



Education and the sector-wide approach in Uganda

Joseph Eilor



International Institute for Educational Planning

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Foreword to the series

A large number of developing countries are dependent on development assistance to expand their education system and provide quality education for all. Some of them are heavily dependent on international aid; others are less dependent, yet need educational assistance to finance their capital expenditures and to implement the necessary reforms. During the Dakar World Education Forum in 2000 the international community committed itself to supporting countries that are seriously committed to fulfilling the objective of Education for All, so that no country which has developed a sound educational plan will fail to reach its goals for lack of financial resources.

Traditional approaches of development assistance have, however, been very critically assessed in the past decades. Amongst the most common criticisms are the fact that international assistance was too often based on big, un-coordinated projects entirely led by agencies, with no strong support at the national level. Thus projects often failed to be sustained once donor support was withdrawn. Findings of several studies have also shown that project support is sometimes incompatible with national institution-building. Run by parallel administrative systems within the ministry of education, it was noted that projects undermined rather than strengthened national capacities to plan and implement policies. There is a strong perception also that project support often contributed to institutional fragmentation and incoherence in policy execution. The projects suffered from a lack of ownership, not only at national government level, but more importantly at the local level where they are to be implemented. Worse still, education projects, like projects in other sectors, failed to reach their basic objective to support national development and reduce poverty.

In the past years a number of new approaches have emerged in international assistance, which have important consequences for educational policy and planning. One of these focuses on poverty reduction strategies, the other promotes sector-wide approaches (SWAs).

Poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) originate from the idea that if poverty is to be reduced it is necessary to co-ordinate all efforts in all sectors around one major policy framework. As a result, financial flows of aid, whether linked to the reduction of debts, grants or concessional loans, have been linked to the adoption by recipient countries of a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy. Learning from past failures, the PRSP approach is based on certain principles. For example the strategy should be: results-oriented, with targets that can be easily monitored, and comprehensive; it should integrate macro-economic, structural, and social policy elements; and it should be country-driven, participatory and based on partnership between the governments and other actors. Education is one major element of PRSPs.

PRSPs will eventually be central to the whole process of development assistance to the least developed countries in the sense that grants and concessional loans will increasingly be allocated as budget support and managed at national level, with a central role being given to the ministry of finance. Having an approved PRSP is already one of the conditions for obtaining funds within the Fast Track Initiative (FTI).

In the same spirit of ensuring government-led development and ownership, an increasing number of agencies are promoting SWAs, in education as in other sectors, whereby project support is being discouraged and replaced by modalities of programme support. The education sector is one of the sectors where such SWAs are increasingly applied and where processes are in evolution. The SWA is directed holistically at the sector, taking the full strategic plan of the sector as its focus. Generally it also involves channelling most, if not all, of the funding through the recipient government's own revenue fund.

Some of the questions that naturally arise concern the extent to which such approaches in development assistance are driven by the development partners or by the recipient government, the extent to which they start a genuine process involving all stakeholders and therefore have a better chance of being implemented, and the extent to which they improve the efficiency of government action in education. Another question, which is directly relevant for the IIEP, is what sort of capacities have to be created and strengthened so that the ministries of education are really in a position to define and negotiate their educational policy with the various stakeholders, amongst which are the aid agencies and the ministry of finance, and to implement it, mobilizing the support of all? One of the interesting consequences of such developments in international co-operation is the increased importance which has been attached to plans in recent years – long-term strategic plans, medium-term plans, operational plans – that ministries have to develop, implement and monitor. Preparing such plans and implementing them requires extensive technical and political skills to develop, on the one hand, very complex policy and financial documents and, on the other hand, to listen to and mobilize a variety of actors around a widely accepted national project.

The studies in this series analyze the principles that guide such new international approaches in development co-operation, the way they have been applied in practice to education, and the consequences for capacity-building in the education sector.

The present study analyzes the implementation of the SWAp in Uganda. Following the successful formulation of the first comprehensive Education Sector Investment Plan (ESIP) of 1999-2003, Uganda adopted the SWAp as a way of enhancing the financing and management of its education system as well as strengthening partnerships between and among all stakeholders. This was not only historic, but was also a bold move given the fact that Uganda had neither previous experience nor practical knowledge of managing a SWAp process. The Ugandan education sector therefore became a torch-bearer for SWAp in uncharted waters.

Owing to the novelty of the approach itself, coupled with the context under which it was embraced, the implementation of SWAp in the Ugandan education sector has provided invaluable learning experience to all those who have been involved in it (i.e. donors, the Government of Uganda officials, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), etc.). It is now described as a process that deals with the planning, financing and implementation of all activities, both at the central and the district levels, rather than a blueprint for solving education sector maladies. It has also meant a constant review of partnership arrangements based on trust and professionalism.

One of the key characteristics of the Uganda education SWAp therefore has been its quest for the creation of new and solid forms of partnership in order to enhance the effectiveness of the resources available to the education sector programmes that have been brought into the mainstream of national education planning and management.

Therefore, as a process, SWAp has been characterized by a shifting quest for a re-definition of its systems and structures. Consequently, this has created a need to study the SWAp process closely so that its operations can be understood more clearly. This attains even greater impetus given the fact that SWAp has steadily taken over as a predominant framework for managing the development of the education sector in the country as well as government-donor relationships.

Within the framework of the IIEP research programme, this case study has been prepared as a collaborative effort between IIEP and the Ministry of Education and Sports with the purpose of documenting Uganda's experiences in the implementation of SWAp in the education sector. The information contained in this report will contribute to enhancing the international debate and understanding of the new forms and modalities of managing aid that SWAp advocates, as well as its practical implications for educational planning and management.

Françoise Caillods
Deputy Director, IIEP

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List of abbreviations

AED	Academy for Educational Development
BECCD	Basic Education Child Care and Adolescent Development
BFP	Budget Framework Paper
BTVET	Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training
CBO	Community-based organization
CCS	Commitment Control System
CCT	Co-ordinating centre tutor
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development
EC	European Community
EFA	Education for All
EFAG	Education Funding Agencies Group
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESA	Education Standards Agency
ESC	Education Service Commission
ESCC	Education Sector Consultative Committee
ESIP	Education Strategic Investment Plan
ESR	Education Sector Review
ESSMR	Education Sector Six Monthly Report

List of abbreviations

ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan
ESWG	Education Sector Working Group
FAE	Functional adult education
FAL	Functional adult literacy
FDS	Fiscal Decentralization Strategy
FPO	Focal point officer
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
GDP	Gross domestic product
GER	Gross enrolment ratio
GoU	Government of Uganda
GTZ	German Technical Co-operation
HIPC	Highly indebted poor countries
HIV/AIDS	Human Immune Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency syndrome
HSSP	Health Sector Strategic Plan
ICS	Information communication system
IGG	Inspector General of Government
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMS	Instructional material supply
IIEP	International Institute for Education Planning
ITEK	Institute of Teacher Education Kyambogo
JESR	Joint Education Sector Review
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KFW	Kreditanstalt Fur Wiederaufbau

LC	Lower council
LGBFP	Local Government Budget Framework Paper
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoFPED	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development
MoGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MoPS	Ministry of Public Service
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
MTBF	Medium Term Budget Framework
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NAES	National Agriculture Educational Authority
NBFP	National Budget Framework Paper
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Centre
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education
NCS	National Council of Sports
NDC	National Development Committee
NFE	Non-formal education
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development
NPA	National Planning Authority
NRM	National Resistance Movement

List of abbreviations

ODA	Official Development Assistance
OOB	Output Oriented Budgeting
PAF	Poverty Action Fund
PAU	Policy Analysis Unit
PCR	Pupil:classroom ratio
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PERP	Primary Education Reform Programme
PIASCY	Presidential Initiative on AIDS Strategy for Communication to Youth
PLE	Primary Leaving Examinations
PME	Plan for Modernization of Agriculture
PPET	Post-primary education and training
PRSC	Poverty Reduction Strategy Credit
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PTA	Parent teacher association
PTC	Primary teachers' colleges
PTR	Pupil to teacher ratio
QTS	Questionnaire tracking system
ROM	Results-oriented management
SACMEQ	South Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SFG	School facilities grant
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SWAp	Sector-wide approach
SWG	Sector working groups

TDMS	Teacher Development and Management System
TMM	Top Management Meeting
UACE	Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UCC	Uganda College of Commerce
UCE	Uganda Certificate of Education
UNEB	Uganda National Examinations Board
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Education Fund
UNISE	Uganda National Institute for Special Education
UPE	Universal primary education
UPK	Uganda Polytechnic Kyambogo
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WAN	Wide area network

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Executive summary

The introduction and implementation of universal primary education (UPE) in Uganda with a view to enrolling more children of primary school age, addressing inequity concerns and augmenting quality outcomes came as a precursor to the transformation of the relationship between external support agencies and the Government of Uganda.

Prior to 1996, this co-operation – whether in the form of funding assistance, technical support or policy dialogue – tended to be a one-on-one affair, and it was not located within an overall strategic education policy framework. However, the actualization of UPE in conformity with the global EFA movement has not only accelerated policy dialogue between the external funders and the government but there has been a substantial strategic policy shift by several external funding agencies from the individual stand-alone project-funding approach to a budget support funding modality. This, in turn, has promoted the growth and development of a shared vision under the leadership of the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), which culminated in the birth of the Education Strategic Investment Plan (ESIP).

In order to facilitate this incipient dialogic process, the key external agencies constituted themselves the Education Funding Agencies Group (EFAG), while in parallel the MoES established the Education Sector Consultative Committee (ESCC). These structures have, together with the education sector review (ESR) process, contributed to the enhancement of collective and co-ordinated multi-stakeholder involvement in policy dialogue, planning, management and monitoring of education sector activities. At the macro-level, these initiatives were helped by the development of the Poverty

Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) in 1997, which in effect mainstreamed the key elements of ESIP.

The focus of the external support within ESIP, delivered mainly through budget support, makes the Ugandan education system the very prototype of a sector-wide approach (SWAp) because the stages in the evolution of Uganda's education SWAp process provide a valuable model of how external agencies and a recipient government can move towards closer and more strategic co-operation.

This case study is an assessment of the Ugandan education SWAp process, especially as it relates to: (a) capacity development; (b) reduction of transaction costs; (c) strengthened partnerships and co-operation; (d) initiation and utilization of education sector studies for policy formulation; (e) improvements of education service delivery; (f) sustainability of education sector programmes; and (g) poverty-reduction concerns.

Using reviews of secondary data sources and field interviews with education sector policy-makers, managers and administrators at both national and district level, the study revealed a number of important policy findings.

First, with regard to capacity-building, while much has been accomplished in terms of skills, staffing and logistical improvements, there are still a number of institutional and human resource capacity gaps at all levels.

Second, although public sector reform has resulted in some downsizing at MoES headquarters, there has been a significant transfer of transaction costs to the district level. District officers have real problems in managing their enlarged responsibilities, and the administrative requirements assumed by MoES – particularly in the management of budget support flows – are substantial. The planning department especially has been forced to shift its workload slightly away from the planning and management of education to

the planning and management of official development assistance (ODA) flows through the semi-annual sector reviews. There is concern that this has actually increased rather than reduced transaction costs for the government, and hence the call to revert to a single annual education sector review.

Third, both the external support agencies and the MoES agreed that the ESR process, which appraises the achievements, current plans, challenges and problems – all in the context of the ESIP agreements and a series of ‘undertakings’ negotiated collectively – has strengthened the partnership and co-operation between the concerned parties. There is, however, some degree of tension about the relative division of the bargaining power especially when it comes to consideration of certain priorities and determining strategic policy directions. While the external agencies are convinced that they have put the Government of Uganda (GoU) in control, this perception is not fully shared by the Ugandan officials. In addition, while the GoU would prefer all external support to come through the budget support mechanism, some stakeholders continue to uphold the project-type interventions.

Fourth, there is concern about the degree to which the large flow of external support has accentuated Uganda’s dependence on such financing. For instance, approximately 60 per cent of the financing for primary education comes from external sources.

Fifth, the demand by the key stakeholders for continuous feedback and accountability pertaining to the overall management of the education SWAp has inevitably boosted the number of education sector studies and research. The findings of such studies, however, have hitherto made a minimum impact on policy formulation in the sector.

Sixth, there has been a tremendous increase in the provision of relevant education inputs, such as qualified teachers, classrooms, equipment and instructional materials, and improvements in the learning curriculum have led

to a decrease in gender disparities. However, the increase in education inputs notwithstanding, there was an initial worsening of several quality outcomes, including the internal efficiency indicators, as the surge in enrolments put an incredible strain on the physical capacity of the primary education system.

There is also a disproportionate emphasis on the addition of classrooms to existing schools, rather than the establishment of new schools. In some cases, therefore, primary schools are growing to become very large, which is not conducive either to improving quality or access (through the reduction of home-to-school distance). Retention of children in school remains a problem, particularly for girls in the upper grades. There is also still a need for greater local flexibility in the curriculum to attract student interest and encourage the students to remain in school. However, the standardization of the primary leaving examination tends to make this difficult. In addition, the success in expanding primary school enrolments has created pressure to address post-primary education and training (PPET) and the imperative of encouraging external support agencies to prioritize this educational level.

Finally, the education SWAp has (largely through the implementation of UPE) directly contributed towards the alleviation of poverty, not only by liberating the poor from the burden of paying school fees, but also by providing them with employment opportunities. Education becomes a powerful poverty eradication tool when access to it is democratized.

More generally, the education SWAp has improved the overall financial management system, strengthened the links between educational policy and the broader national goal of poverty eradication, and it has refined the Ministry's understanding of the entire education system.

Following these findings a number of problem-specific recommendations are made with the objective of bolstering the government's policy autonomy and ownership of the SWAp process, upgrading human resource and

institutional capacities: strengthening partnership with all the stakeholders, front-lining the real felt concerns of the education sector during the budgeting process, improving the allocative efficiency of the medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF) and maximizing stakeholder involvement at all stages of education service delivery.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Transition to a sector-wide approach in the education sector

Since the early 1990s a growing number of developing countries around the world, Uganda included, have gradually embraced a sector-wide approach (SWAp) as an alternative strategy for circumventing the shortcomings of the traditional stand-alone project modality of managing donor assistance. Among other things, the project approach is associated with failure to nurture common understanding among the donors and the recipient government, poor ownership of the development programmes by the host government, restricted local institutional capacity development, poor sustainability of the development initiatives, and overall fragmentation of policy development and resource allocation.

In contrast, the SWAp is expected to harmonize the interventions of the development partners, remove overlaps, avoid duplication of efforts, reduce transaction costs, enhance participation by all stakeholders, promote a holistic and forward approach to planning, fund development activities, and provide common reporting, monitoring and evaluation frameworks (Malinga, 2002).

With specific reference to the Ugandan education sector, the introduction and adoption of a SWAp process has revolved around the formulation of the Education Strategic Investment Plan (ESIP) 1998-2003. The prioritization of the sector resources and the coherence of the policy prescriptions as reflected in ESIP appear to have instantly won the support and commitment of the development partners. That probably explains why, following the official launch of ESIP in November 1998, a consortium of six leading donors comprising

the World Bank, the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, DFID, Ireland Aid, the European Union and USAID promptly subscribed to the SWAp management model. It has since increasingly become a major mechanism for channelling donor funds into the education sector.

This study is an in-depth exposition of the trajectory and internal dynamics of Uganda's education SWAp as an evolving process. It recognizes that the introduction of the education SWAp coincidentally occurred against the background of wide-ranging educational changes in Uganda's politico-socio-economic context.

1.2 Methodology

A triangulated data collection strategy involving consultations with donors, representatives of other agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government officials, as well as a review of the available literature, was preferred. The main thrust of these consultations and this review was directed towards gaining a critical understanding of the extent to which SWAps have helped to influence the realization of benchmarks as reflected in SWAp objectives. Given the breadth of SWAp benchmarks and concerns, the case study is necessarily summative in nature and utilizes a cross-sectional survey design. The complex and ever-changing nature of SWAp issues being investigated has made this study easily amenable to such a qualitative research approach, as it is generally favourable in interpreting and attaching meaning to issues that require ongoing elaboration and exploration as in the incremental development of SWAps.

1.3 The national context

The mutual interdependence that invariably exists between an education system and its wider external environment calls for a full understanding of the key elements of the broad national context, and how they have developed over time.

The geographical setting

Uganda is located in east Africa and lies 1,200 m above sea level, astride the equator between latitudes 4°12' to the north and 1°29' to the south, and between longitudes 29°34' and 35°00' to the east. It is a landlocked country with a total surface area of 241,039 km², bordering Kenya in the east, the United Republic of Tanzania in the south, Rwanda in the south-west, the Democratic Republic of Congo in the west and Sudan in the north.

Due to its altitudinal and location advantages, Uganda enjoys a favourable climate. The central, eastern and western regions have two rainy seasons per year, with heavy rains from March to May and light rains between September and December. Rainfall intensity decreases to the north and tapers into one rainy season. The country is well endowed with fertile soils and the resultant vegetation covers a wide range, from the tropical rain forest in the south to the savannah woodlands and semi-desert type in the north-east.

The demographic trends

Table 1.1 demonstrates how some demographic and human development indices have been changing between the population censuses of 1948 to 2002 (Malinga, 2002). The table shows that Uganda's population increased nearly fivefold, from 5 million in 1948 to 24.7 million, in 2002. Between January 1991 and September 2002 alone there was an increase of 8 million persons representing the highest increment ever recorded. The current high population growth rate of 3.4 per cent per annum is largely attributed to a high fertility rate of about seven children per woman, a relatively high birth rate and declining infant mortality and crude death rates.

Table 1.1 Uganda's population characteristics, 1948-2002

Indicator	Census year					
	1948	1959	1969	1980	1991	2002
Population (millions)	5.0	6.5	9.5	12.6	16.7	24.7
Population increase (millions)	n.a.	1.5	3.0	3.1	4.1	8.0
Intercensal growth rate (%)	n.a.	2.54	3.85	2.71	2.52	3.4
Sex ratio	100.2	100.9	101.9	98.2	96.5	96.0
Crude birth rate	42.0	44.0	50.0	50.0	52.0	47.3
Total fertility rate	5.9	5.9	7.1	7.2	7.1	6.9
Crude death rate	25.0	20.0	19.0	n.a.	17.0	15.0
Infant mortality rate	200.0	160.0	120.0	n.a.	122.0	160.0
Urban percentage	n.a.	4.8	7.8	8.7	11.3	12.3
Density (population/km ²)	25.2	33.2	48.4	64.4	85.0	126.0

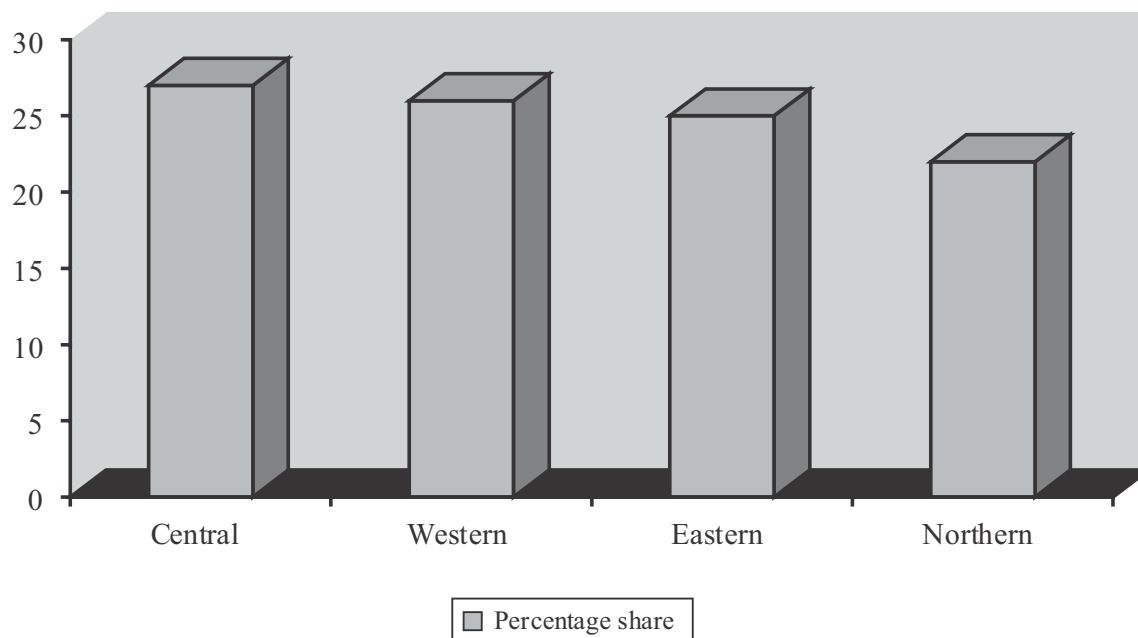
n.a. = not available

Source: Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2002.

The sex ratio (the number of males per 100 females) has been steadily decreasing from 101.9 in 1969 to 96.0 in 2002, and population density has risen from 25 in 1948 to 126 persons per km² in 2002. Approximately 88 per cent of the people live in rural areas.

The spatial distribution of the population in Uganda is uneven. The breakdown by region is as shown in *Figure 1.1*.

It can be observed from the distribution in the bar chart that the central region has the largest share of the population (27 per cent) while the western, eastern and northern regions have 26 per cent, 25 per cent and 22 per cent respectively.

Figure 1.1 Percentage share of population by region in 2002

Source: Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2002.

The political context

The genesis of Uganda's political history can be traced to the establishment by the British colonialists of a centralized protectorate government in 1886. As a colony, Uganda was governed under the 'indirect rule' administrative model whereby the local kings and chiefs served as conduits through which the colonial policies and practices were imposed on the local population. Even when Uganda subsequently gained political independence in October 1962, it continued to operate a unitary system of government. The district councils were, in effect, mere appendages of the central government with virtually no powers to initiate their own policies and work plans.

Uganda's short-lived experimentation with constitutional rule ended in 1966 with the abrogation of the 1962 constitution and its replacement by a

de facto pigeon-hole republican constitution that gave the president sweeping powers.

Thereafter, Uganda became a military dictatorship under Idi Amin (1971-1979). The 1967 constitution was suspended and Amin ruled by decree. The rule of law had, in effect, ceased to exist, and the country plunged into endless civil unrest, fear, insecurity and economic ruin. This culminated into the overthrow of the military regime in 1979. There was then a series of largely ineffectual governments that followed in quick succession, and which failed to assuage the economic decline, political turbulence, the loss of lives and property.

It was the ascendance of the broad-based National Resistance Movement (NRM) government to power in 1986 that finally halted the process of economic and political retrogression. It quickly moved in to restore order and security and embarked on an ambitious reform programme. The most notable aspect of its political reform agenda relates to the process of empowering local government through decentralization. The first step to review local government's powers and functions was the enactment of the 1987 Statute No. 9. This statute legalized resistance councils and gave them powers in their areas of jurisdiction at the local level. These were further streamlined and fine-tuned into the 1993 Resistance Council Statute. The decentralization policy itself was later enshrined in the newly promulgated constitution of 1995 and legalized by the Local Governments Act of 1997. The Act establishes the district, municipality and sub-county/division/town council as corporate bodies of local governments, and devolves to them far-reaching powers and responsibilities in such areas as finance, legislation, planning and personnel matters (GoU, 1997).

The major objectives of decentralization are: (a) to transfer real power to the districts and thereby relieve the central government somewhat; (b) to bring political and administrative government control services to the point

where they are actually delivered and thereby improve accountability, effectiveness and promote peoples' ownership of programmes and projects executed in their districts; (c) to free local managers from central government constraints and, as a long-term goal, allow them to develop organization structures and work procedures, which are tailored to local circumstances; (d) to improve financial accountability and responsibility by establishing a clear link between payment of taxes and provision of the services they finance; and (e) to improve the capacity of the local councils to plan, finance and manage the delivery of services to their constituents.

The NRM government has largely succeeded in restoring respect for the rule of law, respect for democratic values and practices, freedom of the press, and it has strengthened the position of women and other marginalized groups. It also continues to make serious efforts to fight corruption.

The economic context

Uganda is primarily an agrarian economy, but recently is experiencing remarkable private sector-led growth in the manufacturing, construction, mining, fishing and service industries.

The socio-economic mismanagement and civil strife which typified the 1971–1985 period adversely affected the Ugandan economy and social sector; the public sector became over extended, the quality and efficiency of the civil service was severely compromised, fiscal and monetary mismanagement exacerbated inflation, and price controls (together with an over-valued exchange rate) undermined the monetary economy and encouraged the emergence of black markets. There was near total breakdown in the physical infrastructure and social services. By 1986, the key economic indicators had fallen to the following approximate percentages of their 1970 values: exports, 40 per cent; imports, 50 per cent; real GDP, 75 per cent; real GDP per capita, 50 per cent.

Soon after taking over the reins of power in 1986 the NRM government, in concert with its development partners, started executing structural adjustment policy packages, which involved trade liberalization, privatization and divestiture of public enterprise, foreign exchange liberalization, reorganization of tax revenue collection, civil service reform, reduction in the size of the army, decentralization, streamlining of the investment policy and rehabilitation of the socio-economic infrastructure.

The positive response of the economic and social sector to these stabilization and recovery measures was commendable. For example, there was noticeable improvement from an annual GDP growth rate of 0.3 per cent in 1986 to 6.4 per cent in 1987, 7.2 per cent in 1988, 6.6 per cent in 1990 and 5.6 per cent in 2000. The inflation rate, which was higher than 200 per cent in 1986, decreased to 4.5 per cent in 2001/2002. The current GDP estimates stand at US\$8.867 billion, up from US\$2.088 billion in 1991. The overall maintenance of the macro-economic stability is satisfactory (UNDP, 2000). Consequently, budgetary allocations to the social sector, including the basic education sub-sector, increased.

However, concerns about inequitable growth and general household poverty and poor social sector services have obliged the government to reorient its development programmes towards poverty eradication and improvement in social service delivery. To this end, the government developed a national policy framework for fighting poverty known as the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). PEAP concentrated its first set of priority interventions in four areas: basic education, basic health services, rural sanitation and rural roads.

Within the framework of PEAP, the government has adopted SWAps to address sector specific constraints. In education, it is called the Education Strategic Investment Plan (ESIP). ESIP helps to position interventions concerning education within an overall perspective that focuses on poverty as a leading impediment to quality education in Uganda. In the health sector,

the Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP) of 1999 focused on the provision of cost-effective treatment, nutritional policy, adolescent sexual and reproductive health policy, family planning, immunization programmes for children, safe motherhood and the framework for HIV/AIDS interventions. The ten-year Road Sector Development Programme (1996) and the Plan for the Modernization of Agriculture (2000) are SWAps developed for the road and agriculture sectors respectively.

SWAps for energy, justice/law and order, and social development sectors are being developed. Similarly, the Medium Term Competitiveness Strategy for Private Sector Development (supplemented by the Uganda Investment Authority's 'big push' strategy) addresses private sector concerns. It is envisaged that all sectors will eventually have detailed SWAps. In line with PEAP and sector-wide plans is the preparation of district plans. Under decentralization, local authorities implement sector plans developed according to local needs and priorities.

In recognition of these efforts, Uganda became one of the main beneficiaries of donor funding and was the first to qualify for debt relief under the highly indebted poor countries (HIPC) initiative in April 1998. The relief savings and the additional donor funds are now being channelled into sustaining the social services sector, such as primary education and health, through the Poverty Action Fund (PAF), which has been mainstreamed into the national PEAP.

The Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF)

The stabilization of Uganda's economy and monetary sector has been achieved through a complementary application of tight policies limiting expenditure to the resources envelope. In that regard, the government's master expenditure planning tool is the three-year rolling Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), which is regularly reviewed and implemented based on

the annual budget. Both the MTEF and the annual budget are end products of an increasingly consultative and participatory process.

The preparation of the annual budget for the next financial year always begins with the first consultative budget workshop in October, when the macro-economic assumptions for the medium term are articulated to all stakeholders by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), and preliminary budget ceilings are discussed. Based on revenue expectations, an adjusted three-year rolling MTEF is produced.

As a next step, the line ministries are requested to prepare their Budget Framework Paper (BFP), which is alternatively called the Medium Term Budget Framework (MTBF). The BFPs are discussed during interministerial consultations at cabinet level. The MTEF is then updated, and upon approval by Cabinet, submitted to Parliament for approval usually in April/May, and the MoFPED finalizes the budget allocations before the line ministries are requested to prepare detailed budget estimates. A separate budget workshop is subsequently held to communicate the indicative budget ceilings relating to unconditional and equalization grants for local governments. This enables the local governments also to begin the process of planning for programmes and activities envisaged for the next financial year and the medium term.

In the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) the MTBF is prepared by the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG), which is comprised of representatives from the central government, education sub-sectoral representatives, the Education Funding Agencies Group (EFAG), NGOs and other stakeholders. It is the ESWG in concert with the top management of the MoES that: (a) allocates resources in the MTEF in accordance with ESIP priorities, recommendations of the education sector reviews (ESRs) and in consonance with the budgetary ceilings as defined by the MoFPED; (b) originates the budget framework paper for onward submission to the MoFPED and subsequent incorporation into the National Budget Framework Paper

(NBFP); and (c) initiates the process of appraising new educational programmes prior to their being forwarded to the MoFPED for final evaluation by the National Development Committee (NDC).

ESWG also reviews all the budget issues and makes recommendations for consideration in the next budget and the medium term. In fulfilling this mandate, the ESWG heavily relies on the flow of authentic context-specific data. It is in that respect that the conducting of studies becomes an important additional responsibility for the MoES as a basis for refining sector needs to be incorporated in the MTBF. The planning department in the Ministry coordinates these studies (e.g. school mapping, headcount, monitoring and evaluation reports, etc.) and compiles statistics to form the next stage of the planning and budgeting cycle. It is also from such studies that sector policies are derived, often after wide consultations and debate involving Parliament, line ministries, local governments, donors, civil society, the private sector and other special interest groups.

The widespread consultations and communication between all the stakeholders ensures consistency between the annual budget, MTEF and the sector, as well as local government investment plans.

The national planning framework

National economic planning is the prerogative of the MoFPED. It sets the macro-economic targets that encompass sectoral targets as well as expenditure ceilings for each approved expenditure item.

Several initiatives have been undertaken with a view to enhance the planning process in Uganda. Most notably these include the consultative endeavours leading to the production of Vision 2025, which is a synoptic description of the long-term aspirations of the country, and the 1997 PEAP. The PEAP is essentially Uganda's over-arching national planning document

that signals poverty eradication as the ultimate goal of the government. It provides a framework for the development of detailed sector plans and investment programmes, district plans and the general budget process. The sector/district plans are inset within an overall MTEF.

Implementation of the PEAP demands sector-wide programming to determine sectoral objectives, expected outputs and outcomes from sector expenditures, and the activities that the stipulated expenditures will fund in order to accomplish the desired outputs and outcomes.

Poverty reduction efforts

Empirical evidence indicates that the percentage of the Ugandan population living below the poverty line – i.e. on less than one dollar a day – fell from 56 per cent in 1992/1993 to 44 per cent in 1997/1998. However, to many households economic growth is yet to be translated into improved welfare. The challenge, therefore, is to translate economic growth into improved incomes and higher living standards for all. This will, *inter alia*, depend on equitable and sustainable job-generating growth.

In 1997, a wide consultation process was undertaken by the Government of Uganda (GoU) to develop a PEAP, which set out a strategy for eradicating poverty by 2017. The PEAP was updated in 2000 using the results of multi-stakeholder participatory poverty assessment procedures – involving the poor as well – to set priorities and concerns.

Earlier, in 1996, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank launched the HIPC initiative to reduce the stock of debt-stressed poor countries. In 1998, they launched the enhanced HIPC initiative to provide faster, deeper and broader debt relief and strengthen the linkage between debt relief and poverty reduction. Emphasis was on tying debt relief to the poverty reduction strategies produced by an eligible country. Uganda's PEAP was

accordingly accepted by the boards of the IMF and the World Bank as a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). PRSPs are results-oriented.

1.4 Conclusion

The foregoing narrative reveals that despite its favourable geographical endowments, Uganda has had a chequered politico-socio-economic past with serious repercussions on the country's development efforts. However, with the policy gains attained since 1986 in the area of ensuring macro-economic stability and the over-arching goal of poverty reduction – in which education is assigned a pivotal role – the GoU is now better positioned to address most of its development concerns as enunciated in the national development plans.

Chapter 2

The education sector

2.1 Introduction

This section unravels the complex structural policy changes that have occurred in the Ugandan education system over time. An attempt is made to present these changes as an integral element of the much broader national development agenda. It also highlights the core challenges faced by the education sector and the mitigating measures that have been put in place.

2.2 An overview of the education system

Education and development

The structure of the education system

The present four-tier structure of Uganda's formal education system has been in existence since the early 1960s (see *Figure 2.1*). It comprises seven years of primary schooling followed by the lower secondary cycle of four years (leading to the Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) award) and the upper secondary cycle of two years (leading to the Ugandan Advanced Certification of Education (UACE) award). This 7-4-2 system of schooling is followed by three to five years of university education. A primary school completer can either proceed to secondary education or opt for a three-year crafts course in a technical school. The UCE completers have four alternative avenues for further education and training, namely: (a) accessing advanced level (UACE) education; (b) enrolling in a two-year advanced course at a technical institute; (c) joining the two-year grade three primary teacher training

programme in primary teachers' colleges; and (d) joining any of the government departmental training institutes, which offer a variety of technical and professional courses under different ministries, such as ministries of labour, agriculture, animal industry and fisheries, environment and co-operatives. Their courses lead to certificates or diplomas following completion of one to three years of training.

There are provisions for the graduates from these four alternative outlets to pursue university education. Similarly, the UACE completers have several promotional avenues, namely: (a) proceeding to university; (b) joining a two-year course in a national teachers' college; (c) enrolling in a two-year course at the Uganda Technical College; (d) proceeding to the Uganda College of Commerce; and (e) joining any of the programmes of departmental training.

Alongside this formal education structure there is also pre-primary and non-formal education (NFE).

2.3 The administrative structure of the MoES

As per Article 174 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995), the Permanent Secretary is the overall head of the Ministry of Education and Sports. He is the Accounting Officer and the Executive Officer.

The present line administrative structure of the MoES comprises eight departments, namely: Finance and Administration; Educational Planning; Pre-Primary and Primary Education; Secondary Education; Teacher Education; Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTVET); Special Education, Career Guidance and Counselling; and Higher Education. A commissioner heads each department. A Policy Analysis Unit and a Resource Centre were established as a result of the post-constitutional restructuring of the Ministry in 1998. At the same time, three other units were approved as part of the establishment: the Procurement Unit, the Construction Management Unit, and the Instructional Materials Unit.

In addition, there are several semi-autonomous institutions that have been established to handle the more specialized functions of the Ministry. These are: (a) the Education Service Commission (ESC); (b) the Education Standards Agency (ESA); (c) the National Council of Sports (NCS); (d) the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC); (e) the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEBC); (f) the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE); (g) public universities (i.e. Makerere University, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Kyambogo University and Gulu University); (h) Makerere University Business School; and (i) the Uganda Management Institute.

The restructuring was done in accordance with the provisions of the 1995 Constitution and Local Governments Act, 1997, which had devolved administrative and political powers from the centre to the local governments. It transformed the mandate, functions, structures and staffing levels of MoES. It also meant re-focusing the mission statement, streamlining outputs, functions and organization structures to ensure clear reporting relationships and responsibility centres.

At the district level, the District Education Officer is the key official to whom the head teachers go to collect cash for salaries and school supplies, hand in any reports and receive communication from headquarters.

However, under the decentralization programme, all ministries with field staff, such as the Ministry of Education (MoE), are required to second their staff to the District Local Council. These staff operate under the control and supervision of the Chief Administrative Officer. The Chief Administrative Officer is the District Accounting Officer, while the District Local Council is the main budgetary unit in the district. The implications of all these decisions are that the District Education Office primarily reports to the district government, and only secondary head teachers report to the MoES.

Decentralization also implies that at the institutional level most of the authority to control the affairs of individual schools/colleges has been effectively relinquished to the head teachers/principals, school management committees at primary school level and boards of governors at secondary schools, and the parent teacher associations (PTAs).

The decentralization of line functions has enabled MoES headquarters to concentrate more effectively on the key strategic functions of planning, policy analysis, curriculum and examination reform, national assessment, monitoring and evaluation.

2.4 Trends in education sector reforms

Evolution of the current education policy framework

Like most other sectors, Uganda's education system suffered substantially between 1971 and 1985. Budgetary allocations to the education sector declined from 3.4 per cent to 1.4 per cent; only 50 per cent of the total primary-school-age children attended school and most of the burden of financing education was borne by parents. The physical infrastructure had either deteriorated or had been destroyed: textbooks, teachers' guides and other essential instructional materials were virtually non-existent in most schools. Teachers were under-paid, under-trained, or untrained and demoralized. Above all, the management and planning of the education service was wanting at all levels, and the curriculum and the related assessment system were obsolete.

However, with the restoration of peace in 1986, the government initiated the process of reforming and reconstructing the education system by putting in place the Education Policy Review Commission in 1987 to chart out the way forward. The major education policy thrusts that are now operational are a derivative of the Education Policy Review Commission recommendations, which were, in turn, refined into the government White Paper on Education of 1994.

Based on the key provisions of the White Paper, the GoU launched the Education Strategic Investment Plan (1998-2003), which had a special emphasis on:

1. universal primary education (UPE) and democratization of education by ensuring greater access to all types of education, adoption of a language policy that makes learning easier, diversification of the curriculum, strengthening guidance and counselling services, and creating appropriate educational opportunities for the handicapped and other disadvantaged groups;
2. strengthening the relationships between general academic education and the world of work through vocationalization of education, NFE programmes for primary school leavers, and through a scheme of community service;
3. improvement of the quality of education at all levels through enhancement of facilities in schools, better availability of instructional materials, improved curricula and evaluation procedures, strengthening teacher training and ensuring that teachers are adequately remunerated, rehabilitation of educational institutions, reorganization of the administrative structure through decentralization and devolution of power to the districts and other local authorities. For the primary education sub-sector, the major thrusts of the Primary Education Reform Programme (PERP) included:
 - (a) increasing access to quality primary schooling through UPE;
 - (b) improving school management and instructional quality using well targeted interventions such as the teacher development and management system and instructional material supply (IMS); and
 - (c) strengthening of planning, management and implementation strategies through organizational restructuring, ESIP, Educational Management Information System (EMIS) and PAF programmes;
4. providing an enabling environment for public and private sector partnerships;

5. strengthening the role of the MoES as the policy powerhouse and provider of the necessary back-up services to the district authorities;
6. building district capacity to ensure delivery of quality educational services.

The ESIP medium- and long-term policies and strategies are consistent with the Constitution (1995) and Local Governments Act (1997) as well as the broader previously published development policies that are spelt out in Uganda Vision 2025 and the PEAP. They also tally with the provisions of the 1990 Jomtien Declaration on Education for All (EFA), the 2000 Dakar Framework for Action and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs include, *inter alia*: (a) ensuring that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling; and (b) eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and in all levels of education no later than 2015.

The envisaged educational policy thrusts will continue to focus on:

1. the expansion of education institutional facilities, including the construction of schools for the handicapped and impaired, extending assistance to NFE, developing policy guidelines by which to establish and extend government grants to aid community schools, giving support to private providers, and rehabilitation and maintenance of existing facilities;
2. putting in place a wide range of efficiency measures, including development of guidelines for secondment of teachers, increasing teaching loads in secondary schools, introducing double-shift teaching in all schools with sufficient student numbers, introducing day schooling in boarding schools and making schools unisex;
3. development, procurement and distribution of the best available instructional materials that take into consideration cross-cutting issues, including gender sensitivity, HIV/AIDS, etc;

4. strengthening the quality of cost-effective training for teachers, instructors, lecturers, tutors and administrators, including the finalization of their schemes of service;
5. ensuring relevance of curricula through continuous review and integration of aspects of education for sustainable development into the sub-sector curricular design;
6. adjusting the assessment and certification system to match the changing needs;
7. achieving intellectual access through the development and implementation of an action plan for the language policy;
8. strengthening of the education institutions, community, local and central government organizational and management structures, including commissioning a feasibility study to look into the viability of the proposed community service scheme, and harmonizing the operations of the ESA with the local government functions relating to district level inspection;
9. expansion of post-primary educational and training opportunities;
10. mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues such as HIV/AIDS, gender and environmental issues;
11. completion of a policy on career guidance, developing a strategic plan for implementing it at local government level and executing training of trainers' programmes;
12. reviewing and improving terms and conditions of service for teachers, instructors, lecturers and tutors, including those in private educational institutions;
13. strengthening implementation mechanisms of the ESIP, including: fully integrating transferred institutions into the MoES, decentralizing secondary and technical schools, strengthening co-ordination and collaboration with the private sector and developing and enforcing the law on private sector participation;
14. developing strategic planning, budgeting policy formulation analysis, communication and negotiation capabilities for the management of ESIP,

- including training and enhancing the capacity of the MoES/EFAG partnership and management of public and private partnerships;
15. finalization of the national physical education and sports policy, implementing a strategic plan for strengthening sports development and management capacity as well as mobilizing resources and developing the required infrastructure;
 16. development and strengthening of institutions for quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation, including finalization and implementation of the strategic plan for the national council of higher education, development of quality indicators for inspection, refining and expanding the existing assessment and examination system.

The perceived role of education in national development

Education is commonly perceived as an indispensable instrument for the promotion of sustainable development because it leads to a better understanding of the environment, better understanding of scientific and technical aspects of agriculture, better appreciation of community problems and determination to pursue corrective measures such as population control, promotion of primary health care, inculcation of productivity-related habits such as hard work, self-reliance and peaceful co-existence. It is also presumed that education widens avenues for upward social mobility, decreases inequity in the distribution of income and opportunities, and enhances the development of democratic values and practices. In short, education opens up opportunities for economic growth, employment and social equity through poverty reduction, and political as well as social participation, considered as a *sine qua non* for sustainable development.

The Government White Paper on Education (1992) recognizes education as a powerful tool for transforming the Ugandan society as it plays a key role in achieving moral, intellectual, ideological, cultural and social development, including the national goals of unity, democracy, economic progress and security

for all. It emphasizes the main role of education as that of liberating people from the vicious circle of poverty, dependence, ignorance, disease and indignity. All these concerns have been factored into the PEAP, which has four overarching goals (MoFPED, 2001a: 1C, 4-5), namely: (a) rapid and sustainable economic growth and structural transformation; (b) good governance and security; (c) increased ability of the poor to raise their incomes; and (d) enhanced quality of life for the poor.

The ESIP is the instrument for implementing the PEAP (MoFPED, 2001a: 1C, 143) as it relates to the education sector, not only because of its focus on UPE but also because it positions donor support to the education sector within an overall national policy imperative of poverty reduction. The most relevant goals for the ESIP fall within the areas of increasing the ability of the poor to raise their incomes and enhancing the quality of life for the poor. Emphasis is thus being placed on vocational education, primary/secondary education, functional adult literacy (FAL) and the plight of disadvantaged groups.

The key education sector reform programmes

The reform initiatives hitherto undertaken can be analyzed under four broad themes: (a) equitable access to education at all levels; (b) improved quality of education; (c) enhanced management of education service delivery at all levels; and (d) capacity building to develop the education and sports sector effectively and efficiently.

Equitable access to education

The most notable reform component in the area of promoting equity in education relates to the introduction of UPE in 1997. The commitment to implement UPE was contained in President Yoweri Museveni's manifesto during the 1996 presidential campaigns. Upon his election to the presidency,

Museveni announced free primary education initially for four children per family. In so doing, the government committed itself to paying tuition fees for four children per Ugandan family to cover the entire primary education cycle (P1-P7). It also undertook to provide textbooks and other instructional materials for both pupils and teachers for all subjects, to meet the cost of co-curricular activities for all children in the lower and upper classes, and to cover school administration expenses and maintenance. Other costs to be incurred by the government included payment of teachers' salaries and of the support staff, training of teachers, and contribution to the construction of classrooms.

However, the difficulties in establishing the eligibility criteria for inclusion in the UPE programming forced the government to abandon the 'four-children ceiling', and to declare UPE open to all interested school-age children.

The reform sub-components around the UPE policy therefore included the waiving of tuition fees in government-aided primary schools, the training and recruitment of more teachers (including building the capacity of those already in service), the development of the learning curriculum, the provision of instructional materials and the construction of more classrooms.

Regarding classroom construction, greater emphasis was being placed on the classroom construction modality that is consistent with PEAP priorities using the school facilities grants (SFGs). This modality fronted employment creation and the augmentation of household incomes through the maximum use of locally available construction materials and expertise as its cardinal concern. As a result, the stock of permanent classrooms in use in the primary education sub-sector has grown from 47,674 (with a pupil:classroom ratio (PCR) of 116:1) in the financial year 1998/1999 to 64,187 (with a PCR of 98:1) in the financial year 2001/2002 and was expected to reach 69,409 (with a PCR of 94:1) at the end of the financial year 2002/2003 (MoES, 2003e: 17).

Between July 2002 and March 2003, the Ministry completed the construction of 1,302 classrooms out of a target of 3,694; and 89 units of teacher houses out of the planned 474; many more are at different stages of completion. It has also delivered 17,163 desks and other pieces of furniture to primary schools in the country. This process is ongoing.

Consequently, the number of primary school enrolments has since risen from 2,203,824 pupils in 1986 to 7,354,153 in 2002, (a percentage increase of 233.7 per cent). Similarly, there was an 81.4 per cent increase in the number of primary schools, which rose from 7,351 in 1986 to 13,332 in 2002. The number of pupils with special learning needs enrolled in primary schools also increased from 26,429 in 1997 to 218,286 in 2002.

With regard to the secondary education sub-sector, the Ministry has adopted similar multi-pronged interventions aimed at increasing access, including: (a) the commitment to provide seed-secondary schools in sub-counties that do not have any secondary schools; (b) expanding the day secondary schools with the highest enrolment levels in urban areas; (c) consolidating the bursary scheme at the sub-county level for the bright but poor students and annually expanding the number of beneficiaries; and (d) strengthening vocational education at secondary school level and through community polytechnics, and overall expansion of opportunities for accessing post-primary education.

This was a logical policy imperative given the increasing numbers of children enrolled at primary school level and the approach of the bulge towards the primary seven class. In response to this, and in consultation with various stakeholders, the MoES has developed a costed policy framework for increasing capacities and opportunities for the provision of Post-primary education and training (PPET) in Uganda.

The PPET policy framework, which was approved by Cabinet, and several of whose components were to be implemented with effect from the financial year 2003/2004, focused mainly on addressing the issues of increasing access and equity, improving efficiency in resource utilization, improving the quality of education and training, improving the institutional management and governance and making post-primary education and training effective, efficient and relevant to the social and economic needs of the country.

Currently, the available post-primary schools and institutions can absorb only 50 per cent of the primary school competitors. It is envisaged that approximately 430,000 candidates will be completing and seeking admission opportunities in post-primary institutions in the year 2004.

The drive to enhance equity and access at tertiary education involves mainstreaming and restructuring all specialized tertiary institutions, making the curricula relevant to the country's manpower needs and flexible enough to allow joining and or exiting of students at every level by recognizing prior training and learning achievements, extending sponsorship to 4,000 students in public universities, reviewing the access criteria for government sponsorship of eligible students' loan scheme initially targeting university students, but later examine the modalities for its expansion, and promoting initiatives in favour of increased girls' enrolment and completion at all levels of education as well as enhancing guidance and counselling services.

Improved quality of education

Concerning improvement in the quality of education, several well targeted interventions are already under way, chief among which is the implementation of the new Uganda primary school curriculum. Volume One of the primary school curriculum comprising four subjects (English, mathematics, social studies and science) was developed in 1998/1999 and launched in September 1999. Volume Two, comprising six subjects (agriculture, integrated production skills, performing arts/physical education, local languages, Swahili

and religious education), was also launched. Through the Instructional Materials Unit, 130,000 copies of Volumes One and Two (syllabus and teachers' guide) were distributed to schools in 2002/2003. In addition, curricula for the other levels of education, namely secondary, teacher education, BTVET and higher education, have been reviewed.

Secondly, due emphasis has been placed on strengthening institutions for standards setting and quality assurance; these include UNEB, ESA, NCDC and NCHE. Assessment methods have been reviewed and harmonized with adjustments made to the curricula. Examination leakages and malpractices that had become rampant are being minimized. In spite of the staffing and budgetary limitations, ESA has carried out inspections in a number of educational institutions at all levels and has monitored the implementation of Volumes One and Two of the Uganda Primary Schools Curriculum, the use and management of instructional materials, textbooks, science equipment and chemicals in secondary schools. It has also monitored learning achievements through the 'Break Through to Literacy' methodology (Ministerial Policy Statement, financial year 2003/2004). Efforts are under way to develop an inspection system to be used in assessing and evaluating the performance of primary and secondary schools, teacher education and BTVET institutions. However, the delay by the Ministry of Public Service (MoPS) to finalize the Executive Agencies Bill before parliament can provide an over-arching legal framework for divested institutions, including ESA, has weakened the linkage between ESA and the district inspectorate (Ministerial Policy Statement, financial year 2003/2004).

The need to strengthen inspection and supportive supervision in schools, particularly at the primary school level, together with adequate provision of instructional and non-instructional materials is emphasized. The aim is to attain the 2003/2004 targets of a pupil to book ratio of 3:1 for P3-P4 (and maintaining a ratio of 1:1 for pupils with special learning needs); a pupil:teacher ratio of 52:1 and a pupil:classroom ratio of 92:1.

A policy of 'putting books in the hands of children' has been agreed, and guidelines disseminated to schools. It is intended to ensure that schools do not keep in the store cupboard the books/instructional materials supplied, but rather make them available to the learners. In the area of special needs education, textbooks for P3 and P4 have been produced in Braille and wheelchairs, hearing aids, Braille kits, Perkins Braille and an assortment of technical tools have been procured for children with disabilities. In addition, two resource centres were constructed in Mpuru, Mukono, and in Kireka (a school for mentally impaired children), Wakiso district.

In pursuit of the same objective of assuring quality education, the government embarked on an aggressive teacher development and management plan, which emphasized enhancement of teacher competencies through continuous professional development, improvement of teacher/instructor/in-service training programmes and strengthening of the training of teachers for children with special learning needs. Sensitization workshops have also been organized to train tutors in guidance and counselling to enable them to deal with problems that hinder student learning and those that promote the contraction of HIV/AIDS. Above all, a draft scheme of service for the teachers serving in the Ugandan education service has been prepared by the ESC. It is being examined further with the relevant stakeholders to streamline the policy, legal issues and also determine its financial implications.

As a result, the number of primary school teachers on the government payroll has risen from 86,348 (representing a pupil to teacher ratio (PTR) of 64:1) in the financial year 1998/1999 to the level of 122,055 (PTR of 55:1) in the financial year 2002/2003, although the benchmark target was 125,000.

Another quality assurance-driven intervention relates to the strengthening of partnerships with private providers and other development partners by supervising educational programmes consistent with the government's Medium Term Competitive Strategy. For example, the Ministry, in collaboration with

education sector stakeholders, has developed a policy framework for all disadvantaged groups intended to harmonize and mainstream their educational needs. Included are the children disadvantaged by social, cultural, geographical, political and economic barriers. Ongoing complementary educational programmes targeting such disadvantaged groups include the Complementary Opportunity for Primary Education, Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja, and Basic Education for Urban Poverty Areas.

Finally, at the institutional level, there is a deliberate effort to strengthen school management committees, boards of governors, the NCHE and other governing bodies to initiate and sustain the quality improvements in education.

Enhanced management of education service delivery at all levels

As part of an overall government strategy of enhancing the management of the education sector, emphasis was placed on strengthening the capacities of the districts and education managers/providers to implement, manage and monitor the delivery of a quality service.

The single most important management tool that was introduced is EMIS. EMIS enables the MoES to collect, capture and process data to generate various types of management information that could help in planning for education services and decision-making at different levels. EMIS maintains data on institutions, pupils, teachers, infrastructure and finances. It is designed to be sector-wide and decentralized to the district level. The design makes the districts the focal point for EMIS. The districts are expected to use EMIS to generate information that can be used by the district governments to make appropriate decisions. EMIS is thus intended to support sound management principles throughout the MoES, and at the district level to ensure that ESIPs broad priority policy objectives are met. EMIS is further designed to generate statistics from which the annual education statistical abstracts can be published.

EMIS is essentially designed to handle four basic modules with the following specific functionalities: education statistics; personnel (excluding payroll) data management; financial management; and linking up with UNEB. These modules are, when fully operational, jointly expected to enable the Ministry to meet most of its information requirements. However, the Ed*Assist¹ as an application is heavily biased towards education statistics at the expense of financial management and personnel functionality. Some of the specific indicators that EMIS helps to measure include PTR, PCR, the pupil to textbook ratio, net enrolment in P7, the quality of teachers and drop-outs/drop-out rates, etc.

EMIS also has the capacity to interface with a number of other legacy systems to extract relevant data that can significantly impact on ESIP. These include: the Integrated Personnel and Payroll System being developed in MoPS aimed at improving access to a payroll by all teachers and civil servants, and the Integrated Financial Management System currently being developed in MoFPED. Indeed, MoES is a pilot site for the Integrated Financial Management System, and MoES could take advantage of this application to meet its financial management function and to provide the requisite data/information for Ed*Assist.

One other innovation aimed at improving the efficiency of EMIS is the plan to connect all districts to MoES via a wide area network (WAN), which is currently being piloted in ten districts. However, the pilot is mainly constrained by a lack of adequate bandwidth. If the bandwidth problem could be solved, it would provide a more reliable and faster way of transferring data from, and/or disseminating information to, the districts.

1. Ed*Assist is a base software developed by the Academy for Educational Development (AED) in 1999 for Uganda's EMIS, to provide an integrated approach to information access. It is primarily oriented to the managerial policy and strategy requirements of the education system.

There are also several other initiatives taken by institutions in the country trying to set up infrastructure to facilitate an easy exchange of data with the districts. These include the District Administration Network and the Information Communication System (ICS) both in the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), the Wide Area Network Initiative under the Integrated Financial Management System in the MoFPED, the recently installed District Resource Information System under the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, the School Net Project under MoES, and the Rural Telecommunications Development Fund initiative to extend a telecommunications infrastructure to rural communities by the Uganda Communications Commission. Each of these initiatives is similarly constrained by inadequate bandwidth. There are opportunities for EMIS to collaborate with any of all the aforementioned initiatives to generate data for optimal use of educational resources.

Box 1. Data management procedure in Ed*Assist

A Questionnaire tracking system (QTS) starts the process of data management in EMIS. There is a form (questionnaire) for each of the different levels of schools/training institutions. The QTS maintains a registry of schools/institutions and tracks a questionnaire according to its status, which can be any of distributed, received and/or entered. The questionnaire tracking is followed by data entry and data integration using the integrated data entry application. The questionnaires are put in batches and data-entry clerks enter a batch from each district separately. After the questionnaires in a batch have all been captured, the data is rolled up. The role up may be looked at as packaging the data in a suitable format for export to a master computer for necessary processing.

The linking of EMIS to UNEB systems has not yet been operationalized. Discussions are ongoing to agree on the mode of linkage, including the key attributes which the two systems (one at UNEB and the other for Ed*Assist) should include.

Capacity building in the education sector

The focus on quality and equity in education service delivery calls for institutional strengthening of both central and local governments. The MoES's restructuring plan has been operationalized to strengthen the capacity of the centre to implement Results Oriented Management (ROM) and to manage its new functions of policy formulation, sector planning, standards setting, monitoring and evaluation.

The District Capacity-building Plan is a very important component of the ESIP Capacity-Building Programme, which has been formulated to address capacity problems at the district level. Capacity problems have arisen because of the rapid devolution of functions that had hitherto been performed at the Ministry headquarters to the districts.

Each district was requested to develop its own capacity-building plan within a framework of areas identified as priority. The decentralized capacity-building plan is the end product of a broad consultative process between MoES, the district technical officials and politicians, and which was additionally informed by the results of the needs-assessment surveys and the Auditor General's six-monthly education sector audit reports. Although there are some district-specific variations, the critical areas for decentralized capacity building include: (a) EMIS management and use; (b) school facilities planning, development and management; (c) financial planning and management, including accountability and reporting; (d) personnel management and payroll management; (e) management of quality control; and (f) provision of equipment.

The overall objective of decentralized capacity-building plans is to improve the efficiency of education service delivery at the decentralized level by empowering the district officials in the process of planning, budgeting and implementation of their programmes. This invariably entails defining the critical

areas for capacity building, developing strategies for addressing these critical needs, developing a time frame for the implementation of those strategies, and managing the actual implementation process.

The preferred mode of intervention was a mix of short-term or medium-term training, on-the-job training, consultancy support, mentoring, re-tooling, etc.

The private sector and NGOs represent the key sources for the decentralized capacity-building support. The MoES, through its decentralization desk, is responsible for quality assurance, development of criteria for the allocation of resources to support district capacity-building activities and overall policy formulation. The district capacity-building plans are reviewed annually.

Auxiliary institutional strengthening measures that were already effected include: (a) the development of a manual for PTA guidance as well as community sensitization strategies, which was distributed nationwide; (b) the design of a manual and training plan for school management committees/boards of governors including guidance on the preparation of school development plans and training of chairpersons in school governance; (c) the revision of training manuals for primary school teachers to include new budgeting and accounting procedures; (d) countrywide implementation of the district management in-service training programmes; (e) the preparation of a broad district school facilities investment map; (f) the design and establishment of a district-based computerized EMIS with full data transfer linkages with the national EMIS; (g) the computerization of teacher records and payroll system; (h) the implementation of capacity-building programmes for the district education inspectors and the development of guidelines for districts on teaching service appointments; and (i) the management review of organizational standards, establishment requirements and job functions in order to ensure effective planning and monitoring of primary and secondary education as per the central planning and EMIS requirements.

Another policy thrust is directed towards strengthening partnerships with parents, the private sector (enterprises), foundation bodies, other government line ministries/departments, local governments, Education Funding Agencies Group (EFAG) and all other stakeholders. The private sector is already significantly involved in the provision of education. At present, 60 per cent of all secondary schools and 20 per cent of higher education institutions in the country are privately owned and managed (MoES, 2003g).

Linking education to poverty-reduction concerns

It can be presumed that basic education opens up enhanced opportunities for economic growth, employment opportunities, social equity through poverty reduction and participation, all of which combine to form a solid foundation for more sustainable development.

Education vis-à-vis the poverty eradication plan

Being Uganda's comprehensive development framework and main medium-term planning document, PEAP has four poverty-eradicating goals, namely: (a) rapid and sustainable economic growth and structural transformation; (b) good governance and security; (c) increased ability of the poor to raise their incomes; and (d) enhanced quality of life for the poor.

ESIP is the detailed sectoral plan for implementing PEAP as it relates to the education sector (MoFPED, 2001b: 145). With the strengthening of primary education being a central element of PEAP, it forms the foundation for the implementation of UPE and has subsequently guided the formulation of a SWAp. Considering that donor support will only be sought or provided for programmes that are in PEAP, it positions interventions concerning the education sector within an objective framework ultimately focusing on poverty alleviation. Regarding the four main pillars of PEAP, the most relevant goals for ESIP fall within the two categories of 'increasing the ability of the poor to raise their incomes' and 'enhancing the quality of life of the poor'. Hence,

the emphasis is on vocational education, primary/secondary education, FAL and the rights of disadvantaged groups in Ugandan society.

Indeed, implemented within the framework of PEAP, UPE has substantially increased access to education for the poor. Strategic plans have been developed for promoting FAL, low-cost classroom construction, secondary/tertiary education and vocational education. The PAF has been established to channel funds to defined priority areas in accordance with PEAP. Since these funds are protected from shortfalls in revenues, the PAF safeguards the education sector, and therefore ESIP, against budget cuts.

More importantly, although the Plan for Modernization of Agriculture (PMA) does not feature in the ESIP policy framework, it is an integral part of PEAP. The modernization of agriculture is regarded to be central to the process of transformation because it will increase the incomes of the poor by raising farm productivity and off-farm employment (MoFPED, 2001*b*: ix). Accordingly, the government has decided that, in principle, thrusts for public action in the modernization of agriculture will be capacity building for agricultural education.

To date, there has been substantial progress regarding the initial steps towards achieving integration of agricultural education into the education sector. The MoES Planning Department has been identified to ensure the development of a National Agriculture Education Strategy (NAES) and its subsequent approval by the MoES. The PMA Secretariat, with its Director based at the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries (MoAAIF), is co-operating closely with four departments of the MoES, namely planning, primary education, teacher education and BTVET. Additional support is being provided through the Agricultural Education Component of the Agricultural Sector Programme Support of the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), with financial assistance channelled through the MoES by the African Development Bank. The ultimate objective will be to have agriculture

fully integrated into all the departments of the MoES. Agriculture has also been incorporated into the Ugandan primary school curriculum (NCDC, 2000: 1-88).

Education vis-à-vis HIV/AIDS

Efforts to mainstream HIV/AIDS issues into education sector programmes emanate from a general framework that recognizes both the depredations that HIV/AIDS has inflicted on educational institutions on the one hand, and the contribution that education can make to reduce and eventually arrest the spread of the virus on the other.

The main feature of the impact of HIV/AIDS on the Ugandan education sector is the number of orphans in schools who lack resources to fully take advantage of their opportunities. Teacher morbidity is probably an issue as well.

Interestingly, the ESIP document makes no direct references to HIV/AIDS, although it cites several measures to be taken to enrol orphans and disadvantaged groups and for introducing health education as well as guidance counselling. The MoES HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan and the Basic Education Policy for Disadvantaged Children are the two key policy documents related to HIV/AIDS. The other related documents are the guidelines for anti-AIDS clubs and the school health policy. All are still in draft form.

Disadvantaged children are those children aged between 6 and 18 who are experiencing “barriers to learning, and are directly or indirectly excluded from or denied the chance to optimally participate in learning activities which take place in a formal or non-formal setting” (DFID, 1999*b*). It refers not only to those children who may be physically or mentally challenged, but also orphans and those affected by HIV/AIDS, and those who, because of poverty, geography, social conditions, parental status, health or economic demands, cannot attend school.

There is an overall sector co-ordinator for HIV/AIDS at the Ministry, and each department is supposed to have an HIV/AIDS focal point officer (FPO). Each FPO is mandated to develop an annual HIV/AIDS work plan for which funding can be allocated within the departmental budget. However, only two departments (pre-primary and secondary) have hitherto identified activities and obtained budget allocations for those activities.

In March 2003, the government, in collaboration with other partners, launched the Presidential Initiative on AIDS Strategy for Communication to Youth (PIASCY). The initiative in educational institutions is planned to involve regular messages at school assemblies on the dangers of HIV/AIDS, regular messages calling for positive behavioural change, guided discussions and learning activities on responsible sexuality, reproductive health and personal hygiene, imparting life skills, interpersonal relations, discussion on gender issues and promotion of primary health skills and activities.

After launching the PIASCY initiative, the Ministry embarked on a programme of training the principals of primary teachers' colleges (PTCs), co-ordinating centre tutors (CCTs) and selected pre-service tutors. These are, in turn, expected to train other teachers using the PIASCY handbooks that have been developed and disseminated. Additional information and education communication materials are being designed and a television programme has been provided.

The gender gap in education

Gender disparities have existed since the introduction of formal education in Uganda at the end of the nineteenth century. Current literacy rates stand at 77 per cent for men and 51 per cent for women. However, total enrolment at primary school may soon be at par for males and females. Also, records in the *Education Statistical Abstract, 2001* show that the percentage change of girls' enrolment and the gross intake rate at primary level is higher than that of boys. The picture at the secondary level is also improving with girls now

constituting 44 per cent of the total enrolment and the disparities are narrowing, even for dropouts (MoES, 2001: xiv).

Gender inequality is more visible at the tertiary education level. Females constitute only 30 per cent of the whole tertiary sector enrolment. There are disparities within the different institutions: for instance, women form around 45 per cent of the total enrolment at Makerere University, 25.8 per cent at the Islamic University in Uganda and 23 per cent at Mbarara University of Science and Technology; women are also underrepresented in science and technical courses. Since gender disparities in education have serious ramifications on the poverty-reduction goal of the government, several programmes and strategies aimed at promoting girls' education have been put in place. The National Strategy for Girls' Education in Uganda (Republic of Uganda, 1999) is perhaps the most detailed summary of these interventionist programmes. The main activity directed towards increasing female enrolment in both formal and non-formal education is the 'Sara Initiative', sponsored by UNICEF. This is an advocacy-oriented programme that raises the awareness of the general public to the importance of supporting girls' education, building their self-esteem and raising their aspirations. The programme is mainly implanted through video, serialization in print media and education campaigns during cultural festivals.

There is also the Basic Education Child Care and Adolescent Development (BECCD) programme, which focuses on the rights of children, and promotes awareness on girls' education at the basic level. It pays special attention to increasing female enrolment and is also mainly supported by UNICEF. It has been further enriched by the promotion of children's rights, which now form part of the school curriculum. The Statute for Children's Rights (Republic of Uganda, 1996) and the work of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD) are a further reinforcement of these efforts.

Alongside such initiatives is the Girls' Education Movement, which is an Africa-wide popular movement launched in 2001. It aims at promoting quality education for girls, promoting girls' rights in education, developing their leadership and technical skills, tapping the potential of boys, men and women willing to assist, paying attention to girls with special needs and mobilizing communities in the promotion of the movement. The strategy is to use girls' education networks. Uganda is part of this movement and the MoES and the Forum for African Women Educationists are spearheading the Girls' Education Movement in Uganda.

In addition, there are the functional adult education programmes run by the MoGLSD. These are relevant here because over 60 per cent of the participants countrywide are women. There are alternative programmes within the MoES; these are grouped together as the NFE component of the Ministry. The challenge is to link these different ministry initiatives to reinforce each other, and to benefit from and feed into functional adult education (FAE). That linkage is important because FAE has served as a strong foundation for removing gender inequalities, reinforcing quality and access to basic education and improving the quality of life among its clientele.

These, together with other forms of affirmative action interventions, the proposed policy for disadvantaged children and the commitment to the MDGs, confirm the interest by the MoES in working towards the elimination of gender disparities within the education system.

The education budget

There is an upward trend in the size of the education budget (recurrent and development budget) having climbed from roughly a 12 per cent share of the general budget in 1992 to 25 per cent in 1998. The overall share has tended to stabilize at this level under ESIP (see *Table 2.1*).

Table 2.1 Trends in the education sector budget as a percentage of the government budget released to the sector, 1992-2002

Financial year	Percentage of government budget
1992/1993	12
1993/1994	16
1994/1995	17
1995/1996	21
1996/1997	22
1997/1998	23
1998/1999	25
1999/2000	26.3
2000/2001	24.9
2001/2002	24.1

Source: MoFPED, 2002.

Although the overall share declined slightly between the financial year 1999/2000 and the financial year 2001/2002 by just over 2 per cent, this performance makes the education sector the biggest among all the government sectors (*Table 2.2*).

Table 2.2 Share of the budget for the key government sectors (percentages)

Sector	FY 1999/2000	FY 2000/2001	FY 2001/2002
Education	26.3	24.9	24.1
Public administration	23	22	19.3
Security	15.4	13.9	12.6
Roads and works	8.1	8.5	8.3
Health	6.5	7.4	8.6
Five most important sectors	76.6	74.9	72.9

Source: MoFPED, 2002.

Regarding the intra-sectoral allocations, there was a clear focus on primary education, which, from 1999, was targeted at 70 per cent of the total education budget. The other sub-sectors were to remain comparatively small: secondary, 12 per cent; BTVET, 7 per cent; tertiary, 9 per cent; others, 2 per cent. These targets were more or less met over the five-year period (*Table 2.3*).

Table 2.3 Shares on sub-sectors based on both actual and planned figures, 1998/1999-2004/2005

Sub-sector	1998/1999	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005
Primary	65.3	62.6	72.0	69.2	66.9	66.1	68.6
Secondary	11.6	10.2	12.5	13.8	15.0	14.3	13.2
BTVET	3.8	4.0	3.5	4.3	4.3	5.4	4.4
Tertiary	9.7	8.7	8.5	9.4	10.3	10.9	11.0
Others	4.4	6.0	3.5	3.3	3.5	3.3	2.6

Source: Education Sector MTBF, 1998/1999, 2002/2003.

While the primary sub-sector did not fully meet the rather ambitious target (−2.8 per cent), the secondary sub-sector gained (+0.6 per cent), the tertiary stabilized (+0.3 per cent), and others gained (+2.1 per cent).

The concentration on primary education as a bottom-up developmental approach was justifiable within the overall context of the poverty eradication imperative. However, resulting from the bulge of UPE graduates, there is now greater demand for PPET. The budgets are now, therefore, likely to focus more resources on PPET and higher education.

However, a closer analysis of how much goes to financing each student enrolled at different sub-sectors reveals serious inequalities. A comparison between primary and secondary per-pupil expenditure indicates that the per-unit cost of educating a secondary school student was four times higher than that of educating a primary school pupil before 1997/1998 (MoES, 1998*b*), but increased to six times more after 1997/1998 (MoES, 2002*a*). The contrast is higher at the university level where the government used to spend 156 times more on a single university student in 1994/1995 than its expenditure on a pupil at primary level. Similarly, although all categories of teachers have received salary increases, salary differentials have also been growing to favour mainly those in administrative positions.

The nature, trends and magnitude of donor funding in the education sector

External donor support to the education sector takes the form of either budget support or project support. Budget support (i.e. direct budget support) is a reference to external financial support that is extended to the recipient country's national government, usually through its Ministry of Finance. Budget support can be subdivided into three categories of declining flexibility, namely:

1. General budget support whereby the donors channel their funds into the general revenue envelope of the recipient government and such funds

are not earmarked for any particular sector. The recipient government in this case enjoys considerable scope in deciding how to allocate these funds between competing intra and intersectoral demands. The only constraints experienced at this level are often in the form of the macro-economic or PRSP conditionalities.

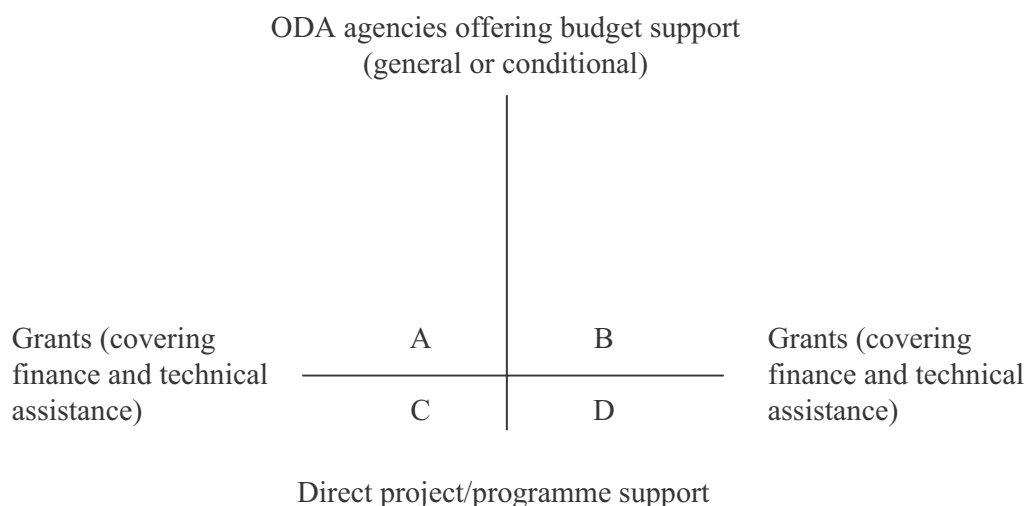
2. Sector support is where external funding is targeted for use in a specific sector or sub-sector, and the line ministry in question may have flexibility in allocating resources between various activities.
3. Earmarked sector support. This is when donors target their funds for use in executing a particular activity or activities within a given sector or sub-sector. The activity-specific nature of this type of external support severely compromises the freedom of the recipient country to shift resources around and within the sector or sub-sector.

Project or programme support, on the other hand, is support that is provided by one or more external agencies for a specific set of activities that are defined in the project or programme design, and in which there is limited flexibility to shift resources between different activities.

The model in *Figure 2.2* may help to clarify the dual nature of support from the Official Development Assistance (ODA) agencies.

The nature and terms of support on ODA agency offers may not restrict it to a particular quadrant. Some agencies may indeed provide ODA that locate it in all four quadrants: A, B, C and D. Nevertheless, in most cases the ODA agencies have a basic policy position that locates them in one quadrant rather than another. DFID, for example, is increasingly situated in quadrant A, while the USAID and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) can generally be found in quadrant C.

Figure 2.2 The different forms of ODA



Source: PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2003.

The GoU’s development co-operation partnership principles specify the preferred modalities of support from the donor partners and they are ranked in descending order of preference as follows: (a) general budget support; (b) budget support earmarked to PAF; (c) sector budget support (also called basket funding); and (d) project aid.

Although the document does not explicitly differentiate between grants and loans, it can be assumed that the stated policy position implies the government’s preference for ODA in the form of untied grant budget support.

With regard to the education sector, the World Bank, DFID, Ireland Aid, the Netherlands, the European Union, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and USAID prefer the budget support modality, while JICA, UNICEF, Germany/GTZ and KFW, NORAD, the Italian Government and DANIDA continue to utilize the project-support model. However, within the context of a SWAp, the bottom line for all these funding

agencies is that their interventions are effected in accordance with the priorities by the MoES. *Tables 2.4* and *2.5* are summary depictions of the trends in donor project support and budget support to the education sector respectively.

It can be deduced from the tables that although external resource inflows into the education sector (in absolute terms) have generally been increasing with time, they have also been fluctuating, or even declining, in relative terms. For example, the education sector's share of the total donor project funds has steadily declined from 7.11 per cent in the financial year 2000/2001 to approximately 5.46 per cent in the financial year 2002/2003 despite the absolute increment of external funding of the sector from US\$8.6 million to US\$21.66 million during the same period. Interestingly, DFID, Germany, USAID, the Netherlands, DANIDA, Italy, Norway, Japan and China seem to be progressively phasing out the project-support modality in preference for the budget-support option (*Tables 2.4* and *2.5*). This strategic policy shift presupposes the existence of a good degree of congruence between the funding agencies.

This newly found commonality in the policy orientation of the donors has been reinforced through the formation of an umbrella organization, EFAG, whose brief is to co-ordinate and consolidate the government agency relations, support the government to manage the aid effectively and enforce observance of agreed principles. To fulfil its mandate, EFAG conducts bi-monthly consultative meetings under the chairmanship of a designated agency whom the membership elects from among them on a rotational basis.

A similar pattern of fluctuating the government's own resource inflows into education is observable in *Table 2.6*. While there was a sharp decline in the government's contribution to the education sector from US\$118.30 million in the financial year 2001/2002, its budgetary allocation to education rose to US\$133.50 million in the financial year 2002/2003.

2.5 Conclusion

The foregoing analysis is an examination of the institutional composition of Uganda's education system and the changes that have occurred in its administrative set-up. It also traces the evolution of the educational policy framework together with its linkages with the overall national development plans, including MTEF. That evolutionary process culminated into the emergence of rudimentary but basic elements of a SWAp; these are elaborated in the next section.

Table 2.4 Donor project support to the education sector in US\$ million, 2000/2001-2005/2006

Donor	Vote	Project/programme	2000/2001 (actual)	2001/2002 (actual)	2002/2003 (estimate)	2003/2004 (estimate)	2004/2005 (estimate)
DFID	113	Education sector programmes	0.68	1.41	0.04	0.00	0.00
DFID	113	Primary school facilities	0.04	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
DFID	113	Education sector strategic plans	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Germany	113	Promotion of private vocational training providers I	0.20	1.62	1.96	0.00	0.00
Germany	113	Promotion of private vocational training providers II	0.00	0.00	0.25	1.47	2.94
Germany	113	Promotion of private vocational training providers I (TA)	0.19	0.15	0.10	0.00	0.00
Germany	113	Study and expert fund (IV)	0.33	0.10	0.20	0.20	0.20
USAID	113	Support Uganda Primary Education Reform (SUPER/PA)	1.47	1.08	1.51	0.00	0.00
Netherlands	113	Primary education and teacher development	0.22	0.00	1.20	0.00	0.00
DANIDA	113	Special needs education	0.20	0.20	0.10	0.00	0.00
DANIDA	113	Education assessment & resource services- EARS	1.40	1.20	1.00	0.00	0.00
DANIDA	113	Agricultural sector program support - MoES	0.40	0.50	1.00	1.10	0.00
Italy	124	Medicine faculty	0.00	0.00	0.21	0.00	0.00
Italy	113	Food Aid 2000	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
Sweden	124	Research	0.00	0.00	3.28	3.04	1.55
Norway	124	Land rights study, Makerere Institute of Social Research	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.00
Norway	113	Primary education, northern Uganda	0.00	0.00	0.63	1.31	1.96
Norway	124	Frame agreement, Makerere University	0.00	0.00	3.66	2.83	1.47
Japan	113	Nakawa Vocational Training Institute	3.30	1.40	1.40	0.00	0.00
IDA	124	Makerere pilot decentralization service delivery	0.00	0.00	1.77	1.84	1.39
China	113	Mandela National Stadium	0.25	0.16	0.00	1.00	0.00
Ireland	113	Primary education reform	0.00	0.98	1.70	1.21	0.98
Ireland	113	Adult literacy	0.00	0.00	0.62	1.24	1.24
Total education sector			8.69	8.81	21.66	14.24	11.74
Grand total for all sectors			122.23	137.81	396.75	379.44	280.55
Education sector share of grand total (percentages)			7.11	6.39	5.46	3.75	4.18

Source: MoES, 1998a.

Table 2.5 Donor budget support to the education sector in US\$ million, 1998/1999-2003/2004

Agency	SS	Programme	1998/1999 (actual)	1999/2000 (actual)	2000/2001 (actual)	2001/2002 (actual)	2002/2003 (estimate)	2003/2004 (estimate)
DFID	Yes	None	19.0	19.2	19.2	19.2	16.9	16.9
USAID (NPA)	Yes	None	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	0.00
Ireland Aid	Yes	None				2.4	2.7	1.6
Dutch	Yes	None				7.0	14.2	11.4
CIDA	Yes	Primary education				1.3	1.3	1.3
Sub-total (SS)			27.0	27.2	27.2	37.9	43.1	31.2
HIPC I	GBS	Through PAF	43.3	34.7	32.1	26.3	28.2	26.9
HIPC II	Yes	Through PAF	0.00	0.00	29.1	30.3	32.6	31.0
ESAC	Yes	Linked to education	45.0	35.0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
PERC/PRSC	Yes	Linked to education	0.00	0.00	35.0	35.0	35.0	35.0
Dutch	Yes	Through PAF	2.0	3.5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other PAF	Yes	Classroom construction	0.00	2.5	0.8	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub-total (GBS)			90.4	75.7	96.9	91.6	95.8	92.9
Grand-total			117.3	102.9	124.1	129.5	138.8	124.1

Source: MoES, 1998a.

Key:

- SS = Sector budget support
- GBS = General budget support
- Primary education = Earmarked for primary education
- Through PAF = Funds are channelled through the Poverty Action Fund

Table 2.6 Summary of government and donor support to the education sector in US\$ million, 1998/1999-2003/2004

Source		1998/ 1999	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004
Government	Recurrent	70.38	105.61	95.98	90.22	90.00	n.a.
	Development	43.00	37.27	37.68	28.08	43.50	n.a.
Subtotal		113.38	142.88	133.66	118.30	113.50	n.a.
Donors	Budget support	117.30	102.90	124.10	129.50	138.80	124.10
	Project support	n.a.	n.a.	8.69	8.81	21.66	14.24

Source: MoFPED, *Background to the Budget*, various years.

Note: n.a. = data not available.

Chapter 3

The introduction and development of SWAp in the education sector

3.1 Introduction

This section operationalizes the meaning of a SWAp before embarking on a step-by-step exposition of how and why MoES gradually gravitated towards fuller adoption of a sector-wide logic. The attendant implementation and management structures and processes are also highlighted. A critique of these structural and procedural arrangements is then conducted with a view to ascertain the extent to which the key elements of a SWAp process have been actualized in Uganda's education sector.

3.2 The meaning of SWAp

Because of its novelty, various definitions and interpretations of SWAp have been adduced. For instance, Brown, Foster, Norton and Naschold (2001) perceive SWAp as a method of working between the aid recipient government and donors in which the significant funding for a given sector meets the following criteria: (a) supports a defined single-sector policy and expenditure programme; (b) is under the management of a recipient government; (c) encourages the adoption of common approaches across the sector; and (d) engenders progress towards reliance on government procedures for disbursement and accountability of all the funds (both donor and government).

The above clearly suggests that SWAp is an intended direction of change rather than a blueprint or an established format. Indeed most development programmes in a number of countries are in the process of moving towards:

(a) comprehensive coverage of the designated sectors; (b) developing common procedures or implementation arrangements; (c) increased reliance on host government procedures; and (d) developing coherent policy frameworks.

The criteria suggested by Brown *et al.* (2001) is endorsed by SIDA as well, although SIDA focuses more on the capacity of SWApS to ensure national ownership, reduce fragmentation, strengthen local institutional capacity, enhance the effectiveness of public expenditure and expedite institutional reforms.

In Uganda's education system in general, and for the purpose of this study report in particular, SWAp will, however, be understood to mean a process which brings together the activities of GoU, EFAG, the private sector, NGOs, civil society organizations and other stakeholders into a single strategy for the development of the education sector.

Uganda's SWAp is therefore characterized by: (a) new partnerships; (b) well defined sectoral and sub-sectoral strategies incorporating macro and sector-specific institutional and financial management policies and structures; (c) a forward-looking work programme for medium- to long-term sector strategy formulation, expenditure framework preparation as well as common government/EFAG management arrangements and capacity-building programmes; and (d) in-built mechanisms for strategic negotiations and sector performance reviews jointly agreed by all stakeholders.

3.3 Rationale for the adoption of SWAp in Uganda

The poverty reduction concerns of the GoU were subsequently elaborated into the PEAP of 1997, comprising various detailed sector plans and investment programmes, education inclusive. The implementation of PEAP, however, demanded a different kind of programming, capable of holistically handling sector investment programmes as well as fundamental policy, institutional and budgetary reforms that had been necessitated by this

very policy shift. Moreover, the conventional project approach had come to be associated with serious inadequacies, which included donor-driven policies, lack of co-ordination between the donors themselves, low levels of ownership by the government that always led to limited commitment to the achievement of project objectives, inconsistencies in the policies and resource allocations (especially where government and donor priorities did not coincide), the negative impact which relatively well funded and well resourced project implementation units had on weak indigenous management systems, weak sectoral performance and poor sustainability of projects, as well as the then rampant diversion of development aid from its intended purposes, all combined to provide the last straw for the immediate adoption of SWAp. Above all, the very multitude of donor projects itself was invariably overwhelming the managerial capacity of the GoU.

In that sense, therefore, SWAp was sought as a panacea for facilitating the integration of external assistance within the government's planning and management system, concentrating resource flows through a coherent plan to enhance sector development and streamlining policy development and resource allocation using an agreed sector strategy.

3.4 Objectives of SWAp in Uganda

As already alluded to, the overarching goal of SWAp in Uganda is to ultimately lessen donor fragmentation, strengthen the capacity of the line ministries to formulate and pursue consistent policies, facilitate information sharing and therefore strengthen the platform for funding common policy positions as well as making informed choices regarding sectoral strategies and allocation priorities. More specifically, SWAp aims at achieving: (a) increased national ownership; (b) improved service delivery; (c) improved institutional and financial sustainability; (d) reduced dependence on aid; (e) an effective framework for policy dialogue and performance monitoring; (f) an improved coherence between macro-economic management, public sector reform, sector

policies and development programmes; (g) reduced transaction costs through removal of overlaps, duplication of efforts and un-coordinated interventions; and (h) enhanced stakeholder participation in education.

3.5 An overview of the process of transition to SWAp in education

Evolution of the educational policy framework

As mentioned earlier, throughout the early 1990s individual agencies were funding separate educational projects in accordance with their own agency interests and priorities. There was minimal co-ordination between agencies themselves. The linkage between their project activities and Uganda's formative overall education strategies was tenuous. Harmonization of their approaches to sector development was virtually non-existent. It was the formulation of the Government White Paper on Education (GoU, 1992) after Jomtien, which led to enhanced dialogue between GoU and individual external support agencies. The White Paper targeted the reform and strengthening of basic education as key priorities.

Although the records are rather fragmentary, they indicate that by the mid-1990s the agencies were beginning to move towards closer co-ordination of their programmes but through a variety of informal mechanisms (USAID, 1992; Wright and Govinda, 1994). More structured approaches emerged soon after the declaration of UPE in 1996, followed by the development of ESIP in 1997 (MoES, 1998*b*). It now became clear that stronger co-ordination and more focused external support would be essential if Uganda's bold initiatives were to be adequately sustained.

Before long, virtually all the external support agencies were operating within the framework of ESIP and a significant number of them were providing their assistance through budget support mechanisms rather than individual

projects. Gradually, the processes established through the joint efforts of the external agencies and the MoES led to a reasonable degree of harmonization in both the policies and procedures utilized for providing external support.

It is important to note that, at the level of national policy, it was the Ugandan process leading from the work of the Education Policy Review Commission of 1989 to the Ugandan Government White Paper on Education that provided a framework within which external support was intended to operate. Nevertheless, the concept of a SWAp was yet to emerge. All the concerned parties were focused on the relationship between the MoES and individual agencies, albeit with some appreciation that external agencies needed to co-ordinate their efforts to reduce overlaps, avoid gaps and simplify administration and reporting procedures for the GoU.

The idea of developing an education SWAp in Uganda seems to have emerged in 1996, during a World Bank Study Tour to Korea, involving a number of senior MoES officials. DFID subsequently provided some initial technical assistance to get the process started in the MoES, culminating in the production of ESIP in 1997. The initial group of supporting external agencies was relatively small: DFID, Ireland Aid, the Netherlands and USAID, along with the EC and the World Bank were the initial providers of budget support. CIDA joined this pioneer group a little later. The other external agencies were also brought into ESIP through the incorporation of their projects into the ESIP 'Umbrella', although for purposes of strategic planning and monitoring only.

In parallel to these efforts there was a strong, co-ordinated and much broader multi-sectoral consultation process going on between the external agencies and GoU that led to the development of the Comprehensive Development Framework at the macro-economic level, and PEAP as a strategic focus on poverty eradication.

Towards the adoption of common procedures

As these types of co-ordinated policy dialogue intensified, it was clear to the funding agencies, as well as to the GoU, that a more structured process was necessary. This resulted in the development of a negotiated agreement in the terms of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in 2001 and government agency dialogue, co-operation, co-ordination and harmonization. For their part, the external support agencies formed EFAG, which operates under an agreement between the funding agencies themselves. The agencies committed to budget support tend to view those arrangements as formally binding commitments, while some, especially those providing support through projects, see them as less formal arrangements or simply as guidelines.

The monthly EFAG meetings involve the review of progress in education, co-ordination of activities and discussion leading to agreement on a common position regarding critical issues. The main outputs of the EFAG meetings are a list of key issues for inclusion in the agenda for the next meeting of the Education Sector consultative Committee (ESCC) and the semi-annual ESR process.

The semi-annual review meetings are regular meetings of the ESCC involving both MoES officials and representatives of the external support agencies, which provide a mechanism for continuing dialogue, the regular monitoring of progress, and both the preparatory as well as follow-up work for the reviews. The ESCC thus acts as a kind of 'executive committee' for the review process, which characteristically involves a very large group of stakeholders: representatives of funding and technical assistance agencies, Parliament, the Office of the Prime Minister, the MoES and its affiliated institutions, MoFPED, the MoAAIF, the Ministry of Health, the President's Office, district officers, religious institutions, teacher/head teacher/director associations, the Uganda Peoples' Defence Force, the police force, NGOs and the private sector.

By dealing with the EFAG instead of individual agencies, the GoU, through the MoES, is able to negotiate, dialogue and work in partnership with the external support agencies as a single body. While the GoU may reach different arrangements with individual funding agencies, the overall modalities of support and co-operation take place within this structure. It is therefore a major apparatus for the management of the ODA process in Uganda's education.

Continued survival of the project support

While UPE has been a major priority since 1997, many external agencies have also supported individual projects, funding alternative or non-formal education as well as early childhood care and development and FAL. These are project approaches, although there is some desire – both in the MoES and among some agencies – to move closer towards budget support. Except for FAL, they are still included within the ESIP framework and, to some degree, subject to the processes of the ESR. The MoES, however, notes that the degree to which these individual projects actually benefit from ESIP co-ordination mechanisms varies from one agency to another. Inevitably, the focus of the semi-annual sector reviews is mainly on (a) the review of the annual undertakings to determine whether the next release of budget support money occurs, and (b) the planning of future strategies. The review of current activities within project approaches is a lower priority.

Since FAL falls under the jurisdiction of the MoGLSD, the relatively small amount of support in this area lies completely outside ESIP. Thus, modest amounts of support to basic education provided by some agencies fall outside the scope of MoES, and thus of ESIP.

Similarly, significant amounts of external support, originating in part from the bilateral agencies, flow through NGOs. For example, Norway channels significant assistance to basic education through Save the Children Norway (formally Redd Barna). Much of the external support through NGOs is difficult

to track and impossible to quantify in any comprehensive way, since neither MoFPED nor MoES require systematic reporting from NGOs, and neither one maintains a systematic record of this type of activity. It therefore falls outside ESIP, although of recent there is a representation of NGOs during the ESR process.

3.6 An overview of SWAp ideals and the actual practices of the Uganda education SWAp under ESIP

The approach is sector-wide

In principle, all activities ought to be contained in one common sector-wide programme, fully costed and integrated into the MTEF. The MTEF is increasingly important in rolling the SWAp process forward. In Uganda, ESIP focuses the entire sector, but with the highest priority (i.e. 65 per cent of the resources) being allocated to the primary education sub-sector. The future is likely going to see an enhanced emphasis on post-primary education and training.

Based on a clear, strategic framework

Strong ownership of sector-wide programmes is partly conditioned by clarity of ‘vision’ regarding the overall direction to which the country is headed, the matching sectoral priorities and the role of the government both at national and sector levels. It is advisable to develop such a clear vision right at the outset prior to the actual development of the sector policies, strategies or programmes.

ESIP provides the framework for the delivery of education services within a common vision and objectives for the entire sector. It is closely linked to Uganda’s PRSP and is supported through the PAF. There is therefore integration with the government-wide poverty reduction plans and Uganda’s Comprehensive Development Framework.

Ownership by the recipient country government

The term ‘ownership’ is reference to the extent to which sector programme priorities are initiated and endorsed by government leadership, strongly backed by budget allocations, readily receive robust defence from government officials and the breadth of the support they receive from the masses and the political class. Models of ownership in which the recipient government originates, endorses and leads a sector programme, or where ‘change agents’ within the government enjoy a cordial relationship with the donors, generally tend to perform better, as opposed to situations where donors develop sectoral policies and strategies that are simply sold to the host government.

ESIP is a home-grown product developed by the MoES, and the government has demonstrated a strong level of ownership of the plan. UPE itself was a precursor of ESIP and was a presidential declaration. However, the ensuring growth and enhancement of dialogue with the agency partners is being seen by some as a shortcoming that allows for the manipulation of some aspects of sectoral policies and strategies according to external priorities rather than Ugandan needs.

Participatory development of the policy framework

Uganda may be among the few countries where SWAps have emerged after a broader national debate (DFID, 1999b) mainly in relation to PEAP. The process that has emerged amounts to a broadly participatory planning at every level, ranging from school through the pilot districts up to civil society inclusion in the monitoring of PEAP.

Within the education sector, the development of ESIP was primarily the responsibility of MoES at the central level. However, the decision to decentralize responsibilities in several sectors to the local government level

had already been undertaken. Hence, the development of ESIP inevitably entailed widespread consultation and had to incorporate pre-existing decentralization modalities. In addition, ESIP was integrally linked to the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) and PRSP via the PAF, such that other ministries (e.g. the MoFPED and the MoGLSD responsible for adult education and the promotion of women concerns) were also involved.

Even the non-governmental sectors were involved in the ESIP process, although the level of their involvement was limited. There are fresh attempts to spread an understanding of SWAp beyond the confines of government and external partner agencies.

Quite clearly, there has been a reasonable degree of interface between the educational technocrats and politicians on the one hand, and the SWAp process on the other. In fact, the approval of the education SWAp by Parliament was a condition for the approval of ESIP by the donor group. However, it appears that the concept of community participation is more about community contributions through, for example, labour and materials than participation in decision-making and ownership. It is assumed that this is taken care of through representation in local government organs. However, for a variety of reasons, these are often inadequate to provide genuine community participation.

The fiscal policy of decentralization also presents a unique challenge for the education SWAp development. Educational policies are in effect being developed centrally and yet the districts are largely responsible for their implementation. There is debate about the extent to which such policies reflect the varied local needs in the districts. There are also tensions over the issue of central government control *vis-à-vis* the local autonomy of the districts.

The policy framework takes a long-term perspective

The ESIP I laid out a plan spanning a five-year period (1998/2003) and the preparation of the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) is now at an advanced stage. However, the commitments of external agency funding are,

for the most part, only three years, which is the time frame for a MTEF. Some agencies are pushing for an extension of the time frame on recognition that longer-term commitments are desirable.

Participation of all the external agencies

All the key external agencies have committed themselves to work within ESIP, even when only some of them channel their funds through the budget support modality to fund the implementation of ESIP. Others, as pointed out earlier, accept the co-ordination of their project support within the ESIP framework.

The SWAp activities are implemented by the recipient country

All the major activities are being implemented by the MoES. Most of these have to do with the disbursement of funds to the local government under the UPE and SFG. This, in turn, has generated substantial monitoring and evaluation responsibilities.

Good external agency co-ordination

External agency co-ordination within the education sector has improved considerably since the mid-1990s with the establishment of the EFAG. This co-ordination mechanism is well harmonized with that of the government, mainly through the ESCC and ESRs within the MoES.

Adoption by the external agencies of common implementation procedures

The external agencies that are pooling their funding through budget support use the semi-annual ESR process as a planning, reporting and accountability tool. Other external agencies accept the planning and co-ordination discipline of the ESR, but implement their project funding separately.

That partly explains why the co-ordination of technical assistance is still not entirely successful.

International NGOs remain a valuable alternative source of support, especially at the local level where it is preferred because it is faster and leads to a complete support package (e.g. building a complete school) as opposed to the incremental classroom construction under SFG. However, while the work of NGOs may appear to be integrated at the district and local levels, strategic integration at the national level is still weak. This is because NGOs tend to be more accountable to their individual funding sources than to the government. They cherish their independence while at the same time desiring to be more fully involved in ESIP.

Common mechanisms for monitoring results

Monitoring is, within the ESR, using an agreed set of indicators for access, quality and efficiency as well as ‘undertakings’, which represent the conditionalities required by the agencies to trigger a subsequent release of budget support. However, as noted earlier, some agencies still have concerns about meeting their head office requirements for results reporting.

3.7 The planning, implementation and management of key elements of the education SWAp

Institutions external to the MoES

Parliament

The role of the legislature is mainly approval and monitoring implementation of the national budget. According to the current legal system, revenues cannot be raised without the approval of Parliament, nor can any expenditure be made without Parliament’s approval. Thus, transfer of funds

from central government in the form of unconditional grants, conditional grants and equalization grants cannot be made without parliamentary approval.

The 1995 Constitution (Article 15, Section 1) states that the President, as the head of the executive branch of the government, will cause the budgetary estimates for each financial year to be prepared and presented to Parliament not later than 15 days prior to commencement of the new financial year (i.e. not later than 15 June each year). Parliament is expected to debate and approve the budget proposals between then and 31 October of the same year. These proposals are in the form of the Finance Bill in respect of all taxation proposals and in the form of the Appropriation Bill for government expenditure. In order to enable the government to raise revenues and to incur expenses during this period when Parliament is still discussing the budget, Parliament approves proposals for expenditure in the form of a Vote on Account.

When Parliament approves the budget, the Finance Bill becomes the Finance Act for the financial year and all expenditure is authorized in the form of an Appropriations Act. The draft estimates become approved estimates with both documents reflecting all the changes proposed and approved by Parliament during the debate of the budget proposal. The Budget Act 2001 now requires that the estimates be submitted to Parliament by 1 April to allow the House (Parliament) ample time to study them and give some input before the budget is finally presented in June. The law was instituted after realizing that Parliament was acting as a rubber stamp with little understanding of the implications of the budget it hurried to pass.

The current law also aims at strengthening the powers of Parliament to monitor the enforcement and control of the national budget and expenditure estimates. The law sets clear guidelines and a timetable that enables Parliament to participate effectively in the budget process and to pass practical revenue and expenditure provisions within the specified period. The law established a

Parliament Budget Office to provide Parliament with timely and political technical advice.

Auditor general's department

The law empowers the Auditor-General (on behalf of Parliament) to examine, inquire into and audit the accounts of all accounting officers and receivers of revenue and public monies and those of statutory bodies where the law so requires. The Minister of Finance then presents the audit report from the office of the Auditor-General to Parliament (the Public Finance Act Cap 149, Sections 24, 28, 29). The Auditor-General is also the sole authority to give approval for any money to be withdrawn from the Consolidated Fund as well as the general fund account or any other district accounts (Article 83, Clause 2 of the Local Governments Act 1997).

Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED)

The Public Finance Act, Cap 149, requires that the Minister of Finance supervise the finances of Uganda and ensure that a full account thereof is made to Parliament (Section 3). In line with this mandate, every year the Directorate of Economic Affairs in the MoFPED, with the assistance of the IMF, forecasts a three-year resource envelope based on macro-economic projections. Based on the available resource envelope, the Budget Policy Department of the MoFPED sets expenditure ceilings within which all sector plans must conform. Views obtained from technical staff in the Directorate of Economic Affairs suggest that the introduction of UPE brought about major adjustments in expenditure ceilings. The education ceiling was revised upwards to 31 per cent, and other sectors were left to share the remaining portion of the budget.

Prudent fiscal policies, which are needed to maintain macro-economic stability, mean that the MoES (and other sector ministries) must contain its expenditure, as set out in the MTEF, within the available budgetary resource

envelope. The MTEF is kept under constant review as macro-economic events and the budgetary process unfold. It is also the duty of the Budget Department to organize a consultative budget meeting for sector ministries and district local governments to refine the ceilings for the distribution of resources. The MoFPED continues to be responsible for co-ordinating all development plans at the national level. This function is envisaged as changing once the proposed National Planning Authority (NPA) is established.

Ministry of Local Government (MoLG)

The MoLG has hardly any direct role in educational planning and the implementation of educational programmes. These responsibilities are taken over by the districts and the lower local governments. The few times the MoLG gives any input to educational issues is when it participates in the activities of the education Sector Working Group (SWG) and in the allocation of education conditional grants (mainly handled by the Local Government Finance Commission). Its indirect role in the education sector is exercised through Article 98 (Section 2) of the Local Governments Act 1997, where the law empowers the MoLG to co-ordinate local governments for purposes of harmonization and to co-ordinate activities of a district council in case the President under Article 202 of the Constitution takes over the administration of a district.

Local government councils

Under a fiscal policy of decentralization, and according to the Ugandan Constitution of 1995 and Local Governments Act 1997, the districts and lower local governments are responsible for planning and co-ordinating development activities in their districts and local areas, of which education is a part. Law requires that all revenue and expenditure proposals be presented to the local council no later than 15 June. The budget has to be approved by the local council before any revenue collection can be made for the financial

year or any expenditure incurred. As is the case of the central government, local councils are empowered to approve proposals for expenditures in the form of a Vote on Account for local governments pending approval of the budget by the council.

Subject to Article 176 (2) of the Constitution, districts are responsible for education services, which cover nursery (pre-primary education), primary, secondary, special education and technical education. District political and technical structures are set up in such a way that they mirror the functional set-up at the centre. In other words, the Directorate of Education in the district links the district administration with the MoES. It is through this directorate (or district department) that the line ministry (MoES) and donors assist the district in fulfilling its education service roles.

In resource allocation decisions, for example, the MoES works together with the MoFPED and MoLG in collaboration with the Decentralization Secretariat and other stakeholders to determine the overall amount to be allocated to districts as the education conditional grant. District planners are required to produce three-year rolling development plans incorporating investment plans from sub-counties and lower level local councils (LC2 and LC1). The MoFPED receives the development plans from the districts and incorporates them into the overall national investment plan.

Each district has a Technical Planning Committee where officers of various directorates make plans for consideration and approval by the District Council. The provision of the district planning capacity has been assured through the establishment of a specialized unit – the District Planning Unit – and the posts of District Planning Officer, District Statistician and District Population Officer. In practice, however, the Technical Planning Committee continues to be responsible for actual planning, and the duty of the planning unit is mainly to co-ordinate these actors or the activities of the committee. The introduction of the Local Government Budget Framework paper (LGBFP)

has helped to strengthen the process of planning and budgeting by relating resources to district priorities.

The local governments' involvement in the education planning process usually commences during the November national workshop when all of them embark on drafting their LGBFPs along the criteria set by the central government. The National Workshop avails local governments with a platform for sharing their field experiences, resolving certain inconsistencies, seeking clarifications and building a consensus.

There is a provision for continuing with the consensus-building process through the subsequent series of regional workshops conducted with a view to fine-tune both the draft LGBFPs and existing sectoral guidelines. It is these LGBFPs, which are eventually forwarded to the centre for their incorporation into the NBFP.

Finally, the local governments will be required to produce work plans, which are to be submitted to the MoES for approval. If they are compliant with the broad national policy objectives, the set guidelines and the expectations of the various development partners, the Ministry will be obliged to sign a MoU with the respective local government officials. However, for those work plans that fail to meet the required mark, Ministry staff will have to render technical expertise to help the concerned local governments in improving the quality of the work plans.

Within the overall context of decentralized service delivery, therefore, such a robust vetting mechanism provides for the required checks and balances, transparency, accountability and meaningful stakeholder participation in the planning process. This collaborative bottom-up approach to educational planning was a radical departure from the top-down approach typical of the pre-ESIP period. Above all, the representation of EFAG in the planning process has the

double advantage of augmenting the capacity of the central ministry personnel through technical guidance while simultaneously gaining from donor support.

Institutions, tools and processes internal to the MoES

The ESIP 1998-2003 is the principal planning instrument in the education sector in Uganda. The ESIP was prepared through a broad-based consultation involving the MoFPED, the MoLG, the Decentralization Secretariat, funding agencies and other stakeholders. The ESIP constitutes an action-based approach to implementing the education policies formulated in 1992 from the Government White Paper on the recommendation of the Education Policy Review Commission.

The formulation of the ESIP 1998-2003 constituted an important landmark in the process of operationalizing the SWAp process in the education sector. It basically represents a move away from the previous project modality of channelling development aid to the education sector to the sector-wide or general budget support modality. ESIP bestowed the responsibility for programme design, target specifications and implementation strategies on the MoES, including the district authorities. Flexible budgetary support mechanisms guided by well defined targets and performance indicators were put in place with a view to enhance the implementation of programmes. The existing project activities and commitments were to be gradually integrated into ESIP.

The context in which the education SWAp is developing in Uganda is particularly notable because ESIP was introduced against the backdrop of the popularly accepted policy conditionalities of macro-economic stabilization, market liberalization, democratization and good governance. The education SWAp enjoys a mutually beneficial relationship with these policy interventions. For example, the strong political commitment of the central government to poverty alleviation is manifested in the national PEAP, which has had a significant influence on the education sector policy and implementation. A

good percentage of the funds earmarked for poverty reduction are channelled into the primary education sub-sector, with monitoring procedures that stress transparency and accountability. This is supported by an increased emphasis on public expenditure management at all levels of the education service. The MTEF has increasingly become an important tool in the rolling out of the SWAp process in Uganda. The education sector plans are drawn up within the guidelines set by the MTEF, which indicates the resources that are likely to be available for the sector programme during the next three years.

Similarly, the fiscal policy of decentralization aims to link education service provision with local needs, backed by conditional grants for primary education to reflect national priorities. The widespread consultations between all the stakeholders ensure consistency between the annual budget, MTEF, the education sector and local governments' investment plans. The MTEF ensures that all expenditures are included within a sectoral approach, thereby making the SWAp comprehensive. The aim of the MTEF is to increase the predictability of government expenditures to cover a three-year period and to reduce the volatility of donor funds.

The ESIP therefore represents a shift away from previous development approaches. Unlike in the past, the responsibility for educational planning now rests on the MoES and the district authorities. In addition, with ESIP, budgets are guided by targets and performance indicators, which enable progress to be monitored objectively.

Full operationalization of the SWAp process in Uganda was only embedded in the mainstream administrative structure of the MoES after the abolition of the Project Implementation Unit. The implementation process that was previously the monopoly of the Project Implementation Unit is now a shared responsibility between the departments of MoES, the newly created working groups, ESCC and the Top Management Meeting (TMM) under the stewardship of the MoES.

A total of eight working groups (two cross-cutting and six sub-sectoral) have been created. These are the work engines of ESCC charged with the task of planning outputs, maintaining institutional liaison with the funding agencies and reporting to ESCC. They are chaired by commissioners and are comprised of technical officers from the MoES, other line ministries and funding agencies.

It is the working groups that kick-start the planning and execution of the SWAp process by preparing detailed proposals for onward submission to the ESCC.

The ESSC is the most crucial management organ in the implementation process; this was established by the Top Management of the MoES to render technical advice. It is composed of senior technical and operational staff of the MoES, other line ministries, representatives of the EFAG and NGOs and representatives of the private sector. The ESCC is programmed to meet bi-monthly under the chairmanship of the Permanent Secretary of the MoES and with the Education Planning Department providing an auxiliary secretariat. Its work assignment includes:

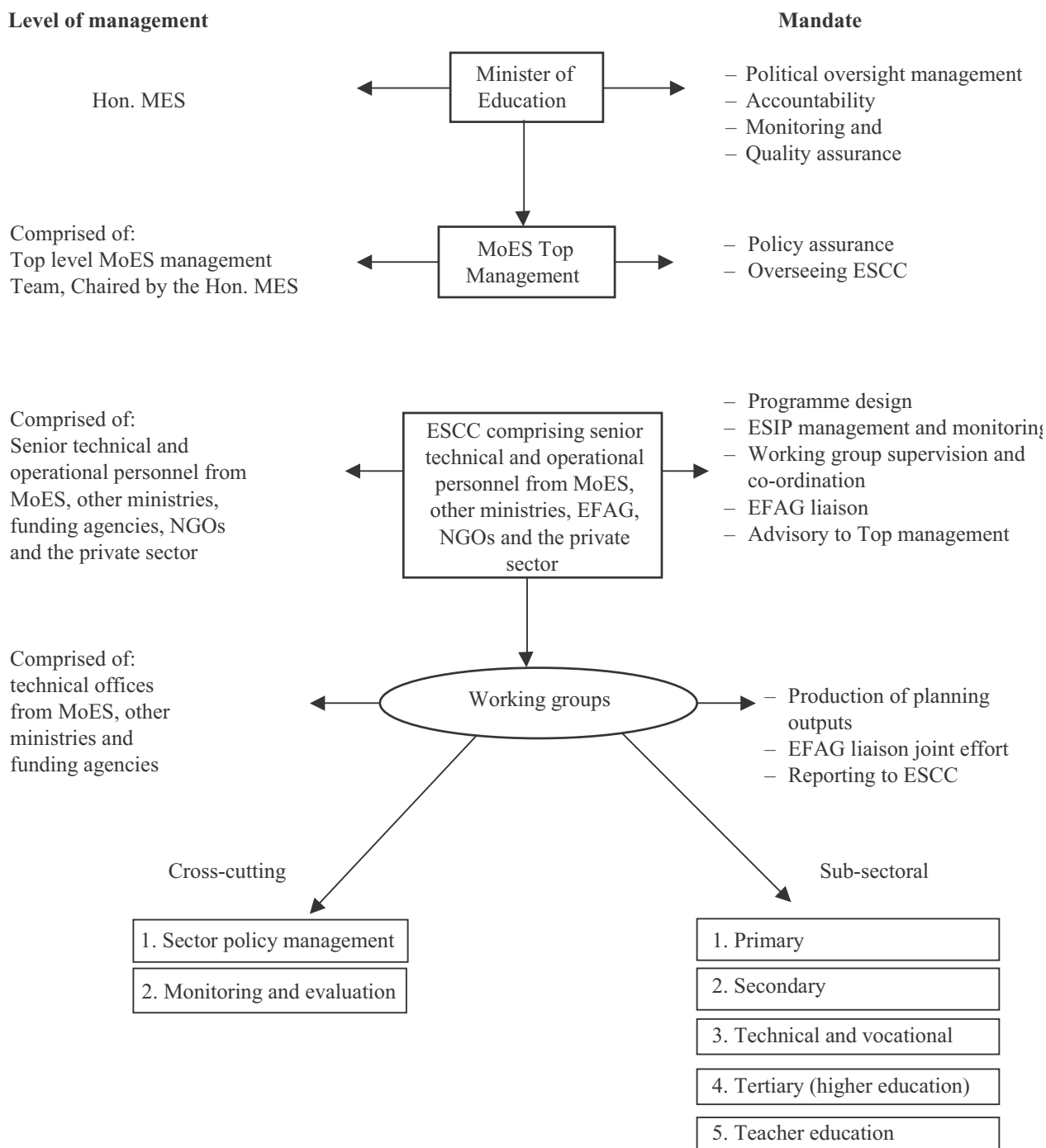
1. Refining and synthesizing outputs from the working groups and progress reports from the departments of the MoES.
2. Monitoring and evaluating the plan implementation process and providing the government and EFAG with an early warning alert mechanism in cases where the designated performance indicators are not met. This helps to harmonize the government's and EFAG's perceptions regarding what should be deemed as an acceptable progress rating during the ESR.
3. Reviewing the departmental progress reports relating to various undertakings accordingly and making recommendations for the next ESR. Such a recommendation could take the form of a ratification of the necessary changes to be effected in a bid to accomplish a particular

- undertaking, or it could provide grounds for not rating a particular undertaking as a ‘trigger’ for the release of the next financial instalment.
4. Providing an avenue for continuous feedback between the government and donors, as well as other stakeholders.

The TMM is the highest decision-making organ of the Ministry with the final authority over ESIP programmes. The committee is steered by the MoES and is primarily charged with the onus of approving any initiatives directed to the education sector, monitoring of ESCC, policy assurance and the determination of the new policy directions to be pursued.

Figure 3.1 is a diagrammatic summary of the authority and power relationships, communication flow patterns and mandates associated with the various job positions in the MoES.

Figure 3.1 ESIP implementation and management structure, 2003



Source: MoES, 2003d.

It is important to note that the MoES is the overall political head of the education sector, while the Permanent Secretary of the MoES is the Chief Executive and Technical Head of the Ministry.

Finally, there are also EFAG meetings, which are attended exclusively by representatives of all the donors to Uganda's education (both those who embrace SWAp and those who still do not). These meetings are held monthly and are intended to enhance the co-ordination of donors' strategies in the education sector. Over time, these meetings have resulted in the institutionalization of the office/role of the co-ordinator of EFAG.

Accountability for public education resources

With increased levels of funding available to the sector there is increasing concern about the need for continued improvements in the area of financial management. The audit reports point to the need to strengthen systems of control and accountability. The role of the MoFPED is to provide strong leadership in this area to assure development partners and funders of the education sector that the guidelines and systems for verification of funds utilization are in place, and that measures are taken against all financial impropriety in a swift and transparent manner. The MoFPED has also put in place an integrated financial management system, which enables easy tracking of all financial and public expenditure resources from a central unit.

Accountability is now the central concern of several agencies, including the newly established Ministry of Ethics and Integrity, the Auditor General's Office, and the Inspector General of Government (IGG), the internal auditing department in the MoES and district local administration, the Public Accounts Committee in Parliament, the Director of Public Prosecution and the Criminal Investigation Department. These bodies are complemented by the work of the press and of civil society organizations.

Additional efforts to strengthen accountability include the plan to establish an autonomous National Procurement Policy Unit, use of ministerial contract committees, enacting of a procurement law based on the United Nations Commission on International Trade model law, and the new procurement regulations. Inclusion of funds for accountability in the PAF and establishment of the five regional offices of the IGG are part of the effort to improve accountability.

Despite these measures, there is still misuse of funds. A study carried out in 1996 found that only 30 per cent of the funds allocated for non-wage spending in education were actually reaching the schools. The findings of the tracking study have been used to develop a mechanism where non-wage funds are transferred directly to schools' accounts and the timing of the transfer of funds is publicly announced. In 2000, districts' performances in the use of the conditional grant for primary classroom construction were published in newspapers. These mechanisms are designed to give ordinary people the ability to monitor the use of funds. This *qui tam* legislation, under which private individuals can prosecute corrupt officials and share the gains with the state, has been suggested in the PEAP. These measures have led to a significant improvement in the proportion of resources that reach the intended beneficiaries. A second expenditure-tracking study carried out in 2001 showed that 60 per cent of expenditure was reaching the intended beneficiaries. Another carried out in 2002 revealed further improvement, with 80 per cent of the expenditure reaching the targeted beneficiaries.

Monitoring and evaluation of SWAp

Improved accountability is supported by a system of monitoring and evaluation in the Division of Monitoring and Evaluation within the MoES. Since 1999, the MoES has taken steps to improve project monitoring. The MoES requires each of its departments to prepare annual and quarterly activity-based work plans and end-of-quarter reports on progress against planned

outputs. The new PAF guidelines for accounting and reporting for conditional grants have reinforced these measures and led to significant improvements in planning and reporting on the UPE and SFG conditional grants.

The focus of the education monitoring effort is being directed at all the performance indicators as specified within the ESIP framework. The standardization of the performance indicators marked the end of independent monitoring by the donors or assessment missions; instead, they were replaced by a bi-annual review process. These two national consultative meetings, which have been held alternately in April and October, regularly unite all the relevant stakeholders, including high-profile officials.

The April review is usually more elaborate and it involves field visits, regional workshops, and lasts for about two weeks. During this major review the key policy changes that are to be implemented in the following financial year are identified and recommended; the donors appraise the undertakings, and on the basis of their findings they determine whether or not to release funds for the next financial year; and a financial report covering the first six months of the financial year together with the Auditor General's report for the previous financial year are produced.

The regional workshops offer an opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of the district-based issues highlighting the progress hitherto made and the challenges encountered. They also utilize the insights obtained from field visits, working group discussions and outputs from the plenary sessions. The participants in the regional workshops commonly include officials selected from all the districts in the region, facilitators from the Ministry Headquarters, parliamentarians and representatives of the funding agencies.

Conversely, the October review is less involving, runs for about a week, focuses on a few key areas of interest and is no more than a mid-term recap on the progress made thus far. However, its financial report is exhaustive and

covers the whole financial year that has just been completed. Although an audit report is not a requirement during the October process, a ‘hot spot’ audit or study report can be requested to cover an issue of common concern between the GoU and EFAG.

The focus of the ESR process is on the double-pronged sets of conditionalities or ‘undertakings’ used by the donors as yardsticks for accepting or refusing to release funds to the education sector. On the one hand there are the ‘critical’ undertakings, which comprise the already known targeted performance indicators monitored by each successive ESR; and on the other hand there are the ‘process’ conditionalities, which consist of freshly identified indicators in each of the reviews. Both the critical and process undertakings are simultaneously considered at each review and their achievement prompts or triggers-off financial releases.

The critical undertakings include the financial commitment of the central government (for instance, allocating a minimum of 31 per cent of its total recurrent discretionary expenditure to the education sector and at least 65 per cent of the recurrent education sector budget to the primary education sub-sector), public expenditure management (as, for instance, in undertaking financial audits, tracking studies) and quality improvement. The process undertakings comprise those few strategic activities and outputs that are critical for the realization of the education sector priorities, such as recruitment of teachers, carrying out school censuses, production of implementation reports, etc.

Interestingly, there are certain actions and processes which fall outside the ambit of the MoES, but which directly impact on the implementation and management of educational programmes. The inter-ministerial Poverty Reduction Strategy Credit (PRSC) Steering Committee, chaired by the Head of the Civil Service, conducts the monitoring of such intrusive and obstructive undertakings under the PRSC arrangement. The government uses PRSC as

a tool for operationalizing PEAP, and since educational development is a major component of PEAP, education is, by extension, one of the core objectives of PRSC.

Institutionalization of the education SWAp has therefore been accomplished using a variety of legal instruments and managerial tools including the MoU, MTEF, MTBF, holding accounts, undertakings and financial agreements.

3.8 Partnership and co-ordination

The process of partnership co-ordination in Uganda

Since the adoption of SWAp in the education sector, partnership between the GoU, EFAG and other stakeholders is managed through new structures that include ESCC, EFAG and Joint Education Sector Reviews (JESRs). These structures are used for joint and co-ordinated policy dialogue, planning, management and monitoring of education sector activities.

The ESCC is comprised of all MoES heads of department, representatives of donors, NGOs, relevant line ministries and semi-autonomous bodies under MoES, as well as secretaries of departments and cross-cutting working groups. It is the strategic planning arm of the education SWAp whose mandate is to handle programme design, ESIP management and monitoring. It also deals with working-group supervision and co-ordination, including liaison between funding agencies. It is advisory to the TMM. The Permanent Secretary of the MoES chairs ESCC meetings.

EFAG was created by a mutual agreement among education funding agencies to co-ordinate their programmes, reduce duplication of efforts, minimize gaps and adopt simplified administrative and reporting procedures on aid to education. It was necessitated by the existence of the ESIP framework

and the need to sustain initiatives contained in it, which a majority of donors were already supporting.

EFAG brings together all donors to education that provide their assistance through budget support mechanisms and those rendering traditional project assistance. It holds monthly co-ordination meetings whose focus is mainly on periodic review of progress in the sector co-ordination of donor activities and agreeing on common positions on mutually critical issues. The immediate outputs from these EFAG meetings are essentially to list issues of concern to EFAG for inclusion in the agenda for the ESCC meetings and JESRs.

A co-ordinator who is a representative from one of the funding agencies and selected to serve in this capacity chairs EFAG meetings. The position of the co-ordinator of EFAG has been institutionalized and is held by one of the donor agencies for a period of one year.

From April 1999 until November 2003, JESRs were held bi-annually (i.e. in April and October/November of each calendar year). During the tenth JESR, held in November 2003, the partners agreed to revert to one annual JESR that takes place in November of each year. The main purpose of the JESR is to review education sector achievements to date as well as current plans and main challenges encountered.

The reviews are based on previously agreed ESIP benchmarks contained in the review *Aide-Memoire*. EFAG also uses JESR to address the issue of accountability of funds they have disbursed during the preceding six months. The April reviews have traditionally lasted ten working days, and those of October only five.

JESRs attract wide participation from the GoU, EFAG, NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs). They are usually informed by the Education Sector Six-Monthly Reports (ESSMR) prepared exclusively by the

MoES, as well as a number of study reports on areas of mutual interest between the partners.

At the end of each JESR, a review *Aide-Memoire* is endorsed by the review and a plenary is issued. The *Aide-Memoire* contains undertakings of the actions to be implemented by the next review as benchmarks.

The results of enhanced partnership and co-ordination

As already pointed out, prior to the adoption of SWAp in Uganda's education sector co-operation between the funding agencies and MoES on the development of the sector tended to be *ad hoc* (i.e. one on one) and was not guided by any national strategic framework. However, with the SWAp in place, collaboration between the GoU and donors on a wide range of issues that include financing, management, technical support, policy dialogue and monitoring of education sector progress has been enhanced. Consequently, the relation between the donors and the GoU has now become more predictable and transparent because it is based on principles supported by:

1. A common overall strategic policy framework at both the macro and sectoral levels. At the macro level, the PEAP (1997) prioritizes education as a key pillar to poverty eradication; while at the sector levels, the ESIP framework has created a platform for a shared vision as well as for beneficial and effective policy co-ordination and dialogue among the partners. ESIP also provides a mechanism for regular monitoring of progress, planning and accountability.
2. National institutional structures that were jointly and specifically created to support the SWAp process. They include eight working groups in the MoES, bi-monthly ESCC meetings, TMMs, JESRs and EFAG.
3. Common reporting formats, particularly the education sector's six-monthly reports and other jointly commissioned study reports.

4. Jointly agreed quasi-legal instruments that include the MoU (which incorporates partnership principles and the code of conduct), the release procedures by donors (triggered by education sector reviews) through the joint *Aide-Memoire* process.
5. Jointly agreed undertakings/conditionalities. These include both critical and process undertakings.
6. Streamline modalities for disbursement, management and accountability. These include MTBF, MTEF, budget support (both earmarked and non-earmarked), PAF and PAF expenditure, holding accounts and sector budget ceilings (at the micro level), which have all enhanced the effectiveness of the aid management in the sector.

Through structured partnership and co-ordination, the MoES now deals with EFAG as a single body instead of with individual agencies as was the case before SWAp. In addition, the entire official dialogue, the overall modalities of support and co-operation take place in a more structured way than before. This has eased a majority of management problems for MoES, especially in the areas of planning and managing aid to the sector. Systems for accountability and reporting of sector progress have largely become simpler and easier under SWAp, and this has minimized duplication of efforts and ensures a holistic coverage of the sector, thereby enhancing the strategic impact of sector interventions.

In addition, the creation of ESCC and EFAG in particular has led to better management and co-ordination of both financing and technical assistance to the sector. The budget support modality, which has been emphasized as the main mechanism for funding sector programmes under SWAp, has strengthened strategic planning and deployment of financial resources across the sector in a much more equitable and effective manner.

Furthermore, the creation of EFAG has led to the highest degree of harmonization of donors' approach to sector support that has hitherto not

been experienced. The donors are more accessible and willing to work with their GoU counterparts as colleagues in the same struggle, thus facilitating the work of the Ministry.

The establishment of structures under SWAp therefore has made it easier for both the GoU and donors to have meaningful dialogue on overall sector policy, strategy and approach to its development.

Experiences of enhanced dialogue between MoES and EFAG

As already indicated elsewhere, the operationalization of SWAp has involved the creation of new instructional structures and quasi-legal instruments to co-ordinate efforts and regulate the conduct of partners. This has resulted in: (a) shared vision, closer and more strategic co-operation on the development of the education sector; (b) a structured, collective and co-ordinated policy dialogue including joint planning, management and monitoring of activities under the leadership of the MoES; (c) a deep and a meaningful multi-stakeholder dialogue on sector policies, priorities, strategies and outcomes; (d) a substantial shift by a significant number of donors towards a budget support modality, which has now become a dominant modality for funding education sector development; (e) a significant reduction of duplication of efforts and a simplification of planning, monitoring, reporting and accountability procedures based on GoU systems; (f) institutionalized strategic planning in the education sector is one of the few sectors in the country where effective sector planning actually takes place; and (g) a common and specified set of conditionalities (undertakings) were reached as a result of a consensus negotiated among partners whose main role is to trigger the release of funds to the sector.

MoES experiences of JESRs

The very first JESR following the adoption of SWAp was held between 12 and 23 April 1999. Its stated purpose was to: (a) assess progress and achievement in the sector; (b) assess plans for further sector development; and (c) agree on realistic achievable outputs for the October and April 1999 reviews. This review acknowledged that the GoU was seriously addressing SWAp concerns, particularly medium-term financial planning, sub-sector and key development programme levels, a rolling sector work plan, and systems for monitoring and evaluation.

As this review was the first, and therefore a pace-setter, it made wide recommendations that fundamentally transformed the operations of future reviews. Some of these are reflected in *Box 2*.

Box 2. Recommendations arising from the 1st JESR

- MoES should seek to improve the integration of the various components and sub-sectors of the sector programme and ensure that consistent assumptions are used throughout.
- Planning within the known financial constraints of the sector MTBF is necessary in respect of all sector activities.
- All working groups should regularly monitor progress in the achievement of actions defined in their work plans and make sure that their work plans are realistic and achievable.
- The finance and technical assistance (where necessary) to enable work plan activities to happen need to be discussed and agreed upon by the policy and management group and reflected in the MTBF.
- In order to maintain or increase current levels of flexible budget support from donors, MoES needs to continue to make strategic decisions based on sound technical analysis and to ensure that key programme and sector targets are achieved.

- Increased involvement of districts in planning, implementation and monitoring.
- Increased emphasis on monitoring and improving education outcomes.
- The place and function of the review process itself should be further developed and established.

This review dealt with issues that included: (a) ESIP implementation; (b) JESR; (c) MTBF for the education sector; (d) primary teachers' recruitment, deployment and payroll management; (e) decentralization; (f) capacity building; (g) EMIS; (h) principles to guide technical assistance; (i) resource mobilization; and (j) partnership, particularly with NGOs.

From then until November 2003, a total of ten JESRs were held on a bi-annual basis. However, since 2004 only one JESR will be held in November of each calendar year.

These reviews have been jointly organized by the MoES and representatives of EFAG, with MoES providing the necessary leadership in managing the review process. MoES is responsible for logistics, the preparation and distribution of review documents, invitations, the identification of a venue, and the programming and writing of the *Aide-Memoire*. EFAG, on the other hand, participates in the planning, review of documents and preparation of the *Aide-Memoire*. The role of the bi-annual JESRs is principally to monitor the progress achieved by the sector in the six months preceding the JESRs and to negotiate benchmarks for future performance. In addition, the ESR process provides a forum for stakeholders to discuss and agree on policy, priorities and future activities of the sector. Sector performance is assessed using targets and performance indicators embodied in undertakings.

Undertakings are described as trigger indicators; these cover critical progress in the sector and process issues affecting the implementing of sector

priority activities. Through the JESR process, GoU and EFAG usually agree on two sets of undertakings.

Undertakings

Undertakings are a new form of conditionalities under SWAp used by donors providing budget support to the education sector to monitor the disbursement and management of aid funds in the sector. They are usually jointly negotiated or updated during sector reviews. Successful fulfilment of a set of undertakings agreed upon at a particular joint review is evaluated at the subsequent review, and this constitutes a main trigger for the release of budget support funds to the sector. Consequently, undertakings have objectively verified indicators to facilitate assessment. Once negotiated, undertakings serve the purpose of assuring the donors on one hand that their main issues of concern will be fully addressed, and GoU on the other hand that once it fulfils the agreed undertakings, EFAG will definitely release the much needed funds for sector development.

At each review, two types of undertakings are usually negotiated. These are ‘critical’ and ‘process’ undertakings.

Critical undertakings. These include targeted performance indicators to be monitored at each JESR. The focus is on monitoring performance in the three critical areas of financial commitment of the GoU, public expenditure management and quality enhancement. In addition, these undertakings usually address funding agencies’ main concerns about the impact of the funds disbursed to the sector and their accountability. This type of undertaking tends to be carried from one review to another.

Process undertakings. These focus on strategic areas where a process is required to support the achievement of sector priorities. These process undertakings are monitored over a period of one year through the ESCC.

However, they are usually one-off, implemented once, and are replaced by new ones once they have been achieved.

Both types of undertakings are usually considered together at each JESR and their successful achievement triggers financial releases from EFAG.

The impact of JESR in the implementation of sector programmes

The JESR is a multi-stakeholder forum for policy dialogue, planning and monitoring of sector activities. Before November 2003, these reviews were carried out in April and October of each calendar year.

Every review is usually informed by the ESSMR; this reports on progress achieved in the sector in the preceding six months. It also identifies the main obstacles that impede progress during the period under review.

At the end of each review, remedial action in the form of undertakings are jointly identified and formulated at the end of the review. These are then incorporated into the review *Aide-Memoire* that is issued in a plenary session at the end of the review.

Undertakings, therefore, comprise a list of actionable issues that the review has identified from each sub-sector, and which subsequently constitute the agenda of the sector for the next six months.

Uganda's experience in the implementation of the bi-annual reviews to date indicates that these reviews have positively influenced the implementation of sector programmes as follows:

1. They have allowed for multi-stakeholder participation in policy formulation, planning and monitoring of sector activities.
2. They have enhanced objectivity in decision-making since they are usually informed by well prepared reports (ESSMRs) and, where necessary, independent studies that shed light on unclear issues.

3. They have reinforced partnerships between the Ministry and the donors and as a result official relationships between donors and government officials is now based on collegiality, as evidenced by the fact that donors now prefer to work with Ministry officials responsible for particular activities of their interest. The result is that donors now have a greater appreciation for the work environment and the contextual issues surrounding the implementation of sector programmes.
4. They have allowed for unified programme implementation reporting modalities. Before SWAp, several donors would be involved in a particular programme area through separate projects for which there were separate reporting requirements from separate departments or sections of the Ministry. Unified programme implementation reporting modalities allow for the preparation of a single report for use by all implementing agents across projects, and satisfies the reporting requirements of both the GoU and the donors.

They provide a basis for joint reporting, monitoring and evaluation of education sector programmes and activities, which is built upon existing GoU arrangements. Sector monitoring focuses on measuring: (a) progress in implementing annually agreed sector work plans and assessing achievements of previously agreed undertakings; and (b) changes in sector and sub-sector performances.

Joint reviews have thus created a context for review harmonization and simplification of existing reporting and monitoring modalities in the sector. Consequently, donors have not only adapted their reporting requirements to GoU management structures but have also agreed on a common financial and narrative reporting format. Prior to the November 2003 ESR, this was called the ESSMR. This report contains both a narrative of sector performance during the preceding six months and a section exclusively devoted to financial reporting.

Basic elements for joint monitoring, evaluation and reporting of sector progress include the following: (a) a common set of indicators that enable measuring progress that all stakeholders in monitoring (i.e. achievement of outputs and completion of activities); (b) ‘chart of activities’ that systematizes ways of describing the programme activities agreed upon; and (c) a calendar for reporting and monitoring sector activities. This is accompanied by: (a) harmonized report content and structure; and (b) clear management arrangements that specify flows of reporting and responsibility centres for: (i) setting sector objectives and targets; (ii) consolidating reports; and (iii) monitoring and feedback.

Roles of various partners during the ESRs

Education sector reviews are jointly attended by representatives of the GoU, EFAG, civil society and the private sector. The adoption of SWAp has necessitated a change in the division of roles among the key stakeholders intended to enhance the process.

Role of EFAG

Apart from jointly participating at every ESR, EFAG also supports and works with the GoU in the planning and management of the review process itself. This involves: (a) attending all the ESR planning meetings with GoU officials; (b) participating in the drafting of the joint position paper on undertakings (this paper is an assessment of the progress made in achieving undertakings agreed upon during the preceding ESR); (c) participating in the drafting of the review *Aide-Memoire*; (d) funding technical assistance requirements for the ESR process, particularly independent facilitators or review; and (e) providing advisory services to GoU on the entire management and funding of the reviews.

The role of the GoU

The main roles of the MoES/GoU include: (a) co-ordination and control of the ESR process (this involves planning, extending invitations to participants, identification of venues, etc.); (b) preparation of key documentation, particularly the ESSMR; (c) provision of auxiliary services for the review process, particularly secretarial and other support staff services; (d) spearheading the drafting of both the joint position papers, undertakings and the review *Aide-Memoire*; (e) programming of the review process; and (f) managing technical assistance for the review process.

The roles of the private sector/civil society

The main roles of the private sector/civil society are: (a) critiquing review documents; (b) providing review documents; (c) providing technical assistance for the review process; and (d) participating in the review exercises.

Before the adoption of SWAp, only donors and GoU officials used to participate in the review of sector activities. The role of the donors was to demand information from the government and make relevant assessments. The GoU, on the other hand, was responsible for provision of the information required by the donors as well as servicing incessant donor appraisal missions.

The impact of joint review exercises on bilateral follow-up meetings

The experience of the MoES in these reviews is that they are both labour intensive and time consuming. A number of key staff in various departments of the MoES, particularly the educational planning department, are virtually engaged full-time in the preparatory activities of the ESR. In addition, each ESR is preceded by a large number of preparatory meetings as well as the production of documents. As soon as one review ends, the preparation of the next begins. Unfortunately, whereas the review process has created an increase in workload for the MoES, the Public Service

Commission has not approved the extra staff positions that are clearly required to deal with the expanded workload.

In terms of follow-up of bilateral meetings, the review process has clearly necessitated more of these meetings than was a case under project modality. Some of the follow-up meetings that have become necessary as a result of the ESR process include: (a) bi-monthly ESCC meetings; (b) monthly cross-cutting working group meetings (these working groups include monitoring and evaluation and sector policy management); and (c) monthly departmental meetings.

In all these meetings, the main issues discussed pertain to the progress of implementation of agreed action points from the last ESR. It is thus clear that much of the MoES effort is devoted to managing the relationship with funding agencies (and this involves many meetings) through ESIP and the ESR process. In addition, the preparation of ESR documentation in the form in which they are required entails additional work, mainly accomplished through meetings.

Indeed, part of the rationale for a decision taken in the November 2003 ESR to shift from bi-annual to annual reviews was a desire to reduce the workload and transaction costs associated with the ESR process whose burden has been increasingly borne by the MoES.

Regulation of the relationship between EFAG and the MoES

Prior to 1996, the relationship between donors and the MoES, whether in the form of funding assistance, technical support or policy dialogue, was bilateral – based on one-on-one interaction and agreement. However, following the adoption of SWAp there was increased dialogue between EFAG and the MoES on the need for a common vision in the development of the education sector in the country. This catalyzed the development of ESIP 1998-2003.

The successful formulation of ESIP created a need for effective co-ordination and collective policy dialogue. This led to a parallel creation of two structures: one to co-ordinate the funding agencies' efforts, and the other to enhance the policy dialogue between the funding agencies and the MoES. Consequently, the funding agencies established the EFAG, while the MoES created the ESCC. Thus, partnership between EFAG and the MoES is managed on a day-to-day basis by the ESCC and the two groups have been coming together bi-annually during the ESR process to review sector activities. These mechanisms appear to satisfy the accountability requirements for the funding agencies adequately, funnelling their support to the education sector through budget support.

For funding agencies extending their support through a project, the relationship is still managed through basic financing agreements.

Over the years, particularly as the collaboration between EFAG and the MoES become stronger and more complex, it became necessary to formulate an MoU that incorporates, among others things, partnership principles and a code of conduct. This MoU, however, has not been rectified, mainly because the MoFPED and the MoES have failed to agree on who should endorse it on behalf of the GoU. The donors, on the other hand, have no problem with the draft MoU and are willing to sign it anytime.

Outcome indicators

Monitoring of sector progress, at present, focuses on three areas: access, quality and efficiency. Fifteen outcome indicators, based on the three monitoring areas already identified above, have been agreed upon. These are summarized in *Table 3.1*.

Table 3.1 Summary of the outcome indicators

Monitoring area	Outcome indicators	Source of data
Access	1. Apparent (gross) intake rate (GIR): new entrants in primary grade 1 as a percentage of the population – Boys – Girls	EMIS UBOS
	2. Net intake rate (NIR): new entrants to primary grade 1 who are of the official primary school entrance age as percentage of the corresponding population – Boys – Girls	EMIS UBOS
	3. Gross enrolment ratio (GER): i. – Primary – Secondary ii. Girls – Primary – Secondary iii. Boys – Primary – Secondary iv. Including: primary Girls' enrolment as a percentage of total enrolment Boys' enrolment as a percentage of total enrolment	EMIS UBOS
	4. Net enrolment ratio (NER): – Boys – Girls Pupil:classroom ratio – Primary – Secondary	EMIS UBOS
Quality	1. Percentage of primary school teachers having the required academic qualifications (P.7 and above): – Men – Women	EMIS
	2. Percentage of primary school teachers who are professionally certified to teach according national standards, i.e. have the minimum professional qualifications (grade 3): – Men – Women	EMIS

Table 3.1 (continued)

Monitoring area	Outcome indicators	Source of data
	3. Pupil:teacher ratio: – Primary – Secondary Pupil:textbook ratio: – Lower primary (P.1-P.3) – Upper primary (P.4-P.7)	EMIS
	4. (i) Percentage of pupils having reached at least grade 3 of primary schooling who master a set of nationally defined basic learning competencies: – Literacy – Numeracy – Science – SST (ii) Percentage of pupils having reached at least grade 6 of primary schooling who master a set of nationally defined basic learning competencies: – Literacy – Numeracy – Science – SST	NAPE UNEB
	5. Percentage of schools meeting minimum quality standards	Inspectorate
Efficiency	1. Public recurrent expenditure on primary education: – As a percentage GDP – As a percentage of GDP per capita	MTBF
	2. Public recurrent expenditure on secondary education: – As a percentage GDP – As a percentage of GDP per capita	MTBF
	3. Public recurrent expenditure on: a) Primary education as a percentage of total recurrent public education expenditure b) Secondary and tertiary education as percentages of total recurrent public expenditure on education c) Per pupil annual recurrent unit expenditure (Ugandan shillings) for: – Primary – Secondary and tertiary	EMIS

Table 3.1 (continued)

Monitoring area	Outcome indicators	Source of data
	4. Repetition rates by class: a) Primary – Boys – Girls	EMIS
	5. Survival rate to primary 4 (percentage of a pupil cohort actually reaching primary 4): – Boys – Girls	EMIS
	6. Survival rate to primary 7 (percentage of a pupil cohort actually reaching primary 7): – Boys – Girls	EMIS

Source: MoES, 2003e.

As can be noted from *Table 3.1*, all these outcome indicators pertain to primary education sub-sectoral performance indicators. This is explained by the fact that at present Uganda's education sector prioritizes basic education, whose share of the total recurrent discretionary expenditure currently stands at 65 per cent.

Sanctity of the conclusions of the ESRs

The ESRs provide, among other things, a forum for review of negotiated agreements between EFAG and the GoU. At the end of each review, stakeholders endorse and issue a review *Aide-Memoire* that contains a negotiated or updated set of undertakings (both critical and process), which are approved at the end of each JESR and are thus binding to all stakeholders. For donors that provide budget support, undertakings are particularly critical in ensuring that the support they provide to the GoU does indeed further their explicit policy objectives of accountability and increased technical capacity for policy formulation and implementation.

The partners' concerns at ESRs

During the reviews, the funding agencies are usually very concerned about: (a) the GoU's fulfilment of undertakings previously agreed upon; (b) accountability of funds disbursed to the sector; (c) setting sector policies; and (d) determining strategic policy directions. These concerns are addressed in the undertakings negotiated, ratified and issued in the review *Aide-Memoire* as a binding agreement between partners.

The GoU, on the other hand, is usually concerned about: (a) the skewed power of EFAG in influencing sector priorities and policy directions; (b) the increasing workload in managing budget support in the context of a low human resource base; and (c) the need to shift the disbursement modality of all aid from a project- to a budget-support mechanism.

3.9 Sector studies and research

The broad-based consultative approach adopted in the preparation of ESIP has revolutionized the development of education in Uganda. The approach has not only facilitated for the first time the involvement of key stakeholders such as line ministries, the private sector, civil society, teachers and parents in planning and management of the education sector, but it has also necessitated informed decision-making based on credible evidence provided by research.

Since 1999, over 35 research studies have been conducted in the education sector. These studies virtually cover all the sub-sectors of education and their outcomes have created a firm knowledge base for policy decisions and choices and have been used to formulate relevant guidelines for investment and implementation of programmes in the sector. Consequently, the Top Management of the MoES and EFAG depend heavily on the outcomes of sector studies to inform policy- and decision-making.

Table 3.2 gives a summary of some sector studies that have been conducted in the education sector as a result of the SWAp process. It can be noted that many of the studies have focused on pre-primary and primary education. This is consistent with the current policy thrusts, which prioritize basic education.

Table 3.2 Summary of education sector studies conducted since 1999

S/N	Sub-sector	Theme	Title	How the study outcomes have been used
1	Educational planning	Gender and primary schooling	Strategic resource planning/gender and primary schooling in Uganda	Formulation of a strategy for girls' education
2	Teacher education	In-service secondary teacher education	An evaluation of in-service secondary teacher education project in Uganda.	i. Finalize the teacher development and management plan ii. Formulate secondary teacher development and management system
3	Higher education	Rationalization of higher education	Possibilities for a merger of ITEK, UPK and UNISE into a single university	Used in the rationalization of the three institutions into a university
4	Higher education	Expansion of access to higher education	Opportunities for an open university of Uganda	Formulation of a strategic plan for the establishment of an open university in Uganda
5	Pre-primary and primary education	Basic learning materials in primary schools	Provision of basic learning materials to primary schools in Uganda. Challenges and opportunities	i. Design guidelines for procurement of basic learning ii. Sustainable provision of learning materials
6	Pre-primary and primary education	Decentralized provision of instructional materials	A study of Kenya's decentralized provision of instructional materials	Pilot decentralization of basic learning materials to 20 districts
7	Pre-primary and primary education	School facility grant	Evaluation of classroom construction	i. Refine guidelines for classroom construction in districts ii. Review the size of grants to cater for the needs of different districts
8	Pre-primary and primary education	Incentive of girls and teachers	Girls' persistence and teacher incentive in primary schools in Uganda	i. Formulate girls' bursary schemes ii. Review school facility grant to include a position of teachers housing iii. Formulate a scheme to pay primary teachers working in difficulty conditions hardship allowance

Table 3.2 (continued)

S/N	Sub-sector	Theme	Title	How the study outcomes have been used
9	Educational planning	Quality of learning	Perspectives of quality learning: from research to action	Improve the linkages between research and planning
10	Pre-primary and primary education	Girl child education	Lessons learnt from promotion of girls' education scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Refine girls' education strategy policy ii. Formulate girls' bursary scheme iii. Improve school sanitation for girls
11	Teacher education	Primary teachers' recruitment, deployment and payroll management	Tracking study on the primary teachers' recruitment, deployment and payroll management.	Improve teacher recruitment, deployment and payroll management
12	Educational planning	Effective participation in primary schooling	Attendance patterns and causes of drop-out in primary schools in Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Formulate a policy to enhance measures to identify pupils enrolled in primary schools ii. Enhancement of data collection and verification methods
13	Pre-primary and primary education	Quality of learning in primary schools	Performance of primary school pupils and teachers in science and social studies	Design measures to improve equity and participation in the classroom
14	Teacher education	Teacher development and management	A summative evaluation of the teacher development and management system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Review the deployment of teacher educators in the country and their schemes of service. ii. Review the curriculum for primary teacher training institutions. iii. Rationalize the financing and management of teacher training institutions
15	Higher education	Expansion of access in post-primary institutions	A unit cost study of post-primary institutions in Uganda	Refine the post-primary education and training policy in the country.
16	Educational planning	Expansion of access in primary education	UPE tracking study	Design measures geared to improve the disbursement, management and utilization capitation grants disbursed to schools and districts under the UPE programme
17	Secondary education	Expansion of access to post-primary education	Study on firm demand for post-primary education graduates	

Table 3.2 (continued)

S/N	Sub-sector	Theme	Title	How the study outcomes have been used
18	Educational planning	Expansion of access to primary education	Study to review the formula for allocating UPE funds	Establishment of new formula for allocating UPE funds
19	Higher education	Expansion of access to higher education	Macro-study to position Uganda higher education system in a comparative global context of an economic development strategy	Development of the higher education strategic plan
20	Higher education	Efficiency of higher education	Academic management and financing study to evaluate the efficiency of existing organizational and management structure	Development of the higher education strategic plan
21	Higher education	Access to and equity in tertiary education	Micro-study I which deals with access to and equity in tertiary education	Development of the higher education strategic plan
22	Higher education	Efficiency in higher education	Micro-study II which deals with internal and external efficiency	Development of the higher education strategic plan
23	Secondary education	Expansion of access to post-primary education	Study on options for secondary school expansion in Uganda	i. Establishment the general & comprehensive sector education policy ii. Refine post-primary training policy and secondary teacher development management plan
24	Secondary education	Management of secondary education	Secondary education management	Design policies for funding, deployment, recruitment and management of teachers in secondary education subsector
25	Secondary education	Expansion of access to post-primary education	Study on quality of education in post-primary institutions	Design a policy for quality enhancement in post-primary institutions
26	Secondary education	Expansion of access to post-primary education	Issues paper and costed option for post-primary education	Refine the PPET policy
27	Secondary education	HIV/AIDS in post-primary education	Examination of best practices and strategies on HIV/AIDS	Design a workplace policy on HIV/AIDS in the education sector
28	Business, technical and vocational education	Training in BTVET institutions	Demand analysis for skills training in BTVET institutions	Formulate a policy to guide the BTVET institutions from 204 to 215
29	Teacher education	In-service teacher training in primary schools	The role, performance and contribution of co-ordinating centre tutors to education quality	– New job specifications for CCTs have been developed. – Need for re-mapping has been established – Increase of CCs from 539 to 570

Table 3.2 (continued)

S/N	Sub-sector	Theme	Title	How the study outcomes have been used
30	Pre-primary education	Quality in primary schools	Improvement of quality in primary schools (SACMEQ II)	Design measures to enhance the quality of primary education through effective participation of children
31	Pre-primary education	Early childhood education and development	Development of an early childhood development policy and costed policy options under nutrition and early childhood project	Refine a policy for early childhood education and development
32	Pre-primary education	Sanitation, hygiene and water in primary schools	Study on sanitation, hygiene and water in primary schools in Uganda	Formulate measures to improve primary sanitation
33	Teacher education	Gender parity in education	Review of the 2005 gender parity goal	Assess efforts required to achieve the gender parity goal in education
34	Educational planning	Infrastructure development in primary schools	SFG value for money audit	Review guidelines for school facility grant to primary schools
35	Higher education	Expansion of access to higher education	Establishing a student loan fund/board	Formulate a roadmap for establishment of student loan scheme in Uganda

Source: MoES, 2003g.

These studies are regarded as part and parcel of the overall technical support to the sector required for institutional capacity building. Until 2001, these studies were mainly funded by EFAG. Since then, however, and in accordance with the principles of donor assistance to education, overall technical assistance, including studies, is now funded by the GoU's own resources and budgetary support channelled through the consolidated technical assistance fund. The aim is to encourage the GoU to be more proactive in identifying where they want technical assistance support and in managing the process.

The MoES is responsible for the initial conception and preparation of all appropriate terms of reference for these studies. These are then shared with the members of EFAG via the SWAp management structures already detailed above.

The extent to which sector studies inform the policy-making and dialogue between the Ministry and EFAG

Joint bi-annual reviews always focus on all aspects of the education system. The intense discussions on policy thrusts, sector priorities or even future plans during the course of these reviews is now as a matter of procedure informed by carefully prepared papers based on credible evidence obtained through one kind of research study or another. Indeed, it is now a tradition that the October reviews are informed by research study findings in an area of mutual concern to all the review stakeholders and agreed in the previous April reviews. Sector research studies are thus playing an ever-increasing role in shaping future policy as well as in the general planning in the sector.

The broad-based consultative approach adopted in the preparation of ESIP prioritizes informed decision-making based on credible evidence, which is only available from studies.

Consultants, through international competitive bidding, selective bidding or single sourcing, have been hired to carry out these studies. The relevant sub-sector of the MoES manages these studies and plays the quality assurance roles.

Process of sector policy and strategy formulation in Uganda's education

The mainstay of Uganda's current education policy framework is contained in the Government White Paper of April 1992. The development of this policy framework was GoU driven as it formed part and parcel of the post-war reconstruction programme. Earlier in 1987, the government appointed the Education Policy Review Commission, which submitted its report in late 1989. It is this report that became the foundation of the Government White Paper on Education referred to above. The GoU formulated the White Paper

through an *ad hoc* consultative approach with individual stakeholders that included donors. Consequently, much of the policy dialogue was unstructured.

Since the introduction of SWAp, policy formulation has become more structured and, as a result, donors and other stakeholders have been brought directly into the process of education policy formulation through the ESRs. For instance, ESIP 1998-2003 was the first and most significant outcome of the new process of policy formulation resulting from SWAp. It was formulated through a collaborative effort involving the GoU, donors, civil society and the private sector as a strategy for both financing key priorities and providing policy direction on the sub-sectors requiring attention to focus on.

3.10 Trends in public education expenditure under SWAp

Introduction

This sub-section explores the trends in public education expenditure with special emphasis on the extent to which spending on education has increased in relation to spending on other sectors (inter-sectoral allocations of budgetary resources). This is done within the overall framework of the national budget performance. Data limitations and inconsistencies have dictated the extent to which this analysis has been done. Reliable data on the financing of education are hard to come by, especially prior to 1998. Nevertheless, the analysis provided in this section presents a representative picture of the general trends in public education expenditure in Uganda. Finally, the section briefly describes the implications of the adoption of SWAp on the operations of the budget.

Table 3.3 Government revenue and expenditure as a share of GDP (percentages), 1989/1990-2001/2002

	1989/ 1990	1990/ 1991	1991/ 1992	1992/ 1993	1993/ 1994	1994/ 1995	1995/ 1996	1996/ 1997	1997/ 1998	1998/ 1999	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002
Total revenue and grants	8.6	16.4	14.4	16.7	16.6	16.0	16.8	16.7	15.9	16.7	17.7	18.8	19.2
Revenue	6.7	8.0	7.3	8.0	9.7	10.8	11.0	11.8	10.6	11.7	11.3	10.8	11.7
Grants	1.9	8.2	7.2	8.7	6.9	5.2	5.8	4.9	5.3	5.0	6.4	8.0	7.5
Recurrent expenditure	8.1	8.2	11.7	8.9	10.2	10.2	10.1	10.4	9.8	10.9	11.0	11.4	13.5
Salaries	1.8	1.4	0.4	1.7	2.1	2.6	3.0	3.6	3.4	4.2	4.2	4.3	5.1
Interest	0.7	1.1	3.5	1.9	1.1	1.1	0.8	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.4
Other recurrent	6.4	5.7	7.8	5.3	7.0	6.5	6.3	5.7	4.1	4.7	3.6	3.4	4.0
PAF (non-wage)											0.9	1.2	1.4
Transfers to URA*									0.3	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4
Statutory									0.8	0.4	0.8	0.9	1.2
Development expenditure	4.9	12.5	10.0	10.9	10.6	8.2	8.7	7.0	6.6	6.9	8.7	10.0	9.8
Domestic	1.7	3.0	1.4	1.0	1.1	1.5	1.1	1.6	1.2	1.4	2.5	3.3	4.1
External	3.3	9.5	8.6	9.9	9.5	6.7	7.6	5.4	5.5	5.5	6.2	6.6	5.7
Of which PAF											1.2	1.6	2.4
Net lending	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	- 0.3	- 0.04
Total expenditure	13.1	20.9	22.0	19.8	20.9	18.6	18.8	17.4	16.5	17.9	20.7	21.1	23.2
Deficit	- 4.5	- 4.6	- 7.6	- 3.1	- 3.4	- 2.7	- 2.0	- 0.7	- 0.6	- 1.2	- 3.0	- 2.3	- 4.0
Deficit excluding grants	- 6.4	- 12.9	- 14.7	- 11.8	- 11.2	- 7.8	- 7.8	- 5.6	- 5.9	- 6.2	- 9.4	- 10.3	- 11.5

*URA = Uganda Revenue Authority.

Source: MoFPED, *Background to the Budget*, various years.

Note: The exceptionally low net lending for 2001/2002 could be due to a typographical error in financial data in the MFPEP *Budget Book*.

Overview of budget performance since the financial year 1989/1990

One of the greatest budgetary difficulties facing the government has been revenue shortfall almost every year. For example in 2000/2001, while the share revenue (excluding grants) to GDP was a dismal 10.8 per cent, the share of total government expenditure to GDP was 21 per cent, as shown in *Table 3.3*. While the share of revenue (excluding grant) to GDP has generally stagnated at about 11 per cent since 1994/1995, government expenditure as a share of GDP averaged slightly above 19 per cent during the same period. The fiscal deficit (excluding grants) continues to widen from 7.8 per cent in 1994/1995 to 11.5 per cent in 2001/2002 (*Table 3.3*). Borrowing from external sources and grants every subsequent year has helped bridge Uganda's revenue shortfalls.

The increase in the deficit is explained by the higher growth in government expenditure in absolute terms compared to growth in revenue. The absolute expansion in the size of the overall government expenditure explains the increase in the budget deficit. In other words, the increase in expenditure was part of the medium-term fiscal strategy to increase expenditure on poverty reduction programmes, including education, health, water and roads.

Although aid inflows have helped to finance the deficits, a substantial portion of the budget still remains uncovered almost every year making mid-year budget cuts inevitable. The MTEF figures show increasing aid inflows with external financing accounting for over half of total government expenditure. The problems arising from financing the deficit from external sources is the increase in the stock of external debt, which has a lasting impact on the budget as debt service commitments often deprive the government of much needed revenue. In fact, increased net foreign inflows have raised concerns about the long-term sustainability of Uganda's external debt and overall fiscal stance. However, Uganda has benefited from debt relief under the HIPC

initiative. The HIPC initiative has reduced the external debt burden that the country bears. Uganda was the first country to reach completion point both under the first HIPC framework in April 1998 and under the enhanced HIPC in 1999. What should have been spent on servicing the debt (savings made by the country arising from debt relief under the HIPC initiative) is being channelled into a PAF to finance poverty reduction programmes, including primary education.

With a commitment to poverty eradication, Uganda might be compelled to seek more support from donors increasingly in the form of general budget support, including support for recurrent costs, if development programmes and projects such as UPE are to be adequately maintained and operated. The section that follows analyzes the distribution of expenditure across different sectors (i.e. intrasectoral allocation).

Composition of public expenditure: trends in public education expenditure

Allocations to education are compared to allocations to other sectors such as health, security, economic management, roads, works and water with a view to assessing the relative importance attached to the education sector in budgetary allocations.

The government's PEAP prioritizes public action across various sectors to meet the objective of poverty eradication and identifies key sectors that are given priority in resource allocation. The priority sectors include primary education, primary health care, road maintenance and agricultural modernization. *Tables 4.2 and 4.3* summarize government expenditure allocations by sectors as a share of total government expenditure and as a share of GDP for the period 1990/1991-2001/2002.

Table 3.4 reveals that prior to 1997/1998 public administration was the biggest spender of government resources, followed by security (defence, police, prison and security organs such as the Internal Security Organization and the External Security Organization, etc.). However, since 1997/1998, expenditure on education has overtaken both of them. For example, in 1990/1991, education's share of total government expenditure was only 13.7 per cent compared to 31.5 per cent for security and 21.7 per cent for public administration. In 1998/1999, education's share was 24.7 per cent compared to 20.4 per cent for public administration and 19.5 per cent for security. Generally, since the introduction of UPE in 1997, education became the highest priority sector as is evident from education's share of total government expenditure (*Table 3.4*). As a share of GDP, spending on education increased from 2.1 per cent in 1995/1996 to 4.8 per cent in 2001/2002, representing the highest share compared to all the other sectors (*Table 3.5*). Other poverty priority sectors, such as roads, works and health, also witnessed a significant rise in their shares in public spending, but the share of agriculture increased only slightly.

In 2001/2002, economic functions and services and public administration came second to education, spending the equivalent of 3.2 per cent of GDP. Roads and works were in third place, spending the equivalent of 3.1 per cent of GDP.

As can be seen in *Tables 3.4* and *3.5*, as the share of education in total government expenditure increased, those of public administration and security declined. However, this should not be interpreted to mean that resources were relocated from other sectors to education. Increasing the size of the overall government budget enabled the increase in educational spending. The enhanced HIPC initiative and donor support made it possible for the government to increase its spending on all sectors, particularly the social sectors.

Table 3.4 Sectoral composition of expenditure as a share of total government expenditure (percentages)

Sector	1990/ 1991	1991/ 1992	1992/ 1993	1993/ 1994	1994/ 1995	1995/ 1996	1996/ 1997	1997/ 1998	1998/ 1999	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002
Public administration (excluding unconditional grant)	21.7	37.1	48.2	33.8	20.4	22.1	21.2	24.1	20.4	14.0	13.4	12.7
Public administration (unconditional grant)					1.4	2.4	4.5	5.4	5.1	3.4	3.2	2.7
Security	31.5	13.7	12.5	18.3	18.9	18.4	17.5	15.5	19.5	10.5	9.8	8.4
Roads and works	7.6	3.3	1.8	4.0	4.2	4.2	6.5	4.3	5.9	12.5	13.6	12.2
Agriculture	2.5	2.0	1.8	2.1	2.6	1.5	1.3	1.0	1.0	4.0	5.7	4.7
Education	13.7	11.1	10.4	12.8	19.3	18.1	20.7	22.8	24.7	19.5	18.5	18.8
Health	4.4	3.3	3.9	5.7	7.8	9.6	7.1	6.5	6.0	10.8	8.6	11.1
Economic functions and services	3.4	2.4	2.7	4.4	9.1	6.0	6.2	5.4	4.0	9.9	14.2	12.7
Interest payments	10.3	22.1	14.5	10.2	7.7	8.2	6.7	6.7	6.0	5.2	1.6	5.7
Water	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4.5	7.5	5.1
Justice/law and order	4.3	4.8	4.2	8.6	8.7	9.5	8.3	8.3	7.4	5.1	2.3	4.9
Accountability	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1						0.6	1.7	0.9
Unallocated	0.4											
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: MoFPED, *Background to the budget*, various years.

Note: Blank cell means data not available, i.e. the sector had not been created at that date, e.g. water. This table does not include external development expenditure before 1999/2000 and therefore figures may differ from *Table 3.3*.

Table 3.5 Sectoral composition of total expenditure as a share of GDP (percentages)

Sector	1990/ 1991	1991/ 1992	1992/ 1993	1993/ 1994	1994/ 1995	1995/ 1996	1996/ 1997	1997/ 1998	1998/ 1999	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002
Public administration (excluding unconditional grant)	2.3	5.9	6.3	3.6	2.5	2.6	2.8	3.0	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.2
Public administration (unconditional grant)					0.2	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7
Security	3.3	2.2	1.6	2.0	2.4	2.1	2.3	1.9	2.9	2.1	2.2	2.1
Roads and works	0.8	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.5	0.9	2.6	3.0	3.1
Agriculture	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.8	1.3	1.2
Education	1.4	1.8	1.4	1.4	2.4	2.1	2.7	2.8	3.7	4.0	4.1	4.8
Health	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	1.0	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.9	2.2	1.9	2.8
Economic functions and services	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	1.1	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	2.0	3.2	3.2
Interest payments	1.1	3.5	1.9	1.1	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.1	0.4	1.5
Water	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.9	1.7	1.3
Justice/law and order	0.5	0.8	0.6	0.9	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.0	0.5	1.3
Accountability	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0						0.1	0.4	0.2
Unallocated	0.0											
Total	10.6	15.8	13.2	10.7	12.5	11.7	13.2	12.3	14.8	20.5	22.4	25.5

Source: MoFPED, *Background to the budget*, various years.

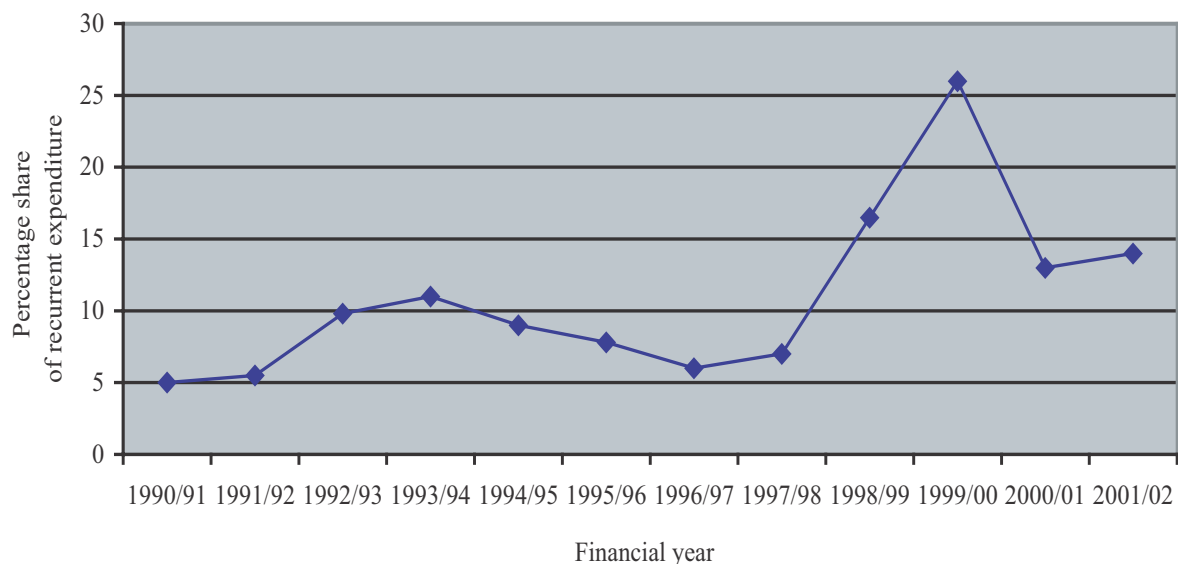
Note: This table does not include external development expenditure before 1999/2000, and therefore figures may differ from Table 3.3

Disaggregating government expenditure in its recurrent and development expenditure components reveals that a substantial increase in total expenditure since 1997/1998 has been due to rapid growth in development expenditure, although the relative share of recurrent expenditure as a proportion of GDP is higher than the share of development expenditure after the financial year 1996/1997.

Sectors that have experienced a significant growth in development expenditure as a ratio of GDP are education, health and roads. Others include water, economic functions and services, but education is ahead of all of them. In the early 1990s, education's share of development expenditure was below 10 per cent, except in 1993/1994. In 1998/1999, education's share of the total development expenditure rose to over 22 per cent and remained above 10 per cent in subsequent years (*Figure 3.3*).

Although the proportion of recurrent expenditure to total expenditure grew at a slow pace compared to the growth of the proportion of development expenditure to total expenditure, absolute growth recurrent expenditure has been phenomenal. *Figure 3.4* shows a dramatic expansion in education recurrent expenditure after 1997/1998. This is mainly due to an increase in teachers' salaries and other recurrent costs associated with primary education expansion.

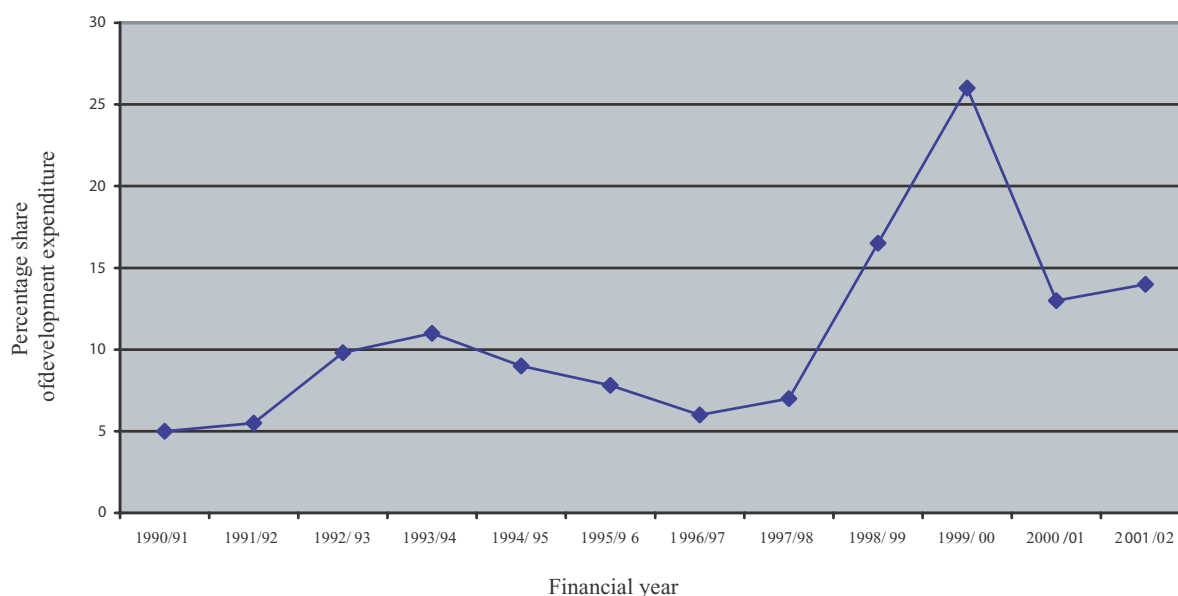
Figure 3.2 Education recurrent expenditure as a proportion of total government recurrent expenditure



Source: MoFPED, *Background to the budget*, various years.

Note: No figures were available for the financial year 1998/1999.

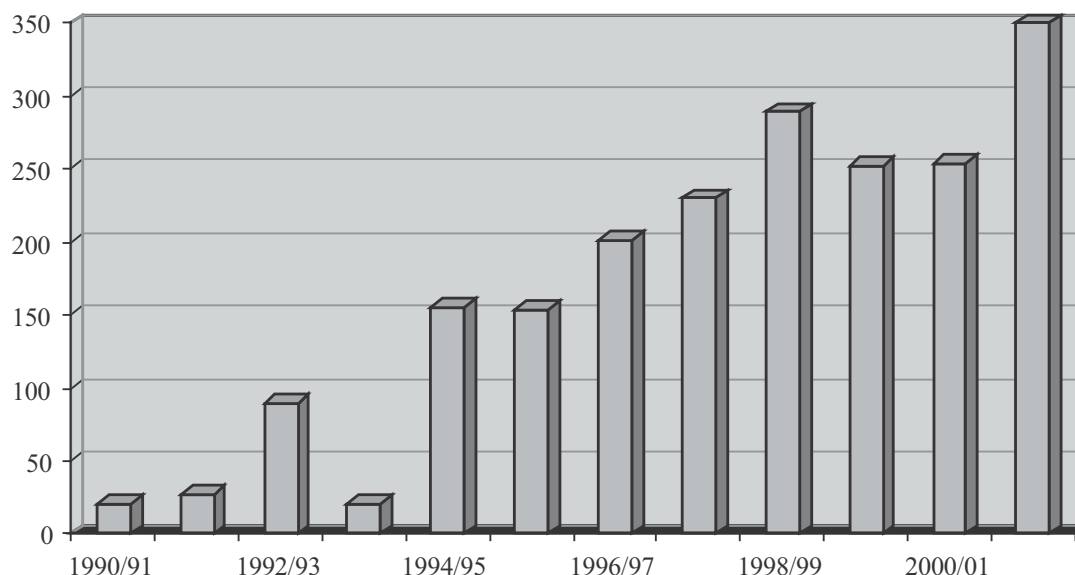
Figure 3.3 Education as a proportion of total development expenditure (percentages)



Source: MoFPED, *Background to the budget*, financial years 1990/1991-2001/2002.

Note: This figure does not include external development expenditure before 1990/2000.

**Figure 3.4 Education recurrent expenditure
(constant 2000/2001 costs)**



Source: MoFPED, *Background to the budget*, various years.

The donor funds flow process

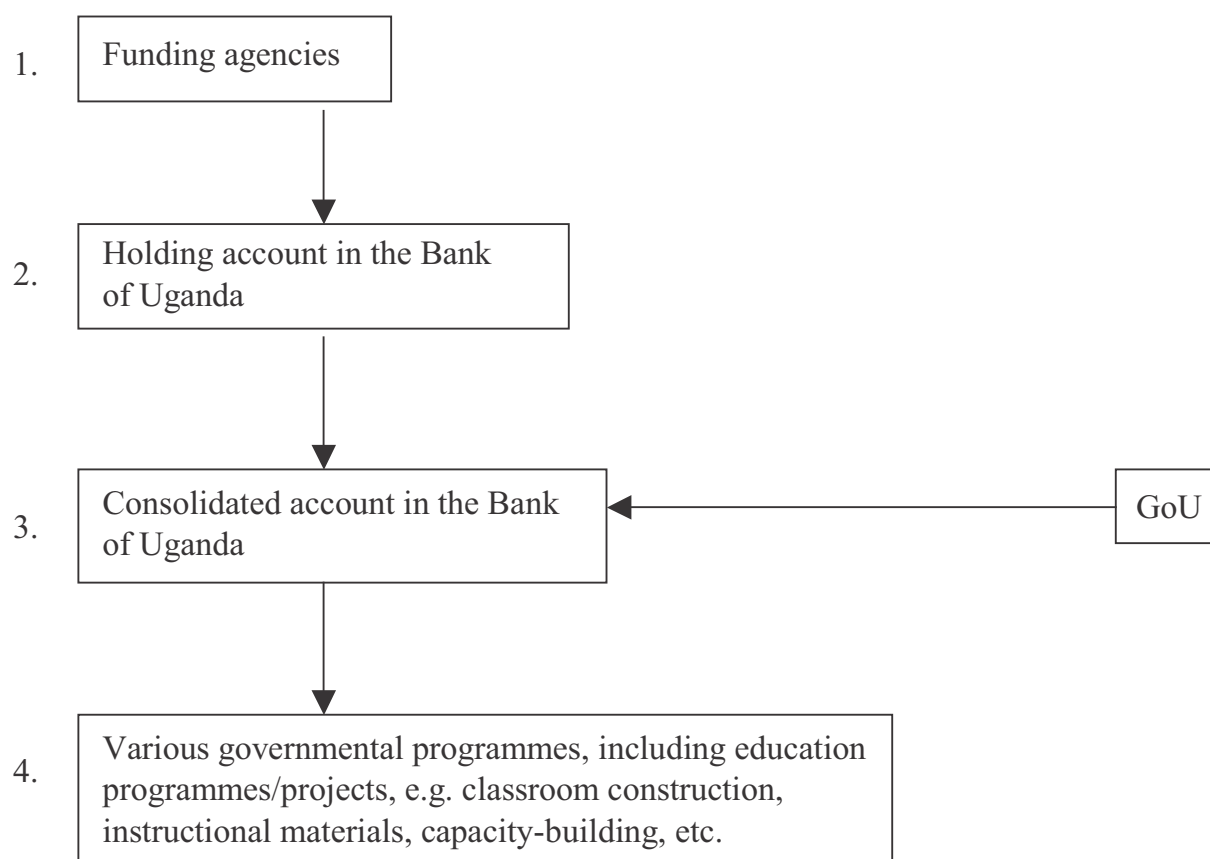
As one of the outputs of the April 1999 ESR, it was recommended that the MoES devise a mechanism through which funding agencies could channel education sector support funds. The MoES had initially responded to this by opening two ‘holding accounts’: the Education Budget Support Account and the Education Project Support Account. However, on further reflection these two accounts were subsequently merged into one Education Budget Support Account. This is a ‘holding account’ because it serves as a strategic checkpoint used by the funding agencies to ensure that agreements or ‘undertakings’ with the GoU are first met before funds can be transferred to the ‘consolidated fund’ account for onward disbursement. This conditionality does not only help in improving the quality of service delivery but it also ensures prudence in financial management and tracking. This in-built system of checks and

balances in the flow of donor funds to the recipient country is depicted in *Figure 3.5*.

Note that the Treasury in the Bank of Uganda operates both the holding account and consolidated account. The above illustration of a four-tier funding modality promotes the concept of ‘basket funding’ advocated by the proponents of SWAp since funds from various donors get pooled into one ‘basket’ and effectively become indistinguishable in the holding account. This gives the recipient government flexibility in effecting demand-driven resource allocation.

More specifically, when the funding agencies disburse the first tranche funds into the holding account, the funding required for the first quarter is promptly transferred into the consolidated account in accordance with the project/programme work plans and budget requests from MoES. The funds for the second quarter are only transferred from the holding account into the consolidated account at the end of the first quarter and strictly after receiving the requisite reporting formats together with budgetary requests from the responsible line ministry. This means that the disbursements to the consolidated fund account are ‘front-loaded’ for each quarter, and this enables the government to have sufficient reserves for timely releases in tandem with the work plan requirements and budgetary requests.

Figure 3.5 The flow of donor funds



Source: MoES, 1999.

If the aid absorptive capacity turned out to be lower than expected during the first quarter, the resultant sector support balances remain intact on the holding account until the resource absorption capacity of the sector improves. This, in principle, rules out the possibilities for misuse or inefficient utilization of the funds.

Similarly, if at the end of a given financial year there is an accumulation of unspent funds left on the holding account, such surplus funds will remain on the account and subsequently get ‘rolled into’ the next financial year.

When budgeting for the following financial year, therefore, due consideration ought to be given to the balances accruing from the holding account.

Finally, there is an in-built annual sector financial audit arrangement, which ensures transparency and accountability in the operation of the holding account. The Office of the Auditor General annually audits all the releases from the account, comprising the funds released to fund projects through the budget support facility as well as other governmental funds. In addition, the Treasury (Director of Accounts) is obliged to issue quarterly financial statements as a component activity of the broader budgetary reporting responsibility during the ESRs.

3.10.5 Integration of donor funds into the budget process

Since the sector support funds are to be factored into the education sector budget ceiling, it is imperative that indications about the magnitude of the expected donor funds be received early enough and in conformity with the inter-sectoral budget preparation process. This is what underscores the importance of regular and transparent dialogue between the donor agencies and the government. There is an added impetus for this because sector support funding is an integrated component of the government expenditure ceiling negotiated with the IMF. No additional funding is deemed to be over and above that factored into the budget ceiling during the June negotiations is permitted during the financial year in question. Indeed, whenever there is delayed receipt of donor support funds, the government invariably saves it for the following financial year so as not to disrupt the planned IMF expenditure programme.

A phased analysis of the process of integrating donor commitments into Uganda's budget process is given in *Table 3.6* below.

This step-by-step integration process provides a mechanism by which donor funds cascade through the budgetary cycle of GoU. It also facilitates

the mainstreaming of all the donor funds into the overall MTEF. However, there are still some difficulties being encountered in a bid to bring all the donors on board, especially those funding through the project support modality.

Table 3.6 Sequence of activities involved in the integration of donor funds into Uganda's budget process

Period	Activity
September	Donors kick-start the process by communicating to MoFPED indications about the anticipated magnitude of sector support for the following year. The MoFPED then uses this to develop broad sector budget ceilings.
October – November	Only then can the MoFPED conduct the first Budget Framework Paper workshop, where indicative sector ceilings will be provided and explained.
January – February	A Budget Call Circular is released, highlighting what are now confirmed sector budget ceilings for the forthcoming year.
April	A major ESR is held in which progress against defined undertakings is assessed thereby determining: (a) whether or not funding agencies will disburse funds in the following financial year. (b) the magnitude of the anticipated donor funds to be disbursed in the next financial year. The agreed levels of donor funding are communicated to the MoFPED by the Permanent Secretary/MoES and any necessary adjustments on the sector budget ceilings are accordingly effected. MoFPED sends one disbursement request to all funding agencies for agreed levels of funds. This request specifies the expected funds by donor and, where applicable, by earmarked programmes. When satisfied that all the conditionalities have been met, the funding agencies then disburse their funds to the BoU, noting on the release documentation the name and account number of the holding account. This would be followed by a communication addressed to the Permanent Secretary/Secretary to the Treasury (PS/ST), with copies to the Director of Accounts, Director of the Budget and the PS/ES.
May	Preparation of the detailed budget for the new financial year is concluded.
June	Annual project work plans for the new financial year are submitted. A schedule is developed for the transfer of the sector support funds from the holding account to the consolidated fund account in line with the annual project work plans.

Source: Republic of Uganda, 2002.

3.11 Planning and budgeting under SWAp

Institutional context for planning and budgeting

The current institutional context of planning and budgeting in Uganda has its origin in public expenditure management reforms that have been implemented since the early 1990s. These institutional arrangements include: cash flow, MTEF, SWAp, PAF, Fiscal decentralization strategy (FDS), results-oriented management, output-oriented budgeting, and the Commitment Control System (CCS).

The cash flow

The cash flow is a set of monthly treasury accounts on a spreadsheet model. It has been an important macro-economic management tool in Uganda since 1992. The institution of cash flow management emanated from continued fiscal slippage, which led to unsustainable levels of credit to the government from the banking system and subsequently high inflation rates. Fiscal prudence returned with the implementation of the cash flow resulting in macro-economic stability and achievement of objectives of the budget and the MTEF. Initially, the cash flow operated on a monthly basis. However, presently the cash flow provides quarterly resource projections, which create better planning horizons than previously. The cash flow is now complemented by the CCS, which was introduced to stem the accumulation of arrears in government departments/institutions.

The Commitment Control System (CCS)

The GoU introduced CCS during the financial year 1998/1999. Its main purpose is to contain accounting officers' ability to commit the government without the requisite financial resources as provided in the monthly government cash flow. In its operations, commitments are held in line with quarterly

projected limits provided in the cash flow. The system was initially piloted in four ministries and for the recurrent budget operation only. However, in the financial year 2000/2001 the system was generalized government-wide and its scope was widened to cover both recurrent and development budget operations. The immediate effect of CCS has been to curtail the accumulation of arrears in public ministries, departments and institutions.

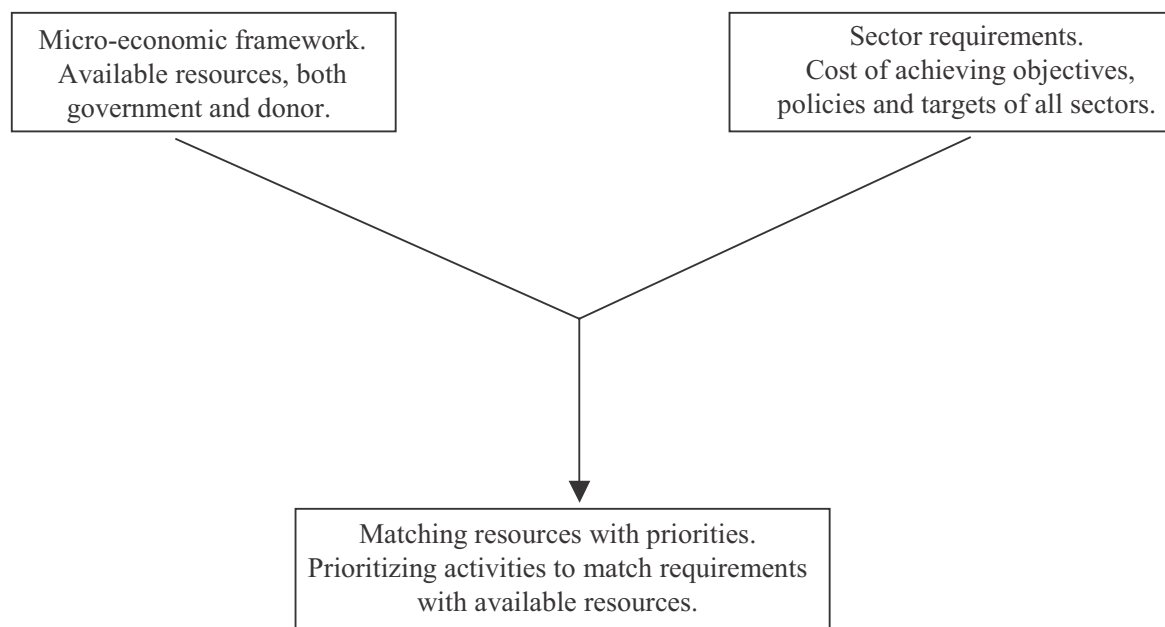
The Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF)

The MTEF is a three-year rolling budget framework within which available resources (both governmental and donor) are divided between sectors of the GoU. The MTEF performance-/output-based budget process provides a mechanism for improving the management of resources through trade-offs among sectors. MTEF thus reflects the performance-based budgeting and management that introduces a medium-term focus into resource planning so as to plan ahead for changes in policy and expenditure reallocations. *Figure 3.6* below illustrates the conceptual framework of the MTEF process.

The sector-wide approach (SWAp)

SWAp is a planning process that was introduced to Uganda in the mid-1990s. It was adopted as a strategy for implementing PEAP. Under this strategy, since 1996, sector programmes have been defined for the roads, rural development, health, education, land, water and sanitation and environment, social development, public administration and the justice, law and order sectors.

Figure 3.6 The MTEF process



Source: PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2003.

The sectors and their constituent ministries and agencies are responsible for the development, prioritization, costing and implementation of the sector plans. This is done through a process of nationwide consultations and involves district local governments working together with line ministries, sector agencies and civil society.

The functioning of the SWAp process is premised on six objective criteria. These criteria are that the SWAp process should: (a) have a broad sector-wide scope; (b) involve local stakeholder-led participation; (c) have common implementation arrangements; (d) emphasize minimal long-term technical assistance; (e) have a coherent policy framework; and (f) ensure donor buy-in. The characteristics of the Ugandan education SWAp clearly conform to this objective criterion.

The adoption of SWAp has been influenced by the fact that overall development assistance appears to be steadily moving away from individual project support towards donor support to sector programmes. SWAp thus focuses on the development of consistent and effective policy frameworks at the macro and sectoral levels as a prerequisite for donor support to sustainable poverty eradication. In its operations the SWAp process focuses on the following: (a) identification of the sector scope and its objectives, thereby linking institutional mandates to overall sector objectives; (b) development of sector policies and strategies; (c) preparation of medium-term projections of resource availability and sector financing and spending plans consistent with a sound public expenditure framework; (d) establishment of management systems by national governments and donor agencies which will facilitate the introduction of common arrangements for disbursement, accounting of funds, procurement of goods and services, and monitoring sectoral performance; and (e) institutional reforms and capacity-building in line with sectoral policy and the need for systems development. SWAp is actualized through sector working groups.

Operations of the sector working groups: In order to operationalize SWAp across the public sector ministries, departments and institutions, the MoFPED has created sector working groups. These groups are a vehicle for the implementation of the SWAp process as they provide a mechanism that articulates and conjoins the sector basis of planning with the institutional basis of budgeting. Sector working groups have therefore been set up for the purpose of budget preparation and are convened at the beginning of each budget cycle with terms of reference formulated by the MoFPED. These terms of reference specify the number and areas of focus for each working group. It is noteworthy that whereas some of the sectors such as education and health are ministries in themselves, others such as public administration, justice, law and order sectors are an amalgamation of various ministries, institutions and departments.

The roles and impact of the sector working groups: (a) co-ordinate budget management; (b) ensure consultation between the MoFPED, line ministries, and external and internal stakeholders; and (c) compile preliminary sectoral information for decision-making and documentation. The creation of sector working groups has enabled transparent and well informed discussion on sector strategies, constraints and other issues. They are characterized by their ability to formulate sector strategic plans, monitor and evaluate plan implementation and budget execution, and engage in systematic sector reviews. Thus, having articulated goals and targets within their strategic plans, the sector working groups proceed to assess progress in implementation and redress constraints during JSRs that involve the whole range of internal and external stakeholders.

Membership of the sector working group is drawn from line ministries, funding agencies and civil society, and these are responsible for the preparation of the budget framework papers, which annually examine and review sector policies, plans and past performance as well as identifying emerging policy issues and future pressures. Each working group has its own terms of reference and work plan. *Table 3.7* is a summary of the sector working groups by type for the 2002/2003 budget process. The education sector working group is one of the most developed and effective working groups in the country.

Table 3.7 Sector working groups (SWG) by type, for the 2002/2003 budget process

Type of SWG	Sectors involved
Functional	Education Health Roads, works, communication and housing Water and sanitation Agriculture Environment and natural resources Justice, law and order Public administration Accountability Local government Economic services Security Public service, pay & pensions reform Gender, labour and social welfare
Advisory	Micro-economic framework Poverty eradication Private sector

Source: PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2003.

The Poverty Action Fund (PAF)

The PAF was established in the financial year 1998/1999 to direct debt relief funds from the HIPC initiative and additional resources mobilized from donors towards poverty reduction interventions. The PAF comprises both government and donor resources and uses existing government conditional grant procedures for disbursements and implementation. It ensures that at least 95 per cent of all earmarked resources identified in the PAF are safeguarded and spent on social sectors that address poverty. The PAF has been highly effective in both earmarking and protecting resources for poverty reduction, and also in ensuring increased transparency, monitoring and accountability. All releases of the PAF are published for the general public's consumption.

The Fiscal Decentralization Strategy (FDS)

SWAp is being implemented in the context of the FDS in the country. Consequently, each financial year the central government transfers to local governments monies in the form of unconditional, conditional and equalization grants. Unconditional grants are paid to local governments to run decentralized services. Unconditional grants are an inflow to local governments and are integrated into local funds and accordingly budgeted for. Conditional grants are monies given to local governments to finance programmes agreed upon between the governments and local governments for giving subsidies or making special provisions for local governments, which are lagging behind national standards for service provision.

It is envisaged that as the capacity of local governments to plan and manage development programmes increases, central government's transfers will be effected increasingly as unconditional grants. When this is attained, the discretionary powers of these local governments over their own programmes will be enhanced.

In the meantime, the government is implementing a FDS to strengthen and streamline fiscal transfer modalities between national and local governments in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness of local governments to perceive PEAP goals in a transparent and accountable framework.

Results-oriented management (ROM)

ROM was introduced in the Ugandan public service in the mid-1990s as a key initiative of the public service reform programme in pursuit of efficiency and effectiveness in the eradication of poverty, as well as to ensure improved service delivery.

The aim of the ROM initiative is to reorient the GoU's management practices from being compliance- to performance-based. As a management

system, ROM therefore seeks to optimize the use of scarce resources by: (a) clearly defining the purpose for which an organization exists; (b) setting clear objectives for the services it provides; (c) specifying activities to be undertaken and resultant outputs required to deliver those services; (d) setting performance indicators against which activities and outputs will be measured; and (e) measuring the organization's performances against these indicators to assess its performance in achieving its objectives.

The GoU has made efforts to integrate ROM into the planning and budgeting process in the central and local governments as well as constituent institutions to PEAP. Consequently, the MoFPED has over the last four years specifically conditioned sector working groups to include targets, outputs and monitoring indicators in their sector budget framework papers as a way of creating focus on measurable outputs, around which national expenditure would be planned. This is also expected to provide a basis for effective accountability and reporting centred on progress achieved by the respective sectors.

Output-oriented budgeting (OOB)

The OOB approach was introduced in Uganda in the late 1990s. This budgeting approach uses established sector outputs to determine resource allocation. The process of OOB requires the determination of the costs of the respective activities that need to be undertaken in order to achieve the desired outputs. This breakdown of costs assists in the identification of costs that are directly attributed to a given output and the shared costs between activities related to other outputs, which should be appropriately apportioned.

SWAp, ROM and OOB initiatives have been integrated because they all focus on the attainment of outputs.

Through this integration, it is now possible to agree on outputs under ROM and estimate the costs of the required inputs for achieving them under OOB. OOB thus helps to ensure that the plans and budgets of every sector are consistent with ROM.

However, the introduction of ROM and OOB has created a new challenge that arises from the inability of sectors to: (a) report on a regular basis; (b) verify the extent to which their plans and budgets have been achieved; (c) identify the outputs delivered and performance indicators; and (d) demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness of the levels of services provided as well as their coverage of targeted populations.

Structures for planning and budgeting

The GoU's organizational structure for planning and budgeting has evolved from one that was principally driven by the then separate Ministry of Planning and Economic Development and Ministry of Finance to one that is more developed within individual sectors with line ministries taking full responsibility for detailed plan formulation and budgeting. The role of the merged MoFPED is now to oversee the overall economic policy development framework to which all public sector ministries, departments and institutions ensure adherence in their respective planning and budgeting processes.

Figure 3.7 gives a summary of the broad GoU institutional arrangements for planning and budgeting. It also includes organizational arrangements within the context of the annual budget cycle. The dotted boxes depict proposed changes intended to enhance the budget process. The proposed changes are also expected to ensure early high-level executive political buy-in of the policy priorities for the ensuing year and associated indicative sector ceilings. Furthermore, once implemented the changes will enable the government to present to all stakeholders the issues, choices and possible tradeoffs that need to be undertaken as well as obtain early donor commitment on funding. They

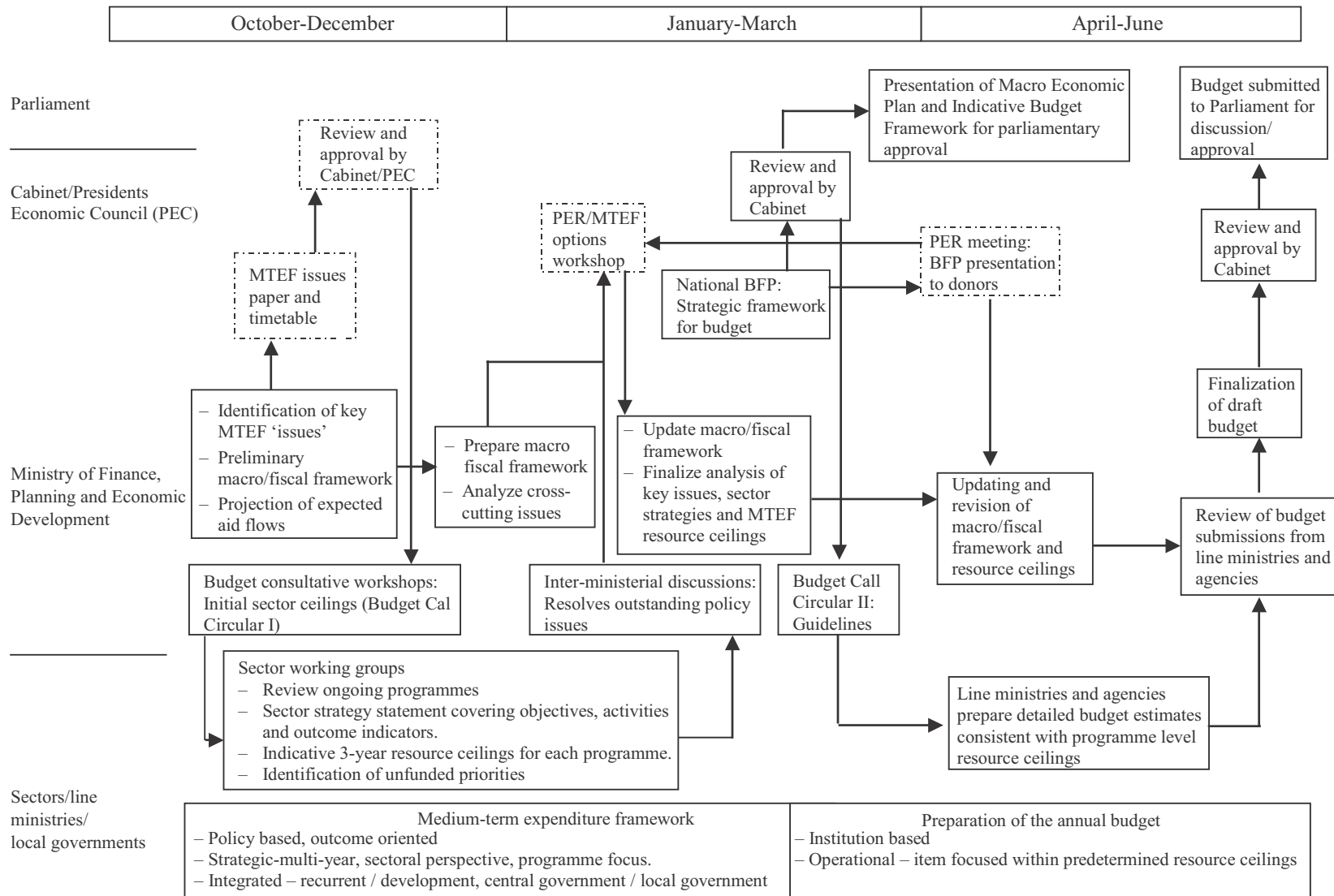
will also allow Parliament to approve the MTEF as provided for in the Budget Act 2001 and Public Finance and Accountability Act 2003. Finally, they intended to provide a baseline for assessing changes in future presentations and approval of MTEF.

The role of the MTEF in planning and budgeting

As indicated earlier, the GoU introduced the MTEF ten years ago and it has since undergone significant evolution. Initially MTEF only provided a fiscal framework that ensured that aggregate fiscal discipline was maintained. As a result, it was then used to improve allocative efficiency through realistic appraisal of key public sector policy choices consistent with macro-economic parameters over a three-year period. At present, however, the MTEF has evolved into a mechanism that guides allocation of available resources among different sectors on the basis of clear sector goals and priorities. It is therefore a framework within which a realistic forward view of aggregate resources can be aligned with programme priorities.

It is worth noting that the MTEF viewed from the institutional level provides the linkage between strategic planning and the annual budget. The MTEF is essential both for aggregate fiscal discipline and for strategic prioritization. The total budgets for multi-year programmes, activities or projects are estimated in the first year. This has brought stability to planning in the public sector in general and in the MoES in particular.

Figure 3.7 The GoU medium-term expenditure framework and budgeting cycle



3.12 Implementation capacity for sector programmes under SWAp

Uganda has been successful in implementing an impressive set of socio-economic and political reforms. In the education sector in particular, the main reforms have focussed on revitalizing the quality of education services provided through a combination of resource utilization, strengthened management and organizational systems as well as effectively targeting available resources.

In its endeavour to improve operational mechanisms and processes for planning, for instance, the MoES was able to design for the first time ESIP 1997-2003, which incorporated short-term initiatives as well as chartering the way forward for subsequent development for the rest of other sub-sectors. In the same period, the Ministry was able to formulate a focused policy framework that emphasized the expansion of access, quality and equity, enhanced public sector/private sector partnerships as well as the capacity of districts in delivering education services.

Although the above initiatives have been successful, the immediate challenge for the sector is how to translate this success in the macro arena into greater success in the classroom. Ensuring value for money in sector expenditures, quality of education services and effectiveness of service delivery are of immediate concern.

The major problem appears to be that information management is focused on administrative expenditures rather than on outcomes, impacts and goals that are being pursued by the sector. Planning, budgeting and incentives appear to be geared predominantly towards tracking inputs and outputs. Recurrent and development expenditures are also reviewed separately rather than combining them in achieving goals. Monitoring and evaluation is not emphasized.

Another main challenge of institutions and human capacity development is that the MoES is implementing sector programmes in the context of a decentralization policy. The decentralization policy has devolved service delivery to districts, local governments and frontline service providers. However, the centre still retains control of expenditure patterns using conditional grants. This tends to undermine the ability of local governments to tailor their activities to the nature of local demands.

The other challenge concerns communication. Despite enhanced transparency and quality in the budget process spearheaded by the SWGs, much remains in terms of stimulating transparency from the beneficiaries. The EMIS that is situated at the centre is currently incapable of providing systematic data on service delivery.

Other challenges that have been experienced by the Ministry include the following:

1. The concept of SWAp is still relatively new to both the GoU and EFAG. This means that everyone involved is still in the learning process and no-one is sure of its eventuality. This situation is more serious at the district and school levels.
2. Inadequate capacity to plan at the district level.
3. The introduction of SWAp coincided with the restructuring of the Ministry. This initially slowed down the SWAp process.
4. The concept of creating and maintaining partnership arrangements is new to the MoES.
5. Difficulty in changing the MoES work culture, which has for a long time been based on the traditional bureaucratic civil service model, to a results-oriented one dictated by the SWAp.
6. The apparent over emphasis of the education SWAp on one sub-sector (i.e. basic education) at the expense of the rest means that the country may pay some cost in the future.

The above implementation problems are being systematically addressed through a multi-prolonged approach that includes:

1. Expansion of the membership of the JESRs and SWGs. This is aimed at increasing participation and consultation in planning. SWGs that are responsible for budget framework papers now ensure that their membership includes central and line ministries, private sectors, civil society and donors. Decisions about funding allocations are widely disseminated through the media and public notice boards.
2. Creation of two separate funds to cater for capacity needs at the MoES Headquarters and the district. The central capacity-building funds are used to cater for the Ministry headquarters' capacity needs, while the decentralized capacity-building fund is targeted at the districts' local governments.
3. Focusing on the strengthening of the monitoring and evaluation function of the MoES to enhance systematic feedback on service delivery by beneficiaries.
4. Enhancing the effectiveness of technical assistance in achieving capacity building in the sector through revision of policies that govern identification and management of technical assistance in the sector.
5. Decentralizing EMIS to districts and eventually to the school level.
6. Formulation of a communication strategy to enhance the horizontal and vertical flow of information. Information needs to be disseminated to the general public to increase awareness and support and thereby improve the efficiency of information.

3.13 Impact of SWAp on MoES operations

SWAp was introduced against the background of rapid changes in the GoU system in general and in the MoES in particular. This change was necessitated by reforms undertaken in the early 1990s. The change affected the role of the MoES and hence the individual roles and responsibilities of the

staff. Clearly, changes have occurred in the working practices in the Ministry. For instance, the local government reform and decentralization policy have seen the role of the MoES moving away from direct delivery of services to policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation, setting national standards, inspection and regulation and technical back-up support co-ordination.

This change in role led to the restructuring of the Ministry and a redefinition of staffing levels under the public sector reform programme. This, however, coincided with the development of ESIP, which emphasizes the need for central capacity development to deliver results as per its mandate. The formulation of ESIP itself was used to operationalize SWAp in the education sector. Furthermore, the introduction of ROM across the public sector also coincided with the introduction of SWAp. ROM emphasizes the achievement of outputs rather than activities or processes, and this is similar to what SWAp emphasizes.

Consequently, all these changes are complementary and consistent with the principles of SWAp and their impact has been to reorient the Ministry's work culture that was previously based on the traditional bureaucratic civil service model to a results-oriented one. However, the introduction of SWAp has also created an urgent need for capacity building, particularly at the district level, to address weaknesses arising from its introduction.

One of the most visible changes created by the introduction of SWAp in the education sector are in the areas of planning, communication, reporting and management. Prior to its introduction, planning was a prerogative of the central Ministry while the districts were merely decision-makers and implementers. Under the circumstances, communication was uni-directional. Furthermore, the development of management basic skills was tilted in favour of the ministry headquarters. The introduction of SWAp, however, has widened the participation of planning, policy generation and monitoring and evaluation to include all constituencies of the stakeholders of education.

Secondly, for SWAp to operate effectively there is need for regular reporting and feedback at all levels. This has necessitated a reformulation of the communication strategy as well as capacity building at all levels. In turn, this has affected fundamentally the functioning and working procedures of the MoES by making it a modern results-based organization.

3.14 Analysis of policy options, financial feasibilities and trade-offs

As pointed out elsewhere, the decade of the 1990s can best be described as a period of ambitious reforms that created rapid change in the socio-economic and political landscape of Uganda. During that period, the GoU undertook critical public expenditure management reforms that laid a firm base for institutional arrangements that have been a hallmark for effective budgeting and planning in the country. The progressive evolution of the approach to planning and budgeting throughout this decade has influenced the institutional framework for planning and budgeting, as well as contributing to the successful story of economic management in the country. This success is demonstrated by the fact that Uganda has enjoyed consistent macro-economic stability and has seen a reduction of poverty levels during this period.

As a spin-off, the reforms have significantly improved the capacity and ability of the government to target its expenditures to identified priority areas while still ensuring that aggregate spending remains consistent with the prudent macro-economic policy being pursued. Furthermore, the planning and budgeting processes themselves have evolved as interactive components of public expenditure and management systems with each drawing from the outcomes of the other to become progressively more effective.

Figure 3.8 is an illustration of the planning and budgeting process in Uganda. It is important to note that these processes are highly interdependent.

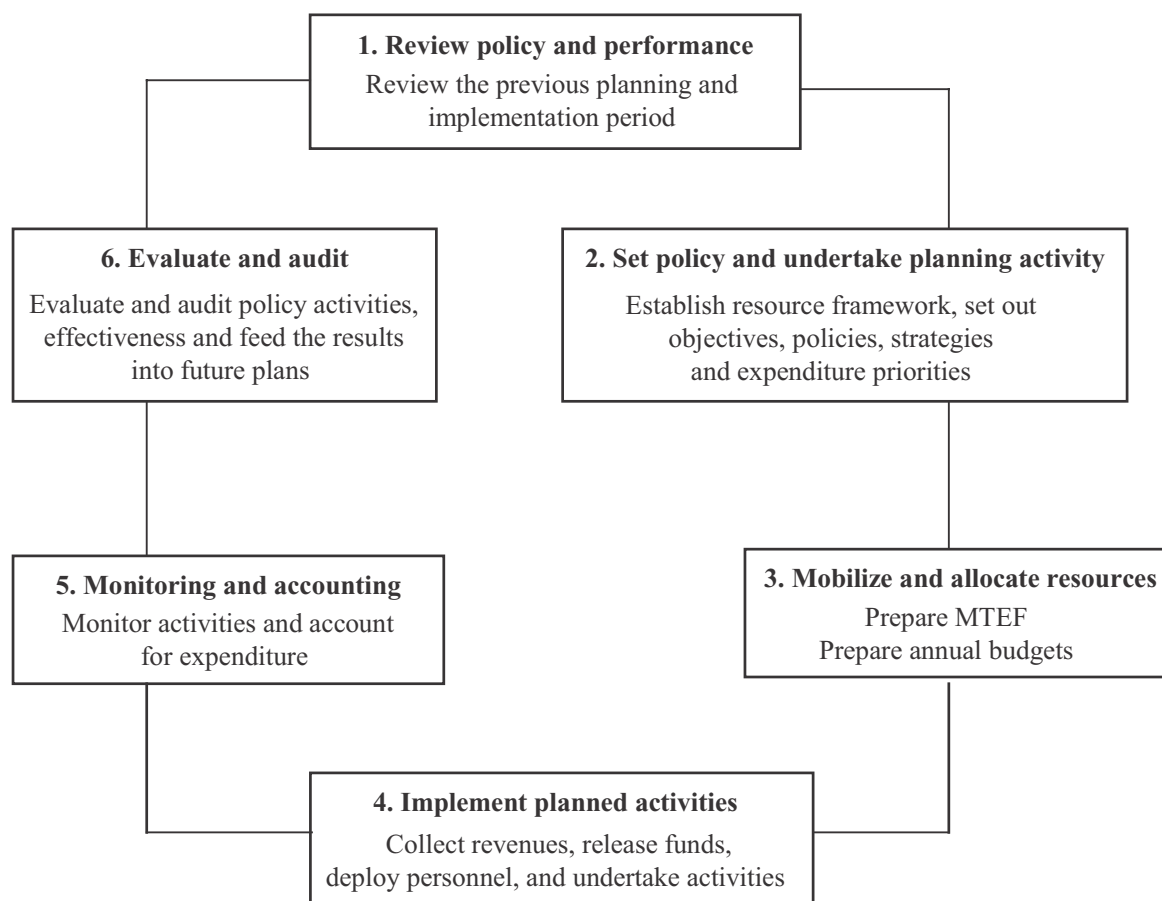
The PEAP framework overarches the entire policy planning and budgeting processes. This implies that all sector strategic plans, which form the macro-economic framework and subsequently drive the MTEF, are all derived from the PEAP.

Uganda has therefore a decade of experience in analyzing the costs of different policy options, their financial feasibility and possible trade-offs at the macro-economic levels. These are linked to both the MTBF which determines the resource envelope and the MTEF which sets the sector ceilings, and these are under constant review to accommodate any emerging concerns. Consequently, inter-sectoral budget allocations take place in the context of the MTEF based on the PRSP. Each financial year, therefore, 15 sector working groups are each required to make their case for resource allocation through the preparation of an explicit costed sector plan. This is a rigorous exercise that involves cost analysis of different policy options as well as trade-offs.

The education sector has been cited as one of the very few that has long had an effective costed ESIP. This strategic plan is a practical, action-oriented guide based on internal and external factors that direct the setting of goals and objectives as well as the resources needed to achieve results. Its development provided an opportunity for the education sector to focus on the strategic actions that the sector needed to undertake in order to attain goals of access, equity, quality and capacity development with strategic planning and programming as a priority.

As a direct consequence of this, the education sectoral share of the budget as presented in the MTEF has been one of the largest, at around 26 per cent of the total annual budget. However, as other sectors improve their capacity, the education budget is expected to come under pressure in the coming years.

Figure 3.8 The GoU planning and policy cycle



Source: Republic of Uganda, 2002.

Prior to the adoption of the SWAp, and as a direct result of the reforms taken at the macro-level to enhance planning and budgeting processes in the country, the education sector was already involved in the preparation of sector plans based on financially feasible policy options. The adoption of SWAp, however, accelerated this process. This was because under SWAp the entire responsibility for sector planning was shifted to the education SWG that draws its membership from the private sector, funding agencies, civil society and the MoES itself. The resultant sector plans were thus a product of a consensus reached among these groups and this contributed to its subsequent success.

The experience of participating in a working group has thus provided the Ministry with the capacity to engage more fruitfully with donors. Furthermore, the Ministry is able to better articulate its position to elicit a buy-in by politicians into its programmes. For instance, at the beginning of each financial year the Ministry holds a de-briefing session with parliamentary members of the Social Services Committee to explain to them the rationale behind the education sector programmes to be undertaken during that fiscal year. The timing of this debriefing is strategic, such that it takes place before Parliament approves the budget for that particular financial year.

3.15 Transaction costs

Transaction costs can be defined as costs that accrue from the process of managing external funding from EFAG to the target beneficiaries. It is a summation of all administrative costs incurred between the time when the GoU takes a decision to request external development assistance and when this assistance is actually received and utilized by the target beneficiary.

Prior to the introduction of SWAp, transaction costs were deemed to be very high because the MoES dealt with each funding agency on a one-to-one basis until the end of each contract. However, the adoption of SWAp was expected to lead to a drastic fall in transaction costs because:

1. An increased proportion of government/donor contracts are now focused on supporting the effectiveness of government structures and procedures rather than introducing parallel ones that specifically serve the interest of a particular funding agency.
2. The adoption of common monitoring indicators and reporting procedures is expected to cut down drastically the amount of time previously expended on servicing different donor appraisal missions as well as preparing reports based on divergent monitoring indicators and reporting formats.
3. The institution of JESR (which brings together EFAG, the GoU and representatives of the private sector and civil society to review plans and

budgets for the sector) means that less time is now spent in consultations and meeting donors since all stakeholders now meet as a group and all their concerns are addressed by the MoES in one forum at once. Previously, the MoES had to schedule a multitude of one-to-one meetings with donors, which required a lot of time to prepare and service.

4. The channelling of EFAG's funds through the budget, coupled with EFAG's agreement to provide indicative funding commitments for at least three years in advance, facilitates planning, budgeting, monitoring and integration of donor funds with the government's MTBF and hence has positive implications for transaction costs.

The adoption of SWAp has admittedly simplified reporting procedures since all the funding agencies are now prepared to accept one progress report ESSMR, and a single annual audit report of education sector expenditure prepared by the Office of the Auditor General. In addition, a total of 15 monitoring indicators in three critical areas of access, quality and efficiency have been used in the last five years to monitor progress in the education sector.

The above developments have certainly had an impact on the transaction costs. Unfortunately, no definitive study has been carried out on the issue of transaction costs. This makes it difficult to isolate transaction costs directly attributed to the management of donor funding from those that would accrue to the Ministry whether or not there is donor funding in the sector.

Despite the above limitations, there is, however, a general feeling among GoU officials that the adoption of SWAp has (at least in the short and medium terms) increased transaction costs rather than reduced them.

When the SWAp was adopted in 1999, the working group structure was embraced as a *modus operandi* for the implementation of the education sector activities contained in ESIP. These working groups were detailed to focus on sub-sector policy and strategy formulation as well as programme management

responsibilities. Consequently, each working group was required to develop its own activity work plans and to organize monthly meetings to review progress. Members of the working group were drawn from the MoES and external stakeholders.

In practice, however, working groups began functioning as management committees with wide stakeholder representation. They had at least two meetings a month to assign tasks to individual members and to review progress. However, these tasks could actually have been accomplished during the meetings themselves.

Rather than sticking to their terms of reference, working groups began interpreting their membership and meetings flexibly as circumstances dictated. For instance, meetings were frequently used just to assign small tasks to individual members and to review progress. Indeed, some meetings were called with no purpose at all, or some members were invited when they actually had nothing to contribute to the group. Therefore, although the working groups' structure encouraged cross-departmental co-operation and successfully engaged outside or external stakeholders in the education sector's activities, there were glaring weaknesses that clearly increased transaction costs. These were: (a) working groups' work programmes became increasingly ambitious leading to a backlog of un-accomplished tasks assigned during the JESR; (b) many of the tasks assigned to the working groups required neither cross-departmental nor wide stakeholder co-operation to be accompanied; (c) heads of department (commissioners) who were chairpersons of working groups became preoccupied with the activities of the group, thus diverting them from their strategic responsibilities; (d) the work pressures drastically reduced attendance in these working groups; (e) there was poor vetting of membership of the working group with the consequence that individual representatives of particular departments or groups were not always the most suited to the tasks of the working group; and (f) agenda items of most working groups became increasingly irrelevant to most members because of

the ever wide-ranging nature of the work plans that were drawn, and the broad composition of membership of the group.

Although these have since been rectified, the above appear to have increased transaction costs rather than reducing them, at least during the early years following the adoption of SWAp.

In addition, the pressure of SWAp-related work activities appears to have exacerbated the existing management problems in the sector. This problem is demonstrated by the fact that MoES officials tended initially to view SWAp as a very large project that added activities and hence workload to the normal business of the Ministry. Clearly, the rationale for adopting SWAp was to help see the totality of the Ministry's activities within an over-arching policy and strategy. The approach was designed to help the MoES focus on its priorities so that emphasis is taken away from activities that are not linked to the overall sector strategy and that they be subsequently dropped. In the early years, however, the adoption of SWAp appeared to have created a substantial workload while the Ministry continued to operate as it had always done prior to the introduction of SWAp.

Consequently, key weaknesses that were merely symptoms of underlying problems emerged. These included:

1. There was a dichotomy between the Ministry's routine work as well as emerging priorities and SWAp's specific tasks. Officials were caught between performing normal routine work and accomplishing activities related to the SWAp process. The situation was aggravated because SWAp was introduced when MoES was undergoing restructuring, and most of the staff were not in post.
2. As the SWAp process became institutionalized, basic management routines of the MoES were neglected. For instance, a number of departments found it very difficult to hold regular departmental meetings. Furthermore,

most senior managers spent a considerable amount of time in meetings convened by other departments and therefore had little time left to accomplish any meaningful managerial work. Most senior managers argued that although SWAp had helped the Ministry to focus on its priorities, it was not without cost. Most officers found themselves stretched between so many different activities that it was very difficult for them to focus on critical issues of their assignment that were begging for their attention.

At present there are clear signals that the administrative workload for the GoU (particularly the planning department of the MoES), has been increased by the shift to budget support. There is also a feeling that the management of the partnership relations with the funding agencies has taken precedence over the management of the education service itself (i.e. an example of the process taking priority over the product). The new burden of managing the semi-annual education sector reviews, as well as the tracking of the finances and the statistics required by external agencies to verify undertakings, has not been matched by increases in the public service commission's recruitment of qualified staff. The Ministry officials are thus overstretched.

Such increases in workload are to be expected in the short term, at least because of the continued survival of the parallel project support modality. For some agencies, it is the policies from their metropolis that preclude their involvement through budget support arrangements. In addition, others wish to support priorities outside the primary education sub-sector. There is also a significant number of agencies that continue to channel substantial amounts of resources using their domestic NGOs who, in turn, develop partnerships with Ugandan NGOs for project implementation. However, this has gone on for a long time and is certainly increasing.

At the same time, strong feelings continue to be felt by the district and school levels who express the view that educational issues and needs cannot be uniform across Uganda. District officials in particular preferred locally

planned and implemented projects that were better tailored to the heterogeneous needs of different districts, hence their preference for project-type interventions.

In addition, projects evidently have continuing relevance and value as a quick interventionist tool for the precise targeting of resources to localized problems and for piloting innovative approaches and new models of education delivery. Therefore, transaction costs are bound to increase as the fungibility of projects inevitably implies wasteful duplication of services and non-cost effective multiple reporting procedures.

Despite these limitations, there are clear signs that an increasing number of external agencies are satisfied with the harmonious and collegial nature of Uganda's education sector partnership and the SWAp process can hardly be characterized as donor imposition on an unwilling government. Of course, compromise has been necessary, but the main donor influence on education policy has been through support to policy analysis and dialogue and through the joint working process rather than hard conditionality. This may, compensate for any increase in transaction costs.

3.16 Conclusion

The rationale for adopting SWAp in Uganda was to help operationalize the PEAP, which is constituted by various sector plans and investment programmes. Education in particular is a key sector of PEAP. The adoption of SWAp has helped the MoES to see the totality of education sector activities within over-arching macro and sectoral policies and strategies. The strategies are especially designed to meet the goals of expansion of access, quality enhancement, equity and increased partnership in the sector.

SWAp was adopted against a backdrop of rapid change created by the reforms that had been implemented in the early 1990s. Fortunately, however,

all these reforms have been complementary to the SWAp initiatives and have indeed enhanced its efficiency. Through the mechanism of MTEF, the education sector has been able to formulate realistic plans consistent with the macro-economic parameters and a three-year rolling planning horizon provided by MTEF.

The greatest impact of the SWAp on MoES operations has been in the areas of planning, budgeting, reporting communication and management. This change has transformed MoES from a previously compliance-based organization to a results-oriented one. Through its use of sector working groups as structures of choice, SWAp has been able to institutionalize capacity building in all levels of the education sector.

Turning to the issue of transaction cost, although SWAp is usually expected to lead to a reduction of these costs, the Ugandan case believes that the transaction costs have actually increased for the GoU.

However, for funding agencies it appears they have been able to realize a reduction in the transaction costs. This is illustrated by the fact that a number of funding agencies from the countries in the European Union are now prepared to have one person co-ordinate their programmes with the government. This has clearly led to a reduction in a number of programme officers that would be otherwise required, as was the case prior to the introduction of SWAp.

Finally, the success of SWAp is still mirrored by the capacity-based challenges, particularly at the district and school levels. These have to be addressed if these successes are to be institutionalized.

Chapter 4

Lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations

4.1 Introduction

This section highlights some strategic achievements and shortcomings of the education SWAp process in Uganda from which certain lessons, challenges and scope for their mitigation can be derived.

4.2 Leadership and responsibility in the SWAp process

Some of the lessons learnt relate to the necessity of institutionalizing partnership in SWAps for purposes of sustainability and broader ownership. For instance, it is helpful to have the education sectoral strategy endorsed by both the Cabinet and legislature. This gives it the requisite political back-up support rather than where the SWAp initiative is strongly identified with a few officials in the line ministry. Problems could arise when personalities change and it is difficult to guarantee the sustainability of sectoral programmes while the initiative and ownership remains confined to a few individuals, however similar. This is what happened in the health sector in Zambia (Jones, 1999) and the United Republic of Tanzania (Johnson, 1999). By contrast, Uganda's education partnership has been shifting, over time, from a reliance on personal contacts or initiatives towards making use of existing or newly created institutional channels.

4.3 Partnership and co-operation between the stakeholders

Citing the example of the Ugandan Education Sector Programme, Malinga (2000) defines partnership as a functional relationship between the GoU on the one hand and the funding agencies (including the private sector) on the other, which is premised on a common agreement to work together in order to improve the education sector. This relationship is based on an agreed code of practice and a common work plan (ESIP), which was formally agreed upon by all the partners. She concedes that although the partnership between the government, funding agencies and other provider organizations has for a long time played a key role in the development of the education sector (mainly through the provision of financial resources, technical assistance and the sharing of ideas), the adoption of the education SWAps has created a new impetus for partnership. It has not only brought about a radical change in the nature of the relationship between the partners themselves, but it has also widened participation in the education sector to include wider sections of the private sector, thus winning Uganda a lot of donor trust and confidence as well as development aid.

One of the most outstanding outcomes of the partnership process in Uganda's education sector was the development of the ESIP.

The ESIP management model creates scope for: (a) ensuring a commonality of interests between the government and donors; this is because ESIP provides a clear framework for co-operation and joint efforts between the partners; (b) regular consultation among the partners through the monthly ESCC meetings; (c) transparency and accountability; this is being accomplished through the ESIP six-monthly reports, regular audits, joint decision-making using ESCC forum, etc.; (d) continuous feedback; and (e) implementation of jointly planned activities (e.g. monitoring sector performance).

The resultant co-operative spirit is strongest among the external agencies belonging to EFAG, especially between the so-called 'inner group' who channels its contributions through the budget-support option. This group feels that the current semi-annual review process provides them with a satisfactory degree of monitoring and accountability.

However, some agencies appear to be resenting the 'inner group' type of partnership as it involves surrendering a 'direct management' approach reminiscent of the project support modality. Besides expressing the concern that the EFAG process 'un-links' donors from the 'grass-roots' results, it is also doubtful whether this reduction in direct engagement with the recipients of donor funding will not, in the long run, create problems in the knowledge base, relationships and commitment of such 'absentee' agencies that have no on-site representation.

Some donors are prohibited outright by their head offices from merging funds or adopting the pooling arrangements of the partnerships. For instance, the World Bank's procurement and disbursement regulations for investment support prevent the pooling of the World Bank and other donor or government funds.

The Ugandan education SWAp has not worked as well in the engagement and co-ordination of the NGO-led investment in education. The support entering the education sector through NGOs is poorly captured (if at all) by this partnership process, and so it remains poorly co-ordinated and documented.

Interestingly, while the strengthened process of dialogue, co-ordination and education sector support through budget funding is being perceived by the external funding agencies as a mechanism for 'putting the GoU in the driver's seat', some officials of the MoES feel that there is still undue control by the funding agencies, and that many interventions reflect funding agency priorities rather than the intrinsic needs of Ugandans for an education service.

There is a strong perception by these officials that the ‘power of the cheque book’ makes the partnership a very unequal one. That is partly because partnership agreements often carry varying degrees of conditionality, which implies sanctions for non-performance. In Uganda, formal *Aide-Memoires* frequently include conditions (undertakings) on the share of government spending which should go to specific sub-sectors of education or categories of expenditure. While that may provide a budget underpinning – which guarantees that a SWAp can be planned on the basis of a secure resource envelope – that form of conditionality reduces budget flexibility. Even the World Bank sector adjustment credit to support the education SWAp in Uganda includes explicit conditions for tranche releases (World Bank, 1998c). Bilateral donors most commonly include conditions related to the disbursement, accountability and audit of funds.

4.4 Poverty reduction in Uganda

The PEAP encapsulates the national aspirations and directions for long-term development and has, since its inception in 1997, guided the formulation of government policy. PEAP is the end product of a broad process of analysis, reflection and consultation, drawing on local communities, civil society, the donor community and the GoU. It represents Uganda’s response to the Comprehensive Development Framework initiative, and has been revised into the format of the World Bank/IMF PRSP. Its overall objective is to reduce the incidence of absolute poverty from 44 per cent in 1996/1997 to 10 per cent by 2017 by creating a framework for economic growth and transformation, ensuring good governance and security, directly increasing the ability of the poor to raise their incomes, and directly increasing the quality of life for the poor.

4.5 Capacity development

The introduction of education SWAs in Uganda involved an enhanced potential for addressing capacity-building issues and derives from the premise that when individual donor agencies join a common programme they would stimulate the possibility for retooling the MoES; organizational restructuring, decentralized context-specific service delivery, effective training and retraining programmes for both technical and managerial staff, improved monitoring of interventionist initiatives and reduced reliance on external technical assistance.

The MoES has been restructured in line with the expectation of the ESIP framework document to improve the Ministry's capacity to manage a sector-wide programme. The staff at the centre were considerably reduced and some departments were merged. New autonomous and semi-autonomous institutions such as the NCHE have been created. The ESIP I period has also coincidentally witnessed the transfer of specialized training institutions to MoES as part of the 1998 public sector restructuring exercise. In addition, the Ministry has been adequately re-tooled. These changes, along with other internal sector-wide capacity-building exercises, studies and activities relating to the 'undertakings' from the six-monthly reviews and ESIP policy refinement, have generated a sense of continuous capacity enhancement at the national level.

The capacity-building efforts that are under way at the local government level are being pursued within the context of a decentralization policy. The GoU's decentralization policy is founded on the devolution of responsibility for planning, resource management and service delivery to the districts and other administrative satellite units at the county, sub-county, parish and village levels. While the local governments in Uganda are autonomous, corporate entities such as the MoLG and its decentralization secretariat exercise broad oversight of their performance and function as co-ordinators of policy and central support facilities for the decentralization work.

The pursuit of decentralization was a deliberate policy of the GoU to achieve several related goals, namely: (a) to accelerate the reconstruction and reconciliation process following the civil unrest of the 1970s and early 1980s and so contribute to national development; (b) to reduce marked regional disparities; and most importantly; and (c) to achieve greater local engagement and sustainability, particularly in education and health sectors – the key priorities of PEAP/PRSP – through development of capacity at the local levels. This is in congruence with the donor-supported objectives of improving responsiveness, transparency and local reliance in service delivery as well as improving the quality and efficiency of resource allocation through closer links between resources and local needs.

It is noteworthy that the implementation of the government's decentralization policies had begun just before the UPE decision, and the education sector-wide programmes have since then been working through that decentralized structure, thereby building the capacity of government management organs rather than setting up parallel implementation units, which are often unsustainably staffed by donor-funded consultants.

In fact, both the GoU and donors take the view that the only way to strengthen particularly the financial managerial capacity at the local authority units is by taking the risk of disbursing funds through them, their weaknesses notwithstanding.

The bulk of education funds transferred to local governments are conditional grants; these are negotiated between the MoES and the individual local governments. The individual local governments prepare separate activity-based work plans for the PAF conditional grant scheme. The basic conditionality of this scheme is associated with the adherence to very detailed controls over the types of expenditures allowed. District managers need central authority approval for any resource re-allocations. Releases of PAF funds are contingent upon compliance with the reporting requirements.

This provides a framework for giving the districts both an incentive to raise their planning and the resources to enable them to translate those capacities into improved service delivery.

4.6 Challenges and opportunities

Despite the transformative effect that the introduction of SWAp has had on the entire education sector, there are still a host of challenges that have undermined the full realization of its intended gains. These include, *inter alia*, the continued prevalence of poverty, disease (especially HIV/AIDS) and civil strife, as well as the disempowering consequences of rapid population growth, social discrimination and inferior valuation of formal education, particularly among the marginalized nomadic communities. Above all, there are a number of education SWAp-specific shortfalls that ought to be addressed if the SWAp process is to deliver the expected benefits.

First, there is a procedural contradiction between the ‘SWAp logic’ founded on the pooling of resources, the sharing of responsibility and ownership and the fungibility of funding on one hand, and the traditional results-based management and accountability approaches still being used at the metropolitan offices of most of the funding agencies on the other. The latter emphasizes a simple one-way causal logic between the inputs injected by an external agency and the achievement of specific results. Yet in moving more fully into a SWAp, funding agencies generally lose their identification with particular outcomes. It is no longer possible to say accurately what their contributions translate into. For some agencies, this is the principal barrier to their moving towards a budget-support modality.

Similarly, in Uganda, there is now some, if not an inordinate amount of tension between the more globally oriented education policies preferred by the funding agencies and the more context-specific policies being fronted by the MoES. For example, the MoES now feels the need to give more priority

to PPET as a logical outcome of the very success of ESIP. Somehow, the UPE 'bulge' that will be leaving primary school as of 2004 will have to be absorbed into post-primary institutions. However, shifting resources out of the primary education sub-sector runs counter to the basic education strategies or action plans that many funding agencies developed and subscribe to in the post Jomtien/Dakar EFA and the MDG environment. At the country level, it would also represent a renunciation of the strategies and policies agreed with the GoU in the first phase of ESIP. To date there is an undertaking requiring at least 65 per cent of the education recurrent budget to be devoted to the primary sub-sector. Uganda is itself a signatory to the Dakar EFA commitments. Yet there is now genuine pressure for the MoES to re-allocate some resources away from primary education to PPET. How both the funding agencies and the GoU respond is going to be an interesting test case of the challenge of balancing global priorities with national needs.

The PPET issue itself illustrates the ambivalence in current practice about the meaning of 'sector-wide'. Primary education, which is being given overwhelming priority, is not a sector but a component of the education sector, yet MoES is responsible for the entire sector and ESIP is intended to be a strategy for the entire sector. MoES therefore needs to ensure that the relative priority it assigns to the component sub-sectors is not exclusively driven by the global priorities of the funding agencies. Moreover, it needs to be sensitive to the concern that its principal task is to manage education service delivery, not external support. The great majority of funding agencies, however, want their support to target only the primary education sub-sector.

The challenge is to convince the funding agencies to appreciate the interconnectedness of all parts of the education sector and apportion priorities accordingly. Such a sector-wide re-examination of priorities needs to focus on the dual nature of the linkage between the downstream implications of improved primary schooling for higher education, as well as the labour market, and the dependence of primary education on the tertiary sub-sector for the provision

of well trained teachers, administrators, managers and educational leaders. There are real concerns in Uganda today about where the next generation of high-level cadreship will come from, unless support for training at the tertiary level is substantially increased.

Another policy concern relates to the sustainability of the remarkable achievements made in the primary education sub-sector. As already alluded to above, around 60 per cent of financing of primary education comes from external sources. This is a high-risk strategy for the GoU, for it is the GoU, in the end, which will be left with an unaffordable education system if external funding were to be prematurely curbed or withdrawn altogether. The ODA budgets of most funding agencies fluctuate in tandem with changes in governments and the concomitant priorities' shift. More importantly, it is difficult to get funding agencies to make formal long-term financial commitments beyond a five-year period.

The GoU, particularly through MoFPED, is acutely aware of this risk and is proceeding with due caution. This caution is generating some tension between the MoFPED and the MoES, as evidenced in the heated debates witnessed during the recently concluded ten ESRs. The MoES, on the one hand, is cognizant of the vast needs of the education system and how the allocative efficiency of any additional external support could be improved. Conversely, the MoFPED is more concerned about the implications for the GoU's own budgetary commitments in both the short and the long term as well as the sustainability of the increased spending levels. This priority is likely to intensify as the MoES implements the resource-demanding Fast Track Initiative (FTI) and as it redirects its attention to PPET. The challenge for both the MoFPED and the MoES is to devise a prudent approach for managing the delicate act of balancing between economic and educational considerations.

Besides, the degree to which funding agencies in Uganda are transferring the administrative costs associated with their entry to a SWAp is skewed

against the recipient government. Indeed, the semi-annual ESR process could be having higher cost implications for the MoES than the stand-alone project modalities, where most of the responsibilities are externally met. This suggests that the MoES must devote large amounts of both human and financial resources to managing the relationships with the external support agencies rather than to managing education itself. There is, therefore, a need to find an appropriate balance in the sharing of transaction costs between funding agencies and the MoES. Fortunately these transaction costs relate to the 'processes' of SWAp management and thus seem amenable to mitigation. For example, some modification of current ESR undertakings and other accountability requirements could prove to be cost effective, as is the recent proposal to revert to an annual rather than bi-annual ESR process.

Another key challenge relates to the paradox of 'growth without development' of the primary education sub-sector. Uganda's impressive success in primary schooling thus far has been in the area of increased access. Greater attention still needs to be given to the improvement of quality. The quality of teaching and learning in most government-aided primary schools has apparently declined because, although the MoES and funding agencies have supported the expansion of physical facilities, revision of the curricula, provision of instructional materials and the enhancement of teacher training, the resources devoted to these interventions can barely keep up with the expansion of enrolments. This is reflected in higher repetition rates, irregular attendance and low cohort survival rates in the upper primary grades, particularly for rural children and for girls.

The current support for classroom construction through SFG favours the expansion of existing schools rather than the creation of new schools. This, in turn, has created excessively large primary schools. Current research findings, however, suggest that large school sizes are detrimental to quality learning (Cotton, 1996; Postlethwaite and Ross, 1992) and retention. It follows that the achievement of child-friendly school sizes and reducing the home-to-school distances that children have to walk will require building more schools,

not simply enlarging the existing schools. This calls for the development of a locally relevant concept of an optimal school size, along with a more effective school-mapping process. In addition, innovative quality enhancing models, such as the proposed linking of new satellite classroom clusters to existing schools, may be worth examining.

At present, there are considerably more primary school teachers than classrooms in the public school system. In the absence of a double shift arrangement, this implies wasteful deployment of teachers to remote rural schools.

Due consideration also ought to be given to the reform of the learning assessment procedures focusing mainly on the positive and negative aspects of the primary leaving examinations *vis-à-vis* the new primary school curriculum. The completion of primary schooling and the achievement of entrance to post-primary institutions could expediently be viewed as separate goals with distinctively different assessment strategies incorporating continuous assessment as well as end-of-year examinations. The use of a continuous assessment, together with a more flexible curriculum, could help to redress the problem of relevance and retention for upper primary school pupils in rural areas.

All these factors underscore the need for better monitoring and evaluation of resource utilization and quality assurance procedures. The complementary roles of CCTs and district-based school inspectors need to be streamlined and located within the broader mandate of ESA as an overall quality assurance management body. It also means that the monitoring and evaluation functions need to go beyond financial accountability concerns. The result should be to improve the quality of teaching and learning through better-trained teachers with improved morale, more and better teaching materials in schools, and critically efficient deployment of teachers. This makes clear the need for a new set of performance indicators to cater for these new concerns.

Equally important for the success of all these interventions is the need to encourage primary schools to build on the local support of PTAs and school management committees and by extension of the local community. Most schools are already in active partnership with their communities. However, interference from local politicians has often impaired the outputs of such active engagement. There is a need for improved and non-partisan dialogue between the local politicians and education officials on matters concerning the best ways to strengthen the provision of education at the local level.

Finally, the MoES has yet to develop and fine-tune sanctions against errant or defaulting key actors in the SWAp process; it also needs to fully integrate the newly transferred institutions (health, agricultural, etc.) into ESIP and create procedures to alter or set aside an inappropriate or mutated undertaking.

Despite these challenges, the education SWAp in Uganda has, through ESIP, provided an increased opportunity for addressing sector-wide problems at both macro and sector levels. There is obviously a good working relationship between EFAG and MoES, which has been strongly facilitated by their representations in the ESCC and SWGs; the SWAp experiment in Uganda's education sector has created a clearer potential link between education policy and its implementation than was evident during the undertaking of the project. The involvement of the MoFPED has proved to be the most valuable aspect of the education SWAp, as are the links between education policy and other wider government initiatives. The MoES has made considerable progress in internal reform in order to develop a capacity to manage ESIP. In addition, increasing disbursements to the education SWAp is taking place through established government apparatus in a manner that is typically linked to capacity building at both central and district levels and in a mutually reinforcing way that builds incentives for better performance.

4.7 Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

These conclusions are motivated by two concerns. The first is to represent objectively the emergent viewpoints from the preceding discussion in a succinct manner. The second is to locate the derived policy recommendations against the backdrop of conventional educational conceptions and prioritization. The derived conclusions include the following affirmations:

1. Institutionalization of the education SWAp process using the decentralized government structures has indeed improved education service delivery at both the macro and micro levels, increased stakeholders' participation and circumvented the shortcomings of bureaucratic red tape. At the same time, however, a SWAp process has brought with it an enlarged scope of responsibilities and challenges, and the concomitant material has caused human and institutional capacity-gaps at all levels. The central and local government level staff are either overstretched or lacking the requisite competencies for managing their new and expanded roles. The organizational structure of the MoES and its linkages with other line ministries or local governments still need further streamlining, and a number of sectoral targets have not yet been accomplished primarily because of resource envelope limitations.
2. Contrary to earlier expectations, the education SWAp appears to have caused a significant increment rather than reduction in the transaction costs for both the MoES and district local governments.
3. The partnership and co-operation arrangements between the GoU and the funding agencies have been strengthened over time. However, there are still some traces of traditionally defined donor-recipient relationships between the two parties. There are also internal tensions and differences within EFAG over a range of issues such as the policy choices that ESIP

should focus on, the preferred modalities of external support to Uganda, the behavioural style and institutional processes that should be used in working with the host country, etc.

4. The SWAp process has advertently stimulated sector-based studies and research because of its emphasis on transparency, feedback and accountability. However, the utility value of the research outputs for policy formulation purposes has hitherto remained very limited.
5. There is some degree of controversy regarding government ownership of the education SWAp, especially the determination of certain strategic policy decisions. While the funding agencies feel that they have empowered the GoU to own and manage the education SWAp in line with ESIP priorities, some stakeholders are of the view that the policy discourse and investment choices at the heart of ESIP have been explicitly or latently influenced by the government's dependence on ODA. There is also the inherent structural inequality between the GoU and its external partners, which undermines the bargaining power of the relatively weaker party (i.e. the government).
6. Because of the growing pressure for the government to broaden post-primary opportunities for UPE graduates and the current policy imperative of focusing on UPE, the GoU will not be in position to substantially reduce its dependence on external financial support in the foreseeable future as there is no realistic possibility of generating sufficient local resources for ensuring the sustainability of the expanded education sector programmes.
7. There are clearly some positive contributions of education SWAp towards poverty alleviation concerns partly through relieving parents of the burden of paying school fees through the provision of additional employment opportunities in the expanded sector.

Recommendations

1. There is a need to explore newer ways of containing the rising transaction costs for central and local governments, including the reassessment of the Ministry's commitment to hold six-monthly ESRs. The transaction costs of these reviews exceed the resources consumed in the visible preparation and the actual review process.
2. There is also an urgent need to redefine radically the role which funding agencies play during the ESR. The funding agencies have sometimes unduly influenced the direction and the dynamics of the discourse at the expense of other stakeholders' participation. The possibility of inviting their representatives merely as observers during the policy formulation process could be considered.
3. Education SWAp ought to be based on a truly comprehensive sector-wide policy framework derived from the harmonization of distinct but interrelated strategic sub-sectoral plans and thereby go beyond the narrow UPE focus. The quality and efficiency issues that were originally seen as integral aspects in the implementation of the education SWAp should now be truly addressed.
4. While some of the internal tensions and differences within EFAG could be healthy, there are also occasions when a lack of a shared vision proves to be dysfunctional to the success of education SWAp programmes. It is recommended that EFAG address this problem internally, possibly through the employment of a process consultant, with a view to devise ways of managing such internal dissent consultatively.
5. ODA that comes in the form of direct project support is obviously not wholly integrated into the Ministry's budget. While such off-budget support by individual ODA agencies is extremely helpful in providing a range of investment choices, there is an associated risk that these agencies will sponsor the development of their own preferred policy options. The structural and behavioural patterns that have traditionally characterized

‘donor/recipient’ relationships are more likely to feature in this project kind of funding modality.

The recipient commissioners in the MoES should thus appoint project co-ordinators who interface with the ODA agency in question in order to facilitate the utilization and management of the projects in accordance with the education sector’s priorities. There may, therefore, be value in mounting short but well tailored courses for these project co-ordinators in the area of ODA programmes. In addition, the MoES could commission a transparent ‘comparative advantage’ assessment of all the ODA agencies so as to help the Ministry to generate a menu on potential ODA support, from which it will be able to assign particular forms of ODA interventions to specific sub-sectors depending on where a given development partner has a clear comparative advantage over the others. This would have the net effect of improving the overall allocative efficiency of project support.

6. The government’s effort to protect and bolster its policy autonomy and local ownership through arrangements, such as general budget support and sector budget support, may have inadvertently given ODA agencies greater influence in policy formulation. Based on the way ESIP I has unfolded, the ODA agencies offering budget support now have a keener interest in understanding and influencing the shape and details of the entire Ministry budget.

This is a clear example of a policy achieving the opposite of the intended effect. It is important that this latent contradiction be raised openly and transcended through honest dialogue between the concerned parties.

7. In order to be able to frontline the current concerns of the education sector, the MoES ought to play a central part during the negotiation process between the MoFPED and potential ODA partners right from the outset. This is why there is a need to strengthen further the Policy Analysis Unit (PAU) within the MoES with negotiation skills to counter the robust policy positions often taken by the MoFPED and the ODA agencies.

Implications for training

With the ongoing gradual shift in emphasis by the MoES towards downstream results and tangible improvements in education quality, there will be a special need for a monitoring and evaluation activity that goes beyond the hitherto mechanical monitoring of expenditures and bureaucratic procedures. Emphasis should therefore be on the use of evaluative approaches that can help to improve our understanding of the interrelationships between operational programmes in education on one hand, and the reality of changes in the quality of education, poverty indicators or development changes on the other. The planning and conduct of client satisfaction surveys and the measuring of service reach have emerged as critical areas for training. More importantly, training programmes ought to re-focus on the challenge of managing the interface of off-budget, area-based project interventions with the wider context of a SWAp, which is largely being supported under the budget support modality.

Above all, the growth in the volume and complexity of work under SWAp underscores the demand for training geared towards the strengthening of the capacity of the centre (the MoES) to implement results-oriented managerial skills – including the management of its modified functions of policy formulation, sector planning, standards setting, monitoring and support supervision. It should also enhance the capacity of the Ministry to strengthen and cost-effectively manage its partnership with the local communities, the private sector, foundation bodies, other government ministries/departments, local governments, EFAG, and all other stakeholders who come on board under SWAp. Only then will it be able to perform its role effectively as the facilitator and overseer of public and private sector participation in the delivery of a quality education service.

However, it is the strengthening of the capacities of districts and other local governments to plan, manage and monitor the implementation of education programmes that serves as a useful entry point. To that end, the

inclusion of skills-development in the agenda of district capacity development initiatives is a worthwhile decision. In addition, a portion of the 5 per cent PAF earmarked for monitoring and accountability could also be devoted to demand-driven skills training and development.

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