Background paper prepared for the
Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2006

Literacy for Life

Sub-Saharan Africa Regional EFA Progress Overview: English-speaking Countries

Pai Obanya
2005

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INTRODUCTION

This study is concerned with the EFA situation in twenty-one countries of Sub-Saharan Africa where English is either the language of official (government) business or the language of communication with the wider world community. The countries are: Botswana, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

The first part of the study analyses EFA-related statistics on these countries, while the second discusses EFA-related issues that statistics do not often adequately reveal. One major rationale for according attention to ‘beyond statistics’ issues is that the reasons for the success and non-success of EFA-related policies and programmes often lie on the political and social realms. Therefore, the search for viable solutions should often be directed at these realms. In other words, to improve on statistical achievements of the goals of EFA, it would be necessary to go beyond statistics.

WHAT THE FIGURES SAY

Education statistics in Africa, as is the case in other regions, do not say it all. In addition, data is often incomplete, and a good deal of published data is based on estimations. In the special case of EFA-related statistics, up-to-date figures are hard to come by. That is probably why the monitoring reports so far published have not gone beyond the year 2002. The present report has sourced its data mainly from the web site of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, since published statistics from the countries concerned were not easy to come by.

A close examination of all available data bases shows the quality-related data used for the year 2005 EFA monitoring report as the most comprehensive. First, data are available on the indicators used for a majority of the countries covered by this paper. Second, and more importantly, the data (covering net enrolment at the primary level, gender-related EFA achievement, survival rate to grade five, etc) are a better indication of the EFA status of the countries concerned. Table one has been compiled from this source. It would be necessary to highlight the EFA status information conveyed by the different columns of the table.

First, on EFA development index (EDI), only one of the countries (Seychelles) figures among the ‘high’ range of countries. With an EDI of .971, that country occupies the 22nd place of the 127 countries scored on EFA achievement. Five countries are in the ‘medium’ EDI category – Botswana (EDI score of 0.863 and rank order 83: 0.863/83), Mauritius (0.931/53), Namibia (0.877/78), South Africa (0.839/87), Swaziland (0.823/89, and Zimbabwe (0.847/84). All the other countries belong to the low EDI category.
Table I: EFA Status of Anglophone African States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>EDI</th>
<th>EDI RANKING</th>
<th>PRIMARY NET ENROLMENT</th>
<th>ADULT LITERACY</th>
<th>GENDER RELATED EFA INDEX</th>
<th>FIFTH GRADE SURVIVAL RATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOTSWANA</td>
<td>0.863</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>0.809</td>
<td>0.789</td>
<td>0.959</td>
<td>0.895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERITREA</td>
<td>0.634</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>0.425</td>
<td>0.576</td>
<td>0.712</td>
<td>0.821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETHIOPIA</td>
<td>0.541</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>0.462</td>
<td>0.415</td>
<td>0.672</td>
<td>0.613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAMBIA</td>
<td>0.648</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>0.729</td>
<td>0.389</td>
<td>0.774</td>
<td>0.702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHANA</td>
<td>0.712</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>0.602</td>
<td>0.738</td>
<td>0.845</td>
<td>0.663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KENYA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LESOTHO</td>
<td>0.797</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>0.844</td>
<td>0.814</td>
<td>0.863</td>
<td>0.668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIBERIA</td>
<td>0.562</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>0.699</td>
<td>0.559</td>
<td>0.653</td>
<td>0.334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALAWI</td>
<td>0.688</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>0.810</td>
<td>0.618</td>
<td>0.788</td>
<td>0.536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAURITIUS</td>
<td>0.931</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>0.932</td>
<td>0.843</td>
<td>0.957</td>
<td>0.993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAMIBIA</td>
<td>0.877</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>0.782</td>
<td>0.833</td>
<td>0.952</td>
<td>0.942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIGERIA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEYCHELLES</td>
<td>0.971</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.977</td>
<td>0.919</td>
<td>0.978</td>
<td>0.942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIERRA LEONE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOMALIA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH AFRICA</td>
<td>0.839</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>0.895</td>
<td>0.860</td>
<td>0.954</td>
<td>0.648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWAZILAND</td>
<td>0.823</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>0.767</td>
<td>0.809</td>
<td>0.975</td>
<td>0.739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UGANDA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANZANIA</td>
<td>0.741</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0.544</td>
<td>0.771</td>
<td>0.868</td>
<td>0.781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZAMBIA</td>
<td>0.773</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>0.660</td>
<td>0.799</td>
<td>0.865</td>
<td>0.767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZIMBABWE</td>
<td>0.847</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>0.827</td>
<td>0.900</td>
<td>0.927</td>
<td>0.733</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Second, data on the move towards the attainment of UPE (Universal primary Education), as revealed by the scores on net primary enrolment shows that only seven of the countries are close to attaining that goal. Three others can be said to be making efforts to attain the goal. Three countries are far from the goal, while three others are in fact very far from it (Table II)

Third, on gender parity, there is a league-table effect that seems to favour the countries that are close to attaining UPE – Seychelles (0.978), Swaziland (0.975), Botswana (0.959), Mauritius (0.957) and Namibia (0.952).

Fourth, on adult literacy only Seychelles and Zimbabwe can be said to be close to attaining the goal of its universalisation. Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Gambia are still very far from this goal, while the remaining countries all have a great deal of efforts to make in this regard. The situation is the same with adult literacy, as the
Table II: Distance from Attainment of the Goal of Universal Primary Enrolment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance from UPE</th>
<th>Countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VERY CLOSE:</td>
<td>Seychelles (0.977)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Net Enrolment 09800 and above (2 Countries)</td>
<td>Mauritius (0.932)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLOSE: .800 – 0.899</td>
<td>South Africa (0.895)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5 Countries)</td>
<td>Lesotho (0.844)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zimbabwe (0.827)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Malawi (0.811)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Botswana (0.809)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOVING CLOSE:</td>
<td>Namibia (0.782)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.700 – 0.799</td>
<td>Swaziland (0.767)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3 Countries)</td>
<td>Gambia (0.729)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAR FROM TARGET:</td>
<td>Liberia (0.699)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.600 – 0.699</td>
<td>Zambia (0.660)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3 Countries)</td>
<td>Ghana (0.602)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERY FAR FROM TARGET: below 0.600</td>
<td>Tanzania (0.544)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3 Countries)</td>
<td>Ethiopia (0.462)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eritrea (0.425)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fifth, on survival up to the fifth grade, this appears to be the real thorny problem of EFA in the countries covered by this paper. It is a daunting quality challenge that is being progressively met (according to table I) only by Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, and, to a certain extent, Botswana.

Table three, comparing the countries for which EDI ranking was done on five EFA Status variables is intended to address a number of issues relevant to enabling and dis-enabling conditions for the promotion of EFA. He first of these issues is whether or not there are sub-regional differences in EFA achievement. The indication from the table is that the Southern African countries tend to occupy the top positions on the league table. This includes the two countries of the Indian Ocean Islands. The question for which appropriate answers will have to be sought relates to identifying the specific political and socio-economic factors that have favoured the promotion of EFA in the countries of Southern Africa.

It can rightly be said that countries like Seychelles, Mauritius, Botswana, and Swaziland are relatively small-sized, small population, and not politically complex countries. For that reason, the achievement of EFA goals is likely going to be relatively easy. The
question that arises here is whether or not one could apply the same categorisation to South Africa, a relatively large and politically complex country.

**TABLE III: Comparative Positions of Countries on Five EFA Status Factors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MOVEMENT TOWARDS GOAL</th>
<th>EDI</th>
<th>Primary Net Enrolment</th>
<th>Adult Literacy</th>
<th>Gender-related EFA Index</th>
<th>Survival to Fifth Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLOSE: (0.800 and above)</td>
<td>Seychelles (0.971) Mauritius (0.931) Namibia (0.877) Botswana (0.863) Zimbabwe (0.847) South Africa (0.839) Swaziland (0.823)</td>
<td>Seychelles (0.977) Mauritius (0.932) South Africa (0.895) Lesotho (0.844) Zimbabwe (0.827) Malawi (0.810) Botswana (0.809)</td>
<td>Seychelles (0.919) Zimbabwe (0.900) South Africa (0.860) Mauritius (0.843) Namibia (0.833) Lesotho (0.814) Swaziland (.809)</td>
<td>Seychelles (0.978) Swaziland (0.975) Botswana (0.959) Mauritius (0.957) Namibia (0.952) South Africa (0.954) Malawi (0.951) Swaziland (0.975)</td>
<td>Mauritius (0.993) Namibia (0.942) Seychelles (0.942) Botswana (0.895) Eritrea (0.821)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIDWAY (0.600 and above)</td>
<td>Lesotho (0.797) Zambia (0.773) Tanzania (0.741) Ghana (0.712) Malawi (0.688) Gambia (0.648) Ethiopia (0.648) Eritrea (0.634))</td>
<td>Namibia (0.782) Swaziland (0.767) Gambia (0.729) Liberia (0.699) Zambia (0.660) Ghana (0.602)</td>
<td>Zambia (0.799) Botswana (0.789) Tanzania (0.771) Ghana (0.738) Malawi (0.618)</td>
<td>Gambia (0.774) Eritrea (0.712) Ethiopia (0.672) Liberia (653)</td>
<td>Tanzania (0.781) Zambia (0.787) Swaziland (0.739) Zimbabwe (733) Gambia (0.702) Lesotho (0.668) Ghana (0.663) South Africa (0.648) Ethiopia (0.613)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAR (below 0.600)</td>
<td>Liberia (0.562) Ethiopia (0.541)</td>
<td>Tanzania (0.544) Ethiopia (0.462) Eritrea (0.425)</td>
<td>Eritrea (0.576) Liberia (0.559) Ethiopia (0.415) Gambia (0.389)</td>
<td>Malawi (0.536) Liberia (0.334)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It can also be rightly argued that the promotion of EFA is easier when the financial resources are not constrained. For this reason, middle-income countries like South Africa, Namibia, Seychelles, and Botswana are likely to find it easier to promote EFA. This argument does not however seem to apply to countries like Lesotho and Zimbabwe, two low income countries that have made relatively great strides in promoting EFA. Most importantly, very little consideration has been given to high-revenue countries (e.g. Nigeria), which has remained a low-income country, and for which no data are available internationally for the present analysis.

That war and conflicts do impact negatively on efforts to promote EFA is well accepted. That could explain the relatively slow pace of countries like Liberia, Ethiopia, and Eritrea. That could also explain the absence of data for Sierra Leone and Somalia. The problem however is that the same scenario cannot explain the relatively low score for adult literacy by a country like Gambia. Neither does it explain the absence of data for Uganda and Nigeria.

The most intriguing issue raised by Table Three relates to the inability of most of the countries concerned to ensure the survival of children up to the fifth grade. It is intriguing that this is a problem for South Africa and Zimbabwe, two countries with relatively high scores on other EFA status variables. How is a relatively low EFA status country like Eritrea able to ensure a higher level of grade five survivals than South Africa, Zimbabwe and Swaziland? Why is fifth-grade survival such a problem in Southern Africa?

Table Three also shows evidence of progress towards the attainment of gender equity, as shown by the relatively large number of countries with ‘high’ scores on gender-related EFA index. Could this be evidence that the gender issue is being seriously addressed? Is gender an issue that receives greater attention in the Southern African countries, where UPE is also close to becoming a reality?

These are questions that require further probing. They would help in unearthing the facts that lie behind the figures. In their answers would lie the key to further work in promoting EFA in the countries concerned.

PROBING BEYOND THE FIGURES

Published literature on the countries covered by this study does give some indications on factors that have favoured the promotion of EFA as well as highlights of conditions that can be unfavourable to moving EFA forward. The first group of factors we have termed ‘enabling’ conditions, while the second group has been labelled ‘disenabling’ conditions.

**Enabling Conditions**
**Political Stability**: Prominent on the list of enabling conditions is POLITICAL STABILITY. This seems to be the pre-condition to everything else. For example, political stability at the end of the 1970s enabled Mauritius to settle down to plan its economic growth. Sustained economic growth provided an impetus for development in all sectors, including Education. The same factor made its demand on educational reforms, and also helped to sustain educational reforms when these got to their heights in the early 1990s.

The same point can be made of both Namibia and South Africa. In these two cases, the end of Apartheid (1990 in Namibia and 1994 in South Africa meant righting the political wrongs of the past. Political reform efforts have focussed on achieving equity for the hitherto neglected populations. These reforms and a sustained effort to promote equity have spilled over into the education sector. The reforms have also been supported by stable political conditions that have now lasted for over a decade.

Botswana has been one of the most politically stable countries on the African continent. It has also been one of the best managed economies and one of the most prosperous. Political stability has meant continuity in policies. With particular reference to Education and more particularly EFA, policy continuity has enabled Botswana to continue building on the gains of all its past efforts and so the country has remained a high achiever in its move towards the Jomtien and Dakar goals.

Political stability has also played its part even in countries that are still far from attaining the EFA goals. Ethiopia, for example, was able to embark on an education sector development programme (ESDP), now entering its third phase. Whatever the difficulties its implementation has had to face, Ethiopia’s ESDP has been able to address such issues as access for rural children, the gender gap, social mobilisation in favour of EFA, and capacity building for efficiency and quality dimensions of education.

The case of Eritrea is similar. On becoming Africa’s newest nation after decades of war with Ethiopia, the country was able to set in motion the process of planning its development. This has included the planning and pursuit of educational development. The result has been (according to a recent country report) a yearly growth rate of 22.5% at the primary level, 6.4% for middle schools, and 10.5% at secondary level.

Nigeria has had free primary education policies in the pre-Jomtien years as well as EFA blueprints in the years immediately following the Jomtien conference. These were however neither coordinated nor allowed to take off on the ground, due largely to policy discontinuity resulting from political instability.

When the country returned to civil rule in 1999, its first major policy initiative was a universal basic education (UBE) programme. This is in the process of being woven into a national EFA action plan. While that process has been slow because of the complex political configuration of the country, progress has been made in evolving a national framework for the development of basic education.
In summary, the first lesson to be drawn from the African experience on promoting EFA is that the political fundamentals have to be right. It is only when this condition has been met that the more technical aspects of EFA promotion become possible.

Long-Term Strategic Planning: The benefits of this strategy are aptly illustrated by the experiences of Botswana and Mauritius. By 1990, Botswana was already in the middle of it’s the execution of its own EFA, as elaborated in the National Policy on Education (NPE) of 1977. By 1997, this has been revised and placed in the overall context of the nation’s VISION 2016 project. We are told that

The year 2016 features prominently in most Botswana programmes and Education is no exception. The target year was set by a 1997 Presidential Task Force, which began work on mapping a long-term vision for the country. The result of the Task Force was the Vision 2016 Report, Botswana’s development blueprint, which features education as a prominent aspect in preparing to “own” the future. According to the blueprint, Botswanians ‘anticipate a future where citizens would have gone beyond basic education to become an educated and informed nation by the year 2016’

In the case of Mauritius, efforts to achieve universal basic education actually began in the 1940s. By 1990, gross primary enrolment ratio had reached 99.4%, and gender parity had been attained. The education sector mater plan, initiated after the 1990 Jomtien conference (precisely in 1991), was therefore intended to address a

number of drawbacks which hindered the efficiency of the system, namely the high rates of drop outs at the primary education level, and lack of remedial action, the extreme competitiveness of the system, the inequalities between schools and regions and the lack of relevance of the content of education to the economic and social needs of the country

The master plan itself was an attempt to give effect to a 1984 government white paper on Education. It was also inspired by the results of the Jomtien conference, but more particularly by the VISION 2020 blueprint of the government.

Closely related to long-term prospective planning of Education (which is in itself an integral part of a national vision perspective) is the practice of placing EFA in a systemic context. This involves emphasizing EFA while thinking well ahead and beyond EFA. Both Botswana and Mauritius have shown that system thinking is likely to make EFA attainment easier. The two countries, while striving to attain the goals of EFA, have not lost sight of post-basic education. That is why EFA planning has been conceived in both cases as the basic essential and also as an integral element of overall system planning and reform

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2 Parsuramen, Armoogum (n.d) Achieving Education For All: The Experience of Mauritius: IICBA/UNESCO
Eritrea, in addressing its huge education development challenges, thought it fit to pay very special attention to early childhood care and education, the number one goal of EFA that is yet to yet receive due attention in many countries. (Box I).

Box I: Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Education -- Eritrea

In Eritrea the term Early Childhood Care, education and Development is understood to encompass a holistic view of the needs of young children as they grow and mature, and can be further broken down into the following:

- **Early Childhood** is defined as the age from conception to six years of formal school entry age.
- The **Care** of the child can be defined as the opportunity to grow in an environment of love and maturing within a safe environment that caters for nutrition, health, water, and the environmental sanitation needs of the child in homes and communities.
- The **Education** of the child is seen as a continuous process of changing during which the child learns to master more and more complex levels of thinking, movement, feelings, and interaction with others in the immediate environment. Development as a whole child is recognised to be of prime importance during these early years.
- **Child Development** is a field of activity devoted to responding to the challenges of human growth and change from conception all through to adolescence.

To meet these needs, integrated and child-centred approaches, which includes the family, the community, and all other stakeholders in society, are being institutionalised.


**Paying Special Attention to the Out-of-School Population:**

Limiting EFA promotion to improving the formal sector would leave countries with relatively low EFA Index ratings, as the elimination of illiteracy and the inculcation of life skills in the out-of-school population are also important EFA goals. Botswana again illustrates how a country can fast-forward its movements towards attaining EFA goals by paying special attention to non-formal education and literacy. (Box II)

**An Inclusive Approach:** This involves taking all the dimensions of an EFA programme together – access, quality, relevance, and efficiency. This runs counter to the popular view among some donors and foreign expert advisers that insists on resource strapped countries addressing the issue of Access first. It is also customary to hear persons directly responsible for EFA policies in African countries make such statements as “now that we are making some progress with Access, we are ready to start addressing equity, quality and efficiency issues more seriously”.

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Box II: Botswana’s Attempts to Reach the Unreached

- The literacy in the workplace project is designed to reach non-literate persons in their places of work. It involves the Department of Non-formal Education (DNFE) and the target organisations working together to identify study venues, arrange study time tables, and ensure that workers are released to attend classes. Employers are expected to pay the facilitators, to whom DNFE provides training and materials. The project has (by 2005) involved 51 organisations and 580 non-literate workers since its inception in 1991.

- The Income-Generating Activities project is aimed at teaching productive, business and management skills to persons participating in the national literacy programme, and it is intended to enable them to improve their living standards – an opportunity for applying literacy and numeracy skills to real-life situations, thereby reducing the risk of a relapse into illiteracy.

- The village reading room project, jointly run by DNFE and the National Library, has been in place since the 1980s as a post-literacy programme and offers neoliterates the opportunity of reading beyond their primers and of acquiring Reading as a lifelong habit.

- The English as a second language programme is a follow-up to the 1984 and 1987 evaluations of the national literacy programme, which revealed the need to carry literacy acquisition a step further by acquiring English for wider communication and further learning.

- The Remote Areas Dwellers (RADS) programme is designed for disadvantaged communities in remote areas, especially targeting the indigenous populations of the Kalahari desert, as well as pregnant girls who drop out of school.


What such statements and professional advice tend to underplay is that there will be really no meaningful education without quality and relevance. National EFA promotion efforts and investments will also not make sense without efficiency considerations. Moreover, one major cause of resistance to mass education is lack of relevance, especially relevance to socio-cultural conditions. In short, any attempt to pursue Access exclusively is likely to be counter-productive, as the ‘beyond access’ considerations can be an impediment to Access.

Mauritius has some lessons for Africa in this regard, as its education sector master plan was a response to challenges that could arise even in cases in which universal access has been achieved. The plan accordingly addressed ‘problems that had centred on the problems of inequality, competitiveness, lack of relevance, and insufficient access to higher levels of education’, with the following as more appropriate EFA-related objectives:

- Every child reaching agreed upon standards of basic education
- Improvement of quality at all levels
• Raising the standards of low-achieving schools, to bridge the gap in learning opportunities that had earlier existed between schools and regions
• Ensuring full development of the aptitudes of every child
• Promoting educational management strategies that should ensure the most effective use of resources
• Ensuring that Education continues to contribute to the economic and social development of the country.³

The experience of Botswana is equally instructive. The revised national policy on education of 1997 was said to have identified the need for improving the quality of education, which was generally believed to have been compromised by concerns for access. Concerns for quality, relevance and efficiency were therefore built into the ongoing EFA programme by
• Developing programmes for raising the standards of teachers and of teaching – raising the academic and professional qualifications of teachers and introducing remedial teachers into the basic education cycle
• Re-orienting curricula to emphasize the skills that Botswanans would need in a developing, rapidly changing society and economy
• Recognising basic education as having a strong role to play in preparing citizens for transformation from a traditional, agro-based economy to an industrial economy that should compete with other countries, thus reformulating the objectives of education as follows:
  ▪ To raise educational standards at all levels
  ▪ To emphasize science and technology in the system
  ▪ To make further education and training more relevant and available to larger numbers of people
  ▪ To enhance partnership between school and community
  ▪ To provide life-long education to all sections of the population
  ▪ To assume a more effective control of the examination mechanism, in order to ensure that the broad objectives of the curriculum are realised
  ▪ To achieve efficiency in educational development ⁴

The example of South Africa’s post-apartheid reforms is also worthy of mention. Equality of educational opportunities was not simply a question of expanding access. It was accompanied by quality issues, like the elaboration of an outcomes-based curriculum and the development of a national qualifications framework. The latter is an attempt to build bridges and ladders between formal and non-formal education (as an integral part of a national life-long education strategy),⁵ and both initiatives represent a

³ A. Parsuramen (p.cit.)
⁴ R. Mukumbira (op. cit.)
suitable response to the challenges of the sixth goal of EFA, which calls for the establishment of measurable outcomes to be achieved by all, including non-formal education.

**Civil Society Involvement**

Mauritius provides a classic example of a case in which not carrying the people along can lead to policy failure. A decision to close down private secondary schools in 1982 has led to ‘tragic human problems’. For this reason, the Minister of Education in 1991 opted for the participatory approach (Box III).

**Box III: Participatory Approach: A Minister’s Testimony**

‘….Given the fact that we live in a vibrant, democratic society where people maintain an enthusiastic and lively interest in educational issues, I was aware that the people of Mauritius would be willing to contribute and that they should be given the opportunity to do so. I felt that our various partners in education, as well as the community at large, should not feel isolated in an exercise that would mould the future of their children and of the country.

‘For all these reasons, I chose the participatory approach as I wished the plan to reflect the aspirations of the people, to rally popular support and to reflect national commitment. We were able to create a national interest for the exercise, to motivate partners to reflect on crucial educational issues and to find solution as a team. I did not want the people to be passive recipients.’

---- A Parsuramen (op. cit.)

**Broad-Based Growth Strategy**

Eritrea illustrates this concept clearly in its development planning process. For example, the government ‘regards equal access to basic education, preventive and curative health services, and the psycho-social protection of vulnerable children as fundamental conditions to achieving the long-range goal of reducing poverty, disease, and other factors that hinder the social, cultural and economic advancement of its entire people’.

The Gambia provides another worthy illustrative example. Here, EFA promotion has been closely linked with the Education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the present education development document, spanning the period 2004-2015, is appropriately titled ‘Rethinking Education for Poverty Reduction.’

A related area to linking EFA promotion closely to poverty reduction strategies is that of abolition of school fees. In The Gambia, for example, ‘the non-payment of fees, the

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6 ERITREA COUNTRY REPORT (op. cit.)
provision of free textbooks and free meals through the school feeding programme, contributed immensely too the increase in enrolment at the lower basic level'.

A recent publication by the Global EFA Campaign cites the following ‘examples of success’ resulting from the abolition of school fees

- In Kenya, 1.3 million children entered school for the first time after the nation adopted a free education policy in January 2003
- In Malawi, enrolment grew from 1.9 million to 3 million
- Tanzania’s enrolment double from 1.4 million to 3 million
- In Uganda, using the proceeds of debt relief in 1997, the country moved towards universal enrolment and abolished school fees. Enrolment then jumped from 2.5 million to over 6 million between 1997 and 2000.

Building National Capacity for Planning and Execution

Ghana’s experience with fCUBE (Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education) shows that EFA promotion does not necessarily require extra and complicated bureaucracies. It is possible to strengthen and reorient the structures already in place, as illustrated in Table IV.

Such a strategy – repositioning structures at the Education Ministry level – does not exclude decentralisation. It simply means that activities will be devolved to comparable decentralised structures at the sub-national level.

The strategy also does no harm to popular participation. Broad-based consultation with stakeholders would ideally take place in different forms at different decentralised levels of governance, as well as at the central level.

The greatest advantage of the strategy is that it reduces dissipation of energy (and units of the same Ministry working at cross-purposes to he barest minimum. It also reinforces the application of broad-based strategies and gives a systemic cover to the development of educational programmes.

Thus, while EFA promotion would certainly be coordinated by a specific agency, this body does not have to re-invent the education development wheels already available in other organs of the same Ministry of Education. Each organ brings its expertise to bear on EFA promotion, and coordinates EFA promotion with its activities in other areas of Education.

It is also a cost-effective strategy in which every unit continuously learns to contribute its quota to ensure the success of EFA promotion. Human and institutional capacity is reinforced, in the process, through engaging jointly in meeting the challenges posed by the promotion of EFA.

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7 Republic Of The Gambia: COUNTRY STATUS REPORT:2005
8 RESULTS: 2005 Basics: Global Education for All Campaign (sourced from the Internet)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIVISION/UNIT</th>
<th>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>MAIN ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Teacher Education Division          | • Develop balanced, well trained teachers for schools  
• Provide trained teachers for all schools in the country  
• Maintain teachers’ skills and expertise  
• Provide opportunity for teachers at the basic level to develop and improve on their career                                                                                                                                                                                                 | • Expanding teacher training programme  
• Providing pre-service training for teachers  
• Providing head teachers’ training programmes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Logistics and Supplies Division     | • Improve teacher morale  
• Motivate teachers and staff  
• Provide adequate and timely supply of teaching and learning materials to all schools  
• Distribute equipment, tools and materials equitably  
• Develop efficient techniques for purchasing and supply of books to schools                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | • Plan and implement procurement schedules relating to school calendar  
• Developing an efficient distribution network                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Inspectorate Division               | • Support teachers professionally  
• Support head teachers in the management of schools  
• Monitor teaching and learning activities regularly  
• Monitor provision and use of facilities in schools                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | • Provision of baseline data on performance  
• Provision of teachers and school performance data  
• Assessing efficacy of teaching techniques                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Curriculum Development and Research| • Analyze, review and revise school syllabuses  
• Develop appropriate content for syllabuses, based on consensus objectives for basic education  
• Develop curriculum and courses to meet the objectives of basic education  
• Review syllabuses and curricula to reflect                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | • Develop, write, and rewrite syllabuses for all levels of basic education  
• Organize national conferences for syllabus reviews  
• Conduct research and test instruments for pupils, based on the syllabus  
• Conduct training workshops for teachers on the use of syllabus                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Basic Education Division</strong></th>
<th><strong>Administration and Finance</strong></th>
<th><strong>Human Resource Development</strong></th>
<th><strong>Changes in objective of basic education</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Achieve total enrolment for all children by 2005  
• Provide adequate infrastructure for all schools in all communities  
• Achieve total involvement and participation of all stakeholders in education services  
• Support all communities and partners on role and responsibilities  
• Achieve equity and balance in the provision of all facilities  
• Empower and support school communities to construct new facilities, rehabilitate and expand old ones to meet the needs for infrastructure  
• Maintain and improve upon existing facilities at all levels of the basic education system  
• Open new schools in all suitable areas throughout the country to accommodate all children  
• Conduct enrolment and retention campaigns and forums in remote communities  
• Collaborate with all partners, NGOs, and other service providers | • Develop equitable formula for resource distribution  
• Carry out staff rationalization  
• Improve the efficiency of financial services  
• Provide equipment at district level for financial management  
• Train districts in financial management and control | • Reform management services  
• Decentralize management to the district levels  
• Develop human and personnel resources  
• Provide equitable distribution of staff  
• Motivate staff at all levels  
• Reward hardworking staff  
• Sanction non-performing staff  
• Eliminate non-performing staff at all levels  
• Review organizational structure of Ministry Of Education and GES (Ghana Education Service)  
• Review management personnel systems of GES  
• Redeployment and rationalization of personnel at all levels of GES  
• Training and orientation of management personnel | • Conduct in-service workshops for staff and subject panels |
| **Girls’ Education Unit** | • Achieve accelerate increase in enrolment of girls to equal that of boys  
• Eliminate drop out rate for girls at all levels of basic education  
• Increase girls choosing science and mathematics courses to equal that of boys | • Organize and empower pressure groups to develop policies and laws to support girls’ education  
• Develop collaboration among partners  
• Conduct training and awareness creation for stakeholders and beneficiary groups  
• Conduct research and consultation studies to learn more about issues of girls education and involvement in science and mathematics  
• Develop human and resource capacity to sustain and improve upon activities to increase girls’ education  
• Organize the public to strengthen community and group activities to improve upon girls’ education |
| **Information, Education And Communication** | • Inform and create awareness about the programme and its activities  
• Elicit support, commitment and Participation of all partners and stakeholders  
• Coordinate NGOs, private organizations and groups to contribute to achieve the goals of fCUBE  
• Address attitude and behaviour change as needed to attain the goals of fCUBE  
• Disseminate information | • Produce and publish materials and pieces for public information  
• Organize meetings, workshops and seminars  
• Prepare TV and radio programmes |

(SOURCE: Ghana Education Service, FCUBE Secretariat)
Disenabling Factors

The major disenabling factors to attaining the goals of EFA in the countries covered by this study are related to the conditions of human existence in Africa: poverty, political instability, HIV/AIDS.

Poverty and Indebtedness

Fifteen of the twenty-one countries covered by this study are classified as ‘low income countries’, while a good number of them (e.g. Tanzania and Uganda) also belong to the highly indebted poor countries category. Tables 1 to 3 have actually shown some close correlation between high income and the pace of movement towards EFA goals. It is therefore logical to speculate that, given other enabling conditions, increasing the wealth of individual countries could accelerate the pace of movement towards EFA.

This is the rationale behind the United Nations Fast Track Initiative (FTI). Three of the countries on our list (Ethiopia, Gambia, and Ghana) are among 14 countries worldwide whose EFA plans had by April 2005 been ‘endorsed’ under the fast track initiative. The problem however has been lack of adequate financial commitment by donor nations.

Wars, Civil Conflicts, Political Instability

This is one single factor that best explains the lack of progress towards the attainment of EFA goals in Somalia, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. In the first case, instability is still far away, and accordingly, planning for national development (including planning for EFA) can simply not start. In the other two cases, some work is being done. UNICEF, UNHCR, and a number of NGOs are active in local communities ensuring the barest minimum of educational activities. Liberia is already working on its EFA national plans (as reported by the UN coordinator in April 2005). The challenge would be to find ways of incorporating the mobilisation strategies of emergency education into on-going strategies.

HIV and AIDS

The HIV and AIDS do constitute a thorn in the flesh of attempts by nearly all the countries concerned by this study in promoting the goals of EFA. In this particular connection, Botswana offers an illustrative example. A recent assessment has this to say on the problem

\[\text{Despite Botswana’s many educational achievements, the HIV menace has eroded much of the progress to date the gains have been undermined by the fact that young people in Botswana are at present the hardest hit by the AIDS virus. Preliminary survey results released in December 2004 by the Central office of Statistics indicate that 17.1\% of the total population of over 18 months of age is estimated to be infected by the HIV virus. The worrying statistic is that the population aged 15-19 years is hardest hit with an infection rate of 34.4\%.}^{9}\]

9. R. Mukumbira (op. cit.)
CONCLUSIONS

This study has drawn attention to two main problems facing a proper assessment of progress towards the attainment of EFA goals in African countries. The first and major problem has to do with statistics. Five years since the Dakar EFA Forum purportedly serious statistical studies are still relying on 1999 and 2000 data, and drawing inferences and making projections from that source. EFA monitoring therefore has a major challenge: making reliable data readily available.

The second major problem is that information is not easy to come by at the country level, even as national authorities dispute figures coming from international circles. The challenge is for countries to develop the IEC component of their EFA activities, the way Ghana is trying to do.

Closely related to the above is the fact that most of the reports currently available have been written by the promoters of the projects being reported. There is therefore a good deal of emphasis on statements of intent (as opposed to actual achievements) and on paying glowing tributes to initiatives (as opposed to highlighting challenges and lessons learnt). The challenge here is for more analytical on-the-spot evaluations of EFA initiatives by independent evaluators.

One general conclusion is that in a majority of the countries progress in developing national EFA plans has been slow. With the exception of Gambia, Ghana, and Uganda, it was not possible to trace national EFA plans. There is everywhere mention of their being in the form of work in progress. There is certainly a problem here with capacity for national planning, especially in a situation in which all partners have to be mobilised. The challenge here is that monitoring EFA could do well to have begun from the very beginning, strengthening national capacity for planning.

With all these caveats, one can still affirm that the EFA process is on in the countries covered by this study. The pace of progress would depend largely on the enabling factors earlier discussed. The disenabling factors would largely also cases of limited progress. To accelerate progress towards the attainment of EFA would therefore require assistance to African countries to surmount larger developmental problems (peace and stability, poverty, HIV and AIDS) in conjunction with education-sector specific issues (particularly enhancing national planning and execution capacity).

Inter-African collaboration will also lay a valuable role here. Some countries have been able to capitalise on the enabling conditions. They have therefore a lot to demonstrate to others who are yet to make the best use of those conditions. African countries demonstrating to fellow African countries that EFA is attainable should therefore be a strategy to be vigorously promoted in the years ahead.
ANNEXES

SELECTED EFA--RELATED OUTLINE PLANS

1. BOTSWANA

2. ETHIOPIA

3. GAMBIA

4. LESOTHO

5. NAMIBIA

(SOURCE: ILO WEB SITE)
Botswana Education for All (EFA) National Action Plan (NPA) 2003 - 2009

The EFA-NAP was developed by a working group comprising focal persons from Government and Non-Governmental Organizations.

The plan is organized around the target areas identified in the Education for All: Dakar Framework of Action. The objectives and strategies described in the plan have been developed on the basis of the Revised National Policy on Education, Vision 2016, National Development Plan and the Ministry of Education Strategic Plan.

Area 10 concerns gender disparities:

Objectives of the plan for this area are defined as follows

- To empower women and the girl child
- To create an awareness of gender disparity in the Ministry of Education
- To reduce gender imbalances
- To eliminate gender bias in the curriculum
- To promote equal access and retention of male and female in institutions
- To eliminate gender stereotypes in the minds of teachers / lecturers and parents.
- Strengthen gender education in all teacher education programmes (pre-service and in-service)
- To eliminate disparities in provision of facilities for male and females e.g. toilet facilities

The implementation strategy involves

- Conducting workshops
- Producing and disseminating information
- Promoting the education and training of the girl child
- Encouraging women to take leadership positions
- Reviewing the curriculum to be gender sensitive
- Developing policies that are sensitive to different cultural settings to protect the right of all learners.
- Embarking on gender sensitisation workshops for all stakeholders.
- Incorporating gender consciousness in guidance and counselling programmes.
- Emphasising self-awareness and assertiveness as part of life skills training
- Infusing gender education in all teacher training programmes
- Addressing attitudes and gender stereotyping in individual in colleges and associated workforce and materials
- Provision of appropriate facilities for boys and girls.
ETIOPIA

The Ethiopia Education Sector Development Program (ESDP II) 2002 - 2005

The ESDP II plan is aligned with the Government's Five-Year Education Program 2002/2003 to 2004/2005. Both the Five-Year Education Program and the ESDP II have made Education for All (EFA) one major component and address the EFA goals and strategies set in the Dakar Framework for Action.

4.9. Cross-cutting Issues

4.9.1. Gender Issue

Objectives of the program concerning gender equality are to

1. Increase the admission, completion and transition rates of girls to equal to those of boys, by

   - improving access to education facilities and programs for girls
   - minimizing barriers to the demand for girls’ education
   - preventing social and cultural barriers to the education of girls
   - Creating awareness on the importance of educating girls by community leaders and members of women's groups, and to bring about changes in attitudes, values and practices at the family and community levels.

2. Creating safe, supportive and appropriate learning environments with greater gender sensitive curricula, textbooks and teachers by

   - Implementing gender awareness campaigns and training for parents, teachers, education managers and students
   - Including separate toilets for girls, establishment of girls’ education enhancing committees, etc.
   - Reviewing curricula, textbooks and instructional processes with a view to removing gender bias, if any, from textbooks and classroom interaction
   - Increasing the number of female teachers, head teachers and managers in the system
   - Establishing girls' education committees at the primary level composed of female teachers, parents and students.
   - Strengthening guidance and counselling services in the secondary schools
   - Encouraging girls to join non-traditional vocational-technical fields
   - The affirmative action for female students to join and complete their studies in higher education institutions
   - Strengthening support packages such, as tutorial support, assertiveness training, etc.
THE GAMBIA


The Plan has been drafted by the Department of State for Education

Redressing gender inequalities is one of the main focuses of the National Action Plan and gender issues are mainstreamed into different sections of the Plan, although it also has a chapter on girls’ education.

The Plan establishes that increasing female enrolment, especially on the Secondary level, and improving on retention rates is essential in order to achieve the Gambia’s Education for All (EFA) goals.

The Plan identifies the following broad objectives:

- Increasing access to education particularly for the girl child and those living in marginalised and deprived communities. This education includes Madrassah education.
- Improving the quality and relevance of mainstream schooling and vocational and life skills training;
- Increased attention to non-formal, early childhood and special needs education;
- Further re-organisation of the Department of State for Education to take on board government's decentralisation process;
- Better management capacity and professional development at all levels; and
- Improved access to higher education.

Chapter on Girls Education establishes that all interventions are geared towards creating an enabling environment for girls and women to compete equally with boys and men. However, the specific strategies for improving gender equality in basic education are:

1. Lowering the cost of education for girls through a female scholarship scheme at the upper Basic and Secondary levels
   - The Scholarship Trust Fund for girls is to be expanded to cover all the Educational Regions to reduce the cost of education and consequently attract more girls to school, especially those from poor families;
   - The government will cover the cost of learning materials at the lower basic level for the pupils under the scholarship, as well as the Examination fees.

2. Providing a clean, safe and supportive environment for girls in school
   - To increase the amount of female teachers, special programmes are set for women in teacher training. In addition, more teachers will be provided with the skills and knowledge to provide the required services particularly for girls. For new entrants
to the teaching profession, training modules on guidance and counselling and
gender awareness will form part of the training programme.

- The curriculum and all teaching/learning materials, which are undergoing review,
will be made more gender sensitive through a review subject panel system.
Subject stereotyping will be discouraged and emphasis placed on fair
representation of females in every subject area.
- guidance and counselling services will be extended to primary schools in addition
to upper Basic and Secondary Schools;
- The sexual harassment policy, which has been developed, will be implemented
and enforced
- classroom construction programme which provides separate toilets for girls in all
schools will be maintained
- The construction programme which provides for separate toilet facilities in
schools will be maintained.
- Special facilities will be attached to the toilets and the scholarship scheme will
include a sum that will allow girls from poor communities to have access to basic
sanitary tools

3. Mobilising and sensitising communities to develop local solutions to the problem girls
face in their communities.

- Extending community mobilisation and sensitization using the multi-sectoral
approach to the issues associated with girls’ education.
- In addition, Guidance and Counselling, Peer Health Education, HIV/AIDS
education and Adolescence and reproductive health issues will form an integral
part of the sensitisation programme.

One of the strategies of implementing the National Action Plan for Education objectives
towards gender equality is the School Feeding Programme.
LESOTHO

Lesotho Education Sector Strategic Plan 2002

The Strategic Plan has been drafted by the Ministry of Education. The Lesotho Government has participated in a number of regional and international forums that national policies and strategies are aligned with. The most important initiatives are:

- Education for All (EFA) Dakar Framework for Action
- World Summit for Children
- Committee on the Rights of the Child
- South African Development Community (SADC) Protocol
- SADC Technical Committee on Basic Education

Gender Equality is seen as one of the crosscutting issues in the plan, the general Education for All (EFA) goal to “eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education and achieve gender equality in basic education by 2015” is implemented through the following

Activity 1. Develop a gender policy for schools that ensure equal chance of participation and achievement in learning, teaching and school management

Strategies:

- Consultative process for policy formulation on gender in schools
- Facilitate approval and dissemination of policy on gender in schools

Activity 2. Monitor indicators on gender disparities on basic education on an annual basis

Strategy: Gender analysis of all educational data

Activity 3. Ensure gender sensitivity of curricula content, teaching and learning materials in basic education.

Strategies: Review all current teaching and learning materials and curriculum content for gender sensitivity

- Develop gender sensitive learning and teaching materials

Activity 4. Sensitise school communities on gender sensitivity

- Develop and broadcast brochures, radio messages and dramas to sensitize school communities on gender issues.
- Address public gatherings
- Sensitize Ministry of Education officials on gender issues

Activity 5. Rollout an information campaign to school communities on topical issues in education including gender sensitivity, environmental education, and citizenship education, population and family life education and school health.

- Hold campaigns on topical issues
The EFA-NAP is implemented by several national authorities under the overall supervision of the **Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture**, which is also responsible for the provision, monitoring and evaluation of education programmes. Each EFA goal, adopted by **Dakar Framework for Action** is linked with national priority objectives. The following national objectives are concerned with promoting gender equality:

**Section II**

2.1. Reinforcement of the free compulsory primary education for all children

by

- Strengthening the free and compulsory Upper Primary Education Programme by rationalizing access, and provision of adequate facilities (additional classrooms, teaching/learning materials)
- Improving working conditions and professional development (training and in-service training of primary school teachers) nationwide
- Revising any policies that tend to hinder the opportunity of any child to benefit fully from primary education (e.g. uniforms, levies, transportation etc)
- Strengthening schools' support structures (Parents Teachers Association, voluntary parent teacher aides, etc)

2.2 Provision of equal access and educational opportunities to quality education for all children to complete primary education

by

- Revising the primary school programme to ensure high quality education and to design appropriate teaching and learning conditions that would enhance retention, transition and self fulfilment among primary school children
- Revising the procedures of supervision, inspection, monitoring, examinations and placements to remove any elements that tend to reduce children's interest in school and retain those that encourage children to continue to learn even outside the school
- Ensuring the access, equity, and quality demands of the basic education programmes including mobile schools, school feeding programmes for the needy, new staffing norms, and the pre-service and in-service programmes

3.1 Ensure that equal access and opportunity to junior secondary education is provided free for all children resident in Namibia irrespective of sex, location, or other considerations; and all schools with partial junior secondary phase offer complete junior secondary education.
Strategies:

- Expanding facilities and teaching-learning materials for Junior Secondary Education in all parts of the country to ensure that all children and out of school youth have equal access to education
- Revising the content of Junior Secondary School curriculum to ensure it meets the needs of all children including the introduction of scientific, technological and occupational life skills, as well as programmes on HIV/AIDS, school health education, environmental and gender education, democracy and human rights education
- Upgrading the capacities of skills training centres
- Upgrading the professionalism of teachers of junior secondary teachers
- Revision of the pedagogy, monitoring and evaluation of junior secondary curriculum to ensure appropriate retention of learners and transition through the system.

3.2 Provision and improvement of the programmes, facilities, staffing, and management of good quality to cater for the needs of all categories of children and youth, and ensuring that occupational and life skills are made available in all JS educational programmes

By

- Expanding and strengthening guidance and counselling services in all junior secondary schools and youth development centres
- Creating and maintaining a database of educational and career opportunities and providers in Namibia, which are accessible to all, especially girls and youth in rural areas
- Establishing a Roster of relevant and appropriate life skills for youth development as well as competencies for various learners in the National Youth Development Centres
- Establishing occupational, career and life skills Centres in the 13 political regions and other strategic parts of the country, particularly in the rural areas as models and introduce relevant skills for the improvement of each area.

4.1 Expansion and improvement of access and opportunities in literacy and adult basic education programmes nationwide to achieve a 95 % rate at the end of the plan period

By

- Revising and expanding existing programmes of life-long learning to ensure adequate access for all Namibian adults and out of school youth.
- Expanding and rationalizing national adult literacy and continuing education programmes with special emphasis on women, vulnerable groups in rural areas and informal settlements.
- Revising and strengthening adult education and community learning development centres (CLDCs).
- Promoting, expanding and strengthening collaboration and participation of all partners and NGOs in the provision of adult education and training, and the community development programmes.
- Creating and maintaining a database of all adult and continuing education providers and career opportunities in Namibia.

4.2 Ensure that vocational, occupational and life skills form part of the adult literacy and non-formal basic education programmes to be available to out-of-school youth and adults, especially rural women and people with special needs in education.

by

- Strengthening vocational and career education and life skills as part of adult education and community development.
- Establishing and strengthening farm schools and broadening the reach to informal hostels to encourage the unemployed rural youth to embrace improved career skills and appropriate community cooperative living.
- Providing clear national policy guidelines on skills development and acquisition for self employment for youths and adults.
- Promoting the use of mass media for community sensitization on vital life-long learning messages and skills.
- Encouraging women through small grants and scholarships to take up vocational education to empower them to obtain entrepreneurial skills.