

CONTENT

INTRODUCTION	02
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	05
POLICY PAPER	07
EVALUATION GUIDELINES	39
INDICATORS FOR EVALUATION	47
REFERENCES	70
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	78
WEBSITES	80
THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND ITS SOURCES	82

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INTRODUCTION

Access to education of good quality is a fundamental human right, calling upon both duty-bearers and rights-holders. In achieving this right, international agencies and governments are proposing educational decentralization as one important component, enabling local participation in educational policy and planning. Underlying these recommendations is the tacit assumption that community participation at the school and local level will help governments to secure the right to education, by clarifying the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, and by yielding further democratic governance, increased accountability, and empowered communities.

Decentralization, educational governance at local levels and the transfer of authority to lower tiers of government is not a right in itself, nor is it necessarily always the appropriate or the most needed strategy. Country settings, systems and traditions differ. However, the fundamental need to secure access to and quality of education, as stated in the Dakar goals of Education for All in 2000, does not differ: it is a universal and internationally agreed upon right for everyone. What decentralization offers is one tool to reach these goals, a tool that must be conceived, used and monitored on the basis of a sound human rights based approach to planning and programming. But also a tool that is no panacea in itself, one that we still do not know too much about, and the use of which should never become the root of more bureaucracy. On the contrary!

WHAT IS DECENTRALIZATION?

The terms decentralization and transfer of authority can mean different things in different contexts. One must remember that neither are static situations, and that they often allude to deliberate processes initiated at the apex of hierarchies. Furthermore, decentralization has various forms. Deconcentration is the process through which the central Ministry of Education establish field units, staffing them with its own officers. Delegation suggests stronger decision-making powers at local levels; however the power mainly remains with the central authority, who can withdraw it at any chosen time without resorting to legislation. Devolution transfers decision-making authority to local levels, and powers are formally held at sub-national or local levels; the role of the center is mainly confined to information gathering and exchange.

Socio-economic, political, and educational contexts vary across countries, and while some show conditions favorable for decentralization, the political, administrative and fiscal systems in others may not so easily be adapted to the transfer of authority to local levels. Moreover, civil society readiness is a key factor in assuring the success of educational devolution. In other words, good and sustainable decentralization has to be planned for at all levels of the system and adequate sources of funding must be identified to assure equity across states, departments and levels of administration.

Countries may choose to decentralize their education systems due to administrative, political, or fiscal motivations. From the bureaucratic perspective, decentralization aspires to improve efficiency and to facilitate the operation of government. Most often, the origin of reforms is embedded in the wider political or administrative changes, rather than just within the education sector reforms. Whichever the reason, decentralization of educational governance should always be motivated by the duty to improve access, quality and outcome of education. In this duty it is the State, in whatever guise, that stands as the prime guarantor, aided if need be by the international community.

LOCAL GOVERNANCE: INCLUDING THE EXCLUDED

How can educational governance at local levels challenge existing social norms that may perpetuate inequity and exclusion, and how can it enable the empowerment of women and parents from poor households, disabled or other excluded groups? It is mainly men from households with a higher social economic status who continue to be predominantly active in local educational governance. Even though the poor form the majority in rural agrarian communities, few members from poor households have a voice on local governing structures and thus an ability to exercise their fundamental human rights to participate in the democratic process. Thus, disparity in participation is wide with regard to socio-economic background as well as gender or other forms of traditional marginalisation, giving rise to an urgent demand for policy intervention to enhance social inclusion in educational decision-making.

Even though local governance in education tends to risk reproducing traditional social organization by predominantly appointing male members of the local elite, it does also enlarges circles of participation to include women and marginalized groups in a range of educational decisions, including pedagogy and curriculum, personnel, students' needs, structure and operations etc, that were formerly the sole domain of professional educators or the elites of society. This enlargement must be emphasized, strived for and made a priority in the transfer of authority, because education for all will only truly be for all if we all feel represented at the table of decision-making.

Central to the State's duty to protect, respect and fulfill the right to quality education are the four interrelated As: availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability. While decentralization, in its various forms, has an impact on all of these, it is perhaps especially on the latter two that more and better educational governance at local level can be a strong factor. Thus, the form and substance of education, its acceptability, is clearly a question that needs to be addressed close to the learner, but without carving into relativism or below-minimum standards. Similarly, education must be flexible so that it can adapt to the needs of changing societies and communities and respond to the needs of students within their diverse social and cultural settings

THE AIMS OF EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE AT LOCAL LEVELS

At the World Education Forum, Dakar 2000, the international community pledged itself to develop responsive, participatory and accountable systems of educational governance and management; and to ensure the engagement and participation of civil society in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of strategies for educational development.

As follow up to the Dakar Framework for Action, UNESCO initiated a programme to identify main issues, identify challenges, and assess country priorities in the area of educational governance. The aim being to address the over-riding question of how educational governance at local levels can serve as a lever to meet the challenges of EFA, improving the quality and equity of education?

As a result of this research, the present publication, entitled Educational Governance at Local Levels, has been developed to inspire and help strengthen national capacities to formulate, implement, and evaluate policies and strategies in local educational governance.

UNESCO hopes that this publication will stimulate and contribute to:

- Enable ministries of education and their EFA partners to identify key priority areas and strategies for educational governance at local levels through needs analysis of political, economic, social and cultural contexts in selected countries
- Provide technical advice to review national EFA Plans in accordance with devolution reforms at systemic and sector-wide levels
- Advise governments to develop capacity building programmes to enable educators, bureaucrats, and political actors to participate in educational decision-making at local level
- Develop frameworks for evaluation to assess progress in the implementation of decentralization reforms at national or local levels
- Ensure gender and social equity by facilitating participation of women and persons with low social and economic status in educational decision-making
- Disseminate research and experiences in local educational governance to inform the policy dialogue.

Little of the debate on the potential of educational decentralization reform is informed by emerging empirical evidence of what de facto transpires at village, municipality or school level. While much analysis of community participation in educational governance has been carried out in industrialized countries, systematic review of such practice in developing countries is scant. Moreover, questions raised to challenge the efficiency of educational decentralization to improve learning outcomes remain unanswered. This publication will not attempt to address these questions, to carry out such country-specific analysis, or contribute to the greater use of empirical evidence. Thus, the needs remain.

THIS TWO-VOLUME BOOKLET:

One booklet includes a Policy Paper on implementing educational decentralization, followed by Evaluation Guidelines for developing a framework to evaluate progress in the implementation of educational devolution at country level. This framework consists of an extensive check-list of Performance Indicators, for input, process and output, addressing the following four issues: policy, plans & programmes; finance & administration; participation; and access, completion & quality.

Another booklet contains four Modules with activities for capacity building. These modules cover the following four broad areas: policy & context; civil society: civic participation & public-private partnership; planning for district education & local governance; and school based governance.

In the two booklets are furthermore included a list of relevant international human rights documents for background information and inspiration, as well as for continued advocacy and awareness raising. This is in line with the mandate of UNESCO to view education as first and foremost a fundamental human right for everyone, and to base its work on the human rights approach, which emphasises participation, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability.

The elements in both booklets are inspirational in nature and intent, neither are conceived as a state-of-the-art to-do list nor as the last word in the debate on local governance. Aimed at policy makers and officials they should serve as background and resource materials for planning and implementing reform. Furthermore, they are meant to inspire the development of locally based and locally owned capacity building modules and courses, but this must essentially be a bottom-up process since building local level governance can only succeed if local participation is ensured at all stages, allowing for cultural and systemic diversities to play their natural role, while respecting the rights of all.

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POLICY PAPER

IMPLEMENTING EDUCATIONAL DECENTRALIZATION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	08
DECENTRALIZATION - THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM	
DECENTRALIZATION: THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM	10
WHAT COMPRISES DECENTRALIZATION IN EDUCATION?	11
WHAT FUNCTIONS ARE DECENTRALIZED?	13
WHY DECENTRALIZE?	15
DECENTRALIZATION: THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE	15
DECENTRALIZATION: WHAT RIGHTS ARE INVOLVED?	17
PLANNING & IMPLEMENTING DECENTRALIZATION	
PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING DECENTRALIZATION	18
DISTRIBUTION OF AUTONOMY: CENTRAL AUTHORITIES AND THEIR CHANGING ROLES	19
PARTICIPATION BY CITIZENS AND COMMUNITIES	21
RESPONDING TO A DIVERSITY OF NEEDS AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL	25
PRIVATE PROVISION AND OTHER PARTNERSHIPS	26
THE FINANCING AND DEVOLUTION OF BUDGETARY AUTHORITY	26
BUILDING EDUCATIONAL CAPACITY	29
BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY: ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS	30
EVALUATING MOVES TO DECENTRALIZE	31
THE CHALLENGE OF SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTING REFORM	
THE CHALLENGE OF SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTING REFORM	32
UNESCO'S ROLE IN EDUCATIONAL DECENTRALIZATION	36
CONCLUSION	37

INTRODUCTION

In following up on the World Education Forum, Dakar 2000, where the international community and Member States pledged to achieve Education for All by 2015, UNESCO has a role in providing international frameworks for education policy and practice on key and complex issues. Educational decentralization, a key strategy for the management and governance of education systems, is one such issue. Across the world, decentralization of fiscal, political, and administrative responsibilities to lower levels of government, local institutions, and the private sector is being attempted as a panacea to solve broader political, social or economic problems. In parallel, governments are proposing educational decentralization, as part of the sector wide reforms. Implicit in these approaches is the assumption that increased participation in local schools would lead to democratic governance, increase accountability, and empower communities (Bryk et al, 1998; Hanson, 1997; Khan, 2001; World Bank, 2000). In the education sector this belief has led to such policies as transferring decision making authority from central to local governments, increasing autonomy for schools, enabling communities to participate more effectively in school management and resource mobilization, and offering incentives for private providers. Underlying all this work is the assumption that when the provision or financing of education is less centralized, benefits will follow: education will become better, more efficient, more responsive to local demands, and more citizens will participate.

In practice, however, we have little conclusive evidence of such benefits. Moreover, few systematic reviews have been conducted on the processes and consequences of educational decentralization in developing countries (Hanson, 1997; Khan, 2002). Drawing from practice in developed countries, some critics argue that decentralization may generate inequities, or greater disparities in the quality of services provided across different regions, or that public funds will hardly be spent more efficiently (Whitty and Power, 2000; Arnove, 1997; Prawda, 1993). Others question whether decentralization enhances academic achievement and learning (King, Rawlings et al, 1997; Hanson, 1997). Despite this criticism, evidence from some developed countries suggests that community participation, a core strategy in decentralization, can be a lever for change in schools (Sergiovanni cited in Hargreaves et al., 1998).

In view of these current dilemmas and different interpretations, countries oscillate between retaining centralization and transferring authority. Developed and developing countries are tentative in their approaches, moving certain functions across the arms of government, often withdrawing control or

authority from these destinations if they think their purposes are not met. While policy-makers who choose to decentralize education need information that allows them to deal with the more critical aspects of the reform process, they also need insight into the risks involved.

This paper examines the relationship between education sector and decentralization, with a view to understanding the lessons attendant on policy and practice in developing countries. It questions the actions of ministries of education and their partners, in particular their efforts to develop responsive, participatory and accountable systems; it also looks at the way these ministries engage civil society (Dakar Framework for Action, 2000). The paper provides a plan for reform with respect to decentralization, suggesting ways for planners to meet the challenges posed by calls for change. More, it brings together a record of experience from countries across the globe, providing a snapshot of new management practices and approaches to governance. In general, it serves the purpose of strengthening a national capacity to develop, implement, and evaluate policies related to the governance of local education; it also encourages a dialogue among member states with a view to generating more South-South cooperation.

The first section below, entitled *Decentralization – the Context of Educational Reform* offers an overview of decentralization. It clarifies related concepts and rationales, describing a range of initiatives across the sector and draws on practices in developing countries. The following section, *Planning and Implementing Decentralization*, comprises aspects of reform that are fundamental to planning and implementing decentralization. It looks at autonomy and the changing role of central authorities and communities, as well as at the diversity of their needs, and at private and other partnerships. It looks at financial distribution and resource management, and at the means of developing a capacity that sufficiently supports decentralizing moves. In particular, it looks at evaluating decentralization in order to measure progress regarding implementation, an area of management that is neglected far too often. Finally, the section entitled *The Challenge of Successfully Implementing Reform* looks at certain lessons and pre-conditions that accompany successful implementation. It also considers how UNESCO might best support decentralization with respect to Education for All. It offers guidelines in the form of questions that are designed to help those who would undertake this kind of reform. It reminds educators everywhere that ‘*decentralization is no magic bullet and no one size fits all*’ (Bray, 2003).

DECENTRALISATION – THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM

This section describes the context of a growing trend that calls for reform in educational decentralization and in local governance; it looks at the role of international agencies in the reform process, as well as the importance of policy-makers' sensitivity to cultural norms. The section defines educational decentralization; it looks at the elements of administrative services and resources that are decentralized, and the rationale and assumptions informing any such transfers of authority. The section concludes by bringing into focus certain experiences regarding decentralization in developing countries.

Educational reform is shaped by elements shared by many countries; these include somewhat fragile political systems, and limited human and financial resources. The cultural climate from country to country differs, notably with respect to political institutions and practices, and in their educational objectives. There is a range in the reception that is given to efforts to decentralize authority, notably with respect to making decisions. In the light of these variations, it is important for any appraisal to examine the local context and its readiness for change; the appraisal must also determine the kind of decentralization that responds best to a country's priorities. In the past decade most governments in the developing world have concentrated on their efforts to expand public access to education. Enrolment has grown rapidly in South and West Asia, in the Arab states and North Africa, and in Latin America and the Caribbean too. In contrast, growth throughout sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia is slower, to the extent of falling away from previous levels in some Central and East European countries (UNESCO, 2002a). More important still is that a percentage of children have only minimum levels of competency, and the education sector itself is not performing to expected standards.

At present few education sectors in these countries are organized well enough to meet the challenge of allocating their resources effectively; they can neither deliver services equitably nor raise the quality of performance and results. Many governments have responded by setting up alternative forms of governance and management, where the emphasis is on participation and better systems of accounting. In Africa this would include Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia (Anglophone), and Burkina Faso, Guinea, Niger, Mali, and Senegal (Francophone). In Asia it includes China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Vietnam. In Latin America Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico, and Nicaragua; only in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama, and Uruguay does the government retain a centralized system. Over the last ten years or so almost all the former socialist countries of central and Eastern Europe have engaged in an educational transformation that involves decentralizing. Ranging from the USA to Australia, many developed countries, have followed suite. Authority is being transferred to various levels, including regional (Argentina, China, Ethiopia, Mexico, Spain, and Venezuela), municipal (Chile, Colombia, and Mali), and local schools (El Salvador, Hong Kong, Japan, Nicaragua, South Africa, Uganda and the USA).

In their efforts to help these countries decentralize, and with perspectives of their own, international agencies such as UNESCO and the World Bank have played a significant role, and continue to do so. UNESCO's approach is rights-based; it promotes democratic participation in decision-making and the involvement of community and other stakeholders in planning, implementing, and evaluating reforms that are related to EFA.; furthermore, UNESCO has launched an initiative that enables member states to strengthen the capacities of local educators, bureaucrats, parents and communities. The training associated with building local capacities addresses issues of local policy; it looks at ways in which civil society and the private sector might take part in school-based governance, and in the planning at district level. It also asks how this work might strengthen the capacity of district Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), so that they are more efficient in collecting, presenting and using data

that furthers EFA policy. UNESCO makes available guidelines for evaluation as well, so that member states can assess progress in the implementation of reform. Having identified important indicators related to input, process, and output performance, they can then assess the nature and extent of reform initiatives.

In contrast, the World Bank looks to decentralize within the context of education and public sector reforms; here the focus is on new approaches to funding and administering services at regional or local levels. More recently, however, the World Bank has also supported school-based management and the transfer of decision-making to schools. UNICEF emphasizes decentralization within national development; as part and parcel of improving quality overall, it supports the creation of *'child-friendly schools,'* and, together with UNESCO, target the abolition of gender inequities.

In addition, local and national NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs) are also engaged in efforts to decentralize. They have an important role in the training programs that support the participation of local stakeholders. CSOs that work in this way include Save the Children, World Education, and many others. Some theorists see privatization as a form of decentralization; indeed, more privatization might take place as states reduce their authority over private schools. Sometimes privatization concentrates power in the church or in private corporations, re-centralizing control by placing it in the hands of civil society organizations (Bray, 2003).

In the reform efforts in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil, two elements are salient: (i) reform requires commitment from institutions at all levels; and (ii) primary completion rates are rising, repetition falling.

DECENTRALIZATION IN MINAS GERAIS, BRAZIL (1991-1998)

Reform is being introduced in institutions (preschool-secondary), all across the State of Minas Gerais, Brazil, where teachers, financial agencies and managers now have more autonomy. The sector is building partnership with CSOs that take part in planning and implementing at all levels. Important reforms include re-organizing the role of parents and the community in school councils, notably their participation in decision-making. These days all principals compete for selection. Although some challenges remain, the sector is now remarkably more efficient. A case in point, from 1990 to 1994, the number of children completing primary education rose from 38% to 49%, with repetition rates falling from 29% to 19%. Reinforcing the networks of local civic society, Minas Gerais continues to invest in building local capacity, in this way encouraging the poorer (and previously excluded) parents to take part in making decisions.

Source: UNESCO Regional Bureau, Chile

WHAT COMPRISES DECENTRALIZATION IN EDUCATION?

Although with reference to policy the terms *'centralization'* and *'decentralization'* can be defined as *'deliberate processes initiated at the apex of hierarchies'*, these are processes that sometimes chosen and carried out by default, rather than because of deliberate action (Bray, 2003; p. 205). While the terms have different meanings, common to most is the notion of territorial decentralization, viz. *'a transfer of some form of authority from the center to the local level'*. The transfer might refer to form (functional activities), level (national to sub-national to local) and the nature or degree of power that is transferred. The latter reference is an element of critical importance in this paper.

The form taken by decentralization depends on the level of government to which decisions are devolved, as well as the authority that is moved to other levels, and the rationale that informs these changes. Each form of decentralization has different characteristics, policy implications, and rates of success. Administrative, fiscal, market and political dimensions comprise form and level; *devolution, deconcentration, and delegation*¹ are the terms that identify the nature or degree of power that is transferred. Related to an increased participation from the private sector, devolution might also include *privatization* policies that are parallel to decentralization. In general, efforts to decentralize have revolved around attempts to restructure centralized bureaucracies, and to create devolved systems that transfer authority to different administrative levels, and at varying degrees of institutional autonomy. The authority in question might be transferred in form (and degree) from a central government to provincial, state or regional entities, just as it might also be transferred to municipal, county or district governments; and to schools and communities too. The purpose of devolution is to effect participatory decision-making by transferring authority to local authorities (see following, Table 1).

TABLE 1: THE TYPOLOGY OF DECENTRALIZATION

LEVEL	FORM	FUNCTIONS
<i>Central government to provincial, state, regional or district offices</i>	<i>Deconcentration</i>	Regional/district offices are in charge of functions that control personnel and financial management. The central government retains control of fiscal allocations and appointments.
<i>Central government to municipal, county or district governments</i>	<i>Delegation and/or Devolution</i>	Management decisions, staff appointments and allocation of local education budgets. Central government retains accountability and controls transfers from national treasuries.
<i>From Central government and regional/district offices or local governments to schools and communities</i>	<i>Devolution</i>	Schools are responsible for routine administrative decisions and/or more substantial powers. These might include maintenance, staffing, school policy, development plans, curriculum choices, fund-raising and financial management. School- or community-based structures might exercise power over some school and educational decisions.

The focus of this paper is the form of decentralization that in effect facilitates participatory decision-making at school level. The term *devolution* implies that decision-making is given back to a level of governance, or an institution. More authority is transferred to local units of government such as districts, municipalities, or provinces (McGinn & Welsh, 1999). Schools, along with local communities, have the power to make administrative or other more substantial decisions that affect pedagogy and curricula, for instance, or staffing matters. Devolution is the most advanced form of decentralization.

1- In Rondinelli’s conceptualization, *deconcentration* refers to the transfer of planning, decision-making or administrative authority from the central government to its field organizations and local units, or to local government or non-governmental organizations; *delegation* refers to the transfer of some decision-making powers and management authority for specific functions to units or organizations that are not under direct control of central government ministries; and *devolution* refers to the transfer of authority for decision-making, finance, and management to quasi-autonomous units of local government such as municipalities (Rondinelli, 1981; Rondinelli, 1999). The typology in Table 2 draws on the work of Winkler and Gershberg (2003).

WHAT FUNCTIONS ARE DECENTRALIZED?

Whatever its form, decentralization has the potential to bring about major changes regarding the organization of an education sector: It encompasses the way the sector makes policy, generates revenue and allocates funds, manages schools and other education institutions, and develops and delivers the curriculum (Fiske, 1996). In view of the fact that perspectives of the *'locus of control'* (Bray, 2003) are so varied, it is important to assess the kind of decentralization that best fits a given circumstance.

In coming to a decision about policy, countries have a range of administrative options from which to choose regarding the transfer of authority and apportioning responsibility at central, regional, district or local levels. A central government might arrive at certain decisions about organizing instruction and curricula, for instance, deciding that most decisions will take place at school level, and in response to community needs. On the other hand, managing personnel and allocating resources is something that happens at district or regional level, though increasingly schools themselves might exert influence over such decisions. In some countries, officers at different levels share responsibility. In the UK the central government makes decisions concerning curricula; in the USA, state governments share this responsibility with organizations in the school district.

Under devolution, there is a shift in the locus of decision-making with respect to certain school functions. Management functions are distributed among levels. McGinn presents a framework to place decisions for which authority can be transferred into one of the five categories: mission, structure and operations, personnel, clients, and resources. According to this classification, a school's mission is defined as the "end purpose." Decisions about structure and operations include "design and operation of the school, assessment of daily performance and adjustment of inputs; and client participation" (McGinn, 2002, p.16). Personnel-related decisions include "required qualifications; hiring, firing, raises and promotions; transfers; and pay scale." (p.16). Matters pertaining to clients cover "potential clients to serve, criteria and procedures for admission; assignment to different programs; and cost charged to the client" (p.17). Decisions about resources include allocation of resources received, generation and use of additional funds, and building new partnerships. Most decisions made by school councils in the selected sites may be classified in the above-described categories.

Adapting McGinn's framework most decisions made at school level, and based on which functions performed, include responsibility for maintenance, resources, recruitment, pedagogy, curricula, structure and operations – areas that formerly were the sole domain of officers at higher administrative levels. Table 2 is an analysis that draws on studies of 33 school councils across some 20 developing countries; it indicates who makes important decisions, and the sub-categories of functions transferred to the local level (schools and communities) (Khan, 2002).

TABLE 2: TYPES AND FREQUENCY OF SCHOOL-LEVEL DECISIONS THAT ARE DECENTRALIZED

DECISIONS	SUB-CATEGORY OF DECISION	FREQUENCY	COUNTRIES	COUNTRIES
<i>Administration and management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - regulations for facilities - inclusion in decisions - teacher-pupil ratios - class schedules - maintenance - learning environment 	100%	20	<i>Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Peru, Russia, South Africa, Tanzania and Thailand</i>

DECISIONS	SUB-CATEGORY OF DECISION	FREQUENCY	NUMBER OF COUNTRIES	COUNTRIES
<i>Pedagogy</i>	- <i>teaching methods</i> - <i>learning and curricula</i>	<i>More than 75%</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Mali, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Russia, South Africa and Thailand</i>
<i>Resource mobilization</i>	- <i>allocation of resources from center</i> - <i>generation of resources and their distribution</i>	<i>Approx. 75%</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru and the Philippines</i>
<i>Personnel</i>	- <i>hiring/firing of teachers</i> - <i>teacher qualifications</i> - <i>personnel discipline</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Russia, South Africa, Thailand</i>
<i>Building partnerships</i>	- <i>bonding social capital</i> - <i>linking social capital</i> - <i>bridging to high levels²</i>	<i>50-75%</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, India, Madagascar, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, South Africa, Thailand</i>

Source: Khan (2002)

In Table 2 there are several groups of decisions for which responsibility is at school level in developing countries. In 20 countries school councils make decisions about administration and management. In other groups, more than 75% of councils make decisions on pedagogy; some 75% decide on mobilizing resources and matters of personnel, and more than 50% make decisions about building partnerships in order to mobilize resources. In this analysis, decisions on maintenance include construction, repairs, and improvements to the school environment. Decisions related to students include enrolment numbers for school age children, education fees, student support, and their assignment to classes. Decisions on teachers relate to recruitment, deciding on qualifications, and disciplinary measures. Decisions also include the allocation of resources from the center, the generation and use of additional resources, and building new partnerships. Decisions on pedagogy and curriculum include methodology, and learning. Decisions on structure and operations are divided into regulations with respect to facilities, the inclusion of parents in decision-making, teacher/pupil ratios, and class schedules (McGinn, 2002; Khan, 2002).

In making these choices about designing decentralization, governments and civil society itself must engage in a participatory process in order to assess the roles and responsibilities that sub-national institutions will assume. When the ministry of education makes decisions about transferring authority, but elects to do so without consulting regional and local stakeholders, then it places the outcome at risk. In a decentralized system, particular attention is owed to the task of assessing the extent of autonomy at school level, and the decisions a school is empowered to make (McGinn & Welsh, 1999).

WHY DECENTRALIZE?

Each country has its reasons for choosing to decentralize education; all of them are shaped by historical, socio-economic and political realities, among them the following.

- 1. Finance:** this refers to how a country raises money for education. Some countries expect that decentralization will generate extra revenues because it takes advantage of local taxes, reduces operating costs, and shifts some of the financial burden to regional and local governments, community organizations, and parents. It is worth noting that financial stringency should not be a country's primary reason; in fact sometimes central governments try to evade their responsibilities with respect to providing services by devolving responsibilities to lower tiers or non-government bodies (Bray, 2003).
- 2. Increased Efficiency:** this refers to the way a country uses its education resources. Bureaucrats often emphasize reasons of efficiency in advocating either centralization and/or decentralization; in other words they introduce administrative reform in order to facilitate operations. This particular rationale would suggest that by moving decision-making to a local level, the sector alleviates problems of wastage and mismanagement; it promotes efficiency because it eliminates certain procedures, and thus motivates officers to be more productive.
- 3. Redistribution of Political Power:** refers to the way in which a country distributes authority with respect to decision-making. Decentralizing education is a means of establishing institutional legitimacy because it redistributes power, giving local communities a greater role in management. This rationale holds that administration and accountability will improve because in general schools are better placed to respond to parents and to the local community. In this case it is political motivation that leads those in power to include or exclude certain groups from the decision-making processes.
- 4. Educational Improvement:** refers to the way in which teaching and learning is affected. This rationale argues that decentralization improves the quality of teaching and learning because it locates relevant decisions close to the point where they are carried out.
- 5. Cultural Differences and Linguistic Pluralism:** refers to the way countries make sure education is relevant to the local context. Alternatively, it might advocate centralization on the grounds that it sets standards with respect to central elements in curriculum and instruction for the purpose of achieving intra-national diversity (Bray, 2003).

DECENTRALIZATION: THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

How have countries responded to decentralization and devolution? With a view to providing lessons for policy makers in general, this section examines the policy and practice of decentralizing education across a range of developing countries. These experiences illustrate the challenges a country faces in making major changes to its organizational structure for the sake of reaching new levels of performance and growth. The section concludes with an analysis of these experiences, it also identifies risks that ministries will find are important considerations in the planning phase of their reforms.

The approaches that a country chose in order to decentralize and/or privatize education have a differing impact on equity, quality and efficiency within the sector. Indeed, the range in impact depends on the way policies are designed and implemented with respect to context, be it socio-economic or cultural. As yet, few of these interventions have been rigorously evaluated, which makes it difficult for others to realistically assess the connection between reform and outcome, despite accumulating evidence that has important implications for countries regarding future and current policy decisions. The following examples illustrate a range of options. Table 3 offers an overview of

policies and strategies³ ranging from approaches that emphasize regional and municipal deconcentration (Argentina), to a more advanced devolution to local structures of school and community governance (Minas Gerais in Brazil). Other examples include places that have instituted contracts with private organizations, such as Tennessee, in the United States. In the case of South Africa and Armenia, deconcentration overlaps significantly with devolution.

TABLE THREE: OVERVIEW OF DECENTRALIZATION

COUNTRY	FORM OF GOVERNANCE	AIMS	MANAGEMENT	FINANCE
<i>Argentina</i>	<i>Deconcentration of authority for decisions is transferred to the provinces</i>	<i>To expand financial responsibilities, and strengthen the capacity of provincial MOEs</i>	<i>Provincial MOE</i>	<i>Provincial governments are responsible</i>
<i>Uganda</i>	<i>Devolution to district education committees and school committee</i>	<i>To improve efficiency through community participation</i>	<i>District education officers (DEOs); school management committee (SMC)</i>	<i>Center provides funding for district and schools</i>
<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>Deconcentration and devolution, though with substantial central control</i>	<i>To address local needs</i>	<i>Schools responsible for recruitment; central govt. sets curriculum; minimum standards</i>	<i>Central government provides funds to advisory school councils; municipal role in expenditure</i>
<i>Chile</i>	<i>Devolution of pedagogical decisions to schools</i>	<i>To change content of education and raise quality</i>	<i>School project teams and director in charge</i>	<i>Central ministries and incentive schemes provide funds</i>
<i>El Salvador EDUCO</i>	<i>Devolution to community: partnership model</i>	<i>To improve access to education for children in rural areas</i>	<i>Community-based school councils: recruit staff; manage schools</i>	<i>Central and community financing</i>
<i>New Zealand</i>	<i>Devolution to elected school boards - parent members only</i>	<i>To improve education</i>	<i>Local school board adapts national curriculum; teachers employed by central state</i>	<i>Financing from the central government via formula-driven capitation grants</i>
<i>Armenia</i>	<i>Deconcentration to regional admin. and municipalities; devolution to elected school boards</i>	<i>To increase efficiency by broadening decision-making</i>	<i>Municipalities provide infrastructure, maintenance, regional administration educational support</i>	<i>Central government finances recurrent costs via a transfer of funds to school board</i>
<i>South Africa</i>	<i>Centralization and decentralization - functions distributed across national, provincial, district and school levels</i>	<i>To increase efficiency and democratic participation</i>	<i>National MOE responsible for standards, provincial MOE for personnel. School governing bodies manage non-personnel budget, and school policies</i>	<i>Central government funds the system through provincial allocations; schools complement funds (fees).</i>

3- The overview draws on Winkler and Gershberg (2003).

COUNTRY	FORM OF GOVERNANCE	AIMS	MANAGEMENT	FINANCE
<i>Minas Gerais, Brazil</i>	<i>Devolution to school councils: parents, teachers, and students</i>	<i>To improve education quality by giving local communities a voice in schools</i>	<i>School councils hire teachers, select school director, choose textbooks and allocate non-personnel budget</i>	<i>Revenue transferred from center to school for non-personnel expenditure; schools raise funds</i>
<i>Pakistan</i>	<i>Devolution to district, tehsil and union councils; devolution to school councils composed of educators, parents, community representatives</i>	<i>To increase efficiency, cost-sharing, and democratic participation, especially of women and persons with low social economic status</i>	<i>Center determines curriculum; provinces hire/fire; district and sub-district levels allocate resources. School council decision: maintenance, student needs, resources, pedagogy, and a few on staffing.</i>	<i>Revenues transferred from provincial to district governments; school council bank accounts are wire transferred a modest annual sum; school councils mobilize funds.</i>
<i>Tennessee School System</i>	<i>School board contracts private reform design models</i>	<i>To improve school quality by using for-profit and not-for-profit companies</i>	<i>Advisory school council diagnoses school needs and develops reform plan. Private reform model agent in charge</i>	<i>Financed by the city under contract that includes performance targets.</i>

DECENTRALIZATION: WHAT RISKS ARE INVOLVED?

- If a country decentralizes technical functions such as investments and project planning to the local level, then handing over the ownership of schools to poor village communities is likely to be problematic on grounds that they might be neither equipped nor prepared. Such a move can also exacerbate partisan politics. Even when parents are capable, they often feel inadequate because sometimes teachers imply that the less-educated have little to offer.
- The transaction costs that are transferred to district levels are significant with respect to their impact on efficiency and on equity. An MOE often sees decentralization as a cost-cutting measure, yet there are high costs during the initial stages.
- Decentralization requires the restructuring of national and/or regional MOEs; district personnel and organizations might not have the ability to manage accountability and spending. More significantly, the more senior MOE officers are often unwilling to relinquish authority.
- Decentralization to regional or local government level does not automatically empower parents or improve a school's performance. School council/management committees that include parents and community members sometimes relegate them to serving only in roles of administrative support, rather than in governance and management.
- Traditions shape local governing structures such as school councils; often this means they reflect and reproduce persistent local inequities and social organization generally. In these instances, excluded groups, such as women, the poor and less-educated are at a risk of remaining marginalized (Khan, 2005).

- Leaders at local and regional levels sometimes perpetuate their roles as gatekeepers for education and learning, either by imposing their decisions on school councils, or by continuing to exclude parents from decision-making. Local stakeholders must first liberate their community's social and cultural capital if they are to mobilize local resources and enable groups to build bonds, links, and bridges (Woolcock, 2000; Khan, 2005).

PLANNING & IMPLEMENTING DECENTRALIZATION

The following explores the elements of reform that a country may consider in formulating policy with respect to planning and implementing decentralization. It raises important issues regarding salient areas that are central to the process, including the transfer of autonomy and the new role of central authorities, citizen and community participation, responsiveness to need, private provision and other partnerships, the financing and devolution of budgetary authority, capacity-building and the evaluation of programs. It looks at the importance of evaluating efforts to decentralize and thereby to assess the progress of implementation, an area too often neglected.

The long history of advocacy for decentralization suggests that rarely does a country achieve it without challenges. In part this is explained by the difficulties ministries encounter with planning and implementing reforms of this kind, largely because of unresolved issues and competing priorities. Each plan occurs within in a context of political ideology, historical legacy, and factors such as linguistic plurality, geography, and differing ways of communication. An institutional analysis of the overall government structure (Mukundan & Bray, 2004) is an obvious starting point because it is a means of identifying deficits and strengths in the sector as it stands.

If countries are to realize the goals of Education for All, democratic participation is a given, as is the strategic role of local communities with respect to planning, managing, governing and assessing efforts within the sector. Decentralization that is over-hasty or forced does as much harm as good. Countries are advised to proceed judiciously, taking care to demonstrate sensitivity to the perspectives and evolving aspirations of local communities. Acknowledging and minimizing incumbent risks, they are obliged to pay close attention to implementation.

The following introduce areas of critical importance, including approaches drawn from a range of countries on the understanding that no one size fits all; and examining each instance in the light of its own choices and circumstances. This analysis is designed to help policy-makers and planners raise pertinent questions in order to assess their needs and priorities. It will help them to make choices in line with their own purposes, and with respect to their own environments. Social and gender-sensitive policies that are soundly pro-active attend to the implications of gender, race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. They take note of elections as a process, and the ways in which a community takes part; they monitor the impact of reform; and manage compensatory steps, such as special grants to low-performing schools or marginalized populations (Fiske, 2000). They also tackle the challenges imbued in social and gender equity at two levels. First of all, they give a voice in educational decisions to parents from poor households, and to women, through their participation on school councils. Secondly, not

only do they ensure that children from poor households, especially girls, improve their access to education, but also that the quality of this education is improved. (Khan, 2002).

DISTRIBUTION OF AUTONOMY: CENTRAL AUTHORITIES AND THEIR CHANGING ROLES

The responsibilities of government and other stakeholders are being redefined and reallocated as new concepts emerge regarding their potential. The responsibilities in question encompass the national level (ministry of education), sub-regional structures, schools, local communities and other social partners. A simple dichotomy of centralized versus decentralized education is inadequate to the task of describing the intricate redistribution of autonomy that is involved. Countries face the challenge of having to balance calls for increasing diversity, flexibility, and local control. There is the matter of responsibility too, where not only national and regional authorities must ensure that education is provided in an orderly fashion, but also that its provision is equitable across geographical regions, as well as socio-economic and ethnic divisions (Abu-Duhou, 1999). Unless a country establishes clear roles and responsibilities at each level, then doubtless those whose job it is to implement reform will lose enthusiasm when saddled with change that is inadequately coordinated (Mukundan & Bray, 2004).

In centralized systems, it is usual for a ministry to cover a range of functions; these include planning, implementing programs, coordinating, supervising personnel, monitoring and evaluating. Decentralized and mixed systems, in contrast, change the ministry's role from planning or implementing to that of technical consultant and coordinator; the ministry is responsible for formulating policy, and for the overall assurance of quality, as well as monitoring and evaluating. The change from a centralized to decentralized system calls for new instruments and practices. In Uganda for example, along with their respective communities, it is the District Education Officers (DEOs) who are responsible for delivering primary education. The focus of the MOE is to make policy and to manage investment and quality. DEOs are responsible for monitoring and supporting all primary schools in their districts. Under the auspices of the District Service Commission, districts recruit and appoint primary school teachers, though their salaries remain a central responsibility (Moulton, 2000).

Although its role as implementer diminishes in decentralized systems, a ministry retains significant responsibility with respect to managing, financing, and overseeing. In order to do so adequately it must utilize findings from on-going evaluations, however, so that it learns from what is happening at the local level; it uses the data to inform and modify implementation. In its role of overseeing change, the ministry shares responsibility with regional and local administrations, and well as school communities, notably with respect to accountability, implementation and to developing curricula.. Given its central responsibility with respect to accountability, it must collect, analyze and then share important data. In general, a central ministry plans the national curriculum, and it is responsible for nation-wide examinations as well. Decentralization and local involvement in developing curricula allows a ministry to adapt to varied and changing local conditions. The ministry is also encouraged to promote UNESCO ideals regarding lifelong education, and integrating schools and their communities. It shares with sub-national units and school stakeholders the responsibility for ensuring the standards that safeguard equity of access and outcome.

There are no prescriptive steps that govern decentralization; it is helpful, however, to create a schema that identifies central functions and the levels of responsibility connected to redistributing autonomy. Table 4 locates autonomy within a multi-dimensional matrix that covers a range of issues; it looks at institutional status, at the groups or individuals who exert influence and at their avenues of influence. It also looks at the stage when these stakeholders make decisions (McLean and Lauglo, 1985). The matrix can be adapted as a tool for planning, with categories added or deleted as appropriate.

TABLE 4: LOCATION OF DECISIONS ACCORDING TO CATEGORY

LEVELS AT WHICH INSTITUTIONS, GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS EXERT INFLUENCE				
CATEGORY OF ISSUE	CENTRAL	REGIONAL	DISTRICT	LOCAL
<i>Governance:</i>				
<i>Policy</i>				
<i>Planning</i>				
<i>Implementation</i>				
<i>School organization:</i>				
<i>Structure</i>				
<i>Minimum requirement</i>				
<i>Financing:</i>				
<i>Current</i>				
<i>Development</i>				
<i>Training:</i>				
<i>In-service</i>				
<i>Pre-service</i>				
<i>Management</i>				
<i>Curriculum:</i>				
<i>Subjects</i>				
<i>Content</i>				
<i>Textbooks</i>				
<i>Language policy</i>				
<i>Instructional methods</i>				
<i>Teacher evaluation</i>				
<i>Monitoring:</i>				
<i>Accreditation</i>				
<i>Examinations</i>				
<i>Pupil promotions</i>				
<i>Discipline</i>				
<i>Data systems</i>				
<i>School evaluation</i>				
<i>Research:</i>				
<i>Needs</i>				
<i>Conduct</i>				
<i>Implementation</i>				

Source: McGinn & Welsh (1999)

In order to adapt a schema such as Table 4, planners might reflect on certain questions when deciding on levels of responsibilities. All decisions about transference should be participatory, for instance, beginning at the local level. The following questions should stimulate reflection and can be adapted as appropriate:

THE MINISTRY'S CHANGING ROLE: DISTRIBUTING AUTONOMY

- Who are duty-bearers and who are rights-holders? And how may these roles change with the transfer of authority?
- What are we trying to accomplish through decentralization?
- How does it fit with the sector-wide objective to improve school participation and students' learning?
- What pathways and associated conditions are necessary if the sector is to pursue these goals?
- Is there a legal, financial, and bureaucratic environment that supports the process appropriately? What are the strengths and deficits at the various levels.
- Is there a well-conceived plan for sharing power, and strategies that provide relevant stakeholders with the authority they need to carry out the objectives of this reform?
- Are there clear policy guidelines and standards for central authorities, regions and districts, and schools?
- In order to avoid inequalities, how do we balance regional autonomy with ensuring that a common standard is preserved throughout the country?
- Is there an infrastructure or agency whose main role is to stimulate and provide continuous support in building capacity at the school and community level?
- How are decisions made with respect to formulating plans and guidelines that will result in the ministry transferring autonomy?
- To what extent do local stakeholders have a voice in decisions to formulate the plans and strategies that comprise decentralization?
- Is there an effective communications campaign that will enlist the support of central, regional and local politicians, administrators and stakeholders, parents, teachers and other community members?
- How is accountability designed and administered? Does it include incentives that promote accountability and improvements to the quality of schooling?

PARTICIPATION BY CITIZENS AND COMMUNITIES

An important element of decentralization involves communities taking part in decisions that affect them. Stakeholders now acknowledge that when local initiatives bring a school and its community closer, the experience generates a sense of ownership. Not only does it enhance accountability, but it also ensures that those in charge have a say regarding content, scheduling, and requirements; they can adapt these elements to the community's circumstances. A community's support is central to efforts that increase people's involvement in the school and in improving retention and learning outcomes (Watt, 2001). Recent research on social capital, moreover, emphasizes the importance of mobilizing communities as a means of tapping into their cultural, social and political capital (Woolcock, 2000); school-based management is a platform from which to draw on these resources.

Community participation ranges from familiar forms of support - such as an involvement in construction - to involvement in management, planning, and learning. The impact is often uneven because of its multi-faceted nature; communities do vary in their ability to participate in and support education. Some well resourced, highly motivated, and cohesive communities are single-handedly financing and managing local education. Other communities, hampered by their lack the resources, make little

more than a minor contribution to the costs involved. Sometimes they find themselves either unable or unwilling to work together. Still, there are many places where efforts that draw together parents and students comprise a striking feature of participation in basic education. In Senegal for example as part of the country's *Faire Faire* policy, community schools play an important role in providing greater access to education for at-risk youth:

LOCAL COMMUNITY SCHOOLS (ECB) IN SENEGAL

In 1992-93, two NGOs, ADEF-Afrique and Aide et Action began the ECB initiative, and by 1996 the ministry had adopted it as an alternative model. At present operators are subsidized by the ministry and NGOs such as PLAN International and RADI. The schools are for those between nine and fifteen; either they have never been to school before and are illiterate, or they have had to leave school early. The pedagogical approach has three goals: to integrate the young people into the community's socio-economic activities, to keep them at school; and to provide pre-vocational training. There are six important elements: (i) the community designs and manages the program; (ii) over four years (equal to six years of elementary school) it teaches those between nine and fifteen – particularly girls – who are not enrolled or have dropped out; (iii) the national language is used (with French as a second language); (iv) the adult literacy program supports the ECB; (v) the program includes schooling for parents too; (vi) methodology emphasizes protecting the environment.

The Senegal experience identifies a situation that has had a positive impact on community involvement; it is a useful model because the components are indicative. In general, initiatives of this kind include parents who share a positive view of education. They have regular and stable household incomes, a history of social mobilization, community organization and leadership and also an educational involvement that goes beyond making financial contributions. They draw on external support as well as resources within the community. In addition, there are role models whose social status is derived from their education, a community that is already involved in making decisions, government aid and policies that abolish or regulate school fees; a high student achievement, and clear avenues of communication linking the MOE, communities, and teachers. In many countries, however, initiatives of this kind are seriously hampered by economic pressures and poverty, the spread of HIV and AIDS, illiteracy, and political instability.

A community's ability to mobilize its social and cultural capital is yet another explanatory factor that challenges existing social norms and serves as a means of boosting participation (Khan, 2005). Putnam (1993, p. 167) defines social capital as '*features of organization, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action.*' He asserts that the ability of individuals or groups to create bonds within their own group, and bridges to other groups, is strategic to a community's strength and ability to improve. In contrast, some critics argue that this account of social capital ignores issues of class distinction and power (Fine, 2001; Harris, 2001). Harris (2001) points out a problem in uncoupling power and social relations in order to put Putnamian social capital into practice overlooks the abstract nature of community as a social construct, as well as the strategic and relational choices that underpin the processes of social organization (Mansuri & Rao, 2004).

Perhaps a more nuanced perspective of social capital is one that says it must be understood within a cultural and political context (Krishna, 2002; Rao, 2001). Indeed, groups that have better networks are more equipped to organize and benefit from community projects. The level of social capital or community cohesion will affect in a positive way the quality and sustainability of local projects

(Mansuri & Rao, 2004). By creating opportunities for innovation, such partnerships also expand the interests of parents and local governing bodies,

Communities that adopt these processes are beginning to re-order the organization of social capital at many levels, particularly when parents and civil society engage with the school in order to make decisions. As a way of being pro-active in this respect, some stakeholders set in train moves to create *'bridging social capital'* with the district education department and local government. Although the concept of social capital is a relevant issue, little research is presently available on community-driven endeavors that rely on latent or pro-active social capital, despite the rate and scale at which these initiatives are now happening (Khan, 2005).

School-Based Management (SBM) is the most intensive form of decentralization and an increasingly popular way that its elements enhance community participation. At the international level, SBM initiatives have enabled school or community-based structures to assume power in places as disparate as Chicago (USA), Colombia, El Salvador (see following), Uganda, South Africa, and Senegal. Increasingly schools are being asked to manage themselves and to make decisions regarding curricula, budgets, resource allocation, staffing and students (Abu-Duhou, 1999). SBM is expected to improve the quality of teaching and learning because it locates decisions closer to the point at which they are carried out. It encourages sensitivity to local conditions, and programs that meet local needs as a means of improving schools. In the El Salvador EDUCO Project, for instance, schools are administered by the parents' associations.

EL SALVADOR: CONTRACTING PARENTS' ASSOCIATIONS TO ADMINISTER SCHOOLS

Decentralization is part of an evolving endeavor that is modernizing public administration; the objective is to make it more cost-effective and participatory. During the 1990s, the government of El Salvador transformed its role in education by inviting the private sector to take part in managing public education. Critics felt that the top-down system, where most programs were designed and administered by the ministry of education (MINED), did not respond sufficiently either to local needs or national priorities. The government decided to share decision-making with municipalities and to privatize some services in order to improve access and quality. It has invited municipalities, NGOs, parents, and communities to involve themselves. While the state provides most primary schooling, civil society offers alternatives to public education, and in some poor and isolated rural areas it is the community that hire teachers and provides classroom spaces.

The EDUCO program, begun in 1991 with a loan from the World Bank, comprises an important part of the initial decentralization effort; in fact it has expanded access to preschool and basic education in poor rural areas. Under EDUCO, parents have organized themselves into non-profit Community Education Associations (ACE), taking over responsibility for managing schools that previously were financed by the state. The program has expanded schooling and also mobilized resources from the private sector. More recent plans (1995-2005) include contracts with private institutions to design curricula, to evaluate programs, to design standardized testing, and to provide in-service teacher training and other activities traditionally conducted by the MINED. The new policy has also introduced a new model of school organization in which a board, the *Consejo directivo escolar* (CDE), consisting of the principal, two teachers, three parents, and two students, manages the school. The principal is always the CDE president and represents the MINED, a teacher is secretary, and a parent treasurer. At present about 3,035 of the nation's 4,800 schools are run by CDEs; they set priorities, plan activities, and make decisions on resources and the administration of state funds that are transferred as block grants.

Decentralization policies have produced multiple results. The MINED's institutional modernization has redefined its role, as well as the sector's organizational structure. The new model of administration through CDEs promises to change the organizational culture of schools, making them more democratic, efficient and responsive to local demand. More basic education is available in rural areas, and private resources are also being used to improve education. Decentralization has created certain new problems and challenges too, with the CDEs facing financial constraints (they have limited power to allocate public funds). The way the system is financed tends to produce inequities, with more wealthy schools likely to supplement state funds. In addition, the nation still does not have enough adequate information services, qualified teachers and administrators; there is nothing in place that monitors the quality of education school effectively.

A lesson that does emerge from developing countries is that school-based management can exacerbate issues of social and gender equity if and when local governance reproduces the dominant patterns of social organization, notably those that exclude some groups. Alternatively, it can procure social change if governing structures challenge the status quo in order to give marginalized groups a voice. One can gauge the extent to which these councils are socially equitable by looking at their composition. Does the council appoint persons with little education, for example, persons with disabilities or those from poor households?

Women's participation in countries where there is a low score regarding the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM; UNDP, HDR 2005) can be addressed only by a policy intervention. It is not enough that women per se are appointed to a council. Whose voices have weight? Do the women of the community take part as much as its men? Does the council represent the interests of poor parents? Are members elected or selected? Careful guidelines with respect to appointment processes ensure that councils truly represent the interests of disadvantaged groups, rather than merely representing a local elite.

If community support for education is to reach its potential, it must have in place fundamental conditions. All stakeholders - communities, government, teachers, and sometimes NGOs - have to accept the need for change. In order to be prepared, they must first listen, learn, and then collaborate. It is the duty of governments to ensure that all schools meet basic conditions for effective learning; a community's efforts add to, rather than substitutes for, services bought with public funds. The objectives related to matters of equity and quality can be met only if all parties acknowledge these realities, and they act to ensure that communities take part effectively. All stakeholders must acknowledge that community support is a process in which they will share risks as well as rewards. And while communities need to make a sustained effort to build capacity so that they can take part effectively, some do not have the skills or confidence to contribute to school management, and still others might lack sufficient cohesion and experience of working together to make collective decisions. The focus should take into account building skills across several areas - administrative, school, and community - to ensure that all parties engage over the long term. Where these elements are in train, communities are likely to make a full and effective contribution (Watt, 2001). It is important for stakeholders to reflect on the nature and extent of the participation, which should be relevant to their own circumstances. In this respect the following questions are helpful prompts:

INVOLVING CIVIC SOCIETY IN MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT SCHOOLS

- Who might take part? Are the community's diverse groups represented?
- How are decisions made?
- What relative weight does a group have with respect to making decisions?
- Are the roles of school councils adequately clarified? Are individual roles?
- What roles do people have regarding school policy, enrolment, access, gender and social equity, staffing, methodologies, learning materials, etc.?
- Do public-private partnerships have a place in this process?
- How might NGOs and civil society itself take part?
- How might the central governments promote citizens' participation?
- How can local stakeholders map their community's social capital that stimulates bonding, linking and bridging in a pro-active way?

RESPONDING TO DIVERSITY OF NEEDS AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

As attempts to expand access to basic education intensify it becomes obvious that conventional approaches will not succeed with those populations that have very particular needs. School systems that use a standardized curriculum, permanent buildings, and rigid timetables often fail to provide equitable access to education for various marginalized groups, including girls, people with special needs, minority groups, rural populations, and nomads. Educators and others now acknowledge that they need programs that are flexible and responsive enough to meet the needs and circumstances of these groups. When it is coupled with community involvement, decentralization affords opportunities to do so, such as Pakistan's Community Support Program (CSP), the Negotiated Education Plan (NEP) in South Australia, and Nigeria's Nomadic Education Program (NEP).

In Baluchistan, Pakistan, the CSP increased the enrolment of girls by an average of 22 percent. Not only did the CSP increase the number of schools and female teachers, but it also encouraged parental involvement by creating girls' schools in rural areas. The opening of a CSP school also increased the enrolment of boys by an average of 9 percent. As it turns out, a program that was set up to extend schooling for girls is benefiting boys too as a result of a run-on effect (Kim et al., 1998).

The NEP was established in South Australian public schools for students with special educational needs, be they physical, sensory, intellectual, language and communication disabilities, or children with learning difficulties, gifted learners, distance education students and Aboriginal students. These individualized programs help students achieve their goals, and also help teachers adapt curricula to meet students' needs. Involving the learner, teacher, and parents or caregivers in a local partnership is a powerful way to facilitate involvement because it supports and motivates everyone (Horrocks and Burrows, 2002). The following questions may prompt planners regarding their concerns about coping with diversity:

CATERING FOR DIVERSITY

- Are everyone, rights-holders and duty-bearers, informed and clear about the fundamental human rights to education and non-discrimination?
- Do minority groups and the disadvantaged have access to school?
- How do schools become more inclusive (eg bursaries, transport, schools that are safe for girls, special needs)?

- Over the long-term, how do schools cater for and support learners with special needs?
- How does the sector respond to educators' needs and rights regarding diversity?
- Is the curriculum flexible enough to cater for diversity?
- Do rural schools adapt their timetables to the farming cycles?
- Do children with special needs go to school locally? How are their rights met?
- What provisions are there for children in the non-formal system to be mainstreamed?
- Is distance education available? How will it cater for children in remote areas?

PRIVATE PROVISION AND OTHER PARTNERSHIPS

Although national, regional, and local education authorities have an obligation to provide basic education for all, they cannot be expected to meet all human, financial or organisational needs and inputs. Countries must ask themselves what the public sector should supply and what it entails to be a duty-bearer. In general public funds for education are either stagnant or shrinking, a reality that imposes severe constraints on any ambitions to achieve UPE. New and revitalised partnerships can help overcome limitations by forging links between government and non-government organisations (NGOs), the private sector, local communities, religious groups and families.

Private schools are expanding in most places, as are private sector provisions such as voucher schemes. In Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, 60% of secondary schools are now in private hands, a trend the government actively supports by offering financial incentives. In many countries parents demand private provision because they see such schools as better and more accountable. Often the increasing numbers of such providers is part of a broader strategy of diversification where funding and services support more autonomous access to schools. A case in point, Colombia's voucher program for the poor relieves overcrowding in public schools, though increases net enrolment without sacrificing quality. The government knew that children were prevented from going to school because there was no room for them (King et al, 1997). The program takes advantage of the fact that private schools can make opportunities available with relative speed and at a lower cost.

Private schools offer several advantages. They are, for instance, more likely to use local decision-making to improve learning conditions. They generally outperform public schools on standardized tests, and their unit costs are lower too (Jimenez et al., 1991). Private providers can show public schools ways to improve, should they care to adopt their more successful management practices.

Another means of involving the private sector is to outsource. This must require a transparent bidding process, and whoever wins is contracted by the respective public sector provider to set up and implement a sub-project within a larger program. Outsourcing is used for services such as school transport, canteens, cleaning, and maintenance, as well as for setting up infrastructure and support programs (Nordtveit, 2003). Many argue that outsourcing is preferable because specialists are more efficient, and that the services are more user-friendly since providers, often community-based, work at the school's convenience.

DEVOLUTION AND TRANSFER OF BUDGETARY AUTHORITY TO LOCAL LEVELS

Underpinning fiscal devolution is a rationale that would see public sector functionaries more accountable with respect to their providing resources for local initiatives, and doing so on time. Evidence suggests that tensions emerge because too often federal, district and local budgets are not coor-

minated regarding implementation, with consequent delays in the transfer of allocated moneys an impediment to local progress. Planning for financial devolution has several important elements: (i) transfer of funds, (ii) new arrangements and options, (iii) changes in the delegation of power, (iv) shifts in designation (development funding, non-development, recurring, and so on), and (v) flexibility regarding allocations within existing budgets (MOE, Pakistan & UNESCO, 2003).

Some places have decentralized a range of budgetary components. Decisions are made at the regional (provincial) level in some countries (Argentina, Mexico), at the local (municipal) level in others (Chile). It is the instances of school-level management that show devolution at its most dramatic (El Salvador, Minas Gerais, Brazil, and Nicaragua). There are four broad categories: (i) decentralization to schools so that they control their budget for supplies and materials, (ii) decentralization of other functions (school management, building maintenance, school feeding programs), (iii) agency projects as part of decentralization and school autonomy, and (iv) competitive grants and incentive schemes (Lang, 2002).

Costs that encompass the entire sector are often an important factor in the decision to decentralize. Here it is important to distinguish between providing services and financing them - that is between delivering and managing services and providing sources of funding to operate the sector. In general, local governments in the developing world do not have enough power to levy taxes or to generate revenue, which means that funding remains a responsibility at the national level. It need not follow, however, that the provision and management of education should also be a national responsibility. In fact, if they are to meet demands for efficiency, participation, transparency, equity and quality, national governments might have to share responsibility for provision and management with local government authorities, schools, and communities, as is happening in El Salvador, Mali, Tanzania, and South Africa. This is especially important in the context of development, which calls for systematic accountability procedures, and for stakeholders to make intelligent use of their limited financial and human resources. Decentralization often results in a significant transfer of transaction costs from central to district level. The flow of funds through different institutions and levels is often erratic, and the quality of financial reporting poor. A case in point is Uganda, which demonstrates some of the complexities and challenges:

UGANDA: DEVOLUTION OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT TO SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

At the heart of Uganda's decentralization is the question of resources. Before decentralization took place, the central government decided how funds were to be used and sent them directly to a department at district level, where officers had no control over spending. Under the UPE policy, parents no longer pay school fees; instead schools receive a UPE capitation grant. The grants are calculated centrally and released in a block to districts, where they are then passed on to schools, according to their enrolments. The ministry has also developed guidelines for the allocation of funds, such as 50% for scholastic materials and 5% for administration. The grants provide about \$4 per year for each child (grades 1-3) and \$6 for those in the next four grades. The government pays salaries and textbooks, with grants also available to meet other needs. The management committees control the money at school level. In order to improve financial management, the government offers training so that everyone understands the principles and procedures of keeping records and of sustaining accountability. The programs provide: (i) for communities to take part and make decisions that do not impose unrealistic and unfair demands on the poor; (ii) for decentralized procurement that maximizes the use of local expertise; and (iii) for a system that ranks and prioritizes the neediest communities.

Countries with poor communities know how difficult it sometimes is to collect adequate taxes; they also know that local authorities sometimes have little mastery of planning and management skills and procedures. Central governments are reluctant to transfer resources to local governments, even though district education offices and schools need additional funding in order to take on any added responsibilities. Although it is often the case that local revenue is inadequately mobilized and local government cannot undertake any spending, the fact remains that parents and communities do contribute significant amounts to the education of their children. The challenge is to ensure that what parents can and do contribute is complemented effectively by public funding, so that every child enjoy the fundamental right to quality education. Policy-makers should involve communities in decisions about how they might allocate their resources at the school level, offering guidelines on how to use public funds and other resources to help the more disadvantaged. The following elements merit close attention:

- weaker schools or regions need help to compete for funding on an equal footing with others
- outcomes must be monitored to ensure that funds are used transparently to improve standards
- community contributions must be evaluated in terms of their appropriateness; they are not a substitute for government funding
- everyone must guard against inequities in the distribution of grants
- those in charge must monitor local capacity with respect to implementation.

Throughout Asia there are examples of governments modernizing the public sector with respect to designing and testing approaches to planning. These examples include the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), Targeted Budget Support (TBS), and Sector Wide Approach or SWAP (*Handbook for Decentralized Education Planning*, UNESCO Bangkok, 2005). Unlike budgets that are limited to an annual time frame, the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) covers several years (usually three); it has four main features:

- a sectoral development program that identifies priorities and the targets it will achieve by the end of the period
- a detailed estimate of the personnel, material, and financial resources required to implement the programs
- annual budget allocations that depend on whether the targets are achieved
- at the end of each year, an assessment of progress, with the MTEF is extended for one more year (the MTEF covers the medium-term only).

This approach assumes that the province has a foreseeable budget and is flexible about sequencing activities and the way it uses its resources. It does allow provincial education authorities to decide on their priorities (such as reallocating resources across levels) and sequence (what happens in the first year, second, third etc)

A coherent program is essential. The central and provincial education authorities collaborate on managing the allocation of resources. The education plan informs the MTEF, which in turn informs the annual budget (no longer the principal instrument for allocating resources). Gradually, the provincial MTEF begins to play an important role in the process, and its activities are drawn up within the provincial education plan. In this way the MTEF serves to link its annual budget to the planning for long-term education at the provincial level

Another example of modernization is Targeted Budget Support (TBS), a means of using resources so that they achieve particular objectives. The effort to improve access to education of quality, for example, is formulated as a special program that includes all related activities and budgets, such as teaching aids for the primary classroom, teacher training and recruitment, construction and equipment. The budget covers the entire program, and as with the MTEF, it depends for its effectiveness on covering several years.

Certain questions suggest themselves with respect to making a policy that devolves budgetary authority:

DEVOLVING BUDGETARY AUTHORITY

- Do certain regions receive more money? Why?
- What objective criteria determine the allocation formulae across regions?
- What sources of funding are there at regional or local level?
- How many sources of funding are there? How do local taxes finance education?
- To what levels are reports submitted with respect to funding?
- Does the local level have autonomy regarding the way it uses its funding? How decentralized is the budget? Is it supervised and/or audited at higher administrative levels?
- Do regions receive a pre-assigned sum as part of plans to devolve?
- Does education compete with other services such as health, water and sanitation, etc. for funding at the local level?
- What guarantees (checks and balances) ensure that funds are released in a timely fashion, in order to avoid delays in implementation?
- How will auditing take place to ensure that funds are used appropriately?
- Are there responsive strategies in place that make sure funding is equitable, and on a region-by-region basis serves disadvantaged schools and populations?

BUILDING EDUCATIONAL CAPACITY

The increasing numbers of students and teachers mean that managing resources calls for new measures. Now that more decisions are made at school level, the managerial and administrative capacity of school directors, teachers and community representatives also merits attention. Decentralizing involves having to develop capacity in offices at provincial, regional, and/or district level, as well as in schools (UNESCO, 2002; Mouton, 2003). Training stakeholders has a substantial impact. Kenya's collaborative training approach for school councils, for instance, has improved school-based management and teaching; school committees now contribute to development planning, which has increased their sense of ownership and involvement (Bray, 1999).

If they are to build capacity, the state and its several partners must make deliberate and sustained efforts to train local leaders, their communities and organizations so that they have the skills to handle decentralized governance. Pakistan's GOOD Governance in Educational Management (GOOD GEM) Project (see below) and Senegal's PADEN project help community leaders to develop literacy and other skills that enable them to take part effectively in educational governance. Building capacity diversifies civil society by enabling it to take part in other areas of social, political and economic development.

DEVELOPING A CAPACITY TO SUPPORT DECENTRALIZATION: GOOD GEM PROJECT

Under a framework of reform, Pakistan's MOE is devolving education as a means of improving access, equity, and quality. The district, rather than the province, has become the operational tier, supported by the tehsil (sub-district) and union council tiers.

The ministry is establishing village or neighborhood councils and citizen community boards (CCB) for purposes of extending participation. These councils include PTAs, village education committees, and school councils in order to make sure that communities take part in planning and monitoring development. Administrators work closely with other sectors, and with PTA/SMC members, community members, teachers, learners, and NGOs. The program recognizes the need to strengthen institutional and human capacities so that local stakeholders can take part effectively. With this in mind, the Academy of Educational Planning and Management (AEPAM) initiated the GOOD GEM Project, a training program undertaken in collaboration with UNESCO that supports decentralization by developing the skills of educational managers, as well as school and community stakeholders. Training modules focus on policy and context, participation, site-based management, district plans for EFA, financial management, and the use of district EMIS as a basis for making decisions at the local level.

BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY: ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS

- Before the task of building capacity can begin, stakeholders such as students, teachers, parents, minorities and the disadvantaged, as well as businesses and cultural institutions, must be involved in order to identify local needs. It is advisable to bring in someone from elsewhere to facilitate their initial efforts to make decisions, and, where needed, advice on their fundamental rights. The community might also need literacy programs so that local participation is more than rudimentary.
- Building capacity is a continuous process that involves many stakeholders, whose roles, duties, rights and responsibilities must be identified respectively. Local people need to take part in plans for district-based education, to perform monitoring and evaluation, and to develop school-based budgets.
- The process should occur in phases. Orientation looks firstly at policy and context, at stakeholders' rights and duties, roles and responsibilities, and then at problems and solutions. Subsequent phases will deepen stakeholders' understanding of district planning, their roles and responsibilities, of procuring attitudinal change, of participation, use of resources and financial management.
- At regional and district levels, building capacity is less about individual skills and more about tasks, such as identifying local institutions that might offer support networks. It is also about using supervision to support schools; and analyzing data for schools to forward as well as reporting back. Officers need training in a range of individual and institutional skills, such as knowledge of human rights based approaches to planning and programming, on how to assess educational needs, how to monitor progress, and how to supervise. Training programs call for great clarity of purpose.
- School leaders and teachers need training in how to manage the autonomy and collaborative responsibilities entailed in their new roles. The task of implementing local governance calls for a change in the existing culture of district offices, as well as in local schools and their communities. Change of this order calls for changes in leadership too, which means that ministries must offer training programs for teachers that ensure graduates understand their rights, roles and responsibilities in the new education.
- Building capacity depends in large measure on what happens in schools and communities; programs must be flexible enough to accommodate differences from place-to-place.
- All interventions call for follow-up to ensure that development is monitored, evaluated and sustained.

BUILDING EDUCATIONAL CAPACITY

- How do national EFA plans accommodate the task of building capacity, following a rights-based approach?
- Who does the planning with respect to building capacity? What is the MOE's role and duty in efforts at the national/provincial/regional level?
- What strengths in the system can be used to support development? Training programs? Other institutions?
- What areas need capacity-building? Exactly what parts need strengthening?
- What are the goals and objectives of capacity-building? The beneficiaries?
- What components and strategies are there?
- Which areas have new responsibilities? What organizational capacity and institutional incentives will support the effectiveness of new functions?
- What organizational adjustments in regarding capacity are needed across levels to make sure that agencies have the support they need to undertake new functions? How will those units with reduced responsibilities be downsized?
- Who monitors and evaluates capacity-building, and how? Who will evaluative measures involve local communities?
- What training is in place to guide officers at higher levels with respect to giving up their authority and responsibilities?

EVALUATING EDUCATIONAL DECENTRALIZATION

Often policy-makers make tacit assumptions that under educational decentralization local stakeholders lead wisely because they have all the information they need to enable organizational efforts to blossom (Fuller and Rivarola, 1998). Of course in many cases this does not happen; the evolution and impact of change is conditioned by the internal dynamics and institutionalized features of the sector. The additional force of a school's prior history, the surrounding economic conditions, and its coherent (or chaotic) management structure, all affect the implementation of decentralization reforms. Any evaluation of decentralization takes account of these complexities.

It is generally understood that the impact of decentralization can be measured only after some time, often five years. Others hold that some benchmarks are needed to assess whether policy, plans and program align with vision. Performance indicators that are sensitive to a local context provide current quantitative and qualitative data that allows educators and others to realistically assess progress in the transition from a centralized system. This assessment helps in redefining the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and institutions; it also helps identifying both constraints and interventions that support or hinder further reform. As an evaluative model comprising certain tasks, it:

- provides empirical evidence on issues and obstacles to implementation at district levels
- facilitates continuous monitoring and evaluation
- assesses the role of a school management council and other associations
- assesses the MOE's roles and responsibilities and also those of local government departments so that district education office take part in policy, planning, and program design and evaluation
- determines what authority is transferred and to whom; who makes decisions across levels, and about what; and what indicators and approaches are needed for monitoring and evaluating.

Stakeholders at different administrative levels can adapt the evaluative model to own needs and priorities. The model assesses how well the policies, plans and programs for which they are responsible reflect a ministry's vision of devolution. Assessing decentralization also calls for circumspection and sensitivity with respect to wider issues, for example:

- decentralization might have a range of impacts on different levels, such as primary and tertiary institutions
- the far-reaching benefits might not easily be summarized with reference to existing objectives.

UNESCO offers guidelines for an evaluative framework that assesses the progress of reform. What follows is an outline of the challenges faced by policy-makers and planners

CHALLENGES IN EVALUATING DECENTRALIZATION

- The coexistence of trends that both centralize and decentralize poses difficulties in classification; these trends can be simultaneous. Is the system decentralized or centralized?
- There are difficulties in measuring progress because of the value attached to relative levels of authority; the authority to decide on curriculum, for instance, is currently seen as more important than the authority to hire a cleaner. Prioritising is therefore fundamental.
- Measuring progress by ranking is misleading because the unit of analysis is rarely consistent. The nation-state as the unit of analysis is not appropriate because national boundaries may be seen as arbitrary. The unit of government is too relative because countries vary in size and in population.
- Placing countries on a continuum for means of comparison is risky, though beneficial. Local can mean different things in different countries. Some functions are more important than others, and therefore cannot be ranked at the same level.

Source: Bray, 2003)

THE CHALLENGES OF SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTING REFORM

If decentralization is to succeed, then it must be planned at all levels, funded at all levels and its stakeholders trained at all levels. Furthermore, success is short-lived if it does not in its approach strictly adhere to the fundamental principles of human rights: participation, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability. Often governments see decentralization as way to save money; in fact at the beginning it will probably cost more and it is furthermore necessary to realise that time-frames for decentralisation may often exceed the democratic mandates of incumbent politicians.

Another issue is that of access to quality education: As the education sector decentralizes, misunderstandings and conflicts emerge over the notion of quality. Even in centralized systems, stakeholders can rarely agree on how to define and measure quality, or enrolment, retention etc, let alone on how to initiate and sustain their improvement. They face even more challenge in a decentralized system. Whether they are central, provincial, or local, leaders see that their duties and responsibilities are changing and growing. The management role in schools is changing too, with new relationships between a school and its community redefining the way schools are organized. Given these changes, how do those who would implement change ensure that enrolment and quality is enhanced rather than compromised? What follows is a list of considerations that are critical to the issues and challenges involved.

UNDERSTAND THE REFORMS

It is essential for the government to communicate the form and function of the reforms. The process begins with the government articulating its vision and strategy to all stakeholders, whatever their level, and to other public sectors, as well as to civil society. These visions must be the result of participatory and democratic process', be transparent and accountable, and with a clear understanding by all of the rights and duties. It calls for appropriate legal instruments that support the delegation of authority at every level, along with an accessible implementation strategy; it calls for procedural manuals that will help those who must manage the decentralization. Unless the government designates carefully the duties and responsibilities attached to levels and institutions, then the lines of authority will blur. People need to know to whom they must report, and who reports to them. School principals and teachers are recruited by the government, and this can mean they see themselves as accountable only to the education department, rather than to parents, students and local bodies. The views of some teachers and principals indicate a confusion over issues of loyalty and responsibility that is avoidable if the ministry communicates clearly as decentralization gets underway.

CONSIDER A SYSTEM OF PERFORMANCE INCENTIVES

The new responsibilities at local level mean that teachers, school principals and parents have to invest more time than they have in the past. Devolution requires educators and others to take on many added responsibilities, including curriculum design, planning for innovative methodology, and involving parents and the community. Since it is often the teachers who must demonstrate commitment before other stakeholders will take part, their motivation in supporting decentralization, and that of local officials, is critically important. While an increase in authority is an incentive to invest more time, an interest in job security can trump the desire to increase one's influence over school policy, or in making a difference to students' lives. Nor do local educators always feel compelled to support reform initiatives out of a sense of duty to their professions or their community (Bjork, 2003; Mukundan & Bray, 2004). Even though financial incentives might help shift these priorities, they are seldom offered. Those who implement reform would do well to consider a system of incentives – public recognition, for instance, or supportive supervision, in-service training, and a well-defined career ladder.

COMMUNICATE

Many decentralization reforms have benefited from well-designed communication strategies. Successful communication programs provide clear information to parents, teachers, and administrators about all aspects of reform, respecting and fulfilling people's right to partake at equal level.

CONSIDER STAGGERED IMPLEMENTATION

Given that the timing of major change is a critical element, it is useful for planners to begin by working on administrative capacity and political support at the local level. Even in the Indian state of Kerala, where there is a high level of political awareness and social cohesion, a '*big bang*' approach backfired. Therefore, the more gradual the transfer of power, the greater the chance of success will be.

USE A SYSTEMIC APPROACH

Devolution must be part of a systemic approach that considers the role of other departments, and the mechanics of inter-sectoral coordination. Central-local relations merit planners' close attention because although in principle most bureaucrats agree with decentralization as a concept, in practice they find it hard to relinquish power.

ESTABLISH SOUND PROCEDURES FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Decentralization necessitates a transparent framework of accountability that provides checks and balances, as well as incentives for stakeholders if they are to support the reform wholeheartedly. Action plans facilitate procedural implementation (instructional, management, and assessment). There is also the matter of monitoring the accessibility and quality of education, which calls for systems at the local level to conduct needs assessment and to gather and analyze data. The new emphasis in monitoring is on support and training, rather than on inspection. It is also more effective when based on consensus and cooperation amongst neighboring schools. Any monitoring initiatives by local governing bodies should reflect the wishes and involvement of parents and community (Mukundan & Bray, 2004).

LINK THE ACCESSIBILITY AND QUALITY OF EDUCATION TO REFORMS IN MANAGEMENT

It is essential for implementers to link the new reforms to outcomes that improve the enrolment, retention and quality of education. A more efficient use of resources and better service delivery is central to decentralization; they are dual elements under the umbrella of educational reform.

CLARIFY THE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS AT THE COMMUNITY/LOCAL LEVEL

A central objective of decentralization is to thoroughly involve the community and to mobilize it by strengthening local structures. Achieving this calls for an extensive program of mobilization, advocacy, and training so that communities are informed properly regarding their authority and new roles. It is worth noting that while decentralization shifts decision-making to the community (where it operates to encourage reform), it can also stifle it. Communities are often conservative, with the result that even the best intentioned of changes to teaching materials, methodology or tests can arouse considerable opposition. Parents might be unwilling to risk their children's future to new ideas about education, such as how learning is measured. Parents and teachers, especially those doing well under the current system, can find change a threat to their perceived advantage (Adams and Chapman, 2002). If they are to initiate social change, decentralization efforts should include approaches and activities that are designed to win over those with resistant attitudes and behavior. Planners often assume that communities are ready to take on more responsibility. Even where people are politically aware, or where social organization has already prepared them to take part in education, it is a mistake to assume that they can meet this challenge without preparation. When communities do agree to become involved, they often limit themselves to involvement in less threatening activities, such as school maintenance or meals. It takes time and effort to secure meaningful participation in matters related to the accessibility and quality of education and to school policy. Parents may resist calls to deviate from traditional patterns of school-community relations, in the process perpetuating a status quo where professional educators are the ones with authority.

RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

Social capital is embedded in local power structures and values. It is local culture that defines values, just as it establishes the boundaries of innovation and change. Evidence also suggests that certain community groups represent different kinds of social capital. Thus even poor farm laborers may for example help reinforce links between landowners and the school with respect to fulfilling a community's educational needs. Local power structures can contribute to change too, by fostering alliances

with education authorities as a means of promoting the school. By taking part in locally based development initiatives, the more influential members of a school council - such as local politicians and NGO representatives - can facilitate institutional cooperation between the school council and government at sub-district and union levels. Female council members too can find themselves generating social networks in ways their male counterparts cannot. In Pakistan's rural communities, for example, where it is usual for women to remain at home, they might decide to negotiate with the men of the household, encouraging them to solve the schools' problems through social networks that include influential friends (Khan, 2005; Woolcock, 2000).

BECOME MORE TRANSPARENT IN DECISION-MAKING AND IN DELIVERING RESOURCES

It is possible that decentralization will result in communities demanding that schools and administrators are more transparent and accountable. The officers in question might have only limited understanding of what transparency means, and might not know how to respond. Ideally the capacity building and awareness of human rights-based approaches that is part-and-parcel of decentralization goes beyond technical training; it includes plans that develop the accountability of strategic stakeholders.

DEVELOP PLANS TO COLLECT AND SHARE DATA

As decentralization deepens, data are needed by a wider category of users, such as school administrators, local government officers, NGOs, publishers of education materials and textbooks, and so on. It is worth noting, however, that community stakeholders use and share information in certain ways; these ways may not be the same as those of bureaucrats in education ministries. In view of this contrast, Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) show their worth because they provide access to information as it is needed at the local level. As part of decentralization efforts, they support the analysis of data and its accessibility, making it easier for local people to use and to share information of relevance to them. Information-sharing is inclusive; it builds confidence in those who have not hitherto involved themselves.

The following checklist may be of help in planning:

PRECONDITIONS: IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

- Ensure shared knowledge of fundamental human rights, and of the respective roles of the rights-holders and duty-bearers; ensure familiarity with the rights-based approach to programming and planning
- Secure a commitment from national, regional, municipal and local leaders.
- Delegate roles and responsibilities to all stakeholders: the central ministry, other governmental sub-units and/or the private sector.
- Define accountability for all stakeholders and levels.
- Develop strategy and schedule for implementation.
- Develop and distribute operational manuals and procedures.
- Institute training programs that teach the skills required at each level.
- Establish performance indicators.
- Set up Education Management Information System (EMIS) as a means of monitoring progress (accessible to monitoring procedures by policy makers and senior officers).
- Ensure that implementation is sustained by adequate human and material resources.

UNESCO'S ROLE IN EDUCATIONNAL DECENTRALIZATION

UNESCO cooperates in national efforts regarding the Dakar Framework for Action. It facilitates programs that enable communities to take part in planning, managing, and delivering better formal and non-formal education (for both pre-school children, children, youths and adults). It helps with reviewing and reforming policy, with strengthening capacity, and with using research to inform educational policy and networks. UNESCO and its consultants, at the requests of and in close contact with member states:

- provide technical assistance at the policy level to ministries that are decentralizing, with a view to ensuring that national EFA/MDG plans and PRSPs are integrated with administrative, financial and political devolution
- help design a framework for capacity-building that supports efforts to implement devolution
- strengthen efforts to monitor and evaluate devolution, notably by developing performance indicators
- ensure that continued and enhanced focus is placed on human rights, on rights-based approaches, and the importance of human rights education at all levels of learning
- help ministries of education analyze financial planning, so that all decentralized responsibilities encompass guarantees of social and gender equity
- show organizations across civil society how to be active as technical intermediaries in efforts to decentralize
- support stakeholders in monitoring decentralization at the local level, and at sites where services are delivered (citizen's report cards, tracking expenditure, etc)
- help member countries share experiences and lessons learned, especially through enhanced South-South cooperation
- document and study the governance and management of decentralized education
- ensure that national EFA plans are sensitive to issues of cultural and linguistic diversity.

The International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) assists by conducting field research that looks at how decentralization is implemented; it also offers training that builds the capacity of staff, ministries and planners at all levels.

CONCLUSION

It is inaccurate for reformers and others to claim that a shift in the locus of control does not affect what happens in classrooms. Reform has meant that school councils now make decisions on pedagogy and curriculum, on personnel issues and on who has access to education (Bray, 2003; Khan, 2005). However, there is little evidence in support of out-right assertions that decentralizing improves education and its governance, or lead to a more efficient allocation of resources and delivery of services. This deficit is not unexpected, given the challenge of improving access to quality education while at the same time having to ensure equity, and preserving the integrity of the sector. The challenge is even greater in places where efforts to decentralize have introduced policies that hardly touch on matters such as organizing changes to methodology and course content, or related planning programs and the management of funding and personnel.

Despite these challenges, countries have established the means to generate more community participation in the governance and management of their schools. These efforts provide a foundation for others who want to strengthening involvement of this kind; they are fundamental to the way countries address matters related to relevance, equity and standards.

Decentralization can, and is, making a difference in efforts to reach the Dakar goals by 2015. It is improving the management of teaching and learning, it is helping in securing the fundamental human right to access and quality of education, and it is giving renewed impetus to a rights-based approach. Those endeavors that have been successful to date demonstrate better financial management, elevated levels of community participation, and more capable local administrations. Most importantly, the current reforms stimulate discussion; they encourage people to acknowledge the necessity of examining in detail any changes that affect learning and teaching. Reform alone cannot improve access, retention and quality; it is part of an initiative that must include the kind of resources and support that lead to effective teaching. Astute political decisions are those that look to policy makers who work with local stakeholders, and who take on board technical advice regarding factors such as the availability of resources. In the same vein, implementers have before them the task of balancing approaches that are bottom-up and top-down, and that call on the expertise, the rights and the voices of all community stakeholders. They need to give time and consideration to the local context, its challenges, benefits and its constraints. As with any option, decentralization is a trade off; some policies work better than others, depending on context and the level of education involved. Their status of implementation is a call to policy-makers and practitioners alike to sustain a solid commitment to review and improve.

EVALUATION GUIDELINES

DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK TO ASSESS PROGRESS
IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	40
THE PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE	
ASSESSING THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE	
EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE: TRENDS AND DIRECTIONS	
TRENDS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL	43
EVALUATING DECENTRALIZATION	44
THE DIMENSIONS OF DECENTRALIZATION	45
THE USE OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	
PARAMETERS OF PROGRESS	47
IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES	47
ASSESSING DEVOLUTIONARY PROGRESS: THE FRAMEWORK	48
DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK	49
USING THE FRAMEWORK	49
THE FRAMEWORK AS A TOOL	51
THE LIMITATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS OF THE FRAMEWORK	51
CHECK-LIST: THE FRAMEWORK OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	
SUMMARY	47
DIMENSION I POLICY, PLANS AND PROGRAMMES	48
DIMENSION II FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION	52
DIMENSION III PARTICIPATION	60
DIMENSION IV ACCESS, COMPLETION AND QUALITY	66

INTRODUCTION

THE PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE

For a long time now educators and policy makers have understood that complex structures, notably ministries of education, cannot meet the demand for human, financial and material resources, in regards to the goal of education for all (EFA). They have found it necessary to look for other ways to manage and to administer. In tandem with the international community, ministries have decided to establish an alternative form of governance that has as its core an educational and social transformation. This approach is in line with universally recognised and ratified UN instruments that protect human rights. It supports the right of people to take part in governance, and to do so without being discriminated against. They have the right, moreover, to a system of education that is not only transparent but also accountable.

Governance refers to a system of making decisions that is wider than government itself. Although there is no universally accepted definition, it is understood to include *'not only control of decisions about the operations of educational organizations, but also control over decisions about the dimensions along which that performance will be evaluated'* (McGinn, 2002; p.13). It refers to the way groups of stakeholders negotiate, and to the way a society distributes power between those who govern and those who are governed, as well as between duty-bearers and rights-holders. Decentralizing the authority and functions of government to a local level is central to the practice of governance. Its principles include:

- devolving and transferring authority
- integrating local and central governments
- making decisions that all stakeholders take part in
- creating links between areas of policy
- building dependencies between stakeholders
- shifting development strategies from *'supply-side'* to *'demand-side'*
- involving communities in planning, implementing and evaluating
- demonstrating accountability and transparency

In the face of calls for reform, countries are now showing a willingness to consider radical solutions across the education sector. They want to be more accountable, to expand access to education, to improve results, to use public resources more efficiently, and to guarantee social and gender equity. For this reason their goal is to change the way they manage education by introducing principles of local governance, thereby gradually decentralizing authority so that the wider communities takes part in making decisions about education. Schools and other institutions can be governed locally only when they are accountable to local stakeholders, who evaluate them by using criteria of their own choosing. In spite of their acknowledging this need for accountability, in practice most reform efforts hold local managers accountable to national or central level authorities, rather than to those at a local level. This means that the community is left with little voice in choosing criteria to judge the performance of its own institutions.

The processes around devolution fundamentally change the relationship between a central government and its local counterpart. Ministries of education are no longer tied to their role as service providers; their main concerns may now be more limited to policy, supervision and quality control. These days local governments and communities have more power over decisions, especially where reform is successful, and where change is accompanied by sound planning and a determined effort to build capacity. This is the kind of change that stimulates and sustains stakeholders' participation over the long as well as short term.

The issues surrounding local governance have universal application. They influence all efforts to improve education, from planning to the way it is administered, and what happens in the classroom. The principles that inform governance are often incorporated into policy, implementing them is served by integrating approaches to planning and programming. In fact they are built into the sector's new initiatives, to the extent of informing its major goals.

ASSESSING THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE

These guidelines address the need to look in detail at current sectoral reforms. They are designed to help practitioners assess the reforms by looking at how well stakeholders are applying the processes and principles of local governance. Since most evaluations assess achievement by looking only at immediate objectives, such as increase in enrolment and gender parity, they do not ask if decentralization is an effective part of reform. It is possible, however, to evaluate devolution by looking at the nature and extent of administrative, financial and political changes; they tell us whether the initiatives build on principles of local governance, and whether in fact they are sustainable over the long term.

The guidelines offer an analytical tool assessing the efforts of educators and others to implement initiatives that are based on the principles and practices of local governance. They ask: *to what extent are they applied to planning and implementing policy, programs and approaches?*

The analysis helps in finding out how well reform initiatives are implemented, especially with respect to administrative, financial, and political devolution. It takes policy into account, both its preparation and review, as well as the plans and programs that are derived from it. It looks at how these are managed and by whom. In addition, it looks at the efficacy of applying the principles of local governance to reforms of this kind.

The first section below, entitled *Educational Governance: Trends and Directions*, offers an outline of recent important trends that have influenced local governance; not only is its purpose to provide an overview of the context in which devolution happens, but also indicates its progress. It identifies four dimensions of governance that frame performance indicators: (i) policy, plans and programmes; (ii) administration and finance; (iii) participation; and (iv) access and quality. The section concludes by looking at the challenges and risks associated with the task of assessing the progress of reform. This is followed by a section on *The Use of Performance Indicators*, which introduces the performance indicators and their rationale, showing how to use them and how they support the job of evaluating reform. Lastly, the *Check-list: The framework of Performance Indicators* comprising the core of the guidelines, includes examples of performance indicators, categorised accord to dimension, input, process and output. There is also a list that tells practitioners where to look for related information.

EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE: TRENDS AND DIRECTIONS

TRENDS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

The most important trend in reform currently is a readiness to examine in greater depth education itself, and to review more prudently the way it is provided. The importance of life-long learning, and education for all, of social and economic progress, and ultimately for national development, has meant a greater awareness of the importance of both non-formal and formal educational opportunities. These days formal schooling is no longer seen as the only way for people to learn. In line with this thinking, education is far more complex than it has been in the past.

Thinkers and policy-makers have come to realize that education cannot be the exclusive preserve of teachers, academics and administrators. Rather, it also involves a range of others, such as parents, families, communities, women's associations, the private sector, the media, members of religious groups, the international community, civil society organizations and even those in other sectors such as health and agriculture. People accept that not only does devolving responsibility to local authorities ensure that services are more relevant to local needs and priorities, but that these services also differ from one community to another. There are, however, certain reservations concerning the extent to which responsibilities can be devolved. The process calls for ministries to redistribute power, resources and responsibilities, not only to local administrations, but also to school councils and local committees.

Yet another trend is a shift in emphasis from management to governance at the local level. Governance includes control over decisions about the way institutions operate, as well as over their objectives. In cases where an institution such as a school is governed locally, governance dictates that the evaluation procedures measuring its accountability are those chosen by the stakeholders themselves. Communities tend to call for governance at the local level when central plans or schemes do not acknowledge how different communities have different priorities. Some programs are discriminatory because they make no allowances for groups whose first language is different, or if students are rural, low in status, female, belong to an ethnic minority, etc. If governments are to implement measures intended to reform local governance, they first need to address issues of equity, human rights and inclusion.

Although some scholars hold reservations as to whether decentralizing has merit, there is a general consensus that it is beneficial to the goal of education for all. If the participation of parents and communities is to be effective however, then it does call for ministries to support schools, teachers, principals and supervisors at the local level. Community members and education officers need training, so that the efforts of ministries and communities to cooperate will prove effective.

Since communities function better when they have the means to assess the performance of their school and its students, they need a system that ensures accountability. If decentralization is to achieve its purpose, then it is essential for ministries to offer support with respect to financial procedures, by educating teachers and by supplying textbooks and equipment. Whether in the formal or non-formal sector, the importance of educational management is of critical importance, especially with respect to the role of local counterparts.

The task of introducing decentralization calls on ministries to clarify the objectives of the exercise, and to include all stakeholders if they are to ensure a sense of ownership and transparency at all levels. The mass media can assist in this regard; as might training institutions, and introducing in-service education programs. A community needs to talk through all the measures under consideration before they are implemented; discussion of this kind is an essential part of decentralised governance.

EVALUATING DECENTRALIZATION

The trends above reflect the range of issues and concerns implicated in local governance. They indicate what is needed if a country is to initiate devolution (input), the way governance takes place (process), and the results at school level (output). Not surprisingly the task of evaluating the progress of decentralization across the board calls for a range of strategic approaches.

When a ministry's policy-makers formulate and implement large-scale reforms they often make the assumption that schools will apply the changes in a uniform manner. Practitioners, however, rarely achieve a universal momentum of this kind. Internal dynamics and the institutionalised nature of environments or sectors all influence the evolution and impact of change. A school's history, its social and economic conditions, or the relative coherency of its management structure may all exert influence over the viability of reform.

It is generally agreed that the real impact of decentralization can be measured only after some years. There is also a consensus regarding the necessity for benchmarks that will assess the extent to which initiatives are in line with the principles and practices of devolution. Performance indicators that are sensitive to local context, and are drawn up in consultation with all stakeholders, offer information that is current and versatile. It allows stakeholders to assess the transition from a centralized to decentralized system. An assessment of this kind helps planners to redefine the rights and duties, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and institutions, and to identify the constraints and input that will influence and inspire further reform. It is a framework flexible enough to help with tasks such as:

- providing empirical evidence on obstacles to implementation at district and local levels
- monitoring and evaluation that is continuous
- identifying indicators and approaches to the tasks of monitoring and evaluating
- assessing an MOE's roles and responsibilities (and those of local government and departments) with respect to communities taking part in planning, in making policy, and in designing and evaluating programs
- assessing the role of school councils and other local bodies

Practitioners from a range of administrative levels can adapt the framework according to context and priorities. Policy-makers and planners should be aware how certain elements pose a risk to successfully assessing decentralization.

- Certain trends centralize *and* decentralize, making it difficult to classify the extent of implementation. Is the sector decentralized or centralized? Both can coexist
- There are difficulties related to measuring progress because of value judgements about how to prioritise. The authority to make decisions on curricula carries more weight than deciding on which cleaner to hire. Evaluating decentralization calls for a means of prioritising certain elements.
- Measuring progress by ranking items on a scale can be misleading because the unit of analysis is rarely consistent. The nation-state as a unit of analysis may not be appropriate because national boundaries can be seen as arbitrary. Government as a unit of analysis is too large because countries vary in size and population.

- Placing countries on a single continuum for comparison is a precarious move. The term local, for instance, means different things in different places. Countries tend not to rank the functions of government at the same level of importance.

THE DIMENSIONS OF DECENTRALIZATION

Local governance implicates a range of elements. If ministries want their decentralizing efforts to be effective, then they need a multi-dimensional approach, because governance covers policy and planning, building partnerships and capacity, monitoring and evaluation, administration and finance. Not only are these elements linked but they are basic to any change that improves the quality of education and its accessibility.

The framework is based on four dimensions, all with a substantial degree of complexity. They represent a basis for assessing the implementation of decentralisation programs. The list is not exhaustive.

- Dimension I: Policy, plans and programs
- Dimension II: Finance and administration
- Dimension III: Participation
- Dimension IV: Access, completion and quality

What follows are questions related to each dimension. They are a useful and adaptable way for practitioners to gather information about the programs in each category.

DIMENSION I: POLICY, PLANS AND PROGRAMS

- With respect to its conception, content and feasibility, has the policy under review been prepared in a consistent manner?
- Have district plans been prepared in accordance with the MOE's program of devolution?
- Are these national program responsive to district plans?
- Is there a plan that covers the management of human resources? How well does it match central and local objectives regarding reform?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of local stakeholders with respect to program development?
- How effectively do monitoring and evaluating activities establish minimum standards of performance and efficiency?
- What previously excluded groups are now included in local devolutionary activities?
- What programs have been initiated that raise local awareness around devolutionary changes? How is their effectiveness measured? Do they meet minimal standards?

DIMENSION II: FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

- Do districts have enough funds to sustain the quality of education?
- What procedures are in place to make sure funds reach the district level on time?
- In which administrative areas will new roles and responsibilities be allocated?
- To what extent are funds raised locally?
- Does the district budget adequately reflect priorities of the schools?
- Does the community have a voice in decisions about spending?
- Are the efforts of the district office to build its administrative capacity adequate to the new rules and regulations?

DIMENSION III: PARTICIPATION

- Are there structures and activities that bring stakeholders together on a regular basis (including measures to resolve conflict)?
- With respect to building partnerships, what are the strengths and weaknesses regarding the six areas identified in the EFA goals?
- Do school councils, parents' associations and other civil society organisations take part in monitoring and evaluating?
- Is there a school development plan?
- What potential is there to build partnerships that will improve overall administrative functions?
- Is training demand-driven, regardless of its format?
- To what extent do private initiatives feature in delivering education?

DIMENSION IV: ACCESS, COMPLETION AND QUALITY

- Does access to education comply with international norms and standards, and are all members of the community informed of these?
- Do the relevant people know who is responsible for a school's accessibility?
- Do stakeholders know who is responsible for policy regarding school fees?
- What impact has participatory planning and decision-making had on school construction?
- Do parents/districts/schools have a say in selecting textbooks? Have the moves to decentralize resources improved stakeholders' access to textbooks and learning materials?
- To what extent are schools using the knowledge and expertise of their own communities to enrich classroom practice?
- To what extent has building partnerships improved decisions with respect to the quality of schooling?
- Is there training available for head teachers so that they can manage more efficiently?
- Has devolution improved equity (social, gender and geographical)?
- Is devolution helping students to better results, measured by school completion rates, achievement levels and the numbers who drop out?

These four dimensions are basic to planning an evaluation exercise that makes relevant links to national priorities.

The following two sections offer a checklist of performance indicators; these too refer to the dimensions above. The first section suggests ways that practitioners might use the checklist to enhance their approach to evaluating devolution. The following section is the checklist of performance indicators itself, designed to help assess how well devolutionary reform is working, selecting indicators that will help practitioners answer the questions under consideration. The checklist of performance indicators uses the categories of input, process and output.

THE USE OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

PARAMETERS OF PROGRESS

Indicators are the quantitative or qualitative factors, or variables, that may provide a simple and reliable basis for practitioners to assess achievement, change, or performance over time. A given objective might have a range of indicators.

In general, people agree that that impact of decentralization is measurable only after a certain period. There is consensus regarding the need for benchmarks, however, so that practitioners might assess how well the practice and vision of devolution are in harmony. Although most would regard as premature any major review of initiatives in the early stages of implementation, the checklist is a useful way to build a framework that anticipates this task. Since it includes a systematic approach to monitoring, it is a source of information for educators and other practitioners.

The framework comprises performance indicators that have relevance to a number of critical areas. Their application yields quantitative and qualitative data that are current. Importantly, the framework also delineates progress regarding the transition from a centralized to decentralized system. One purpose of the assessment is to redefine the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and institutions; another is to identify constraints, as well as any input that will support additional measures of reform. Activities such as this have a functional value. They provide ministries, provincial and district education departments, and their partners, with a basis for analysis. They also make sure that these administrative units remain sensitive to the practice and principles of governance.

As ministries transfer the delivery of education from central to district level, there is a particular and increasing need to emphasize the role of education teams and civil society partnerships at the district level. These district services are provided by a range of departments (finance, education, health, etc), which means that the task of assessing the progress of devolutionary programs requires a systemic approach. Since the approach examines the role of other departments, notably with regard to matters of inter-sectoral co-ordination, performance indicators also have a cross-sectoral application.

IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES

Performance indicators:

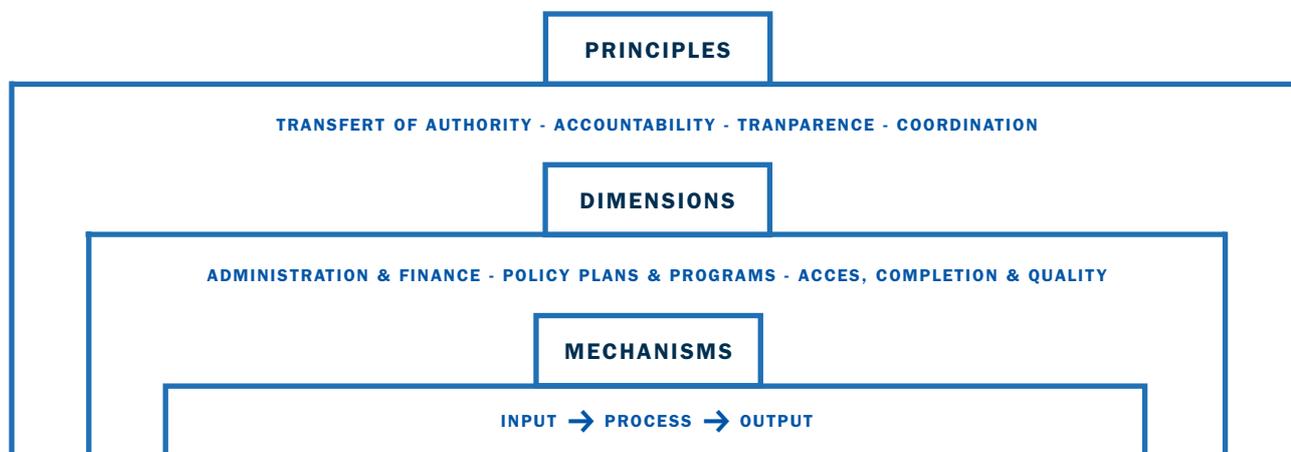
- provide empirical evidence of issues and obstacles impeding devolution at district level
- enable continuous monitoring and evaluation
- assess the contribution of school councils, parent associations and other community stakeholders in improving access the quality of education
- assess the contribution of the ministry, local government and departments in helping stakeholders at district level to take part in policy and planning, and in designing and evaluating programs, by finding out:
 - what level of authority is transferred, and to whom?
 - who makes decisions across levels and about what?

ASSESSING DEVOLUTIONARY PROGRESS: THE FRAMEWORK

The following diagram is an overview of the framework; it includes its operational features and dimensions; it also looks at the strategic importance of accountability, transparency, co-ordination, and the transfer of authority. Useful to practitioners during the implementation phase, the diagram shows links between the various *dimensions* and important analytical areas of input, process, and output.

The four dimensions cover devolution from its conception. Not only does the diagram link all the elements, providing for a vertical progression from input, to process, to output, it also allows for a *horizontal* reading, ranging from policy to plans and programs (initial input) through to finance and administration. It looks at levels of participation throughout, especially with respect to devolutionary changes, such as the impact on access to schooling, completion rates, and quality of education. Completing the assessment cycle, it looks at the efforts of stakeholders to monitor and evaluate initiatives. In fact the framework invites a circular reading, because results from the classroom inform subsequent changes to policy, planning, and programming.

Planning itself rests on input, process, and output. *Input* includes financial, human, and material resources. It encompasses the way planners approach an initiative because often the approach determines the success or failure of the next phase. Linking input and output, *process* refers to the scheduled activities of stakeholders over time. *Output*, on the other hand, refers to tangible, immediate, and intended results that occur because of the way stakeholders manage input. Examples include the delivery of services, goods, or infrastructure - notably their quality and quantity - that realize the purpose of a particular initiative. Output might also refer to any changes that result from an intervention, notably with respect to achieving long-term goals, such as the overall improvement of access to education and its quality.



It is worth noting that distinctions separating the areas under each dimension are not finite. Some areas fit more than one dimensions because of proximity, while some overlap, especially any activities that build capacity, monitor and evaluate. The dimensions are a means of providing perspective on certain issues. Categorizing it not the point of the exercise; rather it is a means to clarifying a range of issues

DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK

The checklist of performance indicators at the end includes questions of relevance to the task of assessing devolutionary measures from the vantage of certain stages and dimensions. The questions are limited in this respect –they are not all relevant to a given situation. Practitioners must select for themselves what has application to their own circumstances and objectives. Although by no means exhaustive, the checklist is a useful starting point for those who would establish a framework of their own.

With much of the work already at hand, the checklist sets out performance indicators (input, process, and output) with reference to the four dimensions cited above. As their next step, practitioners might want to identify other areas to assess; they would then develop indicators to measure progress in these areas, thereby developing their own framework and assessing its components.

For a framework of this kind to achieve true coherence, it must link input, process and output indicators under their respective dimensions. Practitioners will then find they are able to identify any deficits regarding progress with implementation. The step calls for stakeholders to take part in choosing the analytical tool that is appropriate to their circumstances, given the need at every stage for transparency, accountability, and equity.

In the short term, the framework is a useful way to review initiatives (policies and programs) and to be insightful with reference to devolutionary reforms, especially at district level. The framework also helps practitioners to identify any constraints that might impede progress, such as bottlenecks; it provides formative data on which to base any changes to policy as required.

USING THE FRAMEWORK

Practitioners can apply the framework to a range of administrative levels, as illustrated in the following. The stakeholders include the ministry, provincial and district education departments, as well as those at local level and their partners, such as NGO's, civil organizations and private enterprises. The framework comprises tools that are designed to help practitioners monitor, evaluate, and assess devolutionary activities (policy, plans and programs). It looks at devolution in terms of input, process, and output.

CENTRAL LEVEL

External and/or joint evaluation teams from:

- ministry of education:
 - departments of statistics; finance; planning; and human resource management; the Education for All co-ordination unit; and management teams from departments responsible for developing the curriculum
- teacher training colleges
- universities
- professional associations
- NGOs and civil organizations
- association of private school sponsors and owners
- media representatives
- ombudspersons and institutions; national human rights commissions/institutions

PROVINCIAL/REGIONAL LEVEL

- provincial/regional departments, including:
 - data collection teams; finance units; planning units; co-ordination unit for human resource management and capacity-building programs
- teacher training colleges
- universities
- professional associations
- NGOs and civil organizations
- private sector bodies that sponsor education

DISTRICT LEVEL

- district councils
- municipal and district departments
- professional associations
- NGOs and civil organizations
- private sector bodies that sponsor education

LOCAL LEVEL

- school management councils, and head teachers
- professional and community associations
- private sector bodies that support education
- community learning centers

Practitioners are free to choose objectives of their own, making sure they are aligned with human rights and the main objectives of participation, transparency, accountability, and non-discrimination.

Should they wish to *review policies*, program officers and/or evaluation teams might refer to the checklist in order to decide whether the policy statement is sensitive to the dimensions of devolution. Who designed the policy? Do stakeholders have access to the document that contains the goals of devolutionary policy? Does this document link goals in a way that enables participatory evaluation? What is the communication strategy? The teams might also assess whether the policy indicates appropriate input. Does it apply corresponding means and strategies with respect to the objectives? Having gathered data indicated by the checklist, the teams might then assess whether the policy responds to devolutionary principles, especially with respect to equity and quality, as well as to political, administrative, financial, and civil partnerships.

For the task of *reviewing a project*, program officers might refer to the checklist in order to decide whether the goals, strategies, and outcomes reflect the principles of devolution. They can consult the checklist to find out whether coordinators have engaged a range of stakeholders during the preparatory stage, and whether the devolutionary program is responsive to district needs. The range of questions allows program officers to identify the elements of decentralization that their program addresses, as well as those that need strengthening. Not only do the questions allow officers to identify how well their program builds partnerships that are drawn from civil society, it also clarifies how effectively their district budgets finance local initiatives. Links of this kind are a chance for officers to strengthen funding when it is appropriate, just as any deficits will prompt them to mobilize the means of achieving objectives. They will also force them to adapt strategic approaches that are in line with available resources. The questions comprising the checklist are indicative only;

officers need not use all, and may choose to add questions in accordance with their own circumstances.

The framework is a monitoring instrument. For the task of *planning and monitoring*, practitioners such as school councils, professional associations or other civil bodies might refer to the checklist to make sure that have aligned their initiatives to the principles of governance. The checklist helps stakeholders decide what elements have a priority in relation to the needs of their own communities. Not only does the framework strengthen dialogue around program objectives, it also looks at how well stakeholders are applying principles of governance. In addition, it monitors progress in achieving these objectives by providing indicators, or benchmarks, agreed to by the stakeholders when they first conceived the initiative, and re-evaluated continuously throughout.

THE FRAMEWORK AS A TOOL

The framework is flexible; the way users apply it will depend on their respective objectives and context. As a tool that allows for reviewing, planning, monitoring, and evaluating, its purpose is to improve the management of schools by assisting with:

- guiding the design and implementation of effective governance
- developing coherent policies that reflect reasonable management decisions, and allocate funds equitably, in order to support children's learning (equity, access and quality)
- a sound basis for identifying, developing and evaluating school governance
- providing data for departments of finance, planning and development so that they might judge whether what happens on the ground is true to the original plan
- aligning activities with the principles of devolution
- providing data on which to base corrections along the way
- adjusting the roles and responsibilities of government officers at all levels with a view to improving overall effectiveness
- enhancing all stakeholders' awareness of their roles and responsibilities as rights-holders and duties-bearers

THE LIMITATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS OF THE FRAMEWORK

The framework assumes users are engaged in devolutionary reforms and committed to aligning their reforms to international and regional human rights documents, commitments and standards that enshrine the goals encompassed by EFA and MDG. Countries that have devolution under consideration might also use the framework as a tool for planning. Since the checklist indicates the nature and extent of devolutionary activities, it will help countries develop indicators and benchmarks of their own.

The following are some caveats for practitioners to keep in mind when developing and applying the framework:

- Although the checklist measures performance in primary education only, the issues raised are of general interest; the guidelines can therefore easily be adapted to other levels of education, and indeed to other aspects of governance itself.
- The performance indicators are general and based on unknown quantities. While the use of the checklist will provide some evidence as to the extent of the implementation process, practitioners must be tentative about quantitative information, and about inserting results into a local, district,

regional or national context.

- It might not be possible to compare definitions or units of analysis across districts or provinces.
- The dimensions used in the framework should be sufficient to give practitioners a perspective on the elements of decentralization that are under review.
- Program officers who draw on the checklist need to be sensitive in analyzing policy that is particular to their own context; they should bear in mind their own format when it comes to reviewing programs, projects and smaller initiatives.
- The framework is an evolving document, as is civil society itself, and the elements of school management it is trying to address. Thus, it is a work in progress. Over time, practitioners might have cause to add to and redefine in order to sustain robust, coherent indicators, that will serve to assist the state - at whatever level of authority - to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights and to adhere in full to a human rights based approach to decentralization of educational governance.

INDICATORS FOR EVALUATION

	DIMENSION I POLICY PLANS & PROGRAMS	DIMENSION II FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION	DIMENSION III PARTICIPATION	DIMENSION IV ACCES, COMPLETION & QUALITY
INPUT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. POLICY 2. LEGAL CONTEXT 3. AWARENESS 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DELEGATING AUTHORITY 2. MANAGING EDUCATION: DEVOLUTIONARY INITIATIVES 3. ESTABLISHING AN ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HAVING A VOICE IN THE DIALOGUE ABOUT POLICY: THE PLACE OF COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS 2. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT & CONDITIONS
PROCESS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. PLANS & PROGRAMS 5. PLANNING & PROGRAMMING: BUILDING CAPACITY 6. MONITORING & EVALUATING PPPs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. MOBILIZING & USING LOCAL RESOURCES 5. APPLYING FINANCIAL PROCEDURES 6. BUILDING CAPACITY IN THE MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION OF BUDGETS 7. MONITORING & SUPERVISING 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. MOBILIZING & NETWORKING FOR EFA 4. MONITORING & IMPLEMENTING: LEVEL OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION 5. CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR & BY CSOs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. BUILDING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY 3. MANAGING HUMAN RESOURCE & SKILLS 4. MONITORING & EVALUATING QUALITY & ACCESSIBILITY
OUTPUT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. BUILDING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL. 8. ACCOUNTABILITY. 9. EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDING AT THE LOCAL LEVEL. 9. STAKEHOLDERS' PARTICIPATION IN DECISIONS ABOUT FUNDING INITIATIVES 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS 7. STAKEHOLDERS' INFLUENCE OVER RESOURCES 8. STAKEHOLDERS' PRIORITIES IN MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT EDUCATION 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. ATTAINMENT EFFECTS 6. ACHIEVEMENTS 7. EQUITY

INPUT	DIMENSION I POLICY PLANS & PROGRAMS	AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
	1. POLICY	<p>A . <i>The conception, content & feasibility of devolutionary reform</i></p> <p>B . <i>Using devolutionary data</i></p> <p>C . <i>Participation in designing policy</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practitioners are to assess whether the policy has been prepared in a consistent manner • Practitioners are to assess whether data are available for stakeholders to make informed decisions at different administrative levels (central, provincial and district). • Practitioners are to assess coordination mechanisms, & the structure of reform initiatives (top-down/ bottom-up). To what extent has its conception been democratic and participatory? 	<p><i>The policy has:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear goals (short, mid and long- term); - Clear indicators for task of measuring progress; - Clear strategies for the different administrative levels; (central/provincial/district) - A schedule of implementation; - Capacity-building; - A strategy to circulate information; - A risk-analysis document; - Modalities for regular review; and - A budget that covers implementation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data-base at district level. • Mechanisms for regular reporting. • List of stakeholders who participated in designing the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MOE; provincial and district departments of education. • Review of the document and interviews. • DEMIS cells; & the EDO education. • Review of data- base. • Provincial dept. of education & program officers. • Interviews; questionnaires; minutes.
2. LEGAL CONTEXT	<p>A . <i>Legal support</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practitioners are to assess whether the legal environment enables the reform initiative. Does it sustain a process of review with respect to the framework? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rules and regulations established to facilitate the implementation of the program. - Coherence regarding national, regional, and local plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MOE; parliament; national HR institutions; and ombudspersons. • Constitution; laws; regulations; international framework; 	

DIMENSION I POLICY PLANS & PROGRAMS	AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
3. AWARENESS	B . Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess the flexibility of the legal framework with respect to its adaptation to necessary changes in national efforts to localize education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with international human rights standards, and with the country's constitution. Safeguarding a program of continuous transparency and legal accountability for accessible education of quality. Points of view regarding the flexibility of the legal framework. Participation in formulating legal regulations. Degree of adherence to the legal framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parliament. Parliamentarians minutes and registers.
	A . Access to information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are assess to what extent institutions and beneficiary groups understand and have access to information about the devolution plan and its objectives. Does the reform live up to the rights of all stakeholders to participate on the basis of available and relevant information? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List: type and number of documents prepared and distributed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal: policy documents, reports, rules, regulations etc.; External: brochure, folders etc.; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE; and ministry of local governments; Interviews; documents produced and distributed.
	B . Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess efforts made on a regular basis, to raise awareness and create dialogue around initiatives and other anticipated changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of promotional events that raise awareness of reforms: newspapers, radio, television, public debate with parents, etc., sponsored by school councils. 	
	C . Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess the efficiency of distributed material and information campaign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of community awareness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional HighFairLow Beneficiaries HighFairLow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community associations. Surveys and questionnaires.

	DIMENSION I POLICY PLANS & PROGRAMS	AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
PROCESS	4. PLANS & PROGRAMS	A . National EFA plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to establish the existence of a comprehensive national framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative information about the national EFA plan (or an equivalent education policy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE. Review of the national EFA plan.
		B . District/provincial EFA plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to establish whether stakeholders are developing EFA plans at district levels. Is the process participatory? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound EFA plan at the district level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EDO office. Review of district EFA plan.
		C . Planning at the district and provincial level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether informed decision-making takes place in preparing district-based plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracking collected, analysed data in plans and programs Mapping exercises (schools, populations, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District & provincial ed. offices; and the MOE. Analysis of documents: progress reports & evaluations.
	5. PLANNING & PROGRAMMING: BUILDING CAPACITY	A . Building institutional capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess the capacity of local institutions to support decentralization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of local institutions, personnel and facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE. Review of the HRM plan.
		B . Program for managing human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether a plan for managing human resources is in place. What is its quality? Does it include all community stakeholders? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative features of the management plan for human resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOE training providers; and community members. Interviews; questionnaires; training material
	6. MONITORING & EVALUATING PPPs (POLICIES, PLANS, PROGRAMS)	A . Environment for monitoring and evaluating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess the capacity of reforms to incorporate data and results of evaluation into policy, planning and resource allocation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress reports indicate that capacity is: Strong/Fair/weak 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE. Review of relevant reports and statistics.
		B . Indicative framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to establish what guidelines there are regarding that identify the factors they should take into account when planning, monitoring and evaluating. Do these factors improve performance? Are they characteristic of an efficient system? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence and content of guidelines; standards (national and international) such as ideal class sizes and teaching hours; book: pupil ratios; pupil: teacher ratios, school building costs; teacher salaries, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE & the EDO. Records.

OUTPUT	DIMENSION I POLICY PLANS & PROGRAMS	AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
	7. BUILDING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL	<p>A . Structure and operations</p> <p>B . Data analysis</p> <p>C . Training programs</p>	<p>• Practitioners are to assess efficiency of communication between MOE and the local level</p> <p>• Practitioners are to assess stakeholders' capacity to make use of data such as EFA plans (up) and school development plans (down)</p> <p>• Practitioners are to assess whether policy, plans and programs anticipate training needs so that stakeholders can assume their roles and responsibilities effectively</p>	<p>- Examples of decision-making procedures; intervals between making decisions and their implementation</p> <p>- Consistency in data analysis and formulation of new initiatives and/or remediation measures</p> <p>- Frequency of training; profile of participants in training (principals, school council members, etc.)</p>	<p>• The EDO</p> <p>• Interviews & records.</p> <p>• The EDO & schools.</p> <p>• Review of plans</p> <p>• The MOE & the EDO</p> <p>• Review of training plans & reports.</p>
8. ACCOUNTABILITY	<p>A . Accountability to parents and learners</p> <p>B . Transparent decision-making</p>	<p>• Practitioners are to assess whether the education system is responsive to the needs of important stakeholders</p> <p>• Practitioners are to assess transparency of procedures, outcomes and decision-making</p>	<p>- Participation of parents and learners in school councils</p> <p>- Information sharing (posting notices or announcements) on the school's budgetary decisions</p>	<p>• Schools & school councils.</p> <p>• Interviews & a review of posted announcements.</p>	
9. EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES	<p>A . Excluded groups</p> <p>B . Reduced bureaucracy</p>	<p>• Practitioners are to assess whether the groups that were excluded from the management of the educational system are now included as a result of the initiatives under review</p> <p>• Practitioners are to assess relative independence of local governance (before and after reforms)</p>	<p>- List of additional groups or associations involved;</p> <p>- Comparative analysis of decisions taken and implemented at the local levels (before and after implementation of the initiative under review)</p>	<p>• The MOE; & community associations.</p> <p>• Interviews.</p> <p>• The EDO; & community associations.</p> <p>• Interviews.</p>	

INPUT	DIMENSION II FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION	AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
	1. DELEGATING AUTHORITY	<p>A . Areas.</p> <p>B . Stakeholders.</p> <p>C . Gender equity</p>	<p>• Practitioners are to assess the administrative areas where there is a redistribution of roles and responsibilities</p> <p>• Practitioners are to assess to which extent devolutionary initiatives involve the community and/or its new partners</p> <p>• Practitioners are to assess to what extent women take part in formal decision-making at the local level</p>	<p>Examples of delegated responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - formulating policy; - training & certifying teachers; - recruiting and firing teachers; - supervising teachers; - paying salaries - developing curricula; - producing and distributing textbooks; and - building and maintenance <p>Number of stakeholders with new responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SMCs, PTAs, and CSOs; - education officers; - the private sector; and - poor parents and parents with low SES <p>- Types of job held by women and men before and after reforms</p>	<p>• The MOE; & community associations.</p> <p>• The MOE; & community associations.</p> <p>• Interviews; review of activity reports.</p> <p>• District EFA teams; PTAs & SMCs.</p> <p>• Review of documents.</p>
2. MANAGING EDUCATION: DEVOLUTIONARY INITIATIVES	<p>A . Practices and procedures of devolution.</p> <p>B . Financial reforms.</p> <p>C . Decentralization of all funding to the district level.</p>	<p>• Practitioners are to assess whether the decision-making competencies in place match the needs of the reform initiatives at the local level</p> <p>• Practitioners are to assess whether there is an appropriate financial plan for the task of devolutionary reform</p> <p>• Practitioners to assess whether the community and school receive sufficient financial support to</p>	<p>Mapping of decision-making with respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pedagogical devolution (decision-making over curricula, teacher training, etc.); - administrative devolution; and - financial devolution. <p>- Plan that covers financial devolution (national, province/regional, district and school level)</p> <p>- Percentage of budget allocated at district levels.</p> <p>- Distribution of expenditure relative</p>	<p>• The EDO</p> <p>• Review of plan.</p> <p>• The EDO</p> <p>• Interviews; review of relevant documents.</p>	

DIMENSION II FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION		AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
PROCESS	3. ESTABLISHING AN ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE		<i>carry out their reform initiatives at the local level.</i>	<i>to sources.</i> - <i>Distribution of expenditure relative to category of governance (public, private subsidized, private independent).</i>	
		A . Rules and regulations.	<i>• Practitioners are to assess whether stakeholders have adapted national rules and regulations to local levels. What is their availability to relevant administrations?</i>	- <i>Regional/municipal manual on administrative rules and regulations with respect to the budget.</i>	<i>• The MOE & the EDO</i> <i>• Documents analysis & interviews.</i>
		B . Communications infrastructure.	<i>• Practitioners are to assess whether there is sufficient communications infrastructure to support reforms</i>	- <i>Qualitative and quantitative information about communication facilities and infrastructure.</i>	<i>• The MOE & the EDO</i> <i>• Government census & questionnaires.</i>
	C . District and provincial EFA units	<i>• Practitioners are to assess the functionality of plans to prepare district and/or provincial EFA initiatives</i>	- <i>Location of district EFA cell.</i> - <i>District/provincial EFA cell: names of personnel.</i>	<i>• The EDO</i> <i>• Review of documents & interviews.</i>	
	4. MOBILIZING & USING LOCAL RESOURCES	A . School-based budgets	<i>• Practitioners are to assess whether district budgets accommodate the priorities of local schools.</i>	- <i>Review of school-based budget.</i>	<i>• School records; EDO</i> <i>• Documents analysis</i>
		B . Generating tax revenues	<i>• Practitioners are to assess the autonomy of local stakeholders with respect to raising money.</i>	- <i>Own source revenue x 100 total revenues.</i>	<i>• EDO & community associations.</i> <i>• Tax revenues</i>
		C . Community stakeholders take part in making decisions	<i>• Practitioners are to assess the extent of public consultation before stakeholders adopt the budget.</i>	- <i>Number of consultative meetings.</i> - <i>Published budget.</i>	<i>• The EDO & CSOs, SMCs.</i> <i>• Budget lists & records of consultation.</i>
D . Regulating family contributions		<i>• Practitioners are to assess whether stakeholders have ensured a transparent use of families'</i>	- <i>Regulations and documentation addressed to the families; record of face-to-face meetings.</i>	<i>• The EDO & school councils</i> <i>• Regulations.</i>	

DIMENSION II FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION		AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
PROCESS	5. APPLYING FINANCIAL PROCEDURES		contributions. What amounts have they contributed?	- Parental contribution as percentage of annual budget	
		A . Financial devolution plan	• Practitioners are to assess whether daily operations implement devolutionary reforms	- Financial report on the allocation and use of resources compared to objectives and goals of the initial plan	• EDOs & SMCs head teachers. • Review of forms
		B . Reliability of monetary transfers	• Practitioners are to assess the financial transfers (provincial to district level; district to sub-district), including promptness of delivery	- Delays in processing monetary transfers - Number of visas governing the release of funds	• EDO finance; EDO & DCO office. • Financial records
	C . Third party validation	• Practitioners are to assess data regarding its validity and legitimacy;	- Report of third party	• EDO & third party. Interviews; & EDO records.	
	6. BUILDING CAPACITY IN THE MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION OF BUDGETS	A . The efficiency of daily operations	• Practitioners are to assess training programs. Do they enables administrators to apply new rules & procedures?	- Training program includes module on financial accounting practices and law	• Training institutions. • Review of training manuals & modules.
	7. MONITORING & SUPERVISING	A . Frequency & level of supervision.	• Practitioners are to assess whether there is continuous help from district authorities in assessing devolutionary goals and objectives.	Number of times: - Very supportive - Fairly supportive - Not at all supportive	• The EDO • Interviews; questionnaires; & review of records.
		B . Areas covered by supervision.	• Practitioners are to assess whether supervision is supportive in all areas of the devolution initiative.	- Areas: Pedagogy: Teaching methods: curricula & evaluation Management: Training, budgetting, and HRM.	• The EDO community. • Questionnaires.
		C . Existence of a data-base.	• Practitioners are to asses institutional capacity to process data gathered under supervision.	- Established/not established. - Qualitative information.	• The MOE • Interviews; review of systems.
		D . Financial audits.	• Practitioners are to assess cost-effectiveness.	- Number and quality of audits.	• MOE finance & the EDO Audit reports.

DIMENSION II FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION		AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
OUTPUT	8. THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDING AT THE LOCAL LEVEL		<i>What is the level of transparency with respect to spending?</i>		
		A . Budgetary increases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether the reform has produced more resources within the sector? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth in percentage of GDP allocated to education. Percentage of district budget allocated to education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOE & Ministry of Finance Review of budget
	B . Regional equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether funding for poor offsets their economic hardship. Is funding sufficient for schools to reach a minimum standard across all districts? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formula for distributing resource to districts or provinces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE & EDO finance. Description of financial procedures; & interviews. 	
	9. STAKEHOLDERS' PARTICIPATION IN DECISIONS ABOUT FUNDING INITIATIVES	A . Increased discretionary powers over finances at the local level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess local stakeholders' influence with respect to financial issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number/type of budget decisions made at district/school level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School council; EDOs; CSOs. Interviews; & questionnaires
		B . District-based budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether stakeholders prepare the budget at the district level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative information Analysis of the budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EDO Interviews; review of documents.
		C . Areas covered by local budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether budgets reflect local educational priorities and needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of budget against situational analysis of sector in the province/district/ community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EDO Review of budgets Interviews
		D . Social equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether those of low economic status or the marginalized take part in making decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of poor and those with low educational achievement who take part in EFA meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District EFA teams; & SMCs; PTAs Review of attendance lists from meetings.

	DIMENSION III PARTICIPATION	AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
INPUT	1. HAVING A VOICE IN THE DIALOGUE ABOUT POLICY: THE PLACE OF COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS	A . <i>At the national level.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether the overall political background and environment provides for a broad participation in the dialogue about developing policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National policy statement that ensures partners take part in creating, implementing and evaluating policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE Education policy documents.
		B . <i>At the provincial or district level.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether local policies and environment provide for a broad participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District education policy has clauses covering the participation of stakeholders in creating, implementing and evaluating policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE & the EDO Education policy documents.
	2. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES	A . <i>Forums of dialogue.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether appropriate structures regularly bring partners together for dialogue and conflict resolution. What procedures are in place (down and upstream)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment, membership lists, and periodic educational planning and review forums. Spaces created for conflict resolution. How many disputes are solved in these forums? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE & the EDO Reports and minutes of forums.
B . <i>Civil organizations.</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess the organizational structures, networks and means of CSOs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of registered CSOs. Frequency of interventions in creating policy. What is the role of CSOs with respect to implementation? Overview of financial resources (government, UN, private etc) to cover CSO activities. What percentage of the budget is allocated to CSOs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE & the CSOs. Names of CSOs; CSO budgets; & qualitative information. 	
C . <i>ICT networks.</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess the extent to which partners can communicate across geographical boundaries, or via email. What use is made of the internet for sharing information? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of computers and internet connections. What use is made of them? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional associations; & community information centres. School networks interviews & questionnaires. 	

PROCESS	DIMENSION III PARTICIPATION	AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
	3. MOBILIZING & NETWORKING FOR EFA	<p>A . Elements of partnership-building</p> <p>B . Administrative areas for partnership-building</p>	<p>• Practitioners are to assess strengths and weaknesses in partnership-building regarding the areas of intervention stipulated in the EFA goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early childhood care and education; universal primary education; - Learning needs of young people and adults - Adult literacy; - Gender equality; - The quality of education <p>• Practitioners are to assess potential for partnering, such as setting up information systems, monitoring systems, the management of human resources and administrative functions, as well as a reporting system</p>	<p>- List of executive partners for implementing reform initiatives</p> <p>What geographical area is covered by the budget?</p> <p>- There is an improved systems of reporting, data collection and processing. The quality and quantity of information about education is better, as is the access to relevant information and use of human resources</p>	<p>• The MOE responsible executive, partners & the EDO.</p> <p>• Review of documents; interviews; & mobilized resources.</p> <p>• NGO, EDO & school records.</p> <p>• Comparative review of records & interviews.</p>
4. MONITORING & IMPLEMENTING: LEVEL OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION	<p>A . Types of stakeholder interactions</p> <p>B . Frequency of stakeholder interaction</p>	<p>• Practitioners are to assess interactions across a range of stakeholders, and their integration within the larger community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the SMC; - education offers and head teachers; - parents; and - excluded groups. <p>• Practitioners are to assess the flexibility of the decision-making processes, and opportunities to be a part of it</p> <p>• Practitioners are to assess the stakeholders' level of participation in</p>	<p>- Identifies issues addressed by a range of community groups.</p> <p>- Chronology of important activities and decisions.</p> <p>- Number of conflicts and negotiations.</p>	<p>• The EDO, the SMCs, & community members.</p> <p>• Interviews, mapping stakeholders.</p> <p>• Community associations.</p> <p>• Interviews, review of records and minutes of meetings.</p>	

DIMENSION III PARTICIPATION		AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
PROCESS	5. CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR & BY CSOs	C . Level of stakeholder participation.	<p><i>implementation and monitoring activities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practitioners are to assess the extent to which devolution provokes conflicts between stakeholders, and between the local people and government. Are groups negotiating? • Practitioners are to measure the interest and motivation of parents’, teachers’ associations, school councils, etc., in extra-curricula activities generated for community and educational development. 	- List of participants in extra-curricula school activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MOE • Review of records & interviews.
		A . Planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practitioners are to assess whether the design of skills training is driven by local demand. 	- Designation of persons and teams involved in the design of training and training materials;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MOE, EDO & CSOs. • Interviews, questionnaires & training materials.
		B . Skills for service delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practitioners are to assess whether building capacity is anticipated, so that CSOs develop sufficient specialization skills to improve the delivery and monitoring of services. 	- Training plans and budgets at different administrative levels;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSOs. • Interviews & questionnaires.
		C . Outreach of training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are to assess the extent to which NGOs and CSOs implement activities that build capacity as part of the larger devolutionary framework. 	- List of NGOs and CSOs who are active partners with respect to implementing the devolutionary objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MOE, EDO, NGOs & CSOs. • Irrelevant progress reports.

OUTPUT	DIMENSION III PARTICIPATION	AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
	6. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS	<p>A . New roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>B . Co-ordination of EFA-related goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practitioners are to assess the existence of areas that are now under the care of private stakeholders • Practitioners are to assess whether the private initiatives complement public service structures • Practitioners are to assess whether public/private partnerships expanded the delivery of service to those for whom it is intended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listed activities completed in collaboration with private sector stakeholders, such as publishing and distributing textbooks - Active and continuous participation of private stakeholders in areas relevant to EFA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MOE • Questionnaires. • The MOE & EFA national initiative & professional associations. • Questionnaires & interviews.
7. STAKEHOLDERS' INFLUENCE OVER RESOURCES	<p>A . Locating, directing and using resources.</p> <p>B . Expanded resource-base.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practitioners are to assess who has a stake in the movement of resources to targeted community groups. • Practitioners are to assess resource the financial and in kind resource-base before and after stakeholders have implemented devolutionary initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased funds available on administrative levels to which the community has a ready access. - A budget summary that shows all expenditure. - Annual education budget for each region, province, community. - Stakeholders' resources and facilities that have been made available to the education sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MOE & the EDO • The MOE & the EDO at their relevant administrative level. • Review of financial records and statements about decentralisation. 	
8. STAKEHOLDERS' PRIORITIES IN MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT EDUCATION	<p>A . Reflection of community priorities.</p> <p>B . Alternative and innovative approaches to reform measures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practitioners are to assess whether community decisions are followed up appropriately by the respective authority and by the community itself. • Practitioners are to assess if/how increased community participation has improved the learning environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comparative analysis of decisions and results. - Analysis of any changes that have happened during the period under review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community associations & activity reports. • Interviews & questionnaires & review of reports • Community associations. • Interviews & qualitative information. 	

INPUT	DIMENSION IV ACCES, COMPLETION & QUALITY	AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
	1. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT & CONDITIONS	<p>A . Physical infrastructure</p> <p>B . Education personnel</p> <p>C . Textbooks and learning materials</p> <p>D . Local curriculum</p>	<p>• Practitioners are to assess whether participatory planning and fiscal decision-making have benefited school building program</p> <p>• Practitioners are to assess whether decentralization has facilitated teaching and administration with respect to stakeholders' successful recruitment practices</p> <p>• Practitioners are to assess whether decentralization is facilitating access to textbooks and other materials</p> <p>• Practitioners are to establish whether the province, district, school, and parents have a say in selecting textbooks, for purposes of diversifying choice</p> <p>• Practitioners are to assess whether devolutionary initiatives have influenced the curriculum by allowing for its adaptation to the necessities of life at the local level</p>	<p>- Current number of schools compared to the period before the new reform initiatives.</p> <p>- Buildings that reflect community and special needs.</p> <p>- Average teacher/pupil ratio.</p> <p>- Average number of pedagogical and administrative support staff per school.</p> <p>- Average number of education officers at district level.</p> <p>- Book pupil ratio; the number and kind of reference materials.</p> <p>- Modality that governs the availability of books: number of books borrowed over a year; educational resources that are stored in classrooms; family property that is taken home; and the number and availability of free books.</p> <p>- Selection procedure regarding textbooks (centralized or decentralized?); if decentralized, then to what level of administration (provincial, district, or school level)?</p> <p>- The national curriculum guidelines provide for a certain percentage of curriculum development that is local.</p>	<p>• The MOE, school mapping.</p> <p>• MOE statistics.</p> <p>• The MOE, relevant institutions at the local level.</p> <p>• Staffing records.</p> <p>• MOE textbook policy & procurement regulations, the EDO & schools for snapshots.</p> <p>• Review of documents & interviews.</p> <p>• The MOE, curriculum guidelines & syllabus.</p> <p>• Review of records & interviews.</p>

DIMENSION IV ACCES, COMPLETION & QUALITY	AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
2. BUILDING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY	E. Use of local knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether the increased participation of stakeholders in delivering education has facilitated the school's use of knowledge and expertise that is drawn from the community at large for purposes of enriching the classroom experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number and type of extra-curricula events and lectures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School councils & the EDO. Questionnaires.
	A. Teaching core.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether devolutionary initiatives increase the core of qualified teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of teachers who graduate each year, compared to previous years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE & institutions. Review of documents.
	B. Educational management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether the reform initiatives caters for the cost-effective management of education at the local and school level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules and regulations for the administration and management of teaching practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district education office. Review of rules & regulations, interviews.
3. MANAGING HUMAN RESOURCES & SKILLS	C. Structure and operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether the institutional structure and network is sensitive to the processes of decentralization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication guidelines regarding day-to-day operations. Institutional partners (numbers, links to) and operational CSOs at district level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EDO & local stakeholders. Documents & analyses of interviews.
	A. Contents for teachers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether the programs cover pedagogical issues and approaches that increase the level of participation by parents and civil bodies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content of training all courses For what level of participant were the courses developed and delivered? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE, PED & the EDO. Interviews & review of training programs.
	B. Contents for administrators and managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether the programs cover management: budget, disbursements, management of all personnel, school maintenance, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content of training all courses For what level of participant were the courses developed and delivered? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE & PED, training institutions.

DIMENSION IV ACCES, COMPLETION & QUALITY	AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
4. MONITORING & EVALUATING QUALITY AND ACCESSIBILITY	C. Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether training is interactive and to what extent teachers provide feed-back with respect to improving its quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modality for integrating course evaluation. Responses to training courses measured to scale, that is: very interactive, somewhat interactive, or not at all interactive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE & community associations. Minutes of meetings.
	A. Using the results of evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether approaches to monitoring and evaluating at the classroom level leads to a review of planning, programming and budgeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-appearance of similar difficulties throughout the period under review (negative indicator). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE & the EDO Review of policy, plans & programs.
	B. Educational decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether improvements in building partnerships encourage decisions that make for a better quality of education overall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of pedagogical decisions made by the school council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District authorities & schools. Interviews, analysis of documents.
	C. The inclusion of disadvantaged groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess if reform initiatives are increasing access for learners from disadvantaged groups (e.g. low SES, minority groups, and the disabled) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of children from poor families enrolled in primary school because of local outreach programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools, district education authorities. Interviews & analysis of documents.
5. ATTAINMENT EFFECTS	A. Enrolment ratios.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess if the system meets an increased demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gross/net enrolment ratio for the period under review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE Review of records & statistics.
	B. Repetition rates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess if devolution means less repetition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of students who must repeat a grade. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE Review of records & statistics.
	C. Attrition (drop-out) rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess if devolutionary initiatives keeps students in school, and change parental attitudes towards completion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attrition rate for the period under review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE Review of records & statistics.

DIMENSION IV ACCES, COMPLETION & QUALITY	AREA	JUSTIFICATION	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	SOURCES & DATA COLLECTION
6. ACHIEVEMENTS	A. Tests and examinations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether student performance has improved because of the devolutionary initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tests and examinations: average scores. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE, teachers & students. Review of records & interviews.
	B. School completion rates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess overall completion rate in relation to completion and attrition rates, etc., (see above) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of students who graduate from the most senior year of school as a percentage of the total cohort. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE, teachers & students. Review of records, interviews.
	C. School performance overall.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess links between improved academic performance and efforts to build capacity with respect to school leadership and management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of school performance and efforts to build capacity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE & the EDO School performance records, efforts to build capacity.
7. EQUITY	A. Access of excluded groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether there is now greater equity as a result of devolutionary initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the period under review, the increased percentage of students from marginalized groups and minorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE & marginalized communities. Interviews & review of records.
	B. Learning opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether students with learning disadvantages are improving their performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the period under review, the attainment levels and test results of those who usually cannot meet standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE Review of records.
	C. Aggregated gender data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether the sector responds equitably to the different needs of males and females. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The inclusion of gender-aggregated data in the collection, processing and analysis of enrolment data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE & the EDO Review of available data.
	D. The gap between education in urban and rural areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioners are to assess whether the gap between urban and rural areas is decreasing in terms of the accessibility and quality of education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparative analysis of rural and urban areas (data drawn from within the same district and across regions). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MOE & the EDO Review of statistics.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- CADE - UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education
- CCA - UN Common Country Assessment (see also UNDAF)
- CCB - Citizen Community Boards
- CCP - Community Participation Project
- CEDAW - UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- CESCRC - UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- CRC - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- CRPD - UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- CSO - Civil Society Organisation (see also NGO)
- DEP - District Educational Planning
- ECCE - Early Childhood Care and Education
- EDO - Executive District Officer
- EFA - Education for All
- EMIS - Education Management Information Systems
- ESR - Education Sector Reform
- FCPE - Free and Compulsory Primary Education (see also UPE)
- FTI - EFA Fast Track Initiative
- GDP - Gross Domestic Product
- GEM - Gender Empowerment Measure
- HR - Human Rights
- HRBA - Human Rights Based Approach
- HRE - Human Rights Education
- HRM - Human Resource Management
- IICBA - UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa
- IIEP - UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning
- ILO - (UN) International Labour Organisation
- LEP - Local Education Plan
- LIFE - UNESCO Literacy Initiative for Empowerment
- MDG - Millennium Development Goals
- MOE - Ministry of Education
- MTEF - Medium Term Expenditure Framework
- NHRI - National Human Rights Institute
- NGO - Non-Governmental Organisation (see also CSO)

- OECD - Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
- PEC - Parent Education Committee
- PM&E - Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
- PPP - Public-Private Partnership
- PRSP - Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
- PTA - Parent Teacher Association
- PTC - Parent Teacher Council
- SAT - School Assessment Tool
- SCOT - Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats-analysis diagram (see SWOT)
- SES - Social Economic Status
- SBM - School Based Management
- SDP - School Development Planning
- SMC - School Management Committee
- SWAp - Sector Wide Approach
- SWOT - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats-analysis diagram (see SCOT)
- TBS - Targeted Budget Support
- UDHR - Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- UIS - UNESCO Institute for Statistics
- UN - United Nations
- UNDAF - United Nations Development Assistance Framework (see also CCA)
- UNDP - United Nations Development Program
- UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
- UNESS - UNESCO National Education Support Strategy
- UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund
- UPE - Universal Primary Education (see also FCPE)
- VEC - Village Education Committee
- WBI - World Bank Institute
- WPHRE - World Programme for Human Rights Education

WEBSITES

The following list of websites may serve as inspiration for further study and background on decentralisation of educational governance and reaching Education for All by 2015.

- Action Aid: www.actionaid.org
- Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED):
www.aku.edu/ied
- Asian Network of Training and Research Institutions in Educational Planning (ANTRIEP): www.antriep.net
- Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA):
www.adeanet.org
- Department for International Development (UK government): www.dfid.gov.uk
- Education International (EI): www.ei-ie.org
- Education Law Association (ELA): www.educationlaw.org
- Fast Track Initiative on Education for All (FTI): www.fasttrackinitiative.org
- Global Campaign for Education: www.campaignforeducation.org
- Idara-a-Taleem-a-Aagahi Trust: www.itacec.org
- Institute of Development Studies: www.ids.ac.uk
- Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE): www.ineesite.org
- International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA-UNESCO):
www.unesco-iicba.org

- International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO):
www.unesco.org/iiep
- International Labour Organisation (ILO): www.ilo.org
- Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen (KIT): www.kit.nl
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR):
www.ohchr.org
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD):
www.oecd.org
- Plan International: www.plan-international.org
- Shinnyo-en Foundation: www.sef.org
- Save the Children Alliance: www.savethechildren.org
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF): www.unicef.org
- United Nations Development Program (UNDP): www.undp.org
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO):
www.unesco.org
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID): www.usaid.gov
- World Bank and World Bank Institute (WBI): www.worldbank.org
- World Education: www.worlded.org

THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND ITS SOURCES

Education is a fundamental human right, recognised and described in many international and regional conventions and legal instruments. Every country in the world is a signatory to at least one, if not many, of these, thereby committing themselves to protect, respect and fulfil the right to education.

Decentralisation may not be a right in itself, but if successfully implemented it is a tool to ensure access to quality education and to promote democratic participation for all, both of which are fundamental human rights. It is therefore crucial that educational governance at the local level be framed in the language and spirit of rights, helping us to identify duty-bearers and rights-holders. The cornerstones in the human rights based approach are non-discrimination, participation, transparency and accountability.

The principal international instruments on human rights and education (with the specific articles pertaining to the right to education) are the following:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 (esp. article 26)
- Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, 1949 (esp. article 24)
- UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, 1960 (esp. articles 1-5)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965 (esp. articles 5 and 7)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966 (esp. article 13 and 14)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966
- ILO Convention on the Minimum Age of Employment, 1973
- Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979 (esp. article 10)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989 (esp. article 28 and 29)
- ILO Convention concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, 1989 (esp. articles 29 and 31)
- UNESCO Convention on Technical and Vocational Education, 1989
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990 (esp. article 30)
- ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (esp. article 7)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006 (esp. article 24)

In addition there are instruments written for and ratified at the regional levels.