



DAKAR +7
EDUCATION FOR ALL IN AFRICA

C H A P T E R 1

Institutional changes following the Dakar forum

The Dakar Forum in 2000 marked an important turning point in the monitoring and the development of African education systems from an institutional angle. This chapter intends to provide an assessment of the mechanisms that originated from the Forum for the promotion and monitoring of the EFA goals. The Forum also fostered the definition of a more global framework for action for the different education sector stakeholders at country level, with the generalisation of medium-term sector development programmes as a cornerstone. Implementing and monitoring these programmes, which are often based on extensive and shared diagnosis, are facilitated by the integration of education expenditure into a global budgeting programme and by an increasingly transparent and open dialogue between the different stakeholders, through the setting up of partnership framework documents and joint monitoring reviews. Finally, the Dakar Forum generated significant financial mobilization for education from external partners and governments alike, although this is still insufficient in view of the commitments made and showing some initial signs of loss of impetus.

Following the somewhat questionable outcome of the 1990 World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, the Dakar Forum in 2000, reinforced by the agreement on the Millennium Development Goals the same year, seriously revived the cause of schooling in the world and initiated very real institutional changes. These changes took place first of all in the setting up of a series of mechanisms for the promotion and monitoring of the goals of Education for All (EFA). Seven years after implementation, these mechanisms, oriented around different geographical levels -international, regional, sub-regional and national - and around several dimensions - political, technical, analytical and participatory - are to be reviewed.

At national level, one of the most fundamental changes is certainly the insertion of the Education for All goals in a framework of overall development of the education sector, which is itself a component of a national strategy for growth and/or poverty reduction. This framework is founded on in-depth and shared diagnosis of the functioning of the sector and on the mobilization of the stakeholders around a national programme for medium or long-term development of the education sector. Carrying out and monitoring this programme are facilitated by a new type of dialogue between governments, technical and financial partners and civil society, which is usually formalized by a partnership framework document and joint monitoring reviews. The overall framework for development of the education sector is then reinforced by incorporating education expenditure in global budget programming through the medium-term expenditure frameworks. Finally, it becomes all the more legitimate through the assertive and better coordinated presence of civil society. This process towards a global framework could still be improved upon but it certainly makes a radical break with previous practices, where the education sector was compartmentalized in sub-sectors, where international aid came in the form of rival « cash dispensers» and where projects were developed outside national administration without real driving effect.

The Dakar Forum also gave rise to strong international mobilization for education, declaring Africa as a priority, in terms of official development assistance and in the different countries' intersectoral budget trade-offs. This mobilization has been reinforced by international initiatives in favour of heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) and the accelerated implementation of EFA (Fast Track Initiative) as well as progress in terms of harmonization and alignment of aid. However, in spite of this effective mobilization, the resources made available to the different countries are not in line with the promises made and are now showing signs of loss of impetus.

Without claiming to be exhaustive, this chapter aims at putting forward the main institutional changes and assessing the consequences firstly in terms of development of « credible national education policies » and secondly in terms of resources mobilized for the achievement of the Education for All goals and Universal Primary Education.



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1. Major institutional changes...

1.1 Mechanisms for the promotion and monitoring of Education for All at international, regional and national levels

In order to generate strong political commitment at all levels in favour of education, the Dakar Forum (2000), drawing on experience from the Jomtien Conference which had rather limited consequences in terms of commitment, highlighted the necessity for setting up appropriate mechanisms for achieving the EFA goals. This section will cover the main mechanisms resulting from the Dakar Forum for the promotion, coordination and monitoring of progress of Education for All at international and regional (Africa) levels and in each African country.

1.1.1 At international level

The Dakar framework for action (UNESCO 2000) has introduced several mechanisms for monitoring EFA internationally, which are organized around different aspects : political with the High-Level Group, technical with the EFA Working Group, and analytical with the EFA Global Monitoring Report. civil society also has an important role to play, in vigilance and advocacy, especially with the Global campaign for EFA.

The High-Level Group: a political body

The Dakar framework for action describes the High-Level Group as a small, flexible body, made up of decision-makers, representing, at the highest level, governments and civil society of developed and developing countries as well as development organizations. Its mission is to reinforce political will and the mobilization of technical and financial resources for EFA, and to ensure that the international community respects the commitments made in Dakar.

The High-Level Group has met every year since the Dakar Forum: Paris (France) 2001, Abuja (Nigeria) 2002, New Delhi (India) 2003, Brasilia (Brazil) 2004, Beijing (China) 2005, Cairo (Egypt) 2006. More and more countries were represented in the High-Level Group throughout the different meetings, bringing it closer to a large forum rather than a small body.

Each High-Level Group meeting handled a limited number of topics, with the following permanently on the agenda: the monitoring of progress towards EFA, the reinforcement of partnerships, the fulfilment of commitments and the mobilization of resources. Variants concerned topics such as the role and nature of the High-Level Group, the challenges of coordination and cooperation or the effectiveness of aid.

One of the concerns of the High-Level Group is to have a well-targeted debate and effective and open dialogue. This has been better taken into account since 2002 with the publication of the EFA Global Monitoring Report which documents the progress on the six EFA goals, and focuses discussion on the main subject of each report. Finally, the purpose of these meetings is to submit a list of recommendations to governments, so that they affirm their will in achieving the EFA goals. These recommendations concern also the technical and financial partners, so that they honour their financial commitments for reaching EFA, and civil society, so that it can fully play its role in stimulating the commitment of all towards EFA.

The EFA Working Group: a technical body

The Working Group is an informal and consultative mechanism which brings together the EFA partners at technical level: governments, bilateral and multilateral organizations, civil society and private sector. It is in charge of providing the EFA movement with technical directives. It establishes and reinforces partnerships and creates links between the key programmes of the different organizations for achieving the six Dakar goals. It provides a forum for discussion and exchange of experience regarding EFA at national, regional and international levels and recommends specific actions. The Working Group meets once a year, usually towards the month of July, at UNESCO's head office in Paris. It prepares the annual meeting of the EFA High-Level Group.

The EFA Global Monitoring Report: an analytical tool



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The EFA Global Monitoring Report is the work of an independent international team based in UNESCO's head office. The Report has been published once a year since 2002 ; the first edition set out the progress made with regard to the six Dakar goals, highlighted effective policies and strategies and drew the attention of the international community to the new difficulties arising in terms of action and cooperation. The ensuing reports, although not forsaking this approach, focused each in turn on one of the six goals: gender equality in 2003/04, quality in 2005, literacy in 2006 and early childhood care and protection in 2007. One of the justifications for this practice is to give equal attention to each of the six EFA goals.

The Global Campaign for Education: an organization for advocacy

Faced with the manifest inability of reaching the goals set by Jomtien, two important members of the Collective Consultation of NGOs (CCNGO)¹, Oxfam and Action Aid, decided in 1999, to found the Global Campaign for Education (GCE). This coalition took advantage of the Dakar Forum and of the international collective consultation of NGOs organized on a parallel by the CCNGO, to present its own Global Action Plan for Education in order to remind the different states and the international community of their commitments. Joined by many leading associations, including Education International (EI) and the International Federation of Workers' Education Association (IFWEA), the GCE has since been lobbying on a large scale to defend all the Dakar goals and the participatory resources needed to reach them. With its international presence, as well as regional and national connections in over 150 countries, the GCE plays a dynamic role in the elaboration of critical reports and documented field studies which fuel the contradictory debate on the strategies used to further the cause of education. The GCE is also instrumental in the organization of Global Action Week, a time of global mobilization, where human chains and other public demonstrations remind leaders of their commitments and the efforts remaining to be made in order to meet them..

¹ This mechanism dates back to 1984, when it was not yet called the Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education for All (CCNGO/EFA) and included around one hundred international organizations; it aims at strengthening the partnership between NGOs and the education sector of UNESCO.

1.1.2 At African regional and sub-regional levels

The Africa EFA regional Forum

Drawing on the recommendations of the Dakar framework for action, UNESCO's Regional Office for Education in Africa (BREDA) has worked towards setting up an EFA regional Forum in sub-Saharan Africa. Taking the example of the EFA Working Group at international level, the EFA regional Forum brings together the sub-regional representatives of the national EFA coordinators, representatives of the United Nations agencies, technical and financial partners, African regional and sub-regional entities, representatives of NGOs and civil society. It is chaired by a minister elected by his/her peers and convenes twice a year. Each of the six sub-regions has a sub-regional Forum. This mechanism comes in addition to, and ties in with, the African regional authorities on consultation, exchange and cooperation in terms of education, i.e. Conference of African Ministers of Education (COMEDAF) under the aegis of the African Union and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA). Each, in its own way, is involved in achieving the EFA goals and uses specific monitoring mechanisms for that purpose which benefit the regional Forum.

The issue of education in the African Union

Education has, for long, been one of the African Union's concerns, and this was reinforced by Jomtien (1990), Dakar (2000) and by the adoption of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in 2000. In 1994, a group of African countries launched the Ségou Perspectives in Ségou (Mali), which they defined as a process for African integration through basic education. The most visible outcome of the Ségou Perspectives was the proclamation of the year 1995 as the year of education in Africa, the proclamation of a decade of education in Africa from 1997 to 2006 and the 1999 conference of the African Ministers of education in the framework of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) which adopted the programme of action of the Decade of Education for Africa for its first meeting. This programme was structured around four priorities: equity and access to Education for All; quality, relevance and effectiveness of education; alternative methods of learning; capacity building. The implementation mechanism included an executive committee, regional committees at regional economic community level, as well as national committees.

The COMEDAF II Conference adopted the principle of launching a new decade of education for Africa from 2006 to 2015, during its meeting in Algiers in 2005. The action plan for this decade focuses on the following fields: gender and culture, information and management systems in education, education and training of teachers, higher education, technical and vocational teaching and training, teaching-learning content and materials, quality of education. The mechanisms planned for coordination and monitoring involve the African Union itself, the regional economic communities and the national level.

The issue of education in the African sub-regional organizations

The conferences of the ministers of education for the member States of the ECOWAS, CEMAC and PALOP were held in 2004. The purpose of these meetings was, firstly, to reinforce the mobilization of the member States for achieving the goals of education at sub-regional level and, secondly, to examine and approve the sub-regional programmes for educational development. From this point of view, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which is the sub-regional economic organization that groups Southern African countries, has a protocol on education and training which generates many common programmes in terms of education; the Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) is one of the best-known and vouches for EFA monitoring.

Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA)

Regional NGO networks and other associations have developed since the Dakar Forum, stimulated and supported by the Global Campaign for Education, several members of which supported the launch and consolidation of the Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA). With a solid network of national EFA coalitions in 32 countries, ANCEFA acts as a spokesperson with the international community, on behalf of the African national and local associations which are taking up the difficult challenge of Education for All. It also offers important logistic support, regularly organizing training courses and coordination meetings to improve and coordinate NGO and syndicate action with the governments and technical and financial partners, not forgetting its input with African regional structures such as OAU, ECOWAS, NEPAD, etc. Finally, ANCEFA launched the Education Observatory in Africa in August 2006 in partnership with the GCE, with a view to promoting the participation of civil society in the monitoring and evaluation of EFA.

An analytical instrument for monitoring EFA in Africa: the «Dakar+» reports

UNESCO's Regional Office for Education in Africa (BREDA) set up an analytical instrument for monitoring EFA in Africa in 2002: the « Dakar+ » reports (this report is the 2007 edition). They aim at providing all education stakeholders in Africa with details on the current situation of the African education systems and on progress made towards the EFA goals. To do so, the BREDA's Pôle education sector analysis team analyses the most recent data available on the African countries, including UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) data. But beyond informing on the current situation, these reports intend to be of direct use in the evaluation of educational policy choices in reference to the Dakar goals, by drawing up a precise assessment of the evolution observed in Africa, by identifying what has been successful and what has failed and drawing useful lessons from same, and finally by giving thought to the changes to be made to implemented policies.

1.1.3 At national level

A multiplicity of mechanisms is in place at national level, which drives the processes of formulation, implementation and monitoring of education policies, plans and programmes. The traditional government mechanisms of coordination and monitoring in terms of education are usually activated by the education planning departments. They play a strategic role in internal coordination and in the relationship with external partners both for the simple development of an education project and for the more complicated one of a reform or a ten-year education plan. But since the Dakar Forum, the EFA movement has generated specific mechanisms such as the national EFA Forums. They have been set up by the Dakar framework for action to develop national EFA plans according to a democratic participatory approach. These Forums are composed of officials from administrative departments, representatives of technical and financial partners, NGOs and civil society as well as a coordinator. They have contributed to placing EFA high on the list of national priorities and made possible, in 42 sub-Saharan African countries, the drawing up of education plans incorporating all the EFA goals (UNESCO BREDA 2004).

1.2 Definition of a global framework for the development of the education sector at national level

In order to reach the goals set by the different countries for the development of their education sector, the need became clear in the 1990's to move towards a more global framework for action for the different stakeholders in the education sector ; the aim being to avoid past mistakes such as external support on the periphery of the national strategy which incurs very high transaction costs or resources-oriented running of the system with no medium or long-term strategic vision, lack of intersectoral dialogue, absence of appropriate budgeting, etc. The desire to see these practices change, both by the governments and their partners, arose from these admissions. In most African countries, the evolution towards a more global framework for development of the education sector has been established in the desire to move towards a sector approach or programme approach, the principal stages of which are described in graph 1.1. In this section, the principal institutional changes contributing to this evolution will be detailed.

Graph 1.1: The principal stages of the programme approach

Sector analysis	Education system diagnosis in all its aspects to identify needs and policy options
Strategy	Education system diagnosis in all its aspects to identify needs and policy options
Programme	Priorities for carrying out this strategy, whatever the financing source
Medium term expenditure framework	Pluriannual budgeting of expenditure per major programme theme fitting into a global budget framework
Action plan (annual)	Budgeted programming of actions for coming year as a base for disbursements (during sectoral reviews) comparing expenditure and acquired resources
Cash flow forecast, procurement	Tools for the implementation of this action plan, to check the material feasibility of the scheduled programme

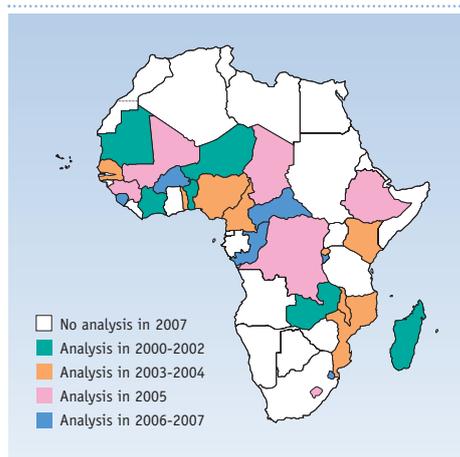
Source: Pôle de Dakar

1.2.1 More education system analysis with more participation...

As described in graph 1.1, a documented analysis of the education system, taking into account the different dimensions of the sector and the interaction between the different sub-sectors, constitutes the first stage of the sector-wide approach. It provides information on the trade-offs carried out or undergone in the educational policy, especially regarding the allocation of resources between the different levels and types of education, the regulation of pupil flow between levels, the expenditure per pupil and the total number of pupils enrolled or the breakdown of the expenditure per pupil between the main components (cf. Pasquier-Doumer, 2007). It also highlights the capacity of the sector for transforming resources into results.

Since 2000, most African countries have produced sector analysis fulfilling these conditions². 17 out of the 26 countries that have carried out this exercise are French-speaking countries

Graph 1.2: Sector-wide analysis in Africa



Sources: Pôle de Dakar, World Bank
 Note: Countries, that have made several sector-wide analyses, are ranked according to the date of the earliest analysis.

(graph 1.2). The initial explanation of the multiplication or even the systematization of sector analysis resides in the contribution such a tool represents at country level for designing, setting up and redirecting sectoral programmes in education to integrate the sector's socioeconomic and financial constraints and the human development goals set by the different countries. Next, the development of programme-aid means that donors, in financing education sector programmes as opposed to projects, require a diagnosis on the resources implemented for reaching national goals, and particularly the goals of Education for All or Millennium Development Goals, and on the way in which resources are transformed into results within the sector. Finally, the development of sector analysis is explained by an international context at the origin of initiatives such as the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative in the mid 1990's or the Fast Track Initiative as of 2000. These initiatives are indeed sources of financing for the education sector, on condition however that the educational strategy can be considered « credible ». Sector analysis provides the different partners in education with the necessary

information for making such a judgment.

Since the first sector analysis carried out in the early 2000's according to these new requirements, the format of this exercise has clearly progressed, even if it remains adapted to each country. Generally speaking, it can be said that sector analysis has moved towards a more and more participatory and open process. Indeed, the national teams working on these diagnoses, made up mainly of ministry of education executives, was expanded first of all to include ministry of finance, budget and planning executives and then teacher syndicates, parent associations and NGOs. In the Central African Republic for example, the syndicates participated in the overall sector analysis elaboration process, and particularly regarding the financial and management aspects of the system. Participating throughout the process facilitated dialogue on the necessary and sometimes difficult reforms of the Central African education system. Opening up in this way enables discussion on the major parameters and directions of educational policy, and promotes a convergence of points of view of the different stakeholders as to the reforms needed.

² These terms are described in the CSR methodology developed by the World Bank and used in particular by the Pôle de Dakar Education Sector Analysis. But some countries have carried out sector-wide analysis outside the CSR series which also complies with the requirements described above.

1.2.2 Education system stakeholders working around a common programme and jointly responsible for monitoring same

Sector-wide plans

The definition of a sector-wide plan is no doubt the most fundamental step in the programme-approach. A sector-wide plan is the culmination of a national process based on policy choices and defines a coherent set of interdependent policies, strategies, activities and investments, with a view to reaching a set of national goals, in the framework of a precise time-frame. It enables all the actions in favour of the education system to be registered in a common framework whatever the nature of the expenditure (investment or running), the source of financing (national or external) or the financial channel (project aid, programme aid, targeted or global budget aid). It then situates the strategies in a long-term perspective, thus ensuring continuity in the development of the sector. The dynamics accompanying this continuity enable the introduction of changes and the progressive adaptation of the annual plans and budgets according to the evolution of the sector-wide plan. Finally, the sector-wide plan is devised so that the sector can operate on the basis of results rather than resources.

Since the year 2000, more and more African countries have implemented sector-wide plans for education in an international context which is favourable to the programme approach. During the 1st African Conference on development financing held in Abuja (Nigeria) in May 2006 which brought together ministers of finance and ministers of education, 20 African countries made the commitment to produce a ten-year plan for education very rapidly. Some of these countries³ already had a plan, whilst others (Gabon, Nigeria and Swaziland) made the firm commitment to develop a plan as soon as possible (cf. table 1.1 for a list of countries with a sector-wide plan). During this conference, the different countries declared that these plans «*will show how Africa can reach the targets in the field of education with additional resources*» (Abuja Conference 2006).

With this declaration, the African countries underline the benefits they get out of the implementation of sector-wide plans. Sector-wide plans do indeed enable the government to give a clear and coherent vision of its policies, priorities and objectives in terms of education as well as the needs in external financing for reaching the goals. They also contribute to encouraging mutual efforts and concentrating the dialogue around the national sectoral policy and they encourage technical and financial partners to comply with national objectives, positioning the ministry of education or the government as sector leader.

The partnership vision is reinforced by the monitoring methods for sector-wide plans adopted by some countries, i.e. the partnership frameworks and the joint monitoring reviews in the education sector.

Partnership frameworks

The progressive shift from the project approach to the programme approach (UNESCO BREDA 2005) has brought about the need for better coordination of the technical and financial partners, between each other and also between all stakeholders in the sector. That is the reason why, in the past few years, some countries have launched the idea of a single framework for dialogue and harmonization of support to the education development programme. Some countries had long benefited from a consultative framework. But these frameworks have had to be reviewed in order to include the conclusions of the Rome Declaration (2003) or the Paris Declaration (2005) whereby the donors have undertaken to align their interventions in accordance with the countries' priorities, to harmonize their modes of intervention and to reinforce the capacity of beneficiary States to take on the role of lead donor.

³ Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda.

Table 1.1: Current situation of sector-wide plans in education in Africa

Country	Existence of a plan	Deadline	Comments	Country	Existence of a plan	Deadline	Comments
South Africa	yes	2003-2008		Madagascar	yes	2005-?	
Benin	yes : PDDSE	2006-2015		Malawi	no		Being prepared
Botswana	no			Mali	yes : PRODEC	2000-2011	
Burkina Faso	yes : PDDEB	2002-2010	Not sector-wide: only primary	Morocco	yes	2004-2011	
Burundi	no		Being prepared	Mauritania	yes : PNDSE	2001-2010	
Cameroon	yes	2006-2015		Mozambique	yes : ESSP	1999-2003 2005-2009	
Chad	no		Being prepared Policy letter already exists	Namibia	yes : ESSP	2003-2007	
Comoros	yes	2005-2009		Niger	yes : PDDE	2002-2012	
Congo	no		Being prepared	Nigeria	no		Being prepared
Côte d'Ivoire	no			Uganda	yes : ESIP	1998-2003	Ten-year plan for education being prepared
DRC	no			CAR	no		Being prepared
Eritrea	yes : ESDP			Rwanda	yes : RESSP	2006-2010	
Ethiopia	yes : ESDP	1998-2002 2002-2005 2005-2010		Senegal	yes : PDEF	2000-2010	
Gabon	no		Being prepared	Sierra Leone	yes	2005-2015	
Gambia	yes	?		Somalia	no		
Ghana	yes : ESP	2003-2015		Swaziland	no		Being prepared
Guinea-Bissau	no			U.R. of Tanzania	yes	2002-2006	Not sector-wide: Only primary
Equatorial Guinea	no		EFA plan	Togo	non		Being prepared
Guinea	yes	2002-?		Tunisia	yes		
Kenya	yes : KESSP	2005-2010		Zambia	yes		
Lesotho	yes : ESSP	2005-2015		Zimbabwe	no		
Liberia	yes : ESMP	2000-2010					

Source: Pôle de Dakar

Note: The Pôle de Dakar does not have information for the following countries: Angola, Algeria, Cape Verde, Djibouti, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritius, Sao Tome and Principe, Egypt, Seychelles and Sudan.

The partnership frameworks, although they have no legal value, represent a moral commitment for the countries' partners to move towards harmonizing their interventions. They are generally flexible enough to allow for some progressiveness in this convergence, allowing for the constraints of each party. They specify in a more or less precise way the channels used to achieve harmonization, which can be the financing and evaluation modes for the sector (cf. the following paragraph on joint reviews), a common definition of the monitoring time-frame for the sector and a coordinated policy commitment, in line with the countries' priorities.

The government on its side undertakes to facilitate the harmonization of the technical and financial partners' interventions by ensuring the lead in coordination and by offering all stakeholders a clear and transparent vision of the management and performances of the education sector.

The forms to be adopted for partnership frameworks are the subject of many debates, resulting from the difficulties encountered in the sector and which are at the origin of a progressive formalization of the frameworks. It is to be noted in particular that in many countries there is the issue of the determination of which stakeholders should participate in the partnership frameworks. Indeed, although all the stakeholders recognize the necessity for partnership frameworks to stimulate and structure the technical and policy dialogue in the sector, *«all do not hold the same view of the stakeholders' place in the dialogue, of the impetus and running of same, and of the very purpose of the dialogue»* (UNESCO 2006). Some countries have chosen to open up the framework to a maximum number of stakeholders, with a view to greater harmonization, others have chosen to avoid the inclusion of those stakeholders whose status, legitimacy or interests are too divergent, with a view to being more effective.

As the partnership frameworks are recent, it is rather soon, on one hand, to make an assessment of these, and particularly of their impact on the harmonization and alignment of the partners' actions. On the other hand, it is already possible to mention the positive effect they have on the quality of the dialogue within the education sector. However, they will only have a true impact on the sector if the decision-making process within the partnership framework is clarified, so that the dialogue, more structured and richer, could have some effect through decision-making.

Joint monitoring reviews in the education sector

The joint monitoring reviews in the education sector, still called joint missions or supervision missions, are mechanisms designed to ensure regular monitoring of the education system, to be shared by all stakeholders. The variety of names used is a reflection of their diversity. Indeed, there is no international « standard » giving a definition of what a joint review should be and which would make it different from any other education sector meeting. Even so, starting around the year 2000, some African countries, generally those with a sector-wide plan, formalized exchanges between the different stakeholders on the performances of their education system. This practice seems to be becoming more widespread and takes on a variety of forms, even though there are several points in common which are worth considering.

The joint reviews bring together what is often a very wide range of stakeholders of the system (the ministry or ministries in charge of education, representatives of the transversal ministries, technical and financial partners, and sometimes representatives of civil society), on a regular basis, annually or biannually. They are directed by the ministry or ministries in charge of education which produce beforehand a set of documents, usually made up of technical

and financial execution reports of the sector-wide plan or more generally of the educational strategy for the past year or the past six months, action plans for the coming year, reports from consultants or audits according to the country's needs and the presentation of the common matrix of performance indicators for the sector when this exists. It should be noted however that the quality of these documents varies greatly from one country to another. The joint reviews are of variable duration (several weeks in some countries) and sometimes include field visits. The expected outcome is a memorandum which synthesizes the progress and delays in the sector and above all puts forward a number of recommendations for which a consensus has been reached among the stakeholders and which are aimed at improving the performance of the system.

By focusing on the national strategy, joint reviews make for concrete exchange around national priorities. For external partners, they offer greater visibility and transparency on the progress of education plans and strategies and enable data collection and the production of analysis to be generated systematically. On the national side, they facilitate the harmonization between donors, avoiding a situation where the latter monopolize the ministries' technical resources with each one requesting a separate report.



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Nevertheless, the relevance of joint reviews depends very much upon the way they are organized, and especially on preparatory work. The quality of the debates conducted during the review does indeed depend upon the latter. Experience shows that it is essential to define in advance, clearly and by common consensus, the objectives of the review and the topics to be addressed and their priority: over-ambitious terms of reference are detrimental to the quality of discussion (Packer 2006). Some countries have chosen to structure the debates by organizing them in the form of thematic workshops. Others have gone further by conducting continuous preparatory work for the reviews through thematic groups representing the different stakeholders with meetings throughout the year. These groups, when they work well, enable the discussions to be focused on the most important issues for the sector and to fuel them with key elements.

There is another condition necessary for the success of the joint monitoring reviews of the education sector: that is the importance given to the recommendations put forward at the time of the reviews. It has been observed in several countries that the recommendations are hardly followed from one review to another. Sometimes, the reviews omit to provide an update on the implementation of earlier recommendations; in other countries, the same recommendations are made one year after another as they have had little effect. In these cases, the formulation of recommendations which, it should be recalled, is the main outcome expected from the reviews, has no impact upon the system. These weaknesses can be avoided if the reviews benefit from high level political support, which avoids them being limited to a purely technical exercise, and puts everyone face to face with their responsibilities.

1.2.3 Expenditure on education is incorporated in more global budget programming...

While significant changes have taken place in the definition and monitoring of educational strategies as seen above, the way these strategies operate has also changed in the past years, particularly through the medium term expenditure framework (MTEF). MTEFs appeared in the 1990's but have significantly developed in African countries since the year 2000. Since the Dakar Forum, over 20 MTEFs have come into existence in Africa which is a pioneer in this approach: to date, a large majority of African countries are equipped with such a tool (table 1.2). MTEFs represent a huge step forward in the management of expenditure on education as they enable it to be programmed both on the basis of the education sector policy and in a realistic medium-term tax and macroeconomic framework, thus avoiding the lack of connection often observed between the policies budgeted and the way they are actually put into practice. The MTEFs result from projections of available resources established at central level and from estimations of cost of sector programmes. The two are combined through an institutional process of adjustment which enables iterative exchange between global and sectoral levels. Thus, placed «inside the strategic expenditure framework, which reflects both the constraint of resources and the government policy, the sectors have management autonomy for decision-making, which maximizes technical results such as efficiency and effectiveness» (Le Houérou and Taliercio 2002). Incorporating education expenditure through the MTEF in a realistic and coherent framework contributes to making budget decisions more transparent and credible, which can result in further mobilization of financing, particularly in a context of harmonization of aid and budget support.

However, the assessment of MTEF implementation in Africa (Le Houérou and Taliercio 2002, Raffinot and Samuel 2006) shows that this single term conceals significant diversity in the conception of the tool, but also that MTEFs only enable an improvement in public expenditure management if the countries already have adequate budget procedures (correct monitoring of public expenditure, global vision of resources and public expenditure) and a minimum of capacities in the administrative departments.

Table 1.2: African countries equipped with a medium term expenditure framework (MTEF)

Uganda	1992	Namibia	2000	Mauritius	2005
Ghana	1996	Rwanda	2000	Senegal	2005
Malawi	1996	Benin	2001	Sierra Leone	2005
Guinea	1997	Mauritania	2003	Cameroon	2006
Mozambique	1997	Ethiopia	2004	DRC	2006
South Africa	1998	Swaziland	2004	Lesotho	2006
Gabon	1998	Zambia	2004	Nigeria	2006
Kenya	1998	Cape Verde	2005	Morocco	2007
Tanzania	1998	Madagascar	2005	Niger	2007
Burkina Faso	2000	Mali	2005	Tunisia	2007

Source: Pôle de Dakar

1.2.4 Civil society is more and more present and coordinated

In Africa, as in countries as a whole worldwide, the increase in the weight of NGOs has been accompanied by an official position legitimizing the participation of civil society representatives, to the point of making it the keystone of any sustainable development project. The Dakar Forum made no exception to this rule, by renewing the call for setting up a true partnership whereby civil society would be fully involved at each stage of fulfilment of the educational goals.

However, due to a structural imbalance connected to the inequality of North/South relations and programme priorities in the field, African NGOs have long been under-represented in international structures and world, or even regional, forums. Indeed, not only do the vast majority of international organizations, whether governmental or not, have their head offices in the northern hemisphere, but African associations have also often suffered from logistic and financial constraints which have limited the development of their organizational capacities.

To remedy their relative isolation and face up to the pressing need to unite in order to matter with governments and partners, there is now a tendency to associate in the form of national and thematic coordination units. This is how in virtually all the countries in the region, one or several NGO national coordinations, often coupled with thematic networks - women, education, AIDS, etc. - allow African national NGOs to make their voices be heard. Moreover, this grouping has often helped associations not only to reinforce a legitimacy sometimes contested by the national authorities, but also to give them the right to participate in regional or international forums inaccessible to national or local associations.

In spite of the reinforced capacity of action by associations in the field and the call for mechanisms based on civil society participation, the « partnership » invoked by the Dakar Forum has been interpreted in many different ways. It is true that this term covers very different realities which are dependent, for example, on the nature and quality of the sometimes confrontational relationship between civil society and the government, or on the degree of cohesion and financial weight of donors who can occasionally have more weight in the debate than the voice of association « partners », even when they form a group.

Even so, the participatory approach displayed by the EFA programmes and mechanisms set up by the governments constitute a progress and a basis for negotiation for civil society. The majority of plans now explicitly refer to the involvement of NGOs and civil society at different stages of their development, even if this is more often the case for non-formal education or at local level for decentralization policies.

For the vast majority of technical and financial partners, community and association participation is not only admitted but is often considered as a determining factor in the selectivity of national programmes and projects. It is a fact that, by placing the accent on reducing inequalities, educational strategies developed by civil society do sometimes enable some of the most underprivileged populations (orphans, AIDS victims, rural or nomad populations, etc.) to be included, where they would otherwise have been set aside from classical education systems.

The other major contribution of NGOs and civil society associations lies in their capacity to inform and mobilize the populations they have originated from: the principal illustration being the activities organized throughout Africa in the framework of global action weeks which are often the only tangible rallying point for raising awareness in many populations for the goals developed by the EFA programmes. Thus, thousands of people took place in rallies in around ten African countries in the last action campaign, including a human chain around the Congolese Parliament.

Despite the lack of resources and organizational difficulties, the association sector can pride itself on acting as a spur, potentially capable of redirecting national educational strategies and bringing to light the malfunctioning or achievements, which reveal the degree of authenticity of the participatory mechanisms in place. All too often, civil society is only included in educational programmes at the final stages of their development and NGOs are only authorized to express a consultative opinion with the monitoring mechanisms and authorities ; both these situations sometimes seem more like a feigned legitimization rather than a true political will for participation.

Finally, in a context where many African countries do not seem to be in a good position for reaching EFA by 2015, associations have also striven to fight the temptation of dropping some objectives in favour of others which are considered to be more pragmatic and achievable. Through its experience in the field and proximity with those populations most concerned by educational projects (notably parents, pupils and teachers), civil society is able to express in what way the programmes in their entirety are perhaps a condition of their success. Literacy, adult training, secondary education, early childhood and educational quality, are all fields where African civil society has already had the opportunity of expressing itself and influencing educational strategies. The success of the Kenya Elimu Yetu Coalition in its campaign in favour of a constitutional reform instituting free primary education is an example from which many associations hope to gain inspiration.

African civil society, endowed with its community traditions and with original education policies developed at the time of independence - Centres of Integrated Popular Education in Guinea, Ujamaa rural education in United Republic of Tanzania, etc. - is a potential source of proposals for the development of educational alternatives better adapted to the specific social and political realities of the countries concerned.



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1.3 High international financial mobilization

The year 2000 marked a change in the international community's financial support to developing countries. Following an almost continuous decline in the 1990's, Official Development Assistance (ODA) underwent a sharp increase starting 2000, rising from 63.3 billion dollars in 2000 to 107.3 billion dollars in 2005, i.e. an increase of 69% in 5 years⁴. It is important to establish to what extent this international mobilization has been of benefit firstly, to Africa and secondly, to the education sector.

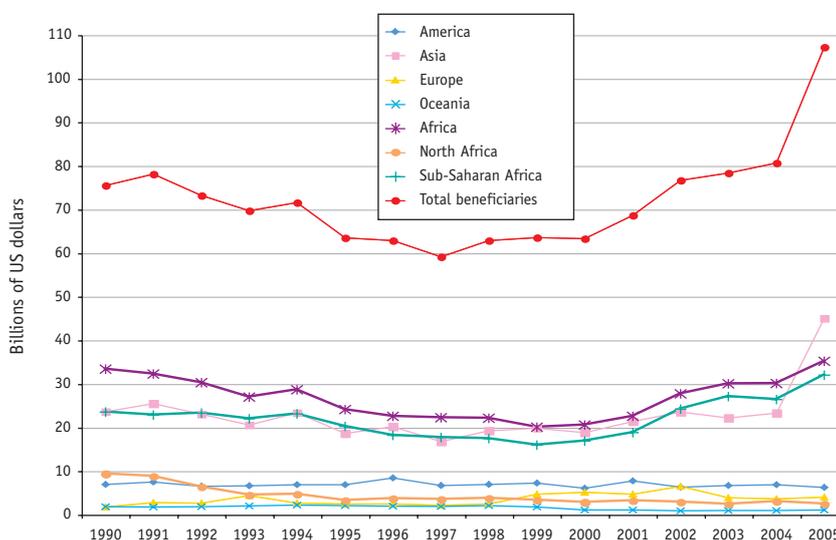
1.3.1 Aid remains favourable to Africa

While ODA has risen sharply worldwide, this is even more the case in Africa: with an increase of 71% registered between 2000 and 2005, rising from 20.6 to 35.2 billion dollars. However, in view of the large drop in aid in the 1990's, growth since 2000 has only enabled to catch up with and exceed the 1990 total (33.4 billion dollars) since 2005.

After a slight slowdown in the increase in aid for Africa between 2002 and 2004, 2005 showed a sharp upward trend: between 2004 and 2005, ODA to Africa increased from 30.1 to 35.2 billion dollars, and ODA to sub-Saharan Africa increased from 26.5 to 32 billion dollars.

In addition, Africa, and more specifically sub-Saharan Africa, still has high priority in aid flows: aid towards Africa represents around one third of total aid making Africa the leading beneficiary. In 2005, the share of aid towards Asia exceeded that for Africa for the first time since 1990, explained by the flow of aid to the Middle East, particularly Iraq (graph 1.3).

Graph 1.3: Evolution of Africa's share in the total amount of ODA



⁴ All the figures for Official Development Assistance in this section concern disbursements of aid, not commitments. As a result, the aid figures presented here may differ compared to other publications mentioning aid commitments. They only take into account official public flows from OECD donor agencies and multilateral organizations. In addition, the totals are given in 2005 constant US dollars, enabling a series of totals which are in no way dependent upon currency rates.

Source: OECD CRS online database 2007

More globally, **the share of official development assistance for Africa has fallen since 2003**: it represented 38% of ODA then, compared to 37% in 2004 and 33% in 2005. **Even if many promises have been made by donor agencies for a more favourable geographical distribution for Africa, the share of development aid for Africa in 2005 is far from what it was in the early 1990's**, as much as 44% in 1990, i.e. 11 points more than in 2005.

1.3.2 Much greater international mobilization for education after Dakar than after Jomtien

155 countries showed strong signs of commitment to respond to basic learning needs by signing the World Declaration on Education for All at the Jomtien Conference in 1990. This declaration and the framework, that accompanied it, committed the different countries to mobilize the necessary financial resources to universalize primary education and eradicate illiteracy. However, analysis of aid flows to promote education show that, from this point of view, the Jomtien Conference has had very little effect: the share of education in official development assistance, which admittedly started from a very low level (0.2%), had not exceeded 1% by 1997 and only reached 2.6% by 2000, i.e. 1.6 billion dollars.

Based on this acknowledgement, the countries participating in the Dakar Forum in 2000 made a much greater financial commitment to education promising that *«no country seriously committed to basic education (with a credible plan) will be thwarted in their achievement of this goal by a lack of resources»*. This time, the consequences were immediate and very significant: aid to education rose from 1.6 billion dollars in 2000 to 6.4 billion dollars in 2005, i.e. an increase of 250%. The share of aid put aside for education was therefore doubled over the period 2000-2004, increasing from 3% to 7%⁵.

The high financial mobilization for education following the Dakar Forum was also observed in Africa: aid for the education sector increased from 0.6 billion dollars in 2000 to 2.3 billion dollars in 2005. The share for the education sector in global aid thus increased from 3% in 2000 to 8% in 2004. However, in 2005, this share was cut back to 7%. The drop was even greater for sub-Saharan Africa as the share fell from 7% in 2004 to 5% in 2005 for the education sector. This new trend raises concern as it suggests stagnation in the priority granted to education and in the mobilizing effect of the Dakar Forum.

At this stage of the analysis, it is important to distinguish Northern Africa from sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed, the education sector is clearly a priority in North Africa, which it should be added only receives a low share of aid to Africa (between 7 and 15% depending upon the year), as aid for education represented over one quarter of the aid flows in 2005. The increase in the share for education shows how rapidly this sector gained in importance between 2000 and 2005: aid for education in North Africa represented 3% of aid in 2000, 13% in 2001, 22% in 2003 and 26% in 2005. However, aid for education is essentially directed at higher education. The share for basic education is under 10% which is coherent with the fact that the countries in this region have practically reached universal primary enrolment.

The situation in sub-Saharan Africa is quite different: the education sector weighs less in total aid received, representing 5% of total disbursements in 2005. Thus, **in this part of the World, while a Dakar Forum effect was noticed starting 2000** (the share for education increasing from 3% in 2000 to 6% in 2002 and to 7% in 2004), there seems now to be **a downward trend that raises questions as to the commitment of donors to education**.

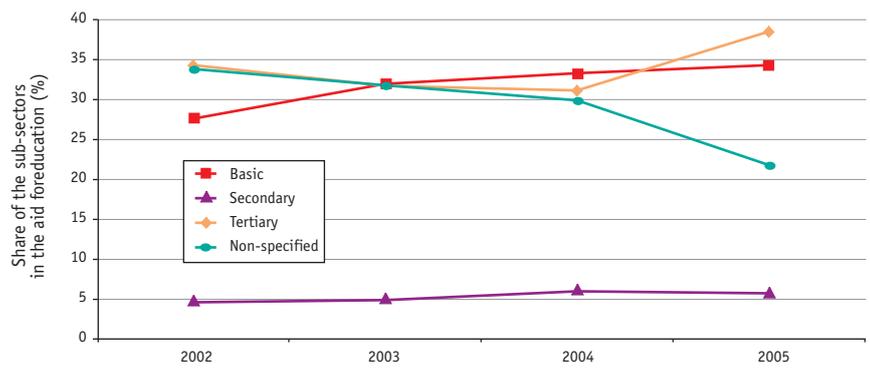
⁵ There is quite a difference between these figures and those presented in the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007, where the share for education rose from 10% to 13%. This is due to the fact that the figures in the Global Report refer to aid in terms of commitments, whereas here, they refer to disbursements and this emphasizes the fact that commitments for the education sector are relatively less well respected than others.



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It would be interesting to have a precise idea of the effect of the Dakar Forum on the intrasectoral distribution of aid for education, and particularly to know if it has contributed to a refocusing on basic education. Graph 1.4 presents this distribution using available data. However, the very large share of aid going to education, where the level of education is not specified, makes it difficult to draw conclusions as to trends in distribution. Even so, it would seem that the share assigned to basic education has grown since the Dakar Forum, even if this trend is cancelled out if non-specified aid goes first and foremost to basic education (inverse trend). It also seems that, for donors, higher education competes directly with basic education. Another important finding is the neglect of secondary education by international aid flows, with a share stagnating at around 5% for this level of education.

Graph 1.4: Weight of the different levels of education in ODA for education⁶ (sub-Saharan Africa)

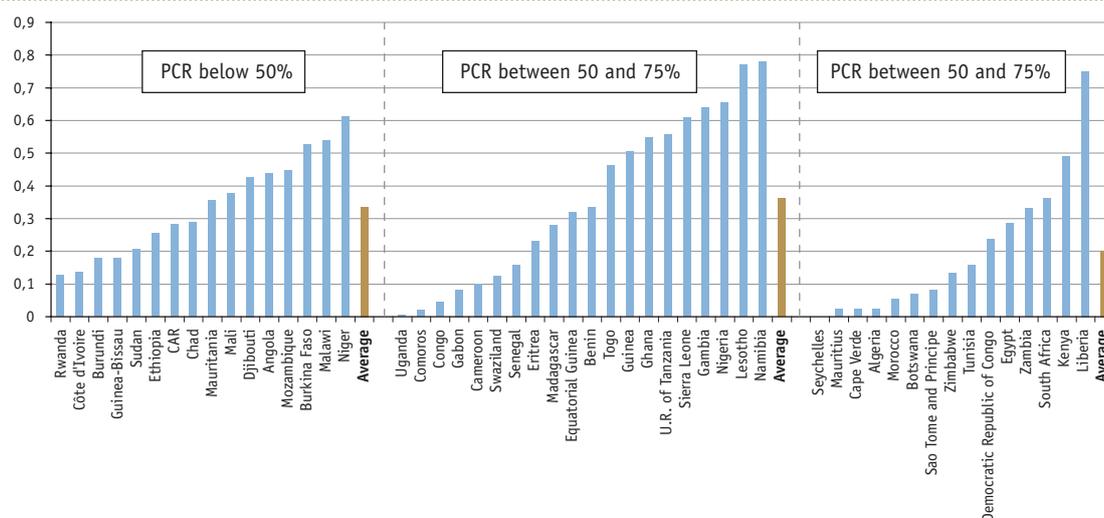


⁶ The years 2000 and 2001 do not appear in this graph due to the over importance of aid to "unspecified" education in 2001 (50%).

Source: OECD CRS online database 2007

Although not perfectly defined, the distribution in development aid disbursements for education in sub-Saharan Africa can raise some questions, especially when looked at in the light of the subcontinent's priorities. It should also be recalled that the Fast Track Initiative recommends that basic education receive at least 50% of the budget allocated to the education sector; to be in line with the 2003 Rome Declaration, it would be appropriate for this rule to be applied in the same way for external financing. In addition, it is noted that the share of aid inside the sector assigned to basic education does not take into account the distance separating African countries from Universal Primary Education. Graph 1.5 shows that aid for education in countries the furthest from UPE (i.e. those with a completion rate lower than 50%) is not directed more towards primary education than in those countries at intermediary distance from UPE (completion rate of between 50 and 75%). The former receive an average of 34% of their aid for education for primary education, the latter 36%⁷.

Graph 1.5: Share of external aid for education assigned to primary education and according to primary completion rate (2005)



Sources: OECD CRS online database 2007, UIS

There is also the question of the impact that commitments made at different international conferences by the donor community for the harmonization and alignment of aid have on aid modalities (Monterrey 2002, Rome 2003, Paris 2005 and Abuja 2006). More precisely, it would be good to know the evolution of the share of aid to Africa in the form of sectoral budget aid. Unfortunately, it is not possible to have a precise vision of this evolution with the data available up to now, even if surveys for obtaining this data are ongoing following the Paris declaration.

In conclusion, it should be remembered that the increase in aid noticed since 2000 has only today enabled a return to 1990 levels. The 1990-2000 decade was characterized by a loss of impetus in aid in a context of strong doubts as to the effectiveness of same. The commitments made by the international community and donor agencies, at the time of the many meetings at the turn of the 21st century, opened the way for new dynamics: an increase in global aid, clear priority for the African continent, and more specifically for sub-Saharan Africa, and an increasingly broad place granted to education. However, the most recent figures show a slowdown in these dynamics: the question is to know whether it is just a

⁷ These results are unchanged when taking into consideration only those countries, where the share of aid for education with undetermined intrasectoral distribution, is not too high (under 15%).

question of consolidation or whether there are new changes in priorities. **It is therefore appropriate to remain vigilant to ensure that the commitments made for supporting education and reaching the goals are kept.**

1.3.3 The Fast Track Initiative and its multi-donor funds for education

The current landscape of the African education system is largely shaped after international initiatives such as HIPC (box 1.1) and Fast Track. The Fast Track Initiative (FTI), with a partnership bringing together, in 2007, 31 developing countries including 20 in Africa (table 1.3) and the bilateral and multilateral donors involved in the education sector as a whole, is in line with the continuity of the Monterrey consensus, in the rationale of effectiveness of aid and of incentives : incentives for the beneficiary countries to set up a credible development policy for the education sector⁸ and incentives for donors to increase aid for education and the predictability of same. Moreover, the Fast Track Initiative has greatly contributed to the transition from the project approach to the programme approach, by encouraging local donors to coordinate around the education sector programme of those countries elected to the Initiative⁹ (Crouch and Umansky 2007). Since its creation in 2002, the FTI's role in the development of education sectors, especially in African countries, has become more and more important. With 7 countries elected at the origin of the initiative and 31 today, FTI has increased its coverage more than fourfold in five years. Today its impact is recognized as clearly positive for the reasons mentioned above, even if it is still difficult to estimate its effect yet in terms of progress in enrolments (Crouch and Umansky 2007). The Initiative's multi-donor funds -Catalytic Fund and EPDF - have played an important role in these developments and deserve to be presented in greater detail.

Table 1.3: List of countries elected to the Fast Track Initiative and year of endorsement (countries highlighted in blue benefit from the Catalytic Fund)

Africa		Other than Africa	
Burkina Faso	[2002]	Guyana	[2002]
Ethiopia	[2002]	Honduras	[2002]
Mauritania	[2002]	Nicaragua	[2002]
Guinea	[2002]	Yemen	[2003]
Niger	[2002]	Vietnam	[2003]
Gambia	[2003]	Rep. of Moldova	[2005]
Mozambique	[2003]	Tajikistan	[2005]
Ghana	[2004]	Timor-Leste	[2005]
Kenya	[2005]	Albania	[2006]
Lesotho	[2005]	Mongolia	[2006]
Madagascar	[2005]	Cambodia	[2006]
Djibouti	[2005]	Kyrgyzstan	[2006]
Cameroon	[2006]		
Rwanda	[2006]		
Mali	[2006]		
Senegal	[2006]		
Sierra Leone	[2007]		
Liberia	[2007]		
Benin	[2007]		

⁸ Any low income country can be elected to the Fast Track Initiative by the donors if it has a complete Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) validated by the World Bank and the IMF, as well as an education sector development plan deemed credible by the local coordination of the technical and financial partners, in accordance with the Initiative's indicative framework.

⁹ All FTI elected countries have an education sector plan since the existence of such a plan is one of the conditions for eligibility.

Source: from www.efafti.org, May 2007

Catalytic Fund

The Catalytic Fund was created in 2003, to enable low-income countries which have a credible education sector development programme but are donor orphans¹⁰, to benefit from transitional financing for a period of three years. This period of time allow them to show performance liable to attract additional donors for the education sector and thus obtain financing in the framework of new cooperation. Implementing this fund has brought to light the problems which could arise from its transitional nature and admission criteria. It was not easy to make take over by new donors happen and to foresee any change in this respect, in view of the tendency for bilateral cooperation to reduce the number of countries where it intervenes: it was therefore decided in November 2006 to allow financing in the longer term. The technical criteria for eligibility have been relaxed as they were not adapted to the large variety of situations : they no longer focus on the number of donors but rather on the level of recovery of the financing deficit of the sectoral plan by local partners, as far as basic education is concerned¹¹. These new modalities gave rise to the expanded Catalytic Fund in 2007.

Since its creation, the Catalytic Fund has become more and more important. While in 2004 donors transferred 49.1 million dollars through this fund for the education sector, this total had more than doubled two years later to reach 101.8 million dollars¹². If it is considered that donation promises made for 2006 have been kept¹³, then this sum has been increased nine-fold, not two-fold. However, promises announced for 2007 and 2008 are not encouraging as, even if the total remains high, they are decreasing from year to year, predicting the end of the rise in power of the Catalytic Fund: the promises of 430.4 million dollars in 2006 dropped to 334 million dollars in 2007 and 231 million dollars in 2008, i.e. a decrease of 46% between 2006 and 2008 (Fast Track Initiative 2006a).

In addition, out of the 231 million dollars disbursed by donors to the Catalytic Fund over the period 2003-2006¹⁴, 109.5 million were transferred to the Fund's beneficiary countries (table 1.3). The fact that African countries have predominantly benefited from the Catalytic Fund is explained by their particularly high financing needs. While African countries predominate in their numbers, they also predominate through the amounts disbursed to them: they received two-thirds of the total amount disbursed to the Catalytic Fund's beneficiary countries between 2003 and 2006, i.e. 72 million dollars. In addition, it is planned that these eight countries receive an additional payment of 90 million dollars before September 2007. On top of this payment to Africa, 117.3 million dollars have to be disbursed to Cameroon and Rwanda, eligible to benefit from the fund at the end of 2006, for the period 2007-2009 (table 1.4, information dated November 2006). This sum will enable Cameroon cover its entire financing need in 2007 and 2008, and Rwanda 100% of the need in 2007 and around 70% in 2008¹⁵.

10 Countries with at least five bilateral donors in the education sector, each contributing at least one million US dollars per year.

11 The country is eligible for the expanded Catalytic Fund if local donors cover less than 50% of the financing deficit for the plan for basic education, at the time when the plan is elected to the Fast Track Initiative.

12 Totals for 2006 do not take into account disbursements made by donors between November and December 2006.

13 This information is not yet available, but for previous years, no discrepancy was noticed between the promises made and the amounts disbursed by the donors to the Catalytic Fund.

14 Countries due to benefit from the Fund at end 2006 are not included here: Cameroon, Rwanda, Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan.

15 The idea of a Catalytic Fund steering committee is to encourage local partners to reinforce their position on the education sector in Rwanda.

Table 1.4: Catalytic Fund disbursements made and projected (in millions of US dollars)

	Countries admitted to the Catalytic Fund before end 2006		Countries admitted to the Catalytic Fund end 2006	
	Actual disbursements 2003 - 2006	Additional disbursements planned before the end of 2007*	Additional disbursements planned for 2007-2008	
Djibouti	3	4	Cameroon	47.3
Ghana	8	17	Rwanda	70
Kenya	24.2	24.2		
Lesotho	1.8	8.4		
Madagascar	10	25		
Mauritania	8	1		
Niger	9	8		
Gambia	8	2,5		
TOTAL AFRICA	72	90.1		117.3
Guyana	8	4	Mongolia	12.8
Moldova	0	4.4	Kyrgyzstan	15
Nicaragua	7	7		
Tajikistan	1	8.2		
Timor-Leste	1.5	3		
Yemen	20	10		
TOTAL OTHER THAN AFRICA	37.5	36.6		27.8
TOTAL	109.5	126.7		145.1

Source: Fast Track Initiative 2006a
 Note: * Estimation November 2006

Education Programme Development Fund (EPDF)

The multi-donor Education Programme Development Fund (EPDF), established in November 2004, was designed, first of all, to support low-income countries in the development or revision of sustainable education sector programmes, aimed at achieving quality Universal Primary Education. This backing consists in financing technical and analytical support to national teams but also, more widely, to donor coordination to stimulate national dialogue on the development of the sector. EPDF also seeks to generate knowledge on the performance factors of educational strategies, by financing international or regional comparative studies, and by disseminating this knowledge through forums or exchanges between countries. Through these goals, EPDF is therefore a privileged tool in the Fast Track Initiative for improving the mobilization of resources for the sector and the efficiency of education expenditure.

At the end of 2006, 59 countries, including 12 African countries, had received support from EPDF. Since it came into being, EPDF has received a total of 24.2 million dollars from its donors¹⁶. Africa is the main beneficiary, with allocations of 12.9 million dollars, i.e. 53% of the fund. However, a very small share (10%) of this total has been committed and an even smaller share spent: only 6% of the EPDF fund allocated to Africa has actually been spent. The extremely low level of this rate of disbursement is explained by the difficulties encountered in implementing financial circuits for some expenditure but, above all, by the very few requests for support made to EPDF.

16 At the time of setting up the fund, Norway (currently lead donor) and the United Kingdom were the only donors. They were joined later by Canada, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Switzerland and more recently by Russia.

EPDF totals spent in Africa have helped Senegal, Cameroon, Rwanda, Mali, Benin and Sierra Leone to have their educational strategy accepted by the Fast Track Initiative. It plans to finance the development of the strategy for several African countries directly in 2007. EPDF has also supported several regional or multi-country programmes including a UNAIDS

Working Group on education and HIV/AIDS and an exchange trip to Asia for decision-makers from five African countries. The fund has also supported institutions recognized by the Fast Track Initiative as playing a strategic role for the advancement of education in Africa, such as Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), UNESCO BREDA (Fast Track Initiative 2006b).

In conclusion, the Fast Track Initiative, particularly through its two multi-donor funds, has stimulated aid for basic education, especially towards Africa, and has contributed to placing education at the centre of debates. The transformation of the terms of admission to the Catalytic Fund, although necessary, does raise interrogations. Indeed, with the extension in the span of time during which the different countries can benefit from the Catalytic Fund, with the considerable development in the number of countries elected to the Fast Track Initiative¹⁸, and with the promises from donors for the Catalytic Fund dwindling in the coming years, the question of the future sustainability of the Catalytic Fund is a crucial issue. Will the Fund be in a position to respond to the needs of all those countries, for which the Fast Track Initiative has undertaken to provide financial support, particularly when countries with a very large school population will join the Initiative? The answer is yes, on condition of substantial donor mobilization, which does not seem to be the current trend. If the Catalytic Fund's resources turn out to be insufficient, trade-offs will have to be made, either on the number of countries admitted to benefit from the Fund, or on the total amounts given to each country. In any case, it is important, as highlighted at the G8 Summit in Heiligendamm in June 2007, to decide upon trade-off criteria which would be favourable to those countries furthest from Universal Primary Education, especially fragile States, and to provide them with sufficient means to register true progress in terms of enrolments by 2015.

¹⁷ Around fifteen countries should join FTI by end 2007, most of them potential candidates for the Catalytic Fund.



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Box 1.1: HIPC Initiative: potential yet unsystematic resources for education

The HIPC initiative was launched at the G7 summit in Lyon in 1996 and reinforced at the summit in Cologne in 1999; it defines a process whereby multilateral and bilateral creditors undertake to reduce the level of debt of heavily indebted poor countries which apply reform programmes supported by the IMF and the World Bank. The objective targeted is the reduction of poverty through the transfer of funds initially assigned to payment of the debt, to the financing of social sectors. 40 countries including 32 in sub-Saharan Africa have been deemed eligible for aid as HIPCs. In December 2006, 21 of those countries had already reached completion point and benefited from substantial debt relief.

Situation of the 40 countries eligible for the HIPC initiative, December 2006

	Countries that have reached completion point	Countries in the intermediary phase	Countries that have not yet passed the decision point
Africa	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, U.R. of Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia	Burundi, Chad, Congo, DRC, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Sao Tome and Principe	CAR, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Liberia, Somalia, Sudan, Togo
Other than Africa	Bolivia, Guyana, Honduras, Nicaragua	Haïti	Kyrgyzstan, Nepal

Between 1999 and 2004, social expenditure (health, education, rural development) in countries which had passed the decision mark in 2004 increased from 5.9% to 8.2% of GDP. Today it is estimated that for the 30 countries which have already benefited from a reduction in their debt, payments to debt servicing have decreased by 2% of GDP on average between 1999 and 2005. Before the HIPC initiative, eligible countries devoted more resources to debt servicing than to expenditure on health and education. This expenditure is now five times higher on average than the total payments for debt servicing. Education is all the more liable to benefit from HIPC funds as it is an important component of the PRSP, based on a sound factual diagnosis.

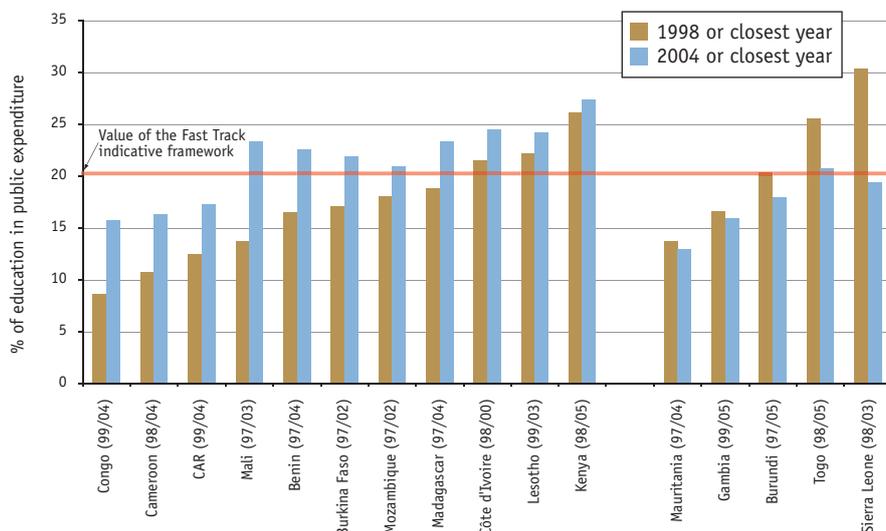
Apart from having an important effect on intersectoral budget allocation in favour of education, the HIPC initiative has generated a whole series of effects. For example, the French government decided to set up a mechanism for countries concerned by the HIPC initiative for the progressive cancellation of the balance of official development assistance debt still owed to France. This mechanism translates by the signature of a debt reduction and development contract (C2D), involving refinancing by donations, upon reaching completion point. 23 countries, including 17 sub-Saharan African countries, are concerned by this and the projected financial volume of these contracts is estimated at 3.7 billion Euros. To date, seven African countries have signed C2Ds with France: Mozambique, Uganda, Tanzania, Mauritania, Ghana, Madagascar and Cameroon. The weight of the education sector appears to vary greatly from one country to another: on the two C2Ds signed in Mozambique for example, nothing has been signalled on the education sector, whereas in Cameroon almost 20% of the overall contract total is to be used for financing the education sector strategy.

The HIPC initiative was then reinforced by the multilateral debt relief initiative (MDRI): in June 2005, the G8 proposed that the IMF, IDA and the African development fund cancel the total of their debt claims on countries that have reached or will eventually reach the completion point. At end 2006, 22 countries were admitted to the MDRI and had already received debt relief from the IMF for a total of 3.7 billion dollars, of which almost 2.9 billion for African countries. Although nothing guarantees that the sums released by the cancellation of debt will go to social sectors and to education in particular, it can be hoped that the new resources they represent for the different countries will contribute to increasing their efforts for education.

1.3.4 National priorities more and more in favour of education

The mobilization of the international community for education since 2000 is also observed at African country level. Even if the information available is far from exhaustive, it seems that most countries have made a greater financial commitment to education. This translates by a more favourable intersectoral trade-off for education: out of the 16 countries for which information is available, 11 showed an increase in the share of public expenditure on education between 1998 (or closest year) and 2004 (or closest year) (graph 1.6), enabling five countries to reach the level recommended by the Fast Track Initiative indicative framework. On the other hand, for the other five, the share decreased.

Graph 1.6: Share of current expenditure on education in State expenditure



Source: UIS data



2. ...that give rise to new questions

The new institutional landscape as described above, and to which the Dakar Forum contributed undeniably in its outline, gives rise to new questions. The idea is not to go over these questions thoroughly but rather to highlight some of them, especially regarding the consequences of this new landscape in terms of the analytical capacity and modalities of the education sectors, the connection between the new mechanisms for the development and monitoring of educational strategies (particularly between the EFA monitoring mechanisms at country level and the other mechanisms), and finally, the implications of the evolution of aid to development since 2000 on the financial viability of reaching the EFA goals of universal education by 2015.

2.1 On education sector analysis

The transition from the project approach to the programme approach, although it definitely represents a progress, has modified the external partners' technical input in the monitoring of the education sector. Indeed, programme aid, in adapting to budget systems and national expenditure circuits and by virtue of the volume of financing mobilized, has led local donor agencies to change, in recruiting mainly financial and public expenditure specialists rather than education sector specialists, able to analyze the performance factors of the education system. For some countries, this has resulted in focusing the sectoral dialogue on the monitoring of budget execution and on financial control, at the expense of the success or failure factors in reaching the goals defined in the sector-wide plans and a sector-wide vision of education.

Moreover, with a view to aligning support, more effectively appropriating educational policy and its results and reducing transaction costs, donors have sought to reduce their technical assistance in the form of staff placed in the departments of ministries of education, with the idea of concentrating their efforts on capacity building plans defined by the government and aimed at strengthening national capacities for the implementation of the educational strategy. However, while technical assistance has indeed been reduced, national capacity building plans have at the present time only very seldom been completed. In fact, the elaboration process is very long and complex: the profiles and competencies needed for each post must be clearly defined in advance in order then to evaluate the needs in terms of capacity building and make them operational. The different stages, which are complex, can sometimes result in tension between the different departments and building a consensus demands a lot of time. In this process of transition from technical assistance to support for the capacity building plan, most African countries find themselves faced with a vacuum as far as expertise for monitoring and implementing sectoral process is concerned, which could have strong implications on the capacity of the different countries to absorb future volumes of aid.

Finally, as will be seen in more detail in later chapters of this report, it appears essential today to move away from a vision focusing on primary education to a global vision for development of the sector. However, despite the multiplication of diagnoses covering the overall education sector as presented above, the national dialogue remains mainly focused on primary education at the present time. The priority displayed for this level of education, which in most countries is still far from the goals set, does certainly not justify looking at it outside the overall system. This focus of the dialogue can be explained by the visions much less consensual on the development of the other levels of education, by the existence in certain countries of several ministries of education, often compartmented and with their own monitoring procedures. It can also be understood by the absence of a fine analytical tool to comprehend and assess the performances of the education system in the other levels of education. In conclusion, while monitoring of and dialogue around educational programmes are now clearly structured for primary education, thanks to the Fast Track indicative framework in particular, it now proves necessary to pursue more in-depth thinking on the

analytical and monitoring tools for the other levels of education so that the global vision of the development of the education sector can become a reality in Africa (this will be covered in more detail in chapter 8).

2.2 On the EFA monitoring mechanisms at country level

Although the Dakar Framework for action stipulates that «*the heart of EFA activity lies at the country level*», the national EFA monitoring mechanisms that it has set up with the support of technical and financial partners - national EFA Forums, national EFA Coordinations, national EFA technical Committees - still exist but hardly operate. This transpires from a UNESCO BREDIA study (2007) which evaluates the EFA coordination mechanisms in around fifteen African countries¹⁸. Case studies, within the different countries, conclude that for Liberia, for example, «*the coordination of EFA activities by the EFA National Forum, by the Secretariat and by other coordination organizations was very minimal if not, non-existent*», for Nigeria that «*the Forum, at national level, was left in abeyance*», for Cameroon that «*the EFA National Coordination was more than discreet since the development process of ministerial or sectoral education strategies started in 200*», etc.

These mechanisms played an important role when they came into being enabling 42 sub-Saharan African countries to dispose of a national action plan for Education for All covering all the EFA goals, through a participatory device. However, very few of these plans have been validated technically, socially and politically: out of the 26 French-speaking, Portuguese-speaking and Spanish-speaking African countries, only 7 had reached the different stages of validation by 2005 (Damiba 2005). Now these plans can not be defended for their implementation without political approval. The non-implementation of a large number of EFA plans undoubtedly has a variety of explanations even if some of the reasons are common to many plans. First and foremost, the EFA action plans have rarely met the criteria for being «*credible*», even though it was difficult to reach a consensus on the definition of the credibility criterion. Indeed, the plans have suffered from not sufficiently taking into account the countries' macroeconomic and financial constraints and the feasibility of planned action in the field. They then had difficulty in fitting into ongoing national processes, such as national strategies for reducing poverty, promoting growth or more global mechanisms, for defining educational strategy set up by the different countries to document, amongst other things, the intrasectoral and intersectoral trade-offs necessary for reaching their educational goals. This lack of coherence has led the different countries and external partners to give priority to some documents and to drop others, often at the expense of the EFA action plans. For example, in the case of Cameroon, the EFA National Coordination has been «*supplanted by new mechanisms (the CSR Committee and the Sectoral Strategy Steering Committee) which both fit into an education sector global analysis approach in order to better situate the input of the different sub-sectors in EFA implementation. (...) By not following the movement for EFA resolution in a sector-wide framework, the EFA National Coordination has been marginalized, with little influence on the elaboration of educational policies*» (Fouda Ndjodo 2007).

These reasons partially explain the incapacity for most EFA plans to attract financing, particularly external financing, the latter focusing on more global educational policy definition frameworks, such as sector-wide plans or ten-year plans for educational development, some of which were in the elaboration phase before the Dakar Forum and which represent the actual country policy in terms of EFA. The mobilization towards sector-wide plans was strengthened by the Fast Track Initiative set up in 2002.

¹⁸ Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria and Togo.

It must however be underlined that in some countries, the national EFA action plans, even if not implemented, have made a significant contribution to having the ongoing policy take into account all the dimensions of EFA, by fuelling more global educational strategies, as illustrated by the case of Burkina Faso : after setting up an interministerial commission to develop the ten-year basic education development Plan (PDDEB) in 1999 with the support of donors and a national EFA Coordination structure for the development of a national EFA action Plan in 2002, Burkina Faso appointed a technical committee in 2006 in charge of developing phase 2 of the PDDEB more fully incorporating the EFA goals and the MDGs, particularly on the basis of the EFA plan.

In conclusion, all the reasons mentioned above partially explain why many national EFA monitoring mechanisms set up following the Dakar Forum have been frozen. The question then arises as to the future of the national EFA bodies as opposed to other emerging mechanisms. Indeed, it would be detrimental on more than one count not to draw lessons from the current situation, first of all because maintaining authorities with no resources may throw discredit on the successful or promising aspects of the EFA programmes. However, the future of the EFA bodies can only be defined according to further analysis of national realities and their specific context; in this respect, a recent UNESCO BREDA study (2007) has brought to light a very great variety of situations which deserve distinct and adapted strategies.

2.3 On financial mobilization for education

While the « Dakar+5 » Report (UNESCO BREDA 2005) passed an optimistic judgement on the financial feasibility of achieving Universal Primary Enrolment by 2015, it is difficult to have the same optimism two years later. That judgement was based on the high growth rate of aid, and on the promises made by donors for very extensive reallocation of aid flow for Africa and education. However, as indicated in point 1.3, these reallocations have not occurred, quite the contrary.

Since 2003, the share of official development assistance for Africa has been on the decline, dropping from 38% in 2003 to 33% in 2005, a return to the level of the share in 2000. This disengagement for Africa is not due to multilateral donors, who have demonstrated an increasingly high priority for Africa in line with their promises (table 1.5). It is due to bilateral donors whose priority, in the geographical distribution of aid, seems to be shifting away from Africa, especially for bilateral donors who are not part of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

Table 1.5: Share of Africa in bilateral and multilateral donors' aid flow

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Africa's share in bilateral aid	31%	30%	33%	37%	34%	29%
DAC bilateral donors	31%	30%	34%	39%	36%	30%
Non-DAC bilateral donors	38%	30%	26%	8%	6%	7%
Africa's share in multilateral aid	37%	39%	43%	42%	46%	47%
Overall	33%	33%	36%	38%	37%	33%

Source: OECD DAC online database 2007

In addition, as mentioned above, intersectoral trade-offs in aid flows seem to be moving away from education since 2005: indeed the share for the education sector in sub-Saharan Africa dropped from 7% in 2004 to 5% in 2005. There again, this does not concern multilateral donors who on the contrary made a very significant increase in the share of their aid for the education sector in 2005 (table 1.6). The drop only concerns bilateral donors. It remains to be seen if this drop is temporary or if it announces a decline of interest for the education sector to the benefit of other sectors with which it is in competition, particularly sectors like that of infrastructures which can, in the short term, have a more direct effect on economic growth.

Table 1.6: Share of education in bilateral and multilateral donors' aid flow, Africa

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Share of education in bilateral aid	3.3%	7.5%	7.3%	9.2%	9.5%	6.8%
Share of education in multilateral aid	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.7%	0.7%	2.7%

Source: OECD CSR online database 2007

While the aid reallocations in favour of Africa and education have not occurred, the estimation of needs in external financing for Education for All by 2015 has been revised upwards. The latest estimations, concerning more specifically the achievement of UPE, ranged in 2005 from 5 to 7 billion US dollars per year, and around 3 billion for Africa (UNESCO BREDA 2005). However, these estimations are based on annual needs between 2000 and 2015. And external aid disbursements between 2000 and 2015 were significantly below the level of the needs estimated for achieving UPE by 2015. It is therefore a question of filling the gap, which would bring the total annual needs for this period to 11 billion dollars per year (UNESCO 2007), i.e. almost twice the total aid observed in 2005.

At a time when the debate on the effectiveness of official development assistance is once again at a dead end (box n°1.2), **it is essential for countries to pursue their commitment for reaching the EFA goals by 2015**. This is what the European Commission puts forward in calling the High Level Conference on education it organized in Brussels in May 2007 «*Keeping our promises on education*». At this conference, the education sector partners were summoned to increase, make more effective and accelerate their support to education. Moreover, at the last summit in Heiligendamm in June 2007, the G8 countries have undertaken to increase their support to education in Africa through the bilateral channels and the Fast Track Catalytic Fund. **If this mass effort is not put in as early as 2007, then reaching the international goals in education by 2015 could be compromised.**

Box 1.2: The effectiveness of Official Development Assistance in question

The issue of the effectiveness of Official Development Assistance has been the subject of extensive debate in the literature, especially since the publication in the late 1980's and the early 1990's of several very critical studies, highlighting the ineffectiveness of aid on economic growth (Mosley, Hudson, Horrell 1987, 1992) and its perverse effects on institutions. These initial results, which came out at the same time as the acknowledgement of some « aid fatigue », reveal the first impasse in seeking aid effectiveness.

In this context of questioning, Burnside and Dollar published an article in 1997 which marked a turning point both in research on the subject of aid as in the attitude of agencies. They show that aid is only effective if accompanied by « good » economic policies such as control of inflation, a balanced budget and an open commercial policy. These conclusions, adopted by the World Bank, have opened the way to aid selectivity, which consists in aid being conditioned more often by the quality of policies implemented. However, Burnside and Dollar's work (1997, 2000) was criticised later both on the methodological level and that of the arguments put forward. Hansen and Tarp (2001) show that aid is effective on average, no matter what the institutional environment. Easterly, Levine and Roodman (2003), taking up Burnside and Dollar's methodology and data, show that simply taking into account other determining factors of economic growth cancels out the effect of aid. Taking up the idea of conditionality, Guillaumont and Chauvet (2001) bring to light conditions other than economic rigour, which would make aid more effective: they thus show that aid, by a potentially compensatory effect, is all the more effective as the countries are vulnerable to external shocks, whether economic or climatic. Finally, Cogneau and Naudet (2004) highlight the principle of selectivity that is in itself particularly unjust with regard to equity and justice: selectivity thus increases inequalities between individuals according to whether they are born in countries with privileged circumstances or not.

The second generation of studies has copiously fuelled the debate but seems once again to be in an impasse: the lack of sound results makes it impossible to come to a true consensus on aid effectiveness. Several reasons can be given to explain this ambiguity (Bourguignon and Leipziger, 2006). From a point of view of methodology firstly, there is the endogenous nature of aid (idea that the characteristics of those countries receiving the most aid are likely to have an effect on the results observed), then, the delicate distinction between its long term and short term effects (a recent study has shown that aid, aimed at strengthening policy development and social sectors, has *delayed effects*¹⁹ on growth while aid to productive sectors or budget aid has a *rapid effect* on growth), afterwards, the difficulties in checking the countries' specificities or the protean nature of aid (which makes the accounting exercise perilous) and, finally, its fungibility (corresponding to the fact that the receiving country can reduce its expenditure in the sector targeted by the aid to reallocate it elsewhere). In addition, the motivations and objectives of aid are multiple and are not always necessarily focused on development objectives, like for example emergency aid. Clemens, Radelet and Bhavnani (2004)²⁰ highlight that emergency or food aids are negatively correlative to growth due to their very purpose.

Two directions can be explored to break out of the impasse:

- 1) Bourguignon and Sundberg (2006) on the one hand suggest opening the « black box » to study more precisely the mechanisms through which aid can have an impact on economic and social results: i) results are determined to a large extent by the policies implemented, ii) these policies are developed by policy decision-makers according to the principles of good governance and iii) donors can to some extent influence policy decision-makers at the time of aid allocation.
- 2) Another possibility is to limit analysis to a precise sector; by assessing the effects of aid devolved to this sector, which can overcome some of the problems studied above, particularly that of the diverse motivations of aid.

This is the direction taken by Michaelowa and Weber (2006) and Dreher, Nunnenkamp and Thiele (2006) whose recent work strives to see to what extent aid dedicated specifically to education improves the educational indicators : in other words, « does aid to education make it possible to educate the young ? ». These studies try to separate the contribution of aid to education from the other traditional contributions such as the tax effort for education, the characteristics of schooling supply and demand, and the nature of the macroeconomic and economic environment, in the improvement of primary schooling coverage (or completion). Also, in these studies, the authors strive to deal with the endogenous side of aid through appropriate statistical and econometric techniques. However, the results hardly tally: Michaelowa and Weber show that the estimated impact of aid to education is indeed positive, albeit modest and above all, not very sound and hardly significant. Dreher, Nunnenkamp and Thiele conclude on the other hand that aid to education makes an important and significant contribution to improving primary school coverage (with regard to both enrolment and completion rates) and that this result is not affected by the way in which aid is measured (in the form of commitments or disbursements).

Once again, consensus seems far from being reached on this issue, but these studies are amongst the first to take a real interest in the « internal » effectiveness of aid in a specific sector and more research will be necessary in order to reach a conclusion. These initial results do however lead to some optimism in that they do show there is a positive correlation between aid to education and the indicators of schooling coverage.

¹⁹ The effect appears only after a minimum of four years.

²⁰ These authors were quoted, for example, by Bourguignon and Leipziger (2006) and in a recent publication of the IMF (2005).

3. Conclusion

The Dakar commitment for financing all « credible plans » for reaching the EFA goals has enabled more in-depth and shared diagnosis of how the sector operates and to register the activities to be carried out in a wider framework of poverty reduction and support to development. Definite progress has been made in terms of harmonization and alignment of aid and, in many countries, donor coordinations have implemented a trusting dialogue with the governments, enabling a shift towards a globalisation of actions. Today more than in the past, all partners take the risk of transparency: the governments by registering the sectoral development programmes in documents (and in terms) open to social debate and by explaining the methods of funding these programmes; the donors, by making public their analyses and commitments. The Fast Track Initiative has systematized this new type of relationship. These advances, which need to be consolidated, will however only reach their outcome if the international community effectively keeps the promises made for education and for Africa. Donors, especially bilateral donors, must work twice as hard as to the intensity and predictability of their financial support for the education sector in Africa, giving priority to those countries furthest away from reaching Universal Primary Education. On their side, the African countries must pursue their efforts for placing education at the centre of the debate, within the government and also with external partners and civil society.

