THE STATUS OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND POLICY ANALYSIS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

A REPORT OF THE DAE WORKING GROUP ON CAPACITY-BUILDING IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND POLICY ANALYSIS

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Working Group on Capacity-Building in Educational Research and Policy Analysis

Objectives

The general purpose of the Working Group is to strengthen research and policy analysis capacity in sub-Saharan Africa. For this broad objective to be realized, the Working Group supports the following:

a) Research and Policy

(i) the assessment of educational research training needs by country, region and language groupings;

(ii) the assessment of graduate-level training in educational research and policy analysis, both in Africa and abroad;

(iii) the assessment of demand for educational research and policy analysis. Where demand does not exist, to stimulate interest and possibly demonstrate the value of research and policy analysis in improving the quality of education.

b) Capacity-Building Activities

(iv) the funding of research, at both individual and institutional levels, and of research-related activities (e.g., library and journal support, publications, data analysis facilities);

(v) the development of training materials and the sponsorship of training courses for particular research and policy-analysis needs in addition to provision of graduate-level scholarship in these areas;

(vi) the establishment and strengthening of networks of researchers and research institutions within and across countries of the region;

(vii) the strengthening of the dissemination and communication research findings with a view to enhancing their utilization in policy and in the improvement of the quality of educational practice;

(viii) efforts aimed at sustainability of initiatives taken by donor agencies, governments and other institutions in strengthening capacity-building beyond the initial stages by adopting a long-term development strategy.

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This report was commissioned by IDRC for the Donors to African Education (DAE) Working Group on Capacity-Building in Educational Research and Policy Analysis. The Working Group was established in October 1989, and IDRC has since then been the lead agency. The main objective of the Working Group is to strengthen educational research and policy capacity in sub-Saharan Africa.

In the preparation of this report, the consultants benefitted a great deal from the knowledge, experience and concerns of researchers, policy makers and representatives of donor agencies in the countries covered by the study. We are grateful to the government ministries, universities, research institutions, nongovernmental organizations, private research firms, educational networks and regional organizations that spared time and provided documents to the consultants.

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My sincere appreciation goes to the staff who assisted in the administration of the assignment that produced this report. I am grateful to Rose-Marie Erambert of our Dakar office and Nancy Kagondu of our Nairobi office, who assisted the consultants in carrying out their assignments in Western and Central Africa and in Eastern and Southern Africa respectively. Florence Ngugi provided the initial secretarial support, while Florence Waiyaki has handled the bulk of responsibilities related to production of this report. The editing was done by Ms Lisa Lawley. I am very grateful to them for their diligence and the patience they have shown in this work.

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INTRODUCTION

Although building a functional and credible research capacity is a costly enterprise, donor agencies as well as policy makers recognize more and more that if universities in Africa are to play a positive role in the development process, an effort should be made to build a "critical mass of professional African analysts" (World Bank 1990a:1) through investment in human capital and in key institutions, as well as in a mobilization of resources to implement programmes of action. A chief motivating factor is the realization that after two or three decades of development activity, most sub-Saharan African countries, instead of experiencing the expected expansion and consolidation of their educational systems, have suffered a decline since the early years of their independence. Researchers argue that the acuteness of the perception of this decline is related to the faith placed in education as a key to economic development (Wright 1981).

In some countries loss of faith in the educational system can be used to explain cuts in budgetary provisions for education in general and higher education in particular. In others such cuts have more to do with general economic decline. Whatever the cause, researchers have suggested that one of the direct consequences of budgetary restrictions has been a decline in research capacity. This, in turn, has marginalized universities in their quest to produce knowledge from research and data that can influence their societies (Kinyanjui 1991).

DEFINITION AND HISTORY OF CAPACITY BUILDING

The World Bank Policy Study, *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Policies for Adjustment, Revitalization and Expansion,* published in 1988, pointed out that the main educational issues in Africa following the tremendous expansion of the continent's education systems since the early 1960s were "the stagnation of enrollments and the erosion of quality" (World Bank 1988). The report suggested that in order to improve access to and quality of education, African countries had to formulate and implement "an internally coherent set of policies with three distinct dimensions: adjustment, revitalization, and selective expansion."

Adjustment concerned strategies for diversifying sources of finance and unit-cost containment. Revitalization called for renewed commitment to high academic standards and investment in the provision and maintenance of inputs. Capacity building in research was contained in the third dimension: selective expansion. In addition to calling for efforts to achieve universal primary education, expand selected programmes of post-primary education and train students for the labour market, the report specifically stated that "expansion of Africa's capacity to produce its own intellectual talent to fill the highest scientific and technical jobs--in educational establishments, in government, and in the private sector--is a critical matter to be addressed in building for Africa's future."

Long before the 1988 report, various efforts to build African capacity had been effected inside and outside Africa: first, through massive scholarship programmes conducted in the North for African students; second, by funded emphasis on social sciences in African institutes as part of an overall effort to build a regular intellectual life; and third, and more recently, as a component of project aid. These diverse programmes for building capacity have been undergirded by equally diverse perceptions of what capacity building consists of. Initially, capacity building referred to the production of a cadre of people who would enable the smooth transfer of Western technology and policy to postindependence African development and management systems. Later, capacity building came to be regarded more

as a number of inputs (funds, facilities, personnel) needed to effectively absorb and perhaps adapt new technologies and policies to the local milieu. As a result of the continuing development-policy crisis in Africa the idea of capacity building has been broadened since the early 1980s to include the ability of the total state apparatus, institutions and individuals to manage reform and development.

It is within this broader concept of capacity building that the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) has pursued its funding of educational research and policy analysis in sub-Saharan Africa over the last two decades. Initially IDRC, with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), commissioned case studies of donor-agency efforts to increase national research capacity in East and West Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin America. The results of these studies made evident the fact that the important role played by institutions and individual efforts in capacity building are influenced critically by the quality of the prevailing "research environment"--constituted of the overall receptivity of the social-cultural-political milieu and its propensity for rational inquiry into social issues. Subsequently, IDRC's Research Review and Advisory Group (RRAG), with support from the Rockefeller and Ford foundations, undertook a four-year exercise with the purpose of identifying and assessing the elements comprising a national "research environment" that resulted in the publication, in 1983, of *Educational Research Environments in the Developing World* (Shaeffer et al.).

What emerged in this volume of papers was a more practical definition of a society's capacity for educational research, one that implied that capacity building is a process whereby the "student" is exposed to and masters the knowledge, skills and techniques to enable her or him to effectively use relevant human and material inputs; conduct, evaluate and use educational research; and then maintain and periodically renew these skills and knowledge within an environment that encourages rational inquiry into social issues, including education.

IDRC, appreciating the importance of both institutions and individuals in capacity building, embarked on a number of programmes to support researchers in sub-Saharan Africa. Apart from research project grants to institutions and individuals, the education programme initiated a three-year (1983-1986) educational research award programme, KERA, in Kenya. Subsequently, IDRC supported on-going work by strengthening BOLESWA (Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland) educational research associations as well as establishing networks and award programmes such as the Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa (ERNWACA), the Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania Educational Research Awards (KUTERA) and BOLESWA Research Awards. At the same time, the Fellowship and Awards Division (FAD) of IDRC concentrated on supporting both the long- and short-term training needs of African researchers through scholarships and training seminars for the acquisition of specific research skills, For instance, in 1985 FAD sponsored a training workshop on qualitative research methodologies for researchers from Western, Eastern and Southern Africa. As a follow-up, in 1986 FAD commissioned a review of the nature of formal and informal educational research training courses in Eastern and Southern Africa, with a view to identifying ways in which such courses could be strengthened.

As a result of this long-term commitment to building capacity in educational research in Sub-Saharan Africa, IDRC, as a member of the Task Force of Donors to African Education, or DAE (established in 1988 to coordinate and share information on initiatives undertaken to support educational change in Sub-Saharan Africa), opted to become a member of the Working Group on Capacity-Building in Educational Research and Policy Analysis when it was established in October 1989. IDRC became the lead agency for its activities

and in that capacity commissioned two consultants to undertake a critical assessment of educational research and policy analysis capabilities in the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa.

SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The two consultants covered sixteen countries: eight in Eastern and Southern Africa (Uganda, Swaziland, Mozambique, Lesotho, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Tanzania) and an equal number in West and Central Africa (Senegal, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Zaire, Sierra Leone and Burkina Faso). In each of the sixteen countries investigated for this report, the consultants met with researchers at universities and national research centres, with policy makers and administrators, and with officials of non-governmental agencies. The one hundred or so individuals interviewed included two ministers of education, three principal secretaries, three directors of planning in ministries of education (MOEs), seven vice-chancellors, and four representatives of major donor agencies concerned with educational management and policy, educational research and training, and utilization of research.

The consultants were requested to recommend measures that national governments, universities, research institutions, networks, international agencies and donors could undertake to rehabilitate and strengthen capacities in educational research and policy in the regions studied. The specific terms of reference for the assignment were to

1. make a critical review of past experiences in training of educational researchers and policy analysts in sub-Saharan Africa.

2. review the status, management and contribution of local institutions (universities, research institutes and regional organizations) in training researchers and policy analysts.

3. evaluate the contribution of donors, governments and local institutions to capacity building in research and policy analysis.

4. identify the problems related to recruitment, retention and full utilization of existing research capacity in sub-Saharan Africa.

5. ascertain the level and nature of existing demand for research and policy analysis capability in Africa and indicate how this currently is being fulfilled (i.e., ways of stimulating the demand for educational research).

6. assess whether the existing capacity in government ministries and other policy organs is adequate and keen to utilize research findings or policy analysis.

7. suggest a short-term as well as a long-term programme of action for strengthening capacity building in educational research and policy analysis that local institutions, governments, researchers and donor agencies could embark on (i.e., suggest a plan of action that should be modest, implementable and have a high degree of sustainability).

8. determine how donor efforts could be co-ordinated and utilized more effectively on the ground to enhance research and policy analysis in sub-Saharan Africa.

9. identify any new measures or initiatives, programmes, or institutions that might be supported or implemented to strengthen capacity in research and policy analysis in sub-Saharan Africa.

In short, the consultants were to construct a portrait of capacity building in educational research and policy analysis depicting

1. the nature of the efforts,

2. the strengths of the efforts,

3. the persisting and emerging weaknesses, and

4. the perceptions of practitioners, policy makers, educational leaders and donors regarding measures needed to strengthen the efforts.

The study's theoretical framework sought to identify skills considered crucial to educational development, research, policy analysis and policy implementation with two main components:

1. capacities for human-resources development, i.e., the quantity and quality of training and nurturing of a reasonably large stratum of high-level personnel to meet development needs in education, particularly skills for training academics in specialized areas of educational research; policy analysis; collection and analysis of information on the total educational system; and policy generation, implementation and evaluation.

2. capacities for organizing and managing a sustainable environment for the effective functioning of public and private educational research institutions and units; traditions of good leadership and high procedural standards, scholarly practice and various communications arrangements; and selection and use of appropriate research technologies.

Implicit in the consultants' efforts to find out what institutions were doing was a very strong element of evaluating how well they were doing and identifying the factors contributing to either success or failure. The following issues were pursued:

1. How do researchers, policy makers and other educational leaders define their task of capacity building?

2. What evidence is there of a conscious effort to select, nurture and support specific skills for defined developmental tasks in education, research and policy analysis.

3. How is the concept of excellence defined, if at all, and which activities support such a definition?

4. What mechanisms exist for the creation and reception of new and/or different ideas, technologies and alternative methods for effective research and training.

In some cases, the consultants were able to discuss with key people some of the unsuccessful educational research experiences of the past. In the consultants' view, sometimes more may be gained from a failure story than from a success story. These encounters were highly enriching to the consultants' quest for information, and the willingness of researchers and officials to make time in their busy schedules to meet with them can be interpreted not only as a sign of interest in the issue, but also as an indication that the past and present contributions of IDRC in the areas of educational research and policy analysis are highly valued.

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Katherine Namuddu

1.0 EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

Eight countries were visited: Uganda, Swaziland, Mozambique, Lesotho, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Tanzania. In each country, "educational research institutions" were defined broadly to include the following: (1) university faculties and departments; (2) institutes specifically set up to conduct research; (3) bureaux of educational research; (4) educational network and association co-ordinating offices; (5) planning, research and evaluation units in ministries of education (MOEs); (6) specialized directorates or boards in MOEs such as national curriculum development centres, national examination boards, etc.; (7) teacher-training colleges; and (8) national research councils. Educational research, or research on the delivery of social services and planning for such research, also takes place in a variety of ministries and departments of government, including the cabinet office (Zambia) and the President's office (Tanzania and Uganda).

1.1 INSTITUTIONS VISITED

Coombe (1991) has pointed aptly out that "sub-Saharan Africa is endlessly diverse. Conditions vary across countries, within countries, and within universities" (1). The same diversity is to be found in MOEs and within and across research institutes and units. A common thread--the lack of adequate human and material resources --spans across all institutions, institutes and units. But the concept of adequacy has to be examined carefully under the different circumstances of each country. It was noted that in terms of numerical capacity, many institutions had sufficient well-trained staff to do educational research and policy analysis, but these personnel were scattered across a wide and varying range of research, administrative, teaching, advisory and developmental tasks within and across institutions. There was little effort to match expertise to task, and no visible attempts to consolidate this research capacity within a few institutions. Table 1.1 shows the number of institutions in the various categories visited in each country.

TABLE 1.1. INSTITUTIONS VISITED FOR THIS REPORT

Institution/Office	Countries							
Universities	**B**	**L**	**M**	**S**	**T**	**U**	**ZB**	**ZW**
Vice Chancellor/Information Office	1	-	2	2	2	2	1	1
Library and Documentation Centre	3	1	3	3	3	3	2	4
University Planning Office	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Faculty with Educational Research Committees	1	-	2	2	1	1	1	1
Department of Postgraduate Studies	-	-	2	1	-	1	-	-
Research Institute and Bureaux	4	1	3	2	-	1	1	1
Network/Association Co-ordinating Office	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1
Teacher-Training College	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Ministries of Education								
Permanent Secretary's Office	-	-	1	1	2	1	1	-
Planning, Research and Evaluation Unit	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	-
Project Implementation Unit	-	-	1	1	1	1	2	-
National Examination Board	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-
Curriculum Development Centre	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-
Other								
National Research Council	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
National Council of Science and Technology	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Private Research Institute	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Private Consultancy	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2

Key: Botswana (B), Lesotho (L), Mozambique (M), Swaziland (S), Tanzania (T), Uganda (U), Zambia (ZB), Zimbabwe (ZW).

1.2 STATUS OF RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

The status of institutions that train researchers and conduct research is closely linked to the status enjoyed by the parent institutions, in this case the universities and the MOEs. In turn, the status of the parent institution depends on its ability to harness sufficient human and material resources to carry out adequately its mandated activities. As the ability of both MOEs and universities to harness and use resources has decreased over the years, so too has their status as leaders in the formulation of workable solutions to problems of national development in general, and of education in particular.

1.2.1. Universities and Colleges

The status of the university's capacity to undertake educational research and train researchers is related to its intellectual integrity and its ability to solve the many problems of low quality and quantity in the educational system. These problems revolve around three main issues: (1) the university's academic curriculum, which increasingly appears irrelevant to the tasks of national identification and development; (2) the inadequate human and material base, compared to expectations within such specialized institutions; and (3) the uncertain contribution and rates of return by graduates to the social and economic performance of fast-changing societies. How well training equips students with the ability to search for and find solutions to the many problems of low quality and quantity at all levels of the educational system, and the integrity with which the students pursue both training and research, are the key issues in capacity building.

The first point to note about the integrity of the university is that it now finds itself unable to solve its own problems, let alone those in the rest of the educational sector. If it is argued, as is now the case in many African countries, that the purpose of a university education is to equip students with skills to create employment for themselves and others, then it is evident that university education has failed miserably. Unemployment and underemployment of graduates has increased, and with it the ferocity of criticisms regarding the teaching capacity and integrity of universities. Increasingly, job-interviewing panels complain about unemployable graduates, some of whom are said to be illiterate.

A second point about the integrity of the university as a specialized learning and training institution is the poor state of its instructional facilities. Apart from the newer universities (Botswana, Swaziland, Zimbabwe), the facilities, teaching-learning equipment and resources are grossly inadequate and usually dilapidated. For instance, a number of high schools in some countries (Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia) were said to be better equipped as wholesome learning environments than university departments. Similarly, claims about curriculums that are too academic and too theoretical abound and are not without foundation. Senior university teachers revealed that undergraduate courses that form the foundation for postgraduate training have not been reviewed for a long time (some for as long as three decades). Unfortunately, many such courses hold immense historical clout for the lecturers who teach them. And for a community that generally has either limited access to or makes minimal use of up-to-date publications, members would be at a loss to replace old courses with relevant materials, since few keep abreast of new developments in their areas of specialization.

In addition, teaching methodologies at universities consistently have been a matter of concern from within and from outside. For example, Gold-Schmidt (1987:35) has lamented that rote learning methods are so widespread in African universities that students usually graduate without having acquired the fundamental skills of (1) asking meaningful questions; (2) dealing independently with new problems; and (3) understanding, without prejudice to their own disciplines, the approaches of other disciplines and thus being able to contribute to the success of interdisciplinary understanding that is needed in all development. Therefore, universities have lost some of their earlier immense prestige as educators and increasingly are coming under pressure to re-examine both their curriculums and their standing within society. Undocumented suspicions regarding the academic quality of university entrants abound at all levels. There has been an enormous expansion at the undergraduate level in response to expansion at both the primary and secondary levels.

While university intakes mostly consist of the best candidates, quota systems meant to achieve equity can let in students who might not make the best use of a university education.

But ultimately, the question of the status and integrity of a university hinges upon the quality of its academic leadership in departments. Lecturers point out that there is now a serious state of incapacity in those older universities that have experienced severe brain drain as well as in the younger ones; in both cases, responsibilities for academic leadership have been thrust upon either the young, inexperienced members of staff or upon staff whose scholarly productivity has been less than salutary over several years. One senior head of a department of postgraduate studies pointed out that at his university, 65 percent of all faculties had weak leadership at the top, which provided little or no academic leadership and innovation. He described the productivity and thinking of these "drag departments" as "survival manoeuvres," since they fear any kind of drastic change because it inevitably would expose the leadership's weaknesses more severely than the present stagnation. In countries that have only one university, the introduction of competition and reform becomes all the more difficult to contemplate.

1.2.2. Faculties of Education

The crisis in the status of universities and the related problems of capacity building are well illustrated by the nature of recruitment into postgraduate-level training in the faculties of education. A number of researchers and policy makers voiced severe criticisms regarding the calibre of postgraduate students. Intake into postgraduate courses in the faculties of education of all universities except Swaziland's, which no longer has a master's programme, have obviously increased. The enormous expansion of primary and secondary schools has meant expansion in the teacher-education programmes. To cater to the different levels of teachers needed, universities have had to offer a variety of postgraduate courses for training tutors. In order to train tutors as quickly as possible, not only have these institutions sometimes recruited students who do not have very high grades, but the criteria used to select these students have often been dubious. In other instances, assessment within courses has had to be watered down in order to enable all recruits to get through the courses quickly. Lecturers point out that most postgraduate courses, although seemingly postgraduate on paper, in the teaching are actually undergraduate courses. There is generally no culture of evaluating the effectiveness and suitability of various programmes. Once courses have been passed by a university senate, they become sacrosanct. Without a periodic review of such courses by a recognized peer body, it is impossible to settle the currently raging debates in which the teachers in the faculty of education are adamant that their postgraduate courses are of an adequate standard, while the rest of the university insists that these courses have been diluted.

In addition, the large number of postgraduate students in education is of great concern to all faculties because their staff feel that the education faculties do not have sufficient human and material resources to supervise all students. Lecturers have pointed to the possibility of inbreeding widespread incompetency in research skills at three levels. As one head of a department of postgraduate studies explained, "fourth-raters are selected to take postgraduate work through dubious criteria. The work of the fourth-raters is supervised by their godfathers, who themselves may not have produced scholarly work but who have been promoted through lobbying. Matters are made worse because the godfathers appoint external examiners who, within their own institutions, have little or no record of academic and scholarly performance." Moreover, it is not uncommon to find holders of master's degrees

who are working on their doctorates, and who are overburdened with teaching at undergraduate level, supervising many master's-level students.

1.2.3. Institutes and Bureaux of Research

The status of institutes and bureaux of research would, of course, be greatly boosted if the status of their parent institutions were high. However, it is possible for institutes to enjoy a status far higher than that enjoyed by the parent body. For instance, the Makerere Institute for Social Research (MISR) consistently was rated higher in status than the university as a whole. It is important to note that many of the institutes that have built a relatively solid foundation of research and productivity do social-science research in various fields, including education. For example, the National Institute of Development Research and Documentation (NIR) at the University of Botswana has research activities focused on the major theme of rural development with special reference to agriculture, education, environment, health and nutrition, and settlement. The three objectives of NIR-- namely, (1) to promote, co-ordinate and conduct research on issues of socio-economic, environmental and cultural development affecting Botswana; (2) to develop the national research capacity within Botswana; and (3) to document, publish and disseminate the results of such research-- are similar to those pursued by other institutes such as the Centre for African Studies (CAS) (Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique), Social Sciences Research Unit (SSRU) (University of Swaziland), the Bureau of Educational Research (University of Zambia) and the Human Resources Research Centre (HRRC) (University of Zimbabwe). Within the milieu described above, research units established at universities have a difficult job: not only to create a "name" for the unit on a purely scholarly basis but also to establish working relationships with the university and external agencies.

The status of these institutes and bureaux obviously has varied from institute to institute, depending upon their age, productivity, the location of the institute and the general research environment within the country. But structural problems usually continue to affect these institutes as they grow and aspire to become centres of excellence. These institutes usually are set up with donor funds, with the understanding that the parent institution will take over total support as donor funding ceases or is reduced. The initial donor funds might enable the institute to hire expatriate staff and launch and carry out well a number of projects, thus creating prestige for the new institute. Unfortunately, parent institutions rarely give fully their promised support at the end of donor funding. It usually take months or even years before institutes can achieve the original level of funding on their own. During this period of transition, many institutes lose their reputations quickly as their work inevitably deteriorates due to a reduced establishment and resources, and as they strive to merely survive through undertaking external consultancies without proper policies.

Many of the institutes visited were still in this process of transition from full funding by one or two external donors to parent institutional support alongside a mixture of support from several donors. Three of these institutes (NIR, SSRU, HRRC) had developed clear policies for undertaking consultative work for external agencies. Basically, such a policy consists of ensuring that research work is contracted to the institute and not to the individual researchers who will be working on such projects. Workers on projects are given an honorarium, with the balance of the funds being allocated to the institute's development and recurrent budget. The Centre for African Studies in Mozambique had not developed an

overall consultative policy, and senior researchers there pointed out that the undertaking of consultancies by individual researchers was killing the work of the institute and seriously threatening its status.

1.2.4. MOE Planning, Research and Evaluation Units

In every country visited, the MOE has a unit for planning, research and evaluation and sometimes also a statistical unit. Different sections within the units may undertake the tasks of human-resources planning, research into policy issues and evaluation of the implementation and impact of education-sector programmes. However, in many countries, regardless of what these units may be called, the section usually is assigned extremely important tasks. In the case of Tanzania, for instance, the planning, research and evaluation unit exists to provide the kind of analysis needed to determine and constantly review human-resources policies within the ministry and to forecast human-resources requirements within the educational system as a whole. This section holds formal responsibility for planning human-resources development programmes and for advising the MOE and Ministry of Planning on human-resources allocations for the education sector. The intention is that the section should work very closely with other departments of the ministry, as well as with units outside the ministry such as examinations boards or councils and curriculum development institutes, to accomplish its major tasks. In practice, this section of the MOE does not contain human resources of the calibre required to live up to these considerable tasks (World Bank 1990b). This is more or less the situation in other countries.

The traditional planning, research and evaluation unit has a very low status among all personnel and agencies who are would-be users of the results of its work. One of the major problems is that not only are these units usually extremely understaffed, but also staff appointments take place according to traditional civil- servant criteria rather than according to the nature of work, so the system rarely puts in place workers of the needed calibre and skill. A typical unit in the MOE would, for instance, have the following posts: commissioner of planning; assistant chief education officer, planning; senior education officer, planning; statistician/demographer; assistant statistician/demographer; assistant statistician/programmer; educational financial officer; clerk of works; and physical planner. Clearly, with selection of personnel by nonspecialist standards, these sorts of positions are unlikely to be occupied by people with the skills needed to undertake the kinds of tasks spelt out for the units. In any case, many officers in these planning units admit that the units never become fully functional because recruitment is never complete in the first place. Even the very senior posts do not usually attract the best candidates because of the low salaries offered. As will be discussed later, some ministries have attempted to improve the efficiency of such units by creating three or more subunits such as a project-planning unit (PPU), a project-implementation unit (PIU) and an information-management unit (IMU), a move that is said to have created long-term problems.

1.2.5. MOE Specialized Directorates

The national curriculum-development centres and the national examination boards or councils are the main specialized directorates that are expected to undertake research as part of their general work. However, neither of these directorates usually enjoys a status related to their research activities. The status of curriculum-development centres normally derives from their work as writers and publishers of school syllabuses and instructional resources. Many of

these centres, such as the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) in Uganda, do not undertake research to evaluate the impact of curriculum in the schools because of a lack of resources of all types. Since they have a hard time writing curriculum and instructional resources, research is regarded as a luxury that they can not afford for the time being. However, other centres, such as the Institute of Curriculum Development in Tanzania, consistently have undertaken research and evaluation of their curriculum projects and instructional materials since 1985.

The status (and sometimes the notoriety) of the national examination boards or councils derives from their role as the bodies that set, administer and mark examinations, the results of which determine the future lives of thousands of students each year. Unfortunately, that examination boards in various countries have lost much of their status and integrity is testified to by the numerous letters to newspapers asserting that there is leakage of examination questions, cheating during administration of papers to candidates and corruption in awarding grades. These accusations do not augur well for the kinds of research examination boards are expected to undertake. However, all boards have a research department and most examination boards collect and often publish an enormous amount of statistical data year after year. For instance, the National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA)'s department of research and evaluation puts out a "school subject grade point average profile" every ten years. However, many people who assemble such data do not regard themselves as researchers. Another type of research that examinations directorates undertake attempts to compare the achievement on the same paper by students in different learning environments. This research is rarely publicized, since it usually underlines the fact that as much as 60 percent of a nation's school population have no chance of passing the public examination due to the poverty of the learning environment.

1.2.6. Private Research Institutes and Consultancies

Only one private research institute, the Centre for Basic Research (CBS) in Uganda, was visited. CBS has a strict policy of not undertaking consultancies. Themes for research are identified internally, and if a donor agrees to CBS's terms, then the centre can accept grants. All researchers at the centre are associates and not full-time staff. The centre, which is only five years old, is quickly gaining recognition because of the quality of the research it conducts on development issues. For instance, the centre has embarked on major research projects on gender issues such as (1) a reflection on the contending theories and perspectives on gender; (2) a review of literature on gender in Uganda; (3) the evolution of gender relations in all its diversity; (4) gender ideology and (5) the relationship between women's organizations and other organizations. CBS trains only its own researchers by giving courses relevant to a particular research project in progress. But since most of the part-time researchers work elsewhere, at the university and in some departments of government, the skills they gain from training and research at CBS are likely to be useful in other situations.

Four people who work at private consultancies were interviewed. Two had one-person operations, while the other two had solid infrastructures with such equipment as computers and data-analysis software. In addition, many researchers at universities had undertaken private consulting for donors and sometimes governments. Individual private consultants, as one of them put it, "are like prophets, not easily recognized in their own countries." The consultants all had done extensive consulting in other African countries, but not much in their own. Although they felt that their status was good in the countries in which they had worked, they suggested that in order to consolidate and improve their status

both nationally and internationally, they would have to specialize in a few educational fields. Unfortunately, they found this difficult to do because of the mixed bag of jobs that comes their way, which, financially, they cannot afford to turn down.

Consultants felt that one of the reasons they experienced difficulty in gaining a high status locally was because they were out of the country more than in, and because governments, in particular, rarely begin a consultative task with a search for local consultants. University teachers who had undertaken private consultancies had ambivalent attitudes toward such work. While they all realized that consultancies take away valuable time from their teaching, they pointed to the low salaries in universities and the frequent closures of universities that make some of them idle. Many pointed out that their consultation activities were often a source of conflict with heads of institutions and departments.

The larger private consultancies were really a combination of secretarial bureaux, training in computer literacy, and research and data analysis. This combination of roles was essential in order for the consultants to be able to recoup their large capital investments in equipment. With regard to research, all conducted surveys and analyzed data for various clients, including MOEs. Their own staff were mostly statisticians and computer programmers, and therefore, they usually contracted social scientists from the universities to undertake research. All such companies claimed that they took a lot of trouble to consult with their clients, preferably right from the inception of the research project through questionnaire design and data capture and analysis. Unfortunately, none of the completed reports was available, so assessment of their quality was not possible.

1.3 MANAGEMENT OF RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

Management at all research institutions is in a state of flux. As the size of the populations that need services has increased, so have the overall difficulties of managing in an environment of limited resources. Generally, almost all institutions, research institutes and many government departments lack simple statistics about what they do, how many people they serve and the unit cost of such services. Therefore, estimating their productivity is virtually impossible. For instance, at the universities visited it is not possible to collect data on how many students have graduated from various postgraduate programmes without first devoting a substantial amount of time combing documents such as university calendars, annual reports, special publications, graduation rosters and library acquisitions of dissertations. Few MOEs, with the exception of Tanzania, still produce an annual statistical report on the education sector. An interested person has to go from office to office and to many institutes and directorates in order to collect such basic data. In a number of cases, the files that have to be consulted usually are out of date.

1.3.1 National Research Councils

In most countries the top level of the research management and, by implication, research institutions is the national research council (NRC). These councils, usually located in the office of the President, are expected to formulate a national research policy. It was not possible to obtain one such policy from any of the countries visited. Originally, NRCs were established in order to vet the legitimacy of research undertaken in the country by issuing permits and collecting reports at the end of each research project. In some countries, only foreign researchers are required to obtain clearance permits, while in others all researchers

are mandated to do so. This type of regulation is still a major role of these councils, and although its stringency often has varied with political moods in the countries, many are no longer able to enforce such policies. A main reason is that research implemented as part of development packages is, in most cases, referred to as "monitoring." Moreover, since many development packages are given directly to governments, or to NGOs on government approval, no further permission seems to be required for documentation and evaluation exercises with an overall goal of increasing the effectiveness of such development aid.

Donor agencies over the last few years have attempted to broaden the roles of NRCs by encouraging them to evolve into more serious research and planning bodies that can take a broader look at the research and developmental needs of the nation and co-ordinate human-resources developmental activities. In response to these initiatives, most countries have set up a national council of science and technology (NCST) that has a much broader mandate in national development than simply vetting research. In many NCSTs educational research is not regarded as a priority, and emphasis has been on scientific and technological research. However, the evolving management roles of the councils is dependent upon the availability of adequate resources with which to set up organizational structures and traditions that can establish a firm foundation for the planning and management of research, which hitherto has been slack at both the institutional and the national level. Few of these councils appear to command such capability.

1.3.2 University Departments of Postgraduate Studies

Two universities, Makerere and Swaziland, had just set up departments of postgraduate studies. At Makerere, the purpose of setting up such a department was to co-ordinate postgraduate work, regardless of department and specialization, so that some kind of equivalency in the requirements for admission and award of various degrees could be established. At Swaziland, the faculty of education had suspended its master's-level course in 1986 because of inadequate supervisory staff. In an effort to revive the course, a dean for postgraduate studies was appointed in March 1991 to begin the long planning process for reintroduction of the course. Botswana's faculty of education is also in the process of forming a directorate of graduate studies.

Other universities already have functioning directorates of postgraduate studies. At Dar es Salaam, for instance, the directorate has three sections: (1) higher degrees, for the co-ordination of all postgraduate courses and their cost; (2) co-operation, links and project, which oversees linkages with other universities and projects within such links and (3) staff development, which is responsible for training staff for the university within the system. But in all cases, research is neither co-ordinated nor its quality controlled at this level. The postgraduate studies departments or directorates in reality are co-ordinating the flow of students and resources through the various postgraduate programs.

1.3.3 Faculty of Education Research Committees

It is at the faculty level that research itself may be co-ordinated because of specialization. The faculty research committee usually has three main management tasks. First, it provides a central mechanism for the promotion of educational research within the faculty by commenting on and forwarding applications for research funds to the university research grants and publication committees. Unfortunately, the amounts awarded for such research are usually extremely small. For example, at Swaziland, the faculty of education, with some

twenty members of staff, was in 1990-91 allocated approximately US$24,800 for all of its annual administrative, procurement and research needs. The head of department estimated that each member of staff would be entitled to approximately US$197 to $275 for research during the year. Second, the faculty research committee organizes various research activities such as workshops, seminars and conferences, and generally is expected to create linkages between researchers and collaborators inside and outside the faculty and university. Third, the committee compiles annual research profiles and is responsible for publishing and disseminating the results. Therefore, research is managed and organized at the individual-researcher level. A few researchers indicated that they usually ask their peers or friends to comment on the written product, but rarely on the methodology, of on-going research projects. Some faculties, such as Zimbabwe and Dar es Salaam, have a tradition of research seminars in which colleagues sometimes critically evaluate on-going or completed research. However, the individual researcher is responsible for seeking such forums. Researchers with funding from university research grants committees generally are required to present a paper on their work, but there are no other management mechanisms for ensuring, for instance, that faculty members undertake quality research.

1.3.4 Institutes and Bureaux of Research

Institutes and bureaux of research are autonomous in their day-to- day activities, relying on central administration only in the control of finances. A high degree of interpersonal skills was said to be needed in order to keep this administrative link functional, since most universities have cumbersome accounting systems that delay the transfer of project funds, regardless of deadlines set by donors and researchers. One of the problems cited was that different donor agencies require different accounting mechanisms and presentations of accounts. In addition, universities usually want to apply their own unit-cost rates on services such as transport, communication, etc., which results in complex and time-consuming negotiations.

Since most institutes rely on staff outside the unit to do most of their research, a lot of time is spent arranging schedules. A head of such a unit at the University of Swaziland described his role this way:

> As leader, your greatest needs are patience and the capacity to be a jack of all trades, which include skills such as financial management, keeping in touch with what is happening on both the local and international level in terms of funding trends, the thinking of major donor agencies and, of course, the political scene in the country. Also needed is the ability to write research proposals and reports. The interpersonal relationships in such units are not always easy to manage because these units depend very much on subcontracting researchers outside the unit, which requires administrative and co-ordinating skills. Practical research skills are, of course, indispensable to a leadership position in a research unit, since the leader plays a model role and provides logistical support and planning, and the ability to institute and do teamwork, monitoring and supervision of all research projects.

Four main management problems besides the general lack of adequate funding confront research institutes. First, getting staff of the right calibre on a full-time basis is difficult. At the time of employment, rarely are the necessary qualifications for staff clearly

spelt out. The tendency is to employ researchers without necessarily ensuring that they have the different research skills required for a variety of research tasks. In any case, different research projects requiring a variety of skills are likely to come after the establishment of the unit with its skeleton staff.

Second, when such units are created and supported with external funds, they are efficient. In other words, they become as successful as expected. However, if external funding ceases before the units have consolidated a mechanism for local funding, the units will have become too successful for their own good since they will be overloaded, leading to a reduction in the quality of their work. Even though the parent institution provides support such as office space, increases in salaries, etc., these are rarely commensurate with the workload and the expected timeframes for completing work.

Third, research capacity building is rarely a priority. This is because the ability to subcontract researchers outside the unit obviates serious efforts toward staff development. In addition, institutes, by virtue of their different terms of reference for operation and recruitment, have an in-built policy of exclusion, and therefore insufficient interaction develops between the researchers in these units and in the social sciences departments. This has serious implications for capacity building because "noninvolved" staff feel that these institutes are either for expatriates or for a select few local researchers and scholars.

Fourth, developing strong external consultative activity usually is followed by failure to build and strengthen internal capacity-building tasks and traditions of (1) interdisciplinary work/teaching/learning; (2) debating frequently through seminars, workshops and research meetings; (3) commitment to scholarship through proper apprenticeship of young researchers by their seniors (forums such as public lectures and seminars may be initiated easily, but they usually collapse after a couple of meetings because there is no critical mass of full-time scholars within the institute to sustain these activities so that they can become in demand as traditions); and (4) failure to formulate clear goals for the institute's own work, usually when the external consultative activity is strong. There is no research agenda for the institute, since, in the absence of adequate institutional support, the first priority is to undertake external research tasks that generate money.

1.4 UNIVERSITY PLANNING OFFICES

A number of universities have planning offices or sections for planning in different administrative offices. These offices usually have the following functions: (1) to co-ordinate all academic services offered by and to the university; (2) to plan and implement all development activities, including human resources and (3) to secure services for development by dealing with all external donors. One such unit was established with seed money from a donor who provided computer equipment for setting up a database and an information-management system (IMS) and technical assistance in the form of two expatriates, one for setting up the IMS and the other as chief technical adviser to the whole unit. The local head of the unit held the fourth most senior position in the university administration. The remaining staff were a statistician, a planner, a project-monitoring officer and a donor liaison officer.

At the time the unit was visited, the posts of head, chief technical adviser and IMS manager were vacant. The posts of planner and statistician had been filled only recently, after the departure of the former occupants. The IMS was not working, and it was not clear whether or not there was a database. None of the staff in the office had experience with the jobs they had been assigned. For example, the planner was much more eloquent with

physical planning and drawing budgets than when planning for human-resources development. The project-monitoring officer had no mechanism for ensuring that individual departments would involve him in tasks that fell under his purview. The donor liaison officer did not know how he would work with the multiple donors who were sponsoring various projects at the university.

While the staffing situation was severe, it was the general nature of the planning office's duties that seemed most fuzzy. The same university had a large personnel department, a large department of the registrar and a department of planning. All three were striving to fulfil mandates and goals similar to those of the planning office. Unfortunately, as with the planning office, no one in these departments had basic information on the human and material resources and the services of the university, something crucial to the effective functioning of offices of this kinds.

1.5 MOE PLANNING, RESEARCH AND EVALUATION UNITS

The management of planning, research and evaluation units in MOEs varied immensely. However, the low salaries offered to local staff, alongside a long list of vaguely defined tasks and responsibilities, had greatly affected morale in a number of units in Tanzania, Uganda and Mozambique. Even in countries such as Swaziland, where pay was generally much better, policy makers pointed out that salaries were still too low, compared to those offered in the private sector, to attract motivated staff. In almost all countries, so-called efficient planning units had devolved themselves into a number of subunits in order to make their jobs more manageable. For instance, the MOE of Swaziland, to improve the efficiency of the planning unit within its current five-year Project for Educational Development (with linkages to an EEC-funded project on vocational and technical education), separated the subunits for statistics and planning. In addition, the planning of the new project in specialized areas such as continuous assessment, curriculum development and teacher training had been allocated to the already existing specialized directorates, and technical assistants had been assigned to each of the subunits and projects.

Increasingly, planning units are finding that they can not command sufficient human resources to undertake all of the work they have been assigned. Consequently, many would like to divest themselves of the job of conducting research, for instance, and instead simply contract outside expertise. One of the management problems, however, is a lack of the autonomy needed in order to function effectively. This is most evident in unit personnel's obligation to participate in planning tasks undertaken by related sections in the MOE, and in their dependence upon cumbersome ministry mechanisms for filling establishments, remunerating staff, procuring resources and financial control. Many researchers felt that the present model of a planning, research and evaluation unit would be unable to evolve into a centre of excellence because of the following factors: (1) administrative ineptness brought about by constant changes and transfers of personnel; (2) lack of planning and formulation of clear priorities for developing human resources within the unit; (3) inability to isolate the key levels of human capabilities and material resources needed to sustain the unit's basic activities; (4) a tendency to overload the unit with activities that were not originally under its purview, as a result of impromptu changes in policy, (5) inability to link the work of the unit with work in other institutions that would increase the pool of expertise available to be tapped by the unit without incurring much expense and (6) a tendency to allow the proliferation of subunits led by expatriates on short-contract terms. (Many of these subunits duplicate the work of the unit as a whole, draw serious attention away from capacity building

in the original unit and cause the meagre available resources to be spread over a wide spectrum of tasks, many of which later will be assessed as having achieved much less than the desired results.)

1.6 DOCUMENTATION, PUBLICATIONS AND LIBRARY

Faculties of education, research institutes and bureaux, and individuals all produce a great deal of research information, some of high quality and much of it only useful as general reading. Unfortunately, much of this information neither is published nor disseminated. Part of the reason is the high cost of duplicating a document of any length. Much more serious is the fact that much of the really high-quality information goes directly to the funding agencies, with only a copy or two of the research report left at the source. Research documents that are kept in inefficient local documentation centres (quite a number of which do not catalogue documents but simply pile them according to subject) usually are not found in the main university or departmental libraries, which themselves lack serious bibliographic services in the area of educational research and policy analysis.

Generally, the wide spectrum of interests within various educational issues is the primary cause of the scattering of materials. Researchers still have to search office by office, enquire at every library and contact all relevant individuals who may happen to have some particular document. The existence of many agency documentation centres or collections usually does not serve outsiders and local researchers. Several foreign donor agencies have accumulated project papers and related documents. But not all individual researchers (or institutions, for that matter) have access to the various documentation centres, and many such centres discourage individual requests, preferring to deal promptly only with governments and other foreign donor agencies.

University libraries are stocked to serve undergraduate courses, but even these now generally are served poorly, since journal subscriptions are out of date and space for reading is limited due to large student populations. The systems of internal co-operation on documentation are rarely visible or open to public access. Acquisitions lists tend to be too general, and many do not mention collections they hold on special-interest groups such as women or the handicapped. Moreover, reports on acquisitions may not always be accurate.

However, the real problem of disseminating information from libraries, research institutions and centres is not the nonexistence of services, but the lack of adequate means to perform the services effectively, sustain them over a long period of time and improve upon them in small but significant ways. For instance, in theory almost all university libraries in each country have an interlibrary loan system. Unfortunately, such systems rarely work. A premium is put on growth of the library stock and the library system, but not on the growth of systems for exchange of information and resources. In any case, even where such resources exist and could be expanded, they are rarely fully utilized, basically because there is a general disbelief in their workability and because few students have a truly genuine desire to read beyond prescribed materials.

One of the factors preventing people from making use of the available resources is the all-permeating conviction that there is nothing to read. Overall, a culture of readers still has to be nurtured, even within the university community. Unfortunately, many organizational structures in African libraries and documentation centres do not help readers to create a demand for library services beyond those needed for the simple fulfilment of course requirements that could serve broader developmental needs. Library exhibitions are rare. Visits to departments and individual courses by librarians are unheard of, and it is

something of a pleasant surprise to find a truly knowledgeable library attendant. Many students leave university without coming to understand the rationale behind the cataloguing systems or, indeed, referencing, since they never get an opportunity to participate in the management of reading resources and other information systems.

Increasingly, libraries mostly satisfy the international need for information dissemination rather than local demands for information. Eloquent evidence of this is provided by the way in which libraries organize their Africana or special collections. These are the least accessible sections and usually the smallest too. Here, only a single copy of an important national or regional document may exist. Many times Africana documents are to be read *in situ*, can not be borrowed, or if they can be borrowed at all, only for twenty-four hours. Some of this material is never on open shelving. Seating is restricted, and security for documents is stifling. As a result, many students avoid this section, and in most cases student and nonstudent readers have no opportunity to become acquainted with policy documents, the laws of their country, development plans, reports of commissions of inquiry and other important documents. This paranoia about the "protection" of local documents thrives on the rhetoric that such documents are rare. This in itself feeds on the laxity, particularly of donor communities, government departments, parastatals and research organizations, in complying with local laws that require them to deposit research reports and findings in libraries and other institutions of learning. These groups all appear to flout such laws at will.

1.7 CONTRIBUTIONS TO RESEARCH AND POLICY ANALYSIS

Even a cursory study of the nature and quality of research products was impossible because of time constraints. However, the general impression obtained from inspecting the holdings of documentation centres was that a large quantity of documents whose authors claim that they are based on research are available. Therefore, the question of quantity is no longer a serious issue. What is at stake is the contribution of all this documentation to understanding the nature and functioning of the education system.

1.7.1 Types of Research Undertaken

Information on the types of research carried out at universities was obtained from two sources: individual papers inspected during the visits and publications in faculties. A few faculties of education publish research profiles either annually (for instance, the faculties of education at the University of Botswana and the HRRC at Zimbabwe) or at specified intervals. *The Research Bulletin* (UDS 1990) of Dar es Salaam, which contains abstracts from all faculties of the university, is published every four to five years. Generally, it gives a more accurate picture of the productivity of staff, since only studies completed within the period under review are included. The *Research Profiles* from Botswana were found to be somewhat cumbersome. For instance, the 1988/89 *Research Profile* (UB 1990) also included research done as long ago as 1980. Similarly, although the *HRRC Annual Report* (UZ 1990) detailed the research projects undertaken, it indicated neither the dates of inception nor those of completion.

In universities in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (the BOLESWA countries), the large quantity of research is supplemented by a lot of visible research activity, especially that organized through the ERNESA networks such as meetings, workshops and seminars. Unfortunately, a relatively small group of people seem to be leaders and participants in all

these activities. While it is all very well to develop a variety of research interests, there is a definite limit to how actively these few people can become involved in all sorts of activities without creating future problems of sustainability. The tendency has been to jump from activity to activity instead of attempting to build enduring traditions of collaboration and teamwork. One of the problems is that the traditional use of university research has been and still is for promotion. Members of staff are not clear about how collaborative research and publications will be viewed by staff promotion and appointment committees, especially when such research is a collaborative effort between junior and senior researchers.

In addition to the three sources cited above, research reports were obtained from NECTA, Tanzania; the Institute of Curriculum Development, Tanzania; the SSRU, Swaziland; and from NIR in Botswana. From among these sources approximately sixty-two researchers had participated in some ninety-six projects completed between 1986 and 1991, and another thirty-seven projects had been initiated in the same period. For another fifty-one titles, it was difficult to decide whether or not research had been undertaken. For instance, under the project title "Current Research," a respondent may write, "School Curriculum."

Apart from research conducted at the NIR and SSRU and a few other research projects underway at the Bureau of Educational Research, Zambia, that had a definite developmental orientation, much of the research done in faculties of education, in curriculum centres and by examination boards tended to be traditional in both methodology and content. As the editor of the 1988/89 Research Profile pointed out in the preface,

> The focus of research in the faculty is on the learner, the teacher, the process of interaction between them and the organizational contact in which they take place. There is lack of descriptive data on many aspects of educational activity and consequently a paucity of analysis and theorization. For instance our understanding of the everyday experiences of students, teachers and administrators is sparse. (UB 1990:5)

Many of the studies that were examined investigated the relevance of curriculum subjects, the effectiveness of teaching in different subject areas, teacher-training programmes, delivery of education at subsectors, the efficiency of the system, and the performance and achievement of students at school and on public examinations. There were a few investigations of social mobilization, evaluations of vocational and technical education, and reviews of educational research. In some countries special themes still dominated the research literature. In Tanzania, for instance, many studies focused on self-reliance, adult education and functional literacy, while in Mozambique themes such as Portuguese- and Bantu-language teaching and learning, ethnoscience (investigating which African scientific traditions had survived colonialism and how this body of knowledge could be incorporated into the curriculum) and educational anthropology (assessing the impact of cultural practices such as childhood separation, circumcision, changing names and related rites) held a prominent place.

1.7.2 Quality of Output

As earlier pointed out, it is very difficult to judge the quality of research output from abstracts and profiles. The relatively few full research reports examined hardly can give a realistic picture of such a varied terrain. NECTA, for instance, made available several completed research reports that were of high quality. The BERA (Botswana Educational

Research Association) office at the Faculty of Education, University of Botswana, had two important sources of research papers: the 1989 *Proceedings of the BOLESWA Educational Research Symposium* (Mautle and Youngman 1990) and similar papers on gender and education (Tsayang et al. 1989). Many of the research studies exhibited considerable gaps in methodology and presentation of data. Until a thorough investigation of the quality of research produced in African institutions can be undertaken, the issue of quality will continue to be a controversial subject prejudiced by subjective judgments based on the few studies that may have been accessible to an individual at a particular time.

Unfortunately, most researchers quickly come to the defensive when challenged about the quality of their work. This sensitivity is enforced by the fact that much of the opinion characterizing educational research in African universities as poor comes from the donor community (Coombe 1991:36). Since the donor community's opinion is formed by the reports it commissions from universities, and from the opinions of private consultants who compete with university teachers for such research assignments, their impact is likely to be lost to the university research community, which rarely get an opportunity to see such reports. A leader of a research institute in Mozambique commented on the debate this way: "While bad news travels fast, good news also travels, using the same route. If the majority have not heard the good news, perhaps there is none."

1.7.3 Policy Analysis

Both teachers at universities and research officers in MOEs consider the current emphasis on deficiencies in policy analysis in educational research in Africa mainly as an overstatement. They point out that the term *policy* is an elusive one, used in many different ways to refer to a highly diverse set of phenomena. They argue that a great deal of policy analysis has been undertaken both by educational researchers at universities and in research institutions and units, as well as within various departments of government ministries. They point to a number of big and small research projects that address the traditional content of policy, namely, the essential functions of schools, the curriculum, objectives, goals, recruitment, enrolment, assessment, rewards, and student and teacher discipline. Similarly, many of these researchers have participated in studies that addressed issues concerning the establishment, structure and governance of individual institutions and the whole educational system, or parts of it; the different kinds of professionals and their training; the provision and allocation of financial resources; and the provision and maintenance of instructional materials and facilities. More recently, many researchers have collaborated as counterparts to external consultants on similar studies commissioned by MOEs at the behest of donor agencies. On this level, therefore, they assert that there are many research findings that describe the essential functions of the educational system.

Researchers and policy makers admit, however, that despite the availability of this large body of information, much of it is still in relatively raw form. In other words, while this information from many sources may be available, it is scattered across institutions and areas of specialization without a single source and without the necessary integrated and interdisciplinary orientation that would make it proper policy analysis. Planning, research and evaluation units were supposed to be the locus for such integrated information gathering, with a database management system and policy analysts to serve all needs. Unfortunately, as earlier pointed out, most planning units are still in the formative stage.

Basically, three kinds of information are missing that together would make for easier policy analysis. First, basic statistical data on the personnel and infrastructure of the

educational system spanning a decade or more is generally missing. As researchers and donors repeatedly have observed, most of the basic data may be there, scattered in various files and cumbersome documents, and yet it is never available when needed. Many MOE units are in the process of setting up information-management systems. But even where these systems already exist, data is rarely available on request. Data stored in huge files on inefficient hard disks from which a single output takes four hours hardly can be relied upon as immediate sources of information. Second, the central statistical unit may gather all the needed data on schools, but then much of this data is just numbers rather than statements that would enable researchers to explain some aspect of the educational system. In addition, several bodies often gather information on the education system for different purposes. For instance, the ministry of works may collect data on physical facilities and infrastructure in rural schools; the same exercise probably would be undertaken by the ministry of local government and urban development for urban schools. The teacher service commission will gather data on teacher posting but not on resignations and retirement, since that is done by the ministry of labour or even the ministry of finance. The department of statistics based in the ministry of economic development and planning will collect data on the dynamics of the population, e.g., teachers, while manpower planning is supposed to use all these statistics in recommending various training courses. Therefore, in order for such data to be of immediate use in policy analysis, it has to be integrated and accompanied by definite educational questions and answers about the performance of the system. Third, although descriptive data on the basic functions of the educational system and the description of existing policy statements is available, there is neither description nor analysis of the policy-making process and how policy problems are handled, the nature of particular policy problems and their origins, and the responses to educational development problems.

There is a total lack of systematic scholarly activity that focuses on the development of policy over time as related to its setting within the relevant national context and economy. This activity should explore comparable and contrasting trends and influences between policies so that results can be fed into the policy-making process. Since policy develops within the context of particular sets of values, pressures and constraints of particular structural and social arrangements, it is important that local issues are investigated in an integrated manner.

Most policy analysis carried out so far has been undertaken by foreign consultants, except, perhaps, in the case of Tanzania, where local researchers have made a reasonably large contribution. The reason expatriate consultants have taken over policy analysis has to do with the trend of funding education through what has been called the "project mindset." Modern project planning and preparation requires, at best, both research analysis as well as short-term basic policy analysis. In the former, the problem of interest is long term, requiring a substantial budget, time and data to achieve results. In the latter, short-term data collection and analysis can yield quick results on a problem and, at the same time, serve as a theoretically sound aid to making good policy decisions. This sort of policy analysis is basic and requires the researcher to think more like an analyst or planner, reflecting on problems the organization faces and asking how such problems could be approached and with which information and basic methods.

In the absence of long-term policy analysis, most MOEs now rely on short-term studies carried out by consultants. Since the state of many African educational systems is one of considerable difficulties, it is essential that priority areas for funding be identified. While many such short-term consultative reports do gather useful information that assists governments in arriving at priorities, many contribute little to the state of knowledge. The

typical preinvestment study conducted by a foreign consultant during a two-week exercise usually suffers from three main constraints: (1) there is a tendency to solicit data from the same people and institutions, regardless of the area of concern. This is because accessibility of informants is a key issue in all consultancies of this nature; (2) although the exercise is expensive, government rarely has control over the products. Even when unacceptable reports are produced, there is no mechanism of redress. Moreover, as local researchers repeatedly have pointed out, the reports rarely contain anything new or substantial. The most important skill that consultants usually bring to the exercise is the ability to synthesize data in a manner acceptable to donors. Local researchers argue that this is not such a difficult exercise, given the kind of database and documentation resources at the disposal of the foreign consultant, which are normally unavailable to the local researcher; and (3) foreign consultants are brought in on the pretext that the report is urgently needed. Therefore, the consultant has to rush through data collection and assembles a report based on a fuzzy understanding of the intricate social phenomena at play. When investments are based on superficial understanding, the inevitable result is failure of policy.

1.7.4 Contribution to Knowledge and Capacity Building

Many researchers assert that many consultative reports contribute little new knowledge, and that the subjective canvassing of opinion from a few members of the public on a particular educational change hardly can be regarded as research methodology, since it lacks the element of objective pursuit of any one issue to its logical conclusion. Indeed, the synthesis of ideas often calls for more concrete research, particularly since such reports call for new investments in new curriculums, systems of teacher training, etc. Where such reports are based on a weak and fragmented database, it is hardly surprising that they make little contribution to the general state of knowledge.

1.8 TRAINING IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND POLICY ANALYSIS

Training in educational research has been part of formal training courses at the universities for a long time. There are also various kinds of nonformal training and apprenticeships. Because there is a great deal of information on this aspect of capacity building (Namuddu 1986), only some issues will be summarized.

1.8.1 Undergraduate Research Methodology Courses

All research methodology courses at the undergraduate level are normally one semester in a general degree course of three or four years. These courses are designed to give the undergraduate basic information on research methods, not basic skills in research. In these courses, usually taught in the psychology department, the student receives an introduction to a range of techniques for survey research, designing questionnaires, elementary data analysis and report writing. The goal is to give students a notion of the range of research tools available in order to undertake a simplified research project as part of the final-year course.

The quality of the research skills acquired in courses of this nature can be judged best by inspecting the projects that students produce. External examiners who have evaluated these projects consistently have observed that they usually lack the basic characteristics required in a research report. For example, the reports lack any kind of theoretical or

conceptual framework; the methodology is inadequate for the questions posed; data collection and analysis is usually incomplete, and generally, the reports have little or no value except for the fulfilment of course requirements. External examiners also have observed frequently that neither during the research methodology course nor during the research process itself do students appear to receive adequate guidance and direction from their tutors. Teachers may pay little attention to the research methodology of projects beyond assessing their general nature. One teacher familiar with these projects characterized the majority as worthless.

1.8.2 Master's-Level Training

Many universities now have coursework leading to the master's as well as a master's by research. In the former, the tendency is for the course in the first year to be so broadly defined as to include a smattering of courses from all educational subspecializations. In the second year, the student is allowed to specialize in one or two areas. And indeed, in these cases, the research project does not result in a thesis but in a paper. Master's-level programmes have a wide range of problems, the most frequently cited of which are:

1. Lack of adequate staff with sufficient experience to develop, improve and sustain such courses at a high standard. In the absence of adequately trained staff, teachers with master's degrees and a few years of university teaching often are required to teach and supervise students in master's programmes. As a result, the course has little rigour and scholarship.

2. Lack of adequate facilities and material resources for hosting such courses. While it is generally easy for various departments in the schools or faculties of education to get the university senate and academic boards to approve the academic and scholarly nature and standard of course outlines, the same bodies rarely critically question the availability of resources for such courses.

3. Lack of organizational structures within which to utilize all available expertise in the faculty for teaching such courses. The tendency is for these courses to be taught in departments rather than through interdepartmental or even interfaculty arrangements. For instance, to find staff from the faculty of social sciences supervising students from the faculty of education and vice versa is somewhat rare. The creation of directorates of graduate studies, discussed earlier, is a strategy through which universities hope to encourage departments to tap the diverse expertise available throughout the university, rather than remain limited by the expertise available in individual departments.

4. Courses of this nature are usually very well subscribed in their few first years, attracting qualified students from a previously underserved pool of graduates. But as this pool gets depleted, there is a tendency for political expedients to overtake scholarly requirements in recruitment, leading to a dilution of the quality of students, and therefore of graduates. Yet the graduates of master's level courses are an important source of future university lecturers. If they enter postgraduate studies with less than the needed scholarly achievement, they can not pursue their master's courses seriously, and yet may end up as teachers and supervisors of future postgraduate students.

1.8.3 Doctorate-Level Training

Universities that offer doctoral as well as master's programmes do not primarily aim to train researchers. Postgraduate programmes in all universities visited are designed to train personnel who are experts in their fields of specialization such as psychology, curriculum, etc. In fact, no single university department had research as its field of specialization. This is a key point. Postgraduate students in universities rarely spend much of their time doing research. The majority are likely to be full-time teachers, administrators and specialists in their academic fields. While they may have to conduct some research for promotional purposes, this is definitely not essential. Therefore, during postgraduate training the emphasis of both students and teachers is on "using" the correct research techniques in the research project that will be used for the dissertation, and not on mastering a set of research skills for future application.

All doctoral courses are by dissertation. Many students still describe such courses as tortuous and very difficult to complete because of the uncertainty of the long and vague apprenticeship entailed. Increasingly, recruits in doctoral courses are already permanent members of staff in university departments, which sometimes means that the rigour of their supervision and scholarship not only is curtailed by the amount of time they have available, but also by a certain kind of nonscholarly inbreeding of inappropriate research skills and incompetency. External examiners who have evaluated doctoral dissertations have had a variety of reactions, depending, of course, on the university, the area of specialization and the area of study. The following, however, are general commentaries on this long experience of external examination, which itself has not been investigated and properly documented:

1. The research methodology is generally inadequate to the questions and the issues investigated. In any case, the problems tend to be narrowly defined right from the beginning and confined to a narrow range of subproblems and issues. Despite the evolution of a multiple range of data-collection and -analysis tools and mechanisms, theses and dissertations in universities in sub-Saharan Africa tend to be narrow and either strictly quantitative or case study, where the methods of data collection and analysis rarely are defined. The result is that many case studies can not be replicated. Because of the length of time involved in conducting research for the doctoral dissertation and the scarcity of resources devoted to the whole exercise, the databases for such dissertations may be very narrow and, in some cases, highly unrepresentative of the population studied.

2. Rarely is the approach multidisciplinary. Problems and their solutions tend to be confined to the parameters of the discipline and therefore look very stereotyped and are quite often impractical within the local reality. It is rare to come across a thesis that seriously addresses a contemporary issue, paying attention to a range of relevant aspects and facets and then going on to recommend solutions that are within the grasp and capabilities of the local milieu and have a reasonable relationship to the current dynamics of policy development and implementation in the country.

1.8.4 Nonformal Training

Most members of the research community involved in nonformal training hardly recognized it as a viable training venue. Researchers recognized only workshops, training seminars or short-term, out-of-station courses as opportunities for training. Researchers were dissatisfied with nonformal training, since they tended to spend a lot of time on it, only to acquire an assortment of skills, some of which were useful for research in the units but were not recognized in the departments as criteria for promotion, advancement to higher training and job mobility. Researchers pointed out that despite its difficulties, nonformal training was becoming the only form available to young researchers. For example, projects such as SHAPE (Self-help Action Plan for Education) in Zambia had provided long-term training in research methodology for tutors in teacher-training colleges. Similarly, research-award schemes such as KUTERA (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania Educational Research Awards) and educational associations formed with the support of the IDRC through the ERNESA network all have provided nonformal training to awardees and members. Increasingly, researchers are appreciating this sort of training, provided it comes as part of a package with adequate research funds, so that what is learned can be put to use immediately.

1.8.5 Apprenticeship

Much of the training in research and in teaching at university was expected to be undertaken through apprenticeship. For example, a graduate teaching assistant is given the post as an apprentice to a senior member of staff on the understanding that within a year the student will have to register for a postgraduate degree. Much of the assistant's time is spent reading in his area of potential specialization because he needs to identify a topic of research. Meanwhile, he may assist with an occasional lecture, mark scripts from the lecturer's classes and sit in on some of the classes and give an occasional verbal assessment of the quality of such classes. Neither general nor specific guidelines as to how the senior staff and the head of department and other senior members should teach, supervise, and evaluate the work and progress of teaching assistants are available.

Similarly, in many research jobs within MOE planning units, universities and research institutes, local staff apprenticed to senior expatriate staff are expected to be trained on the job. Such arrangements are altogether too common, but it is rare to find a unit in which these arrangements have been mutually acceptable to those involved. The general feeling is that the apprentices never really learn any new skills from their teachers. During this survey, various people, many of whom described themselves as victims, related numerous woeful accounts of these arrangements. Obviously, many factors influence the workings of these arrangements. For instance, there is the question of remuneration, the expertise of the teacher, the desire of the teacher to genuinely pass on his skills and the willingness of the student, understudy or local counterpart to learn. While all of these are important factors, researchers felt that the most critical flaw in these arrangements was the complete absence of a properly articulated mandate by the teachers regarding the skills and knowledge that have to be passed on within a particular timeframe and at a level of performance that can be assessed.

A typical MOE planning unit may have some five or so technical-assistance expatriates of differing expertise. To have an MOE appoint "real" counterparts capable of understudying each of these experts is somewhat rare. As one expert who was nearing completion of a three-year technical-assistance posting in a planning unit explained, "I was

supposed to find my counterpart already working when I arrived. On my arrival, I was told he would be appointed within the next week or so. After six months I threatened to resign if the counterpart wasn't appointed. The matter was spelt out clearly in the first-year appraisal report. Finally, after fifteen months I got somebody, a pleasant young man, fresh from university. I am a statistician and he is an economist and has no idea about education. But both of us have been trying hard ever since." Not uncommonly, one local counterpart may sometimes be appointed to understudy two or even three experts.

It is becoming increasingly rare to find technical-assistance experts who are prepared to train local counterparts when the latter are appointed. Policy makers and local counterparts gave a catalogue of grievances against the available technical assistants: they are unwilling to train; they do not spell out exactly what it is that the local counterpart is supposed to learn; there is no proper assessment mechanism; they tend to send the counterparts out in the field alone, thus reducing substantially the opportunity for training and they make local counterparts errand boys. However, the gist of all these grievances is that typically governments do not require technical-assistance experts to clearly articulate a training programme through which they expect to conduct their counterparts. Researchers are unimpressed by the quality of technical-assistants now generally found heading various educational projects. Apart from technical experts with specific technical skills such as computing or putting up a building, the average technical expert in education is regarded as a person "who spends much of his time beating about the bush, since he is unlikely to know enough about the local situation, and since he has no 'real technical skills' beyond asking questions and getting answers and then putting on them paper", said one policy maker.

These issues imply that governments must become much more serious in considering the training aspects of technical assistance. While it is true that a great deal of technical assistance is saddled onto governments as conditions of grant, the onus to utilize such expertise optimally is on governments, since in most cases they pay dearly for such expertise. Since governments by now should have acquired sufficient knowledge of the workings of various donor agencies, they have little excuse in pleading innocence and should have the last word in selecting these technical-assistance experts. The curriculum and the kind of training they expect these people to give to their local counterparts should be part of the terms of reference, and much more important, the formative and summative assessment of such training programmes by independent experts should be part of the contractual obligations, with clear loss of remuneration to the expert should she or he fail to measure up to the expected standards.

Governments, universities and various units that have control over funded projects in the main have been very negligent in this crucial area. Part of the reason for this laxity is the dubious feeling that donors are doing African countries a favour by giving them aid, grants, loans and technical assistance. It is quite true that philanthropy is involved, but governments and organizations that provide assistance aid derive their funds from public monies that they are expected to account for properly. Part of the reason why donor governments and agencies are reducing the amounts of such funds is because the international public has come to look upon sub-Saharan Africa as a bottomless pit that simply guzzles resources without advancing in output. While international philanthropy is a good thing, it is hardly a favour. Therefore, African recipients clearly should be involved in ensuring that technical assistance is offered through people who have the skills and knowledge that Africa truly lacks. As soon as African countries can put in place mechanisms designed to optimize

their utilization of the technical assistance they receive, they quickly will weed out the spurious experts. The result will be improved apprenticeship training and the beginning of development in education.

1.8.6 Training in Policy Analysis

As already indicated, the primary purpose of exposing students to research methodology courses at postgraduate level is not to train them to become researchers but to train them as specialists in particular subdisciplines in which they may or may not continue to conduct research after graduation. Therefore, research methodology courses do not regard policy analysis as a special area of training. In short, there is no training in policy analysis, certainly not within the research methodology courses offered in schools and faculties of education.

In fact, many university lecturers pointed out that the term *policy analysis* is relatively new within the educational-research literature in general, and particularly in the African context. Many dated the phrase's entry into common usage to the dissemination of some of the World Bank's research and, most definitely, to the publication of its 1988 report, *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Policies for Adjustment, Revitalization, and Expansion.*

Researchers and trainers made two observations regarding the probable reasons why university research-methodology courses traditionally have not paid attention to training in policy analysis: first, training in research methods was limited to thesis work. And with the limited exchange of information between government and university, few researchers seriously believed that the individual suggestions for policy changes commonly included in the suggestions and recommendations sections of all thesis and research publications would make it into the ranks of actual policy.

Second, government departments only very recently have begun hesitantly to open up their policy-making activities to local researchers, and it is still something of a novelty for government departments to fully involve local university academicians in their policy making, implementation and evaluation activities. Many researchers pointed out that despite the emerging openness in a few sections of some government ministries, such openness is by no means total or universal. Researchers repeatedly emphasized that ministries were still in the habit of labelling almost all government-sponsored reports, be they research or policy documents, as confidential. One lecturer pointed out that government departments were no more open to local experts now than they had been during colonial days, since any local researcher looking for important information is most likely to end his discussion with the receptionist. African scholars were resentful particularly of the common practice of allowing foreign consultants easy and total access not only to of all these so-called confidential reports, but also to all personnel for intensive interviews, something that commonly is denied local consultants. Lecturers argue that governments in Africa have not arrived at their present state of relative openness to local researchers by themselves. First, over the last decade many donors in the North wished to have technical-assistance experts work with local researchers in looking for workable solutions in education. After years of foreign experts working in African education and with little to show for the enormous investment that has been poured into "developing" education, donors consider the policy of having local experts who can, perhaps, bring out the missing links between expert solutions and local culture to be wise. Researchers, however, made a clear distinction between donor policy and the implementation of that policy. While donor policy was for the provision of technical assistance, the actual selection of such assistance personnel often was left in the hands of

dubious middlemen in recruiting companies whose first goal was to place their comrades and employees rather than to provide the best skills and needed expertise. And it was through such recruitment practices that inexpert technical assistance has been saddled onto various governments and organizations.

But governments themselves were not without blame in selecting unsuitable counterparts to technical assistants for training in policy analysis. One frequent observation was that governments were in the habit of allocating such jobs to the "boys" who were either "party" or "movement" supporters. Unfortunately, such party faithfuls, without the proper understanding of their tasks and obligations, are persuaded easily by inexpert technical assistants to mind their own business, since this is, in any case, an easier option than genuinely trying to learn new intellectual skills on the job. Even though the increasing scarcity of resources is forcing some government departments to take a second look at their local expertise in recruiting advisers, governments are more likely to trust the opinions of foreigners than those of local researchers.

1.8.7 Constraints to Capacity Building in Policy Analysis

Many universities over the last decade have experienced frequent disruption due to student strikes. Usually such strikes begin with an issue related to the welfare of students on campus. Unfortunately, both students and ministries tend to see university administration as simply a department of government, so that each group expects government to intervene, even in matters that universities could solve easily on their own. However, since most strikes now concern issues of student allowances, something that only governments can tackle, increasingly the "solution" of management problems on campus is brought about only with government intervention, which in most cases tends to be drastic, resulting in frequent closures of universities. This has serious implications for the quality and quantity of capacity building.

First, because governments close universities so frequently, serious problems have arisen in the scheduling of undergraduate classes, which, in turn, has delayed the completion of postgraduate courses. Second, instead of "giving" time to researchers to do their work, the frequent closures actually dissipate academic energy and morale. In any case, most senior staff will spend almost all of their time during closures in endless meetings with government officials in an effort to "resolve" the crisis. Third, to academicians, frequent closures do not augur well for the experimental liberalization of the policy-making process in government, since suspicion between the two groups is increased and accusations of unpatriotic behaviour are traded, thus damaging the emerging but delicate research and policy environment.

1.9 CONTRIBUTIONS OF DONORS TO CAPACITY BUILDING

There is no doubt that donors such as USAID, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation, SIDA, IDRC and many other bilateral and multilateral organizations have contributed enormously to the training of educational researchers. Unfortunately, there has not been a thorough review and documentation of this enormous contribution that integrates information from all donors for all countries. Such information, of course, exists within the separate databases of donor agencies, but donors have not considered it fit to pass on such information to local researchers. As King has aptly remarked, "One of the first paradoxes of educational programs and investigations is--that [it] often involves a good deal of high

level manpower both in the recipient country and from the donor, and it results in the collection and interpretation of significant amounts of educational data--and yet the results are usually not available in the public domain" (1988:3).

Areas that donors might have to consider seriously are both a way of getting this information into the public domain and their obligation to keep the research community informed of the results of the projects they sponsor. Partly because such information is unavailable to researchers, the contribution of donors increasingly is coming under debate in a number of universities. However, the gist of this debate is not numbers but the quality and integrity of donor contribution.

1.9.1 Overseas Training

No one doubts the contribution that donors have made in training personnel who now work at various institutions. Several criticisms now are being levelled at the performance and productivity of these very personnel. For example, it can be argued that the lack of training in systematic policy analysis in universities and governments is due to the inadequate skills of the existing cadre of educational researchers and teachers, many of whom were trained overseas. The educational researchers explain that their courses, whether taken abroad or at home, did not expose them to the skills needed for the task.

Clearly, no training programme, whether given abroad or at home, can be expected to equip all students with all the skills that will be needed throughout their careers. The most that can be expected of any course is that it equips the student with the basic skills needed to continue updating existing skills, learn new ones, and adapt to changes in the requirements and applications of the acquired skills. These are skills that increasingly seem to be lacking among all students and graduates, whether trained overseas or locally. But as a senior researcher pointed out, students in overseas universities are exposed to such skills. However, when they return to Africa, they find that the local academic environment does not promote the use of such skills without difficulty. Unfortunately, many students find the struggle too hard to endure and give up trying.

Evidently, training personnel to the master's and doctorate level and then abandoning them to the vagaries of their individual and collective local environments is not enough. There is a need for continuing intellectual support to build upon or add on to existing local research environments so that scholarly traditions can be cultivated and sustained. Donors' contributions to this aspect of training has been extremely haphazard and meagre.

Ultimately, the record of achievement by donors seems less impressive than might be expected from the enormous amounts of investment they have put into overseas training over the last four decades, partly because of a number of misconceptions regarding the kind of development that personnel trained overseas were expected to spearhead on their return to Africa. First, it is clear that much knowledge about the cultural determinants of the developmental process has been garnered painstakingly only within the last two decades. At a time when donors sponsored many and massive training programmes for students from sub-Saharan Africa to undertake higher-degree studies abroad, the view that development was a matter of simply acquiring knowledge and skills and then transferring them to underdeveloped areas for easy transfusion was still prevalent. While the slow developmental experiences of the last two decades have somewhat sobered this simplistic and overoptimistic view, they have not altogether reversed it. Indeed, many of the continuing modalities of training and technical assistance to sub-Saharan Africa retain more or less this same element.

For instance, while many donor agencies are likely to object to wholesale exportation of students abroad, as happened in the 1960s, few have qualms about exporting droves of technical assistants to sub-Saharan Africa to work with counterparts. Yet there is no real evidence to suggest that the newer method produces better results than the old one. Explanations that the new method is more economical, and that it serves a larger number of local people than the previous method, are often impressive in theory but rarely reflect reality. Despite accumulating evidence pointing to their ineffectiveness, donors' plans for the development of education in sub-Saharan Africa still are undergirded by developmental models of the past. During the development of "new thinking" about the educational system, much cultural evidence about how various societies have attempted to transform education in their own images has been ignored. Donors still firmly believe that what countries in sub-Saharan Africa lack in order to raise the quality of education are adequate instructional resources and facilities; adequately trained and motivated teachers who are well remunerated and who can use data-management systems to extract the information they need; sufficiently trained planners and managers; and well-designed assessment systems. The fact that many other countries have all of these resources but still have a poor education system for the majority of citizens is overlooked easily in such arguments.

1.9.2 Local Training

Another example of the problems accruing to donors' disregard for cultural factors concerns what is now termed "lack of seriousness" among African universities in following up donor initiatives to improve teaching in higher education. For example, the German Foundation for International Development (DSE) arranged a conference, "Promotion of Research-Orientated Education and Training at African Universities," in September 1985. During this conference university teachers who participated agreed that if the goal of stimulating intellectual curiosity and training inquisitive minds was to be pursued on a broad basis, considerable effort would be required in the areas of staff development; new curriculum design; and provision of adequate teaching aids, libraries and laboratory facilities, not to mention offering special preparatory courses for first-year students in such areas as language and study skills. This meeting was followed by another in Nairobi in 1986, when once again university teachers from all over Africa were invited to attend training sessions in communications skills and presentation of information. Teachers were exposed to various instructional skills.

Unpublished observations of this and subsequent meetings suggest that although university teachers outside faculties of education found new, useful terminologies fascinating, the whole exercise was marked by scepticism. In any case, universities were expected to institutionalize the new practices, with faculties of education playing a major role in establishing resource centres for such staff-stimulation activities. Unfortunately, the intended spirit of peer learning did not take into account the enduring quality of snobbishness based on traditional, disciplinary scholarship. While each university promised to establish an interfaculty committee that was supposed to organize activities, in many universities such committees have not been announced formally, and where they exist, they neither have met often nor organized serious staff-enrichment activities. Yet projects that encourage peer learning at this level are still part of the new initiatives.

1.9.3 Linkages Between Universities in the North and South

All universities visited now have linkages with universities in the North sponsored by a variety of donors, including universities in the North. The purpose of linkage is to facilitate exchange of information and expertise. The Free University in Amsterdam seems to have been extremely adept at forming these linkages with almost all universities in the region. Many local researchers regard such linkages as extremely useful, although the modalities for collaboration are still a source of concern. The newer types of "contractor" linkages are not well regarded. Up until now the Northern partners have made an effort to understand the special problems of their counterparts in the South. Lately, however, there is less close co-operation and rubbing of shoulders between academicians at universities in the two hemispheres. More and more Northern researchers are working as consultants for governments and not as collaborators with university colleagues. Increasingly, few junior and senior researchers from the North have a long-term opportunity to work in the South. Researchers feel that unless the universities in the North acquire firsthand understanding of local situations, the linkages are less helpful and are bound to collapse at the end of donor funding.

1.9.4 Funding Research, Development and Communication

The main contribution of donors to capacity building at the local level now consists of three main activities: educational development projects, research and communication networks. All the countries visited either were in the process of negotiating with donors (World Bank--Uganda) or in the process of implementing major educational projects sponsored by donors (USAID--Swaziland; SIDA--Zambia and Mozambique; World Bank--Tanzania). In addition, many countries were at various levels of the educational improvement and rehabilitation projects sponsored by the International Development Association (IDA). A characteristic running through all these education-sector projects was the emphasis put on building research capacity and policy analysis. As earlier indicated, the Swaziland project, for instance, was setting up subprojects in data management, continuous assessment, curriculum development, planning and teacher education, all of which had capacity-building components. In the projects in Tanzania and Zambia, specific research projects through which capacity building would be undertaken had been identified. This trend was welcomed by local researchers, who felt that their skills would be well utilized if they were given an opportunity and adequate resources to undertake these projects.

IDRC probably has been in the forefront in funding communication and networking among educational researchers in the region. The Educational Research Network in Eastern and Southern Africa (ERNESA) was established in 1987 as a mechanism through which to encourage and build exchange of research information among all countries in the region. The problem then, as now, was lack of communication between researchers within and outside institutions. Various people and organizations were deriving research results, but these results remained largely unknown outside.

The experiences of ERNESA over the four years of its existence have confirmed that it is possible to co-ordinate aspects of the intellectual life and product of researchers in the region. Undoubtedly ERNESA has made a number of achievements, the most visible of which are (1) bringing to the attention of African educational researchers the lack of communication amongst themselves; (2) creating and nurturing national educational research associations; (3) bringing together researchers from different institutions and departments of

government within nations so that they can begin to co-ordinate their research and communication activity; (4) planning and executing seminars and other meetings; (5) enabling IDRC to provide seed money for the purchase of key research tools such as computers and the setting up of small documentation centres for educational research literature; (6) linking of researchers in the region with other networks of researchers in both the North and the South; (7) undertaking state-of-the-art reviews of educational research; and (8) formulating and presenting a consolidated and unified African response to major reports such as the 1988 World Bank policy document, *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa,* and the policy documents circulated before the World Conference on Basic Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990. In addition, ERNESA now produces a quarterly newsletter that circulates not only to its members but also to other networks. Each of the eleven countries in the network (i.e., all the countries visited for this report, plus Kenya, Malawi and Ethiopia) has a local branch of ERNESA and their achievements have been varied.

On the whole, the experiences of ERNESA also have reaffirmed the common observation that genuinely working networks are not just set up but they actually evolve. In almost all countries, with the possible exception of Ethiopia, ERNESA still consists of occasional activity driven more by the donor than by the very needs that prompted its creation. Fundamental problems confront networking activities in Africa. Exchanging information is difficult when paper is scarce, photocopying facilities nonexistent or expensive, and postal services unreliable. But even if all these resources were available, networking can work well only when it first resolves the perennial problem of lack of initiative in exchanging information among colleagues in the same department, faculty or institution. Obviously, it is still too early to judge the success of the young experiment, and there are indications that researchers are beginning to be less secretive in their individual institutions than they used to be. But there is a great deal of groundwork to be done in creating a genuine culture of intellectual sharing.

The main danger that ERNESA participants now feel is the possibility that IDRC might change its mind. Many participants expressed concern over a certain type of unsystematic pressure that the donor is beginning to apply, suggesting that ERNESA either should produce better results or face extinction. Facilitators of the network in individual countries also point to "orders" to undertake various activities that they did not feel were relevant to their clientele in the educational associations. An example of these unsystematic pressures was the premium that the donor put on conducting state-of-the-art reviews of educational research. Useful as these may be to senior researchers, they do not seem to be held in the same esteem among young researchers. The majority of members of educational associations are college tutors whose main interest is classroom research. They would prefer to spend ERNESA funds on research in this area, rather than on compiling completed research in which they do not feature.

Many items on ERNESA's original agenda, including the development of common training programmes for researchers and publication of research inventories and directories, remain untouched. Obviously, supporting the network to a reasonable level has been an impossible task for IDRC. Efforts are continuing to convince other donors to contribute to the exercise, which many participants feel is useful but has to be given time and room to evolve and grow.

1.10 RESEARCH DEMAND AND UTILIZATION OF CAPACITY

It is common to underestimate the demand for research within government ministries and universities because it appears that few officers use research results in their daily work or in making their various decisions. This is not true. All MOEs and universities make extensive use of ideas emanating from research done in the North.

1.10.1 Research Demand in Universities

Universities are generally nonusers of local research, except for a few instances in teaching. While the quality of the learning environment has continued to deteriorate on most campuses, there have been no studies of how to redeploy available resources to meet new circumstances. The research and communication environment of universities always has been a matter of concern. Yet universities have not commissioned or undertaken serious studies to understand the conditions under which lecturers labour in order to get their research done. Indeed, many department heads have no idea of how to create an environment conducive to research at the local level. However, it is clear that whatever solution is proposed or implemented for local problems, it will be derived from practices in the North, many of which have come into use after research.

1.10.2 Research Demand in MOEs

Many decisions within MOEs are governed by regulations and rules that have been laid down in a manual. As a result, there is little flexibility, except at the very top levels of management. However, assessment of demand for research in MOEs (and other institutions) should be seen within the broader process of developing, formulating, implementing and evaluating developmental policy in education, regardless of where the results are obtained. In this broader context, African governments demand and use research, but much of the research they use is not derived locally. Therefore, attempts to increase demand should concentrate on processes of localizing demand. Unfortunately, this process seems to have stagnated at the level of commissioning an inquiry into the status and problems of the education system.

When there is political consensus that education needs change, governments like to give the impression that they have consulted a reasonably large proportion of the population to collect opinions and ideas and then synthesized these into a policy document. This is how many education commission reports are produced. However, even though opinions are sought from a wide range of interest groups, both within and outside the countries, there is little information on how the synthesis of such opinions takes place and how the numerous recommendations usually found in such reports were selected from the multitude of opinions and suggestions. It is not clear whether there is an objective and documented system for sifting through the masses of data collected that ultimately leads to the selection of the policy recommendations. In other words, research processes should be engaged in both the solicitation of opinions and, more crucially, in the selection of key recommendations for future plans of action.

1.10.3 Creating Demand for Local Research

The main problem of demand for research is therefore neither the absence of a reasonably adequate number of researchers with the required skills nor the absence of areas in policy making in which research results are needed. The problem is one of ensuring that opportunities for research are used and that researchers at different levels can pool resources and work together on important developmental issues in education. However, there seem to be few detours around both the academic traditions and the "project mindset" that are the basis of the departmentalization and segmentation of skills that now prevents full utilization of available human resources in educational research and policy analysis.

Over the last fifteen years or so, many education systems in sub-Saharan Africa have been reformed. But since the systems have expanded out of proportion to the local ability to finance them, they have become "educational project systems". Any single country may have major education projects sponsored by various donors in different subsectors of the system. For example, in one country one donor supported the vocational education project in only about one-third of the country's schools from 1987 to 1991. Another donor now has come in for the next five years to support four projects in one-third of the same education system. In a neighbouring country, one donor is sponsoring five projects that will cover about one-sixth of the system. It is evident that some schools may benefit in all projects, while some will not be catered to at all. With regard to capacity building, only the top management of the MOEs, the donors and the foreign technical assistants who work on these projects know all the facets of these projects well. The knowledge of local researchers and policy makers seems to be limited to specific projects under their purview. Moreover, while some projects have a number of local researchers, others have few or none.

Governments, MOEs and other institutions have to show that they actually need and are prepared to use local research results in their daily work in order for researchers to feel that their work is in demand. MOE planning units use research results on a crisis basis, for instance, when they have to prepare for negotiations with donors or prepare projects requiring new investments. These are genuine but not sustainable demands for research, especially in policy analysis. A sustainable research demand must originate from proper assessment of (1) how government traditionally has solved critical problems in education; (2) how reform has been conceived, formulated and implemented; and (3) how the impact of various programmes has been assessed. In most situations, the solutions to Africa's critical problems and the nature of the required reforms usually are determined outside of Africa--by the owners of research data and information in the North, who also have money. There are numerous examples of curriculum projects in mathematics, science and language learning that have been transplanted, with minor changes, into the African educational system from outside. They all invariably have failed to produce the expected results.

More crucially, the recommendations of African commissions of inquiry, from which further interventions in the educational system are derived, all base their perceptions of feasible solutions on activities and solutions that have been tried in the North. Therefore, the system used to derive and formulate policy pre-empts the demand for local research at three levels. First, since what is going to be done has already been determined elsewhere, there is no demand for research to find the most appropriate solution. Second, because the imported solutions generally are applauded as workable and suitable for the African educational system, little research is conducted on the implementation process itself. The package, whether it is a method of continuous assessment or a type of vocational education, comes with instructions on how it should be introduced in the schools. As a result, rarely

are experimental activities designed to track and assess the applicability of the packaging instructions in the local environment. Consequently, this obviates another area where there might have been demand for local research. Third, no systematic monitoring of what the educational system is doing with a particular package as a function of the total social process takes place. This, again, is because education is treated as a collection of culture-free philosophies, content and expected outcomes whose underlying social assumptions should be universal to all societies. Educational change is perceived to come about through legislation instead of as a social process undergirded by a range of assumptions about how the existing social relations should or should not be rearranged.

Many constraints, of course, sometimes entice African governments to embrace aid or loans when they are aware that the recommended solutions will not result in positive development in the most critical areas of need. For instance, the economic difficulties of most countries are considerable at a time when the educational system is in such a state of crisis that it is difficult to set priorities. Under these circumstances, any solution that is packaged with a grant or long-term loan looks attractive and is quickly endorsed. And yet, the only way for African countries to implement the most useful options in these catch-22 situations is to rely on solid and integrated research data drawn from the local environment. But such data has to be available before decisions are made. The onus is on African governments to be clear about their goals.

1.11 SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

The foregoing six sections have outlined the status of and considerable difficulties that confront efforts to build capacity. In this last part, a number of suggestions for solutions are presented, together with background information, wherever possible, in order to locate them in some social context.

1.11.1 Strengthening MOE Planning Units

Researchers and policy makers felt that there were two important tasks for strengthening the planning units. First, the units should not devolve into subunits for the purposes of assembling statistics, planning for human resources and implementing projects. Rather, the planning unit should employ qualified personnel, set aside adequate resources and PLAN so that other research institutes can accomplish these tasks. Second, the planning unit should not undertake research.

Devolution of the Planning Unit into Subunits. Researchers felt that MOE planning units had done considerable harm to their status by creating subunits such as a statistics unit, a project-implementation unit, a project-evaluation unit and so on. First, most of these units accomplish little without donor funds and technical assistance. Second, even when they accomplish a lot under the supervision of technical assistants, they do so because they are given considerable amounts of resources and the autonomy they require in areas such as accounting and procurement, hiring of short-term consultants, disbursement of payments and per diems, and transportation, and because they are insulated from the MOEs' slow procedures and the multiple local frustrations and conditions that make work in other sectors extremely difficult. Yet most people credit the efficiency of these subunits to the presence of technical assistants, whose salaries are usually 75 percent higher than those of their senior local counterparts. The management of subunits by technical assistants has resulted in some

donors' insistence that only foreigners can manage these units successfully, and that the elimination of inefficiency in the rest of the sector is simply a matter of improving management. It was suggested that planning units should employ qualified local people, give them the considerable autonomy and resources that they now allocate to the subunits run by technical assistants, and define their tasks clearly.

The function of the "new" planning unit should be to plan. In this connection, the unit should (1) have access to an information-management system, not necessarily on its own premises. The unit neither should collect data nor analyse it; (2) ensure that all data the government needs for policy development in the education sector is collected and analysed and answers basic research questions, and that relevant publications on all these data and issues are published regularly, updated and available in a central place for researchers and other users; (3) ensure that data and information is available to help all sections of the MOE to understand the educational system in all its various ramifications and that such information is forwarded to them as a routine; (4) help the MOE to develop realistic budgetary allocations and report to the government what the ministry does with the money and human and material resources allocated to it; (5) define and review human-resources policies in co-operation with professional-development programmes at all levels of the MOE, prepare a long-term plan for their development and allocation, and monitor performance; and (6) be able to identify priority research projects.

Research in Planning Units. The idea of a planning unit doing planning *and* research was regarded as overambitious because planning was considered a crucial task that would make considerable demands upon the time and skills of the few qualified people employed in the unit within the normal civil-servant establishment rules. In addition, it was felt that all employees of government, regardless of their skills and independence, have a propensity to perceive issues according to the government's prevailing view. Therefore, not only would planning unit employees not have the time to undertake research, but they would be unlikely to evaluate impartially programmes they have planned, policies they have formulated and implementation strategies they have endorsed. The planning unit needs outsiders to assist it and to bring a different perspective to all research, monitoring and evaluation work. The planning unit's closest ally would be a research institute that ultimately would develop into a centre of excellence.

1.11.2 Centres of Excellence

The idea of setting up regional centres of excellence to concentrate on defined aspects of educational research was felt to be excellent in theory but practically impossible. Researchers pointed out that in the East African region, the scars left by the break-up of the East African Community still were too painful to allow genuine devotion to the creation and nurture of such centres. Moreover, every government ought to have a research institute it can rely on to supply research data and answers to local questions on a daily basis. Researchers felt that such a centre should not be an arm of government or a university. It should be independent, with a corps of full-time researchers and specialists in the social sciences, education and the sciences. The institute should not have its own research agenda. Its goal should be to do all the research, publication, documentation, communication and dissemination tasks that MOEs and universities are required to do but can not. The tasks of the centre also should include (1) making critical reviews of past experiences in conducting educational research and policy analysis; (2) compiling inventories of educational researchers

and policy analysts in the country, where they are working and their areas of interest; (3) assisting and ensuring that all institutions constantly assess their demand for educational research and policy analysis and (4) ensuring that institutions collect and store data in the format that would be most useful under various circumstances in the country.

Obviously, other types of centres, for instance, those undertaking research generated by individual interests, could be set up. But researchers and policy makers felt that it was pointless at this stage for governments and donors to continue pouring money into centres whose research does not contribute to the solution of immediate problems in the education sector. They also suggested that a centre with a research agenda related directly to policy making would be in a better position to persuade other institutions and researchers to undertake work relevant to the country's needs than hitherto has been the case.

1.11.3 Streamlining the Consultative Processes

Much of the current flurry of substantial consultative activity all over the region thrives on the absence of MOE planning units and research centres of excellence of the type described above. If these centres were in place and productive, many consultants would be redundant. Therefore, strengthening and building capacity in the planning unit and centre of excellence would make available all information that consultants now have to glean from office to office. (In this connection, it was evident that many institutions and researchers were reaching high levels of "consultation fatigue".)

Consultants in different fields apparently were in the habit of visiting the same institutions and, inevitably, of meeting the same people. It was suggested that consulting exercises should be channelled through research institutions, networks or departments at the universities. Apportioning consultative exercises among local personnel in each country, who, being more familiar with the local scene, could assemble such data and then provide it to the consultant, would result in more realistic data being collected within acceptable timeframes. Local researchers would have to be paid for collecting such information, since they would incur expenses. Unfortunately, many foreign experts do not seem to appreciate the economies involved in collecting such data. Consultants take it for granted that they can visit any knowledgeable person, take up two or three hours of his or her time asking all manner of questions and then just walk away with a sceptical thank-you. As a consultant in a private firm firmly explained to the author, "Information always costs." When the same consultant had mentioned this fact to one World Bank consultant, the latter had replied rudely, "If you do not give me the information, what will you do with it?"

1.11.4 Streamlining the Funding Process

First, although many researchers supported the work of the Task Force of Donors to African Education (DAE) in undertaking to survey the status of activities on major issues in education, many were fearful that the big donors were likely to influence the activities of smaller donor agencies by curtailing their flexibility in funding.

Second, many felt that governments should take more responsibility in the selection of technical assistants. They should not simply look at CVs and leave it at that, but should ensure that applicants know not only their job but also how to train on the job. Selection and negotiation of work relationships should include representatives of recipient governments, who themselves ought to set up local committees to decide what they want. University staff felt that universities in the North were more reliable and would select better-qualified people

than the contract firms, which, unfortunately, are becoming more numerous and who generally seem to have the attitude that Africa will take anyone, provided he or she is from the North.

Third, governments should meet their contractual obligations and avoid instances of late appointment of local counterparts, underpayment of local experts and overpayment of expatriates.

Fourth, researchers felt that both governments and donors had a tendency to depreciate skills and competencies of local people without sufficient evidence, using all sorts of criteria to stifle their participation in consultative and advisory work. It was suggested that one reason for such depreciation was because everyone was aware that local researchers and policy makers already know the problems; they know what the solutions should be; and they know the quantity and quality of resources, both human and material, needed for such solutions to work and produce change. However, with the intervention of contracting firms and middlemen, jobs had to be created for expatriates. These jobs revolved around persistent claims of lack of knowledge, lack of qualified personnel and lack of progress in African countries.

On the question of co-ordination of donor funding, researchers felt that donors were in a position to co-ordinate and streamline funding to particular institutions if they so wished. Few researchers, however, saw any benefit in this. In fact, researchers cited several examples of donors who were said to have become "very tough and rude" after being disappointed by the small impact of their huge investment and who had dissuaded other donors from funding particular projects. Other donors were said to have insisted that research be undertaken in specific areas, when in fact sufficient research data in this very area already existed.

There was a suggestion, however, that individual donors who usually set up many small grants programmes, ostensibly to cater to different needs within the region, should reconsider their policy. Since these grants are rarely adequate for a full-fledged research project, they only serve to fragment activities in an institution or country. Researchers felt that individual donors could consolidate their programmes so as to enable researchers to embark on large, multidisciplinary projects.

Researchers called for donors to fund serious, in-depth studies in search of models of development assistance that would put the recipients first and the donors second.

1.11.5 Training and Capacity Building

The general feeling was that universities should increase their training capacities at the postgraduate level but within improved and high-quality curriculums. It was noted that training at postgraduate level is now crowded with mechanisms (the most critical of which were learning by rote and inbreeding of poor research skills through supervision of theses) that, although designed to increase institutional capacity, actually perpetuate institutional incapacity. Much training had become a symbolic ritual. Specialization designed from the logic and content of disciplines did not lead to specialization according with national development. Therefore, developmental studies and training in the skills of policy analysis should be a major component of every postgraduate course, regardless of specialization. In addition, university teachers should keep in close touch with the proposed centres of excellence in order to know what the country is doing and hoping to do in education. Researchers identified seven basic priorities in research that cut across all levels of all educational systems: (1) increasing the effectiveness of human- and material-resource use in

education; (2) improving instructional quality at all levels of the system, including programmes for professional training; (3) improving management of educational institutions and of the educational system as a whole; (4) rationalizing the provision of financing of education at all levels of the system; (5) improving, revolutionizing and diversifying educational assessment at all levels; (6) improving professional training at all levels, so that emphasis is placed on skills for instructional purposes rather than for management; and (7) developing systems for maintenance of educational resources and physical facilities. All research should address these issues in the context of the country involved, and donor funds should ensure that this is the case.

With regard to the persistent complaint that overseas training does not equip students with the right research training, researchers felt that little could be done, since students attend far too many different universities to expect anyone to influence their curriculums. Suggestions such as having local people sit on overseas dissertation committees were dismissed as impractical. Therefore, the onus has to be on the student to communicate with local researchers in order to reorient his own studies. And if there are centres of excellence, students should be able to obtain up-to-date information on any aspect of the educational systems in their countries.

Overall, researchers felt that the university had to begin developing a culture of readers. An important element of developing this culture should be an increasing awareness of the need to cost all resources as a method of valuing resources and therefore making the optimum use of them in order to recoup investment. It would be up to universities to suggest the strategies they would employ in order to convert the university into a truly intellectual community that is nevertheless a participant in life at the grassroots.

1.11.6 Sustainability of Local Research Institutions

In an era of debt-laden economies, high inflation, low salaries and scarcity of savings, it is hardly surprising that researchers and policy makers had few tangible suggestions for providing the financial and material resources that would be needed to sustain quality research in centres and institutions. All governments do set aside some money for research, but the amounts are grossly inadequate. As earlier noted, in the case of Swaziland even university research grants are small. Institutes seem to sustain themselves on donor funds and on savings from consultative work, provided they have that policy. In some countries such as Zambia, the ruling party has established a scientific fund to assist research within the party. Some of this research may be on educational issues.

It is reasonable to assume that donors will continue to provide research and development funds, provided positive results accrue from such investments. But even when donors provide "transition finances", there will come a time when African governments and institutions will have to support research, as well as the developmental and recurrent costs of institutions, fully. For this reason, researchers suggested that only one or two institutes should be left operational through a well-phased and well-planned system of consolidation. They appreciated the political acumen MOEs would need in order to accomplish such a task, and suggested that it made sense to begin putting the recurrent and development costs of running such institutes in government budgets so that this money can form "savings" that are allowed to accumulate until donor funding is reduced or terminated. Moreover, if MOE planning units begin to reshape their activities soon, and if centres of excellence are constituted within the immediate future and begin to do their work, it is estimated that in the course of the next fifteen years, when many researchers and policy analysts interviewed

expect that much donor funding probably will level off, a substantial amount of the data and training that is needed will have been put in place, and, therefore, less investment will be required. Centres of excellence should consider "selling" information through proper exchange channels, both inside and outside of the country.

2

WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

J. M. Sibry Tapsoba

2.0 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

In West and Central Africa, eight countries were visited: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Zaire. Of these countries, four are Francophone (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Senegal, Zaire), and three Anglophone (Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone) and one bilingual (Cameroon). The balance in the choice of the countries was important, since major particularities in the existing educational systems are associated with the French and British colonial legacies. Differences in the educational research and policy analysis capacities of the institutions visited also can be accounted for by the nature of the content and orientation of each country's educational system.

In each country, the institutions visited comprised teacher training colleges (or the *ecole normale superieure*); university faculties and departments of education; social-sciences research institutions (including regional institutions); specialized units within ministries of education; and networks of educational researchers.

2.1 RESEARCH AND TRAINING PROBLEMATICS IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Universities and research institutions in West and Central Africa possess the same symptoms as their counterparts in the rest of the continent. They are confronted with dwindling budgets; increases in student enrolments; pervasive social, economic and political crises; and deteriorating quality of teaching and research. However, this common context of crisis--within the societies and universities--should not hide the diversity in the capacity of these countries' institutions to train and undertake research in education and policy analysis.

2.1.1 Faculties and Departments of Education

Training in educational research as a distinct area of specialization is lacking in the Francophone countries. Very few universities have faculties of education; training in education, based on the French model, is provided in teacher training colleges and focuses essentially on classroom approaches. In the Anglophone countries, if the tradition of established faculties of education is well rooted, the crisis affecting the universities is impacting these faculties and departments negatively, since the expansion in primary and secondary education implies an increased demand for teachers at those levels. However, increased enrolments in the faculties of education does not mean increased resources in terms of faculty members and support (libraries, office space, etc.). Related to the lack of training in educational research in Francophone universities is the understanding of the role of research and graduate training in providing solutions to the education crisis. In essence,

experience gained through service is perceived to be the most important factor in decision making. As such, teachers are promoted to principalship and other leadership positions on the basis of their long-term involvement in the classroom.

2.1.2 Social-Sciences Research Institutions

Taking into account the lack of provision for educational research and policy analysis in the universities (particularly in French-speaking countries), social-sciences institutions have emerged in an attempt to fill the gap. If some of the "viable" institutions created by national governments and individual researchers (in Francophone Africa, research centres known as CNRSTs[1]; in Nigeria, the NISER) are receiving some sort of support from governments, most of the social-sciences research institutions in West and Central Africa (CIRES in Ivory Coast, CEDRES in Burkina Faso; CODESRIA in Senegal; CREST in Sierra Leone) are supported by donors.

The long-term sustainability of these institutions remains an issue when donor support is no longer available.

2.1.3 Ministry of Education (MOE) Specialized Units

MOEs have planning units focusing, generally, on data collection and operating as an advisory body to authorities. These units, however, lack the needed expertise to undertake sound analysis of the mass of data gathered. As a result, data is presented in its raw form, and interpreting it into policy-related statements is not always possible.

Staff in these units have complained that local academics and "experts" from the North use the data generated from the units for their own benefit without giving credit to the people who collected the data. In addition, the professional status of the staff in the MOE units is not always clearly defined, and salaried compensation is not commensurate with the nature of the tasks.

2.1.4 Educational Research Networks

During the last five years, the International Development Research Centre has established two networks in West and Central Africa: the Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa (ERNWACA) and the Network on National Language Policy in Education (Reseau sur les Politiques des Langues Nationales dans les Systemes Educatifs). These networks have provided the opportunity for researchers to share research results and get acquainted with research undertaken in other institutions of their countries and region. Although the overall results of the networks are positive, the networks are confronted with administrative difficulties, since university faculty members involved in these networks

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1. In the former French colonies, separate scientific research institutions were set up to carry out research, since the primary objective of the universities was not research but teaching. As a matter of fact, the notion of the "three pillars of the university" (teaching, research and service) is a new one in the Francophone university.

CNRST stands for Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique.

already are overloaded with academic duties. Nevertheless, the networks appear to be the most efficient structure for getting researchers to focus on activities that cross countries.

2.2 TAXONOMY OF RESEARCH

If researchers agree about the lack of research in the social sciences in general and in education in particular, there is still some debate about the different categories of educational research needed for African countries.

2.2.1 Definition of Research in Education

Veille (1981) developed a taxonomy that provides the following definitions for different categories of educational research:

Disciplinary research. Disciplinary research is an analysis of educational phenomena in terms of the links between education and society. This type of research is often called knowledge-oriented research. The expected outcome of this type of knowledge leads generally to new knowledge of educational phenomena (e.g., education and employment, or socio-economic backgrounds of students).

Research for planning. Often called decision making-oriented research, this type of research forecasts the course of educational systems and designs plans for educational programmes. The output of research for planning generally results in proposed patterns of action that provide the basis for educational-policy decision-making processes (e.g., a development plan for a college upgrading programme).

Instrumental research. The objective in undertaking instrumental research is to introduce immediate innovations in educational content, procedures, technologies and systems. The results appear in the introduction of new media and strategies (e.g., textbooks, radio system of education).

Action research. With action research, one of the objectives is to alter the educational process in a new and often experimental way. Here, the research often is conceived as a change activity shared by those involved in the project in which research merges with the collective act of learning (e.g., participatory research).

Researchers also acknowledge two other types of research: (1) research on research, which attempts to evaluate the orientation, methodologies, procedures and strategies of educational research and (2) statistical research, which has as its objective the production of information required for other types of research, distinctions clarified by Chinapah.

2.2.2 Wright's Categories of Research

Research also can be differentiated by its underlying motivation. For Wright (1981), the following categories can be identified:

- research motivated by the requirements for a higher degree (master's or doctorate);

- contract research, in which the motivation may be purely financial, or at least will include a financial dimension;

- research motivated by the requirements of one's occupation (university or college, where promotion is based on research); and

- research motivated by intellectual or practical concern about a problem.

It should be noted that Wright's categories do not exclude Veille's and Chinapah's categories, in the sense that research motivated by degree requirements still can be disciplinary or action research.

In this document, the term *educational research* encompasses all of the different categories described in this section. The range of definitions of research in the social sciences gives an indication of the problems associated with its undertaking.

2.3 THE AFRICAN UNIVERSITY AND RESEARCH

2.3.1 Problems in the Emergence of Research in the African University

The World Bank report *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth* (1989b) is one of the most recent and famous documents that reminds researchers as well as policy analysts of the depth of the crisis African countries find themselves in. The consequences of the crisis are being felt at the level of higher education, especially as institutions' ability to conduct research questioned more and more. If the decline (or lack of) research can be attributed to the lack of financial resources, some researchers (NCST 1980; Nyong'o 1982) have indicated that the level of research at universities also can be related to academics' freedom to engage in research. As NCST (National Council for Science and Technology) (1980) indicated, freedom and autonomy of the universities have led to some unwanted results in the sense that over the years neither private agencies nor governments have felt the urge to support university research. In fact, as Tapsoba (1988) notes, few governments in Africa wanted to invest in research without the assurance that they would have control over the process and the output of research activities. This is particularly the case in the social sciences, where researchers may come up with research results that could challenge established government policies.

As such, policy makers in Africa over the years have interpreted academic freedom as the university's freedom from accountability. As the NCST's report suggests, "Doubts have been expressed as to whether the academic freedom in which universities operate provided the best environment for carrying out research necessary for national development" (1980:16).

The NCST report is in line with most of the controversy surrounding the financing of research at universities in Africa. As one official indicated during the meeting, most high-level policy makers in Africa are academics or former academics who had been demanding additional funding for research; why they make no particular effort to support research when they are appointed to key positions is puzzling. They certainly become aware of the power of research, specifically in the social sciences.

In his argument about autonomy and accountability in higher education, Altbach (1982) summarizes why this issue is more complex in less developed countries:

1. The colonial model of the university left little room for academic autonomy. Colonial authorities wanted loyal universities devoted to producing small numbers of middle-level civil servants. It has been difficult for the universities of newly independent states to break dramatically from this tradition. The heritage of colonialism has contributed to a subservient university.

2. The culture of polity of many developing countries is not well developed and political authorities often feel that they can not afford a fully autonomous university that could cause political problems or serve as a source of dissent.

3. Universities in the Third World are very expensive institutions, especially in relation to the resources of their societies. Further, virtually all funding for academic institutions comes from governmental sources. As a result of this massive fiscal investment, governments often wish to have a major voice in setting goals for higher education and in determining some of the details of university operation.

4. The massive demands of development often include higher education in a key role. Universities are expected to produce needed manpower, engage in research and often provide expert advice to government, agriculture and industry. Government authorities try to ensure that academic institutions fulfil these expectations. (68)

In addition to the above arguments, Tapsoba (1988) has indicated that three other reasons can account for the slow and hesitant emergence of research at the university level. They are:

1. The idea that an undergraduate population is the indispensable foundation of the university means that graduate education therefore has been put in the hands of foreign universities. Most African universities, at least at their early stages, provided instruction only for their undergraduate populations. Beyond that level, students were sent at their governments' expense to European countries and others where such training was provided.

2. Since graduate education was thus primarily the responsibility of European institutions, as a result, policy makers decided that both research and training of researchers--usually associated with graduate education--could remain more economically an international responsibility.

3. In most African countries, the introduction of organized research facilities preceded the creation of universities. Under colonial rule, a number of research institutions already existed, some of which had an international reputation for the quality of their work. As a result, after the establishment of the universities, most countries opted to focus on the research centres--financially supported by international organizations--as an escape from becoming financially responsible for university research and promoting the research of academics. (6)

Mazrui (1975) argues that the principal causes for the limited amount of research are (1) an increase in the student population, which has produced an increase in the teaching load of university professors; (2) a diversion of funds away from research toward teaching and

student scholarships; (3) a decrease in the attention paid to and confidence accorded higher education in many countries and (4) economic difficulties that have led to budgetary reductions in research.

While most researchers argue that the educational system inherited from the colonial period is in part responsible for the economic underdevelopment of most countries (Badini 1991), the main and current question should be: Where are the African countries going to find the necessary resources to build up research capacity at a time when most of them are going through the structural adjustment programmes of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund?

As Tapsoba (1988) points out, it is clear that with the current internal crises most African countries are undergoing and the changes in the international economic order, new resources are not likely to be found.

2.3.2 Attempts to Deal with the Crisis Through Policy

Because of the close link with development, changes have been attempted in education, and in most African countries innovations have been tried. Unfortunately, the changes and innovations often have been based on international prescriptions, complete with instructional packages for implementation. African-based educational research is lacking in terms of the planning, implementation, and evaluation of new programmes and reforms. As a result of both factors--international prescriptions and lack of indigenous educational research--African countries have moved from unsuccessful project to unsuccessful project without really understanding the nature of the failures. In fact, in a context of lack of resources, most countries have been eager to get involved in any innovation that happens to come their way in order to receive support from outside sources.

In sub-Saharan Africa, educational research mostly is initiated from outside and international organizations. As one key official in a nongovernmental organization pointed out, most of the failures of current research programmes and policy analysis in Africa can be traced to their origin; the programmes are outside-driven and not necessarily conceptualized from issues that engage the countries that receive aid.

As a result of the failure to remedy these problems, African researchers are blamed for not being capable of providing solutions. This is used as an excuse for bringing in foreign expertise, therefore perpetuating a continual dependency. It all works in a cyclical process: programmes are initiated/ conceptualized from abroad, implementation is guided from abroad and the failure of the programmes is used to recommend more foreign assistance (in this case, human).

2.4 INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHERS

2.4.1 "Stock" of Researchers

The World Bank's *A Framework for Capacity-Building in Policy Analysis and Economic Management in Sub-Saharan Africa* (1990) comments on the lack of African researchers, both of numbers and of high qualification, but this consultant has been surprised to find out that, although there is room for improvement, the countries visited for the report possess an impressive "stock" of qualified researchers in the field of education. The issue the World Bank refers to is much more about utilization of qualified manpower resources than their availability.

However, as Wright (1981) points out, the number of Ph.D.s in a country is not necessarily a reliable indicator of its research capacity. Educational research, in most cases, is undertaken to fulfil the requirements for a degree, be it a master's or a doctorate. Although it is important that such research take place, whether it really contributes to building up the research capacity of a country is unclear.

2.4.2 Training for a Degree and Research

This consultant found that there is a gap after the completion of university requirements that researchers have a hard time bridging. In other terms, academic research needed for degree requirements tends to follow the pattern of the hypothesis to be tested. Researchers therefore are not prepared to engage in activities that suggest "nonuniversity methodologies." Surprisingly, such elementary skills as review of the literature, definition of a research problem and data-analysis methods are not well mastered by researchers. This was found to be more the case in French-speaking countries' institutions than in the English-speaking institutions included in the itinerary.

This lack of mastery and confidence about the different aspects of a research enterprise could be considered one of the main reasons behind what one researcher called the "page-one research project syndrome". He finds that researchers usually have great ideas about research projects, but they are seldom able to define a research problem that can be carried out effectively.

2.4.3 Writing a Research Project Proposal

Graduates also lack knowledge about how and where to get grants for research projects. Most researchers have not benefitted in their graduate training from a methods course that provides basic information on how to write a grant proposal and where to get support for their intended research activity. Of the universities visited, only two were offering (or indicated that they had offered in the recent past) research-methods courses to their students. When they are offered, the training programmes include one or two statistical courses, but such courses merely deal with numbers and not with process. As a result, most researchers complain about the lack of resources but are unable to list two or three sources of funding in their areas of specialization.

2.4.4 The "French" System and Research

Although most of the countries in West and Central Africa have research realities in common, differences exist between French- and English-speaking institutions. The following findings are specific to the French-speaking institutions:

1. Faculty members are part of the civil service, and thus work under a promotion (and reward) system that is applied to other sections of the civil service in which research is not considered among the criteria for promotion;

2. Faculty members who hold the *doctorat 3e cycle* mainly are concerned with research activities leading to the *doctorat d'etat*. For academics striving to obtain their final doctorate, the instrumentality of "regular" research activities in gaining promotion is

lower than the instrumentality of the researches for the *doctorat d'etat* in gaining promotion, since the *doctorat d'etat* is required in most countries for promotion to full professorship;

3. A heavy teaching load impacts negatively on research; and

4. There are few postgraduate programmes in education in the universities; students have to go to France, Canada or the United States of America for training at the Ph.D. level. In addition, most education programmes are in institutions outside the university (e.g., the *ecole normale superieure*), and these programmes mostly are geared toward training teachers, not researchers.

2.5 THE RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

In general, newly appointed academics in the institutions are more motivated to get involved in research than senior faculty members. The instrumentality of research to promotion weakens after faculty members have gained tenure, and such senior faculty begin to focus on consultancies that generate supplemental income.

In addition, the experiential feedback that researchers gain from engaging in research activities lowers expectancy and instrumentality[2] due to (1) the general lack of resources, (2) the bureaucracy and (3) the realization that research is not necessarily associated with rewards.

One other negative aspect is the fact that researchers tend to work in isolation; there is very little, if any, team research. Researchers have a tendency to carry out their research activities in secret. As such, they don't benefit from the experiences of their colleagues and are suspicious of other academics.

Educational researchers in most universities in Africa also do not possess computer skills. Although there are very few computers on campuses, academics are not able to use the available statistical software such as SPSS[3], SAS and STAT-IF to analyse their data; they still do their computations manually. The nonexistence of postgraduate programmes, combined with the lack of computers (and knowledge about their use) for data collection and analysis, impacts negatively on the researchers' and policy analysts' performance.

Finally, the salaries of educational researchers in some countries (e.g., Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Zaire) are sometimes as low as US$100 per month. In these countries, the fall in value of the local currency makes mobilizing the necessary funds to pay academics and support research almost impossible for governments. As a result, researchers tend to leave their countries in search of better working conditions. In Zaire, at the time that

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2. *Expectancy* refers to the perceived assessment of the faculty member's ability to successfully undertake the activity; *instrumentality* refers to the nature of the reward.

3. Statistical Package to the Social Sciences.

this consultant visited, researchers had not received their salaries for the last two months. Even in regional research units such as BASE[4], researchers do not receive their salaries regularly.

2.6 INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH CAPACITY

2.6.1 Infrastructure for Research

The universities have suffered cuts in their budgets. Those cuts have had a negative impact on their ability to maintain the institutions, provide up-to-date equipment for teaching, and research and hire qualified staff. At the Universite Nationale de Côte d'Ivoire, the budget fell from 120 million CFA (about US$400,000) in 1981 to 45 million (about US$150,000) in 1991. At the Centre National d'Education (CNE) in Cameroon, budgetary cuts have decreased the number of researchers from sixty in 1973 to fifteen in 1991. In Sierra Leone, the fall of the local currency, combined with other socio-economic factors, has pushed researchers to leave the country in search of better working conditions.

In the facilities of universities, of governments and of regional educational research units, a sense of desperation prevails that is characterized by what can be called TOTAL LACK: lack of financial resources to maintain and/or upgrade the existing facilities, lack of adequate equipment to engage in research, lack of (current) support materials, lack of financial resources to pay researchers.

The capacity of researchers in some of the countries visited (e.g., Sierra Leone, Ghana) to carry out research activities with the few resources available to them is amazing. Although Tapsoba (1987) warned that additional resources do not necessarily mean additional research, one can't stop thinking of the wonders these researchers could perform if they had more support.

In Zaire, for instance, the existing facilities and equipment are in total decay. At the university in Kinshasa, broken tables and chairs are in storage (if not exposed to the attention of visitors), telephones are no longer working and library shelves are empty.

Most research centres possess a library, or book collection rooms, but the books are not up to date and subscription to research journals is lacking. In Cameroon, CNE had not subscribed to a research journal since its creation as a research institution in 1973. The available periodicals and books are gifts from institutions such as USAID and the French Cultural Centre. The lack of support materials for research can be explained by internal as well as international economic conditions that require budgetary cuts, but it is also a result of poor planning. As an official at the National Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) in Nigeria pointed out, sometimes there may be resource problems for research facilities in Africa, but one of the key problems is organization and planning that takes into account the long-term evolution of demand. His views are echoed by a researcher at CESAO (Centre d'Etudes Sociales pour l'Afrique de l'Quest) in Burkina Faso who

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4. The Bureau Africain pour les Sciences de l'Education (BASE) in Zaire is a focal point of total institutional chaos: the building has deteriorated to the point that doors and windows are broken, and researchers have barely a desk to work on. If an organizational diagnosis were made of BASE, the analyst would conclude that (1) poor working conditions affect potential research activities and (2) the state and nature of the facilities reflects the importance authorities attach to educational research.

indicated that the most depressing reality of research centres is how quickly the investment becomes outdated. According to him, countries in the developed world tend to plan for centuries, and most upgrading investments are minimized, while in Africa, universities' buildings are usually outdated and crowded before they are built.

Computer facilities for research are almost nonexistent in the countries visited. The International Institute for Curriculum Development (IICE) in the Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan in Nigeria, attempted to create a data-analysis lab, but now only two computers are functional. In most countries the few computers, often acquired through projects or the financing of international organizations, are in storage as no provisions were made for the recurrent charges of maintaining computer labs.

Although most educational research facilities are in a total state of chaos (BASE in Zaire, URBS in Sierra Leone, CNE in Cameroon), some facilities (NERDC in Nigeria and CODESRIA in Dakar) have conditions conducive to research. In addition, educational research (sometimes statistical compilations) are undertaken in the various ministries of education. Such activities often are not conducted according to standard methodological approaches--and usually are not referred to as research--but have the advantage of compiling raw firsthand data that can be used for further research.

TABLE 2.1 RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE COUNTRIES VISITED

Infrastructure	Countries							
	B	C	IC	G	N	SG	SL	Z
National Library	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Faculty of Education within the University	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Computers for Educational Research	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N
Private Educational Research Institutes	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N
Graduate Programmes in Education:								
Master's Level	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Doctorate Level	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N
Research Methods Courses	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Educational Research Journals (regularly published)	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N
Networks of Educational Researchers	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Key: Burkina Faso (B), Cameroon (C), Ivory Coast (IC), Ghana (G), Nigeria (N), Senegal (SG), Sierra Leone (SL), Zaire (Z)

2.6.2 Training in Educational Research

In universities, educational programmes focus on training undergraduate and graduate students for teaching or administrative positions (in the civil service); there are no clear, articulated programmes for training researchers. Attempts have been made, however, to make up for such deficiencies by providing (1) periodic research-methods seminars for graduate students at the doctorate level and (2) seminars and workshops for researchers.

Master's-level training. While most universities possess master's-level courses leading to a degree in different fields, few offer master's-level courses in education for specializations other than teaching.

In the area of training, differences appear between English-speaking and French-speaking universities. In the English-speaking countries (Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone), programmes are offered in educational administration and educational foundations, as well as in teacher education. Those courses are provided in faculties that are part of the university.

In the French-speaking countries, however, the focus is on teacher education. In fact, most of the training in education is done in institutes (the *ecole normale*) outside of the university. Of the countries visited, only Burkina Faso possesses an institute of education within the university; the others have attempted to establish a link between the *ecole normale,* where training is provided, and faculties of social sciences in the university, where research is carried out. Unfortunately, those linkages seldom have been operational.

Doctorate-level training. When it comes to doctorate-level training in education, none of the French-speaking universities offer programmes for a doctorate in education. Students still are sent to France, Canada, Belgium or the United States for such training.

Some of the English-speaking universities (mainly those in Nigeria) offer doctorate-level programmes in education. The available doctoral courses are by thesis, but the focus of these programmes is not on training researchers. These programmes have some serious problems, and some faculties have to use the expertise of overseas institutions through what can be called a "twinning" arrangement in order to ensure credibility of the training. Among the problems, the following can be mentioned:

1. lack of adequate facilities and materials for offering the programmes;

2. lack of qualified staff with the necessary experience to supervise the training; and

3. lack of interaction between faculties in order to provide multi- or interdisciplinary approaches.

Research-methods courses. If in the English-speaking countries (Ghana, Sierra Leone, Nigeria) universities offer research-methods courses, in their French counterparts (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ivory Coast) research-methods courses are nonexistent. Instead, students are guided through the writing of their maitrise[5] without having to take a methods course.

The lack of research-methods courses in education in the French-speaking universities in Africa can be explained by the fact that, in education, few postgraduate programmes exist. In fact, the main objective for most education programmes in the French-speaking countries is to train teachers in the different subject matters. Virtually no courses attempt to focus on what can be called the "external efficiency" of the educational system. As a result, graduates of the programmes are teachers who usually are promoted to administrative positions after a few years of practice, but they are not prepared to do research, nor are they prepared for the policy analysis that is part of their administrative responsibility.

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5. In the French-speaking countries, the *maitrise* is the first degree (after the *baccalaureat*) that the student has to obtain before being allowed to register for the *doctorat* programme.

In general, the following summarizes the state of educational research facilities in the countries visited:

1. they lack facilities and equipment for educational research;

2. when facilities are available, their adequacy is limited;

3. they lack institutional policy toward educational research; and

4. research-methods instruction is absent from education courses.

2.7 INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

2.7.1 Nature of Donors' Contributions to Research

Although few researches have been undertaken to examine the contribution of regional and international organizations in building educational research capacity, the preparation of this report has underscored that (1) capacity building is an enormous and costly enterprise, and that (2) some organizations (including donors) already have attempted to get involved in stimulating educational research through networks, seminars and workshops. The success of such attempts so far has been limited.

Lewis (1987), in his survey of some major donors, indicated that all of the agencies in the development promotion business today recognize that relevant research constitutes an extremely important factor in the success of the development process. This statement is supported by the fact that in education, virtually all current resources for research are provided by outside sources, whether bilateral or multilateral.

The following is a summary, drawn from Asibey's (1990) report, of donor agencies' support to research in sub-Saharan Africa:

1. the yearly external flow of financial support for developmental research in sub-Saharan Africa amounts to a little over an estimated US$600 million[6] (see Table 2.2);

2. more than twenty bilateral or multilateral agencies and private foundations are active in funding what they call "developmental research" in sub-Saharan Africa;

3. bilateral donors are the largest contributors to developmental research in sub-Saharan Africa (74 percent) followed by multilateral institutions (20 percent) and private foundations (6 percent);

4. donor institutions are responsible for about 50 percent of the total research funds spent annually in sub-Saharan Africa;

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6. For more details about donors' contributions to research in sub-Saharan Africa, refer to Asibey (1990).

5. education is not high on the list of main sectors supported by donor agencies; in fact, of the five main sectors, education is last:

   - improving food-production capacity
   - alleviating population pressures
   - stopping environmental degradation
   - minimizing the spread of infectious diseases and
   - strengthening higher education.

6. three main mechanisms deliver support to developmental research: multilateral agreements, collaborative programmes and direct support to national research institutions; and

7. despite the recognized importance of the subject, few donors keep track of the funds allocated to developmental research.

Table 2.2. MAIN DONOR AGENCIES' SUPPORT TO RESEARCH FOR SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA IN MILLIONS

	Total Research Funds	Total Allocated to SSA
Bilateral		
USAID	US$374 (1989)	US$119
BOSTID	US$2.6 (1987-88)	US$0.4
UKOAD	US$58.8 (1986-87)	US$22.3
SAREC	US$56.7 (1988-89)	US$14.8
French Aid	US$2,434 (1988)	US$111.9
GTZ	US$351.8 (1987)	US$16.2
CIDA	US$426 (1988-89)	US$18.3
IDRC	US$150 (1989-90)	US$50
Multilateral		
World Bank	--	US$111.9
UNDP	--	US$12.8
Foundations		
Ford Foundation	US$9.9 (1990-91)	US$10.9
Carnegie Corporation	US$9.7 (1988-89)	US$7.4
Rockefeller Foundation	--	US$17.9
IFS	--	US$0.24

Source: Compiled from Andrew O. Asibey, *Development Research Donors in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Review of Selected Agencies*, IDRC-MR 256e. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, March 1990.

2.7.2 Donors and Local Research

Donor agencies in sub-Saharan African generally have their main offices overseas. Therefore, final decisions for support of research activities are based on the African offices' recommendations but made overseas.

Researchers complain about deadlines and requirements for proposals. The process for disseminating available resources for research is not adequate; as a result, researchers learn about available resources when the deadline for submitting proposals has passed.

In addition, donors' priorities and researchers' priorities are not usually the same. Donor agencies tend to support projects in areas that they have identified as important. However, researchers raise the question, Important to whom? As one researcher put it, "We have to engage in research activities that meet donors' needs, but not our priorities".

2.8 DEMAND FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

2.8.1 Demand for Research at the Individual Level

The demand for research by researchers is motivated by professional requirements. Researchers tend to undertake research in order to meet degree requirements or to move up the professional ladder. The demand for research is also explained by personal reasons such as prestige and recognition by fellow researchers.

2.8.2 Demand for Research at the Institutional and National Levels

Although officials make statements about the importance of educational research, there is no clear expression among the countries of a demand for educational research. As stated by an official of UNESCO, "One can feel the need for educational research, but no expressed demand has been made by governments." In fact, governments assume that educational researchers have the responsibility to produce the needed research. Referring to researchers, a key official at the Ministry of Higher Education in Burkina Faso stated, "I have a feeling that our researchers [in Burkina Faso] still haven't found much."

If government officials agree that educational research is a must, they tend to focus on other needs (e.g., basic food self-sufficiency, basic health-care systems) than on educational research. At the African Development Bank, one key official made the following statement: "We at the bank feel that research is important for implementing projects. However, African countries are reluctant to include in their borrowing requests a provision for educational research. They do borrow money for agricultural research, but so far not for educational research." Such behaviour on the part of policy makers can be attributed to the relationship between the investment in educational research and the expected return.

The World Bank indicated that virtually all loans make provision for preliminary studies. However, these feasibility studies usually are not considered to be research. Most educational research activities are requested by international institutions for specific purposes and usually are financed as projects.

2.9 POLICY ANALYSIS IN EDUCATION

2.9.1 Definition

Policy can be defined as governments' or organizations' decisions bearing on the allocation of scarce resources for which there is competition (Chen and Fawceh 1979). A policy is generally broadly defined in that it attempts to influence the behaviour of large numbers of people through the use of a rather limited repertoire of interventions. In sub-Saharan Africa, policies are national in scope and intent, but their implementation may be decentralized and applied differently in different regions of the countries.

In education, *policy analysis* could be defined as the gathering of data related to the educational system and utilization of the data in the formulation of actions to be taken. Such educational data can be used in projecting enrolment, costs and infrastructure, and in planning. Although researchers in education undertake policy analysis activities, most such work is done in the planning divisions of the ministries of education.

2.9.2 Higher Education and Policy Analysis

The prevailing economic crisis that has led to the reduction of funding for higher-education institutions in Africa has affected negatively the countries' capacity to produce quality policy analysis.

As Altbach (1982) noted, universities usually are called upon to provide policy advice to government officials. However, because of budgetary constraints, universities have fallen into such states of chaos that they no longer can supply the needed qualified graduates and the requested policy expertise.

In return, the countries' limited policy analysis capability has negatively impacted on their capacity to foresee changes and adjust to them. In the countries visited, there are few policy-analysis centres (except in Nigeria, where centres such as the NERDC and CSER (Council for Social and Economic Research) play an active role in policy formulation); and at the university level, no formal courses for policy analysis exist.

Policy analysts complain that officials do not implement their policy recommendations. As a policy analyst at the Centre de Recherches Economiques et Sociales (CEDRES) at the Université de Ouagadougou indicated, the authorities tend to implement policy that has been rejected by researchers. Officials appear to be uninformed about existing analyses, or they choose to ignore them.

If researchers agree that good policy analysis relies on the ability to (1) identify, measure and predict the impact of the economic situation on the educational system and (2) clearly recommend courses of action to authorities, researchers in the countries visited clearly do not possess the needed latitude for doing such analysis. In addition to the economic crisis that prohibits them from acquiring the necessary equipment, heavy bureaucracy and suspicion help to marginalize their efforts.

2.10 STRENGTHENING CAPACITY BUILDING IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND POLICY ANALYSIS

There is no doubt that capacity building in educational research is key to providing short- and long-term solutions to the lack of research. In fact, researchers as well as policy makers are

very supportive of any attempts to create an environment that is supportive of research. The question is not so much about the need for greater capacity, but rather, about how to go about creating a functional capacity in educational research: one that mobilizes financial, human and material resources.

Researchers and officials of some donor agencies express disappointment over the failure of efforts so far undertaken to build capacity in research. In Sierra Leone, researchers and policy makers still refer to the experience of the Centre for Research into the Education of Secondary Teachers (CREST), based in Milton Margai Teachers College, which collapsed without achieving the expected outcome; so is the case in Zaire, where BASE still struggles to produce and/or support educational research.

Most research projects are donor driven. Donor contributions to educational research are the main support, but the gains from development and research assistance have been less impressive than the quantity of investment. Such situations have kept the countries examined in an cycle of dependency.

Actually, the concept of capacity building is not new; it can be traced back to the days when, with the World Bank in the lead, donors emphasized manpower planning and nation building. It is important, therefore, that any action aimed at building capacity in educational research be thought out carefully in order to maximize the chances for success.

Actions to develop educational research capacity necessarily will include:

1. developing the competence of individual researchers, not only in graduate training but also in functional research skills;

2. building a network of links between researchers at national and international levels;

3. developing and/or supporting institutions and structures within which research may be promoted; and

4. building a network of links between institutions at national and international levels.

2.10.1 Competence of Individual Researchers

The traditional way of building capacity in educational research has been through graduate programmes (both masters' and Ph.D.). There is a definite need to ensure basic qualification of researchers through Ph.D. programmes, but it appears important to also focus on providing support for short-term (three-to-six-month) courses in research methods in selected education departments. These research courses should encompass traditional as well as nontraditional research approaches in order to prepare graduate students broadly for research.

Finding support for research projects is often difficult for researchers, not necessarily because there is no funding for their activities but most of the time because researchers do not know (1) how to write grant proposals and (2) where to get funding. It is suggested, therefore, that donors follow in IDRC's footsteps by financing seminars and workshops on how to write grant proposals.

Data collection and analysis is another area that needs strengthening. Seminars and workshops should be held to initiate researchers into the skills of computer data analysis; such seminars should focus on the essentials of literature review, questionnaire design, data collection and data analysis.

2.10.2 Institutional Capacity

Building new institutions for educational research is a complex and costly activity. It is therefore suggested that the focus should be on existing research institutions with the objectives of (1) upgrading their research capacities and (2) coordinating and disseminating existing research findings.

One alternative could be to identify two "centres of excellence," one in French-speaking and the other in English-speaking sub-Saharan Africa that would receive support and upgrade their research capacities. These centres will serve as research "homes" for researchers to spend time (three months to a maximum of one year) with colleagues from other countries and, with the appropriate facilities, do research. Requirements for such residencies could be a clear and defined research problem, along with a budget. Milton Margai Teachers College in Freetown, Sierra Leone, and a *restructured* BASE in Kinshasa, Zaire, could serve as such centres of excellence.

Educational research institutions in Africa function in a vacuum and are not informed of activities undertaken in other African countries and, sometimes, by other research centres in the same country. Communication between research centres is lacking. Links should be established between educational research centres within the countries, and with centres in other countries, in order to avoid the duplication of activities.

2.10.3 National Capacity

At the national level, regional and/or international organizations, as well as governments, must attempt to stimulate the demand for educational research through the establishment of grant programmes and awards, the objective being to provide recognition for educational research.

Another suggestion is to spend resources to "market" educational research. For policy makers to support educational research, they not only have to be convinced of the need for it, they also have to make it their priority. A very subtle form of marketing could be used to inform/remind policy makers of the positive impact of research in education.

Other recommendations for action include:

1. sponsoring the training of researchers through exchange programmes, fellowships and international seminars, the objective being to keep researchers informed of new developments in their fields;

2. emphasizing the financing of research generated within the countries as opposed to research generated overseas;

3. emphasizing collaborative research at the national level (i.e., between researchers of the same or different fields within the country) and at the international level (financing of research activities to be undertaken by two or more countries);

4. focusing on action-based research. This does not imply that fundamental research should be dropped. However, in a context of restricted resources, choices have to made; that is why this report suggests that research contracts be awarded on the basis of their potential impact on educational development.

2.11 SUMMARY OF WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

2.11.1 Findings

Building capacity in educational research is a long process and requires a long-term commitment, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where resources are lacking. The complexity of the issues to be tackled suggests that any initiative must be carefully analysed. Any failed initiative will contribute to future difficulties in generating donor support.

The following is a summary of the key findings of this report:

1. Generally, research facilities in sub-Saharan Africa are inadequate for conducting research. They suffer from a lack of resources as well as from poor management. The poor economic conditions of the countries negatively affect the ability of research institutions to cope with the expansion of the student population and provide quality research and policy analysis.

2. Motivation to engage in research is low, since salaries for educational researchers are often too low.

3. Although sufficient numbers of qualified researchers with master's, Ph.D., *doctorat 3e cycle* and *doctorat d'etat* degrees are employed by research institutions in sub-Saharan Africa, diplomas alone do not equate with research capacity. The visits to the countries and research institutions revealed that highly qualified researchers have problems with research methods.

4. The existing training centres in education focus on training undergraduate and graduate students for activities other than research. Few methods courses are offered in the formal university programmes. If an effort is made in sub-Saharan Africa generally, to provide strong graduate training programmes, attention is not yet paid to the area of education. The existing graduate education programme emphasizes the training of specialists in the various disciplines but not research. As a result, basic research methods are not well mastered.

   While there is no lack of expertise for generating descriptive data on the basic functions of the education system, the lack of adequate training in policy analysis in particular has affected negatively the capacity of the MOEs to the extent that there is seldom any analysis of the policy-making process. Research methodology courses do not regard policy analysis as a special area of training.

5. Donor agencies' support represents a sizeable portion of the total research expenditure in the countries. However, an important part of this support is devoted to agricultural and environmental research.

6. Educational research institutions operate in a vacuum. Very little communication takes place between research centres within the countries or with research centres in other countries.

7. Although the need for educational research exists, the demand for it has not been clearly expressed yet. On the one hand, governments make official statements about the importance of educational research, but on the other, there are no clear indications of support for this research.

8. In the French-speaking countries, a tradition of educational research in areas other than pedagogy is yet to be developed.

2.11.2 Recommendations

In light of the diversity and complexity in education, further in-depth studies of specific countries such as Cameroon, Ivory Coast and Nigeria are needed. Generally, however, donors and governments should support existing research institutions in West and Central Africa instead of creating new research facilities. Some of the existing units, such as Milton Margai Teachers College and BASE, should be reorganized and transformed into centres of excellence. Although in the past regional centres have experienced dissatisfaction because of the centres' ownership problems, researchers in West Africa (mainly in French-speaking countries) advocate the need for centres of excellence. They point out that such centres should not be administrative units that can be penalized by heavy bureaucracy but rather cadres whose researchers have adequate time and resources to engage in research.

Networks of researchers and institutions should be supported in order to establish communication between research institutions and facilitate the dissemination of research results. The establishment of *operational* networks will reduce duplication of research activities. The creation of networks also could serve as a stimulus for collaborative research.

While management of the research enterprise is generally poor, effective dissemination of results to users and other researchers is nonexistent. Often products of research are kept either by individual researchers or in small, inefficiently managed local documentation centres that are hardly accessible to other institutions and individuals. On the other hand, large libraries are deficient in serving the needs of educational researchers and policy analysts.

To remedy this situation and to strengthen documentation centres, dissemination and utilization of research outputs, governments, universities, research centres and donors should encourage:

1. the creation and reinforcement of documentation centres at institutional, national and regional levels

2. the establishment of a bilingual journal of educational research and a newsletter to serve the interests of the research community in sub-Saharan Africa. (Educational research networks should support this initiative and serve on the editorial board.)

3. the promotion of the idea of a pan-African association to cater for the interests of educational researchers and policy makers

4. the adoption of a multimedia strategy for dissemination of research results. Attempts should be made to reach the public at large to indicate the value of educational research in enriching debates on educational policy and practice

5. the production of annotated bibliographies on educational research by Africans in sub-Saharan Africa

6. the exchange of information and organization of meetings involving researchers in each region. (This could be incorporated within the emerging regional co-operation framework of the IDRC-sponsored networks.)

7. the exchange of materials, journals, books, etc. between libraries and documentation centres within each country and region.

Strengthening and sustaining documentation centres at national and regional levels should be a long-term strategy that complements the proposed training of researchers and upgrades their skills. This process would also help in the revitalization of research institutions and provide critical inputs to research activities, dissemination, and utilization of research results for educational policy and practice.

To speak of strengthening and sustaining local institutions and retaining competent researchers in those institutions implies the existence of a vibrant and appropriate research environment. In many of the countries in West and Central Africa, this sort of environment hardly exists--and where it does exist, it needs to be cultivated to grow into maturity. National governments and local institutions have a critical role to play in this respect. Researchers can not be spectators in this process; they must take an increasingly proactive stance in promoting the appropriate atmosphere. This situation should be attacked at three levels:

National policy makers and governments should

1. be sensitized to the importance of educational research and analytical capacity in policy debates, formulation and implementation, and to overall improvement in educational practice

2. formulate policy guidelines for conducting and disseminating research

3. allocate funds for educational research in national budgets and require donors, when providing funds for education, to include a component for research

4. utilize as much as possible local research capacity in educational studies; reforms; and policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation

5. encourage competition for the available research resources and reward productivity with future funds

The management and output of local research institutions also must be improved. As a starting point in reviving and strengthening national research institutions:

1. the institutions as a whole should be critically evaluated in terms of programme objectives, management achievements and outputs; target populations and beneficiaries; and personnel qualifications, utilization, promotion, productivity and output. Guidelines and criteria for such evaluations should be established.

2. leadership and management should be evaluated with a view to providing competent and effective research management in the region. This is critical to the revival of the institutions, and to their aggressive search for funds to support their activities and functioning.

3. facilities, including libraries, books and research equipment, should be evaluated.

4. mechanisms for collecting data on research institutions should be put in place to enable assessment of resources, programme activities, existing capacity, existing research, productivity and training needs in order to implement the requisite changes.

5. national research institutions and researchers in co-operation with governments should establish national research priorities to guide the agenda for educational research and policy analysis, training needs, needed facilities and funding strategies.

Finally, to strengthen the community of educational researchers and policy analysts, the following actions would be helpful:

1. Establish a professional education association in each country to promote, co-ordinate and focus on educational research and its contribution to national development.

2. Strengthen the activities of ERNWACA and link them to the most pressing educational issues in West and Central Africa.

3. Co-ordinate interchange and communications between existing educational research networks in sub-Saharan Africa as a means of strengthening the voice of researchers in policy dialogue in Africa, thereby enhancing utilization of the available funds, personnel and energy. This could form the basis of the pan-African association proposed above as a mechanism for discourse on educational issues on the continent.

4. Create national and regional research programmes, exchange personnel, and hold seminars and conferences to enhance research activities and dissemination of research results.

5. Encourage researchers to make their activities known by marketing their contributions and findings as widely as possible to the various actors in the region's educational systems.

Since the recommendations above are wide-ranging, priority should be given to upgrading the research skills and knowledge of educational researchers and policy analysts, particularly in the Francophone countries, where a tradition of training in research has not been established. Without these fundamentals, meaningful capacity building can not take place. As training takes root and capacity deepens, the other recommended steps will enhance each other and should become progressively easier to implement. However, securing the commitment and involvement of national governments, research institutions, researchers and donors will be crucial to the sustainability and ultimate success of the recommended actions.

CONCLUSIONS

The diversity of institutions and systems of training in educational research (and of the work ethos) in each of the countries visited severely limits the breadth of generalizations that can be drawn from a study such as this one. In addition, the consultants were instructed primarily to report the state of the art, not to evolve a historical and comparative interpretation from the emerging data. While comparisons between past and present practices have been made whenever necessary, the consultants' intention has been to reproduce as faithfully as possible people's perspectives and observations as reported within the terms of reference for this assignment.

AREAS OF CONCERN

Capacity Building

Interdependence of capacity building efforts. Various factors that influence capacity building--for example, training and utilizing capacity as well as productivity--all are interlinked. For instance, on the one hand, the number of researchers and policy analysts available is dependent on the number trained. On the other hand, the number of researchers actually available is dependent on the mechanisms for their deployment, their utilization, their productivity, the quality of their research, and its effect on practice and policy in education, all of which are also functions of the quality of the training programmes.

Capacity building efforts historically have concentrated on the development of human resources in terms of numbers. Similarly, for historical and political reasons, capacity building has been episodic, with major phases of activity following such crucial milestones in the development of national education systems as

1. the immediate postindependence indigenization of national development in general and the educational system in particular

2. the need to provide adequate personnel in order to manage the enormous postindependence expansion, especially of teacher training

3. the need to rehabilitate and revitalize the system as a result of the considerable drop in quality pursuant to unchecked expansion in quantity

4. training capacity in preparation for embarking on new and/or alternative forms of educational delivery such as those arising out of the World Declaration on Education for All.

5. training personnel to implement major donor-funded projects in education

All of these constitute a reactive approach to capacity building, when a well-planned, co-ordinated approach would have served the individual countries better.

Constraints to capacity building. The persistent weaknesses constraining efforts to build capacity for educational research and policy analysis originate from four main factors:

1. the historical set-up of universities with small and weak postgraduate programmes

2. nonrationalized deployment of human and material resources in the civil service

3. fragile socio-political systems that discourage development or research environments supportive of genuine inquiry into social issues

4. lack of adequate financial resources due to the economic crisis and structural-adjustment policies.

These weaknesses, in turn, are characterized by five dimensions: First, the efforts are driven more by donors than by local initiatives. Evidence for this consists of inattention of governments to borrowing for educational research; reliance on international declarations in order to initiate local capacity building exercises; weak and intermittent research and policy analysis only as part of the reinvestment process demanded by donors; and local failure to pursue to proper conclusion research projects included in donor-funded development projects.

Second, the existing local research capacity generally is invisible due to depreciation of local researchers and nonrecognition as research many of the tasks they perform as everyday work; nonrationalized deployment of personnel in a variety of institutions; and reliance on institutional affiliation as the criterion for the possession of research skills.

Third, the status, integrity and autonomy of institutions involved in educational research and training is either low or ill-defined due to constant controversies regarding their contribution to nation building and policy formulation and increased intervention by the security organs of the state in the solution of academic and administrative problems. Low productivity and the questionable quality of the products of research and training also contribute to this low status.

Fourth, formal and nonformal training in research and policy analysis faces considerable difficulties such as outmoded curriculums and inadequate practical research work and apprenticeship; recruitment of unsuitable personnel into university teaching, into postgraduate-level courses and as technical assistants, all of which result in inbreeding of incompetence in skills and knowledge; and lack of serious peer review within and across institutions.

Finally, within an environment in which policy generally is driven more by political expedient and by donors in the North than by hard data, building a strong local research capacity in education is not always regarded as a priority.

Capacity building as a long-term process. MOE policy makers, researchers and educational leaders perceive the process of capacity building as a long-term commitment at three levels: First, they recognize that building analytical capacities has instructional prerequisites such as learner-centred pedagogy, emphasis on analytical skills in general classroom subject teaching and emphasis on practising independent problem solving and self-direction in learning. Second, there is need for solid and sustained commitment to ideology that will guide practice and the provision of resources. Third, there is a need to differentiate

what governments, institutions, donors and individuals should do, and when, in order to contribute adequately to the effort.

New models for capacity building. Researchers and policy makers are very supportive of any attempt to create an environment that is conducive to research. They support the work of the Donors Task Force to African Education (DAE) in undertaking a survey of the status of educational research and policy analysis capacity. The independent initiatives by IDRC, the African Capacity Building Initiative (ACBI) of the World Bank and the African Development Bank, together with on-going programmes of the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation, UNESCO and many other efforts by donors in most African countries were considered healthy. (However, many researchers were fearful that the big donors were likely to influence the activities of the smaller ones, thereby curtailing some of the flexibility in funding.)

Both governments and donors had a tendency to discount the skills and competencies of local people without sufficient evidence, using all sorts of criteria to stifle their participation in consultative and advisory work. An increasing sense of disappointment among donors with the efforts so far made in building research capacity was understandable, but blame does not lie solely with the recipients. Failure can be attributed to insufficient attention to developing the competence of individual researchers in fundamental research and communications skills; funding and nurturing adequately the links and networking among researchers at local, institutional, national and international levels; and carefully selecting, developing and supporting institutional mechanisms and structures for utilizing research in policy and practice.

There is a felt need to reconceptualize the socio-economic and political structures that undergird present models of capacity building. Researchers, as recipients of development aid from donors, generally felt that the past and present models have had serious shortcomings that need to be addressed. For example,

1. How can the paradigms and issues of research be indigenized to take into account local and cultural knowledge systems when they are in competition with strong and powerful ideas and policies from Northern donors?

2. Within the present unequal terms of funding, who should perform the role of critiquing the modes in which researchers and governments cast collaboration? And what system of incentives will best cater to researchers?

3. Before training in educational research and policy analysis produces the necessary critical mass of researchers and policy analysts in each setting, under what modalities can existing personnel be redeployed periodically in order to play an adequate and effective broker's role between donors, governments and researchers in the North and South?

4. With increasing calls for inter- and multidisciplinary research and policy development, what is the meaning of the notion of long-term commitment in terms of training and effective functioning? What can be learnt from a historical-comparative perspective? Are there disciplinary boundaries of capacity building in educational research and policy analysis?

Strengthening Institutions

While researchers and policy makers evidently wanted faculties of education to be strengthened so that they would be able to undertake the training of researchers, the researchers expressed lingering doubt as to whether universities that are characterized as conservative and suffering from understaffing would reorganize their curriculums so as to embark on a more comprehensive type of training as soon as possible. Similarly, since they felt that ministries of education need to use innovative strategies in deploying their research staff to work on planning and research projects, whether there would be sufficient will power in MOEs to transcend the traditional practices in the civil service that now discourage such arrangements was doubtful. In addition, the matter of where government-initiated research and policy analysis should be conducted was not resolved. While both researchers and donors felt strongly that planning units should not undertake research, they appreciated that MOEs needed a research unit they could rely on for policy analysis.

Improving Documentation and Communication of Research Output

If institutions are poorly managed, research output is both poorly managed and poorly disseminated. Some universities produce research bulletins and research profiles featuring their on-going research, while others irregularly publish educational research journals. But in general, the products of research are kept either by individual authors or in small and inefficient local documentation centres and units that often do not share their stock with the main university or departmental libraries.

Even the larger libraries lack serious bibliographic services in the area of educational research and policy analysis. In addition, university libraries are stocked to serve undergraduate courses (but even these are now generally poorly served). The real problem of disseminating information from libraries is the lack of adequate means to provide the required services effectively, sustain them over a long period and improve upon them in small but significant ways. Over a long period of time, the problems inherent in a chronic lack of resources are compounded. For example, because poorly funded existing information-exchange systems work ineffectively, readers have become convinced of the unworkability of systems of this nature.

In addition, many donor agency documentation centres or collections usually do not serve outsiders and local researchers. Similarly, many government departments release information to expatriate researchers while barring local researchers from access to their documents and research results.

Governments of all countries visited have also failed to enforce legal-deposit laws intended to make important documents available to the public. Government departments, parastatals, research organizations and donor agencies all appear to ignore the existence of such laws.

Overall, a poor reading culture, poor organization and failure to advertise the resources available in libraries, especially local documents, has contributed to a pervasive conviction among students, policy makers and researchers that "there is nothing worthwhile to read."

Nurturing and Deploying Research Skills

While researchers, policy makers and other educational leaders tend to define their task of capacity building primarily in numerical terms, there is evidence that emphasis increasingly is being shifted to the conscious selection, nurturing and support of specific skills, particularly in planning and in the application of computer technology to data analysis. The major strengths of on-going efforts include seven elements.

1. There is increasing realization of a need not only for building indigenous high-level capacities for research, but also for educational planning, management and decision making.

2. A large number of people with research skills have been trained over the years.

3. This resident cadre of researchers, although scattered in many sectors and across a variety of tasks, has been effective in creating and sustaining many of the research and project-management functions in institutions and government and, as an advisory group, in playing an advocacy role for research.

4. With the increasing need to diversify educational delivery systems, local people with planning, organizational and research skills have formed many nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), private research centres and consulting offices, all of which have had a multiplier effect by introducing training in research and evaluation as components of everyday project work.

5. Because personnel with a range of research skills are located in a variety of sectors and institutions, this provides considerable scope and opportunity for short-term and long-term training, although much of this potential neither has been systematically recognized and explored nor utilized.

6. The existing trained researchers recognize the need for creating mechanisms for local financing for the sustenance of research institutions, and since many increasingly will have access to policy making roles, they can be expected to advocate for more public spending on educational research.

7. The institutions involved in increasing research capacity recognize their role as strategic arenas for transferring and indigenizing research technologies and paradigms. The field is open for them to begin creating and sustaining communications and collaborative intellectual linkages between the North and South, between institutions and researchers in various sub-Saharan African countries, and between organizations and individuals within each country. A sustained debate on new, alternative and democratic ideas, policies and practices in educational development and in the democratization of the total socio-political environment can most effectively begin with these local institutions.

The major exception in these areas of strength is Francophone Africa, where, for reasons closely related to the colonizing country's traditions of scholarship, research

methodology courses for the most part are nonexistent. Closing this gap is one of the continent's major capacity-building challenges.

Utilizing Research Results Locally

While six main categories of institutions (university faculties and departments of education and the social sciences; autonomous institutes and bureaux of research attached to ministries of education or the universities and institutes developed through international arrangements or co-operation; specialized directorates in ministries of education such as curriculum-development and examinations centres; private research centres; NGOs; and private consulting offices) conduct research, none conduct research on their own activities, and all are generally nonusers of local research findings. By failing to create and sustain demand for research and to use research results in their own work, none of the centres producing research provides an adequate role model for potential users of research such as decision makers, policy makers and educational institutions and organizations.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

Capacity building in educational research is key to providing long- and short-term solutions to the lack of research in the education sector. In an atmosphere of scarce financial resources, donors and governments generally need to provide further support to research institutions that are up and running rather than create new ones, and concentrate on funding those projects that are most likely to yield tangible, hard-hitting results. The question is how to most effectively create a functional capacity in educational research--a capacity that makes the most of the financial, human and material resources already in place and available to the sub-Saharan countries.

Strengthening Capacity Building

Revitalizing planning units and research centres. Both governments and universities can and should play a leading role in strengthening research capacity within and across their various institutions. They will have to decide on the most workable options and then pay attention to all aspects of capacity building. Clear decisions are needed about which of the many existing institutions will be supported so that they can either sustain their present momentum of good work, quickly regain their wavering strength, or be consolidated or phased out in favour of maximizing results from the limited resources available. Donors, despite the substantial investment that will be sought from them, can play only an analytic role by meeting national and regional requests for support as best as they can while leaving needs-assessment primarily to the institutions and countries involved--the people and organizations who know the problems best.

MOE planning units have done considerable harm to their status by creating subunits within the planning units. Most of these subunits accomplish little without donor funds, and even when they are under the supervision of technical assistants, they manage to perform better only because of the considerable resources and autonomy given them in this situation. Yet credit for the efficiency in these subunits is given to the often overpaid expatriate technical assistants. As a result, some donors now insist that only foreigners can manage these units successfully, and that the elimination of inefficiency in the rest of the sector is simply a matter of improving management. Planning units should define their tasks clearly,

employ qualified local people, and acquire the autonomy and resources that they now allocate to the subunits run by technical assistants.

The "new" planning unit should have access to a data- and information-management system, which could be shared with another department or organization. It should ensure that all data that government needs for policy development in the education sector is collected and analysed, and that basic research questions are answered. The unit should see that relevant documents on all the data and issues are updated regularly and made available to researchers and other users; such data and information especially should be available to all other sections of the MOE, forwarded to them as a matter of routine. This new-style planning unit would help the MOE to develop realistic budgetary allocations and be able to advise government on how the MOE utilizes the monetary, human and material resources allocated to it. A key role would be to define and review human resources policies in co-operation with MOE professional development programmes and to prepare the long-term plan for their development, allocation and performance monitoring. The idea of a planning unit doing planning and research is overambitious. Planning is a crucial task that makes considerable demands upon the time and skills of the all-too-few qualified researchers and analysts employed in such units through the civil service selection process. Instead, planning units need to be able to turn to research centres of excellence for the raw data necessary to carry out their planning tasks. Researchers and policy makers in East Africa regard the idea of setting up regional centres of excellence as acceptable in theory but impossible in practice. Researchers in Southern Africa were indifferent, while those in Central and West Africa seemed to support the idea.

Still, every government ought to have a research institute it can rely on to provide research data and answers to local questions. Such a centre should not be an arm of government or part of a university. It should be an independent island with a corps of full-time researchers and specialists in the social sciences, education and the natural sciences. The institute should not have its own agenda for research; instead, its goal should be to undertake research, publications, documentation, and dissemination--tasks that government ministries and universities are required to do but currently can not. Other types of centres of excellence, for instance, those geared toward generating research by organized individual interests, could be set up. But in an environment of scarcity, pouring limited funds into centres whose research does not contribute to the solution of immediate problems is pointless. Action-oriented research aimed at resolving the most acute shortages and filling the broadest gaps should predominate until the immediate crisis has been breached.

Much of the current consultative activity thrives on the absence of the kinds of MOE planning units and centres of excellence described above. If these centres were in place and productive, much of the information and analysis that consultants currently provide would be available to policy makers from local institutions and researchers with their deeper and more intuitive grasp of local problems and likely solutions.

Building training capacity. Universities should increase their training capacities at the postgraduate level within an improved and high-quality curriculum. Training is now crowded with mechanisms that perpetuate institutional incapacity, the most critical of which are learning by rote and inbreeding of poor research skills. Much training has become a symbolic ritual. A thorough review of both undergraduate and postgraduate courses in education needs to be undertaken. Peer-review bodies need to be established and, where they exist, should be strengthened, so that researchers can acquire a genuine and scholarly independence in their work, thereby ensuring quality in the teaching and supervision expected

of students in higher-degree courses. Specialization designed from the logic and content of disciplines does not lead to the specialization required for national development. Therefore, interdisciplinary developmental studies and training in policy analysis should be a major component of every postgraduate course, regardless of specialization.

Sustaining local research institutions. In an era of debt-laden economies, high inflation, low salaries and scarcity of resources, personnel in the various countries offered few tangible suggestions for acquiring the financial and material resources needed to sustain quality research and policy analysis in sub-Saharan Africa. While all governments set aside some money for research, the amounts are grossly inadequate, and local funding remains a major challenge in sustaining capacity building in Africa. Governments can and should begin to allocate recurrent and development costs of running research and policy analysis institutes within government budgets, so that these institutions can become less dependent on the generosity of donor agencies. Where this allocation already exists within national budgets, there is still a need for increased levels of funding, so that institutions not only can be sustained but can grow and develop.

Maximizing capacity building through the funding process. Individual donors who usually set up many small programmes of grants, ostensibly to cater to different needs within the region, should reconsider their policy. Since these grants are rarely adequate for full-fledged research projects, they only serve to fragment activities in an institution or country. It was felt that individual donors could consolidate their programmes into major categories so as to enable researchers to embark on large and multidisciplinary projects. Donors should fund serious and in-depth studies on models of development assistance that put the needs of recipients of aid first and those of donors second, hence ensuring improvement in the quality of educational research in Africa.

Big and small research grants should continue to be awarded with emphasis on team, collaborative and interdisciplinary research. Structures should be put in place that actually enforce quality control in all research undertaken using donor funds and public monies. Seven basic priorities in research that cut across all levels of all educational systems were identified:

1. increasing the use and effectiveness of human and material resources in education

2. improving instructional quality

3. improving management of educational institutions and of the educational system as a whole

4. rationalizing the financing of education

5. improving, revolutionizing and diversifying educational assessment

6. improving professional training, so that emphasis is placed on building skills for instructional purposes rather than for management

7. developing systems for the maintenance of educational resources and physical facilities.

All research should address these issues in the specific context of the various institutions and countries.

Governments should take more responsibility in the selection of technical assistants. They should seriously meet their contractual obligations and avoid late appointments of local counterparts, underpayment of local experts and overpayment of expatriates. Universities in the North and South should be involved in selecting "contracting agencies" or personnel for major capacity building tasks such as those funded by the World Bank, USAID and other donors.

Improving Access to Information

Many of the changes already suggested here will serve to help concentrate information necessary to researchers in the places where they quite rightly should expect to find it: in libraries and in the government offices and institutions that generate and analyse research. Still, to improve access to information in libraries, governments ought to take a close look at their legal-deposit laws and begin enforcing them among those organizations and individuals required to comply. Donor agencies also ought to be persuaded of the duplication and frustration of efforts that can result when they fund research and then fail to make the results accessible in the countries and areas studied. Libraries also need to review their policies and modify those that make access to existing resources difficult.

Universities and centres of excellence should explore ways in which they can encourage development of a culture of readers and a true, thriving sense of intellectual community. Centres of excellence, when they are established, should be prepared to assist graduate students who are in training overseas in obtaining the information they need to understand and adjust to the research environment back home, and also to tailor their studies to prepare them with particular skills, especially those that are in short supply in the home environment, that they will need in their future work.

Research networks also can help in the dissemination of information by fostering an atmosphere of sharing and collaboration, in addition to direct exchange of research reports and other forms of information. Operational networks driven by the needs of the member countries also will reduce duplication in research projects. Networks also should consider facilitating the establishment of a bilingual (French/English) journal and/or newsletter to serve the interests of the sub-Saharan educational research and policy analysis community.

Donors, research networks, universities and centres of excellence all can help researchers obtain the skills they need to conduct research and obtain appropriate levels of funding by planning and sponsoring workshops, seminars, and training courses in such subjects as writing grant proposals, traditional and nontraditional research methods and computer data analysis, as well as such fundamentals as literature review, questionnaire design, and data collection and analysis.

Stimulating Demand for Research

Aside from emphasizing funding of locally generated research projects, national, regional and international organizations might consider stimulating demand for educational research in two other ways: through the establishment of grant programmes and awards that encourage local research by recognizing excellence; and by using a subtle form of marketing to reinforce policy makers' appreciation of the positive impact upon results that research, especially research grounded in local realities, can have upon the educational programmes they devise.

Areas for Further Study

Although economic and political crises in Africa have affected negatively the development of educational research and policy analysis capacity across the continent, conditions do vary between countries. For instance, educational research in Francophone countries is not as well established as in Anglophone Africa. Such realities should be taken into account when formulating policies to strengthen existing capacity. Special attention should be paid to Francophone Africa, where a strong tradition of educational research and policy analysis does not exist. Further studies almost certainly will be needed.

The diversity and complexity found in the educational sector suggests that further in-depth studies of Cameroon, Ivory Coast and Nigeria in West and Central Africa, and of Kenya, Mozambique and Zimbabwe in Eastern and Southern Africa, also will be needed, particularly with regard to the establishment of centres of excellence.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Building capacity in educational research is a long process that requires a long-term commitment, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where resources are lacking. The lessons of the past, voiced here, suggest that capacity building in educational research and policy analysis should not be pursued through a series of occasional responses to the crisis but through thoughtfuly elaborated, continuous activity. The complexity of the issues that must be tackled suggests that any initiative needs to be carefully analysed. The consultants hope that this report can form the basis for deliberations on policy and action among governments, donors, networks and researchers--and that it will contribute to the beginnings of just such a thoughtful, appropriate and long-term strengthening of educational research and policy analysis capacity in sub-Saharan Africa.

APPENDIX 1: INSTITUTIONS VISITED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

In addition to individual researchers, analysts and policy makers, the following institutions were consulted during the course of research:

Botswana

Botswana Christian Council
Department of Primary Education, University of Botswana
National Institute of Development, Research and Documentation

Burkina Faso

Centre d'Etudes Sociales pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CESAO)
Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Superieur (CAMES), Université de Ouagadougou
Institut des Sciences de l'Education, Université de Ouagadougou
Institut des Sciences Humaines et Sociales, Université de Ouagadougou
World Bank, Ouagadougou Office

Cameroon

Centre National d'Education (CNE)
Ministry of Higher Education, Informatics, Scientific Research and Technology
Planning Division, Ministry of Education

Ghana

Association of African Universities (AAU)
University of Ghana at Legon
University Research Committee, University of Ghana at Legon

Ivory Coast

African Development Bank (ADB)
Université Nationale de Côte d'Ivoire

Mozambique

Centre for African Studies, Eduardo Mondlane University
Faculty of Arts, Eduardo Mondlane University
Higher Pedagogical Institute
INDE
Ministry of Education

Nigeria

Family Health Services (FHS)
International Institute for Curriculum Evaluation (IICE), Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan
National Education Research and Development Council (NERDC)

Senegal

Association des Universités Partiellement ou Entierement de Langue Francasise (AUPELF)
Council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa (CODESRIA)
Education Planning Office, UNESCO/BREDA

Sierra Leone

Fourah Bay College
Milton Margai Teachers College
Ministry of Education
University Research Bureau Services, Fourah Bay College

Swaziland

Department of Educational Foundations and Management, University of Swaziland
Faculty of Agriculture, University of Swaziland
Institute of Educational Research, Faculty of Education, University of Swaziland
Main Library, University of Swaziland
National Curriculum Development Centre, Ministry of Education
Social Sciences Research Unit, Department of Sociology, University of Swaziland
Swaziland Educational Research Association
Swaziland Project for Educational Development, Ministry of Education

Tanzania

Education Planning and Rehabilitation Project, Ministry of Education
Department of Educational Foundations, University of Dar es Salaam
Faculty of Education, University of Dar es Salaam
Institute of Curriculum Devlopment, Ministry of Education
Ministry of Science and Technology and Higher Education
National Examinations Council
Planning, Research and Evaluation Unit, Ministry of Education
Planning Unit, Ministry of Education
University of Dar es Salaam

Uganda

Center for Basic Research (CBS)
Department of Post-graduate Studies, Makerere University
Makere Institute for Social Research, Makerere University
Makerere University
Ministry of Education
Rank Consult (U) Ltd.
University Planning Office, Makerere University

Zambia

Bureau of Educational Research, University of Zambia
International Labour Organization (ILO)
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology
National Council of Science and Technology
School of Education, University of Zambia
Science and Technology Sub-Committee of the Central Committee of the Ruling Party (UNIP)

Zaire

Bureau Africain pour les Sciences de l'Education (BASE)

Zimbabwe

Association of Women's Clubs
Computer Processing Group
Department of Curriculum Studies, University of Zimbabwe
Human Resources Research Centre, Faculty of Education, University of Zimbabwe
Information Office, University of Zimbabwe
IRT Associates
World Health Organization (WHO)

APPENDIX 2. PROFILE OF TRAINING AND RESEARCH PROGRAMMES IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

BURKINA FASO

In Burkina Faso, the consultant visited the Université de Ouagadougou, the Institut Pedagogique du Burkina (IPB), the Centre d'Etudes Sociales pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CESAO), the Institut Pan-Africain pour le Developpement--Afrique de l'Ouest (IPD/AOS), the Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Superieur (CAMES) and the World Bank regional office. During the visits, meetings were held with researchers and policy makers.

Université de Ouagadougou. This institution, founded as the Ecole Normale Superieur (ENS) in 1965 and renamed the Centre d'Enseignement Superieur (CESUP) in 1969, developed into the Université de Ouagadougou five years later. Currently, the Université de Ouagadougou offers instruction in eleven institutes and schools:

- Institut des Sciences Humaines et Sociales (INSHUS)
- Institut Superieur de Langues, Lettres et Arts (INSULLA)
- Institut Universitaire de Technologie (IUT)
- Institut des Sciences de la Nature (ISN)
- Institut du Developpement Rural (IDR)
- Institut des Sciences de l'Education (INSE)
- Institut de Mathematiques et Physiques (IMP)
- Institut de Chimie (INC)
- Ecole Superieure des Sciences Economiques (ESSEC)
- Ecole Superieure de Droit (ESD)
- Ecole Superieure des Sciences de la Sante (ESSSA).

The university works in coordination with other higher-education institutions in the country such as the Ecole Inter-Etat des Ingenieurs de l'Equipement Rural (EIIER), the Ecole Nationale d'Administration et de Magistrature (ENAM) and the Centre National de Recherche Scientifique et Technique (CNRST). The university is attempting to undertake research activities with CESAO and IPD/AOS.

Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Superieur (CAMES). CAMES serves as a consultative body for evaluating the research and publication activities of the member countries' (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Niger, Senegal, and Togo) academics. One of the objectives of CAMES is to maintain the high quality of academic standards and ensure equivalency between the French-speaking countries' institutions of higher education and their counterparts in France. As such, CAMES reviews each candidate's publications and contributions to his or her field, and suggests promotion--or not. The decision of the CAMES does not necessarily result in the promotion of the faculty member; the universities, but mostly the governments, carry greater influence in making promotion decisions based on available resources and other unknown criteria.

CAMEROON

While in Cameroon, the consultant observed riots at the university and in other public institutions. The consultant's visits were restricted to the Université de Yaounde, the Ministry of Higher Education, the Centre National d'Education and the Ecole Normale Superieur.

Université de Yaounde. Founded as the Institut d'Etude Universitaires in 1961, it became the Université Federal du Cameroun in 1973, with campuses in Yaounde and Douala. Conceived on the French model, the university possesses three faculties and five professional schools; these are

- Faculty of Letters and Social Sciences (eight departments)
- Faculty of Law and Economics (four departments)
- Faculty of Sciences (nine departments)
- Ecole Normale Superieure

- International Relations Institutes of Cameroon
- University Centre for Health Sciences (four departments)
- National Advanced School of Engineering (four departments)
- Advanced School of Mass Communication (four departments).

Centre National d'Education (CNE). The centre was created in 1973 as the Institut National d'Education (INE) and was renamed the Centre National d'Education (CNE) in 1976 because of a staff shortage. The CNE focuses mainly on research dealing with classroom interaction. Currently, the CNE has three departments: psychology, didactics and socio-planning.

IVORY COAST

In the Ivory Coast, the Université Nationale de Côte d'Ivoire and the African Development Bank (ABD) were visited.

Université Nationale de Côte d'Ivoire. Created as the Centre d'Enseignement Superieur in 1959, it became the Université Nationale de Côte d'Ivoire in 1964. Currently, it is composed of six faculties and one institute with faculty status:

- Faculte de Droit (two departments)
- Faculte de Medecine, Arts et Sciences Humaines (twelve departments)
- Faculte de Medecine (ten departments)
- Faculte de Pharmacie (eight departments)
- Faculte de Sciences Economiques (two departments)
- Faculte de Sciences et Techniques (seven departments)
- Institut d'Odonto-Stomatologie.

In addition, the university possesses thirteen institutes and centres where research is being carried out:

- Antenne Universitaire pour le Developpement et l'Education Communautaire (AUDEC)--Korhogo
- Centre d'Enseignement et de Recherche Audio-Visuels (CERAV)
- Centre Ivoirien d'Etudes et de Recherche en Physiologie Appliquée (CIERPA)
- Centre Ivoirien de Recherches Economiques et Sociales (CIRES)
- Centre de Recherche Architecturale et Urbaine (CRAU)
- Institut d'Ethno-Sociologie (IES)
- Institut de Geographie Tropicale (IGT)
- Institut d'Histoire, d'Art et d'Archeologie Africaine (IHAA)
- Institut de Linguistique Appliquée (ILA)
- Institut de Litterature et d'Esthetique Negro-Africaine (ILENA)
- Institut de Recherche sur les Energies Nouvelles (IREN).

The University also has three nonresearch institutes and centres. Educational research is carried out essentially at CERAV and CIRES.

African Development Bank (ADB). As a potential donor agency for educational research, the ADB supports research activities (mainly agricultural) with profits generated through lending activities to member countries. It is therefore not possible to estimate the total amount of financing the ADB will commit to research in the next years.

Established in 1963 (but operational only since 1966), the ADB also provides loans for research. However, most African countries borrow money for agricultural research, seldom for educational research.

GHANA

While in Ghana, the consultant met with researchers at the University of Ghana, Legon and the Association of African Universities (AAU).

University of Ghana, Legon. This university, founded in 1948 as the University College of the Gold Coast with a special relationship with the University of London, evolved into the University College of Ghana in 1957. The University of Ghana has five faculties and two schools with faculty status:

- Faculty of Agriculture (six departments)
- Faculty of Arts (six departments)
- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of Science (ten departments)
- Medical School (sixteen departments)
- Faculty of Social Studies (nine departments)
- School of Administration (four departments).

In addition, the university has a unit of graduate studies headed by a dean and a number of units that receive separate funding from the government. They are

- Institute of Adult Education
- Institute of African Studies
- Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research
- Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research
- Regional Institute for Population Studies
- School of Performing Arts
- Agricultural Research Stations (three stations supervised by the Faculty of Agriculture)
- School of Communication Studies.

Association of African Universities (AAU). Created in 1967 to encourage exchanges and co-operation between African universities, the AAU is based in Accra, Ghana. Its main objectives are to study and make known educational needs in Africa--particularly in the fields of research and higher education--and to co-ordinate the necessary actions to meet those needs. Currently, the AAU has ninety-two member universities. It produces a newsletter (the *AAU Newsletter*) and the *Directory of African Universities* (every two years). At the time of the consultant's visit, the AAU was undertaking an assessment of capacity building in African universities.

NIGERIA

The consultant met with researchers and policy makers at the Ministry of Education, the University of Ibadan and the National Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC).

University of Ibadan. The university, founded in 1948 as the University College of Ibadan in close relationship with the University of London, gained academic independence in 1962 and became the University of Ibadan. It has:

Faculties

- Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry (seven departments)
- Faculty of Arts (ten departments)
- Faculty of Education (seven departments)
- Faculty of Science (nine departments)
- Faculty of Technology (seven departments)
- Faculty of Law (two departments)
- Faculty of the Social Sciences (five departments)
- Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (seven departments).

Centres

- Institute of African Studies
- Institute of Child Health
- Post Graduate Institute for Medical Research and Training
- Institute of Education.

In addition, the University of Ibadan has a college of medicine and centres of research.

National Education Research and Development Council (NERDC). NERDC is the national coordinating body for educational research in Nigeria. In addition to headquarters in Lagos, it has offices in other regions of the country that collect data and disseminate research results. NERDC supports both national and international research initiatives by sponsoring seminars and workshops. In addition, NERDC uses the available researchers for consulting activities.

SENEGAL

During his visit, the consultant met with researchers and policy makers at the Université Cheik Anta Diop--Ecole Normale Superieure (ENS), the Association des Universités Partiellement ou Entierement de Langue Francaise (AUPELF), the Council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa (CODESRIA) and UNESCO/BREDA.

Université Cheik Anta Diop. The Université Cheik Anta Diop, founded in 1957, is composed of four faculties as well as institutes, schools and centres:

Faculties

- Faculte des Sciences Juridiques et Economiques (four departments)
- Faculte des Lettres et Sciences Humaines (ten departments)
- Faculte de Medecine et Pharmacie (five departments)
- Faculte des Sciences et Techniques (six departments).

Centres, Institutes and Schools

- Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire Cheik Anta Diop (IFAN)
- Ecole Nationale Superieure Université de Technologie (ENSUT)
- Ecole Normale Superieure (ENS)
- Centre de Linguistique Appliqué de Dakar (CLAD)
- Centre de Recherches Psycho-pathologiques (CRP)
- Institut de Technologie Nucleaire Appliqueé (ITNA)
- Centre de Hautes Etudes Afro-Americaines
- Institut d'Odontologie et de Stomatologie (IOS)
- Centre de Recherche Economique Appliquée (CREA)
- Ecole des Bibliothecaires, Archivistes et Documentalistes (EBAD)
- Centre d'Etudes des Sciences et Techniques de l'Information (CESTI)
- Centre de Recherches Biologiques sur la Lepre (CRBL)
- Centre de Recherches, d'Etudes et de Documentation sur les Institutions et la Legislation Africaines (CREDILA)
- Institut des Sciences de l'Environnement (ISE)
- Institut de Pediatrie Sociale
- Institut de Recherche sur l'Enseignement de la Mathematique, de la Physique, et de la Technologie (IREMET)
- Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur les Energies Renouvelables (CERER)
- Institut de Medecine Tropicale Appliquée (IMTA)
- Institut des Droits de l'Homme et de la Paix
- Institut Français pour les Etudiants Etrangers (IEE).

The university operates joint programmes with the Ecole Inter-Etats des Sciences et Medecine Veterinaires (EIS).

Association des Universités Partiellement ou Entierement de Langue Francaise (AUPELF). Although AUPELF is not a research institution, its main objective is to facilitate research in the French-speaking universities and coordinate their on-going activities. In this capacity, AUPELF has put in place a number of networks of academics in French-speaking institutions in Africa and overseas to coordinate research--mainly in the hard sciences. For the time being, the AUPELF does not have programmes for research in education.

Council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa (CODESRIA). Created in 1973, CODESRIA's objective is to motivate African social scientists and institutions to undertake (fundamental and action) research. CODESRIA is not a research institute, but it coordinates and supports development research in Africa through comparative and interdisciplinary approaches.

SIERRA LEONE

The University of Sierra Leone is made up of three colleges (Fourah Bay College, Njala University College and the College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences), each headed by a principal; the vice-chancellor is the chief executive of all the colleges. Taking into account time constraints and logistics, the consultant visited only Fourah Bay College, Milton Margai Teachers College (which hosts CREST) and the Ministry of Education.

Fourah Bay College. Fourah Bay College, founded in 1827, was combined with Njala University College in 1966 to form the University of Sierra Leone. The academic structure of Fourah Bay College is as follows:

- Faculty of Arts (seven departments)
- Faculty of Economics and Social Studies (four departments)
- Faculty of Engineering (three departments)
- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences (seven departments).

In addition, Fourah Bay College has six institutes:

- Institute of Adult Education and Extra Mural Studies
- Institute of African Studies
- Institute of Education
- Institute of Marine Biology and Oceanography
- Institute of Population Studies
- Institute of Public Administration and Management.

Milton Margai Teachers College (MMTC). Milton Margai Teachers College's main objective is the training of teachers in the various subject matters. MMTC has housed one capacity building project: the Centre for Research into the Education of Secondary Teachers (CREST). Established in 1980, CREST's functions included research at the secondary and teacher-education levels, as well as curriculum development and materials production. Based on the assumption that research will provide an in-depth understanding of issues and problems and serve as a basis for constructive action in education, CREST focused on action research. CREST is no longer functioning, but it has contributed to stimulating interest in educational research.

ZAIRE

In Zaire, the consultant met with researchers at the Université de Kinshasa and the Bureau Africain des Sciences de l'Education (BASE).

The Université de Kinshasa. Created as the Université Lovanium in 1954, it became the Université de Kinshasa in 1981, and possesses six faculties:

- Faculte de Droit (eight departments);
- Faculte des Sciences Economiques (six departments);
- Faculte des Sciences (six departments);
- Faculte Polytechnique (five departments);
- Faculte de Medecine (eight departments);
- Faculte de Pharmacie (four departments).

Educational research is carried out in the department of sciences de l'education (educational sciences), which is part of the faculty of economics.

Bureau Africain des Sciences de l'Education (BASE). BASE, founded in 1973, became a specialized institution for educational research of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1986. Five centres are to be established, but for the moment only one is functional (the Central Africa Office). Salaries of personnel are to be paid by member countries of the OAU. However, for multiple reasons, including the economic crisis and political sensitivity, member countries do not honour their agreements, and the institution is almost nonfunctional.

The BASE objectives are to organize co-operation in educational research between member countries of the OAU and to set up networks of researchers as well as institutions. Because of the factors mentioned above, BASE has not been able to fulfil its objectives. Nevertheless, it has managed to give seminars on educational planning with the support of UNESCO and the Agence de Cooperation Culturelle et Technique (ACCT) of France.

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