

**DFID RWANDA: JOINT EDUCATION SECTOR SUPPORT (JESS)
NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT, 6th~7th October 2010**

Overview of Sector Progress 2006 - 2010

As this is the last in the series of JESS Narrative reports, it is appropriate to start with a brief look at how far the education sector has come since 2006 against key indicators. Fuller details of last year's progress, remaining challenges and recommendations for the future are dealt with in subsequent sections.

Table 1

RWANDA PRIMARY EDUCATION KEY INDICATORS				
	2001-2	2006	2009	2010
Gross Enrolment Rate	103.7%	145.3%	128.5%	126.5%
Net Enrolment Rate	74.5%	92.1%	94.1%	95.4%
No. Pupils	1,534,510	2,019,991	2,264,672	2,299,326
% Girls	50.3%	51.3%	50.8%	50.7%
Completion rate	29.6%	58.7%	74.5%	75.6%
Repetition rate	17.2%	18.1%	14.0%	
Drop out rate	16.6%	14.3%	12.2%	
Transition Rate	43%	58.7%	95.0%	
Trans Rate Girls	n/a	55.3%	94.3%	
No. Teachers (incl HT)	26,024	30,637	32,412 ¹	
% Female teachers	50.1%	54.9%	53%	
Pupil Teacher Ratio	59:1	71:1	70:1	67:1
Pupil Qual Teach Ratio	73:1	73:1	73:1	68:1
No. primary schools	2,172	2,323	2,469	
No. Primary classrooms	27,735	30,434	30,989	
Pupil Classroom ratio	55:1	66:1	71:1 ⁽²⁰⁰⁸⁾	
Educ budget as %GDP		5.2%	5.3%	
% Prim of ed budget (rec)		45%	40%	

Source: MINEDUC Statistics

Two tables showing results against Education Sector Support Programme (ESSP) targets and the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) and Common Performance Assessment Framework (CPAF) targets are given as Attachment A to this report.

In terms of the specific targets set in ESSP, net enrolment in Primary has increased to 95%, below the 97% target and whilst Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) remains high at 126% it have fallen markedly over the period. Primary completion rates have exceeded expectation, whilst drop our rates, though fallen by 4%, remain high at 12%. The qualified teacher to pupil ratio at the primary level has improved slightly to 1:68, but is below the target of 1:49. Despite the extensive use of double shifts, the pupil to classroom ratio has worsened (from 62:1 in 2005 to 71:1 in 2008), as has the pupil to teacher ratio from 59:1 to 67:1.

The continued pressure on the primary sector is a consequence of focusing attention on lower secondary under the 9 Year Basic Education (9YBE) policy. The physical expansion at lower secondary has seen a 100% increase in the number of classrooms and the GER almost doubling, from 20% to 36%. Fiscal effort by the government has remained good, with education's share of the budget steady at around 18%: in absolute terms education's 2010 budget allocation (RWF 149bn) exceeded the Long Term Financing Framework (LTFF) projection (RWF 137bn). The above points to the continued need for

¹ Figure corrected from that provided by MINEDUC (arithmetical error)

reform at the primary level, where universal access is close but not achieved and where quality remains threatened.

There can be little doubt that the JESS which started in 2006 has been a most effective means of supporting the sector. External financing of around \$176m to the education budget (2004-2009) has provided the fiscal space for Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) to develop and deliver on the policy commitments articulated in the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP). The JESS experience has been a good Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp) model, the silent partnership of DFID, the Netherlands and SIDA further reducing transaction cost. Project donors' support, though off budget, has to a large extent been "on plan" and their participation in the broader sector policy dialogue has added value. The Development Partners (DP), and DFID in particular, have been instrumental in leveraging considerable additional resources to the sector through the Fast Track Initiative (FTI). A total of eight DPs have provided Sector Budget Support (SBS), whilst 12 have provided support through projects. The number of SBS donors looks set to decrease in the coming years, whilst the volume of aid through projects will increase.

Introduction

The policy environment continues to remain strong, the senior team (Minister, Minister of State and the Permanent Secretary) has remained in post following the recent election and continue to provide highly effective sector leadership, though there remain gaps in middle management positions. There is wide and genuine enthusiasm for reform and change throughout the system. Ambitions remain high - and carry risks, particularly with regard to capacity to deliver across a broad reform agenda within available resources. Newer priorities have emerged around skills development, science and technology, and there is some risk that the final steps to Millennium Development Goal 2 and Education for All goals may falter as resource and attention is diverted. The relationship between the MINEDUC and the Development Partners is excellent - open, collegiate and business-like, working well at both the formal level through fora such as the Education Cluster Group meetings, task and working groups and the JRES, as well as more informally.

Building on its strengths and experience, MINEDUC has finalised a new ESSP 2010-2015, continuing commitments to improve coverage and quality of basic schooling, but now with increasing emphasis on a post basic system geared towards a skilled workforce, particularly in areas of science, technology and ICT.

The JRES has become a sound forum for annual review and monitoring of progress: it is well prepared, managed and involves a wide range of stakeholders. It will be enhanced when two striking gaps (progress is ongoing) are addressed:

- the availability of comprehensive annual education statistics, broken down by district or province and reflecting gender and other variables (e.g. special needs);
- systematic information on education quality, notably assessments of learning achievement and an inspectorate report of status against basic standards.

More might also be done to improve the field perspective and reporting, through better planned and managed visits as well as through selected district reports.

Continued strong progress was again noted at the 2010 JRES, the benefits of the 9 Year Basic Education policy are being felt in terms of enrolments, primary progression and completion as well as transition to Tron Commun (S1-S3). Major efforts are being made to address quality issues. Overall financial support to the sector remains good (5.3% GDP), though the prospects for external financing through the budget beyond 2011 look less good; a further FTI application is in process.

Sector Performance

In terms of access, the positive impacts of roll out of the 9BYE policy continue: overall enrolment in primary increased by over 34,000 to reach 2.299 million, whilst enrolment in Tron Commun increased by a further 27% and now stands at 298,212. The Primary GER declined one percentage point to 127% (girls 128%, boys 125%), whilst the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) rose two percentage points to 95% (girls 97%, boys 94%). The overall promotion rate through primary grades is also improving, from 69.5% (2008) to 73.8% (2009), with girls one percentage point (74.3%) ahead of boys (73.2%). Both repetition (14%) and drop out (12.2%) rates have further declined, in both cases more so for girls. The primary completion rate continues to rise, increasing to 75.6% from 74.5% in 2009, with a marked difference (8.4%) between boys (71.4%) and girls (79.8%). The transition rate from primary (P6) to lower secondary (S1) increased from 88% (2008) to 95% (2009) with more boys (96%) than girls (94%) entering S1, though the gap has narrowed by two percentage points from 2008. To accommodate this expansion, an additional 3,072 classrooms have been constructed, over 9,000 latrines built and 5,923 additional teachers recruited: 2,146 at primary and 3,777 at secondary level. Over three million textbooks have been distributed to schools. The continued expansion at these levels exerts pressure on upper secondary, where the transition rate has increased from 86% (2008) to 90% (2009), with the rate for girls (92%) remaining ahead of that for boys (88%).

Budget execution and sector financing

Government's continued commitment to education is signalled in its share of the national budget. In 2008/09 total education spending was 5.3% of GDP which represented 18.7% of total public expenditure. This compares favourably with other countries in the region (e.g. Uganda 3.8%). Within the overall budget, the sub-sector shares remain much the same as the previous year: primary education remains at 37.5% (38% in 2009); secondary education (lower and upper combined) secures 27.3% (28% in 2009), whilst higher education absorbs 23.9% (24% in 2009).

Budget execution for FY 2009/2010 again shows an under-spend for education, at 89% this is slightly (1%) worse than the previous year. Overall, the majority of the under-spend is in the recurrent budget, though variations occur between sub-sectors. Primary (85%), lower secondary (82%) and upper secondary (83%) combined account for 65% of the total education budget and 80% of the total under-spend. Budget under-spend has not hitherto been a feature of MINEDUC, and the recent lapses are attributable to specific circumstance. The under-spend in the primary and secondary sub sectors can be attributed mainly to delays in procurement (textbooks and One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) project), and teacher training due to scheduling difficulties. New teacher recruitment (5,923) also fell short of the target (7,000).

The predictable, on budget financing made available to JESS through Sector Budget Support (SBS) (calculated at 13.6% of the education budget), the

27.5% notional share education receives from General Budget Support, as well as the substantial increases in domestic financing, have clearly enabled MINEDUC to drive the reforms espoused in the ESSP. The additional resources secured through the FTI Catalytic Fund further strengthened the reform.

The future looks far less secure, with a dwindling number of SBS donors. The recently introduced "division of labour" by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN), effectively apportioning donors to certain sectors and capping the sectors each support, has thinned the education group. Much therefore depends on the current FTI application, without which DFID may remain the sole provider of SBS by 2012. The shift to more project-based support, largely targeted at TVET/Skills, does not augur well for basic education. There is a real risk that the degree of cohesion established under JESS will dissolve as donors move off budget. DFID should continue to use its influence to seek some flexibility in the division of labour policy, to persuade others into SBS and to support MINEDUC look for new donors, e.g. Irish Aid.

In addition to the need to improve the internal efficiency of the primary sector (see below), priority should be given to support cost sharing in Higher Education (HE). Though the relative recurrent unit cost difference between primary and higher education has reduced from 86:1 to 50:1, the 24% share of the education budget that HE commands is above regional norms: Uganda, for example, spends 10%. Poor progress was made on this action point from the 2009 JRES, the cost reduction study resulted in a workshop and initiating audits - not the same thing.

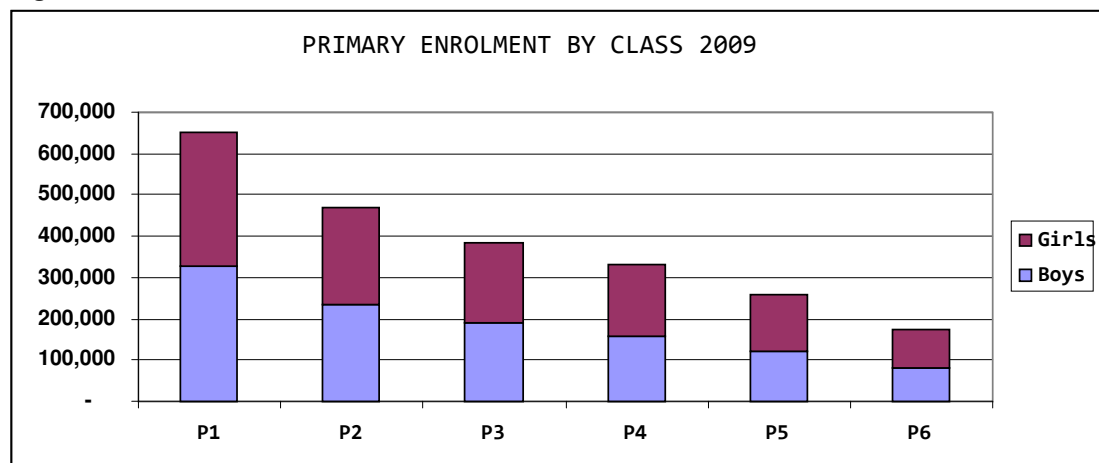
Technical issues

Access: out of school children and boys. The NER has reached a plateau around 95%, falling short of the ESSP target of 97%. There is a need to accelerate efforts on the remaining out of school children, estimated at 104,000 in 2006. As greater attention is focussed higher up the system, there is a real risk that a 95% NER is considered close enough. Policies and strategies to tackle exclusion developed under ESSP (gender, special needs) have not as yet converted into results in terms of reaching the last in the line. The children who still remain out of school are likely to include a substantial number with special needs. The MINEDUC Action Plan 2010/11 includes programmes to build capacity for teachers and schools to accommodate children with special needs, and to better monitor and support special needs schools. This assumes the special needs children are there: it does not specifically address the issue of getting them there - of overcoming the demand side constraints of poverty, stigma, expectation, attitude, transport etc.

Good as progress has been on increasing primary completion, a quarter of those who start primary do not finish. Whilst there remain issues around the participation of girls, particularly in regard to their under-representation in science and technology subjects and access at upper secondary and TVET, there is a clear need to better understand what is happening to boys in school. Boys now drop out and repeat more, leading to lower progression and completion rates than girls, and the completion "gap" appears to be widening. The on-going DFID study *Equity and Inclusion in the Education Sector*, due to report very soon, will be an important rallying point to better target effort and resource to reach the missing children.

“The central drama”² of primary education is the weak internal efficiency. Though the GER has declined markedly since 2007, there remains significant over enrolment in the early grades. The graph below shows that P1 enrolment is 3.7 times that of P6, suggesting a P1 GER of around 200%! In the context of stretched financial and human resources, efforts to reduce this should be a priority as it will free up resources and create better space for the quality enhancement effort needed in the lower grades.

Figure 1:



The quality of education. The JRES highlighted a number of factors that currently constrain the system in respect of the quality of education. In summary, these are:

- Not enough teachers and generally weak pedagogical skills
- Low levels of teachers' English language proficiency
- Insufficient support to and supervision of schools
- The reliance on double shifts in the majority of schools
- Absence of solid data and information on learning achievement

MINEDUC is establishing sound strategies and structures to address these - the key issue is time. The process of approving bodies, assigning responsibilities and developing strategies has been lengthy.

Notable achievements are the establishment of the Quality Improvement Working Group (QIWG) to coordinate the collective efforts of relevant entities, bringing together the National Curriculum Development Council (NCDC), the Rwanda Examinations Council (REC) and the Teacher Service Commission (TSC) under the leadership of the Inspector General of Education (IGE). High priority is currently being given to the switch of language of instruction to English, and the need to raise, in rapid time, the English language proficiency of teachers, as well as their capability to teach effectively through that medium. There remains some policy uncertainty regarding early primary (P1 to P3) with a decision on reverting to Kinyarwanda now awaiting cabinet decision. This is needed as a matter of urgency. Major support comes through the Rwanda English in Action Programme (REAP) through which an impressive range of strategies involving intensive courses, self study and electronic media to support teachers is being implemented. The JRES made repeated reference to the importance of

² Public Expenditure Review of the Education Sector - Rwanda, July 2007

establishing effective mentoring systems for teachers as a way of driving change.

The TSC³ (currently still a Task Force pending the formal constitution of the Rwanda Education Board (REB)) has in place a comprehensive Teacher Development and Management (TDM) strategy through which in-service programmes covering pedagogy, school management and mentoring are being delivered at both national and district level. There is a strong sense conveyed at the JRES of the TSC developing an effective coordinating role for the myriad of partners, largely international NGOs and volunteer agencies (VSO, Peace Corps) all running programmes that address aspects of the quality agenda. UNICEF's role, as the DP co-lead and representative on the QIWG, is important: there were coded signals at the JRES (and less coded in informal discussions in the margins) of frustration with their "Child Friendly Schools" mantra, suggesting a need for them to get more behind MINEDUC policy and programmes and be less evangelical with what is largely perceived as *their* agenda.

The targets for qualified teacher to pupil ratios for primary and secondary have not been met under ESSP. Last year's recruitment of 5,900 new teachers fell short of the 7,000 target, and no mention was made at the JRES of attrition. The total number of primary teachers fell between 2008 and 2009. Notwithstanding the general conjecture over the relationship between qualification and performance, there is clearly a need to attract better qualified and motivated young people into the teaching profession - a role that the TSC has to develop.

Many schools (it is unclear how many exactly, but probably the vast majority) operate a double shift system. Widely promoted as a means to boost enrolment whilst additional infrastructure and teachers are put in place, double shifts need to be viewed as a temporary expedient with clear exit strategies communicated to school communities. Much can be done through good management to reduce the loss of quality that is likely due to less class contact time for learners, inevitable fatigue on the part of teachers and strain on facilities and resources - especially books⁴. An action point from the JRES recommends the development of strategies/guidelines to manage double shift to ensure best use of the system. This is needed as a matter of urgency.

A conspicuous gap in the JRES is the absence of any measures or reporting on learner achievement. Progress is being made by the Rwanda Examinations Council (REC) to develop a system for Monitoring of Learning Achievement (MLA) to assess literacy and numeracy levels at P5. Consideration should be given to earlier assessment: if children are off track at P5 they stand a lower chance of rescue. USAID, through its Literacy Language and Learning Project are planning to undertake two assessments in 2011: Early Grade Reading (EGRA) and Early Grade Math (EGMA) which will provide an initial read out of achievement, though there is a danger of confusion and duplication with the MLA process. The basis to build a more coherent picture of what goes on in schools is being laid by the Inspectorate, which has developed *Quality Standards in Education for Nursery, Primary and Secondary Schools*. This provides the basis for more systematic monitoring

³ Unlike many other countries, in Rwanda the TSC's mandate extends beyond the usual administrative functions of recruiting, posting and retiring teachers, to include overall responsibility for their professional training and development: an interesting innovation that should warrant future research on relative effectiveness.

⁴ Mark Bray's book *Double-shift Schooling: Design and Operation for Cost-effectiveness* (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2008) provides excellent advice from a range of contexts on how to best manage double shifts.

and assessment of the quality of education, including the all important emphasis on schools' self assessment. The inspectorate is under-staffed: 30 inspectors cover the entire country and all institutions (except TVET now covered by the WDA) from pre-schools to teacher colleges, including adult education centres. Nevertheless, they visit around 30% of schools - the key question is whether these are the right schools and what impact inspections have. According to the Inspector General, inspectors' skills are weak. The first annual report on the status of schools is in final draft and will be published shortly. Presentation of this report should become a fixture at future JRES.

Significant progress is noted in reform of the textbook policy and practice. Over three million books were reported delivered to schools last year. Evidence from field visits, substantiated during wider discussion in the JRES, suggests that schools do not use textbooks and other learning materials, which frequently lie unused in stores. Teacher training programmes need to focus on developing teachers' skills in using books. Inspectors, Headteachers, and District Education Officers (DEOs) all have an important role to play in bringing about such change.

Science and Technology, TVET and Upper Secondary Education

MINEDUC leadership remains very focussed on promoting the National Science and Technology Policy (2005) as a key driver of future economic growth. The presentation to the JRES, outlining plans and programmes, was very "top end" focussed. More should be done to promote science in schools, particularly at the primary level where the early opportunity to inculcate skills of investigation, observation and experimentation resonate strongly with ideas expressed throughout the review of the need to develop such skills in children through a more vibrant curriculum and pedagogy. There is a continuing and growing focus on TVET with the recognition of the need to align training to employment. The establishment of the Workforce Development Agency (WDA) is potentially a positive step in forging this link, though it clearly needs to develop improved communication with providers and employers if it is to be effective in bringing about change. With increased focus on TVET, including from a number of DPs (the World Bank, the Netherlands, USAID and GTZ all have skills projects in the pipeline), there is a real danger that upper secondary education, where the majority of students will go, is being squeezed out. The (2009/10) budget for TVET was two-thirds of that for Upper Secondary - an indicator of where current priorities lie.

Capacity Development

The system is clearly stretched; central and district levels are under-staffed and systematic capacity development to support central institutions and district staff, as well as the all important school and community is much needed. There have been delays in formalising key institutions, most notably the REB, and consequently appointing full-time staff.

The problems and delays with the Capacity Building Pooled Fund (CBPF), noted in past reviews, have been addressed through DFID technical assistance involving the Department of Children Schools and Families (DCSF) - a good example of cross Whitehall working and innovation. Management shortcomings have not been fully resolved. Funds have been used for activities contained within the agreed action plan, linked to ESSP priorities, 85% of which were used to strengthen capacity at the school and community level. The recommendation is that the DPs continue their support, albeit with conditions of improved management and oversight, through more

bespoke capacity building activities that target in particular MINEDUC, implementing agencies and districts rather than large scale teacher training. DFID, and other partners, will need to judge the likely impact of the newly established Public Sector Capacity Building Secretariat as a conduit for capacity development funding. In the immediate future this looks too far removed from the specific needs of the sector to be an option to support education. Nevertheless capacity building support needs to be developed with involvement of this cross government initiative.

Arguably one of the major weaknesses in MINEDUC is the continuing lack of a sound EMIS, which remains a major constraint to planning and monitoring throughout the system. (Latest primary and secondary level statistics are provided at Attachment C). Progress seems now more assured, though the continued absence of timely and reliable data was identified as a risk to Public Financial Management (PFM) in the recent (April 2010) Fiduciary Risk Assessment (FRA).

The FRA reported the overall risk as moderate and improving; the report substantiated the view that Rwanda is making progress in PFM. It concluded that "a strong policy based budgeting system does exist in the education Sector in Rwanda", though closer articulation between the budget process and policy priority is still needed, though the 2010/11 Action Plan (provided at the JRES 2010) does link financial allocations to actions under ESSP outcome headings. Accounting, recording and reporting - particular from school and district level (holding 44% of the education budget in 2008) - were reported as requiring continued attention. The report also concluded that "management of funds in primary schools was not done well" citing lack of knowledge by heads and bursars: something that basic training and guidelines can quite easily fix. Recently MINEDUC has addressed the earlier weaknesses in procurement with improved monitoring of contracts, internal tender committees, training on laws and processes.

Recommendations for DFID

Aid effectiveness

- Lobby MINECOFIN for greater flexibility on Division of Labour
- Support MINEDUC to encourage SBS support and seek new donors
- Maintain influential advisory presence in the sector in support of government leadership, keeping watchful eye on project alignment (UNICEF, USAID, WB) and duplication

JRES

- Support MINEDUC to ensure statistical data and achievement reports are included at future JRES

Policy development

- Research the double shift (JRES recommendation) and determine and support actions that will make it work better.
- Sustain pressure in sector dialogue to focus on initial primary level
- Support analytical and cost sharing policy work for Higher Education
- Conclude and energetically disseminate the findings of the Equity and Inclusion in Education study

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Capacity Building/Programme Development

- Continue to support CBPF and bespoke capacity building actions, in particular continue to exploit our comparative advantage in English Language training

FINAL

Attachment A

Table A1: Performance against ESSP key indicators and targets

Indicators	Target	Achiev't
Primary NER	96.8%	95.4%
Primary Completion	56% ⁵	74.5%
Primary Drop Out Rate	5%	12.2%
No. qualified primary teachers to pupils	1:49	1:68
No. primary classrooms	36,630	30,989
Prim pupil:classroom ratio	57:1	71:1
Classrooms in Tronc Commun	2266 ⁶	5087
GER Tronc Commun	20%	36%
No. qualified secondary teachers	8093	5849

Table A2: Performance against EDPRS/CPAF targets

EDPRS Strategic outcome (2.7.1): *Enhanced Population Skills*

Indicators	Baseline 2008	Target 2009/10	Achievt 2010
Primary School Completion Rate	53%	56%	76%
Primary school completion for girls	53%	55%	80%
Primary school pupil to qualified teacher ratio	67:1	65:1	68:1
Transition to from basic education (S3) to upper secondary (S4)	78.6%	82%	90.2%
Percentage of students in science stream taking S6 national exams who pass with minimum for public university entrance for science discipline			31% (2009)
Proportion of employers who are satisfied with performance of TVET graduates			

⁵ ESSP gives a target of 122%, clearly impossible. The target of 56% is from the EDPRS.

⁶ This figure is public schools only, the target figure is both public and private.