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# Shared Control of Education

## Theory, Practice, and Impressions from Education Projects Assisted by the World Bank

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# Shared Control of Education: Theory, Practice, and Impressions from Education Projects Assisted by the World Bank

ABDUN NOOR

*Educational administration has always meant a number of delicate balancing acts, particularly between the central governmental authorities and the individual communities served. The author, Senior Educator at the World Bank, attempts to clarify a basis for shared control of educational programs in developing countries.*

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SHARED CONTROL in the administration of education is a concept that bridges the set of polarities between centralized and decentralized control, the major forms of administration of the education sector in developing countries. Not only is it a synthetic approach combining the best of the two better-known modes of control, it also is pragmatic in that it describes the present interactions between the two traditional approaches, between the education control center and the periphery of the system.

This paper therefore attempts to clarify the historical and theoretical grounds for what already occurs in the practice of education administration in the developing world. The first part of the paper establishes the concept—its rationale, its purposes, and the degree to which it should be attempted; the second part relates instances of shared control—its features and educational functions—in education projects assisted by the World Bank; the third part offers impressions—of the salient characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses of the approach—garnered from experience. The emphasis throughout is on the definition and process of this approach to education management, with the intent to make an important instrument more explicit and therefore more usable.

Presented at a Workshop on "Centralized vs. Decentralized Control in Education," University of London, Institute of Education, February 1983. The views and interpretations in this paper are the author's and should not be attributed to The World Bank, to its affiliated organizations, or to any individual acting in its behalf.

## The Concept and Rationale

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ONE OF THE ACCEPTED PRINCIPLES in education decision-making is widening the circle of decision-makers. From the time a society has begun to deliver organized education as one of its responsibilities, the need for widening the small circle of decision-makers in education comes into play. Expanding the responsibility for control is important during the framing of education policies as well as during the designing of strategies to implement them. Yet in most societies the concept of widening control is elusive and the subject of varied perceptions. It has mainly been propagated in the context of either centralized or decentralized control of education.

Why should the circle of decision-makers be widened, for whom, and for what purposes? Responses to these questions must come primarily from a historical and ideological perspective. Historically education has been the exclusive concern of organizations functioning at the grass-roots level. It is the arena where religious and missionary groups, voluntary and government agencies, and communities have competed and cooperated with each other, contributing collectively to the progress of primary and nonformal education. These various participants have determined the level of enrollment, defined the curriculum, supervised the standards of instruction, hired and fired the teachers, and in general, maintained the quality standards of the instructional process.

With the rapid achievement of independence of colonialized nations by the mid-1950s and 1960s, however, several new goals for education came into prominence. There was a public call for rapid quantitative expansion, better quality, more equity, and improved relevance of organized education. This necessitated greater sophistication in delivering organized education. The emerging national leaders, perceiving that the center could fulfill these goals with higher management efficiency and better economies of scale, began to pile onto their shoulders more and more responsibilities. Administration shifted gradually from local to regional and on to the central authorities. Education soon became a strong tool of central control.

The arguments for both centralized and decentralized control of decision-making are strikingly similar and are made, with varying ideological justifications, mainly on the grounds of fostering general interest and greater welfare among the citizenry and of widening the small circle of decision-makers. Centralized control distributes education, by prevailing national government ideology, to the nation's regions; decentralized control identifies regional needs and meets them to incorporate regional residents in national economic life. Both work toward greater unity of the population and improvement of the quality of life. The recommendation of "shared control" that later follows is recognition of this unity. Centralized control is advocated by some because, for the delivery of organized education, it provides opportunities for economies of scale and permits growth of specialized skills and knowledge. The centralized organizations enjoy higher status and privileges; with their monopoly on power they can manipulate policies and control competencies to further greater causes such as national unity, discipline, increased social interaction, and increased financing of neglected social issues.

Chart 1: Centralized control of decision-making.

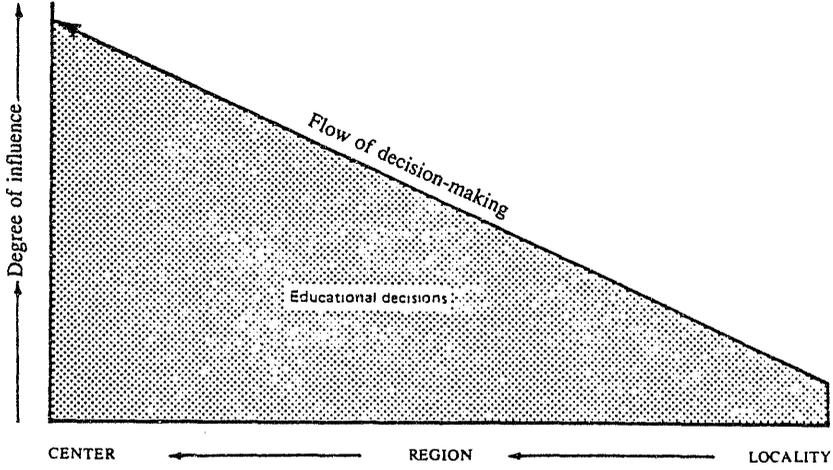
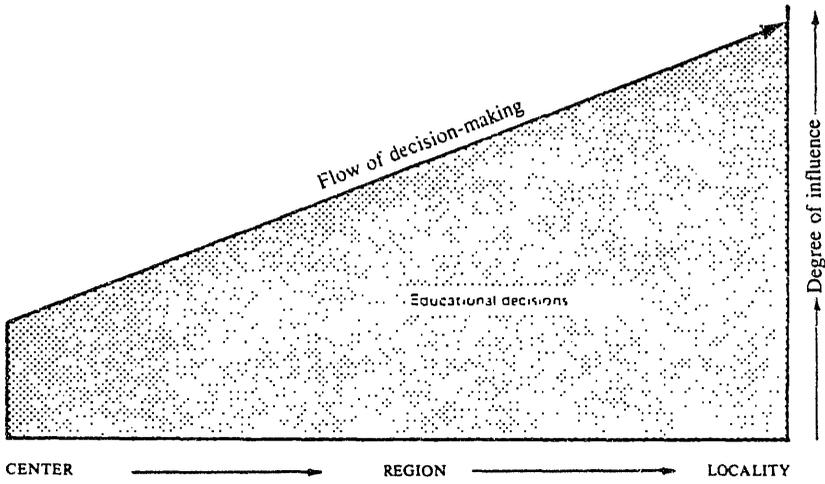


Chart 2: Decentralized control of decision-making.



Decentralized control is preferred by others because it enables decision-makers to deliver education to meet the differentiated needs of various target groups and to encourage wider participation of these beneficiaries in the decision-making process. Decentralized organizations enjoy a higher degree of autonomy. By providing closer attention to technical issues, the decentralized agencies can quickly correct the weak impact of macrolevel planning and efficiently respond to greater needs by extending services more rapidly to local communities.

Both concepts, centralization and decentralization, stress the issues and polarity of power and authority. The centrist advocates that the bulk of the educational responsibilities that now remain with regional and local authorities should gradually shift to the center (Chart 1). The decentralist maintains that exactly the reverse should apply—that the center should weaken through a gradual relinquishing of responsibilities to regional and local control (Chart 2). Each of these concepts threatens the existing power equilibrium.

### Shared Control: The Concept

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IN REALITY neither of the concepts exists in its true or pure form. The pendulum for or against centralized or decentralized control of education swings in a regular rhythm because the structures of centralized or decentralized control in education are neither mutually exclusive nor dichroic. These prevalent structures, in fact, lend themselves to the concept of *shared control*—a synthetic position that sees neither of the traditional poles of power enjoying monopoly over all education decisions. Shared control suggests shifts of responsibilities in either direction to entities best equipped to perform them (Chart 3). The criteria for this delegation of authority are not predetermined locations—geographic or political—but rather the criteria of best possible efficiency. The concept is based on the principles of cooperation, dialogue, and dialectic: sharing control over decisions among equals, complementing each other's strengths while eliminating weaknesses. Integration of functions between the equals could proceed horizontally (for interministerial and intersectoral coordination) or vertically (between several layers of administration).

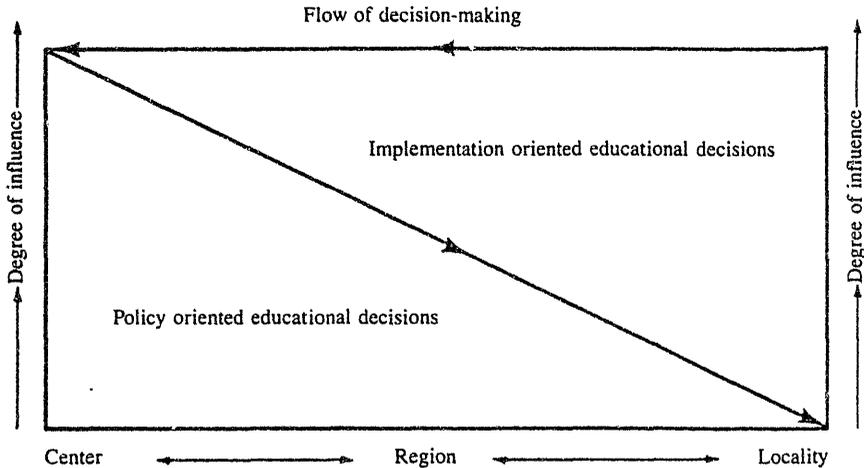
By definition, relocating decisions for shared control requires a realistic assessment of major educational decisions for their structure, scope, performance, and impact. While redistributing functions, care would be taken that positive efficiencies of centralized as well as decentralized control would be optimized and negative influences minimized.

### Shared Control: The Purpose

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SHARING CONTROL means sharing with other agencies the appropriate authority for delivering education. The authority would be legal, political, administrative, and financial. The agencies receiving authority could be either direct organs of the

Chart 3: Shared control of decision-making.



central government or autonomous, semiautonomous, or private institutions. They might function at the capital or at its outskirts, in regions, in provinces, in districts, or in other areas. Authority could be given for all aspects of organized education, from developing policies to managing implementation, or for only a part. At each administrative level it is the *mix* of authority for policy-making and implementation that constitutes the balance of shared control.

The purposes of sharing control are varied, multidimensional, and complex, but they can be clustered under five basic rubrics. The rubrics are related to the ability for speedier decision-making, equalizing opportunities, adapting the educational content to beneficiary needs, encouraging greater community participation, and fostering closer community identity. Each of these purposes reinforces, both independently and mutually, the quality of organized education.

### Speedier Decision-Making

Decision-making under polarized control—either in the hands of the central government or under local control—is often considered by the beneficiaries as slow and irrelevant to their needs. This becomes particularly true when appropriate consultation with the beneficiaries is considered a priori for reaching quality in decision-making. Sharing the control could influence the quality of decision-making in at least three ways.

First, it could reduce the mass of activities for which central decisions are needed. Over the years the center has assumed function after function, and central services have multiplied. Some are the traditional ones but need strengthening to meet the demands of rapid enrollment expansion (e.g., the ability to construct new schools). Others are new and are mainly to meet the more sophisticated values of societies rapidly improving in their standards of living (e.g., the development of school health programs and the provision of school meals). The costs, in most developing countries, for providing central services have multiplied four to ten times over the last twenty years. Because of the large number of services and the high magnitude of costs, not only has the range of decisions broadened, but also the number of decisions to be made at the central level has risen astronomically. Shifting some of the decision-making responsibilities to the periphery, it is argued, would reduce the time needed to make a decision, narrow the gap in perception between the decision-maker and user of services, and speed up implementation.

Second, sharing control would encourage the participation of the community in local decision-making, a process highly conducive to enhancing and enriching good performance at local levels. Flexible programs for primary and nonformal education could be administered without bureaucratic interventions.

Finally, sharing control would permit speedier responses to those educational services in which delay could impede educational progress. For example, it would be possible to disburse scholarships to gifted pupils and stipends to needy students before the academic semester and not after it. National examinations could be conducted by smaller localized boards, and the time required for processing the examination results thus shortened.

## Equalizing Opportunities

Unequal opportunities are a fact and way of life in most societies. Imbalances occur because each society encompasses various life styles, differs in economic resources, bestows unequal wages, and promotes inequitable access to educational opportunities. Disparities have survived in each society and under every conceivable type of economic environment.

Sharing control, it is argued, will minimize the ill effects of existing imbalances. A deliberate effort to balance distribution of resources as well as services through shared control could equalize educational opportunities. Resources—people, material, and finance—could be better distributed and better differentiated by the needs of each region. Flexible educational programs could be designed for special target groups to meet their specific needs. Allocation of qualified teachers could be balanced to favor not only the bright and gifted but also slow learners and the poor. Delivery of educational services could be planned efficiently. In decisions locating schools and placing other educational programs and facilities, due recognition and weight could be given to ameliorating those socioeconomic characteristics which

impede progress. Moreover, educational goals could be advanced by encouraging formulation of appropriate policies to restrict growth of certain undesirable aptitude and behavior patterns.

### Adapting Educational Content to Beneficiary Needs

In most developing countries, adapting the content of education to meet the different aspirations of the population has emerged as a firm and accepted policy. Relevant education for a wider segment of the citizenry is seen as the prerequisite for strengthening cultural values, for meeting economic needs, and for matching the realities of disparate regions.

Cultural values are strengthened when educational content is adapted to the languages of ethnic groups and when instructional materials are modified for target groups differentiated by age, sex, and rural or urban habitation. Shared control of education would facilitate such adaptation. In the economic sense the adaptation of national content will help in developing specialized-skill profiles to match the specific economic needs of the region and improve the employability of its residents. Moreover, this would also be appropriate for those regions (e.g., a cool mountainous region) where environmental conditions or natural resources (e.g., deep natural vegetation or forests) could require a mix of specialized skills that differ significantly in characteristics and standards from national norms. Furthermore the concept of shared control would allow better integration of the educational institutions within the economic, social, and cultural environment of the regions. Also, sharing control would safeguard against making decisions that are irrelevant to regional realities—for example, the opening of a department of marine biology in the agricultural college of a landlocked province, ostensibly to reach parity with coastal provinces that already have such a faculty.

### Enhancing Community Participation

Another outcome of sharing control of education is the opportunity to widen consultation with a greater number of beneficiaries during the decision-making process. Appreciating the preferences of the beneficiaries and resolving their concerns as adequately as possible have changed the quality and nature of educational services. To cite some examples: participation has contributed to modifying the nature of education required to foster population control in Muslim societies; it has enhanced the relevance of technical training in many Latin American countries; and it has helped develop the proper attitude for better nutrition during the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka.

Participation can be enhanced when required educational services are sharply focused and finely tuned. One way of responding to this need has been the creation of

more manageable administrative units. The units are smaller in size, both in area and population coverage, and socioeconomic characteristics and cultural traditions are uniform. Moreover, the newly created units are the foci of political representation. Nuclearization of educational services in the Dominican Republic (and other Latin American countries) and consolidation of services at the *awarja* level in Ethiopia exemplify types of shared control for encouraging wider community participation.

### Fostering Closer Identity

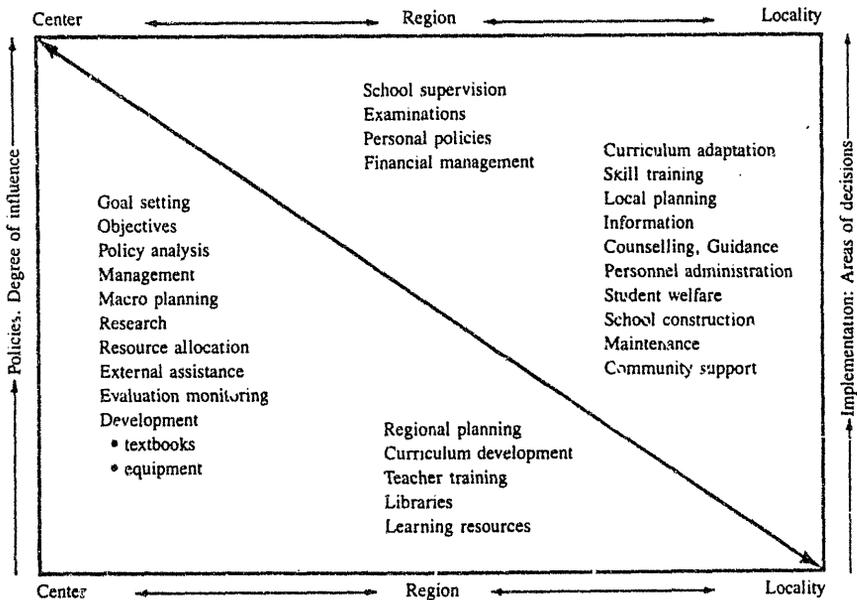
Sensitivity to decisions made at the central level has often influenced—rather ignominiously—the political, economic, and cultural life of a country's ethnic groups.

### The Degree of Sharing Control

THE NEXT ISSUE in conceptualizing shared control is how far entities can go in cooperative decision-making—how extensively control of the current educational functions can be shared and with what depth the shared programs can be developed.

In theory all educational programs and decisions have the potential of being shared. In practice, however, all educational functions cannot and should not be

Chart 4: Optimal location for major educational decisions



shared. Moreover, shared functions should not be subjected to equal divisions among the sharing institutions. Some functions (e.g., goal setting, policy analysis) must remain exclusively within the domain of the central institutions. Other decisions (e.g., site selection for primary schools, records of teacher attendance) should be located at the local levels and ought not to be shared with higher levels, whether regional or central. It is also improper to identify in abstract—and in isolation from the particular national and regional circumstances to which this refers—the groups of functions and decisions that could or could not be shared among the cooperating entities.

Two criteria may assist in locating educational functions under shared control. Functions should be located, first, where the best possible judgment could be passed and, second, where decisions have the best chance of wider receptivity. By these criteria it appears that the central institutions have a distinct advantage in managing functions that require better economies of scale and involve highly specialized knowledge. This suggests that primary responsibility for functions such as policy analysis, planning, research, allocation of funds, and specialized development activities (e.g., production and distribution of textbooks and teaching materials, bulk procurement of equipment, manufacture of furniture) ought to remain with the central authorities. The rest of the educational functions preferably could be shared with the regional and local levels.

Following these criteria, I have tried to identify in Chart 4 the best allocation for some of the frequent educational decisions. The chart indicates that many of the central functions could be delegated to the periphery almost immediately (bearing in mind the precaution that particular country and regional circumstances must be considered). To determine the relative priority between functions for shared control, two questions should be systematically asked. First, what the impact of the delegated function would be on the five rubrics for shared control listed above (furthermore, would its relative impact be more potent and widespread compared with other functions that also should be delegated). Second, whether the recipient entity is now (or could be) capable of conducting such functions at the level and with the quality that they were previously offered.

### Instances of Shared Control in Countries the World Bank Has Assisted

THE CONCEPT OF SHARED CONTROL in education administration and for broader economic development had been advocated by the World Bank's senior management from the early 1970s. In fact, Mr. Robert S. McNamara gave a *strong impetus* to this concept in his Nairobi address.<sup>1</sup> Realization was reached quite early in the Bank that one of the important dimensions of development is bringing the beneficiaries closer to the decision-making process, the basic objective of sharing control.

Of the various sectors of the economy, education appears to have been slow in

implementing the concept. At least until the mid 1970s, the efforts of the Bank in the education sector were largely centrist—to assist and strengthen those institutions that energized centralized control. To some extent this may have been due to the institutional nature of the World Bank—it must deal with the central governments of the member countries—and to the expressed preferences of these member nations. Many of them, having recently gained independence, were more willing to exercise a stronger and sharper centrist role in education, mainly to achieve national unity, discipline, and social cohesion. Resorting to shared control could have weakened the national fabric and the communal effort of nation building (including institution building). In other cases the Bank staff may have preferred to conform with prevalent centrist administrative practices and to design educational projects fitting that mold. Whatever the rationale, it appears that fewer than 15 to 20 projects of the 250 that the Bank has assisted in education have contributed to the concept of shared control (see Table 1). Most of the ones that have are of recent vintage, developed mainly since 1976. Consequently, an impression has gained ground that the majority of education projects assisted by the Bank have contributed to greater centrism, especially to the strength of central education authorities. But because of their comparative scarcity and recentness, the Bank-assisted education projects that do incorporate shared control merit attention.

Table 1. Education projects assisted by the World Bank that have included shared control

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Nigeria III—1973
Ethiopia IV—1975
Bolivia I—1977
Malaysia IV—1977
El Salvador IV—1979 (Ln. 1738)
Pakistan V—1979
Philippines: Sector Program for Elementary Education—1979
Brazil IV—1980 (Northeast basic education project) Ln. 1867
Ethiopia V—1981
Papua New Guinea II—1981
Indonesia NFE I
NFE II (under consideration)
Colombia V—1982 (project for rural basic education; Loan 2192-CO)
Dominican Republic III—1983 (primary education) under consideration

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### Features of Projects Having Shared Control

FEATURES EMERGE from a review of the limited number of Bank-assisted projects that have contributed to shared control.

First, for the countries that advocated the sharing of control as a part of their national development strategy and included education within that strategy, the Bank assisted the overall development strategy and in the process designed programs for the education sector.

Second, the widening of the circle of control has taken place mainly in the context

of well-designed structures of government. Very little has been delegated to nongovernmental enterprises or to the private sector. The structures are usually layers of administration for governance that almost always have correspondence to the prevailing political entities. The controlling entities are located at regional, district, and subdistrict levels with clearly defined legal, administrative, and political rights. Although each of them might differ from the others with respect to cultural heritage, size, population representation, political significance, and economic contribution, they all still hold a common frame of reference in relation to the central government as states, districts, or autonomous institutions.

There are, however, other forms of shared control. Special territories have been carved out to meet the needs of special groups of participants with common identities—programs for depressed zones to improve economic conditions, for rural areas to develop human resources, and for hilly areas to improve delivery of services have been developed. These special programs have required different procedures and a different scope for sharing control and authority.

Third, sharing of control has been most frequent at the primary level. It appears that programs for primary education are most amenable to assistance mainly in the form of the Bank's sector lending. Primary education has been assisted through sectoral approaches in the Philippines, Colombia, and Papua New Guinea.

Finally, the cases I have reviewed indicate that in none of the countries in which the Bank has assisted in widening the share of control have *all* educational functions been shared. Rather those functions have been preferred for sharing which collectively or independently contribute to the five clusters of purposes that I identified earlier. The five purposes, it seems, have acted as criteria on which basis control of functions has been shared. The functions that have been shared more frequently than others require:

- a greater adaptation to local needs;
- the use of specialized skills and expertise;
- speedier and timely implementation of policy decisions;
- greater relevance to beneficiary expectations and needs;
- wider participation of the community.

## Educational Functions Shared

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THE MOST FREQUENTLY SHARED functions have been training, planning, supervision, financing for regional programs, and stimulating relevant, income-generating learning at local levels.

### Training

Training is the educational function most frequently shared. Sharing control has been justified mainly for the broad purpose of adapting specialized skills and knowl-

edge to local needs and requirements. In fact, even in those projects where objectives are overtly oriented toward central institutions, special care has been taken to scatter training responsibilities among a number of organizations to keep the location of training closer to the users' needs. The authority for training of educational functionaries has been systematically delegated to province and district levels.

Moreover, the training institutions at each level have enjoyed a higher degree of autonomy in training decisions and greater flexibility in conducting their programs. They have been authorized to identify their target groups, assess their training needs, prepare relevant teaching and learning materials, and conduct the training itself. In some projects the training institutions also control their own budget and personnel and establish the overall goals for training. Where training responsibilities are widely shared, however, it appears that the center has authorized the sharing under the rubric of a national training policy.

There appear to be four distinct variations in the form of control for training. In the first form delegation of full training responsibilities has been phased in, transferred at the initial stage to an advisory or coordinating council at the center (as was done in Pakistan and Malaysia). At a later stage the central councils have delegated full training responsibilities to regions and districts. The councils, having received a broad mandate to coordinate interministerial training programs—industrial, vocational, technical—stimulated cooperation among interministerial agencies and encouraged close liaison with employers. By actively discouraging the design of training programs in isolation by different ministries and agencies, the councils have been able to retard duplication and waste, as well as to correct overlaps in geographical coverage. But to achieve success the advisory councils needed to be backed by legislation, to be located close to power and authority, and to be provided with adequate financial support. Moreover, the councils were encouraged to define in advance their training policies and to focus them on correcting social imbalances in occupations.

The second form of control for training is generally applied to teacher training. Here the facilities for preservice teacher training are located across regions (as in Burundi). Instead of national recruitment, the teachers are recruited and trained in the region where they will serve. Training is more oriented to cultural and other socioeconomic characteristics. For in-service training of teachers, Malaysia has established regional resource centers. The staff of the center moves in a group to schools to impart in-service courses collectively, in addition to conducting short courses, generally a week long, at the centers. The staff of the regional centers usually comprise teacher trainees and curriculum, mass media, and audiovisual specialists.

A third variation in control of training is to entrust training to the community. This is done to promote skill acquisition at the level required locally. The skills to be taught include farming, cottage industries, equipment repair, carpentry, and the like. The training is cheaper than providing a full skills curriculum centrally. The mix and composition of training is relevant to local economic needs. In Ethiopian communities

manage about 250 skill-training centers, which through local committees report directly to the Revolutionary Development Committee. Three preconditions, however, are attached to ensure the success of such community support. First, there should be a development-oriented leadership and a local organization within the community capable of identifying the required training needs. Second, the training program should be linked to an ongoing developmental activity, usually in agriculture, in rural public works, or in basic health services. Third, the community must want and be willing to support a program of expanded learning opportunities.

A fourth form is the tiered training concept. This allows the preparation and retraining of managers and organizers at provincial, district, subdistrict, and field levels on the broad principles of developing learning activities at the village level. The staff at each level of administration are entrusted to train the staff at the succeeding level. Training takes place for different groups of staff, often simultaneously, at various administrative levels. The front-line staff, who directly organize and manage the learning groups, are reached at various points and, in fact, are enriched by the experience of the hierarchical training process. This concept is used in Indonesia for a nonformal education program.

## Planning

After training, planning is the most common function for which the circle of control has widened. Localized planning is justified mainly to better appreciate the expectations and needs of the beneficiaries. In this context it is reasoned that localized planning could provide an efficient mechanism for identifying local problems, planning local solutions, and controlling implementation of projects designed to meet local needs. The programs of Bank-assisted education projects are therefore geared toward a gradual buildup of planning capacity at regional and district levels.

The principal task for localizing planning is to develop a local plan, draw annual programs, prepare budget requests, and process data and other related information required for national policy and decision-making. To perform these tasks, local planning offices have been set up and in most cases made permanent. Senior staff have been relocated. Funds have been appropriated for conducting local-level research, analysis, and processing of data and for advisory services to subregional groups. Programs for staff development have found new impetus. Senior and experienced educational administrators have been trained both at home and abroad.

Moreover, the local planning officers have been given a ceiling of funds within which they are expected to identify, design, appraise, and implement developmental programs.

Various planning issues are expected to be addressed within the local educational plan. It should dwell on the number and location of students identified on the basis of a school-mapping exercise. It should determine the needs of expansion, in terms of both teachers and institutions. Moreover, the plan should identify the ability of the

community to finance the needed program, to articulate specific sociocultural factors that could assist or impede the development of educational programs, and finally, to assign relative priority for each of the programs identified in the plan. It is expected that such requirements will force the development of local analytical capacity.

Having prepared an acceptable plan, the next major task of the local planning officers is to prepare a series of subprojects within specified financial limits and to identify agencies that could implement the subprojects. During this exercise the planning officers are asked to adhere to three distinct criteria: relevance, efficiency, and feasibility. The criterion of relevance ensures the congruence of prepared projects and local needs. Efficiency is ensured when the subprojects provide overall economy in resource use and confirm availability of required community support. The criterion of feasibility ensures that required skilled manpower and other physical resources are available locally to implement the project within the foreseen period.

The main responsibility of the center for such planning has been coordination and overseeing that programs developed within each of the regional and local planning offices are consistent with national policies and practices. The center also remains responsible for controlling quality and for improving the efficiency of the overall process of resource allocation. It must determine relative distribution of funds to respective provinces weighted on the basis of equity and needs. For this it should develop sectoral policies and introduce guidelines and standards. It should monitor subproject proposals and review their technical suitability. It should advise regions when the projects fail to meet agreed policy directives and criteria. It should provide technical support to relatively weak planning offices in the conduct of their functions. Finally, the center should evaluate the impact of local planning on national decision-making and development efforts.

### School Supervision

The third function for which control has been widely shared is supervision. A frequent measure for improving school supervision has been the creation of additional layers of administration between the school and central government to permit speedier decision-making and faster implementation of policies affecting the local level. A prime example is the nuclearization strategy adopted in many Latin American countries. Although the need for quality school supervision has been the principal rationale in favor of nuclearization, other justifications have been cited. For example, it has been argued that nuclearization, among other things, will:

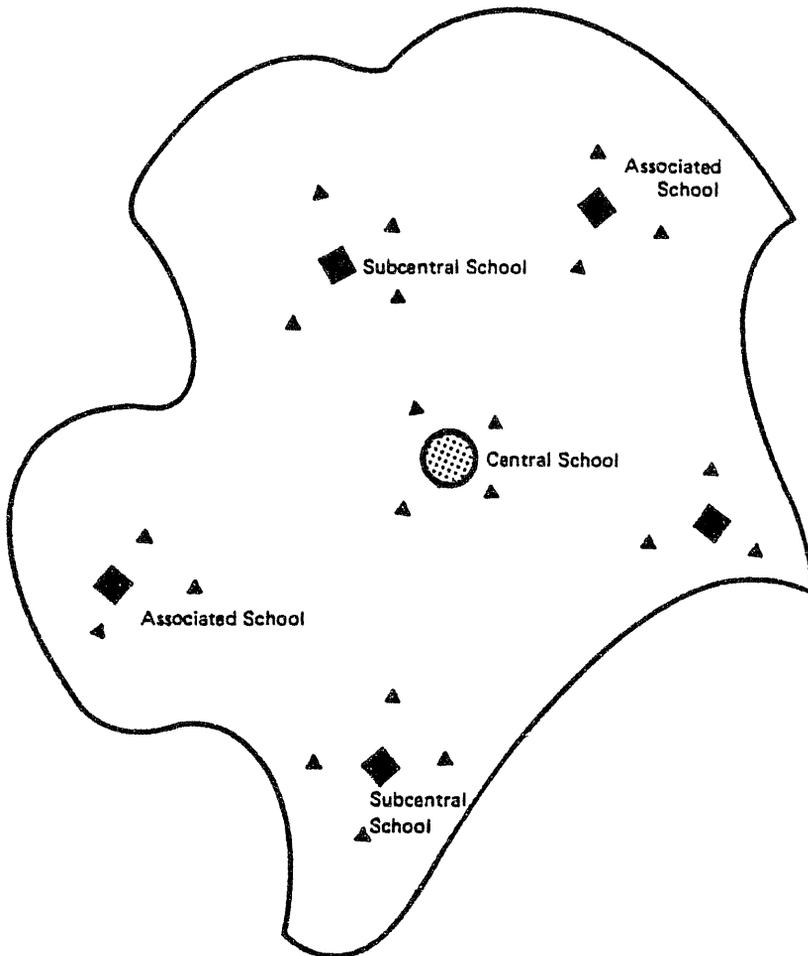
- achieve higher quality by providing better supervision of school instruction, a closer attention to training of teachers, and a wider choice of curriculum;
- consolidate at local levels fragmentary approaches to provision of services by central authorities, contributing to greater economies for total service provision;

- strengthen local capacity for adapting nationally prescribed curricula;
- permit better integration of educational institutions with the community by encouraging wider local participation.

Nuclearization is a pattern of school organization and administration toward which many of the governments in Latin America have been moving. Bolivia was the first country to adopt the concept, and more sophisticated versions of nuclearization have been introduced gradually in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Colombia, and Brazil.

Nuclearization addresses the need for improving management through consolidating educational services at an administrative level closer to the schools and through strengthening the capacity of the schools to plan, execute, and evaluate local educational programs. It has two tiers—the district and central schools.

Chart 5: Nuclearization — the sphere of control of a central school.



The bottom tier is a complete central school, which is linked to subcentral and associated schools with a varying range of educational facilities (Chart 5). The central school offers formal education to school-age children, accelerated primary education to overage students, and nonformal education to adults and youths in areas of agriculture, health, community development, and population education. It also serves as a center of community activities. In some countries central schools may offer the first few grades of secondary education. Each of the central schools is surrounded by three to six subcentral schools to provide the full six grades of primary education to communities within ten to fifteen kilometers of the central school. The associated or satellite schools offer the first three or four grades of primary education to small communities located within three to four kilometers of a central or subcentral school.

The director of the central school has no teaching responsibilities. As the catalyst for and initiator of education innovations, he is specifically responsible for supervising teachers in the nucleus, strengthening teaching competence through organizational in-service training, serving as liaison to the community for nonformal education, evaluating instructional programs for all schools under his control, and monitoring performance.

The upper tier of nuclearization is a district, comprising about ten to fifteen complete central schools. As head of the school district, a district director is responsible for the supervision and administration of all schools in his district.

A wide range of functions with varying degrees of authority has been shifted to district levels. They include, among others,

- *Supervision*: the total responsibility for academic and administrative supervision;
- *Planning*: collection of information and processing of data for framing national policies and for local decision-making (in some countries the nuclear-level directors have received authority for planning and coordination with regional development authorities, program evaluation, and research);
- *Training*: preparing staff development plans and carrying out in-service training of teachers;
- *Curriculum adaptation*: designing specialized courses and programs to meet specific needs as determined by language, ethnicity, and other crosscultural issues;
- *Administration*: efficient distribution of textbooks and teaching materials; administering small-scale uplift programs (small discretionary funds for this purpose have been allocated for travel and other administrative needs).

Another form of strengthening local control, analogous to nuclearization, can be seen in the Awarja Pedagogical Centers (APCs) in Ethiopia. The APCs are new educational institutions at the Awarja (a subdistrict) level—not an additional administrative layer in educational hierarchy. Each APC is headed by a coordinator with four or five staff specialized in supervision, in-service training of teachers, planning, and the like.

The APC, to my mind, represents a higher level of sophistication compared with

nuclearization in its contribution to the concept of shared control. It is expected to strengthen local control of education as well as to improve the relevance and quality of the educational development programs. Therefore the functions it holds are much broader and comprehensive than that of the nucleus school. For example, the APC is responsible for overseeing school construction and maintenance. It is authorized to recruit teachers for primary education and to pay salaries. It selects students who will proceed to higher levels of education. It is responsible for planning at the local level, including information feedback and evaluation.

### Financial Authority

Sharing control has often meant augmenting provincial revenues by granting an enlarged slice of the central resources, and increased authority to use that portion of resources, to the regional authorities. Regional education funds have been created to promote primary and elementary education in the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, and Colombia. In some cases less than one-third of the total resources needed for primary education have been retained at the center, with the rest transferred to the fund. The fund finances efforts to remove a variety of constraints to enrollment expansion or education quality in each province. For example, in Papua New Guinea the fund could be used, among other things, for new teaching posts, school construction, teacher housing, teaching and learning materials, and for researching locally relevant experiences and studies.

Allocation of central resources, however, has become increasingly conditional. In the Philippines and Papua New Guinea, allocation of funds to the provinces is for primary education guided by social equity indicators. This pitches resources steeply in favor of disadvantaged provinces. Instead of standard allocation of development funds by student enrollment, a formula is used that is based on a weighted indicator of deficiencies in student enrollment, survival, achievement, and on the relative distribution of school-age population.

In Colombia the mode of allocating funds exemplifies a further sophistication over the Philippine approach. In addition to relative deprivation in rural education, the allocation criteria take into consideration the relative level of development of the region, particularly in its rural areas. Moreover, resource quotas are established for levels lower than the regions, usually for districts and counties, using similar guidelines. Quotas so defined help ensure that limited resources are distributed in accordance with the relative need, not absorbed disproportionately by politically influential or institutionally more developed units.

The use of resources by provincial authorities has also become increasingly restrictive. With funds have come regulations, couched and advocated on grounds of social justice and equity but written in the language of power and hierarchy. Stipulations have been developed to bring balance between development and recurrent expenditures. In many societies expenditures for some functions have been treated

as capital expenditures, whereas they traditionally were regarded within the realm of recurrent expenditures. Expenditures on school supervision and maintenance of physical facilities fell under recurrent costs. Concerted efforts have been made to strike a balance between expenditures on physical facilities and construction (the hardware) and other educational quality inputs (the software). More planned programs for staff development and instructional materials have been directed toward the regions with poorest performance. These measures, though rational and sound, may have strengthened central influences even under shared control.

### Funds for Income-Generating Learning

Another innovative form of shared control has appeared in the form of the basic education learning fund. It encourages the conduct and development of learning activities found relevant by the village-level participants. Developed in Indonesia at the community level, the fund provides a source for direct support and flexible funding for new skills activities, identified and initiated by the village participants, and leads to additional income for group members.

The key element of the learning fund concept is bringing together ten to twenty willing villagers in small learning groups. The group prepares its members for effective participation in the development process. Collectively the members learn how to utilize the available service institutions—that is, the agricultural extension, health, family-planning, and other community service resources—to improve their lives. Together they decide and develop innovative learning programs to provide basic practical knowledge, and simultaneously they increase their income to break the mutually reinforcing cycle that ignorance and poverty have created. They earn competencies in literacy and numeracy, not as an end in themselves but as information-seeking tools to aid villagers in concrete problem solving and in acquiring a base for further self-initiated learning. Underlying these learning groups are an expanded version of basic education and an intensive participation by a central instruction agency named Penmas.

The learning groups are assisted by *peniliks*, the village-level workers from Penmas. Penmas is a directorate in the Ministry of Education, assigned to expand learning opportunities—for basic education, community education, vocational training, and women's education—among the underprivileged groups. The *peniliks* lead in organizing villagers into active learning groups and in working closely with local levels of government to ensure coordination among development activities. The *peniliks* select the learning group leader and assist the leader in managing the learning activities. The learning leader, with the help of the *penilik*, identifies initial training needs, identifies required resources (e.g., meeting site, instructors, instruction materials, and funds), and steers the learning group.

The basic education learning fund makes available startup capital on a matching basis to learning groups who wish to develop new marketable skills and to create a

source of income for the learning group members. A set of criteria guides the selection of projects for fund assistance. The degree to which a program creates productive skills, generates income, enhances effectiveness of other local development projects, and benefits the most educated and poorest member of the community is taken into account.

Disbursement from the fund is contingent on joint approval of the project—including a detailed list of costs for program inputs (simple equipment, materials, instructors) prepared by the district Penmas office and the district representative of the Department of Home Affairs—and evidence of a minimum local commitment of at least one-half of the total costs of the activity in money or kind. Moreover, the matching funds are small. No learning activity is supported by an allocation from the basic learning fund in excess of \$250–300.

The learning fund program has been implemented in seven of twenty-seven Indonesian provinces, for a total of about 3,000 learning groups. A review of the activities of the income-generating and community learning groups in rural areas carried out in 1982 determined that the outcome of the groups' activities included increased employment and income, improved knowledge and practices related to nutrition and hygiene, greater receptivity to development programs, and increased effectiveness of government services and programs for beneficiaries. The World Bank is considering further assistance of the learning groups in a forthcoming project.

## General Impressions and Experience

THE PRACTICE OF SHARING CONTROL is still new. To date it has been able to capture only partially a notion that is itself somewhat ideological and complex. Empirical work to shed light on limits of shared control—even to outline which decisions could best be shared, and which should not be and under what circumstances—is scarce or nonexistent. In the absence of such systematic research, the pendulum has swung rather regularly from favor to disfavor and back to favor of sharing control. Moreover, in some cases the concept has been perceived as analogous to participation, while in others the concept has been interpreted within a broader dimension of administrative decision-making. Fears of shared control—that it is a threat to the unity of nations, that it encourages hostile countercultures, and that it lowers standards—still persist.

The impressions offered here should not be construed as arising directly from the experience of implementing Bank-assisted education projects. In fact no country analysis has yet been conducted to gather empirical evidence. What follows are general impressions, garnered by this author from the reading of the implementation documents and from the comments of knowledgeable staff who have had experience in shared control.

### Impression 1: The Impact Is Still Unclear

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THE IMPACT of sharing control is difficult to evaluate, mainly because very few countries have implemented shared control in an explicit form. Nor has shared control produced all results expected of it. There are also very little economic analyses on the efficacy of widening control—whether centralized, decentralized, or shared. Experience, however, suggests three features that are noteworthy. First, the optimal mix of responsibilities among the sharing entities could not be and should not be predetermined in the abstract. Second, while actual shifts in the work load are easy to carry out (see Chart 4), the proper functioning of the reallocation of responsibilities depends on a myriad of socioeconomic and cultural factors. And it is unlikely that the policy planners will be able to foresee the possible influence of each of these decisions. An element of flexibility must guide shifts in decision-making. Third, even under rudimentary forms of sharing control, the relationship between the center and the sharing organizations has changed for the better. There has been an increased sense of cooperation and a higher desire for consultation between the bureaucracy and the citizenry.

### Impression 2: Total Commitment Is Required

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TO SUCCEED, the policy for sharing control should receive total and full commitment from all quarters—the administrators, legislators, and beneficiaries. The commitment should be concrete and not notional. Four measures could be indicative of such commitment. First, the procedures for sharing control have been well worked out in advance. Second, the role to be played by each of the sharing agencies has been defined in operational terms. Third, the sharing of control has been advanced exclusively for improving administrative efficiency—and not as a measure to meet political expediency. Delegation of decision-making power, therefore, should be matched with the available competence of manpower to exercise that power. Finally, during decision-making at each level the interrelationship of various agencies contributing to shared control has been understood and given due weight. Let me illustrate each of these measures.

#### Procedures

The procedures that have worked for centralized control cannot be applied to shared control, mainly because services are rendered fragmentally under centralized control. The target groups receive selected services (training of teachers, school construction, school health programs) from the central sources independently of other required services. Services delivered often bear no relation to each other with regard to timing, scope, and needs. It is the recipients' obligation to consolidate the services at the users' level (i.e., the school). Under shared control, however, the

procedure is reversed. The local authorities are expected to consolidate services and then deliver them to specialized and targeted groups independent of the rest of the population. This calls for setting out clear procedures for horizontal and vertical communication, itself a delicate and time-consuming task.

## Roles

Closely linked to the need for procedures is the need to delineate roles for each of the units sharing the control of education. Roles should be defined concretely and in operational terms. There should be clear understanding of which responsibilities each unit is entitled to exercise, and with what degree of authority, in decision-making. In defining these roles, care should be taken not to duplicate functions while avoiding gaps. Consider Papua New Guinea as an illustration. It has developed a sophisticated model for sharing control, yet there exists some anomaly in the roles to be played by the provincial and local authorities. First, all of the educational staff located in the province do not report to the provincial chief of education. Staff responsible for school inspection and supervision at primary levels, which is a provincial duty, report directly to the center. Second, there are no indications as to who would prepare textbooks and other learning materials in those subject areas which are not controlled by the center. These discrepancies have lessened the impact of shared control.

## Expediency

Sharing control has often been pursued as political expediency. Thus little regard has been attached to the technical and administrative capacity of the sharing units to take over new functions. It is ironic that in the delegation of responsibilities, little assessment of staff capability was carried out, deployment of staff in weak areas was not planned, and measures were not designed to build up the capacity of the receiving units through systematic technical assistance. In fact, where there is a lack of adequately trained staff, a precondition for sharing control should be developing other means to attract qualified personnel. Measures such as transfers with salary increment, housing, educational facilities for children, and clear rules for reentry to the central service, especially where the central service is regarded as a status symbol, should be encouraged as incentives for improving the administrative efficiency of shared control.

## Linkages

Also not fully realized is the interrelationship of decision-making among various levels of government. The tendency continues for each controlling unit to make

developmental decisions in isolation. Obviously there is a gap in the realization that performance at any administrative level influences performance at others. Sharing control is a measure to conserve resources, not to waste them by independent and isolated decisions.

### Impression 3: Resources Should Also Be Controlled

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A KEY PRECONDITION for sharing control is the authority to raise and control requisite resources—resources in finance, technical manpower, and physical facilities. The control of finances is most critical because its availability invariably determines the adequacy of other resources. If the principle of shared control is to succeed, the financial resources should be made available to sharing entities, along with the authority to use or to raise them from existing sources. Without such authority, sharing the control of functions will be meaningless. In Brazil, for example, the municipalities have recently been vested with a large number of educational functions but have been given little authority to raise the funds required to meet these additional responsibilities.

A cleavage may be noted here. The degree of control is not always directly proportional to the degree of financing. In fact, the relationship between finance and control is often intricate and complex. In many countries (e.g., Pakistan), a higher degree of financing has been associated with an equally higher level of control. In others, this relationship has not held. Diffusion of control has often started from the realization that despite a higher degree of financing, the center has been able to exercise little effective control over educational matters. In such cases the tendency has been to shift gradually the burden of financing to state and provincial levels.

### Impression 4: The Center Should Retain Its Preeminence

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ALTHOUGH THIS MAY seem a contradiction, the role of the center is critical to the success of shared control. The center should continue to keep its attribute as a strong and technically capable power, or the broader efficiency of the sector is likely to suffer. When the center is perceived as weak, trained and qualified staff wither away. This attrition forces a shift of the focal point for policy decisions to locations that are inefficient and incapable of handling decisions and results in the depletion of scarce resources. A rational strategy for shared control should not appear to erode the power and technical base of the central bureaucracy but instead should appear to conserve resources as a critical force for technical assistance and for efficient managing of shared control.

Two lessons appear pertinent. First, the technical base of the central bureaucracy could be redeployed for training of the administrators and decision-makers at the regional and local levels. Relieving the central bureaucracy from routine administration for the exclusive purpose of building technical capabilities has shown promise in the Dominican Republic. The Central Planning Commission, while retaining its principal function of policy coordination and planning, has continually used its staff

to train and strengthen regional counterparts. The shift of authority from the center has been gradual, mainly corresponding to the systematic buildup of capacity at local levels.

Second, keeping a critical mass of qualified manpower at the center has improved the capacity of the bureaucracy to respond effectively to the increased complexity of managing shared control. The chances of generating distortions are greater under shared control. The higher the degree of shared control, the greater the probability of generating distortions because the local decision-makers, by getting obsessed with meeting local needs, tend to lose the national perspective. The central influence is necessary to check and keep in balance these distortions. The rationale for central influence is that it corrects imbalances, mainly in the stock of qualified manpower; maintains uniform standards; and accords priority among equally desirable policies and goals.

### Impression 5: Controlling Authorities Should Be Prepared for Politicization of Decision-Making

POLITICIZATION of decision-making appears to be more intense under shared control of education. Peddling of influence is perceived as an accepted practice in local decision-making because it helps to reach better educational decisions, especially with respect to personnel policies, school discipline, and teacher accountability. But it has also jeopardized shared control by attracting frequent pressures from the central and regional powers to curb the practice.

The local political group is only one of many pressure groups that systematically influence local control. The centrally based power groups are more inclined to pressure the local control for somewhat negative ends and with dubious results. For example, the centrally located publisher may push textbooks that are not relevant to local needs. The national teachers' union resists widespread experimentation in flexible curriculum, mainly because this may require greater sophistication in teacher skills and longer periods of teacher upgrading. Canvassing is also frequent from regional and ethnic groups, who may demand an increasing share of the enrollment and scholarships for their constituents.

#### NOTE

1. Mr. McNamara, in his report to the Board of Governors in Nairobi (1973), observed that "in most countries, the centralized administration of scarce resources—both money and skills—has usually resulted in most of them being allocated to a small group of the rich and powerful." In his view, if developing nations were truly interested in alleviating poverty and balancing development, "experience shows that there is a greater chance of success if institutions provide for popular participation, local leadership and decentralization of authority." World Bank, *The Assault on Poverty* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), pp. 90–98.

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