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Participation in Education

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Participation in Education

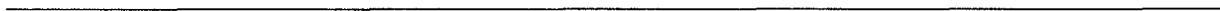
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Acronyms and Abbreviations

BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CODESSER	Chile Corporation for Rural Development
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
TM	Task Manager
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ZOPP	Objectives-Oriented Project Planning



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Executive Summary

Operations in the education sector can be greatly improved by increasing stakeholder participation of government officials, education professionals, local communities and the private sector. Participation can help to increase the relevance and quality of education, improve ownership and build consensus, reach remote and disadvantaged groups, mobilize additional resources, and build institutional capacity. Participatory operations involve risks and costs, however, and certain preconditions are necessary.

Potential Benefits

As a complement to technical expertise, promoting stakeholder participation in education planning and management can help in a number of different ways to meet the challenges facing developing education systems—to improve quality, promote equitable enrollment and control soaring public costs.

Improving the Relevance and Quality of Education

A fundamental rationale for increased stakeholder participation in the education sector is to improve the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of projects by ensuring that learning programs match the needs of the populations they are serving. The demand for education is often poorly understood, resulting in wasted resources and inappropriate programs which are not supported by the intended beneficiary groups.

A variety of Bank assisted and other projects have promoted the participation of community

members, community or school based organizations, students, and the private sector, to improve the relevance and quality of education.

- Efforts to make **primary or secondary education** more responsive to community needs have included the granting of education vouchers to families, fund transfers to school boards, and a variety of models of school or community based management. The involvement of parents and other community members in decision making has, in many cases, helped to improve teacher and student attendance rates as well as the relevance of the curriculum, teaching materials and school calendar. The result has been to boost morale, reduce drop out and repeater rates, improve achievement scores, and expand enrollment demand.
- In **nonformal education**, there has been a relatively long history of student and community participation Programs have been more effective in terms of attendance rates, learning achievements and behavioral change when learners help identify their needs, design and manage learning programs, and participate in developing learning materials. Not only are such programs more relevant to the knowledge and interests of the students, but also the participatory activities themselves support the learning process.
- Similarly, the motivation and achievement of students in **vocational and higher**

education have been enhanced when students themselves and community-based organizations participate in designing and managing programs to meet their needs. In these sectors, the involvement of private sector employers has been particularly important for improving technical standards and linking training to real employment opportunities.

Improving Ownership and Building Consensus

Participation in a sector as socially, politically and culturally sensitive as education can help to build the consensus necessary for change. Stakeholders' involvement in policy dialogue can help define the values on which policy is to be based and develop a consensus between competing interest groups; and it can ensure that proposed changes have the understanding and support of all the groups on whom successful implementation will depend.

In some cases where major policy reform has been envisaged, Education Commissions have elicited relevant information and views from all sections of society. Techniques for facilitating dialogue among stakeholders in policy and project design, and in participatory sector work, have included focus groups, workshops, conferences and innovative use of video technology.

Reaching Remote and Disadvantaged Groups

Participatory methods have been notably successful where formal education systems have proved least effective - in serving the needs of remote communities and disadvantaged groups. Participatory social research has been used to counteract the bias against disadvantaged groups, bringing to light, for example, reasons for low enrollment or poor achievement of girls in primary schools. Expertise in bringing educational opportunities to the poorest communities, and in promoting the education of women, is found in NGOs, experienced in working with community based

organizations and having the necessary flexibility to adopt participatory methods.

Mobilizing Resources

The experience of participation through cost sharing in education has been mixed. Efforts to generate community contributions of cash or labor to school construction have been most successful in remote areas where the influence of central government bureaucracy is weak. They have been least successful when communities have not participated in decisions concerning location, design, construction or education priorities. Estimating the ability and willingness of communities or individuals to share in costs, whether through student fees, or voluntary contributions of cash or labor, needs to be approached on a case by case basis, in the context of equity objectives. Even the contribution of labor in school construction has been found to be beyond the means of some of the poorest communities.

Building Institutional Capacity

As in other sectors, participation by stakeholders in designing and managing programs in the education sector can also yield substantial long term benefits beyond the individual project, by strengthening the institutional capacity for sustained development. The process of participation empowers individuals and enhances their ability to contribute to the wider development process as new skills are learned and new norms adopted. Although these external benefits are very difficult to measure, they can be inferred from many of the project reviews.

Costs and Risks

Evidence in the education sector suggests that higher initial costs may be incurred in participatory projects in order to carry out the necessary social research and community work, to disseminate information or organize workshops. Furthermore, project costs may be understated when the opportunity cost of voluntary time and effort is high. These additional costs, however, are generally offset by subsequent gains in efficiency.

There is some risk that the allocation of costs may be inequitable, or place an excessive burden on the poor, in participatory projects where substantial community contributions are sought.

Difficulties which have been encountered in participatory projects include delays in implementation, and dependence on charismatic project leaders. The risk of abuse by individuals, local elites or interest groups also has to be borne in mind, as does the potential for misuse of funds.

Commitment to a process of dialogue among groups of stakeholders involves its own risks: uncertainty is inevitable over the timing, or even the possibility, of reaching consensus; political conflicts are liable to be exposed; and there is a risk of generating social unrest by raising unrealistic expectations among participants.

These costs and difficulties notwithstanding, the risks of very expensive failure in participatory projects are judged smaller than in a typical, top-down education project, where lack of sustainability may not be recognized until after significant investment is complete.

Conditions for Success

The most important preconditions for success in participatory projects are political will on the part of central government and commitment by key actors. In cases of weak political will, support for participatory approaches has been engendered by ongoing dialogue and demonstrating potential benefits through pilot projects.

Institutional conditions may make participation more or less difficult to achieve while, in some of the poorest countries, simple scarcity of manage-

ment and communication skills may be the main constraint to increasing participation. For this reason, it is frequently necessary to build an education or training component into a participatory project (in any sector) to overcome skill shortages. Information sharing and dialogue are also important to success; in demand driven education projects, communities must have access to the best possible information on technical options, costs, benefits and realistic opportunities.

It is in the nature of participatory projects that objectives and methods are dictated by local conditions, and that the donor, task manager or external adviser takes a back seat in the decision making process. Promoting participation in education projects thus calls for additional skills and greater tolerance of uncertainty on the part of the task manager; and it puts a greater onus on the quality of project preparation, clarification of objectives and project supervision, because of the need to react flexibly to developments as the project evolves.

Task managers who are promoting participation in education projects emphasize four key elements:

- sharing information and fostering dialogue among stakeholders;
- ensuring flexibility in funding, timing and scale of projects;
- supporting stakeholder analysis and institutional development; and
- developing better systems of monitoring and evaluation, and new mechanisms for ensuring accountability.

1. Benefits and Costs of Participation

Background and Rationale

The role of education and training in economic development is now well recognized. Within the World Bank, the importance attributed to education has been reflected in an expansion of Bank lending within the sector from an annual average of US\$ 756 million in 1987-89 to a projected average of US\$ 2,742 million for 1993-95.

Yet despite increased investment, the education systems of most developing countries are facing severe problems in stretching available resources to meet growing needs. Many countries in Africa and South Asia have yet to approach universal primary education. In many parts of the world, the quality of education is poor, access is inequitable, and the enrollment of girls, in particular, in formal education is still very low. And in those countries where expansion in enrollments has been rapid, the urgent priority now is to improve the quality of education.

The basic education systems of many countries have poor and deteriorating performance in terms of student and teacher attendance, dropouts, repeaters, and achievement scores. In many cases, costs to the state of vocational and tertiary programs have become insupportable; and training frequently fails to match the needs of employers. Pressure is strong to improve educational relevance and quality, and to make access more equitable, without adding to public costs.

These problems have been exacerbated by the failure of many large-scale education programs

to benefit from the knowledge and participation of local communities. Lack of participation by stakeholders in project design and implementation has led to waste of resources in poor quality, inappropriate projects. Experience has demonstrated that participation by consumers of education services helps ensure that education and training programs are relevant to the conditions and needs of the populations they are serving.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the potential contribution of measures to increase stakeholder participation in improving the relevance, quality, and efficiency of Bank operations in the education sector. The particular questions addressed here are as follows:

- Which policy objectives in this sector potentially benefit from increased stakeholder participation?
- What is the evidence, from both outside and within the Bank, of the actual impact of various forms of participation on the relevance, quality, and efficiency of education provision?
- Under what conditions, and by what methods and approaches, can Bank staff improve the effectiveness of their work in the education sector by promoting stakeholder participation?

As defined in this paper, "participation" involves a broad spectrum of stakeholders engaged in basic, secondary, tertiary, nonformal, and vocational education and

training projects. These include staff and officials in central and local government; nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); private sector institutions; and local communities. Their participation can occur in sector research, planning and analysis, project design, implementation, and evaluation.

The form of participation may include cost sharing by local communities in school construction, school based management, participation in teacher recruitment, curriculum and textbook decisions, policy dialogue, planning, implementation, and evaluation. The forum for dialogue may be anything from a village meeting under a tree to an international conference.

The degree or intensity of participation also varies. Participants may supply materials, labor, or information to decisionmakers and programs; their views may be consulted on alternative courses of action; they may have a decisionmaking role; or they may be fully responsible for initiating action.

Admittedly, taking such a comprehensive view of the subject makes generalization difficult. However, promoting participation in education at any level has a common, underlying rationale: helping to build the social and institutional infrastructure needed for sustained development; ensuring "ownership" of policies and programs by those on whom successful implementation depends; and improving the relevance and quality of education by matching supply to demand.

Potential Benefits

Increasing Relevance and Effectiveness

Citizen participation in decisions concerning education can make education policies, projects, and learning programs more relevant to the needs and preferences of the populations they are serving. The greater the intensity of stakeholder participation in planning, decisionmaking and management, the greater the potential benefits in terms of relevance,

community support and learning achievement. On the simplest level, participation can be elicited through sample surveys, questionnaires and interviews, providing an opportunity for beneficiaries to express their needs and preferences. With more intense participation, when decisions are made and action initiated by the beneficiary groups themselves (for example, in determining curriculum content, the school calendar, and teacher recruitment) programs respond naturally to their felt needs and priorities.

At the level of the individual school, the involvement of parents and other community members in decisionmaking can help to improve teacher and student attendance rates as well as the relevance of the curriculum, teaching materials, school hours, and the calendar. The result is to boost morale, reduce dropout and repeater rates, improve achievement scores, and expand enrollment demand. Nonformal education programs generate interest, and are effective in terms of attendance, learning achievements and behavioral change, when students identify their own learning needs and participate in development of learning materials.

Improving Ownership and Building Consensus for Change

In a sector as socially, politically, and culturally sensitive as education, successful implementation of programs, and particularly of reform programs, requires the full involvement of the government and the people in its implementation and management.

The concept of demand driven education inevitably raises the question of who is generating the demand. The demand of individuals is likely to differ from the state's view of national priorities. This is due both to discrepancies between the private and social returns to investment in education, and to differing values among stakeholding groups. These differing perspectives help shape and define the answers to such questions as what language of instruction should be used, whether education of girls should be compulsory, and

Box 1**Yemen: Going Beyond Policymakers and Government Officials**

Yemen's proposed Education Sector Investment Project represents an attempt to go beyond policymakers, ministry and regional officials to include local level officials, teachers, teacher trainers, headmasters, inspectors, administrators, business and other professionals in project design.

To promote participation, two Yemeni working groups of six to seven members each were formed by the Ministry of Education (MOE), one for secondary schools and one for community colleges. These were charged with identifying priority areas for change and facilitating the preparation of an action plan to serve as a guiding document for designing a proposed Bank-financed education investment project. Through the working groups, the MOE convened two-day workshops to elicit priorities and to reach consensus with participants from each of the professional groups. The broad criteria for selecting participants were agreed between the Bank and the Ministry of Education, which sought to include those it judged to be interested in change and innovation.

Between the project identification and preparation missions, the working groups continued to meet and to map out project details and implementation strategy with the help of consultants. The secondary education working group sponsored a national workshop of teachers, headmasters, MOE officials and other professionals to discuss the scope and feasibility of the project. This resulted in a comprehensive program called the "Planned Change Program", which was then publicized and validated through a series of regional workshops. A further national workshop of headmasters recommended an innovative, school-based program of subprojects, to include community participation. Staff of the Education Research and Development Center, Sana'a, were hired as local consultants to develop subprojects for the planned change program.

The input into project design from outside the capital led to changes in emphasis in the proposed project. For example, contrary to the expectations of the Bank and the MOE, teacher performance and school management were identified as higher priorities than expansion of school facilities.

The participatory process was accomplished within the Bank's standard time frame for project preparation. The approach did not involve more staff resources, but did require a different attitude and a sensitive approach from the Bank missions. Their role during the workshops was to generate alternatives if participants reached an impasse and to refrain from directing the discussions. Since the project has not been implemented, the effects of participation on project objectives are not yet known. However, it is already clear that the proposed project components, strategies and benchmarks for monitoring progress reflect the priorities of the variety of stakeholder educators who share ownership of the project.

whether and how religious schooling should be supported.

On some matters, the student, the student's family, the local community, professional bodies, and the state all may have different ideas. The line must be drawn between decisions which can be made individually or locally and those to be imposed regionally or nationally. Where governments are committed to education as a way to establish national unity and move toward social equity, participation in policy dialogue by all groups with a stake in

the sector (central and local government, community organizations, teachers and other education professionals, parents, students, and private enterprise) can provide the means of building consensus for change.

Participation in policy dialogue is important for several reasons. First, it helps define the values on which policy is to be based and encourages more equitable distribution of educational privileges between competing interest groups. To the extent that participation gives a voice in education policymaking to a wider range of

stakeholders, including disadvantaged groups, it can contribute to social equity. Second, it promotes the social learning on which change must be based. In addition, implementing new education policies and improving practices in individual schools depends on changes in the behavior of many individuals, including teachers, heads, supervisors, and officials. Effective implementation requires that the changes have the understanding and support of these actors.

Reaching Remote and Disadvantaged Groups

Participatory methods have been notably successful where formal education systems have proved least effective—in serving the needs of remote communities and disadvantaged groups. The community support program in Balochistan (Box 3) illustrates the potential of a participatory approach to bring educational opportunities to girls in poor and remote communities.

Mobilizing Additional Resources

Participation in education and training can be instrumental in mobilizing additional resources through cost sharing by beneficiaries. In basic schooling, for example, private contributions have resulted mainly through community participation in school construction. However, participation in cost sharing, unless accompanied by participation in decisions about education priorities, does not necessarily generate the sense of ownership needed to inspire community efforts to improve the relevance and quality of education and training. When community members find that they can influence the design or management of a program, and that their involvement can lead to improvements in the school, they, in turn, are motivated to support, financially and otherwise, an institution whose relevance and value is clear to them. Whether at the level of basic schooling or higher education, participation in both decisionmaking and cost sharing bestows an element of ownership and provides an

Box 2

Community Contributions to School Construction

Efforts to encourage community contributions to school construction have met with mixed success. In addition to saving government funds, such programs are intended to prompt parents to take pride and responsibility in the school. This has proved easier in remote regions than in areas where the influence of central government bureaucracy is strong.

In the Northwest Province of Pakistan, the Aga Khan Foundation facilitated beneficiary and local government planning. Beneficiaries participated in the design and implementation of the school construction program, which were linked to a school quality improvement program through the introduction of in-service teacher training workshops.

In Nepal, a small cash grant was paid promptly to the community on the basis of results. These grants were not designated, and often they were used for parties to celebrate the completion of the buildings. Within a four-year period, 160 schools were constructed in an area with no roads. Villagers took a pride in "their school", teacher attendance improved, and there was a significant improvement in student achievement.

In Ghana, on the other hand, similar efforts were initially more supply-driven, specifying modern building technology and cumbersome payment systems, and they faltered due to bureaucratic wrangling over grant administration. In parts of Uganda, it was also difficult to mobilize community participation in school construction, in this case due to extreme poverty and the costs of diverting community labor from everyday acts of survival to school construction.

incentive for more efficient individual choices and pressure for more efficient management.

Strengthening Capacity

Capacity building of individuals and of institutions is the fourth and most fundamental source of potential benefits from participation. In education, participation not only strengthens the transfer of knowledge, but it is also a process through which the students and communities who become involved in directing activities are empowered, thus gaining self-esteem and confidence in their ability to address educational and other problems.

Dependence on skills and information from outside "experts" is reduced as abilities within the community (or school or government department) are recognized. Citizen participation is, in effect, a form of nonformal education, enhancing the ability of individuals to contribute to the development process as new skills are learned and new norms adopted. In this way, stakeholder participation in the processes of education policymaking, project and school management, and the development of learning programs, magnifies the external benefits of investment in education by accelerating the behavioral changes conducive to sustained development; at the same

Box 3

Mobilizing Community Support to Primary Schools in Pakistan

The community support program in primary education in Balochistan provides a remarkable example of what can be achieved in adverse conditions through participatory methods.

Beginning with a pilot project in 1992, the community support program has already succeeded in establishing 198 new community girls schools in remote rural villages which had no government school and no tradition of parental involvement in schools. Enrollment of girls is 100 percent in many of these villages, with very high attendance rates.

To begin the participatory process, community workers went door to door, urging parents to form an association. In each of the villages, education committees have been created, responsible for selecting a site for the school, identifying potential teachers, and monitoring teacher attendance and student enrollment.

A local girl, educated at least to eighth grade, has been identified and trained as teacher for each school. After she demonstrates her commitment by teaching for three months on a voluntary basis, mobile teacher training teams are sent to her home village to provide intensive three-month pedagogical training in order to circumvent cultural barriers preventing girls from travelling afar. Following the training, the teacher becomes a government employee: government rules, which normally require teachers to have matriculated, have been stretched to accommodate the program.

The pilot project resulted from the initiative of a Pakistani consultant. The Bank task manager, with whom she discussed her plans, recognised the potential of this approach and was able to organize USAID funding for the pilot. The consultant subsequently formed a small NGO in order to qualify for funding from other sources, which now include local and international NGOs, USAID, UNICEF and the government of Balochistan, through a World Bank loan.

At the project preparation stage, when the pilot was tried, there was no way of knowing whether the approach would work or not. The success of the pilot led to full acceptance and ownership of the program by the government, and the government itself is now funding the program on a province-wide basis using IDA credit. Because of the experimental nature of the project, World Bank support to the program has only been possible through the new lending approach which supports the entire primary education program rather than selected components.

Box 4

Building Borrower Commitment in the Philippines

The participatory process used in education sector work in the Philippines is reported to have called for much more time and patience on the part of Bank staff than would have been the case with a more traditional Bank approach, but it is hoped will pay off in terms of government commitment.

This work started with an Economic Development Institute workshop, focusing attention on the characteristics of effective schools, how schools improve, why schools were not working well, and what the priorities of reform should be. This was followed by another national seminar on the same subject. A method of broad stakeholder involvement, through a participatory workshop for project design (the ZOPP methodology), was used with 40 people from each broad geographic zone. From these participants and other stakeholders, a team was selected to draft a national implementation plan. Having secured ownership in the sector, the exercise is now being extended to the central agencies where the decision to borrow or not ultimately lies.

time, the institutions through which participation is exercised, and the linkages between these institutions, are strengthened.

While these long-term benefits are very difficult to measure, their importance is recognized to be such that more and more projects are being geared specifically to institution building.

Costs and Risks of Participation

Participatory projects may have higher initial costs than conventional education projects, and the benefits of participation may be slower to appear; but in the long term, benefits are both more substantial and sustainable. Proponents of participation implicitly place a greater value on future benefits. In the shorter term, several important costs and risks are associated with participatory processes.

Additional Costs

Additional costs, mainly in committing manpower to generate the necessary enthusiasm and momentum, are liable to be incurred in social research, community work, supervision, disseminating information, and organizing and bringing people together for conferences and workshops. Despite these costs, the risks of very expensive failure are judged smaller than in traditional, more capital intensive education projects, where the lack of sustainability may not be recognized until after the investment is

complete. When participatory projects fail to get off the ground, the initial investment is generally relatively small.

Inequitable Allocation of Costs

Because of the emphasis placed on shifting the burden of costs from public to private sources, one risk is that communities may be asked to bear more of the costs than they are able to. Even the contribution of labor in school construction (Box 2), for example, has been found to be beyond the means of some of the poorest communities. The opportunity cost of voluntary time and effort often is not accounted for in estimating cost effectiveness and may be very high in some participatory projects. The goals of equity and poverty alleviation may be jeopardized if these dangers are not recognized. Estimating the costs involved in participatory projects, and the ability and willingness of communities or individuals to share in the costs, must be approached on a case-by-case basis.

Relinquishing Control and Accepting Uncertainty

Once committed to the participatory process, the Bank, donor or central government relinquishes a measure of control over the outcome. Decisions and project or policy implementation may be delayed by failure to reach consensus. In some cases, participation has brought political conflict into the open; in others, progress has been stalled by disagreement

among donors, among NGOs, and among government departments and professional interest groups. Even when consensus is achieved, decisions reached by the participants may be contrary to the donor's or government's perception of the national interest. Furthermore, efforts to generate participation may result in social unrest if they arouse expectations which cannot be fulfilled.

Planners may have to be prepared to accept uncertainty in the timing and potential scale of project implementation, and to respond flexibly with whatever adjustments are called for on the basis of trial and error. Action may need to be taken to avoid the capture of project benefits by local elites, or to safeguard standards of accountability. The risk of abuse by individuals or groups, or of simple misuse of funds, cannot be avoided as new systems of accountability are evolved. These potential hazards place a heavy burden on supervision.

Preconditions for Success

Political Will

The potential for establishing participatory processes in the education sector depends on political will on the part of central government. This is essential not only because of the commitment needed to overcome inevitable practical obstacles to the process, but also because of the political implications of any form of citizen participation, even when no formal decentralization of authority is envisaged. Until key actors in the government are convinced that the benefits of participation outweigh the potential risks involved, external development agencies can sustain dialogue and share information on the subject. In cases of weak political will, support for participatory approaches may be engendered by using pilot projects to demonstrate potential benefits.

Commitment of Key Actors

Participatory projects are often dependent on the commitment and energy of one or more key

individuals—in government, project management and at the grassroots level—who are able to motivate others to support the participatory process and get the project off the ground. In some cases, this dependence can also have drawbacks. The education and training activities of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka are a good example of how charismatic leadership can produce both success and weakness in a program. While mass mobilization and heightened popular participation are hallmarks of the movement, many of its more innovative efforts have suffered from the lack of sustainable financial and institutional elements.

Institutional Capacity

Given the necessary political will and the commitment of key actors, institutional conditions may make participation more or less difficult to achieve. Participatory processes are easier to establish in societies where traditional as well as modern authority is based on democratic decisionmaking, as for example in Botswana (Box 8). It is easier to build on existing institutions than to create new ones. An analysis of existing structures and systems of incentives (financial and nonfinancial) facing stakeholders on whose participation a project may depend can help to identify opportunities and obstacles to building ownership. Additive (as opposed to substitutive) processes, building on existing structures by modifying their functions, can facilitate the participation process and serve as bridges to sustainable behavioral change among project beneficiaries.

Project timing and outcomes are more certain where there is experience in participation. In some of the poorest countries, where institutional capacity is extremely limited, a simple scarcity of management and communication skills may be the main constraint to increasing participation. It is frequently necessary to build an education or training component into a participatory project (in any sector) to overcome skill shortages.

2. Participation of Different Stakeholder Groups

Most participatory projects involve several different stakeholders groups. The examples which follow demonstrate approaches and methods through which quality or coverage of education services is improved by the participation of four key stakeholder groups:

- government and education professionals;
- community members;
- local, national and international NGOs; and
- the private sector.

As far as possible, details are provided on the results and benefits which have been produced through the participatory process. Unfortunately, monitoring indicators of participation, or of the impact of participation on social and economic variables, have been largely neglected to date. More recently, these have begun to receive attention in project design.

Government and Education Professionals

The argument for greater participation by government, project management, and education professionals is based on the recognition that education policies and projects will be better designed and better implemented if they are produced by those who must make them work. This includes teachers, school heads, supervisors, and officials. A review of the literature on policy implementation in Africa, for example, found that, of 145 policies examined, less than 10 percent were mostly or

completely implemented. This failure in many countries to implement education policies is attributed in large part to the lack of national ownership. In many cases, policies are the product of debate within the international aid establishment rather than the country concerned. Hence the rationale for the participation of as many interested parties as possible in the process of dialogue and decisionmaking—as, for example, in the preparation of Yemen's Education Sector Investment Project, described in Box 1, and in the sector work described in Boxes 4 and 5.

Community Level

Community participation in the education sector can occur in a number of different activities: research and data collection; dialogue with policymakers; school management; curriculum design; development of learning materials; and school construction. In all cases, community participation is sought for one or more of three broad purposes:

- to improve the quality of service and to increase enrollment demand by making education relevant to the needs of beneficiaries;
- to create a sense of ownership by community members, so that services benefit from their knowledge and practical support and are sustained; and
- to improve access to education for disadvantaged groups which conventional projects fail to reach.

Box 5**Madagascar: Bank/Ministry Collaborative Field Study**

In a recent study on the quality of primary and secondary education in Madagascar, Bank staff have collaborated with a fourteen person technical group from the Ministry of National Education in conducting a qualitative field study of thirty-six primary and secondary schools. With Bank assistance, the technical group prepared a statement of expected learning outcomes from each level of education, identified the school level factors that their experience suggests influence these outcomes, and undertook field observations of two to three days in each school. The group prepared a case study on each school, analyzed the collective data for general conclusions, and wrote a final report of their research. Their findings formed the basis for *journées de réflexion* held in each region of the country with various stakeholders, and for a national seminar of senior education administrators on the factors that determine school quality in Madagascar.

This study and the results of discussions about its findings form the core of the Bank's sector study. The sector study also takes into account a statistical analysis of the performance of the education system (conducted mainly by Malagasy nationals and presented at the national seminar) and the findings of quantitative surveys on school achievement and reasons for high wastage in primary school student enrollments. The study, which has taken about a year longer than a normal Bank sector study, includes statements of learning objectives, thirty-six case studies and a final report, and most important, a new awareness and vocabulary about school quality in the policy dialogue in Madagascar.

Participatory Research and Data Collection

Effective targeting of education programs to meet the needs of disadvantaged groups depends on building the capacity for participation at the local level and requires, as the starting point, good information about the perceptions, values and existing organizational structures and associations of beneficiary communities.

Systematic social assessment techniques are being used more widely within the Bank to assist in project design. Used iteratively, they

are also a valuable monitoring and evaluation tool. These techniques identify affected populations and the social factors, such as gender, ethnicity, organizational competence, or land tenure, which influence their access to project benefits. They indicate the risks due to lack of knowledge or lack of capacity, and point to measures to create awareness, reduce conflict, and strengthen existing organizations and local capacity. Social assessments can also describe how participation could be organized, and whether the capacity to organize participation would best be developed in the public, private, or NGO sectors.

Box 6**Mali: Using Beneficiary Assessment to Identify Educational Problems**

A beneficiary assessment was conducted in Mali as part of an education project to investigate why parents in rural areas were not sending their children to school. Attendance of girls was especially low. The assessment, carried out by local people with the assistance of Malian sociologists, found that the costs of transportation and feeding the children at school, plus the opportunity costs of the children's labor at home, outweighed the benefits of a poor quality education with few prospects for finding a job. These findings led to new policies that reduced the costs to beneficiaries by building schools in closer proximity, increased attendance by designing a girls component, and trained teachers to improve the relationship between parents and the school system.

In the education sector, assessments have been used to identify measures to encourage school enrollment and, in particular, to improve the access of women to education and training services. Such measures may include *social marketing or awareness campaigns* to overcome lack of knowledge; and changes in the location, schedule, staffing, content, or beneficiary costs of services to make them more relevant to social and material conditions.

Beneficiary assessment is a systematic, qualitative method of inquiry, designed to complement the questionnaire survey through in-depth conversational interviewing, as well as through direct

and participant observation. The goal is to obtain information for managers and policymakers concerning the values and behavior of stakeholders in relation to a planned or ongoing intervention. Beneficiary assessments have been used in Bank work in the education sector in Mali (see Box 6) and Turkey; the approach has been instituted in the country work programs of Southern Africa and South Asia to improve the quality of project design, monitoring, and evaluation. Beneficiary assessments have also proved appropriate in integrated Social Action Programs in Bolivia, Zambia, and Madagascar to ensure that programs are demand driven

Box 7

The Gambia: Participatory Research Uncovers Reasons for Low Enrollment and High Dropout

An innovative approach was used in this survey to gain a better understanding of the reasons for low enrollment and high drop out rates of girls in primary education in the Gambia. In addition to conventional survey methods (including questionnaires in schools, teacher interviews and parent focus interviews), the techniques of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) were used. These techniques included mapping, diagramming and sequential interviewing, designed to counteract the bias against disadvantaged groups and provide a voice to people who are not usually heard.

Thirteen local researchers, including statisticians, Ministry of Education staff and teenage girls (to interview their peers) were trained in PRA methods. After trials in three villages, the team carried out a series of projects in seven villages and seven urban schools. Focus group discussions were held, where community members were asked to explain their problems and how education related to those problems. Villagers constructed matrices of community and educational problems, drew seasonal diagrams on income and expenditure, constructed social-educational "maps" of the village, identified households with girls of school age, and provided a wealth of socioeconomic information.

These techniques elicited a variety of new insights into the perceptions of villagers concerning the education of girls, including information which could not have been obtained from interviews and questionnaires alone. One of the most startling results was the discovery that one quarter of all the school-age girls (those who were pregnant, married, or about to be married) had been missed by enrollment statistics since they had not been counted by villagers in the initial census. Costs to parents, including hidden costs and the timing of school fee payments which coincided with the season of lowest income, were seen as the biggest problem associated with education. As a result of this research, various measures have been introduced, including a change in the timing of fee payments.

This work was followed up by a second project, working with two rural communities to examine practical community based solutions to the problems identified in the first project, and to assess available community resources for implementing such solutions. Options deemed by the community to have the highest chance of success were integrated into a Community Action Plan. Women in one of the villages, for example, decided to start a communal farm and to divert half the income from sales of farm produce towards school costs for girls.

and that adjustments are made on the basis of feedback on their social impact. The time and cost involved in beneficiary assessments varies considerably. Those which have been Bank supported generally have been completed within a six-month period, at a cost of less than \$80,000.

A variety of techniques for more rapid assessment, such as *participatory rural appraisal* or *rapid rural appraisal*, have been utilized to counteract the bias against disadvantaged groups. These techniques, which include the participation of villagers in mapping, diagramming and sequential interviewing, have so far been used mainly in relation to community agricultural projects. They were applied for the

first time in the education sector in a recent survey in the Gambia (see Box 7) where participatory rural appraisal techniques were combined with conventional survey methods to investigate the factors contributing to low enrollment of girls in primary schools.

Dialogue with Policymakers

Including community level representatives in the dialogue on education policy can help to inform the policy debate and to ease the implementation of reforms. Even where national ownership of policy is not in doubt, and where there are effective institutions for consultation at all levels, there may still be a conflict between the need for rapid implementation of large-scale changes and the time

Box 8

Botswana: A Policy of Education through Partnership

To restructure and extend Botswana's basic education system, the Ministry of Education (MOE) initiated an innovative approach to policy dialogue and analysis. Called the Consultative Conference, it incorporated the use of video tape as a way of linking up the village and school voices with the national policymakers. Four key policy issues were identified for public scrutiny: the role of the community in the development and operation of the schools; the curriculum; the drop-out problem; and communication about education changes.

The process was organized through a series of participative meetings and an innovative use of video tapes. In-depth interviews were carried out with key stakeholders including chiefs, senior and influential community leaders, headmasters, teachers, students (including unemployed Community Junior Secondary School graduates) and parents. After an initial profile of responses was analyzed for each of the policy areas, questions were framed and a representative sample of new interviews was videotaped. Rather than inhibiting respondents, the use of video cameras motivated respondents to become more forceful and pointed, knowing that the video was to be shown to senior government officials. The tapes were edited and four ten-minute presentations were created which highlighted the range of responses with a sequence of powerful images. The full force of frustration and misinformation was presented, along with strongly expressed views as to what might be done. The four tapes were the centerpiece of a series of conferences, the first directed at national leadership and attended by the Minister of Education and virtually all top educational officials, public figures, representatives of business and of donor agencies. The responses of national leaders at this conference were recorded on a fifth video which was then shown with the others at three regional conferences, to which local leaders, educators and community representatives were invited.

The process aimed to develop a collective perspective on problems, rather than to solve them. It provided a unique experience for technical experts and senior officials, as well as community leaders, chiefs and school staff. The resulting dialogue helped to move the country towards a consensus of action at local, regional and national levels. To some extent, the conferences reestablished public confidence in the process of education policymaking, which had been under attack. They led to improvements in communications among the ministry, the schools, and the community school boards, and stimulated local initiatives for improved community support to the schools.

Box 9
Brazil: School Decentralization

In 1991, immediately following a change in government, a new policy was introduced in Minas Gerais, Brazil, to attack serious problems in public basic education. Only 40 percent of students were completing all eight grades and the cost of repetition, in a school population of three million, was estimated at \$280 million a year. The solution to the problem of quality in public basic schools was sought through a series of measures including enhancing the participation of the local community. This was done on the principle that changes happen within the school and would be facilitated by granting a measure of pedagogical, administrative and financial autonomy to the schools.

Two factors were considered crucial in motivating participation: providing schools with a budget; and transparency through sharing all information and discussing all issues with parents. Parents participated in the election of school boards, which are composed of teachers, parents and students over 16 years of age. Within regulations set at the federal and state levels, school boards have some freedom in setting curricula and school calendar. Each school receives a grant, now allocated according to a formula designed to improve equity by paying higher per student allowances to schools with special needs. Expenditure is subject not to procurement regulations but to democratic decision. The board takes responsibility for a variety of administrative, financial and pedagogical matters, on the basis of a five year development plan, prepared by the principal, approved by the board, and updated annually.

In practice, the degree of parental participation has varied greatly between schools, depending largely on the extent to which former as well as new principals have encouraged the involvement of parents in making decisions that affect the school operation. However, the level of interest is frequently very high and, while school boards are required to meet only four times a year, school boards that hold monthly meetings are not unusual.

The problem of political patronage, which had been widespread, was overcome by giving the school community the power to select its principal from a pre-qualified shortlist. Transparent procedures, including competitive examinations and assessment of professional qualifications, are used to identify the three best qualified candidates for each school. Before the school community makes the final selection by secret vote, each candidate prepares a three-year plan which it presents to the assembly.

Conflicts between interest groups, as power was shifted away from the traditional elites, were confronted by giving high priority to building consensus for the changes among all interested groups, including churches, universities, consumer groups and government. Many of the changes have been written into law. The new system for selecting principals is currently being contested in the Supreme Court but, because it is supported by consensus and strong commitment by local communities, this is not seen as a serious threat.

In 1992, standardized student assessment was first implemented for the whole third grade population, providing a snapshot of problems for the benefit of school boards and their development plans. Schools received the data with enthusiasm and results were discussed in seminars with parents to determine methods for improvement. It is too early to evaluate the full impact of the changes, but there are said to be strong indications of improvements in morale, attendance rates and student achievement.

required to ensure that the changes are widely understood and accepted at the community level.

Botswana's policy for rapid expansion of junior secondary education, for example, emerged

from a long process of consultation by the national Education Commission. However, time was insufficient to create ownership and real participation on the part of the local communities, upon whose partnership implementation depended. In response to growing

Box 10
Ghana and Chad: Difficulties of Decentralization

Decentralization has tended to prove more successful in improving teacher discipline when authority has been devolved to the school and community rather than to local authorities. Community pressure is more likely to improve teacher performance than external supervision since few bureaucracies are willing to take action against teachers. Although devolving authority from the center to the districts can improve the management and effectiveness of rural schools, it is often hampered by reluctance on the part of central authorities to devolve sufficient control over budgetary resources and recruitment. District elites tend in some cases to favor the better endowed and secondary schools. In practice, the central government may show greater concern for real local problems.

In Ghana, for example, the central government kept public school fees low; however, when districts were given authority, they used fees on the school child to raise general revenues, resulting in a decline in primary school enrollments for the first time in many years. In Chad, conflicts at both the central and community level over power sharing led to a compromise along functional lines. Conflict centered first on the question of shifting power from the center; it was eventually decided that the inspectorate, policy design and quality control would remain at the central level. The second source of conflict was at the local community level, between the community (which would be meeting 40 percent of teachers costs) and local administrators who were reluctant to devolve responsibility for pedagogical matters to nonprofessionals. A compromise was reached, whereby the community representatives agreed to consult the local education administrators.

public concern, the Ministry of Education initiated an innovative consultative process (described in Box 8), using *video interviews*, to promote dialogue, connect grassroots beneficiaries more directly with often distant policymakers, and restore public confidence in the policymaking process.

Decentralization and School Based Management

Recognizing that the beneficiaries (parents, community leaders, and students) can often determine best what they want from their school, and what measures are needed to make it more effective, there is a strong case for devolving authority over aspects of school management to the local level. A wide variety of different approaches have been taken to devolve financial and administrative control, either to local communities or to school district authorities (see Box 10).

One relatively simple method of facilitating involvement of parents and school staff is the granting of funds through transfers to the local level via block or capitation grants, or vouchers, to be spent at the discretion of the district,

community, school board, PTA, management committee, or individual households. Expenditure priorities among these groups are often surprising. In Guinea, for example, many schools invested in burglar bars because investing in security in the initial phase made better sense than an investment in equipment. The result of granting discretion over expenditure is to provoke new thought in the community about what is most needed in the school and what the possibilities are for improvements.

More intense participation, through local management and accountability, has helped to overcome many of the causes of poor achievement in schools, such as inappropriate curricula, textbooks, school hours and calendar and, in particular, poor teacher attendance and performance.

Much of the experience in devolving management responsibilities to the school has been in Latin America. The new policy introduced in Minas Gerais, Brazil, to improve quality in schools by enhancing community participation, provides one example (see Box 9).

El Salvador and Mexico represent two alternative models of community participation in primary education. In Mexico, the state governments are responsible for both the finance and delivery of primary education. Public school teachers are employees of the state, and their recruitment and pay are determined by the state. In 1989, in response to difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers for rural schools, a pilot program was initiated in 1,000 schools for the purpose of paying teachers a salary supplement equal to 80 percent of their normal salary. This policy was meant to aid recruitment and address the equally serious problem of teacher absenteeism from the classroom. Special community level school committees comprised of parents, school administrators, and local authorities were established to monitor teacher attendance and to send quarterly attendance reports to the state authorizing payment of the supplemental salary. The success of this pilot resulted in its expansion to 5,400 schools in disadvantaged areas in four states, partly financed by a Bank loan. Preliminary data showed a significant reduction in teacher absenteeism and, in 1994, the component was extended to ten more states under the Bank's Second Primary Education project.

In 1991, the government of El Salvador established a program called *Education con Participacion de la Comunidad* (EDUCO) with the objective of expanding coverage of preschool and primary education. This program gives community groups in rural areas where there is insufficient school coverage the legal authority to manage public schools. A general parents assembly elects for a three-year term a school board which is authorized to receive and allocate funds. The Education Ministry signs an agreement with each school board specifying the pay level of teachers and other expenses, and specifying a school year of at least 160 days, which is significantly longer than that of regular public schools. The board is responsible for providing the school buildings. The Ministry transfers monies adequate to cover teachers' pay and teaching materials to the board's private bank account. The board recruits, contracts (for one year renewable) and pays the teacher. The allocation of funds for teaching materials is decided jointly between the board and the teacher. The board can release the teacher in case of inadequate performance. The Ministry has been sufficiently satisfied with the results of EDUCO that about 25 percent of schools in El Salvador now have

Box 11

United States: Community Design of Educational Materials

Educational materials produced by community members can be among the most effective communication and learning tools. Not only is the product more meaningful (relevant) to the community, but the process of designing and producing the learning materials itself stimulates interest and enhances a variety of skills.

A classic example is the community-produced "photonovel", first used as a participatory learning method in New York State to mobilize community action to combat a rodent pest problem. The client community, assisted by facilitator participants from the Health Department, controlled all aspects of the production and content of their photonovel. Storyline material was generated by discussions of fundamental community problems at several open meetings, and community members were selected to be the photographed actors.

The results were: a 16-page comic style booklet which people in the community found much more interesting than the commercially produced posters, pamphlets and films; the desired behavioral changes (in refuse disposal and neighborhood clean-up); closer understanding between staff members of the Health Department and community members; and improved cooperation between community groups. Photonovels and other popular media learning materials have been developed by learners and used in literacy and nonformal education environmental and agriculture programs throughout the world from Ecuador to Tanzania and Indonesia.

such community groups. So far, only about two percent of teachers in EDUCO schools have been fired as a result of bad performance or absenteeism.

Development of Curriculum and Learning Materials

Community participation in curriculum design and the production of learning materials has two important benefits: it ensures that the curriculum and materials used are appropriate to the interests and experience of students; in addition—as illustrated by the example from the USA in Box 11—the process of participation itself generates interest and builds new skills.

Colombia's *Escuela Nueva* program for multi-grade schools now serving one million children in rural communities, represents yet another model of school based government and community participation, this time placing emphasis on a community based school curriculum. The program, which was created in the mid-1970s in an effort to overcome curriculum, training and administrative deficiencies in multigrade rural schools, incorporates a number of innovative components, including participation of students in school government and community participation in the school curriculum. In each learning task, self instructional textbooks guide students to identify examples and cultural elements from their own experience and local materials to be accumulated in the learning centers. The oral tradition is transcribed and classified. Local crafts, jobs and economic activities, health problems, geography, landscapes, transport, sports, dances, food, animals, vegetation, minerals, and so on, are also described and classified for use in learning experiences. Teachers are encouraged to organize meetings with parents, discussing the material prepared by the students. Children also participate in health, sanitation and nutrition activities. In this way, the school gradually becomes a resource center for the teacher, for agencies operating in other sectors and, eventually, for the community itself.

In addition, *Escuela Nueva* children are introduced to civic and democratic life through student councils. Students organize into committees to take care of discipline, cleaning, maintenance, sports, school garden, newspaper, and library. They also cooperate in the instructional process by helping slower students. This is seen as an essential part of the curriculum, as it creates linkages between the school and the community. Evaluation of this program, which has evolved and expanded over two decades to include some 25,000 schools, suggests that student achievement, dropout rates, and civic behavior all compare favorably with the output of traditional schools, at similar unit costs.

NGOs

NGOs often have the greatest expertise in reaching the poorest communities, and in promoting the education of women, through participatory methods. As a result, various forms of collaboration are being developed, for example between NGOs and state education authorities (Box 12) and between international and national NGOs (Box 13). Two notable examples of NGO activities in the education sector are described below.

Bangladesh: BRAC

The experience of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) in primary education for the least privileged children demonstrates what can be achieved in poor communities beyond the reach of government services. Many of the BRAC schools have also proved more efficient and cost effective than government primary schools serving more privileged communities.

Now the largest nongovernmental program in Bangladesh, with more than 6,000 schools, the program was initiated ten years ago, as a result of concerns expressed by women enrolled in one of BRAC's functional education programs. These women were asking, "What about our

Box 12

India: Building Women's Empowerment into Project Design

In India, as a means to ensure community support and the full participation of women in the Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project, the Mahila Samakhya (MS) women's empowerment program has been built into project design. MS is an autonomous body, whose program is based on participatory principles. Project functionaries are facilitative, not directive; planning, decisionmaking and evaluative processes are accountable to the collective of village women. The program is not hurried, and it does not have targets. Rather, it is a self-paced process, built on existing knowledge and women's own priorities for learning. MS will interact in a structured way with the district and State education machinery, and it is envisaged that its role will be expanded as the project evolves.

children? Must they grow up illiterate and wait until they are eighteen to come to your program?" BRAC responded by helping the women form a school committee, find a site and guiding them in managing their school. The schools, not intended as permanent institutions, cater to a single cohort of students who enrol during the same school year and who move together through three years of schooling. Once the three year cycle is complete, the school ceases to exist unless there are at least thirty eligible children

(60 to 70 percent of whom are girls) in the community whose families are interested in enrolling them. Recently, all BRAC schools have continued into a second or third cycle.

By limiting eligibility to families with fewer than two hectares of land, BRAC is reaching children of the least-privileged families. The majority of teachers, who must have at least a ninth grade education, are women, selected from village residents to narrow the social

Box 13

Indonesia: International and National NGO Collaboration

Under the Improved Environmental Management and Advocacy (IEMA) Project-Phase I, World Education (WE), an international NGO working in Adult Nonformal Education, collaborates with twelve Indonesian nongovernmental organizations to develop education and training programs on pesticide-related problems for farmers, NGO staff, consumers, and provincial regulatory officials. The goal of the IEMA project is to assist Indonesian farm families to develop critical ecological, decisionmaking, and leadership skills that reduce environmental degradation and health risks and increase productivity in their farming systems.

WE's contribution to these efforts has been focused on local organizational development and use of primary learning approaches in technical programs to promote education and action on local environmental problems. The IEMA project provides technical and management assistance on a monthly basis through farmers field schools to NGOs and farmer networks. It also manages a small grant fund for specific NGO activities, and offers specialized training on program design, management, and nonformal education methods for NGO staff. This project further facilitates inter-institutional learning by organizing quarterly forums in project villages bringing together local community members, NGO program managers, farmer experts, government officials, and other resource people in ecology, agriculture, and education to assess program progress and plan.

In addition to farmer training on integrated pest management, there are two other smaller components of the IEMA project. One of these supports an advocacy and consumer education program on pesticides, and the other provides training on participatory learning approaches to a wider group of development and conservation organizations in Indonesia.

distance between beneficiary and service agent. They receive fifteen days basic training, after which BRAC provides a high level of support, supervision and continuous in-service training. BRAC also supplies materials and management support. Parents, on their part, determine the school schedule, pledge to send their children to school, to attend monthly meetings, and to replace broken slates and worn out mats.

The approach to instruction is traditional, with traditional textbooks provided by BRAC. Curriculum content is similar to Classes I to III in the formal schools. BRAC's program monitoring unit tracks quality issues and managers are working constantly on revisions and improvements to the curriculum and to teacher training materials

Evaluation of the program has revealed that although BRAC schools cater to less privileged children, student achievement is comparable to, or better than, that of formal school students. Public costs per enrolled student are about the same in BRAC as in government schools, with a much higher share of BRAC expenditure devoted to management and supervision. However, drop out and repeater rates were found to be much lower than in government schools: of students who enter Class I, nine out of ten BRAC students continue to enter Class IV compared with only five out of ten from government schools. As a feeder system for the higher levels of the government system, therefore, BRAC is clearly more cost-efficient.

UNIFEM's Gender Education Project

In 1991, UNIFEM funded the Baha'i International Community to implement a gender education project in Malaysia, Cameroon, and Bolivia, to stimulate dialogue in local communities concerning the status of women. The project utilized the existing network of national and grassroots organizations already established by the Baha'i community in these countries. Global Vision Inc. provided technical assistance for the project which used traditional

media (peoples' drama) to explore cultural, social and spiritual values which traditionally defined and characterized women's roles. This use of communication technology facilitated community gender exchange, bringing men into the dialogue and redefining values in light of a broader vision of development.

An evaluation of the project was conducted using similar participatory methods. While there were differences in degree of change in attitudes and behaviors between project sites, specific changes noted across sites were found in family labor patterns (men taking up more of the burden of housework), in family finance (men spending more of their discretionary income on the welfare of the family), in the use of female leisure time for self-improvement (literacy classes), in the increased number of women elected to decisionmaking bodies, in reductions in reported alcohol abuse and subsequent spouse abuse, and in significant increases in female enrollment in primary school.

Private Sector

Private sector involvement in vocational and higher education is now widespread and is encouraged for three reasons: as a means of ensuring that training matches the needs of employers; as a source of technical expertise; and as a source of funds.

Chile: CODESSER Training Schools

Chile's Corporation for Rural Development (CODESSER) provides a particularly successful example of agricultural and industrial training schools which have transformed the opportunities of graduates by developing financial and technical links with local entrepreneurs. The program, which has evolved over the last ten years in a learning-by-doing process, now manages fifteen agricultural and two industrial schools, using private sector involvement to ensure links to the job market and continual improvements and innovations within the schools themselves.

Initially, CODESSER took over four schools whose reputations were so low that it was difficult to attract students. The organization now manages seventeen schools, including two industrial schools, some of which now receive more than 300 applicants for 45 first year openings. Interest in enrolling in CODESSER's schools is well founded: more than 75 percent of the agricultural school graduates are working in middle management agricultural jobs.

When CODESSER takes over a school's management, it designates a Regional Directory made up of seven recognized farmers or industrial entrepreneurs. The participation of the private sector is deemed central, not only to the educational objective, but also to the achievement of a greater convergence between the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of the school's programs and the vocational training needs of the agriculture and industrial sectors. The involvement of the private sector also offers a direct connection to the job market

and an effective medium to bring about organizational and productive innovations in the schools.

The schools offer training to entrepreneurs through an agreement signed with the National Society of Farmers. The National Service for Employment and Workers' Training (SENCE) has also developed a program which collects proposals to design and offer training to targeted groups in specific localities. While the content of the training programs is determined by trainers, a condition for funding by SENCE is that all trainees must receive an apprenticeship contract for a minimum of three months. As a result, the institutions that provide training must have a clear assessment of the market demand for the skills they offer. CODESSER has been active in proposing courses and provides school facilities and personnel (who earn an additional income) for rural training courses financed by SENCE.

3. Practical Implications for Bank Task Managers

Participatory Approach

The wide variety of experience described above suggests that participatory processes call for a change in approach rather than adherence to a blueprint. It is in the nature of participatory projects that objectives and appropriate methods will be dictated by local conditions, and that the donor, or task manager (TM), will relinquish a degree of control, taking a back seat in the decisionmaking process. In many cases, the progress of the project is determined through a process of trial and error, the precise outcome of which cannot be predicted.

Just as back-seat driving can be more stressful than driving, taking a back seat does nothing to reduce the burden of the TM. Promoting participation in projects (whether by the borrower, NGOs, the private sector, or local communities) calls for additional time and skills and for greater tolerance of uncertainty. It puts a greater onus on the quality of project preparation, clarification of objectives, and project supervision because of the need to react flexibly and sometimes innovatively to developments as they occur. Similarly, where the objective is decentralization within the borrowing country, shifting responsibility from central to local levels demands flexibility and skilled manpower at the center.

The kinds of difficulties which can be encountered include: the exposure of political conflicts; dependence in the initial stages on one, or a few, key actors; delays and uncertainty concerning the timing and scale of implementation; and the need for innovative systems of accountability, to minimise the risk of abuse by

individuals, local elites or interest groups. Social accounting through peer pressure, as utilized successfully in the Grameen People's Banking Movement in Bangladesh (where loan collection rates are nearly 100 percent), is a useful example of an innovative system to ensure transparency and accountability in the education sector as well.

Task managers who have used participatory methods recommend that attention be given to these key elements, as outlined in Box 14, to improve the quality of project entry and results on the ground:

- promoting a quality dialogue among stakeholders;
- ensuring flexibility in funding, timing, and scale;
- supporting organizational and institutional development; and
- ensuring mechanisms for accountability, including appropriate monitoring and evaluation.

Task managers have also made the following specific recommendations for those engaged in fostering participatory practices.

Feasibility

- A systematic approach should be developed to assess the feasibility and net benefits of different forms of participation in education on a case-by-case basis. Teamwork is intrinsically costly, involving

not only planning and coordination to ensure cooperation, but also time spent to arrive at collective decisions and to supervise implementation. Analysis of the allocation of the costs of participation between the Bank, the borrower, the beneficiary community, and any other affected groups should not exclude the opportunity cost of time and other resources called for at the community level, and the capacity of poor communities to meet these costs.

- An institutional assessment should be carried out at the stage of project identification, covering governmental and nongovernmental organizations, donor agencies, and community organizations, to determine whether sufficient institutional capacity exists for the proposed project or, if not, what training components would be required.

Techniques

From the country case experience noted above, some of the more prominent techniques for promoting popular participation are as follows:

- Drawing on **social assessments**, including beneficiary assessment and participatory rural appraisal, to ensure that the values, perceptions and real needs of beneficiary populations are taken into account in education policymaking, planning, implementation and evaluation.
- Supporting stakeholder analysis and participation through **workshops, conferences, and focus groups** to stimulate debate on education priorities. The role of Bank staff is seen as facilitating rather than directing the debate. Economic Development Institute seminars, ZOPP style workshops, among other training and consensus building activities, have proved valuable on a number of occasions, in getting this process started. "The earlier the better" is the watchword for participation by stakeholders in the policy debate or in project design.

- Innovative use of **media**, from videotape to photo-novels, to mobilize community participation in education policy dialogue and in learning programs. Traditional media such as puppet theaters, street plays, minstrel groups and story telling have also been utilized effectively in many parts of the world for mobilizing participation of the community.
- The use of **pilot projects** to test the viability of a new participatory process. Since neither the precise evolution of the process nor the pace of project expansion can be predicted from the outset, **iterative planning and monitoring** are essential.
- Devolving a measure of **local budgetary control** to the individual school or beneficiary community to focus community knowledge and effort for school improvements.
- Identifying effective institutional agents—**intermediary organizations**, including NGOs and community based associations—and key informants, to enhance the educational status of women, and the participation of disadvantaged groups in the education process.
- Introducing **social or peer accounting** to complement cost or economic accounting in people intensive, participatory project work.

Procedures and Funding

Bank procedures, and many government procedures, tend to operate against effective local level participation in education planning and management. The Community Support Process, included in the Balochistan Primary Education Program and described in Box 3, provides a good illustration of some of the obstacles to Bank support for participatory processes in education; it also illustrates how these obstacles can be overcome with determination and ingenuity on the part of the task manager concerned, and why it is well worth the effort.

Box 14

Key Elements in the Participatory Approach: Task Managers' Recommendations

- Dialogue**
- Identify key stakeholders and intermediaries (motivators and innovators). These may be government officials, educators, local consultants or NGO personnel. Establish and maintain dialogue. Learn to listen.
 - Economic Development Institute seminars have proven valuable in instigating debate on education and introducing task managers to key actors.
 - In selecting consultants, give higher priority to the required personal qualities and communication skills.
 - Maintain continuity in Bank team from project design through supervision.
- Flexibility**
- Funding:*
- Participation is facilitated by program rather than project lending, allowing for the creation of revolving funds, matching grants, on-lending mechanisms, and other such flexible *uses* of money.
 - Be able to react quickly with small amounts for short term needs. New *sources* of flexible, small funds are needed. Project Preparation Facility and Special Project Preparation Facility preparation funds can be helpful. Bilateral Trust Funds, UNDP and Japanese Grant Fund are filling a gap but are time consuming to obtain for small amounts. The creation of the Institutional Development Fund, Participation and NGO Window may be promising vehicles for financing on a low risk grant basis. The Asian Development Bank's Technical Assistance Grants are a useful model for mainstreaming such flexible low risk financing within the normal Bank project processing cycle.
- Timing and scale:*
- Be prepared to relinquish some control over project scale and the pace of implementation. Neither schedules nor the pace of expansion can be forced. It is often necessary to start with a pilot project.
- Accountability**
- Project design:*
- Concentrate on defining procedures and criteria rather than details. Mechanisms for transparency and accountability (particularly social or peer pressure), for the allocation of training vouchers, or for sub-project contracts, can be built into project design.
- Procurement:*
- Bank conditions are inappropriate for small organizations and urgent needs. Sector Adjustment Loans have been helpful in this regard. Alternative accountability systems are also necessary. (For example, use agreed unit costs and procurement schedules for six months to one year in advance of implementation, and follow only with sampled checks during semi-annual supervision missions.)
- Monitoring and evaluation*
- Incorporate systematic social and institutional analysis in project preparation and appraisal stages.
 - Use iterative social assessment to monitor project impact, and an evaluation system which is formative and summative. (For example, postcard monitoring check-ups, semi and annual reviews, and midterm reviews to emphasize feedback to decisionmakers and beneficiaries and to make program adjustments.)

In this case, a pilot project resulted from the initiative of a Pakistani consultant. The Bank task manager, with whom she discussed her plans, recognised the potential of this approach and was able to organize USAID funding for the pilot. The consultant subsequently formed a small NGO in order to qualify for funding from other sources, which now include local and international NGOs, USAID, UNICEF and the government of Balochistan, through a World Bank loan.

At the project preparation stage, when the pilot was tried, there was no way of knowing whether the approach would work or not. The success of the pilot led to full acceptance and ownership of the program by the government, and the government itself is now funding the program on a province-wide basis using IDA credit. Because of the experimental nature of the project, World Bank support to the program has only been possible through the new lending approach which supports the entire primary education program rather than selected components.

The need for a new source of flexible, small funds to support research and pilot projects has been emphasized by a number of TMs. In the Balochistan case, USAID funded the pilot project. In other cases, the UN Development Programme or the Japanese Grant Fund have filled the gap. In the effort to secure funds from these sources, TMs find that they are spending

an excessive amount of time in relation to the small sum involved, and occasions when the need for funds is immediate.

Bank procurement requirements are inappropriate for the urgent needs of small organizations, such as those of the NGO responsible for implementing the Community Support Process. The pilot project was run by one key consultant with the assistance of a few community workers who formed an NGO in order to qualify for project funds. Although this was clearly the only organization capable of running the project, the procedure for "sole source justification" proved tedious and time consuming, once again taking an excessive amount of time on the part of the TM. New bidding procedures are needed which can not only accommodate small organizations with limited bureaucratic or English language skills but will also ensure that appropriate new criteria are incorporated to judge capacity in field and community work.

Systematic monitoring of the progress of the Balochistan village education committees is being introduced and should yield valuable information on the nature, and wider impact, of the participatory process itself, as well as the degree of success in meeting educational objectives. A number of staff members are working independently within the Bank to develop appropriate indicators for participation in education projects. Coordination of these efforts would be very useful.

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