Transitions in Secondary Education in Sub-Saharan Africa

Equity and Efficiency Issues
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Equity and Efficiency Issues

Secondary Education in Africa (SEIA)
Africa Region Human Development Department

THE WORLD BANK
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Foreword

Many African countries are undertaking important economic reforms, improving macroeconomic management, liberalizing markets and trade, and widening the space for private sector activity. Where such reforms have been sustained they produced economic growth and reduced poverty. However, Africa still faces serious development challenges in human development, notably in post-primary education. The World Bank incorporated this within its Africa Action Plan (AAP) by underscoring the fundamental importance of expanding not only primary but also secondary and higher education, and linking it to employment options for African youth.

The Education for All-Fast Track Initiative (EFA-FTI) involves over 30 bilateral and international agencies and has made important strides. In the coming years, the key challenges are to consolidate progress towards universal primary education and expand secondary school access in response to economic and social demands. Secondary education and training are pre-requisites for increased economic growth and social development. It promotes productive citizenship and healthy living for young adolescents. To be competitive labor markets in Africa need more graduates with “modern knowledge and better skills.” Asia and Latin America have shown these trends convincingly. However, expansion of post-primary education services while simultaneously improving its quality will require African countries to deliver these services more efficiently. Adoption of “innovative and best practices” from other Regions can help.

The “Secondary Education In Africa (SEIA)” study is part of the Africa Human Development Program that supports the Region’s Africa Action Plan. Its objective is to assist countries to develop sustainable strategies for expansion and quality improvement in secondary education. The study program produced eight thematic studies, and additional papers, which were discussed at the regional SEIA conferences in which 38 countries and all major development partners participated (Uganda 2003; Senegal 2005; Ghana 2007). The SEIA Synthesis Report (2007) is a summary overview and discussion of all studies. All SEIA studies were produced with the help of national country teams and international institutions for which financial trust fund support is gratefully acknowledged. Study reports are available on the SEIA website: www.worldbank.org/afr/seia.

This study is about equity and efficiency issues in secondary education transitions in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is based on country case studies from Eritrea, Mali, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, and an extensive literature review. The main objective is to analyze national and local measures that may lead to more “efficient and seamless transitions” between post-primary education pathways. In most African countries student transition from primary to junior secondary and from junior to senior secondary are still accompanied by significant repetition and dropouts. According to international trends, Africa needs to revisit its post-primary structures to provide more diversified (academic and non-academic) pathways of learning which respond better to the continent’s present economic and social needs for growth and competitiveness. I hope that this report will make a timely and useful contribution.

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Acknowledgments

This paper was commissioned as part of the eight SEIA Thematic Studies by the Human Development Department of the Africa Region (AFTHD) of the World Bank. This report is thematic study #2: “How can education transition processes and related mechanisms from primary to secondary and from secondary to tertiary be made more equitable and efficient in the Sub-Saharan African context?”

This synthesis report is based on a number of case studies from six countries, and is a joint responsibility of TIP, The University of Western Cape, South Africa, and NIFU, Norway. From TIP, Brenda Sonn, Mandy Barnes, Karen Collett, Shelley Arendse-Majiet, Sue Davidoff, Philippa Kabali-Kagwa, Sharman Wickham, and Denise Miller, and from NIFU, Berit Lødding and Per O. Aamodt have been involved in the study.

Feedback and comments on the various draft versions was provided by: Jacob Bregman (SEIA Task Team Leader and Lead Education Specialist, AFTHD), Marit Granheim (Senior Education Specialist), and Steffi Stallmeister (Education Specialist).

This thematic study has benefited from funding under the Norwegian Education Trust Fund, which is gratefully acknowledged.
# Acronyms and Abbreviations

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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>AAG</td>
<td>Affirmative Action for Girl Child</td>
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<td>DCP</td>
<td>Donkey Canvas Project</td>
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<td>FAWE</td>
<td>Forum for African Women Educationalists</td>
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<td>GCO</td>
<td>Girl Child Organisation</td>
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<td>GEEP</td>
<td>Group for Population Studies and Education</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>NUEW</td>
<td>National Union of Eritrean Women</td>
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<td>NUEYS</td>
<td>National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students</td>
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<td>PRA</td>
<td>Participatory Rural Appraisal</td>
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<td>PTA</td>
<td>Parent-teacher association</td>
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<td>SBSP</td>
<td>School Board Support Programme</td>
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<td>SEIA</td>
<td>Secondary Education in Africa</td>
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<td>SIDA</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency</td>
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<td>SWAA</td>
<td>Society for Women and Aids</td>
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<tr>
<td>TCP</td>
<td>Total Child Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOR</td>
<td>Terms of reference</td>
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<td>TVET</td>
<td>Technical and vocational education and training</td>
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Executive Summary

The Purpose of the SEIA-TRANSE Study

The Thematic Study 2 of SEIA, the TRANSE study, has the main focus: “How can transition processes and mechanisms be made more equitable and efficient at secondary level?” The questions guiding the study were:

- Who are the successful experiences for improving the equity and efficiency of transitions to, within, and out of lower and upper secondary education?
- How can Sub-Saharan Africa develop and maintain cost-efficient student and parent support services?
- How can transitional problems in life-long learning be addressed?

Through our analyses of selected cases from six Sub-Saharan African countries we have identified a number of promising practices from which important experiences should be addressed more generally. Furthermore, we have also been able to identify some general key perspectives running across the cases, and finally, based on our observations, we have formulated some concluding statements and recommendations.

Promising Practices Identified

The main purpose of the SEIA-TRANSE study has been to identify and analyse measures that may lead to more efficient and equitable transitions in secondary education. These measures are at the one hand aiming at improving the structure and increasing the capacity of secondary education, and at the other hand to facilitate the individuals’ possibilities to enter and to succeed in secondary education. Measures may be implemented at national, regional or local level. We will especially focus on measures like:

- Financial (expansion of capacity, improvement of infrastructure, support to students)
- Provisions (attractiveness and relevance, volume, location, quality and support, selection mechanisms)
- Counselling
- PTA (parent teacher associations) and other local community/school relations
- Reducing factors that are hindering youth to enter or to stay in schools

Funding is fundamental both to expand the number of available school places, and to support students to make better use of the schooling facilities. The SEIA-TRANSE study has investigated a number of cases which are examples of sustainable models for funding, mainly on student support and the mobilization of local resources. Financial support to girls may prevent drop out and improve learning, and hence be a tool toward more equitable transition patterns. Such “positive discrimination” for girls, however, may be controversial. There are promising projects mobilizing parents and the community giving...
evidence of the importance of local resources. When public funds for building and maintaining school facilities are scarce, the contribution from parents and the community could be of vital importance: to do repair work, produce building materials, and so forth.

Quality of schooling, both at primary level as well as within secondary education, is a decisive factor both for recruiting students and for students to be able to succeed. Several dimensions of improvement in the provision of secondary education programs have been reported from the case studies. School-based vocational training could attract new groups of students as well as being relevant for the society and for the transition into the world of work. There are, however, serious limitations in the implementation of vocational education, both concerning the updating of programs according to changing needs, and especially when comes to funding; equipment and facilities for vocational training is expensive. There are many projects aiming at the improvement of quality, such as tutorial programs and measures to overcome the shortage of qualified teachers, a problem which of course is difficult to solve quick and within reasonable financial frames, and also getting worse because of many teachers being infected by HIV/AIDS. In Senegal, regional training centers for teachers has been established, also providing field inspectors to monitor the work of teachers. The Tanzanian case, reporting on “best performing schools” is interesting, both because it could give a direct contribution to those students benefiting from it, and also as laboratories for school development.

Counselling is an important tool for efficient transitions to help individual students to make the right choices. The counselling of girls seem to be especially important, because the low enrollment and high dropout rate among girls is related to the weak positions of women in the community and cultural traditions. Counselling combined with efforts to strengthening women’s participation in the community could directly lead to increased school participation of girls. Also projects among young boys at risk may have positive effect on the re-entry into schooling.

PTA (parent-teacher associations) and school-community programs in general are reported in a number of cases presented in this report, and seems to have a number of positive effects for equitable and efficient transitions: local mobilization of resources, better school management, strengthening of local “ownership,” encouraging children to enter and stay in schools.

Reduction of hindering factors has been reported in several cases, especially concerning girls. The most obvious material factors keeping girls out of school is heavy burden of work, cooking, and looking after younger children. The Donkey Canvas project in Eritrea is striking example of practical support to families to relieve the burden of water supply which traditionally is the task for women, and hence leaving time for schooling. This is a type of low-cost support which has a potential in broader context than in this respective locality.

Key Perspectives

Through the examination of the country reports, some common features cross-cutting the topics discussed above have been identified. The features may be grouped together under six key perspectives or focus areas: 1) the community perspective; 2) the question of a national strategy; 3) the gender perspective; 4) the modular training as an inclusive practice; 5) vocational training; and 6) perspectives on quality.
The Community Perspective

School internal factors are usually at the center of attention in endeavours to improve educational systems. There are good reasons for this. However, school external factors are easily overlooked. It is striking how many of the promising practices reported in this study that bear evidence of the importance of school external factors. The promising cases analyzed in the SEIA-TRANSE study have offered examples of strong links between the school and the community and local ownership. Links between schools and the community may constitute effective instruments both for enrolling students and to keep them in schools. This seems to be especially important for girls, and therefore school-community links are beneficial for both effective and equitable transitions.

School-community links may also lead to efficient resource mobilization and enhanced local steering capacity. A strengthening of the link between the school and the community does not, however, imply that the community should bear the full financial responsibility for secondary education.

National Policy

National policy documents and strategic plans are no guarantees for real improvement in education. Policies decided by the government and elaborated policy documents, may not lead to any real improvements in the schools. With reference to the previous section, real change in transitions in secondary education depends to a considerable degree on what takes place at the micro-level, relations between schools and families and community, and within the schools itself. Also the majority of the promising practices reported in the SEIA-TRANSE study are micro-level oriented, with the exception of two cases, which both are focusing on national polices and reforms. At the other hand, the case studies reported also show examples of the importance of the national policy, and cases or projects being linked to national priorities or strategies. In the synthesis report for the 1999 ADEA biennial meeting, one of the lessons is that “The development of education in Sub-Saharan Africa cannot be effectively pursued without paying attention to macro-political contexts.” Furthermore: “Innovations that are placed high on the national political agenda are most likely to register success.” The promising cases studied in the SEIA-TRANSE project seem to support these statements. Local initiatives and small-scale projects, usually supported by donor agencies can lead to promising results, but they risk remaining isolated incidents in the long run if not being linked to broader national perspectives.

The Gender Perspective

Besides equity across the urban-rural divide, equity by gender is a most important issue to make secondary education accessible for all. Increased female participation in secondary education is also one of the most effective ways to increase total enrollment. Several promising practices have a focus on gender, and most often it is the girl child who is the center of attention. The potential for enhancing girls’ participation in secondary education is greater in countries with low enrollment rates, as these are countries where the participation of girls is even weaker than that of boys. Girls outnumber boys both in South Africa and in Namibia, where the enrollment rates are relatively high.
Many of the promising practices show that the efforts to enhance girls’ access and retention in secondary school need to be sensitive to how factors may have different impacts on girls’ as opposed to boys’ participation. Hindrances for schooling are gender specific due to the gendered division of labor in the local context, as well as based on the cultural acceptance of girls’ need for education. The cases analyzed in the SEIA-TRANSE study represent several promising practices to support girls’ schooling and relieving some of their work burdens in the household, e.g. water supply and looking for smaller children.

Other examples of promising practices are related to preparing girls for participation and leadership positions in society, since girls’ educational aspirations as well as the families’ support for entering schools depends on the expectations for the future role of women in the communities. Other measures are also implemented, such as finding scholarships for deserving female students and to prevent teenage pregnancy.

Inclusive Schooling

The traditional role of secondary education was to prepare for and to select for the entry into universities. This tradition was also inherited by the African countries from the colonial era. Most industrialized countries during the last couple of decades gradually have changed this role of secondary education, and have moved toward universal access and a broader scope of secondary schooling, including the preparation for work. Most African countries have just started on the road toward broadening access to secondary, as is evident from the generally very low participation rates.

Policies for increasing enrollment in secondary education imply more than merely to enlarge the number of available places in schools. It means also a change away from the elitist principle of selecting people \textit{out} of schools toward a principle of recruiting and keeping them \textit{in} schools. Such policies and measures could be classified as \textit{school-internal} and \textit{school-external}.

\textit{School-internal} factors include selection principles and selection criteria, but also quality is related, since poor quality of schooling at one level does not prepare students sufficiently to continue at the next levels. The case of Tanzania, in this respect, is an interesting attempt to organize high-quality schooling, and to support talented students. Similar projects are reported in the case study from Senegal. The case from Mali is an example of a modularized system, which among others tends to make the distinction between continuation and disruptions less severe, because students which have left school finishing some modules, but not the entire course can return to continue their schooling a later stage. For students who have had to leave school because of economic constraints, family obligations or other, this offers a more flexible system and is an example of what we think of as “inclusive schooling.” In Mali, the modular model is developed within vocational education, but the principle of keeping the door open for those who have left school could be adapted to general educational as well. Such a model is also linked to life-long education, which is an important aim for more equitable and efficient transitions in secondary education.

\textit{School-external} policies and measures are such that related to factors keeping people out of schooling in Sub-Saharan Africa, both of non-enrollment, dropout, and repetitions. We have already mentioned some of the projects relevant to this topic.
Vocational Training

It is considered as a weakness of secondary education in Africa that it is almost entirely general, neglecting the role of vocational education (Atchoarena and Delluc 2002). In developing countries, the secondary school system, especially at upper secondary level vocational options have been increasingly important. Vocational alternatives are important if one wants to attract new groups to secondary education, serving as a tool to obtain close to universal participation. Even if vocational training often takes place outside the formal school system, such as apprenticeship training, also the formal school system in many countries is important. In addition to opening up new alternatives, and hence attracting new groups, vocational secondary education could play an important role in the transition of youth to the labor market.

The case of Mali investigated in the SEIA-TRANSE study is the only example among the cases reporting on vocational secondary education. Therefore, it is a unique case addressing the difficult task of shaping links between education and the world of work. The Modular Education model, which is implemented within the Vocational Education Consolidation Project in Mali, being funded by the World Bank, aims at improving initial vocational training, by among others the modernization of training facilities and improving the qualifications of vocational teachers. The priority areas within this project (motor vehicle mechanics, metal construction, electromechanical engineering, carpentry and joinery, cabinet making, building electrification, electricity, maintenance mechanics, office work, building and plumbing) are mostly related to a “modern” economy and therefore beneficial for the transitions of the economy of Mali. An important indicator of the success of this program is how efficient the transition from vocational training into the world of work is, but to our knowledge, there is no evaluation about this matter. Lauglo and others (2003) are cautious about advocating vocational subjects as part of mainstream secondary education, pointing out that the policies for vocational education have not shown to be an effective tool to alleviate school leaver unemployment.

There is also a concern about the sustainability of the vocational training program of the Mali type, especially since such programs demands substantial equipment investments, and also the capacity to maintain an update technical equipment.

Quality

Efficient transitions within secondary education and also from education to work of course depend on the quality of education, both of previous basic schooling and within secondary level. “Quality” is a complex concept, and there are many opinions about what quality is, and how to improve it. However, there should not be any disagreement that the supply of teachers—by numbers and qualifications—is perhaps the most critical factor. In addition to the problem of training enough qualified teachers, low salaries causes severe retention problems, and also leads to teachers taking extra teaching load or other paid work in order to secure a decent economic outcome. These problems are probably less if teachers are recruited locally. Besides contributing to lower turnover, locally recruited teachers have advantages in terms of better links to the society and knowledge about the local situation and culture. Therefore, regional training centers are needed both for initial and further training, as reported from Senegal.
The case study from Tanzania has identified a number of best performing schools and then examined what factors or strategies that have helped these schools to excel. The focus is almost entirely on school-internal factors, even if links between schools and parents is part of the strategy. Access to the selected schools is based on merit, and the school may help parents of talented and high achieving children to pay school fees to get assistance from a variety of sources. The students stay in boarding houses at schools, taking away outside distractions and burdens. The teaching and learning strategies are characterized by regular and prompt feedback and tight follow-up of the students. All students, not only the high achievers or weak, receive equal attention. Students who do not meet the minimum requirements get extra support and help.

**Recommendations**

One should be very careful in making generalizations out of projects in certain countries or specific community context, and not try to copy promising practices uncritically between different contexts. In our discussions of the cases, which are presented in the sections below, we have tried to extract some general lessons. There is a combination of structural factors on the one hand (availability of school places, economy, distance to schooling, as well as cultural and other factors) which both enable and inhibit efficient and equitable transitions, and on the other hand individual factors as transitions depend on the decisions of individuals. Furthermore, it is important to consider the relationship between structural and individual forces as an interactive relationship: individual decisions are highly influenced by structural factors, and vice versa.

A second important concern is the broader consequences of the project reported as promising practices. In this study, we have only information about the operation of, and to some degree the results of the specific projects selected for the study. A project could be regarded as being successful as assessed by internal criteria, but this does not automatically imply that the outcomes are equally successful in terms of its contribution to the educational development in a broader context.

**Differentiation of Policies**

Enrollment rates among Sub-Saharan African countries vary between less than 10 percent and more than 90, with Tanzania and South Africa representing the extremes according to available statistics. Obviously, the challenges of making transitions more efficient and equitable are accordingly different. In low-participation countries, the main aim is increased enrollment, especially in lower secondary education. The policy measures, however, may vary according to whether the low secondary enrollment is mainly due to low primary enrollment, low transition rates from primary to secondary, or high dropout rates. If the main problem is the lack of school places within a reachable distance, the answer is of course to build more schools, and increase the supply of qualified teachers. Yet, an increase in enrollment is only possible if there is a demand among the youth and necessary family support to go to school. We have seen that low enrollment without exception goes hand in hand with the underrepresentation of girls. Hence, efforts to stimulate increasing enrollment among females may have positive effects on equity as well as on the overall enrollment rate. Among the cases investigated in this study, there are several examples of improving girls’
The chances to go to school, for example, by reducing their workload in the family or by direct support to schooling.

The challenges for efficient and equitable transitions are quite different in countries with high enrollment rates (for example, South Africa and Namibia), where problems are to a certain extent more similar to those experienced in industrialized countries. First, some of these challenges are related to obtaining high quality in a mass secondary education system in countries having limited economic resources. Second, the course delivery must be diverse to serve a student population with a wide range of interests and abilities. In a system with universal participation at the secondary level, the functioning of secondary schooling must be wider than simply to prepare for entering higher education. Additional functions include vocational training and prolongation of compulsory schooling to include lower secondary education.

As enrollment in secondary education increases from covering only a small proportion of the age group toward universal access, the situation of those who are outside the school system changes dramatically, from being more or less the normal situation to become marginalized. Falling outside secondary education in a high-enrollment country often also means falling outside the labor market, and into the category of youth at risk.

**Holistic Approaches**

Perhaps the most important lesson from the SEIA-TRANSE study is that not only school internal factors cause problems in transitions. Enrollment or persistence in secondary education is often hampered by problems outside the educational system itself, both by factors related to poverty, the need for children (especially girls) to assist the family in labor or looking after small children, or a lack of belief in the relevance of education. Therefore, often measures having a broader focus than the school itself are most effective. Some of the projects reported have not primarily education as their focus, but nevertheless being highly relevant for participation and success in school, for example, the Total Child Project in Namibia and projects directed toward girls in Eritrea. It is characteristic that these promising practices are community based, and represent important links between the school and the community.

Strong school-community links seem to have a range of positive effects, both on the individual level concerning participation and learning, but also to enhance the local ownership of schools. This could lead both to positive steering output by the strengthening of parents or other from the community in the steering of schools and to the mobilization of local resources for the improvement of schools. There are many examples of the community taking part actively in the building or the maintaining of school building, contributing to both increased enrollment and the quality of the teaching and learning conditions. The strengthening of local ownership of course also has positive effects on the families' attitudes regarding the schooling of children—both to participate and to support the children in their schoolwork. In addition, strengthening of school-community links contribute to the responsiveness of teachers and school leaders for the needs and the problems of the community, including factors causing trouble for the children in their attendance and school work.

To make such broadly-oriented projects succeed, coordination of efforts is essential. Donors or other agencies aiming at the development of educations should hence look for
partnership and coordinate with agencies organizing projects having other aims like social and cultural development, democracy and the civic society, and health.

**Multi-level Approaches**

The majority of the cases investigated in the SEIA-TRANSE study are rather small-scale, local projects in a small number of schools or communities, but there are also examples of nationwide projects which are part of national policies or strategies. Many small-scale projects are initiated and being run by donors, and also national policies are strongly influenced and supported by donors. This illustrates clearly the need for national policies to coordinate and to give direction to all the local projects. Being aware of the limitations and the problems of national policymaking and governance in most Sub-Saharan African countries, we still want to stress the obvious need for national policies, and as far as possible to link local and donor driven initiatives to national priorities. At the same time, what seems to work most efficiently are projects and reforms being implemented in a local context. Because of the steering problems in the countries visited, there is a great risk that national policies and initiatives may not lead to any real change at the level where schooling is actually taking place. This underlines the importance of the small-scale and local initiatives. We therefore recommend that projects and policies aiming at efficient and equitable transitions in secondary education as far as possible connect local, small-scale, community oriented measures with national policies and strategies. It is important also to coordinate efforts initiated and run by different donors.

**Sustainability**

Changes in education generally need a long-time perspective. This is a lesson also from educational reforms in industrialized countries. Rapid change in quantitative terms, like increasing enrollment, is possible, especially if the starting level is very low. Yet, changes in content, teaching and learning, and the quality of schooling generally are slow to implement. This is true for nationally-initiated reforms: structural and quantitative changes can be visible rather soon, but rapid changes in the day-to-day activities at school and classroom level is generally far less probable. The same is true for successful small-scale projects to be implemented in other locations or in a national scale. In addition, successful practices, even if implemented in a small scale, often do not prove to be successful until at a later stage. Therefore, it is necessary to allocate sufficient time to let a specific project work, and to be patient even if results are not visible at the expected time. This could of course be problematic for donor-driven projects, since donors are accountable for their use of money, and therefore often do have to show results at an earlier stage than what is realistic.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

In the planning stage of the TRANSE study, one of the criteria set for the selection of promising cases was that there should be a level of reporting and evaluation of the projects. However, the actual case studies has shown few examples of thorough reporting and evaluation of the promising practices. This has caused several methodological limitations for this
study, but this is a minor problem compared to how this affects efficient implementation of projects and reforms. Both as a means to conduct specific individual projects, and especially as a tool for wider learning and the dissemination of experiences, one should always allocate some resources within the framework of the projects for some level of monitoring or evaluation. In addition to being a tool for dissemination of promising practices, monitoring and evaluations could reduce the risk of merely copying practices which have been successful within a specific context to different contexts where the challenges may be very different.
Résumé analytique

But de l’étude SEIA TRANSE

L’étude thématique 2 de l’étude SEIA TRANSE a pour thème principal: « Que faire pour rendre les processus et les mécanismes de transition plus équitables et efficaces au niveau de l’enseignement secondaire? » Les questions qui ont orienté l’étude sont les suivantes:

■ Quelles sont les expériences concluantes en matière d’amélioration de l’équité et de l’efficacité des transitions vers, à l’intérieur et à l’extérieur de l’enseignement secondaire de premier et de second cycle?
■ Comment l’Afrique subsaharienne peut-elle développer et maintenir des services d’appui économique aux élèves et aux parents?
■ Comment peut-on résoudre les problèmes transitoires relatifs à l’acquisition continue du savoir?

A la faveur des analyses de six cas choisis dans six pays d’Afrique subsaharienne, nous avons identifié un certain nombre de pratiques porteuses d’avenir à partir desquelles les expériences d’importance devraient être examinées plus globalement. Par ailleurs, nous avons également pu identifier certaines démarches générales clés communes aux cas et, en fin de compte, sur la base de nos observations, nous avons formulé quelques conclusions et recommandations.

Pratiques prometteuses identifiées

Le but principal de l’étude SEIA TRANSE est d’identifier et analyser les mesures qui peuvent conduire à des transitions plus efficaces et équitables dans l’enseignement secondaire. Ces mesures visent d’une part à améliorer la structure et à accroître la capacité de l’enseignement secondaire et, d’autre part, à favoriser les possibilités d’admission et de réussite des personnes dans l’enseignement secondaire. Les mesures peuvent être mises en œuvre au niveau national, régional ou local. Nous mettrons particulièrement l’accent sur les mesures telles que:

■ Les finances (renforcement des capacités, amélioration des infrastructures, appui aux élèves)
■ La mise en place (attractivité et pertinence, taille, emplacement, qualité et appui, mécanismes de sélection)
■ L’orientation
■ Les APE (associations des parents d’élèves) et autres relations communauté locale/établissement scolaire
■ Réduction des facteurs qui entravent l’admission et le séjour des jeunes dans les établissements scolaires
Le financement est essentiel tant pour accroître le nombre de places disponibles dans les établissements scolaires que pour aider les élèves à mieux utiliser les équipements scolaires. L'étude SEIA-TRANSE a examiné un certain nombre de cas qui constituent des exemples de modes de financement durables, surtout sur l'appui aux élèves et la mobilisation des ressources locales. L'appui financier aux filles peut freiner le taux d’abandon scolaire et améliorer l’apprentissage, et par là servir d’outil pour des modèles de transition plus équitables. Une telle « discrimination à rebours » des filles peut, toutefois, être sujette à controverse. Il existe des projets prometteurs qui mobilisent les parents et la communauté et témoignent de l’importance des ressources locales. Lorsque les fonds publics destinés à la construction et à la maintenance des infrastructures scolaires sont rares, la contribution des parents et de la communauté peut être de la plus haute importance pour les travaux de réfection, la production des matériaux de construction, etc.

La qualité de la scolarité tant au niveau de l’enseignement primaire qu’au secondaire, est un facteur décisif quant au recrutement des élèves et à l’aptitude des élèves à réussir. Plusieurs dimensions de l’amélioration de la mise en place des programmes de l’enseignement secondaire ont été constatées dans les études de cas. La formation professionnelle en milieu scolaire pourrait attirer de nouveaux groupes d’élèves et présenter un intérêt pour la société et pour la transition dans le monde du travail. Il existe, toutefois, de graves insuffisances dans la mise en œuvre de la formation professionnelle, pour ce qui concerne la mise à jour des programmes sur la base des besoins fluctuants et particulièrement lorsqu’il s’agit du financement : les équipements et les installations nécessaires pour la formation professionnelle sont coûteux. Il existe plusieurs projets visant à améliorer la qualité, tels que les programmes d’aide pédagogique et les mesures pour surmonter la pénurie des enseignants formés, un problème qui, à l’évidence, est difficile à résoudre rapidement et dans des cadres financiers acceptables, et qui s’aggrave parce que plusieurs enseignants sont infectés au VIH/SIDA. Au Sénégal, il a été créé des centres régionaux de formation des enseignants, qui affectent aussi des inspecteurs chargés du suivi des activités des enseignants. Le cas de la Tanzanie, qui se penche sur « les établissements scolaires les plus performants » est digne d’intérêt, parce qu’il pourra servir de contribution directe aux élèves qui en bénéficient et aussi de laboratoires pour la mise en place des établissements scolaires.

L’orientation est un outil important qui permet aux transitions efficaces d’aider les différents élèves à faire des choix judicieux. L’orientation des filles semble être particulièrement importante, dans la mesure où le faible taux d’inscription et le taux élevé d’abandon scolaire des filles sont liés à la place secondaire que les femmes occupent dans la communauté et aux traditions culturelles. L’orientation, couplée aux actions entreprises pour renforcer la participation des femmes dans la communauté, pourrait aboutir directement à une scolarisation accrue des filles. Cependant, des projets intéressant de jeunes garçons vulnérables, peuvent avoir un effet positif sur la réadmission aux études.

Les APE (associations des parents d’élèves) et les programmes établissement scolaire - communauté en général sont signalés dans un certain nombre de cas présentés dans ce rapport et semblent avoir un certain nombre d’effets positifs sur les transitions équitables et efficaces: mobilisation des ressources locales, meilleure gestion des établissements scolaires, renforcement de la « maîtrise » locale, encouragement des enfants à aller à l’école et d’y rester.

La réduction des facteurs limitants a été mentionnée dans plusieurs cas, notamment pour ce qui concerne les filles. Les facteurs patents indéniables qui éloignent les filles de
l’école sont la lourde charge de travail, la cuisine et la garde des enfants plus jeunes. Le Projet Donkey Canvas en Érythrée est un exemple frappant d’appui pratique aux familles pour alléger le poids de l’approvisionnement en eau qui, de tout temps, est le travail des femmes et, par là, dégager le temps nécessaire pour l’éducation. Il s’agit d’un appui peu onéreux qui a un potentiel dans un contexte plus large que dans cette localité précise.

**Perspectives clés**

À la faveur de l’analyse des rapports de pays, quelques aspects courants communs aux sujets abordés ci-dessus ont été identifiés. Ces aspects peuvent être regroupés en six perspectives clés ou domaines d’intérêt, à savoir: 1) la perspective communautaire; 2) la question d’une stratégie nationale; 3) la perspective sexospécifique; 4) la formation par modules vue comme une pratique ouverte; 5) la formation professionnelle; 6) les perspectives sur la qualité.

**La perspective communautaire**


Les liens établissement scolaire—communauté peuvent aussi aboutir à une mobilisation efficace de ressources et au renforcement des capacités locales de pilotage. Un renforcement du lien entre l’établissement scolaire et la communauté n’implique pas cependant que la communauté devra supporter toute la responsabilité financière de l’enseignement secondaire.

**Politique nationale**

Les documents de politique nationale et les plans stratégiques ne constituent pas des garanties d’une amélioration effective de l’éducation. Les mesures décidées par le gouvernement et les documents de politique détaillés peuvent ne pas conduire à une amélioration concrète dans les établissements scolaires. Compte tenu de la section précédente, un véritable changement des transitions de l’enseignement secondaire dépend, dans une large mesure, de ce qui se passe au niveau local, des relations entre les établissements scolaires et les familles et les communautés et au sein de l’établissement scolaire lui-même. De plus, la majorité des pratiques prometteuses mentionnées dans l’étude SEIA-TRANSE sont axées sur le niveau local, exception faite de deux cas qui, ensemble, mettent l’accent sur les politiques et les réformes nationales. Par ailleurs, les études de cas mentionnées illustrent aussi
des exemples de l’importance de la politique nationale, et des cas ou projets subordonnés aux priorités ou aux stratégies nationales. Dans le rapport de synthèse de la réunion semestrielle 1999 de l’ADEA, l’une des leçons relevées est que « le développement de l’éducation en Afrique subsaharienne ne peut être poursuivi efficacement si l’on n’accorde pas attention aux contextes macropolitiques. » Par ailleurs : « Les innovations qui occupent les premières places dans le programme politique national ne sont pas les plus susceptibles d’enregistrer un succès. » Les cas prometteurs étudiés dans le SEIA-TRANSE semblent corroborer ces affirmations. Les initiatives locales et les projets de petite envergure, généralement appuyés par les bailleurs de fonds, peuvent aboutir à des résultats prometteurs, mais ils risquent de demeurer à long terme des cas isolés s’ils ne sont pas subordonnés à des perspectives nationales plus larges.

**Perspective sexospécifique**

Outre l’équité d’un bout à l’autre de la fracture périurbaine, la parité entre les sexes est la question la plus importante qui consiste à rendre l’enseignement secondaire accessible à tous. La participation accrue des filles à l’enseignement secondaire est aussi l’un des moyens les plus efficaces d’accroître l’effectif total des inscrits. Plusieurs pratiques prometteuses mettent l’accent sur la parité entre les sexes, et le plus souvent c’est la fillette qui est la principale préoccupation. La possibilité de renforcer la participation des filles à l’enseignement secondaire est plus élevée dans les pays à faibles taux de scolarisation, dans la mesure où ce sont des pays où le taux de participation des filles est même plus faible que celui des garçons. Les effectifs des filles sont supérieurs à ceux des garçons en Afrique du Sud et en Namibie, où les taux de scolarisation sont relativement élevés.

Plusieurs des pratiques prometteuses montrent que les actions entreprises pour accroître l’accès et la fidélisation des filles dans les établissements scolaires doivent tenir compte de la manière dont les facteurs peuvent avoir des impacts différents sur la participation des filles comparativement aux garçons. Les entraves à la scolarisation sont sexospécifiques en raison de la division du travail par sexe dans le contexte local, aussi bien que sur la base de l’acceptation culturelle des besoins des filles en matière d’éducation. Les cas analysés dans l’étude SEIA-TRANSE constituent plusieurs pratiques prometteuses pour appuyer la scolarisation des filles et les soulager de certains de leurs travaux ménagers tels que l’approvisionnement en eau et la garde de plus jeunes enfants.

D’autres exemples de pratiques prometteuses concernent la préparation des filles à la participation et aux postes de responsabilités dans la société, d’autant que plus les aspirations des filles à l’éducation ainsi que l’appui des familles à l’admission dépendent des attentes que l’on fonde sur le futur rôle des femmes dans les communautés. D’autres mesures sont aussi mises en œuvre, telles que la recherche des bourses pour les élèves méritantes et pour prévenir la grossesse chez les adolescentes.

**Scolarisation ouverte**

Le rôle classique de l’enseignement secondaire était de préparer et de sélectionner les élèves pour l’entrée dans les universités. Les pays africains ont aussi hérité de cette tradition depuis l’ère coloniale. La plupart des pays industrialisés ont, au cours des deux dernières décennies, changé ce rôle de l’enseignement secondaire et ont opté pour l’accès universel et une
plus grande envergure de l’enseignement secondaire, y compris la préparation au travail. La plupart des pays africains viennent à peine d’emprunter le chemin de l’élargissement de l’accès à l’enseignement secondaire, comme le montrent les taux de participation générale très bas.

Les politiques d’augmentation des effectifs de l’enseignement secondaire laissent supposer qu’il ne suffit pas d’accroître le nombre de places disponibles dans les établissements scolaires. Il faut abandonner le principe élitiste consistant à sélectionner les gens hors des établissements scolaires pour adopter le principe de leur recrutement et de leur maintien dans les établissements scolaires. De telles politiques et mesures pourraient être considérées comme étant internes ou externes à l’établissement scolaire.

Les facteurs internes à l’établissement scolaire comprennent les principes de sélection et les critères de sélection, mais aussi la qualité est concernée, dans la mesure où la mauvaise qualité de la scolarisation à un niveau ne prépare pas suffisamment les élèves à continuer aux niveaux suivants. Le cas de la Tanzanie, à cet égard, est une tentative digne d’intérêt d’organiser une scolarisation de haute qualité et de soutenir les élèves doués. Des projets similaires sont mentionnés dans l’étude de cas au Sénégal. Le cas du Mali est l’exemple d’un système de modules qui, parmi d’autres, estime généralement que la différence entre la poursuite et l’interruption est moins grave, dans la mesure où les élèves qui ont abandonné l’école après avoir fini certains modules mais pas l’ensemble de la matière peuvent revenir pour poursuivre leur scolarisation plus tard. Pour les élèves qui ont eu à abandonner l’école en raison des contraintes économiques, d’obligations familiales ou autres, ceci constitue un système plus souple et sert d’exemple de ce que nous considérons comme une « scolarisation ouverte ». Au Mali, le système de modules est mis en place dans l’enseignement professionnel, mais le principe qui consiste à garder la porte ouverte à ceux qui ont abandonné l’école pourrait aussi être adopté pour l’enseignement général. Un tel modèle est aussi associé à l’éducation permanente, un objectif important des transitions plus équitables et efficaces dans l’enseignement secondaire.

Les politiques et les mesures externes à l’établissement scolaire sont celles qui sont associées aux facteurs maintenant les jeunes hors de l’école en Afrique subsaharienne, que ce soit en raison de la non inscription, de l’abandon scolaire ou des redoublements. Nous avons déjà relevé certains des projets se rapportant à ce sujet.

**Formation professionnelle**

Elle est considérée comme le point faible de l’enseignement secondaire en Afrique où l’enseignement est presque entièrement général et la mission de la formation professionnelle méconnue (Atchoarena & Delluc 2002). Dans les pays en développement, le système de l’enseignement secondaire, particulièrement au niveau du second cycle, les options de formation professionnelle sont de plus en plus importantes. Les possibilités de formation professionnelle sont nécessaires si l’on veut attirer de nouveaux groupes dans l’enseignement secondaire, servant d’outil pour obtenir une participation proche de l’universel. Même si la formation professionnelle a lieu souvent en dehors du système scolaire formel, par exemple sous forme de formation par l’apprentissage, il n’en demeure pas moins vrai que le système scolaire formel dans plusieurs pays est de poids. Outre la création de nouvelles options, et donc l’attraction de nouveaux groupes, l’enseignement secondaire professionnel pourrait jouer un rôle significatif dans la transition des jeunes au marché du travail.
Le cas du Mali examiné dans l’étude SEIA-TRANSE est l’unique exemple parmi les cas faisant mention de l’enseignement secondaire professionnel. Par voie de conséquence, il est un cas isolé qui analyse la tâche difficile de modelage des liens entre l’éducation et le monde du travail. L’enseignement par modules qui est appliqué dans le cadre du Projet de consolidation de l’enseignement professionnel au Mali et financé par la Banque mondiale, a pour objectif d’améliorer la formation professionnelle initiale par, entre autres, la modernisation des moyens de formation et le renforcement des qualifications des enseignants de la formation professionnelle. Les domaines prioritaires de ce projet (mécanique automobile, construction métallique, ingénierie électromécanique, charpenterie menuiserie, ébénisterie, électricité, mécanique d’entretien, travail de bureau, bâtiment et plomberie) vont généralement de pair avec une économie « moderne » et sont donc d’utilité pour les transitions de l’économie du Mali. Un important indicateur du succès de ce programme est le niveau d’efficacité de la transition de la formation professionnelle au monde du travail, mais à notre connaissance, il n’existe aucune évaluation de cette question. Lauglo et al. (2003) expriment une certaine retenue quant à l’intérêt des matières professionnelles dans le cadre de l’enseignement secondaire classique en faisant observer que les politiques de formation professionnelle n’en ont pas fait un outil efficace de lutte contre le chômage des sortants.

La viabilité du programme de formation professionnelle tel que conçu au Mali constitue aussi un sujet de préoccupation, particulièrement parce que ce type de programme exige d’importants investissements en matériel et l’aptitude à entretenir et à mettre à jour les équipements techniques.

Qualité

L’efficacité des transitions dans l’enseignement secondaire et de l’enseignement au travail dépend de la qualité de l’éducation, aussi bien de l’éducation de base que de l’enseignement secondaire. La « qualité » est un concept complexe, et il existe plusieurs points de vue sur la définition de la qualité et la manière de l’améliorer. Cependant, il ne devrait avoir aucun désaccord sur le fait que l’offre d’enseignants—en termes d’effectifs et non au moins en termes de compétences, est peut-être le facteur le plus déterminant. Outre le fait qu’il faut former un nombre suffisant d’enseignants compétents, le faible niveau des salaires pose de sérieux problèmes de fidélisation et amènent les enseignants à prendre des charges d’enseignement supplémentaires ou d’autres travaux rémunérés pour s’assurer des revenus substantiels. Ces problèmes sont éventuellement peu ressentis, si les enseignants sont recruited localement. D’où les centres régionaux de formation, aussi bien pour la formation initiale que pour le perfectionnement professionnel, qui seraient créés au Sénégal. Outre leur contribution à un taux de renouvellement plus faible, les enseignants recrutés localement présentent des avantages en termes de meilleurs liens avec la société et de connaissances sur la situation et la culture locales.

L’étude de cas en Tanzanie a identifié un certain nombre d’établissements scolaires les plus performants et a ensuite examiné les facteurs ou les stratégies qui ont permis à ces établissements d’exceller. L’accent est mis presque entièrement sur les facteurs externes à l’établissement scolaire, même si les liens entre les établissements scolaires et les parents font partie de la stratégie. L’admission dans les établissements scolaires sélectionnés est basée sur le mérite et l’établissement peut aider les parents des enfants doués et obtenant
d’excellents résultats scolaires à payer les frais de scolarité et à obtenir l’assistance d’une multitude de sources. Les élèves vivent dans des foyers à l’établissement, ce qui les met à l’abri des distractions et des contraintes extérieures. Les stratégies d’enseignement et d’apprentissage sont caractérisées par le recueil immédiat et régulier des réactions des élèves et un suivi assidu. Tous les élèves, et non seulement les éléments très performants ou faibles, bénéficient de la même attention. Les élèves ne remplissant pas les conditions minimales reçoivent un appui et une assistance supplémentaires.

**Recommandations**

Il faut se retenir de faire des généralisations à partir des projets mis en œuvre dans certains pays ou dans un contexte communautaire précis et d’essayer de transposer des pratiques prometteuses de façon inconsiderée d’un contexte à l’autre. Dans notre analyse des cas, analyse que nous présentons dans les sections ci-après, nous nous sommes évertués à tirer quelques leçons générales. Il existe une association de facteurs structurels d’une part (disponibilité de places dans les établissements scolaires, moyens financiers, distance par rapport à l’établissement scolaire, facteurs culturels et autres) qui à la fois favorise et inhibe l’efficacité et l’équité des transitions et, d’autre part, des facteurs individuels dans la mesure où les transitions dépendent des décisions individuelles. Il est par ailleurs important de considérer la relation entre les forces structurelles et les forces personnelles comme une relation interactive : les décisions personnelles sont fortement influencées par les facteurs structurels et vice versa.

La seconde préoccupation de poids est les conséquences de plus grande portée du projet annoncées comme des pratiques prometteuses. Dans cette étude, nous ne disposons que des informations sur le fonctionnement et, dans une certaine mesure, les résultats des projets précis sélectionnés pour l’étude. Un projet peut être considéré comme étant concluant en ce qu’il est évalué en fonction des critères internes, mais ceci ne signifie pas forcément que les résultats sont aussi probants en termes de contribution au perfectionnement de l’enseignement dans un contexte plus large.

**Différence entre les politiques**

Les taux de scolarisation dans les pays d’Afrique subsaharienne varient de moins de 10 % à plus de 90 %, la Tanzanie et l’Afrique du Sud représentant les extrêmes selon les statistiques disponibles. À l’évidence, les défis à relever pour rendre les transitions plus efficaces et équitables sont par conséquents différents. Dans les pays à faible taux de scolarisation, l’objectif principal est de décloisonner pour augmenter les effectifs, notamment dans l’enseignement secondaire de premier cycle. Toutefois, les mesures politiques peuvent varier si les faibles effectifs de l’enseignement secondaire sont dus surtout aux faibles effectifs de l’enseignement primaire, aux faibles taux de passage du primaire au secondaire, ou aux taux élevés d’abandon scolaire. Si le problème principal est l’insuffisance de places dans les établissements scolaires à une distance raisonnable, alors il faut construire d’autres établissements et augmenter le nombre d’enseignants formés. Cependant l’augmentation des effectifs n’est possible que si les jeunes en font la demande et si la famille leur accorde l’assistance dont ils ont besoin. Nous avons constaté que, sans exception, les faibles effectifs
vont de pair avec la faible représentation des filles, d’où la nécessité de prendre des mesures pour stimuler l’augmentation des effectifs des filles pour escompter des effets positifs sur l’équité ainsi que sur le taux général de scolarisation. Parmi les cas analysés dans cette étude, il y a plusieurs exemples d’augmentation des chances des filles d’aller à l’école, par exemple en réduisant leur charge de travail dans la famille ou par un appui direct à la scolarisation.

Les problèmes à résoudre pour assurer des transitions efficaces et équitables sont très différents dans les pays à taux de scolarisation élevés comme l’Afrique du Sud et la Namibie, problèmes qui, dans une certaine mesure, sont semblables à ceux auxquels sont confrontés les pays industrialisés. Tout d’abord, certains de ces problèmes sont liés à l’obtention de la haute qualité dans un système d’enseignement secondaire de masse dans des pays ayant des ressources économiques limitées, et en second lieu, à la diversité des cours à dispenser pour satisfaire une population d’élèves ayant une gamme variée d’intérêts et d’aptitudes. Dans un système marqué par une scolarisation universelle au niveau du secondaire, la marche de l’enseignement secondaire doit viser plus loin que de se limiter à la préparation à l’entrée à l’enseignement supérieur. Elle doit donc s’intéresser à la formation professionnelle et à la poursuite de la scolarisation obligatoire, y compris dans l’enseignement secondaire de premier cycle.

Au moment où les effectifs dans l’enseignement secondaire augmentent pour cesser de n’accepter qu’une petite frange de la classe d’âge à l’accès universel, la situation des personnes qui sont hors du système scolaire change de fond en comble, passant de la situation plus ou moins normale pour devenir des marginalisées. Se retrouver hors de l’enseignement secondaire dans un pays à taux de scolarisation élevé revient aussi souvent à tomber hors du marché du travail et dans la catégorie des jeunes exposés aux risques.

Approches globales

Il se pourrait que la leçon la plus importante tirée de l’étude SEIA-TRANSE soit que ce ne sont pas seulement les facteurs externes à l’établissement scolaire qui posent des problèmes aux transitions. L’inscription ou la persistance dans l’enseignement secondaire est souvent entravée par des problèmes externes au système éducatif lui-même, à la fois par des facteurs liés à la pauvreté, la nécessité pour les enfants (notamment les filles) d’aider la famille dans les travaux ou la garde de petits enfants, ou un manque de conviction dans le bien-fondé de l’éducation. Par conséquent, dans bien des cas, les mesures ayant un pôle de convergence plus large que l’école elle-même sont plus efficaces. Certains des projets mentionnés n’ont pas, au premier chef, l’éducation pour objectif, mais ils sont néanmoins très pertinents pour la scolarisation et le succès à l’école. C’est le cas par exemple de Total Child Project en Namibie et des projets destinés aux filles en Erythrée. Il est notoire que ces pratiques prometteuses sont communautaires et constituent des liens importants entre l’établissement scolaire et la communauté.

Des liens solides établissement scolaire-communauté semblent avoir une multitude d’effets positifs, sur chaque personne pour ce qui est de la scolarisation et de l’apprentissage, et favoriser la maîtrise locale des établissements scolaires. Ceci peut déboucher sur un pilotage fécond des résultats par le renforcement des parents ou d’autres membres de la communauté dans le pilotage des établissements scolaires et la mobilisation des ressources locales nécessaires pour l’amélioration des établissements scolaires. Il existe plusieurs
exemples de communautés qui prennent une part active à la construction et à l’entretien de bâtiments scolaires, ce qui contribue à l’augmentation des effectifs et à l’amélioration de la qualité des conditions d’enseignement et d’apprentissage. Le renforcement de la maîtrise locale a aussi, à l’évidence, des effets positifs sur le comportement des familles par rapport à la scolarisation des enfants, pour ce qui est de leur implication dans les travaux scolaires des enfants et de l’appui qu’elles leur apportent. Par ailleurs, le renforcement des liens établissement-scolaire-communauté contribuent à la rapidité d’intervention des enseignants et des chefs d’établissement face aux besoins et aux problèmes de la communauté, y compris les facteurs perturbant la présence et le travail scolaire des enfants.

Pour faire aboutir ces projets à objectifs multiples, il est indispensable de prendre des mesures de coordination. Les donateurs et d’autres agences œuvrant pour le développement de l’éducation doivent donc nouer des partenariats et coordonner de concert avec les agences qui mettent sur pied des projets ayant d’autres objectifs tels que le développement social et culturel, la démocratie et la société civile, ainsi que la santé.

Approches à plusieurs niveaux

La plupart des cas analysés dans l’étude SEIA-TRANSE sont plutôt des projets locaux de petite taille, dans un nombre restreint d’établissements scolaires ou de communautés, mais il y a aussi des exemples de projets d’envergure nationale qui s’inscrivent dans les politiques ou stratégies nationales. Plusieurs projets de petite taille sont élaborés et gérés par les donateurs, de même que les politiques nationales sont fortement influencées et soutenues par les donateurs. Ceci montre à suffisance la nécessité pour les politiques nationales de coordonner et d’orienter tous les projets locaux. Étant au fait des insuffisances et des problèmes d’élaboration de politiques nationales et de gouvernance dans la plupart des pays d’Afrique subsaharienne, nous tiendrons à insister sur la nécessité évidente de formuler des politiques nationales et, dans la mesure du possible, d’établir un lien entre les initiatives pilotées par la communauté et les donateurs et les priorités nationales. En même temps, ce qui marche le plus efficacement sont les projets et les réformes mis en œuvre dans un contexte local.

Viabilité

Les changements dans l’éducation nécessitent en général une perspective à long terme. C’est une leçon tirée aussi des réformes de l’éducation dans les pays industrialisés. Un changement rapide en terme quantitatif, tel que l’augmentation des effectifs, est possible, particulièrement si le niveau de départ est très bas. Mais les changements de contenu, d’enseignement et d’apprentissage et la qualité de l’enseignement sont le plus souvent lents à se concrétiser. Ceci est vrai pour les réformes initiées au niveau national : les changements
structurels et quantitatifs peuvent être visibles assez tôt, mais les changements rapides intervenus dans les activités quotidiennes au niveau de l’établissement scolaire ou de la salle de classe ont peu de chances d’être visibles. Ceci est encore vrai pour les projets de petite envergure qui doivent être mis en œuvre dans d’autres localités ou à l’échelon national. En outre, les pratiques concluantes, même si elles sont mises en œuvre à petite échelle, ne donnent pas souvent de bons résultats tant qu’on ne passe pas à l’étape ultérieure. Par voie de conséquence, il est nécessaire d’accorder suffisamment du temps à un projet donné pour lui permettre de fonctionner, et d’être patient même si les résultats ne sont pas tangibles au moment prévu. Ceci pourrait, bien évidemment, être périlleux pour les projets pilotés par les donateurs, dans la mesure où les donateurs ont l’obligation de répondre de l’utilisation qu’ils font de l’argent et, par conséquent, présentent des résultats à un stade précoce plus tôt que ce qui correspond aux faits.

Suivi et évaluation

Dans la phase de planification de l’étude TRANSE, l’un des critères de sélection des cas prometteurs était qu’il devrait y avoir un niveau de suivi et d’évaluation des projets. Cependant, les études de cas effectives ont montré quelques exemples de suivi et d’évaluation assidus des pratiques prometteuses. Ceci a causé de nombreuses insuffisances d’ordre méthodologique de cette étude, mais il s’agit d’un problème négligeable comparativement à son effet sur l’efficacité de la mise en œuvre des projets et des réformes. Comme un moyen d’exécution de projets individuels précis et particulièrement comme un outil destiné à un apprentissage plus large et à la dissémination des expériences, il faudrait toujours allouer certaines ressources dans le cadre des projets pour garantir un certain niveau de suivi et d’évaluation. En plus d’être un outil de dissémination des pratiques prometteuses, le suivi et l’évaluation pourront réduire le risque de se limiter à la transposition des pratiques qui ont marché dans un contexte précis dans des contextes différents où les problèmes peuvent être très différents.
CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This introductory chapter first provides the rationale for the study, and an overview of the problems related to transitions in secondary education. Then it describes the methodology of the study during the preparatory phase, the data collection phase, and the analysis and documentation phase. The organization and the labor division within the project is described and discussed.

Background to and Rationale for the SEIA-TRANSE Study

Since the worldwide Education for All process was initiated in Jomtien in 1990, the significant priority given to primary education in many countries has become evident. International donors, development lending institutions as well as national policies have tended to focus most heavily on the first years of schooling.

This has been both a necessary and important development. Nevertheless, one of the consequences is that other levels of the education system, mainly secondary and higher education, have escaped attention. This has led to imbalances between the sectors. In many developing countries, large groups of school-leavers from primary schools seeking further education are experiencing that their educational aspirations cannot be met due to the underdevelopment of the next stage (secondary education). At the same time, many of these countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, are undergoing socioeconomic reforms and transformations, which reduce the possibilities for traditional occupations or employment in rural areas. The increase in the number of unemployed youth has become a major problem in many countries, often leading to higher levels of poverty and crime. Therefore, a growing concern exists in many countries to develop their secondary education sector,
both to overcome these problems, and to contribute to increasing levels of both vocational competence and a stronger base for the entry into higher education.

This, in brief, is some of the background for the World Bank to implement the study “Secondary Education in Africa” (SEIA). The rationale for the study as set out by the World Bank in the Terms of Reference of the SEIA study is as follows:

Investment in secondary education in Sub-Saharan Africa will provide countries with critical higher level skills and knowledge for advanced learning and training of technicians, scientists, entrepreneurs, and yields considerable social and private returns. Secondary education plays a crucial role in preparing for higher education and for work, for youth and in a life-long learning perspective. In Sub-Saharan Africa, less than one third of the age group takes part in secondary education. In these countries there is a strong pressure to expand this level in the educational system, especially at lower secondary level. The main purpose of the SEIA regional study is to summarize key lessons for lower- and upper secondary education reforms in Sub-Saharan African countries and draw from successful reforms in other regions. SEIA’s overall objectives are to: (a) Collect and summarize best practices and identify sustainable development plans for expansion and improved quality, equity and efficiency of delivery of secondary education in S-SA; (b) Identify policy options for the development of a strategic agenda for implementation of secondary education reforms in S-SA countries; and (c) Recommend how donor agencies could better coordinate and support

— Terms of Reference, June 13, 2002, p.2

The Thematic Study #2 of SEIA has the main focus: “How can transition processes and mechanisms be made more equitable and efficient at secondary level?” The questions guiding the study were:

- Who are the successful experiences for improving the equity and efficiency of transitions to, within, and out of lower and upper secondary education?
- How can Sub-Saharan Africa develop and maintain cost-efficient student and parent support services?
- How can transitional problems in life-long learning be addressed?

Below we will present an analytical approach to the concept of transition followed by a discussion of the factors which may promote or inhibit efficient and equitable transitions into, within, and out of secondary education as a background for our study of promising cases. Before we examine the concept of transition in more detail, we will turn the attention to enrollment rates in different Sub-Saharan African countries as these give evidence of transition problems.

Overview of the Problem

Low Secondary Education Enrollment in Sub-Saharan Africa

In this section, we present a statistical overview of enrollment and transitions in secondary education in Sub-Saharan Africa drawn from databases at both the World Bank and UNESCO. The reliability and the comparability of these statistics of course may vary, but we consider them helpful to get a broad impression of the state of enrollment at this level. However, data do not provide any direct information about transitions between and within
levels, and generally no distinction is made between lower and secondary level. We will present data both on all Sub-Saharan Africa, but focus especially on the six countries selected for this study: Eritrea, Mali, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa, and Tanzania. Our primary interest is not to make a detailed statistical overview, but rather to identify the different countries’ position according to available enrollment indicators.

Low enrollment in secondary education in Sub-Saharan countries is related to broader problems in school attainment and quality of schooling, and these countries are scoring lower on most education indicators than developing countries in general.

According to Table 1, the illiteracy rate is higher, enrollment in both primary and secondary education is lower, and pupil/teacher ratio is much higher than in the average among developing countries. Gross enrollment in secondary education is less than half that of other developing countries, both among males and females.

In a majority of the South of Sahara African countries enrollment in secondary education is very low, and below 25 percent. There is, however, a vast variety in enrollment rates which is clearly demonstrated among the six countries selected in the TRANSE study. Among our selected countries are both the Sub-Saharan country having the lowest enrollment rate of all (Tanzania with 5 percent in 1996, 7 percent reported in the country report) as well as the one with the highest (South Africa with 95). Eritrea, Mali, and Senegal have between 10 and 25 percent enrollment rate, while Namibia in addition to South Africa is ranked among the countries with high enrollment (50 percent or more). Table 2 presents a brief overview of how the different countries could be characterized according to the level of enrollment in secondary education.

There are a range of different causes for low participation in secondary: low primary enrollment, low transition from primary to secondary or high dropout in secondary. Another problem is low transition from lower to upper secondary. In addition, a large proportion of the schooling capacity is occupied by students who are repeating grades.
In Tanzania, transition from primary to secondary is only 21 percent compared to 53 in Kenya and 29 in Uganda. In South Africa and Namibia enrollment rates are quite high, so in these countries there are different challenges in transitions than in countries with low secondary education enrollment like Tanzania.

Comparison on changes in enrollment rates should be made with great care. First, if the reporting and the basic statistics are uncertain, the level of uncertainty will be even more severe regarding observations of change. Second, it is difficult to compare the magnitude of change when the absolute level differs so much, from 5 percent to almost 100. Table 3 shows trends in enrollment in four of the six countries covered by the SEIA-TRANSE study.

During the decade since 1990, Senegal and Tanzania have had no significant increase in enrollment in secondary education. In both Namibia and South Africa, enrollment increased rapidly until the mid-1990s, but has been stable after that.

Of the 39 countries for which data are available in the UNESCO

| Table 2. African Countries Classified by Level of Enrollment in Secondary Education, 1996 |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Below 10%                        | 10–24%            | 25–49%          | 50% and Above   |
| Burkina Faso*                    | Benin             | Cameroon        | Botswana        |
| Burundi*                         | Eritrea           | Cote d’Ivoire   | Cape Verde      |
| Chad                             | Ethiopia          | Dem. Rep. Of Congo | Congo           |
| Mozambique                       | Kenya             | Gambia          | Mauritius       |
| Niger                             | Madagascar        | Ghana*          | Namibia         |
| Tanzania                         | Malawi            | Lesotho         | South Africa    |
| Rwanda*                          | Mali              | Togo            | Swaziland       |
|                                   | Nigeria           | Zambia          |                 |
|                                   | Senegal           |                 | Zimbabwe        |
|                                   | Sudan             |                 |                 |
|                                   | Uganda            |                 |                 |
|                                   | Angola*           |                 |                 |
|                                   | Guinea            |                 |                 |
|                                   | Sierra Leone*     |                 |                 |
|                                   | Guinea            |                 |                 |

*Data from 1990

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Source: World Bank, Thematic Data on Education.
statistics, the following countries have increased their enrollment rate from 1990 to 1996 by at least 25 percent:

- Benin (12–18)
- Botswana (43–65)
- Cape Verde (21–55)
- Gambia (19–25)
- Guinea (10–14)
- Lesotho (25–31)
- Malawi (8–17)
- Mali (7–13)
- Namibia (44–61)
- Nigeria (25–33)
- South Africa (75–95)

In addition, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mauritius, and Swaziland all increased their enrollment rate by close to 25 percent. The following countries had stagnating or slightly decreasing enrollment rates:

- Cameroon
- Congo
- Ethiopia
- Kenya
- Madagascar
- Niger
- Senegal
- Sudan
- Tanzania
- Uganda
- Zimbabwe

Also in this category we find countries with both very low enrollment rates (Mozambique, Niger Tanzania, and Uganda), as well as Congo and Zimbabwe with high enrollment rates. The general picture is that countries with high enrollment rates also had increasing rates while many low-enrollment countries had stagnation, so the changes from 1990 to 1996 lead to increasing differences in enrollment.

Besides making transitions into, within, and out of secondary education more efficient, including also increased participation, the question of equity is important. Very often, but not always, increased access also implies increasing equity. In countries with very low participation, enrollment can be expanded without including underprivileged groups to a higher degree. Enrollment rates beyond 50 percent, however, are difficult to obtain without more balanced enrollment by girls and students from low-income families and from remote areas.

Combining two different data sets—World Bank thematic data on education shown in Table 4, and UNESCO Statistical yearbook—we are able to provide data on enrollment
by gender in all six countries covered by the SEIA-TRANSE study. Three countries (Namibia, Senegal, and South Africa) are included in both data sets.

The underrepresentation of girls, is a common characteristic of the countries with low enrollment rates (Eritrea, Mali, Senegal, and Tanzania), and according to Levine (2003) there is no exception to this pattern.¹ There are no clear signs of reduced gender differences during the period we are covering, but the figures do differ some between the two data sets. In Namibia and South Africa, both being countries with high enrollment in secondary education, the female participation is actually higher than male participation. In both countries, the differences are being reduced, as male participation has stagnated, while female participation has gone down, as is evident from Table 4.

Data from the Demographic and Health Surveys includes data on secondary enrollment in urban and rural districts. In most African countries south of Sahara, school

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enrollment rates are considerably higher in urban than in rural districts, as one could expect, but there are also vast differences in this relation between countries. There are even a few countries where school enrollment is higher in rural than in urban districts, such as Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Kenya, in the latter the difference is actually quite big (45 percent in rural compared to 29 in urban). In Tanzania and Uganda, enrollment rates are slightly higher in urban districts, but the differences are small.

On the other end of the scale, there are a number of countries with enormous gaps in enrollment between urban and rural background, and where rural enrollment is almost negligible, such as Burkina Faso (3 percent) and Niger (1.5). In these countries urban enrollment is 13 and 17 times higher than rural enrollment. Also, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, and Senegal, are characterized by very low rural enrollment both in absolute terms and compared to rural enrollment. In most countries, urban enrollment is two or three times higher than rural enrollment. This includes Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Cote d’Ivoire, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Rwanda. Also, in Ghana, Malawi, Nigeria, Togo, and Zambia, urban enrollment is higher than rural, but the ratio is less than 2:1. Data from the Demographic and Health surveys also indicate that there are large differences in educational attainment and the proportion reaching certain educational levels between students from rich and poor families.

Definition of “Transitions”

Transitions in education describe the flow of students between different stages in the school system: from one level to the next, between grades within a given level, and out of and back into schools. According to Boudon (1974), the transition through the educational system may be described as a series of branching points, at which students may continue schooling, change direction or leave. A general model of an educational system could be drawn as a series of boxes representing the different school levels as shown below. The boxes may represent different durations of the specific levels according to national arrangements.

In this model, the children enter primary education at the left at the age of 5, 6 or 7, and then go through the prescribed years of schooling. Even if primary school is compulsory, we know that in many developing countries certain proportions of the age groups never enter primary schooling, and many are dropping out before finishing school. The transition rates are defined by the proportion of school leavers from one level that are enrolled at the next level, or at the end to the world of work. These are the transitions at the ordinary branching points into secondary education, between lower and upper secondary education, and out of secondary education (to tertiary education or work). In addition, students may leave (drop out) of schooling at any point, and they may return. Furthermore, there are transitions taking place within the levels, between grades or repetition of grades, which is not shown in this figure. Comprised in the concept “transitions” are decisions or opportunities to enter school, to continue, repeat or to drop out at any stage, and to move on to the next level after school-leaving. All these moves may be related to school-internal factors (successful learning and passing examinations) and external factors (family support, economy, and so forth).

The model above is general in the sense that it does not represent any country-specific system. There are large differences between countries both concerning the functioning of
the two secondary levels and how it is institutionalized. Lower secondary may be organized as an extension of primary education, or lower and upper secondary education may be integrated in one system. The organizational setup is perhaps not the most important question related to transitions, but at what stages there is restricted entry. In some countries, students can move more or less automatically from primary to lower secondary, and lower secondary education is included in compulsory education. This has been the historical trend in most OECD countries during the last decades, while in most developing countries, lower and upper secondary education are integrated, and the entry into lower level is restricted and selective. Another important question is whether lower secondary education comprises vocational training in addition to the general tracks, or whether vocational training (if at all existing within the ordinary school system) is restricted to upper secondary.

To make calculations of the transition rates presented in the model on a national and comparative basis, we would need advanced statistical data which is not always obtainable even in industrialized countries, and far out of reach in developing countries. Transitions are not easily observable directly, but could be indirectly observed by data on enrollment at any level broken down by age, gender, and so forth. Analytically, there is an important difference between a cross section picture of a school system at given points of time represented by data on enrollment, and all the moves students make within a given time-span represented by transitions. Any enrollment characteristics at a given level and point of time is the result of all previous transitions within and between the lower levels that students have had to pass. Therefore, cross-sectional data as those being presented in previous sections also indicate different transition patterns. For example, low participation from girls at lower secondary level is a result of low participation or pass rate at primary schools, or that fewer girls than boys do enter secondary education.
Effects on Transitions: Critical Factors

The transition rates illustrated in the model presented above are the results of a combination of individual decisions and contextual factors which interact with each other. As a starting point, we could adapt a simplified model: transitions from one level to the next depend, on the one hand of the availability of school places within realistic reach (geographically and economically), and on the other hand, on individual decisions of the students (and their families). The individual decisions depend on a series of structural factors: students must be adequately prepared from previous schooling, and going to school must be considered beneficial both by the individual student, his/her family, and the community.

Even if the SEIA-TRANSE study do not aim at thoroughly investigating the causes for transitions in secondary education, it is important to have an understanding of the factors which may promote or inhibit efficient and equitable transitions into, within and out of secondary education as a background for our study of promising cases. We have classified these main factors identified in the literature as being related to financing, family networks and household composition, quality and relevance, and the urban-rural divide.

Financing

As one could expect, there is a close relationship between poverty and secondary schooling. Two thirds of the World’s countries with the lowest Gross enrollment ratio at secondary level are in Africa, and francophone countries are over-represented. The average GNP per capita among the countries with lowest secondary enrollment is less than US$600 (1995), against more than US$17,000 among countries with high secondary enrollment (Lewin and Caillods 2001). In addition, low-participation countries have the highest population growth, and the highest 0–14 year dependency rate. Policies aiming at increasing the enrollment are therefore especially challenging. First, merely keeping the enrollment constant under population growth requires a considerable expansion in the number of school places. Second, the high dependency ratio means that there are few economically active behind each student in schooling age.

Naturally, there is a close relation between secondary and primary enrollment. If primary school enrollment is low, also secondary enrollment must be low. On average, the countries with very low secondary enrollment, also have relative low primary enrollment, and in addition also a significant gender imbalance. However, in countries with very low secondary enrollment, secondary enrollment as a ratio of primary enrollment is much lower than in countries with low or higher secondary enrollment (Lewin and Calliods 2001). This implies that the low secondary enrollment cannot be explained by low primary enrollment alone. In addition, even with a constant primary school enrollment, there is a considerable potential for rapid growth in secondary education, at least in terms of eligible candidates.

Funding of secondary education is not an automatic correlation with GNP, but also depends on political priorities. Countries with low secondary enrollment allocate a smaller proportion of the GNP for education, but a higher proportion of public expenditure. Where allocations to secondary as a proportion of GNP is relatively high, gross enrollment in secondary education is also high (Lewin and Caillods 2001).

Simulations made by Lewin and Caillods (2001) illustrate how the economic situation of poor countries set financial constraints on the expansion of secondary education. For
many African countries to reach a secondary education gross enrollment ratio of 80 percent or more is considered not to be sustainable under current cost structures. One of the reasons is that before obtaining this level, these countries first must increase their primary education enrollment. Even a secondary education gross enrollment rate of 60 percent is probably beyond reach. Limited financial resources not only affect the number of school places in secondary education that can be afforded, but also the quality of both primary and secondary schooling (teachers’ qualifications, school buildings, textbooks, and so forth). Low quality leads to both reduced enrollment as well as increased repetitions.

**Family Networks and Household Composition**

Lloyd and Blanc (1996) have pointed out that extended family networks in Sub-Saharan Africa probably have enabled a greater number of children to be educated than would otherwise have been possible if biological parents alone bore the full private cost of their children’s education. As heads of households women provide better opportunities for boys as well as for girls’ education, compared to men. This is evident in a study which includes seven different Sub-Saharan countries (Kenya, Tanzania, Cameroon, Niger Malawi, Namibia, and Zambia). In an earlier study, Lloyd and Gage-Brandon (1994) reported that teenage children and especially boys, are significantly more likely to have ever enrolled in school if their mother is the reported head of the household in which they reside. Girls more often than boys tend to drop out if they have younger siblings. Nevertheless, girls seem to benefit more than boys from living in a female-headed household when it comes to grade completion.

One explanation is that as a household head, a woman is able to act according to her preferences to a greater extent than when she is living in a household headed by a man. Furthermore women are more likely to concentrate their resources on the children with whom they are living, having fewer commitments for child support outside the household. There is indirect evidence that in urban areas the extended family networks may be weaker, and more supportive of boys’ than of girls’ education (Montgomery and Kouamé 1993 cited in Lloyd and Blanc 1996). This is in accordance with some of the tendencies emerging from the enrollment figures, discussed above, but their exposition does not, of course, provide any single, exhaustive explanation of the differences that are observed at the national level.

**Quality and Relevance**

There are a number of aspects decisive for the quality of schooling. The most essential ones are, first and foremost, the quality of teaching and the competence of the teachers, then the availability and the quality of textbooks and other learning material, and then the conditions of the school buildings. There are strong indications that primary education in Africa does not prepare students in a satisfactory way for secondary education. This can affect the decision of school leavers from primary education to enter secondary education, because this decision is based on their assessment of their own chances of succeeding. Unsatisfactory quality of primary schooling may lead to potential students being rejected who under different circumstances had been qualified, especially if there are tests or entrance examination on which entrance is decided. Finally, poor previous schooling may lead to students enrolled in secondary education not being able to achieve according to what is demanded. Increased enrollment and more efficient transitions in secondary education is therefore
dependent not only of the development toward universal access to primary education, but also of the quality offered in primary schools. In addition, because the quality of primary schools varies considerably between urban and rural schools, as well as between private and public schools, the situation in primary education generates serious inequalities in transitions in secondary education. So, even if the scope of the SEIA-TRANSE is secondary education, it may well be that some of the most important answers to the problems are to be found at the primary level. If African countries succeed in development toward high-quality, universal primary education, increased demand, increased enrollment, and improved transitions could be expected almost automatically to occur.

Perhaps the most important problems of relevance of secondary education in Africa is that it is almost entirely academic, aimed at recruiting an elite to the universities. Training of vocational skills is an option for only a small proportion of the relevant age groups. In addition, publicly-funded vocational programs—both formal and non-formal—generally have poor quality (UNESCO 2000, World Bank 2001). A strengthening of vocational secondary education could both contribute to economic development, serve as prevention of large youth groups falling outside the society and the world of work, and probably also increase the general interest for being enrolled in secondary education. Atchoarena and Delluc (2002) point at the challenges of a rapidly increasing labor force in most Sub-Saharan countries, and the problems of an educational profile with very low enrollment in vocational training, especially in francophone countries. Experiences from developed countries show that the move toward universal access to the secondary level has been accompanied by the strengthening of the vocational sector of secondary education. A relevant example is the Norwegian reform on upper secondary education—Reform 1994—which has resulted in a considerable change in profile toward vocational branches, and also lead to more efficient transitions (Støren, Skjersli, and Aamodt 1998). But also within the academic programs, one could expect problems of relevance, with curricula copied from former colonial powers, not adapted to the African context, history, and culture, as well as textbooks being outdated (if at all available).

The main objective of technical and vocational education is to prepare the labor force to adapt to the requirements of the labor market. In the first period after independence, this type of training was seen as important to support the growth of a modern sector. However, the economic development of most African countries has not been as expected, and the development toward a modern economy including the growth of the industrial and the service sector have been set back after the economic crisis of the late 1970s. Instead, the structure of employment in Sub-Saharan countries changed into very high unemployment rates and a rapidly growing informal sector absorbing much of the labor force. In this situation, imported models of technical and vocational education, developed in a context of economic growth and modernization lead to a mismatch with the actual economy and labor marked that emerged (Atchoarena and Delluc 2002).

This development in turn leads to serious criticism of technological and vocational training which could be summarized as (Moura Castro 1999, Atchoarena and Delluc 2002):

- Poor quality,
- Very high costs,
- Training not suited to actual socio-economic conditions,
- Disregard of the informal sector’s needs, and
- Disregard of the labor market and the high unemployment rate among graduates.
A broader set of objectives than simply economic must therefore be pursued. Social aims, including the fight against poverty has become more important, as well as the integration of young people into the world of work. Also the training for self-employment and to raise the productivity of the informal sector are important objectives.

**The Urban–Rural Divide**

It seems that the priorities of education adapted to serve the demands of a modern economy leads to the neglect of training relevant for the rural population. Kallaway (2001) argues that international educational policy discourses tend to subordinate many countries of the South to a domination of educational codes and assumptions imported from the industrialized world. The specific way in which rural communities are being positioned by the global economy is effectively ignored as the new policy formulations emphasize exclusively the need for particular kinds of “human resource development.” For the Third World, it is inappropriate to predicate educational reforms on the human resource imperatives of a modern, high-skill economy. The new educational policy, shaped by global trends, has failed to engage the special interests of the rural poor. The inhabitants of the rural areas have little or no say in the changes that are made in the educational system. Kallaway points out that very little real consultation is taking place with the educators, teachers, communities, and students who are to be the recipients. At the same time, the changes are often carried out in the name of democracy and the empowerment of the disadvantaged, which makes it difficult for individual teachers or schools or communities of teachers to mount a critique of the educational transformations that are being carried out.

Moreover, Kallaway discusses the dangers of a narrow and one-sided view of the way education functions. Thus, the function of selection in the educational system should not be ignored by a too narrow emphasis on the equality function of schooling. The particular circumstances and the needs of rural poor populations should be identified, rather than selling people the myth of their equal chances of global success. Ilon (1994) states that education will become even less useful as long as the fact of marginalization as a result of globalization of the economy is denied, and students are trained as if they had equal non-school resources, equal starting places, equal educational opportunities, and equal job and career possibilities. Kallaway points out that earlier attempts to link the school curriculum to the world of work in a rural setting have not been very successful, which is to say that there are limitations to the role of education as a tool of development. He states that the need for a linkage between the school curriculum and the world of rural work has increased rather than decreased alongside the decrease of access to secondary and tertiary education and the prospects for finding alternative employment in the formal sector. He argues that it would be foolish to totally ignore the potential contribution of curriculum innovations as a means to development.

**Measures to Improve Transitions**

Based on our knowledge about the factors that affects transitions, we could specify relevant types of policies and measures to make transitions more equitable and efficient to guide both the selection and the analyses of promising cases. Based on the general model in Figure 2, we could analytically make the distinction between arrangements:
To increase total enrollment in secondary education and to make enrollment more equitable across gender, across the urban-rural divide, and between social and ethnic groups, and

To make the flow between grades and levels more efficient to reduce dropout and repetition.

To put it simply, in our case studies we are looking for policies aiming at recruiting and keeping students, and helping them to succeed in schools. Recruitment depends on the availability of school places which are attractive to the individuals, and on factors that may prevent the individuals from making use of the opportunities. Success depends both on the provision and the motivation of the individuals as well as the quality of teaching and learning environment in secondary as well as primary school.

Based on the review of literature and experiences from educational reforms in industrialized countries, we can identify the types of measures that could improve enrollment and success-rates in secondary education. Such measures should address both the opportunity structure as well as the stimulation of individual demand. These measures may be implemented at national, regional, or local (community/school) levels. Examples of types of such measures are:

- Financial (expansion of capacity, improvement of infrastructure, support to students),
- Provisions (attractiveness and relevance, volume, location, quality and support, selection mechanisms),
- Counseling,
- PTA (parent-teacher associations) and other local community/school relations, and
- Reducing factors that prevent youth to enter or to stay in schools.

According to our model, the concept of “transitions” as it is used in this study, covers a broad range of events: the entry into lower secondary education, continuation from lower to upper secondary education, the progress from grade to grade within the specific levels, repetitions, dropout as well as transfer to the labor market or tertiary education. Consequently, the factors affecting transitions as well as the measures to make transitions more equitable and efficient differ according to type of transition and at what educational level it concerns. This is also closely related to the age group normally involved in the specific stages of transitions. The measures that are effective in attracting 13- or 14-year-olds to continue schooling after leaving primary schools could be expected to differ from those that stimulate students aged 16 or 17 in their final years of upper secondary education to complete their education. Both the mechanisms to support students and their families as well as the pedagogical challenges to support their learning vary between lower and secondary education as well as by age.

Measures to improve transitions in secondary education could be classified according to which level they are operating—national, regional, or local (community). Examples of measures at the national level are educational reforms in access regulations, extra funding for increased participation, and curriculum reforms. Typical measures at the regional level are the establishment of schools at different levels within realistic reach for the population, and adaptation of capacity in secondary education to the expected numbers of school leavers from primary education. As we discuss below, measures at local or community level are important,
both for the development of schools itself, but especially to encourage youth and their families to enroll (and continue) in education or to reduce the obstacles against schooling.

**Methodology**

The purpose of the SEIA-TRANSE study is not primarily to describe and analyze transition processes in African countries, but to investigate experiences from promising practices relevant to transitions. If the former had been the case, we would need substantial comparable statistical data on transitions from primary to lower secondary education, from lower to upper secondary, on transitions from upper secondary education to higher education or the labor market, and on dropout and repetitions during the secondary level. However, the state-of-the-art report contains some key statistics on enrollment patterns mainly based on UNESCO statistics which is also presented in brief in this synthesis report.

Both because of the purpose of this project, and because of the lack of reliable data, the study of promising practices and an investigation of those factors which promote such practices in different country contexts calls for a largely qualitative study. This report draws on both the empirical work conducted as case studies of individual programs as well as interviews and conversations with officials in the Ministry of Education, heads of service organizations, religious organizations, and individuals interested in educational change.

**Modus Operandi**

A Norwegian-South African consortium was set up to conduct the two thematic SEIA studies: the thematic study 2 (TRANSE) and thematic study 6 (HESI) consisting of: the Faculty of Education and the Teacher Inservice Project (TIP) at the University of the Western Cape in collaboration with a Norwegian consortium of researchers based at the International Education Centre (LINS), The National Institute of Technology (TI), Akershus University College (HIAK), The Norwegian Board of Education (LS), and Norwegian Institute for Studies in Research and Higher Education (NIFU). The main contract partners with the World Bank was LINS and NIFU for the HESI and the TRANSE study respectively, which then set up a sub-contract with TIP to conduct the country studies and to draft the synthesis report.

**Phase 1: The Preparatory Phase**

During this phase of the project, the NIFU and UWC/TIP team began to explore and to exchange views about current definitions and understandings of the term “promising practice” and to develop the research instruments to be used in the study. In addition, at a four-day workshop with the South African and Norwegian partners, possible countries within which to conduct the study were discussed and identified. This workshop was the forum for discussions on the research foci, and the processes and procedures to be followed. Each of these aspects, amongst others, is further detailed below.

**Data Collection and Research Instruments.** The research consortium developed criteria for the selection of cases, and four interview schedules to be used in both the HESI and TRANSE studies:
1. Setting criteria for the selection of promising cases
2. Interview schedule 1—Orientation/Context
3. Interview schedule 2—Educators/Facilitators/Implementers
4. Interview schedule 3—Recipients
5. Interview schedule 4—Enabling and Inhibiting Factors.

These instruments were piloted in a promising practice site in Cape Town and later adapted. The learning and insights gained in the pilot work were taken into the joint work-session held in October 2002 in Gordon’s Bay, South Africa.

**Joint Planning Session—Gordon’s Bay.** This work-session gave the members of both the Norwegian consortium and the South African team an excellent opportunity to meet and to come to shared understandings with regard to the various aspects of the project, in particular, the research methodology and the timeframes. Decisions taken here were documented in the workshop report which served as an important implementation guide for the UWC/TIP researchers in their fieldwork.

**Appointment of Local Country Researchers.** While the South African researchers had been commissioned to conduct the fieldwork and to write the associated reports, it was also necessary for these researchers to contract and work with local researchers in the six selected countries. These researchers assisted in identifying and selecting sites as well as gaining access to the selected sites. In addition, they were involved in collecting documents, liaising with organizations and schools, conducting interviews, and, where necessary, translating the responses to these interviews. They were responsible for writing site reports and for checking and verifying country reports. The range of tasks described here fulfilled an important aim of the study, that of capacity building for these researchers, many of whom had had little previous practical research experiences. The country research partnerships ranged from two to four researchers.

**Gaining Access to and Liaising with Selected Sites.** In order to facilitate this process, each of the possible sites was given a letter outlining the rationale and purpose of the research, the profile of the research teams, and their roles and responsibilities. This letter also required confirmation of their participation in the research activities. Each site was also promised a copy of the site report as well as the country report.

**Phase 2: Fieldwork and Data Collection**

**Interviews.** Semi-structured interviews of approximately two hours each were conducted with a range of roleplayers and key informants, from departmental officials to school principals and program managers, from teachers and program implementers such as peer educators to the students themselves. The interviews were largely shaped, but not exclusively limited to, the interview schedules developed during Phase 1. Often the researchers returned to interviewees to collect further information or to verify information previously collected.

**Observations.** Wherever possible, researchers visited the sites where programs were being implemented. This was not always possible due to the timing of the project. A number
of schools were closed for vacations. During planned visits, researchers observed lessons and facilitated discussions.

*Literature and Documents.* Wherever possible, documents from the various Education Departments (both at national and regional levels) as well as those from other service providers, were collected and consulted. These included policy documents, planning and strategy documents, as well as evaluation reports where these existed.

**Phase 3: Data Analysis and Documentation**

Data analysis and interpretation was conducted in different stages. First, data from each site was compiled into a site report. These reports captured the interview responses and observations made. Where possible, site reports were returned to the site for verification.

The next stage was to conduct analyses across the sites within each country to produce a country report. Country reports also included an overview of the country as well as recent educational and social policy so as to locate the practices described in the site reports within their larger contexts. It is within these reports that the first level of “conscious” analysis occurred as researchers began to grapple with the challenge of illustrating complex relationships between policy, practice, and local contextual needs and demands.

The final stage was the distillation and compilation of the findings from the six country reports into the final thematic report. This Working Paper synthesizes the findings of the country studies, highlighting the factors contributing to more equitable and efficient transitions in secondary education, and offers conclusions and recommendations.

The three stages described above represent a pyramid—the site reports laying the groundwork or foundation for the country reports and these, in turn, providing valuable perspectives from which to build the thematic report. Together, the reports make a significant contribution to critical engagement with policies and practices which support and strengthen secondary education in Sub-Saharan Africa.

**Selection of Countries and Cases**

After discussing which countries should be selected for this study, the research team in Gordon Bay agreed that various dimensions would be well reflected by choosing Namibia, Eritrea, Senegal, Mali, Tanzania, and South Africa. Together these countries provide variation in terms of enrollment rates and over all economic situation, geographical diversification, and language, as two of the countries chosen are francophone.

The main objective of the SEIA/TRANSE study is to present examples of promising practices for more equitable and efficient transitions. To be able to answer the guiding questions for the project, we need to identify and investigate a number of cases representing practices, projects, or measures which have a potential for developing policies beyond its specific context. The selection of cases should reflect an adequate coverage of transition mechanism and the factors affecting transitions as well as representing the measures presented in the previous section.

It was important for the team to define what is understood by “promising practice” as described in the terms of reference for the study. It was agreed that the term “promising practice” was more appropriate than “best practice,” as it allowed the researchers to take
into account a wider range of study sites which, in turn, provide for a more complex understanding of development. Development initiatives face different challenges at various stages of their own development, and one of the aims of the study was to identify a range of these challenges and different initiatives’ responses to these.

During the preparatory phase, the research consortium defined a set of criteria for the selection of promising cases. The TIP team finally developed the following selection criteria to identify promising practices and select sites for study:

**Records indicating results:** Records refer to both quantitative and qualitative documentation and results refer to changes in outcomes. The point is that the TRANSE study needed sources of information that were both written and relatively systematic. The research in each site did not allow for basic investigation.

**Accessible accounts:** This criterion indicates the need to consider the cost efficiency of practices selected for investigation. If costs of the practices were not included, one could risk coming up with excessive and costly undertakings with poor chances of becoming mainstreamed and sustained. Money can buy a lot, also in terms of promising practices.

**Replicability:** The extent to which a practice might lend itself to widespread replication should be taken into account. In other words, the practice should not be so unique that it would not be possible to implement it at other sites.

**Sustainability:** The practice should be beyond the planning stage or the pilot stage and/or there should be some indication that it will be able to continue over time. This meant that it was important to collect data about the origins of the selected practices and to give some of the history in order to provide a picture of how well established they are.

**Popularized and disseminated:** It was recognized that it would be good to investigate how popularization and dissemination occurs—how a practice becomes more widely accepted and implemented within a site or community.

**Relevant and context specific:** The practice needs to be relevant and seen by stakeholders to be relevant to its particular context. The study team needs to look carefully for ways in which the practice has been modified within its cultural context.

**Ownership:** The degree of involvement/participation of different stakeholders should be an important criterion. While practices may have been initiated externally, it is important to try to assess the extent to which the providers as well as the recipients have taken on ownership of the practice.

**Inter-sector/interdisciplinary approach:** An integrated or holistic approach would indicate a practice based on the recognition that problems are not isolated but exist within a wider context. It is important that this context is understood and described.

**Systemic understanding:** This criterion refers to the recognition that solutions are often complex, but that a practice might be seen as part of a wider strategy to address a problem.

**Equity:** Investigation of ways in which practices in the TRANSE study address gender, ability, age, race, and the rural/urban divide.

In the selection of the sites consideration was given to initiatives at a national, regional, and local level, in order to ensure representativity. This was based on an understanding that the
various practices can be initiated in different ways. However, given the time and resources available for the fieldwork, the selection of cases was more pragmatic and these criteria were primarily used as guiding principles.

The Challenges, Strengths and Limitations of the Study

It is important to reflect on the research process itself—both because it is possible to learn valuable lessons which can then guide later projects, and because conclusions and recommendations are best understood within the context within which they have been developed. Collaboration on research projects has both strengths and weaknesses, and requires careful planning, management, communication systems, and procedures. These are not only difficult to develop but also very challenging to maintain over the life of the project. When done successfully it is often a costly business but leads to worthwhile understandings and insights.

This research study not only required collaboration but collaboration at a distance: between the Norwegian and South African partners, and between the South African researchers and the local country researchers. In addition, a funding partner (the World Bank) was involved. While the Gordon’s Bay work-session assisted with the challenges of the preparatory phase, additional meetings and communication systems would have better facilitated on-going contact during the next phases of the project.

A common challenge experienced in many research projects is that of time constraints. This project was no exception. The study was conducted between October 2002 and the end of March 2003 with a 12-day extension on the initial deadline. This timeframe was made more difficult by the timing of the project. As already mentioned, in some of the countries selected the schools were on vacation for most of December and January, while in Eritrea schools were on a short break during February.

Another limitation relates to the local country researchers. While they provided access to sites and their liaison work often smoothed the way for the South African researchers’ visits, it is suspected that there were times when some also played—not always intentionally—a gate-keeping function. They had enormous power to both select sites and to exclude sites from selection. The lack of information provided to the South African researchers about potential sites before the visits were undertaken contributed to this situation.

Despite these challenges and limitations, considerable amounts of data were collected from a number of different sites. These data have yielded rich and textured descriptions which have been analyzed to provide a good understanding of promising practices. This achievement has largely been due to the knowledge of educational systems and development enjoyed by the South African research team and the local researchers.

It is important to note that the research project was recognized in all the countries visited as valuable, and those who participated did so enthusiastically, generously sharing their views. They expressed the hope that they would be able to learn from the reports—in particular, from reading about the practices followed in other programs. This enthusiasm to learn and to share understandings is itself an important finding of the study!

It is also important to note that the research process offered participants who were interviewed opportunities to reflect on their own practice and to share ideas with the researchers. This, in itself, has been a positive spinoff.
The projects selected for this study represent a range of African countries south of the Sahara, with a wide range of enrollment rates in secondary education, representing both the various regions and Francophone and Anglophone countries. In addition, the projects should focus on the different aspects of transitions, as well as on the various factors influencing transitions. An overview of the projects and their characteristics is shown in the table below.

The actual projects relates to transition processes more indirectly than directly, but are related to a broad range of influencing factors, and directed toward different levels. Two of the projects (Mali and Senegal) have a focus on the national level, while the other projects mainly are community-based, but still related to national policies. The equity question is addressed in many projects, and with a special focus on girls’ education. However, there is also a focus on the situation of the boys in the South African USIKO project, which also covers the topic of youth at risk. Also the quality of schooling is covered, most specifically in the Tanzanian cases. Finally, a majority of the promising practices are related to the important topic of interrelations between school and the society.

Namibia

Context and Challenges

Compared to many other Sub-Saharan countries, Namibia is in a relatively positive state both concerning economy and education. Since independence from South Africa in 1990, there has been a rapid progress in economic growth and in access to education. A major problem, however, is the high level of inequality in social and economic terms. Measured
by Gini coefficient, Namibia’s income distribution is among the most the most unequal in the world. There are large income disparities between ethnic groups, and both farms and businesses connected to the primary sector are predominantly owned by white farmers and business people.

The Government spends on average 23 percent of its national budget on health and education, and the educational system has undergone numerous reforms addressing quality, equity and access. Since independence, enrollment in primary schooling has increased considerably, but still very few enter tertiary education. While 74 percent finish grade 7, only 1 percent enter tertiary institutions. In 1993 the Government committed itself to provide free and compulsory primary education for all, but there are a number of factors hampering the delivery of quality education: “... the lack of teaching and learning materials, poor physical facilities, higher learner/teacher ratios, inequalities in resource allocation in educational regions, and the lack of qualified teachers.” Other important problems reported in Namibian education are: absenteeism, teenage pregnancy, and HIV/AIDS.

Concerning transition problems, it seems that the main problem in Namibia is very low transition rates from primary to lower secondary education. The above mentioned problems of quality, probably due to rapid expansion in primary schooling, are important factors.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Measure</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Finance</th>
<th>Provision</th>
<th>Counselling</th>
<th>PTA, Other Local</th>
<th>Reducing Hindering Factors</th>
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<td>School Board Training program</td>
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<td>Modular Vocational Model</td>
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<td>Best Performing Schools</td>
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In addition, the geographical distribution is important. While primary schools are spread over rural areas, secondary schools are concentrated in towns and cities, and many of the secondary schools have hostels to support learners from rural areas.

High repetition rates in junior secondary schools is an increasing problem, having an impact on overcrowding schools. This could be related to the promotion requirements and the quality of teaching. A learner is promoted from grade 7 if at least a D grade is achieved in five promotion subjects. Similar promotion requirements exist at lower grades.

Girls’ Project

The Affirmative Action for Girl Child Project was developed as a concept for the Fourth World Conference in Beijing in 1995, and implemented in Namibia by the Girl Child Organisation. The aims of these two cooperating organizations are:

- Project an alternative lifestyle to demonstrate to girls that teenage motherhood is not a viable option,
- Prepare girls for leadership positions in Namibian society,
- Involve girls in the solution to their own problems,
- Unleash the full potential of the girl child enabling her to participate fully in the development of Namibia, and
- Help girls complete their schooling and find scholarships for deserving cases.

Even if the aim of the project is far wider than related to education, one of the aims is directly related to schooling, and also the overall aim is highly relevant for education.

The AAG/GCO project operates countrywide, but the project described here focused on activities in the central Windhoek area.

From each school two girls are nominated according to selection criteria provided by AAG. The girls included in the program receive training by regional representatives of the GCO, and are also linked to professional women who give guidance and support. The girls get financial support for school fees and books during their secondary school career. In return, the girls are expected to make contributions to community service and mentor other girls in the future.

Within the GCO, staff is visiting schools, and have dialogs with teachers and female learners encouraging them to establish clubs addressing issues like violence against women, leadership training, career choices and civic education. The girls clubs meet with towns or districts supported by GCO organizers and provide training on topics like human rights, sexual abuse and harassment, mobilizing the community, project writing and development etc.

There have been established 160 clubs operated by the AAG and the GCO, and approximately 12,000 girls have been reached. Within the AAG, 30 girls have benefited directly from leadership development, mentoring and financial support. In 2003 another 70 will be included in the project.

So far, no systematic evaluation of the project has been conducted. Through the fieldwork, it was reported substantial positive results that the girls involved in the projects had fewer teenage pregnancies, remained in school, developed critical thinking, stayed up to date with national and world events and read more newspapers, and being more involved in community activities.
The lessons of this project relevant for the TRANSE study is related to enhancing girls’ access and completion of secondary education. The project has a further focus than schooling, aiming at improving their position in the society, to increase their awareness of community participation and working life, and to reduce the problems of suppression and teenage pregnancy often stopping them from further schooling.

**School Board Training Programme**

This project operates from the Teacher resource center in Ongwediva in the far north of Namibia. The northern areas of Namibia are the most highly populated parts of the country where 46 percent of the country’s population resides on 10 percent of the land. People make their living from farming combined with income from family members working in the towns. The majority of the households are rural, and over 40 percent are female headed. Both young males and females residing in the area have their income from work in the towns, while children are often left to the grandparents.

Historically, there has been a high demand for education in the north, and most schools have been started as community initiatives, but later transformed into government schools. School attendance in the 7–16 year age group is as high as 95 percent for both boys and girls. Progress through schools is not so positive. In 1998 there were 15,000 learners in Grade 1, about one third of that in Grade 10, and less than 2,000 enrolled in Grade 12. There are 709 primary schools, 229 combines primary/secondary and 34 secondary schools in the region. In addition, there is a technical college, a teachers college, and a campus of the University of Namibia.

To secure strong links between school and home, school boards are the foremost mechanism, both through home-school communication and through a real effort to increase parents’ involvement in school board management and policies. The School Board Training Programme was started in 1997 with support from World University Services Denmark. The main aim is to strengthen democratic participation in education by supporting and providing opportunities to school boards or rural and marginalized communities to respond to Namibia’s educational challenges in connection with the implementation of educational reform. The target group is school board members (parents, teachers, principals, and teacher representatives). The school board members attend training courses offered between clusters of schools. Radio programs have been used to disseminate the message more widely, and also a newsletter has been started. Also exchange visits between clusters of schools have been arranged.

Today, workshops have been conducted for 279 schools reaching nearly 1500 participants. No formal evaluation of the program has been conducted, but there has been some review of the training, and the feedback has been used to improve the training sessions. The impact of the program has been, as reported from interviews with the project staff:

- Parents visit the schools more frequently,
- Parents elect more active members to the school boards,
- Parents organize more functions, including fund raising,
- Attendance has improved, and
- Principal is no longer always the chairperson of the board.
An increased responsibility among school board members for the working of the school has been noticed. In a narrow sense, the direct effects of this project on transitions cannot be reported. However, the improved involvement of parents in the running of the school is likely to have positive effects on the links between the school and the community, to increase the schools’ responsiveness toward the needs of the community, and to enhance the management capacity of the schools. Also the understanding among parents of the importance of schooling could be mentioned, however, in this specific region the high demand for schooling indicates that this is already in place to a high degree. Also the possibility of raising resources for the schools should be noticed. Therefore it could be concluded that this method of improving the governing of schools by training of school board members should be noticed as a promising case for the development of schooling in general, and therefore also potentially for the improvement of the transition processes.

**Total Child Project**

The Total Child Project is located in the North-Eastern part of the country, where large tracks of land was alienated from the indigenous population, and Aminus (Korridor) was created as a communal areas surrounded by commercial farmland and the border of Botswana. The area has been underdeveloped and underresourced, as well as over-exploited of grazing resources. The communities are ethnic-based, with a strong degree of prejudicing and discrimination among the black population. Combined with the apartheid legacy of migrant male labor, there has been a high degree of distortions, violence, child abuse, and so forth. The homestead became the domain of the elderly, women, and small children.

In 1998, only 15 percent of the teachers had more than two years of tertiary education, 80 percent had Grade 12 or one or two years of tertiary education. The primary schools feed one junior secondary school, offering only Grades 8–10, and there is only one school, in the regional capital offering Grades 11–12. However, the few learners reaching that far prefer to seek places in the better-resourced schools in Windhoek. A high proportion of the children from the homesteads are sent early to subsidized school hostels. In the region Omaheke two thirds of the children from age six live in hostels. The Total Child Project reports that this leads to a lack of parental guidance and the traditional guiding of children into adulthood is being lost. Furthermore, hostel supervision is inadequate and the staff untrained in child supervision. Children perceived the adults’ behavior as exploitation, neglect, and abuse. This has contributed to self-destructive antisocial behavior.

The aims of the Total Child Project is to create dialog between the stakeholders in children’s development toward the protection and affirmation of children, and to promote action among adults and children against social exclusion, and toward empowering individuals, communities and institutions to embrace human rights as a framework for citizenship, social transformation and justice. Some of the more specific objectives are:

- Reduce gender and ethnic violence, sexual violence, discrimination, and abuse,
- Create platforms and opportunities for communities to re-evaluate gender and ethnic identities,
- Improve adult-child relations, with children, especially girls, saying no to exploiting relationships,
- Decrease teenage pregnancies and consequent number of girls dropping out of school
- Create a self-managing school,
- Create community counselling and guidance systems,
- Re-establish positive adult guidance for children, and
- Create community strategies for managing the impacts of HIV/AIDS and to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The philosophy of the project is children’s environment at schools cannot be treated in isolation. To help children succeed in education, parents, community, teachers, school support staff, and learners have to be fully involved.

The TCP staff work with learners, teachers, school board members, and community members to:

- Establish an understanding of their rights and responsibilities,
- Improve learning and teaching methodologies,
- Support good governance,
- Enhance parent participation, and
- Support early childhood development.

The TCP project started as a pilot in 1998. The program is currently reaching about 3,000 people directly. At the community level the project has trained 31 family visitors who were trained and now work as volunteers in 15 of the villages of Aminius.

There is no research or evaluation ongoing within the project, but an external evaluation was carried out in 2001. Very little information exists regarding the possible success of the project. The TRANSE site researcher was of the view that the project has addressed major problems and concern. There are some signs of improvement, but it should be recognized that this projects is focusing on inequity problems between boys and girls and between ethnic groups which are related to attitudes which requires long-term commitment to change. The evaluation from 2001 indicates that a overwhelming majority of the teachers regarded the project as helpful, that parents had been more involved, and improved the relationship between school and community. The learners aged 15–17 reported that teachers increasingly allowed debates in the classroom. Other important indicators reported by the evaluation were:

- Teachers and parents reported that dropouts have dropped,
- End of the year results indicated improvements,
- Parents participate more in school events, and
- Schools take their own initiative in mobilizing resources for the school.

Like the other Namibian case, also the Total Child Project has a much broader focus than teaching and learning in school, but addresses the total welfare situation of the children. Even if clear results can not be reported, there are still several indicators pointing toward classifying the project as a promising practice.
Eritrea

Context

The population of Eritrea is estimated to be between 3.6 and 4 million people. The situation of the country, and also related to education, is a consequence of decades of armed conflict with Ethiopia. Eritrea got its independence in 1993 after 30 years of struggle, and in 1998, open conflict with Ethiopia erupted, peaking with a full-scale fighting in 2000, causing severe destruction and a humanitarian crisis. Even if the war has come to an end, the situation is still severely affected by it, including unsustainable spending on defence, one third of the population displaced from their communities and deprived of their livelihoods, damage to towns and schools, and almost all men had been called up for military services. In addition, little rain over the past four years has resulted in crop failure. The drop of trade with Ethiopia has affected the economy negatively.

Though still caught in this critical situation, the Government of Eritrea and the Ministry of Education have presented ambitious and optimistic goals and implementation plans for the educational system of the country. The aim of the plan is to achieve a balanced and equitable education and training sector over the next 5–10 years. Demand for pre-, primary, and secondary education is enormous and continues to grow strongly. Parents bear significant financial burdens to keep their children in school. In spite of the war, many schools are still functioning, but without basic learning tools. The strengths are dedicated teachers, principals, and administrators, along with the strong interest in children’s education from families.

About half of the primary school age group is not at school, and those who complete primary school (about one third of the age group) after only five years of schooling will have a very thin competence if not continuing into middle school. Less than 7 percent of the age group complete seven years of middle school.

Enrollment in secondary education doubled from 1993 to 1999, but then dropped a little in 2000. The enrollment rate of girls has increased more slowly than among boys, and hence the percentage of girls in the whole dropped from 48 percent in 1993 to 41 in 2000. Girls' enrollment varies greatly from region to region. High repetition rates, as well as high dropout rates, are both major concern for the Ministry of Education. Less than 15 percent of the age group 14–17 is enrolled in secondary education, the repetition rate is reported to be 24 percent among girls and 16 percent among boys. Compared to the number of primary schools, there are few secondary schools, especially on upper secondary level.

The Ministry of Education is currently introducing a new reform to address the dropout and repetitions, recognizing that the quality and relevance of the curriculum are important issues. The majority of the school leavers are at the moment unemployable. The level of qualifications of the teachers is generally low, and secondary schools are very large (5,000–6,000 students), so are the classes, containing sometimes more than 80 students.

Three projects were selected for investigation in Eritrea, all aimed at girls’ education.

The National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (NUEYS) in Massawa

This project has a broad perspective aiming to build a “versatile youth,” and to enhance awareness of various realities in Eritrea. Since 1995, there has been a strong emphasis on girls
education as a result of requests from members. The NUEYS supports girls in the 5th and
the 9th grade who are academically weak providing support in science and mathematics.

Tutorial classes have been organized as an equity promoter, offering them extra classes
a week in both English and mathematics in selected secondary schools. Especially girls
preparing for matriculation are targeted.

The project is implemented in secondary schools, and the schools are responsible for
the implementation, under monitoring of the NUEYS. There are 1,440 girls who are the
annual beneficiaries of the tutorial classes, and the number has been steadily increasing.
Thus far no systematic evaluation or monitoring of the project has been conducted, but
positive outcomes have been reported. The girls involved in the project have been able to
catch up in basic subjects in school, and in general, they have been promoted from grade
to grade. A limiting factor is that the tutorial classes are given in towns, and many students
must walk long distances to attend them. This both excludes students from remote areas,
and reduces the benefit for those who participate in the classes.

Some controversy has been caused because this project implies extra attention and
educational support to girls. The research team heard comments that all weak students,
regardless of gender, should be treated in the same manner. Once girls get into schools they
should compete on equal terms. Extra support to girls could be taken as a sign that girls are
incapable of competing on their own, and thus support stereotypes about girls’ capacities.
At the other hand, the NUEYS opinion is that a need exists for extra support to girls to be
able to compete on equal footing. This view also seems to be supported by the national edu-
cational policy.

National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW)

Besides women and health, economic activities for women, women’s rights and literacy,
girls’ education is an important focus of the NUEW. Until 1999, NUEW only
worked among adult women, but now they have activities in all secondary schools in
Eritrea. A project “Food for Education” gave food to families in order to relieve the bur-
den on girls from growing, harvesting, and preparing food, thereby increasing the pos-
sibility of going to school. The project seems to be very successful, and will be expanded
to all regions.

The NUEW has created forums for girls to sit together, and to talk about problems
and solutions, and to encourage female students in secondary education to speak for
themselves. In some remote, rural areas, there are traditions and beliefs that girls should
stay at home helping their mothers, and then being married at about 15 or 16 years of
age. Women were not allowed to talk at village meetings. Therefore, projects aiming at
strengthening girls and women’s position and participation on community life could
contribute to improving their situation, and also being directly relevant to their partic-
ipation and success in education.

Donkey Canvas Project (DCP)

The Donkey Canvas Project is coordinated by NUEW, and is implemented in villages all over
Eritrea where water wells are far and women have to carry water often over long distances.
These burdens on the women are directly responsible for low enrollment and high dropout
at all levels of education. The aim of DCP is to increase enrollment rates and to decrease dropout rates for girls at all levels of schools in Eritrea by alleviating the burden of having to carry water—often for long distances.

DCP mainly operates in remote areas where transportation is difficult. In most cases students not only walk long distances to school, but also walk to fetch water every day. These difficulties often prevent girls from going to schools, and if they are enrolled in schooling, their learning possibilities are seriously hampered by the mentioned burdens. The purpose of the project is to promote girls’ education and equity, save time and energy in disadvantaged communities, and inject capital for better standards of living.

DCP grants donkeys and plastic barrels for transportation and storage of water supply that can last for at least three to four days. In many villages owning a donkey is a privilege that also would place a family at an advantage in many respects. Families who have been granted a donkey, canvas, and barrels have gained not only in terms of sending their children to school, but also in terms of promoting productiveness in their farming and hence increased their standard of living.

The NUEW functions in all six regions and all sub-regions of Eritrea. In every village there are committees which are responsible of identifying the most needy families and also those with school-going children. It is claimed that the distribution of items is more effective than offering support in terms of money. The budget of DCP is limited, and in many villages there are many more needy families than can be helped by DCP.

Thus far no systematic evaluation exists of DCP, but positive outcomes were reported by the TRANSE research team. The relief from having to carry water every day had affected the performance at school, but still many children walk long distances to school, leaving them with little energy and time for the school work. A positive factor is also that through the project, the NUEW has established intimate relationships with the village communities, and supported not only the children’s schooling, but also their economic activities. In some cases, however, it has been reported that the donkeys, which are very valuable in these villages, have been either put to other uses or even sold. This illustrates the need for follow-up and monitoring.

Even if it is too early to draw any conclusions of the success of the DCP, the TRANSE team wants to draw the attention to this project, not that it should be copied, but because it illustrates that to improve the schooling situation, it often is effective to focus on external factors. The project also exemplifies the importance of strong relations with the community. It illustrates the importance of a broader understanding of the factors keeping children out of schools in specific family and community contexts. In this project the focus is, like in many other Sub-Saharan countries, to reduce problems keeping the girls out of schools. In remote villages of Eritrea, the burden of fetching water is one such factor, in other contexts there are other practical burdens, or traditions and culture that have to be addressed as inhibiting factors.

Senegal

Context

The population of Senegal is approximately 10 million, consisting of a variety of ethnic groups. High population growth and environmental degradations are two endemic prob-
lems the country is facing. Related to the rapid growth in population is the fact that close to 58 percent of the population is below 20 years. The number of school age youth (7–19 years) increased from 580,000 in 1960, to 2.6 million in 1992 and over 3.3 million in 2000. The persistent economic crisis and high unemployment rates have kept young Senegalese out of the ordinary labor market and made a normal transition into adulthood difficult, leading many into delinquency, prostitution, and drugs. More than 80 percent of the population work in agriculture, livestock farming, fishing, and forestry, but still, Senegal is among the most industrialized countries in West Africa, producing groundnuts, cotton, millet, fishing products, and phosphate.

Senegal instituted a modern educational system at an early stage after liberation, but already in the 1960s there were difficulties due to persistent economic crises, and high unemployment rates keeping the graduates out of employment. In spite of progress made to improve access during the last ten years, disparities still exist, especially between boys and girls. There was a 3.9 percent annual increase in the student population at lower secondary level from 1990–2001; the increase in girls’ enrollment was especially strong. The increase in enrollment was even stronger at upper secondary level—student population increased from 42,000 to 76,000 in the same period—but because of population growth, the enrollment rate still remains low (approximately 10 percent).

The Senegal education is very elitist, especially in terms of facilities. Lower secondary education enrolls only 25 percent of the age group, and only 40 percent of the graduates from lower secondary education continue to upper secondary level. At all levels, access depends on the number of places available. Another example of transition problems is that of the more than 570,000 holding a First School departure certificate, less than 30,000 passed and were admitted into public universities.

Factors affecting transitions in schools in Senegal were identified as:

- Overpopulated classrooms,
- Lack of textbooks,
- High repetitions and dropout rates,
- Lack of teacher training in assessment, and
- Recruitment of teachers without formal qualifications.

Recruitment of temporary teachers has increased the number of teachers available, but there are concerns about the consequences for the quality, and also of having teachers with different statuses.

**Policies for Improved Access and Retention**

In the case of Senegal, the focus of the country study within the SEIA-TRANSE study has been on a broad range of policy measures and initiatives, both by the public authorities and NGOs with the aim of improving access, passage, and quality of education at the secondary level. The range of initiatives includes: establishing of proximity colleges, building new classrooms to improve access, promoting girls’ access through the creation of clubs for excellence, mainstreaming the interdisciplinary approach, delivering the school project, introducing ICT to improve the quality of teaching and learning, instituting the peer approach,
initiating civic responsibility, and involving out-of-school players such as churches. Central initiatives are organized under the Ten-year Education and Training Programme, but also the activities of NGOs, especially FAWE Senegal and the Group for Population Studies and Education (GEEP), play an important role.

Teacher training addresses one of the important limiting factors for expanded access and the number of school places, namely the shortage of qualified teachers. Regional training centers and the creation of the function of field inspectors to monitor the work of the teachers are among the promising practices in Senegal.

ICT in lower and upper secondary education is being developed by the Ministry of Education in partnership with the GEEP and WORLDLINK to equip schools and colleges with computers, at the moment including 65 schools.

The school project is a concept introduced by the Ministry to realize a contract between the school and the community. Each school has established a management committee (composed of parents, school staff, unions, community associations, NGOs, and so forth) aimed at mobilizing the local actors to provide better study conditions and building toilets, classrooms, and so forth. A weakness so far seems to be that the students have not been given much space for action.

Efficiency and gender equity is the aim of the “Education for Young Girls” (SCOFI) project at the basic level, contributing to an increasing number of girls in basic schools, and also in lower secondary level. FAWE has been implementing a program to support and maintain girls’ success and excellence in schools. This program issues scholarships to the best students, and provides mentoring to promote education for girls. Clubs of excellence are open for girls based on merit. The program has been very successful in terms of passing certificates at lower secondary, entering upper secondary, and keeping repetition rates low.

Building and refurbishing school libraries. The Ministry of Education has been building and refurbishing school libraries in some 30 schools in Senegal, and also invited international support to supply books to the libraries.

Improved success rates. Examination results in Senegal in general seem to be relatively satisfactory. In one region, the Diourbel region visited by the TRANSE research team both the school attendance ratio as well as exam results have improved. Some of the factors contributing to this success relate to permanent consultation and collaboration between different actors, both the school authorities and local partners (local authorities, teachers’ unions, NGOs, parents).

Enabling and Constraining Factors

Some of the factors which seem to have contributed to the improvement in access and quality of secondary education in Senegal are:

- Free public education at secondary level,
- The existence of private schools, supported by the state, capable of absorbing a good number of children, and
- NGO initiatives to promote girls education (FAWE), to introduce ICT (GEEP, WORLDLINK), and to prevent HIV/AIDS (GEEP, SWAA, SIDA).
Severe constraints exist for access and the improvement of educational quality:

- High population pressure.
- Poverty.
- Adolescent reproduction health concerns (early pregnancies, HIV/AIDS).
- The emigration factor (many students drop out to go and visit relatives abroad).
- Competing influence of religious instruction (children are sent to Islamic schools not controlled by education authorities).
- Lack of infrastructure (especially in rural areas).
- Professional constraints (lack of qualified teacher is a major constraint to increased access). Teachers are also low paid, and often must do extra work in private schools. Also the problems of part-time teachers is serious.
- Time constraints, stemming from a high number of public holidays and periods where schools are on strike. In the region of Diourbel, the effective number of schooldays was only a little more than half of the total scheduled.

**Mali**

**Context**

The population of Mali is estimated at 10.5 million and with 55 percent reported as being under the age of 19. Principal areas of the Malian economy are agriculture, livestock farming, and fishing. Mineral (gold) and energy resources are also considerable. Nevertheless, Mali is among the very poorest countries in the world, with a per capita gross GDP of US$240. Poverty also manifests itself in a high mortality rate.

In 1962, two years after independence from French colonialization, Mali embarked upon the task of reforming the educational system. The reform was aimed at meeting the State’s urgent need for qualified personnel, who were required to manage a socialist economy. Success was registered especially with regard to the training of personnel, but after the military takeover in 1968, the socialist base that underpinned the 1962 reform was eroded without making any effort to institute appropriate corrective measures within education policy. The structural adjustment policy advocated by the World Bank during the early 1980s forced the Malian government to defer all forms of recruitment into the public service, and led to massive early retirement of qualified teachers.

One of the principal objectives of the 1962 education reform, education for all by 1972, is still a pipe dream. From 1962 to 1992, the gross enrollment rate of children in full-time education increased from 7 to 33 percent, the current figure being 66 percent. Latest data record that children enrolled in full-time education was 6.4 percent in the general secondary education stream in 1998: 8.9 for boys and 3.9 for girls. For the technical and vocational education streams, the corresponding figure is 2.4 percent: 3.2 for boys and 1.6 for girls. In sum, 8.8 percent of the age group (12.1 percent of the boys and 5.5 percent of the girls) are enrolled in secondary education when general and vocational branches are considered together. Shortcomings in areas such as educational policy, policy implementation strategies, resource allocation and utilization are worthy of mention.
Modular Vocational Model

The promising practice that is highlighted in the country report from Mali, the Skills-based Modular Education model, is implemented within the framework of a larger reform called the Vocational Education Consolidation Project. The work started in 1996 and is funded by the World Bank. The Skills-based Modular Education model forms part of the Initial Vocation Training, which aims at modernizing training facilities, improving the quality and competence of teachers, revising curricula, and developing management capacity within institutions. It also aims at making institutions play a more active role in communities, which is facilitated by greater decentralization of budgets and responsibilities. Currently, Skills-based Modular Education is implemented in five vocational and technical public institutions across the country. The priority areas are: motor vehicle mechanics, metal construction, electro-mechanical engineering, carpentry and joinery, cabinet-making, building electrification, electricity, maintenance mechanics, office work, building, and plumbing.

The modular programs can be updated regularly to accommodate the changing nature of the trades and professions for which students are being prepared. Because of this flexibility, modules can be adapted to suit needs related to initial training, further training, and retraining of the workforce. This means that the model has a potential for resolving transitional problems in life-long learning, which was also an intention behind the appeal for a sustained partnership between business and technical and vocational education institutions behind the larger TVET reform. Through an ability to respond swiftly to shifts in job market requirements, the intention is to enable qualification not only of young people who have not yet entered the job market, but also of working people in need of additional training for purposes of promotion or catching up with technological changes in the workplace.

Certain flexibility is inherent in the transition process. Structurally, the Skills-based Modular Education is an open kind of education where students can always work their way toward higher levels. A certificate is not awarded unless the student has accomplished all the tasks entailed in all the modules that make up the particular course for which the student enrolled. If a student fails a module, he or she can always repeat that module during the duration of the course, with the help of supervision from the teachers. The length of the students’ stay at the institution is not measured in terms of years they spend on the course but rather on the basis of the ability to successfully complete all the requisite tasks and assignments within a minimum period of 18 months. One notices a certain degree of rigidity at the second stage of the foundational phase of lower secondary, as the students who obtain 10 out of 20 points are promoted to the next level, and those who obtain less than 10 points, fail. Having passed the final examination at this stage, the students have access to general, technical and vocational secondary education institutions.

The final evaluation of the project has not yet been done, but the terms of reference for evaluation have been available since September 2001. However, the Ministry of Education positively evaluated Skills-based Modular Education during its pilot phase at the Bamako Vocational Training Institute, which led to expansion to four other institutions.

This kind of capacity building in vocational training may thereby be characterized as responsive to the demands as expressed from the world of work rather than to the choices of the students. Such a model is ambitious, not only because of the rapid changes in curriculum, textbooks, teaching, and facilities which are needed, but also in as much as a mismatch may
occur during the lapse of time between the acknowledgment of labor market demand and the certification of the students.

An important question is whether Skills-based Modular Education as practiced in Mali allows equity and efficiency with regard to transition to secondary education. Equity is understood as a kind of fairness wherein all beneficiaries, without any distinction whatsoever, have access to the same advantages. Efficiency points to results, not forgetting results registered on the job market.

The Skills-based Modular Education model gives another example of how a promising practice is embedded in larger policy plans. There is no difference between the objectives of the project and important policy options. From a practical point of view it may even be claimed that a project may have some positive influence on a national program. An example is the influence of the Vocation Education Consolidation Project on the national program called the Ten-year Education Development Plan. Therefore, national plans must be both broad and flexible. Furthermore, new initiatives should be worked out as smaller projects before they become part and parcel of national plans.

The relatively high cost of equipment and working materials needed in vocational education is a constraining factor for the replication of a practice such as the Skills-based Modular Education model. Furthermore, the need to develop leadership skills beyond the management of teaching programs and timetables of classes is emphasized. Managerial and financial autonomy is then presented as a worthwhile solution, as the students involved in this kind of education produce goods, which can, on the strength of their quality, easily sell on the market. This is one option of the Ten-year Education Development Plan that has not yet been realized.

Community involvement appears to be the weak link in the project. Thus, the practice is an example of how reforms that are initiated at a central level may have difficulties engaging the community. Another weakness of the project is the necessary retraining of the staff members who have traditionally dealt with theoretical work and many of whom have had little experience in the workplace.

The question concerning the ability of the Skills-based Modular Education model to facilitate equity and efficiency in the transition processes is not answered directly in the country report. Rather factors pertaining to sustainability and governance (that is, factors which are already known) are brought to the forefront and discussed with suggestions of how weaknesses and obstacles related to the project may be mitigated. The fact that the project has not been evaluated yet may be part of the reason why the questions of equity and efficiency are not addressed explicitly. The success of the project seems to depend on a future development of leadership and the retraining of staff members in schools in order for the education to be able to meet the demands from the world of work. The provision of skilled workers does not, however, create jobs or improve labor market conditions.

**Tanzania**

**Context**

Tanzania has a population of 33 million people, of whom 46 percent are under the age of 15. Tanzania is one of the ten poorest countries in the world, with an estimated per capita income
of US$265 and with a wide and ever increasing disparity between the rich and poor. About 50 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. The country spends six times more servicing debt than on education, and the considerable burden of debt repayment has huge implications for the country’s ability to improve welfare and adequate social services. Many children, especially from poor families go to school without eating breakfast; and where schools have no feeding programs, the child might be fasting all day, which makes concentration difficult.

The Education Sector Development Programme aims at expansion of access and enhancement of equality, quality and equity improvement, capacity building and enhancement of efficiency and effectiveness of the educational system. The Primary Education Development Programme in which one of the priority targets is enrollment expansion, was embarked upon in January 2002. The massive expansion of primary education has implications for development of the secondary education sub-sector which is expected to absorb a larger number of primary school leavers than is the case now. A Secondary Education Master Plan is being developed by the Ministry of Education as part of a broader Education Sector Reform Programme, which is to take effect in 2003. Main objectives are:

- Expand the transition rate from primary to secondary education from 19.5 percent in 2002 to 21 percent in 2003 and to 50 percent by 2005.
- Increase the net enrollment rate of the 14–17 years olds from 7 percent in 2002 to 50 percent by 2010.
- Improve the quality of secondary education, thus raising the pass rates from 22 percent in 2002 to 50 percent in 2003.
- Provide education equitably across regions and districts in an endeavour to ensure adequate opportunities to all persons to enable them to acquire education and vocational training at all levels.

Besides the geographical dimension of equity enhancement, equity by gender is an important aim in the educational policy for the secondary level. In general the country report states that access will be increased through strategies that will emerge from an ongoing study on the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Post Primary Sector Needs of the 21st Century.

The Best Performing Schools

As an approach to researching promising practices, the best performing schools at the secondary level in Tanzania were identified. The study then sought to examine what factors or strategies were employed that helped these schools to excel. In the approach to promising practices, the focus is on school internal factors, although parental and community involvement in schools is also considered. Other relevant factors are also described, then lessons learned in studying the promising practices in the selected excelling schools are crystallized in a discussion about enabling and inhibiting factors.

Among the enabling factors it is pointed out that the schools have in common a sense of shared purpose among teachers, students, and parents in the understanding of the value of education. Access is based on merit, and the school may help parents (of talented and highly-achieving children who are unable to pay school fees) to get assistance from a variety
of sources. Furthermore, leadership and management are highlighted in the study, with an emphasis on leadership that is committed, cooperative, inclusive, and consultative in that it involves the school community in decisionmaking. In addition the study emphasizes that both teachers and students are highly motivated and committed to achieve and to excel. Another outstanding feature of the best performing schools, is that students are settled, which means there are no outside temptations distracting them from studying, nor do they need to work. Concerning teaching and learning strategies, regular and prompt feedback after tests and examinations help the teachers and students identify problem areas and follow it up with assistance from the teacher. All students receive attention, and not only the high achievers or the weak students. When students do not meet the minimum requirements, instead of promoting them, the schools will hold them back and provide them with extra support. The schools are successful because they develop the students’ self-confidence and are driven by a belief that all the students in the school can succeed. Financially these schools are advantaged, with funds from parents, support from partners in educational development, and higher budgetary allocations from the government.

Among inhibiting factors, teachers’ salaries is a major concern. Teachers in the public system are poorly paid, and enormous administrative problems cause some to wait for up to a year to get paid. Many teachers are not able to sustain themselves on current salaries, which perpetuate a system whereby teachers supplement their income through extra tuition outside of the school and do not apply themselves in class. Furthermore, a shortage of skilled teachers in mathematics and science is mentioned by the study, as is the necessity of developing proficiency in English among the teachers. In an attempt to expand the system, one of the schools operates a double shift, which reduced teaching time to 35 minute periods that the teachers felt were inadequate. One of the schools was also struggling with a student/teacher ratio that resulted in work overload.

On the basis of the lessons learned and the enabling and inhibiting factors that were identified for the schools, the report concludes with a number of recommendations for endeavours to enhance access and promote equity and efficiency. First of all, the expansion of the system will require the training of more teachers, but the competence of the existing teaching corps must be improved. This includes upgrading skills in areas of short supply and improving proficiency in English. Furthermore, improvement in teachers’ content knowledge, and their instructional skills and strategies must be enhanced. Improvement of teachers’ salaries is necessary in order to retain competent teachers and to remove their need to supplement their income through extra tuition. Among commendable practices on pedagogical grounds: provision of study skills and extramural programs that support curriculum-based activities.

The enrollment rate in secondary school is lower in Tanzania than in any other country which was selected for this study. The country report reflects ambitious plans and visions for the future in the Tanzanian educational policy. Educational endeavours here have been successful in spite of the country’s economical situation. Post-primary education in this country is currently relatively elitist and oriented toward selecting among high achievers rather than toward bringing about inclusion of all young people. Most probably, the expansion of access, which is very much sought after, will include at least initially more of the relatively privileged strata of the young population. In this context the selection of the best performing schools as promising practices worthy of closer inspection makes sense.
South Africa

Context

The current population is approximately 42 million. After a long history of struggle against apartheid government, the new South African government was elected in 1994. The new government inherited political and economic structures which reinforced white minority interests. However, a number of policies and practices have been put in place to address issues of equity, access, redress, and quality assurance. The country faces numerous challenges. For example, it has one of the highest crime rates in the world, the fastest growing HIV and AIDS population in the world, increasing violence and social fragmentation, and high unemployment. The average income is one of the highest on the continent, but inequality is a major challenge. About 9 million South Africans live below the international poverty line of $1 a day, while half of the population is defined as poor according to a national standard. Poverty is mainly rural, and it is affecting black, but also coloured people to a far larger extent than Indians or white people. The poor are also the main victims of high crime rates.

The democratic government elected in 1994 began the transformation of the education system with a multitude of reforms. One of the first steps was the amalgamation of 19 separate education departments into a single, national education department. The National Education Policy Act from 1996 represents the moral vision and outlines the features of the new education system, such as improvement of equality, equity, effectiveness and efficiency; integration of education and training; life-long learning; interdepartmental collaboration; developing citizenship; respecting and celebrating diversity.

Enrollment rates are not specified in the country report, but according to UNESCO statistics (UNESCO 2000), the gross enrollment rate in secondary school is 95 percent.

The USIKO Program

One of the promising practices which is highlighted in the country report from South Africa, is called rite of passage to manhood for male youth at risk in challenging communities. The program is initiated, developed, and supported by the community-based organization USIKO. It is both an in-school and out-of-school program, located in both Bontheuwel and Jamestown in the Western Cape. The program elicits cooperation from mature male volunteers from the community to serve as mentors to young men, in order to provide strong, positive, supportive male role models in the community. This is particularly important in communities where many of the men are unemployed, involved in gang activities, and are more often than not absent fathers.

Several of the promising practices that are included in this study have a gender focus. However, the emphasis is most often on enhancing girls’ participation in education in order to promote equity. The USIKO program is unique in that boys and young men constitute the target group. This is based on an understanding of the local situation, where young men may have more tempting alternative careers in criminal gangs than through formal education for future employment.

The program is seen as supportive of government objectives. It aims to get the boys to commit to alternative choices in life from those they experience in their communities by expanding their vision of what is possible in life and their sense of responsibility as adults.
in their communities. The community must from the outset develop a sense of ownership in the program, and there is a need for male volunteers as mentors. They are selected on evidence of their commitment, as they will be undergoing a personal development process as they work with the boys. In the first phase of the program, the mentors are trained to articulate and understand different constructs of manhood and to develop their own vision for themselves. The training runs for approximately eight months with weekly meetings. The youth must come up with their own community project, and the program keeps them busy and away from abusive and negative activities, and provides them an avenue where the community can acknowledge them for doing good. Those who are involved in community farms are made aware of agricultural entrepreneurship with a set of power relations different from the historical case of servitude on farms.

The program has positive effects on many levels. Many of the young men are reported to have changed their view of themselves, and a number of boys who had left school decided to go back to school. The program enables boys to get a different perspective when making difficult decisions, and the program works in partnership with the school, the clinics, and the community to support the boys. Adults in the community have taken responsibility for creating a context in which the results of the program are sustainable. Intergenerational communication is encouraged. Through capacity building, men in the community are enabled to take over responsibility for the program. Combinations of in-school and out-of-school activities are reported, enabling the boys to be successful in school. The program involves a broad representation of leadership in the community, and it also has a leadership group that meets to discuss key issues in the program. In reaching decisions by consensus, a sense of ownership is built. The success of the program has led to community support for the program; funding from local government is part of its community development program; jobs are created as some of the men have been given employment as program co-ordinators. The need for external support is diminishing as internal capacity is being built.

No systematic evaluation of the program has been conducted by external parties, but evidently it is being evaluated continuously by the local actors and communities involved. The fact that it has spread and has been introduced as a “girl to woman” program in one community, is a token of its success.

St. Mary’s Interactive Learning Experience (SMILE) Program

The mission of the SMILE program is to develop the teaching and learning of English as a secondary language in historically disadvantaged schools in South Africa. One component of the program is the Classroom Reinforcement and Teacher Training Programme, which occurs daily in the schools involving facilitators, teachers, and pupils. The other component is called the English Oral Conversation Skills Programme and occurs after school hours at the host schools, involving mentors and pupils. The program is entirely funded by corporate and private donors with no government funding. Participants in the project have to either buy their own SMILE materials or have materials donated to them.

Continuous evaluation is done by the parties involved in the program, using SMILE assessment resources. There is no report on systematic evaluation of the program itself, except for the group interviews for the TRANSE study with teachers and pupils who were recipients of the program in Willowfountain Intermediate School. The recipients made very favorable comments, pointing out that it enables pupils to gain confidence to express
themselves verbally and in writing. The learners said that they never miss a class if they can help it, and that the program had helped to motivate them, resulting in improved academic performance. It was also reported that teachers have become more sensitive to the needs of pupils, something which has helped to open the doors of communication between teachers and learners. The program is resulting not only in improvement of academic performance but also in life skills, according to the pupils.

A sharp drop in absenteeism is reported from the schools where the project is functional, and it is furthermore reported that the community is beginning to realize that many problems in schools are not due to the learners but rather due to inadequately trained and demotivated teachers. According to the teachers who were interviewed, the program had a positive impact on them in so far as they were more motivated, more confident and better able to share ideas, while acquiring cooperative learning skills and acquiring assessment skills. Both teachers and pupils themselves emphasized that the program has a favorable impact on the pupils’ attendance in school.
In the Chapter 1 we presented a model for transitions in secondary education, illustrating the different transitions processes into, within, and out of secondary education. We also discussed the critical factors affecting transitions, and possible measures that may make transitions more equitable and efficient. These measures both aim at improving the opportunities and to improve the individuals’ access to and use of the opportunities, and they may be implemented at the national, regional, or local level. Examples of types of measures are:

- Financial (expansion of capacity, improvement of infrastructure, support to students),
- Provisions (attractiveness and relevance, volume, location, quality and support, selection mechanisms),
- Counselling,
- PTA and other local community/school relations, and
- Factors hindering youth to enter or to stay in schools.

Because this study covers a limited number of countries and cases, and the cases report on projects or reforms that were not primarily aiming directly toward transitions in secondary education, we could not find examples within our case studies of all types of transitions, and all dimensions and types of measure. It is difficult especially to relate the cases directly to any specific type of transitions, because several measures could have the same effect on encouraging youths to enter schools and to prevent dropout. Furthermore, the cases did not address specific grades or differentiate between transitions at lower or upper secondary level.

There were several examples of funding measures reported in the case studies, mainly student support and the mobilization of local resources. Financial support to girls is reported in the case study from Namibia, Senegal, and Tanzania to prevent dropout and improve
learning, and hence as a tool toward more equitable transition patterns. Some cases report on projects mobilizing parents and the community which, among other purposes, also could contribute to raising local resources. When public funds for building and maintaining school facilities are scarce, the contribution from parents and the community could be of vital importance: to do repair work, produce building materials, and so forth. Such impacts are reported from the School Board Training Programme in Namibia and the school project in Senegal.

Many dimensions of improvement in the provision of secondary education programs have been reported from the case studies. School-based vocational training as reported in Mali could attract new groups of students as well as be relevant for the society and for the transition into the world of work. There are, however, serious limitations in the implementation of vocational education, both concerning the updating of programs according to changing needs, and especially when it comes to funding (equipment and facilities for vocational training are expensive). There are many projects aiming to improve quality, such as tutorial programs and measures to overcome the shortage of qualified teachers (a problem which of course is difficult to solve quickly and within reasonable financial frames, and is getting worse due to many teachers being infected by HIV/AIDS). In Senegal regional training centers for teachers has been established, also providing field inspectors to monitor the work of teachers. The Tanzanian case, reporting on “best performing schools” is interesting, both because it could give a direct contribution to those students benefiting from it, and also as laboratories for school development being examples for others.

Counselling is an important tool for efficient transitions to help individual students to make the right choices. The counselling of girls seem to be especially important, because the low enrollment and high dropout rate among girls is related to the weak positions of women in the community and cultural traditions. Counselling combined with efforts to strengthen women’s participation in the community could directly lead to increased school participation of girls. This is the aim of the Affirmative Action for Girl Child project in Namibia. The South African USIKO program is an example of a corresponding effort among young boys at risk to help their transfer into manhood, which also seems to have a positive effect on the re-entry into schooling.

PTA and school-community programs in general are reported in a number of cases presented in this report, and seem to have a number of positive effects for equitable and efficient transitions: local mobilization of resources, better school management, strengthening of local “ownership,” and encouraging children to enter and stay in schools.

Reduction of hindering factors has been reported in several cases, especially concerning girls. The most obvious material factors keeping girls out of school is a heavy burden of work, cooking, and looking after younger children. The Donkey Canvas project in Eritrea is a striking example of practical support to families to relieve the burden of water supply (which traditionally is a task for women), and hence leave time for schooling. This is a type of low-cost support which has potential in a broader arena than this locality.

Key Perspectives

Through the examination of the country reports, some common features cut across the previously-discussed topics. The features may be grouped together under six key perspectives
or focus areas, which are: 1) the community perspective; 2) national strategy; 3) the gender perspective; 4) modular training as an inclusive practice; 5) vocational training; and 6) perspectives on quality.

The Community Perspective

School internal factors are usually at the center of attention in endeavours to improve educational systems. There are good reasons for this. However, school external factors are easily overlooked. It is striking how many of the promising practices reported in this study bear evidence of the importance of school external factors in making secondary education more equitable at the local level. In many of the country reports we find examples of a strong link between the school and the community, something which expresses itself through a strong sense of local ownership. Some of the projects may be community based more than school based, and positive effects may be multiple (not only related to school). Prevention of dropout from school may even be a side effect as the practices are targeted toward other prioritized objectives. This means that the projects may not be directly aimed at enhancing participation in school, but they may still prove to be very relevant in this respect. We see several examples of social and economic aspects in the community setting that have great impact on participation in school.

The USIKO project is one such promising practice, as it involves development on personal, group, and community levels. It is community based, and has a positive impact in promoting retention in school, as the project arises from an understanding of how alternative career patterns in criminal activities might be enticing for young boys in the existing historical and socioeconomic context. The Donkey Canvas project in Eritrea also achieves multiple goals, as girls are enabled to participate in school at the same time as the farming conditions for the family are improved. Aimed at improving living conditions and relieving girls of their heavy work load, the project takes the greater context of schooling into consideration.

Extra efforts to compensate for historical disadvantage are seen in the SMILE program in South Africa, which is designed to improve English oral conversation skills. Reportedly the program has been received very well in the community, and parents are pleased with the fact that the children are learning to speak English properly. The community perspective in this program consists of the understanding of the historical background which necessitates extra efforts to learn English.

In Boudon’s (1974) model, the SMILE program is consistent with the individual decisions of the students and their families, which, as pointed out previously, depend on a series of structural factors. These include adequate preparation by previous schooling, and that going to school must be considered beneficial both by the individual student, his or her family and the community. In other words the improvement of the quality of teaching as reported from the SMILE program, encourages participation in education and manifests itself in increased levels of attendance. As the country report from South Africa points out, both the SMILE and the USIKO programs develop life skills in young people by improving their language skills and problem-solving and negotiating skills. These are skills which are rewarded within the educational system.

Increased participation of women in public life is a major theme in those promising practices that have the girl child at the focus of attention. These projects aim at improving
women’s position in society while being directly relevant to their success in education. This will be discussed below in the description of the gender perspective. One project that is focussed on improving relations with the environment and the school’s responsiveness toward the needs of the community is the School Board Training Programme in Namibia. Although direct effects of this project on transitions cannot be reported, the links between the school and the community are strengthened, thereby providing a basis for enhancing the management capacity of the schools.

A strengthening of this link between the school and the community does not imply, however, that the community should bear the financial responsibility for secondary education. The point is rather that practices which involve community participation will open up a wider range of instruments and means for achieving the goals. The promising practices suggest a more productive utilization of existing human capital. This means mobilization of human resources and creativity locally, but it does not mean that the local community should be expected to carry the burden of financing secondary education.

**National Policy**

National policies, documents, and strategies are no guarantees for real improvement in education. The road from governmental decision to implementation can be long even in industrialized countries, and in developing countries bad communication contributes to even more implementation problems. Policies decided by the government and elaborated policy documents, may not lead to any real improvements in the schools. With reference to the previous section, real change in transitions in secondary education depends to a considerable degree on what takes place at the micro level—relations between schools and families and community, and within the schools itself. Also the majority of the promising practices reported in the SEIA-TRANSE study are micro level oriented, with the exception of the cases in Senegal and Mali, which are focusing on national polices and reforms. In these two cases, the national policies must be implemented in the individual schools and their contexts. An important conclusion is made in the case study report on Mali, pointing to “. . . the need for national plans to be both broad and flexible, and secondly, the need to work new initiatives as smaller projects before becoming part and parcel of national plans.” Small-scale projects can function as pilot projects or policy experiments to test educational innovations locally before being implemented in a large scale. It should then be added, however, that this depends on close monitoring and evaluations of the pilot projects.

On the other hand, many of the other cases (for example, Eritrea) show examples of the importance of the national policy, and cases of projects being linked to national priorities or strategies. In the synthesis report for the 1999 ADEA biennial meeting, one of the lessons is that “The development of education in Sub-Saharan Africa cannot be effectively pursued without paying attention to macro-political contexts.” Furthermore: “Innovations that are placed high on the national political agenda are most likely to register success.” The promising cases studied in the SEIA-TRANSE project seem to support these statements. Local initiatives and small-scale projects, usually supported by donor agencies, can show promising results, but they risk remaining isolated incidents in the long run if not linked to the broader national perspective.
The Gender Perspective

Besides equity across the urban-rural divide, equity by gender is a most important issue in making secondary education into a benefit for all. Several of the promising practices have a focus on gender, and most often it is the girl child who is the center of attention. The potential for enhancing girls’ participation in secondary education is greater in countries with low enrollment rates, as these are countries where the participation of girls is even weaker than that of boys. Girls outnumber boys both in South Africa and in Namibia, where the enrollment rates are relatively high. The USIKO project in South Africa is unique among the promising practices in that it focuses on boys in challenging communities.

Many of the promising practices show that efforts to enhance girls’ access and retention in secondary school need to be sensitive to how factors may have different impacts on girls’ participation as opposed to boys’ participation. One excellent example is given in the country report from Eritrea, where it is pointed out that wherever the young people have to walk a long distance in order to get to school, the girls may not be encouraged to the same extent than boys to make that long walk by themselves. Physical facilities and infrastructure are important, and we might observe that the absence of such facilities may have a more severe impact on girls than on boys’ educational opportunities.

The Donkey Canvas project in Eritrea illustrates the importance of a broader understanding of the factors keeping children out of school. Again we see that such hindrances may be gender specific, and that the project is responsive to the gender division of labor in the local context. An answer to gender differences in career opportunities is also evident in the USIKO project in South Africa, where it is boys who are the focus of attention. Both projects reflect an understanding of the broader context of schooling and the impact of school external factors.

Preparing girls for leadership positions in society is one of the central objectives in the Affirmative Action for Girl Child Project in Namibia. This is in accordance with another central objective in the program, which is to help girls complete their schooling. To this means other objectives are employed, such as finding scholarships for deserving female students and demonstrating that teenage motherhood is not a viable option. Decrease of teenage pregnancies and thereby preventing girls from dropping out of school, is also one of the objectives of the Total Child Project in the same country. The National Union of Eritrean Women has a focus on girls’ literacy and rights, aiming at strengthening women’s position and participation in community life.

All three promising practices described in the country report from Eritrea focus on girls’ education. How such a strategy is debated in Eritrea may work as a double-edged sword. The extra support given to girls may signal that their mental capacities are poorer than those of boys. In Senegal the creation of clubs for excellence that are open to girls on merit, is a means to promote girls’ access to secondary school. Gender equity is also the aim of the “Education for Young Girls” project in Senegal, where FAWE has been working to support and maintain girls’ success and excellence in schools. The positive impact of women on the educational opportunities of the younger generation is also evident from the above-mentioned study of the greater possibilities of both young boys and young girls in female-headed households as compared to households headed by men (Lloyd and Blanc 1996).
Inclusive Schooling

The traditional role of secondary education was to prepare for and to select for the entry into universities. This tradition was also inherited by the African countries from the colonial powers. Most industrialized countries during the last couple of decades gradually have changed this role, and moved toward universal access and a broader scope of secondary schooling, including preparation for work. Most African countries have embarked only recently on the road toward broadening access to secondary education, as indicated by the generally very low participation rates.

Policies for increasing enrollment in secondary education imply more than merely enlarging the number of available places in schools. It means also a change away from the elitist principle of selecting people out of schools toward a principle of recruiting and keeping them in schools. Policies and measures aimed at recruiting and keeping students in schools are responding to the branching points and the factors discussed in Chapter 1 regarding efficient and equitable transitions. Such policies and measures could be classified as school-internal and school-external.

School-internal factors include selection principles and selection criteria, but quality is also a relevant issue, because poor quality of schooling at one level does not prepare students sufficiently to continue at the next level. The case of Tanzania, in this respect, is an interesting attempt to organize high-quality schooling, and to support talented students. Similar projects are reported in the case study from Senegal. The case from Mali is an example of a modularized system, which tends to make the distinction between continuation and disruption less severe, because students who have left school finishing some modules, but not the entire course, can return to continue their schooling a later stage. For students who left school because of economic constraints, family obligations or other reasons, this offers a more flexible system and is an example of what we think of as “inclusive schooling.” In Mali, the modular model is developed within vocational education, but the principle of keeping the door open for those who have left school could be adapted to general education as well. Such a model is also linked to life-long education, which is an important aim for more equitable and efficient transitions in secondary education.

School-external policies and measures are related to factors keeping people out of schooling in Sub-Saharan Africa: non-enrollment, dropout, and repetitions. Several of the cases reported attempts to help girls especially to go to school. The Donkey Canvas Project in Eritrea is a good example of projects that help take away some of the work burden from young girls, in this case helping with the supply of water. Other projects aim especially to improve girls’ life situation in general, but have positive effects on girls’ schooling. The South African USIKO project, on the other hand, is an example of a project oriented toward the integration of young boys into the society.

Vocational Training

It is considered as a weakness of secondary education in Africa that it is almost entirely general, neglecting the role of vocational education (Atchoarena and Delluc 2002). In developing countries, within the secondary school system, especially at the upper secondary level, vocational options are increasingly important. Vocational alternatives are important if one wants to attract new groups to secondary education, serving as a tool to obtain close
to universal participation. Even if vocational training often takes place outside the formal school system, such as apprenticeship training, the formal school system in many countries is still important. In addition to opening up new alternatives, and hence attracting new groups, vocational secondary education could play an important role in the transition of youth to the labor market.

The case of Mali investigated in the SEIA-TRANSE study is the only example among the cases reporting on vocational secondary education. Therefore, it is a unique case addressing the difficult task of shaping links between education and the world of work. The Modular Education model, which is implemented within the Vocational Education Consolidation Project in Mali funded by the World Bank, aims at improving initial vocational training, through modernization of training facilities and improvement of the qualifications of vocational teachers. The priority areas within this project (motor vehicle mechanics, metal construction, electromechanical engineering, carpentry and joinery, cabinet making, building electrification, electricity, maintenance mechanics, office work, building, and plumbing) are mostly related to a “modern” economy and therefore beneficial for the transitions of the economy of Mali. Is this a balanced response to the needs of the world of work in Mali, or is there a neglect of the demand from the traditional or the informal economy? This dilemma is furthermore illustrated by the fact that the case study report makes the judgement that the links with the community seem to be weak. An important indicator of the success of this program is how efficient the transition from vocational training into the world of work is, but to our knowledge, there is no evaluation about this matter. The provision of skilled workers does not necessarily create jobs or improve labor marked conditions. Lauglo and others (2003) are cautious about advocating vocational subjects as part of mainstream secondary education, pointing out that the policies on school-based vocational training have not proven to be an effective tool to alleviate school leaver unemployment.

There is also a concern about the sustainability of the vocational training program of the Mali type, especially because such programs demand substantial equipment investments, and the capacity to maintain an update technical equipment.

A final comment about the Skills-based Modular Education model concerns equity. By Malian law it is forbidden to discriminate, and both males and females have the right to choose any field of study. Yet, there is little doubt that the priority fields mentioned above are typically male-dominated fields normally attracting very few girls. For instance, the ratio of girls and boys in the motor mechanics course is only 1:15.

Quality

Efficient transitions within secondary education and also from education to work of course depend on the quality of education, both of previous basic schooling and within secondary level. “Quality” is a complex concept, and there are many opinions about what quality is, and how to improve it. However, there should not be any disagreement that the supply of teachers—by numbers and by qualifications—is the most critical factor. In addition to the problem of training enough qualified teachers, low salaries cause severe retention problems, and also lead to teachers taking extra teaching loads or other paid work in order to secure a decent economic outcome. These problems are probably less if teachers are recruited locally, as in Senegal, where regional training centers provide both initial and further training.
Besides contributing to lower turnover, locally-recruited teachers have advantages in terms of better links to the society and knowledge about the local situation and culture.

The case study from Tanzania has identified a number of best performing schools and then examined what factors or strategies that have helped these schools to excel. The focus is almost entirely on school-internal factors, even if links between schools and parents is part of the strategy. Access to the selected schools is based on merit, and the school may help parents of talented and highly-achieving children to pay school fees and get assistance from a variety of sources. Important aspects of these high-performing schools are attempts to obtain a common sense of shared purpose among teachers, students, and parents on the understanding of the value of education. Leadership and management of schools are highlighted, with an emphasis of a cooperative, inclusive, and consultative decisionmaking involving the school community. The students stay in boarding houses at schools, taking away outside distractions and burdens. The teaching and learning strategies are characterized by regular and prompt feedback and tight followup of the students. All students, not only the high achievers or weak, receive equal attention. Students who do not meet the minimum requirements get extra support and help.

The best performing schools as reported by the case study of Tanzania are interesting examples of high quality education, showing also examples of measures to try to balance excellence with equity. At this level, they doubtlessly represent promising cases. However, some reflections should be made. First, these schools get better funding from a variety of sources—raising the funding of all schools in the country to that level may be unsustainable. Second, questions arise whether establishment of a small number of high-performing schools is contradictory to the need for raising the overall enrollment rate in Tanzania (which has one of the lowest secondary enrollment rates in Africa). If the experiences from these high performing schools are transmitted to other schools, they could serve as pilots for a broad improvement of quality as well as increased participation.
As a starting point, one should be very careful in making generalizations about projects in certain countries or even in a specific community context. In our review of the cases, we have tried to extract general lessons, which we presented in the previous chapters. To help draw general conclusions, we have applied a model of transitions with reference to Boudon (1974), considering the educational system as a series of branching points—at each such point there are a number of critical factors deciding whether the individual continues in education or not. A combination of structural factors (availability of school places, economy, distance to schooling), as well as cultural and other factors described in the SEIA-TRANSE state of the art report, both enable and inhibit efficient and equitable transitions. Furthermore, transitions depend on the decisions of individuals. The relationship between structural and individual forces is an interactive relationship: individual decisions are highly influenced by structural factors, and vice versa.

A second important concern is the broader consequences of the project reported as a promising practice. In our study, we have only information about the operation of, and to some degree the results of the specific projects selected for the study. A project could be regarded as being successful as assessed by internal criteria, but this does not mean automatically that the outcomes are equally successful in terms of the contribution to the educational development in a broader context. A prerequisite for promising practices to become really successful, it is necessary to link a local perspective with the national level.
Another general conclusion from the cases is that policies or projects that adopt a multiplicity of measures are the most likely to succeed.

Both the socioeconomic and the school-specific contexts vary considerably between Sub-Saharan African countries. Therefore, policies and projects aiming at more efficient and equitable transitions in secondary education should be carefully adjusted to the specific context. Before implementing policies or projects, the specific contexts should be thoroughly investigated.

In prior chapters, we described the cases investigated in the SEIA-TRANSE study, and identified a number of characteristic aspects. In this final chapter, we will put forward a few considerations which we think are important for future policy related to transitions in secondary education: the importance of differentiation, holistic and multi-level approaches, sustainability, and monitoring and evaluation.

**Differentiation of Policies**

Enrollment rates among Sub-Saharan African countries vary between less than 10 and more than 90 percent, with Tanzania and South Africa representing the extremes. Obviously, the challenges of making transitions more efficient and equitable are accordingly different. In low-participation countries, the main aim is to open up for increased enrollment, especially in lower secondary education. The policy measures, however, may have to vary according to whether the low secondary enrollment is mainly due to low primary enrollment, low transition rates from primary to secondary, or high dropout rates. If the main problem is the lack of school places within a reachable distance, the answer is of course to build more schools or provide transportation and increase the supply of qualified teachers. Yet, an increase in enrollment is only possible if there is a demand among the youth and necessary family support to go to school. We have seen that low enrollment without exception goes hand in hand with the underrepresentation of girls, and hence efforts to stimulate increasing enrollment among females may have positive effects on equity as well as on the overall enrollment rate. Among the cases investigated in this study are several examples of promising practices which aim at improving girls’ chances to go to school, for example, by reducing their workload in the family or by direct support to schooling.

The challenges for efficient and equitable transitions are quite different in countries with high enrollment rates (South Africa and Namibia), where problems which are to a certain more similar to those experienced in industrialized countries. First, some of these challenges are related to obtaining high quality in a mass secondary education system in countries having limited economic resources, and second, the diversity of course delivery to serve a student population with a wide range of interests and abilities. In a system with universal participation at secondary level, the functioning of secondary schooling must be wider than preparing for higher education. These functions may involve vocational training and prolongation of compulsory schooling to include lower secondary education.

As enrollment in secondary education increases from covering only a small proportion of the age group toward universal access, the situation of those who are outside the school system changes dramatically—from being more or less the normal situation to becoming marginalized. Falling outside secondary education in a high-enrollment country often means falling outside the labor market, and into the category of youth at risk. Because participation
in these countries is higher among girls, the boys need specific attention. The South African USIKO project is a good example of efforts to help young boys to become integrated into the society, and to manage the difficult transition from youth to manhood.

**Holistic Approaches**

Perhaps the most important lesson from the SEIA-TRANSE study is that school-internal factors are not the only source of problems in transitions. Enrollment or persistence in secondary education is often hampered by problems outside the educational system itself, both by factors related to poverty, the need for children (especially girls) to assist the family in labor or childcare, or a lack of belief in the relevance of education. Therefore, often measures having a broader focus are most effective. Some of the projects reported have not had education as their primary focus, but nevertheless are highly relevant for participation and success in school (for example, the Total Child Project in Namibia and projects directed toward girls in Eritrea). It is characteristic that these promising practices are community based, and represent important links between the school and the community.

Strong school-community links seem to have a range of positive effects, both on individual participation and learning, but also on local ownership of schools. This could lead to positive outcomes by the strengthening the role of parents and others from the community in the steering of schools and by mobilizing local resources for the improvement of schools. There are many examples of the community taking active part in the building or maintenance of school buildings, contributing to both increased enrollment and quality of teaching and learning conditions. The strengthening of local ownership also have positive effects on the families’ attitudes toward their children’s schooling, leading to greater participation with and support for the children in their schoolwork. In addition, strengthening of school-community links contribute to the responsiveness of teachers and school leaders to the needs of the community, including factors causing trouble for the children in their attendance and schoolwork.

To make such broadly-oriented projects succeed, coordination of efforts is essential. Donors or other agencies supporting the development of education should look for partnerships—coordinating with agencies organizing projects having other aims like social and cultural development, democracy and the civic society, and health.

**Multi-level Approaches**

The majority of the cases investigated in the SEIA-TRANSE study are rather small-scale, local projects in a small number of schools or communities. However, there are also examples of nationwide projects which are part of national policies or strategies. Many small-scale projects are initiated and being run by donors, and also national policies are strongly influenced and supported by donors. This illustrates clearly the need for national policies to coordinate and to give direction to all the local projects. Being fully aware of the limitations and the problems of national policymaking and governance in most Sub-Saharan African countries, we still want to stress the obvious need for national policies, and as far as possible to link local and donor-driven initiatives to national priorities. At the same time, what
seems to work most efficiently are projects and reforms being implemented in a local context. Because of the steering problems in the countries visited, there is a great risk that national policies and initiatives may not lead to any real change at the level where schooling is actually taking place. This underlines the importance of the small-scale and local initiatives. We therefore recommend that projects and policies aiming at efficient and equitable transitions in secondary education should as far as possible connect local, small-scale, community-oriented measures with national policies and strategies. It is important also to coordinate efforts initiated and run by different donors.

**Sustainability**

Changes in education generally need a long-term perspective. This is a lesson also from educational reforms in industrialized countries. Rapid change in quantitative terms, like increasing enrollment, is possible, especially if the starting level is very low. However, changes in content, teaching and learning, and the quality of schooling generally are slow to implement. This is true for nationally-initiated reforms—structural and quantitative changes can be visible rather soon, but rapid changes in the day-to-day activities at the school and classroom level is generally far less probable. The same is true for successful small-scale projects to be implemented in other locations or in a national scale. In addition, successful practices, even if implemented in a small scale, often do not prove to be successful until a later stage. Therefore, it is necessary to allocate sufficient time to let a specific project work, and to be patient even if results are not visible at the expected time. This could of course be problematic for donor-driven projects, because donors are accountable for their use of money, and therefore often must show results at an earlier stage than what is realistic.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

In the planning stage of the TRANSE study, one of the criteria set for the selection of promising cases was that there should be a level of reporting and evaluation of the projects. The actual selection of cases, however, had to be based on more pragmatic criteria. The case studies have shown few examples of thorough reporting and evaluation of the promising practices. This has caused several methodological limitations for this study, but this is a minor problem compared to how this affects efficient implementation of projects and reforms. Both as a means to conduct specific individual projects, and especially as a tool for wider learning and the dissemination of experiences, one should always allocate some resources within the framework of the projects for some level of monitoring or evaluation. In addition to being a tool for dissemination of promising practices, monitoring and evaluations could reduce the risk of merely copying practices which have been successful within a specific context to different contexts where the challenges may be very different.
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This working paper discusses equity and efficiency issues in secondary education transitions in Sub-Saharan Africa. Its main purpose is to identify and analyze national, regional, and local measures that may lead to the development of more efficient and seamless transitions between post-primary education pathways. In most African countries student transition from primary to junior secondary is still accompanied by significant repetition and dropout. Transitions within the secondary cycle also cause significant losses and should use more effective assessment and selection methodologies. According to global trends, Africa needs to revisit its post-primary structures to provide more diversified (academic and non-academic) pathways of learning which respond better to the continent’s present economic and social realities. In the end, the main goal should be to produce young people who can become productive citizens and lead healthy lives, as demonstrated by middle and higher-income economies.

This study was prepared as part of the Secondary Education and Training in Africa (SEIA) initiative which aims to assist countries to develop sustainable strategies for expansion and quality improvements in secondary education and training. All SEIA products are available on its website: www.worldbank.org/afr/seia.

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