

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### EDUCATION

#### Introduction

Poverty in the education sector manifests in several ways including the following: low enrolments, low progression, high dropout rates and low performance; poor attendance because children are engaged in income generating activities to supplement family income, tending sick family members and long distances to school; poor learning environments and lack of opportunities for appropriate skills training; malnourished learners who are unable to achieve their full learning potential; demotivated and ill-qualified teachers especially in rural areas; high illiteracy levels; ill health among teachers, pupils and others in the education system; lack of motivation for parents to send their children to school; and wide gender gaps because of choices parents have to make on who goes to school.

#### Situational Analysis

All citizens of a country have a right to education. Article 26 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that education is a human right and that elementary education in particular should be free and compulsory. In Zambia, the education system is characterized by inadequate places at all levels due to a wide range of factors such as cost, insufficient number of teachers and tuition materials, particularly in rural areas.

This is compounded by low levels of retention, with children beginning to drop of school as early as Grade 2, due mostly to the high cost of education. Other reasons for dropping out are long distances to school, opportunity labour costs, early marriages and pregnancies.

#### *Early Childhood Care, Education and Development (ECCED)*

In line with the Education for All (EFA) commitments Zambia made under this theme, activities for young children 0-5 years old were to be expanded, with emphasis on community based interventions. Enrolments were to increase from 2 per cent in 1990 to 25 per cent in the year 2000. By 1998, only 8.4 per cent of children going into Grade 1 had had access to ECCED. Rural areas had received little attention with only 2.7 per cent of children having ECCED experience compared with 23.6 per cent in urban areas.

#### *Primary Education*

Although the Basic Education Sub-Sector Investment Programme has been accorded priority, the programme caters for only Grades 1 to 7. This means that the average Zambian pupil is denied a comprehensive education that can form a firm foundation for the future.

Enrolments at primary level, particularly from 1996, have increased marginally. In 1996, there were 1,547,389 pupils enrolled from Grade 1 to 7 and in 1998 this had increased to 1,557,257. The 1999 figures dropped slightly to 1,555,707.

Consequently, universal basic education has not been achieved. Dropout rates have also increased, and by 1996 they ranged between 4.5 per cent and 10.3 per cent for Grades 1 and 6.

### ***Secondary Education***

This level has not received adequate attention in terms of expansion, rehabilitation, educational material support and curriculum review. As a consequence, the quality of teaching and learning has been adversely affected. Currently, less than 50 per cent of primary school leavers can be absorbed by secondary schools. Similarly, progression from Grade 9 to 10 has fluctuated between 16.5 per cent and 20.5 per cent in the 1990's.

### ***Tertiary Education***

Very few students graduating from secondary schools find places in tertiary institutions due to a severely limited number of institutions. The University of Zambia, for example, has only had about 4,000 students enrolled at any one time. Similarly, very few of the students who graduate from secondary school go into teacher training colleges.

### ***Literacy***

The literacy level for the population aged 15 years and above increased from 54.8 per cent in 1990 to 67.8 per cent in 1996. Female literacy increased from 46.7 per cent in 1990 to 59.9 per cent in 1996. Literacy in rural areas increased from 37.9 per cent in 1990 to 50 per cent in 1996 for the 15 years and above group while urban literacy increased from 68.5 per cent in 1990 to 83.1 per cent in 1996. Although there have been some improvements, the rural/urban and female/male gaps in literacy are still wide and the literacy levels generally are still low.

### ***Skills Training***

There are a total of 350 skills training institutions of various sizes registered with the Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Authority (TEVETA). Of these, the Trades Training Institutes, which total 23, are large while others are small, most of which have obsolete equipment, inadequate staffing and inappropriate curriculum. Most of the institutions are urban based and found mainly in Lusaka and Copperbelt Provinces. The rest are spread out across the other provinces at an average of two per province, while Luapula has only one.

In comparison to the demand for skills training, the colleges are able to absorb only a small proportion. The enrolment levels are extremely low. A total of 22,000 youths are engaged in some kind of skills training; this number is desperately small compared to over 600,000 young people who are not receiving skills training.

### ***Gender***

The education system is characterised by gender disparities at all levels, with regard to enrolment figures; progression rates; gender ratios among teachers/lecturers; and learning achievement. At the basic education level, for instance, in 1998 there were 810,873 boys enrolled, compared to 747,151 girls, with a concentration of girls between Grades 1 to 4. This gap widens from Grade 5 upwards, and gets even worse at secondary and tertiary levels.

### ***Distance and Continuing Education***

The opportunities that distance education can provide have not been realized; for example, the distance education programme at the University of Zambia caters for about 600 students and the Department of Continuing Education of the Ministry of Education caters for less than 5,000. There are not many providers of distance education and where it is provided, it is only in a few restricted disciplines in the social sciences.

### ***Information and Communication Technology***

To date very little use has been made of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the education system. Two exceptions are the University of Zambia, which has recently embarked on a programme of expanding its distance education programme, using the Internet to connect the main campus with the provincial centres, and the interactive radio programmes of the Educational Broadcasting Services.

### ***HIV/AIDS***

The HIV/AIDS pandemic in Zambia has posed a serious problem in human development. Education is affected because teachers are said to be among the four most infected groups in Zambia. Teachers dying from the pandemic each year are estimated at about one thousand. In addition, 620,000 children have become orphans, and this contributes to the high drop out rate in schools.

### ***Teachers***

The goal for teacher supply during the 1990-2000 decade was to provide 4,400 per year but only 2,226 were produced. Statistics from MOE show that the number of teachers has been decreasing. In 1996, there were 40,488 teachers in public schools, in 1998 they were 38,840 and by 1999 they were 37,117. This has been mainly due to a decision by the Ministry of Education to stop recruiting untrained teachers. In addition, there is a high attrition rate of teachers due to HIV/AIDS, poor conditions of service and lack of housing, particularly in rural areas.

The pupil/teacher ratio in the same years has worsened, starting with 37 in 1996, 45 in 1998, and 47 in 1999. Urban provinces have worse ratios than rural ones due to overcrowding. In rural areas teachers have the additional problem of a single teacher teaching all the grades, in some schools.

## **Programmes**

Six programmes are proposed to contribute to economic growth and poverty reduction. Three of these already exist.

### ***Existing Programmes***

#### ***BESSIP Extension***

Basic education in Zambia covers Grade 1 to 9. BESSIP, however, is currently catering only for Grades 1 to 7. In the proposed new programme, all BESSIP activities will be extended to Grades 8 and 9 to ensure that graduates acquire more basic knowledge and have the opportunity to refine skills gained from practical subjects. It also means all primary schools will be turned into full basic schools. Learners leaving school after completing Grade 9 will also have matured, and will be better able to engage in gainful employment at the age of 15 years.

The BESSIP components that will be extended are:

1. Infrastructure development
2. Educational materials
3. Teacher development, deployment and compensation
4. Equity and gender
5. School health and nutrition
6. Upper basic school curriculum development
7. Capacity building and decentralization
8. HIV/AIDS.

Under this programme distance learning strategies and other modes such as evening classes and ICT will be applied in order to increase access for out of school youth and adults.

It is also proposed that ECCED should be made part of basic education. Early childhood programmes provide a head start for schooling, making them part of basic education would make it easy for basic schools to host programmes in this sub-sector and hence increase access for many rural children. The Ministry of Education already contributes to this sub-sector by training teachers. Mainstreaming ECCED in basic education would also make it possible for the MOE to provide quality assurance.

#### ***Integrated Functional Literacy Programme***

This programme will revamp the national literacy programme whose performance has deteriorated. Access to functional literacy for all marginalized groups will be increased. The quality of the programmes will be improved too as well as the capacity of providers enhanced. Lastly communities will be sensitised to demand access to literacy programmes. Opportunities will be created for literacy graduates to continue education through distance learning, night school and any other modes of provision.

### *Skills Training*

The Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA) has developed a comprehensive skills training programme to improve the skills of the human resources produced for both the formal and non-formal sectors using a demand driven TEVET system that is sustainable and promotes equity.

The TEVET Development Programme has identified seven priority areas namely:

1. Organization and Management of TEVET
2. Training Systems
3. Trade Testing and Examinations
4. Entrepreneurship Development and Informal Sector Training
5. Human Resource Development
6. Management Information Systems
7. Infrastructure and Equipment
8. Crosscutting Issues; and
9. TEVET Financing System.

Since there are a variety of skills providers, TEVET needs a structure to facilitate effective planning and coordination of interventions. This calls for the strengthening of TEVET management at policy formulation and evaluation level, regular and support services level and TEVET providers' level.

TEVET also addresses other activities including curriculum review and retraining of curriculum developers and providers of skills training to meet changing demands such as entrepreneurship training to prepare trainees for both wage and self-employment. It also deals with developing the capacity of teaching staff, planners, managers and other support staff; the development of an effective TEVET management information system; rehabilitation of facilities and providing new equipment for institutions and the incorporation of cross cutting-issues: HIV/AIDS; environmental protection; occupational health; gender; poverty alleviation; child labour; and disabilities. Under the TEVET policy, apprenticeship will be reintroduced to improve the quality of crafts training. Distance Vocational Training will also be introduced to increase access to skills training in trades, technical and commercial fields.

TEVET financing will be based on cost sharing. A TEVET fund will be established with contributions from Government, industry and donors.

In addition to the existing TEVET Development Programme, an extension is proposed which will include a bursary scheme, re-equipping of more training centres, increasing the participation of women, introducing short courses in business skills, sensitising people about the value of skills training, establishing a data base and disseminating information on available programmes and credit facilities.

### *New Programmes*

Presented here are the new programmes being proposed.

#### *Equity Programme*

Some equity activities, particularly the PAGE and bursary scheme at basic school level, have been taking place all along but in an uncoordinated manner. This programme will address issues inhibiting access to all levels and programmes in the sector.

The following activities will take place under this programme: a study to review bursary schemes currently in place; expansion of the bursary schemes to all levels, including continuing education and skills training; and abolition of school uniforms at basic level. Other measures are abolition of all fees at basic level; sensitisation of communities about the importance of educating girls, women, orphans, the differently abled and the vulnerable; distribution of resources to all districts based on unit cost and learner population; development of guidelines for cost sharing for levels other than basic education, provision of appropriate physical facilities and learning materials for vulnerable groups; Provision of counselling for students; and strengthening and enforcement of laws, regulations, penalties, and sanctions governing safety and security of learners.

#### *High School Improvement Programme*

In line with the education policy document of 1996, Grades 10 to 12 will be referred to as high school. This programme is planned to improve quality and increase access to high school education. The curriculum will be reviewed to make it more relevant and responsive and will among other things include advanced skills training to enable graduates acquire higher-level skills.

Other components will include infrastructure development; materials production, procurement and distribution; teacher development, deployment and compensation; equity and gender; school health, nutrition, water and sanitation; capacity building and decentralisation; and HIV/AIDS. Distance education and other modes of provision such as night school will also be provided for.

#### *Tertiary Education Programme*

There is need to introduce a tertiary level programme that will increase access, improve quality of education and review curricula to make them more relevant and responsive to the changing labour market. Programmes should be diversified using various modes of teaching. Tertiary level programmes should lead to acquisition and

generation of knowledge that will contribute to economic growth and poverty reduction.

In order to attract funding tertiary institutions will do the following:

1. Apply appropriate management principles to administration and financial management;
2. Analyse the cost-effectiveness of the workforce, especially academic staff;
3. Conduct thorough human resource reviews to determine actual labour needs and therefore ascertain the job opportunities for graduates; and
4. Expand distance education programmes to increase access.

In addition, the following cross-cutting interventions are proposed.

### ***HIV/AIDS***

The Ministry of Education has developed a comprehensive HIV/AIDS programme under BESSIP. There is need to develop a similar programme to cater for the whole sector to include learners, instructors, managers and policy makers. Activities under this programme will include the development and implementation of a sector-wide strategic plan, mounting an advocacy and sensitisation campaign, and developing materials and human resources for the programme.

### ***Education Administration***

The provision of education is currently fragmented among several providers. To counter the problem of poor co-ordination in the sector, the following steps will be undertaken:

- ❑ Creation of a National Education Sector Authority (NESA) to co-ordinate the activities of all education providers and be the supreme body in the sector. Membership will come from all stakeholders. As part of the first phase towards its formation a steering committee of key stakeholders should be set up.
- ❑ Strengthening of partnerships among providers of education and increased service supply; Government will provide the private sector tax and other incentives.
- ❑ Development of an education sector-wide strategic plan. This will, among other things help in effective co-ordination.

### ***Suggested Strategies***

Presented below are new and existing policies, which will impact positively on economic growth and poverty reduction. The following steps will be undertaken:

1. Provide free and compulsory basic education for all.
2. Pass legislation to compel parents/guardians to send children to school.
3. Develop a relevant, flexible and innovative curriculum that will accommodate evolving development priorities like technology advancement, HIV/AIDS prevention, life skills, gender, environment, use of local languages for initial literacy and topics relevant to local communities.

4. Develop a national policy on the education of orphans
5. Ensure special learning opportunities for out-of-school children and illiterate adults.
6. Eliminate sources of educational disadvantage to enhance equity and equality of access, participation and benefit for all in accordance with individual abilities.
7. Create a conducive and enabling environment in all institutions to enhance standards of teaching and learning.
8. Provide quality and innovative training for teachers.
9. Provide competent and well-motivated teachers.
10. Develop an ECCED system, recognizing its critical role in the development of mental, physical and emotional capacities of children, thereby compensating for disadvantages.
11. Improve progression rates to high schools (particularly for the poor and girls) and provide quality and relevant high school education, which prepares students for further education or employment through skills and entrepreneurship training.
12. Build a responsive, and effective planning and management system that can provide accurate data and develop appropriate policies and strategies.
13. Enhance the capacity of tertiary institutions in generating and disseminating new knowledge.
14. Increase access of the poor and vulnerable to all educational institutions.
15. Recognize the new image and role of the school as a centre for the dissemination of messages about HIV/AIDS, the environment and civic issues, not only to its own students but also to the wider community.
16. Improve the conditions of service for teachers, in particular to provide a living wage.

### ***Prioritised PRSP Interventions***

All the programmes identified are important for economic growth and poverty reduction and they should all be implemented. The following is the order of implementation. All the six programmes should, however, be allocated some resources in proportion to their priority:

1. BESSIP Extension
2. Integrated Functional Literacy
3. Skills Training
4. Equity
5. High School Improvement
6. Tertiary Education.