Synthesis of Reports of
National Consultative Workshops
In Africa
November 2005

Section One – Background Information

In November 2005 EdQual convened four national consultative workshops in our African partner countries. Attendees included the institutional research team and invited colleagues, as well as key national stakeholders and policymakers.

Their objective was to develop an understanding of key national priorities for each partner country, in terms of education quality, based on informed dialogue between policymakers, researchers and key stakeholders. The workshops enabled and established working relationships with key stakeholders, while raising awareness of the EdQual RPC research amongst policy makers. As part of this, they also sought to establish National Reference Groups involving key figures in national education programmes and national education policy authorities; this has been achieved in most partner countries.

Leon Tikly, as Programme Director, attended all the consultative workshops, providing continuity and a crucial link between partner countries, their research teams and their stakeholders. To support this knowledge and information exchange, as well as develop the capacity building strand of the RPC, representatives from linked projects attended each other's workshops eg Ghanaians to Tanzania, Rwandan to South Africa.

Section Two – National Consultative Reports

These follow. Each was produced by the Large Scale Project (LSP) team responsible for convening the workshop.

EdQual; Language and Literacy Project

**National Consultative Workshop
Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania 17-18 Nov 05**

Summary Report

1.0. Overview

The RPC National Consultative Workshop was held for two days at the African Sky Millennium, Dar es Salaam Towers. Participants were drawn from a spectrum of stakeholders ranging from the Government, Academics, Development partners, NGOs and Civil Society Organizations. The Acting Vice Chancellor University of Dar es Salaam, who was the guest of honor officiated the opening ceremony and the Chief Academic Officer, University of Dar es Salaam officiated the closing ceremony. There were three keynote speakers, one from Tanzania Education Network/Mtandao wa Elimu Tanzania (TEN/MET) two from the Ministry of Education and Culture.

2.0. Rationale of RPC Workshop

The RPC workshop aimed at establishing dialogue in the form of debate on the role of language and literacy as well as leadership and management of change in improving education quality in Low Income Countries. Specifically the workshop intended to:
   • Officially incept the RPC in Tanzania
   • Stimulate a debate and elicit stakeholders' views on the quality of education research priorities and their knowledge and needs on:
   • Language and literacy development for quality improvement
   • Leadership and management of change for quality improvement

The RPC workshop paved a way for collaboration between the University of Dar es Salaam and other Universities/Institutions in the S-S within the framework of N-S interactions, through research to be able to identify and understand key priorities related to quality of education.

3.0. Key National Priorities

The following were identified as the key national priorities in the area of educational quality. It was noted that in order to ensure quality focus should be on:

- Learning as a central goal of operational practice. In that capacitating teachers and administrators in terms of requisite resources and skills cannot be over emphasized, for them to be able to efficiently facilitate the learning process.
- Input(s) to be emphasized include fiscal resources, instructional materials, facilities, of students' characteristics and the nature of teachers and administrators both qualitatively and quantitatively.
- Processes need to consider nature of interaction in educational activities involving students, teachers, administrators, materials, and technologies. The focus should be on what is actually going on in the classroom.
- Content need to focus on knowledge, skills, and attitudes being transmitted.
- The curriculum needs to be interactive.
- Outputs have to focus on relatively short-term consequences, such as students' cognitive achievement, completion rates, certification, skills, attitudes, and values.
- Outcomes have to target longer term consequences, such as school leavers' employability, social mobility, earnings, civic participation, and other attitudes and values.

4.0.   Key Indicators of Education Quality for All RPC Large Scale Projects

During the RPC's two days workshop, the following were identified as key indicators of educational quality in the area of large scale projects to be those related to effectiveness (achievement of goals), internal and external efficiency (inputs/outcomes), equity (fairness- the disadvantaged; the marginalized; inclusiveness) ,access (exposure to content, processes, outputs and outcomes). In achieving this following need to be considered:

- Inputs: Teacher preparation, school environment, learning abilities and knowledge (children), health and well being of the child and family, and parental involvement in school management.

- Processes: Conditions and relationships within the classroom, what teachers do in class, and teaching and classroom management techniques.

- Content: The nature of the curricula and implementation in schools, the connection between curriculum objectives and the learner's own experiences and needs within their communities.

- Outputs: how much learning actually takes place, degree of mastery achieved by those in the educational system, and how well all succeed in learning according to their learning styles.

- Outcomes: The degree to which children are learning and developing their abilities both for their own good and for the community and nation. The extent to which what is learned contributes to society social well being as well as economic progress.

5.0.   Key National Priorities for the Large Scale Project: Language and Literacy Development

The following were identified and proposed as key national priories that need to be considered and researched by the LL large-scale project:

- The need to understand the extent education in LICs aims to exploit the benefits of bilingualism and take into account of time needed for CALP to develop using the second language.
- The extent to which the current practices in education among LICs aim at achieving long-term academic development through appropriate LOI
- The extent to which public policy takes into account the need to exploit the strength of first language if used as LOI based on informed debate, relevance and application in the learning and teaching.

6.0   Key National Priorities for the Large Scale Project: Leadership and Management of Change

During the workshop, it was emphasized that the focus of LM research project should be to tackle quality of education issues emerging from the LICs attempts to meet the MDGs goals and targets related to education as well as the EFA goals as stipulated in the Dakar framework for action. The following areas were identified as imperative in that regard:

- Role of leadership in the globalizing world characterized by the rapid changes and increased number of reforms in the educational systems.
- Need to contextually develop relevant models of leadership and change from the best practices based on the local realities and needs such as gender equity, decentralization by devolution and competing needs on community resources.
- Role of leadership and management of change in the poverty reduction initiatives on one hand and a negative picture on the other where the poor are getting poorer and poorer
- Role of clear policies formulated through a consultative process supported by research, legislations and collaborative planning at all levels.
- Role of capacity strengthening for education quality improvement through improved efficiency, accountability, good governance, public sector management, financial management, community mobilization, organizational capacity, networking and coalition building among NGOs and CSOs.

7.0   Conclusion

The workshop deliberations on the illusive nature of the concept of quality education was crucial particularly as RPC is trying to work towards having operational definitions to allow researchers from different countries to have a common framework and one of its envisaged outputs is developing a framework for understanding key quality indicators. The general consensus was that quality education:

- Should prepare students to meet future social, economic and political challenges
- Could be reasonably offered at low cost, without compromising the quality of teachers and other key inputs
- Could be offered in different social and economic contexts, however, the focus should be on the classroom interactions
- Should promote dialogue about meanings and images in different socio-economic context

Appendix 1: Workshop Program

Day One 17/8/2005	Event	Responsible
9.00am – 9.30am	Registration	Secretariat

9.30 am	Arrival, Guest of Honour	Vice Chancellor, University of Dar es Salaam.
9.30am - 9.35 am	General welcome and Introductions	Facilitator
9.35 am-9.40 am	A word of welcome	Dr. H. Dachi (RPC Coordinator, University of Dar es Salaam)
9.40am- 9.45am	A word from Dean FoED & to invite the Guest of Honour	Dean, Faculty of Education University of Dar es Salaam
9.45 am- 9.55 am	Opening speech	Vice Chancellor, University of Dar es Salaam
9.55am-10.00 am	Vote of Thanks	Prof. C. Rubagumya
10.00 am-10.30 am	Presentation: "Overview of the RPC"	Dr. L.P. Tikly (Director, RPC)
10.30am – 11.00am	Health break	All
11.00am – 11.30am	Key note Address one: 'The Importance of Quality"	Permanent Secretary Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC)
11.30am – 12.00am	Presentation: "Indicators of Quality"	Prof. J.C.J. Galabawa
12.00pm -12.30pm	Small Group Discussions	Participants
12.30pm -1.00pm	Plenary	Facilitator
1.00pm – 2.00pm	Lunch	All
2.00pm-2.30 pm	Key note address two: "Government Priorities on Language and Literacy Development".	Mrs. Philomena Temu
2.30 pm-3.00pm	Presentation: Research priorities on "Language and Literacy Development".	Prof. C. Rubagumya
3.00pm-3.30pm	Small group discussions	Participants
3.30pm-4.00pm	Health break	All
4.00pm – 5.00pm	Plenary feedback and discussion	Facilitator
5.00pm	Summary of day and plans for day two	Facilitator/Rappouteurs
5.30pm	Close	
Day Two 18/8/2005	Event	Responsible
9.00am – 9.30am	Key note address three: "Government Priorities on Leadership and Management of Change for Quality Improvement"	Coordinator Public Sector Reform Programme
9.30am - 10.00am	Expert input two: Research priorities in relation to project two	Dr.G. Oduro/Dr. H.A. Dachi
10.00am – 10.30am	Small group discussions	All
10.30am – 11.00am	Health break	All
11.30am – 12.30am	Plenary feedback and discussion	All
12.30pm – 1.30pm	Lunch	All
1.30pm – 2.00pm	Key note four: key issues in implementing change	Dr. J. Kisanji
2.00pm -2.30pm	Small group discussions	All

2.30pm -3.00pm	Plenary	Facilitator
3.00pm – 3.30pm	Health break	All
3.30pm-4.00 pm	Key note speech five: Capacity strengthening for quality improvement	Mr. Ally Mwaimu
4.00 pm-4.30pm	Small group discussions	All
4.30pm-5.00pm	Plenary feedback and discussion	Facilitator
5.00pm	Summary and thanks	RPC Institutional co-ordinator/Director RPC
5.30pm	Close	Chief Academic Officer-UDSM

Appendix 2: List of participants: RPC National Consultative Workshop 17-18 November, 2005.

Name	Designation	Institution	E-mail address
Leon. P. Tikly	Director-EdQual	University of Bristol	Leon.Tikly@bristol.ac.uk
Martha Qorro	Senior Lecturer	University of DSM	mqorro@yahoo.com
Casmir Rubagumya	Lead Researcher EdQual	University of DSM	crubagumya@yahoo.com
Lema Godson	Curriculum Developer	TIE1	nsindovo@yahoo.com
Ndibalema Alphonce	Lead Researcher EdQual	University of DSM	nralphonce@edu.udsm.ac.tz
Alex. K. Buberwa	Chief Research Tutor	IAE2	alexbuberwa@yahoo.com
Frank. N.Tilya	Lecturer	University of DSM	tilya@edu.udsm.ac.tz
Hillary. A.Dachi	IC-EdQual	University of DSM	dachi@edu.udsm.ac.tz
Fikirini. E.M.K. Senkoro	Associate Professor	University of DSM	senkoro@udsm.co.tz
O.A. Kisinda	Programme Officer	TEN/MET3	info@tenmet.org
Mayunga Nkunya	Professor/Ag. VC	University of DSM	caco@udsm.ac.tz
Justinian. J.C. Galabawa	Key researcher EdQual	University of DSM	galabawa@edu.udsm.ac.tz
Corneria. K. Muganda	Senior Lecturer	OUT4	mundibalema@yahoo.com
Philomena Temu	School inspector	MoEC	Philomena_temu@yahoo.com
Joseph Kisanji	Executive Secretary	TEN/MET	jkisanji@tenmet.org

[1] Tanzania Institute of Education
[2] Institute of Adult Education
[3] Tanzania Education Network/Mtandao wa Elimu Tanzania
[4] Open University of Tanzania

Ally Mwaimu	Ag. Director, PP	MoEC5	Asm_mwaimu@yahoo.com
Jonas Tiboroha	Assist. lecturer	University of DSM	tiboroha@edu.udsm.ac.tz
Aneth Komba	Assistant Lecturer	University of DSM	kombandembeka@yahoo.com
Dorothy Phumbwe	Asistant Lecturer	University of DSM	phumbwe@yahoo.com
Nandera E. Mhando	Senior Admin-EdQual	University of DSM	nanderam@yahoo.com
Keren Durant	Research Admin-EdQual	University of Bristol	kerendurant@bristol.ac.uk
Habiba Pazi	Admin-EdQual	University of DSM	habibapazi@yahoo.com
Dorina Bowes	Admin- EdQual	University of Wits	Bowesd@epu.wits.ac.za
Eugenia Sekgobela	Admin-EdQual	University of Wits	Skobelae@epu.wits.ac.za
Elizabeth Obese	Senior Admin-EdQual	University of CC6	Lizobese2000@yahoo.com
Joyce. A. Yeboah	Admin-EdQual	University of CC	Joyce_yeboah@yahoo.com
Nyamurasha M	Senior Admin-EdQual	IOE-Rwanda7	mshaggieous@yahoo.com
Mary Kkampogo	Administrator	IOE-Rwanda	mfkampogo@yahoo.com
Richard Lunt	Deputy Director	British Council (TZ)	
Bakari Rashid	Systems Administrator	University of DSM	rashid@edu.udsm.ac.tz
Lucas Tematema	Accountant	University of DSM	lukahekima@yahoo.com
Mnujum Ahmadi	Driver	University of DSM	

---

[5] Ministry of Education and Culture

[6] University of Cape Coast-Ghana

[7] Institute of Education- Rwanda

EdQual; Leadership and Management Project

National Consultative Workshop
Accra, Ghana 24-25 Nov 05

Summary Report

1.0. Overview of Participants

In all, 25 people participated in the workshop. These included representatives from the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOEs), the Ghana Education Service (GES), the University of Cape Coast (UCC), the University of Education, Winneba (UEW), the University of Ghana (UG), the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), the National Accreditation Board (NAB), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Professional Teacher Associations (the University Teachers' Association of Ghana, National Association of Graduate Teachers, the Ghana National Association of Teachers, the Conference of Principals of Teacher Training Colleges), as well as Chieftaincy institutions. Other participants were DFiD's in-country Advisor on Education, Dr. Don Taylor and representatives from the Outcome RPC –Ghana team.

These diverse stakeholder participants, drawn from both the urban and rural settings of the country, provided a broader perspective of national priorities in relation to education quality. The blend created a platform for helpful debates among policy makers, policy implementers, researchers and community leaders on change agenda priorities in quality delivery of school education. Below are summaries of the main issues emerging from the workshop.

2.0   EMERGING ISSUES

2.1   KEY NATIONAL PRIORITIES IN EDUCATION

1. Removing factors that militate against quality teaching and learning in schools. E.g. Government has put in place measures to reduce:
    (a) *hunger* as a factor that adversely affect learning among pupils in disadvantaged schools. 'a hungry student/pupil is more likely to perform poorly in the classroom' (Baiden-Amissah, Minister Responsible for Basic and Teacher Education),
    (b) *financial constraint* to children's access to quality teaching and learning. In this light, government has established a capitation grant of thirty thousand cedis (¢30,000.00), approximately £2 equivalent per pupil 'to empower schools to effectively use financial resources to plan and carry out quality improvement learning activities in schools'. Government's commitment to reducing financial hindrances to quality learning in schools is demonstrated by disciplinary actions so far taken against school heads that collect unauthorized levies from pupils (Ghanaian Times, Dec. 16, 2005)
2. Enhancing the professional competences of teachers, especially at basic and secondary levels of the educational system.
3. Eliminating gender disparities that adversely affect girls' learning at school. 'Without any prejudice to agenda already worked out by your consortium, the issue of gender in quality education should form a priority research focus in this project' (Baiden-Amissah).
4. Improving the quality of pre-school teaching and learning. The country has introduced two years compulsory kindergarten prior to the normal years of basic education.
5. Improving the quality of technical and vocational education

6. Strengthening school and community-based school performance appraisal and monitoring activities, especially in rural and deprived areas. Towards achieving this feat, School Management Committees (SMC) have been established and tasked with the responsibility of supervising and monitoring teaching and learning.

2.2. KEY INDICATORS OF EDUCATION QUALITY IN GHANA

Major Indicators emerging from the workshop were understood in terms of those criteria or standards that politicians (government) and the public readily use to determine the success or failure and effectiveness or ineffectiveness of school education:

1. Examination Results:

A major indicator of quality education in Ghana is the achievement rate of school children in criterion reference tests. E.g. A school's performance in the national league table for Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE) is used as a determinant of the school's quality. At the Tertiary education level, the number of 1st Class awards announced by institutions at congregations is seen as an indicator of quality education.

2. Level of English Language Proficiency:

English remains the medium of all official deliberations and public examinations, even at interviews for appointment and promotion. At community durbars, traditional chiefs address their local audience in English as a symbol of high status. In churches, especially Pentecostal ones, a preacher's level of fluency in speaking English often becomes a measure of his/her spirituality. Hence, the public tends to measure the quality of the country's educational system by the proficiency level its products.

3. Enrolment level in schools (Class size)

The size of students/pupils that enroll in schools has increasingly become a political tool for measuring the quality of education provided by a ruling government. This may be understood from the perspective of government's desire to fulfil the goal of the Education For All (EFA) policy.

4. Infrastructural/Equipment

Apart from items 1-3, above, another factor that in recent times has become an indicator of quality education in Ghana is the number of school buildings, libraries, science laboratories etc that a government is able to provide during its tenure of office. In this context, the government, through the support of external donors and local initiatives, e.g. through the Ghana Education Trust Fund, has embarked upon various infrastructural development projects on campuses.

i. Availability and accessibility of appropriate textbooks on subjects by students.

Currently, schools in deprived rural areas lack textbooks to support teaching and learning. In some schools, teachers use improvised means such as copying out passages on chalkboard for pupils or dictating such passages directly from a photocopied text for children to copy in their books. In lower primary schools where children's reading and writing skills are rather low, one can easily see the effects on the quality of children's learning.

ii. Adequacy of qualified teachers at all levels of the educational system

2.3   KEY NATIONAL PRIORITIES IN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

1.   Improving supervision in schools.

'One leadership task that we in the Ministry consider critical in ensuring successful implementation of quality delivery initiatives in our school is *supervision*… Improving supervision of teaching and learning in schools is therefore a priority need in our attempt to achieve quality education for all' (Mrs Lydia Osei, Deputy Director General, Ghana Education Service)

2.   Improving the level and quality female participation in school leadership.

A policy priority of government is to increase the participation of women in leadership at all sectors of the educational system.

3.   Improving data and information management.

One major problem hindering informed decision-making in Ghana's educational system is unreliable data. Developing data and records management skills in teachers, headteachers and district education directors is therefore crucial.

4.   Improving community participation in the provision of quality education

5.   Capacity building in leadership for managing change

2.4   KEY NATIONAL PRIORITIES IN LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The Government of Ghana recognizes language as a unifying force necessary for delivering quality formal, non-formal and informal education. Until 2002, the policies of successive governments had been to (a) use the mother tongue (L1) as language of instruction at the lower primary level, and English Language (L2) as medium of instruction from upper primary onwards; and (b) make identified Ghanaian languages as subjects of study from upper primary through to the university. Consequently, fifteen out of the existing sixty languages were developed to be studied as subjects.

2002-2005, there has been a policy shift. English language (L2) made the medium of instruction from kindergarten through to the university. Basic schools required to study a Ghanaian language as a subject, while Second Cycle institutions are to study a Ghanaian language as a core subject.

Priority needs:

1.   developing teaching learning materials in Ghanaian languages;

2.   training specialist teachers to enhance the teaching of Ghanaian languages;

3.   strengthening the capacity of language departments in teacher training universities: University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba;

4.   setting up of community libraries for cluster of schools to encourage children to develop the develop the habit of reading

5.   encouraging children to acquire reading, writing and spoken skills in their L1 and the L2 (English and French)

2.5   KEY INDICATORS OF QUALITY IN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Quality indicators in leadership and management in Ghana can be best understood within the context of government's policy of decentralization. The country's 1988 Local Government (PNDC) Law 207 has redefined the role, functions and structures of government institutions by devolving authority and making district and institutional heads more responsible and accountable.

1. Calibre of people in school leadership positions
2. Quality of leadership and management support systems
3. Effectiveness of supervision of teaching and learning
4. Availability of reliable data for effective decision making
5. Instructional time utilization
6. Effectiveness of teaching/learning resource management
7. Efficiency in financial management
8. Sustained professional development programmes for people in leadership positions

2.6   KEY INDICATORS IN LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

1. Ability of teachers to speak, read and write the dominant language (L1) spoken in the locality. It emerged from presentations from Government representative and group discussion reports that Ghana lacks adequate specialist teachers to handle the teaching of L1 schools. *'Very few teachers are sufficiently trained in the Ghanaian languages to be able to teach them. ... Because most teachers do not understand the predominant language (L1) of the locality where they are posted to teach, they are compelled to use English as a medium and subject of instruction at all levels'* (Mrs Agyeman-Duah, Director, Curriculum Research and Development Division, GES)
2. Ability of pupils/students to communicate (speak, read and write) well in their mother tongue.
3. Ability of students to comprehend L2 expressions in their own L1 and vice-versa.
4. Evidence of confidence in, and desire to learn and communicate in the L1. The erroneous thinking 'that education given through the medium of a Ghanaian Language can only be an inferior one' tend to affect students' desire to learn and use the L1
5. Adequacy of appropriate language labs and teaching/learning materials.

EdQual; Implementing Curriculum Change Project

National Consultative Workshop
Johannesburg, South Africa 28-29 Nov 05

Summary Report

1.0. Day One Proceedings: Monday 28 November 2005

The workshop kicked off with welcome remarks from Dr. Trevor Coombe, the chairman of the advisory board of the Wits Education Policy Unit (EPU). He acknowledged the presence of the director of RPC, Dr. Leon Tikly and extended special welcome to him. The welcome note was immediately followed by a self- introductory session by all workshop participants.

The head of the Wits School of Education, Professor Mary Metcalfe also welcomed all participants to the two-day workshop. She acknowledged the high quality of people who were participating in the project on the improvement of quality of education in South Africa. Professor Metcalfe informed the house that Deputy Vice Chancellor Professor Thandwa Mthembu was expected to attend. She also apologized for not being able to sit through the day's activities due to commitments elsewhere. After her short address, the Wits EPU project coordinator, Dr. Thabiso Nyabanyaba proceeded to give housekeeping announcements.

1.1 Key note speech by Mr. Duncan Hindle (DG- National Department of Education)

The first key note speech was given by the Director General form the National Department of Education, Mr. Duncan Hindle. The DG's key note speech was on "The importance of Quality Education". It was pleasing to learn from Duncan that quality is at the top of the Department's agenda and that the department is now fully aware of what they mean by quality education. The challenge now was how best quality should be improved in the education system and he hoped that the proceedings of the two-day workshop would give insights into possible approaches of improving the quality of education in South Africa. The house was informed that there seems to be no direct correlation between poverty and performance, at least at school level. The director based his argument on the fact that there are many individuals from poor backgrounds who have made remarkable success in education. He cited results of some analysis the department did on investments in education and school performance which showed that some 30% of differentials in performance were explained by factors within schools (i.e. In- school inequalities). Duncan underscored that whilst resources matter, they are not the sole factor affecting school performance; other variables like the commitment of teachers and sound school management make a difference in terms of school success. The case of reshuffling of school principals in Orange Free State was cited, where one principal turned a school with a track record of failing to a successful school with 80% metric pass rate.

The presentation also emphasized the need for professional support for schools and for personnel at district offices. Teachers are not getting adequate support from district offices because of the poor quality of personnel manning the district offices. It was revealed that currently, 85% of the education budget goes towards teacher salaries and this warrants that there be some measure of quality teacher input into the system. The presentation also touched on the poverty of teacher qualifications which obviously translates into poor learner performance. The director also raised the issue of class size, which he indicated is directly linked to teacher salary. Current norms are in favour of big class sizes in order to try and maximize returns on the huge teacher salary budget.

It was also pointed out during the presentation that the department may find it more beneficial to identify sites of quality performance in the system and invest more into them so they can excel, but without necessarily neglecting the rest of the schools. The director indicated that the same strategy might be used with colleges. There is also need for the department and all the relevant stakeholders to seriously consider whether there is something fundamental in the system that might make a difference in terms of quality, eg. restructuring the school system. Duncan also acknowledged that ICTs have not been fully exploited as of date. There is reportedly very strong political drive and emphasis on measuring the quality of the education system in the country. What seems to be most worrying though, is that the examination results of learners don't match the performance of teachers as reflected through the appraisal system.

The presentation touched on some of the critical variables that are believed to have direct impact on learner performance and these include:
- Language
- Time on task
- Qualifications of teachers
- Benchmarking examination papers at regional and international levels

The Director General concluded his presentation by posing the following question:
How do we build, strategically, a critical mass of performing schools?
(N.B. Duncan Hindle's full presentation is provided in appendix A)

1.2 Presentation by Dr. Tikly (Director- RPC)

Dr. Leon Tikly's presentation was on the "Overview of RPC" but his opening remarks were an acknowledgement of the Director General's insightful presentation on quality issues in the South African education system.

Dr. Tikly started by giving the RPC partner institutions which include:
> University of Bristol, UK
> University of Bath, UK
> University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
> University of Cape Coast, Ghana
> Kigali Institute of Education, Rwanda
> University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

Over and above these partners, he also pointed out that each large- scale project will also involve additional partners from South Asia and Latin America. He also noted that all the low income countries in the consortium have similar challenges and problems. It was his observation however, that South Africa is unique in that it has a higher resource and capacity level that should give her a lead in defining the quality agenda. South Africa is therefore very different from the rest of the African countries although it also has very depressed areas in education.

The presentation proceeded to give the purpose of the RPC which is primarily to generate new knowledge in order to assist governments in low income countries identify and implement initiatives that will improve the quality of education in ways that will benefit the poorest people in the world and at the same time promote gender equity. DFID aims at developing capacity in order to make universities become sustainable centers of excellence that can provide sustainable support to their national and regional education systems.

Leon touched on critical aspects relating to small and large projects, methodological approach, capacity strengthening and dissemination of information arising from the projects. *(N.B. For the full presentation by Dr. Tikly please see appendix B)*

1.3   Presentation by Dr. Luneta Kakoma

Dr. Luneta Kakoma opened his presentation by articulating the concept of quality and stressed that it is important to contextualize the definition of quality in education. He also argued that quality education addresses relevance to the social and economic needs of a community. The presentation shed some light on why it is necessary for systems of education to prioritize quality education and what indicators can be used to depict the quality of a given education system. Some of the key indicators he singled out in his presentation are:

- Attainment: (In Mathematics, Reading, foreign languages, ICT)
- Success and transition
- Monitoring of school education
- Resources and structure

He was also quick to mention that for low- income countries it is necessary to address literacy and numeracy over and above the four indicators above. This is mainly because of the low levels of literacy still prevailing in low- income countries.

The presentation gave some of the initiatives that may be considered in order to address quality of education in low-income countries:

- Improve professional development programmes for teachers
- Improve teacher salaries
- More time must be devoted to teaching and learning
- Enhance language teaching to facilitate effective mastery of literacy skills
- Adopt effective instructional strategies that facilitate effective good learning and acquisition of knowledge and skills
- Safe and secure schools
- Good management

Luneta's presentation concluded by posing questions:

- Which indicators of quality should governments of low-income countries address, given their low resources?
- Should low-income countries be preoccupied with issues of quality when they are still grappling with issues of access?
- What professional development programmes should low-income countries adopt?
- How should low-income countries address problems of resource shortage and inadequate infrastructure?
- Why is there little participation in forums that address quality education by people at the chalk-face, the teachers?
- How can communities and school governing bodies enhance quality in education?
- What is the role of NGOs in addressing quality education in low-income countries?

(N.B. Dr. Luneta Kakoma's full presentation is provided in appendix C)

1.4   Presentation by Mr. Haroon Mohamed (National Department of Education)

Haroon started by thanking workshop organizers for inviting him to speak on behalf of the Department on the subject of quality. He was quick to point out that the theme of the workshop was very relevant in the context of MDG and EFA goals, African Peer Review mechanism and the experiences and literature in the last 50 years on educational change to improve educational quality in all parts of the world.

Haroon informed the participants that in South Africa, the Education for All (EFL) goals for access have already been met, if not surpassed at Universal Primary and at secondary levels. He however pointed out that concern is over retention and pass rates that are still very low. There is also mismatch between skills imparted in education and the demands of the economy. The provision of Quality Education is thus at the centre of the stage and one way of putting it is that discussions have shifted "From the Right to Learn to Getting Learning Right. In the rest of his presentation, Haroon dwelt on contextualizing the debates on quality educational provision and highlighting key questions that need to be addressed:

- What is the significance of the Maths and Science as subject areas for the government?
- What initiatives already exist in this area?
- What are the key government priorities in this area?
- What contribution can future research make to developing this area?
-

Haroon presented exciting plans for the government to address some of the pressing issues in the area of education, particularly in Science and Maths. It was encouraging to note that plans in educational development in the country are conscious of the demands of the wider economy. For instance, the presenter reported that government has set a target of 6% economic growth by 2012 and this is to be supported by the relevant human resource skills that should be developed by the education sector. Haroon also deliberated on key government priorities in an attempt to address some of the shortcomings of the education system.

He concluded his presentation by noting how research effort can contribute towards educational improvement in South Africa:

- Getting the data more accurate- in the empirical, interpretive and interventionist senses- so that planning decisions and interventions can be more effective for all agencies.
- Emancipatory research in a context of dominating technical rationality.
- Research that is textured to history, subjectivity, objectivity and the frames of social difference- race, class, gender, ethnic.
- Provide more reliable data on performance; baseline information; and then longitudinal data on performance.
- Provide research evidence on what works in developing contexts.
- Provide and assist with implementing research tools for monitoring and evaluation of initiatives and programmes.

He looked forward to working and interacting with the RPC.
(N.B. Haroon Mohamed's full presentation is provided in appendix D)

1.5 Presentation by Dr. Thabiso Nyabanyaba (Lead researcher and Institutional project Coordinator)

The second presentation in the afternoon was given by the institutional coordinator from the EPU, Dr. Nyabanyaba and it focused on Mathematics and Science education. He opened the presentation by outlining the three key elements that must be considered in Maths and Science education, namely:

- Implementing curriculum change
- Fighting poverty and
- Promoting gender equity.

He then proceeded to give some research findings relating to Mathematics and Science education curriculum change. Amongst the many findings he gave is that Mathematics and Science education is important for economic development. He also explained that curriculum

change is of higher quality when it starts with teachers, rather than when it is imposed as centrally devised plans.

In his presentation, Thabiso articulated how the current project should try to respond to some of the problems identified in the area of Mathematics and Science education. He proposed adopting a broad emancipatory perspective whose key aims should be to actively involve teachers so that they can, in turn, develop greater confidence and capability to reflect on and develop their work. The presentation invited participants to think seriously around the following critical questions as they proceed with the workshop discussions:

- What are the main priorities with regard curriculum change for Rwanda?
- How can we support teachers' professional development?
- How can we support teachers to identify professional development needs?
- How can we support teachers to work together to address these needs?
- How we particularly support women teachers and teachers in difficult contexts?
- What evidence do we need to collect to demonstrate the effectiveness of supporting teachers' professional development?
- How can teachers from the different partner countries work together?
- How can we ensure sustainable initiatives?

(N.B. For Dr. Nyabanyaba's full presentation, please see appendix E)

2.0   Main issues raised in day one plenary sessions

The following section of the minutes provides a summary of the questions, issues and concerns that were raised in the two plenary sessions of the first day.

2.1   First plenary session (Chair: Dr. Trevor Coombe)

The first plenary session was based on the very insightful presentations that had been made in the morning and which primarily focused on the quality of educational provision. The key presentations on the subject of quality, as reported above, were made by Duncan Hindle, "The importance of quality education", Dr. Leon Tikly, "The overview of RPC" and Dr. Luneta Kakoma, "Indicators of quality".

The first question raised was on the levels of education the project is focusing in terms of quality:

- Is the project concerned with quality of basic, secondary or tertiary education?
- Does it cover the quality of public as well as private education?

The questions were calling for some delimitation of the scope of the project on quality improvement in terms of the various education cycles.

The response was that clearly the project is concerned with quality of provision of education at the various levels and both private and public forms of education are included, notwithstanding the limited resources at hand. The project is not yet clearly delimited although basic and secondary education would obviously be given priority. It is hoped that workshops of this nature will actually help in focusing the thrust of the broad project and coming up with appropriately delimited research questions.

Concern was raised over the relationship between quality educational provision and good jobs, especially given the high levels of graduate unemployment prevailing in the country. This aspect was reportedly more linked to a separate project on educational outcomes. It is

however important to note that the project on quality also has implications on employment of the graduates.

Different participating organizations commented on how their work relates to the cause of the project on improvement of quality education.

The Mathematics Foundation

The Mathematics Foundation noted that amongst issues raised on quality was the critical aspect of teacher development, an important dimension of quality which the organization is also addressing. The organization's research interests are mainly on the development of Maths Teacher Educators.

The Development Bank of Southern Africa

In South Africa what do we want to achieve in the second decade of democracy? The first decade had such promising goals, (eg. Equity, access, relevance) but very little was achieved at the end of the decade. The participants were invited to seriously consider where the problem really lies. Problem diagnosis helps in ensuring better success in the initiative goals of the second decade of democracy.

The bank also pointed out that they would be very keen to listen to project initiatives of this type and see what contribution they can make.

Umalusi

The role of Umalusi in the quality project is very specific, given that they work in general and tertiary education. The role of the organization is monitoring quality of exit examinations and syllabuses, aspects that have direct relevance to educational quality. Currently the organization is reportedly in the process of refining tools for judging the quality of examination outcomes.

One participant emphasized the importance of establishing how the quality of education can be measured.

An important point raised and debated to some length in the session was the issue of education relevance.
- Is relevance what local communities want and is it something that is tied to specific local contexts or is it generic to a nation?
- Who should determine the relevance of an education system?
- Should relevance be defined in terms of the immediate needs of a community or a country?

One perception of relevance that was given during the session was premised on learner choice opportunities. Relevant education was defined as that education which can provide learners with wide choice of life opportunities. Whilst this perception was generally attractive, somebody was quick to point out that sight should not be lost of the fact that choices learners make are themselves not free of political and economic pressures. They should always be viewed as problematic.

A very noteworthy point raised in relation to relevance was that it is a dynamic phenomenon that constantly changes as the needs of the society change. Therefore in terms of curriculum innovations, educationists are targeting something that is constantly moving.

The final concern raised in the first session was on Duncan's point on the closure of some multiple class schools on farms in preference for better resourced urban schools where learners arguably access better quality education. The house's attention was drawn to the economic/affordability rationale behind such closures of rural/farm schools. There is need to interrogate such a rationale, especially given that some of such small schools are doing very well. There is a lot that planners should learn from such small sites of excellence.

2.2 Second plenary session (The session was chaired by Shireen Motala, director of the EPU)

This session took place in the afternoon after presentations by Mr. Haroon Mohamed, "Government priorities on project on quality education" and Dr. Thabiso Nyabanyaba, "Research priorities in relation to project one"

Issues and questions raised included

- How best can we disseminate information to teachers so that they can understand and use it effectively in their practice?

One participant raised concern over underestimation of the importance of the cognitive aspect of child development. She argued that more priority should be placed on the measurement of the cognitive aspects of the learners' progress. There is a necessary relationship between the various levels of education that makes it important even for children who don't get as far as tertiary education to master the knowledge thoroughly enough at every lower level.

Concern was also raised over the sound curriculum reforms that were introduced in the first decade of democracy but with no desired results; eg. Outcome based curriculum and curriculum 2005.

- What is the professional role of teachers, should they be holistic community workers or should they just teach?

There is need for carefully articulating the relationship between access and quality of education.

A strong suggestion was made that the workshop focus should not be on who is wrong in terms of current education failures, rather the focus should be on what constitutes good teaching.

- What is it that makes an ideal Maths teacher?

It is important that the different teacher development programs should be synchronized at national level, (eg. The ACE program). This makes it possible to define the competencies that are desired from such programs. At the moment different people are doing their own things differently and there is absolutely no coordination between and amongst institutions in terms of what they are producing. It is important for people to understand the relevant, appropriate pedagogies for Maths education in order to know the kind of teacher to produce. Much more than just Maths knowledge is needed in order to be able to teach Maths effectively.

It is important to investigate quality assurance in order to establish the performance of teacher development programs.

The point was underscored that in quality education, the teacher matters. Focus should be on affording much support to teachers so they can improve their practice. The new curricular

innovations introduced in the first decade of democracy may have failed due to lack of adequate teacher support.

The question was raised why "life skills" was not given its due share in the papers delivered and in the discussions on the day. The immediate response to this concern was that "life skills" is still the main focus of the project because it is linked to poverty reduction. An expert is yet to be identified in the area and more consultations will be made on that. The focus on Maths and Science does not in any way preclude life skills.

In conclusion, Leon pointed out that the focus of the workshop is to develop quality indicators around education in general and on Maths and Science education in particular. He acknowledged that the quality of debates that had prevailed during the day was extremely high but it was still too early to present a set of research questions for the project.

3.0 Day two proceedings: Tuesday 29 November 2005

Professor Mamokgethi Setati, the director of the Marang Mathematics Center (Wits School of Education) chaired the first morning session. Lindwell Clarke from the Department of Education opened the second day by a very exciting presentation on "Transforming Teaching and Learning through ICT".

The presentation focused mainly on the current situation with regards ICT integration in teaching and learning and current initiatives by the department to enhance the use of new ICTs in schools. Lindwell's presentation was highly informative of the Department's position on and commitment to use of new ICTs in schools. The White Paper on e-education spells out in very clear terms what the current policy position of the department is in terms of transmission of computer literacy in particular and integration of e-learning in general. The goal of this initiative is "To equip every manager, teacher and learner in general and further education and training with knowledge and skills to use ICT confidently, creatively and responsibly by 2013". The house was also informed that the same document outlines the implementation plan of the project. It was interesting to learn that the department has gone into partnership with private providers like Microsoft, Edu-Net, Hewlett Packard and CISCO as a way of enhancing implementation of the project.

The presentation also tried to shed light on the progress made so far in implementing new ICTs in schools and equipping learners and teachers with computer literacy skills. At national level, Lindwell lamented that less than 30% of the schools have computers for training. The picture however varies from province to province, with Western Cape, Northern Cape and Gauteng leading in the initiative whilst Limpopo, Eastern Cape and Kwazulu Natal lagging far behind. The presentation also showed that the department is fully aware of the implementation challenges posed by the realities on the ground. These include:
- The high costs involved
- Making the initiative relevant to the curriculum
- The need to develop school capacity for effective implementation
- Connectivity
- Coordination of the project by the various levels of the department and
- How best to involve local communities

Lindwell concluded by pointing out that it takes time to change practice and that there is need for all stakeholders to forge ahead with the new initiatives, in spite of other pressing needs and demands of the system. This will ensure that children currently going though the education system don't miss out on this technological link with the world beyond the school.
NB:(For Lindwell's full presentation please refer to appendix F)

3.1   Presentation by Mr. Edmond Were, KIE Rwanda

The second morning presentation was from Mr. Edmond Were from Kigali Institute of Education (Rwanda). Edmond' presentation also focused on the use of ICT in teaching and learning. The presentation pointed out at the conceptual problems generally surrounding ICT, new ICTs and computer literacy. Edmond brought the participants' attention to the fact that even in the old days, before the advent of new technologies, people relied heavily on old communication technologies like the horn, the drum, printpress, the post office and the train.

The presentation focused on the role of new ICTs in education, ICT skills and the learning environment that is created through the introduction of ICTs in schools. The presenter gave a well- informed account of international ICT initiatives that have been a result of international declarations like the Jomtien and the Dakar Frameworks as well as the UN Millennium goals. An account of the Pan African Initiatives, the Asian Initiatives, the Japan, Taiwan, China and South Korean Initiatives as well as the Kothmale Initiative in Sri Lanka was given during the presentation. The important question Edmond raised through these initiatives was what African countries like Rwanda and South Africa can learn from such ICT initiatives as they grapple with the improvement of quality education in their countries.

The presentation informed participants of the policy position in Rwanda with regards ICT integration in schools. It was impressive to note from the presentation that in spite of the constraints of power and infrastructure shortage in the country, a lot is being done to develop computer literacy amongst learners in schools. Like in South Africa, it was also interesting to note that there is government- private sector partnership in implementing the ICT project in schools. Plans for introducing hand-powered laptops for use by learners in schools without electricity were both impressive and exciting to the workshop participants.

Given the challenges Rwanda is currently facing in terms of general social and economic development and developments in the education sector in particular, Edmond concluded his presentation by posing questions:

- Is Rwanda on the right ICT path?
- Does Rwanda need to adopt and adapt some of the initiatives in Africa and Asia?
- Do we need an integrated ICT initiative?

(N.B. For Edmund's full presentation, see appendix G)

3.2   Plenary session

The plenary session that followed Lindwell and Edmond's presentations was characterized by questions and discussions that focused mainly on learners and ICTs. The following were some of the questions that were raised during the plenary:

- How do the ministries of education plan to cater for the learners in disadvantaged rural schools that have neither electricity nor telephone facilities?
- How best can we optimize the utilization of computers that are supplied to schools?
- Shouldn't we be looking at where ICTs are widely used by the youth out of school and draw the sources of motivation from there?
- How does the use of ICT by our young generation affect their take up of language, especially language which is not their mother tongue? There is a possibility of children learning a different language through ICT.

In response to the question on how governments are catering for disadvantaged learners, it was noted that in Rwanda the government is giving every school 10 computers, irrespective of whether there is electricity or not. It was also noted that there is a program financed by Microsoft and CISCO where learners in schools without electricity will be supplied with hand powered laptops. In terms of telephone connectivity, the participants were informed that schools are provided with phones that are not connected to lines.

In South Africa, the main solution to lack of basic infrastructure for utilization of ICT lies in the government working hand in glove with districts in developing the requisite infrastructure.

Concern was also raised that the issue of ICTs is not problematised enough. In debates on ICT integration, it was suggested that it necessary to consider the six Ts:
- Security
- Electricity
- Sustainability
- Utility (i.e. optimum utilization of equipment supplied)
- Applicability to curriculum
- Creativity

Another important point raised during the discussion was the need to focus on people using the technology in schools rather than on the technology itself. The importance of human power in the use of ICT in schools was underscored during this plenary discussion. It was also stressed that computers can never replace teachers in schools. A lot of learning can also take place through peer support.

The house noted the importance of identifying those schools that have been consistently examples of good practice in the use of ICTs. Apart from learning more from them, the schools should also be given more support so they can continue to excel.

The plenary discussion was concluded by acknowledging that both presentations had been extremely helpful in laying out the scope of activity already taking place in Rwanda and in South Africa with regards to ICT integration. The Rwanda experience was particularly noted to be very encouraging.

3.3   Presentation by Dr. Nick Taylor (Director-Joint Education Trust). The Institutional Coordinator, Dr. Thabiso Nyabanyaba chaired the session**.**

The third presentation in the morning session was by Dr. Nick Taylor, the director of Joint Education Trust (JET). Nick's presentation focused on "Key issues in implementing change-Issues in school quality".

The presentation was primarily based on research work being undertaken in the education system by JET. Nick's presentation subscribed to the impact of poverty on learning. He noted that 70-80% of learning can be explained by poverty in South Africa. Amongst other home background factors, the presenter gave that there is very insignificant help learners get in terms of reading at home. This situation was reportedly worsened by the fact that teaching of reading in schools is extremely poor. The presentation proceeded to give detailed and highly informative research data on language choice and interactive patterns in lessons in Grade 3 classes studied in more 140 schools. It was revealing to note that much of the lesson time is taken up by teacher talk instead of pupil talk. There was also very little pupil-pupil interaction during lessons. The only times learners were noted to be talking was when they were answering questions from teacher.

Research studies reported by Dr. Taylor showed need for teacher development interventions if the quality of education in South Africa is to be improved. There is also need for availing research results to teachers in schools so they get to know what is prevailing in their schools.

(N.B. See appendix H for Dr. Taylor's full presentation.)

3.4   Plenary discussion (Dr. Nyabanyaba chaired the session)

In the plenary session that was held immediately after Dr Taylor's presentation, other workshop participants confirmed that teaching was extremely poor in some schools. Teachers pose uncritical questions during lessons and sometimes they provide the answers and ask pupils to simply repeat those answers. Poor teaching in schools is clearly one of the major factors militating against quality education in South Africa. This underlines the need for greater teacher development and teacher support interventions.

In relation to poor learning in schools in Eastern Cape, it was recommended that research should be carried out to establish the possible impact of population movements in the province. The poverty of learning could be a direct result of the unstable population in the area.

The following were some of the key questions that were raised during the discussions:
- What are the key characteristics of those schools that are able to implement curriculum innovation programs well?
- How do organizations like JET intervene in such situations were schools perform poorly?

In one of the responses to the second question above, it was noted that JET has made presentations to the minister of education on some of the research findings. The organization also generates awareness of the research findings through participation in public debates.

On the characteristics of schools, it was notably very difficult to know as schools are very difficult to study. Researchers have to rely mainly on research evidence, particularly learners' written work.

Concern was also raised over the role of districts in enhancing effective quality implementation. There is the tendency of provinces to develop innovation programs without involving districts and then passing on already designed programs to the latter for implementation. This tends to result in some resentment to implement the programs by districts. Human resource capacity was also reportedly very poor at some district offices.

The issue of language as an impediment to learning was repeatedly raised in the plenary discussions. One participant stressed the need for analyzing the policy on language as it is such a critical issue. The house's attention was also drawn to the complexities surrounding issues on language choice by both learners and parents. In teasing out language policy, participants were advised to view language not only as a psychological but also as a social and political tool which give learners access to certain social goods in the long run. It is this canonical role of language that should be pulled into discussions on language choice and language policy. It was also noted in this debate on the contentious issue of language that countries like Singapore that are at the top in the world in terms of school learner performance have English as their main medium of communication.

3.5   Presentation by Ms Lomthie Mavimbela, (Director of Education Foundation)

The last presenter in the afternoon of the second day was Lomthie Mavimbela, the director of Education Foundation. Lomthie's brilliant and highly informative presentation focused on

capacity strengthening for quality improvement. The rationale for such capacity strengthening is that for ministries of education to be able to provide learners with quality education, there has to be mobilization, use and management of resources efficiently. She proceeded to point out evidence of weak capacity in the department of education:

- Indicators of student performance and completion rates are low.
- International agencies still play a critical role in setting the education agenda and this shows inadequate capacity of the ministry to take ownership of their policies.
- Evaluation of programme interventions continues to stress inadequate capacities

Nomthie's presentation gave very good insights on the key features of sound capacity strengthening within an education system:

- Use of a holistic approach that takes cognizance of institutional arrangements, systems and processes as well as resources available.
- Effective collaborative partnerships between government and civil society, NGOs and research institutions.
- Ownership and active involvement of government.
- Capacity initiatives accompanied by support and monitoring.

The presentation concluded by clearly articulating the main issues involved with the various stakeholders like government, NGOs, schools and research organizations in the capacity development project.
(N.B. For the director's full presentation see appendix I)

3.6 Final plenary session

The following are some of the questions that were raised after Nomthie's presentation

- What are the key capacity strengthening issues with regards quality enhancement?
- What are the strengths and gaps in the South African government for commissioning and using research?
- What do you see as the role of research consortia in strengthening research?

The house was informed that there are wide variations from province to province in terms of commissioning research. In some provinces directors are very good in designing what they want but in others there are serious weaknesses with regards to the same issue.

It was pointed out that involvement of implementers at the grassroots in identifying issues that require to be researched on helps increase chances for utilization of research results.

3.7 Short presentation by Dr. Anil Kanjee (Human and Social Sciences Research Council)

Because of time constraints, Dr. Kanjee could not give a full presentation. In the couple of minutes availed to him, he however managed to give the participants some idea of what the HSRC is doing in terms of research meant to enhance improvement of the quality of education.

He pointed out that the major aim of their work is to try and provide support to all education role-players so as to enhance evidence-based decision making pertaining to policy and practice for improving quality of education. The HSRC try to achieve the above aim by:

- Providing an avenue for "high-level" policy dialogue

- Being a source of information for civil society
- Enhancing sharing of information and ideas
- Exchanging of national, regional and international experts and decision makers.
- Creating space for consolidating knowledge, expertise and experience
- Consolidating & disseminating research findings & relevant lessons

In concluding his brief presentation, Dr. Kanjee reflected on the main challenges facing his organisation. These include addressing areas that will have a significant impact on improving quality, ensuring the inclusion of all stakeholders and striving for maximum buy-in from national decision makers.
(N.B. Refer to appendix J for Dr. Kanjee's full presentation)

The session ended by Leon thanking all the participants for the valuable contributions made during the two-day workshop. Particular thanks were directed to all the key people whose presentations were of high standard. He also remarked at the level of commonality that exists between South Africa and the other countries on the continent. He also announced to the house that Dr. Trevor Coombe had been invited to be part of the Advisory Board of the project, subject to approval by the director general in the department of education.

The workshop ended around 1510 hours

.

EdQual; Use of ICTs in Basic Education Project

National Consultative Workshop
Kigali, Rwanda   21 Nov 05

Summary Report

i.   Introduction

The workshop was held in Mille Collines Hotel in Kigali and was attended by participants from different institutions who were also stakeholders in education. There were participants from primary and secondary schools, tertiary institutions, non-government organizations, religious institutions as well as government. Their attendance was particularly vital since they play a pivotal role in improving the quality of education in Rwanda *(cf Participants list at the end of this Summary Report).*

The issue of quality education has been central in official discourse on educational reform. It is more so an important element in Rwanda's post genocide national efforts for nation-building and reconstruction. It has as a result emerged as one of the key priorities of Rwanda's Millennium Development Goals, Vision 2020 and poverty reduction strategy.

Rwanda envisages quality education to embrace information communication technology (ICT) at all educational levels. In this regard ICT infrastructure is being put into place to ensure that school going children have access to the technology as well as have the skills to manipulate the technology foe learning. This will assure the country in its efforts to achieve globally relevant socioeconomic development. Within the education realm ICT will ensure the pursuit of improved education quality since it will impact on the teaching and learning process especially in classroom instruction and the providing an opportunity to learn through student initiated research. Of particular interest is the role modern ICT can play in integrating various marginalized community groups and schools in the educational process. The workshop was thus timely for Rwanda.

The programme for the workshop comprised the following themes:

    a) Indicators of quality education
    b) Use of ICT to support basic education in disadvantaged schools and communities
    c) Implementing curriculum change to fight poverty and promote gender equity
    d) An overview of the Research Project Consortium

Papers on the above themes were presented and below are the findings.

2. The National Priorities in the area of Quality Education

The following issues were raised as key priorities in the area of education quality for Rwanda.

• Improving capacity in research and development

Research in education is one of the means of improving the quality of education in Rwanda because it provides information that can help decision makers and planners in education. Therefore, there is need to train more researchers and also carry out research in education in order to achieve quality education.

- School Infrastructure

Good and adequate school infrastructure is one of the key priorities in Rwanda with regard to quality education. The learning milieu is a pivotal factor that influences the teaching and learning process. Learning may not take place in an unconducive environment where there are many learners crammed in one class, no proper ventilation, no adequate desks or tables, etc. In Rwanda today, there is lack of enough school infrastructure and some of the ones available are dilapidated. This has been occasioned by the introduction of Universal Primary Education, which has exerted pressure on the few existing infrastructural resources at the school level.

- Strengthening capacity at basic school level

There is a need to provide a strong academic foundation at pre-school and primary education levels. At primary level, pupils are expected to acquire basic Knowledge in ICT and have good foundation in mathematics, science, literacy, languages (French and English), etc. For a long time Rwanda has been deficient in these areas and this has impacted on the quality of students at secondary and tertiary levels.

- Promotion entrepreneurial skills

Promotion of entrepreneurship skills in the curricula at all levels of education has been seen to be essential. This is due to the present societal demands. The present situation requires people who have entrepreneurship skills so that they can be able to create their own jobs rather than being job seekers.

- Middle Level Colleges

There is need to create more middle level colleges such as vocational and technical schools where some students would acquire "middle" skills and are able to fit in the labour market without necessarily attaining university education.

- Emphasis on science

Mathematics and science oriented curriculum tends to be ignored by a majority of learners. The global changes in science and technological advancement have necessitated the revision of the curriculum so as to emphasize especially science and mathematics. Others factors remaining constant, implementation of the revised curriculum will start with secondary level from 2006

- Gender equity

Gender equity in school and achievement is another priority especially for girls. Though enrolment rate of girls at basic education level (6 years primary and 3 years secondary) is high, a few girls undertake science subjects at high school and the rate of completion of university education is very low.

3.   The main indicators of quality education in low-income countries arising from the workshop

Participants identified the following as the key indicators of quality education:

- Completion of basic education

Progression through the education system should be systematic. That is, the number of learners who complete basic education (6 years primary& 9 years secondary in case of

Rwanda) should allow for smooth transition to high school, vocational training as well as university.

- Adaptability

The curriculum should adapt easily to societal needs. It should also be relevant to societal demands. Production of people who cannot work in the community but instead look for white-collar jobs is indicative of a curriculum that is not adapted the societal needs which implies that education lacks quality.

- Teacher-pupil ratio

To cultivate teacher and learner relationships an appropriate teacher – pupil ratio must be established. An appropriate teacher – pupil ratio is an indicator of education quality. For example, an average class with 45 learners is a good one in terms of teaching – learning. It allows a teacher to properly interact with learners and cater for their individual differences.

- Market Feedback

Positive feedback on performance of graduates from the labor market has a positive influence on education. If the graduates compete favorably in the labor market for example by performing well, then it is indicative of quality education.

- School infrastructure

Adequacy of physical infrastructure, facilities and instructional materials in schools is another indicator of education quality. Schools should have sufficient classrooms and libraries. The libraries should have enough and relevant references.

- Less dropout rates at various levels

Education quality should be characterized by a less number of school dropouts.

- Professional development

Human resource development e.g. professional development of teachers must be emphasized. There should be in – service courses for teachers and also opportunities for upgrading. The teachers should be able to move with the new changes in education

- Mastery of instructional language

Teachers' and learners' mastery of the language of instruction is essential for educational quality. For Rwanda in particular, the education system should promote bilingualism. Learners should have a good command of both French and English.

- Acquisition of life skills

Learners 'acquisition and appreciation of life skills e.g. HIV/AIDS awareness, critical thinking and problem solving, etc must be a deliberate outcome of the education system. Such life skills include ICT skills. In the present development era, the more the education system can integrate ICT in the curriculum the more it stakes claim to quality and relevance.

4. The National Priorities in the area of ICT Use in Education

- Development and implementation of ICT curriculum**.**

With effect from 2006, teaching of ICT will be fully implemented and it will be a full-fledged subject with the primary school curriculum. The challenge will be how to reach out to all the pupils for them to benefit from the teaching of computer literacy.

- Focus on science and technology

To improve science and technology, the government has increased expenditure on the teaching of ICT and science and technology. Also, training of sufficient qualified personnel to teach science and technology is one of the priorities.

- Capacity building and staff development in the area of ICT.

There is need for training of trainers in ICT and technicians in schools. More Pre-service and in – service teachers are to be trained on how to impart ICT skills to learners and develop instructional materials. Also, technicians responsible for servicing ICT equipment will be trained.

- Development of ICT infrastructure in all secondary schools.

Rwanda has a vision to develop ICT literacy and currently, three quarters of the secondary schools in the country received ICT equipment and facilities**.** Some primary schools have also received computers and electricity will be availed to primary and secondary schools that do not have.

- Strengthen Regional ICT Training and Research Centre at Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST)

The center will facilitate the training of school teachers, staff from various ministries and parastatal organizations in intermediate ICT skills.

- Research
-

Setting up and strengthening a body to coordinate research programmes and to identify areas of research priorities is a key priority.

5. Key indicators of quality of ICT use in education arising from the workshop

Some of the key indicators of quality in ICT education that were identified by participants include:

- Professional development.

Percentage of teachers who have undertaken computer literacy course and their ability to develop ICT instructional materials and use facilities efficiently and effectively to support learning/teaching in schools and institutions is indicative of quality of ICT in education.

- Learners' outcomes

Learners' attitudes and how much they enjoy ICT related activities and their perception of how the use of ICT facilitates learning is a key indicator of quality in ICT.

- ICT infrastructure and access

Availability of enough computer hardware, proportional pupil – computer ratio, average number of computers per school and ability of the school population to access Internet are good indicators of quality of ICT use in education.

- Level of elementary ICT literacy of students

If students acquire basic elementary ICT skills and use them to learn other subjects in the curricula for example mathematics, Physics, Geography, Chemistry, etc, then it can be inferred that there is quality in ICT.

- Availability of ICT curricula

Availability of ICT curricula in schools for different levels of learners was another important indicator of quality of ICT that participants considered

- ICT Policy

Also, participants equally considered National ICT Policy as an indicator of quality of ICT. The rationale is that like any other educational programme, ICT should be implemented on the basis of the national policy.

6. List of people who participated in the workshop

1. Mr.Prudent Gatare
2. Dr. Erasme Rwanamiza
3. Prof. Joseph Gahama
4. Prof. Wenceslas Nzabalirwa
5. Mr. Anthony Munyuzanagabo
6. Dr. Thabiso Nyabanyaba
7. Mr. Alphonse Rutaganda
8. Mr. Abraham Katende, Director ADRA
9. Sister Hélène Nayituliki
10. Dr. Sylvester Okenyi
11. Mr. Samuel Mwesigwa
12. Reverend James Rutebuka
13. M/S Gorreth Gatsinzi Deputy Head teacher Kigali Parents Primary school
14. Mr. Francis Tumusiime, Deputy Head teacher Kagarama Secondary school
15. Mr. John Bosco Mutenzitare
16. Mr. Paul Abiero Opondo
17. Dr. James Vuningoma
18. Mr. Herman Manenu
19. Miss Hope Sylvia Rutebuka
20. Dr. Leon Tikly , Director Research Project Consortium
21. Mr. Fred Kimenyi
22. Mr. Gerry Ayieko
23. Mr. Jean Baptiste Rusine

24. Mr. Stanslas Ruzibiza
25. Mr. Gabriel Nizeyimana
26. KIE Vice Rector Academics Prof. George Njoroge
27. KIE Vice Rector Adminstration & Finance Mr. Celestin Kabahizi
28. Mr. Doegratias Nyandekwe
29. Hon. Beatrice Mukabaranga (Senator)
30. Hon. Mujawamariya Jean D' arc, State minister for higher education
31. Mr. Aaron Mugabi
32. Dr. Eugene Ndabaga, RPC Coordinator Rwanda
33. Mr. Moses Nyamurasha, RPC administrator – Rwanda
34. M/s Jolly Rubagiza, Researcher – Rwanda
35. Mr. Edmond Were, Lead researcher- Rwanda
36. Mr. Ali Kaleeba , Research assistant- Rwanda
37. Madam Odette Mukari Mutanguha
38. Mr. Joris Pauwels Representative VVOB- Rwanda
39. Miss Mary Kampogo , RPC Assistant adminstrator- Rwanda
40. Mr, Peter Gatare Ag. Director of Higher Education – Rwanda

Section Three – Press Coverage

    i.   The Daily Graphic, Ghana Nov05
    ii.   The New Times, Rwanda Nov05

Confab opens on falling education standards

STAKEHOLDERS in education have begun a two-day meeting in Accra to tackle the problem of falling standards in education in the country.

They are made up of policy makers, implementers, education-based non-governmental organisations and researchers.

They are discussing issues related to the implementation of policies that will ensure quality education within the context of leadership and management, as well as language and literacy.

The meeting forms part of the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom (UK) programme to fund research into the implementation of quality education in low-income countries.

The Institute for Educational Planning and Administration of the University of Cape Coast is the institution chosen by DFID to lead the research in Ghana.

Opening the meeting, the Deputy Minister of Education in charge of Basic and Teacher Education, Mrs Angelina Baiden-Amissah, said quality education was very important to the government and that quality underpinned current government initiatives in the educational sector.

She noted that without quality education, the government's aim of moving the nation to a middle-income level by 2015 would be a mirage.

She added that it was in that light that the government had, since the past few years, focused its attention on improving conditions at all levels of the educational sector.

Mrs Baiden-Amissah mentioned some programmes, such as the banning of all forms of levies in basic schools, the introduction of a feeding programme and the initiation and support of teacher development programmes through distance education, as evidence of the government's commitment to quality education.

The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Coast, Professor E. A. Obeng, noted that the workshop was taking place at a time when issues relating to efficient and effective delivery of education at all levels of the nation's educational system had become central to the country's development plans.

House strikes out Kwahu chieftaincy dispute

THE Eastern Regional House of Chiefs has finally struck out the nine-year-old dispute between the Obohene, Nana Afari Obanryan II and the Ewusi Traditional Council which was resolved last month at Abetifi.

In 1998, the Otublum seceded from the Kwahuman Traditional Area and unilaterally

KIE launches multmillion research programme

DFID injects over Frw209 million

BY EUGENE MUTARA

Kigali Institute of Education (KIE) has launched a research programme consortium on implementing education quality in the country.

The research project code named EdQual ICT, will be used in Science and Mathematics in basic education.

The launch that brought together over two hundred educators at Le Printer restaurant, discussed the use of ICT in the teaching of Science and Mathematics in basic education facilitated by four professors from United Kingdom, Chile, South Africa and Rwanda, the host.

While officiating at the launch, the Secretary General in the Ministry of Education, Tharcis Musabyeyezu lauded the project noting that Rwanda was proud to shift from accessing education to quality education.

"The country had over six hundred secondary schools with one university to admit the bulk of students but today, we have more universities that have admitted our students, I think this research has come in at the right time," the minister said.

The SG added that about 4000 computers were distributed to 400 schools where they need other partners to intervene and help. Education being a pillar in the Economic Development for Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS), the SG disclosed that the ministry wants to introduce computer lessons on the school

Modiri

curriculum, noting out that about two hundred and fifty teachers have already trained in computer maintenance.

"It is so important if all primary and secondary schools had access to computer education since 93 per cent have accessed Universal Primary Education," Musabyeyezu noted.

The first of its kind in Rwanda, the research project which is to last for five years is spearheaded by KIE. The first phase will be conducted in primary schools and later in secondary schools to improve science and mathematics through ICT.

According to Jolly Rubagiza, the Project institutional coordinator, the research targets all schools in Rwanda but have so far considered few schools among them FAWE girls' school, Gahini secondary school and Sonrise primary school in Musanze district of Northern Province.

Rubagiza said that the reason for choosing Science and Mathematics was because

Tharcise Musabyeyezu

Rwanda lags a bit behind as far as the two subjects are concerned, noting that the strategy will also counter the laboratory problem since the country cannot afford equiping all schools with science laboratories.

"In a dilemma where you cannot wait till you acquire enough money to buy laboratory equipments, this can act as a solution, with ICT in place we can even do without a laboratory at school." Rubagiza said.

She said that this year's budget for KIE alone as an institute to carry out the research in Rwanda is UK£ 55,000 pounds (Frw55m) while the budget for the five years is UK 209,605 pounds (Frw209.6m) running from 2005 to 2010 and sponsored by United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID).

At least six African universities are involved in similar research projects in their respective countries including university of Bristol-UK, University of

Bath-UK, University of Cape coast-Ghana, University of Dar es salaam-Tanzania, Kigali Institute of Education-Rwanda and University of Witwatekseand, South Africa.

The purpose of Edqual is to generate and promote new knowledge that will improve education quality for the poorest people in the world and raise gender equity.

The five year research programme aims at designing initiatives that can realistically be implemented on a large scale in sub-Saharan Africa and other low developed countries.

Special attention will be given to the needs of the disadvantaged learners and the challenges facing remote or over crowded schools.

It also looks at implementing curriculum change to reduce poverty and to increase gender equity as basic mathematics and scientific knowledge that can help communities in situations of poverty to combat HIV/Aids, improve nutrition and manage their environment.

Among the millennium development goals to be achieved by 2015 in Rwanda include; Universal Primary Education and Gender equality.

Participants at the subsequent workshop which ends on November 17th, include Prof. Rosamund Sutherland from Bristol, UK, Prof. Enrique Juan Hinostroza from Frontera, Chile, Prof. Mathramutu Pillay from Wits, South Africa and Prof. Pamela Abbot vice rector(Academic) from KIE.

Intellectuals clash over Gender issue

BY EUGENE MUTARA

Participants at the on going EdQual research workshop clashed over the issue of Gender equality in the teaching of science and mathematics subjects using ICT.

One of the participant who preffered annonimity argued that gender eqality will not apply in the proposed research to use ICT in science and mathematics noting that the element of gender equity can

never be achieved.

"Girls are biologically weak how is it going to be possible for this project if fewer girls opt for science subjects," He said during comments after hearing presentations from different University proffessors.

his statement attracted atacks from female intellectuals notably the KIE vice Rector in charge of accademics Pamela Abbot who argued that nothing a man can do that a woman cannot.

"We have seen many women doing science subjects and

excelling in mathematics having Phd's, I will not agree with you, no, no, no," Abbot said intervening in the participant's comments.

While professor Enrique Juan Hinostroza from chile argued that gender equality was about giving equal rights to both sexes be it weak or strong but having a right to access that right.

This left many disgrantaled arguing that women should work harder to prove themselves other than leaving it

as an open right for every one. similar cases have been showing up in areas least expected; In a recent workshop for journalists on population issues organised by UNFPA ideas emmerged that women could not do certain things leaving many in disagreement.

Rwanda has been hailed for her gender sensitive policies including having the biggest number of parliamentary seats reserved for women but if the intellectuelectuals can still clash over the issue alot deserve to be considered.