AFR/SD's Basic Education Summer Training Program Summary of Week 1, July 17–21, 2000

Opening Session, July 17

Ash Hartwell (AFR/SD) began by asking who felt like a student again, sleeping as we are in dormitories, sharing bathrooms, and roaming around a college campus. David Evans (CIE) added that the informal setting of Amherst College matches his own organization's philosophy and pedagogy. For this workshop, Evans said, "our approach mixes theory and practice and will take advantage of all of our experience, knowledge, and skills."

Julie Owen-Rea (AFR/SD) asked the 25 or so participants to imagine how it had been when they were all in primary school, "when, where, and how it was." Megan Thomas (AFR/SD) began with her recollection of a certain teacher who "took me under her wing and turned everything around for me." Monica Aring (EDC) remembered the huge candy-filled cones that were in a shop window she passed by on her way to school as well as "the sense of dread and excitement." Mitch Kirby (AFR/SD) recalled some of the "fun times outside of the classroom" engaging in sports and schoolyard pranks. Alpha Ibrahima Ba (USAID/Guinea) remembered, to much laughter, "the smell of the whip" and the battles he had engaged in with his mother, who did not want him to attend school. Michel Welmond (RTI) said he hadn't enjoyed primary school at all, and remembered watching the clock hands on the wall, which, just before moving forward, seemed to hesitate and even creep backward. Lessiah Msithini (USAID/South Africa) said she was placed in a multi-grade classroom of 120 students, half of whom faced in one direction and the other half in the other. Msithini was never sure which was her class, and kept switching sides. Eric Sossouhounto (USAID/Benin) said he used to enjoy "demonstrating in front of the class," but also remembered padding himself with cardboard and cloth to protect himself against the teacher's whip. Owen-Rea recalled the atom bomb drills in her school and thinking about the bomb's destructive potential.

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Owen-Rea then prepared the *mise en scène* with some reflections on the workshop's purpose. "This is a kind of boot camp," she said, noting that the education sector is in somewhat of a crisis. Education funding for sub-Saharan Africa is increasing through debt relief and at least four presidential initiatives with specific earmarks for basic education. Staffing, on the other hand, has been drastically reduced. Whereas when Owen-Rea began working at the Agency there were three education officers in Cameroon alone, there are now three direct-hire staff for 11 country programs and the Washington, DC office. “We’re learning to make do and we have to learn how to do more,” she concluded.

Hartwell continued with an overview of the program objectives. These were to:

- Support the achievement of personal and professional objectives related to Agency support of basic education programs;
- Utilize state-of-the-art concepts, research, and resource people in thinking about development;
- Exchange ideas with and learn from other participants; and
- Enjoy New England and deepen personal development.

Hartwell said that people sometimes believe that the word *training* means *making up a deficit*, but the team that developed the workshop believes training is *working together to learn*. “We believe that learning is a collective exercise and that what you bring is more important than what you lack.”

> “Learning is a collective exercise—what you bring is more important than what you lack.”

The session moved on with a preview from Anthony Kinghorn (Abt) on a workshop session on the nature and extent of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa. Kinghorn stated that he believes there won’t be a cure soon and that basic education systems will have to devise new ways of supporting children. Noting that if present infection rates continue, one-third to one-half of all teenagers will die by the time they reach their thirties, Kinghorn said that we have “a critical window of opportunity to target teenagers.”

The session ended with two stage-setting exercises. In the first, Thomas asked participants to consider four questions as they proceeded through the two-weeks of seminars, discussions, and other activities:

1. What functions and activities are you responsible for?
2. What strategies, approaches, tools, and skills do you want to develop?
3. What products or outcomes do you expect to leave with and bring back to your work?
4. What resources do you want access to?

Mary Lugton (CIE) then asked people to take a picture of a tree and to fill in on the branches of the tree one or two of their personal goals, and in the roots of the tree, one or two of the resources they’d need to achieve them. Everyone then formed a circle, and one person took the end of a roll of string, stated his interest or goal, and then passed the roll to another person in the circle who indicated a desire to speak. In this way, the string began forming a star whose points connected the circle of people. Some of the “points” on the start included the following interests, goals, or expectations:

- To what extent should we rethink our approaches because of the AIDS crisis?
- What are some tools we can use to monitor the effectiveness of our education programs?

- How we can harness community involvement to combat AIDS?
- How can we transform problems into partnerships for the design of new projects and systems?
- What are some of the lessons we've learned about sustainability?
- How can we help USAID to be as responsive as possible to the needs of Africa?
- How can we re-center the role of the teacher as a political and social actor?
- How can we rethink teachers' roles, where they come from, and how they are created?
- How can the Africa Bureau strategize to ensure an emphasis on education and how can we maintain this commitment?
- How can we get education outside of education ministries and bring so many of the other resources that exist to improve education systems?
- How can we operationalize our "three lenses" approach, particularly in design and planning of programs, resources, and people?
- How can we measure how our activities fit into the overall lens of "systemic reform"?
- How can we translate little pockets of reform into sustainable systemic reform?
- How can we better unify our strategic objectives into an overall program?

By this time, the string had been used up and a complex star had taken shape. Asked to describe the star or the metaphor it suggested, people listed adjectives like *interconnected, nodal, fragile relationships,* and *multi-pathed.*

Development Orientations and Social Capital

David Evans (CIE), July 17

The "Three Development Rationalities"

This session offered participants a broad framework for understanding material presented during the training. During the first part of the session, David introduced participants to the "three rationalities" (based on Denis Goulet's work, *Ethics of Development*), as follows:

1. *Technical Rationality:* Goal—to accomplish a concrete task using scientific knowledge. Approach is instrumental, eliminating obstacles, applying hard logic and the actors are usually experts, specialists, and trainers.
2. *Political Rationality:* Goal—to follow the rules of the game, promote institutional survival, and maintain existing power relations. The approach is compromise, negotiation, accommodation, navigation, application of soft logic, and flexibility.
3. *Ethical Rationality:* Goal—to preserve the priority of certain values, especially against other rationalities. The actors are typically the disempowered and marginalized.

> "In decisionmaking, one rationality usually triumphs, thus guaranteeing bad decisionmaking."

Before opening the discussion, Evans noted that in decisionmaking, one rationality usually triumphs, thus guaranteeing bad decisionmaking. He suggested changing the vertical relationship among the rationalities to a circular one in which no one rationality dominates. “Any form of knowledge is partial and risk mistaking itself for the whole.”

Using examples from their own experience, participants then explored the three rationalities as ways of thinking about education and development and examined their impact on and relationship to effective decisionmaking about development practice. Overall, participants linked the rationalities, found they used all three, and did not use any particular approach predominantly.

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In discussing Education For All, Ron Bonner (consultant) said that it was an ethical rationality followed by technical glitches and lack of political commitment. Bonner distinguished the “right” of EFA (not the economic and social benefits) from the arguments that were generated later. Richard Sack (ADEA) responded that EFA failed because the education ministries, donor agencies, and unions did not have a viable technical plan and because the political will was lacking.

Eric Sossouhounto (USAID/Benin) described decisionmaking in Benin as politically driven, and tied this in with problems of overcrowded classrooms, not enough teachers, and no means to support an increase. Jeff Ramin (USAID/Mali) described the situation in Mali as also based on the political rationality, with the Ministry of Education’s priority to maintain the status quo. He also noted that the World Bank/USAID approach incorporated all three rationalities, perhaps with a technical emphasis but not to the submission of the ethical and the political.

Norm Rifkin (consultant) said that depending on his audience, he used all three rationalities to make his point. “We began by showing the impact of education on other agency objectives. This was a technical argument; however, we also used the political because we needed to survive. The ethical rationality was used on the PVO community.”

Michel Welmond (RTI) suggested that the technical rationality is always used, but is always linked somehow to one of the other two. Bonner reiterated this point, saying that the technical rarely stands alone. Ash Hartwell (AFR/SD) noted that as designers and managers, we are hired for our technical expertise. He termed this our “front act” for the political, bolstered by he ethical. He gave as an example Ethiopia’s BESO project, which he said was “technically the best informed,” but also the one where the political issues were daunting.

Social Capital

In the second part of the session, Evans led participants in a discussion of social capital. He began by distinguishing social capital from natural capital (resources), physical capital (man-made infrastructure) and human capital (changing/improving individuals). He defined social capital as the rules, norms, obligations, and reciprocity and trust embedded in social relations, in social structures, and in society's institutional arrangements. He noted that social capital differs from human capital in that it is relational, and has "public good" characteristics.

The discussion on the definition raised many interesting questions and differing opinions. Diarra compared social capital to an organizational structure, to which David added "more like a village or a community." Paul Blay (consultant) wondered if it was meaningful to talk about building it—you can change it but who will apply the value judgment "better" or "more effective"? Anthony Kinghorn (Abt) questioned its ability to help, saying that it can actually retard change, while Hartwell noted that reciprocity and exchange can take place at a lower cost. Alpha Ibrahima Ba (USAID/Guinea) stressed the need to be aware of and even willing to defend parts of it. Lisa Franchette (USAID/South Africa) considered it to be a whole ethical philosophy that involves "a sense of obligation to help those less well off than one's self." Rifkin cautioned that "it's a mistake to invest in social capital without a reason for doing so."

> "Social capital is like an organizational structure, or like a village or a community."

The discussion moved briefly to the breakdown of social capital and Franchette elaborated on the situation in South Africa where "we're trying to rebuild and strengthen the broken down social capital, e.g., the growth of the 'orphan problem' if communities don't feel the need to help each other out." Evans emphasized the contributions of conflict and war to the breakdown of social capital, and Julie Owen-Rea (AFR/SD) raised urban-rural migration as another contributing factor. However, she also noted that such problems could create social capital as people work together to response to crisis. At this point Sack noted that social capital represents cooperative behavior and commented on ADEA's work here.

Other questions/issues raised during this session included:

- How do we measure social capital? People spoke of measures of trust, a sense of unity, and associational activity.
- How does social capital contribute to development? Increased trust reduces transaction costs; access to information results in greater creation, mobilization and use of resources; better management of common property; and more effective government services.
- How can it be created? Some say it takes generations to build a culture based on social capital, e.g., Albania; promote NGOs, PTAs, school

management committees; find out what exists and work with that; look for what can be revived/strengthened.

- What is the Agency Doing? Supporting networks, ADEA; strengthening local social services; consulting on FQEL in Guinea; girls' education networking in Benin; NGO strengthening.
- Under what conditions will these promote the kind of social capital we want?
- How is this done at a government level (not just community level)?

Welmond suggested talking about how to scale up social capital, to avoid top-heavy decisionmaking, and to promote democracy and governance, decentralization, strengthening of civil society, and other agency thrusts and themes.

"What are the roles of the state, NGOs, communities, and the private sector in sectoral investment programs?"

Natasha de Marcken (AFR/SD) felt that development agencies could promote social capital, fostering teamwork toward a common goal. Bonner added to this, saying that if the agency's focus on partnerships is taken seriously, these could build a social capital network to further development objectives. But, we should also ask "what *shouldn't* we do to mine, destroy, or use it up."

Sector Programs and Financing, July 18

Facilitators: Ash Hartwell (AFR/SD), Richard Sack (ADEA), David Evans (CIE) and team moderators

This session presented a simulation exercise that engaged participants in the design of a national basic education reform program. After a brief orientation to sector investment programs (SIPs), Hartwell introduced the national context—the Republic of Nagha—and using presentation slides explained the simulation exercise. Participants broke up into four task force teams and were charged to come up with sector program strategies that fit within the public financing ceilings. Each team had to project primary school enrollments, select projects, estimate costs, calculate budgets and summarize their proposed SIP for the minister of education. At the outset, Hartwell noted that money is not the problem—provided a country can come up with a viable, credible plan.

The four task force teams formed, with Sack as the minister of education advised by Hartwell and Evans. After the exercise, participants reflected on key issues such as:

- What are the challenges in designing a SIP with technically sound strategy/approaches within the financial ceilings?
- What institutional capacities and institutional capacity building is required to manage this kind of plan?

- What is the role of the state, NGOs, communities, and the private sector in a SIP?
- What issues are not fully addressed, e.g., impact of HIV/AIDS, process of supporting school, community based initiatives
- Are gender equity strategies adequate or effective?
- What happens when there is no SIP?
- What role do external agencies/donors play in the SIP?
- Is this an exercise that would be usefully utilized in the field with ministry officials or other actors?

Comments on the exercise ranged from the skeptical to the questioning and included, "difficult balancing act," "helps us envision how a budget is put together at the ministerial level," "was this real?," and "how does technical know-how translate into financial reality?" Michel Welmond (RTI) said there was a lot of guessing, driven by the need to "come up with something" and Lessiah Msithini (USAID/South Africa) voiced concern about not knowing the rationale behind the data.

Discussing quality, Norm Rifkin (consultant) wondered if improving quality had really been considered, and, if so, how it had been incorporated. Mitch Kirby (AFR/SD) responded that his group had resisted expansion to improve quality, and use freed resources to focus on quality. Jo Lesser (USAID) said she realized that a focus on quality would increase a demand that couldn't be fulfilled. Lesser recommended enticing public-private partnerships to start investing. Ash noted that "financing is a platform but it doesn't guarantee quality." May Rihani (AED) mentioned that the SAGE project is completing a new study on the relationship between access and retention.

Paul Blay (consultant) said that in real life, he wished he had had different options and could make better use of capital, e.g., double-shifting with emphasis on recruiting more teachers and crash training them, holding classes outside or renting classrooms, and providing nonformal training. Mohamed Diarra (USAID/Mali) noted that double-shifting sounds good, but also affects quality. It might not work even if it were cost-effective—he emphasized the need to balance quality with cost efficiency.

> "While double-shifting sounds good, it affects quality and might not work, even if it were cost-effective."

On the issue of costs, Welmond said his task force assumed it could convince the donors to pick up nearly all capital costs. Jeff Ramin (USAID/Mali), however, said that his team doubted it would be able to go to donors. He noted an implicit limitation—the World Bank won't support an "unsustainable" plan, i.e., one whose recurrent costs exceed the government's long-term ability to pay.

Lisa Franchette (USAID/South Africa) asked about establishing realistic targets with retention, enrollment, etc. "Are our heroic assumptions realistic?" responded Ron Bonner (consultant). "We lockstepped through without considering the other forces at play.” He presented the eternal dilemma: “We have to think of all dimensions, but we often don’t have that luxury.” Focusing on retention, Rifkin suggested looking at the in-school and out-of-school factors that lead to drop out, but hinted that the dropout problem is probably more external.

Megan Thomas (AFR/SD) raised the issue of HIV/AIDS, noting its impact on planning capacity and stating that we don’t know how to factor this in.”

In her closing comments as facilitator, Rihani stressed that “reality” is bigger than we are and that these decisions include a lot of stakeholders whose important roles and voices need to be recognized. If this were to happen, more realistic outcomes might be attained.

Wrapping up, Hartwell said that the exercise had been designed to be impossible—not only to teach us humility but also to highlight the fact that our existing models and structures are inadequate.

Teacher Development, July 17–18

Facilitators: David Evans (CIE) & Michal Welmond (RTI)

The objectives of these sessions were to examine alternatives to expensive and inefficient traditional models of training teachers in low-resource countries and to

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Evans painted a picture of the situation of teaching in Africa.

- Eighty million primary age students, and the number of out-of-school youth is increasing
- Fewer than 2 million teachers
- Education budgets flat and at their ceilings
- Roughly 90 percent of recurrent costs going for teachers' salaries and benefits

In sub-Saharan African schools:

- Many teachers are unqualified or underqualified
- They are often not teaching
- Pupil learning is low
- There is pressure to expand the size of the school system
- Many parents have decided that schooling for their children is not worth the relatively high opportunity costs

In teacher training colleges (TTCs) in sub-Saharan Africa:

- There is a shortage of trained teaching staff
- It is difficult to recruit qualified applicants
- Graduates often don't want to enter the teaching profession
- Staff have mainly secondary school backgrounds and experience
- The curricula are highly theoretical, with little opportunity for practice teaching

> "Teachers are now being asked to 'teach more children more with and for less.'"

Restating the problem

Evans showed how the primary education systems usually have school and teacher training systems that are virtually unconnected. Moreover, he said, in "low resource contexts," there is a lack of evidence to link certification with student achievement. Given the high cost of training teachers in TTCs or other long-term residential programs, Evans wondered if there might be a better way to create and deliver high quality teachers to primary school classrooms.

Based on the experience in Uganda of implementing a new Teacher Development and Management System and on the work of Craig, Heneveld, and du Plessis (*Teacher Development: Making an Impact*), Evans described how such a teacher development system might look. This system, he said, could "provide good quality teaching to the entire primary school system on a timely and sustainable basis with no necessity for certification."

This system would shift the meaning of several conventional concepts: the "outputs" of the teacher development system from teachers to *teaching services*; the location of training efforts from TTCs to *classrooms*; the focus from untrained teachers to *working teachers*; the time horizon from short- to *medium-term*; and the allocation of resources from the ministry to the *classrooms*. The measure of the success of such a system, Evans said, would be "the effect on teaching and learning processes in primary classrooms."

Given that, in the words of Helen Craig, “teacher development is a process, not an event,” Evans and the participants discussed several examples of approaches that might lead to the creation of an effective teacher development system.

The second day of discussion, led by Welmond, was about problems with recruitment and incentives. Ron Bonner (consultant) said that often interest or aptitude is not considered when recruiting teachers, and wondered if it would be worthwhile for countries to develop teacher recruitment strategies. Mohamed Diarra (USAID/Mali) agreed that financial incentives alone are insufficient, at least in Mali where northern areas of the country continue to suffer teacher shortages. Other factors, such as classroom conditions, student quality, and benefits are important considerations for teachers, Diarra said.

Welmond disagreed with studies that show that pay alone does not improve teaching practices—or at least without taking other factors into account—the reasoning being that relative to inflation and salaries in other professions, teachers are now being asked to “teach more children more with and for less.” Teachers under “austerity” plans, for example, often suffer salary freezes, while student-teacher ratios climb. Additional governments may hire teachers “under contract,” to avoid freezes on civil service hiring, circumvent unions, and to pay lower salaries. All these conditions work together to demoralize teachers.

> “Teacher performance is a function of “willingness and ability.”

On the other hand, Norm Rifkin (consultant) said, “better pay does attract more and better candidates,” but he also questioned whether that meant that increasing pay would improve the teaching of already-present teachers. Evans countered that it certainly could, citing the case of Uganda, where none of the successes of the SUPER project in reforming teaching practices began until teacher salaries had been quadrupled to the level of a basic living wage. Lessiah Msithini (USAID/South Africa) said that teacher performance is a function of “willingness and ability.” Msithini also thought that tenure “demotivates” teachers to improve.

Welmond commented that several U.S. studies indicate there is a strong correlation between teacher education on achievement, but wondered why this was not the case in Africa. Eric Sossouhounto (USAID/Benin) said he thought it was because teachers not only have few opportunities to “move forward,” but that “there is also no penalty for failure to perform, nor is there sufficient supervision.” Alpha Ibrahima Ba (USAID/Guinea) said that another problem created by the lack of advancement opportunities is attrition. “When you reach the ceiling, there is no sense in staying,” he said. Diarra said that this was also true in Mali, where many teachers leave for politics or other more remunerative and professionally satisfying careers. Indeed, Welmond added, teaching in some countries, such as Benin, opens the door to opportunities through ties to political parties and organizing.

There is a "threshold of conditions," Evans said, levels at which certain statements apply. For example, access to textbooks would make a big difference in Africa, but in the United States, more textbooks would have little or no effect. Diarra said he was aware of a study conducted in the late 1960s (Coleman) that demonstrated that the home environment was a more important factor in student achievement in the United States, but that in Africa it was the contrary—it was the school that was paramount.

Mitch Kirby (AFR/SD) asked whether there is a [false] assumption that "qualifications qualify a teacher to teach," noting that ministries of education sometimes do not tie the qualifications they demand from teachers to any skills that are particularly needed for the classroom. He also observed that "there is a lot of resistance to giving up the notion of what has long been the standard of qualified teachers." Evans said that in Uganda, "it took ten years of arguing" to get agreement to try some of the innovative teacher development methods. Ba said that in Guinea it might be time to scale up some of the country's innovative approaches, such as using compressed training schedules for contract teachers. Three questions arose, however: For how long and at what cost could this method be used? How long would the teachers be willing to accept their "external" status? And what is the long-term impact of the contract teachers' lower salaries? Diarra suggested Mali's example as another possibility, noting that the World Bank is assisting the country to institute a two-track system whereby the government steps in to pick up the costs of additional teachers in community schools, as they are needed. Participants wondered if this model were sustainable.

> "In Southern Africa one-third to one-half of the population in the education system is at risk of dying from HIV/AIDS."

The Impact of HIV/AIDS on the Education Sector, July 17–19

Facilitators: Anthony Kinghorn (Abt), Brad Strickland (AFR/SD), & Megan Thomas (AFR/SD)

Two sessions and one plenary were offered on the impact of HIV/AIDS on the education sector. The objectives of the sessions were to:

- help participants understand the magnitude of the impact on the sector;
- assist those working in the field to understand how they can work with education ministries to ensure the impact is recognized and planned for; and
- gather the needs/concerns (and strategies) of missions to address problem.

In addition to these objectives, the group listed its own questions and concerns:

- What is the evidence of education's success in HIV/AIDS?
- What strategies will work?
- What is the relationship with national policies and political will?
- The starting point is to have countries recognize that AIDS is a national issue.
- Is there disaggregated data on the impact?
- Why is behavior change so mysterious?
- There is the need to identify key resources.
- education ministries need to work with communities
- What is the role of education in addressing the crisis?
- Should we be addressing the needs of out-of-school youth and what is the education ministry's role and responsibility in this?
- Sectors must learn to work together more than ever
- Should we be delivering prevention messages at the primary school level?
- How do we achieve an equity focus (specifically rural/urban?)
- What is USAID's policy and strategy?
- How can ADEA's resources be used?
- We need to target our strategies.

"AFR/SD is working with education ministries at the central level to develop strategic plans and action steps for addressing the teacher/learner and management impacts."

Anthony Kinghorn presented some of the impacts HIV/AIDS will have. Sixteen African countries are facing infection rates of 10 percent, and in Southern Africa one-third to one-half of the population in the education system is at risk of dying from the disease. Given the demographics of the disease, Kinghorn sees the entering cohort of students—those not yet infected—as critical to stemming the tide of this crisis in many countries. These children under age 15 is our "critical cohort" to preserve.

In South Africa the population growth rate will become flat by 2008 and negative population growth will occur by 2010. Life expectancy is projected to drop from 60 to 40 years. There also will be enormous increases in the number of orphans. Ten percent of Zimbabwe's children will become orphans and in Botswana it is reported that 30 percent of orphans leave school. There are now 13 million orphans in sub-Saharan Africa. This problem already poses an enormous challenge to schools and societies. Many countries, such as Zambia, which is reported to have 1 million orphans, are seeing growing numbers of children living on the streets and migrating to capitals and large cities. If these projections materialize there will, of course, be enormous impacts on the development of countries. Kinghorn warned participants that it should no longer be "business as usual" in the education sector, that the extent of the problem is beginning to be understood by our partners in ministries, but that strategies have not been identified to address these problems.

Kinghorn's presentation sparked much discussion, which carried over into the second day (reported in the plenary discussion below). Brad Strickland presented the AFR/SD Education HIV/AIDS group's strategy. He and Megan Thomas have identified the following three-pronged approach to the crisis. First, they are working with education ministries at the central level to develop strategic plans and action steps for addressing the teacher/learner and management impacts. To support this they will create a "hub" of technical experts to work with ministries and champion the cause in southern Africa. (The hope is to eventually develop a similar hub in West Africa.) Second, working with other donors, they are addressing strategies to assist in-school learners, through the provision of life-skills curricula accepted by communities. Finally, they are developing strategies to address the needs of out-of-school youth, as this population will continue to grow in the face of the epidemic

On day two, the session walked participants through a "costing exercise" that could be used with ministry officials to help them recognize the budgetary impact of HIV/AIDS on education. The group looked at an organigram of a hypothetical ministry of education and discussed which areas might be most vulnerable. They looked specifically at the areas of training and benefits to see how losses of teacher capacity and learners affects these two cost centers. Kinghorn stressed that flexibility needs to be built in when moving from models to actual strategies, as such models hide differential impact across a country or region. In reflecting on the exercise, participants agreed that the exercise should be designed to match participants' knowledge levels.

> Should planners devote equal attention to prevention issues as well as to supply-side concerns?

The plenary session began with a summary of the previous two days' work, and began with a listing of some trends in HIV/AIDS and education:

- Fewer school children (60,000 fewer in Zambia)
- More orphans (2 million more in South Africa by 2010)
- Fewer human resources (four to five teachers dying every day in Zambia)
- Increased training budgets needed to replace teachers (80 percent in Swaziland)

Some of the strategies the group considered regarding the supply-side effects of HIV/AIDS included:

General support and mobilization (central ministry of education level)

- Advocacy within USAID, host country ministry of education, and donor community
- Multi-country networking and initiatives
- Promote intersectoral approaches to HIV/AIDS and education

- Coordinate with national HIV/AIDS programs
- Support DOE strategic HIV/AIDS plan development
- Support mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS in all areas of education ministry e.g., curriculum development.
- Donor coordination
- Disseminate information on best practice experience and activities

Management and planning capacity

- Review training and capacity building in planning and management in education ministries
- Build capacity in teams
- Support school level management
- Workplace programs, e.g., workplace support, succession planning especially for vulnerable functions, benefit design.

Human resource planning and development

- Rethink training (pre-and inservice)
- Consider distance education
- Rethink educator support
- Streamline processes around illness, absenteeism and death
- Discipline and incentives to prevent sexual abuse

Delivery strategy—school/classroom interventions

- Strategy on school level management
- Rethink organization of classroom, e.g., shifts and large class techniques
- Radio education

Community mobilization

- Ensure greater support for community schools
- Mobilize PTAs to deal with, e.g., absenteeism
- Use community resources to supplement teaching capacity e.g., paraprofessional teachers
- Tools and processes to mobilize and empower community/ local responses, e.g., manuals, advocacy activities
- Networks to share experience and best practices—bottom-up approach

> "The emphasis on curriculum "has not paid off," but that the issue is nevertheless not being sidelined. Yet management and delivery issues also must not be ignored."

We then looked at what the school and community will look like and opened up the discussion to identify viable strategies. Some of the special needs created by HIV/AIDS are:

- Infected children, both orphans and non-orphans
- Psychological, social, and economic stress
- Pressure to drop out
- Delayed enrollment
- Erratic attendance
- Less time for schooling and travel to school
- Inability to pay for fees, books and uniforms

Responding to changed learner needs

- Curriculum reform
- Fees, scholarships, and reliance on community resources
- Psychological support
- Nonformal programs for out of school youth
- Preventing children from dropping out
- Peer support/club especially for girls
- Mobilizing welfare or other support systems
- Targeted food programs
- Hospice or other care to relieve care burden on children
- Early childhood development or sibling care

> "Perhaps someone could "come out" and form a support group, which could pave the way for the destigmatization of HIV/AIDS."

Much of the plenary was spent discussing whether planners should devote equal attention to prevention issues as well as to supply-side concerns. Lisa Franchette (USAID/Ghana) said, "the need for prevention activities seems key to me—and not as much as impact. …Your strategy, however, seems to downplay prevention strategies." Strickland answered that the emphasis on curriculum "has not paid off," but that the issue is nevertheless not being sidelined, but that management and delivery issues also must not be ignored.

Ash Hartwell (AFR/SD) said any strategy—prevention or management—needs to take account of contexts, "which will necessarily be different in different countries, depending on political will, the availability of information and the level of public awareness, bureaucratic readiness to take action, and the availability of data. You cannot simply introduce prevention materials without having an overall strategy."

Michel Welmond (RTI) worried that the approach being suggested was the all-too-familiar "crisis management" mode. "We have to think of the long-term consequences of what we do now. *Crisis*, after all, is also *opportunity*. We can use this as an opportunity to introduce radical new ways of teaching and remove other longstanding obstacles to change." Eric Sossouhounto (USAID/Benin) questioned whether nonformal education programs and hospices are really sustainable in the long-term. And Alpha Ibrahima Ba (USAID/Guinea) said "all the items on the lists we are doing right now, AIDS or no. So we need to know what are the AIDS-specific items and what they add."

The discussion also reviewed community participation/mobilization. Strickland said that communities should be enabled to make educational materials themselves and "produce their own strategies to reduce AIDS." As an example of this, Strickland cited Zambia, which is consulting communities to reform the country's life-skills curriculum. Julie Owen-Rea (AFR/SD) said the GABLE project in Malawi revealed community practices where people were unaware of the risks to their children, e.g., unsafe circumcision. They did this through plays and discussions. Focus groups revealed initial hostility to this kind of intervention, but this was eventually followed by a "real turnaround." Mitch Kirby (AFR/SD) added that two years ago AIDS was a taboo topic when he was part of the team working on the sector strategy in Malawi. "Now it's preeminent—the point is that we have to put this discussion into an historical context. In some countries, we may need to begin to talk about the problem, while in others, it may be time to discuss strategies to combat the crisis."

How do you spell IT? What is taken but left behind?

Winnie Chilala (USAID/Zambia) asked how missions should plan for the projected impacts. "How can we get better information? We can't impose community participation, or the project is bound to fail." Mohamed Diarra (USAID/Mali) suggested looking to Uganda and Senegal for inspiration. In Senegal, he said, religious leaders used their influence to affect sexual behaviors. Diarra said that Mali is conducting a behavior survey to see what the practices are, and to see if Senegal's interventions can be replicated.

Lessiah Msithini (USAID/South Africa) suggested one approach, of someone "coming out" and forming a support group, which could pave the way for the destigmatization of HIV/AIDS. David Evans (CIE) said that Uganda has done a good job of mobilizing its society, if not the school system. He reminded participants, however, that "HIV/AIDS is not [only] an education problem—we can't take it all on ourselves." Indeed, he said, the problems caused by HIV/AIDS already exist in education systems, though he acknowledged they would be magnified.

Hartwell took issue with the idea that curriculum reforms at the national level would lead to real change, since they often takes 5 to 10 years to create and are often not disseminated or implemented. Msithini agreed, saying, "It's difficult to get teachers to accept new materials or to change their practices." Kinghorn suggested modifying core curricula to meet life skills needs or to transfer skills to students before they arrive at the average dropout age, which is expected to decrease as the crisis takes effect. Natasha de Marcken (AFR/SD) warned that by trying to lead social change through curricula, "you put teachers into a vulnerable position of leading change in communities that might not support it." Others mentioned that teachers sometimes exacerbate the problem by sexually exploiting students.

Richard Sack (ADEA) closed the discussion by cautioning participants to "manage our expectations." Education systems are conservative, he said, and not quick to respond to new situations. Identifying "what works" is inappropriate. "There is no one solution; rather, there are promising approaches. Within our limitations, we should ask ourselves what is feasible."

Experiential Learning, Swift River, July 19

We'd all been anticipating the trip to Swift River with excitement and—some of us—secret trepidation. The concept of paddling around on this "swift" river with the idea that we were going to get something out of it was intriguing. Upon arrival, James, our fearless leader, gave us a brief orientation on the Swift River—an ironic name for the placid stretch of water we observed—on how to read USGS maps and on paddling techniques. We were all quite impatient to get on with it, and after posing for a group photo, we partnered up and off we went, dragging our canoes like the experts most of us certainly were not.

Many of us managed to launch without incident. So-called novices pushed off just fine while some, who had declared themselves experts in important whispers to their partners, were treated to the Swift River Full-Body-Dunk special. Chris Gamm (CIE) was the first to be drawn by the river's pull and allowed his kayak to roll over just enough for him to soak in some of that invigorating water. Next in were Lillu Tesfa and John Engels who went down with much noise and fanfare, not too far from the launch point (reliable sources have indicated that the moment was recorded on film for posterity).

For a good hour or so, we paddled our way up and down the river, hunting down coveted bandanas tied to twigs, solving riddles (How do you spell IT? What is taken but left behind?), and generally having fun. At one point, baby raccoons simply going about their business, upstaged James who was trying to carry on dialogue with us about our experiential learning on Swift River. Between trying to keep the adorable raccoons in sight and the canoes in friendly alignment, we reached deep inside and managed to discuss getting over personal fears, teamwork, and organized chaos. Then it was time to return to shore.

> "USAID/Guinea regularly shares tasks, shares information, seeks input from partners and beneficiaries, and otherwise internalizes the Agency's core values."

While the initial *dunkees* reached shore without further incident, others in our group, perhaps suffering "wet-look envy," leapt into the drink. Some had to be literally dragged off tree branches, leaving behind shoes, meal cards, and tell-tale nail marks, so eager were they to remain and become one with the river. The late additions to the Swift River Full-Body-Dunk Hall of Fame were Ash Hartwell, Ciyata Coleman, Winnie Chilala, and Julie Owen-Rea. Congratulations! We are the few, the proud…the very wet.

The party moved on to a nearby picnic area where everyone continued to bond ruminating over the day's events.

Designing Strategic Objectives and Results Frameworks, July 20

Facilitator: Matthew Nash (PriceWaterhouseCoopers)

The objectives of the session were to preview the updated guidance, review the rationale for the revision, and discuss its implications for USAID education programs. Matthew Nash presented a PowerPoint presentation on changes to Agency guidance on developing strategic objectives and results frameworks. A copy of the slideshow was handed out to participants along with some training materials and suggestions and guidance from USAID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE).

One of the topics covered was the Agency's core values: *customer focus, teamwork and participation valuing diversity, empowerment and accountability,* and *managing for results.* Asked if anyone ever used these as part of their planning process, Mohamed Diarra (USAID/Mali) said his mission has an annual meeting to reflect on the core values. Ron Bonner (consultant) said he used to use a banner with the core values printed on them as a "motivational tool." Georgette Poukou (USAID/Benin) reported that her mission met with "customers" twice per year to collect feedback on and assess progress using the core values as lenses. Finally, Alpha Ibrahima Ba (USAID/Guinea) said that his mission regularly shares tasks, shares information, seeks input from partners and beneficiaries, and otherwise internalizes the core values.

> "As you read up [the framework] ask why, and as you read down, ask what is needed and what assumptions you are making in order to achieve the IR."

The discussion moved on to strategic plans. Some questions about these included the following:

- Whose plan is it?
- What is the timeframe? Is it realistic?
- Who are the actors?
- What are the roles of the beneficiaries/customers/other donors?
- What is the vision?
- What are the norms of planning?
- Where are we and where do we want to go?
- How do we rationalize our plans with Agency constraints, e.g., earmarks and directives?
- How flexible are the plans, really?
- What is a customer, anyway?

The top box of a results framework is a strategic objective. This, according to Nash, should be "a stretch, but [something that is] still within the mission's manageable interests" in collaboration with other actors. The discussion turned to whether the whole framework is, in fact, a stretch. Richard Sack (ADEA) wondered whether the process could account for "the 99 percent that the Agency has no control over." Nash answered that the framework contains assumptions as well as a development hypothesis, and suggested that part of the planning include asking the question what the effect would be on the strategic objectives if either does not hold. “As you read up [the framework] ask why, and as you read down, ask what is needed and what assumptions you are making in order to achieve the IR,” Nash said.

Complicating matters further, Ash Hartwell (AFR/SD) said, is the R4 reporting process, which “asks you to report on what you are doing, not what the others are doing.” In other words, it is hard to determine to what extent changes are due to the Agency’s activities and not to the work of other donors or blind chance. Nash said that R4s are a reporting mechanism, the goal of which is to demonstrate impact. However, they do not have to tell entire impact. “Tell what you can tell of your story in three pages…but you need to be aware of much more, because the R4 can’t tell the whole story.”

> “Be as realistic as possible in projecting results. “Underreporting results is worse than over-reporting achievements.”

Discussion then moved to IRs: how does one hold a contractor responsible for lack of—or unintended—results? Why is the timeframe five to eight years? What if your IRs are processes, such as dialogue or the development of democratic processes? How do you measure quality? In short, the answer to all of these questions is that the goals of the framework are more *strategic*—and are not necessarily performance goals. “And that is where the art of crafting indicators comes in,” Nash said. Moreover, indicators and IRs can be revised or even changed as more information comes in. In the words of Tracy Brunette (AFR/SD), “We’re reasonable people [USAID/Washington], and the flexibility has always been there.” Karen Tietjen (AED) recommended that there still should be a fail-safe strategy. “SOs are *not* your strategy,” she said, “and IRs are arguably more important. You can’t just drop them, as they may be a leg on the stool of your SO.”

A final area of discussion was on Jeff Ramin’s (USAID/Mali) question of whether a results framework can really capture the entire education program, and Paul Blay’s (consultant) about whether frameworks can recognize the work of other donors. In answer to the first question, the consensus was that the strategy should be driven by the mission’s priorities in the sector, not the other way around.[1] The second issue can be addressed by sharing the results framework—or revising it—during the negotiations surrounding sector investment planning. This will improve donor coordination by rationalizing donors’ sometimes separate schedules and development philosophies. “The SIP process may mean donors “can’t go off on their own anymore,” said David Evans (CIE).

During the second part of this session Ron Bonner (consultant), May Rihani (AED), and John Hatch (USAID) gave their perspectives on planning and design.

[1] Proof that sometimes chickens do come before eggs.

Bonner began with the observation that results frameworks are just a small part of the program, and that much "chinking" is needed to hold the boxes together. His overall advice was to "do what's right and convince reasonable people of its rightness." Bonner recalled that former AFR/SD director Jerry Wolgin once said that one of USAID's most important offerings is ideas, which can indeed have enormous impact. But Bonner now believes that what may be even more important is *that ideas be applied in systematic and sustainable ways.* Bonner's fear is that the results frameworks have become idea machines and that little thought is given to application. With this preface, Bonner proceeded to offer eight pieces of advice about planning and design:

1. Value the SO agreement—use it as a negotiating tool and to guide the design of activities.
2. Plan for the possibility of change and make contingency plans. On the other hand, don't over-study the problem or waste resources collecting more data than you need.
3. Use the results frameworks to guide dialogue, generate commitment, and set boundaries. The framework "grounds" you to what you've agreed to.
4. Develop partnerships and share responsibility with partners and stakeholders.
5. Coordinate, engage, and involve other donors—and the government—in sectoral discussions.
6. Consider all of the various implementation modalities: contracts, grants, NPA, SOILS. Be creative when translating the framework into an "actionable plan."
7. Be as realistic as possible in projecting results. "Underreporting results is worse than over-reporting achievements."
8. Make your SO team a *real* team of all those who need to play a role in doing the job.

"Should we forget about curriculum? Focus on teacher development? Or pick according to our own preferences and interests?"

Rihani talked about four tensions that arise between the need for results and basic development principles. These tensions, she said, are operational, and can even create bottlenecks. However, with planning, we can turn these tensions into "positive energies," she said.

1. The tension between the results-driven framework and the desire for broad participation arises from the need to define and achieve results within a timeframe. Participation, however, is hard to fit into this stricture, however, because so much is unclear at the beginning of the process (Whose plan? Whose results? Whose participation? Who is the client?) Without participation, however, the project is likely to fail.

2. There is a tension between the results-driven framework and increasing human and institutional capacity. Capacity is sometimes viewed as less important than the "product." We should learn to view capacity building as a product.
3. The tension between the results-driven framework emphasizes accountability but fails to acknowledge that *processes* are also valid results.
4. The results-driven framework can undermine the process of trust-building between partners in a "level field of development." We need to recognize the different roles each partner plays and to "develop trust through dialogue."

"One can't rely on ministries to provide accurate data."

Hatch spoke about reining in expectations, particularly at the beginning of an activity.

1. Plan on the process of developing a framework, indicators, and activities to take about two years.
2. Write requests for proposals carefully, as contractors respond to this document, and "cannot guess what it is you have in mind."
3. Once a contract has been signed, keep in mind that it takes a while to collect the information needed to get started. Establishment of baseline data can be difficult. The contractor may have to do that, but won't be allowed to call that an "action."
4. Project and objective timelines do not necessarily match.
5. There is sometimes confusion between "deliverables" and IR indicators. This problem can be worsened when the activity is funded by a buy-in to a centrally funded project.
6. Avoid situations where two contractors are working at odds on different aspects of one IR.

Much of the discussion that followed related to a question from Lisa Franchette (USAID/Ghana), who asked what were some of the things to keep in mind in the education sector specifically. "Should we, for example, forget about curriculum? Focus on teacher development? Or pick according to our own preferences and interests?" Julie Owen-Rea (AFR/SD) suggested "going through a process" of listening to people, working with them, and learning about the context in which the program will operate. Hartwell reminded participants about the Africa Bureau's *Strategic Framework for Basic Education Programs in Sub-Saharan Africa*, which sets forth the principles of systemic, sustainable, classroom-focused reforms. Rihani agreed on the need to understand context. "You can't just barge in—if we want to strengthen capacity we have to work with our partners at all levels." Bonner suggested a two-tiered approach of 1) asking where the major problem in the education system lies—quality, access, equity, efficiency; and 2) conducting—even if it has to be "quick and dirty"—a sector analysis. Jeff Ramin (USAID/Mali) added that it is important to know what the other donors are doing as well, but asked if there was a mechanism to obtain and track such information.

Performance Measurement & Monitoring in the Education Sector, July 21

Facilitators: Tracy Brunette (AFR/SD) and Karen Tietjen (AED)

Tracy Brunette and Karen Tietjen gave a slide presentation and led a discussion on performance measurement and monitoring in the education sector. Every day we use data and indicators to inform our decisions. The Agency's managing for results "core value" mandates that missions regularly collect data, but data is critical for wise management regardless. The goal of this session was to improve participants' understanding of the importance of data in their work, specifically to measure impact, make management decisions, and monitor results.

> " SOs and IRs alone do not compose a strategic plan."

The main points that the facilitators conveyed were:

- Setting indicators and planning for the collection of data are an integral part of program planning and design, not afterthoughts.
- Indicators and data serve multiple purposes within the Agency (managing programs and reporting to headquarters), but missions should collect only information that is useful to them, i.e. that helps them manage their programs effectively.
- Stakeholders should be involved in selecting indicators and partners should be involved in developing the monitoring plan. Ideally, the ministry of education would join the donors to discuss the process and to select indicators and targets jointly.
- The method of collecting data depends on the question that needs answering or the indicator that needs addressing, but is also a function of cost, timing, and degree of precision required.

In the discussion, participants listing many commonly used indicators, such as enrollment, retention, completion, and repetition rates; student:teacher and student:textbook ratios; and various aspects of government resource allocations. Brunette mentioned that indicators cannot be chosen in isolation, and indeed are "sometimes chosen for us or with other partners."

But it is often difficult to collect reliable data. Data units in education ministries may be understaffed, school records may be incomplete or faulty, and partial data may exist in widely scattered offices at various levels of the education system. As Faroon Goolam (USAID/South Africa) said, "one can't rely on ministries to provide accurate data." Not only are the enumerators hard to pin down, but the denominators are sometimes arbitrarily changed, based on faulty assumptions or estimates, or simply be impossible to determine. David Evans (CIE) said that it is important to know what is included and not included in data. For example, do national school expenditure amounts as a percentage of GDP include private as well as public schools? Brunette said that there are many sources of data, but that it was true managers would have to be conscious of quality and completeness. She also suggested that it might be useful to have an IR to assist governments to gather and analyze data.

In the absence of data, or when the quality and completeness makes it impossible to use, Jo Lesser (USAID) suggested using low-cost and quick random samplings.

Brunette and Tietjen said that the SOs and IRs alone do not compose a strategic plan—more may be needed, i.e., sub-IRs and sub-sub-IRs should be created if necessary. Paul Blay (consultant) urged that the indicator be chosen that is relevant to the scale of what you want to do. For example, one would not use the national GER to measure the impact of a community schools project in one village.

Requests for advice on indicators included the following:

- Advice on measuring the impact of technical assistance
- Formulas for calculating some indicators, e.g., using reconstructed cohort analysis rather than longitudinal studies
- How to establish (and project) reasonable, achievable targets
- How is the information used—is the data "moving toward looking at how students are learning?"

May Rihani (AED) said that the concept of indicators should be viewed as strategic. "If we forget that we risk becoming inventory takers." The Agency's idea was that managers select what can be done (measurably) within a timeframe to have an impact. Furthermore, she said, "we have to remember whom we're doing it for—not just for the sake of reporting results but to have an impact on the education sector."

Community Participation, July 20–21

Facilitators: Janet Robb (CAII) & Joy Wolf (AIR)

On day one, participants broke into four groups to try to better define the often used, but vaguely understood, term *participation*. Participants listed types of community involvement, the problems the various forms address, and the characteristics of the participation process. The group also reviewed a new CD-ROM toolkit for designing community participation interventions, reviewed lesson learned from their own experience, and reviewed lessons from two activities of the GABLE project in Malawi.

The four groups discussed

- *Community schools*, which address the problem of excess demand, and often hire teachers from the local community, teach in local languages, compress curricula, and usually comprise only the lower grade levels.
- *Community training*, which addresses the problem of lack of local capacity to participate meaningfully in school management, and often consists of training for school boards or PTAs in budgeting, planning, conducting meetings, negotiation, and proposal writing.

- *Community incentives*, which address lack of motivation to contribute support to local schools, and usually consists of benefits offered to the school such as grants, supplies, construction materials, etc., conditioned on community contributions such as labor or funds.
- *Community mobilization*, which addresses lack of understanding or limiting beliefs about roles and responsibilities, and usually consists of awareness campaigns that assist community members to recognize and overcome such barriers.

> "There is a difference between social mobilization (a community working together to make bricks), and community mobilization, in which communities modify beliefs and cultural practices."

On day two Janet Robb presented the lessons learned in two projects in Malawi, the GABLE Social Mobilization Campaign (to find out what communities were thinking about girls' education) and the Social Mobilization Campaign for Educational Quality (to discover how communities conceived of school quality). One of the lessons was that there is a difference between *social mobilization*, an example of which was "a community working together to make bricks," and *community mobilization*, in which communities modify their beliefs and cultural practices. Other lessons include some of the following:

- It is important to conduct research in the targeted communities to determine the form and content of the message.
- A variety of interventions allows the campaign to reach more groups helps avoid monotony.
- Do not be extractive with research findings—collect what you need for your reporting needs, but do not neglect to allow communities to analyze and utilize the findings.
- Respect and follow as much as possible cultural norms and practices when visiting communities.
- Dialogue and involvement must take place and must be in forms appropriate to the culture and values of the target audience.
- Likewise, the objectives of the intervention must be made clear—there should be no hidden agendas.
- Collecting and responding to community input must be incorporated into all phases of the project. In this way, the results are more likely to be accepted and adopted by communities.
- There must be flexibility to adapt the program to the needs and abilities of the target community.
- Establishing responsibility is essential if anyone is to plan for action.
- Partnerships and coordination of activities with others working in the

same areas can maximize results and avoid duplication and overlap of resources.

- Incorporating community interest groups such as traditional leaders, elders, teachers, etc. can increase credibility and more effectively sensitize and motivate the community.

The remainder of the discussion was devoted to eliciting other lessons that participants had learned from their own community participation projects. These included:

- As the level of participation increases, indicators become more complex (Robb)
- It is difficult to impose any degree of participation, e.g., the level of girls' enrollment or women's participation on PTAs (Jeff Ramin, USAID/Mali)
- Who decides who participates is critical. On the other hand, just because one person does most of the talking in a meeting does not mean that the others have been "excluded." People may yield the gavel to various high-status people, e.g., elders, men, or the educated. This does not mean the others were not consulted. In other circumstances, men and women may meet separately, but one person speaks for both groups in the larger for a. (Robb and Alpha Ibrahima Ba, USAID/Guinea).
- Lack of participation extends not just to women but to children as well. One reason women may participate less is because they may be overburdened with household duties. Can we expect them to devote additional time to PTA meetings? (Mohamed Diarra, USAID/Mali).
- Representation does not always equate with participation. Moreover, all opinions are not necessarily equal (Robb).
- There must be the concept of "the common good." The process and the program are not for the donors, but for the good of a community (even if some of the funding is external) Governments, donors, communities should gather to negotiate the common good. (Daniel, CIE).
- We must not make the mistake of thinking of communities as homogeneous entities. "Someone always loses" (Wolf).
- We might try to think of community participation as a democracy/governance issue or a crosscutting theme (Ba).

> "Representation does not always equate with participation. Moreover, all opinions are not necessarily equal."

From Crisis to Opportunity: A Human-Centered Workforce Development Strategy for Growing People and Economies, July 20–21

Facilitator: Monika Aring

A nation's wealth is now principally of its own choosing. Location, national resources, and the *military are now no longer decisive. Instead, how a nation and its citizens choose to organize their economy, the relationships (institutions) they put in place, the types of investment they make will determine the national prosperity. "Skill and the Wealth of Nations," Michael Porter, 1987.*

This highly interactive session revolved around a case study of fictional Saringal, a Central Asian country which targeted an export-manufacturing strategy to modernize its agrarian economy and had pinned its hopes on a potential direct investment of $150 million from Levi-Strauss to create a manufacturing platform to produce jeans for export and 300 jobs for Saringalis. Although Saringal had carried out successful stabilization and structural adjustment programs and implemented economic and social reform, Levi-Strauss chose not to invest in Saringal, citing serious skill shortages and a history of failed public-private sector partnerships. Session participants were asked by Saringal's fictional president to form a consultative group to develop a productive education and training system. Participants assumed various roles as key Saringali stakeholders. These included ministers of labor, education and commerce; a representative from the primary minority group; factory owners; lending agencies; educators; and educational administrators.

> "The case study helped participants understand many of the issues confronted by countries that wish to improve their human resource base."

Throughout the two-day session, participants acquired new insights into what workforce development is and is not. Prior to assuming their role-play positions as members of the Saringali consultative group, participants shared definitions of workforce development. These included: apprenticeships; filling a market niche; doing what you want and making it possible to do it; continuous improvement of skills; providing opportunities; learning as service; preparing for the public good; helping people to help themselves; job-market readiness; earning a living; saving lives; having an economy; nation building; fulfillment; all education; societal marketing; retraining; self-employment; and reproducing the social system.

Participants also identified challenges to workforce development, including how to provide educational opportunities for workforce development and the kind of education that should be provided and how to develop vocational and technical skills training. Several participants also observed that the focus of development on primary education marginalizes vocational training and although primary education is viewed as linked to employment, USAID resources have not been directly mobilized for workforce development.

The Saringal case study helped participants to understand many of the issues confronted by countries that wish to improve their human resource base. Participants discussed why Levi's decision had such a strong impact on Saringal, and identified Saringal's weaknesses and strengths. Weaknesses included 25-75 percent unemployment; a weak manufacturing sector; lack of international competitiveness in the textile sector; high school dropout rates; political fragility; an inability to repay debt; a large and militant minority population; potential terrorism; a lack of information about global markets; and a weak skill base. Strengths included: a hidden skill base; seven workforce development centers; lots of water; rice and cotton exports; manufacturing plants and equipment; a strong business class; a national university; basic air and sea ports; and effective structural reforms.

In their role-play as members of the Saringali consultative group, participants were led through a results-based planning process that located workforce development inside a vision of future growth in which all stakeholders held ownership. This process, participants learned, is part of a new "systems" approach to problem-solving rather than the "technical" program approach that has been traditionally employed concerning economic and workforce development. Participants identified systems as organic, adaptive, and continuous and programs as targeted, goal-oriented, pre-designed, and occurring one time. A "systems" approach to problem solving does not rely on hierarchical structures of command but rather invents new structures, involves all stakeholders, and increases levels of anxiety as part of creating disequilibrium in systems. This approach contrasts with "technical" problem solving, which relies on authoritarian and clear command structures, and assuages anxiety.

> "A 'systems' approach to problem solving does not rely on hierarchical structures of command but rather invents new structures, involves all stakeholders, and increases levels of anxiety as part of creating disequilibrium in systems."

This systems-based planning and problem-solving process involved multiple brainstorming sessions from which emerged key themes and issues. In a collaborative, funnel-like process that developed a sense of ownership and accountability among the various "stakeholders," members of the Saringali consultative group engaged in brainstorming sessions to respond to various questions posed by the facilitator. The facilitator then led them through a process of identifying, prioritizing, and discussing key themes that had emerged.

Participants began by identifying (in their consultative group role) the three things they were most proud of achieving for their country and the one failure that was most upsetting. Each was noted on a timeline that spanned from 1970 to 2016.

Failures included attempts in multiple sectors to secure credit (domestically and internationally) for new business ventures and others related to an inadequate educational system. Successes included the development of microenterprises for local women and providing jobs and healthcare.

Participants were then asked, "If in the year 2010 you had an entirely effective economy, what would be happening?" This rich and lively brainstorming exercise created a vision for future growth that included healthcare and education for all; a positive correlation between universal graduates and jobs; economic growth; integrating non-wage and informal sector work into the economy (and factored into the GNP); vocational training at job sites; reduced poverty rates; gender equity; economic growth; an increase in real wages; increased literacy; increased tourism and environmentally friendly products; a shift from microenterprise to small business; a better sense of nationhood; a shift from manufacturing to services; rewarding jobs; political stability; improved social services; minority people in leadership positions; decreased debt; decreased population growth rate; modernization and sector diversification; schools as centers of communities; and a more democratic political system. Emerging themes included social services and labor conditions; and an improved sociopolitical fabric, business environment and international reputation. They also included a continuously modernizing society and an improved government.

> "Consultative group members discussed what would happen if Saringal had entirely effective business and labor conditions and an entirely effective workforce."

Consultative members discussed what would happen if Saringal had entirely effective business and labor conditions. This included increased savings; demand for skills; full employment, higher productivity; increased external investment; more exports; access to credit; a more diverse, adaptable and trained workforce; and better employee protections. Themes emerging from this discussion included increased human capacity and a better workforce; linkages and integration between education and the economy; and economic growth.

Consultative group members also identified what would occur if Saringal had an entirely effective workforce. These included integration between sectors; full education; lots of planning; increased competition for jobs; growing demand and supply of skills; better working conditions/labor codes; fewer labor unions, labor-management cooperation; an efficient educational system; a growing middle class; a more dynamic, flexible and reciprocal relationship between schools, training institutions and the marketplace, increased tax revenues and innovation.

The themes that emerged from each of these brainstorming sessions included coordinated between supply and demand; coordination between education and employment and a responsive educational system; a balance between the government and the market; increased opportunities for sustained economic development; less crime; transparency and openness; new structures and/or regulations; and an improved policy environment. Each requires the development of relationships among key stakeholders.

Editor's note:

Many thanks to Mary Lugton for writing up the sessions on development theories and social capital and on sector investment programs; Lillu Tesfa for writing about the experiential learning adventure; and Phoebe for attending and writing up the sessions on workforce development.

—*John Engels*