



Réseau Ouest et Centre Africain de Recherche en Education
Educational Research Network for West And Central Africa

**Quality of basic education in The Gambia:
An annotated bibliography from 1992-2002**

ERNWACA - Gambia

with support from ADEA

ERNWACA Researchers :

Makarieh A. Njie
Professor Jonathan Mogbo
Mr. Musa Sowe
Mr. Lamin Ceesay
Mrs. Fatou Bin' Njie-Jallow
Mrs. Grace Bangali

*2003
Banjul, Gambia*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful to the ADEA for contracting out this assignment to ERNWACA national offices through our regional office and coordinator Kathryn Toure in Bamako, Mali, and for the support and encouragement they have all rendered during the exercise. The review gave the national offices the opportunity to investigate/research relevant works/studies that had been undertaken in our respective countries in the last ten years as regards the development and provision of quality basic education and to annotate them and synthesize findings for publication.

The various research activities for the project required the involvement of researchers and librarians from different organizations and we are most grateful to the individuals and the organizations for their support and assistance. The researchers were:

Mr. Makarieh A. Njie, ERNWACA National Coordinator

Professor Jonathan Mogbo, University of The Gambia

Mr. Musa Sowe, Gambia College

Mr. Lamin Ceesay, Gambia College

Mrs. Fatou Bin' Njie-Jallow, DoSE

Mrs. Grace Bangali, UNDP Librarian

We would also like to express our deep gratitude to our reviewers. In particular we are grateful to the reviewers, Mrs. Anne Therese Ndong-Jatta (The Honourable Secretary of State for Education), Abraham Joof of West Africa Examinations Council (WAEC) for providing relevant materials for the research work, Baboucar Bouy, Director of Planning at the Department of State for Education (DoSE) and Mr. Oladele Oyelakin, Lecturer, Faculty of Science & Agriculture, University of The Gambia, who also did the typing with our secretary, Ms. Batorr Ceesay.

Makarieh Njie

ERNWACA-National Coordinator

GAMBIA

FOREWARD

The Education Research Network for West and Central Africa (ERNWACA) was created in 1989 by African researchers with the support of the International Development Research Center (IDRC) and USAID. It seeks to promote African expertise so as to positively influence educational practices and policies and to stimulate dialogue among researchers, decision makers and the public on pressing education issues. ERNWACA is concerned with the production and dissemination of research findings conducted by institutions and researchers.

ERNWACA has collaborated with the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) to produce this annotated bibliography of research on the quality of basic education in West and Central Africa 1992-2002. National teams in 11 ERNWACA member countries – Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Togo – produced national bibliographies; Pai Obanya prepared a regional synthesis of findings, working electronically from Nigeria with ERNWACA. The work of collecting and reviewing documents was conducted during six weeks in March and April 2003. The timeframe limited the comprehensiveness of the undertaking.

The reviews seek to help bring African expertise to bear on African education issues, to promote a culture of research, and thus contribute to sustainable and qualitative change in education. It covers over 600 research reports, government reports, student theses, articles and papers written or published between 1992-2002. It therefore complements ERNWACA's earlier bibliography, *Overlooked and Undervalued* (Maclure/SARA), which reviews 1076 documents from 7 countries on the state of education research 1960-1991. The thematic organization of the current reviews follows the four main themes identified within a broad-based ADEA exercise on the quality of education in Sub-Saharan Africa:

- Pedagogical renewal and teacher development
- Decentralization and diversification of delivery systems
- Implementation of basic education reforms and innovations
- Relevance of Education: Adapting curricula and using African languages

We particularly thank the following ERNWACA members and supporters: the national team leaders, researchers, and assistants who conducted the reviews and the ERNWACA national coordinators who coached them; national institutions that helped to locate and provide the documents; Soumaila Diakite (ERNWACA's Regional Scientific Committee), Dominic Ageyman (Ghana), and Raoul Kone (Cote d'Ivoire) who reviewed and commented the ADEA terms of reference for the Challenge of Learning initiative; Gilbert Tsafak (Cameroon) and Francois-Joseph Azoh (Cote d'Ivoire) who attended the ADEA planning meeting for the COL initiative in December 2002 with the Regional Coordinator and Laouali Malam Mousa (Niger) who expressed his willingness to attend as well; Cheick Oumar Fomba (Mali) who attended a second COL planning meeting in Paris; Philippe Amevigbe (Togo), Naim Salami (Benin), Ernest Ilboudo (Burkina Faso), and Kourra Diallo (Mali) who helped develop a common methodology for the work; Maman Saley and Dayo Odukoya who ensured that Niger and Nigeria respectively participated for the first time in a transnational research project with ERNWACA; Pulane Lefoka of the Education Research Network for East and Southern Africa (ERNESA) with whom we exchanged about our respective approaches to the process; Jean-Michel Labattut and Gilles Forget of IDRC and Yolande Miller-Grandvaux, Joe Coblenz, and Renuka Bery of the Academy for Educational Development; Deborah Glassman of Save the Children; Mamadou N'doye, Hamidou Bakary, Charlotte Sedel, Joris Van Bommel, Adriaan Vespoor and all of our other colleagues at ADEA as well as Ramona Konzelmann at IIEP, Mariam Diakite, ERNWACA intern, and Yves Bennet. And Martial Dembele (University of Quebec at Montreal), Minister Ann Therese Ndong-Jatta (Gambia), and Minister Moustafa Sournag (Senegal) of ERNWACA's Board of Directors.

Kathryn TOURE
ERNWACA Regional Coordinator
May 2003
www.rocare.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

INTRODUCTION

Document reviews	Page
1. Teacher Training in The Gambia: Gambia College Review Report	7
2. Disabled Children in Mainstream Schools	8
3. Factors Affecting Enrolment and Retention in the Primary Schools in The Gambia	9
4. Study of Parent-Teacher Associations at Lower Basic Schools in The Gambia	10
5. Rural-Urban and Gender Analysis of the performance of Pupils at the First National Primary School Examinatio in The Gambia.....	11
6. Providing Students and Schools with Useful Feedback on Assessment Results	12
7. Situation of Children and Women in The Gambia	13
8. Process Facilitation Report. Decentralization of Education Services	14
9. Supervision Mission (World Bank and DoSE)	15
10. EFA 2000 Assessment Report	16
11. Using the Monitoring of Learning Achievement Study to Investigate Quality Factors in Private Schools	17
12. Monitoring of Learning Achievement in Gambian Lower Basic Schools	18
13. Local Government Act, 2002	19
14. Second IDA Education Sector Project in The Gambia	20
15. Improving the Quality of Basic Education	21
16. Technical and Vocational Education and Training	22
17. Survey of Action Aid's education programmes in The Gambia	23
18. Institutional Review (The Gambia College, School of Education).....	24
19. Two Case studies of funding and quality assurance policies in higher education – implications for The Gambia	25
20. Empowerment of women through education and training	26
21. Entrepreneurial skill development programmes in Commonwealth countries	27
22. State of the environment report	28
CONCLUSION	29
REFERENCES by author	31
Annex: THEMATIC SUMMARY of findings by four ADEA themes	32

ACRONYMS

AATG	Action Aid The Gambia
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
CRPPD	Curriculum Research and Professional Division of DoSE
DoLG	Department of State for Local Government
DoSE	Department of State for Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
ERNWACA	Education Research Network for West and Central Africa
GTTI	Gambia Technical Training Institute
HIV/AIDS	Human Immuno Deficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HTC	Higher Teachers Certificate
ICTS	Information Computer Technology System
IDA	International Development Agency
MDI	Management Development Institute
NSGA	Nova Scotia Gambia Association
PSLCE	Primary School Leaving Certificate of Education
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
PTC	Primary Teachers Certificate
RIFT	Remedial Initiative For Female Teachers
TIPE	Training and Information and Programme for the Environment
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
VDG	Village Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WAEC	West Africa Examinations Council
WID	Women in Development

INTRODUCTION

The worthwhileness immanent in generating, transmitting and distributing education values is the most sublime gift that has been bestowed on humankind. In its most unfettered and generic form, education is supreme. The premise on which this pronouncement is made need not degenerate into an incandescence. But this supreme entity, education, like any other good or service beleaguered by the environment is naturally consigned to the limitations of man. To that extent there are imperfections to this idealized quality education, only saved by the manner in which educational resources are produced, tendered, delivered, utilized, and optimised with an eye on maintaining this quality. **Unfortunately, present day education is assailed with an attempt to refine the existent machinery in pursuit of obsolete goals. Our education must be relevant, qualitative, innovative, be imbued with direction and must lend itself to experiential reforms based on the relevant environmental circumstances.**

Extrapolated to The Gambia experience and operating at the Basic Education level, to what extent have research inputs whether at the empirical or in documented surveys addressed the basic issues of alternative delivery, pedagogical renewal, implementation of reforms, relevance and decentralization, against the back-drop of the mission statement of the Gambia's National Policy of Education which seeks to provide :

“ A Responsive, Relevant and Quality Education for All Gambians.”

The Department of State for Education (DoSE) is resolved to provide access to quality education to develop a “computer literate and technologically competent populace with renewed emphasis on Science, Technology, Agriculture and the Arts in developing a productive and capable human resource base for the new millennium.”

To conform with the above injunction, this team of researchers conducted a study of twenty refreshingly readable reports and projects from The Gambia dealing with Basic Education issues. (More studies would have been included in this compendium if they had met the research team's standard of relevance to education.)

A casual overview of all papers reviewed might erroneously advert one's mind to the hasty and misleading conclusion that this array of reviews is a miscellaneous assemblage of unrelated themes in education and its correlates. However, a closer analysis allows one to note that seemingly disparate presentations have been packaged into a form of meaningful totality. For instance, almost all the reviews have identified the girl child not only as an independent and indispensable variable in empirical research works, but also as sensitively formidable in opinion papers presented. Almost all the reviews have discerned the relevance of papers presented to Basic Education and to pedagogical renewal and teacher education development. Only a paucity of the papers, all of them government driven have some bearing on decentralization. Only one paper dealt with the ominous HIV/AIDS. Papers that highlighted educational reforms were a little less than half of all the papers presented. Only two of the papers endorsed the limitations of their studies and in fact both endorsements came from one source. The culture of empirical research work is in a fledge and even then, only three of the studies were inferential in their statistical analysis.

Generally there appears to be a dearth of research works on Basic Education and it would appear that many of the structured works have always been initiated by DoSE, international bodies or NGOs. Only in some cases do individuals, whose names reoccur every so often with unwavering tenacity, come to grips with the realities and trends of the day in the area of basic education. Existing capacities in tertiary institutions especially those institutions that are inclined fully to the nuances of Basic Education either directly or tangentially should be tapped for better relevance.

It is hoped that this review will help to muster a new vista of cooperation – deep penetrating and continuous between ERNWACA, The Gambia and the parent body. The research team is grateful to ERNWACA for the opportunity it was offered to undertake this exercise.

1. N'jie, Makaireh; Bittaye, Abdoulie; Benett, Yves; Teacher Training in The Gambia; Gambia College Review Report. Study for Department of State for Education and UNICEF. ERNWACA, Banjul, Gambia, 2002, 35p.

The study sought, through a peer review process, a comprehensive insight into the Gambia College teacher training programme with a view to redirecting the policy of the College to better educational relevance and quality using a three-phase approach, in the following sequence: dialoguing, activity-oriented approach (interviews and visits) and face-to-face verbal conveyance of the team's impressions to the college authorities. The findings, among others, highlighted a considerable increase in the percentage of students' intake at both Primary Teachers' Certificate (PTC) and Higher Teachers' Certificate (HTC) programmes, an increase that was palpable with female students with a documented increase of 101% and 78% respectively to show for it, in an otherwise male-dominated environment. In her quest to modernise ways, cope with the ever-increasing stranglehold on an ever-growing student population and adapt to the throttled-down windpipe pressures from the stakeholders and the community in its entirety, the college had managed as best as it could to demonstrate an above-the-board level in areas of distance learning. She had also managed to maintain equitable ambivalence in a work-learn diarchy offered to student workers. There was evidence to show for it, even if in a smattering form, in the use of newer technologies including the internet, support and encouragement provided to mature students and efforts to build capacity and develop staff welfare. This avidity seemed threatened by the institution's half-hearted approach to research, lukewarm approach to periodic peer review exercises, poor funding and a lacklustre quality assurance system.

2. UNICEF, Disabled children in mainstream schools. Study for the Government of The Gambia, 2000, 25p.

In this study, a purposive stratified random sampling technique involving 20% of all mainstream schools nationwide was utilised in order to seek information on types of disabilities that existed in such mainstream schools. The study also looked at coping and normalization strategies needed to combat disabilities. An attempt was made to forage an in-road into configuring the capacity needed to meet the challenges of disabled children using benchmark standards such as registration, retention, life-long and cognitive skills as indicators. The obviously descriptive survey design involved 717 sampled children. The pertinent data were obtained and collected by headmaster-assisted trained experts by the use of two instruments: 1/ Standardised questionnaire: This guided them to seek and obtain information on whether the child was handicapped; 2/ Standardised test administration: In the event of (1) being present, to ascertain the extent of disability. The following major observations were highlighted. There was a total lack of specialised facilities and services including teachers; about 3 in 5 of the schools had no criteria for admitting disabled children; paradoxically 4 in 10 had as policy to deny admission to completely blind and deaf pupils. Academic performance and peer group intra-communications skills between normal and disabled children were rated highly even though at the other negative level of discourse 1 in 10 class repeat ratio was higher than the current 1 in 25 national education policy target. There was worrying and palpable evidence to believe that parents showed little or no interest in their disabled children, especially in female disabled children. Four in 10 of teachers of disabled children could not operate technical equipment. Dropout rate for the past five years for disabled children was not different from that of their normal counterparts within the same period under survey. A current effort to integrate disabled children into the mainstream schools in spite of a lack of capacity to do so achieved a 70% success. Government should encourage NGOs to support disabled children's special education needs and to embark on intersectorial collaborations for the same purpose. Government should also reach out to Peace Corps to provide affordable help on special education and to establish and activate youth clubs for similar support. In one word: build capacity capable of diversification (incorporating also the basic needs of disabled girl children), all in a bid to fashion basic education that adapts to the aptitude and abilities of disabled children in mainstream schools.

3. ERNWACA-Gambia, Factors Affecting Enrolment and Retention in the Primary Schools in The Gambia. Study for the National Chapter, ERNWACA, Banjul, The Gambia, 1997, 117p.

The researchers obtained a sample of 750 respondents using multi-staged stratified random sampling techniques. They also employed documented literature materials, informal interviews and structured questionnaire as instruments for collecting pertinent data from stakeholders; specifically head teachers, teachers, parents and pupils. The instruments were face-and-content-validated while the items were dichotomised into enrolment and retention compartments. The study was beset with the inadvertent need to derail from the original proposal which would have incorporated achievement and diagnostic tests into the matrix. This diversion was influenced by the small-size of the study, low funding and time constraints. Problems notwithstanding, the study teased out factors such as the traditional closed system imperatives (religion and early marriage of the girl child) as militating against normal enrolment. Other factors included the far-away-from-home school location and high libidal tendencies of the male teachers. Retention had been eroded by general lack of discipline, uninspiring academic performances of pupils, absence of a coherent educational policy at the national level, paucity of conducive learning spaces, neglect in the use of middle schools as a necessary and expected leverage to primary schools. Regarding recommendations, more female teachers should be employed as a countervailing measure to combat immoral tendencies and sensitisation programmes on the need to enrol more girls should be mounted. A policy in education should be enacted compelling parents and guardians to enrol and retain primary school pupils. English should be introduced in Madrassah schools while more Koranic teachers should be deployed to rural areas. Therefore, enrolment and retention are influenced by quality especially in the realm of ethical values, openness, good and enduring logistics and infrastructure, gender sensitivity, tolerance and above all an all-encompassing, workable and sustainable national policy on education.

4. N’jie, Makaireh; Loum, Abdoulie, Benet, Yves; Study of Parent-Teacher Associations at Lower Basic Schools in The Gambia. Study for Department of State for Education and ACTION AID. ERNWACA, Banjul, Gambia, 2002, 75p.

The study, a survey design, sought to highlight the tripartite relationship existing among Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), school management and school performance in Lower Basic Schools, employing structured questionnaires, observational techniques and interview guides as instruments for collecting relevant data from head teachers, teachers, parents and Grade 6 pupils, as well as from a smattering of DoSE and DoLG respondents. Selection of the 18 schools for the study was achieved by stratifying the population of the schools into a/ according to education region and b/ according to the level of pupils’ academic achievement as indicated by the estimate of the Average Examination Score for each school in the Primary School Level, School PSLS Examination. The study was limited by the small size of the sample which in turn was influenced by the thin stretch of financial and human resources over the six education zones. There was the added constraint of time and more importantly of the rigorous and not-too-familiar methodology adopted. The pilot survey to establish the validity of the instruments was informative as it prompted a lot of amendment. The tables which were eventually developed addressed: 1/ the distribution of sampled schools according to region, rank order, socio-economic status and ACTION AID intervention and 2/ the distribution of sampled school according to achievement rate and rank order. The findings showed that there was a male-dominated PTA executive command, about 13 total members on the average, predominantly illiterate or semi-illiterate with a three-year mandate to serve, hardly aware of their functions and sometimes involved in activities tangential to those that could lead to good school performance indicators but at other times embarking on salutary self-help projects since they were known to generate and own their funds through levies, donations and dues. Their activities were shorn of legal commitments. Regional achievements rates had improved in all regions, an enhancement that was further boosted by the lowering of achievement rates between regions. ACTION AID strategy had positively influenced school performance. As a recommendation, DoSE should, in considering the factor of illiteracy in an overbearing male-dominated PTA within a potentially innovative system, encourage a viable decentralised PTA-school partnership and should appoint a committee to advise it.

5. Banjul Unit of the Research Division, Rural-Urban and gender analysis of the performance of pupils at the first national primary school examination in The Gambia. Study for the West African Examinations Council, Banjul, The Gambia. Banjul Unit of the Research Division, 1990, 11p.

The influence of gender and geographic location on performance in the primary school leaving certificate examination was investigated by the researcher who answered two researcher questions and tested two research hypothesis in an ex-post facto design. A sample of 3,400 pupils was selected from all six education zones and stratified as follows: 1745 urban-based pupils and 1659 rural-based counterparts. Similarly the stratification produced 1427 girls and 1977 boys. The data generated by the aggregate of scores for each candidate in the 7 components of the examination leading to a computed mean score, were analysed using a t-test at no stated level of significance. Findings showed significant difference in the performance of boys over girls and that the performance of urban-based pupils was significantly better than that of their rural counterparts. Far-reaching recommendations touching on teacher development, innovation and relevance were made among which were a request for the improvement of the all-round neglected status of rural schools, the need to increase the motivation index of teachers who had found themselves in such schools. Other recommendations included the training and retraining of rural-based teachers complementing this call with a much more intensified supervisory and monitoring strategy. Most importantly a massive collaborative campaign should be mounted by various women organisations, sensitising the community at large on the need to educate the girl child especially in Rural areas. Parents to boys in rural areas must be told of the advantages derivable from engaging in take-home assignments as an activity preferred to idling away after classes.

6. Asomaming, C; Joof, Abraham; Providing students and schools with useful feedback on assessment results: WAEC experience. Study for International Association for Educational Assessment (IAEA), 1992, 16p.

This documented research approach was in keeping with its objectives of availing students and schools with useful feedback on assessment results for Lower Basic Schools, Upper Basic Schools and senior secondary schools and by so doing improve the quality of education. The researchers had argued that if the Chief Examiner's report was emphasised, the feedback derived would be of little use because of its non-statistical and subjective approach. The content of his work was always peripheral, dwelling on the strengths and weaknesses of students, on whether the standard of the examination was good enough to be maintained over time and finally on suggestions for improvement. The obvious limitation of this approach, according to the researchers, was that this opinion report failed to address very valid issues on quality such as the extent to which performance had met the set-out educational and national objectives and the extent to which the instrument had become effective in covering the scope of the curriculum. The more valid alternative was to turn to analysis and evaluation based on statistics. To proceed, the pertinent data were collected on all students who sat for exams of the West Africa Examinations Council (WAEC) between 1999 and 2001. The data were further stratified into gender, subject and programme. The data were analysed using percentage mean score. Among the major results were the following findings: Boys performed better than girls in 4 of the 5 technical programmes. Girls performed better than boys in technical drawing. Girls performed better than boys in English language, literature in English, chemistry and physics. Girls performed better than boys in visual art. There was an overall upward trend (C₆ and better) in mathematics while the reverse was the case in English language. Technical drawing, applied electricity, business management, commerce, physics, biology, chemistry and French showed an overall upward trend. Thus, subjecting performance to such statistical rigour should offer empirical evidence of the defects of the system and provide basis for monitoring and taking remedial measures. Such remedial measures had manifested positively with resounding success in Kushea and Bundung. Test results by their unmitigated relevance to education help in the maintenance and attainment of quality education.

7. Government of The Gambia, Situation of children and women in The Gambia. Study for the Government of The Gambia commissioned by UNICEF, Banjul, The Gambia, 2001, 171p.

This study focused not only on manifestations of problems faced by women and children but provided step-wise in-depth analysis of the immediate causes, socio-cultural imperatives and structural dimensions of these problems and thus serves as a foundation from which UNICEF and Government could revise and forge a new vista of cooperation. The convention on the right of the child and the convention on the elimination of all discrimination against women provided the framework to discuss basic social needs and status within varying local needs. This in turn provided laws, norms and practices and led to an analysis of their impact on the subjects' ability to enjoy universal human rights. In spite of the constraints of time and space the researchers embarked on a life-cycle approach which identified and analysed problems in terms of rights guaranteed under human rights principles and adopted a methodology allowing for intersectorial issues affecting the enjoyment of rights of children and women. For the 0-4 age bracket there was a decrease in child mortality rates with threats of malaria and respiratory tract infections as debilitating variables. Malnutrition with its attendant futuristic effect was copious. About 35% of infants within 3 months age range benefited from breastfeeding. Only 15% of the 3-5 age range attended some form of schooling. Disability surveys revealed that for boys it was 8.6/1000 and for girls 6.9/1000 while child labour for age range 5-14 was 27% with boys confined to animal husbandry and girls to domestic chores. Female genital mutilation had become controversial. Furtherance of education for the 9-12 age range was a problem. Girls in the 13-17 age range were traditionally married or victims of HIV or unwanted pregnancy. HIV was prevalent also for 15-24 while there was maternal mortality for girls below 20. The 18-49 women were beleaguered by inequality in social participation, over burdensomeness in agricultural work, and inaccessibility to formal employment and political participation, while they were also disadvantaged in marital arrangements and disputations. Other disadvantages included obstetrical and gynaecological problems, maternal mortality, malnutrition and prolific fecundity occasioned by the frown on use of contraceptives, especially from Moslem scholars. Recommendations touched on ways and means of arresting the HIV/AIDS pandemic, setting up of children and womens' rights commissions, ability to take care of the disabled, extremely poor and refugee children, enactment of a law to legislate against traditional initiation and genital operations. Policy should be enunciated to eliminate sexual harassment and discourage teenage pregnancies within schools, as well as pass into law a legislation on defilement.

8. Bouy, Baboucarr; Process facilitation report. Decentralization of education services. Study for DoSE, Government of The Gambia, 2002, 7p.

The report outlined the methodology and strategies used in sensitising personnel within the sector and stakeholders outside it to whom responsibility for educational provision would be handed over eventually. Thus the process of decentralisation would furthermore through sensitisation sustain the life of the sector beyond the life span of the facilitation contract. The methodology used was to use existing structures to ensure mainstream of issues of decentralization by providing each member of the Coordinating Committee meeting with a copy of the local Government Act, LGA for acquainting themselves with the definition of school, power to establish school, educational services, local education committees, transfer of existing school and education by-law. The principal findings were underlined by a convergence of views between personnel from the education sector and stakeholders outside the sector on the state of preparedness of DoSE for decentralization. They were as follows: There was preparedness both ways to transfer or receive the delivery of educational services, a wish that had already been amplified and expressed by the existence of a cordial working relationship between the council and regional educational officers. The present budget layout which reflected the independence of LGA seemed to lean on decentralization of educational services. There were problems. The Councils generally did not have education officers to advise them on educational matters. There was insufficient capacity in human resources and infrastructural facilities at regional offices and area/municipal councils to perform certain responsibilities. Furthermore it was difficult to fashion out how educational officer's roles could be redefined in order to accommodate his anticipated new functions into the council's structure. It was suggested that capacity of the Regional Education offices be built either in the short, medium or long term. Further realignment of DoSE's budget would be needed to effect the new divisions. LGAs would in collaboration with the Regional Education offices facilitate the internalisation of the guidelines for the opening of schools and adapt such ventures to their local needs.

9. Tembon, Mercy; Joof, Badara; Supervision mission. World Bank and DoSE study. Republic of The Gambia, 2001, 22p.

A World Bank mission in conjunction with directors and staff of DoSE responsible for the implementation of the respective project components undertook field visits to regional officers and schools to discuss issues related to programme implementation and progress made towards achieving programme objectives. The methodology was based on discussions held with different people they met, documents referred to, consultations and observations from field visits. Generally there were achievements of objectives and outcomes in areas of basic education expansion programme through the efficient use of existing physical and human resources. Linkages between Madrassa and formal basic education have been established as planned while syllabuses in the two systems had been synchronised. The classroom construction programme continued to be slow. There was improvement of girls' education through an increase in the gross enrolment ratio for girls and the development of a draft policy to curb sexual harassment. Girls' education scholarships which had been in force for two years was, at the time of the study, being evaluated. Quality and relevance to education had improved through curriculum improvement. Progress had also been made in areas of instructional materials through the reprinting and distribution of textbooks in schools. Revision of assessment and examination for the basic cycle was succeeding and PSLCE had been phased out in 4 regions. Monitoring and evaluation systems were in place though partially. Implementation of activities under Quality of Early Child Development and care was on course and financial commitment by UNICEF and some support from UNESCO had not wavered. Access to and quality of secondary education had improved through an increase in the number of secondary schools and through the implementation of the computer literacy programme for grades 10 – 12 students. Vocational and technical policy had been formulated and widely discussed by stakeholders and the policy document prepared and submitted to cabinet for approval. Labour market training needs analysis and a lot more had not been carried out because implementation was contingent on approval of TVET policy. There was however some progress made on the labour market information system. Access to university education had increased although very little progress was made in the procurement of a library and textbooks. Effort was still being made to recruit a senior faculty member. Activities to restructure, refurbish and operationalise DoSE had been completed. There was need to focus more on the efficiency of the project financial management. The following actions were agreed upon: a careful assessment of textbook rental system vis-à-vis a proposal of alternative options including issuance of free books; evaluation of girls' scholarship scheme, plan for completion of project activities under TVET component among others.

10. Technical Team, Directorate planning, policy analysis. Research and budget, Department of State for Education; EFA 2000 Assessment Report. Property of the Republic of The Gambia, 1999, 61p.

Mandate was given to the national team on Education For All (EFA) to establish a data base on early childhood development (ECD) to help inform policy about its intensity and coverage and to identify possible government interventions. This had led to the evolution of a demand-driven policy framework for the management of ECD programmes. Data were collected covering primary education, Early Childhood Education, Adult Literacy, Essential Skills Training and Education for better Living, and Primary School Leaving Certificate from the following sources: Annual Education Statistics, a survey covering all ECD centres, Census Data base of Central Statistics department, from data collection exercise and from WAEC achievement scores respectively. Progress towards goals and targets indicated that the number of new entrants to grade 1 had been rising and that significant strides were made in increased enrolment of girls over the period 1991/92 – 1998/99, showing a faster growth rate than the apparent male intake rate. A greater number of children in rural areas entered grade 1 than was the case in urban areas though this could be attributed to the larger percentage of pupils in the rural areas. Net intake rate for females had been trailing that of males even though the percentage increase for female was greater than that for males. Gross enrolment ratio had shown a steady increase for both sexes though that of girls trailed that of boys. Enrolment of rich children was higher than that of the poor. The higher the level of Education the greater the rich-poor difference in enrolment. The proportionate share of per capita subsidy increasingly accrued more to the rich at higher levels. Expenditure on primary education as a proportion of total expenditure on Education averaged 46.6% between 1990 and 1996. The number of teachers in The Gambia between 1991/92 and 1998/99 had been on the increase for male and female teachers with the number of male teachers doubling that of female teachers. The number of certified teachers increased steadily between 1991/92 and 1998/99 with a low rate of attrition. Improvement made in teacher pupil ratio had been limited and manifested fluctuations. There was high repetition rate though on the average it had been falling steadily. It fluctuated for both sexes within the same period. Female and male students spent on the average 8.2 years and 8.0 years respectively to graduate. This also showed that 23.6 percent of the resources had been wasted annually. Boys performed better than girls in all subjects except science and English while the reverse was the case for 1994/95, 1996/97 and 1997/98. Literacy rates for males declined from 64.3% in 1991 to 54.8% in 1998 and for females it appreciated from 33.9% in 1991 37.1% in 1998 though with erratic fluctuations in between. Region 1 had the highest literacy rate and 6 the lowest and for both sexes in the region, the same trend was maintained. Gender parity index showed that the participation of women in literacy had been far lower that that of men. To achieve a set of broad objectives for the remainder of the policy period, the following four key strategies were envisaged: capacity building, restructuring the existing 6 – 3 – 3 – 4 system, improved management and maximizing resources.

11. Njie, Fatou; Jata, Nuha; Boye, Baboucarr; Gaye, Jawara; Jallow, Muhammed; Using the monitoring of learning achievement (MLA) study to investigate quality factors in private schools. Study for UNICEF-Gambia, Banjul, Gambia, 2003

This a follow-up study of a similar and earlier one initiated and conducted by DoSE in 1996 for four years on the performance of pupils in Mission, Private and Government schools, using the results of the aforementioned earlier study as a basis for reanalysing the MLA data and including private schools in a survey that the pioneer researchers had abnegated. In this present survey design the researchers sought answers to questions based on the extent to which capacity, quality of delivery, mode of assessment, economic status, and cost implications to delivery systems had influenced achievement. Through interviews administered to relevant stakeholders, the researchers designed a survey study regarding the school's conduct on their competence-based level of managerial ability. A performance ability test from the Gambia National Assessment Test documented pupils' level of academic achievement. The findings have not yet fledged but hopefully would enhance quality, relevance and access to education.

12. Jata, Nuha; Njie, Fatou; Joof, Hassan; Monitoring of learning achievement (MLA) in Gambian Lower Basic Schools. Study for Department of State for Education and UNICEF, Banjul, The Gambia, 2000, 17p.

As the Primary School Leaving Certificate bowed out to the MLA which had emerged as an affordable and more scientific instrument to assess children's achievement and factors that influence learning, educational practitioners welcomed the MLA as a precursor to a well-informed, enduring and articulated policy on primary education. In order to ensure effective monitoring of learning achievement in Gambian Lower Basic Schools, a survey research study was initiated involving 2394 pupils, 86 grade 4 teachers and 2401 parents, randomly selected by stratified sampling techniques and categorised into school type and location. Structured questionnaires were administered to the respondents while an achievement test whose standardisation was not indicated in the study was administered to the pupils, both in a bid to determine the extent of performance of the pupils and the factors that had influenced such performance while the mean mastery level was not attained by a majority of the pupils. Private schools performed better than the mission schools with an attainment well above the mastery level. Government schools with a mean performance of 36% brought up the rear. Urban schools performed better than their rural counterparts while boys performed better than girls. Major findings included improved capacity, enhanced incentives, effective supervision and monitoring especially in the rural areas, motivation of rural-based teachers, ameliorating the conduciveness of the teaching-learning environment, adoption of child-centred learning and sensitisation on the marginalisation of the girl child through campaigns and other forms of encouragement to better her lot.

13. Government of The Republic of The Gambia, Local Government Act 2002. Property of the Republic of The Gambia, 2002, 99p.

The Local Government Act 2002 established a framework capable of regulating a decentralized system of Government and capable of providing functions, powers and duties to local authorities. The Local government areas and councils in the exercise of Local government functions provide, through their institution, such as Education, Agriculture, Environment health and others, services for development. In specific terms, if the roles of Educational services are spelt out under this general framework, then the Council for the Area which is the sole authority within the local Government Area shall not only establish schools in accordance with the provision of section 61 but shall, in addition, ensure that the schools operate within the policy guidelines. Furthermore, this sole authority shall manage and monitor the establishment and operations of other categories of schools in accordance with National Policy Guidelines. Income generating and skills enhancing projects shall be encouraged. So will a prescribed miscellany of functions at the Secretary of State's pleasure be provided. These functions shall be performed by a Local Education committee representing a diverse outfit of professionals in educational matters who provide the expertise. Female groups and a chairperson are to be appointed by council. In the event of the secretary of state directing that any government school within a Local Government Area be transferred to and be under the jurisdiction of the Council, a corresponding provision concomitant with that order shall be made to accommodate the efficient transition of the school, land and buildings with employment, service and pension rights of teachers inclusive. Subject to the Secretary of State's prescription, council can make laws on fees, buildings and their annexures, including maintenance; on equipment and furnishings and on award of scholarship.

14. Gunter, Duster; Karel, Bos; Second IDA Education Sector Project in The Gambia. UNESCO Project Progress Report, Republic of The Gambia, Ministry of Education Projects Implementation, 1994

The project indicated that in spite of the double shift and multi-grade teaching systems, rapid population growth and rapid urbanization brought about an overuse of primary school facilities. A salutary, well received primary school enrolment ratio from 57% in 1996/97 to 80% by the year 2003 underscored the urgency of a corresponding need to maintain/construct new school buildings and to procure furniture. From January 1991 to September 1993, the second IDA Education Sector Project through the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) responsible for the overall management, administration and coordination of projects as well as for the procurement of all goods and services including the disbursement of funds and maintenance of project accounts, was completed. The additional mandate of initiating a liaison role with donor representations and ensuring the timely flow of resources facilitated the completion of the project. During the same period under review, 37 classroom blocks fully furnished, were constructed in 20 primary schools, while, thanks to the influence of the UNESCO Project Progress Report, 120 new classrooms were completed in each of the three phases mapped out, (second, third and fourth), 93 classrooms for the fifth phase, besides the rehabilitation of 200 classrooms. In the area of curriculum development, the project financed the development of a new teaching curriculum with an integrated fervour for grades 5 to 9 while the Arabic translation of the Islamic Studies Syllabus was implemented. In-service training programmes ostensibly fashioned to upgrade the professional skills of teachers through INSET rolled out 235 and later 175 teachers in 1992 and in 1993, 550 teachers. Continuous Assessment technique was introduced at the Upper Basic schools but remained at the formative stage at the primary level. The construction of Gambia Technical Training Institute and the Banjul Skills training centre were undertaken and completed in 1994 as a way forward to providing quality technical education. More capacity was provided to plan for quality through the recruitment of an additional planner, to assist the planning unit, while after 1993, the activity base in the construction of classrooms and ancillaries was elasticised to accommodate a growing population of students.

15. King, Kenneth; Jashir; Sarjil, Singh; Improving the Quality of Basic Education. Paper Commissioned for the eleventh Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers, Barbados, 1990

In view of the fact that this meeting had direct relevance to The Gambia which was also represented at the meeting and considering the theme, to wit, “Improving the Quality of Basic Education,” it became necessary to incorporate the report of this conference into this document. In recognition of the centrality of teachers, the conference focused on finding better ways of providing more effective teacher training programmes including the management and support for such programmes. In consideration of the quantity and quality of basic education, accentuated in the formal instructional process, the provision of basic education to drop-outs and to those denied access due to no fault of theirs including adults, the conference recognized that for quality basic education the emphasis in investment should be in 1/ training of teachers, 2/ development of teaching and learning materials including texts, 3/ nature and quality of school buildings and equipment, 4/ examination reforms and 5/ use of alternative education technology such as distance learning. Furthermore, the conference emphasized that enhanced quality of basic education rested on sound research and field experience and finally that individual countries were required to make the decision about what changes ought to be made in basic education and how such changes ought to be implemented.

16. Republic of The Gambia, Department of State for Education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). The Policy. Study for the Government of the Republic of The Gambia, 2001, 19p.

Based on the strategic aims of providing a legislative framework to support the implementation and sustainability of TVET policy and system and based on the further need to strengthen the institutional capacity in all ramifications of the TVET system the Government of the Republic of The Gambia initiated a study that would impact on the technical, interpersonal and entrepreneurial needs of all sectors of the economy in The Gambia for the purpose of responding adequately to local labour market requirements within a larger ambit of globalisation and regionalisation and in addition provide opportunities for lifelong learning. Through field visits, documentary evidence, interviews, meetings and anecdotal sum-ups, the following challenges among others were encountered. TVET had not doubled as a cognitive skill capable also of providing hands-on skills for lifelong education. Basic Education was a forerunner and not a substitute for TVET. TVET had not been allowed to claim credit for prior learning. Finance had been inclement to a coherent institutional TVET capacity. Exit of early school leavers had been optimised. Technical and vocational education and the training aspects, especially in the rural area, had remained uncoordinated. There was no established link between TVET and employers while the system of TVET had suffered from under investment. The lack of a national grid limited the potential to meet the real needs of TVET. There was lack of coordination of international donor support at government level. TVET lacked managerial capacity and the range of subjects in most centres had not been extended to what TVET prescribed. There was no structure on the ground to assess summative competency of TVET trainees. Public awareness campaigns supportive of the TVET system had not been mounted. The exploitative tendencies on apprentices had not caught the public eye which should regulate the situation through ensuring concordance with international charters on human rights. Recommendations were made along the following lines: A legislative framework supportive of the implementation and sustainability of TVET policy and systems should become operational. A National Training Authority (NAT) with a functional mandate of advising, maintaining quality standards and coordinating disparate technical and vocational centres providing should be established. There should, finally, be a good financial arrangement.

17. Bennett, Yves; A survey of Action Aid's education programmes in The Gambia. Study for ACTION AID, The Gambia, 1999, 28p.

ACTION AID, The Gambia (AATG) conducted a survey with the primary aim of investigating how effective the strategies they had mounted in the education sector had been in three of its four development areas. Data were collected by a combination of the instruments: Questionnaire items to programme managers and the literacy specialists in the development area; semi-structured interviews of key informants at ACTION AID, The Gambia. Centres in three regions, on-site small group meetings with adult learners in identified villages on an arrangement that incorporated variability in terms of gender, age and occupational background at the formal levels of 1/ small group meetings with two adult learners and 2/ small group meetings of local people "untainted" by any of the educational programmes. At the informal level the interviews were with the programme manager, the literacy specialist, a facilitator and a local community leader. Documents exploited were from the central Government's plan at the macro-level and relevant reports and reviews. Time constraints limited the study to expressed personal accounts and views. Other limitations, a common difficulty in studies of programme's effectiveness were consigned to interactive effects of other experiences, non utilization of a quantitative approach and the impact of the programmes in comparative terms. The findings showed, that going by the Tendaba Declaration, AATG had contributed effectively to education. There was a wide range of difficulties on ACCESS, auditing of Committee's accounts/resources for the REFLECT programme, monitoring of programme, proportion of drop outs on the adult literacy programme and collaborative research with other bodies.

Major recommendations included the suggestion that each Village Development Group (VDG) should set up committees on children's education, adult and continuing education, while AATG in conjunction with VDG review AATG policies on continuing education, skills training and staff development, reappraise AATG's provision of Adult Literacy programmes at its quality assurance system, reduce AATGs operational cost for its education programmes and review its strategic policy for the management of its education programme.

18. The Gambia College Review, School of Education, Institutional Review. Study submitted to the external review team, School of Education, The Gambia, 2002, 97p.

Gambia College provides courses of learning leading to the award of certificates, diplomas and other academic awards in Agriculture, Health, Education, and in such other areas that may be approved under The Gambia College Act of 1984. The mission is geared to addressing human resources development needs of The Gambia and calls for the pursuit of teaching, learning and research for professional and academic orientation in order to contribute effectively to socio-economic development and raise education to meet critical needs. Constraints abound in physical structure. Academic staff training, accommodation, office space, finance, electronic databases, equipment and materials, research units, staff quarters and sports facilities are in short supply. There is an administrative set up manned by Principal, his vice, a registrar and his deputy. The courses provided award diplomas and certificates, to wit, PTC, HTC, nursing and midwifery, and public health. There is an academic board that oversees educational affairs, and acts as a quality control and quality assurance mechanism. It is this academic board that regulates the academic matters including the RIFT programme which the school of Education runs. This project is informed by the 1988 – 2003 Education policy review intended to increase female enrolment in the PTC and HTC. The paucity of female students is informed by the reluctance of parents to send their daughters to schools manned by male teachers, thus RIFT, a remedial initiative for female teachers aims at developing appropriate skills in numeracy and literacy, and to apply science to everyday life or competency in social science. RIFT will also enable trainees to become self-confident and to acquire personal autonomy. The three components of RIFT which are diagnostic test, vacation course and term time tutorial serve to remedy weaknesses identified by test in English, mathematics, science, and environment; serve to focus on any of such deficient subjects as enumerated above, with guidance and counselling facilities provided to facilitate the remedial action; and serve as provision designed to attend special tutorial session on Friday evenings as well as afford a forum for the revision and review of difficult concepts identified by the individual. Achievement forms are provided to determine individual progress and to evaluate development. Thus, a project designed for high school and secondary school female students who have attempted the College entrance examination but cannot meet with minimum requirement, has after evaluation, maintained a quantum leap from the initial 10% admission, soared to 50% with a ten percent incremental leap every year; thanks to donor agencies, World Bank, and UNICEF. RIFT has now been extended to HTC in 1997 with a one off funding from UNESCO. The progress made in the improved admission of female students has a rippling effect. Confidence has been restored to parents who now know that with the increased presence of female teachers, their daughters are safe. More than this, students can now have their female role models.

19. Njie, Makaireh; Two Case studies of funding and quality assurance policies in higher education – implications for The Gambia. 1999, 105p.

The spirit and content of this review is not preferentially tipped for tertiary education. It looks beyond it and intends to establish penetrating interdependent links between this study and the provisions for basic education. This is not immediately discernible unless one silhouettes tertiary education and what it stands for against a back-drop of the national education policy and the education system. The Gambia, in striving to provide educational opportunities for all its citizens, must also ensure that such provision is closely related to the actual life and working circumstances of Gambians, be it primary, secondary or tertiary and that at whatever level, the objectives of the policy must be in harmony with the overall national developmental aims. Furthermore, the education system must not only instil national self-reliance, good citizenship, dignity of labour and social responsibility, it must, through its policy, be implemented in a sustainable, adaptable and realistic manner, and thus allow its programmes and activities to be decentralized and properly coordinated to ensure effective dialogue and community participation in action and choices. Thus, there is a commonality approach at all levels. Derivable from these general guiding principles are the following objectives expected from the learner, irrespective of the level of the educational entry point he finds himself: promotion of a broad education necessary for the development of his full potential; development of physical and mental skills, for contribution to national building economically, socially and culturally in a sustainable way. Others include acquisition of vocational skills to earn a living in a self-reliant manner, to develop moral, religious and ethical values, to develop creativity and a healthy mind, and to be aware of democracy and human rights and how these can be fostered responsibly. Finally, the individual should develop an understanding for science and technology, develop an appreciation of Gambian culture and heritage and of others, and an understanding of a healthy body and a healthy environment.

The argument is that there is no way the tertiary base can be firm without access to basic education, a reduction in gender disparity in enrolment, retention and performance, a reduction in entry age, a development of a broad education base and a radical improvement in the quality of learning. This one-way-directional approach of “basic-tertiary” education can be attained by the training of unqualified teachers; by increasing the expenditure on learning materials, monitoring learning achievements in basic education and developing appropriate strategies for sustained development in learning. The system might also consider developing a dynamic interaction between the formal, non-formal and madrasa systems, increase access and promote mass literacy campaigns. All these strategies can be sustained by a restructuring of the school system, a maximisation of resources, training and capacity for education personnel and improving the management of the education sectors. Finally if a vertical relationship is established between the basic education sector and the tertiary education sector, via the secondary sector in an upward flow, the downward quality feedback will improve the dividends of education in a cyclic fashion.

20. Faye, F.L.; Empowerment of women through education and training. Paper presented at the management workshop held for managers of community-based organisations, Pakalinding, The Gambia, 2000, 8p.

Women could participate in national development by raising their level of consciousness through education and training. In this regard, various world conferences were held between 1985 and 1995; in Kenya, Thailand, Egypt and China. This produced a declaration and action plan for action, reaffirming women's rights as human rights and recommending the life cycle approach as function of gender based equality and that peace was a beacon of female advancement. Gambia responded to this clarion call by initiating a fundamental landmark which in its Women in Development (WID) project recognised the education of girls and women and the Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP). The tripartite action plan that subsisted was 1/ importance of women's education and training, 2/ fostering of community action to increase the proportion of girls enrolled in schools and 3/ retention of girls and reduction of drop-out rates. In addition, the WID project recognised five major areas of activity: skills development and training; information, education and commitment; agriculture complemented by appropriate technology; safe motherhood and family planning and the need to strengthen the capacity of the women's bureau. As an ancillary support, women were provided with improved productive skills and credit facilities. The first phase evaluation carried out in 1999 showed success and provided the impetus for the approval that took off during the second phase tenure in 2000. There was evidently a harvest of self-sufficiency. However, it remained for this empowerment to be backed by the full force of legal commitments by all concerned and it was reassuring to know that an Act of Parliament of a National Women's Council and Bureau had been put in place. However, while empowerment became a prerequisite for development it was wont to threaten the balance of the social system. For instance gender roles and responsibilities would be restructured, traditional values and norms disregarded at home and in the larger society and with the intensification of this awareness, the choice of whom to marry, how many children one should bear and even what job to do would create a conflict and the synthesis could precipitate broken homes and family disintegration.

21. Njie, M.A.; Entrepreneurial skill development programmes in Commonwealth countries, 1993, 57p.

The persistent shortage of middle level manpower was responsible for a mandate driven directive to relevant authorities to construct a new technical institute to solve the aforementioned problem, thus increasing the skill efficiency of individual workers through education and training and in the final analysis increasing the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the work force and helping reduce the proclivity for unemployment among educated youth. By surveying the employment structure in the country, and by implication, the levels of training necessary to provide for the necessary requirements of the economy, the author was able to identify many trends. He concluded that middle level manpower was synonymous with higher and middle level technicians. The construction of the the Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI) and development of its associated manpower were informed by this premise. But there were challenges based on the need to train the existing labour force and the next generation of workers, and a greater challenge based on the inability of the labour market to absorb them: Thanks to the silvery hue against a cloud provided by UNDP with a sum of 1.5 million dollars for an employment creation programme. In concluding the GTTI scheme was developed to provide an orientation for self-employment.

22. National Environment Agency, State of the environment report, NEA, The Gambia, 1997, 125p.

Of special interest in the overall profile of the state of environment report was the progress achieved in environmental education in general and environmental specifics as related to basic education. For instance, there was the adoption of a unified approach to lend teeth and credence to the subject Social and Environmental studies through a fusion of subjects such as history, geography and culture. This was done by the Curriculum Research and Professional Division of DoSE which also called for scientificizing the content of population, Family Life Education to include this already improved environmental study. The positive education efforts achieved highlighted the fact that before 1988, curricula were too academic and had no reflection of environmental concern. Environmental Education (EE) curricula had in varied circumstances projected a particular approach to suit the time, conditions of the locality and the interest of the sponsors of the project. For instance while Phase 1 of TIPE regional experimentation of EE in primary schools used thematic and single subject approaches, the Sahelian condition Phase I, ended in 1995, used themes while the Nova Scotia Gambia Association (NSGA) used the career subject approach. Gambia College in its teacher education curricula used themes and the multi-disciplinary approach. MDI, for mention, was ready to fuse environmental courses with management studies. GTTI with its basic education relevance was developing an EE infusion course on New Technology Refrigeration. The way forward had been variously sustained by five genres of instructional materials published by TIPE and in 1988, DoSE through CRPDD, published core/subject teaching and learning materials including teachers' guides and pupils' textbooks for 100 pilot primary schools, targeting grades 4 to 6. A list of materials covering pollution, desertification, water and forestation was used. Recently, NSGA's efforts included information booklets, photocaps and lesson plans for a pilot survey while the formal education task force on Environmental Education was working with a local consultant to integrate environment into the formal education sector.

Parri-passu with these efforts, the major improvement made was in the area of staff quality through training of staff to enrich them with tools, ideas and skills on EE. This led to the improved percentage of teachers (37% in 1994) with EE background, with Gambia College setting a target of 6000 teachers for the future. More effort came through the Regional Support for Education and Training of Teachers (RESETT). Hands-on activities including field trips were conducted while skills on developing, designing and monitoring projects and in relating with schools and projects were also developed. The Environmental Award Scheme was established and cleaning exercises undertaken. The non-formal education sector was not left out through transmission of environmental messages via the electronic media and desegregated into subjects and languages. Suggestions were made to incorporate EE into government institutional policies and to permutate several forms of integration of EE into the national curriculum with the caveat that a central control mechanism was needed to check the defects of over zealousness. Intersectorial cooperation was also needed to facilitate the distribution of the EE materials in the entire basic education system at a low cost. Training programmes should be mounted to build capacity and provide the necessary EE methods. Hands-on activities should be introduced.

CONCLUSION

There is a fundamental question that has arisen from this catalogue of reviews. Simply put, is there a meeting point? To answer the question, the paper can be reclassified into:

1. Tertiary education reports dealing with three papers
2. Disability problems and truancy; two papers
3. Empowerment of women and human rights based paper; three papers
4. Monitoring of learning achievement paper and performance ability tests; two papers
5. Decentralization of Education services, Local Government Act; two papers
6. Reports on IDA, EFA, ACTION-AID, PTA and Supervision Mission; five papers
7. Technical Education, Entrepreneurial skill development and State of the Environment; three papers
8. Miscellany; two papers

Even these eight valent positions derived from the twenty-two rivulets have conspiratorially accepted that one factor keeps popping out a stubborn face from this maze of disparate looking presentations. In more than one way they have the trappings of capacity building in education, reform in education, and the system of decentralization in education.

In addition, they are relevant to basic education. More importantly they are gender sensitive. But if these presentations are silhouetted in regionalisation and globalisation hues, they have also taken up the challenge, by having the capacity to address issues based on the environment, HIV/AIDS, human rights issues and EFA. All the inputs have been frank, pragmatic and sometimes have inadvertently compromised and mitigated the contours and pathways of research work.

Specifically, the national policy on education has recommended that the Information Computer Technology System (ICTS) be organized and operated to provide post-basic skills in science and technology including general subjects. However, in order to have effective IT system, DoSE must carry out needs assessment on the following: (a) Equipment resources (b) support services and supplies needed (c) teacher training development and strategies to retain them and (d) curriculum assessment for the various levels.

Of note is the inclusion of the madrassa educational system by DoSE which as part of its provision has encouraged appropriate in-built structures, facilities and learning environment.

Granted that there is a paucity of research work on HIV/AIDS, there is nonetheless a wholesome commitment, extensive in scope and intensive in action by The Nova Scotia Gambia Association, NSGA, peer education programme which at the moment conducts video shows all over the country on HIV/AIDS, and empowers youth with the knowledge, skills and confidence to take responsibility for their own health especially with respect of the spread of HIV/AIDS pandemic. The NSGA SoS Education programme, to the extent that it has now been “exported to Freetown”, is said to be the only institutionalized model found in any school anywhere, and a West African success story.

All the same, there is an extravaganza of brightly lit horizons in which hopes for utilizing research approaches to tackle challenges posed by the ever increasing dimensions of basic

education and greater aspirations for the realizable dividends of generating efforts for meeting the challenges will be crystallized.

REFERENCES by author

No.

6. Asomaming, C; Joof, A; (1992), Providing students and schools with useful feedback on assessment results: WAEC experience, IAEA
5. Banjul Unit of the Research Division, (1990), Rural-Urban and gender analysis of the performance of pupils at the first national primary school examination in The Gambia, Banjul Unit of the Research Division for WAEC
17. Benett, Y; (1999), A survey of Action Aid's education programmes in The Gambia, ACTION AID, The Gambia
8. Bouy, B; (2002), Process facilitation report. Decentralisation of education services, DoSE
3. ERNWACA, (1997), Factors Affecting Enrolment and Retention in the Primary Schools in The Gambia, ERNWACA
20. Faye, F.L., (2000), Empowerment of Women through education and training
7. Government of The Gambia, (2001), Situation of children and women in The Gambia, UNICEF
13. Government of The Republic of The Gambia, (2002); Local Government Act, 2002, Republic of The Gambia
14. Gunter, D; Karel, B, (1994), Second IDA Education Sector Project in The Gambia, UNESCO
12. Jata, N; Njie, F; Joof, H; (2000), Monitoring of learning achievement in Gambian Lower Basic Schools, DoSE and UNICEF
15. King, Kenneth; Jashir; Sarjil, S; (1990), Improving the Quality of Basic Education, Commonwealth of Education Ministers
22. National Environment Agency, (1997), State of the environment report, National Environment Agency, NEA
11. Njie, F; Jata, N; Boye, B; Gaye, J; Jallow, M; (2003), Using the monitoring of learning achievement study to investigate quality factors in private schools, UNICEF.
1. Njie, M; Bittaye, A; (2002), Teacher Training in The Gambia: Gambia College Review Report, UNICEF and ERNWACA
4. Njie, M; Loum, A; Benett, Y; (2002), Study of Parent-Teacher Associations at Lower Basic Schools in The Gambia, ERNWACA
21. Njie, M.A., (1993), Entrepreneurial skill development programmes in Commonwealth countries
19. Njie, M, (1999), Two Case studies of funding and quality assurance policies in higher education – implications for The Gambia
16. Republic of The Gambia, (2001), Technical and Vocational Education and Training, Government of the Republic of The Gambia
10. Technical Team, (1999), EFA 2000 Assessment Report, Government of The Gambia
9. Tembon, M; Joof, B; (2001), Supervision mission, World Bank and DoSE
18. The Gambia College, School of Education, (2002), Institutional Review, School of Education, The Gambia
2. UNICEF, (2002), Disabled children in mainstream schools, Government of The Gambia.

Annex:

THEMATIC SUMMARY of findings by four ADEA themes

THEME 1

Summaries	Pedagogical Renewal and Teacher Development
Improvement in the percentage of student teachers' intake, especially females. Use of newer technologies also provided enhanced capacity.	The above named is robustly reflected in the first of the papers, page 7, titled <u>Teacher Education in The Gambia; Gambia College Review Report</u> . This paper highlighted a considerable improvement at both the PTC and HTC programmes, in the percentage of student teachers' intake, especially for female teachers. The use of newer technologies and the ability to reach out to students constrained to a work-learn diarchy, courtesy distance learning, and the use of the internet, had also provided enhanced capacity.
Lack of capacity needed to cope with disability especially on girl-child. Capacity should thus be incorporated into basic needs.	In the case of Disabled Children in Mainstream schools Page 8, an attempt was made to forage an inroad into configuring the capacity needed to meek the challenges posed by disabled children. The finding showed that there was a total lack of specialised teachers needed to cope with this problem, and that 40% of the so-called teachers of disabled children could not even operate technical equipment. It was suggested that capacity capable of diversification, which should also incorporate the basic needs of the girl child, be built.
Employment of more female teachers as countervails to potential male sexual harassment.	The third paper which addressed Factors Affecting Enrolment and Retention of the Primary Schools in The Gambia. Page 9 recommended that more female teachers should be trained and employed as a countervailing measure to combat immorally driven extortionist tendencies of some male teachers.
Train, retrain, supervise and monitor the outcome of training of rural-based teachers.	On page 11, the paper titled Rural-Urban and Gender Analysis of the Performance of Pupils at the First National Primary School Examination in The Gambia, far-reaching recommendations touching on Teacher Development were made, to wit, the need to increase the motivation index of teachers who had found themselves in rural schools, and the urgent need to train and retrain the same rural-based teachers, and an attendant need to supervise and monitor the outcome of their training with intensity.
Generally, increase in teachers with males doubling the females. Steady increase in	EFA 2000 Assessment Report which featured on page 16 posited that the number of teachers in The Gambia between 1991/92 and 1998/99 had been on the increase with the number of male teachers doubling that of female teachers. The number of certified teachers increased steadily within the same period under survey with a low rate of attrition. Improvement made in the teacher-pupil ratio was not only

certified teachers. Improvement in teacher-pupil ratio slight and erratic. Capacity building needed if broad objectives were to be met.	limited, it manifested fluctuations. All in all, one of the strategies envisaged to achieve a set of broad objectives was capacity building.
Study yet to be completed but evidence adduced so far attests to improvement of quality through pedagogic renewal.	On page 17, the findings based on a study carried out involving Using the Monitoring of Learning Achievement (MLA) to investigate Quality Factors in Private Schools dwelt specifically on the extent to which capacity, among other factors, had influenced achievement. Viewed in a one-dimensional capacity-building factor, the author of the study hopes that when the study is completed, the recommendations will enhance the quality of basic education.
Need to upgrade professional skills through INSET yielded very positive results. Underpinning of GTTI and BSTC as a way to build capacity in Quality oriented technical education.	Second IDA Education Sector Project in The Gambia. Page 20. In-service training programmes ostensibly fashioned to upgrade the professional skills of teachers through INSET rolled out 235 and later 175 teachers in 1992. In 1993, 550 teachers were trained. The construction of the GTTI and the Banjul Skills Training Centre were undertaken and completed in 1994 as a way forward to providing enabling capacity in quality technical education.
Provision, management and support for teacher training programmes with added emphasis on investment to achieve quality	In the paper, Improving the Quality of Basic Education found on page 21, there was a tilt in finding better ways of providing more effective teacher training programmes including the management and support for such programmes. The paper recognised that for quality basic education to reign supreme, emphasis on investment should among others be geared to the training of teachers.
Establishment of a National Training Authority (NAT)	Technical and Vocational Education and Training TVET. The Policy. Page 22 espoused on the need to establish a National Training Authority (NAT) with a functional mandate of advising maintaining quality standards and coordinating disparate technical and vocational centres.
Staff development and skills training of teachers.	On A Survey of Action AIDS Education Programme in The Gambia which featured on page 23, a major recommendation included a review of AATG policies on staff development and skills training.
RIFT Academic Staff training to female teachers	Institutional Review page 24. In part it addressed the short-shrift attention given to the training of academic staff. It also addressed the paucity of female student-would-be teachers occasioned by a vicious

using a Remedial Initiative.	cycle triggered by the reluctance of parents to send their daughters to schools manned by male teachers. Thus RIFT (A remedial initiative for female teachers) was a Gambia College initiated programme which with an initial admission score card of 10% had soared to 50% with a 10% incremental leap each year. The programme has now been extended to the HTC. With a substantial increase in the number of female teachers at the Basic Education level, confidence has now been restored to parents who now know that their daughters are not only safer but have a copious elbow space from where to choose their role models.
Training of unqualified teachers and restructuring of the school system through capacity building	State of Environment Report page 28. In this paper, major improvement was made in the area of staff quality through the training of staff in order to enrich them with tools, ideas and improved percentage of teachers with Environmental Education (EE) background, with Gambia College setting a target of 6000 teachers for the future. More effort came through the Regional Support for Education and Training of Teachers RESETT

THEME 2

Summary	Decentralization and Diversification of the Delivery System
Alternative delivery system of distance learning and its correlates	The study on <u>Teacher Training in The Gambia; Gambia College Review Report</u> page 7 diverged from the normal formal classroom delivery system to incorporate within its matrix an out-reach, out-of-classroom system of distance learning with its in-built synergies of newer technologies, all in a bid to maintain equitable ambivalence in a work-learn diarchy offered to working mature students out there.
Diversification of delivery system to cater for needs of disabled children especially girls.	<u>Disabled Children in Mainstream Schools</u> found on page 8 was not without its decentralization phenomenon, as attested to, in the study, by the attempt made to use bench mark standards, as indicators, to ascertain the schools as silhouettes. The findings were a disaster. There was therefore a call for a diversification of disabled children, including girls, all in a bid to adapt basic education to their abilities, aptitudes and felt-needs.
English language Madrassa Schools and Koranic teacher in rural basic schools.	On page 9, <u>Factors Affecting Enrolment and Retention in the Primary Schools in The Gambia</u> was significant in its recommendation, by calling for the introduction of English in Madrassah Schools and the deployment of Koranic teachers to rural school. The triple-barreled posturing of this index of significance (diversification, reform and relevance) is not lost.
State of preparedness of DoSE on decentralization.	The paper <u>Process Facilitation Report. Decentralization of Education Services</u> page 14, is a useful document on decentralization. The principal findings were underlined by a conveyance of views between personnel from the education sector and stakeholders outside the sector on the state of preparedness of DoSE for decentralization given the following guidelines: (1) The transfer of the receipt of the educational

	services (2) The present budget outlay (3) Human resources and infrastructural facilities (4) Adaptation of other ventures which are within the collaboration to local needs.
Synchronising formal education and Madrassa	<u>Supervision Mission</u> of page 15 accentuated that linkages between Madrassa and formal basic education inspite of the decentralized mutation had been established as planned while syllabuses in the two systems had been fused. Since this is an attempt to bring together a decentralized system, it suggests an added dimension of innovation and relevance which it is more of.
Decentralized system in accordance with Local Government Act of 2002.	<u>Local Government Act 2002</u> on page 19 established a framework capable of regulating a decentralized system of government. It was also capable of providing functions, powers and duties to local authorities. In specific terms, if the roles of educational services were spelt out under this general framework, then the Local authorities of the area should not only establish schools in conformity with the provision of section 61 but should in addition ensure that the schools operated within the policy guideline.

THEME 3

Summary	Implementation of Basic Education Reforms and Innovations
Affordable special education on disabled children to be initiated by Government	<u>Disabled Children in Mainstream Schools</u> page 8. The recommendation that basic education be adapted to actuating the inherent goals of disabled children whose abilities, aptitudes, interests and felt-needs might remain unrealized if tailored to the relative conduciveness of normal children is most welcome. Affordable help on special education should therefore be initiated by government.
Employment of more female teacher. Reform on Madrassa schools through study of English Deployment of Koranic teachers. Compulsion on enrolment and retention.	If the recommendations made on page 9 regarding <u>Factors affecting enrolment and retention in the primary schools in The Gambia</u> are anything to go by, then more female teachers should be employed as a countervailing measure to combat immoral tendencies by male teachers. A policy in education should be enacted compelling parents and guardians to enroll and retain primary school pupils. English should be introduced in Madrassa schools while Koranic teachers should be deployed to rural schools.
P.T.A. an innovative venture reinforces DoSE-community partnership	On page 10 <u>Study of Parent-Teacher Associations at Lower Basic Schools in The Gambia</u> is a study which inspite of its tendency, through the findings, to flaunt illiteracy as an ominous factor in an overbearing male dominated PTA insensitive to gender diversity, the said PTA is a potentially innovative material-resource gold mine which sometimes embarks on well-meaning self-help projects such as fund-generation, thus reinforcing DoSE-community partnership.
Girl child education	<u>Rural-Urban and Gender Analysis of the Performance of Pupils at the First National Primary School</u>

	<u>Examinations in The Gambia</u> . P11. It was recommended that a massive collaborative campaign should be mounted sensitizing the community at large on the need to educate the girl child especially in the rural area.
Test results subjected to performance test rigours followed by monitoring and remedial measures enhanced quality.	<u>Providing Students and Schools with Useful Feedback on Assessment Results</u> . WAEC Experience page 12. It was revealed that subjecting performance to statistical rigours not only offered better empirical evidence of the defects of the system but also provided a basis for monitoring and taking remedial measures. These monitors and measures had been put to practice in two schools that performed poorly. Mercifully, results to the same schools, over a period of time, possibly because of the interventions of the monitors and measures, through statistical rigours, eventually improved dramatically with resounding success. Thus Kushea and Bundung had become success stories, where test results, by their unmitigated and infinite relevance to basic education, had helped to attain and maintain quality education.
Catalogue of reforms within the basic education cynosure to give some teeth to the right of the child, especially the girl child	<u>Situation of Children and Women in The Gambia</u> page 13. Recommendations made on this study touched on ways and means of arresting the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the setting up of children's Right Commission, ensuring that the disabled are catered for, so also are the street child, the extremely poor and the refugee child. There should be an enactment of law's that should legislate against traditional initiation and genital operations. In addition policy should be enunciated to eliminate sexual harassment and discourage teenage pregnancy as well as pass into law a legislation on defilement.
The following basic education reforms are worthy of note: reprinting and distribution of texts, implementation of ECD activities, formulation of vocational and technical policy, text book rental system, issuance of free books, girls scholarship scheme.	<u>Basic Education Reforms and Innovation Supervision Mission</u> page 15. A World Bank mission in conjunction with directors and staff of DoSE responsible for the implementation of the respective project components undertook field visits to regional offices and schools to discuss issues related to programme implementation and progress made towards achieving programme objectives. It was found out that progress was made in areas of instructional materials through the implementation of activities under Quality of Early Child Development and Care was on course and financial commitment of UNICEF and some support from UNESCO had not wavered. Vocational and Technical Policy had been formulated and the Policy document prepared and submitted to cabinet for approval. The following actions were agreed upon: a careful assessment of text book rental system vis-à-vis a proposal of alternative options including issuance of free books, evaluation of girls' scholarship scheme, e.t.c.
Education reforms through income generating and skills enhancing projects.	<u>Local Government Act 2002</u> page 19. Part of the framework required in order to regulate a decentralized system of government which is capable of providing functions, powers and duties to local Authority schools is to ensure that the functioning authority encourages the schools to embark on income generating and skills enhancing projects This certainly is innovative.

<p>New teaching curriculum has an integrated fervour. The Arabic translation of the Islamic Studies programme doubles as being both reformative and relevant.</p>	<p><u>Second IDA Education Sector Project in The Gambia</u>, page 20. In the area of curriculum development, the above named project financed the development of a new teaching curriculum with an integrated fervour for grades 5 and 9 while the Arabic translation of the Islamic studies Syllabus was implemented. This later development is imbued also with relevance to education.</p>
<p>Life-long learning through NAT. Government initiated project would respond to local labour market requirements within a larger ambit of globalisation and regionalisation and thus make an impact on technical, interpersonal and entrepreneurial needs.</p>	<p><u>Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), The Policy</u>. Page 22. Based on the strategic aims of providing a legislative framework to support the implementation and sustainability of TVET policy and system and based on the further need to strengthen the Institutional capacity of TVET in all ramifications, the government of the Republic of The Gambia initiated a study that would impact on the technical, interpersonal and entrepreneurial needs of all sectors of the economy in The Gambia for the purpose of responding adequately to local labour requirements within a larger ambit of globalization and regionlization and in addition provide opportunities for life-long learning. To effect this, it was suggested that a National Training Authority (NAT) with a functional mandate of advising, maintaining quality standards and coordinating disparate technical and vocational centres, be instituted.</p>
<p>VDG to set up committees on children's education and on adult and continuing education.</p>	<p>In a study of <u>A Survey of Action Aids Education Programmes in The Gambia</u>, page 23, it was suggested as part of the major recommendations that each Village Development Group (VDG) should set up committees on children's education as well as on adult and continuing education.</p>
<p>Basic reform on Remedial Initiative for female teachers RIFT</p>	<p><u>Institutional Review</u> page 24. The academic board of the Gambia College regulates academic matters, including The Remedial Initiative for Female Teachers (RIFT) which the develop school of Education runs. RIFT not only enables trainees develop appropriate skills in numeracy and literacy, it helps them to apply science in everyday life or competency in social science. In addition it enables teacher trainees to become self-confident and to acquire personal autonomy.</p>
<p>Establishment of the GTTI was formatted primarily to reduce unemployed through providing skills in technical education.</p>	<p><u>Entrepreneurial skill Development Programmes in Commonwealth Countries</u> page 27. The persistent shortage of middle level manpower was responsible for a mandate driven directive to relevant authorities to construct a new technical institute, the GTTI, to solve the aforementioned problems, thus increasing the skill, efficiency of individual workers through education and training and in the final analysis increase the overall effectiveness of the workforce and help reduce the proclivity for unemployment among educated youth.</p>

<p>Fusion of subjects and the multi-disciplinary thematic approach. Material focus on pollution, desertification, water and forestation. Distribution of materials at low cost was cost-effective</p>	<p>State of the Environment Report, Page 28 There was the adoption of a unified approach to lend teeth and credence to the subject, Social and Environmental Studies, through a fusion of subjects and the multidisciplinary thematic approach. DoSE, through CRPDD had published core subject teaching and learning materials including teachers' guides and pupils' text books for 100 pilot primary schools targeting grades 4 to 6. A list of materials with focus on pollution, desertification, water and forestation was used. Intersectorial cooperation was also needed to facilitate the distribution of Environmental materials in the entire basic education sector, at a low cost.</p>
---	--

THEME 4

Summary	Relevance of Education
<p>Distance learning component is as a consequence of 'cope and adapt' measures.</p>	<p><u>Teacher Training in The Gambia. Gambia College Review Report</u> page 8. In her quest to cope with the ever-increasing strangle-hold on an ever-growing student population and adapt to the throttled-down wind-pipe pressures from the stakeholders and the community in its entirety, Gambia College had managed as best as it could to demonstrate on above-the-board level in areas of distance learning.</p>
<p>Koranic teachers and Madrassa schools are innovative</p>	<p><u>Factors Affecting Enrolment and Retention in the Primary Schools in The Gambia.</u> Page 9. The deployment of Koranic teachers to rural areas and the establishment of Madrassa schools have educational relevance.</p>
<p>What is relevant here is the local needs adaptation of educational services.</p>	<p><u>Process Facilitation Report. Decentralization of Education Services</u> p14. LGAs would in collaboration with the Regional Education Offices facilitate the internalisation of the guidelines for the opening of schools and adapt such ventures to their local needs.</p>
<p>Madrassa – formal education linkages as well as curriculum adaptation to be noted.</p>	<p><u>Supervision Mission</u> page 15. Linkages between Madrassa and formal basic education were established as planned while the syllabuses of the two systems had been merged. Moreover, quality and relevance to education had improved through curriculum adaptation.</p>
<p>Adaptation of new teaching curriculum and translation of the Islamic studies syllabus to Arabic language.</p>	<p><u>Sccond IDA Education Sector project in The Gambia.</u> Page 20. The project financed the development of a new teaching curriculum with a local and an integrated fervour for grades 5 to 9, while the Arabic translation of the Islamic Studies syllabus was implemented.</p>

<p>Request to countries to make changes in basic education based on experiences.</p>	<p><u>Improving the Quality of Education</u> on page 21, posited that at the eleventh conference of commonwealth education ministers, members emphasised that the quality of basic education had to be enhanced. Individual countries based on their local experiences were required to make the decision about what changes ought to be implemented.</p>
<p>Close relatedness of educational opportunities to actual life and working conditions of Gambians. The development of Gambian culture and heritage. Interaction between formal, non-formal and madrassa.</p>	<p>The study on <u>Two case Studies of Funding and Quality Assurance Policies in Higher Education. Implications for The Gambia</u>, page 25, opined that in striving to provide educational opportunities for its citizenry, The Gambia must ensure that such provision was closely related to the actual life and working circumstances of Gambians, and that the educational system be implemented in adaptable manner to ensure effective community participation. Beneficiaries should also develop an appreciation of Gambian culture and heritage. The system might also consider developing a dynamic interaction between the formal, non-formal and madrassa structure.</p>
<p>Because curricula had no reflection on environmental concern, an Environmental Education Curriculum was established to suit the conditions of the locality. The non-formal sector desegregated environmental messages into local languages and subject areas.</p>	<p><u>State of Environment Report</u>, page 28. The positive education efforts achieved by the Curriculum Research and Professional Division of DoSE, which also called for scientificizing the content of population and Family life Education, highlighted the fact that before 1998, curricula were too academic and had no reflection on environmental concern. Now, Environmental Education curricula had varied in circumstances projected a particular approach to suit the time and conditions of the locality to the extent that there are now an infusion of in-built courses such as pollution, desertification, water and forestation. The non-formal education sector was not left out Thus environmental messages were transmitted and desegregated into local languages and subject areas.</p>