



END OF PROJECT

EVALUATION

OF

**Commonwealth Education Fund
(The Gambia)**

(January 2004 – June 2008)

By

Afri-Consult Group

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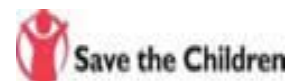


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We had face-to-face interviews with several officials ranging from both National and International NGOs, Private Sector, Teachers Union and Government staff. They openly and frankly engaged us during the interviews and the enthusiasm and interests demonstrated were truly encouraging. Our special appreciation is thus extended to all those who in one way or the other participated / engaged in the evaluation process.

Acronyms

AATG:	Action Aid-The Gambia
ADB:	African Development Bank
ADWAC:	Agency for the Development of Women and Children
AECE:	Association For Early Childhood Educators
AGM:	Annual General Meeting
ANCEFA:	The Africa Network Campaign on Education For All
CBO:	Community Based Organisation
CEF:	Commonwealth Education Fund
CCF:	Christian Children's Fund
CRR:	Central River Region
CES:	Catholic Education Secretariat
CSEF:	Civil Society Education Fund
CSO:	Civil Society Organisation
DFID:	Department for International Development
DOBSE:	Department of State For Basic and Secondary Education
DOSE:	Department of State for Education
DOSFEA:	Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs
ECD:	Early Childhood Development
ECCD:	Early Childhood Care and Development
EFA:	Education For All
EFANET:	Education For All Network
FAWE-GAM:	Forum for African Women Educationalists – Gambia Chapter
FIOH:	Future in Our Hands
FTI:	Fast Track Initiative
GBP:	The British Pound Sterling
GEU:	Girls Education Unit
GCE:	Global Campaign for Education
GCCI:	Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
GER:	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GMD:	The Gambian Dalasi
GOTG:	Government of The Gambia
GOVI:	Gambia Organisation for the Visually Impaired
GSIAE:	General Secretariat for Islamic/Arabic Education
GTU:	The Gambia Teachers Union
GWA:	Global Week of Action
HIPC:	Highly Indebted Poor Country
HIV/AIDS:	Human Immune Deficiency Virus
IEC:	Information, Education and Communication
MDG:	Millennium Development Goals
M & E:	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFEA:	Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
MLA:	Monitoring Learning Achievement
MSWG:	Multi-Sectoral Working Group
NAM:	National Assembly Member
NAS:	National Aids Secretariat
NAT:	National Assessment Test
NBR:	North Bank Region

NEPAD:	New Partnership For African Development
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation
PSLCE:	Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination
Pop/FLE:	Population and Family Life Education
Pro-PAG:	Pro-Poor Advocacy Group
PRSP:	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PTA:	Parent Teachers Association
SAP/HH:	School Age Population/Per Household
SNE:	Special Needs Education
SNEU:	Special Needs Education Unit
SOS:	Secretary of State
SSI:	Sight Savers International
TANGO:	The Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
UBE:	Universal Basic Education
UK:	The United Kingdom
UN:	United Nations
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF:	United Nations Children's Fund
URR:	Upper River Region
VDC:	Village Development Committee
VSO:	Voluntary Service Overseas
YAP	Youth Ambassadors of Peace
YWV:	Youth with Vision

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) was established in 2002 in 17 low income Commonwealth member countries including The Gambia. It started operations in March 2002 however, the Gambia programme started later with the establishment of a one person secretariat and a management committee in January 2004.

The initial project life span was 3 years(2002 – 2005) but it was later extended to June 2008. The project operated on three priority objectives as:

- Strengthening civil society participation in design and implementation of national and local education plans and frameworks especially through support to national coalitions/ alliances
- Enabling local communities to monitor government spending on education, both at national and local levels, and
- Supporting innovative ways for civil society to ensure that all children, especially girls and the most vulnerable are able to access quality education.

CEF The Gambia in partnership with nine national organizations implemented the CEF programme in line with the three CEF priority objectives. The partnership started with proposal development by individual partners, followed by signing of a partnership agreement, support with funds to implement activities, and retiring of funds spent with narrative reports on outputs, and a financial report, among others. The strategy was advocacy based but necessarily service delivery oriented.

The total project budget at evaluation was £337,417 and its total expenditure was £246,614. This shows an under expenditure of £90,803 (27%).

Methodology

The evaluation exercise covered all CEF partners. All relevant and available literature about the project were obtained either from the secretariate or from the partners for literature review. In addition, 20 key informants were interviewed and a focused group discussion was also held with 5 members of the National Assembly Select Committee on Education and Training. A validation workshop was also conducted to provide input on the draft report by all stakeholders

Findings

1: Effectiveness of the project

a) Civil Society participation

CEF The Gambia project provided long term support to strengthen the national coalition of CSOs (EFA Campaign Network) in The Gambia. It provided both institutional and programme capacity building support to EFA Campaign Network throughout the life of CEF in the country (2004-2008). This support among others, has enabled the EFA Campaign Network to celebrate the annual Global Week of Action and advocate for changes in policy or practice in education sometimes with co-funding from other EFANET partners.

In addition, another civil society the Gambia Teachers Union was supported to conduct a survey on the conditions of teachers in the country aimed at providing quality education and used the results to carry out evidence based advocacy for better status of teachers.

The report was circulated to all partners and major stakeholders in education. It was also supported to carry out 17 community policy discussion forums (bantabas) geared towards sensitizing stakeholders on their responsibilities, identify gaps, and deducing strategies with the view to effecting positive changes in policy and practice.

Yet another civil society partner the Youth Ambassadors of Peace was also supported to carry out a baseline survey on school attendance in all the regions of the country. However due to the inadequacy of funds YAP could only validate and advocate on the data for Regions 2 and 3 (Western Region & NBR respectively). The reports showed that for the 2006/07 academic year, the total possible instructional contact hours achieved in NBR equals 798 hours and 802.9 hours in WR instead of the prescribed 880 hours. Reasons advanced for the shortfall among others were teachers absenteeism, unplanned holidays, inadequate visits to schools by parents.

b) Monitoring government spending on education

Budget Education and budget tracking capacity activities were supported for the NAMs in 2004 and again for the New National Assembly Select Committee on Education and Training Members of the Legislative Session 2007 – 2011. The NAMs were also supported to conduct a survey of selected schools throughout the country to determine the schools situation on the ground. The report produced by them was laid on the floor of the National Assembly and was also distributed widely as an advocacy material.

Pro-PAG conducted a study to verify the magnitude and level of government spending on education for the period 2000 to 2004 and published the results of the study entitled: *The Gambia Expenditure Analysis 2000 – 2004*. The report showed that actual expenditures were far less than the planned allocations over the period. ProPAG also facilitated participatory budget consultations in three pilot divisions of the country. The NAMs and Civil Society Organizations participated in both the budget consultations and the interface forum. This partner also now conducts quick analysis to identify the education funding gaps of the national budget which are communicated to the NAMs during the 'Budget Brief' session on annual basis.

c) Innovative Approaches

Aisha Oumoul Moumineen Quranic Memorization and Islamic Boarding School for Girls is a girls' boarding school that provides rare type of education geared toward overcoming gender discrimination. CEF supported this boarding school for girls with a labour-saving device that will give the girls an opportunity of having more time for their studies. The school has now instituted the integration of Islamic education with the conventional school syllabi.

CEF established a partnership with ADWAC to establish four Early Childhood Development and Education centres in line with the First EFA Goal in rural North Bank Region. It also conducted activities to advocate and raise the awareness of parents and local institutions such as village development committees, parent-teacher- associations and local policy makers on the importance and need for early childhood learning/education.

GOVI was supported in establishing a pilot pre-school class for 13 blind and low vision children.

GSAIE was supported and achieved the progressive harmonization of Islamic / Arabic schools with the government's school system. It now receives annual subvention from the education budget to hire English teachers. Its educational statistics are now incorporated into the national educational data base.

2: Impact and changes on EFA activities

CEF's support and those of other partners strengthened the EFA Campaign Network Secretariat to have a fixed location, office equipment and furniture, a Strategy paper, elected national and regional executive committee members. It is able to leverage funding from several sources and is currently expanding and deepening its education advocacy work. There is increased participation and interest in the GWA by other partner organisations.

GTU is in the process of setting up its own research unit and developing a reliable data base on teachers and factors affecting teachers in the provision of quality education. GTU's data on teachers and conditions of teachers has improved the Union's mode of advocacy. In addition, the Union has shifted more away from writing complaint letters to encouraging dialogue with the Education directors. GTU sits in the short listing committee for teacher promotions. It also participated in the drafting of the teacher postings policy and some of its Regional Secretaries sit on the regional postings committees. There is a marked increase on the involvement of the Union in committees and programmes on teacher matters established and organized by the DOSBSE or GOTG respectively.

The General Secretariat For Islamic /Arabic Education (GSIAE) has now developed integrated syllabuses (Grade1-12), which are intra Madrassa and inter-conventional school in nature. It now has got unified timetable elements also in place. Its madrassa data is shared with the Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education incorporated into the annual national education statistics.

Aisha Oumoul Moumineen Quranic Memorization and Islamic Boarding School for Girls have now instituted the integration of Islamic education with the conventional school syllabi. As a result, girls are no longer restricted to only Islamic Education, but are being introduced to English and Mathematics. Furthermore, the students now have access to quality coos meals and the the milling machines also generate additional income for the school.

Attempts were made through GCCI to get private sector to donate funds for education advocacy. No donations are as yet forth coming.

The Youth Ambassadors for Peace produced empirical evidence showing that Regions Two and Three (NBR) pupils are spending fewer hours in school than the policy pronouncement. The authorities in North Bank Region noted the survey results and promised to hold a high level meeting to look at the school calendar issue for 2008/09 school year. Similar data for the rest of the regions is available but could not be validated and used for advocacy work due to insufficient funding.

A pilot pre-school for blind and low vision children is established in the Greater Banjul

Area by GOVI. The pilot is so popular that some parents have now come forward and registered their children in the school's waiting list. The school registers students as far away as Western Region. The SOS for DOSBSE is said to have pledged to sustain the GOVI pre- school through the FTI funding in the medium term and The Gambia Government national budgets in the long term.

The National Assembly Members that were trained in budget analysis and budget tracking were also able to demystify the National Budget and demonstrated their skills at the review of the first draft of the 2008 budget in September 2007. The Education and Training Select Committee of the National Assembly advocated and secured additional allocation to the education budget for the employment of school caretakers who were volunteering for over 5 years.

There is now increased CSO attendance and participation at the annual budget interface meetings.

CEF Partner relations and capacity building

CEF does not implement activities on the ground. It worked by giving advice and funding to local and national civil society organizations (CSOs) regarded as partners to carry out education advocacy work in the country. CEF's partnership selection was by and large not based on any rigorous and systematic partnership capacity assessment except in the case of EFA Campaign Network. In general, CEF assumed that the capacity of its partners was adequate to carry out education advocacy in the CEF objective areas except in the area of budget education, monitoring expenditure and lobbying to influence budget allocations. As a result, CEF provided long term support for the institutional and programme capacity building of the EFA Campaign Network. It also supported Pro-PAG build the capacity of its partners in budget education and tracking.

It provided one training for its partners on advocacy which was a step-down training of the CEF Maputo training on CSO in Policy Processes. The workshop targeted 19 members of the EFA Campaign Network, Secretariat and Regional Chapters, CEF partners outside the Network and NGOs in education. Female representatives from all the regions were specially targeted. The training was principally led and facilitated by the GTU trainer, who was identified by the EFA Campaign Network to undergo the capacity building training held in Maputo.

CEF received, reviewed and approved funding proposals from partners and signed what is termed Partnership agreement with them. This document reads more like a contract than a partnership agreement since it focuses mainly on the implementation requirements of the service provider (the partner) and the funding level and disbursement arrangements by (CEF) the donor / funder. Several implementation issues arose relating mainly to delay disbursement of approved funds from CEF on the one hand and on the other hand the late implementation and report submission on the part of the partners. These issues were resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, thanks largely to the proactive intervention of the CEF Coordinator.

Examine changes in key social norms

Most NGOs and CSOs in the Gambia are inward looking in focus and concentrate on acting alone to improve the condition of their members and beneficiary communities. With the advent of the CEF Project, several organizations have started to work together

as a coalition in the planning and implementation of education advocacy activities. There is this gradual move away from acting alone to an inclusive approach to education advocacy work.

CEF' operational procedure requires partners to account to CEF funds that have been disbursed before any reimbursement is done. Despite the initial teething problems, transparency and accountability became rooted in organizational behaviors of partners.

The blind and low vision children are normally hidden at home and isolated to grow up and become beggars on the streets. These children are now attending a pre- school are no longer considered as dirty and outcasts but are now seen as clean and are not only integrated into the society but now have the opportunity to contribute to it.

The education advocacy work of CEF partners has demonstrated a significant shift in the social norm of elders quietly and diplomatically arranging compromises to open advocacy activities especially during the annual Global Week of Action and the World Teachers Day celebrations.

There is a slight shift away from selection to election of officers and members of boards and committees.

Key Strategic issues critical for programme sustenance and Recommendations

From the evidence stated in the findings and the conclusions arrived at above, it can be finally concluded that CEF support has enabled civil society organizations and their national coalition to engage in, expand and deepened their education advocacy activities.

There are few key strategic issues critical for CEF Programme sustenance and the way and manner that they are addressed will also enhance and improve CEF intended programme quality and performance

Some CEF partners have indicated that the education advocacy activities they were engaged in are already embedded in their core organizational programme activities and would therefore continue even if CEF funding discontinues.

It is recommended that fund raising activities for the fund and its successor funding mechanism as well as fund raising capacity building of partners be mainstreamed from the start of the project in order to ensure programme sustenance and improve both the quality and performance of the CEF intended education advocacy in the country.

CEF strategy has limited the scope of its work in education advocacy to what its Partners are doing and consequently CEF was unable to initiate expansion of the scope of its work beyond what these partners can do to other areas such as supporting national research on links between macro-economic policy and education financing, influencing IMF policy commitments to stop using public sector wage bill caps as a routine condition on loans, mapping out missing children such as the "Almudos" and innovate ways to bring them education and especially how to deal with reducing the

adult illiteracy rate in the country. It is therefore recommended that CEF or its successor funding mechanism include in its funding arrangements CSOs that work in the areas suggested above or support the existing partners to expand the scope of their work to include such areas of education advocacy.

The scope, quality and performance of CEF's intended programme of education advocacy will depend on the capacity of its partners. CEF never sought to formally assess their capacity or to build, expand or deepen the institutional and programme capacity or "expertise" of any partner organization except the EFANET.

Several partners have indicated that if their capacities were sufficiently built during the partnership period, they would continue to use these strengthened capacities to enhance the quality and performance of their education advocacy work well after the end of the CEF project.

It is therefore recommended that in order to achieve programme sustenance as well as improve the quality and performance of the CEF intended programme, that sufficient attention is paid to capacity building of partners. It is further recommended that capacity building be a core support area for such an intended programme.

Section 1: Introduction

The Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) was established in 2002 in 17 low income Commonwealth member countries including The Gambia¹. It started operations in March 2002 with the planning processes. The Gambia programme had a late start with the establishment of a secretariat in January 2004.

The initial plan targeted a 3-year project (2002 – 2005) but it was later extended to June 2008. The project operated on three priority objectives of:

- Strengthening civil society participation in design and implementation of national and local education plans and frameworks especially through support to national coalitions/ alliances
- Enabling local communities to monitor government spending on education, both at national and local levels, and
- Supporting innovative ways for civil society to ensure that all children, especially girls and the most vulnerable are able to access quality education.

CEF The Gambia in partnership with seven national organizations implemented the CEF programme from March 2004 to June 2008 in line with the above three CEF priority objectives. The partnership started with proposal development by individual partners, followed by signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), support with funds to implement activities, and retiring of funds spent with narrative reports on outputs, and a financial report, among others. The strategy was advocacy based but with a service delivery twist.

Whilst CEF did not implement projects directly by itself, it provided the necessary inputs to a selected number of partners who then implemented the projects, based on agreed terms and conditions as specified in the contracts. The trust of the funding was geared towards civil society organizations in support of education advocacy and allied networking. To achieve the intended objectives, the partners used different but complementary strategies, including pre school education for the visually impaired, synchronization of the madrassa teaching syllabus with those of the conventional school systems, supporting girls education in the madrassa sector, training civil society operatives in budget tracking and analysis skills, commemorating the global week of action at some of the decentralized areas, among others. Some of these initiatives were said to be new and innovative approaches in extending education to all children especially girls and the marginalized groups in society.

Having implemented the project for the intended phase, it was felt prudent to conduct an end of project evaluation as is detailed hereunder. The purpose of the CEF end of project evaluation² is to assess performance, results, challenges and learning against the CEF original objectives. The evaluation process encouraged honest reflections and assessments of impact, and outcomes and challenges as well as lessons learnt. The study thus provides a reference, especially in the absence of a baseline data, for

¹ Technical Proposal, CEF End of Project Evaluation, June 2008

² EPE Guidance Notes 2, CEF

appreciating and reviewing the effects and impact of the CEF project. The study design and processes were to a large extent informed and guided by the above orientation and objectives.

Section 2: Methodology

The evaluation exercise comprised four major stages:

- Literature review
- Key Informant Interviews
- Focus Group Discussions
- Stakeholder Validation Workshop

The data collection methodology included:

Literature Review:

Background, relevant and current data/ information, documents and reports related to the study, both within the CEF Secretariat and with partners and elsewhere were collected and examined.

The information obtained from the literature review phase was judiciously used to further explore specific trends and issues relative to the assignment. The information/ data thus obtained was cross-checked and validated by the use of other data collection methodologies to ensure accuracy, reliability and validity.

Key Informant Interviews:

A sample of key informants was selected for individual key informant interviews from the following partners:

- EFANET
- GSIAE
- Pro PAG
- CES
- Aisha Oumoul Moumineen Quranic Memorization and Islamic Boarding School for Girls
- GTU
- YAP
- ADWAC
- CEF- (Finance Officer, Programme Coordinator)
- Government

For each of the partner organizations listed above, three key informants were selected comprising of Chairperson/ Director, Programme Officer and the Finance Officer respectively. In reality, not all the selected persons were available during the period of the evaluation exercise. In some partner organisations four or five people were available for interviewing.

A detailed checklist/ semi-structured questionnaire covering the main elements of the study was developed and used to facilitate the key informant interviews and FGDs. The data obtained from the interviews and discussions were accordingly analyzed, with the

aid of a data analysis framework developed for the purpose. This framework was intended as a schematic presentation of the areas / issues to be explored, and the methods, tools and verifiable indicators to be used.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):

An End of Project Evaluation of this nature should not only rely on quantitative data collection methods. The judicious application of relevant qualitative data collection techniques such as Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) could tremendously enrich the process and enhance its prospects for wider consultations and participation of a broad based spectrum of projects partners and beneficiaries.

In the context of this evaluation exercise, one FGD was conducted with the National Assembly Members of the Education Select Committee as beneficiaries of the ProPAG Budget Education and Budget tracking and allocation capacity building exercise.

Stakeholders Validation Workshop:

Upon the production of a draft report, it is planned that the content will be circulated to stakeholders for review in readiness of a consultative forum to allow them to input into the document. A validation workshop was organized at the end of the exercise. The workshop not only presented an opportunity for stakeholders to review and validate the findings of the report, but also provided the basis for consensus building and strengthening of ownership. The valuable comments and inputs from the workshop were subsequently incorporated in the final document, thus further enriching the outcome.

Section 3: Findings

Introduction

One of the strongest aspects of the CEF The Gambia programme for many of the EFANET respondents related to the practice of *accompaniment* – where the CEF Project engaged with the Network Partner over a period of time; where the CEF Project was committed to this *long term process* of engagement; where trust could be built between them; where they could get to know one another rather than have the more common one-off intervention (characteristic of many of the interventions NGO's and CSOs have grown accustomed to); where the very intention was to build a relationship between the Network Partner and CEF; and where it was acknowledged that organisational change was, indeed not a one-off event, but in its very nature a longer term process, enhanced by the commitment to building a relationship of support. This approach characterised the CEF Project as unique, enabling the EFANET to address a number of issues over a period of time, which had been disabling factors in terms of their organisational effectiveness. In this way, the respondents spoke unequivocally about the value that the CEF Gambia Project had contributed towards their organisation. This CEF the Gambia approach was unfortunately not uniformly applied to the other CEF partners in the country.

3.1: Effectiveness of the CEF Project in The Gambia in terms of institutionalizing education advocacy

Effectiveness invariably measures the extent to which a project has achieved / performed relative to its objectives. A key factor in performance is project design.

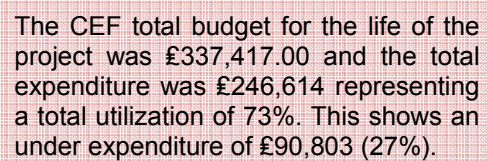
With the absence of Oxfam and Save the Children in the Gambia, ActionAid automatically became the lead agency in the management of CEF in the country. ActionAid provided an institutional home for CEF. ActionAid's Country Director sits in the CEF Management Committee. In addition, it also provided the accounting function for CEF The Gambia using its financial and accounting policies, system and procedures.

The structure of CEF The Gambia comprises a Management Committee and a Secretariat. The Management Committee is composed of five people drawn from donors, government, private sector, NGO and civil society. It is noted that with the exception of one member, all others are full time employees of other agencies and naturally give priority to their official functions over CEF matters. The Management Committee considers the CEF annual plans and budgets as well as considers project proposals that have been reviewed by the coordinator for approval, revision or rejection. It also receives periodic reports from the coordinator.

The CEF Secretariat is manned by a single person who is the project coordinator. Therefore, it does not have a heavy management structure. The coordinator sensitized partners about CEF and also received and processed project proposals and implementation progress report from partners for the consideration of the management committee. He also initiates the disbursement of funds as well as monitored implementation activities and retirement of funds. CEF accounting of funds is reported to be transparent in that funds were disbursed by cheques and are reflected in the books of partners and accounted for prior to any replenishment.

The partners designed and developed draft project proposals and finalized them with input from the CEF coordinator. This arrangement allowed for the direct involvement of people who were more intimate with the issues and concerns of the target population. It also showed a greater appreciation of the fundamental importance of partner involvement in project development and implementation. In the case of the coalition, this involved delegation of activities to the chapter level where implementation and monitoring were mainly carried out. This methodology had the advantage of allowing people to take responsibility at the basic level but also had disadvantages for both secretariats (CEF & EFANET), of demanding more patience and more flexibility and even making accounting more difficult but not impossible with its attendant problems.

CEF monitoring and evaluation was done at three levels. Each partner was responsible for ensuring close monitoring of project activities using their own internal monitoring system, tools and procedures. Partners submitted periodic implementation progress reports and financial reports to the CEF Coordinator according to the provisions of the partnership agreement. In addition, the CEF Coordinator carried out periodic monitoring visits and held meetings with partners to resolve any implementation issues. The Coordinator in turn produced quarterly reports for the CEF Management Committee, CEF UK and other partners. A mid-term peer review was carried out and this external end of project evaluation.



The CEF total budget for the life of the project was £337,417.00 and the total expenditure was £246,614 representing a total utilization of 73%. This shows an under expenditure of £90,803 (27%).

The monitoring and evaluation system put in place was therefore participatory, simple and robust. It was considered quite satisfactory by both the different partners and CEF.

CEF The Gambia's total budget, expenditure and percentage utilization figures for the period 2004-2008 are shown at appendix 5.5 below. The total budget was shown to be £337,417.00 and the total expenditure was £246,614 representing a total utilization of 73%. This shows an under expenditure of £90,803 (27%). The bulk of the under expenditure of £73,913 (81.40%) is shown to have occurred in 2005 and 2006. The under expenditure during the said period was attributed to the slow implementation rate by Partners as well as the cumbersome AATG financial procedures. It is lamentable that such under expenditure happened at the time and place when no other funding mechanism was available for civil society advocacy work in education. It is however noted that with above mentioned rather small amount of expenditure, CEF and its partners implemented activities and performed in the three CEF objective areas as shown below.

3.1.1: Strengthening Civil Society Participation

As mentioned in the introduction to this section, CEF The Gambia project provided long term support to strengthen the national coalition of CSOs in the Gambia. It provided support for both its institutional and programme capacity building throughout the life of CEF in the country (2004 - 2008). In this vein by 2006 an EFA Campaign Network Strategy Paper 2006 – 2010 was developed and validated with the participation of the 7 Regional EFA Campaign Network chapters and other stakeholders including international and local NGOs like Christian Children's Fund (CCF), Future In Our Hands

(FIOH), Sight Savers International (SSI), Agency for the Development of Women and Children (ADWAC).

Seven regional chapter meetings were held across the country. The Regional Chapter members were able to review the draft EFA Campaign Network Constitution and Bye Laws, added their observations and recommendations, in readiness for the AGM. Each regional chapter elected their executive committee members for the next three years, as well as their representatives to the 2007 AGM.



By the 2007 AGM, the Network's draft constitution was adopted and put in place as the instrument for guiding the running of the EFA Campaign Network. In addition a National Executive Committee (NEC) was elected to serve a 3-year term as a decision making body of the EFA Net, including its divisional chapters.



Following the holding of the 7 EFA Network regional chapter meetings across the country in the first quarter of 2007, the EFA Campaign Network, for the first time since 2000, held an expanded and all inclusive Annual General Meeting in May 2007. This was attended by EFA Net regional chapter representatives, key partners, the Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education, UNICEF, DFID, and a cross section of CSOs/ NGOs like Action Aid, FIOH, and CCF

At the AGM, the Network's draft constitution was adopted and put in place as the instrument for guiding the running of the EFA Campaign Network. In addition a National Executive Committee (NEC) was elected to serve a 3-year term as a decision making body of the EFA NET. This body then employed a full-time coordinator for the EFA Net and paid his remuneration from resources allocated by CEF. Support for the inauguration of the National Executive Committee was also provided. EFA Campaign Network Secretariat has been supported with office space and necessary office equipment and is now fully functional. A new personnel or volunteer was provided by VSO The Gambia to support the Secretariat. Therefore, two full-time staff members are now in the EFA NET Secretariat.

EFA Campaign Network has been supported by CEF and other partners to fully implement its activities during the annual Global Week of Action from 2004 - 2007. The scope of activities and the participation of its members and partners increased in tandem with the NET's own capacity. The range of activities and achievements of the last two years (2006 and 2007) are worthy of extended mention in this report.

GWA 2006 was celebrated with CEF funding "all-inclusive" partner planning sessions, Community sensitization sessions on media, and produced the documentary on the event for sharing and learning. A Big Hearing at the National Assembly was attended by the Secretary of State for Education, Speaker of the National Assembly, and 85% of the National Assembly Members. The ratification of the Early Childhood Development Policy was the major advocacy agenda of the week. Increasing the education budget to improve on quality of education was also another issue central on the advocacy. Both the Speaker and the SOS for Education promised to lobby the Members of the National Assembly for increased education budget to be able to improve the conditions of teachers, and for more teaching and learning materials in schools.

The EFA Campaign Network and her partners, including a number of NGOs and UN Agency (Future in Our Hands (FIOH), Sight Savers International (SSI), UNICEF, Christian Children Fund (CCF), and Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO)) commemorated the Global Week of Action 2007. The activity was collaboratively implemented with Senegal's education advocacy civil society groups on a cross-border initiative. EFA Net joined their counterparts (CSOs and NGOs) from Senegal for a joint celebration of the Week with two high profile campaign platforms held at Sokone, Senegal and at the border villages of Kerr Ayib and Farafenni, The Gambia. Several events were organised during and before the Week.

Evidences were gathered by regional chapters from people who witnessed violations of education rights, as well as some highlighting the fulfillment of education in their lives. The evidences /information provided valuable material for advocacy, and sensitizing policy makers on some of the ordeals of children missing education.

At national level, the celebration of the Week started with a launching on 23 April 2007. This activity brought together stakeholders in EFA, including youth CSO groups like Youth With a Vision (YWV), Child Protection Alliance (CPA), and Youth Ambassadors for Peace (YAP); as well as national NGOs and CBOs.

The Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education supported the activity with the Secretary of State for Education delivering a statement on the national television about the Week and the importance of EFA. This gave the Week a national look, and helped to raise public awareness on education and GWA. This effort by the SOS manifested Government's recognition of this important event.

The Gambia took part in the Big Chain Reaction by coordinating a Cross-border Chain with a match pass that linked EFA partners in Senegal and The Gambia. This Chain, signified, highlighted and demonstrated that education rights have no boundaries; and partners from different countries can join together in raising awareness on "Education Rights Now!", as well as getting policy makers to renew their commitments to EFA.

Regional Chapters also observed celebrations of the week at their levels by holding one-day campaign platforms to address the local policy makers like chiefs, national assembly members and local municipality representatives on the state of education in their regions. The celebrations took similar formats as the national Big Chain. The issues highlighted and brought for the attention of the authorities included aspects of the evidence gathered from the respective regions; then authorities were allowed to respond or make suggestions on ways forward.

Some of the Key achievements of the celebration are enumerated below as:-

- Closer collaboration has been established with EFA stakeholders in Senegal (like Action Aid/Senegal, CONGAD, UNESCO/BREDA, ANCEFA) on education advocacy.
- Wider coverage of education issues on international media houses was reached this time; resulting in raising awareness on some of the constraints in education in both countries e.g. dilapidated classroom conditions of the school at the host village of Kerr Ayib were covered and shown on television; teachers and pupils from both countries shared experiences on struggles they go through to deliver and acquire quality education, and poor teacher conditions were highlighted.

- GAW 2007 witnessed expanded participation of EFA members and increased funding collaboration in both countries. This has contributed towards the increased credibility of the event; and is hopefully to be sustained.
- Advocacy materials were developed and distributed; which generated discussions on education on various mass media channels e.g. community radios, national and international radios and televisions. Education was a talk-word for the week.
- The campaign neutralized the check point at border-post of Farafenni-Kerr Ayib for seven hours with people freely moving in and out of the two countries with education advocacy materials.
- Education staff and EFA advocacy groups had the opportunity of seeing, discussing and comparing education facilities in both countries.
- The Permanent Secretary for Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education challenged the EFA Campaign Network The Gambia to identify cohorts of children not accessing education in The Gambia, and promised that his Department of State will support their admission or re-admission to education.

The issue of quality of education is high on the political agenda. It is being discussed on the media with high grassroots participation. Grassroots' concerns, opinions, and suggestions are being listened to by Government. From a sample survey, the 1 to 1 text book ratio for the core subjects at basic education level i.e. English Language, Mathematics, and Integrated Science has been achieved for Grades 1 – 3.

Youth Ambassadors of Peace, another CEF Partner conducted a survey on school attendance across the country. The objective is to establish the number of hours children spent in school within the school year 2006/07. The rationale is to establish a data base on the number of hours spent in schools by educational regions in comparison with target 880 hours enshrined in the Education Policy 2004 - 2015. This is to establish whether educational regions that have programmed their regional school calendars are meeting the target contact hours they committed themselves to achieve for their schools.

Youth Ambassadors of Peace collected data on school attendance from 52 schools from all the six educational regions. Data was collected on school attendance across the country; and the views of class teachers, heads of schools, and pupils/ students were captured. 15 persons have been trained to conduct the data collection exercise and were to support the advocacy/ campaigns for improved school attendance by learners.

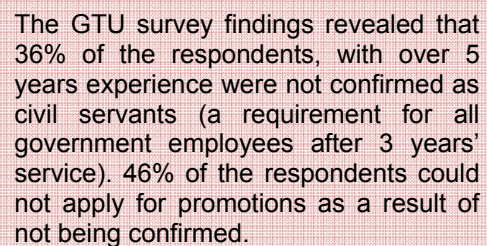
Upon completion of the data collection, YAP was supported by CEF on education policy interpretation and analysis in preparation for the validation exercises of regional school attendance data.

YAP organised a validation exercise of the data in one of the educational regions i.e. Region 3 or North Bank Region (NBR). The exercise brought together the policy makers the likes of the Regional Governor, who is the principal government representative, the regional education director and staff, representatives of parents on school management bodies, teachers and heads of schools.

After validation of the information collected, YAP was able to show, using empirical evidence, to the policy makers that the NBR's school pupils and students did not attain the 880 contact hours that they were suppose to spend in school for 2006/07. YAP also

called the attention of the policy makers in the region, to the comparative disadvantages of not attaining the target number of hours within the education policy's decentralised school calendar system.

GTU another CEF Partner in 2006 received funding and conducted "Bantabas" i.e. sensitization of communities on the Education Policy, as apart of the advocacy work for implementation of UBE. The "BANTABA" (a local word for an open forum/space where discussions are freely and informally held, usually in a village square/centre) strategy being used is now on course and shall be held across the country. This GTU/CEF collaboration activity started with the development of advocacy materials, followed by the training of trainers on the policy development processes. The state and status of implementation of the very education policy under review, as well as the concerns and shortcomings that may impede successful implementation are now being discussed all over the country. The trained trainers facilitate and guide the discussions using the REFLECT approach i.e. with the use of the simplified education policy brochure and poster, they trigger reflections on how the education policy came into being, its contents, methods of service delivery (quality) at the various levels, and who is or should be doing what. 17 such batabas were conducted across the country with the bulk of the fora held in Regions 2, 4, 5, and 6. The process has been documented for international sharing and learning. The Bantabas brought the issue of the education policy to the attention of many people. The coverage was further enhanced with the use of TV and radio. It is noted that some schools incorporate understanding of the education policy into their in-service and school-based capacity building training programmes. CEF Secretariat, among others, received and continuous to receive invitations to facilitate workshops on the education policy to enlighten the people on what contains in it.



The GTU survey findings revealed that 36% of the respondents, with over 5 years experience were not confirmed as civil servants (a requirement for all government employees after 3 years' service). 46% of the respondents could not apply for promotions as a result of not being confirmed.

As a result of this exercise, concerns and questions about the education system and services for the poor are continuously coming from the people, For instance, at the GWA Big Hearing, parents and children called for considerations to be given to the rural regions with the posting of trained teachers, and the distribution of the FTI resources to schools in remote areas was raised by some female teachers.

Gambia Teachers Union (GTU) was also supported by CEF to carry out a survey on teachers and teacher conditions. The survey findings revealed that 36% of the respondents, with over 5 years experience were not confirmed as civil servants (a requirement for all government employees after 3 years' service). 46% of the respondents could not apply for promotions as a result of not being confirmed.

It shows that professionally teachers were inadequately trained and prepared for the service: *teachers have limited knowledge on essential professional requirements that need to be fulfilled after training in order to benefit promotions and well-placements as teachers.* Teachers expressed inability to access basic right instruments that concern them, such as, General Orders, Public Service Commission Regulations, Scheme of Service for Teacher, etc. As a result, this has negative impact on quality of education

e.g. lack of or slow promotion opportunities spanning to 10 years after training contributes to low teacher morale, low performance, low learning outcomes and increases attrition. This is because *better working conditions for teachers means better learning conditions for learners*.

10 advocacy messages were developed from the findings of the survey for the World Teachers Day 2007. A report entitled “The state of the provision of quality education in schools in The Gambia”, was produced, validated and circulated.

Advocacy for reviewing and enforcing a posting policy, re-introducing the in-service training opportunities, and the actual high number of untrained teachers in the system were mounted using empirical evidence. Advocacy is now based on empirical evidence from civil society

A documentary on early marriage and its effects on the girl-child were produced in 2006. The documentary was shown several times on the national TV although no separate impact study was done to determine its effects.

3.1.2: Monitoring Government Spending on Education

In 2004 NAM Select Committee on Education and Training surveyed selected schools, produced a report and disseminated it widely. NAMs have seen and verified the rate of implementation of the catalytic fund, recommendations outlined in the Report on Schools Survey 2004 (shared on the CEF Gambia web page).

In 2006, Pro PAG conducted a study to verify the actual spending on education for the period 2001 to 2005. Pro PAG published the results of the study entitled: *The Gambia Expenditure Analysis 2001 – 2005*. The report showed that actual expenditures were far less than the planned allocations over the period. This report provides evidence on government’s actual spending on education that can be used with authenticity and a tool for further training of the NAMs on budgeting and policy analysis as well as an advocacy tool for civil society in successive budget exercises.

In addition the agency produced information materials for the sensitization and capacity building of the grassroots members in order to scale up the knowledge and skills on budget and budget analysis to district level. This is to enable the key stakeholders in education to reflect and look at government financial inputs in education against what really occurs on the ground e.g. in relation to the expected education service delivery for quality education.

ProPAG has also facilitated participatory budget consultations in three pilot divisions of the Gambia³. During these consultations, development priorities for the divisions are identified and documented. Each division then chooses ten representatives who in turn defend the divisional education priorities at the national interface forum. The main thrust of the exercise is for the Department of State for Education (DOSE) and Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs (DOSFEA) to take onboard these priorities during their budget planning for the subsequent year (in this case 2007). Although capacity building for budget monitoring and tracking is yet to be done at the community

³ North Bank, Upper River and Western Divisions

levels. The NAMs and Civil Society Organizations participated in both the budget consultations and the interface fora.

Pro PAG analyzed the approved national budget to validate the priorities from the previous year's consultations. This is in a way tracking the progress being made towards increased budget allocations for the achievement of EFA goals in the Gambia.

As the national budget frame is January–December, the annual budget brief and also advocacy for increase in education budget allocations strongly hinges on the release of the copy of draft budget for parliament by the DOSFEA. A copy of the draft budget is made available to ProPAG by the national assembly clerk. Quick analysis is done to identify the education funding gaps which are communicated to the NAMs during the 'Budget Brief' session. This year's (2008) Budget Brief will take place before the Budget Speech Session due last week in December.

3.1.3: Innovative Approaches

Aisha Oumoul Moumineen Quranic Memorization and Islamic Boarding School for Girls is a girls' boarding school that provides rare type of education geared toward overcoming gender discrimination. The school aims to provide deeper and advance educational opportunities for girls in Islam as is accorded to their counterparts/ boys. Muslim girls are mostly limited in terms of the contents learnt by society; hence their opportunities of being knowledgeable adults that can take up their own destiny in life are limited. For example, despite The Gambia being a Muslim majority state, there are no qualified women magistrates that are specialists in Islamic law. This school is out to advocate for such opportunities like empowerment of the women to the highest possible level through education. In cognizance of mainstreaming gender, CEF supported this boarding school for girls with a milling machine (labour-saving device) that will give the girls an opportunity of having more time for their studies. The school has now instituted the integration of Islamic education with the conventional school syllabi i.e. English Language and Mathematics are now taught in the school alongside the major curriculum for which the school is established to propagate. The school has yet to commence the teaching of science as part of the syllabus.

Agency for the Development of Women and Children (ADWAC) is a local NGO based in the North Bank Region of The Gambia, which is one of the deprived and disadvantaged areas of the country. Its key area of operation is women and children, and is operating in a region with very few early childhood education facilities. CEF established a partnership with them to institute Early Childhood Education in line with the First EFA Goal. The idea is to ensure a continuation of the work on parenting-education that ADWAC was involved in with UNICEF and the Department of Community Development. The partnership agreement includes activities to advocate and raise the awareness of parents and local institutions such as village development committees, parent-teacher-associations and local policy makers on the importance and need for early childhood learning/education.

ADWAC conducted village to village sensitization campaigns on early childhood education and girls' education. The main purpose of the community sensitization campaign is to increase awareness of the communities on the importance of early

childhood care and development/education with special emphasis on pre-school and girls' education (which are problems in this region). 325 village /community members of high ranking status in decision making within the North Bank Region were sensitized on the importance and need for early childhood education (pre-school), and girls education.

Support has been given to GOVI towards the administrative activities of the pilot pre-school class. The grant includes the salary of the Nanny, purchase of uniforms for the children, purchase of learning materials and equipment, and for the proposed official launching of the school. The Nanny helps the children in their development of daily life skills such as basic body care: using a tooth brush, combing of one's hair, way to the class, toilet etc. 13 children (7 girls and 6 boys) have benefited from the pre-school programme for the whole year; and each child was provided with a set of uniform, shoes and a bag. According to their end of year performance report, 8 pupils have performed well, 1 pupil's performance is fair, and 3 performed unsatisfactorily. The children are facilitated to and from school with CEF supporting with fuel for the vehicle that was provided by another partner called Friends of GOVI. The pre-school was officially launched by GOVI in October 2007. This was attended by a cross section of government officials, quasi- government bodies, parents and the media representatives. The CEF support covered the media coverage and advocacy facilities. CEF also supported them with technical skills by serving in the organising committee.

GSAIE was supported to conduct the training of Madrassa teachers to orientate them on the new books developed through CEF support, sensitize them on the integrated syllabi and importance of synchronization of curriculum, and building their capacity on basic teaching skills. This was significant as it could facilitate teaching and learning in the concerned Arabic schools on a standardized basis, instead of the current fragmented and uncoordinated syllabi with the various affiliated Arabic schools. The existence of a unified time table will also enhance quality and standard of teaching and learning.

112 teachers benefited across the country. The newly developed materials are now in all Madrassas that are members of the Secretariat.

GSIAE embarked on a nation-wide data collection and monitoring of Madrassas. The detailed current data base of Madrassas by proprietor, enrolment, staff, and level of adherence to education policy integration pronouncements e.g. teaching English as a subject.

A committee of members from a cross-section of Madrassa education service providers on behalf of the GSIAE went on a nation-wide tour of madrassas to monitor the institutions with a view to verifying the situation of teaching and learning, use of unified materials, enrolments, infrastructure and general staffing in madrassas as compared to the conventional schools. The exercise confirmed the existence of 335 Madrassas registered with the Secretariat by June 2006; and enrolments in madrassas of 55,327 pupils of whom 24,404 are girls. The data is shared with the Planning Unit of the Department of State for Education for verification and synchronization into the national annual education statistics.

On resourcing of Madrassas, the GSIAE has now employed 130 teachers to teach English Language in Madrassas with funding from the national education budget. This is

a direct support from the Ministry of Education to the Secretariat, which has minimized the English teacher attrition from madrassas.

The GSIAE has presented the collected data from Madrassa to the Permanent Secretary of the Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education (DOSBSE), as well as a report on the state of teachers in Madrassas. The grants received by the Secretariat to employ teachers of English Language in Madrassas have been reported. The Secretariat continues holding discussions with the authorities of the Department of State for Education on increasing allocations to madrassas based on their data and findings of the 2006 Survey.

3.2: The changes and impact on the education for all activities and CEF contributions towards achieving EFA

It is said that impact can only really be measured over a period of time, and through initially gathering base line data, which then provides the backdrop for assessing the ways in which organizations have shifted over time and have brought about changes. In other words, impact studies require longitudinal research, to be able to see what has actually shifted within the organization's functioning and the results achieved.

Although CEF has been operational in the Gambia over a limited time period (2004-2008), one can discern some changes and impact on education for all activities towards achieving EFA goals that are attributable to CEF's contributions. Some of these are stated below.

A centre for the EFA Campaign Network Secretariat is in place; which enhances easy location, contact and identification. CEF's support strengthened the EFA Campaign Network Secretariat to have a fixed location and office equipment and furniture such as computers, printer, photocopier and stationery is being reinforced by other partners giving further support. Following the expiry date of the one year rent paid for the premises for the EFA Campaign Network to house its Secretariat at TANGO, CEF has renewed the contract and paid rent for an additional 2 years i.e. *April 2007 to March 2009*.

An EFA Campaign Network has a new lease of legal mandate (a new constitution), with national accreditation, and functionally structured. The grassroots organisations like the regional chapters are part of the decision making body. The National Executive Committee (NEC) is the major decision making body; and the membership to the NEC is for a set term i.e. 3 years. There is now a broad-based functional EFA advocacy coalition in place in the country.

With legally accredited structures (with the support of CEF), EFA Campaign Network The Gambia's image before its partners and funders is changing positively. Confidence and organizational vitality are improving and perhaps as a result the Network received funding from partners other than CEF. It had received funding in 2007 for the AGM and GWA from other agencies like FIOH, Action Aid The Gambia, UNICEF and UNESCO. The commitment of resources on the activities of the EFA Campaign Network by the partner organisations increased the resource based of EFA Net and has also shown that EFA Net's sustainability is now beyond the concern of CEF alone but of a coalition of partners.

Communication and relationships between the EFA Campaign Network partners, as well as supporters of the EFA course has shown manifested improvements with the use of the EFA Net Secretariat, officers and equipment.

The increased participation and interest in the GWA by other partner organisations like UNICEF, VSO and FIOH means that education advocacy is becoming not only a concern for CEF in The Gambia but many more CSOs and International Agencies.

Another CEF partner, the General Secretariat For Islamic /Arabic Education (GSIAE) has now developed integrated syllabi (Grade1-12), which are intra Madrassa and inter-conventional school in nature. The Secretariat now has got unified timetable elements also in place.

Regular and cordial dialogue is established between the General Secretariat for Islamic /Arabic Education and the Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education (DOSBSE). The recognition of Madrassa education as part of the national EFA framework is actualized. The General Secretariat for Islamic/Arabic Education in The Gambia now actively participates in all EFA planning and implementation activities organized by the Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education, such as the drafting of Education Sector Strategic Plan in December 2006.

In addition, GSIAE Secretariat in 2005 secured from the Department of State for Education direct financial support from the Education Budget to employ teachers of English into the Madrassas. GSIAE has now employed 130 teachers to teach English Language in Madrassas with funding from the national education budget. This is a direct support from the Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education to the Secretariat, which has minimized the English teacher attrition from madrassas. This funding support from the national budget is now assured and made available to GSIAE on annual basis.

A data base on the number and list of madrassa institutions in the country is now available and updated periodically. The madrassas that qualify the status of being madrassas as enshrined in the education policy have been identified. The GSIAE and individual bodies in the provision of education services have knowledge and information (in a data base) of the situation of madrassa school environment i.e. buildings, furniture, toilets, water, and gardens. The data is shared with the Planning Unit of the Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education for verification and synchronization into the national annual education statistics.

With regards to mainstreaming the four core subjects (English, Mathematics, Science and Social & Environmental Studies) in Madrassa schools, books in these subject areas are translated into Arabic and printed for the Madrassa through FTI funding.

Aisha Oumoul Moumineen Quranic Memorization and Islamic Boarding School for Girls (a CEF partner) have now instituted the integration of Islamic education with the conventional school syllabi. English Language and Mathematics are now taught in the school alongside the major curriculum for which the school is established to propagate.

Another CEF partner GTU was motivated and engineered to set up its own research unit and establish a reliable data base on teachers and factors affecting teachers. Independent civil society data on teachers is now available and regularly updated. This has improved the quality of education statistics. It will also contribute towards building the capacity of GTU staff on conducting education research and influencing education policies.

GTU's data on teachers and conditions of teachers has improved the Union's mode of advocacy. Its advocacy is now based on authentic evidence generated by it. This has increased the organizational vitality and public confidence in the Union. The advocacy

style of the Union has shift more to encouraging dialogue with the Education directors. One respondent described the situation as follows “Some of the directors were previously reluctant to see us. Now they welcome us. Both of us are now working hard to cement this partnership based on mutual trust and confidence.” The GTU was invited to be part of the Government delegation to the World Bank Institute’s validation workshop on Teacher Matters in Nairobi, Kenya.

GTU this time is given a full-time seat in the short listing committee for teacher promotions and defends and justifies for the interest of some teachers based on lapses of the system and not the teachers. This has resulted in some teachers being considered for promotions, who would not have been promoted and which would add to their low morale and professional output. In addition, the GTU chaired the DOSBSE Complaints Committee (2007) which receives complaints about promotion issues. It is also highly involved in the coordination of teacher transportation.

Gambia Teachers Union used the former draft teacher postings policy written by the Department of State for Education to draft an expanded version of a teacher posting policy. The two draft copies were then forwarded to the Education Advisory Council, the highest technical advisory body to the Secretary of State for Education for review and advice. The Council decided to set up a task force consisting of representatives of GTU, Department of State for Education, municipal councils and parents to further review the draft policy.

The draft expanded policy was then re-forwarded to the Education Advisory Council, who approved it and submitted it to the Secretary of State for Education for the Ministry’s consideration. This document which will guide equitable teacher deployment is an important legal instrument for balancing teacher posting between rural and urban areas. The GTU Regional Secretaries sit on the regional postings committees.

In the area of Corporate Social Responsibility, CEF in partnership with Pro PAG, and with funding from Pro PAG embarked on conducting a survey to find out from the organizations themselves as to which among them believes has a social corporate responsibility in education.

The objective is to map out those enterprises that can be consulted and to build partnerships on education advocacy in future. The exercise will minimize waste of resources and time when it comes to CSO/business sector relationship in education advocacy. 150 business bodies have been reached with the questionnaire on private sector social responsibly to education; and about 90% have responded

Through the consultations held with GCCI personnel and documentations shared, GCCI has seen the need for contributions to education advocacy, and has promised to support the initiative.

Another CEF partner, The Youth Ambassadors for Peace, produced empirical evidence which has proven to Regions Two and Three that their pupils are spending less hours in school than the prescribed 880 hours. The Governor of North Bank Region noted with concern the revelations of the survey results and promised to hold a high level meeting to look at the school calendar issue for 2008/09 school year.

The Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education now conducts a media campaign against pupils' low attendance of school at the beginning of school terms or after public holidays and last weeks of the terms. These activities are both on radio and TV.

A pre-school for blind and low vision is established while the mainstreaming of blind children is being effected at higher levels (primary and secondary school). Advocacy materials in the form of leaflets and billboards informing the public on the existence of this initiative have been developed. The public is being sensitized through these materials, as well as through the radio on the need for visually impaired early childhood education. A class of such children as a pilot is in place for observations. Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education, through the representative of the Secretary of State for Basic and Secondary Education has consented to sustaining the pre-school after the CEF project.

As a result of the community sensitization work of another CEF partner (ADWAC), four Early Childhood Development and Education Centers were opened and operational in the rural North Bank Region. This sits wells with the current Government policy direction of annexing ECCE centers to nearby Lower Basic Schools for sustainability reasons.

Some school administrators and CSOs have been introduced to budget tracking. In addition to some NAMs also trained in budget tracking and are aware of their powers in the budgetary process. The Education and Training Select Committee of the National Assembly advocated and secured an extra GMD1.5 million (equiv.GB£30,928) from the Secretary of State for Finance and Economic Affairs on to the Education Budget 2006. The amount carved from the miscellaneous budget line is secured for the employment of school caretakers volunteering for over 5 years. They were

The effects of the community sensitization work of another CEF partner (ADWAC), led to the establishment of 4 early childhood development and education centers and their operational in the rural North Bank Region.

also able to demystify the 2008 National Budget and demonstrated their skills at the review of the first draft of the 2008 budget in September 2007. During the focus group discussion with the NAMs they were considering the creation of a separate budget line in the National Assembly budget, for monitoring and supervision of projects by the various select committees. Such a budget line can be used as seed money to lobby other donors to contribute to it as a way of establishing a sustainable capacity for the oversight functions of the NAMs.

There was increased CSO attendance and participation at the budget inter-face meeting organised by Pro PAG in August 2007. This has demonstrated the feasibility of the institutionalization of participatory budget process in the country.

3.3: CEF Partner relations and capacity building contributions for sustainable education advocacy

As the name implies, CEF does not implement activities on the ground. It worked by giving advice and funding to local and national civil society organizations (CSOs) to carry out education advocacy work in the country. These CSOs and their national coalition are considered as CEF partners. The sustainable education advocacy work of the implementing partners will be affected positively or negatively by a lot of factors among which are the partnership selection criteria and process, partnership capacity assessment, the values and principles of the partnership. These then inform the institutional and programme capacity building proposal / plan, implementation and monitoring and the budget for funding. These also in turn inform the partnership agreement or contract including how implementation issues are going to be resolved. The rigor with which the above are carried out will definitely affect sustainable education advocacy work in the Gambia.

Some of the present leadership of some CEF partners were unable to state how or why their organizations were selected to be CEF partners. They could only assume that their organizations were selected because they were doing some kind of education advocacy work before the establishment of CEF in the country. They however agreed that they had series of meetings with CEF coordinator during which it was explained to them what is CEF and how it works. Subsequent to these they were invited to submit project proposals. CEF's own first quarter 2004 report at page 2 described partnership identification as shown below.

“Consulting National Coalition/partners

The process started with the newly appointed coordinator accompanied by Mr. Lamin Nyangado, who was overseeing the CEF, visiting and holding consultations with major stakeholders. Partners like The Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (TANGO), EFA Campaign Network Secretariat, Forum for African Women Educationalists Gambia Chapter (FAWE –GAM), Gambia Teachers Union (GTU), Pro Poor Advocacy Secretariat (Pro PAG), DFID, Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO), Peace Corps The Gambia; The Association of Early Childhood Educator (AECE) etc. were visited. The visits were used for the introduction of the coordinator and the CEF Project.

After consultations with the major partners, a weeklong visit to some of the partners in the rural regions like the EFA Campaign Regional Networks executives in the North Bank Division, Central River Division and Lower River Divisions; as well as some CBOs/CSOs such as Agency for the Development of Women and Children (ADWAC) and Village Aid were visited. Courtesy calls were made on the Regional Education directors and their staff. To all those visited, the CEF Project aims, objectives and procedures were elucidated and appeals for amicable collaborations lodged. From this, partners who have direct stake and relationship to the CEF activities were identified “

The second quarter report 2004 also described it as follows “The period was utilised to carry out more sensitisation activities on would-be partners on CEF areas of intervention to individual partner basis. Twenty-three of the would-be partners were consulted, issued with copies of the CEF Strategic Plan, letter of invitation for submission of proposals and guidelines on application formats for requesting CEF funding.”

It was further reported in the third quarter 2004 report that following the extension of

invitation in Quarter Two to partners for them to submit proposals for CEF support/funding, the Management Committee received applications for funding from nine organisations

Thereafter CEF approved five of the nine funding proposals. Funds were then disbursed in September 2004 to these five to start activities.

There are some organizations that were later invited to become CEF partners and indicated that they went through some screening process by filling questionnaires. "The process also involved series of meetings to discuss and clarify various issues before completing and returning the completed questionnaires" said one respondent. One of these organizations was subsequently invited to a CEF planning workshop where a programme area was identified for its intervention and requested to develop and submit to CEF a draft proposal. With the input of the CEF Coordinator and the ActionAid Education Advocacy Officer, the draft proposal was finalized and accepted for funding. Thereafter a document called a partnership agreement was signed. The organization however, felt that this document seems more of a contract document than a partnership agreement.

In the area of capacity assessment, CEF The Gambia project committed itself at section 4.2.1b of its Strategic Plan 2004-2006 to provide support to conduct capacity needs of CSOs. It is further stated at paragraph 2 section 5 of the same document that CEF will "encourage and support partner organizations to implement activities that they have expertise or advantage in..." However, this evaluation exercise did not find any formal and written partnership capacity assessment system and process that was consistently applied for all CEF partners. It would appear that CEF assumed that all its partners except one already possessed adequate institutional and programme capacity in education advocacy and therefore there was no need to build, expand and or deepen such capacity.

Six out of nine CEF partners (66.6%) claimed that they were not aware of any capacity assessment of their organizations either done by CEF or jointly with CEF.

Two CEF partners (22.2%) viewed the selection process mentioned above as "both a way of them knowing CEF as well as CEF also gauging their capacity to deliver the specific education advocacy service required by CEF".

Only One (11.1%) CEF Partner, the EFA Campaign Network, confirmed that it had undergone both an institutional and programme capacity assessment. Even there it was done way into the relationship and done through a consultancy whose report took a long time to be produced and validated. Training and Research Systems International (TRESI) was contracted to conduct a study on the status of the EFA Campaign Network (The Gambia). The study was in two parts, an assessment of the network secretariat (strengths and weaknesses) as perceived by the general membership, and a delineation of specific areas in which the coalition members will require training and capacity building so as to improve their efficiency and effectiveness for advocacy work in education for all.

Subsequently another consultancy facilitated a workshop attended by the network members and partners to map out the way forward for the institutional and programme capacity building of the EFANET.

The EFA Net confirmed as was also shown by literature review that its activities were however funded by CEF since CEF's inception up to when the capacity assessment report was validated and accepted. Since then the funding of its institutional and programme capacity building activities was rightly based largely on the recommendations of the capacity building assessment report and the report of the way forward workshop. In addition to building its institutional capacity, the capacity of EFA Campaign Network members was built on facilitation of workshops and conducting of meetings for selection/ elections of committees/ representatives. This was a one-day training workshop held prior to the regional AGMs and was offered by BESPOR, a new participant to the EFA Net. It was conducted specifically for the EFA Campaign Network team members that facilitated the regional chapter meetings on the draft constitution and annual general meeting.

In addition, as a way of supporting advocacy for Universal Basic Education (UBE), training for capacity building of members on advocacy was held in September 2006. This training was a step-down training of the CEF Maputo training on CSO in Policy Processes. The workshop targeted 19 members of the EFA Campaign Network Secretariat and Regional Chapters, CEF partners outside the Network and NGOs in education. Female representatives from all the regions were specially targeted.

The workshop tried to equip participants with basic advocacy skills, develop common understanding of issues and terminologies in advocacy. Advocacy, campaigning and lobbying concepts were discussed and defined by participants guided by research body organization perceptions to agree on organizational specific definitions. The group mapped out issues in "quality education" for national concerted campaigning in the coming year.

Participants received the EFA Net Strategy Paper and reviewed it together to familiarize themselves on what contains in it. Each regional chapter was provided with advocacy planning documents used at the training i.e. "Working for Change in Education - a handbook for planning advocacy by Save the Children, and "Tools for Policy Impact: A Handbook for Researchers by ODI" as tools to guide the preparations of their advocacy work in future.

The training was principally led and facilitated by the GTU trainer, who was identified by the EFA Campaign Network to undergo the capacity building training held in Maputo.

A team of four persons: one MC Member, a representative of the EFA Campaign Network Secretariat, a representative of the Teachers Union, and CEF Coordinator visited Ghana on a week's study tour for learning and sharing of best practices. The study tour exposed the members to practical EFA network and coalition building experiences, structures and actual work carried out, among others. This helped changed perceptions and views of the partners and the MC member on network and coalition setting; which became evident on how they reacted and associated with issues of advocacy and their relationship with CEF.

It is widely known among CEF partners that The EFA Campaign Network had substantial institutional capacity building support from CEF.

One partner claimed that it subsequently charged 10% project cost in their proposals

which they used for institutional capacity building. The majority of CEF partners claimed that they never had any support from CEF for institutional capacity building to enhance the quality and performance of their education advocacy work.

It is also noted however, that some CEF partners actually built the capacity of other CEF partners and their members particularly on Budget education and budget monitoring. The Pro-Poor Advocacy Group (Pro PAG) implemented the capacity building programme activities for the NAMs in 2004 and again for the New National Assembly Select Committee on Education and Training members of the Legislative Session 2007 – 2011. Following the elections in January 2007, over 65% new members entered the House; which justified repeating the capacity building programme on areas covered by CEF to the previous cohort of parliamentarians.

The modules delivered included: the education policy, education strategic plan, International commitments, IMF caps, and The Gambia's Budget cycle, the coding of the National Budget, Budget analysis and budget tracking tools.

10 NAMs of the Committee of 13 (i.e. 77%) in the Education and Training Select Committee benefited from the capacity building training. Those who did not attend received similar training in the previous Legislative Group. 4 technical staff of the National Assembly Secretariat also attended the training.

Representatives from four major CSOs in education partnering with CEF namely: Gambia Teachers Union (GTU), Child Protection Alliance (CPA), Youth Ambassadors of Peace (YAP) and the Regional Chapter members of the EFA Campaign Network also benefited from the training. Overall, 25 persons were trained, of whom those from the CSOs are expected to train more members of their agencies.

“Previously, the NAMs cannot analyze the budget well. But now, through the CEF training on budget analysis skills, we can track budget expenditures and argue for pro-poor investments”; say a NAM during the FGD!

Training materials elucidating and clarifying the budget, budgeting, budget tracking, the national education policy 2004 – 2015 details, the EFA and education MDGs, and basic calculating techniques in budget analysis were developed and used as a training manual.

The national budget was demystified and simple budget analysis techniques taught e.g. calculating percentage growth instead of nominal figures, comparing major social sector allocations to determine government priority areas, and calculating nominal and real budgetary allocations. “We now understand the meaning of the figures on the budget; and we will see what education needs to get”, said a NAM. They can now analyse the budget to advocate for increased allocation using or based on logical evidences.

Catholic Education Secretariat (CES), a body managing schools established by the Roman Catholic Mission, and financed by government grants, that partnered with CEF sometime ago requested for support to train their school administrators on financial management, budgeting and budget tracking. The support was given and Pro PAG

extended the training accorded to the NAMs to the CES schools.

63 personnel comprising principals of schools, vice principals and bursars (i.e. school level finance managers) from 28 schools benefited from the training. They were introduced to budget literacy, budget analysis and tracking of budgets. They were also taught issues about the national budget, as the source for their school resources, its components, interpreting or reading it, and its relationship to achieving education objectives at school level.

They were introduced to budget tracking, its importance and processes; as well as analyzing education budget allocations in comparison to other social sectors. They were also trained on the use of a uniformed financial management model, plus organizing the school budget in line with it.

In addition, Catholic Education Secretariat received support for sensitizing teachers, administrators and heads of schools on the EFA & MDG Goals, Education Policy details and responsibilities, record keeping and Government Instrument (General Orders and Scheme of Service).

Community capacity building on education monitoring was implemented by ADWAC. The training sessions were held in four school communities aimed to enhance and improve the capacities of PTAs to effectively participate in managing the resources of the school. 101 PTA committee members attended the training in four schools. Roles and responsibilities of PTAs were redefined and documented. Individual responsibilities of officials on the PTA executive members were recorded. Fund raising to improve general school environment and conditions was treated and participants guided to know where such opportunities are available within the division.

The schools have gone into agreement with ADWAC for further assistance in proposal development for fund raising.

It is confirmed by both the interviews and literature review that irrespective of the fact whether partners have gone through a formal capacity assessment or not and whether partnership values and principles were discussed and agreed or not, CEF was convinced about the capacity of its partners to deliver the various education advocacy services and signed a partnership agreement detailing what funds would be provided by CEF for what services to be provided by the CEF partner within what time frame.

All the partners were funded by CEF in various amounts in their education advocacy programme and activities. As a result of this funding, the CEF partners implemented the required activities in the 3 CEF objective areas and achieved the performance enumerated in section 3 above.

Several implementation issues arose relating mainly to delay disbursement of approved funds from CEF on the one hand and on the other hand the late implementation and report submission on the part of the partners. It is reported by interviewees that these issues were however, resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, thanks largely to the proactive intervention of the CEF Coordinator. Meetings were regularly organized between the CEF coordinator and line managers to discuss work plans and performance. These meetings were also informed by regular monitoring visits by the CEF Coordinator.

It is noted that although Action Aid did not sign a partnership agreement with CEF, there was close collaboration between CEF and Action Aid Education Programme which made it possible for more to be covered in education advocacy without duplication.

3.4: Examine changes in key social norms that may influence Partner relations

Changes in key social norms in any society do not come about easily especially in a short time frame like the project life of CEF. However some shifts in some social norms can be discerned and are said to be attributable to CEF partner relations.

It has been reported that most NGOs and CSOs in the Gambia are inward looking in focus and concentrate on acting alone to improve the condition of their members and beneficiary communities. With the advent of the CEF Project, several organizations have started to work together in the planning and implementation of education advocacy activities. There is this gradual move away from acting alone to an inclusive approach to education advocacy work. These organizations now network and have come together in a coalition called the EFA Campaign Network.

A direct result of acting alone has been the tendency not to open up your books and be transparent and accountable to partners. CEF's operational procedure requires partners to open up to others and also account to CEF funds that have been disbursed before any reimbursement is done. Despite the initial teething problems, this arrangement became rooted in organizational behaviors and enhanced transparency and accountability.

The blind and low vision children's attendance of education at this age rather than being isolated at home or being on the streets as beggars (the traditional practice) is considered as a major change in a key social norm. These children are no longer considered as dirty and outcasts but are now seen as clean and are not only integrated into the society but now have the opportunity to contribute to it. This significant change is being advocated for on the radio by GOVI, resulting in an increase in the number of visitors to the school. There is an appreciation of the initiative being registered by the populace and GOVI has children registered in its waiting list for admission to the pre-school for next academic year.

Given the cultural preference or affinity for using elders to quietly engage each other in dialogue to effect change rather than engage in open advocacy using the lobby or activist approach or a combination of both, the education advocacy work of CEF partners has demonstrated a significant shift in this social norm to open advocacy activities especially during the annual Global Week of Action and the World Teachers Day celebrations.

Some key informants also alluded to the fact that there is a slight shift away from selection to election of officers and members of boards and committees. Some even went further to claim that there is a shift towards transparent periodic renewal of mandates.

Section 4: Key Strategic issues critical for programme sustenance and Recommendations for improving on CEF intended programme quality and performance

In summary, the above mentioned findings clearly showed that CEF's advice and funding contributed to building a stronger domestic constituency in The Gambia, to demand greater investment in education and enable civil society organizations and their national coalition to play a more coherent and constructive role in promoting achievement of EFA and MDG Pillars 2 and 3.

Several respondents have concluded that CEF The Gambia project played a key role in supporting the strengthening of the National Coalition known as the EFA Campaign Network as well as enabling it to have a presence at Regional level. There is incontrovertible evidence that CEF project supported the expansion, democratization, institutional and programme capacity building of the EFANET. It is observed that the coalition is poised to address through its regional chapters the challenges faced by the education system in the different parts of the country as contained in its Strategy paper.

With legally accredited structures, assured accountability and ownership, EFA Campaign Network The Gambia's image before its partners and funders has changed positively. With this renewed confidence and credibility, the Network continued to receive funding and personnel for its programme and activities from other agencies apart from CEF. It is therefore, hoped that the Network's education advocacy work will continue once CEF's funding stops. It is especially noted that although CEF initially provided core support for the Global Campaign for Education's annual Global Action Week, it is now funded by a variety of agencies.

It can also be concluded that the community policy discussion forums (Bantabas) initiated by the CEF partner- the Gambia Teachers Union, allowed civil society to foster dialogue with policy makers about community concerns. These bantabas enabled policy makers to have direct input and feedback from the citizenry about various policies on education. It is claimed that these policy discussion forums have brought about some changes in policy and practice e.g. the variable school calendar.

The progressive harmonization of the Arabic / Islamic schools (madrasas) with the government's conventional school system has also greatly enhanced the achievement of EFA in the country. So also has been the teaching of English and Mathematics in the girls' boarding school.

From evidence adduced from literature review, key informant interviews and the focused group discussions, one can conclude that with CEF support, the education budget has increasingly been brought under the scrutiny of civil society organizations in the Gambia. In addition, some National Assembly Members (NAMs) have been able to carry out budget analysis and lobby to influence budget allocation to education.

CEF The Gambia project has also performed in the area of documenting innovation and ending exclusion. There is an official government policy opposing discrimination and encouraging disabled children to enroll in mainstream schools. There is however no special needs nursery school in the country. With CEF support an Early Childhood Care

and Development Centre for Blind and Low Vision Children is now established and assured of support by the government at the end of the CEF project.

From the evidence stated in the findings and the conclusions arrived at above, it can be finally concluded that CEF support has enabled civil society organizations and their national coalition to engage in, expand and deepened their education advocacy activities. There are few key strategic issues critical for CEF Programme sustenance and the way and manner that they are addressed will also enhance and improve CEF intended programme quality and performance. These are considered to be:-

1. Continued availability and adequacy of funding for CSO education advocacy
2. Existence of CSOs willing to engage in education advocacy
3. Capacity of the CSOs in education advocacy.
4. Gender analysis and gender mainstreaming in all the above

Funding

CEF was the funding mechanism dedicated to only CSO education advocacy in the country. It focused on funding the education advocacy work of its partner CSOs. The existence of this funding mechanism enabled the CSO partners to implement the array of education advocacy activities enumerated in the sections above in this report. Some CEF partners have indicated that the education advocacy activities they were engaged in are already incorporated into their organizational strategic plan and are therefore part and parcel of their organizational programme activities. These activities will therefore continue since they are now part of the existence of organization itself. For example, ADWAC will continue the advocacy work for ECD in its Eco-zone in the North Bank Region because it is a programme area of the agency's work. Likewise the GTU will continue to advocate for better conditioning and positioning of its members because that is what is at the core of its existence. So also will be the annual GWA activities of the EFANET. ProPAG's budget education, analysis and tracking work will continue in a like manner. However in all these cases the scope and the scale of advocacy work will be adversely affected by the lack of a successor funding mechanism for CSO education advocacy work. There are some activities supported by CEF that the various partners could not say how they would be funded at the end of the CEF project.

In some cases, it is not only the availability of the funding but also the adequacy of the available funding and the right procedures. For example the GTU planned 39 community policy discussion forums but were able to implement only 17 (43.5%). In the case of the YAP project, the bureaucracy surrounding the funds disbursement and management posed problems in terms of covering the validation exercises in all the 6 regions across the country. It was only able to cover 2 out of 6 regions at the end as a result of technical constraints in funds disbursement by CEF. Raw data is available that needs to be validated to authenticate their use for advocacy in all the regions; as well as use different media channel to communicate findings and their effects on the education system. If additional resources were available this activity will continue in order to reach a national coverage and thereby improve programme performance.

CEF The Gambia project concentrated on disbursing funds and not on raising funds for either itself or actively engage in supporting the fund raising efforts of its partners except in its last lap of existence when it started to actively search locally for donors to contribute to an intended civil society education fund.

There are definitely difficulties in raising funds locally in The Gambia, particularly from donors (embassies and agencies) most of whom are based in Dakar, Senegal and accredited to The Gambia. Locally, the difficulty lies in the smallness of the economy; and externally, due to the governance image of the Government. Action Aid conducted a donor scoping trip to Dakar in October 2007 (i.e. AATG top officers) and found out that many embassies do not have The Gambia on their list of priority countries.

Pro-PAG, GCCI and CEF are exploring the possibility of establishing a corporate partnership. GCCI has mentioned that the business sector pays an education levy to government and is asking about those funds, and if they could be utilised for the purpose for which the partnership was looking for funds. Upon enquiries, it was realized that these funds are for the national training levy and utilised by the National Training Authority (an arm of the Department of State for Higher Education). The challenge therefore is whether the private/business sector will be willing for support with another separate fund for the CSEF. The fact of the matter is that no resources have been secured yet for the CSEF. It is being recommended that fund raising activities for the successor funding mechanism as well as fund raising capacity building of partners be mainstreamed from the start of the project in order to ensure programme sustenance and improve both the quality and performance of the CEF intended education advocacy in the country.

Existence of CSOs willing to engage in education advocacy

CEF the Gambia project built on what was available on the ground instead of attempting to as it where invent the wheel. As stated above, it invited CSOs that were already operational in its three objective areas to submit funding proposals. These organizations were invariably already working in these objective areas in the country are already poised to implement activities pending availability of funding. As indicated above some of these partners are willing and able to continue their education advocacy work in the country because such activities are already embedded in their core programmes. The existence of such organizations / agencies augurs well for the sustenance of the CEF programme. This CEF strategy has however limited the scope of work in education advocacy and consequently CEF was unable to initiate expansion of the scope of its work beyond what these partners can do to other areas such supporting national research on links between macro-economic policy and education financing, influencing IMF policy commitments to stop using public sector wage bill caps as a routine condition on loans, mapping out missing children such as the “Almudos” and innovate ways to bring them education and especially how to deal with reducing the adult illiteracy rate in the country. It is therefore recommended that CEF or its successor funding mechanism include in its funding arrangements CSOs that work in the areas suggested above or support the existing partners to expand the scope of their work to include such areas of education advocacy.

Capacity of the CSOs in education advocacy

Since CEF is not an implementing body and instead is a mechanism for providing advice and funding for its implementing partners, therefore the scope, quality and performance of its intended programme of education advocacy will depend on the capacity of its partners. As indicated in the partner relations section of this report, CEF never sought to formally assess their capacity or to build, expand or deepen the institutional and programme capacity or “expertise” of any partner organisation except the EFANET. All

the key informants of all the CEF partners have expressed the need to have their capacities built particularly in the areas of fund raising, technical expertise in advocacy, networking, alliance building and studies and research. It is particularly confounding that despite acknowledging in its strategy paper that the culture of serious research to inform policy formulation and decision making is yet to be established in the country, yet CEF by and large sought not to do much about it. Given the fact that its environmental scanning has also shown that both the cultural and political climate of the country will only tolerate advocacy based, it is therefore that CEF did not put research capability of its

Given the fact the operation of most of work alone and competition with each building their capacities and alliance building their appreciation of the ability to present a well coherent voice at the

As stated above, the adequacy of funding the performance of CEF be even better if their (including fund raising and implementation to reporting) is sufficiently successfully raise funds advocacy work well project.

Some partners have training and exposure to understanding of international policy Campaign and concrete actions on the given the perception of several CSOs have and skills to challenge was expressed by a key 2006 CEF Sustainable

Research and stated at page 17 of the report as *“They are supposed to be reminding national governments of their commitments and track their adherence to those commitments and keep them on their toes. They do not have enough capacity to do that. They must know government policy direction, actual policy statements and content. They must be able to track policy implementation and produce empirical evidence of deviation. They should also be able to know what international protocols and commitments that national governments have signed up to so as to hold them accountable. They cannot*

“They are supposed to be reminding national governments of their commitments and track their adherence to those commitments and keep them on their toes. They do not have enough capacity to do that. They must know government policy direction, actual policy statements and content. They must be able to track policy implementation and produce empirical evidence of deviation. They should also be able to know what international protocols and commitments that national governments have signed up to so as to hold them accountable. They cannot challenge the government on any of the above”.

work that is evidence even more surprising sufficient support in the partners.

preferred mode of CEF’s partners is to sometimes even in other, support in in networking, coalition would greatly enhance need for unity and their coordinated and negotiating table.

availability and would greatly improve partner CSOs. It would capacity in fund raising strategy development donor accounting and build so that they can for the education after the end of the CEF

expressed the need for a detailed national and relating to the EFA translation of this into ground. This is pertinent public officials that inadequate knowledge them. This perception informant during the Funding and Coalition

challenge the government on any of the above.” This evaluation did not find evidence suggesting that this perception has changed much.

In conclusion, it is noted that several partners have indicated that if their capacities were sufficiently built during the partnership period, they would continue to use these strengthened capacities to enhance the quality and performance of their education advocacy work well after the end of the CEF project.

It is therefore recommended that in order to achieve programme sustenance as well as improve the quality and performance of the CEF intended programme, that sufficient attention is paid to capacity building of partners, especially in the area of education research and advocacy skills. It is further recommended that capacity building be a core support area for such an intended programme.

Gender Analysis and Gender mainstreaming in future programme Activities

Future programme activities (funding, capacity building and advocacy) should be premised on rigorous gender analysis and attempts should be made to mainstream the relevant gender issues.

Section 5: Appendices

5.1: Terms of Reference (TOR)

INTRODUCTION/ BACKGROUND

The Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) was established in 2002 in 17 low income Commonwealth member countries including The Gambia. It started operations in March 2002 with the planning processes. The Gambia programme had a late start with the establishment of a secretariat in January 2004.

The initial plan was 3-year project (2002 – 2005) but it was later extended to June 2008. The project operated on three priority objectives of:

- Strengthening civil society participation in design and implementation of national and local education plans and frameworks especially through support to national coalitions/ alliances
- Enabling local communities to monitor government spending on education, both at national and local levels, and
- Supporting innovative ways for civil society to ensure that all children, especially girls and the most vulnerable are able to access quality education.

CEF The Gambia in partnership with seven national organizations implemented the CEF programme in line with the three CEF priority objectives. The partnership started with proposal development by individual partners, followed by signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), support with funds to implement activities, and retiring of funds spent with narrative reports on outputs, and a financial report, among others. The strategy was advocacy based and but necessarily service delivery oriented.

2. ASSESSMENT/ STUDY TITLE

This is as shown on the title page above.

3. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the End of Project evaluation are to:

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the CEF Project in The Gambia in terms of institutionalizing education advocacy
2. Examine the changes and impact on the education of all activities and CEF contributions towards achieving EFA
3. Examine CEF Partner relations and capacity building contributions for sustainable education advocacy
4. Examine changes in key social norms that may influence Partner relations
5. Determine key strategic issues critical for programme sustenance and based on the findings, to provide recommendations for improving on CEF intended programme quality and performance

4. DURATION

The duration of the consultancy will be thirty three (33) Days, commencing 8 July 2008.

5. PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

The exercise will comprise of four major stages:

- Literature review
- Key Informant Interviews
- Focus Group Discussions
- Stakeholder Validation Workshop

Stakeholders Validation Workshop:

Upon the production of a draft report, the content will be circulated to stakeholders for review in readiness of a consultative forum to allow them to input into the document. A validation workshop will be organized at the end of the exercise and relevant comments and contributions there from will to the extent possible be incorporated into the final report.

6. TEAM COMPOSITION

- 1 Lead Consultant
- 1 Co-Consultant / Data Analyst

8. EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The expected output of the consultancy shall be a comprehensive Evaluation report fulfilling the specific objectives mentioned in section three above, not later than August 11th 2008.

9. TENTATIVE WORKPLAN

The assignment is expected to commence with effect from July 8th 2008 for a period of 33 working days. The The draft report shall be produced and submitted to the CEF Secretariat, not later than August 11th 2008.

5.2: References Used

1. CEF The Gambia Strategic Plan 2004-2006
2. Sustaining Funding for Civil Society Advocacy in Education in The Gambia by Malamin Sonko, September 2006
3. EFA Campaign Network The Gambia Strategic Plan 2006-2016
4. CEF Quarterly Reports 2004-2008
5. CEF Partnership Agreements with the 9 partners.
6. CEF The Gambia Mid term Review Report 2004
7. Base Line Survey Report on School Attendance for 2006-2007 in Region 3 by Youth Ambassadors of Peace.
8. Report on the state of the provision of quality education in schools in The Gambia, by GTU. July 2007
9. A Guide for understanding Budgets by ProPAG July 2007
10. Guideline Notes, CEF End of Project Evaluation 1, CEF Secretariat

5.3: Checklist / guide for interviews and discussions

CEF END OF PROJECT EVALUATION CHECKLIST

1). Effectiveness of the CEF Project in The Gambia in terms of institutionalizing education advocacy

To Strengthen Civil Society Participation

1. What role has CEF played in supporting the development of The national coalition (EFA Network) to work towards the goals and objectives of Education for all?
2. What has been the nature of this support?
3. Has the coalition been supported to have presence beyond the capital city?
4. Has this presence helped to address the challenges faced by the education system in the different parts of the country?
5. What is the nature of the support that CEF provided to other partner organizations' work towards the goals and objectives of EFA?
6. What are the Key achievements of the education advocacy work of partners supported by CEF?
7. Did CEF's support contribute to significant changes to policy or practice? Give examples .e.g. Teachers Union Bantaba Policy Forums and progressive harmonization of Madrassas with government system.

To Monitor Government Spending on Education (Pro PAG &CES)

1. How has CEF supported your organizations to increasingly bring education budgets under scrutiny? What is the total budget involved?
2. Was your organization involved in the distribution of information on education budgets? If yes state kind, content, frequency, channel of distribution and recipients.
3. Did your Organization train people in education budget work? State the nature, content, frequency and the number of people trained.
4. What are the effects of the training?
5. How has the CEF support strengthened the position of your organisation to engage in debates on education budget with DOS for Education and also Finance?
6. How has your organization familiarized National Assembly Members with issues faced by the education sector and budget?
7. Did your agency carry out any research on education financing? What are the findings and what did you do with them?

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES (mainly ADWAC, GOVI & YAP)

1. How has CEF supported your organization's work in documenting innovative approaches that have proved effective in extending education to all children especially girls and marginalized groups?(Community initiatives in ECCE by ADWAC, ECCE for low vision and blind children by Govi, Flexible school calendar by YAP, Milling machine for girls school, Integrated syllabi by GSIAE and survey on teacher status by GTU)
2. State nature of support.
3. What are the effects of the support?

GENERAL

Will the education advocacy activities of the your organization continue once CEF's funding discontinues?

11. The changes and impact on the education of all activities and CEF contributions towards achieving EFA

1. What has been CEF The Gambia Project's impact on EFA activities? Please list them.
2. What changes have you noticed on each or some of the EFA activities that are contributed by CEF The Gambia Project?

111.CEF Partner relations and capacity building contributions for sustainable education advocacy

(Sustainability refers to the durability of positive results after the project while capacity building aims at making the target group or organization self reliant)

Partnership

1. How was your organization selected to become CEF partner?
2. Describe the selection process?
3. What criteria were used in the selection process?
4. What values and principles under pinned your partnership?

5. Was your organization assessed in terms of OD and capacity to do Education Advocacy? How? What were the findings and how were they used?
6. How were the partnership values and principles clarified and agreed upon?
7. Were all the partnership values and principles respected during the implementation of the partnership activities?
8. Which ones were not respected? Why and How?
9. Has your agency's autonomy been respected during your partnership with CEF project?
10. Give examples of show of respect or lack of it
11. Has the partner relations been transparent? How? Any examples?
12. List any issue(s) that arose from the implementation of partnership activities?
13. Were the issues resolved to the satisfaction of all the partners?
14. Did the partnership result in mutual trust and respect especially during CEF's exercise of fiscal responsibility as a sponsoring partner?

B) Capacity Building

1. What has been CEF's capacity building (institutional & programming) contribution to your organisation for sustainable education advocacy in terms of:-
 - a. Resource mobilisation for programmes / activities / overheads (How and What Quantum)
 - b. Programme design and development
 - c. Training (workshops, seminars, exposure visits, others)
 - d. Accompaniment (for individual and organisational development)
 - e. Mentoring
2. Has /Have the above support improved the performance of your organisation? How / Why?
3. Has the above support made your organisation more sustainable? How & Why?

1V. Examine changes in key social norms that may influence Partner relations

(The rules that a group uses for values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours) e.g A common group norm amongst academics is that dress is casual with the underlying implication that what goes on in the mind is more important than what goes on the body). Norms are often transmitted by non-verbal behaviour. Respect for elders, helping those who need help, fighting corruption/ oppression, standing up for the truth, showing courage at all times, gender differences in the price of time eg total work time per day is higher for women and yet their wages are lower, hiding children with disabilities)

1. What are the key social norms that may have influenced your partner relations with CEF?
2. Has there been any changes in these key social norms that have influenced your partner relations?

V. Determine key strategic issues critical for programme sustenance and based on the findings, to provide recommendations for improving on CEF intended programme quality and performance

(See remarks column of final report of CEF The Gambia 2004-2008)

1. What are the key strategic issues critical for CEF in tended programme quality and performance?
 - Strengthen civil society participation
 - Monitor spending on education
 - Development of innovative approaches for inclusion.
 - Strengthening inter-agency collaboration and internal functioning of CEF
2. What recommendations would you make for improving on CEF intended program(see above) in terms of :-
 - a) Quality
 - b) Performance.

5.4: Persons Met

Name	Institution
Mr. M. L. Cham	Action Aid-The Gambia
Mr. Mam Samba Joof	Agency for the Development of Women and Children
Mr. Faburama Fofana	"
Mr. Lamin Gassama	"
Mrs. Bridget Correa	"
Aja Jainaba Dibba	Aisha Oumoul Momedeen Quranic Memorization and Islamic Boarding School for Girls
Mr. Emily Kujabi	Catholic Education Secretariat
Mr. Nyakasi Jarju	CEF The Gambia
Mr. Matar Baldeh	Education For All Campaign Network
Ms Cathy Graham	"
Mr. Mamud M. Jobe	Gambia Organisation for the Visually Impaired
Mr. Sajo Bajinka	"
Mr. Issa Dabo	General Secretariat for Islamic/Arabic Education
Mrs. Antoinette Jack	Gambia Teachers Union
Mr. Essa Sowe	"
Hon Abdoulie Bojang	National Assembly Member
Hon Borry Kolley	National Assembly Member
Hon M.S.Touray	National Assembly Member
Hon Abba Sanyang	National Assembly Member
Hon Sulayman Joof	National Assembly Member
Dr. Siga Jagne	Pro-Poor Advocacy Group
Mr. Omar Jobe	"
Mr. Saloum Sanyang	"
Mr. Fabakary Kalley	Youth Ambassadors of Peace

5.5: Financial Analysis

Year	Budget	Expenditure	% Utilization
2004	£53,803.20	£44,747.00	83
2005	£87,809.00	£57,929.00	66
2006	£128,340.00	£84,307.00	66
2007	£48,375.00	£43,289.00	89
2008	£19,090.00	£16,348.00	86
TOTALS	£337,417.20	£246,614.00	73