



Zambia

Country Context

While it has always been conceived as a *factor* of personal and national development, education in Zambia has continued to exhibit fairly low growth. This is manifested in low progression rate, high drop out rate, low gross and net enrolment ratios, and the general plummeting quality. Of clear concern to all stakeholders in the provision of education, is the need to meet the challenge of education for all (EFA), with the perfect intention of maximising quality over quantity. The recently developed National Education Strategic Plan is a most recent government framework to guide the education provision process in the country. The plan spans between 2003 and 2007. The plan is supported by a number of donors through a sector pool funding mechanism and a small number of donors are into project support funding.

What is contained in the Strategic Plan is a mere expression of interest by the government to collaborate with other stakeholders on ECCED, set up regulatory frameworks for CSEN and OVC, coordinate life skills training for youth across relevant ministries, develop a programme to set up adult literacy programmes and strengthen the gender component at primary and secondary levels. There is, however, a striking absence of a direct mention of the EFA goals in the strategic plan, and how the MoE and other ministries with an education agenda, wish to address them in terms of strategies and financing.

The government, through the Ministry of Education (MoE), has started a national process focusing on addressing the EFA goals in an effort to meet the 2015 MDG targets. In the offing is the EFA Secretariat to coordinate the development of the EFA plan. The process is participatory, involving a wider cross-section of NGOs and civil society. An immediate task of this secretariat has been to coordinate the development of the National EFA Plan. Pursuant to the provision of universal primary education (UPE), in 2002 the government introduced the free education policy for primary education - Grade 1 to 7, which entails removing all user and PTA fees that pupils in primary schools were asked to pay. Late in 2004 the Ministry of Education commissioned a study on the impact of free Basic education policy on access to education. The study revealed that the FBE policy produced mixed results. Even though the basic school enrolment increased, the policy was constrained by other non-costs barriers to access such as inadequate infrastructure and financial resources to meet the many needs of the schools. The government's intentions are often met with complexities, with the principal ones being lack of financial resources, weak collaborative efforts among the stakeholders, inconsistency in the policy, and sheer lack of commitment on the part of the government.

Key Achievements

- ❑ Supporting and strengthening of the institutional capacity of the CSO education coalition - ZANEC
- ❑ Acting as catalyst for donor pooled funding for civil society in the education sector.
- ❑ Supporting the national coalition, which contributed to their intensive campaign on the ban on teacher recruitment due to IMF conditionalities.

Breakdown by Criteria

CRITERION 1

CEF's major achievement in Zambia has been the institutionalisation of a coalition of CSOs in the Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC). Management, administrative, constitutional and financial structures have been put in place along with a harmonised approach to donor support. In addition a capacity needs assessment of partners has been undertaken. To a considerable extent, the coalition has been informed of the need to reduce direct service delivery in favour of advocacy and lobbying of national polices. However there remains a challenge regarding clear consensus among its membership on whether ZANEC is a coordinator, facilitator or implementing agency. The MTR reports that it is evident that some stakeholders remain confused about CEF intervention and grant support procedures.

CRITERION 2

A workshop has taken place where a budget tracking strategy was agreed. That strategy is scheduled to come into action in 2005.

CRITERION 3

The programme in the Zambia is yet to properly address Criterion three although CEF Zambia did support the Global Week of Action in 2003, 2004 and 2005.

Case Study: Identifying limitations and taking action

In Zambia, it was perceived that most CSOs are engaged in education delivery and not advocacy work and thus their participation and capacity in education advocacy, lobbying and campaigning are very weak. In a context where the coalitions and networking are relatively new phenomena, CEF set out to establish the existing capacities amongst education CSOs for future engagement.

CEF commissioned and funded a study aimed at engaging CSOs to identify their own capacity gaps for the purpose of linking to CEF interventions. Between October 2004 and February 2005 a detailed analysis of the capacity within CSOs was undertaken and a report was produced detailing baseline CSO capacities for CEF intervention. This report was distributed amongst the target group of CSOs, the CEF Management Committee and general public and supported by a

workshop. In turn this lead to a realigned strategic focus with CEF. More resources have been allocated to capacity building.

The next steps of this process are to:

- Develop a clear/specific intervention strategy

- Identify possible sources of support - trainer

- Engage more with CSOs to encourage ownership in the process