

**AN EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USAID SUPPORT TO
NAMIBIA'S BASIC EDUCATION IN OMUSATI REGION**

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Abstract

The colonial regime left Namibia with a fragmented education system characterised by factors such as racial and ethnic divisions, unequal access to education, unqualified and under-qualified teachers and lack of proper schools facilities and poor performance.

After independence, the Government made a commitment to reform the education system. An education policy '*Toward Education for All*' was put in place to guide the education reform process. As a result, the education sector receives the highest budget allocation in anticipation of making education accessible to all Namibians.

This study aims to analyse and evaluate the support provided by USAID to basic education in Omusati Region from 1990-2003, in order to establish its effectiveness by eliciting responses from beneficiaries and the study is based on Chen's theory of impact evaluation.

The support provided include the deployment of Peace Corps teachers, provision of office equipment, books and capacity building for Namibian teachers and administrators and a small grant for income generating projects. Furthermore, the study looked at the performance of education in the Omusati region in general and problems and challenges facing education in the region.

This evaluation is a qualitative study. Interviews and questionnaires were used to collect primary data, in addition to secondary data gathered through documentary analysis and internet searches. The analysis of information collected from primary and secondary data is mainly descriptive.

The thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter One gives a background to basic education in Namibia. Chapter Two discusses the theoretical framework and the methodology used to carry out the study. Chapter Three discusses USAID Basic Education Support Programmes, while Chapter Four gives an overview of Basic Education in Omusati region. Chapter Five provides the analysis and findings of the study and Chapter Six the conclusion and recommendations.

The main finding of the study is that 74% of the schools in the region received USAID support. The support provided has however, not significantly improved the pass rate of the learners which is one of the objectives of USAID support to education. The study ends with recommendations that may be useful to implement in order to improve the situation and ensure that aid provided contributes to the quality of education and make meaningful contribution in the life of the beneficiaries.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this hard-won achievement to my dearest daughter, Hileni Tuwilika Akwenye. My little angel, you have been a source of inspiration.

DECLARATION

I, Annely Julia Akwenye, hereby declare that this study is a reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree at any other institution of higher education.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BES	Basic Education Support
BETD	Basic Education Teacher Diploma
DECIDE	The Dutch Expertise Consortium for International Development of Education
DPs	Development Partners
ELTDP	English Language Teachers Development Project
GNP	Gross National Product
GRN	Government of the Republic of Namibia
HIGCSE	Higher International General Certificate of Secondary Education
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IGCSE	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISC	Instructional Skills Certificate
MBEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
MECYS	Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport
MHEVTST	Ministry of Higher Education, Vocational Training, Science and Technology
NAMCOL	Namibia College of Open Learning

NIED	National Institute for Educational Development
NPA	None Project Assistance
ODA	Official Development Assistance
SIM	Structured Instructional Materials
SIP	School Improvement Project
SRF	State Revenue Fund
TBCM	Teachers Basic Competency Manuals
UCLES	University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate
UN	United Nations
UNAM	University of Namibia
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and background

One of the main challenges facing developing countries is to achieve the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of universal primary education by the year 2015. Education systems in developing countries are characterized by lack of proper school facilities and qualified teachers, inadequate management of schools, poor performance by learners and inaccessibility of schools, particularly by children in the rural areas (DECIDE, 2001).

Like many other developing countries, Namibia is not an exception to these deficiencies in its education system. What makes Namibia's case unique is that, prior to independence in March 1990, the education system was characterised by racial and ethnic divisions, unequal access to education and training at all levels of the education system, irrelevant curricula and equally irrelevant teacher's education programmes, unqualified teachers, low rates of achievement and lack of democratic participation within the education and training system.

Black parents, teachers and administrators were excluded from the decision-making process in education and there was unequal allocation of resources. There were great inequalities between races and ethnic groups. Black people were provided with limited skills to ensure that they remained unskilled in order to provide or offer cheap labour to other races. Black people's schools were ill-equipped, poorly staffed and under-funded. The school curricula were designed in such a way that only a

minimum number of black children would proceed to secondary and tertiary education levels. Black children were not allowed to attend any schools other than those specifically designed and designated for them.

Basic education in Namibia is a right for every Namibian irrespective of gender, colour and race, provided for in the national Constitution. Inevitably, therefore, the government is mandated to provide reasonable facilities to render the right to education effective particularly at primary education level. Article 20 of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia states that “All persons shall have the right to education”. It further states that “primary education shall be compulsory and the state shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia, by establishing and maintaining state schools at which primary education will be provided free of charge. Children shall not be allowed to leave school until they have completed their primary education or have attained the age of sixteen (16) years whichever is the sooner save in so far as this may be authorised by an Act of Parliament on grounds of health or other considerations pertaining to the public interest”.

It is within the Constitutional mandate that the government saw it imperative to reform the education system in the country. The Education Policy, *Toward Education for All – a development brief for education, culture and training*, was put in place to address the past problems as stated above.

Education for All policy aims to achieve the following goals:

- i. **Access** involves expanding the capacity and removing barriers that keep children from going to school.
- ii. **Equity** involves providing equitable access to schooling and its benefits. In other words, it aims to enhance fairness and equitable allocation of resources.
- iii. **Quality**- the government has to ensure that it provides quality education by ensuring that teachers are well-prepared and that all those involved in education play their role. The learner-centred approach is also seen as means of providing quality education.
- iv. **Democracy**- Government endeavours to develop a democratic system of education which ensures that all stakeholders in education such as teachers, parents, the communities and learners play their role and become managers of the learning environment.
- v. **Efficiency and Effectiveness**- In order to achieve the goals of access, equity and democracy, there is a need to concentrate and allocate the financial and other resources to important projects and programmes and to reduce wastage of these resources.

In addition, the Education Act was promulgated in 2001. The primary objectives of the Education Act are to:

- Provide for an accessible, equitable and democratic national education service;

- Provide for the establishment of the National Advisory Council on Education, the National Examination, Assessment and Certificate Boards and the Education Development Fund;
- Establish state and private schools and hostels;
- Establish the code of conduct for the teaching profession;
- Establish the teaching service committee;
- Provide for incidental matters (Education Act 2001).

The National Language Policy provides for the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction from grades 1 to 3, with grade 4 as a transitional grade. English is used as a medium of instruction from grades 5 to 12 (MBESC 2004).

The National Gender Policy provides a framework by which implementation of constitutional issues can be encouraged, supported and sustained. It sets out principles for equal educational opportunity for all children irrespective of gender.

The Policy on learners with disability makes provision for the children with disabilities to have the same rights to education as those children without disabilities.

The Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) through the then Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) developed a programme of basic education that includes both formal and non-formal education. According to MEC the aims of basic education are: to provide a balanced, relevant and coherent programme of instruction and learning. It aims to promote functional literacy and language development,

functional numeracy and mathematics, intellectual development, personal development, social and cultural development, national unity, international understanding and political development, vocational orientation and economic development, and environmental awareness (MEC 1993).

In order to avoid confusion because of references made in the thesis to different Ministries of Education, it is worth mentioning on the onset that the Ministry of Education has gone through many changes. After independence in 1990, it was called the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport (MECYS). In 1991, Youth and Sport were removed from the Ministry's portfolio, leaving it as the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC). In 1995, the Ministry was divided into two, namely the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (MBEC) and the Ministry of Higher Education, Vocational Training, Science and Technology (MHEVTST). In 2000, sport was again returned to the Ministry's portfolio and it became the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture (MBESC). In 2005, the two Ministries of Basic Education and Higher Education were integrated into one Ministry which is now the Ministry of Education (MEC). This explanation is provided in order to avoid confusion because of different titles of the Ministry of Education referred to in the thesis.

1.2 Statement of the problem

After independence, the GRN adopted a unified education system to make education accessible to all Namibians on an equitable basis. The Ministry of Education receives the highest portion of the budget. In addition, it receives massive support from

donors or Development Partners (DPs) in the form of financial and technical support in efforts to promote access, equity, quality and enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the education system.

The USAID support to basic education is to assist Namibia to realise its educational goals and objectives, which are to improve the quality of education and the performance of the learners. However, there are serious concerns about the quality of education and high level of inequality in performance among the different regions in the country. In addition, in many cases, donor-funded projects and programmes are not evaluated, especially by the recipient country, to establish whether they are effective and whether they address the real needs of the beneficiaries.

The study tried to analyse and evaluate both the financial and technical support provided by USAID to determine the effectiveness of its support to basic education in Omusati region in terms of learners' performance from 1990 to 2003. It further tried to establish whether the aims and objectives of the region have been achieved and whether the support made any positive impact in terms of enrolment, accessibility to education and pass rate.

In assessing US aid performance, the study looked at the following:

- The types of assistance/aid and amount given by the US government to the Omusati region;
- The terms and conditions under which aid is given;
- Allocation per school, which school received what type of aid;

- The profile of volunteer teachers to determine whether they possess the required experience to deliver quality education;
- The relationship between the Peace Corps teachers and the school management has been explored to determine whether there were frictions that may hamper service delivery.

1.3 Objectives of the study

- To assess the effects of US aid on basic education in Omusati region;
- To establish the factors that contribute to poor or better performance of schools in Omusati region;
- To determine the effectiveness of the programmes and their effects on the beneficiaries;
- To assess the achievements and progress made towards achieving the programme objectives;
- To provide viable recommendations.

1.4 Research question

In order to make a systematic evaluation and analysis of the effectiveness of US aid to basic education in Omusati region, the study is guided by the following central research question: How has US aid support influenced the performance of basic education in Omusati region in terms of quality of local education input and output?

Sub-questions

- What kind of support provided?
- Who benefited from the support and how?
- What are the effects of the USAID funded programmes on the beneficiaries?

1.5 Significance of the study

Since independence, Namibia has received support from different DPs. Given its historical background as mentioned above, much of the support has been focused on education. Development aid is good and is expected to make positive and meaningful impacts on the beneficiaries. The researcher is not aware of any evaluation study that was conducted either by the Government, the region, an independent person or body. The evaluation of the effectiveness of the USAID support to basic education in Omusati region is long overdue, because Omusati region has been receiving USAID support for a long time. It is important that a study is conducted to establish whether the support has made or is making any impact on the beneficiaries.

The findings of this study on the performance of basic education in Omusati region would, therefore, provide an insight into the effectiveness of USAID support that will be useful to regional education planners, policy-makers, heads of schools and other stakeholders, and will enable them to make informed decisions on how to improve service delivery and quality of output in the education system. The study has provided information about aid utilization, which is relevant not only to the Omusati region and the Government of Namibia, but also to the donor community and the public at large, as well as being a contribution to knowledge that will be useful to future researchers and scholars.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The difficulty in assessing quality of education is the subjectivity involved in the assessment exercise. For example, quality can be based on a number of students that graduate from basic schools, or the number of students who pass a specific subject, or the type of teaching aids and materials used in imparting knowledge to students. In addition, the type of information the researcher got, time and resources required to undertake the study limited the study.

This study was specifically conducted in Omusati region. Its findings may thus not be generalized to other regions as they may not have similar characteristics in terms of the support provided by the US government. Furthermore, the study only concentrated on support /aid provided by the US government and, as such, the findings may not be generalized to other supports provided by other donors.

1.7 Literature review

Du Toit and Kruger (1991) define education as “the science which has its field in the scientific investigation and reflection concerning the educational phenomenon and the problem it poses”. The education of children by adults with a view to adulthood is universal. Education of children starts at home primarily by parents until such time that the child enters school. The parents and educators are responsible for the child’s education and accept responsibility for his/her realisation of the educational objectives.

They further note that education has a direct and indirect dimension. Direct education takes place when the educator observes and interprets the child's conduct in the associative relationship and offers the child necessary educational help. This implies that there is a direct encounter between the educator and the child. Indirect education occurs when the child identifies or associates with the adult, although specific educational objectives are not sought nor explicit educational actions carried out in the associative situation. Indirect education occurs when the child identifies with the adult.

Learning is a continued act of orientation whereby the child requires potential meanings embedded in his/her culture with educational help. During learning, the child attributes meanings under the influence of his/her experiences while he/she is involved. A child needs to be motivated and inspired in order for him/her to learn or during his/her learning process.

Education is a basic condition for economic and social development and basic education is its foundation. The mobilisation and management of necessary human, financial and material resources to ensure that children receive appropriate and good quality basic education is a complex challenge and requires the collaboration of many stakeholders such as teachers, parents, administrators, community leaders and development partners. Parents have always played an important role in primary education through their support for construction, maintenance and management of schools.

Providing basic education is faced by a number of challenges. Paul A. Francis (1998) in a study on primary school in Nigeria points out some of the challenges, namely: uncondusive environment to learning, poor security and health for learners, inadequate classrooms and those available are generally in a poor state. There is little or no funding to meet maintenance or running costs or to obtain supplies of instructional materials and other educational inputs.

Francis further states that teachers' effectiveness and student learning are further limited by the inadequate supply of materials and textbooks. He noted that many teachers do not have the minimum qualification for primary school teachers. This situation is not peculiar to Nigerian alone. Most of the challenges stated in the study are also applicable to Namibia.

Basic education has direct positive and negative effects in a person's life. Children and people who have gone through basic education have a better future prospect than those who did not. Poor basic education has negative effects on human resource development. These sentiments were echoed by the World Conference on Education for All in 1993. The report of the conference states that "poor quality education, low primary completion rates and low student achievement limit educational effectiveness in developing countries". This could be as a result of poor policies or lack of proper implementation.

The report further states that schooling take place under unfavourable conditions and insufficient resources. This places severe constraints on the improvement and

performance of education. This is true in the case of Namibia in general and Omusati region in particular, where the provision of quality education leaves much to be desired. The quality of basic education, efficiency and effectiveness in Omusati region requires urgent attention if the goals of Education for All policy are to be achieved. The then MBESC also acknowledges this problem. In its national report on the development of education, it states that quality education has not been achieved due to a high number of unqualified and under-qualified teachers (MBESC 2001).

The Right Honourable Prime Minister, Hon. Nahas Angula, a former Minister of Education, once said that “education empowers people and determines the future of a nation. It gives shape to the character, personality and the world view of individuals, communities and nation” (Namibia’s First Decade Education in Perspective 2000:13).

The World Bank report on primary education in sub-Saharan Africa concluded that investments in African education, including primary education by governments and donors over many years have not produced the expected results. Furthermore, the report states that international research evidence on the education has been accumulating and many policy analysts and planners are convinced that primary education reform is more successful when interventions focus on implementation at the school level.

The report notes that the World Bank lending for primary education in Sub-Saharan Africa, improving mobilisation and efficient utilisation of additional resources for

primary education, have not had the expected impact on student learning. However, the report acknowledges that there has been a tremendous growth in the provision of basic education in Sub-Saharan Africa. The enrolment rate for primary education has increased.

International donors have contributed significantly to help African primary education schools absorb more students and maintain educational quality. However, despite the improvement and large investment in primary education and the concern for quality, Heneveld and Craig note that current conditions in most primary schools throughout the region dishearten educators. African countries with support from donors face the challenge of defining for themselves the essential conditions that they can reasonably expect to create and sustain in their schools. There is also a problem in Sub-Saharan Africa countries to define the conditions for school effectiveness.

Achieving quality education requires a proactive and innovative measures and new approaches to be undertaken in order to achieve educational changes that focuses on student achievement and the school's ability to cope with change. David Hopkins refers to this approach as school improvement. Hopkins (2002) regards school improvement as a distinct approach to educational change that enhances student outcomes as well as strengthening the schools capacity for managing improvement initiatives. He further stresses that improvement through focusing on the teaching-learning process and those conditions which support it.

Education in the classroom involves mainly two people, namely the teacher and the learner. Powerful and effective learning depends or draws information, ideas and wisdom from the teachers and use learning resources effectively. Teaching approaches applied by teachers play a major role and has influence on the outcomes in both cognitive and effective domains. Therefore, it is important for the right approaches to be applied in order to enhance student performance.

Findings of the research carried out by the English Language Teachers Development Project (ELTDP) (quoted in Insight, 2006:26) found that “49% of junior secondary school teachers in Namibia do not have a level of proficiency in English language usage that is desirable to teach at the Junior Secondary phase and 58% of Junior School teachers do not have sufficient reading skills to teach at their phase” The World Bank report of 2005 (quoted in Insight 2006:26) states that “because of teachers’ language limitations, reading lessons tend to be mechanized verbalization of words without grasping the meaning or the context”. Development aid should be used to address some of these problems.

The Dutch Expertise Consortium for International Development of Education (DECIDE 2001) states that there are more than 130 million children in the world who are out of school, a situation that limits their chances for social and material prosperity and for economic development of the whole nations. This was said at a conference held in October 2001 that brought together policy makers, academics, donor agencies and educational professionals from various countries with the aim to reflect on more effective ways of international cooperation. The aim of the

conference was to share knowledge and experiences on international education development in order to reform education systems all over the world. The conference noted that the realities of education are often not in line with policy interventions, no matter how different the contexts are.

Developing high quality education for all remains a formidable task in many parts of the world. Opening school doors to all children and providing quality education that allows them to develop life long skills is still something to be achieved in the future (DECIDE 2001). This is true in countries where financial resources are very limited like Namibia, which faces serious challenges of providing children with relevant educational experience, improving the quality of teachers and strengthening institutional management and accountability. According to DECIDE (2001), policy strategies require a clear vision on education improvement as well as realistic timelines and investment.

One of the keynote speakers at the DECIDE conference, Mr. Jozef Ritzen (2001:12), argued that “achieving education for all is not only a matter of closing the financing gap but also requires a dramatic shift in policies aimed at sound macroeconomic policy frameworks and good governance in education with a clear focus on efficiency and equitable access for all”. He further states that the international community has a responsibility of providing financial resources to assist developing countries to achieve their educational goals.

David Wall (1973:30) defines aid as “government sponsored flows of resources made available on concessional terms to foreign governments either via bilateral or multilateral organizations”. He views aid as a good thing and the more it is given the better. However, he cautions that aid should be used as effectively as possible and notes further that aid is given to fellow human beings who live in a state of distress. It helps to contribute to the alleviation of such distress and stress. More aid should be made available to those who need it. Namibia’s education sector is one of the sectors that really needs development aid and should make optimal use of it in order to ensure or to reap maximum benefit from it.

Peter Burnell (1997:3) states that “aid can be construed as inter-societal transfers of resources that are intended by all relevant parties, especially the provider to serve first and foremost the recipients’ needs or wants”. Aid is charity. It should be given for good intentions and must be put to good use; otherwise aid could turn out to be aid that does not aid. Aid should make positive effects on the beneficiaries/recipients but not to satisfy self-interests of those that are entrusted with the administration of aid.

The recipient and the donor both agree and reach an understanding on the importance of donor aid, which is aimed at contributing to the economic development of the recipient country. Burnell (ibid) urges donors to assess the performance of aid projects and programmes in terms of achievement of objectives, overall impact, cost effectiveness and general development results.

The purpose of development aid to education is to help improve the condition of people in developing countries by ending inequalities in access to knowledge and skills. This may, as a result, help in narrowing disparities in wealth and living standards. Education is not only an instrument serving to promote progress in other sectors, it also has value in itself. Education and training are about the acquisition of knowledge, skills and the stimulation of social skills and creativity, and the development of values and attitudes (Development Cooperation and Education in the 1990s 1993).

The Human Development Report (2005:75) states that “Aid has not always played a positive role in supporting human development, partly because of failures on the side of the aid recipients and partly because donor countries have allowed strategic consideration to override development concerns”. The report further states that the primary aim of aid should be human development. Namibia is trying to develop its human capacity and this starts with basic education. Therefore, for Namibia to achieve the goals of quality education, it needs to invest in the training of new teachers and improve the competencies of teachers already in the system by upgrading their qualifications and improve their competencies through in-service training. This will help to enhance their productivity.

The problem of poor performance by students is not peculiar to Namibia alone. Many other developing countries, especially in Africa, experience similar problems. For example, Nigeria had a problem of learners failing Mathematics, and a study was carried out to determine the causes of the problem. The results of the research

indicated that learners were failing mathematics due to the ineffective instructional skills and methodologies used by the Mathematics teachers (Taiwo 2006). Failure problems in the Omusati region may or may not be as a result of poor performance or delivery methods by teachers, but the study tried to examine the root causes of poor performance of the learners.

1.8 Organisation of the Thesis

The thesis consists of six chapters. **Chapter One** gives background to Namibia's basic education system.

Chapter Two discusses the theoretical framework and the research methodology used to carry out the study and the data analysis techniques.

Chapter Three gives a brief overview of international development assistance and discusses the USAID funded programmes.

Chapter Four discusses Basic Education in Omusati region

Chapter Five makes a critical analysis of the USAID support to basic education in Omusati region. In so doing, it examines to what extent the USAID funded programmes helped to improve the performance of basic education in the region.

The thesis ends with **Chapter Six** which gives the conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Theoretical framework

Development partnership relations involve at least two parties; the donor and the recipient. It could come about as a result of bilateral relations between countries or through multilateral organizations such as the United Nations agencies and international financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The study used Chen's (1990) theory-driven model of impact evaluation. Before the introduction of Chen's theory, the effectiveness of the programme was measured against pre-determined goals of the programme. In other words, goals were used as the main criteria in assessing programme effectiveness. Assessing the effectiveness of the programme based on the goals may be misleading because it makes the evaluator or researcher to focus only on the goals of the programme and overlook other important elements, thereby giving a narrow view on the outcomes or effects of the programme. For example, the goals of the programme may be achieved but in reality the programme has not contributed to the wellbeing of the beneficiaries.

According to Chen, in carrying out an evaluation, the evaluator or researcher should not only be concerned with assessing whether the goals of the programme are achieved, but also with discovering what actually happened as a result of the programme. Thus looking at both official and operative goals and the intended and unintended outcomes of the programme.

The main difference between the official goals and operational goals is that official goals are the general purpose of the programme while operative goals are the ends sought through the actual operating policies of the programme. They tell what the programme intends to achieve.

Theory-driven model states that in assessing the effects of the programme, one should look at both the intended and unintended outcomes by examining the programme activities in order to identify these outcomes.

By applying Chen's theory of impact evaluation, the study looked at the real programme goals/intentions under the Namibia/USA education cooperation and assessed the effectiveness of the programme in achieving its objectives. It aims to judge effects on the beneficiaries and programme outcomes as opposed to objectives.

The main advantage of Chen's theory of impact evaluation is that it provides a conceptual framework for dealing with unintended outcomes without ignoring the intended programme goals.

2.2 Research methodology

This study is an evaluation utilising a qualitative research methodology, with an element of quantitative data. In qualitative research, the researcher employs a number of techniques such as interviews, documentary analysis and questionnaires. It does

not rely heavily on numerical measurements but the researcher may use it. In order to get more better and reliable data and to minimize any chance of biasness, two types of research tools have been used; interviews and questionnaire. These are discussed in detail under primary data collection.

Since the researcher is based in Khomas region which is about 800 km from Omusati region where the research was done, the researcher travelled to Omusati Region where she conducted interviews with the Director of Education, Circuit Inspectors and administered the questionnaire to the Principals of the sampled schools.

Since the schools are scattered all over the region, it took the researcher one and a half weeks to complete this exercise. Prior arrangements were made with the Director and Circuit Inspectors to conduct the interviews. A schedule was sent to the schools indicating the date and time when the researcher would visit the respective schools.

2.2.1 Secondary data collection

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, both primary and secondary data were needed. Secondary data were consulted to obtain information on the financial and technical support provided to basic education in Omusati region by the US government through bilateral arrangement with the Namibian Government. In addition, records of examination results of students in final years of basic education (grades 10 and 12) were consulted in order to ascertain the levels of performance as an indicator of the quality of output.

Documentary analysis such as policy and project documents and contractual agreements between the US and Namibian Governments were reviewed to check on specific targets set for inputs and outputs, and to see whether these targets have been attained. Furthermore, internet search was made to get more ideas to enrich the study.

2.2.2 Primary data collection

Primary data were obtained by conducting interviews with key staff members of the Ministry of Education who are responsible for the administration and implementation of the programme of education in the Omusati region. These key staff members included the Director of Education for Omusati region and Circuit Inspectors in the region. They were expected to give their views with respect to the USAID-funded programmes, needs of their institutions, views on progress made, prospects for the future in the context of USAID assistance that they might or might not have received. The USAID official responsible for the programme was interviewed to provide more information on USAID support to Namibia's Basic Education. Furthermore, a questionnaire was used to collect data from the principals of the schools, irrespective of whether the school had received any assistance or not.

2.2.3 Population and sampling method

There are 12 Senior Secondary and 12 Junior Secondary schools in Omusati region. However, due to inadequate facilities and lack of enough spaces at Junior Secondary schools, the Government allows some primary schools to offer grades 9 and 10

classes at their premises. These types of schools are classified as combined schools meaning a combination of primary school and junior secondary. There are 78 combined schools in the Omusati region.

The region has one education Director and eight Circuit Inspectors. The Director and four Circuit Inspectors were interviewed to give their views on the type of support provided by USAID to schools in the region and the effects of such support particularly on the performance of learners. As mentioned earlier, the region has 102 schools that meet the criteria for the study- that is, they offer either grade 10 or grade 12 final examinations. This number includes 12 Junior Secondary schools, 12 Senior Secondary schools and 78 combined schools. However, due to the geographic spread of the schools in the region and the time constraints, it was not feasible to cover a representative sample of 102 schools. Therefore, the population studied is 24 schools, consisting of 12 Junior Secondary and 12 Senior Secondary schools and excluding combined schools. The sample size is 19 schools and they all completed the questionnaire. This represents about 79 percent of the total population.

The support provided differs from one school to another and not all the schools received support. Thus there are two categories of the schools to be studied; those schools that have received and those that have not received assistance from the US government. Therefore, a purposeful sampling method was applied in this study.

According to Struwig and Stead (2001), one of the characteristics of purposeful sampling is that the participants show certain characteristics in which the researcher

is interested. This is true in the case of this study where the researcher is interested in looking at the performance of schools that have received assistance and those that did not in order to compare the results in the following subjects: English, Mathematics and Physical Science to determine whether there are any differences in performance as a result of USAID interventions

The selection criteria were based on the fact that the schools have or have not benefited from US support in terms of Peace Corps teachers, new buildings or rehabilitations from US funds, and training of local teachers, especially if these schools benefited during the same time, that is, if the school term or year that they got the support is similar.

Inquiries were made on how long such schools have received support and what type of support was given in order to have a homogenous group of schools. The indicators of outputs found in these schools as listed above will be compared to a 'control' school which have not benefited in anyway from the US support because not all schools in the region benefited from US support. One therefore would like to see whether there is a correlation between student performance at schools which benefited from the support given by the USAID support programme and those schools that did not benefit from the USAID support programme.

2.2.4 Data Analysis

Since the study is mainly qualitative, an analysis of information collected from primary and secondary sources was mainly descriptive. However, statistical analysis

was made to provide clear information on how many percentages represent what in the data. Microsoft Excel was used to generate charts to give more meaning to the data and their interpretation. Impact analysis is the main mode of analysis. At the end, we would be able to know what changes have taken place in the various schools and what explanations account for these changes.

The study is a summative evaluation that evaluated and assessed the outcome (s) of the USAID-funded education programme in Omusati region in order to determine its effectiveness through collection of information and data about the activities, performance and outcomes in order to make judgments about its effectiveness.

CHAPTER 3

BASIC EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses basic education support programmes funded by USAID. It is divided into three main parts. The first part gives a broad overview of international development assistance; the second part focuses on the specific programme funded by USAID and the third part deals with aid conditions.

Basic education reform and development aims to promote equal access for all learners to schooling and to educational resources. All learners should have equal chance to enter a classroom and to stay there until they have satisfied the basic achievement targets. This, however, cannot be achieved by the government alone. It requires a joint effort of the government, parents, development partners and provision and improvement of school facilities and resources especially to the

previously neglected schools. The financing of basic education programme is a very expensive undertaking and requires partnerships with international development agencies; hence USAID support.

As a newly independent country, Namibia faces many challenges including inadequate human and financial resources. It is on this basis that international development agencies offer helping hands to the countries in need.

To achieve the goals and purposes of the Education for All policy, GRN vigorously mobilised both financial and technical support to augment its resources from external sources. The Government of the United States of America (USA) through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has been supporting the Namibian education sector since 1990 by providing financial and technical assistance. The main aim of the USAID support programme is to support Namibia's efforts to reform and develop the education system, thereby contributing to improved quality, increased efficiency and equity (Government of the Republic of Namibia 2000).

From 1990 to 2003, USAID committed about N\$ 560.5 million to the education sector (Development Cooperation Report 2003/2004) making it the highest donor support to Namibia's education sector.

Furthermore, a number of programmes such as Basic Education Support (BES I, II and III) were developed and implemented to ensure that the disparities that existed

during the pre-independence era are rectified and all children are provided with quality education irrespective of their colour, gender or where they come from.

One of the criteria for schools to qualify for the USAID support is that the schools must be located in one of the previously disadvantaged regions. Omusati region is one of the regions that have met the criteria; thus it is eligible to receive USAID support. American Peace Corps teachers are sent to the schools in the region for a period of two years, while a capacity-building programme for Namibian teachers is in place to ensure that local teachers are well-trained to be able to deliver quality education and take over from Peace Corps teachers when they are no longer available.

3.2 International Development Assistance

International development assistance started after the Second World War with the 'Marshall Plan' giving aid to European countries in order to rebuild their economies after the war. Since then, development assistance has for the most part been between states that is, from Governments of the North to Governments of the South (Degenbol and Engberg 2003).

Degenbol and Engberg (2003) point out that the recipients of aid have had limited influence on goals and strategies. It was only in the 1990s that donors started talking about national ownership of development efforts. This basically means that, in the past, international development assistance was designed by donors to achieve foreign aid formulated goals. Experience from other countries indicates that, in the past, aid

was donor-driven because the recipients left a vacuum in policy making or administration. This trend is however, gradually changing and recipients are spearheading the use of aid resources in accordance with their needs.

The traditional approach was project focused and was criticized for lack of proper coordination and a number of projects had failed. As a result, the impact of international development assistance was disappointing. According to the World Bank (2001), quoted by Mengistu (2005), a study conducted in 1994 by the Bank's Operation Evaluation Department found that 60% of the entire Bank's project in Africa did not meet the objectives. Since then, project assistance has increasingly been criticised by both donors and the recipients. This led to a change in focus from projects to programme aid- that is from funding specific projects to fund programme of policy and institutional reforms designed by Governments of developing countries (Mengistu 2005), hence Education Sector Support Programmes.

Aid is discussed in the sense of Official Development Assistance (ODA) which is the transfer of resources by governments at concessional rates and made available for development or humanitarian purposes. It can be done through bilateral or multilateral relations. Bilateral relations are between two governments, agencies or institutions while multilateral relations involve more than two parties. It can be given in a form of capital aid which includes money or goods or technical assistance – in a form of transfer of expertise through scholarships or through the provision of expertise.

The United States has been assisting developing countries to meet the *Education for All* goals in partnership with the host country and in some cases taking the lead (Fiske and O'Grady 2000). The authors state that as a donor and development partner, it has helped make a difference internationally in education access and quality and helped in addressing educational challenges facing other nations, through innovative solutions such as dealing equitably with multicultural and disadvantaged populations, extending learning beyond classroom walls, and accommodating supplementary and alternative learning systems and funding mechanisms.

United States support includes both financial and technical assistance to help the recipient countries improve school systems and support the learning opportunities. In general US assistance is provided to primary, secondary, adult basic education and early childhood development through USAID, the US Department of State, the US Department of Education and the Peace Corps programme.

According to Fiske and O'Grady (2000) USAID contribution to basic education since 1990 has been more than \$1.3 billion. This makes USAID the major contributor to improving education in the development world. USAID has played a major role in enhancing the capacity of local educational institutions and the community through capacity-building programmes with a view to improving the quality of education and increasing the livelihood of sustained programme impact. This is true in the case of Omusati region where teachers, school inspectors and the communities were trained in various aspects of educational issues such as preparation of lessons, methods and techniques of teaching and enabling the local

communities to become active in basic education activities and to participate actively in the education of their children.

3.3 USAID funded Basic Education Programmes.

At independence, Namibia inherited an education system that was designed to reinforce the apartheid system rather than to promote the necessary human resource base, equitable social and economic development. The education system was fragmented along racial and ethnic divisions with vast disparities in both the allocation of resources and the quality of education.

After independence, GRN embarked upon education reform programmes within a unified education structure in order to achieve the Education for All objectives.

The overall objective of the reform programme is to develop an educational system focused on the learning needs of the average child to enable him or her to become a more productive member of society (MEC 1991). Since 1990, GRN has remained committed to the improvement of education. Currently, it allocates about 25% of the national budget to education. This represents about 9% of the total Gross National Product (GNP) and Namibia is one of the three countries with the highest percentage of GNP directed towards education in the world (USAID 2003). One has to applaud the Government of Namibia for not allowing aid to become a substitute for its own efforts. It has maintained high budgetary allocation to the education sector and donor funds augment and fill the gap that could not be met by government resources.

3.3.1 Basic Education Reform Assistance Programme.

USAID support to basic education in Namibia started immediately after independence in 1990 and, since its inception, many projects and programmes have been implemented. An agreement was reached between Namibia and USA in which the US Government pledged to support Basic Education Reform Programme. The amount committed by the US government to support this programme amounts to \$35 Million. The main goal of the programme “was to improve the quality of life for the majority of Namibians by guaranteeing equal access to quality educational services and to provide them with appropriate skills and knowledge needed to realize their full human potential” (MEC 1991:1)

The objectives of the programme were:

- i. To establish an effective, efficient and sustainable basic education system accessible to all Namibian children;
- ii. To improve the quality of Namibian’s basic education system;
- iii. To increase the quality and supply of basic education textbooks and other instructional materials;
- iv. To establish a rational and equitable financial resource base for the sustainable delivery of quality educational services; and
- v. To enhance the institutional and senior professional capacity of Namibian educators to plan and manage an improved basic education system.

The programme received joint funding from the Governments of USA and Namibia. However, the exact amount provided by GRN could not be established, due to lack of information from the Ministry of Education. The programme started in 1991 and was anticipated to end in 1996 and the following indicators were expected to be achieved:

- Establish a unified Namibian learner-centred basic education system;
- New syllabus based on learner-centred curriculum vetted nationwide;
- Pre-service and in-services teacher training capacity in place and qualification set as a function of effectiveness in achieving learner-centred objectives;
- Put in place new assessment systems;
- Put mechanisms in place to support and direct the selection and distribution of textbooks;
- Put mechanisms in place to produce, publish and distribute textbooks based on new Namibian curriculum and syllabus;
- Allocate adequate budgetary resources to basic education reform; and
- Establish a unified and integrated administrative system.

3.3.2 Basic Education Support (BES I) Programme

BES I support focused in schools in four education regions of Caprivi, Kavango, Ondangwa East and Ondangwa West. These regions comprise of about 60% of the total population of Namibia.

It is worth mentioning that the education regions were different from political regions for administrative purposes. The country was divided into seven education regions. These were Katima Mulilo, Keetmanshoop, Khorixas, Ondangwa East, Ondangwa West, Rundu and Windhoek. These were created for administrative purposes only and were different in composition from the thirteen (13) political regions. For example, Ondangwa East region covered the Oshikoto and Ohangwena political regions while Ondangwa West covered Omusati and Oshana political regions

Since 1990, the basic education projects and programmes were being implemented under the above-mentioned educational regions. It was only in 2005 that they were integrated into the thirteen political regions. Therefore, in evaluating the performance of basic education in Omusati region, reference was made where necessary, to Ondangwa West because Omusati region was previously under the mandate of this educational region. Basic education in Namibia consists of seven years primary school, followed by three year junior secondary and a two year senior secondary phase (7-3-2).

Alongside with other donors, the US Government has supported the Namibian Governments' efforts to meet the goals in the education system through a variety of projects. The first major component of the programme was hastily designed and was None Project Assistance (NPA). This means that there were no specific projects and programmes in place and hence no direct support to specific projects. Support could be provided anywhere the need arose at any point in time.

According to the 1998 strategic objective agreement project document, the NPA objectives of programme were not fully achieved and the project was re-designed in 1993 – 1994 into the Basic Education Support (BES I) programme. An agreement was then reached between the two governments to support BES I programme. This programme was aimed to facilitate basic education reform in Namibia by increasing the capacity of the MBESC to implement its new curriculum at the lower primary level nationally and improving learner outcomes in disadvantaged schools.

USAID pledged to provide a grant amount of \$ 18,337,000 while the Namibian government provided N\$ 6,113,000. The programme was expected to end in 1996 but was extended to 1999. The theme of BES 1 project was “improved delivery of quality primary education to Namibian learners in grades 1 - 4 in the most disadvantaged schools” (MBEC 1998). The programme aimed to achieve the following results.

- Improve the quality of primary school teachers in the target and selected schools;
- Develop and improve lower primary curriculum; and
- Put in place and operationalise the monitoring and evaluation system.

During the initial years of implementing the Basic Education Reform, the MBESC focused on reforming the curriculum of the junior secondary phase (grades 8 – 10). The second stage focused on reforming the primary phase (grades 1 – 7). BES I

programme supported the reform effort by providing direct support to the lower primary grades (grades 1- 4).

BES I support focused on the following three major areas:

- **Structured instructional and continuous assessment materials:** Under this component, USAID provided technical assistance and training to staff members of the Ministry and other education institutions such as the National Institute of Educational Development (NIED) for the development of carefully structured and scripted instructional materials that unqualified and under-qualified teachers could use to provide an environment designed for learner-centred education in the classroom..
- **Teachers training:** under this component, USAID provided training to teachers to be able to use the structured instructional materials.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** USAID assisted the MBESC to develop a monitoring and evaluation capability through training and workshops.

It was anticipated that the targets of BES 1 project would be met at the end of the project cycle but after completion, it was discovered that much still remained to be done in order to achieve the programme objectives. The two governments agreed to enter into another agreement to pursue the unachieved objectives of BES I and this was done under BES II.

3.3.3 Basic Education Support (BES II) Programme

BES II was based on the achievements and lessons learned during the implementation of BES I. It provided a renewed focus on support for sustainable and effective instructional and management systems that support learning for lower primary learners in historically disadvantaged schools. This programme was reinforced by more additional funding and provision of Peace Corps teachers.

The programme was aimed at achieving the following results and some of them a similar to those pursued under BES I:

- **Improve the quality of primary school teachers in the target and selected schools:** Under this component, it was anticipated that at the end of 1999, 576 grade 3 and 576 grade 4 teachers in target schools must have received training in the use of new curriculum, learner-centred instruction and continuous assessment in target classrooms.
- **Develop new improved lower primary curriculum:** It was envisaged that at the end of 1999, the curriculum syllabi in four subjects for grades 1 – 4 would have been developed and translated into five local languages.
- **Put in place and operationalise the monitoring and evaluation system:** This was anticipated to be finalized at the end of 1997.
- **Improve instructional support systems:** This activity aimed at supporting the analysis, development and improvement of the conditions, inputs and processes to improve teaching and learning. It was anticipated that at the end of the project, teachers are well trained and demonstrate effective teaching practice in the classroom, instructional materials that were relevant and child – centred and effectively utilized in the classroom.

- **Improve school support and management systems:** This component was aimed at supporting the MBEC goals to improve school support and management system through;
 - identifying the most essential management support functions and services for school improvement;
 - Developing and strengthening management systems and support functions;
 - Design and implement diagnostic tools to monitor support system improvement and performance (MBESC 1998).

BES II agreement was signed in 1998 and came to an end in 2003 and the grant amount allocated to the programme was \$ 38,779,000.

3.3.4 Basic Education Support (BES III) Programme

BES III is an expansion of activities that started under BES II. It is an integrated set of support and capacity building activities that contribute to the achievement of the strategic objective; increased capacity of the basic education system to give learners the foundations for health and livelihood (MBEC 2004).

This programme focused on three main areas and aimed to achieve the following results:

- Increase resilience of the basic education system to cope with HIV and AIDS epidemic;
- Improve effectiveness of decentralized education management;

- Improve quality of language, Mathematics and Science education delivered by primary school teachers.

This chapter will not dwell much on BES III as its implementation period is outside the scope of the study.

3.3.5 Peace Corps Teacher's Programme

One of the main challenges facing the education system in Namibia is lack of qualified teachers in English, Mathematics and Sciences. Teachers need better skills to impart English, Mathematics and Physical Science content to the learners so that students can maximise their learning opportunities in these subjects at more advanced levels. Most of the qualified teachers in those subjects are assigned to the higher grades because the curriculum for these subjects requires skills and thus the foundations of learners in these subjects are left to weaker teachers.

It is on this basis that the two governments entered into an agreement on provision of Peace Corps teachers to work in Namibia, especially, but not limited, to education and health. The Peace Corps support programme assigns teachers to teach English, Mathematics and Science to schools in rural areas. It also provides text books, office equipment such as computers and photocopiers, and small grants to schools in previously disadvantaged regions.

After independence, the GRN declared English as the official language. GRN requested for Peace Corps teachers to teach English as a new language and to assist with a new national education policy that mandates English as the official medium of

instruction in the upper grades of primary schools and all grades of secondary school. Peace Corps also provided assistance to the then MBEC in one of its major education initiatives, the BES I project. The aim was to increase the MBEC's capacity to implement the lower primary curriculum while improving learner outcomes in Namibia's most disadvantaged schools.

During the implementation of BES I project, Peace Corps teachers provided support and follow up as the teachers used the Structured Instructional Materials (SIMs) in their classrooms and had provided training and support for teachers studying to improve their teaching qualification through the Teachers Basic Competency Manuals (TBCMs) and the Instructional Skills Certificate (ISC) programme (MBESC 1998). The Peace Corps programme aimed at eliminating teachers' shortages and to provide direct in-service training to Namibian teachers.

3.3.5.1 Primary Education Teachers Training Project

This project was developed to assist the then MBEC to promote the capacity building objectives under the "Basic Education Reform Programme". The Peace Corps teachers provided assistance to strengthen Namibia's human resource base and improving the quality of primary education by implementing new methods and initiatives in the pre-service and in – service training for primary school teachers and by developing teacher's resource centres.

3.3.5.2 Secondary Education Teachers Training Project

This project aimed at strengthening Namibia's human resource base by improving skills of secondary school teachers in English, Mathematics and Sciences. Findings of a survey conducted by the MBEC in 1991 indicate that, staffing inadequacies existed in most educational regions. Out of 11,000 secondary school teachers, only 5000 were qualified and majority of them lacked sufficient command of English to use as a medium of instruction (MBEC 1992). The survey also indicates that there was a shortage of qualified Science and Mathematics teachers. The Peace Corps teachers are assigned to teach Mathematics, Physical Science and English as a second language in rural remote schools in the then seven educational regions.

3.4 Small grant support

USAID support also included a financial support that could be provided to schools to implement small development projects. Depending on the nature and size of the project, the amount provided ranged from N\$ 10,000 to N\$ 50,000. Schools have to compete for the funds by writing a good and viable project proposal. The project proposals are evaluated and appraised by a committee consisting of staff members from the Ministry of Education and USAID. Viable projects were recommended for funding. Schools have choices to come up with any type of project as long as it is viable. Funds generated from the projects are used for the maintenance of the project and the profit goes to the school development fund. The school development fund is used to cater for the school needs that are not catered for by the Government budget.

3.5 Aid Conditions and country ownership

It is a well-known fact that donor aid does not come freely. There are always specific conditions attached to it (tied aid) and the recipient is left with no choice but to agree and adhere to aid conditions. Aid conditions or tied aid refers to the criteria or conditions set or imposed by the donor to the recipient country.

Lister (1991) states that aid tying is the requirement by some donors that part of their funds should be used to procure goods, services or expertise only from the country that provides aid. Those in favour of aid conditions argue and see aid conditions as an appropriate mechanism to improve aid utilisation and to avoid misuse of aid by the recipient and to introduce new policies or new development programmes. Those that are against aid conditions view it as a way of donor dictating to the recipient on what should be done and how it should be done and this forces the recipient government to do something it would otherwise not do.

Developed countries provide aid to developing countries with the aim of assisting the economies of these countries. However, the objectives of giving aid differ from donor to donor and therefore aid conditions also differ from country to country and from one programme to another. Aid relationship between the donor and the recipient is mostly on unequal level where the donor plays a dominant role and the recipient is forced to comply with the aid conditions.

Poor countries need aid without too many strings attached to it. This is echoed by the Human Development Report (2005) that states that “poor countries received aid that

is unpredictable, hedged with conditions, uncoordinated and tied to purchase in donor countries”.

The report further suggests that for the 2015 MDGs targets not to be missed, donors have to make aid more predictable, reduce excessive conditionality, ending tied aid and providing more aid as programme support through the government’s budgets. This is an ideal situation especially in the case of Namibia that prefers aid to go through the State Revenue Fund (SRF) but only few donors channel their funds through RSF. USAID support to basic education is not channelled through the SRF.

Donors argue that they do not channel their aid through the SRF or budgetary frameworks of the recipient countries because they do not have confidence in the financial and budgetary systems of the recipient countries.

The human development report (2005: 103) states that “aid is most effective when it is channelled through budgets and expenditure frameworks that reflect priorities set out in poverty reduction strategies”. However, donors acknowledge national priorities but they undermine government process in practice by channelling their resources to individual projects and programmes. This approach reduces efficiency and undermines the recipient government to control and monitor the aid provided.

Recipient countries lose out from tied aid on many counts. The conditions imposed by the donors for certain goods and services to be purchase from the donor denies the recipient country an opportunity to get the same services and goods at a lower price

elsewhere. Tied aid can result in the transfer of inappropriate skills and technology (Human Development Report 2005).

All donors stress country ownership of development aid. This means giving the recipient more control over how aid is or should be spent. This is made to ensure country ownership which is a requirement for efficient use of aid. However, in reality, this is not the case. Donors want to have control over their money and this undermines country ownership.

The Human Development report (2005: 102) states that “United States tops the list of tied aid while Italy at the bottom of the list. Furthermore, the report states that tied aid reduces the value of assistance by 11% - 30% and is more costly than open market transaction”.

The disadvantages of tying aid are that, it is more expensive to procure goods and services from the donor country through international competitive bidding. Furthermore, acquiring goods such as equipment procured from far may not be compatible with the local makes and sometimes there are problems of acquiring spare parts and maintenance when a need arises.

Tied aid sometimes put the recipient in a difficult position, especially if the recipient cannot comply or fails to comply with some of the conditions. It is argued that aid conditions could have a win-win situation if it is agreed and implemented as per the donor and recipient agreement and commitment. It is important for the donor to

determine the capacities and capabilities of the recipient before they establish their conditions, otherwise tying aid will not improve or achieve the development objectives. Sometimes tied aid becomes a burden to the recipient government, individuals who are assigned to the project/programme and to the nation as a whole. The consequences of non-compliance with aid conditions could be immediate withdrawal or suspension of aid by the donor.

The recipient prefers unconditional aid but donors do not always give unconditional aid. This situation sometimes puts the recipient in a difficult situation, because there is no leeway in aid conditions and in some instances the recipient suffers as a result of incorrect donor policies or conditions. Aid is therefore not always mutually beneficial to both parties despite the good intentions of the parties to benefit the intended beneficiaries and to make a positive impact in the lives of the beneficiaries.

In many cases, the donor prefers the recipients to use their procurement guidelines and policies and these are in many cases biased towards contractors in the donor country.

Bilateral relationship between Namibia and USAID has also been governed by conditions set by USAID and Namibia has to comply with these conditions if it is to receive disbursement. For example, the Standard Provisions attached as annex 2 to the agreement signed between GRN and USAID in 1998, set the following conditions which Namibia has to comply with:

- Any motor vehicle financed under the agreement will be of United States manufacture, except where USAID agrees in writing.
- Transportation by air of property or persons financed under this agreement will be in carriers holding United States certification, to the extent service by such carriers is available under the Fly America Act. This requirement may be further described by USAID in the implementation letters.
- At least 50% of the gross tonnage goods (computed separately for dry bulk carriers, dry cargo liners and tankers) financed by USAID which may be transported on ocean vessels will be transported on privately owned United States flag commercial vessels.
- On Peace Corps, the agreement sets conditions that the Peace Corps teachers should be provided with fully furnished housing by the host government and in certain cases may require upgrading of existing structure and the houses to be provided should comply with the Peace Corps standards with regard to cement floors, screening and access to potable water and latrines.

The agreement also makes provision for all the circuit resource persons to be provided with or have access to 4-wheel drive vehicles.

The conditions may be made with good intentions but sometimes the recipient government may not be in a position to meet them. Given the economic conditions of Namibia, it may be difficult to comply or fulfil all the conditions set out in the agreement.

Lister (1991:10) states that “recipients need to recognise that they are not powerless in the aid relationship. They have the power to decline aid- which is not negligible point, given that aid agencies are driven by an interest in dispensing it. They also have more subtle power. Recipients do not face a single monolithic entity on the donor side but a variety of different agencies with different concerns and preoccupations. The recipient can and should take advantage of the differences among donors”. He further cautions that for a recipient to be successful and use aid resources optimally, it should have knowledge about aid agencies and the type of aid they offer. The recipient should manage aid agencies and avoid being managed by them. Furthermore, the primary task of the recipient should be to establish a coherent framework of national policies and to set priorities that will apply to both internal and external resources.

CHAPTER 4

BASIC EDUCATION IN OMUSATI REGION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter gives an overview on the performance of basic education in Omusati region. Omusati region is situated in northern Namibia. The 2001 Namibia's Population and Housing Census National Report indicates that Omusati region has a population of 228 842. It is the region with the second-highest population, exceeded only by Khomas region with a population of 250 262. Omusati region has the highest number of secondary schools compared to other regions in the country. Records of the Ministry of Education indicate that Omusati region has 102 secondary schools followed by Ohangwena region with 82 secondary schools.

Given the historical background of the education system in this country in general and Omusati region in particular, the education system has been characterised by unqualified and under-qualified teachers, lack of school text books and proper school facilities and inadequate resources. Most of the classes in the schools were constructed by the local communities using local materials such as mud and sticks and no proper chairs and desks. In short, in most of the schools the school environment was not conducive to the learners (MBESC 2004).

4.2 Basic Education reform

Basic education reform took place soon after independence. The goals of Basic Education in Namibia are to:

- Promote national unity, liberty, justice and democracy;
- Promote human rights, respect for oneself and respect for others, their cultures and religious beliefs;
- Foster the highest moral, ethical and spiritual values such as integrity, responsibility, equality, and reverence for life;
- Support and stimulate learners through childhood and youth and prepare them for the responsibilities and challenges of adult life and citizenship;
- Encourage perseverance, reliability, accountability and respect for the value and dignity of work;
- Develop literacy, numeracy, understanding of the natural and social environment, civic life, artistic appreciation and expression, social skills, and promote physical and mental health;
- Provide knowledge, understanding and values, and develop creativity and practical skills, as a solid foundation for academic or vocational training, and for a creative, meaningful and productive adult life;
- Promote maximal development of the individual learner's potential, including those with special learning needs;
- Foster and promote the spiritual and religious well being of the learner, with due regard to the diversity and freedom of beliefs;
- Extend national unity to promote regional, African and international understanding, cooperation and peace; and

- Lay a foundation for the development of human resources and economic growth of the nation.

In Namibia, basic education is free. However, parents are expected to make financial contribution to the school development fund. Omusati region is in the remote rural area and most of the inhabitants are subsistence farmers and poor. Due to poverty and high level of unemployment in the region, the contribution to the school development fund is fairly small compared to that of schools in urban areas. For example, the contribution to the school development fund in rural areas ranges from N\$ 27.00 to N\$ 400.00 per annum, depends on whether it is a Primary, Combined, Junior Secondary or Senior Secondary school, while for schools in urban area the contribution ranges from N\$ 200.00 to N\$ 700.00 (MBESC 2001).

Being a subsistence farming region, children have to work hard in the fields and look after the live stocks. In some cases, children have to wake up early and work in the field before they go to school. In addition, majority of them walk long distances to school. Some children walk as long as four or five kilometres to school. This makes the children tired before they reach the school and as a result, it leads to lack of concentration in the class.

Before independence, once a person fails standard eight, nine or ten (grades 10, 11 and 12), that person could become a teacher without undergoing teacher training. This is one of the contributing factors to a high number of unqualified teachers in the

country. After independence, the government was committed to reform the education system and to address these problems.

The University of Namibia (UNAM) and four Colleges of Education were established to ensure that teachers undergo proper training in order to improve the quality of education. UNAM offers advanced Diplomas and Degrees in Education and other fields while the Colleges of Education offer Basic Education Teacher Diplomas (BETD). Teachers who graduate from the colleges can only teach at primary school level but not at junior and senior secondary levels.

Teachers upgrading programmes were put in place to ensure that those teachers who did not undergo teacher training and those who were under-qualified were trained in order to ensure efficient and effective service delivery. Some of the teachers who were not in position to be trained due to their age and other factors were retrenched. New schools were constructed and the existing ones upgraded or renovated to make them conducive to the learners. All these were done with good intentions to improve the quality of education (MBEC 1998).

The reform programme brought about many changes in the education system. The basic education curriculum, covering grades 1 to 10 was fully Namibian. For Senior Secondary level, the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and the Higher International General Certificate of Education (HIGCSE) for grade 12 were adopted in partnership with the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) (MBESC 2001).

In addition to government's efforts, the USAID support consists of teachers' training and upgrading programmes, development of curriculum that is relevant to the current prevailing situation, development and distribution of textbooks, deployment of Peace Corps teachers and training of those that are involved in education matters such as school Inspectors and Principals.

Although these efforts were made to improve the performances of both teachers and learners, the performance of schools in Omusati region has not been satisfactory. Findings of the National Learner Baseline Assessment conducted in 1992 by the then MBEC indicates that Ondangwa region performed poorly in English and Mathematics as compared to other regions such as Keetmanshoop, Windhoek and Khorixas.

The Education for All National Plan of Action indicates that the enrolment rate for primary education between the year 2000 and 2001 in the region was 67%. For Junior Secondary school was 87% while for the Senior Secondary was 90%.

The data obtained from the Ministry of Education indicate that repetition rate for junior secondary increased from 16.5% in 1994 to 20.3% in 2000. For senior secondary, it stood at 1.4% in 1994 and decreased in the following three years but started to increase from 1998 to 2000. In 2000, the repetition rate stood at 1.3%. There is no explanation given why the repetition rate is increasing rather than decreasing. Although the data show a decrease in repetition in grade 10 from 28.5%

in 1994 to 3.5% in 2000, this is as a result of the Government policy which only allowed learners not older than 16 years of age to repeat grade 10. This means that those learners who are older than 16 years were forced to stay at home or to repeat grade 10 through the Namibia College of Open Learning (NAMCOL). The statistics also show that Omusati region has 68.3% of teachers qualified to teach at secondary school level in 2001. This means that 31.7% of the teachers are not qualified to teach at secondary school level. This, however, shows a considerable increase when compared to only 21.9% and 27.5% for 1995 and 1996 respectively. The teacher: learner ratio has declined from 34.5 in 1995 to 30.9 in 2001 (Education for all national plan of action 2001-2015).

In Namibia, symbols are allocated values as follows

Table 4.1 Value designated letter grades

Symbol	Points	Percentages
A	7	80-100%
B	6	70-79%
C	5	60-69%
D	4	50-59%
E	3	40-49%
F	2	30-39%
G	1	29-29%
U	0	0-19%

Source: Ministry of Education

For grade 10, a learner is expected to obtain a minimum of 23 points in order to proceed to grade 11 while grade 12, a learner is expected to obtain a minimum of 25 points to gain admission in the institutions of higher learning. The number of points that qualifies a student to proceed to grade 11 keeps on increasing on the yearly basis. Students are required to obtain minimum of 25 points in order to gain admission to the institutions of higher learning. If students continue to obtain low symbols, they will not have a chance to proceed to grade 11 or to gain admission to the institutions of higher learning to further their studies. This has a negative impact on the learners.

Records of the performance of both junior and senior secondary schools in Omusati region show that from 1995 to 2003 none of the students obtained an A and B symbols in English, Mathematics and Physical Science. A small number of students obtained a C symbol in the same subjects. One wonders for how long this trend will continue and the impact it will have on learners.

4.3 Improvement in learning achievement

Educational quality means access to learning opportunities in school by all people including the disadvantaged and minority groups. The focus of basic education should be on actual learning acquisition and outcomes, rather than exclusively upon enrolment, more attention should be directed to educational programmes aimed at improving and applying systems of assessing learning achievement.

Fiske and O'Grady (2000:87) state that "the basis for a learning society is a formal education system, where each individual is introduced to many different forms of knowledge. There is no substitute for the teacher pupil relationship".

The measurement of learning gains is of crucial importance of numerous stakeholders: student, parents, teachers, policy makers and donors. Examination and national assessments convey powerful messages about what knowledge and skills are important and how they should be taught. The results of tests determine decision about promotion to higher grades. Teacher resource centres can help to improve teaching and learning and enhance quality education.

According to the Ministry of Education, out of the 16,128 teachers serving in government and private schools, 28 percent have not received formal teacher training, 16 percent of all the teachers had academic qualifications lower than grade 12 and had no teacher training. Another 24 percentage had an academic qualification lower than grade 12 but with some teacher training. Only 12 percent of all teachers had received teacher training and academic qualifications amounting to three or more years post secondary (MBEC 1998).

In the effort to reform basic education in Namibia, the Government through the MEC put in place a framework for basic education in Namibia that will guide the planning and implementation of basic education and nation building to the year 2000 and beyond.

The basic education in Namibia, A framework for the nation building to the year 2000 and beyond outlined the objectives that were envisaged to be achieved and they are as follows:

- Highlight the goals for basic education;
- Outline the broad framework for basic education;
- Identify initial indicators of goal achievement; and
- Specify the timeframe for basic education reform, development, implementation and institutionalisation (MEC 1992).

Basic education in general provides a solid foundation for further learning and development. It promotes acquisition of knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes for better living and sustainable development.

The goals for basic education reform and development in Namibia are:

- Equitable access to schooling;
- Operational efficiency of education;
- Effective pedagogy;
- Democracy (MEC 1992).

Due to the historical background of learners in Omusati region, majority of them cannot speak or write English language well. This factor could contribute to

failure because the volunteers are fluent in English while the learners may just be in the process of learning how to write and speak English.

4.4 The costs and effects of failure

The cost of failure is not only felt by the learners alone but also by the government, families and the society at large. When children fail, they either repeat or drop out and this also has its adverse effects such as poverty and unemployment. Repeaters increase the number of students in a class and make teaching and learning more difficult. Furthermore, resources allocated to repeaters cannot be used to provide access to children's with no opportunity for school. When children fail, parents feel reluctant to send them to school again. There are also long term psychological costs of children in a sense that they feel that they can only fail but never succeed. Other effects include children negative attitude towards schooling and the stigma attached to failure.

Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of basic education is one of the major goals of education reform programme. In order to improve the performance of education, one should first understand the reasons and causes of failure. This will help to make informed decisions that will address the problem.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

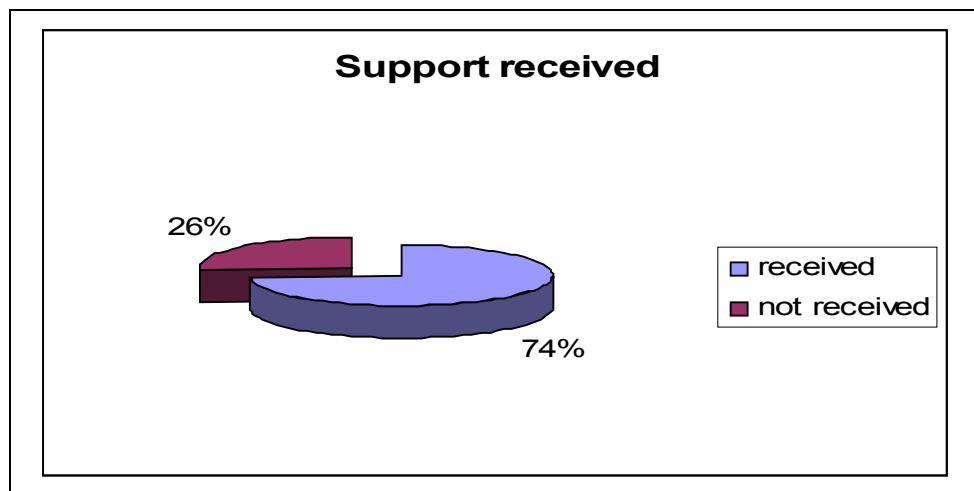
This chapter makes an analysis and provides the findings of USAID support to basic education in Omusati region based on the information gathered through interviews held with the Director of Education for Omusati region, Circuit Inspectors in the region, USAID officials and questionnaire completed by the Principals of the sampled schools.

To say that aid is effective or not is a value judgment. Some aid projects are successful in their own terms. For example, USAID helped to develop new

curriculum and syllabi that are relevant to the Namibian situation. This was a successful project and it has achieved its objectives. However, the question is whether it has helped to improve the overall performance of basic education in general and Omusati region in particular.

The chart below indicates the percentages of the support received.

Chart 5.1 Schools that received USAID support and those that did not receive



As indicated in the chart above, 74% of the schools received one or more types of support while 26% have not.

5.2 Findings

The Findings are based on the analysis of the responses from the respondents. On the questions on the general overview of the USAID support, the respondents stated the types of support provided to various schools as being computers, photocopiers, televisions, textbooks, Peace Corps teachers and financial support.

Based on the responses from the questionnaire, the examination results of the experimental and control groups were compared to establish whether there are significant differences in the learning achievement of learners from the two groups. In the experimental group, three schools received support in the same year. The final examination results of these schools were compared to three other schools that have not received support in the same period. None of the learners from the two groups obtained an A, B or C symbols in the three subjects. In other words the study found that there was no difference in performance of the schools that received funding and those that did not.

This was also echoed by the director of USAID when he indicated some of the major achievements of USAID to basic education in addition to the development and implementation of the curriculum that is learner-centred, training and capacity building for teachers, inspectors and the community.

According to the USAID Director, Peace Corps are graduate teachers, though some of them may not possess the required experience. He refuted the allegation made by some of the respondents that some of the Peace Corps teachers are secondary school graduates. He, however, could not elaborate on the criteria used to select Peace

Corps teachers. In his view, the Peace Corps programme has been performing well and his office did not receive any complaints about the Peace Corps teachers.

Furthermore, he stated that a study was carried out to establish the impact and effects of USAID support. The findings of the study indicated that schools that received their support performed better than those that did not receive. However, this claim could not be verified due to lack of records on the study.

Many school teachers and parents were trained through the School Improvement Project (SIP) on parental involvement and school development planning. About 90% of the schools have development planners and school committees in place.

Through the small grant projects, some schools received funds to implement small projects in the schools such as gardening. The produce from the projects are sold to the community and the money generated is used for the sustainability of the project and the profit goes to the school development fund.

In addition, some schools received office equipment such as computers, printers, photocopiers, a generator and televisions. The schools can now type their school work at their premises, teach their learners basic computer skills, show educational programmes on the television and make photocopies. This has cut costs on printing documents from private companies. Those that received computers can now store the school information electronically. It is easy to retrieve information whenever needed as compared to manual storage which is very difficult and cumbersome.

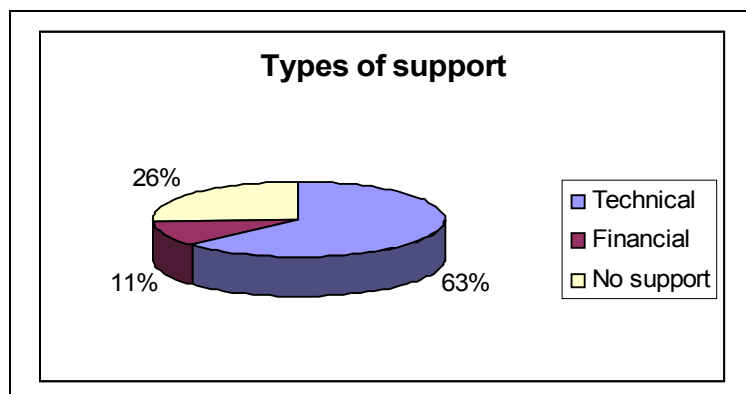
Chart 5.2 Types of support provided

Chart 5.2 indicates that 63% of the schools received technical support, 11% received financial support and 26% have not received any support.

On Peace Corps teachers, apart from teaching English as a second language, Mathematics and Physical Science, they trained local teachers and the community on how to prepare their lessons, how to interpret syllabi and how to deal with HIV/AIDS related issues in schools and in the community. Parents have realised the important role they have to play in the education of their children by being part of the planning process and by assisting teachers especially, in art subjects.

Another positive achievement is that some Peace Corps teachers took it upon themselves to solicit funding for the electrification of a school in the region. This was successful, thanks to the Peace Corps teachers who saw the need and solicited funding for the project, the school has electricity funded by Shell Company. This is one of the positive unintended outcomes of the programme.

Teachers trained through the USAID support are more conversant with the concept of learner-centred approach and can now relate more effectively with the learners said one of the interviewees. The entire curriculum for basic education was reformed to make it relevant to the needs of the learners and of the country. Text books were published and distributed to various schools in the country, some of which were funded by USAID.

With regard to the planning of USAID interventions, the study found that all planning of projects and programmes implemented in the region is done at the central level (Head office in Windhoek) and the region is only expected to carry out instructions from the head office as agreed with USAID. In other words, whether the project/programme addresses the needs of the region or not, the region does not have any influence on the decisions made on their behalf by the Ministry of Education and therefore has no choice but to adhere to the ruling of the central government.

The study also found that USAID funded projects and programmes are managed by the Americans themselves, the region does not have a say in the day- to-day management and monitoring of the programmes. It is therefore difficult for the region to see the progress and impact of the projects/programmes because they are not directly involved.

BES I and II mainly supported lower primary schools and were highly intensive. Local teachers and inspectors were involved in the implementation of the

programmes. However, it is difficult to establish whether the programme made impact because the Ministry did not conduct examinations at the lower primary level.

With regard to the Peace Corps teachers, their tasks in the region are twofold, namely: to teach at the designated schools and to interact with the community. The first one is the official programme goal while the second one is the operative goal. Because of the operative goals, Peace Corps teachers sometimes leave the school in order for them to interact with the communities and the local teachers have to stand in for them. This situation is described as not desirable because it creates inconveniences for both the learners and the local teachers. The purpose of Peace Corps teachers interacting with the community during school hours is not known by the school management but they have no control over the situation. This has a negative unintended outcome of the operative goals. A situation like this could lead to inefficiency and ineffectiveness.

The school managers in the region are not consulted or involved in scrutinizing the portfolio of Peace Corps teachers. The study found that some Peace Corps teachers are mere secondary school graduates without any university or college certificates. Some do not have appropriate skills and expertise to teach. This was supported by some Principals who said that they only realised this after the Peace Corps had left the school or through informal interaction with them. However, this claim was refuted by the director of USAID stating that all Peace Corps teachers are qualified personnel.

Furthermore, the study found that some schools are not happy with Peace Corps teachers because of some incidences experienced in the schools. For example, one principal said that he was shocked to learn that a Peace Corps teacher changed the school logo and used this logo for official purposes without the knowledge of the school management. This seriously disturbed the school management which, as a result, questioned the intentions of the Peace Corps teachers. This is another operative goal with negative unintended outcome.

Some Peace Corps teachers do not do what they are expected from them. Instead of doing the work assigned to them, they interviewed and questioned the learners and write books about the community and as a result, the learners suffer.

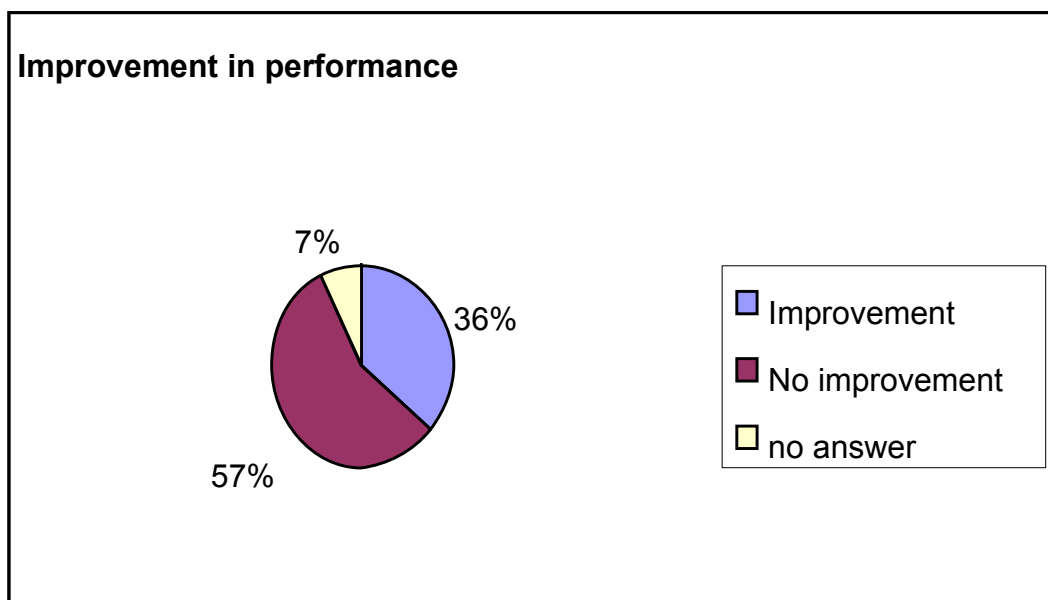
Although there are conditions attached to USAID support to Namibia, the study found that they did not have any effect on the support provided to the schools in Omusati region. This is due to the fact that schools were not given money to purchase office equipment and textbooks from USA, instead, USAID purchased the office equipment and books and distributed them to various schools. Therefore, USAID conditions mentioned in chapter four did not apply to the support given to Basic Education in Omusati region.

On the question of the factors that contribute to the poor performance of learners, all the respondents sited the factors that affect the learners as poverty and family problems, long distances that learners walk to schools, lack of commitment and negative attitudes towards studying, lack of support by parents and families, lack of

proper facilities such as electricity, libraries and resource centres and inadequate materials.

The study found that USAID support has not made significant influence on the performance and pass rate of learners. In some cases, schools that did not receive any funding or USAID support performed better than those that received USAID support. An example was given of one school that had never received any support from any donor but it is one of best performing school in the region. However, this does not mean that USAID support is meaningless. In areas such as the provision of textbooks/ literature books and office equipment, it has made positive impact on the schools in general, but this has no direct bearing on the pass rate of the learners.

Chart 5.3 improvements in performance as a result of USAID support



On the question of whether the support has had any improvement on the performance of the schools, 57% of the respondents indicated that they do not see any improvement in performance as a result of USAID support while 36% indicated that there was improvement in the performance and 7% did not answer the question.

Although there are no direct effects on the pass rates of the learners, about 40 percent of the respondents indicated that the children who are taught by Peace Corps teachers communicated better in English as compared to those taught by local teachers and are able to communicate with pen pals from elsewhere in the world.

Some of the respondents indicated that they would prefer to receive other forms of support such as construction of schools, libraries, textbooks to be provided, or equipment such as computers than to get Peace Corps teachers.

5.1 Challenges and constraints

Despite USAID's effort to help Namibia to achieve its educational goals and the MDGs, there are still challenges that hamper good performance of education, particularly in the formerly disadvantaged regions. These challenges include the inequitable distribution of qualified teachers among the regions as well as inequity in the provision of textbooks and other resources and the provision of quality education to all Namibian children.

Another major constraint expressed is the fact that the Peace Corps teachers are recruited on a two-year contract basis and the Principals tend to assign the Peace

Corps teachers to higher grades. For example, the Principal may assign a Peace Corps to teach Mathematics in grade 10. However, the final grade 10 examinations include what was taught in grades 8, 9 and 10. This means that if the learners do not have a good background in grades 8 and 9 Mathematics, the chances of him/her passing the grade 10 Mathematics final examinations are minimal.

Half of the people interviewed feel that the Peace Corps contracts should be for at least 3 years or more so that they can teach for a longer period before the learners write the final examinations. This may help to monitor the performance of the learners. In other words, some interviewees feel that if a Peace Corps teacher is assigned to teach Mathematics in grades 8, 9 and 10 at the end of Junior Secondary education, it will be easy to look at the performances of learners taught by the volunteer teachers for the three years to see whether they perform better than those who were taught by the local teachers. One will then be able to make a judgment and draw a conclusion on whether the Peace Corps programme made a positive influence on the performance of the learners or not.

The general conclusion is that a two-year period is not sufficient for Peace Corps teachers to make impact because during the first year, they familiarise themselves with the environment, the culture and language of the people in order to get an understanding of the people with whom they are working. Generally, it can be concluded that the Peace Corps programme has not made considerable influence on the performance of learners.

It does not matter how much money is spent and how many people are trained, but what matters is the effect or impact of such undertaking in achieving the goals and objectives of the programme and how it contributed to the improvement of the standard of living of the beneficiaries. The study found that there was no significant difference in pass rates between the schools that received support and those that did not.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusions

This chapter gives the conclusions of the study and the recommendations thereof. While increasing participation and reducing inequalities remain considerable challenges in some countries, improving the quality of education for all is the most important challenge facing Namibia. The primary objective of education is to assure that all students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in their local and global communities.

Quality education has many dimensions. It is about student learning outcomes and the schooling environment. It is about the qualifications of teachers and the teaching and learning processes. It is also about effective and efficient delivery of inputs and the monitoring and evaluation of system performance.

In general, Namibia has made good progress in achieving the goals of access, equity, quality, democracy, efficiency and effectiveness, but much still remains to be done to ensure that the goals of Education for All are realised. The US Government has assisted Namibia in general and Omusati region in particular in achieving the education goals of providing quality education.

The general conclusion is that USAID support has helped the region in many ways. Some types of support such as office equipment and financial support has made life easier for the schools by improving efficiency in the schools. However, the support provided did not make any direct positive influence on the performance of the

learners. Nevertheless, this cannot be blamed on the USAID support alone. Perhaps the question that needs to be answered is whether the Ministry of Education as a watchdog of education in the regions is making any effort to monitor aid utilisation to ensure that aid provided to education is put to good use and make positive contribution to the quality of education.

There is a general feeling among the respondents that many school principals have no understanding of USAID support and how it works. Others have no idea on how to access the USAID support. This implies that there is no proper aid coordination between the central government and the region.

6.2 Recommendations

Having made an in-depth study on USAID support to basic education in Omusati region, the paper made a number of recommendations that the Ministry of Education, Omusati region and USAID may consider in order to improve the situation and ensure effective use of aid in order to achieve the goals of Education for All policy.

The Peace Corps teachers and all those involve in education should be encouraged to be committed, dedicated and have a sense of responsibility towards their work. This will help in providing quality education and ensure positive outcomes of the USAID interventions.

One of the purposes of the programme is to ensure transfer of knowledge through capacity building of local teachers. In order to take advantage and ensure optimal use

of the support provided, it is recommended that each Peace Corps teacher should have a Namibian counterpart to train him or her based on the area of expertise. The two should be supervised by one person who should ensure that there is indeed transfer of knowledge. This will help to enhance the capacity of the local teachers and take over the responsibility after the Peace Corps teachers had left.

It is saddening to learn that the learners taught by Peace Corps teachers have not performed better than others, not even in one school and this raises a question on the worthiness of the programme. The Ministry of Education should consult its partner (USAID) to discuss this and find measures to rectify the situation.

There is a need to improve communication between the central government and the region, especially when the decisions taken on USAID funded programmes have a bearing on the region.

It is important to improve teaching skills and performance and motivate learners to study hard in order to address the problem of failure in the region.

Some of the concerns raised by the Principals and Inspectors are the lack of proper school facilities and learning materials such as textbooks and lack of qualified teachers. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education and the Omusati region should make a concerted effort to improve the school facilities, supply the schools with the basic necessities such as textbooks and ensure that they recruit enough

experienced teachers to cater for the school needs in order to improve the performance of the learners.

A study conducted in 2000 by the MBESC, on the conditions of schooling and the quality of primary education in Namibia suggested that the regional education directors and their respective advisory teachers should investigate the subject competencies of teachers in Mathematics and English and design courses to upgrade the subject knowledge of these teachers. However, this suggestion has not been implemented as yet. It is important that this should be done as a matter of urgency because as long as the region does not have teachers with the necessary competencies, it will continue to rely on Peace Corps teachers and other expatriate personnel. Such a situation will not be beneficial in the long run, given the fact that development assistance on grant basis to Namibia is gradually decreasing. Sooner or later, there will not be any type of such support. The government should try to train teachers in the areas where there are serious needs such as Mathematics, English and Sciences.

Another recommendation made was that Omusati Region together with two other regions (Oshana and Oshikoto) should give more tests to the learners in addition to other measures of continuous assessment if they are to have systematic feedback from the learners in order to establish where the learners are in terms of the objectives/competencies mastered or not. However, this has not yet been implemented. This is very important because it can help to establish at the early stage

the possible causes of poor performance by the learners and, if detected early, corrective measures can be taken to ensure that learners perform well as expected.

In order to have competent Mathematics, English and Physical Science teachers and to avoid over-reliance on Peace Corps teachers, the region should carry out an audit of all the teachers who teach these subjects and their level of competencies and come up with remedial measures such as tailor-made in service courses and increase the standards required for pre-service teachers specialising in these subjects.

The report on a study conducted by the MBESC in 2004 acknowledges that there has been a decline in the competence of both learners and teachers especially in Mathematics. It is therefore imperative for the Ministry of Education in general, and Omusati region in particular, to redouble their efforts to overcome these challenges and short-comings in the education system, if Namibia is to become competitive in the global economy and achieve a knowledge – based economy as envisaged in the Vision 2030.

The study notes that the Northern regions, including Omusati (Caprivi, Kavango, Ohangwena, Oshikoto and Oshana) Mathematics teachers have very low competencies. As mentioned earlier in the previous chapters, these regions make up about 60% of all learners in Namibia. This means that most of the learners in the country are taught by teachers with low competencies in Mathematics. It is therefore advisable that the Ministry of Education should develop new strategies aimed at improving the situation of low competencies of teachers especially in Mathematics,

English and Physical Science in order to ensure and achieve the goal of quality education in Namibia.

Although the Ministry of Education receives the highest budgetary allocation of the national budget, much of it goes to salaries and utilities. Less is spent on the provision of basic services and teaching supplies. It is recommended that the Government through the Ministry of Education should make a concerted effort to allocate more financial resources to the provision of educational facilities and resources.

Perhaps one of the reasons why the Peace Corps programme has not made much impact is the number of years they are allowed to teach in Namibia. There is a need to review the USAID-funded programmes especially, the Peace Corps programme, to increase the number of years from two years to at least three or four years, so that they can teach for a longer time before an assessment in the form of final examination at the end of Junior or Senior Secondary school is done. The outcome of the learners will be used as an indicator to establish whether there has been changes in the performance as a result of Peace Corps teachers or not. There is a need for immediate replacement of Peace Corps teachers in order to ensure continuity.

The region or an independent person or body may wish to carry out a study on the possible reasons why some Peace Corps teachers leave the school work in order to interact with the community.

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Annexes

Annex 1 Thesis questionnaire

Confidential

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Instruction: Please mark with an x in the appropriate box and give a brief explanation where necessary. Please be assured that the information will be treated as highly confidential and will only be used for the intended purpose.

School Name: _____

Respondent Position _____

1. How long have you been at this school?

2. Can you state the USAID support or assistance you received at your school?

3. Did your school received Peace Corps teachers?

Yes

No

3.1 If yes, How many? From which year? To which year?

3.2 Did Namibian teachers from your school trained through the USAID support?

Yes

No

3.2.1 If yes, how many Namibian teachers were trained?

3.2.2 At which institution (s) were they trained?

3.2.3 Which areas of training?

a) Management b) Teaching

3.2.4 If teaching state the subjects

3.2.5 After training, did the teachers return and remain at the school?

Yes No

3.3 Construction of school Yes No

3.3.1 If yes, How many classrooms

3.4 What type of materials, text books and stationery did your school receive through USAID support? Please specify

3.5 Did your school received Furniture through the USAID funding?

Yes No

3.5.1 If the answer above is yes, what type of furniture?

3.6 Did your school receive Equipment through the USAID Funding?

Yes No

3.6.1 If the answer above is yes, please state the type of equipment

4. Please state the subjects taught by the teachers

5. What was the pass rate of these subjects before and after the USAID intervention?

6. How do you compare the situation before the Peace Corps teachers and other supports that came to your school and during the time they were at your school?

7. What changes did you observe?

8. Would you attribute these changes to the support provided?

 Yes No

Please explain

9. Did the USAID support address the real needs?

 Yes No

Please explain

10. Was the support provided sufficient?

 Yes No

11. Did the support provided to your school build the capacity of the school?

 Yes No

Please explain

12. What factors do you think have contributed to the changes in performance of learners?

13. What do you want improved at your school?

14. Do you think that the US support had impact in terms of access and quality since 1990?

Please Explain

15. Were the changes in services of this school a demonstrable result of the Peace Corps teachers and other US support programmes?

If so, what are the key elements or aspects of Peace Corps programme made a difference?

16. What impact does the Peace Corps programme have on:
- a) Namibian teacher staff
 - b) Students
 - c) Community
 - d) School

17. If US were to bring more Peace Corps teachers, how would you feel?

Why?

18. What would you say affects students performance?

19. How would you want to further improve on students' academic performance at your school and why?

20 Did the USAID support not improve or address that? Please explain

Annex 2 Interview questions with the Director of Education for Omusati Region

1. Can you give a general overview on the USAID support to your region?
2. How has the support influenced the outcomes of schools in your region?
3. How do you compare the outcomes of the schools before and after USAID support?
4. Are there differences in performances of the schools that have received USAID support and those that did not?
5. Can you provide detailed information on whether there were any difficulties encountered during the USAID support to schools in your region?

Annex 3 Interview Questions with School Inspectors

1. Can you give a general overview on the USAID support to the schools in your Circuit?
2. What type of support did the schools receive?
3. How has the support influenced the outcomes of schools in your circuit?
4. Are there differences in performances of the schools that have received USAID support and those that did not?
5. Can you provide detailed information on whether there were any difficulties encountered during the USAID support to schools in your circuit?

Annex 4 Interview Questions with the Director of USAID

1. What are the types of support provided by USAID to Basic Education in Omusati Region and what impact, in your opinion, did they have?
2. What are the achievements of USAID funded programmes to Basic Education in Omusati Region, since their inception?
3. (a) What are the criteria being used by USAID to select Peace Corps teachers?

(b) Are Peace Corps teachers graduate?
4. How do you assess the performance of Peace Corps teachers in Namibia?
5. What is your general view on USAID support to Basic Education in Omusati region?