



**The Contribution of Post-Basic Education and Training (PBET)  
to Poverty Reduction in Rwanda : balancing short-term goals and  
long-term visions in the face of capacity constraints**

**RACHEL HAYMAN**

**Post-Basic Education and Training  
Working Paper Series - N°3**

**June 2005**

**Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh**

*Comments to: [R.C.Hayman@sms.ed.ac.uk](mailto:R.C.Hayman@sms.ed.ac.uk)*

## CONTENTS

CONTENTS.....	2
ACRONYMS.....	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	5
Introduction.....	7
1. EDUCATION IN RWANDA: RECENT HISTORY AND CURRENT DEBATES....	8
The Education System pre-1994.....	8
The Reconstruction Years: 1994-1998 .....	10
Consolidation of the System and Provision of Education: 1998 to 2004 .....	12
Education and Training Policy in 2004-05 .....	15
Skills Training.....	18
External Support to Education and Training .....	21
Core Issues and Debates in Education and Training .....	23
2. POVERTY REDUCTION IN RWANDA AND ATTAINING THE MDGS.....	26
Poverty in Rwanda.....	27
Rwanda’s Development Vision and Poverty Reduction Strategy .....	29
Achieving the MDGs .....	31
Donor Perspectives on Poverty and Education.....	33
3. EDUCATION AND TRAINING, THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION .....	36
What is Post Basic Education and Training (PBET) and why is it necessary? The debate in Rwanda .....	36
Education and Poverty Reduction: what the data tells us.....	38
The Enabling (and Disabling) Environment.....	44
4. CONCLUSION.....	49
Postscript.....	52
REFERENCES .....	53
APPENDIX 1 : Vision 2020 objectives and indicators, compared with the MDGs.....	57
APPENDIX 2 : Provisions for Education and Training within Sector Strategies .....	59

## ACRONYMS

ADB	African Development Bank
APEFE	Association pour la Promotion de l'Education et de la Formation à L'Etranger (Belgium) [Association for the Promotion of Education and Training Abroad]
CERAI	Centres d'enseignement rural et artisanal intégré [Centres for Rural and Artisan Education]
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CWIQ	Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire
DFID	Department for International Development
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
EFA	Education for All
ESAF	Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility
ESP	Education Sector Policy
ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan
ETO	Ecole Technique Officielle [Technical School]
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GER	gross enrolment rate
GoR	Government of Rwanda
GTZ	Gemeinschaft für Technische Zusammenarbit [German Technical Cooperation]
HEI	Higher Education Institute
HIDA	Human Resources and Institutional Capacity Development Agency
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative
HLCS	Household Living Conditions Survey [EICV - Enquête intégrale sur les conditions de vie des ménages au Rwanda]
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISAR	Institute for Agricultural Research
KHI	Kigali Health Institute
KIE	Kigali Institute of Education
KIST	Kigali Institute of Science and Technology
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
Mifotra	Ministry of Public Service, Skills Development, Vocational Training and Labour
Minagri	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
Minaloc	Ministry of Local Government, Good Governance, Rural Development and Social Affairs
Minecofin	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
Mineduc	Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Scientific Research
Minicom	Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Investment Promotion, Tourism and Cooperatives
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Centre
NER	net enrolment rate
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NUR	National University of Rwanda
PBET	Post-Basic Education and Training
PCCDE	Prefectural and Communal Centres for Development and Continuing Education

PDL-HIMO	Programme de développement local à haute intensité de main d'oeuvre [Labour Intensive Public Works Programme]
PPPMER	Projet pour la promotion des petites et microentreprises rurales [Rural Small and Micro-enterprises Promotion Project]
PRSC	Poverty Reduction Support Credit
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RESSP	Rwanda Education Sector Support Programme (DFID)
SWAp	Sector-Wide Approach
UBE	Universal Basic Education
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Committee for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
VSO	Voluntary Services Overseas
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
YTC	Youth Training Centre (more commonly know by the French acronym CFJ – Centre de Formation des Jeunes)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study explores the relationship between education and training and poverty reduction in Rwanda. When the current regime came to power in July 1994, it was faced with restoring and reforming a chronically weak education sector. Although enrolment figures had been considered good and gender parity had been achieved at primary level before the war and genocide, the education system since independence in 1962 had been discriminatory in nature, quality was poor, vocational training and technical education were incredibly weak, and tertiary education was seriously under-developed. Between 1994 and 1998 the emphasis was on transforming education into a tool for reconciliation and peace.

Since 1998, poverty reduction has lain at the heart of Rwanda's development policy. This has attracted significant support from donors for a wide range of activities in the education sector. Basic education has been made a priority, with a commitment to providing nine years free education to all children. Resources are being re-allocated towards basic education, with increased attention being paid to non-formal aspects and involving non-state providers. This raises debates around capacity, funding and quality, as well as the links between basic and post-basic education and training (PBET).

A more in-depth exploration of the Government of Rwanda's (GoR) development policy reveals that it is looking well beyond basic education, and beyond poverty reduction. Indeed, education and training are expected to fulfil two core objectives: to contribute to peace and reconciliation; and to transform the Rwandese people into human capital for development. The long-term vision of the GoR is for Rwanda to become a service hub in Central Africa which requires substantial attention to PBET to develop a sufficiently skilled population to generate the resources to sustain and develop the country.

Education and training are expected to have various direct and indirect impacts on achieving this vision on the one hand, and on reducing poverty on the other. However, a broader 'enabling environment' is necessary for this to happen. PBET is both inherent to and dependent on this environment, which includes factors both internal and external to the education system. In the current context, various constraints exist. These include limited human and financial resources, structural weaknesses in the economy, low capacity within the GoR, and prospects for political stability in the country and region. While it is recognised that a broad approach is necessary, this is hampered in reality by poor cross-ministerial communication and poor links between the education system and labour market. Underlying this is a limited understanding of what the outcomes of education are in terms of socio-economic transformation at individual and societal levels. Assumptions are made, but the empirical evidence base is weak. Those actively engaged in the education system demonstrate poor knowledge about the transition of children and students from education and training to employment, and even poorer knowledge about what happens to those who fail to access education or to complete cycles.

Discrimination on an ethnic and regional basis may be a thing of the past, but equity of access remains a serious issue, with the poor and rural inhabitants faring badly. Recent reflections on the education system highlight the need to improve access for girls and vulnerable children, youths and adults – however, there is little sign of a specifically pro-poor approach. There is tension between the desire to increase access, the impact this would have on quality, and the human and material resources required to finance the system. External financing is the main option which in turn leads to tensions over the core objectives of donors in comparison to those of the GoR. Donors are focusing particularly on basic education, although in practice they have funded a wider range of activities including substantial investments in institutional

support. Broader human resource development may have been considered a priority for the GoR, but little investment in skills beyond the formal education system has occurred, largely due to the high costs and limited interest of donors. The GoR appears torn between its commitments on basic education and pro-poor development, and its desire to invest at higher levels and in more technology-based subjects. This reflects the tension between the poverty reduction and economic growth agendas, which are interlinked but not necessarily the same.

## **Recommendations**

Empirical evidence about education and poverty reduction in Rwanda is weak. What exists has either not been sufficiently exploited or has been used to push particular agendas. Findings suggest that low educational achievement is closely associated with poverty levels, which are very high in Rwanda. It is only with secondary education that a real change seems to be observed in socio-economic status and lifestyle. This may be partly addressed through ongoing commitments to improve quality in primary education and to expand basic education provision. However, the drive towards a nine-year basic education cycle should not detract from the need for an integrated approach which ensures adequate expansion of higher levels of education in tandem to ensure that there is motivation for remaining in basic education on the one hand, and that access to higher levels of education does not continue to be skewed towards the rich on the other.

Planning would be facilitated by addressing the following gaps in the knowledge:

- Little is known about the transition of children and students from education and training to the world of work – tracer studies could facilitate this.
- Evident skills deficits in the public and private sector do not equate with concerns about labour market saturation – why do these skills gaps persist and how can they be filled?
- Education is clearly highly valued – why do people invest in it, what are the real physical and intellectual returns, and how can the ‘hunger’ for education best be supported by the state?
- Information on specific pro-poor pathways through education to poverty reduction is scarce – what mechanisms exist and how are they performing?

Commitments have been made to take a more integrated approach to policy planning for PBET, but inter-ministerial dialogue remains limited in scope. Greater collaboration with other ministries at the heart of the poverty reduction strategy – such as Agriculture, Health, Commerce and Labour – is essential to ensure that coherent, workable strategies to transform education and training into poverty reduction and growth objectives are developed.

# **The Contribution of Post-Basic Education and Training (PBET) to Poverty Reduction in Rwanda : balancing short-term goals and long-term visions in the face of capacity constraints<sup>1</sup>**

## **Introduction**

The development of human resources is one of the principal factors in achieving sustainable economic and social development. Education and training has been considered as a critical lynchpin to achieve development and poverty reduction in Rwanda. (Mineduc 2003b: 4)

The Government of Rwanda (GoR) has placed human resource development at the heart of its long-term development strategy, and education in its varied forms – basic, post-basic, formal and informal – has been and remains a vital factor in the GoR's policies for national reconciliation, poverty reduction and economic growth. This policy is very much aligned with the dominant poverty reduction agenda underlying many sub-Saharan African country strategies; and attaining the international targets of the Dakar Framework for Action and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) underpins the rhetoric of the Government.<sup>2</sup>

This study explores education, poverty and growth in Rwanda, the evolution of GoR policy, the priorities in practice and how different agendas are balanced in the face of resource constraints. Rwanda is a heavily indebted poor country (HIPC), and its high dependence on external financial and technical resources means that donors play an important role in the education and training sector. It is therefore not surprising that the GoR's policy line mirrors in many respects the concerns of the international community. Nevertheless, the GoR has its own perspective on the role of education and training for poverty reduction, and tensions can sometimes be observed between competing agendas.

A central focus of this study is the two-way interaction between post-basic education and training (PBET) and basic education on the one hand, and PBET and the wider socio-economic environment on the other. It seeks to explore the relationship between PBET and poverty reduction in policy, practice, rhetoric and reality. In doing so, a number of questions are addressed. What role does education and training play in GoR development policy, and what are the expected outcomes? What are the core priorities, and how do these reflect the priorities of donors? What evidence exists on the contribution of education and training to poverty reduction and to development, and how does this relate to the wider environment?

The last ten years have seen a substantial number of studies conducted on Rwanda. Nevertheless, these shed only limited light on the contribution of PBET to poverty reduction. This is largely because Rwanda's recent traumatic history has dominated research and reflections on the social, political and economic development of the country – focusing on the conflict, the genocide, peace and reconciliation, and the post-genocide reconstruction of the

---

<sup>1</sup> This country study is part of a six-country study on PBET and poverty, funded by the UK Department for International Development and led by the Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh. I am grateful to all the people within Rwandan ministries, educational establishments and donor agencies who gave time to discuss this issue with me. I am also grateful to Neil Thin, Kenneth King, Harvey Smith, Martyn Roebuck and Susy Ndaruhutse for comments on drafts of this paper. The views contained in this paper are mine alone.

<sup>2</sup> The Dakar Framework for Action was adopted at the World Education Forum in Dakar (Senegal) in April 2000. Here, participants reaffirmed the commitment made in the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA), adopted at Jomtien (Thailand) in 1990, namely to achieve EFA by the year 2015 (see [http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/wef\\_2000/index.shtml](http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/wef_2000/index.shtml)). The Millennium Development Goals were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2000 (see UN 2000).

country. The empirical basis for analysing the relationship between PBET and poverty is therefore weak, and to date it would seem that policy is based rather on assumptions and experiences from elsewhere than on the realities of the country. The data that does exist nonetheless provides some insights into the complexities of unpicking how PBET is seen to and can contribute to poverty reduction.

This study has the following structure: Part 1 outlines the historical context of education and skills development in Rwanda, as well as the situation in 2004-05, covering policy provisions, the input of donors and core debates. Part 2 reflects on the links between education and poverty within GoR and donor policy, and Rwanda's progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Part 3 then brings these sections together in an analysis of PBET, the enabling environment and poverty reduction in the particular context of Rwanda.

## 1. EDUCATION IN RWANDA: RECENT HISTORY AND CURRENT DEBATES

### The Education System pre-1994<sup>3</sup>

Historically, access to education, and particularly post-primary education, in Rwanda has been limited and discriminatory in character. When Rwanda was under Belgian mandate (1919 to 1962), education remained largely the domain of the Catholic church, which established the first school in Rwanda in 1900, with priority given to the Tutsi as the chosen elite of the colonial authorities. Access for Hutu to education improved in the 1950s, when a new generation of Catholic missionaries began to support the social uplifting of the Hutu masses, allowing Hutu to obtain post-secondary education through the seminaries of Kabgayi and Nyikabanda (Prunier 2002: 33, 44; Chrétien 2000: 264). The 'revolution' of 1959 and the establishment of a Hutu-led republic with independence in 1962 reversed the situation.<sup>4</sup> Ethnic and regional quotas for public and government-assisted schools and institutions became the norm (Obura 2003: 42),<sup>5</sup> and the quota system was extended into the public employment sector.<sup>6</sup> Access was extremely limited in public education institutions in general at independence when Rwanda had only 386,000 primary pupils and just over 11,000 secondary school pupils within 64 institutions (Tikly et al. 2003: 28-29) out of a population of just under 3 million.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Although one should be wary about dividing Rwanda's trajectory into simplistic blocks of pre and post-genocide years, I use these terms here to distinguish between distinct policy periods: the overthrow of the Habyarimana regime in 1994 marked a clear break in policy planning and implementation. The policy environment since 1994 has been dominated by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) – within the Government of National Unity up to 2003, and as the strongest force in a coalition government since elections in 2003.

<sup>4</sup> By the late 1950s Belgian preferential treatment for Tutsi was waning, as members of the Tutsi elite began to demand independence and as the impact of the change in attitude of the Church was felt. Elections in 1960 and 1961 brought the *Parmehutu* party to power (Chrétien 2000).

<sup>5</sup> The 'ethnic' breakdown in Rwanda is a contentious issue, as is the denomination of Hutu and Tutsi as distinct 'ethnic' groups (see for example Uvin (1998), Chrétien (2000) and Mamdani (2001)). At the time of the Habyarimana regime (1972-1994) the population was considered to be 90% Hutu, 10% Tutsi and 1% Twa (Mamdani 2001: 139 and notes, pg 313). Given that the GoR no longer officially differentiates the population, there are no statistics after 1994 which categorise the demographics of the country along Hutu/Tutsi/Twa lines. It should be noted also that Rwanda was further divided along regional lines, notably north-south. The north-west was the power-based of the Habyarimana regime and it is possible that Hutu from the south experienced as much discrimination as Tutsi (Uvin 1998: 35).

<sup>6</sup> This mirrored the situation pre-1959 when educated Hutu experienced great difficulty in finding employment in the public sector (Prunier 2002: 33). It should be noted that the application of the quota system was not necessarily rigorous, however (Uvin 1998: 35; Mamdani 2001: 139).

<sup>7</sup> Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, International Development Statistics, ESDS International, University of Manchester: <http://www.esds.ac.uk> (accessed 30 March 2004)



At independence, Rwanda's curriculum was heavily academic, focusing on religion, philosophy and language (Tikly et al. 2003: 29). A World Bank report on education in Rwanda from 1975 highlights the need to orient education more towards the needs of the rural population and proposes projects to support vocational training in schools (IBRD 1975: i).<sup>8</sup> This reflects the tone of the first major reform of the education system in Rwanda which happened in 1977 and which sought to "ruralize, vocationalize, democratize education" (Obura 2003: 39), stressing teaching in the local language (*Kinyarwanda*) and local culture. Until 1977, education followed a system of 6-3+3-3/4 (6-years primary, 3 years lower secondary and 3 years upper secondary, 3/4 years tertiary) with vocational, technical and academic streams at secondary level. In the reform of 1977 an eight-year primary cycle was introduced with a three-year post-primary cycle for a small minority, streamed into general and technical education (covering activities like teacher training, nursing, mechanics and carpentry) at secondary schools. About 10% of pupils continued to post-primary education by 1992. Pre-1990, Rwanda's enrolment figures were considered good by African standards, with a gross enrolment rate (GER) of 65% in 1990 and gender parity in access to primary schools (Obura 2003: 40). Quality was an issue, however, with poorly qualified teachers and short supplies of materials, affecting retention rates and performance.

Vocational training was particularly promoted within the 1977 reform with the establishment of Centres for Rural and Artisan Education (CERAI) which provided some general academic subjects while focusing on vocational skills training (agriculture, home economics, crafts). Other vocational training centres under the Ministry of Youth (supported by UNDP) were also in place, including Youth Training Centres, Youth Work Camps, Apprenticeship Centres, and Training and Production Workshops (GoR 1990).<sup>9</sup> However, the quality of the training from these centres was very poor and uncoordinated, and by the early 1990s there were concerns about the high population of largely illiterate, poorly skilled youth trying to enter a restricted job market (GoR 1991; GoR 1992).

As for tertiary education, the National University of Rwanda (NUR), strongly supported by Canada, opened in 1963 with six faculties by 1975. By 1994 it had produced only 1000 graduates specialising mainly in the arts and social sciences (Tikly et al. 2003: 29). Tertiary education was also provided by private (mainly religious) institutions.

The second major overhaul of education was foreseen in 1991, envisaging a return to the pre-1977 structure of six years primary, three years lower secondary and three years streamed upper secondary. It also planned the rationalization of the curriculum, the redesigning of learning materials and the reorganization of teaching staff (Obura 2003). However, this revision came as Rwanda was descending into civil war and the reforms were barely enacted.

Throughout this period, the churches were major providers of education, particularly at the secondary level.<sup>10</sup> Colonial authorities limited their involvement in education to overseeing policy, curriculum and inspection. In the 1920s the *libre subsidié* (state-assisted) system was

---

<sup>8</sup> The 1975 report notes that "The curriculum is too literary, geared to the needs of the very small numbers who enter secondary schools. Secondary and higher education are uncoordinated and often unrelated to Rwanda's manpower needs." (IBRD 1975: i) The report stresses that investments should first and foremost address the primary sector, with nothing for the secondary and tertiary sectors (including teacher training) at this stage. As we shall see later, this mirrors remarkably the concerns of the 2004 World Bank report on education in Rwanda.

<sup>9</sup> *Centre de Formation des Jeunes, Chantiers de Jeunes, Centres d'Apprentissage, Ateliers de Formation et de Production*. The official name of the CERAI was *Centres d'enseignement rural et artisanal intégré*. The translations given here are my own.

<sup>10</sup> One informant explained how limited access to public institutions, as well as the quota system, led many Tutsi families to help in establishing private schools.

established whereby the state provided financial support including teacher salaries for church-run schools (Obura 2003: 106), a system which persists to this day applying both to church and NGO-run schools. The position taken by the Catholic Church prior to independence, which first favoured Tutsi and later promoted the ‘liberation’ of the Hutu, has been seen as fuelling divisions in Rwandan society, even more so than the colonial administrative authorities (see Eltringham 2004).<sup>11</sup> The post-independence education system deepened these divisions through ethnic and regional biases in admission policy, top-down teaching which promoted strict obedience to authority, and a curriculum entrenching socially constructed ‘ethnic’ stereotypes. Schools have also been accused of inciting children towards violence.<sup>12</sup>

Despite this, pre-1994 Rwanda was hailed as a development success story (Uvin 1998) and many donors were active in supporting the education sector: France for teacher training; Belgium for secondary, tertiary and curriculum; World Bank for primary education and vocational training; African Development Bank and UN agencies for out-of-school children, higher education, and support to education reform; Germany and Canada for vocational training. However, this support was often uncoordinated and generally uncontrolled by the GoR, with donors providing assistance according to their own criteria and systems (IBRD 1975: 8; GoR 1990; GoR 1991; GoR 1994).

### **The Reconstruction Years: 1994-1998**

The war which began in 1990 and culminated in the genocide which lasted from April to July 1994<sup>13</sup> destroyed the education system of the country. Schooling came to a halt; buildings were destroyed; the university was sacked; libraries and the national archives were pillaged; large numbers of teachers were killed or fled the country. Officials working in the Ministry of Education in the immediate aftermath described how the Ministry building had no windows, equipment was seriously lacking and even chairs were scarce.<sup>14</sup> Not only did the education sector have to recover physically, but popular faith in education had been dealt a serious blow. Furthermore, the school population was completely turned upside down; the massive population movements both out of and into Rwanda meant that pupils were entering the school system from different educational and linguistic backgrounds. Trauma levels were high, as were the numbers of orphans.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> The role of the Church in dividing Rwandans during the colonial period, its actions during the genocide and its role in the reconstruction of Rwandan society continues to be a topic of debate (see IRDP 2003).

<sup>12</sup> For a recent reflection on how Rwandese people view the causes of the genocide, including how ‘ethnic’ stereotypes were accepted within popular perception, see IRDP (2003). The role of education is explored briefly (pg 33), a topic also taken up by Obura (2003: 98).

<sup>13</sup> While it could be argued that the genocide began much earlier with incidents of state-organised violence against Tutsi since 1959 (see Prunier 2002), the term ‘the genocide’ is generally applied to the period of extreme violence between 6 April 1994, when the shooting down of President Habyarimana’s plane sparked off the organised elimination of Tutsi (and Hutu opposed to the regime), and the establishment of the Government of National Unity on 19 July 1994 by which time the Rwandan Patriotic Army had established control over most of Rwandan territory.

<sup>14</sup> Interviews with a number of government officials in the Ministry of Education and the National Curriculum Development Centre, September-October 2004.

<sup>15</sup> Nearly 2 million Rwandese had fled to neighbouring countries by July/August 1994, mostly to Zaire, but hundreds of thousands also to Burundi and Tanzania. It was not until late 1996 that the majority returned. There were also over a million people internally displaced by the end of the war. By late 1994, up to 400,000 refugees from earlier exoduses (notably since 1959) had returned from Uganda, Zaire and Burundi (Prunier 2002). Moreover, the war and genocide had left in its wake 100,000 orphans and children separated from their families, virtually all children had been witness to violence, and in 2002 there were an estimated 45,000 child-headed households (Obura 2003: 49-51).

Nevertheless, the primary education system was up and running again by September 1994 albeit in emergency fashion – high school graduates were being given crash courses to become teachers, exams were taken in any language, officials were travelling around the country delivering salaries to teachers in cash or in kind. The churches, the reputation of which had been seriously sullied during the genocide, approached the new regime early on to renew the state-church partnership in education and played an important part in raising funds for reconstruction (Obura 2003: 109). Secondary and tertiary institutions opened their doors again in January 1995.

The main policy priority of the GoR was to address the failings of the educational system in the past, in line with its broader policy to forge national unity out of the chaos. As the previous section showed, the pre-war education and training system was seriously wanting, and major reform rather than reconstruction was the order of the day. Policies written by the post-1994 regime have tended to highlight the inequalities, inadequacies and inefficiencies of the education system under the former regime (GoR 1994; Mineduc 1998; GoR 2003: 32; Mineduc 2003d).

The years 1994 to 1998 were characterised by reconstruction and rehabilitation, with a heavy emphasis on reconciliation as refugees were reintegrated into the system, an issue of both practical and political importance:

It was also politically important to demonstrate to the children who came back from exile that the government was immediately ready to provide for all-comers among schoolchildren, of whatever language and school background (Obura 2003: 58).

History teaching was postponed<sup>16</sup> and dysfunctional vocational training centres were closed down. Discussions on education in 1994 emphasised the promotion of ‘new’ values beyond the ethnic, regional, national and religious prejudices of the past (GoR 1994). These values have remained central to curriculum debates ever since.

This demonstrates one core role envisaged for education and training, namely as an instrument of peace and reconciliation. The second core role was for economic development. This philosophy is clearly laid out in the GoR’s 1997 (updated in 1998) Study on the Education Sector in Rwanda, prepared with UNESCO and UNDP support. Education was to provide human resources for economic and social development while promoting peace and tolerance. Education would help modernise and diversify the informal rural sector, and would train personnel to manage the economic system and public services. National capacity building in science and technology as well as the teaching of mathematics, science and languages were emphasised, along with the linking of education and training to the employment market. Ambitious targets on primary, secondary and tertiary enrolments were set, such as raising primary school attendance to 100% by 2005 and increasing secondary school admissions to 40% by 2005 (Mineduc 1998: iii) and promises were made with regard to vocational training and special needs schooling. So while the international community,

---

<sup>16</sup> The question of history is a subject of continual debate (see GoR 1999; Chretien 2000; Pottier 2002; IRDP 2003; Eltringham 2004), and what history to teach in schools was under discussion for many years. A new history syllabus was adopted in 1997 at primary level and in 1998 for secondary level, based on the outcomes of seminars and workshops which recommended the teaching of unifying factors in Rwandan culture rather than divisions (Rutayisire 2004). This, however, remained unimplemented by 2003, one of the problems being that no textbook on history had been published since 1994 giving teachers no research on which to base their teaching (Obura 2003: 99-105). However, history has now been absorbed into a broader Social Studies curriculum for primary and lower secondary which was completed in 2004. At upper secondary level discussions on a revised history curriculum are still ongoing (personal communication, Harvey Smith, CfBT Rwanda, March 2004).

including many NGOs, were focusing on rehabilitating schools, the GoR was emphasizing the need to “replenish and expand the country’s skilled manpower at the highest levels” (Obura 2003: 114) and kick-start critical sectors of the economy (GoR 1995). High priority was therefore given to getting tertiary education back on its feet, and the GoR was determined to do this whether the international community helped or not. This attitude towards tertiary education continues to resound and has been a frequent source of tension with the donor community, as we shall see.

Relations between the GoR and donors were strained in general during these years, particularly with those bilateral donors who had supported the previous regime. Nevertheless, there was substantial multilateral and NGO assistance for material reconstruction of the education system and support to teachers. Even prior to the first main Round Table meeting in Geneva to mobilise funds for Rwanda in January 1995, meetings with donors had been held on support for the education sector, notably in Geneva in October 1994 and in Rwanda in November 1994. Between 1994 and 1998 the main donors were UNESCO, UNICEF and the UNDP, which were channelling bilateral funds, as well as the WFP which was providing food for schools and as in-kind salary supplements for teachers. UNESCO and UNICEF were also providing direct assistance to the Ministry of Education. There was, however, limited interest from donors in secondary and higher levels of education. Concern was also raised about the lack of coordination amongst the many agencies active in the country, limited interaction with the Ministry, and the poor quality of some of the reconstruction work carried out (Mineduc 1998).

### **Consolidation of the System and Provision of Education: 1998 to 2004**

While the 1997 Education Study emphasizes the role of education for social and economic reconstruction and development, there is nothing in this report specifically referring to education and poverty reduction. By 1998, however, the GoR was beginning to formulate its broader policy agenda, with poverty reduction playing an increasingly prominent role, as we shall explore further in Section 2. The education sector was also seeing a shake-up in terms of organisation and staff, as well as an expansion of associated institutions. Returnees from the Diaspora were being recruited into the Ministry of Education, bringing with them experience from other countries, most notably Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi and Anglophone countries further afield. In 1997 the former Ministries of Primary and Secondary, and of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Culture were merged into one to become the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Scientific Research (Mineduc). Culture was transferred to the Ministry of Youth and Sports. In 1998 the National Curriculum Development Centre, the National Examinations Council and the General Inspectorate were established. A more recent change has been the shift of vocational training from the Ministry of Labour and of adult education from the Ministry of Local Affairs to Mineduc in 2004. The late 1990s also saw a significant increase in the provision of tertiary education, with three new public institutes opening: the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST) and the Kigali Health Institute (KHI) in 1997; and the Kigali Institute of Education (KIE) in 1999.

In 2004, the education system in Rwanda was structured as follows:

- 1-3 years pre-primary, known as Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)
- 6 years primary education
- 3 years lower secondary (often referred to as *tronc commun* in accordance with its French name) + 3 years of upper secondary. Upper secondary is divided into four streams: general education (academic, with two science streams and two arts streams); primary teacher training delivered at 11 Teacher Training Colleges located throughout

the country; technical education (e.g. mechanics, carpentry, electronics) delivered by Official Technical Schools (ETO<sup>17</sup>); and professional education (e.g. nursing, agroveterinary, hotel and catering, secretarial) for which specialist schools also exist.

- 2-4 years tertiary education
- vocational training, provided by Youth Training Centres (YTC), which run courses of 6-12 months.

Education is provided by a range of state and non-state actors, generally divided into public, state-assisted (*libre subsidié*) and private. However, the private sector covers a range of for-profit and not-for-profit organisations which are often not clearly differentiated. A study is foreseen under the draft ESSP update for 2005-2010 on the role of non-state actors, as the Ministry of Education is keen to encourage the diversification of provision, to work closer with the private sector (including faith-based organisations and non-governmental organisations) to provide education and training services, notably for adult literacy, pre-primary and vocational training, but also within secondary and tertiary education (Mineduc 2005).<sup>18</sup>

Primary education is mostly provided by the public sector and state-assisted institutions, with private primary schools, mostly based in the capital, accounting for only around 1% of provision (World Bank 2004:32). According to Obura, 70% of primary schools in Rwanda are owned by faith-based organisations and these manage almost all the primary schools which are state-assisted (Obura 2003: 106). Private primary schools are considered to be better equipped than their public counterparts in terms of human and material resources, but there is little difference between public and state-assisted primary schools (World Bank 2004: 93). Table 1 shows that access to primary education is increasing with a gross enrolment rate (GER) of 130.8% in 2003/04, which is attributed to the policy of fee-free primary education implemented in 2003 (Minecofin 2004c: 48). Fees have been replaced with a capitation grant from the central ministry.<sup>19</sup>

Private provision of education is more significant at other levels. Pre-primary is largely provided by private bodies within urban areas, with less than 1% of the eligible population having access to 257 nurseries of which only two are government-owned (Mineduc, 2003a: 9).<sup>20</sup> Access in general beyond primary is limited, with selection for secondary school, at the time of writing, decided by a national examination at the end of the primary cycle.<sup>21</sup> The GER at secondary stands at 15.4%, which is increasing, although the net enrolment rate (NER) remains static at around 10% (see Table 1). Public schools account for only 30% of secondary institutions, with the state-assisted and private sector playing a very key role, the latter especially in the professional and technical streams. A higher proportion of girls are

---

<sup>17</sup> Generally known by their French name, *Ecoles Techniques Officielles*.

<sup>18</sup> Obura notes that relations between the churches and the GoR were strained in the early 2000s in terms of coordination and collaboration around education provision, suggesting issues that need to be resolved for a more effective partnership to be established, most notably the need for the churches to commit themselves to national goals for education, and for the state to provide clarification of the roles of non-state providers (Obura 2003: 113).

<sup>19</sup> Parents are still required in practice to pay for uniforms, books, and general school support often including salary supplements for teachers which raises questions about just how 'free' primary education is. There have been concerns about capitation grants actually reaching schools in 2004, and the tracking of these has been flagged up for attention (Joint Review of the Education Sector 2004).

<sup>20</sup> ECCD has been flagged up for attention over 2005-06 (Mineduc 2005).

<sup>21</sup> The acceptance of students into secondary schools depends not only on achieving the national average score in the exam, but also on the number of places available with particular criteria on the basis of gender, language, accommodation, course choices and geographical location (Akyeampong 2004a: 15). The system tends to favour boys. There are only as many primary leaving certificates issued as there are places available at secondary schools.

enrolled in private institutions than in public or state-supported ones and a particular concern is the poor performance of private secondary schools in terms of examination results in comparison to public and state-assisted schools (World Bank 2004: 128), despite having a higher number of qualified teachers (Mineduc 2004b: 8).

Since 1999 there has been an explosion in the number of higher education institutes (HEIs), both public and private, providing both degree and non-degree programmes, although the enrolment rate is only around 1% (see Table 1). The National University of Rwanda is the only public university, but there are five public HEIs, as well as 14 private universities and HEIs. New ones or regional branches are being established on a regular basis, leading ministry officials to talk of ‘mushrooming’ HEIs to meet a growing demand, mostly from private, part-time (generally mature) students signing up for courses. Distance learning programmes are also being developed, particularly for teachers. Tertiary education has seen an even more impressive growth rate than secondary (increasing at around 20% a year), with enrolments growing at around 29% a year between 1996 and 2001 (World Bank 2004: 33). Enrolments in private institutions stood at around 40% in 2004, where again girls are more numerous (Mineduc 2004c: 1).

**Table 1: Rwanda - Education Indicators**

	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
<b>Primary</b>						
Total pupils	1,288.617	1,431.692	1,476.272	1,534.510	1,636.563	1,752.588
Primary GER (%)	87.9	97.2	99.9	103.7	128.4	130.8
Primary NER (%)	69.9	72.2	73.3	74.5	91.2	93
% of girls	50	49.6	50	50.2	50.5	50.8
Transition to Secondary (%)	38	42	37	43	45	
Repetition Rate (%)	38.1	37.6	31.8	17.2	20.6	
Drop-out Rate (%)	11.4	12.6	14.2	16.6	15.2	
Qualified Teachers (%)	49.2	53.2	62.7	81.2	85.2	88.2
Student/teacher ratio	55	54	51	58.9	65.8	66.9
Total number of schools	2021	2093	2142	2172	2203	2262
<b>Secondary</b>						
Total students (public + private)	105.292	125.124	141.163	157.210	179.153	203.551
Secondary GER (%)				11.2	13.4	15.4
Secondary NER (%)				6.5	10.2	10.6
% of girls (public)	48.4	46.5	45.6	44	47.2	49.1
% of girls (private)	54	56.2	56.3	56.6	52.8	50.9
Repetition Rate (%)		11.4	14	9.6	9.2	9.8
Qualified Teachers (%)	33	43	49.7	51.9	52.1	51
Student/teacher ratio (public)	21.1	21.3	26.8	26.7	26.1	27.7
Total Number of schools	322	363	376	393	405	504
<b>Tertiary</b>						
Total students (public + private)	3045	9357	12.802	15.940	20.393	27.243
% of girls	40.7	32.9	33.7	34.1	36.8	39.6
Number of institutions	8	10	10	10	9	20

*Source: Pre-Primary and Primary Education, School Year 2003-2004: Statistical Census (Mineduc 2004a); Secondary Education, School Year 2003-2004: Statistical Census (Mineduc 2004b); Higher Education, Academic Year 2003-2004: Statistical Census (Mineduc 2004c); Rwanda Development Indicators 2003 (Minecofin 2003b)*

Non-formal education in Rwanda is generally equated with adult literacy schemes and catch-up programmes for out-of-school and vulnerable children and youths, often provided by churches and local and international NGOs. From the mid 1970s Prefectural and Communal Centres for Development and Continuing Education (PCCDE) provided adult literacy and numeracy training (Tikly et al. 2003) but funding dried up in the mid-1980s. Little attention was paid to this area until recently, with responsibility shunted from the Ministry of Gender to the Ministry of Local Affairs and in 2004 to the Ministry of Education. However, this sub-sector is making its way back onto the agenda with a literacy policy set to be drafted in 2005, an allocation of 0.6 billion Rwandan francs in the 2005 budget (Minecofin 2004a), and a

commitment by Mineduc to work more closely with non-state actors in the provision of literacy and catch-up programmes (Mineduc 2005).

While gender equity has been achieved at primary level, fewer girls than boys make it to secondary and tertiary levels, and girls are more likely to repeat years in secondary school and drop out during tertiary (Mineduc 2004b, 2004c). Girls' education, particularly increasing equity at post-primary levels and encouraging girls to take up science subjects will be a focus of attention in the 2005. Table 1 illustrates ongoing problems of high drop-out and repetition rates (which are particularly high towards the end of the primary cycle), high student/teacher ratios, and poorly qualified teachers. While the proportion of qualified teachers is increasing, it only stands at around 50% for secondary education. The figures presented here, however, mask inequities across the system between rural and urban areas, and between regions in terms of provision of services, gender balance, access, teacher qualifications and teacher/pupil ratios. Urban areas fare better than rural areas on the whole with the more remote provinces, such as Umutara and Gikongoro, registering the worst education indicators (Minecofin 2003b: 318).

### **Education and Training Policy in 2004-05**

In 2002, Mineduc produced its Education Sector Policy (ESP), which was followed in 2003 by the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2003-2008 (ESSP). A draft update of the ESSP, to cover the period 2005-2010 was under discussion in April 2005.

The mission of Mineduc is as follows:

“The global goal of the Government of Rwanda is to reduce poverty and in turn to improve the well-being of its population. Within this context, the aim of education is to combat ignorance and illiteracy and to provide human resources useful for the socio-economic development of Rwanda through the education system.” (Mineduc 2003b: 8).

The goals of education are set out as:

- a) To educate a free citizen who is liberated from all kinds of discrimination, including gender based discrimination, exclusion and favouritism;
- b) To contribute to the promotion of a culture of peace and to emphasise Rwandese and universal values of justice, peace, tolerance, respect for human rights, gender equality, solidarity and democracy;
- c) To dispense a holistic moral, intellectual, social, physical and professional education through the promotion of individual competencies and aptitudes in the service of national reconstruction and the sustainable development of the country;
- d) To promote science and technology with special attention to Information and Communications Technology (ICT);
- e) To develop in the Rwandese citizen an autonomy of thought, patriotic spirit, a sense of civic pride, a love of work well done and global awareness;
- f) To transform the Rwandese population into human capital for development through acquisition of development skills.
- g) To eliminate all the causes and obstacles which can lead to disparity in education be it by gender, disability, geographical or social group.

This list reflects clearly the broader political objectives of the GoR of forging a new Rwanda based on ideals of national unity and non-discrimination, with most of the goals promoting philosophical ideals for education. Goals d) and f) are worthy of closer reflection. The

emphasis on science and technology emerged in the 1997 Education Study (Mineduc 1998) and has been very prominent in GoR developmental rhetoric. Between 1998 and 2001 work was undertaken on an ICT policy with support from UNECA, laying out incredibly ambitious aspirations, often accompanied by unrealistic targets and costing a total of \$500m, to transform Rwanda into an ICT-led economy within 20 years.<sup>22</sup> Science and technology lie squarely at the heart of education policy, with aims to get computers into every school, to promote science teaching, to encourage girls to follow science streams, and to promote science research (Makuza 2003; Mineduc 2005). Goal f) demonstrates how the GoR sees human capital formation as the key to its developmental success, the central tenet being that investment in social and human development in the broadest sense will lead to economic growth, which should have direct and indirect impacts on poverty.

The ESSP seeks to translate this policy into action, taking an integrated approach which brings on board other ministries and actors. The main ministries involved are the Ministry of Education (taking overall responsibility for policy and planning at the formal level, as well as coordination amongst actors), the Ministry of Local Affairs (responsible for primary and secondary salaries and decentralised functions), Ministry of Labour (responsible for setting salary levels and service conditions for education staff) and the Ministry of Finance (responsible for financial planning and the budget, as well as coordination of the poverty reduction strategy).

The ESSP has three key strategies, and two cross-cutting themes (science, technology and research; and planning and management):

- i. Basic education strategic framework.<sup>23</sup> This covers ECCD, primary education, vocational training, adult literacy with the overall aim of increasing access to “universal basic education” (Mineduc 2003c: 14). The core elements of the strategy aim to address access, quality, facilities, teacher training, evaluation, and gender issues, as well as the transition from primary to lower secondary school. The formal primary sector received the most attention up to 2005, but the draft update of the ESSP for 2005-2010 places a greater emphasis on reaching out-of-school and vulnerable children, youth and adults, as well as providing ECCD and special needs education. Specific activities on vocational training also receive more attention.
- ii. Secondary education strategic framework This deals with lower and upper secondary as two components, which it states are under pressure to expand from below as EFA develops and from above, with demand increasing for suitably qualified entrants to tertiary education. The plan is to double entrants<sup>24</sup>, and by 2008 23% of the education budget is to be allocated to secondary education (in 2002 it was 13%), with additional

---

<sup>22</sup> This policy document states that “Within the emerging information revolution, the GOR sees ICTs as a key factor for achieving progress in economic and social development in Rwanda. The Government believes that ICTs are offering Rwanda a window of opportunity to leap-frog the key stages of industrialization and transform her subsistence agriculture dominated economy into a service-sector driven high value-added information and knowledge economy that can compete on the global market” (GoR and UNECA 2001: 7). The aim is to be a producer and developer of technology, not just a consumer. To do this, the GoR will “lay *very high* emphasis on the development of the service sector, *medium-to-high* emphasis on the development of the industrial sector and *medium* emphasis on the agricultural sector.” (idem: 14, emphasis in original). This contrasts somewhat with the PRSP which puts agricultural development at the forefront of economic change in Rwanda (GoR 2002b).

<sup>23</sup> We shall return later to debates around the term ‘basic education’. Note how the strategy here includes formal vocational training which is in practice post-primary. The revised ESSP for 2005-2010 seeks to address the commitment to a Nine-Year Basic Education cycle, which includes lower secondary. However, lower secondary education continues to be dealt with under the secondary education strategy in the ESSP 2005-2010 (Mineduc 2005).

<sup>24</sup> In the draft update ESSP 2005-2010, this ‘double’ has been modified to ‘expand’. Under this new version the emphasis is laid strongly on the lower secondary level, within the new Nine-Year Basic Education system, as well as support for teacher training to provide human resources for expanded basic education.



funds coming from parental and community groups. The ministry aims to increase the number of day schools to reduce the high costs of boarding schools, and to encourage increased private provision. Special schemes to promote the access of girls and vulnerable children are to be expanded - the Genocide Survivor's Fund (managed by the Ministry of Local Affairs) already pays the secondary school fees of many orphans of the genocide at public and private secondary schools,<sup>25</sup> and District Education Funds are beginning to provide bursaries for more gifted pupils.<sup>26</sup> The framework emphasises that science, ICT and technical education will be promoted as far as resources permit and that greater links should be forged between secondary schools, higher education units, technical institutes and the private sector.

- iii. Higher education strategic framework: The ESSP recognises the “need to develop the higher education sector in order to meet manpower needs for nation building” (Mineduc 2003c: 35), and aims to increase student numbers and improve quality while reducing costs through efficiency measures, reducing the number of expatriate lecturers, a student loan scheme for cost-recovery, widening the resource base and encouraging private funding. In terms of curriculum, there are plans to include generic skills within higher education by 2008, covering life skills, HIV/AIDS awareness, citizenship, community service and entrepreneurship.
- iv. Cross-cutting issues: These cover first the achievement of the GoR's objectives on ICT, science and technology requiring greater promotion of research into these areas, teacher training as well as addressing environmental factors such as electricity, water and school infrastructure. The second cross-cutting issue is planning and management of the education sector, including institutional capacity building and financial efficiency.

Curriculum reform has received a great deal of attention within education policies over the last ten years as it is considered central to correcting the errors in the education system which fuelled hatred and discrimination. The National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) was created in 1998 out of the former Pedagogical Bureau with the aim of educating Rwandan children to be “critical, well-informed, self-reliant, patriotic, scientifically aware, competitive in the local, regional and international labour markets, cooperative and able to resolve problems peacefully” (Mineduc 2003d: 4). The NCDC's 6-year plan (2003-2008) highlights values and skills to be promoted, namely employability, life skills, ICT/science, rural development, vocational skills, peace and reconciliation, and critical thinking.

As far as financing is concerned, the ESSP foresees that by 2008 basic education (excluding lower secondary) should receive 50% of the education budget, secondary 23% and higher 26% (Mineduc 2003c: 50).<sup>27</sup> Table 2 provides an overview of expenditure on education up to 2003. The proportion of total public expenditure going to education is increasing, demonstrating the commitment of the GoR to prioritising this sector, with the operational budget rising to 39.8 billion Rwanda francs in 2004 and 46.3 billion in the 2005 budget (Minecofin 2004a: 36). Up to 2001, much of the increase in education spending was for capital investments rather than service delivery (World Bank 2004). Since 2000 higher education has absorbed a significant proportion of the education budget, although this is beginning to decrease. Table 2 also demonstrates how dependent Rwanda is on external

---

<sup>25</sup> Concerns have also been raised that several private schools, often sub-standard, are effectively living off these funds. Personal communication, former consultant to Rwandan Ministry of Education, April 2005.

<sup>26</sup> CARE Rwanda raise concerns that these bursaries are not going to the most vulnerable. The NGO is implementing a project to provide ‘loans for fees’ for vulnerable children at primary level – such schemes already exist for tertiary education (CARE n.d.).

<sup>27</sup> However, there is some inconsistency in the figures here, as financial projections given on page 69 of the same document predict that in 2008, basic (excluding lower secondary) will receive 59%, lower secondary 12.1%, upper secondary 6.5%, and higher education 20.6% (Mineduc 2003c: 69).

resources to fund the development of the education sector, with over 97% of the development budget drawing on external resources.

**Table 2: Education Financing**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Total Education Budget (FRWm)</b>	<b>19 522,1</b>	<b>20 689,2</b>	<b>32 293,5</b>	<b>38 843,9</b>	<b>41 362,9</b>	<b>48 047,1</b>
Operational Budget	11 392,4	11 711,8	21 809,9	25 562,0	25 520,5	32 284,9
Primary Education (%)	65.8	60.2	44.3	45.5	N/A <sup>a</sup>	N/A <sup>a</sup>
Secondary Education and Training (%)	20.1	16.7	18.5	16.8	N/A <sup>a</sup>	N/A <sup>a</sup>
Higher Education (%)	13.2	23	37.2	37.7	43.7	36.8
Development Budget	8 129,7	8 977,4	10 483,6	13 281,9	15 842,4	15 762,2
Internal (%)	6.7	8.2	17.6	7.1	6.1	2.3
External (%)	93.3	91.8	82.4	93.3	93.9	97.7
Government spending on education as a % of GDP	1.9	2	3.5	3.5	N/A	N/A
Government spending on education as % of total recurrent budget	21.2	20.2	30.2	27 <sup>b</sup>	23.7 <sup>b</sup>	24.2 <sup>b</sup>
Ratio of higher education to primary education unit costs			141	137	112	89

<sup>a</sup> Calculating the percentage for 2002 and 2003 is not possible as the budget for primary and secondary has been decentralised and the breakdown is not stated clearly in the Development Indicators.

<sup>b</sup> From PRS Progress Review 2004

Source: Rwanda Development Indicators 2003 (Minecofin 2003b); PRS Progress Review 2003 – 2004 (Minecofin 2004c: 53)

## Skills Training

Skills development in Rwandan policy-making received limited attention until the early 2000s, although the establishment of the Human Resources and Institutional Capacity Development Agency (HIDA) as a full legal entity in 2004 represents progress towards a broad policy. Furthermore, the GoR appears to be becoming increasingly aware of the need to tackle skills training at all levels, from adult literacy to post-graduate training of professionals, in the interests of both poverty reduction and economic development (Makuza 2003). This is emerging clearly in the draft ESSP update for 2005-2010 where timelines are set for policies on literacy, vocational training and open and distance learning (Mineduc 2005).

Of particular concern is the large population of young people who are effectively excluded from education and training, a problem which remained unresolved in the pre-war period also, as we saw above. Table 1 (pg. 14) gives some idea of how limited access is at the post-primary level. In 2001 the African Development Bank (ADB) financed a study on the needs of the labour market for technical workers which noted how Rwanda had more than 65% of its population below the age of 25, with about 100,000 young people entering the job market each year with limited skills and qualifications. These young people get by in the informal sector, through informal apprenticeships or low-skilled paid work. The study further observed that there was a clear demand for training, but such attempts as there had been had registered limited impact (ECIL 2001). Various informants, interviewed in the course of the present study, felt that, despite the very obvious statistics, the Ministry of Education failed to pay adequate attention to the young people who exit the education system at various points to go straight into the work market rather than continuing up the educational ladder.

Skills development involves the following areas within the formal and non-formal education and training system:<sup>28</sup>

- formal vocational training, delivered through youth training centres (YTC) at post-primary level;
- formal vocational education, delivered as a stream of upper secondary education;
- formal technical education, likewise delivered as a stream of upper secondary education;
- non-formal skills training, e.g. apprenticeships, short-term vocational courses for vulnerable youth and adults. A great deal of non-formal training for vulnerable youth and adults is delivered by NGOs and religious organisations, but there is no clear overview of this provision.
- continuous and distance learning for educated people. For the public sector this is provided by HIDA in collaboration with various training centres.

Within the formal sector, vocational training at post-primary level is delivered through YTCs which provide courses for six to twelve months. In theory, access should be open to all out-of-school youth but due to limited places, entry criteria apply in practice. For example, Nyanza YTC requires that applicants have completed P6, are aged 16 to 30, can demonstrate numeracy and literacy, and are able to pay their fees. Places are also often taken up by those who have completed secondary school but not gone on to tertiary education.

The PRSP sets a target of establishing one YTC in each of Rwanda's 106 districts, a significant increase on the existing 51 - 22 public and 29 private – which are generally poorly equipped, poorly staffed and poorly appreciated. Despite these promises, YTCs have received little attention to date; indeed, there was apparently no mention of youth training in the first draft of the PRSP at all and it was only added later.<sup>29</sup> Responsibility for this area of training has been shunted from one ministry to another over recent years, from the Ministry of Youth to the Ministry of Labour, and now to the Ministry of Education. YTCs are not formally inspected and have largely been left to their own devices, although they rely on the central and local authorities for funding. This last element is changing, however, as YTCs are encouraged to become self-financing. Indeed, the Nyanza YTC is already well on the way to this with carpentry and weaving production workshops attached to the Centre which employ staff and recent graduates and seem to provide a good way of not only generating resources but also of improving the skills and employment chances of graduates.

Interviews with staff (both local and external technical assistants) at Nyanza YTC provide added insight into the problems facing this sector. Firstly, informants stressed the limited value attached to vocational training by the state. It was felt that the ministries made no effort to find out about the realities of the YTC, no inspections were carried out, and there were problems obtaining resources from local authorities.<sup>30</sup> Instead of vocational training being valued in its own right, there was a sense that these centres were seen as the 'dustbins' of the education system, for those who had failed to make the grade. Secondly, the difficulties of

---

<sup>28</sup> There is only a small section on technical education under 'education' in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Progress Review of 2004 (Minecofin 2004), but the topic is dealt with in more detail under a separate section on 'human resources and capacity development'. This perhaps reflects the complex question of responsibility for young people between the Ministries of Youth, Labour and Education.

<sup>29</sup> Interview, GoR official, Ministry of Labour, September 2004

<sup>30</sup> As a counter argument, with its incredible resource constraints (both staff and vehicles), it is not surprising that limited visits are made to individual Centres. Moreover, until responsibility for the YTC shifted to Mineduc (and that was only in late 2004), they did not officially come under the remit of the General Inspectorate, which itself has few staff qualified to assess technical education and vocational training institutions (interview, General Inspectorate, October 2004). Moreover, decentralisation of authority is still at the teething stage which would explain why responsibilities about who provides what are somewhat unclear.

accessing employment on completion of training were raised, for which there are multiple reasons, including the general worth attached to a YTC qualification. Problems included the quality of training in terms of practical and theoretical knowledge, links to enterprises, knowledge about opportunities, and access to credit or contacts to establish businesses. As in other sub-sectors of the education system, there are no tracer studies from YTC and very scant knowledge about what happens to graduates when they leave. The Belgian Agency APEFE<sup>31</sup> which supports the YTC in Nyanza has begun such a study, estimating that around 40% of graduates find jobs in areas related to their training, and perhaps only half of these will be full-time positions. Other graduates use the YTC as a pathway back into the formal education system, normally to access upper secondary education. To address the problems of making the transition from training to employment, the APEFE projects include a social assistant to support graduates, providing information about credit and helping with the establishment of associations and cooperatives.<sup>32</sup>

Despite these problems, it should however be noted that parents are willing to invest in training for the children, often paying for multiple courses, implying that they place value on such training.

Set against this reality, it remains to be seen how the provisions made for developing vocational training in the ESSP will be implemented. These aim to impart “development skills – such as life skills, practical and entrepreneurial skills... including vocational training” (Mineduc 2003c: 14) to out-of-school boys, girls and adults linked to literacy programmes. The ESSP strategy 2003-2008 involves rendering functional 50 YTCs, which should become self-financing, training trainers, providing equipment and analysing the needs of the non-formal sector (*idem*). This final element was supposed to be completed by December 2004 but is now scheduled for 2005, and the debate is currently ongoing about the future of the YTC under the nine-year basic education system. At the moment YTCs effectively constitute an alternative form of post-primary education, but this would be put into doubt if all children are completing lower secondary also. Proposals from officials and actors involved in the sector include expanding YTCs to 2-3 year courses as a part of basic education, scrapping the YTCs altogether, and rendering YTCs more informal in terms of using modular systems which involve substantial practical experience and the possibility of dropping in and out of the system while still gathering credits. Although there are plans to develop a vocational training policy over 2005-2006, which represents a step towards thoroughly assessing this sub-sector, the number of YTC to be rehabilitated has been reduced to 20 in the draft ESSP update for 2005-2010 (Mineduc 2005).

Technical and professional education constitute two streams at upper secondary level. The technical education sub-sector has recently been the focus of attention, with the preparation in 2004 of a draft technical education policy and strategic plan. This was strongly supported, if not pushed, by German Technical Cooperation (GTZ). The result is an incredibly ambitious and very costly plan, which has raised eyebrows among other donors who show reluctance to engage in this sector precisely because of the high cost, especially as less than 10% of secondary students opt for this stream. A background study was conducted on labour market needs for technical education, which highlighted the limited material resources, the low

---

<sup>31</sup> APEFE is the development cooperation agency of the Belgian Francophone Community. The Flemish equivalent, VVOB, is also active in the education sector in Rwanda.

<sup>32</sup> This type of guidance provision is present in a number of similar style projects delivered with donor support. There is, however, no systematic guidance provided by the state. While this was recognised as an area for development (Joint Review of DFID, UNICEF and World Bank support to the education sector in Rwanda 2003), the ESSP update for 2005-2010 limits guidance and counselling plans to trauma and lifestyle (particularly around HIV/AIDS). No mention is made of career guidance. (Mineduc 2005)

quality teaching and the lack of practical experience of teachers, as well as the poor links with enterprises and the labour market (Kayiranga Gakuba 2004). Again, however, promises have been made about this sector with the PRSP promising one technical school (ETO) in each province, which would mean increasing the current 5 to 11. Similar problems of weak staffing, poor equipment and infrastructure, limited priority by the Ministry, and weak links to the labour market are also experienced by Rwanda's agro-veterinary schools (Arnoldussen 2004) and it can be envisaged that these issues are widespread across the professional education sub-sector. Nursing schools have now been moved more closely under the remit of the Ministry of Health and it is hoped that this will address problems of quality in these schools.

The Ministry of Commerce (Minicom) is responsible for artisan training, but largely plays a framing rather than a provision role. There is no formal apprenticeship system in place, although it is recognised that informal apprenticeships are an important way of passing on traditional practices down the generations, and some projects have attempted to capitalise on this sort of knowledge. For example, an International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) project exists to promote skills training in rural areas aimed at youth who do not get into YTC and establishing more traditional apprenticeships with local artisans, working together with Minicom.<sup>33</sup> This project also addresses one of the other problems of the formal skills training sector, namely that it is largely an urban phenomenon.

Recurrent themes with regard to skills training are the poor links to the labour market, the lack of practical experience provided and the quality of trainers, all of which require better dialogue and cooperation in both directions, between employers and trainers. Various informants mentioned the interest of the GoR to establish a Skills Training Agency to bring together the various actors involved or affected by skills development in order to overcome some of the problems. There are also calls for vocational training to be better linked to the local environment, to provide not only generic skills but specific skills of relevance to the surrounding employment market.<sup>34</sup> Different actors felt that there is growing recognition of the need for skills training and that there is GoR will to put in place the necessary strategies, but the question remains of financing such activities. Self-financing is one option for YTCs, as mentioned above, but technical education is still an expensive option in comparison to general education, particularly at a time when donor interest is weak.

## **External Support to Education and Training**

On the donor side, by 2000 the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) was providing substantial support to the education sector, greatly increased with the launch of the Rwanda Education Sector Support Programme (RESSP) in June 2001. With the provision of institutional support and a large team of technical assistants providing policy advice, DFID has become the main player in the education sector. The World Bank is also prominent in education at an institutional and sector-wide level, and UNICEF is another influential donor although it only has a small budget and focuses on specific activities, such as girls education and catch-up centres. Box 1 lists the donors who have recently provided aid to education in Rwanda or who are currently active in this sector.

---

<sup>33</sup> Interview, Ministry of Commerce, PPPMER II project, December 2004. The full name of the project is Rural Small and Microenterprises Promotion Project (PPPMER – *projet pour la promotion des petites et microentreprises rurales*).

<sup>34</sup> It should be noted that the draft ESSP update for 2005-2010 is more explicit than its predecessor on establishing links between education and training, labour markets needs and the private sector (Mineduc 2005).

### ***BOX 1: List of key donors and their activities***

#### **Multilaterals:**

- UNICEF: out-of-school and vulnerable children; gender issues; HIV/Aids awareness; maths books at primary level; curriculum change and social cohesion; support to Kigali Health Institution (KHI); support to secondary schools in Kigali-Ngali and Gisenyi
- World Bank: Human Resources Development Project; infrastructure at primary and secondary level; HIV/Aids; textbooks (primary maths).
- European Union: reconstruction and rehabilitation of secondary schools; support to the Institute for Agricultural Research (ISAR).
- African Development Bank (ADB): rehabilitation of secondary school in Busogo; technical and vocational education and training in Gitarama; support to primary education, Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST), Kigali Institute of Education (KIE).
- Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO): support for nutrition education in schools; training programme for Ministry of Agriculture staff in rural development.
- UNDP: support to KIE, KIST and National University of Rwanda (NUR).

#### **Bilaterals**

- UK: sector support to Mineduc, including technical assistants for basic education, curriculum development, higher education, teacher training, institutional strengthening; support for textbooks (primary), and for KIST.
- Belgium: direct bilateral aid to science at lower secondary level; indirect support (via Belgian semi-autonomous or decentralised agencies) to KHI, nursing schools, agro-veterinary schools, skills training for adults, Youth Training Centres, NUR and ISAR, secondary school management; study grants; university exchanges.
- Germany: support for technical education (policy, schools, technical teacher training through KIST); primary education (to 2002); textbooks.
- France: GIS mapping of schools; curriculum development; French-language textbooks.
- Luxembourg: support to KHI; continuous education.
- Japan: infrastructure and equipment for KIST; potentially going to invest in education infrastructure.
- Canada: support to National University of Rwanda; study grants.
- Sweden: support to NUR for research; support to FAWE secondary girls school; study grants.
- Switzerland: support to Haguruka Gitarama/Kibuye for training; study grants; KIE.
- USA: support to KIE and ISAR.
- Austria: previously provided small support for Nyanza technical school.
- Netherlands: study grants for law; support to KIST and KIE.
- China: support to Kibungo nursing college.

#### **NGOs**

- Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO): volunteer teachers at secondary level; school management at provincial level.
- Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF): HIV/Aids training.
- Concern: vulnerable and out-of-school children.
- CARE: vulnerable and out-of-school children; vocational training.
- Agro-Action Allemande: school feeding.
- Aide et Action: school construction, equipment, non-formal education, school health and hygiene.
- Action-Aid Rwanda: life skills for girls, primary education, school rehabilitation.
- Solidarité Socialiste: tailor training.
- Vets Sans Frontières: support to Kabutare veterinary school.
- NGOs such as Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Catholic Relief Services, Norwegian Church Aid and World Vision are supporting particular schools or provinces.

*Sources: Minecofin (2004d) - Aid Coordination Matrix 2004 (this provides accumulative information and some of these projects and programmes may no longer be running); additional information provided by individual donors.*

This overview gives some idea of the large number of donors involved – multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental, but also demonstrates how assistance is spread across all sub-sectors, not merely focusing on basic education. Having said that, it should be noted that several bilateral support programmes to post-primary levels have come to an end, particularly in vocational training and higher education, and more donors appear to be orienting themselves towards support for basic education.

Coordination of aid to the education sector has been improving, although it is far from perfect. At the Development Partners Meeting between Rwanda and donors in November 2002, a series of ‘clusters’ was established to improve coordination around the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) with a lead ministry and a lead donor for each sector. On the donor side, DFID is the leader of the Education Donor Group. Irregular meetings have been held, including a retreat for donors in April 2003 which sought to improve dialogue and coherence amongst donors. The annual reviews of the education sector in 2003, 2004 and 2005 have involved a wide range of donors, and in November 2003 DFID, the World Bank and UNICEF held a joint review of their support programmes to the education sector. However, coordination suffers from a lack of Mineduc leadership, as well as some donors (particularly those concentrating on discrete projects<sup>35</sup> and those with smaller-scale activities) feeling that DFID is not reaching out to include them sufficiently.

A Sector Wide Approach (SWAp)<sup>36</sup> has been adopted in the education sector, and donors and Mineduc have agreed in principle to work within the framework of the ESSP. However, it would appear that donors are still offering support to the education sector outside of this framework, and the Ministry tends not to refuse. This appears to be particularly frustrating to DFID, which provided substantial support to the development of the ESSP. The Ministry will also negotiate support if it feels that the aid on offer does not suit its purposes. An example of this would be Belgium offering support for primary education, but the Ministry insisting rather on support for secondary education. The compromise reached was that Belgium would support science teaching in lower secondary.

## **Core Issues and Debates in Education and Training**

It should be recalled that Rwanda remains a country in extreme flux. Institutions are still being established and models experimented with, and the socio-political and economic stability of the country is far from assured. The country is highly dependent on foreign aid, which covers around 50% of the country’s overall budget and 88% of its development budget (Minecofin 2003b). The education sector is beset with debates about priorities and directions, involving both the GoR and the donor community, which are sometimes in agreement and sometimes at odds with each other.

On an institutional level, Rwanda is undergoing a public service reform as well as a decentralisation process. Ministerial remits are being reviewed and internal structures and staffing revised. By the end of 2004 draft organograms were still going through Parliament and were not public. As we have already mentioned, this reform has brought vocational

---

<sup>35</sup> Aid is delivered to Rwanda using various aid instruments, such as direct budget support (as provided by the UK, European Union and Sweden), sectoral programme support (such as the UK’s Rwanda Education Sector Support Programme), project aid (which may be implemented by official donor agencies or NGOs), and technical assistance.

<sup>36</sup> A SWAp can be defined as follows: “All significant funding for the sector supports a single sector policy and expenditure programme, under government leadership, adopting common approaches across the sector and progressing towards relying on Government procedures for all funds” (ODI, 2000 quoted in Virtue et al. 2003: 4)

training from the Ministry of Labour and adult education from the Ministry of Local Affairs to the Ministry of Education; responsibility for nursing colleges has moved to the Ministry of Health. Various units are being created or adapted to incorporate these new functions within the Ministry of Education. It is generally felt that this will improve coherence and monitoring across the sector. At the same time, decentralisation is seeing greater responsibilities for school management and inspection being devolved to local authorities, which should allow the Ministry of Education to concentrate more on policy planning and research.

The fact that the education sector is a core sector for poverty reduction means that there is a great deal of external support available, coming from a wide range of donors, but consequently there is also greater scrutiny of GoR policy imperatives. As in other countries, quality of education and equity of access are major concerns. We have already seen how rural areas are less well provided for than urban areas, and how girls are less likely to access post-primary education than boys. Quality and equity raise little controversy beyond the question of how to address them. Other debates have been more intense, however, for example on shifting to a nine-year basic education system, on higher education funding levels, and on language policy.

The goal of expanding basic education to include the first three years of secondary was initially outlined in Rwanda's Vision 2020 (GoR 2002a), and reiterated in the seven-year programme of the GoR following the 2003 elections (Makuza 2003). The GoR has set itself the target of Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2010<sup>37</sup> and Education for All (EFA) by 2015. The aim of the GoR is to gradually expand fee-free lower secondary education, making it accessible to all. It is recognised that there is a balance to be struck between what is desirable and what is feasible, however. The drive towards UPE is already putting pressure on quality, with high student to teacher ratios and double shifting, in turn aggravating repetition and drop-out rates which are worsening (see Table 1, pg. 14). The World Bank estimates, on the basis of entry and survival rates from 2001, that about 37% of school-age children in Rwanda would not achieve complete primary education - of this amount about a third would not enter school, a fifth would drop out between grades 1 and 4 and 44% would drop out after grade 4 (World Bank 2004: 41). Retention also depends upon factors such as access, opportunity costs and parent attitudes, as well as the quality of teaching.

These problems are compounded in the secondary system where, if quality is not addressed, they will only worsen with the drive towards nine years basic education for all. In the lower secondary cycle, most of the teachers satisfy the minimum qualification (that is have at least an upper secondary school diploma) and some even have a university degree, but half the teachers in upper secondary schools are probably under-qualified (World Bank 2004). To address this, there has been a new focus on teacher training and school management (with support from DFID in particular), including support for distance learning to upgrade the skills of under-qualified teachers. Limited resources to expand expenditure on teacher salaries – exacerbated by an IMF ceiling on public sector salaries – means that innovative ways are being sought to improve teacher conditions, motivation and hence retention, e.g. housing, healthcare benefits, access to loans, career development, and life-long learning. The draft ESSP update for 2005-2010 focuses a great deal of attention on the realities of achieving the nine-year system, in terms of curriculum change and provision of human and physical resources. For example, in the 2003-04 school year, 100 rehabilitated CERAI buildings opened to provide lower secondary education only, leading to an increase in pupil intake. The aim is to continue expanding classroom numbers (Mineduc 2004c: 2).<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Note that this is a revised target. As mentioned earlier, the 1997 Education Study promised UPE by 2005 (Mineduc 1998: iii).

<sup>38</sup> I am grateful to Harvey Smith of CfBT Rwanda for drawing this to my attention.



A second area of debate between GoR and donors is language of instruction. Following the genocide, children were entering schools from different linguistic backgrounds and educational systems. For the GoR, language is a political (and economic) issue (Rutayisire 2004). Firstly, the existence of a national language – *Kinyarwanda* – spoken universally, is seen as a strong unifying factor. Secondly, the GoR was keen after 1994 to ensure that no child was denied access to school on the basis of language.<sup>39</sup> Thirdly, the GoR wants to trade on Rwanda as a country which can communicate in both French and English, seeing this as an economic advantage coupled with its location in Central Africa. Rwanda has been a member of COMESA since 1996 and has applied to join the East African Community, making English (and Swahili which is also spoken and understood widely) an important language of trade with East Africa; but Rwanda's natural trading partners also include the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi, and despite the regional security situation, these countries are important economic partners of Rwanda, particularly for formal and informal cross-border trade. For these reasons, the GoR has pushed a trilingual policy in schools where the language of instruction is as follows:

- P1-P3: *Kinyarwanda* with English, French and *Kinyarwanda* as subjects
- P4-P6: English or French (with the choice left to the school) as a medium of instruction with *Kinyarwanda*, English and French as subjects
- S1-S6: English or French (with the choice left to the school) as a medium of instruction with *Kinyarwanda*, English and French as subjects
- Tertiary: both English and French as media of instruction

However, there are problems with the policy. Studies of primary, secondary and tertiary institutions revealed that while pupils and students were competent in *Kinyarwanda*, their competence in French and particularly English was very poor; this situation was exacerbated by the fact that many teachers had very poor language skills. Indeed, it was estimated that very few schools were even teaching English, with 95% of schools choosing French as the medium of instruction (Williams 2003: 17), although some schools are attempting to offer the same curriculum in both languages.<sup>40</sup> Limited linguistic competence is more marked among rural pupils and girls. Before entering tertiary education, students must complete a bridging year to render them bilingual, but competence is still very low. The implications of research findings were that the emphasis should be placed on ensuring children receive a quality education in a language which they understand, namely *Kinyarwanda*, if EFA goals are to be achieved. This has been refuted by Mineduc which stands firmly by its trilingual policy, as an issue 'dictated by geopolitics and international targets'.<sup>41</sup>

Perhaps the most controversial issue which has been a constant source of debate is the emphasis placed by the GoR on tertiary education, as well as ICT, science and technology. This emphasis has been present ever since 1994 and the need for tertiary education is still

---

<sup>39</sup> Much is made of the language question in Rwanda, notably by outsiders who are wont to stress that as the new governing elite is primarily of Ugandan origin, then Rwanda is being anglicized. There is interesting work to be done on the language split among higher officials in Rwanda, and it is true that there is a prestige factor which is pushing Francophones to learn English (whether for internal political gain or because of access to broader trade and educational opportunities). However, it should be noted that in the education system there is officially an egalitarian approach with Anglophones as obliged to pick up French as vice versa – with Anglophones apparently finding it harder to learn French than the other way around – and likewise within ministries there is a clear drive amongst officials to become competent in both languages. In November 2004, President Kagame attended a *Francophonie* summit for the first time, reaffirming Rwanda's place as a Francophone country. More importantly, the language of business within ministries and elsewhere is *Kinyarwanda*, with internal reports and most meetings conducted in the local language first and foremost. I am grateful to Martyn Roebuck for reminding me of this final point.

<sup>40</sup> Martyn Roebuck, education consultant, personal communication, April 2005

<sup>41</sup> Speech by the Minister of Education, Professor Romain Murenzi, 4<sup>th</sup> Development Partners Meeting, Kigali 9-10 December 2004.

argued in terms of the genocide: “Tertiary education will continue to be an important source of rare human resources in a post genocide situation” (Minecofin 2003a: 35). It has been argued that this policy dilutes support to primary and secondary education, effectively concentrating scarce public resources on the richest in society at the expense of the poorest. This has been most extensively explored in the World Bank’s Rwanda Education Report published in 2004, but drawing on data from the 2001 Household Living Conditions Survey (HLCS), which claims that the 10% best educated in a cohort appropriates nearly three-quarters of cumulative public spending on education for that cohort; the richest in society already have greater access to higher education making education access more inequitable the higher up the system you go (World Bank 2004). Table 2 (pg. 18) reveals a significant increase in the tertiary education budget in the late 1990s, and although this is beginning to be reversed in favour of basic education, donors are still concerned about the balance. For the World Bank this raises questions about the GoR’s commitment to basic education:

The concentration of spending on higher education after 1996 is consistent with the government’s efforts to rebuild the country’s depleted stock of highly qualified citizens following the genocide. Yet if achieving universal primary schooling is an objective, the current bias in the allocation of current spending appears lopsided. (World Bank 2004: 56)

The main argument revolves around the distribution of resources within the education system and the unit costs. In particular, it is felt that too great a proportion of the budget goes on student bursaries and welfare costs both at national institutions and abroad, in both secondary and tertiary institutions, at the expense of teacher and staff pay, particularly at the primary level, and operating costs (World Bank 2004: 60). This goes to the heart of the debate about whether education and training are sufficiently pro-poor. At the primary school level, about 96% of the allocation goes to staff salaries leaving almost nothing for books, materials, other running costs, and student welfare (idem: 64) much of which then comes from parent support. Steps are now being taken by the GoR to try to address this imbalance, with the introduction of a student loan scheme to recover costs at tertiary level, through the Student Financing Agency of Rwanda (with DFID support), and plans to reduce the high number of expatriate staff in tertiary institutions who are paid above the norm. The GoR is also proposing to build more day secondary schools in order to cut costs for boarding, as well as promoting private sector involvement in the tertiary and secondary levels.

Underlying all these debates is of course the question of resources to cope with the increasing needs of an expanding education and training system. The World Bank (2004: 27) sees sources of growth as dependent on domestic revenue, external resource flows and share of education in public expenditure. It states that the first and last are unlikely to rise dramatically, so the only source of higher spending on education is increased external support, which the Bank is optimistic will flow given donor commitments to support the attainment of the MDGs (and therefore basic education).

## **2. POVERTY REDUCTION IN RWANDA AND ATTAINING THE MDGS**

The 2002 Rwandan Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper emphasized that

the acute lack of human capacity is a major constraint in the effort to reduce poverty in Rwanda. The government is therefore putting very high priority on building and expanding the human resource base, with emphasis on improving the quality and practical relevance of education at the tertiary level, strengthening

training in science, technology and management, vocational training, capacity building. (Minecofin 2002c: 307)

The expectations of education in Rwanda are threefold:

- to lift people out of poverty by reducing illiteracy and empowering people with skills for development;
- to develop human resources, provide formal training for human capital formation;
- to contribute to national unity and reconciliation by providing life skills and attitude change.

Since the late 1990s, addressing Rwanda's extreme poverty has been a central focus of government policy, and as the above quote demonstrates, human resource development is considered a key factor in this challenge.

### Poverty in Rwanda

Rwanda ranks 158 out of 175 in the United Nations Human Development Index 2003, with an estimated 36% of the population living on less than \$1 a day and 85% living on less than \$2 a day (UNDP 2003).

**Table 3: Defining Poverty in Rwanda: Characteristics of Households**

Category of Household	Characteristics
<i>Umutindi nyakujya</i> (those in abject poverty)	Beg to survive; no land or livestock; lack shelter, adequate clothing and food; fall sick often and no access to medical care; malnourished children; cannot afford to send children to school
<i>Umutindi</i> (the very poor)	Main difference to abject poor is that these people are physically capable of working on land owned by others, although themselves have no land or only very small landholdings, and no livestock.
<i>Umukene</i> (the poor)	Some land and housing; live on own labour and produce; have no savings; can eat, even if food is not very nutritious; do not have a surplus to sell at market; children do not always go to school; often have no access to medical care.
<i>Umukene wifashije</i> (the resourceful poor)	Shares many characteristics of <i>umukene</i> but have small ruminants and children go to primary school.
<i>Umukungu</i> (the food rich)	Have larger landholdings with fertile soil and enough to eat; have livestock, often have paid jobs and can access health care.
<i>Umukire</i> (the money rich)	Have land and livestock; often salaried jobs; good housing, often own a vehicle, have enough money to lend and to get credit from the bank; many migrate to urban centres.

Source: Rwanda PRSP (GoR 2002b: 17)

Comparing statistics across time in Rwanda is complicated by the vast population movements which occurred in the mid-1990s. The 1985 population survey measured poverty on the basis of the real value of household expenditure, and it was only with Rwanda's PRSP in the late 1990s that a more thorough reflection on poverty occurred. Preparations for the PRSP began in 1999 with the interim PRSP adopted in 2001 and the full PRSP in June 2002. Preparations included a national Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA), as well as the Household Living Conditions Survey (HLCS). These allowed the GoR to gain some idea of the extent of poverty in the country, and to establish its own definition of the concept. The PPA came up with six categories of households (see Table 3) which indicate just how nuanced the concept of 'poverty' is in Rwanda with four categories for the poor and two for the rich. Poverty as defined in this way is primarily concerned with economic and social factors - access to land and livestock, considered to be the main assets of households, and access to education and healthcare. These definitions imply that access to social services is determined by a household's economic status above all else.

However, although 'poverty' is defined in this way in the PRSP, drawing on the PPA, it is more common in statistical analyses to divide the population into three categories of 'very poor' (or 'extremely poor'), 'poor' and 'not poor'<sup>42</sup> which are closely equated with expenditure and consumption patterns. The HLCS of 2001 and subsequent analyses based on this data define Rwanda's poverty lines as follows (Minecofin 2002b: 5):

- Food poverty line of RWF 45.000 per equivalent adult per year, in January 2001 prices. This is based on the cost of purchasing a basket of foods which satisfy reasonable calorie and protein requirements and which reflect the average consumption patterns of the poorest 60% of the population.
- Overall poverty line of RWF 64.000 per equivalent adult per year, adding an allowance for non-food items to the above definition, based on the average proportion of the household budget devoted to non-food items by people whose food expenditure was around the food poverty line.

On the basis of these definitions, 60.3% of the population is identified as poor, but as can be expected, there are large differences between rural and urban areas. 14.3% of urban residents are classified as poor as against 65.7% of rural residents, who constitute 90% of the population, with 97.5% of those identified as falling below the poverty line living in rural areas (Minecofin 2002b: 5). There are disparities across regions of the country also with poverty greater in areas which are: less fertile (the south, and particularly the south-east of the country which experiences the least rainfall and has less fertile soils); more affected by security (e.g. the north-west of the country which is the most fertile area in the country but remains one of the poorest areas as it has been the most affected by conflict); more remote (the north-east of the country was settled by returning populations after 1994 and has limited infrastructure); or most affected by the genocide (e.g. with larger numbers of female-headed households). There is a very large gap between the city of Kigali, where around 11% of inhabitants are classified as poor, and the rest of the country.

A Profile of Poverty in Rwanda, produced in 2002 by the Poverty Observatory of the Ministry of Finance (Minecofin 2002b) outlines some key characteristics of poverty in Rwanda. Larger households, and those headed by females or children, are more likely to be poor. Consumption, or income, poverty is highest amongst those households whose main activity is agricultural, with poverty levels higher among those who are reliant on agricultural wage labour than those who are farming on their own account. 94.4% of the poor fall into this category (Minecofin 2002b: 8). The Profile then looks at human dimensions of poverty, such as housing, sanitation, and access to services like electricity and drinking water, but focusing on health and education as core, inter-related factors, where improvements in health will increase income and in turn improve education levels. Education is seen as playing a core role in the process of reducing poverty:

According to the results of the Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA), the non-poor progress by obtaining paid employment, being members of an association or by obtaining credit from a bank, for all of which it is necessary to have an adequate education level.

Having a child that completes school offers a household the opportunity to escape from poverty. By contrast, illness, ignorance or the poor management of the household's property are the factors that explain entry into poverty. (Minecofin, 2002a: 9)

---

<sup>42</sup> Very poor - total consumption is less than RWF 45,000; poor - total consumption between RWF 45,000 and 64,000; not poor - total consumption is greater than RWF 64,000 (GoR 2002b: 18).

The “context of poverty” (GoR 2002b: 6) in Rwanda is linked to historical, structural, economic, environmental and demographic factors, exacerbated by the very specific legacy of the genocide and civil war, which in turn can partly be explained by these factors. Transforming Rwanda, therefore, depends upon addressing all of these issues.

### **Rwanda’s Development Vision and Poverty Reduction Strategy**

At the time of its establishment in 1994, the GoR adopted a clear set of fundamental principles upon which the state would be constructed. These focused heavily on security, reconciliation and national unity, public sector and economic reform, democratisation and provision of social services, which in turn focused particularly on the reintegration of the displaced and addressing the needs of vulnerable groups (Twagirimungu 1994). The emphasis on national unity and security on the one hand, and economic development on the other have constituted core elements of the GoR philosophy which can be traced throughout political statements from 1994 to 2004. These principles were translated into a clearer development vision during a series of discussions involving a broad range of Rwandan actors over the course of 1997 and 1998 (GoR 1999). Following more substantial workshops and discussions led by the Ministry of Finance in collaboration with line ministries and supported by UNECA, an initial brief document became a more substantial strategy entitled Vision 2020, the most recent version of which was published in 2002. The fundamental principle is to “build a modern and prosperous **Nation**, strong and united, worthy and proud of its fundamental values, politically stable, without discrimination among its sons and daughters; and all this in social cohesion and equity”, centred on a “**prosperous knowledge-based economy**” and a “modern, competitive **Private Sector**” (GoR 2002a: 6, emphasis in original).

Central to Vision 2020 is human resource development to address demographic control, health, literacy and basic education, skills training, gender equity, professional diversification, nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit and the development of the private sector. It is clear that the emphasis is much more on education for socio-economic development than as a fundamental human right, of intrinsic value in itself. The objective is to transform the country into an ICT-led, service hub in Central Africa, building on Rwanda’s geographical position and linguistic advantages, and thereby addressing the problems of a lack of natural resources, high population density and limited potential for agricultural modernisation. This is, however, a long-term (and highly ambitious) objective, with the GoR recognising the current constraints of the economic structure and capacity of the country, as well as a population which “is not very literate (48%), not very educated and quite closed to the world. The level of professional capacities is low and technically qualified staff is rare” (GoR 2002a: 26).

To achieve its objectives for human resource development, Vision 2020 states that the GoR will: invest in adult literacy programmes; make basic education obligatory and free; involve parents and the community more in the educational process, including private sector actors, religious communities and civil society; improve infrastructure; increase quality and motivation for teachers; encourage private initiatives in education; promote the adoption of technologies; promote a culture of reading, information and training; promote scientific and technological research at all levels through training and dealing with infrastructural issues such as electricity supply in order to expand access to new technologies in rural areas; and improve monitoring and evaluation (GoR 2002a: 27).

Vision 2020 promotes a sectoral approach, although it is not referred to specifically, in that it recognises throughout the interlinkages between different types of education and health, economic development, environment, agriculture, gender awareness, etc. In particular it notes the links of education to economic development in terms of providing a qualified labour force, through literacy and achieving UPE on the one hand and through private sector skills and technology on the other. So, not only does it look beyond basic education but it is also looking beyond formal sector education to promoting training institutes for entrepreneurship and management, for engineering and technicians, including experience transfer. There is also a strong link drawn between education and the modernisation of agriculture: inputs (fertilisers, irrigation, land and soil management, improved livestock and seeds); land reform; rural infrastructure; investment in commercial farming; processing and marketing of products; research into scientific and technological innovations; formal and informal education and training on agriculture; information services; and natural resource protection (GoR 2002a: 43).

Rwanda's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, adopted in June 2002, builds on Vision 2020 and sets out Rwanda's medium term "strategy for poverty reduction and economic growth" (GoR 2002b: 8). It outlines a number of priority areas which are ranked by importance, namely:

- Rural development and agricultural transformation
- Human development (including actions directly influencing the quality of life of the poor, e.g. health, family planning, skills development, education, water and settlement)
- Economic infrastructure
- Governance
- Private sector development
- Institutional capacity-building

Under the PRSP, achieving "quality Basic Education for All (EFA) is the first priority for the education sector" (GoR 2002b: 47) and primary education is considered to be fundamental to poverty reduction as it caters for a large number of children. The PRSP states that "evidence within the region shows that completing primary education may increase incomes by about 40%" (idem), although no further information is given on where this evidence derives from. Primary education is also considered to have major impacts on basic literacy and numeracy, health, agricultural productivity, small enterprise development, better governance, as well as being an essential basis for higher levels of education.

The PRSP goes on to outline the direct and indirect poverty reduction virtues of other sub-sectors of education. Secondary education, despite access being very limited particularly to the poorest,<sup>43</sup> trains primary school teachers and teaches skills necessary for the labour market. It recognises that potential access to secondary schooling is a motivation for investment in primary education. As for tertiary education, while the GoR recognises that most direct beneficiaries of tertiary education are not poor, tertiary education institutions

provide teaching and perform other functions that are relevant to poverty reduction, such as applied research and consultancy in critical areas including food security, epidemics and conflict. The poverty benefits from expenditure on higher education come, not from the direct income benefits to them, but from the contribution graduates can make to society, including employment, revenue generation and

---

<sup>43</sup> The PRS progress review of 2003 notes that only 5% of secondary pupils are from the poorest 20% of households (Minecofin 2003a: 34).

providing public services. In particular, graduates from tertiary institutions can provide basic services like health and education. (GoR 2002b: 50)

A separate sub-section is given over to technical education and vocational training noting that “there is an urgent need for Rwandese people to invest in skills” with the aim of Rwanda becoming “a net exporter of skills within the region rather than a net importer” (idem: 51). As to non-formal education, termed ‘mass education and functional adult literacy’, this is

considered a poverty reducing priority due to grassroots involvement in communities and the likely benefits of improved levels of adult education, including positive effects on people’s participation in input and output markets, population growth and community development. (idem: 52)

This overview demonstrates the GoR belief that social and human development will have direct and indirect impacts on poverty, notably through economic growth. Poverty reduction requires investment in systems like capacity development, knowledge, enterprise culture and institutional development. Throughout the priority sectors, such as agriculture, rural development and health, the role of education and training is evident. The Education Sector Policy and ESSP, discussed above, aim to translate these broad policy objectives into practice.

## **Achieving the MDGs**

The MDGs have begun to take increasing prominence in Rwandan policy discourse. The only mention of international targets in the PRSP comes in relation to the monitoring work of the Poverty Observatory. However, both the 2002 and 2003 Rwanda Development Indicators (Minecofin 2002c; Minecofin 2003b) focus on the MDGs, linking them to Vision 2020 and the PRSP. The PRSP Progress Review of 2004 places the achievement of EFA and the MDGs at the heart of the priorities for education (Minecofin 2004c: 47).<sup>44</sup>

The United Nations MDG Status Report on Rwanda from 2003 recognises that although “Rwanda is beginning from behind the ‘starting line’ in trying to achieve the MDGs” due to the negative reversal since 1990 caused by the civil war and genocide – making it a “unique case” - the basic assessment is that “the determination of Rwandans and the sound policies that have been adopted are laying the foundation for sustainable and reliable justice, democracy, and economic growth as preconditions for attaining many of the MDGs.” (UNDP 2004: 7). Given Rwanda’s recent history, poverty levels are higher now than they were in the early 1990s, and although they are steadily falling the Report notes how poverty remains extreme for the vast majority of the population.

Table 5 shows that Rwanda has a reasonable chance of attaining most of the MDGs, and the diagnosis given for the institutional and policy environment to support this process is relatively positive. We can also see that Rwanda’s progress towards the education and gender targets is stronger than on health, with the exception of HIV/AIDS. This could be linked to the limited external support going to the overall health sector in comparison to the vast amounts of resources being pumped into HIV/AIDS related activities.<sup>45</sup> As already

---

<sup>44</sup> Note, however, that in the draft ESSP update for 2005-2010 the explicit references to achieving the MDGs and even EFA targets are much less prominent than in the 2003-2008 version.

<sup>45</sup> In the MDG Global Monitoring Report of 2004, a study of spending on HIV/AIDS in Rwanda revealed that 93% of HIV/AIDS expenditure was covered by households, with 6% by donors and 1% by the GoR, with donor funding targeted at prevention rather than treatment. The study concluded that access to treatment was therefore

mentioned, Rwanda's education sector represents one of the strongest policy environments in the country; there is high government commitment to education with public spending at an all-time high, a sector strategy paper (the ESSP), a medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF) for education, and an Education for All Plan of Action (Mineduc 2003a). The GoR is also committed to producing education statistics annually and to decentralizing authority, as well as supporting teacher training colleges which should help towards achieving the education targets. The capacity for monitoring and reporting progress towards the MDGs on education are again the strongest.

**Table 5: Progress Towards Meeting the MDGs in Rwanda**

Goal/Target	Will target be met?	State of supportive environment
Goal 1a: Poverty (halving extreme poverty)	Potentially	Fair
Goal 1b: Hunger (halving proportion of underweight 5 year-olds)	Potentially	Fair
Goal 2: UPE by 2015 (ensuring that by 2015 boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling)	Probably	Strong
Goal 3: Gender Equity (equal access to primary and secondary education for boys and girls)	Probably	Strong
Goal 4: Child Mortality (Reduce under- five mortality by two- thirds by 2015)	Unlikely	Weak but improving
Goal 5: Maternal Health (reduce maternal mortality ratio by three- quarters by 2015)	Potentially	Fair
Goal 6: Combat HIV/Aids and Malaria (Halt and reverse the spread of HIV/ AIDS by 2015)	Potentially	Strong
Goal 7: Environmental Sustainability (Reverse loss of environmental resources by 2015)	Unlikely	Weak but improving

*Adapted from UNDP MDG Status Report Rwanda 2003 (UNDP 2004: 9)*

The Status Report assesses that with the increase in gross enrolment and net enrolment, Rwanda could reach full enrolment by 2010. Full completion, however, may be a more elusive goal given the problems raised earlier of retention rates, repetition rates<sup>46</sup> and drop-out rates, as well as high pupil/teacher ratios, poor quality infrastructure, equipment supplies and access for the poorest and most vulnerable, which the Report considers could jeopardize Rwanda's progress towards UPE (UNDP 2004). In line with the views expressed above on the balancing of resources, the Status Report is concerned that primary education only receives around 45% of the current education budget while 40% goes to higher education which serves only 2% of the population, and recommends reallocating resources from higher education to basic education.

With regard to other Goals, while Rwanda is unlikely to achieve most of the targets, the Status Report is relatively positive about progress. Infant mortality rates and under-5 mortality rates are declining, immunization coverage has increased,<sup>47</sup> and maternal health is improving to some degree. Progress towards the environmental and habitat targets are the

---

determined by socio-economic status, leading to serious questions about equity (World Bank and IMF 2004: 121).

<sup>46</sup> Rwanda is one of a few countries where repetition rates at both primary and secondary level are flagged up as particularly problematic in the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005 (UNESCO 2005: 100-105). It also falls into the group of countries with the highest pupil/teacher ratios, as well as having high rural/urban disparities (pg. 132) and very low participation rates in early childhood care (pg 88). On the positive side, it fares relatively well against other Sub-Saharan African countries on primary enrolment (pg. 92).

<sup>47</sup> Concerns were raised at the Development Partners Meeting in December 2004, however, that this could be reversed if funds are not found to continue vaccination programmes which were coming to an end. The recent UNICEF report noted that under-5 mortality in Rwanda was the 11<sup>th</sup> highest in the world (UNICEF 2004).



weakest. Resources and institutional capacity are primarily given as reasons hampering faster progress in all sectors, and this raises questions about the sustainability of progress where external resources are so essential.

Appendix 1 sets out some of the objectives, indicators and strategies of Vision 2020 and compares them with the MDG targets. There are clear resonances, such as the MDG to reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than \$1 a day and the Vision 2020 objective of reducing the incidence of poverty from 64% to 30%; the reduction in infant mortality by one third and maternal mortality by three-quarters is mirrored in Vision 2020; access to clear water is to be doubled in both the MDGs and Vision 2020. However, Vision 2020 goes much further, notably with regard to human resource development and economic growth, as well as social cohesion.

### **Donor Perspectives on Poverty and Education**

Since the adoption of the PRSP, the majority of donors in Rwanda have made it their focal point of assistance. This was formalized to some extent during the Development Partners Meeting of November 2002 which established a series of sector ‘clusters’ to improve collaboration between Government ministries and donors working in specific areas.<sup>48</sup> Until 2004, most of the clusters originally established had achieved little, if they had met at all, but over the course of 2004 a drive came from both the GoR and donor sides to make them functional. The sector strategies and PRS Progress Review 2004 were produced with decent collaboration on the whole between donors and the GoR. Nevertheless, the actions of donors, and particularly bilateral donors, are still primarily determined by individual agendas and some display more enthusiasm about poverty reduction *per se* than others. While the MDGs may have been adopted at the highest level by donors as central to their development objectives, the priority accorded to them in practice continues to be determined by more political and practical considerations. Moreover, the rationale may also differ in terms of poverty reduction for human rights, or poverty reduction for economic growth, or even poverty reduction for global security.

As we have seen, a wide variety of donors have been heavily involved in education sector reconstruction and reform in Rwanda since 1994 (see Box 1, pg 22). The main donors who have provided institutional support were firstly the UN agencies (UNDP, UNESCO and UNICEF in particular), then DFID and the World Bank since about 1999. Education policy documents and studies prepared throughout this period carry the voice of these different donors. The documents of the 1994 to 1998 period, written with UN support, focus more heavily on reconstruction and reconciliation as well as education in terms of human rights. Poverty reduction does not come out as a central theme. This follows the tone of the GoR’s position at this time which was concentrating on dealing with the pressing demands of the emergency. In 1998, with the signing of an Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF), Rwanda moved away from the UN system towards the International Financial Institutions. The poverty language began to emerge around this time, coming out strongly in Vision 2020. From 1997, UK support to Rwanda grew exponentially, and the provision of budgetary support, as well as technical assistance to the Ministries of Finance and Education, led to increasing UK influence within policy processes by the early 2000s.

---

<sup>48</sup> Final Communiqué. Third Rwanda-Development Partners Conference, Kigali 6-8 November 2002 – 7 November 2002.

As the largest bilateral donor supporting the education sector, it is worth reflecting on the UK perspective on education and poverty reduction in Rwanda, in order to compare this with the GoR position. Achieving poverty reduction and the MDGs lies at the heart of the UK approach. Indeed, the provision of direct budget support has the express purpose of “increas[ing] the level and the effectiveness of GOR expenditure on poverty reduction, especially in the education sector” (DFID 2000: 1). Under the 2000-2004 programme, two-thirds of UK aid went directly to the GoR’s central budget, but there was also a specific education ‘window’ to fund the Rwanda Education Sector Support Programme (RESSP). Support to the education sector is not, however, focused solely on achieving the international targets on education:

GOR recognise that in order to achieve sustained poverty reduction underpinned by steady economic growth, education reforms need to be broader than the IDTs.<sup>49</sup> Enrolment in secondary education, currently 10%, and also in tertiary education, needs to rise, to replace human capital (including many teachers) lost during the genocide, and to create a skill base for future economic growth. (DFID 2000: 3)

Education is given a broad role, therefore, to bring about social and economic transformation in Rwanda, while promoting peace, reconciliation and individual independence.

The RESSP covers a broad range of activities with the bulk of support going to institutional strengthening and policy planning, in-service teacher training (at upper secondary level for primary school teachers), and teaching and learning materials to improve education quality. A team of long-term advisors has been provided to the Ministry, complemented with short-term advisors and consultants on a wide range of specific topics. The activities and the thrust of the UK programme clearly show that DFID looks beyond basic education to the system as a whole, with substantial institutional capacity building elements. However, the UK’s influence over policy and planning means that in practice particular activities are supported with more gusto than others, notably those that deal directly with the MDGs. DFID has not engaged at all in vocational or technical training and shows a considerable lack of enthusiasm for this area, with the exception of teacher training. It has recently been heavily involved in assessing and defining the move towards a nine-year basic education system. Furthermore, DFID, like the World Bank, is concerned with education resources being skewed towards higher education, and is pushing for a greater share of education expenditure to go on primary and secondary institutions.

The World Bank, like DFID, has considerable policy influence in Rwanda at a macro-economic level, and poverty outcomes are its core concern. The World Bank recently agreed to provide Rwanda with a Poverty Reduction Support Credit (PRSC) which focuses on four areas considered crucial to poverty reduction, namely education, health, water and energy.<sup>50</sup> The World Bank study on education in Rwanda, published in 2004, focused on the contribution of education and training to poverty reduction, primarily in terms of labour market issues. The message at the heart of this study is that there needs to be evidence of effective use of resources to address the triple challenge for education to play a role in the GoR’s poverty reduction strategy, namely to ensure that no child is denied the chance to complete primary education, “that students at all levels make adequate progress in acquiring the knowledge and skills to equip them for adult life”, and that the “mix and number of graduates from the education system correspond to the economy’s demand for skilled labor” (World Bank 2004: 30). ‘Effective use of resources’ means ensuring that money is going to the “right type of services”, is benefiting the intended population groups, reaches the school

---

<sup>49</sup> The International Development Targets were the precursor to the Millennium Development Goals.

<sup>50</sup> World Bank ‘The World Bank Provides A Total Of US\$65 Million To Boost Poverty Reduction Activities In Rwanda’. Press release 2005/129/AFR, October 21 2004.

level, and that teachers and managers, as well as parents and students are receiving the right incentives (idem).

We will return below to issues surrounding the labour market, but the thrust of the study reiterates the current thinking of the international community, namely that with limited resources as its disposal, Rwanda should concentrate on providing equity of access to basic education (supporting the GoR position on considering lower secondary as a continuation of the basic education cycle) due to “its central role in basic human capital formation” (World Bank 2004: 91) and because it plays a “critical role ... in a country’s economic and social transformation” (World Bank 2004: 175). Although the data presented demonstrate that poverty levels in Rwanda are highest amongst those with no or only primary education, it draws on evidence from elsewhere that primary schooling increases agricultural productivity, informal sector work, facilitates the shift of employment away from agriculture and has other non-market social benefits:

The suggested direction for policy development in primary education is premised on the critical role that this level of schooling plays in a country’s economic and social transformation. Even in **traditional** agriculture, studies have shown that in most developing country contexts this modicum of schooling substantially boosts farmer’s productivity [see, for example, Lockheed, Jamison, and Lau 1980; Foster and Rosenzweig 1996]. (World Bank 2003: 175, emphasis added)<sup>51</sup>

So for the World Bank, the poverty reduction role of education and training is primarily about direct benefits to the maximum population; indeed, the Bank argues that the concentration of resources on tertiary education, which reaches only a small percentage of the population, “can continue only to the detriment of efforts to develop primary and secondary education and at the cost of seriously compromising the country’s broader poverty reduction agenda” (World Bank 2004: 162).

Despite this position, in practice the World Bank supports a broad range of education and training activities, primarily through its Human Resources Development Project, which is providing \$35m (with counterpart funds of \$2.07m from the GoR) over five years up to 2006. The programme focuses on the primary and secondary levels of education (infrastructure through community involvement; teacher training at secondary level and KIE; support to the science and technology curriculum), educational management (including support to the General Inspectorate and financial management), HIV/AIDS awareness in schools and among teachers, training scholarships at tertiary level and financing of expatriate lecturers. This reflects the realities of other donors also, whose policy thrust may focus on basic education for poverty reduction, but whose actual activities include many activities at the post-basic level, as we saw in Box 1 (pg. 22). Various donors support Rwanda’s tertiary institutions and have university links programmes in place; support for education and training at the secondary level is weaker. When questioned about these activities, the general response from donor representatives was that there are needs throughout the system which must be addressed to achieve the desired poverty outcomes. This is particularly the case for teacher training and management. Quality in schools will not to be improved without better teacher training which requires improvements in policy, planning, infrastructure and materials throughout the entire education and training sector.

---

<sup>51</sup> It should be noted that this is actually a misquotation of the original research by Lockheed, Jamison and Lau (1980a and 1980b); the original research implied education makes a difference to farm productivity of about 10% **in a modernising environment**. Education makes virtually no difference to farm productivity if the environment is non-modern (where agriculture is traditional and where there are no new methods and new crops being tried out). This issue is explored in King and Palmer (2005) and King, Palmer and Hayman (2004).

A growing concern of some donors, however, is how to assess the poverty reducing impact of investments in education and training. Both the joint review of the education sector of April 2004 and the joint review of the activities of the World Bank, DFID and UNICEF in November 2003 raised the problem of the poor knowledge-base about education outcomes, particularly at the post-basic level, and how education actually contributes to poverty reduction and national development, calling for greater information to be provided through studies and poverty assessments.<sup>52</sup> Without substantial research, answering this question is extremely difficult. Existing data, including the statistics produced annually by the Ministry of Education, shed very little light on the backgrounds of entrants to the education and training system. Surveys suggest that the poorest are less likely to go to school and are more likely to drop out, and that girls and vulnerable children are the worst affected. Perhaps as a response to this, the Joint Review of the Education Sector 2005 focused very strongly on addressing girl's education, 'hard to reach' children and adult education as well as quality. The nine-year basic education system aims "to raise the general level of knowledge and skills in the population, which has the *potential* to reduce poverty" (Mineduc 2005: 7, emphasis added), thus equating the expansion of basic education with poverty outcomes. What is striking, however, is that rendering the entire education system explicitly 'pro-poor' rarely comes up in the draft ESSP update for 2005-2010.

### **3. EDUCATION AND TRAINING, THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION**

The previous sections have illustrated Rwanda's development vision and how this reflects the dominant paradigm of poverty reduction and achieving the MDGs, but also looks further to long-term social and economic development. We can also see how central to the GoR's vision is skills development, particularly at the post-primary level. This section looks more closely at the role of post-basic education and training in the fight against poverty in Rwanda.

#### **What is Post Basic Education and Training (PBET) and why is it necessary? The debate in Rwanda**

Researching this study in Rwanda led to an interesting debate about what constitutes post-basic education and training, and why it should be considered in this fashion. This led back to the question of how *basic education* is defined.

The first real use of the term 'basic education' can be found in Rwanda's Education for All Plan of Action, published in June 2003 but on which work began in 2000. This sets out how Rwanda will address the objectives of the Dakar Framework of 2000, and includes under its definition of Basic Education for All: nursery and pre-school education; primary education; vocational training for young people and adults; literacy and education for adults (Mineduc 2003a). This definition of 'basic education' is reiterated in the ESSP 2003-2008, with secondary and higher education as other sub-sectors. However, across general and education policy papers there is no standardized definition. The PRSP covers education and training issues under nine headings: early childhood care and development (ECCD); primary education, which it describes as "the most critical part of basic education" (GoR 2002b: 48); secondary education (covering lower and the three streams of upper secondary – general, technical, professional); tertiary education; science and technology (covering teaching of

---

<sup>52</sup> See Joint Review of the Education Sector 'Aide Memoire' (May 2004); Joint Review of DFID, UNICEF and World Bank support to the education sector in Rwanda. Draft Report (November 2003).

science, research and ICT); technical education and vocational training (at upper secondary and post-primary levels, and in theory disadvantaged youths); mass education and functional adult literacy (including knowledge on family planning and agriculture); girls' education; and HIV/Aids programmes in schools.

However, the PRSP also sets out the GoR's plan to expand access to lower secondary education in order to "have nine years of basic education to include the first cycle of secondary education, instead of six years of primary education as it is now" (GoR 2002b: 49). Therefore, as Rwanda begins to expand lower secondary education, this cycle is increasingly being included in the term basic education, which would mean Rwanda moving from a system of 6-6(3+3)-3/4 to a 9(6+3)-3-3/4 system. Given that the actual experience of most children is primary education only - which in itself is by no means universal - the question remains of whether lower secondary really should be considered as basic education at this stage: "full primary education constitutes the minimum... the secondary level cannot be regarded as an integral part of basic education until significant progress has been made at the primary level" (Minecofin 2002a: 52). Nevertheless, the gradual expansion of lower secondary is highly topical at the present time.

In 2004, a series of studies was commissioned by the Ministry of Education and DFID to explore the implementation of the nine-year basic education policy. The rationale for moving to this system is given as

the desire to ensure that all children irrespective of whether they proceed to upper secondary school or terminate after basic education have acquired basic skills and knowledge for useful citizenship, or the academic foundation for post-basic education. (Akyeampong 2004a: 5)

At the heart of the policy is the recognition that most children are not leaving the education system with sufficient knowledge to lead a meaningful adult life:

The thinking is that, universal primary education is a fundamental basic human right that the government is fully committed to, but also that this is not sufficient for realizing the potential for personal and socio-economic development. (Akyeampong 2004a: 7)

This was confirmed in interviews with officials involved in the education sector, who felt that keeping children in school for a further three years would increase their economic opportunities, and reduce early marriage and fertility.<sup>53</sup> The policy also recognises the increasing demand that will come for secondary education as UPE is achieved (the "social demand" as the World Bank terms it (World Bank 2004: 175)).

As Akyeampong further observes,

the end of nine year basic education should be seen as a complete and critical minimum cycle of education that all children irrespective of socio-economic background must receive. (2004a: 8)

While for some it would be preparation for upper secondary or for technical or vocational training, this would be the end of formal education for most children. Consequently, the plans for implementing this policy foresee an increase in funding for lower secondary; the concentration of resources is therefore expanding beyond primary to broader basic education. The funding projections for the 2006-2010 period foreseen an increase in primary spending from 46% to 51%, an increase in lower secondary spending from 12% to 14% and an allocation of 1% each for pre-primary and non-formal education (although the latter may well

---

<sup>53</sup> Interviews, Ministry of Education, September-October and December 2004.

increase once plans are costed). On the other hand, no change is foreseen for upper secondary which should receive 6% a year over this period, and the proportion going to tertiary education should decline from 28% to 21% (Mineduc 2005: 50).

Returning to the debate about what constitutes basic and post-basic education and training, if basic education is to include skills development for out-of-school children, youth and adults, as well as lower secondary, then post-basic education and training should include upper secondary and tertiary as well as non-formal skills development at a higher level. This is incredibly broad, as many different actors are involved in this type of activity. Taking a holistic view of PBET as a system creates problems from a policy perspective, particularly as it crosses the boundaries between education and employment. Currently, formal and non-formal education and training are the remit of the Ministry of Education. However, training in traditional crafts comes under the Ministry of Commerce, and a new Human Resources and Institutional Capacity Development Agency (HIDA) has been established within the Ministry of Labour but with semi-autonomous status. Moreover, the sector strategies and ministerial strategic plans established over the course of 2004, which set out how ministries will go about implementing the PRSP, highlight the extent to which PBET is a central factor in achieving policy objectives for poverty reduction and socio-economic development across the board (see Appendix 2). Firstly, human resource development of the public service is mentioned in all sector strategies and ICT requirements comes up in most. Many also plan studies to establish human resource needs in their sectors, such as the skilled professionals required by the health sector. Some strategies demonstrate much greater reliance on PBET to achieve their poverty-reduction objectives than others. For example, the agriculture sector strategy aims to develop agricultural training modules and improve research on agricultural technologies (Minagri 2004). Water resource and environmental management also require skilled staff for research, dissemination of techniques and training. To date, collaboration on education and training beyond a few core ministries has been limited; the above requirements imply that a much broader dialogue is in order.

### **Education and Poverty Reduction: what the data tells us**

Empirical studies of education and poverty reduction in Rwanda are few in number. One insightful piece of research on education and livelihoods was conducted in 2003 by Reiss, who looked at 35 households in one cell<sup>54</sup> near the town of Gitarama (Reiss 2003). This cell is by no means typical of rural Rwanda, given its proximity to one of the main towns in Rwanda and the presence of a substantial religious community which provides educational and employment opportunities. Nevertheless, the findings of the study bear witness to the concerns raised above. The author draws the conclusion that primary education has social welfare benefits but is not sufficient for meaningful employment to improve socio-economic status. It is the years of secondary education that begin to make a difference. Based on qualitative interviews with households the author demonstrates that, with four or more years of schooling, the respondent was more likely to be socially active (including being involved in associations with access to non-formal training), have some form of savings (especially if they had completed primary education, and those with secondary education were more likely to have a bank account), and be involved in income-generating or diversified farm-related activities (including having access to agricultural credit). However, there was no significant difference in income between those respondents who had not completed primary education and those who had; they were just as likely to be involved in unpaid farming activity. It was with some years of secondary or post-primary vocational training that significant differences

---

<sup>54</sup> Rwanda's local administration is divided into provinces, districts and cells.

in livelihoods were observed.<sup>55</sup> These people were much more likely to have access to paid employment and income-generating activities, as well have better housing and health.

These findings provide some evidence that primary education, while having some impact on poverty reduction in the sense of improving social welfare aspects of people's lives, is insufficient to make a significant difference in economic terms. This mirrors the information which can be drawn from household surveys in Rwanda on education and poverty, the main source of which is the Household Living Conditions Survey (HLCS) of 2001 (Minecofin 2002a). This is conducted every five years with the next one currently in the planning phase. This is complemented every two years by the Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire (CWIQ), of which the most recent version dates from 2003 (Minecofin 2004b).

Table 6 gives an overview of the types of correlations between education/training and development made in the analyses of these statistics produced by the Ministry of Finance. A number of issues can be highlighted, most of which are unsurprising:

- poverty is highest amongst the non-educated, with the incidence of poverty dropping sharply amongst those with secondary or higher education;
- fertility is lower amongst women with some education;
- the poor are most likely to be employed in agriculture, low-skilled activities or the informal sector;
- education makes some difference to agricultural practices, but it is more likely that those with education will not be involved in agriculture at all.

Some of the more interesting issues which should be noted include the fact that 51% of households where the head of household has some education are still poor and that 38.2% of people classified as illiterate were 'not poor'. This should raise questions about intervening variables and the actual weight of education in the equation. Reasons for abandoning school point plainly to cost and low quality. It would, however, be interesting to know why education is considered to be of limited use, or to know if 'lack of future in the education system' was also a reason for dropping out. Finally, the scant information given on agriculture and education would seem to imply that education is not going to make a huge difference to agricultural productivity or agricultural modernisation – it is perhaps more likely to encourage people out of farming and into other occupations, which reflects the GoR ideal of establishing a ready workforce for the service and industrial sectors. On the other hand, this does not equate with the assumptions made in both the PRSP and the World Bank study that education will lead to better agricultural productivity, or that an improved agricultural sector will provide the backbone for the 'modernisation' of the economy.

To date only limited analyses of the existing data have been undertaken and much greater possibilities exist. Years of education are rarely given, although sometimes the qualification of 'partial' primary or secondary education is added, so it is difficult to distinguish between those with one year and those with five years of primary, etc. The CWIQ in particular does not distinguish rural occupations, with agriculture, forestry and fishing all lumped together. Definitions of 'employed' and 'unemployed' populations are used without much analysis of the difference between formal and informal sector activities. Finally, there are few questions in the questionnaires for both surveys which would shed light on the transition from education and training to employment.

---

<sup>55</sup> Reiss does not specify the difference between informal post-primary vocational training, and formal lower or upper secondary schooling; nor between those with say two years of secondary education and those with three or more. She does, however, give a threshold of seven years of education making a difference to incomes (Reiss 2003: 32).

**Table 6: Correlations including Education and Training from HLCS 2001 and CWIQ 2003**

Source	Correlations	Analysis Offered
HLCS <sup>a</sup>	Incidence of poverty according to gender and level of education of head of household (HoH) (p.28-29)	Poverty is more marked where HoH has no formal education (although 51% of households where HoH has some education are still poor)
	Poverty by level of education (p.29)	Extremely poor more likely to have no education or primary education. 80.4% of those with secondary education and 96.9% of those with higher education categorised as not poor.
	Fertility and education (p.39)	Higher level of education, smaller size of family.
	Reasons for drop-out from school (p.48)	Main reason being cost (so most likely to affect the poor), lack of interest, illness, work.
	Access to secondary education (p.49)	Discriminates against the poorest
	Literacy and poverty (p.52)	Poorest more likely to be illiterate – over 50% of illiterate are extremely poor, compared to 42.6% of poor and 38.2% of not poor.
	Number of pregnancies and education (p.71)	Progressively lower number of pregnancies with higher levels of education. Completed secondary and tertiary education makes a significant difference (5.6 average pregnancies for women with no education; 4.4. with primary; 4.2 with post-primary; 2.7 with secondary; and 2.7 with tertiary)
	Employment and level of education (p.75)	Higher levels of education associated with more skilled employment (administration, technical professions, management). Lower levels of education associated with agriculture, labour, traders.
	Unemployment and education levels (p.79-80) Poverty and employment status (p.83)	9% of those with secondary education are out of work – mostly in urban areas, although highest unemployment rate is amongst those with primary education. Unemployment amongst higher education graduates is limited to Kigali (9.4%). Those in agricultural occupations are likely to be poorest, those employed in the informal sector also among poorest; high incidence of poverty also amongst apprentices and home-helps.
	Obstacles to job creation by gender (p.107)	On basis of lack of openings, access to credit, capital, administrative regulations, location, etc.
CWIQ <sup>b</sup>	Literacy and socio-economic group (p.7)	Literacy highest among employees of public sector; lowest amongst 'independent' farmers
	Reasons for abandoning school (p.8)	Cost (32.6%); failure (23.1%), work (16.1%), illness (10.6%) education of no use (10.3%)
	Number of meals per day and education level (p.15)	66% of HoH with post-secondary education eat 3 times a day, as against 1% of HoH with no education
	Use of chemical fertilisers (p.34)	Higher among those with post-secondary education
	Use of agricultural production (auto-consumption or sale) and food security (32 and 34)	Educational level makes no difference
	Education and stock-rearing (35)	HoH with no education or only primary education more likely to raise animals than HoH with education. But those with higher levels of education more likely to sell cattle.
	Education and possession of pastures (36)	
	Education and use of veterinary services (37)	41.8% of those with post-sec/ed use vet services, against 29.5% with partial sec/ed and 14.3% with no education.
Desire to raise animals (38)	Much lower amongst educated population.	

Notes:

<sup>a</sup> The HLCS (Minecofin 2002a) was conducted over the course of 2000-2001. It is conducted every 5 years; the next one is due to commence in 2005.

<sup>b</sup> The CWIQ (Minecofin 2004b) is conducted every two years; this version dates from 2003. The aim is to monitor poverty issues between Household Surveys.



Finally, analyses tend to focus on the education and income levels of those who are already in employment not who are seeking work, so it is hard to know if graduates are finding positions in their field of specialization and getting a reasonable return on their investment. Given that no tracer studies exist to date in Rwanda, neither from schools nor tertiary institutions, this represents a large gap in the data on educational outcomes.

For donors and the GoR alike, the question about education and training and poverty outcomes in terms of incomes and employment is becoming increasingly salient. The World Bank education report particularly picks up on the issue of the “external efficiency” (World Bank 2004: 165) of the education system, i.e. how well the education system is responding to labour market demands for educated workers.<sup>56</sup> In the absence of tracer studies, the World Bank analyses the overall structure of employment, the educational profile of workers, private returns to education by level, and indirect evidence of school-to-work transition. It finds that:

In the public and formal private sector, primary education and vocational and technical secondary education yield hardly any returns; general secondary education yields a respectable return of almost 10 percent; and higher education fetches a return of more than 30 percent. (World Bank 2004: 170)

In the informal sector, rates of return to primary and secondary are considered to be higher, around 13% and 25% respectively. However, workers in the informal sector earn significantly less than those in formal employment and often have a much lower educational standard (3.5 years of schooling on average as against 9 years). It therefore estimates that “private incentives for investing in education in Rwanda are strong at all levels” (idem), although given disparities in earnings and education, private returns to education are likely to be high for those with upper levels of education. The report observes that the smaller rate of return for vocational education is at odds with the belief that such training confers added advantages to students. While it admits there could be deficiencies in the courses, it states that “the possibility that such courses are inherently less responsive than general education to labor market needs cannot be dismissed” (World Bank 2004: 169).

Of core concern to the World Bank are the unemployment statistics for those with secondary and tertiary education - at 14% for general secondary school leavers aged 20-24 and as high as 35.3% for 25-29 year-olds with higher education (World Bank 2004: 173). However, it is not clear if the report takes into account the fact that students are considered to be unemployed in the statistics, so some of these people actually may still be in full-time education; nor does it allow for a time-lag for graduates to be absorbed into the labour market as it only looks at one point in time.<sup>57</sup> It looks at issues of over-education and under-education of workers in comparison to their colleagues, and is concerned that many with secondary vocational, technical education and higher education are over-educated for their positions, although this may also be down to co-workers being under-educated. For the World Bank, the unemployment statistics demonstrate signs of labour market saturation and show that Rwanda’s heavy investment in secondary and tertiary education to replace lost skilled workers has now paid off. The capacity of the formal labour market to absorb the growing number of graduates is limited. Given that the production of workers faster than the economy can absorb them does not necessarily lead to accelerated economic growth, but rather to unemployment, underemployment and social frustration, the study recommends that further expansion of secondary and tertiary education and training should be carefully

---

<sup>56</sup> The report deals primarily with formal sector education and training, not post-primary vocational training or adult education. It recognises that higher education produces other social benefits in health, fertility, rural development, etc. but concentrates mainly on the links to the labour market.

<sup>57</sup> I am grateful to Susy Ndaruhutse for her observations on this issue.

calibrated with the growth of the economy and labour market capacity. It also recommends that courses offered in schools of a technical or vocational nature should be better aligned with labour market needs, and raises concerns about the high costs of such courses and the low enrolment rates which place a burden on public expenditure.

In recommending a more cautious expansion of PBET, the World Bank raises the key issue of quality of courses and their relevance to the labour market, to ensure that graduates leave the system with marketable skills (World Bank 2004: 131). This reflects the findings of other labour market studies conducted in Rwanda, which focus on the often poor quality of technical and vocational training courses, with very weak links between training establishments and enterprises. No fully comprehensive study of Rwanda's labour market exists, particularly not of the informal sector; however, two studies which looked at labour market needs provide some additional information about these structural questions in Rwanda. The ADB-funded study of 2001 on technical and vocational training needs highlighted the sheer number of young people, under-skilled and under-educated, who were entering the labour market each year, often in the informal sector. It noted that traditional skills training, such as informal apprenticeships, was not being sufficiently harnessed; that many formal skills training programmes had not been successful; that there were weak linkages, if they existed at all, between education and training and employment, as well as a lack of a framework for dialogue and cooperation between employers and trainers; and that the transition for secondary and tertiary graduates into the workplace was poor (ECIL 2001).

This situation is reiterated in a 2004 study conducted by GTZ on technical skills needs as a background to the draft technical education policy. The continuing lack of a comprehensive labour market study or analysis of the informal sector, the continuing problems of transition and of dialogue between employers and trainers, and the continuing lack of a policy framework, points to the lack of prioritisation this issue has received in Rwanda. The GTZ study investigates the demand for skilled employees with technical education qualifications (delivered in upper secondary schools) and semi-skilled employees (those with YTC qualifications) of 85 Rwandan enterprises within the industrial and service sector. It sought to assess the future needs for such workers. It agrees with the World Bank study in that for the enterprises evaluated there were skills gaps that needed to be filled but that the expansion of these positions would be limited. Any substantial expansion of the formal labour market would depend upon very favourable economic conditions. The study does observe, however, that there is great potential in the country for self-employment especially in rural areas, and within the informal sector where different sets of skills are necessary, such as credit management (and finding credit), small business management, entrepreneurship, and micro-finance (Kayiranga Gakuba, 2004: 49).

### **Attitudes towards Education and Training**

Despite the problems of accessing decent jobs, there is nevertheless a demand for PBET coming from the population. There is a huge 'hunger' for education in Rwanda. The labour market may not be able to absorb them, but individual people are investing significant proportions of their income in their children's education or in upgrading their own skills. Kigali's tertiary institutions are full of fee-paying students, often mature working people, who are doing degrees on a part-time basis. This tends to apply to those who have completed secondary education on the whole, but it is not just the wealthy elite. A fascinating study could be done of *why* these people think it is worth investing in education, and how much of

their household income is devoted to this.<sup>58</sup> Anecdotal evidence from discussions with people about this demonstrated that various incentives exist, such as improving employment chances or gaining knowledge being seen as a good way to spend one's time.<sup>59</sup> Behind this hunger there lies another, more humanistic element, namely a desire for knowledge not just for economic gains but for its intrinsic value with knock-on effects on individual empowerment. A high-ranking civil servant in the Ministry of Education felt that this hunger should be encouraged, that this represented a marked difference to the past when access to tertiary education was discriminatory, and that the education and employment markets would eventually find their own balance. Indeed, encouraging this desire for learning, in marked contrast to the past, could be incredibly important for long-term social stability and change.

This raises an important issue about attitudes towards education and how education is seen to improve social behaviour. Reiss observes how those who had completed primary education were generally perceived as being more knowledgeable, having better hygiene and knowledge about nutrition, having better behaviour, understanding the difference between traditional and modern agricultural methods, able to follow instructions, and understanding faster (Reiss 2003: 35-36).<sup>60</sup> Respondents, who had been unable to complete primary education expressed regrets at having dropped out, a sense that they were excluded from opportunities for improving their lives. This sense of education, particularly post-primary, being a necessary instrument for social advancement came out in my own discussions. Rwanda, like many African countries, suffers from 'diploma disease' (see Dore 1976), and increasingly so. Although even full primary education is only accessible to the privileged, the all-important qualifications make a difference at all levels, and there is a sense of failure attached to lower educational achievement. As mentioned above, no primary leaving certificate is delivered to those who do not gain a place at secondary school;<sup>61</sup> pupils who complete primary school, but do not achieve the score to enter secondary school, will receive an attestation of attendance only. Moreover, we have seen in our discussion of skills training how even post-primary vocational training is considered to be only for those who have failed to gain a place at secondary school, again placing negative value on this type of training.

When asked about what happened to those children that dropped out of primary school, or who failed to get into secondary education or post-primary training, frequent responses were along the lines of "ils rentrent aux collines", "ils rentrent chez eux", "ils se débrouillent" ("they return to the hills" (rural areas), "they go home", "they get by"). These responses came from people who are actively involved in education policy, planning and delivery. This shows not only a remarkable lack of knowledge about the career paths of students but a perception that those who fail in school are fit for nothing more than subsistence agriculture or unemployment. There was no sense that even the minimal levels of education obtained would make a difference which casts doubts on the assumptions made about education and poverty reduction, particularly in rural areas.

---

<sup>58</sup> There are questions in the HLCS and the CWIQ about household expenditure on education, but this information does not appear in any of the reports produced.

<sup>59</sup> The current reform of the civil service must also be affecting the desire for skills upgrading where under-qualified members of staff are in a precarious situation. Formal qualifications are increasingly required, with senior civil service positions allocated largely to those with post-graduate degrees. In a country which provides very few post-graduate training courses, this raises serious questions about who has been privileged enough to receive this sort of education and how.

<sup>60</sup> One of my own informants - highly placed within the education policy community - reiterated this view of those with education, describing how employees on his farm with primary education were much better workers than those without. He would trust the employee with primary education to administer drugs to his cows, but not the one without.

<sup>61</sup> However, the possibility of issuing primary leaving certificates is under discussion. Interview with General Inspectorate, October 2004.

These views on education would imply that Rwanda requires more than just better education policy and provision but also a change in attitude about educational achievement. As we have seen, the nine-year basic education system is intended to provide a better quality, but ultimately terminal, education for the majority of Rwandese. The aim is that they will be equipped with sufficient knowledge to transform their lives. However, studies conducted in Rwanda and elsewhere demonstrate that opportunities for progression to higher levels of education is a strong motivator for retention in primary education.<sup>62</sup> Given the desire for education and popular attitudes towards educational achievement in Rwanda, whether the attainment of nine-years basic education – or even a part thereof – will be recognised as a worthy achievement rather than a failure is certainly a question.

### **The Enabling (and Disabling) Environment**

At the heart of this study is the question of the contribution post-basic education and training makes to poverty reduction. This has two main dimensions, firstly how PBET feeds the basic education system (i.e. beyond primary as described above); and secondly, how PBET contributes to the broader socio-economic and political environment which enables education and training to be transformed into poverty reducing outcomes, in the sense of both social development and economic development. As we can see, in the Rwandan policy-making environment the role assigned to education and training is extensive, with expectations of both direct and indirect impacts on poverty levels, such as improving the life chances of individuals, providing skilled workers to run public services and stimulating the economy. However, for education and training to have the desired impacts, it is clear that various intervening factors are crucial. Rwanda is very much a post-conflict country, still establishing institutions, systems and policies to address the huge needs of a country which is extremely poor, highly dependent on external resources, and where limited possibilities for growth exist. The contribution of education and training to poverty reduction is crucial for the country, but at the same time, the possibility of PBET actually producing the desired results is severely limited by the country context. Indeed, in Rwanda it is perhaps more fitting at this stage to talk of the *disabling* environment which limits PBET's contribution to poverty reduction, rather than the *enabling* environment which it helps to create.

The evidence base is weak in Rwanda, as we have seen. The expectations of the contribution PBET can make are based largely on conjecture, drawing on evidence from elsewhere, or are based on an analysis of existing data which limits itself to drawing correlations between poverty levels and educational attainment, and employment status and educational attainment. What this tells us is that lower educational achievement is strongly associated with high poverty levels, limited occupational opportunities beyond low-skilled, low-paid informal activities or small-scale agriculture, poorer living conditions and a vicious cycle which will impact on the opportunities of children. There is, however, limited reflection on possible intervening variables which may be essential to ensure that education and training transform into a virtuous spiral out of poverty on an individual and societal level. These variables constitute a complex web of interlinked, indirect factors, such as political stability, a robust education policy, an economic environment conducive to stimulate job creation, or factors of an individual, direct nature, such as contacts in the right places, location in the country or access to credit.

---

<sup>62</sup> For a discussion of this issue in Tanzania, see Wedgwood (2005). See also Lewin (2004).

First and foremost, in the post-conflict environment a fundamental requirement for any long-term development of the country is security and stability. The education system in Rwanda from colonial days through to the mid-1990s demonstrated how education can become a tool for violence and discrimination. Since 1994, the education system has been transformed in many ways, not least seeking to transform it into an instrument for reconciliation and social change in line with a broader policy on forging national unity and lasting peace (Rutayisire 2004). The education system has also had to deal with specificities resulting from the war and genocide – high numbers of orphans and female-headed households, widespread trauma, depleted infrastructure and a decimated skilled population – as well as problems experienced in other sub-Saharan countries, such as HIV/AIDS,<sup>63</sup> poverty and scarce resources. Ongoing reforms aimed at dealing with these contextual factors - to policy, institutions, curriculum, etc. - have all depended upon high level knowledge and experience among policy-makers and advisors, as well as a sufficient corps of skilled people to run the country and its institutions in a coherent fashion.

Strong, independent analysis of whether the policy to fundamentally transform attitudes in Rwanda is bearing fruit is unavailable to date, and indeed ten years would be a very short time to change ingrained social stereotypes, particularly amongst rural communities. It should be recalled that internal security in Rwanda has only been assured since about 1998 and ongoing regional tensions imply that this will remain a factor to be taken seriously for many years to come. Indeed, there are concerns that even internal security is not guaranteed, which in turn is impacting on political developments. Governmental policies stress that the education system of post-genocide Rwanda should promote critical thinking among students in an attempt to move away from the situation of the past which sought to instil an unquestioning obedience to hierarchy; but this is happening within a society where freedom of expression and association is by no means a given and fears remain about divisive ideologies.<sup>64</sup>

One highly context-specific example of the need for PBET for security and stability relates to the justice sector. Rwanda continues to battle with a huge backlog of cases related to crimes committed during the genocide. Apart from placing a huge strain on the judicial and prison system, this situation has required new laws to be drafted and innovative mechanisms such as the *gacaca* to be implemented.<sup>65</sup> Yet, there is a huge dearth of qualified judges, lawyers and legal personnel in the country (Ministry of Justice 2004). On a broader scale, it is very clear that Rwanda has a huge deficit in terms of skilled policy-makers, administrators and public service providers. A great many skilled workers were lost during the genocide, either killed or fleeing the country. It was estimated in November 1994 that only 20-30% of civil servants had been in their positions prior to the genocide (Abed et al. 1995). Various studies on capacity development have been conducted since then and initiatives put in place to tackle the

---

<sup>63</sup> Reports estimate that around 8% of the adult population is infected with HIV/AIDS which is lower than previously anticipated but still represents a serious disabling factor for education and poverty reduction: it is estimated that the number of orphans will rise from 65,000 in 2003 to 208,000 by 2015, affecting around 10% of 13-16 year-olds by 2015, with additional impacts on poverty levels; there are no figures on infection rates among teachers but death rates among teachers are expected to rise within the next 10 years (Kinghorn et al. 2003).

<sup>64</sup> A recent, controversial and alarming report by the Rwandan National Assembly outlined the persistence of what it terms 'divisionist' tendencies throughout Rwandan society, including within some schools (GoR 2004). This included the naming and shaming of teachers, pupils and civic educators, accused not only of divisionist tendencies, but also sexual misconduct, lack of professionalism, terrorism and interference in school management (press release in Invaho, n°1569, 4 October 2004).

<sup>65</sup> *Gacaca* courts are based on traditional conflict resolution techniques in Rwanda. The system was adopted to deal with lesser crimes perpetrated during the genocide and to promote reconciliation in the country, while tackling the massive prison population. Following a trial period, the programme was rolled out to the entire country in 2004 and the first judgements were handed down in January 2005.

problems. But many staff in ministries are poorly qualified, particularly below senior level, which places a significant burden on senior staff to carry out core ministerial functions. This is not conducive to a sound policy environment. Retaining trained staff is emerging as a massive problem throughout the public sector. Capacity building is built into most donor projects and programmes in Rwanda, including training staff abroad as there is limited scope for post-graduate study in Rwanda at the moment apart from medical doctors. But once they are qualified, it is difficult to retain them given the low salary base and the demands for such highly qualified people in the private sector and aid agencies,<sup>66</sup> if they are not offered lucrative positions abroad. It has been recognised as an issue and, coupled with civil service reform, human resource development within the public sector is receiving attention from the Government with the establishment of HIDA.

Although there are clear skilled staff needs in the public sector, it cannot absorb all graduates from primary, secondary and tertiary education. So the big question which emerges is, where do the educated go? Douse observes that social problems could arise from UBE if there are no increased opportunities for job creation and income generation (Douse 2003: 30), a point highlighted in the PRSP Progress Report of 2004, which states that

employment is a significant factor both for income generation and as a deterrent against anti-social behaviour, particularly amongst Rwanda's large youth population. (Minecofin 2004c: 61)<sup>67</sup>

And the bigger question linked to this is, where should economic growth come from to stimulate the labour market? The GoR sees the future of Rwanda as an ICT-led service economy, building on the Asian model, but with few natural resources to speak of and a largely uneducated population of which 88% is engaged in the agricultural sector (Minecofin 2004b), the sources of growth appear limited. The large and growing population and the subsequent pressure on land is considered a cause of poverty in Rwanda. It is also the sector where the realities of poverty are starkest. Even farmers with primary education are living in extreme poverty (Minecofin 2002a). Reducing income poverty requires an increase in per capita growth, ensuring that incomes grow faster than the population, and that the incomes of the poor grow faster than other income groups. The GoR claims that

this can best be achieved by investing in rural and specifically in agricultural growth, and by ensuring that the most disadvantaged groups are able to participate. (GoR 2002b: 31)

Rural development does seem to be receiving increased attention; investment has been happening in road networks, rural energy and water systems, and a large-scale public works programme (PDL-HIMO) is bringing temporary earning opportunities into rural areas. There is particular demand for semi-skilled workers with the sort of vocational skills delivered by the YTC to work on HIMO projects (Kayiranga Gakuba 2004).

However, there has been very little emphasis to date on researching the dynamics of the agricultural sector in terms of poverty reduction. A specific survey on the agricultural sector

---

<sup>66</sup> This topic came up in a 1999 UNDP report (UNDP and GoR 1999) and received substantial attention at the Development Partners Meeting in Kigali in December 2004. A long debate was given over to the lack of accountants and auditors of internationally recognised standards within the country. This debate expanded to cover medical staff, and the problems of poaching by donor-funded projects of trained medical staff from the public sector. One very interesting intervention related to the question of capacity building by donors within their projects, with a Rwandan participant chastising Rwandans who have received training at the expense of donor country taxpayers for using their new qualifications for their own benefit rather than in the interests of Rwandan development. This raises interesting theoretical issues about capacity building within aid projects.

<sup>67</sup> Recall that the large number of out-of-school, unemployed and disenfranchised youth became a prime target for recruitment into militias in the pre-genocide years.

is not envisaged until 2006 (Minecofin 2004c: 45). In official surveys there is no differentiation made between those who are subsistence farmers, those who are commercial farmers, those raising livestock, those involved in agri-business, and those involved in forestry or fishing – some of which give much greater potential for wage earning and socio-economic change than others. Access to education and training opportunities, both formal and non-formal, are poor in rural areas, and the agricultural sector strategy is considered to be one of the weakest. Moreover, further up the educational chain, attitudes towards rural development demonstrate a lack of value placed on this sector. Few students are interested in enrolling in agricultural courses in the YTC,<sup>68</sup> only 4% of students are enrolled in agro-veterinary courses at upper secondary level (Mineduc 2004b), and less than 9% of tertiary students are enrolled in agronomy, environmental management and rural development courses (Mineduc 2004c). Those involved in the sector highlighted how even students of agronomy had no desire to get their hands dirty, and ‘returning to the hills’ as we have seen is considered to be the employment option of those who have failed in education. Information is not available on whether demonstration projects are leaving a lasting impact on production patterns, and attendance is at best very low.<sup>69</sup> Some express a hope that decentralisation will push the demand for skilled workers, and with it the demand for services, out of the capital with knock-on effects on the rural economy.<sup>70</sup> Again, we are dealing here with conjecture and it is too early to demonstrate whether these desired outcomes are becoming a reality, but it brings us back to the argument made above about whether attitudes can be changed and basic education will suffice.

The problem of the absorption of educated workers into the formal labour market has already been evoked, with the World Bank associating unemployment rates amongst secondary and tertiary graduates with signs of saturation. The concern is that investment in post-primary education may lead to unemployment, rather than the innovation and increased agricultural output required to give the returns to education investment expected in terms of higher incomes and therefore poverty reduction. One informant expressed exasperation at the lack of innovation and entrepreneurial spirit in Rwanda; another said that there was no room in Rwanda for unemployment, only laziness. This raises questions not so much about labour market saturation but what is required to develop the entrepreneurial spirit and facilitate graduates of secondary and tertiary education to become employment *creators*, not job seekers.

Although broad social and economic factors are central to this issue – cultural and psychological (including gender issues, dealing with a traumatic historical legacy, and taking individual responsibility in a culture where top-down authority has been the norm), structural and institutional (e.g. restrictive banking conditions, cost of inputs, poor marketing infrastructure) - there are many issues *within* the education and training system that need to be addressed if education and training are to impact on poverty reduction. The need to import skilled workers – from office equipment technicians, through skilled hotel staff for the new international hotels which have recently opened in Rwanda, to university professors - implies that the Rwandan system is failing somewhere to fill the gaps to date; indeed, the weak skill base is actually impacting on productivity levels (Kayiranga Gakuba 2004: 76). Again multiple factors are at play here which have been highlighted throughout this study: the education policy environment, policy priorities, quality of education, qualifications and

---

<sup>68</sup> Interview, APEFE technical assistant, October 2004.

<sup>69</sup> The CWIQ of 2003 states that 94% of households involved in agriculture did not attend demonstrations by agronomists. Moreover, use of fertilisers is actually falling from 5% in 2001 to 1.4% in 2003, and the use of modern inputs is very low (Minecofin 2004b).

<sup>70</sup> Interviews with ministry officials, educational establishments and actors involved in rural development, October 2004

motivation of teachers, school infrastructure and equipment, management systems, curriculum, as well as the links between training institutions and the employment market.

This last point is particularly problematic. As already mentioned, there are no official tracer studies which would shed light on the transition from education and training to the world of work, and the factors which are crucial within the chain. Very little guidance is provided to students. A study on guidance and counselling in schools revealed that, in a system where children are allocated places on courses according to their performance in national examinations rather than their own preferences,<sup>71</sup> children felt that they had little control over their career paths, leading to a lack of motivation, although they placed a high value on acquiring work skills and educational proficiency (Arulmani 2003). The GTZ study demonstrated that there is a willingness on the part of enterprises to dialogue with institutions on improving the practical experience of students through apprenticeships and work placements. But this in turn requires better communication between the ministries responsible for these activities, notably the Ministries of Education, Commerce and Labour, which has been limited to date as we have already mentioned. If education and training are to impact upon the areas considered central to poverty reduction, such as health, rural development and the environment, then dialogue would have to be even broader to include those ministries. The PRSP process, with the development of sector-wide approaches has brought Rwanda a long way in improving inter-ministerial, cross-sectoral dialogue but there is still work to be done, and this makes for a very complex policy scenario, in which the boundaries between ministerial remits become increasingly cloudy.

But other enabling factors within the education system are also essential if the objectives of the GoR are to be achieved. For example, the policy of promoting science and technology in schools in order to prepare the school generation to compete in a global economy depends upon infrastructure being available (electricity, machines, mechanics for maintenance, etc.) and sufficient skilled teachers to teach.

Finally, there is the question of balancing the system. One informant posed the question of how the 10% of the population accessing secondary education, and the mere 1% of the population gaining tertiary education could be expected to solve the developmental problems of the country.<sup>72</sup> On the one hand, the GoR has ambitious plans which would require massive investment in PBET to be achieved, yet it does not have the resources to do this and donors are pushing in the other direction. On the other hand, it has also made the commitments to UPE and UBE which call for increased resources to be channelled towards lower levels of education, as the nine-year basic education system would suggest is happening. If Rwanda is to improve the quality of education, it is recommended that a slower expansion of lower secondary education be considered (Akyeampong 2004a and 2004b; World Bank 2004), and likewise the expansion at higher levels. This points to difficult choices and trade-offs.

---

<sup>71</sup> Arulmani describes how students, at the end of lower secondary (Form 3) indicate their personal preferences for the fields of study in upper secondary. They then take a national exam and students are allocated places on courses in accordance with their marks and places available, not their choices. It is a similar story at university level, where students are allocated course places and have limited choice over what they study (personal communication). This leads to a high level of dissatisfaction and poor motivation.

<sup>72</sup> Interview, National University of Rwanda, October 2004



#### 4. CONCLUSION

The official discourse of the GoR stresses that the wealth of Rwanda lies in its people, which need to be educated and healthy for the economic development of the country, as well as for reconciliation and lasting peace. This reflects the two core roles for education and training in Rwanda: to promote security and national unity; and to promote socio-economic development. Since 1994, the Rwandan education and training system has seen substantial reforms, with a great deal of external support, to address long-standing, structural inefficiencies in the education system as well as the destruction wrought by the civil war and genocide. A fundamental change has been the abolition of ethnic and regional discrimination in educational establishments. The policy environment has been greatly strengthened with the establishment of a SWAp; decentralisation has passed greater responsibility for school management down to local levels; enrolment at primary and secondary levels has increased; tertiary education has been vastly expanded; vocational and technical education are receiving more attention; capacity building is being addressed in a more holistic fashion with the establishment of HIDA; and institutional weaknesses are being addressed. Rwanda is making reasonable progress towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals.

Despite this remarkable progress, significant problems nevertheless remain to be resolved, and in the face of resource constraints difficult choices have to be made about immediate and longer term priorities. Although a sector-wide approach has been put into place in institutional and policy terms, not all areas of education and training have received the same degree of attention in terms of planning and resource allocation. Primary and tertiary education have been the primary foci of GoR attention, with donors particularly supporting the former. Pre-primary, non-formal education, vocational training and upper secondary on the other hand have been largely neglected in the drive to address UPE and economic priorities, although strategies are in place to address these areas over the next few years.

A fundamental issue remains equity of access. Despite a clear policy which determines that all Rwandese have equal rights to education, poverty and social vulnerability result in the exclusion of many, particularly beyond the primary level. The policy priorities for the 2005-2010 period within the education sector imply that broadening basic education aims to address this question – targeting out-of-school children and unskilled adults through the development of policies on non-formal education, increasing access to nine-years of basic education, and improving quality within the basic education system. Interestingly, however, there is limited explicit focus on ensuring access for the *poor* beyond the basic levels of education. The 2005-2010 plan draws attention to access for girls throughout the system and to addressing special education needs, but has little to say on access for the poor in general (Mineduc 2005). While girls and vulnerable children may make up many of the poorest in society and thus are an important target population in terms of improving equity, this is quite a different thrust to a specifically pro-poor strategy. Although certain mechanisms are being put in place to help children access higher levels of education, e.g. through district education funds, the concentration on a nine-year, terminal, basic education system – while evidently a response to resource constraints – may increase inequities in the education system and discrimination outside it, with only the most privileged accessing further levels of education and hence better employment opportunities.

It clearly remains to be seen if the systems being put in place will actually have outcomes in terms of poverty reduction. The limited data available in Rwanda suggest that primary education is not sufficient to make a significant difference to livelihoods, at least not with the current levels of quality within the education system and the wider environmental constraints, such as opportunities for employment outside of the agricultural sector. The increased

resources going to basic education, and to teacher training and school management, should begin to address quality issues in schools, which in turn should increase the chances of children leaving the system with greater knowledge and skills. However, very little is known about transitions from education and training to the labour market (formal and informal), and even less about what happens to children that drop out of the system.

Rwanda's PRSP places a great deal of emphasis on the contribution that education and training can potentially make to poverty reduction. Basic education is seen as having a direct link to poverty reduction through its impact on increasing incomes; secondary education as having direct and indirect poverty benefits in training primary school teachers and teaching skills necessary for the labour market; and technical and higher education are seen as having an indirect link to poverty reduction through relevant research such as on food security, epidemics and conflict, as well as the contributions made by graduates to society in general by creating employment, generating revenue and providing public services such as health and education.

However, the policy environment reflects the complexity of balancing the desire for knowledge and the need for knowledge with the reality of serious resource constraints. There are tensions between agendas in Rwanda, between short-term goals and long-term aims, and between GoR and donor priorities. As the World Bank observes, the only realistic source for the foreseeable future for increased investment is external financing, and this brings with it the need to negotiate and compromise on which priorities in a seemingly endless list should receive attention first.

In many ways, the objectives of the GoR and the donor community converge. The GoR has made commitments to achieving UPE, EFA, and the MDGs. This also constitutes the core of the dominant donor agenda. However, the GoR is clearly looking towards a further horizon. When challenged on the emphasis placed on higher education, many officials expressed the view that basic education was a necessary foundation, but if the GoR only concentrated on direct pro-poor education, then how could the country develop? It was accepted that PBET was expensive, but also that it was necessary. Officials were frustrated when their expenditure levels were compared with other countries in the region, saying that Rwanda would never catch up if it went at the same pace, coming as it is from behind the starting line. Indeed, at the Development Partners Meeting in December 2004, the Minister of Finance exclaimed that Africa should stop apologizing for investing in the high skills that other countries have required to develop. Officials also brought it down to the question of what do we mean by poverty reduction – is it enough to just raise incomes to above \$1 a day? The different perspectives of the GoR in comparison to donors comes out in debates around allocation of resources, and politicised issues such as language policy.

This is not to say that donors do not also see the long-term needs for economic growth and development. In providing support as they do to strengthening the entire education system, to secondary and tertiary education as well as multiple training activities, donors are recognising that achieving the MDGs requires more than investment in primary education alone. Indeed, we should be careful not to assume that achieving the MDGs is the only priority of the donor community which incorporates a very diverse range of actors. Global rhetoric can diverge greatly from practice in country, and the MDGs and the poverty agenda have greater prominence within the priorities of some donors than others. It is clear in Rwanda that donors are undertaking discrete projects in the education sector with specific, tangible outcomes which may draw more on existing networks, historical ties or strategic objectives than a commitment to achieving the MDGs. So in a similar way to the GoR, it could also be

surmised that donors are adhering to global targets in principle but are continuing to pursue different objectives in practice.

However, the more short-term priorities of donors do dominate resource allocations. For the last 10 years, donors have more or less accepted the GoR's reasoning that it needed to invest in higher education to replenish a depleted skills base. A great deal of energy was devoted to the establishment of new tertiary institutions to train qualified graduates. The first cohorts are only just beginning to enter the labour market, so it is very early to judge just how much of an impact this policy will have on poverty in the country.<sup>73</sup> What we do appear to be seeing, however, is increasing pressure being exerted on the GoR to refocus its energies on the basic education sector which is the foremost priority of much of the donor community. Admittedly, this is also the GoR's priority, but in a wealth of policy priorities, the actual practice is more telling of the real priorities. Policy does seem to be shifting back towards basic education with a higher proportion of expenditure going towards primary education, with fresh political commitment to nine years of free basic education, and with the adoption of cost-recovery mechanisms at tertiary level. It is impossible to know how much this stems from the GoR and how much from external pressure, as it will always be presented as a GoR position. However, the influence of donors is clear throughout the policy process in Rwanda, through the presence of external advisors, project offerings and budget conditions for loans.

In Rwanda, policy documents and statements demonstrate that basic education is a priority which is being pushed hard, but this drive raises questions about the end-goals. Does education and training aim primarily to achieve UPE, does it aim primarily at poverty reduction, or does it aim primarily at socio-economic development? These may all be interlinked, but they are not the same. Throughout the GoR's policy documents it is clear that the underlying theory is that social and human development will lead to economic growth, with its presumed direct and indirect impacts on poverty levels; poverty reduction *per se* is not necessary the first priority. Education may be recognised as “a fundamental human right” (Minecofin 2004c: 47), but the emphasis is much more on human capital formation for sustainable economic and social development. Moreover, there are evident tensions between the objectives of achieving the EFA targets, and the ‘vision’ of where the GoR wants the country to be, namely a hub of ICT and the service industry. Achieving that vision is problematic in the face of resource constraints and the low starting point, which leads to a disconnect between the desire for a knowledge-based economy and the reality that most children will not continue beyond primary or basic education and that this will be the real skills base of the country for many years to come – indeed, the nine-year basic education policy is oriented towards building up this low skills base. The evidence would suggest that those coming out of basic education, at least in its current form, are not going to transform Rwanda into a knowledge-economy and competitive environment to attract foreign direct investment.

A key pointer to this disconnect is the recognised reality that the agricultural sector represents the backbone of the economy in the short and medium-term, yet only limited results have been achieved in transforming the rural sector in practice, and there has been no evident dialogue between the Ministries of Education and Agriculture on how best to address mutual objectives. Science and technology continue to be a focus of attention across the education and training sector, which perhaps risks marginalising more poverty-relevant agricultural and rural development strategies. As suggested, attitudes towards the rural development sector may be hard to change.

---

<sup>73</sup> There are concerns, for example, that many of those following teacher training courses are not going into teaching but using their qualifications to remain in higher education or to pursue other careers.

For education and training to translate into poverty reduction and economic growth, a ‘transformative context’ or ‘enabling environment’ is essential. This incorporates factors which are both within and beyond the control of the GoR, e.g. the regional environment, the political and policy environment, the administrative environment, the economic environment, and the social environment. Throughout the development and education policy documents of the GoR PBET emerges as fulfilling two core functions: to support the basic education system; and to fuel economic and social development. However, this is also a two-way interaction. Good quality and broadly accessible basic education is necessary to support the upper levels of education and training. Likewise, without a decent ‘enabling environment’, PBET cannot produce its intended outcomes. PBET is both inherent to this context and reliant upon it, and indeed the long-term developmental vision of the country would appear to hinge much more on PBET than basic education. A narrow focus on particular parts of the education system, without considering in sufficient detail the wider environment, may jeopardize the expected outcomes. As this study demonstrates, a great deal of attention has been paid to establishing and planning systems for education and training; however, less is known about actual outcomes in terms of *how* children and graduates of education use the knowledge acquired, and whether those outcomes can in fact reduce the incidence of poverty in the country. Planning future directions for both basic and post-basic education and training could be enhanced by deeper reflections on the broader environment which impacts upon education and training outcomes.

## **POSTSCRIPT**

At the Joint Review of the Education Sector in April 2005, held after the primary research for this study was completed, a draft update of the Education Sector Strategic Plan was under discussion, to cover the years 2005-2010. This has been referred to throughout this study but it is worth noting the direction in which thinking would appear to be going. Firstly, basic education in a broader sense is due to receive considerable attention over 2005-2007 – adult education, girls’ education, vulnerable children and special needs children, teacher training and management, as well as the changes required to implement the nine-year basic education policy. At the same time, Post-Basic Education and Training also receive greater attention, with plans for a Vocational Education and Training Policy and a Higher Education Policy, as well as to develop a comprehensive PBET framework to encompass the complex issues of this area. Moreover, there is a greater focus on tightening up links between the education and training sector and the labour market, which represents a welcome step towards addressing some of the problems raised in this study.

## REFERENCES

- Abed, G. T., V. Bédague, C. Grandcolas and J.-L. Scheider (1995). Programme pour la réhabilitation des finances publiques. Kigali, IMF. [Programme for the Rehabilitation of Public Finances]
- Akyeampong, A. K. (2004a) Consultancy to support MINEDUC in planning for 9-year basic education in Rwanda. Draft Mission Report 1-14 March 2004. CfBT/Stoas.
- Akyeampong, A.K. (2004b) Four Commissioned Studies to Support move to 9 years Basic Education in Rwanda. A Review of Key Findings and Policy Options. November 2004. CfBT/Stoas.
- Arnoldussen, D. (2004) Projet d'Appui à l'Ecole Agrovétérinaire de Kabutare. Mineduc – APEFE. Rapport d'évaluation. October 2004 [Project to Support the Agro-veterinary school of Kabutare]
- Arulmani, G. (2003) National Guidance and Counselling Strategy for Rwandan Schools. UNICEF
- CARE (n.d.) CARE Rwanda Education Programming 2002-2006
- Chrétien, J.-P. (2000). L'Afrique des Grands Lacs: deux mille ans d'histoire. Paris, Aubier. [The Great Lakes of Africa: Two Thousand Years of History]
- DFID (2000) Rwanda: Budget and Education Sector Support 2000-2003. London: DFID
- Dore, R. P. (1976). The Diploma Disease. Berkeley: University of California Press
- Douse, M. (2003) Consultancy to support Mineduc in projecting teacher supply and demand. Draft Report. 5-26 Nov 2003. Cfbt/STOAS.
- Educational Consultants India Limited (2001) Study of Technical and Vocational Training Needs for Rwanda's Reconstruction and Role of KIST. Project supported by the African Development Bank and Mineduc. Final Report, August 2001
- Eltringham, N. (2004). Accounting for horror. Post-Genocide Debates in Rwanda. London, Pluto Press.
- GoR (1990) Aperçu sur l'éducation non formelle des jeunes au Rwanda. Ministère de la Jeunesse et du Mouvement Associatif. [Overview of Non-Formal Education of Youth in Rwanda]
- GoR (1991) Rapport de Mission pre-identification. Projet d'appui a l'aménagement de la réforme éducative rwandaise. BAD/UNESCO. April 1991 [Pre-Identification Mission Report. Project of Support to the Reform of Rwandan Education]
- GoR (1992) Rapport d'enquête sur la situation des lauréats issus de 8 Centres de Formation des Jeunes de 1987 à 1991. Ministère de la Jeunesse et du Mouvement Associatif. September 1992 [Inquiry into the situation of graduates from 8 Youth Training Centres from 1987 to 1991]
- GoR (1994). Actes du Séminaire sur l'Assistance d'Urgence et la Reconstruction du Système Éducatif au Rwanda, Kigali 7-8 Nov 1994, Kigali, Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche Scientifique et de la Culture et Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire et Secondaire. [Proceedings of the Seminar on Emergency Assistance of Reconstruction of the Education System in Rwanda, Kigali 7-8 November 1994]
- GoR (1995). Programme of National Reconciliation and Socio-Economic Rehabilitation and Recovery. Kigali, Government of Rwanda.
- GoR (1999). Report on the reflection meetings held in the Office of the President of the Republic from May 1998 to March 1999. Kigali, Republic of Rwanda, Office of the President of the Republic.
- GoR (2002a). 2020 Vision. Draft 2. Republic of Rwanda. Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. Kigali, July 2002.
- GoR (2002b). The Government of Rwanda Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.

- GoR (2003). Réalisations du Gouvernement d'Union Nationale 19 juillet 1994 - 19 juillet 2003. Kigali, Republic of Rwanda. Services du Premier Ministre. [Achievements of the Government of National Unity, 19 July 1994 to 19 July 2003]
- GoR and UNECA (2001). An Integrated ICT-led Socio-Economic Development Policy and Plan for Rwanda 2001-2005. Kigali.
- Hayman, R., Mugenga J. and B. Wepukhulu (2004) Consultancy to scope post-basic education and training (PBET) in Rwanda. Draft Report. December 2004. CfBT/Stoas.
- IBRD (1975) Appraisal of an Education Project Rwanda Report No. 759-RW. World Bank: Washington. May 21 1975
- IRDP (2003). Building Lasting Peace in Rwanda: Voices of the People. Kigali, Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace.
- Joint Review of DFID, UNICEF and World Bank support to the education sector in Rwanda, Draft Report. November 2003.
- Joint Review of the Education Sector, May 2004: Aide Mémoire
- Kayiranga Gakuba, Théogène (2004) Analyse des besoins du marché de l'emploi des entreprises au Rwanda. GTZ/Mineduc. [Analysis of the Employment Market Needs of Enterprises in Rwanda]
- King, K. and Palmer, R. (2005) 'Education, Training and the Enabling Environments' Centre of African Studies, Post-Basic Education and Training Working Paper Series No7, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh.
- King, K, Palmer, R. and Hayman, R. (2004) 'Bridging research and policy and their enabling environments' paper to DSA Annual Conference on Bridging research and policy, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2004.
- Kinghorn, A., Kgosidintsi B.N., Schierhout G., Gatete F., Bwandinga, G. and J Rugeiyamu (2003) Evaluation de l'Impact du SIDA sur le Secteur de l'Education au Rwanda, Rapport Final. Health and Development Africa (Pty) Ltd. CfBT/STOAS, April 2003. [Evaluation of the Impact of AIDS on the Education Sector in Rwanda. Final Report.]
- Lewin K.M. (2004) Mapping the Missing Link. Planning and Financing Secondary Education Development in Sub Saharan Africa. Paper delivered at the Second Regional Conference on Secondary Education in Africa. Dakar, June 6-9 2004.
- Lockheed, M., Jamison, D. and Lau, L. (1980a) Farmer Education and Farm Efficiency: A Survey. In King, T. (Ed.) *Education and Income*. World Bank Staff Working Paper No.402, World Bank: Washington.
- Lockheed, M., Jamison, D. and Lau, L. (1980b) Farmer Education and Farm Efficiency: A Survey, in *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 29(1): 37-76, reprinted as World Bank Report Series No. 166, World Bank: Washington.
- Makuza, B. (2003). Keynote speech by the Right Honourable Prime Minister Bernard Makuza on Government Programme before the Parliament. Kigali.
- Mamdani, M. (2001). When Victims Become Killers: colonialism, nativism and genocide in Rwanda. Kampala; Oxford, Fountain; James Currey.
- Minagri (2004) Plan Stratégique pour la Transformation de l'Agriculture au Rwanda. Republic of Rwanda. Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. Kigali, October 2004 [Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture in Rwanda]
- Minecofin (2002a). Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey (2000-2001) - Final Report. Kigali, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.
- Minecofin (2002b). A Profile of Poverty in Rwanda. An analysis based on the results of the Household Living Conditions Survey 1999-2001. Kigali, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.
- Minecofin (2002c). Rwanda Development Indicators 2002. Kigali, Minsitry of Finance and Economic Planning, Statistics Department.

- Minecofin (2003a). Poverty Reduction Strategy-Progress Report. Kigali, Republic of Rwanda, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.
- Minecofin (2003b). Rwanda Development Indicators 2003. Kigali, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Statistics Department.
- Minecofin (2004a). Document de Référence du Budget 2005. Kigali, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.
- Minecofin (2004b). Enquête sur les indicateurs de base du bien-être QUIBB - 2003. Rapport d'analyse des résultats. Kigali, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. [Core Welfare Indicators Survey, CWIQ - 2003. Analysis of Results]
- Minecofin (2004c). Poverty Reduction Strategy Annual Progress Report. Kigali, Republic of Rwanda, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.
- Minecofin (2004d). Registry of External Aid to Rwanda. Kigali, CEPEX.
- Mineduc (1998). Study of the Education Sector in Rwanda. Kigali, Ministry of Education.
- Mineduc (2003a). Education for All Plan of Action. Kigali, Ministry of Education.
- Mineduc (2003b). Education Sector Policy. Kigali, Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Scientific Research.
- Mineduc (2003c). Education Sector Strategic Plan 2003-2008. Kigali, Ministry of Education.
- Mineduc (2003d). National Curriculum Development Centre 6 Year Plan: 2003 to 2008 (current year plus 5 years). Kigali, Ministry of Education, National Curriculum Development Centre.
- Mineduc (2004a) Enseignement Préscolaire et Primaire. Année scolaire 2003-2004. Recensement statistique. Kigali: Ministry of Education [Pre-primary and Primary Teaching. School Year 2003-2004. Statistical Census.]
- Mineduc (2004b) Enseignement secondaire. Année scolaire 2003-2004. Recensement statistique. Kigali: Ministry of Education [Secondary Teaching. School Year 2003-2004. Statistical Census.]
- Mineduc (2004c) Enseignement supérieur. Année Académique 2003-2004. Recensement statistique, Kigali: Ministry of Education [Tertiary Teaching. Academic Year 2003-2004. Statistical Census.]
- Mineduc (2005) Education Sector Strategic Plan 2005-2010. April 2005 (DRAFT)
- Ministry of Justice (2004) Justice Sector Strategy. November 2004
- Obura, A. (2003). Never Again: Educational Reconstruction in Rwanda. Paris, IIEP.
- Pottier, J. (2002). Reimagining Rwanda. Conflict, Survival and Disinformation in the Late Twentieth Century. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Prunier, G. (2002). The Rwanda crisis : History of a Genocide. London, Hurst & Company.
- Reiss N. K. (2003) The Contribution of Primary Education to Rural Livelihoods in Rwanda. A Dissertation Submitted to the School of Development Studies of the University of East Anglia in Part-fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Rural Development. September 2003
- Republic of Rwanda (2004). Rapport de la Commission Parlementaire ad-hoc, créée en date du 20 janvier 2004 par le Parlement, Chambre des Députés pour analyser en profondeur les tueries perpétrées dans la Province de Gikongoro, idéologie génocidaire et ceux qui la propagent partout au Rwanda. Kigali, National Assembly [Report of the Ad-hoc Parliamentary Commission, created on 20 January 2004 by the Parliament, Chamber of Deputies to analyse in-depth killings carried out in the Province of Gikongoro, genocide ideology and those who propagate it throughout Rwanda.]
- Rutayisire J. (2004) Education for Social and Political Reconstruction: The Rwandan Experience from 1994 to 2004. Paper delivered at the British Association for Comparative and International Education conference: Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Conflict, reconciliation and reconstruction. University of Sussex, 3-5 September 2004

- Tickly, L., J. Lowe, M. Crossley, H. Dachi, R. Garrett and B. Mukabaranga (2003). Globalisation and Skills for Development in Rwanda and Tanzania. London, DFID.
- Twagirimungu F. (1994) 'Discours programme du Premier Ministre du Gouvernement De Transition à Base élargie, son Excellence Monsieur Faustin Twagirimungu', 19 Juillet 1994 [Programme Speech by Prime Minister of the Broad-Based Transitional Government, His Excellency, Mr Faustin Twagirimungu, 19 July 1994]
- UN (2000). United Nations Millennium Declaration.
- UNDP (1999). Etude sur la capacité nationale d'absorption et d'exécution de projets - rapport provisoire. Kigali, Republic of Rwanda/UNDP. [Study on national absorption capacity and implementation of projects - provisional report]
- UNDP (2003). Human Development Report 2003. Millennium Development Goals: a compact among nations to end human poverty. New York, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- UNDP (2004) Millennium Development Goals Status Report 2003. Republic of Rwanda. UNDP.
- UNESCO (2005). EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005. The Quality Imperative, UNESCO.
- UNICEF (2004) Childhood Under Threat: The State of the World's Children 2005. Unicef: New York.
- Uvin, P. (1998). Aiding Violence. The development enterprise in Rwanda. West Hartford, Connecticut, Kumarian Press.
- Virtue, J., K. Carroll and C. Waddington (2003). Sector Wide Approaches in Education. London, Institute for Health Sector Development.
- Wedgwood, R. (2005) Post Basic Education and Poverty in Tanzania. Post-Basic Education and Training Working Paper Series No1, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh
- Williams, E. (2003) Consultancy to develop Mineduc capacity to create and implement a 'trilingual' policy in Rwandan schools. Final Report. CfBT/Stoas, January 2003.
- World Bank (2004) Education in Rwanda. Rebalancing Resources to Accelerate Post-Conflict Development and Poverty Reduction. Washington D.C., World Bank
- World Bank and IMF (2004). Global Monitoring Report 2004. Washington DC, Development Committee.



## APPENDIX 1 : Vision 2020 objectives and indicators, compared with the MDGs

Vision 2020 Objectives	Targets for 2020*	Comparison with MDG Targets**
Increase GDP per inhabitant	GDP per inhabitant: from \$220 to \$600 <b>Poverty (% on less than \$1/day): 64 to 30 %<sup>74</sup></b> GDP average growth rate: 6.2 to 8% Gini co-efficient: from 0,454 to 0,350 Gross national savings: from 1 to 6% Gross domestic investment (as % of GDP): 18 to 23%	<u>Goal 1 - Target 1:</u> Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day <u>Goal 1 - Target 2:</u> Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger
Increase export ratio/GDP at 15% by 2020		
Rebuild nation and its human resources		
Ensure harmonious leadership which unites nation		
Controlling population growth and major causes of mortality, malaria, AIDS and other epidemic diseases	Life expectancy at birth: from 49 to 55 Population growth rate: from 2.9% to 2.2% Fertility: from 6.5 to 4.5 children per woman <b>Infant mortality (0/000): from 110 to 30</b> <b>Maternal mortality (0/00.000): from 810 to 200</b> Infant nutrition (weight insufficiency: from 30 to 10% <b>Rate of AIDS prevalence: from 14 to 5%</b> <b>Mortality caused by malaria: from 51 to 25%</b> Medical doctors per 100.000 inhabitants: 1.5 to 10 Population in 'good hygienic state': from 20 to 60% Nurses per 100.000 inhabitants: 16 to 20 Lab assistants per 100.000 inhabitants: 2 to 5 <b>Access to clear water: from 44 to 80%</b> Kcal/day per person: 1612 to 2200 Availability of protein/person/day: 35 to 65% (of needs)	<u>Goal 4 - Target 5:</u> Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate <u>Goal 5 - Target 6:</u> Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio <u>Goal 6 - Target 7:</u> Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS <u>Goal 6 - Target 8 :</u> Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases <u>Goal 7 - Target 10:</u> Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation
Rebuild social cohesion on basis of Rwandan cultural values, balancing economic rationality and social justice through the development of human resources in and outside Rwanda.		
Develop human resources through literacy programmes and basic education for all, training to promote scientific, technological, professional and managerial skills, taking into account gender issues	Literacy from 48% to 100% <b>Net Enrolment Rate (primary): from 72 to 100%</b> Transition rate from primary to secondary: from 42 to 80%	<u>Goal 2 - Target 3:</u> Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able complete a full course of primary schooling

<sup>74</sup> Note how poverty in the targets is defined by the \$1 per day system, rather than the 'basket of goods' system described in section 3.

	<p>NER (secondary): from 7 to 20%</p> <p>Qualification rate of secondary school teachers: from 20 to 100%</p> <p>Tertiary attendance: from 1 to 6%</p> <p><b>Gender equity in tertiary: from 30 to 100%</b></p> <p>Gender equity in decision-making: from 10 to 30%</p>	<p><u>Goal 3 - Target 4:</u> Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015</p>
Develop a dynamic, entrepreneurial middle class aimed at private sector development oriented towards industry and service sectors, mainly in financial, tourism and ICT sectors	<p>Industrial sector growth rate: from 7 to 12%</p> <p>Services sector growth rate: from 7 to 11%</p> <p>Urban population: from 10 to 30%</p>	
Modernization of agriculture and its integration into other economic activities	<p>Agricultural sector growth: from 9 to 6%</p> <p>Number of farmers: from 91 to 50% (of pop)</p> <p>Modern agricultural techniques: from 3 to 50%</p> <p>Use of fertilisers/ha (kg/year): 2 to 15</p> <p>Financial credits to agricultural sector: from 1 to 20%</p>	
Opening up the country to the region through improved regional infrastructure and integration.	<p>Roads (km/km<sup>2</sup>): from 0.54 to 0.6</p> <p>Annual consumption of electricity (kwh/inhabitant): 30 to 100</p> <p>Access to electricity (% of pop): 2 to 10%</p>	
Sustainable management of land, environment and natural resources	<p>Land protected against erosion: 20 to 100%</p> <p>Firewood fuel: from 96 to 60%</p>	<p><u>Goal 7 --Target 9:</u> Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources</p> <p><u>Goal 7 - Target 11:</u> By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers</p>
Economic and social integration into the region and the world		

Source: Rwanda Development Indicators 2002 (Minecofin 2002c: 7-8); Millennium Development Project - <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/index.htm>

\* Indicators which resonate with MDG targets are highlighted

\*\* The list of MDG targets here does not include those for Goal 8 : Develop a Global Partnership for Development

## APPENDIX 2 : Provisions for Education and Training within Sector Strategies

Ministry	Provision on Education & Training
Ministry of Gender	Identify capacity building needs and cost the necessary Human Resource Development Plan Conduct and monitor the implementation of the Human Resources Development plan Develop and implement a special ICT programme, to include networking systems (LAN, WAN) and Management Information System (MIS) to facilitate sharing and processing of information among the different actors in the gender and women promotion area.
Ministry of Agriculture	Requests Education Institutions to integrate in their curricula basic elements on natural resources preservation. The Ministry of Education , in collaboration with grass roots level communities and with the help of the Ministry of agriculture, should organise training & popular modules related to agriculture; Higher Education & Research Institutions should be involved in popularization of new agriculture technologies, together with MINEDUC.
Ministry of Local Affairs	Make available training modules of local leaders and train them Monitoring & Evaluation of training programmes Set up guidelines with regard to programme coordination & training activities for grass roots structures Set up a training module for civic education and train trainers
Ministry of Justice	Facilitate the development and implementation of programmes for educating and disseminating information to Government offices and the general public about good governance, national reconciliation, fighting the ideology of genocide. Legal education training and research Strengthening Government Machinery for Law making and law reform by improving the capacity of institutions (Human Resources) concerned with preparing and drafting new laws
Ministry of Infrastructure	Reinforce training with regard to ICT Train Human Resources to respond to Economy needs
Ministry of the Interior	Restructure and reinforce Human Resources capacities Improve public education on security Reinforce Police training centres and educate Police officers with regard to HIV-AIDS Train Prison personnel
Ministry of Lands	Set up a training programme on water resources management Set up a training support programme to decentralised structures Study on Human Resources needs
Ministry of Labour	Vocational training for youth Set up a long distance training programme Training capacity reinforcement within MIFOTRA Evaluate training institutions capacity
Ministry of Health	Develop and implement a Human Resource development plan for health professionals Develop in-service training modules and an operational plan to integrate the in-service training needs of all programmes Review and revise the teaching programmes of Health professionals Provide internship training for newly graduated Doctors

Source: Hayman, Mugenga and Wepukhulu (2004: 39)