

**Analysis of Capacity Development in Education Management
Under the Education for All Programme in Guinea**

A Dissertation

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Doctor of Philosophy in Social Sciences

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ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with the analysis of capacity development in education management under the Education for All Program in Guinea. The main purposes of this study are as follows: The first is to provide a general review of Guinea's education reform processes and their relative outcomes. The second is to trace the pattern of sustainability of the reform framework put in place during EFA program intervention in order to strengthen Guinea's education system of decentralized management capacity. The third is to provide better understanding and perhaps lessons from Guinea for reform perspectives in comparable countries and regions. Although, capacity development concept/definition appears to be accommodant, its central meaning within the realm of education planning and management refers to the improvement of the performance of the existing system in the educational service delivery in an efficient, equitable and sustainable way.

Therefore, the research proceeds with an in-depth case study using political economy as an analytical approach to explore and depict the gradual unfolding and change brought by the reform intervention. With particular scrutiny on the overall structures of the education system, the content, context and the actions of the actors involved in the education reform process. Methodologically, a mixed approach of inquiry is being applied in order to achieve the goals of this research. First, the secondary data collection encompasses program and policy documents from government and aid agencies. Second, the primary data—as a supplement—stems from individual interviews, focus groups and questionnaires administered to actors having experience in the reforms in different manners and at different levels. Third, observation of the reforms' settings and participants is also being put into contribution to offer a balanced interpretation of the data collected through the other research instruments.

There are several findings of this research. First, in contrast to the previous studies, which state that, failures of reform program are due to a lack of political will and commitment from the side of the recipient country's government in not only driving actions of but also coordinating reform efforts. However, this study established that such will and commitment is being displayed in the case of Guinea but the program intervention lacked full adherence and concrete measures in enacting the reform program. Despite it being formally integrated into a general national development plan, it lacks however, legal provisions and means to support and orient the education policy plans and strategies in their formulation and implementation stages. Second, this study argues against the view that new approaches to development assistance are becoming more harmonized, aligned and effectively delivered. While, reform interventions in Guinea's education system are apparently ambiguous in their nature, fragmented in their conception, lacking coherence and means to implement planned educational policy. Third, the ultimate goal of empowering recipient countries' capacity through recent attempts at education development assistance is yet to be reached. Since problems of readability and sustainability of Guinea's education sector's achievements and actions still prevent the system from thriving.

The implication of these findings calls for a complete and total recalibration of the system and its reform intervention approach and strategy in the country. This suggests a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the country's actual and prevailing concerns in the sector to be initially brought to the forefront. Then, to better consider a concerted, systematic and strictly inclusive approach. In view of making it especially tailor-made, endowed with its own means of action and intended to address constant but specific sectoral governance matters and that in a perennial manner.

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

This thesis does not contain material, which has been accepted for any other degree in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by any other person, except where due reference is given in the text.

Signature

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Any errors and omissions in this thesis are my sole responsibility

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFD	Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency)
AfDB	African Development Bank
ANLC	Agence National de Lutte contre la Corruption (National Anti-Corruption Agency)
APEAE	Association Parents/Elèves (Local Parents' Associations)
BCRG	Banque Centrale de la République de Guinée (Central Bank of the Republic of Guinea)
BESC	Brevet d'Etudes du Second Cycle (Certificate of Secondary Education Level)
BEPC	Brevet d'Etudes du Premier Cycle (Certificate of First Cycle Education Level)
BSD	Bureau de Stratégie et de Développement (Strategic & Development Bureau)
BTS	Brevet de Technicien Supérieur (Senior Technician Patent)
BAPEEL	Brevet d'Aptitude Pédagogique à l'Enseignement Elémentaire (Certificat of Pedagogical Ability for Elementary Teaching)
CAP	Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle (Certificate of Professional Competence)
CDE	Comité de Développement de l'Ecole (School Development Committee)
CDP	Committee for Development Policy
CDMT	Cellule des Dépenses à Moyens Termes (Committee of Medium Term Expenditures Framework)
CE1&CE2	Cours Elémentaire 1 & 2 (Elementary Course 1 & 2)
CEPE	Certificate d'Etudes Primaires Elémentaires (Elementary Education Certificate Level)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIPC	Comité Interministériel de Pilotage et de Coordination (Interministerial Steering and Coordination Committee)
CM1&CM2	Cours Moyen 1 & 2 (Medium Course 1 & 2)
CMRN	Comité Militaire de Redressement Nationale (Military Committee for National Recovery)
CNDD	Conseil National pour le Développement et la Démocratie (National Council for Democracy and Development)
CNLCS	Comité National de Lutte Contre le Sida (National Committee for the Fight against Aids)
CNOCS	Conseil National des Organisations de la Société Civile (The National Council of Guinean Civil Society Organizations)
CNPE	Comité national de Pilotage de l'Education (National Steering Committee for Education)
CP1 & CP2	Cours Préparatoire 1 & 2 (Preparatory Course 1 & 2)
CPPE	Comité Prefectoral de Pilotage de l'Education (Prefectural Steering Committees for Education)
CPIA	Country and Policy Institutional Assessment
CRD	Communauté rurale de Développement (Rural Development Communities)
CR	Commune Rurales (Rural Communes)
CRPE	Comité Régional de Pilotage de l'Education (Regional Steering Committee for Education)
CSNE	Comité Stratégique National de l'Education (National Strategic Committee for Education)
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations

CSPPE	Comité Sous-préfectoral de Pilotage de l'Education (Sub-Prefectural Steering Committees for Education)
CSP	Comité de Suivi et de Pilotage (Monitoring Committee)
CTC	Comité Technique de Coordination (Coordinating Committee)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DAF	Direction des Affaires Financières (Financial Affairs Directorate)
DAAF	Direction des Affaires Administrative et Financières (Financial and Administrative Directorate)
DEA	Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies (Diploma of Advanced Studies)
DCE	Direction Communale de l'Education (Communal Directorate of Education)
DES	Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures (Higher Studies Diploma)
DEUG	Diplôme d'Etudes Universitaires Générales (General University Studies Diploma)
DEV-C	Direction de l'Education de la Ville de Conakry (Conakry City Education Directorate)
DfID	Department for International Development
DPE	Direction Prefectoral de l'Education (Prefectural Department of Education)
DRH	Direction des Ressources Humaines (Human Resources Directorate)
DSPE	Directeur Sous-préfectoral de l'Education (Director of Sub-prefectoral Education)
DSEE	Délégation Scolaire de l'Enseignement Élémentaire (School Delegation of Elementary Education)
DSSE	Délégué Sous-préfectoral de l'Education (Sub-Prefectural Delegate of Education)
EAC	East African Community
ECCAS	Economic community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDC	Education Development Center
EFA	Education for All
ENI	Ecole Nationale des Instituteurs (Teacher's Training Colleges)
EPT	Education Pour Tous (Education for All)
EU	European Union
FAWEGuinea	Forum for African Women Educationists
FEGUIPAE	Fédération Guinéenne des Parents et Amis de l'Ecole (Guinean Federation of Parents and Friends of School)
FoCEB	Fond Commun pour le Développement de l'Education (Common Fund for the Development of Education)
FTI	First Track-Initiative
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEP	Global Education Policy
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Society for International Cooperation)
GEMR	Global Education Monitoring Report
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
GNF	Guinean Franc
GNP	Gross National Product
GOG	Government of Guinea
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GSE	Groupe Sectoriel de l'Education (Sectorial Group of Education)

IBE	International Bureau of Education
ICR	Implementation Completion Report
ICT	Information and communication Technology
IDA	International Development Association
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IGEN	Inspection General de l'Education Nationale (General Inspectorate of National Education)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INRAP	Institut National de Recherche et d'Actions Pédagogique (National Institute for Pedagogical Research and Action)
IPE	International Political Economy
ISSEG	Institut Supérieur des Sciences de l'Education de Guinée (Higher Institute of Education Sciences of Guinea)
IRE	Inspection Régionale de l'Education (Regional Inspectorate of Education)
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
KDF	Kuwaiti Development Fund
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (the German Reconstruction Bank)
MB	Ministry of Budget
MDEC	Ministère du Domaine de l'éducation et de la Culture (Ministry in charge of Education and Culture)
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEN	Ministère de l'Education Nationale (Ministry of National Education)
MENA	Ministry National Education and Literacy
MEPU	Ministère de l'Enseignement Pré-Universitaire (Ministry of Pre University Education)
MEPU-EC	Ministère de l'Enseignement Pré-Universitaire et de l'Education Civique (Ministry of Lower Education or Pre-University and Civic Education)
MOE	Ministry of Education
MEF	Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances (Ministry of Economie and Finance)
MESRS	Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique (Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research)
METMFP	Ministère de l'Enseignement Technique Moyen et de la Formation Professionnelle (Ministry of Technical Education and Professional Training)
MET-FP	Ministère de l'Enseignement Technique et de la Formation Professionnelle (Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training)
MP	Ministère du Plan (Ministry of Planning)
MPS	Ministry of Public Services
NAP	National Action Plan
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organization
NIE	New Institutional Economics
NICT	New Information and Communication Technology
NPM	New Public Management
NSF	National Science Foundation
ODA	Official Development Assistance

OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAAB	Plan Annuel d'Activités Budgétisées (Budgetized Annual Action Plan)
PBA	Programme-Based Approach
PACV	Programme Appui aux Collectivités Locales (Village Community Support Program)
PADES	Programme d'Appui au Développement de l'Enseignement Supérieur (Support Program for the Development of Higher Education)
PASE	Programme d'Ajustement Sectoriel de l'Education (Education Sectorial Adjustment Program)
PASEC	Programme d'Analyse des Systèmes Educatifs de la Confemen (Confemen Educational System Analysis Program)
PCUD	Plateforme Nationale Des Citoyens Unis Pour Le Développement National Platform of United Citizens for Development
PDG	Parti Démocratique de Guinée (Democratic Party of Guinea)
PEPT	Programme Education Pour Tous (Education For All Program)
PETP	Professeur d'Enseignement Technique et Professionnel (Technical and Vocational Education Teaching)
PPDE	Plan Préfectoral de Développement de l'Education (Prefectural Plan of Educational Development)
PRCI	Programme de Renforcement des Capacités Institutionnelles (Institutional Capacity Development Program)
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSE1&PSE2	Program Sectoriel de l'Education 1&2 (Sectoral Education Program1&2)
PTA	Parent-Teacher Associations
QUIBB	Questionnaire des Indicateurs de Base du Bien-Être (Questionnaire of the Basic Indicators of Well-Being)
RAP	Rapport de Performance Annuel (Annual Performance Report)
RESEN	Rapport d'État du Système Educatif National (State Report of the National Educational System)
RTI Int'l	Research Triangle Institute International
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SABER	System Approach for Better Education Results
SINDA	Service d'Information et de Documentation et d'Archivage (Information, Documentation and Archives Service)
SDF	Saudi Development Fund
SEEPU	Secrétariat d'Etat de l'Enseignement Pré-universitaire (State Secretary in charge of Pre-University Education)
SLECG	Syndicat Libre des Enseignants et Chercheurs de Guinée (Free Trade Union of Teachers and Researchers of Guinea)
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SSP	Service Statistique et de Planification (Statistical and planification Service)
ST-EPT	Secrétariat Technique à l'Education pour Tous (Technical Secretariat of Education for All)
SWAp	Sector-Wide Approach
TDR	Terme de Reference (Terms of Reference)
TFPs	Technical and Financial Partners

TVET	Technical and vocational Education training
UN	United Nations
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO- IBE	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/ International Bureau of Education
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNDP	United Nation Development Program
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United State Agency for International Development
WEO	World Economic Outlook
WFP	World Food Program

I. INTRODUCTION

In the last three decades, developing countries have shown renewed interest in education development and reforms. These educational reforms were not isolated in their nature but rather triggered by national and international trends valuing education merits in promoting socio-economic well-being of people and societies. For the sake of social emancipation and national development, governments in developing countries unanimously viewed education as a cornerstone in this venture. In addition, globalization is another account that is pushing for education reform policies, structures, and practices. More specifically, international initiatives such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education for All (EFA) programme, advocating for global commitment to education, have stimulated education reform in many developing countries. Moreover, the MDGs goal 2 (achieving universal primary education of good quality) and goal 3 (eliminating gender disparity in education) braced up by EFA are repositories of basic education diffusion. Throughout the world, and especially in the developing countries, the renewed call to basic education diffusion through the World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990 and the World Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000 was heard with both enthusiasm and apprehension.

Although, all developing countries have warmly welcomed the campaign for basic education diffusion through EFA, however, the challenges of attaining the programme's goals remained considerable. Domesticating this global agenda into national educational policies, and assigning appropriate mechanisms and resources require structural changes within the education system, especially in terms of governance, planning and management, monitoring and evaluation. Yet, the apparent lack of institutional capacities in developing countries is unequivocal. To palliate this, governments of developing countries have undertaken policy reform initiatives with the support of the international community. Unlike structural adjustment programme (SAP), recent international trends in development assistance to basic education placed emphasis on capacity development through sector programme support. This put emphasis on "harmonizing aid and aligning it to the plan/strategy of the developing country itself and establishing the ownership of that country and the partnership among stakeholders" (OECD High-Level Forum, 2005:9). This means that, adopting capacity development as a governance improvement mechanism should consider each recipient country's specific context since it has to be "an endogenous-driven process of change" (OECD/DAC 2006: 8; Walters, 2007: 3).

Nonetheless, talking about EFA, it is worth arguing that it is a global agenda planned without due respect to national governments' capabilities to effectively implement it. Thus, with a large sponsorship of international organizations to this programme, recipient countries are likely exposed to the "one-size fits all traveling policy" (Steiner-Khamsi, 2004) as part of the requirements for support. Like many developing countries, the Republic of Guinea also joined this global trend in subscribing to the tenets and goals of the EFA programme to be reached by 2015. Adapting the programme to Guinea's needs and priorities, EFA's aim is to "ensure that Guineans have equitable access to high-quality education system that is relevant for their communities and for their economic well-being" (World Bank, 2001:3). Therefore, universal primary education is identified as the over-arching focus. Guinea's EFA programme policy comprises:

"three components with specific objectives (World Bank, 2001). Component 1: expand access to education—its objective is to increase the number of students [...] with a focus on initial Grade 1 enrollments. [...] Priority is given to under-served regions and populations. Component 2: improve quality of education—its objective is to develop and test strategies to improve teaching and learning. With focus on teachers, schools, and community groups [...] to ensure the teaching team has the authority, knowledge, and the learning materials to make meaningful decisions about how to improve learning for all. Component 3: strengthen the capacity for decentralized management—its main objective is to improve overall management of the education system, increase responsibilities and resource availability at schools. Better support will be provided to school personnel, reversing top-to-bottom flows of information in ways that will improve capacity for delivering high-quality education services" (World Bank, 2001:7).

Overall, the programme set in three phases is to be implemented subsequently within twelve years, from 2001 to 2013. The first phase (EFA1)—the pilot project—planned to be managed centrally; the second phase (EFA2) provides a transition to prefectural and regional management; and the third phase (EFA3) is to be almost entirely managed at the prefectural level.

The overarching objectives set by Guinea's education reform under the EFA framework indicate the intention of Guinea's government and its development partners to address the sector overall performance. However, "improving the performance of institutions is a matter of reforming the institution's structures and processes" (Swift-Morgan 2011:30). Swift-Morgan (ibid) further posits, "in the case of education system, this would mean that a Ministry or district

wanting to enroll more children into school would identify the problems within the system's structures and change these structures". In the same vein, a similar argument holds that:

"quality and equity in education provision is determined by how well the institutional and organizational architecture of the education system, as a whole, operates and functions. This concerns not just the quality of the teaching force, or the classroom learning environment, but reliable research, planning, budgeting, management and administrative processes at all levels and the dependable release of funds for education sector policies and priorities" (UNESCO/CapEFA, 2011: 115).

With these critical observations in mind, recent international trends to education reform strongly emphasize improved governance, especially in the context of decentralization. Capacity development, therefore, is considered as a central mechanism in delivering development assistance in the developing countries. Thus, in the case of Guinea and under EFA framework, this international trend in education governance reform has been translated into the third component of the programme. However, a general review of Guinea's education sector reforms reveals that among the three main areas of intervention, "access to education and quality are somehow rated substantial" (Implementation Completion Report (ICR), 2015: 8), while "strengthening capacity for decentralized management of the sector was rated modest due to the lack of sufficient evidence" (ICR, 2015: 8). Given this state of affairs, this study's analysis focuses solely on the latter component. However, investigating such a reform programme supported by multi-donor agencies entails paying attention primarily to the reform design and then the implementation process as well. The complete transformation of the education sector landscape by recent reforms has integrated various actors at different levels who influence the education planning, policy adoption, and implementation. The existence of such diverse stakeholders involved in the education development requires a strong coordination of their actions to better consider the recipient country's policy ownership and its priorities in the sector, and to reinforce the partnership among actors. Moreover, under this trend, "the main form of action is sector programme support using SWAp/PBA (sector-wide approach/programme-based approach)". This approach is also considered as "effective in building a medium-to long-term support for developing country" (Hirosato and Kitamura, 2009:45).

In fact, "Guinea's experience with SWAps [...] has been evolving over the years...and it seems there exists a conceptual understanding of the EFA sector-wide programme, but not a

clear, practical programmatic approach to implement it” (Back et al., 2003:3). Under EFA framework, Guinea used SWAs through the decentralized capacity management component to address its educational system’s weak institutional capacity. However, due to the mixture of actors, the multi-level and multi-scalar nature of the reform, an approach analyzing this should consider aspects related to power and resources leverage intended to change Guinea’s education institutional setting and how this change came about. In this respect, as argued by Hirosato (2005:38), “analysis of each actor’s behavior within the education system or in the education reform process deems necessary, and requires the political economy approach of International Relations which can consider the interaction and dynamism among all stakeholders”.

Moreover, the intriguing point in sector programme support with decentralization trends in education management is to depict the circumstances under which the implementation process took place. Although a plethora of critical literature arguably denounces the weak capacity of developing countries’ education systems in carrying out systemic reforms, very few studies have examined the implementation process within the context of developing countries. Mostly, these studies are reports or policy documents of national governments and international organizations.

1.1 Research problem statement

Addressing today’s educational challenges faced by developing countries, involves surmounting some controversial positions. As within the existing discourse, it is not rare to come across studies that tell us recent education reform has been pressured from outside and that is why it did not work. Some also would say it is the colonial structure, which is responsible for the whole thing, and some would further say it is the corruption issues. However, this research postulates that all of these accounts are important. Nonetheless, the enactment of intended reforms’ actions and the way reforms’ actors interact with each other is actually what is different and/or questionable. As such, it should be admitted that external, central and local actors all play equally important role and have equal responsibility for the failure of reform interventions.

Furthermore, in many African studies, it is always claimed that colonial past is responsible for the current educational status in many developing countries. And that the African elites and its composite have nothing to do with such situation rather it is the colonial masters and their inherited structures. Indeed, the colonial inheritance can be partly invoked in this regard but the full responsibility rests upon national governments, since higher government officials entrusted

with reform programs often are the ones that mess up the whole process. Be it from the policy formulation to the implementation and both from the central to the local dynamics.

1.2 Study Rationale

1.2.1 Objectives and research questions

The focus of this study is to determine empirically what changes the international development assistance brought to education development using the decentralization trend of capacity development to achieve EFA in developing countries. As a case study of this global trend in education reform in the West-African region, this thesis proceeds in an in-depth study of capacity development in Guinea's education system. The purpose is to analyze the sustainable framework put in place during EFA reform programme in order to strengthen Guinea's education system of decentralized management capacity. Therefore, political economy is used as an analytical approach to depict the gradual unfolding of the reform through the overall structures of the education system, more importantly, the content, context and the actions of the actors involved in the education reform process. With particular focus on Guinea's decentralized education management capacity and its implementation process, I shall seek to answer the following questions:

1. What changes has this education sector reform brought to Guinea's education system?
2. How responsive has decentralized management capacity been under EFA programme to Guinea's education system performance?
3. What factors have been determinant to bring about these changes, how, and to what extent?

To address these questions, a mixed research approach is being applied. As such, this would subsequently rely on the existing literature, policy and report documents of the Guinean government and aid agencies, interviews, participants' observation and a survey conducted with agents/agencies in the sector. For more details on the research methodology, Chapter 4 provides an extensive elaboration in this regard.

Furthermore, this research however, aims to contribute to the ongoing discussion on capacity development and its relevance as a new approach in international development assistance to education in the developing countries. More specifically, the research may help determine the

characteristics of Guinea's education sector governance. It may also contribute to determine how appropriate Guinea's EFA policy pertaining to capacity development for education sector management is and what major changes it has brought into the system. Finally, yet importantly, the study may assist to shed light on the reform gains and shortfalls, and eventually come up with some policy implications for future education reform perspectives. Implications that might be of interest to all actors involved in education development and reform in developing countries in general and the Republic of Guinea in particular.

1.2.2 The thesis arguments

Weak governance is unanimously viewed as the main hurdle to education development in developing countries in general and Guinea in particular. However, in spite of a global commitment, intended interventions still strive to address this challenge. Thus, in the face of such an unattended issue, it can be argued that both endogenous and exogenous factors possibly impede education development and performance in developing countries. For it appears that not only are recent trends of education reform policies complexly designed, but also they are introduced without regard to the prevailing socioeconomic, political and cultural environment of the country in which they are intended. And yet, given the widely varying characteristics and needs of countries and people, any reform intervention should be first perfectly adapted and institutionalized with the required change measures and means needed. In addition, and most importantly, it is necessary to reconsider the historical course of each country to reconcile the identities, values, attitudes, and behavior of the intended beneficiaries as well as their effective participation in the process in view not only of the successful implementation but also responsiveness of the reform.

More specifically, the recent trend in education development assistance in Guinea still presents features of supply-driven type of technical and financial assistance than demand-driven nature of sustainable reform initiative. Education reform programs using capacity development should be a development-driven intervention that supports initiatives led from within recipient countries instead of being donor-led one. Yet, despite being supposedly refined, recent developmental approaches remain externally conceived and infused with less country driven, re-adaptation and re-appropriation of reform programs.

Against this background and in respect with national setting, this study puts forward the

following arguments:

First, there is external pressure on developing countries to reform, which on its own is not bad as it has certainly its real merit. For without this international solidarity or development assistance, developing countries would not be able to surmount rapidly growing needs and challenges with respect to educational development. However, the demerit of these external interventions is that they are not fully aware of the existing local challenges. As such, development partners do not understand properly the kind of process to follow in dealing with local context.

Second, the intervention strategy of Technical Assistants (TA) with respect to strengthening national education systems appears not to be appropriate. Simply because the approach taken by these TA in empowering national education agents lacks proper fit; whereby when external TA empower local elites, they do so by empowering central government education officials, believing that the central agents would be capable enough to make further necessary changes. Yet, given the constraints and opportunities inherent to each level, central education officials are not necessarily in the best position to address prevailing challenges proper to a particular milieu or educational sub-system.

Third, overall recent education reform processes often fail to account for local context and its specificities. As a result, local needs and conditions usually are not adequately reflected into the general planned policies. This loophole in the reform plan actually derives from the apparent sideline of local agents, while central actors who, at large, are decision-makers, major planners/managers, either lack expertise or knowledge of local dynamics.

1.3 Theoretical/conceptual framework

1.3.1 Key concepts' operational definitions

To lend a better understanding of what 'policy change' and 'policy reform' stand for, it is important to make a clear distinction of the two terms, since apparently they are often used in an interchangeable manner. At first, *Policy change* usually relates to incremental shifts in structures that previously exist, or else the process of bringing about new and innovative policies (Bennett & Howlett, 1992). However, *Policy reform* in its essence involves a major change of the policy. In other word, it is a process that consists of "improving the performance of existing systems and assuring their efficient and equitable response to future changes" (Berman 1995: 27).

- *Capacity development/building* is viewed as a broad concept. "Capacity building or

development is the process by which individuals, groups, organizations, institutions and societies increase their abilities to: a) perform core functions, solve problems, define and achieve objectives; and b) understand and deal with their development needs in a broad context and in a sustainable manner” (UNESCO, 2005:n.d).

-Education planning and Management: “good planning helps with the making of rational choices in investment strategies and between the delivery systems, while efficient management raises the performance of the education system in providing quality [basic] education to all” (Oulai et al., 2011).

1.3.2 Political economy

In analyzing education reform in the developing countries, much attention should be paid to the reform processes and the context in which the reform took place. Since the literature shows that globalization has strongly influenced education policies and its reforms in these countries. This leads, therefore, to the absolute necessity to approach globally diffused education policies through an integral theoretical framework. As Verger et al. (2012:1) argued that:

“paradoxically, existing research on GEP does not always incorporate processes of globalization into its analytical framework, at least in a comprehensive way”....much research on GEP does not provide sufficiently rich empirical evidence on the interplay between processes of globalization and the re-contextualization of education policy in the local places”.

Apparently, from a methodological viewpoint, retracing global education policy and its genesis represents in itself a challenging task. For the very complex interplay of globally set initiatives, makes its diffusion and re-introduction in other settings to be a major issue (Ball, 1998).

The initiative of policy-making at the nation-state level derives from a traditional authority of individual countries. However, over the course of history, the globalization trend brought new challenges to this existing format by redesigning the policy making process in education (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). As such, this calls for new perspectives in view of formalizing study approaches that can provide theoretical and methodological implications to appropriately analyze global education policy (Verger et al., 2012). Regarding these implications, it has been observed that globalization defies the pre-established locus of inquiry, which is the nation-state. In fact, this leads to question the nationalistic based-approach of analysis that mostly characterizes research in education, particularly the comparative education field (Green 2003; Dale and Robertson, 2007). Another observation presents that globalization urges us to transcend

educationalism (Dale & Robertson, 2007), which implies that when analyzing new policy trends, policy changes and/or regular transformations in the field of education, elements such as extra-educational structures, events and processes (i.e. prevailing welfare regime, levels of poverty and social cohesion or the economic performance in a country) need to be considered as potential mediators (Verger et al. (2012). In the same vein, Dale (2005) posits that there is still a strong disciplinary parochialism within the mainstream of comparative education that keeps researchers to place education policy studies on approaches that essentially revolves around the field of education. Therefore, to work up this disciplinary flaw, emerging trends in education should be better approached as being a set of complex local, national and global political economy dynamics (Novelli et al., 2008).

The use of political economy in a sector reform programme analysis is of paramount importance, since political economy has “a keen interest in understanding how and why changes in institutions—including welfare regimes and policy sectors such as education—come about” (Verger et al., 2016:15). Additionally, to advance their perspective on education reform analysis, (Kingdon et al., 2014:7) for their part distinctly asserted that:

“The understanding of educational institutions has benefited little from these advances in surrounding disciplines. This needs to change. Our intention [...] is to put the theory of political economy to use in evaluation the research on education systems in developing nations. Alternative approaches offer somewhat different analytical tools that are more or less useful depending on what is being studied”

Furthermore, it is also expounded that the political economy not forcibly subject to the economics of education stand, takes a holistic approach to education development and reform process and addresses all aspects of educational development and reform process from the political, economic, institutional, social and educational perspectives and within a historical context (Ridell, 1999a). As an entry point, “political economy begins with the nature of decision making and is concerned with how politics will affect economic choices in a society” (Robbins, 1932:16).

Moreover, political economy has been critical in many developmental interventions around the world. However, its integral usage in the study of educational development and reform policy only gained momentum with the neo-liberalism influence in the sector. Hence, this radical transformation in the way educational affairs are conducted at various levels—both within international and national environments—increasingly favored the use of political economy as an

analytical tool. Such stance aligns itself perfectly with the current trend, whereby “a variety of groups influence the educational decision-making process and educational change” (Kingdon et al., 2014:24). Moving from this initial picture of involvement, further observations reveal that with “the re-structuring of the governance of education at a global level, international donor agencies and global education institutions are exerting more influence on the education sector decision-making in many developing countries” (Kingdon et al., 2014:19-29). Similarly, at the national level, the mixture of actors who—directly or indirectly—are involved in the education sector also emerged gradually in countries targeted with these reform processes. These actors, also termed as potential ‘drivers’ or agents of change by Kingdon et al., in large part remain multifarious and are identified as: organized interest groups “in civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), pockets in the mass media, religious groups, trade unions, and reform-minded elements among the political, bureaucratic and professional elites” (2014:3). Reform in education being the coveted field of actions of all these players implies strong interactions and dynamism in advancing their stakes.

In fact, the outcome of a reform policy and its implementation carried out under an unfavorable political economy is easily predictable. Quiet often the causes that lead to policy implementation shortfalls and policy failures are highly associated with a lack of capacity and poor governance of service delivery systems. On top of that, some political economy constraints remain determinant and with the absence of a marked political will, flourish well-anchored practices such as clientelism, patronage and corruption, etc. Behind these practices lie political forces, which sometimes act within or outside the prescribed framework of the reform process. Most probably, in any reform undertaking such a dynamic appears as a common expectation. As such, a general contention posits that:

“Education reform does not take place in a vacuum, but under specific constraints and opportunities, many of which are politically driven, shaped by the interests and incentives facing different stakeholders, the direct and indirect pressures exerted by these stakeholders, and by formal and informal institutions. Each of these factors influences different aspects of education reform, whether policy design, financing, implementation or evaluation” (Kingdom et al., 2014: 5)

Moreover, the trade-offs associated with reform processes led political economists also to expound that choices that are made and policies implemented are not in most cases the most appropriate choices given the interdependence existing between political and economic dynamics

(Jansen, 2002; Hartshorne, 1999; Sayed, 2001). Therefore, in a sense to reconcile these longstanding divergence of politics and economics, the focus of political economy analysis is to determine how power and resources are distributed and contested in various settings “to reveal the underlying interests, incentives and institutions that enable or frustrate change” (DFID, 2009: i). Therefore, here comes the relevance of political economy in education programme intervention framed within SWAps, which in turn, considered capacity development as its implementation framework.

Awareness of addressing poor management marked a significant departure in international assistance to education development. Thus, development of capacities became crucial in the whole process as a way “to improve the problem-solving abilities of individuals, organizations, and society in developing countries” (Hirosato, 2009:8). The basic fundamentals put forward in solving problems related to governance have been streamlined into developmental strategies. The most common and widely conceptualized approach is development capacity. However, this approach is widely recognized and consistent with the Leftwich scheme, which distinguishes “agents/actors (organizations or individuals) pursuing interests from institutions (i.e., rule of the game) and structural features of the environment (i.e. natural and human resources, economic, social, cultural and ideological systems)” (see Leftwich, 2006:12-13).

Nonetheless, in the “context of the decentralization trend in education administration/sector management, involvement in educational activities is not limited to central and local government officials but has come to include stakeholders such as civil society–NGOs, community organizations, school committees, teachers’ unions and parents’ associations, and the private enterprises”(Hirosato, 2009:8). In such a postulate, the political economy of educational development and reform seems more appropriate since it “subsumes the entire education sector, from central/local governments to the school/classroom level” (Hirosato, 2009:8). Further, quite often, “reviewed literature on education [reform] has analyzed the causes behind policy implementation gaps and policy failures, and it blames factors such as low capacity, poor administration, poor delivery system, poor governance, poor community information and corruption/leakages. However, underlying these is likely to be some political economy constraint, some lack of political will or some vested interest, which hinders the reduction in corruption or hinders better administration, governance and community information” (Kingdon et al., 2014:34).

1.4 Capacity Development

Against this backdrop, the above-mentioned political economy constraints are mostly the ones that the education programme support using SWAps aimed at addressing. Thus, “in its implementation, focus is being placed on the capacity development process in order to improve the problem-solving abilities of individuals, organizations, and society in developing countries” (Hirosato, 2009:37). However, capacity development as a major intervention mechanism in recent international education development encapsulates various dimensions in its applicability or assessment as a conceptual framework. However, at country level, design and implementation of effective and conducive educational capacity development policy requires favorable political economy. Also, it requires a real commitment, i.e., political will, on the part of the central authority, and capacity to innovate and progressively implement such policy at the local levels.

However, any investigation of capacity development should consider its conceptual scheme as it is outlined by Leftwich (2006: 12-13), who distinguished schemes to be “agents/actors (organizations or individuals) pursuing interests from institutions (which define ‘rules of the game’) and structural features of the environment (e.g. natural and human resources, economic, social, cultural and ideological systems)”.

Research evaluating this intervention should also consider the importance of ownership, endogenous processes, transformation, and multi stakeholder involvement as the basis for capacity development. As “the role and purpose of capacity building, there is an underlying agreement that capacity building is about change” (Walters, 2007:5); through either policy change or reform, that requires a conceptual clarity. Such conceptual framework for education policy reform and development analysis must integrate different dimensions which constitute the process of capacity development as they have been broadly identified in the literature (Oulay et al., 2011; OECD-DAC, 2006): national ownership and leadership of capacity initiative with international assistance matching national priorities and strategies; attention paid to strategies at various levels: individual capacities, the organizational effectiveness (e.g., the department in charge of education), the norms and practices regulating public management in general, and the political, social and economic contexts; “any development capacity intervention must recognize the intrinsic values of ownership and participation”(De Grauwe, 2009:47) since it remains essentially an endogenous process of change, and “the role of development partners is not to ‘do’ capacity development but to promote it” (Walters, 2007:4); either through policy change or

reform which requires a conceptual clarity. For this analysis, a conceptual framework is proposed which integrates specific aspects and dimensions of capacity development. It also highlights fundamental elements, which, in general are supposed to guide any capacity development intervention and particularly the decentralized education management capacity in Guinea (see Fig. 1.1; 1.2; 1.3 below).

Figure 1.1 CapDev inter-linked frames

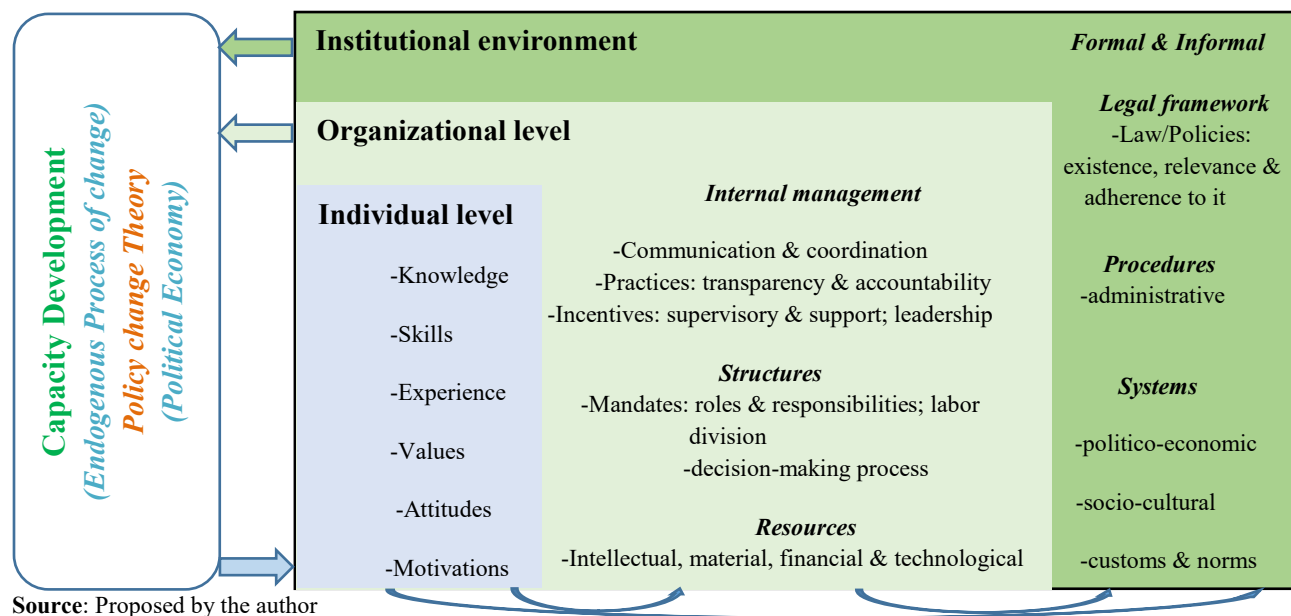


Fig 1.2 CapDev pyramid

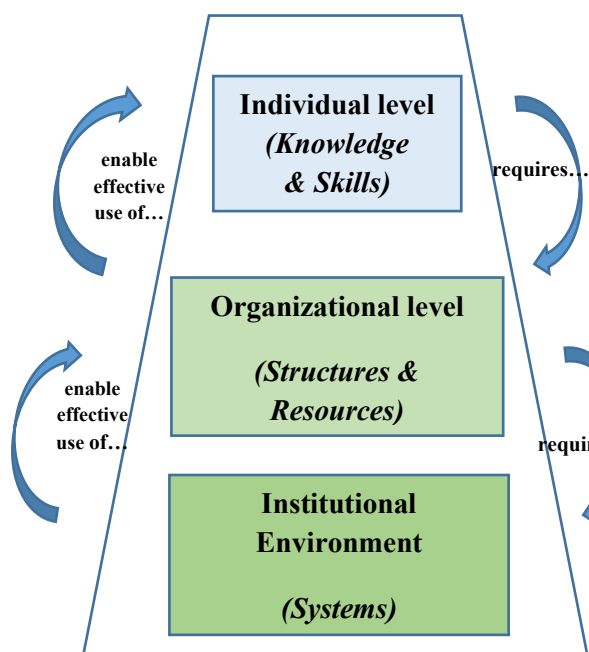
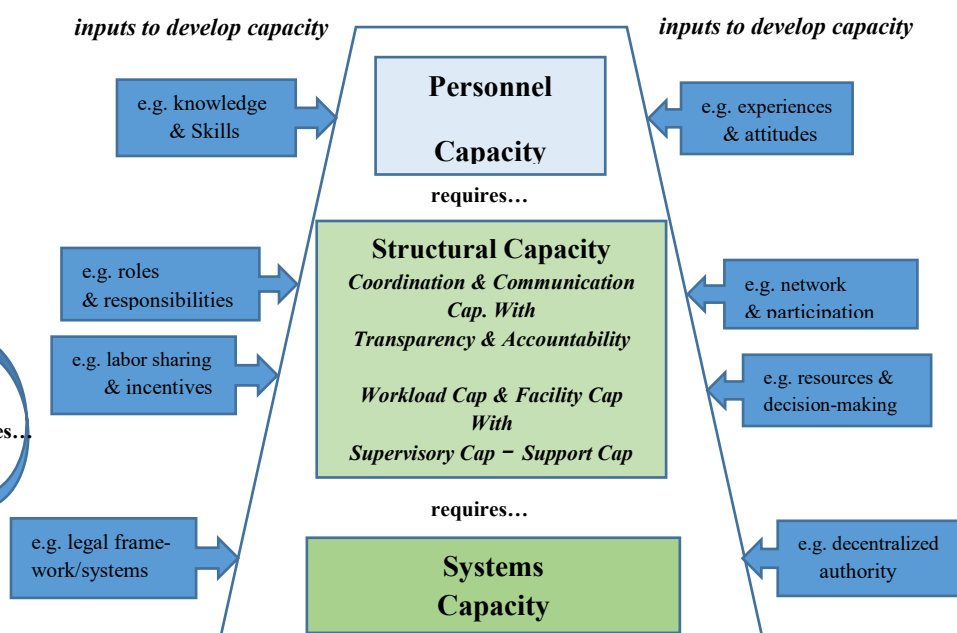


Fig 1.3 Pyramid of effective CapDev



Source: Adapted by the author from Potter & Brough (2004)

Comprehending dimensions and elements of capacity development seems crucial in order to grasp the study's analytical basis. In this respect Matachi (2006), provided a detailed and concise summary.

1.4.1 “Capacity at the individual level: [viewed as] the most fundamental element of capacity. It becomes the foundation for organization capacity and refers to the will and ability of an individual to set objectives and to achieve them using one's own knowledge and skills” (JICA/Japan International Cooperation Agency, 2004:16). Also, “capacity at the individual level includes knowledge, skills, value, attitude, health, awareness, etc. It can be developed through various ways such as formal, non-formal and/or informal education, training, on-the-job-training (OJT), independent reading, etc. In the context of organization development, it is also referred to as human resources development” (Matachi, 2006:5).

1.4.2 Capacity at the organization level: “determine how individual capacities are utilized and strengthened. It refers to anything that will influence an organization's performance” (JICA, 2004:16). This includes: “human resources (capacities of individuals in the organization); physical resources (facilities, equipment, materials, etc.); intellectual resources (organization strategy, strategic planning, management, business know-how, production technology, programme management, process management (e.g., problem-solving skills, decision-making process, communications, etc.); inter-institutional linkage (network, partnership, etc.); incentives and reward systems; organizational culture and leadership of managers” (Matachi, 2006:5).

1.4.3 Capacity at the environment/institutional level: “refers to the environment and conditions necessary for demonstrating capacity at the individual and organizational levels” (JICA, 2004:16). This includes “systems and frameworks necessary for the formation/implementation of policies and strategies beyond an individual organization. There are various dimensions on the environment such as administrative, legal, technological, political, economic, social, cultural, etc. that impinge on and/or mediate the effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development effort” (Matachi, 2006:5). Moreover, Matachi further posits, “elements on which capacity is based at the environment/ institutional level include formal institutions (laws, policies, decrees, ordinances, membership rules, etc.), informal institutions (customs, cultures, norms, etc.), social capital and social infrastructure, and capacities of individuals and organizations under the environment” (2006:5).

So far, the fact is that international organizations have deployed too much effort in assisting to develop capacities of developing countries' education systems, and these interventions "usually strengthened the skills of individuals, they have not always succeeded in improving the effectiveness of the ministries/organizations in which they are working" (Oulay et al., 2011:12).

Against this background, practically, reform pertaining to systemic capacity development stands as a multi-layered and multifaceted process, which encompasses different essential elements—set into separate but interdependent components. Thus, it "should not be viewed as a "quick fix" but rather as a fundamental, on-going process that requires changes in many aspects of the educational system" (Sillers, 2002:6). However, on the one hand, using the conceptual model help scrutinizing the inter-linking play of these various elements/components to better understand and interpret the gradual unfolding of this process. Also the model help guiding the selection of the "start list" of pre-set codes from which these codes derived (see Fig.1.1). On the other hand, as it is supported that by, "emphasizing systemic capacity building would improve diagnosis of sectoral shortcomings in specific locations, improve project/programme design and monitoring, and lead to more effective use of resources" (Potter & Brought, 2004:336). They also argued that "by systematically applying the pyramid to the system and asking what the capacity shortfalls are in terms of each component, a better understanding of the organizational shortfalls can be assessed and a more logical approach taken regarding where action is needed most" (Potter & Brought, 2004: 339) (see Fig 1.2 and 1.3).

1.5 Structure of the thesis

The rest of the thesis is organized as follows:

At first, the key concepts underlining the study and the theory and conceptual framework guiding the research analysis are presented at the introduction part. Then, a thorough review of the analytical lens that is circumspect to multi scalar type of reform was given due attention. In addition, a proper connection of the theory to the conceptual framework is being established. And a concise outline underlying the whole concept provided thereupon.

Chapter 2 surveys the existing scholarly work pertaining to education development and reform at the global level. Then, a narrower focus is being made to highlight the recent trend of global

education policy and their related strategic diffusion. Particular attention was given to the role that globalization has played in influencing the way education policy used to be formulated and disseminated at regional and national level. The transformations brought about by these new trends at the local level have also been of particular interest. In essence, the specific case of Guinea was examined to have a closer look at recent reform programs in the education sector.

Chapter 3 describes the research design and methodology of the thesis. It provides a detailed explanation of the use of case study and justification for the site selection and adopted sampling strategy. Implication on the chosen approach for this research, data gathering and its analysis is being also singled out. Meanwhile, the integrity of the investigation as a whole also received special attention.

Chapter 4 provides a thorough background of Guinea's country profile and its education reform history. Then, it proceeds to offer an insider look at the organizational and managerial pattern that supported earlier reform program interventions in the country's education system. Also, major gains and related problems facing each of the education sub-sectors are respectively highlighted.

Chapter 5 reviews the most recent educational reform program introduced in Guinea. With respect to the country's adoption of EFA program intervention, a focus on measures intended to revolutionize the performance of the sector have been addressed. Subsequently, the results obtained and the ever-lasting challenges in the sector are also laid out. At the same time, the issue of decentralized management of the sector is being heralded with central concern for the institutional reform that served as a springboard for the reform.

Chapter 6 depicts the implementation process of the reform program at the institutional level. The discussion examines in detail the preponderant environment throughout the reform. As a first step, it establishes a clear distinction between the formal institutions and the informal institutions that condition the success or failure of capacity development. In a second step, it draws out the influencing agents of these institutions resulting from interactions within and among these agencies. And then demonstrates the influence that these institutions may have on an administrative entity or sector if the rules regulating its functioning are non-existent or ill-defined.

Chapter 7 portrays the pattern of the structural administrative arrangement of the education sector following the reform intervention. It then describes the dynamics that have determined the organizational aspect as well as the functioning of the structures in charge of the management of the education sector in Guinea. Further and finally, it provides a general understanding of why such a state of affairs characterizes the governance of the sector as well as the performance of its personnel.

Chapter 8 draws conclusions and some implications from this research. Thus, it delineates the salient points concluding this study, the main findings, and the major implications for the reform program, the prospects for future research as well as recommendations on similar interventions. In itself, this study both fills a gap in the debate on the relevance of new trends in international assistance to education development in developing countries, and stimulates and reframes the real subject that deserves further discussion regarding the development of the education sector in Guinea.

CHAPTER II–LITERATURE REVIEW: EDUCATION POLICY REFORM AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN [DECENTRALIZED] EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

A comprehensive survey of the existing studies has been conducted to easily direct the investigation of this present research topic. The widespread coverage of education within the literature has triggered interrogations on emerging issues of this subject area that lack extensive exploration. Among these issues, recent global education policies clearly stood out. Table 2.1 below sketches the exploration of developing countries’ education system landscapes, and the increasing influence on how international trends have profoundly altered policy formulation in education development assistance and its implementation. Considering the lack of extensive analysis of the implementation of these new trends, this study reflects upon this matter and sets out to empirically determine their effect on education development with respect to the political economy of these developing countries.

Table 2.1: Literature Review Synthesis Matrix

Research questions	Key Thematic	Existing Literature
1- What changes has this education sector reform brought to Guinea’s education system?	Policy change and policy reform	(Robertson, 1992; Dale, 2000; Robertson et al, 2007; Vulliamy, 2010; Verger et al, 2012; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Bonal, 2002; Hirosato & Kimura, 2009; Mundy, 2002; Jones, 1997; Babu & Sengupta, 2006; EFA/Global Monitoring Report, 2008; Easterly, 2005; World Bank, 1989; DfID, 2006; James, 1998; Republic of Guinea, 2004; Republic of Guinea, 2002, Al’Abri, 2011; Swift-Morgan, 2011;
2- How responsive has decentralized capacity management been under EFA programme to Guinea’s education system performance?	Development approach through capacity development: endogenous process of change / intentional intervention	(Abrahamsen, 2000; Buchert, 2000; Boak & Ndaruhutse, 2011; Hirosato & Kimura, 2009; OECD-DAC, 2005; OECD-DAC, 2009; EFA/GMR, 2008; Caprio et al., 2007; James, 1998; Babu & Sengupta, 2006; GMR, 2011; UNESCO/CapEFA, 2010; CapEFA, 2011; Caprio et al, 2007; Verger et al, 2012; Robertson et al., 2007; Molenaers and Nijs, 2008; Ridell, 2015; FTI, 2009; World Bank, 2001; Penny, Ward, Read and Bines, 2008; Boak and Brannelly, 2009; Woods, 2007; Cafferini & Pierrell, 2009; Ridell & Nino-Zarazua, 2015; Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006; Verspoor, 2008; Back et al., 2003; Midling et al., 2006; World Bank-SABER, 2013; Swift-Morgan, 2011; Walters, 2007;
3-What factors have been determinant to bring about these changes, how and to what extent?	Political economy approach to institutional change: incremental change	(Fukuyama, 2004; Verger et al., 2012; Van de Walle, 2001; NEPAD, 2004; Commission for Africa 2005; Babu & Sengupta, 2006; CapEFA, 2011; Cerna; 2013; McLaughlin, 1987; Nieuwenhuis 1997; Chansopheak, 2009; Walmond, 2000; Barry, 2010; Back et al., 2003; World Bank- SABER, 2013; Swift-Morgan, 2011; UNESCO/CapEFA, 2010; Caprio et al, 2008; Walters, 2007;

2.1 Policy change and policy reform in developing countries' education reform

2.1.1 Global education policy change towards education development assistance

To review education policy change and/or reform in developing countries, one must consider the global discourse on political and economic development. As globalization has drastically altered and shaped the policymaking in education around the world, particularly in the developing countries (Robertson, 1992; Dale, 2000; Robertson et al, 2007; Vulliamy, 2010; Verger et al, 2012; Verger, 2014). In fact, Rizvi and Lingard argued “that globalization has reformed and redesigned the education policy terrain” (2010: 371-377). They further posit “that the process of globalization has deeply shifted and changed the ways in which education policy is developed, implemented and evaluated as globalization has witnessed the reworking of the nation-state—the site at which public policy was most commonly created” (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010: 371-377).

2.1.2 Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) approach to education development assistance

According to the international political economy approach (IPE)¹, which argued that the “most important way globalization is affecting education policy is by altering the structural conditions in which education reform happens” (Verger et al., 2012:11). They went on to say, “a good example of how globalization altered the structural conditions of educational governance can be found in the World Bank/IMF sponsored Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) implemented in Latin America and African countries in the 1980s and 1990s” (Verger et al., 2012:11). However, in these developing countries, it was observed that the “SAPs had serious repercussions in education by, first, lowering the public budget necessary to fund educational expansion and, second, raising the levels of poverty and, consequently, the opportunity costs of schooling” (Bonal, 2002:7). Moreover, the World Bank neoliberal policies raised many criticisms on the effectiveness of aid pertaining to the support of individual projects. As it has been observed that during the “project implementation, often structural profiteering emerged, impeding both ‘ownership’ and ‘indigenous’ capacity development” (Hirosato, 2009:26). A further argument compounding these problems was that the “inefficiencies and high transaction costs for aid-recipient countries of development agencies ‘going it alone’ with their own individual projects and monitoring missions” (Ridell, 2008: 364).

¹Besides the Neo-Institutionalist approach, represented by the ‘World Society’ theory. International Political Economy (IPE) is the other main macro approach that addresses the nature of the effects of globalization in education. For further details, see Verger et al. 2012; Verger, 2014.

Another set of criticisms of the World Bank neoliberal policies relate to the de-emphasis on local control and innovation in favor of generic policy strategies of making education less responsive to local needs (Mundy, 2002) and limiting national sovereignty over the education agenda (Jones, 1997). Thus, “after implementing structural adjustment programmes for a decade, the development community woke up to the fact that in least developed countries, the public institutions have not been developed adequately and capacitated appropriately to absorb and implement policy reforms” (Babu and Sengupta, 2006:21).

Moreover, other conclusions of World Bank-supported projects present that management objectives

“had often been overambitious and insufficiently grounded in institutional-political analysis; attempts to increase internal efficiency had been underemphasized even in countries with very poor records and, where there had been attempts, they had not been effective; efforts to build capacity within education management systems in projects had been fragmented and largely ineffective; and decentralization of education management had been widely supported without any assessment of its effects on access and quality” (EFA/Global Monitoring Report, 2008: 170-171).

Overall, it was observed by Easterly, (2005) that the failure of the structural adjustment policies implementation in many developing sub-Saharan African countries is related to the lack of institutional capacity as being a major element in part of the policy reforms in the 1980s and 1990s.

Nonetheless, in this state of affairs, various attempts were made to overcome these apparent policy failures. A starting point with these attempts was to address poor governance that a World Bank (1989) report on Africa mentions to be behind the failure of the “Washington Consensus” policies in developing countries. “Specific issues to be addressed in an attempt to improve developing countries’ governance include: prevailing government corruption; lack of transparency in the policy decision-making process; lack of accountability; disregard for, or the inadequacy of, law; and the inefficiency of the public sector” (Hirosato, 2009: 26).

2.1.3 Sector-wide approaches (SWAs) and international education development assistance

In response to the failure of structural adjustment policies, the “Post-Washington Consensus” policies, with particular emphasis on good governance have been introduced to help developing nations address their developmental challenges (Abrahamsen, 2000). These new agendas set by “Post-Washington Consensus” policies have ushered a new era of development initiatives.

Among these initiatives, a new worldwide agenda for education– ‘Education for All’– came into being; organized and sponsored by the World Bank and UNESCO successively in 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand and in 2000 in Dakar, Senegal. “This new agenda was believed to help developing countries to overcome poverty and other major challenges” (Al’Abri, 2011:497). So was the intent of the Millennium Development Goals, another agenda of the Post-Washington consensus policies, initiated by the UN to collectively direct a set of precise international development goals (Robertson et al., 2007).

However, with these new agendas, the “World Bank and donor countries and agencies refocused their efforts on the creation of a more comprehensive development framework and poverty reduction mechanism” (Hirosato, 2009:26). Also, “the new focus on improving governance led at the same time to a reassessment of the conventional modalities and methods of aid provisions” (Hirosato, 2009:26). Overall, these changes resulted [first in the Fast Track Initiative (FTI)] and in the adoption of sector programme support using sector-wide approach (SWAp) (Buchert, 2000). In sum, “SWAps grew out of national and international dissatisfaction with project approaches, which were seen to be inefficient and in some cases inappropriate” (Boak & Ndaruhutse, 2011:14) Thus, “experimentation with new ways of assisting educational development had begun by the late 1990s with several bilateral and multilateral agencies participating in sector-wide approaches (SWAps), including the provision of direct budget support for education” (Ridell, 2008: 364). In 2005, “the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, signed by 107 countries and 26 international organizations, generalized these developments and introduced indicators of progress and targets of good practice for five key elements of aid effectiveness: ownership, harmonization, alignment, results and mutual accountability” (Ridell, 2008: 364).

Moreover, the first “education SWAps were introduced in the developing countries, beginning in Uganda, in the late 1990s” (Boak & Ndaruhutse, 2011: 12), and then extended to South Asia, Latin America and East Asia. Initially, “education SWAps intent is to increase the overall effectiveness and efficiency of resources and ensure that the education sector was more responsive to national government policies and priorities, facilitating coherence between sector policies and human and financial resource allocations” (Boak & Ndaruhutse, 2011:12). Broadly speaking, this approach is a response to the massive increase in financing called for at Dakar to reach the goal of the EFA programme, specifically MDG goal 2 and goal 3. However, one more

aspect to be considered in this approach should revolve around its context framing, policy/plan formulation and implementation. As observed by Caprio et al. (2007:7) who noted that “increased financing must go along with increased capacity across the education sector; and the balance between more financing and better capacity is fundamental to increasing ownership and accountability at national level and needs to be reflected into credible plans and in their long-term, country-driven implementation”.

Subsequently, the “2008 EFA Global Monitoring Report highlights this policy priority: another impetus for changing the ways of delivering aid to increase effectiveness is the perception that decades of ‘capacity building’ has not resulted in the sustainable institutional development necessary for the planning and implementation of development activities”(EFA/GMR, 2008:165). Which amounts to saying that adoption of the education sector programme support using SWAp must comply with countries’ priorities. As expounded by Hirosato, the “education sector support is a framework and method of aid provisions that aims to improve the entire sector and related governance in the medium to long term. In its implementation, focus is placed on the capacity development process in order to improve the problem-solving abilities of individuals, organizations, and society in developing countries” (2009:37).

Summary: There are convergent viewpoints within the literature on today’s education policy setting at the global level. However, the relevance and repercussions of such policy at the national level remain inconclusive. At large, globally planned policies noticeably fail to consider a priori local context. Moreover, critical studies investigating the setbacks of such policies on a local basis are lacking. Aid agencies or consultants working under their mandates mostly conduct studies assessing the effect of global education policies on developing countries. Under this situation, precedence is given to the needs and interests or even preferences of these aid agencies (Hirosato and Kitamura, 2009), omitting or neglecting therefore priorities of developing countries. As a result, voices from developing countries apparently remain inaudible in ongoing discussions to effectively expose country-case experiences with global education policies, their merits and demerits, and possible ways of improving their relevance. What is more, such lamentable claims actually lack great resonance within current studies on international development assistance to education in the developing countries. This suggests, however, the

absolute necessity of integrating local initiatives within the global agenda for education development. In fact, this research sets out to achieve one of these tasks.

2.2 Development approach through capacity development: endogenous process of change

2.2.1 Capacity development and education development assistance in developing countries

Recently, there is a growing awareness of the bottlenecks impeding sustainable development in some parts of the world. As James (1998: xv) put it:

“the challenge, for developing countries, as well as for the assisting/donor international community, is to attempt to enhance the ability of people of developing nations to develop essential policies and management skills necessary to build their nations’ human, economic, social, political, and cultural structures so as to take their proper place in global affairs. Sustainable growth requires guidance from trained personnel to assist with the technical skills and knowledge needed to build institutions. These aspects of the society would be critical in developing the bases for agriculture, environmental protection, education, health, and human resources. With the growing population in the developing countries, it is essential to build the capacities to meet the needs of the population. The beginning point to fill the gaps in policy analysis and development management, which are the two major areas that need to be addressed, is capacity building”.

In the perspective of replacing the concept of capacity in the broad developmental discourse, it is should be admitted that:

“The concept of capacity as an integral component of development agendas is not new, yet it has only recently been acknowledged that development plans and goals cannot be achieved without adequate local capacity. Increased attention to the lack of capacity and the absence of relevant institution has brought to light their importance in the successful design, implementation, and evaluation of development plans, programs, and policies” (Babu and Sengupta, 2006: iii).

Illustration of this fact is clearly stated in the 2011 GMR, which suggests that “the barriers to quality education were under-estimated in the Dakar Framework for Action in 2000 and that, over the past decade, insufficient attention has been paid to designing strategies for overcoming them” (CapEFA, 2011:14). Therefore, “a major part of the response to this for UNESCO and its partners “lies within the capacity development approach” (CapEFA, 2011:9).

However, in the process of building consensus on education development assistance, various summits have been held with emphasis placed on “support toward basic education in developing countries based on the principles and framework of EFA” (Hirosato and Kitamura, 2009:14). This consensus fueled by the international debate in support of promoting EFA

resulted in the EFA Fast-Track Initiative (EFA-FTI) which began in 2002 under the leadership of the World Bank. As a framework for financing basic education, it primarily focuses on primary education to allow wide access to and also improved education quality. Thus, “the EFA-FTI is [finally] regarded as the foremost mechanism for realizing the Dakar Framework for Action and the current model for international aid—the Paris Declaration on Aid effectiveness” (Hirosato and Kitamura, 2009:14).

Moreover, these two international education aid delivery mechanisms embraced capacity as an integral approach of aid alignment and harmonization. As it is generally perceived that:

“The EFA-FTI, set up to accelerate the movement towards EFA and the MDGs in low-income countries lent its vital support to this process. Its aim is to promote ‘systematic, coordinated support to country-driven agendas for capacity development involving all relevant actors and levels, strengthening individuals, institutions and organizational set-ups. ‘This approach goes beyond the experience, knowledge and technical skills of individuals or material resources’” (CapEFA, 2011:21).

The same principles of aid delivery hold true with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, whereby, capacity development is considered crucial in implementing its “principles of country ownership, alignment, donor harmonization, managing for results and mutual accountability” (Caprio et al., 2007:8), especially in the context of decentralization (Hirosato and Kitamura, 2009).

Yet, it is worth acknowledging that the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness deals not only and/or specifically with the education sector. However, it has set the scene as policy framework clearly referenced in the OECD-DAC GOVNET paper, “The Challenge of Capacity Development: Working Towards Good Practice”, adopted in 2006. This paper “provides an extremely useful, concise and coherent framework for rethinking capacity development as an endogenous, country-led process that cuts across individual, organizational and institutional levels” (Caprio et al., 2007:8). Therefore, “capacity development in the education sector signifies the provision of a high-quality learning environment (particularly, enhancing the learning effect continually) through the promotion of capacity development based on the needs of the developing country in regard to classroom-level management, organization/system building, and necessary skills improvement” (Hirosato and Kitamura, 2009:17). This implies that:

“capacity in the education sector can be identified across all levels—from a institutional, such as creating legal frameworks for participatory policy planning

and accountable monitoring, to b) organizational, such as strengthening the responsibilities and capacities of local government authorities and civil society organizations (CSOs) to c) individual, such as securing the availability of a qualified personnel (i.e. office staffs, teaching workforce), the latter aspect having been defined as one of the critical factors to reach the EFA goals” (EFA/GMR, 2008:191).

2.2.2 Capacity development in developing countries’ education sector reform

Global discourses on education development have shaped global education policies, and profoundly affected educational policies and practices in the developing countries, as Robertson et al. (2007: 74-90) noted that “international organizations have a more powerful impact on education of low-income and developing countries through their practices, programs and policies such as the UN’s MDGs, EFA, and the broader globalized education policy discourses of the knowledge economy and lifelong learning”. However, it is broadly acknowledged that “many developing countries often do not have the appropriate material and human resources to implement very costly and technically demanding global education programmes such as quasi-markets in education or accountability policies” (Verger et al., 2012:22). To cope with this challenge, a systemic change within the education sector and its service delivery systems must take place in most of these developing countries. Nonetheless, “most of them have not yet fully developed the individual, institutional, and system capacities in undertaking necessary education reforms, especially under decentralization and privatization requiring new roles at various (central and local, or public and private) levels of administration and stakeholders”, argued Hirosato and Kitamura (2009:1).

Moreover, following international trends, various governments in the developing countries adopted the new approach on education development assistance. However, adoption of the sector programme support approach by these countries reflect either their pressing need to secure international funds for national development or their firm commitment to reach the MDGs and EFA goals. Whatever the case, effective use and implementation of SWAps requires ownership of developing countries and the strong partnership among stakeholders. This further implies that increasing ownership on the one hand, requires developing countries to define plans and strategies to be followed in their education development and reform. Also, “identify capacity needs and develop a national capacity development strategy instead of relying on donor-led technical processes” (Caprio et al., 2007:8). Likewise, on the other hand, “donors need to implement their commitments to align their technical and financial support with partners’

capacity development objectives and strategies, to make effective use of existing capacities, and to decrease transaction costs, administrative burdens and fragmentation” (Caprio et al., 2007:8).

Moreover, since the “Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness’ and recent ‘Global Monitoring Reports’ have identified the lack of planning and management capacities as a major obstacle to achieving EFA, and perhaps as important as the scarcity of resources” (Hite & De Grauwwe, 2008:15). This entails that alongside the fund mobilization, developing countries should address their lack of capacity by strengthening the individuals, organizations and systems of their education sector service delivery at the central. The same thing applies at the local level including civil society and NGOs by taking advantage of the framework that SWAps provided. Addressing capacity issues of developing countries through a holistic approach seems to be fundamental. Hirosato and Kitamura (2009:16) state that the problem many developing countries “confront in this process is the capacity development involving local government and community-level administrative organizations to which authority has been devolved or about to be devolved through decentralization”. They further agree that “even if the developing country has a certain level of capacity on the central government level for planning, management, implementation, and monitoring/evaluation, the administrative capacity on the regional and local levels is often extremely weak” (Hirosato and Kitamura, 2009, 17).

Education Planning and Management

Introducing a new approach of doing things requires a structural change in the functioning pattern of the system at play. That being said, the public sector branch in charge of the planning and management of the education sector has to undergo systematic restructuring. Meaning that some interventions from the public authorities are needed to set priorities, direct initiatives and extend funding support to achieve sectoral development of education. Furthermore, operationalizing “educational change requires not only good planning, but also more than that. It also demands attention to clients, implementers, tasks, politics and the process through which decisions are made” (Reimers, 1990: 67). Reimers also posits that “organizational change should be induced in ministries of education to develop managerial excellence. The perennial problems of patronage and corruption need urgent corrective action since their cost to society will surely be larger in times of scarcity” (1990: 66).

It is quite obvious that the tug of war in any reform resides in the paradigm change of the intervention strategy. However, it remains an absolute way to go in spite of a fierce resistance

such a move may face. Given the fact that “the management aspects of education projects are crucial not only because innovation and change require special management capacities and processes, but also because the level of management capacity in ministries of education in many developing countries is low” (Rondinelli, Middleton & Verspoor, 1990: 19). With such an apparent reality, there is an urgent call to increase the administrative skills of educational planners and administrators to allow them to better perform their tasks. Along with this skill improvement, there is also an express need of promoting institutional and/or organizational memory of the education sector delivery systems. In a general perspective, it is believed that “promoting change is difficult under any circumstances, but it is especially challenging in developing countries and unstable economic, social, and political conditions” (Rondinelli, Middleton & Verspoor, 1990: 10).

Due to recurrent uncertainty, “most [developing] countries do not have planning processes that allow planners and administrators to learn from past experience” (Havelock and Huberman, 1977:33). Hence, such an increasing uncertainty of the environment in which complex education reform is carried out poses serious difficulties for education planners. In the face of such predicaments, Reimers contended that “one of the critical issues to [plan and] implement policy changes that may improve educational management seems to be how to create the conditions by which the existing information, data and research become relevant in the decision-making process and how to create the conditions that will allow the education ministries to learn from their own experience” (1990: 71). However, the disruption in the continuity of educational plan and policy represents a widespread characteristic of most reform initiatives in many developing countries. In addition, the “lack of evaluative information about the educational system makes accurate diagnosis [of previous and existing problems] impossible, with consequent risk of duplication of past mistakes” (McGinn et al., 1983: 266).

Against this backdrop, there is a need to reconsider overall practices in international assistance to improve the management of education development projects in the developing countries. It must be understood that these intended programmes to reform education delivery systems are basically “people-centered” interventions. Therefore, this suggests that implementing such reforms successfully requires provision of appropriate resources necessary for planners to develop and use their own skills and capabilities. The success of reform programmes depends on the ability of planners and administrators to tailor “services to the

particular needs of different groups of people and on changing people's behavior so that they can more effectively help themselves", argued Korten (1984:2). Possible avenues that could foster such attainment would be to encourage local innovation and limit the intensive borrowing of western administrative practices and management techniques to developing countries. Criticisms on the over-usage of such approach revolve around two fronts: a) their perception as being a single correct management strategy; b) their lack of sufficient attention to differences in culture and human behavior (Esman and Montgomery, 1969; Siffin, 1976; Esman, 1980). Furthermore, the service delivery system of the education sector should adopt a flexible approach to planning [which] recognizes that both design and management must be guided by incremental process of learning 'change in behavior resulting from experience' and experimentation (Rondinelli, Middleton & Verspoor, 1990).

However, the applicability of such practical shift in the traditional management reform practices must consider introducing and institutionalizing change measures. Such an attempt must consist in promoting a participative approach integrating positive and innovative trends, which should initially be internal and then external. It is therefore understood that innovation in education management goes through changes in attitudes and behavior of almost all people involved in the education system (i.e., students, parents, teachers, administrators and partners in the sector. It is also acknowledged that different agencies/actors engaged in a variety of educational tasks should coordinate their activities (Rondinelli et al., 1990; OECD, 2005; Hirosato and Kitamura, 2009). Overall, out of the 21 attribute of innovation that Zaltman, Duncan, and Holbek (1973) identified, it appears that features of innovation [are not linear as it] involves a long process, and [it consists] of (1) raising awareness or perception that changes are needed; (2) generating knowledge and information about, and interest in, alternative ways of accomplishing educational goals, (3) assessing and testing proposed changes; (4) diffusing new ideas, methods, or practices by early advocates of innovation; (5) promoting widespread acceptance and legitimization of change; and (6) adapting and institutionalizing the changes.

In sum, to successfully introduce these innovative and change measures, a reconfiguration of the environment in which the education reform takes place must be considered. As such, it amounts to considering policy "change processes from a multi-level perspective involving a variety of actors" (Cerna, 2013:11). Ultimately, in respect with current trend in education development, governance of the education sector is now following such pattern. This multi-level

governance of sectors, “provides a useful transition from policy change to policy implementation as top-down versus bottom-up approaches [are to be] used for both parts of the process”, argued Cerna (2013:11).

Top-down and bottom-up approaches in reform planning and implementation

At first, one must contend that a trade-off may exist on the appropriate steps to be taken when it comes to introduce a reform initiative. However, it is quite certain that in any change-driven process, an approach or strategy is of a paramount importance. Traditionally, reform processes heavily applied the ‘waterfall’ pattern in the design and management of projects in various sectors. More specifically, educational reform has long relied on and employed the top-down strategy. This centralized, command-and-control approach to planning and management is being well anchored in many educational systems as an historical inheritance. Nonetheless, with the continuous influence of other disciplines on the education sector governance, recent reform projects in management have gradually incorporated these integrated management approaches into projects planning. Nowadays, although it is still relevant for many organizations to use the top-down planning, the bottom-up method of planning became more and more prevalent and widely used. The “two approaches vary in a number of areas, such as the role of actors and their relationships and the type of policies they can be applied to” (Cerna, 2013: 18).

a. Top-down approach intervention

In project planning and management, top-down approach is still used by and in many reform programmes. For its part, Matland (1995:147) argued that “top-down theorists see policy designers as the central actors and concentrate their attention on factors that can be manipulated at the central level”. This means that the decisions and objectives are set in the upper side of the organization system, and then the goals of the project are disseminated to the lower part of the system for execution. Actually, one must say that the success of projects based on this approach depends entirely on the implementing team’s adherence to the project’s goals. In regard to such a contingency, Sabatier and Mazmanian (1979) presented a detailed schema of the approach, whereby they distinguished some legal and political variables, which are synthesized into six conditions for implementing effectively reform plans. The schema ranges “from clear objectives, causal theory, legal structure of the implementation process, committed officials, and supportive interest groups to no undermining of changing socio-economic conditions” (Sabatier, 2005:19).

Advantages and disadvantages

The use of the top-down approach in project planning is considered helpful in aligning the project goals with the education sector's strategic goals since actors at the central management unit are giving instructions and directions to follow. The top-down approach has another merit, which is “to develop generalizable policy advice and come up with consistent recognizable patterns in behavior across different policy areas” (Matland, 1995:148). The demerits of this approach lie on its authoritative feature in the decision-making process. Actors—who are major players in enacting reform project—at the lower level are not involved in the planning of the project. As such, the basic requisite of top-down approach is de facto compromised as grassroots actors or the real beneficiaries are left out at the crucial stage of the process. The effect of such an offset can distort clarity in communication, which leads to misunderstandings and can ultimately result in the failure of the project.

b. Bottom-up approach intervention

Looking at the bottom-up approach, intervention based on such approach seeks for an organic change that would come from within the targeted entity. That means reform processes applying bottom-up strategy involves empowering most, if not all, stakeholders in decisions concerning the initiation and implementation of educational reform (Horn, 1947). Given such consideration, proponents of this approach put much emphasis on “target groups and service deliverers, arguing that policy is made at the local level” (Matland 1995:149). Another consideration in the use of a bottom-up strategy implies that “those closest to the educational process (teachers, administrators, and students) know best what is necessary to ensure relevant and quality education” (Horn, 1947: 114). Thus, in planning project with the bottom-up strategy, the targeted objectives and corresponding tasks should be identified by the reform beneficiaries as well as its front-line actors.

Advantages and disadvantages

Employment of bottom-up approach in reform project planning has some advantages. The basic principle of this approach is at first promoting collegial decision-making on objectives and goals to be pursued. This allows wider collaboration and participation based upon consensus building and cultural regard of stakeholders at the grassroots level. From its implementation perspective, bottom-up approach [does not have a strong desire] to “present prescriptive advice, but rather describes what factors have caused difficulty in reaching stated goals” (Matland, 1995:150).

Thus, a reform project using this strategy places flexibility at the center to spearhead reform activities and adjust to local challenges and prevailing factors. However, bottom-up approach is also subject to a number of criticisms. Given the detailed activities to input in the project plan, the planning stage is perceived as much more time and effort consuming. Hence without thorough leadership, the pace of implementation can be delayed due to a lack of team commitment to the project plan, which may further obscure the scope and control over the reform process.

From the above, it should be acknowledged that both top-down and bottom-up approaches have pros and cons. However, possible missteps are likely to take place if the use of one approach by reform projects overrides the relevance of the other. Far better, the relevance of one or other approach to a given project depends on the organizational strategy and structure, and the reform actors' culture. Overall, the most viable and prominent passage would be to find a balance between the two approaches by taking the best aspects of both and mitigating their potential negatives. To foster the pertinence of such a combination, Cummings and Williams (2008: 9) advocate the following:

“The dichotomization of change strategies as either top-down or bottom-up is not the most useful way to think about reform. While it seems clear that simple command-and-control approaches do not work very well in improving education systems, effective change requires both top-down and bottom-up efforts. The critical issues, we would argue, are the roles assumed by actors at different levels of the system and the relationships between levels of the system. In a system accustomed to command-and-control, roles typically require adjustment, with the “bottom” or front-line requiring a substantial development of capacity, initiative, and morale, while the “top” requires practice in facilitation, development of trust, and the relinquishing of control. It is rarely healthy for a system to locate all intelligence or responsibility for initiative at a single level. At the same time, systems need to think and act horizontally as well as vertically”.

2.2.3 Capacity development through recent education development assistance

As a corrective measure to the ineffectiveness of existing aid approaches and poor governance, education SWAs was introduced in the developing countries firstly in sub-Saharan Africa in the late 1990s; and then “extended to South Asia, Latin America and East Asia. In some countries, education SWAs led to general budget support, particularly in countries with poverty reduction strategies that recognized the education sector as a priority” [as it is the case in Guinea] (EFA/GMR, 2008:171). However, the extensive use of SWAs and direct budget support is

expected to impact the education sector on two fronts: either through the “goals of the education sector strategies themselves or the intermediary processes regarded as necessary to reach those goals, such as planning, management, resource allocation, disbursement, implementation and accounting” (EFA/GMR, 2008:171). Considering the second perspective, sector-wide approaches are perceived by many specialists as the most promising and convenient entry point to mainstream capacity development approaches (OECD-DAC, 2009). Furthermore, justifying that “SWAps have an important premium on education planning and their success can mainly be seen in the improved planning capacity, policy development, working ethic, governance and broader institutional development of partner” government (Boak and Ndaruhutse, 2011:35).

Above all, “the aid effectiveness principles are invariably not the only forces at work guiding partner governments and donors in their engagement in SWAps. Both sides are strongly influenced by wider political forces and governance concerns may represent disincentives for them to move towards harmonization and alignment” (Molenaers and Nijs, 2008:7-24). Nonetheless, whatever SWAps perception would be, it has been “found that education SWAps have been implemented in the vast majority of aid-dependent countries and they have also been adopted in some lower-middle-income countries” (Boak and Ndaruhutse, 2011:8). Overall, out of the 28 Fast-Track Initiative (FTI) endorsed low-income countries up to 2010, twenty-one of these had SWAps in place or under preparation (FTI, 2009). Also, the research conducted by Boak and Ndaruhutse (2011:17) “revealed that out of the low-income countries (25 in their case) which have education SWAps, only five are sub-sector or partial SWAps, focusing only on primary or basic education”.

Against this backdrop, Education SWAps adopted and implemented by many of these low-income countries were supported by different aid agencies with different experiences. The United Kingdom through its Department of International Development (DFID) extended its “poverty reduction programmes to over 20 countries; and countries receiving sectoral budget support for education included Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Nepal, Rwanda, Viet Nam and Zambia” (EFA/GMR, 2008:167). However, “key constraints to further aligning aid with government programmes were seen to be a lack of government ownership of the agreed performance assessment framework and insufficient capacity with line ministries” (EFA/GMR, 2008:167). For its part, the United States Agency for International Development, adopted SWAps and

budget support for education basically in Iraq, Afghanistan and Egypt; but results in the sectoral programme assistance in the 1990s were viewed as disappointing (Ridell, 2007a).

Moreover, regarding aid effectiveness to improve harmonization, different stories actually emerged. Boak and Ndaruhutse (2011:18) argued that “while some countries can testify to improvement in harmonization as a result of the SWAp such as Mozambique and Uganda”. However, “there is still an important gap between rhetoric and practice that has served to reduce the impact and efficiency gains that would have been made through SWAp. However, the lack of harmonization has resulted in partner governments in some countries, such as Cambodia and Kenya” (Boak and Ndaruhutse, 2011:18), to heavily bear the high transactions costs associated with coordination of actors from ‘outside’ the education SWAp (Boak and Brannelly, 2009; Woods, 2007). Looking at the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), a similar view tends to appear somehow. Known as the “premier donor to education in terms of supporting the countries with the largest needs and using local plans and systems as its starting point” (EFA/GMR, 2008:166), the SIDA intervened in 15 countries to support basic education. Among these countries, “only in Bolivia, Honduras, Mali, Mozambique, Rwanda, and the United Republic of Tanzania does Sida provide aid as sectoral or general budget support. While in Bangladesh and Cambodia, specific activities within sector programmes are supported” (EFA/GMR, 2008:166). The Lao People’s Democratic Republic—another country in that region—had differing views for its SWAp adoption. Yet government involvement in sector programmes was clear in the six countries receiving Sida budget support but still, some problems persist. As stressed by the EFA/GMR (2008: 166), “in several of the other countries there are said to be low levels of government ‘ownership’ of donor-supported activities and a severe lack of management and planning and accountability”.

In the same vein, Boak and Ndaruhutse (2011), and Cafferini and Pierrell (2009) reviewed education SWAp experience that looks specifically at the experience of l’Agence Française de Development (AFD) in Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger. Here again, a mixed picture clearly shows up. They demonstrate that “many donors have not changed their earlier practices in giving aid, while institutional management constraints, capacity development, and political hurdles have held back the potential of SWAps to make a greater difference to education in aid-recipient countries” (Ridell and Nino-Zarazua, 2016:29). Another account of education SWAp experience presents a broader perspective. The EFA/GMR (2008:172) indicates as follows:

“A Netherlands government evaluation of SWAps also pointed to gains in the expansion of education systems that have occurred alongside increases in sector-wide programmes, but expressed qualifications: ‘when measuring impact, however, it is the quality of the interventions that is important, i.e. institutional development, capacity building and regulation, factors which cannot be improved through funding alone’ (Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006)”.

New Public Management (NPM) and New Public Governance

Interventions in public sectors in many countries, including developing ones, have witnessed the alternation of key international development trends. Given the necessity to improve performance of public sector services, almost all countries continuously sought for better and low cost structural management models. Therefore, reform initiatives that are originally conceived by Western countries rapidly crossed boundaries and gained wider attention. The public sector reforms that were envisioned in the early 1960s became gradually enshrined in development practices and viewed as international trends. Based on models already tested in the developed countries, reforms attempted in developing countries resorted to following the same trend in public administration management, whereby, focus was placed on designing and establishing individual functioning government entities that put emphasis on rules, procedures, and stability. Moreover, the development of the organizational capacity of developing countries’ public sector and their personnel was often done with the training support offered by developed countries’ institutions. Thus, it could be subsumed that the basic principles adopted by public sectors in this regards may fall within the nature of organization theory suggested by Gulick and Urwick (1937:1-46) and promoted through traditional public administration as follows:

“The principle of division of work and specialization (dividing tasks based on skills and capacity); the principle of homogeneity (combining related tasks logically); the principle of unity of command (subordinate should receive instruction from one supervisor); the principle of accountability (accountability remains at the top); the principle of delegation of authority (task should be assigned to subordinate); the principle of span of control (number of staff reporting to a manager); and the staff principle (line and staff relationships)”.

Furthermore, the growing influence of business management practices on public service administration, allowed the borrowing and applicability of business terms and philosophy in the way of conducting affairs. This is all the more obvious as the terms and business language remain recurrent in the management of an organization. To better appreciate this assertion, the

concepts POSDCORB, which stands for Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating, Reporting, and Budgeting advocated by Gulick and Urwick (1937:ibid) have been intensively used. Despite the rootedness of different managerial practices that have lent traditional public administration its renowned success and effectiveness, how its dominance over the personal and patronage system of administration prior to the 1960s faded away with the advent of neo-liberalism and neo-classic economics in the developed countries in the 1970s. Criticisms directed toward traditional public administration relate to its subjugation to a particular “formal control of a political leadership, which is strictly based on hierarchical model of bureaucracy, staffed by permanent, neutral and anonymous officials, motivated only by the public interest, serving any governing party equally, and not contributing to policy but merely administering those policies decided by politicians” (Hughes, 1998:22). Influential policy ideas of the 1970s considered the type of administration under traditional public sector management inappropriate given the new demands of the modern society.

Under the above considerations, “the modern public service needs to perform a role of policy-making as well as implementing the policies designed in cooperation with the political leadership. Traditional public administration ignored this phenomenon and supported the view that a public servant’s role is to implement given policies. This obstructed the innovative behavior of the employees” (Atreya, 2002: 25). In addition, “the public administration reforms from the late 1970s have led to a revolutionary change not only in the manner of delivery of social services and accounting for government expenditures, but also in the structures of governance” (Tolofari, 2005: 75). Overall, these reform waves were intended to counter the prevailing past models. As such, the “Weberian model of bureaucracy is [considered] obsolete as it breeds timeservers not innovators; it encourages administrators to be risks-averse rather than risk-asking, and to waste scarce resources instead of using them efficiently” (Hughes, 1998:22-51). Further intervention measures deployed along with the 1970s reform waves were, eventually, aimed to end the lethargy accommodating the inefficiency of public services. And as pointed out by Behn (1998), the repartition of tasks likely generates problems of coordination in the organizational structures. Establishment of the hierarchical rules and regulations as well as formal behavior that engender bureaucratic pathologies, i.e. unresponsiveness, delay, red tape, and system rigidity. Thereby, “it is increasingly realized that bureaucracy is not only the means for providing direct services. Governments can forge partnerships with other [service] providers,

such as the private sector and the civil society for improving service” (Atreya, 2002: 25). Following the trend of neo-liberalism, developing capacity through traditional approaches involves improving individual organizations, instead of establishing them, using a number of supply-driven features (Bossuyt, 2001). This wave sees the blossoming of ideas such as “development administration and management theories, strategies targeting government service delivery systems, public programs to reach neglected target groups, human resource management, and people-centered development largely focusing on education and health” (Loveridge, 2011:25).

The growing awareness in governments’ failure to deliver the services that people were demanding, somehow, precipitated the adoption of market-oriented strategies for strengthening the economy of many countries. In addition, the decline in the predominance of Welfare State regime, followed by the rapid dissemination of new technologies, globalization, and the demise of centrally planned economies, and its corollary have likely contributed to reversing the state influence over general affairs management by the early 1980s. As such, many countries, especially developing ones were unable to cope with the rapidly changing and demanding globalized world economy. However, looking at a broader perspective, Nikos (2000:39) contends that “considering the drivers of the drastic reforms to public management, the more popular view is that from the late 1970s, to the present day, remarkable revolution swept most countries of the world...it seems that not only in Europe but all around the world public administration is being changed or reinvented”. Another view inferred that given the budget limitations in the early 1980s, government in many countries took reform initiative as remedial measures (Bovaird & Löffler, 2001). In fact, providing a complete set of justification of drivers that led to a shift in efficiency-driven managerial reforms would be elusive. Amidst various explanatory accounts, there are views that surmount the usual simplistic criticism to assert two realistic stances, as argued by Tolofari (2005: 76) stating that:

“First, that the reforms in many countries of the world were merely adoptions of what had begun elsewhere, and second, that in some cases, especially in Africa and Latin America, governance and NPM reforms were imposed by external forces, notably the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank”.

In real terms, the discredits that become more and more acute on the relevance of traditional public administration, paved the way for the introduction of market-oriented

government instead of the state-dominated one. Thus, Loveridge (2011:36) posits that, “the 1980s saw the emergence of the concepts ‘new public management in western developed countries and ‘governance’ in international development, which brought a shift in focus from individual organizations to the wider institutional environment encompassing private, public and non-government organizations”. The reforms envisioned under these new waves “draw upon an “ideal” governance agenda that includes decentralization, the creation of public-private partnerships, and a variety of efforts to enhance participation and overseeing at local level” (Daun & Mundy, 2011:12). The attempt of strengthening public sector management and/or governance, specifically in the developing countries, would embrace new policy initiatives. Mostly, recent trends in this regard are “policies framed and supported by major international actors such as the World Bank, [whereby] such governance reforms tend to be viewed instrumentally as a central component of efforts to enhance the efficiency of—social sectors—educational systems...”(Daun & Mundy, 2011:12).

Moreover, NPM is often mentioned together with ‘governance’ since the terms are closely linked. As such, governance is a broad range of governmental structure and responsible for establishing the overall strategy, however NPM refers to the functional aspect of new type of public administration in its essence (Ewalt, 2001). In fact, the dynamism involved in public sector reform called for a more integrative form of public affairs management. The evolving trend of reform in public administration keeps track of perpetual mutation involved in governance processes, which is understood as a continuous process. As echoed Kiiza (2000:30-217) stating that, “indeed, the trajectory of public governance is a history of continuous administrative change”. The overall intent of [perpetual] reforms is to make public sector management more efficient and effective (Manning, 2000). Thus, debate on the relevance and the applicability of NPM in developing countries became intense and replications to mitigate such interrogations usually refer to late successful experiences. Quite often, the experience of New Zealand is best known and is a much-lauded example of wholesale introduction of NPM as the key approach behind their public sector management reforms in the 1980s (Bale & Dale, 1998). Now, the next question that would be worthy of asking relates to the relevancy of NPM to differing settings, given the irregular adaptations of its precepts that are required to suit local environments. Some of the basic principles that must be a priori taken into consideration would relate to organizational leadership, policy and strategy. Also important are the management of

people, resources and the assessments of results, either objective or subjective, as and tracing processes, values and ethics of the organization, as well as the way government operate at the lower level structures (Boston et al.,1996; Larbi, 1999; Bovaird & Löffler, 2001; Ewalt, 2001; Yamamoto, 2003).

In the same vein, the OECD (1995:161-171) resolutely acknowledged the “new paradigm that has emerged in the field of public management and identified the following characteristics as a shift to new public management” as follows:

“A closer focus on results in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and quality of service; the replacement of highly centralized, hierarchical organizational structures by decentralized management environments where decisions on resource allocation and service delivery are made; and which provide scope of feedback from clients and other interest groups; the flexibility to explore alternatives to direct public provisions and regulation that might yield more cost effective policy outcomes; a greater focus on efficiency in the services provided by the public sector, involving the establishments of productivity targets and the creation of competitive environments within sector organizations; and strengthening of strategic capacities at the center to guide the evolution of the state and allow it to respond to external changes and diverse interests automatically, flexibly, and at least cost”(p.161-171).

Against this background, the role of good governance in the administration management became central to allow the establishment of the various arrangements necessary to provide decentralized services. In addition, having better knowledge of politics and power in reforms of public sector are determinant factors, as translating development theories that assume socio-economic and political features affect the application of power and local political dynamics (Chabal, 2009a; Leftwich, 2007).

The advent of the 1990s came along with full endorsement of characteristics guiding the enforcement of effective sector governance. International development policy, as supported by development practitioners, identified underlying issues such as institutions and governance as critical factors to ensure sustainable development. Therefore, the desire to lay new foundations for a system of governance in the developing countries becomes more than ever a compelling necessity. In the early 1990s, this intent of remodeling government was guided by two major stances that originally share some basic common principles. These two lines of thinking are distinctly endorsed by economists, labelled as ‘new institutional economics’; and its opposites is currently led by managerialists known as ‘managerialism’ (Aucoin, 1990; Hood, 1991). The “new-institutional economics generated a set of reform doctrines built on ideas of contestability, user choice, transparency and close attention to incentives structures” (Ehrenhard, 2009: 41).

“Likewise, managerialism generated a set of reform doctrines based on professional management expertise as portable, paramount over technical expertise, requiring high discretionary power to achieve results, and central and indispensable to better organizational performance, through the development of appropriate cultures and the active measurement and adjustment of organizational outputs” (Hood, 1991:3-4). As it can be clearly sensed from the lines of contentions from these two doctrines, “the approach put forward by the economists is to be used mainly for organizational and (quasi-) market design, whereas managerialism is predominantly the provision of tools to managers” (Ehrenhard, 2009:45).

Furthermore, due to the precedence given to organization over management, the new institutional economics became more influential in the 1990s. As a result of low “economic activity that was believed to be underpinned by legal and social, formal and informal, norms and rules” (North, 1990:n.d). Economic rationalists argued that “the government was the economic problem restricting economic growth and freedom” (Hughes, 1998:10) and advocated the doctrine that less intervention by government and the use of markets would improve economic efficiency. And that, development efforts [should] aim to “increase the motivation of individuals to develop appropriate ‘rules of the game’ and create incentive systems to drive improved institutional and organizational performance” (Loveridge, 2011:26). Economic rationalists also believed and “argued that the traditional bureaucratic model did not provide an equivalent structure of incentives and rewards to those of the market and advocated that individuals should have maximum choice for both individual freedom and efficiency reasons” (Atreya, 2002:28).

New institutional Economics and Managerialism features

Tracing new public management evolution and its widespread plebiscite among development practitioners, one would certainly think of the two streams of ideas—new institutional economics and managerialism—as the major drivers of this managerial regime. These two concepts, although sharing some common central principles, offered different perspectives on public affairs management.

New institutional economics

This component of new public management with focus on incentives structure has various aspects that shaped public sector reform. Neo-liberalism, public choice theory, principal agent theory, and transaction cost economics, and property rights are the variants of new institutional economics (NIE). Among these lines of thinking, the transaction cost has been mostly influential

due to its concern with the cost of transaction in the provision of services. As such, this variant of NIE “focuses on the reduction of transaction costs by applying contractual systems in the public service provision in contrast with the traditional hierarchical co-ordination mechanism and decision-making process” (Atreya, 2002:37).

Another credit given to NIE besides the promotion of efficient structure of service delivery has to do with conflict of interest related issues. The principal theory deals with such concerns by examining problems that may occur under public affairs management. As Jostee rightly put it, “in the context of public management, the principal can be seen as the citizens (or the general public) while the bureaucrats are their agents. The asymmetry of information and a self-serving interest in the bureaucracy has led to “opportunistic” behavior in public management” (2008:6). Likewise, Dixon et al. (1998) argued that:

“the institutional economist’s concern is ‘opportunism’ in the public administration—that is, self-serving (rent seeking), and even deceitful and dishonest behaviors by bureaucrats, their clients and politicians. People are opportunists because the environmental uncertainty makes contracts incomplete, and the ‘principal’ cannot effectively monitor the behavior of their ‘agents’, who do not have identical interests and who have information that is not accessible to the principal” (p.164-187).

In general, new institutional economics approach toward public administration reform “basically involves disaggregation of large bureaucratic organizations into smaller compact organizations, focus on outputs rather than inputs, value for taxpayers’ money, authority devolved at the point of service delivery, flexibility, customer responsiveness, introduction of competition in public service, and strengthening accountability and transparency” (Atreya, 2002:32).

Summary: It is overwhelmingly acknowledged that failures of education reform policies in the developing countries are associated with the lack of sufficient capacities. Quite often, poor governance and lack of resources are pinpointed as being the major barriers to the success of education reform policies. These positions are firmly held in the literature of education development; but discussion on processes of education reform implementation in the local context gained less attention. However, it is worth recalling that “there has been a paucity of studies on the implementation of education reform in the developing countries” (Chansopheak, 2009:134). As such, this observation holds true and more specifically in the perspective of implementing capacity development as an effective service delivery mechanism. Mostly, studies

in this regard survey the policy dialogue, adoption and planning between recipient countries and development partners but not the implementation process, whereas at the implementation stage, quite often aid agencies hire foreign consultants to carry out this process. Sometimes the lack of knowledge of local settings by these consultants, results in inconsistency in the intervention quality, which can ultimately jeopardize the whole process. Such pitfalls being a potential threat to the endogenous-driven process of capacity development, an attempt of this research is to determine this phenomenon.

2.3 Political economy approach to institutional change: incremental change

2.3.1 Features of education development assistance in Africa towards capacity development

First, it is important to point out the competing demands that exist between resource allocations to program development assistance, especially in the education sector. Hence, talking about strengthening capacity as a development process, which entails various facets, especially in the developing countries facing enormous challenges. As Fukuyama (2004) argued in this respect that the finite resources allocated to capacity improvement programmes actually form the same budget dedicated to achieving developmental plans such as basic social services and programmes (health, primary and secondary education, and poverty reduction plans). To put it in context, improved development assistance should consider broader perspective while intervening in recipient countries with different internal settings. Meaning that there should be a prior need from donors' perspective to analyze the "political economy of each country before implementing a SWAp, to understand and incorporate formal and informal incentives into the design of SWAp" (Ridell & Nino, 2016:29). This aspect must be given particular emphasis since failing to integrate such an approach in developing an assistance plan may result in adverse effects. In this respect, Verger et al. (2012:4) supported the notion that "beyond the formulation and dissemination of policies, some international organizations have the capacity to transform the legal framework of member-countries and, by doing so, alter the rules of the game through which policies are being formulated". As a result of such intervention effects, African countries have at large experienced systemic degradation of their capacity during the last 30 years, while most of them possessed better capacity during independence than what they currently present, observed the World Bank Africa Governors (Van de Walle, 2001).

Nonetheless, despite intensive efforts exerted from both development partners and national governments, addressing capacity through sector programme support in most African countries

remained beyond reach.. Additionally, Babu and Sengupta (2006:6) further expounded that “capacity, particularly in most Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries, remains a missing element in the process of development”.

Overall, recent education development assistance in Africa emphasized capacity development as a strategy to effectively deliver aid and improve the whole sector management performance. However, general experiences have shown that capacity strengthening in the education sector goes beyond technical assistance than to simply addressing the training needs of education ministries personnel. Rather, a systemic and holistic approach to the sector is much more compelling. Since the education sector’s approach to capacity development has become increasingly systemic, it is important to recognize that [achieving] “EFA is a complex, long-term process and that technical support should go far beyond the training of education policymakers, planners, education professionals or teachers to include a concern for the overall institutional and organizational environment in which education policies are formulated” (CapEFA, 2011:37).

In fact, Verspoor’s (2008) observation of the impact of SWAps on African countries is rather optimistic from the perspective of fund allocation and disbursement. He went on indicate that, among “the 48 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, about 15 have been active participants in SWAps. These countries have set national priorities for quality improvements in the context of the equitable distribution of sector fund. They are also taking the lead in partnerships with international agencies based on broadly accepted targets and strategies” (Verspoor, 2008:33). Additionally, Verspoor (2008) further observed that:

“SWAps are helping to overcome the limitations of the project approach. The initial results are promising, although definitive outcomes remain uncertain [...] SWAps have created an environment that allows explicit consideration of intra- and inter-sectoral trades-offs, channeling resources directly to schools (e.g. Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and Guinea) and scaling-up of pilot programmes (Zambia, Guinea and Mali). Finally, as governments aim to reach people in remote areas, NGOs are being considered increasingly as effective operational partners” (ibid).

However, the other side of the coin reveals that although education decentralization—an integral component of SWAps—is being implemented in many countries in the region (sub-Saharan Africa), most often, it has not yet resulted in “better quality education, improved governance, or greater efficiency in resource allocation or service delivery” (Verspoor, 2008:34). Moreover, according to Verspoor, the situation is particularly daunting in “sub-Saharan Africa

because most education management changes, as initially conceived within the context of decentralization, hardly touched key management issues relating to the organization of instruction, planning of programmes, course content, financial management of funds, and personnel” (p.13-20). Nevertheless, regarding EFA response to these challenges facing SSA, a concrete step was taken during the first “EFA coordination meeting in Africa organized in Johannesburg in October 2012 to gauge main achievements, face challenges and build capacities during the past decade”².

On this occasion, extensive consultations took place “with high-level representatives of ministries of education and other education stakeholders on the continued relevance of the EFA framework, likely priorities of countries beyond 2015, and broader socio-economic challenges impacting on education”³. Prior to this meeting, a questionnaire was sent to all Ministries of education in the 47 SSA countries and out of these, 33 responded to the survey and 31 attended the meeting⁴. Participating countries, organized into working group sessions and grouped by Regional Economic Community (REC) –EAC^a, ECCAS^b, ECOWAS^c, IGAD^d and SADC^e– identified a number of common concerns related to post EFA. Besides the need “for an extended and expanded vision of good quality and inclusive basic education for all, [further critical issues include]: Quality (teachers and improved learning environments), Skills for employability and improving governance in education”⁵.

Subsequently, from a sub-regional perspective the concern of education governance has to do with capacity development relating to educational management. This is so obvious, since among the five sub-regions of SSA, four of them expressly mentioned governance improvement as their education challenges and related key areas of [future] intervention. More specifically, just to evoke the case of ECOWAS–the Economic Community of West African States–to which Guinea belongs. The post-2015 education challenges in this sub-region read as follows: a) weak institution capacity for education management especially at local levels; b) low adherence to policies and legal frameworks on education.

²Please refer to the First EFA regional consultation on post-2015 Education reform in Sub-Saharan Africa, Retrieved on May 8, 2019, from: <http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Dakar/pdf/Post2015RegionalConsultationSSA2012Final.pdf>

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

a) East African Community; b) Economic community of Central African States; c) Economic Community of West African States; d) Intergovernmental Authority on Development; e) Southern African Development Community.

2.3.2 Capacity development for a decentralized education management in Guinea

Sector reform is not an undertaking unfamiliar to Guinea's education system. While the key areas of intervention are considered to be: a) capacity building for education management institutions; b) development and enforcement of policies and legal frameworks⁶. However, most of the attempts in this area have practically failed to bring about the expected effects.

More specifically, reform policy pertaining to the improvement of both education sector effectiveness and efficiency. This state of affairs is clearly translated in the inability of previous education reform programmes—the education structural adjustment programme (PASE I & II)—implemented in Guinea during the 1990s to adequately address the issue.

Although, a policy measure is being formulated in this respect its effect on improvement of education government remains unobserved. However, one possible explanation to this inertia can be either the lack of appropriate research to uncover hurdles that beset the functioning of the whole system or the lack of effective strategies for policy implementation. Cerna (2013:17), in this regard, argued that simply “passing policies does not guarantee success on the ground if policies are not implemented well”. Cerna (ibid) also added that “it is difficult to say which factors or conditions facilitate successful implementation since so much depends on the political, economic and social context”. To illustrate it, local factors (e.g. size, institutional complexity) matter for policy responses (McLaughlin, 1987).

Against this background, it seems that “little significant new thinking has been done about comprehensive strategies for building capacity in the education sector; government budgets allocate relatively little to professional development and organization reform; and much aid to education remains in the form of technical assistance” (EFA/GMR, 2008:27). “Capacity building still seems not to be considered of overriding importance, yet countries need much stronger capacity to deal with the political economy of reforms and with technical constraints on implementation”(EFA/GMR, 2008:27). Furthermore, it became obvious that “the success or failure of any education policy lies largely in its implementation” (Nieuwenhuis, 1997:141).

⁶Please refer to the First EFA regional consultation on post-2015 Education reform in Sub-Saharan Africa, Retrieved on May 8, 2019, from: <http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Dakar/pdf/Post2015RegionalConsultationSSA2012Final.pdf>

Additionally, central, mid-level, and local education bureaucrats are essential in education policy reforms to be assigned roles and accomplish actions (Grindle, 2004); since “the destiny of the reform after it is adopted then lies in the hands of the implementers, who are education officials at all levels in the central ministry of education and in regional and district offices, the schools’ principals, teachers, the community, and parents” (Chansopheak, 2009:134).

Illustrative enough of such capacity shortfall is Guinea’s prior experience of education reform policy implementation. According to Walmond (2002:147), despite large investments in training, equipment, materials, and expertise [during PASE reform programme], “the Ministry of Education is not close to functioning autonomously in most administrative and technical areas without continued support”. Walmond (ibid) further indicated that

“donors, not the Ministry of Education, appear to hold the institutional memory. Technical assistants, not Ministry of education staff, seem to know and understand budgeting and accounting procedures and guidelines”.

Those who implement the policies and programmes of PASE seemed to be more concerned with meeting donor criteria than assessing Guinean needs. Overall, besides this in-depth critical study on PASE reform effect, academic research on Guinea’s education reform policy is literally lacking. Specifically, extensive analyses on systemic education reform policies such as the globally planned agendas—the MDGs and EFA programme. Arguably, from a general perspective, “studies on the Guinean education system are considered conspicuous in their absence not only in English but also even in French, the official language of the country” (Barry, 2010:91). However, despite this notorious lack of academic work, there is a growing body of national policy documents and reports produced by government agencies and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs). Mostly these reports are intended to evaluate the performance of various sectors in Guinea by partially touching upon the education sector programme.

Moreover, these studies quite often target programmes implemented within the EFA framework with a limited time-period. These studies include, the evaluation of the African girls’ education initiative country with case study Guinea/Conakry (1994-2004), conducted by Back et al. (2003) under the UNICEF Child development programme. The programme evaluation for USAID/Guinea Basic education portfolio executed from 1997 to 2006, prepared by Midling et al. (2006). The World Bank SABER—Systems Approach for Better Education Results—country report on Early Childhood Development in Republic of Guinea conducted in 2013.

Similarly, Guinea government policy documents broadly outlined measures taken towards EFA goals achievement. In adopting EFA programme, Guinea's PEPT (Programme Education Pour Tous) has been closely aligned with the PRSP, which qualified the country to be among the first countries targeted by the EFA Fast-Track Initiative.

Under this mechanism pointed out Swift-Morgan (2011), the ultimate goal of PEPT is to contribute to poverty reduction, focusing on universal primary education as a priority for achieving the kind of social and economic development needed to reach this goal (Republic of Guinea, October 2006). To reach this end, Guinea's PRSP identifies decentralization and improved governance as core strategies to reduce poverty in the country and to improve the education sector in particular (Swift-Morgan (2011). Thus, through the rubric of "Institutional Building" the governments intends to build education system planning and monitoring capacities, especially at decentralized level, also build grassroots management capacity, and reinforce the policy for delegating management authority (Republic of Guinea, 2002).

To translate these measures, initiatives towards capacity building under EFA framework in Guinea were undertaken by UNESCO through its CapEFA mechanism. However, "during CapEFA's first phase from 2007-2009, support was given to the planning, steering and follow-up to the National Policy for Teacher Education and Training for Primary and Secondary Education adopted in 2006" (CapEFA, 2010:92). Additionally, EFA-Fast Track initiative has taken remarkable steps in 2007 in conducting technical teams and political consultations in Guinea under its guidelines for capacity development in the education sector. A recent diagnosis of Guinea's sector strategy envisioned to build on a strong capacity analysis which includes a capacity development strategy (Caprio et al., 2008).

Nonetheless, in spite of these undertakings intended to improved performance of the Guinean education sector, the literature review reveals a dearth of research addressing capacity gaps in education reform policy design pertaining to education planning and management. As observed earlier, lacking also are extensive empirical analyses that scrutinized changes expected from EFA sustainable framework: '(i) [re]-organizational setting of Guinea's education Ministry, (ii) leadership, (iii) human resources, (iv) material resources, (v) practices and (vi) multi donor/stakeholder coordination—to ensure effective overall management of the sector' (World Bank, 2001:16). As such, there is a need to translate PEPT third reform component—

decentralized management—to progressively devolve more and more responsibility and resources to the prefecture (Swift-Morgan (2011)).

As a matter of fact, to date and arguably the only existing study that empirically investigated decentralized education management introduced by Guinea’s Education for All (EFA) programme is being conducted by Swift-Morgan (2011). However, her research particularly focused on the use of knowledge-based regulation tools including participatory approaches to decision-making in the education sector without addressing the education system capacity related to education management policy design and implementation.

Summary: At the national level, difficulties to digest global education policies are highly associated with the institutional capacity of the educational system in the country. Yet this observation is actually common to most of the developing countries within the literature. However, aspects that account for a country’s institutional capacity weakness do differ at certain points. The literature on education reform and development tends to obscure such aspects by simply addressing the macro level of the reform policies (advocating for policy change, training and technical assistance, and provision of funds). While the most compelling and often complicated aspect is addressing micro level features that impede real change to take place within the system. Although, some studies claimed the lack of prior consideration of a country’s political economy obstructs the introduction of change measures, these studies fail to account for the innate nature of resistance to change policies within a particular system. Many arguments point to the lack of political will or the misuse of resources while disregarding factors connected to a system’s historical and societal formation and evolution. Guinea’s case is expressive enough, since the country has experienced many education reform policies but its institutional capacity is still viewed as the main obstacle to the sector’s performance, and yet a study determining this phenomenon remains lacking. However, under EFA programme and its ambitious governance reform objective, this present research will attempt to fill this gap.

CHAPTER III-RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the research design and methodology of the thesis. This includes an overview of the basic study design which briefly explains and justifies the use of case study approach, and then follows the description of the study site selection and the case sampling strategy. The methodology involves a qualitative data collection method designated to provide relevant information to answer the research questions. Also presented are the data analysis strategy and the coding process, the optimum measures taken to assure the study's data credibility and ethics consideration, and the research limitations portrayed as well.

3.1 Research Design

To closely explore the decentralization trend of educational development promoted by recent global education policy such as the EFA programme, I chose Guinea as a case study within a sub region (West Africa) marked with serious development challenges. A typical low-income country with a massive presence of development partners involved in the education sector reform, Guinea offers a ripe context to examine an education sector-wide approach, which adopts decentralized capacity development as an implementation strategy. Guinea also offers an opportunity to assess how national priorities matched or mismatched with global educational reform programme. More specifically, in the process of policy formulation and re-contextualization, since “the effects of global education policy are mediated by domestic history and politics” (Verger et al., 2012:21); Further views support that ‘borrowed policy ideas are modified, indigenized or resisted as they are implemented in the recipient country’ (Schriever, 2000b, Philips et al., 2003; Steiner-Khamisi, 2004; Steiner-Khamisi et al., 2006). Historically, Guinea has been the only francophone Marxist state in the West African region. This implies that the country has a deep-rooted centralized governance system with less democratic governance or cultural experience.

Given the need of empirically addressing the decentralized trend of education development and reform in developing countries, this case study begins with a succinct survey of the reform programme design, followed by a narrower focus on Guinea's decentralized management capacity. The ultimate goal of this study is to investigate Guinea's education reform policy context, the interaction and dynamism among all stakeholders involved in its implementation process. Hence, the necessity of using a ‘case study approach since it facilitates an investigation

of the influence of context’ (Proctor, 2017:chap.20), which is a key component in any change process. As a research strategy, “a case study also focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings” (Eisenhardt, 1989:534). As posits (Stake, 2006), a single case presents a broad range of domains, i.e. sub-units and/or sections, groups or events, which may display various specificities. As such, this involves therefore making a proper sampling. To conduct this study, the unit of analysis being considered is Guinea’s education sector decentralized management capacity under the EFA programme.

3.2 Site selection and sampling strategy

To carry out the selection criteria, the case study feature that is—exploratory and characterized by detailed description of the phenomenon under investigation (Baxter and Jack, 2008; Merriam et al.)—taking context into account is being observed. Since Guinea’s education sector reform is the unit of analysis, the essential part of the data for this study is going to be collected in Guinea. This would consist of conducting data collection operation at the central level—Ministry of Education (Conakry, Guinea’s Capital city). Subsequently, data collection process is extended to one representative of Guinea’s eight administrative regions (Mamou, a big junction city) and then to a prefecture level (Télimélé, a historically underserved town). Following such schema, this would allow the research to depict how appropriate and balanced the reform policy has been in addressing/strengthening decentralized education management capacity within the country under EFA programme. Table 3.1 offers a detailed picture of the country case and sub-cases sampling schema. Moreover, the specificities of each of these settings led to the adoption of a purposeful sampling in the site selection with a defined rationale.

The schematic sampling presented in the table below translates the initial plan of Guinea PEPT that is meant to be implemented in subsequent steps. Guinea PEPT is a three-phase plan which consisted of gradually shifting from central ministry control to decentralized, multi-stakeholder education management. According to the World Bank (2001), the process is being planned as follows: the first phase (EFA1) will be managed centrally [2001-2005]; the second phase (EFA2) will provide a transition to prefectural and regional management [2005-2009] and the third phase (EFA3) will be almost entirely managed at the prefectural level [2009-2013].

With such a subsequent phasing of Guinea’s EFA programme, the government of Guinea (GOG) and its development partners seek to devolve planning and management processes and

responsibility with an eventual shift of funding to the lower levels of the administrative system. Thus, as Swift-Morgan (2011) posits, the decentralized trend of EFA reform programme.....

Table 3.1: Sampling schema

Sample Type	Selected Case	Rationale
Country case	Guinea/Conakry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The only francophone Marxist state in the West African region history; -The country has a deep rooted centralized governance system; -with less democratic governance or cultural experience. -A representative country which prioritized education in its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper; -The country has been among the first EFA-FTI recipient countries, adopting therefore decentralized trend in education reform policies.
Within country sub-case: region	Mamou	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A representative of Guinea's eight administrative regions with ethnic, linguistic & cultural diversity; -Geographically, the capital city of this region represents a big junction that easily connects to the other regions within the country; -the city has a comparative advantage in attracting reform initiatives, development programmes & actors.
Within region sub-case: prefecture	Télimélé	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A representative of Guinea's 38 prefectures with ethnic, linguistic & cultural diversity; -Geographically, the capital city of this prefecture represents a junction connecting other cities & regions with difficult access; -the city lacks opportunities in attracting both reform initiatives, development programme & actors
Subjects	Intervention levels & actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -All agents and actors taking part in the reform design and implementation at different levels of the education sector;

involves both the deconcentrated and decentralized organs and agents. Sometimes, new mechanisms–SWAp framework–bring the two together and add civil society representatives such as local NGOs and the Associations of Parents and Friends of the School (Associations des Parents et Amis de l’Ecole–APEAEs) to the process.

The country case and sub-cases, respectively represent the central, regional and prefectural level of Guinea’s education sector administrative systems, and provide therefore an appropriate cadre for this study’s investigation. Conakry–the capital city of the country–where the ministry of education’s main departments and services and development partners’ headquarters are based, offers a general picture of the education reform policy design and implementation at the central level. The second administrative level below the central government is represented by the region. In Guinea, there are eight administrative regions whereby each has its own administrative body. In accordance with the EFA programme phasing, the implementation of the reform second phase is to be exclusively managed at the regional level. Hence, capturing the devolvement process of the reform programme at this level requires taking into account various factors that might influence education sector-wide approach at sub-national setting. Thus, the selection of Mamou region in this respect is fundamentally strategic and purposeful. Since the region is a replica of Guinea’s eight administrative regions with ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity; the capital city of this region represents a big junction that easily connects the other regions within the country; the city has a comparative advantage in attracting both reform initiatives, developmental programmes, personnel and technical assistance.

Still, following the EFA programme outline, the third phase of this reform is aimed at entirely decentralizing education management at the prefecture level with more and more responsibility and resources. With such initial intent of Guinea’s PEPT, an investigation that aims to reveal the true effects of the reform programme has to be based on a setting with weak capacities prior to the intervention. Therefore, at the prefectural level, Téliélé is representative enough of Guinea’s 38 prefectures with ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity; the capital city of this prefecture represents a junction connecting other cities and regions with difficult access. Also, the city is reputedly known as lacking opportunities in attracting developmental programmes such as, public infrastructure and access to basic social services. Against this backdrop, the state under which the education sector in Téliélé operated before the reform is

easily sensed and offers a general picture of the expected changes from the EFA reform programme intervention.

For the sake of balanced analysis, I resolutely decided to pick two sub-cases with approximately similar geographical settings but different in resource endowment for the education sector prior to the implementation of Guinea education SWAs based on decentralized trends. The two selected sub-cases offer relatively different environments but appropriate settings to gauge changes that have been brought about by the reform. In contrast to the approach taken by Swift-Morgan (2011), the region is not held constant to prevent variation that could be attributable to differences in possible influencing factors such as culture and social issues – Mamou and Téliélé are both cities with largely ethnically, culturally and linguistically heterogeneous; leadership and approach at the regional level of the Ministry (the regional inspector and the planning, statistical and other staff at IRE involved in the reforms) which is the case for Mamou, while in Téliélé, the Ministry's leadership and approach is enacted at the prefectural level; resources allocated to education at the regional level applies to Mamou's case while Téliélé reflects the extent of this allocation at the prefectural level; also simply account for the number and nature of the international aid agencies and international and local NGOs involved in the regional and prefectural level during the reform implementation.

As defined already, there are some differences that initially exist between the two sub-cases selected for this analysis. The first sub-case is the regional level which represents the second administrative level in Guinea. At this level, there is a well-established body of the Ministry of education—the Regional Inspectorate of Education (IRE) – in charge of managing the education at the regional, prefectural and sub-prefectural level. This pre-supposes the existence of some facilities, resources and staff to directly cope with urgent educational needs, while also benefiting from field offices' support of international and national NGOs operating already in the region. In addition to that, the capital city of this region—Mamou town—represents a big junction which allows easy access to the other regions from the main capital city of the country.

However, the opposite scenario characterizes Téliélé prefecture. Although, it is also perceived as a junction connecting many other cities and regions within the country, but it has difficulties of easy access. Additionally, in contrast to the region, the prefecture is the third administrative level in Guinea. This implies that at the prefectural level, the ministry of education is represented by a directorate—the prefectural education directorate (DPE). With

limited authority, resources and personnel, the DPE is in charge of managing educational affairs at prefectural and sub-prefectural levels. After all, the Téliimélé DPE operates under direct control of the Kindia Regional Inspectorate of Education (IRE) – another administrative region closer to Conakry (Guinea’s main capital city) which literally translates the equal distance existing between Mamou and Téliimélé from Conakry. Yet and again, unlike what Swift-Morgan (2011) claimed, Téliimélé’s geographical proximity to the regional and the country’s capital cities does not seem to be a factor that can make a big difference regarding access to and impact of resources and technical assistance.

Another important parameter to be considered in this sampling strategy is the selection of the study subject types. Since this case study presents a composite history of the EFA reform programme in Guinea, the investigation is going to be based on analysis of policy documents and reports, interviews and focus groups, and observations as well. In fact, as specified by the conceptual framework designated for this study, all dimensions must be given equal focus and particular interest throughout the investigation. Thus, this implies taking into account a wide range of agents and actors who have played a vital role in Guinea’s EFA reform programme. These agents and actors involved the Ministry of education and related structures and official staff at the central as well as the local level (regional, prefectural and sub-prefectural); civil society organizations (CSOs) –Parents/teachers’ associations, teachers’ unions and local NGOs; development partners (bi and multilateral cooperation agencies); community leaders–rural development communities (CRD). Overall, these are the constituent elements that were likely to be involved and experience the EFA reform programme that took place in Guinea.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

The information needed to answer this study’s research questions is primarily based upon qualitative data collection methodology. The methods and sources of data to be used to collect this information comprise desk study of government policy documents and reports produced by aid agencies, an in-depth, group or individual semi-structured interviews, and then homogenous focus groups of subject types. An observation of reform setting during field visit may also provide additional invaluable information. In addition, the possibility of using a “mixed method” in this study is being also considered. The rationale behind such intent is often and commonly posited in the “literature as a means to add new perspectives” and offer a “richer and more comprehensive picture of the issue under investigation” (Amundsen, 2013: 43; Foss & Ellefsen,

2002: 242). The application of these methods in accordance with the subjects of inquiry is given below in Table 3.2 along with a justification of their relevancy to answer the research questions.

Table 3.2: Research question, methods and related informant types

Research questions	Collection methods	Informant type
1-How responsive has decentralized capacity management been under EFA programme to Guinea's education system performance?	Desk study	Policy documents and official reports (aid agencies); Regional programmes/plan evaluations; Prefectural programme/plan evaluations.
	Semi-structured interviews	MOE personnel at central, regional and prefectural level; Technical staff from key funding agencies; NGOs, CSOs-parent/teacher associations, teachers' unions and community leaders.
	Focus groups	Communal education personnel; NGOs, CSOs-parent/teacher associations, teachers' unions and community leaders.
2- What changes have brought this education sector-wide approach to Guinea's education system?	Desk research	Policy documents and official reports (aid agencies); Regional programmes/plan evaluations; Prefectural programme/plan evaluations.
	Semi-structured interviews	MOE personnel at central, regional and prefectural level; Technical staffs from key funding agencies; NGOs, CSOs-parent/teacher associations, teachers' unions and community leaders.
	Focus groups	Communal education personnel; NGOs, CSOs-parent/teacher associations, teachers' unions and community leaders.
3-What factors have been determinant to bring about these changes, how and to what extent?	Desk research	Policy documents and official reports (aid agencies); Regional programmes/plan evaluations; Prefectural programme/plan evaluations.
	Semi-structured interviews	MOE personnel at central, regional and prefectural level; Technical staffs from key funding agencies; NGOs, CSOs-parent/teacher associations, teachers' unions and community leaders.
	Focus groups	Communal education personnel; NGOs, CSOs-parent/teacher associations, teachers unions and community leaders.

3.2.1 Participants in the Study

The selection of participants for this study considers the entire structure of the ministry of education, its constituting units and staff members. This means that the country-case and sub-cases will guide the selection of target location, the type of informants and the number expected to be representative enough for this investigation.

The second stratum of study participants includes aid agencies and their staffs—country representative aid field offices—who were involved at different levels of the reform process. Moreover, the participatory approach put forward in the conduct of sector programme support impels us to consider a third layer of subject types that heavily influenced the programme intervention. As such, the composite nature of this group is the civil society organizations (i.e., national and international organizations), and local authorities acting at the grassroots level. Table 3.3 (below) provides detailed information of this selection.

Table 3.3 Outline of the study participant

Units	Informants		Location	Number
MENA (Ministry of National Education and Literacy)	Central Level	MENA (Secretary General) (1)	Conakry	11
		Planning & Management Department (Manager & Staff) (5), Communal Departments of Education: Dixinn & Ratoma (Directors & Staff) (5)		
	Regional Level	Regional Inspectorate of Education (Inspector & Staff) (4) Prefectural Department of Education (Director & Staff) (3)	Mamou	7
	Prefectural Level	Prefectural Department of Education (Director & Staff) (5)	Télimélé	5
	Sub-Prefectural Level	Sub-Prefectural Delegations of Education (DSSE / Mamou: 3) & (DSSE / Télimélé: 3) (6)	Mamou/ Télimélé	6
TFPs (Technical & Financial Partners)	Multilateral organizations	World Bank (Representative & Staff) (2); UNESCO (Representative & Staff) (2), UNICEF (Representative & Staff) (2)	Conakry/ Mamou	6
	Bilateral organizations	French Development Agency (1), Japan International Cooperation Agency (1); KfW & GTZ (2); Canadian International Development Agency (1); <i>French Cooperation (1); European Union (1); USAID (1)</i>	Conakry	8
CSOs (Civil Society Organizations)	International Organizations	Aid and Action (1); International Plan Guinea (1); EDC & RTI (2); Child Fund (1)	Conakry	5
	National organizations	Coalition Nationale EPT (1); Forum des Educatrices de Guinée-FAWE (1); Club des Amis du monde (1); Intersyndical de l'Education (1); Fédération Guinéenne/APEAE (7)	Conakry	11
RDC (Rural Development Communities)	Local authorities	Sub-prefectures of Mamou (3) & Télimélé (3)	Mamou/ Télimélé	6
Total				65

3.2.1 Use of Data collection tools

In the course of conducting this research, a paramount concern related to the robustness of data often arises. This is simply justified by the complexity of the issue under investigation. A recent trend in education development and reform has brought up a new landscape and approach into the systems of service-providers. Consequently, various techniques are deemed necessary in order to dig deeper into the multifarious character of the reform and the actors driving the process. Therefore, the first tool being deployed in this regard consisted of a thorough review of the existing literature of global education policy. Primary knowledge harvested out of this literature review paved the way to systematically identify major players in global education reform policies, as well as the scope and scale of their activities. This eventually helped smoothen the use of secondary data sources such as key programme documents (i.e., evaluation reports, programme mid-term assessments, policy documents, etc.) to be examined. In accordance with the research questions at play, the subsequent range of research tools is composed of a mosaic of research method protocols. According to the units and subject types targeted by the study, in-depth, individual semi-structured interviews are meant to be administered to central, regional and local officials of the education ministry; key staff of aid agencies, international and national organizations, and local authorities. Focus group sessions are mostly intended for office staff of different departments that compose the ministry of education at each level, the civil society organizations such as parent-teacher associations (PTAs), teachers' trade unions, national coalitions for EPT, and local NGOs on the ground. In addition, a survey questionnaire is prepared as a supplement to better apprehend the sectoral environment that accommodated the reform, and at the same time, capture the content of the new intervention as well as any possible changes that have occurred in the governance of the sector.

Finally, the possibility for the researcher to run across field/participant observations is being anticipated and considered. As such, insights and perspectives from these observations will add value to the data collected through other research instruments deployed in this study.

3.2.2 Research and Data credibility

In any data collection process, a number of threats are likely to be encountered that may affect the credibility of the research. With these threats in mind, the researcher is more than ever forewarned and mitigating measures must be appropriately taken therein. Hence, the necessity to

identify strategies that could help lessen the threats and enhance the credibility of the research. According to Patton (1999:1190) “the credibility of qualitative inquiry depends on the belief in its value, rigorous methods and the credibility of the researcher”. However, the issue that this study intends to deal with is manifestly circumscribed within the qualitative research approach; since “naturalistic approach seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings” (Hoepfl, 1997:47). Practically, the present research however seeks to explore the context and processes, as well as the interaction and dynamism of all stakeholders involved in Guinea’s EFA reform programme following the decentralized trends in education development assistance. Thus, this infers the interests of various actors directly concerned by the reform being engaged and/or are likely to conflict. So, most of the issues that have arisen in this respect are related to power and resource control.

Nonetheless, the sensitive nature of this investigation commends overcoming the reluctance associated with the study participants’ attitudes towards this research topic. In addition, relevant and accurate research methods and techniques need to be designated and rigorously used in order to generate valuable data and minimize the errors and biases in collecting and analyzing data (Loveridge, 2011). Quite often, investigating reform programmes implemented in developing countries and supported by multi-donor agencies raises immense challenges. Since matters such as power dynamics, control over the reform agendas and resources exist at different levels, these matters are perceived as sensitive in their terms and nature. And Guinea, by itself, is a country where people are uncomfortable discussing authority affairs openly, as well as the way these affairs are conducted, either with an ordinary citizen or even less with a government official. Also, the high level of political patronage is another essential aspect that mostly immunizes government officials to engage in authority matters debate.

However, talking about capacity development in decentralized education management involves devolving authority and resources within the education system with respect to the pre-defined framework. Thus, coming up with an initiative that aims at unrevealing the marking events of such reform with a critical stance proves to be opposing; especially when trying overtly to bring to the surface true obstacles that eroded for years an education system in desperate search for performance. In accordance with capacity development approach, its real applicability within a system requires a total adherence to the whole principles of the concept (country ownership and partnership with stakeholders with full enactment of the concept dimensions).

Given the trade-offs that might exist in complying with such principles—either from the recipient country or aid agencies—it is expected that cases similar to what Swift-Morgan (2011:110) had anticipated before conducting her fieldwork might emerge:

“I anticipated that Guinean and foreign technical assistants at central or regional level Ministry of education officials guiding and implementing the reforms could be reluctant to discuss how things may have gone differently than they had intended (and for which they were paid), or even possibly in contrast to that they reported in communications to the funders or general public. In turn, I recognized that this reluctance could threaten the validity of the data if responses did not reflect a thorough picture of what happened and if certain details were withheld or changed in a way that the subject thinks may reflect more favorably upon him or her”.

Nevertheless, the neutral status that characterizes the researcher in having no attachment to the functioning of the educational system or any reform programmes, may weigh against any suspicion associated with the research credibility. With such a posture, this could allow an easy access to potential key informants and the study participants (alternatively a request for an official letter from the Ministry of Education is within consideration). Furthermore, risks associated with the credibility of the research are manifested through distorted information from either the study informants or the researcher him/herself. To palliate these risks, triangulation of data is going to be used. With such strategy, supported by Loveridge, interview data can be “checked against data from the analysis of key programme documents and secondary data (method triangulation)” (2011:102). Also, “data from interviews can be compared across different types of interviews to highlight the consistency and inconsistency of different people’s perspectives (triangulation of sources)” (Loveridge, 2011:102).

Another aspect related to the study credibility may emanate from the appropriate and rigorous use of data collection tools. However, rigorous planning and implementation of the research serves as a stepping-stone to mitigate such shortcoming. The use of various tools to gather information necessary to answer posed interrogations by this study, lend it a solid ground for a balanced investigation, although the secondary data (literature review, policy documents and reports) is rich enough to inform this research. But the additional tools-interviews focus groups and observations- as the main methods to produce robust primary data are more than enough to illuminate what this research seeks to explore. Hence, the necessity to thoroughly

design and align these data collection tools to the research questions to form the basis of this country-case study. As Patton (2002:152) insightfully posits about case studies, they:

“illuminate dimensions of desired outcomes that are difficult to quantify ... Getting into case details better illuminates what worked and didn’t work along the journey to outcomes – the kind of understanding a program needs to undertake improvement initiatives”.

In the same vein, Loveridge (2011:103) argued that “one of the challenges of case study approaches is that alternative explanations for the phenomenon are numerous but it is not practical to examine them all”. However, and similarly, the approach taken in this study is to cross-check what has been said about capacity development concept to examine the external validity of this research’s findings pertaining to the complexity associated with the implementation of such concept. That the “complex and intangible nature of capacity development is investigated better through qualitative methods”, such as case studies” is further supported (Loveridge, 2011:94).

3.2.3 Research ethics

In conducting this research project, ethical issues in social science research are fully taken into account and observed accordingly. Therefore, the aim of the research, its process and confidential nature of the research methods are subsequently outlined. First of all, prior consent of the prospective research participants is sought and it is ensured that they are fully informed about the purpose, procedure and potential risks involved in the research. Also, participants are clearly informed that participation in this study is completely voluntary and that they are free to choose not to participate.

Moreover, to avoid any risk of harm, research participants are overtly informed that interviews are to be tape-recorded electronically. Thus, transcript summaries of the key discussion points are going to be sent to them to check and confirm accuracy of their perspectives recorded during interviews. Subsequently, guarantee is offered to research participants on protecting the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses to the fullest possible extent, giving them, therefore, assurance that identifying information will not be made available to anyone and that the collected information is going to be used exclusively for the purpose of this research.

3.2.4 Study Limitation

Like any scholarly work, this research project also has a number of limitations as partially specified already. In addition to risks related to the research credibility for which lessening measures have been taken, additional limitations are worthwhile mentioning. First and foremost, the present research does not broadly cover the entire reform sets put forward by the EFA agenda. Specifically, the two first components—expanding access and improving education quality—of Guinea’s EFA reform programme are not considered in this investigation, since this study is focusing mainly on the third component of the reform programme – strengthening capacity for decentralized management.

The second limitation of this study has to do with the vagueness associated with the definition of the concept capacity development. This elasticity makes coverage of the many aspects related to capacity development difficult. In such a situation, as posited by Dramane et al., (2009), it constrains the research analysis not to become too vast, and therefore superficial...or covering small number of issues without paying attention to the wider factors impacting the process. Thus, given the twin-constraints (time and resources), the scope of this research has been restricted to the analysis of education decentralized management based on the applicability of the three main dimensions—individual, organizational and institutional—of capacity development concept in Guinea’s education system during EFA reform programme. Additionally, for the sake of in-depth investigation, meticulous design and thorough selection are made regarding the study’s country-case and sub-case studies to better direct the focus of the research and its feasibility.

Furthermore, another possible limitation lies in generalizations to be drawn from this case study and the susceptibility to apply it in other settings. At first, this study’s stand is far more detached from this perspective. As such, preference is being given to the avoidance of any form of ambiguity, as cited in Niaz (2006) due to the considerable controversy in the literature (Eisner and Peshkin, 1990; Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Eisner, 1997, 1999; Husen, 1997; Niaz, 1997, 2004; Macbeth, 1998; Miller et al., 1998; Knapp, 1999; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Peshkin, 2000; Erickson and Gutierrez, 2002) pertaining to the generalizability of qualitative research findings. As Polit & Beck (2010:1451) argued, “the goal of most qualitative studies is not to generalize but rather to provide a rich, contextualized understanding of some aspect of human experience through the intensive study of particular cases”. Also, “given the importance of context to

capacity development interventions...there will always be limits on the degree to which the findings in one setting can be generalized to another” (Loveridge, 2011:107).

However, there are perspectives that offer venues for generalization to be drawn from multidisciplinary research-based such as in the field of education (Niaz, 2006); “education, health sciences, sociology, information systems, management, marketing, accounting” (Parker & Northcott, 2016: 1100-1131)⁹. Nevertheless, one thing remains plausible about the uniformity characterizing many developing countries. More specifically, issues related to education reform policy formulation and implementation in general, and particularly the recent adoption of capacity development as an intervention mechanism by most aid agencies in these countries.

Therefore, acknowledging that fact ultimately leaves an opened window through which similarities of capacity development intervention implemented in the context of decentralization in other developing countries might be seen in Guinea’s country-case as well, or even vice versa.

⁹For further details refer to Parker, L. and Northcott, D. (2016) On Generalizing From Qualitative Research. Retrieved in November 8, 2017 from: <https://www.google.co.jp/search?q=Generalising+From+Qualitative+Research+Professor+Lee+Parker&oq=Generalising+From+Qualitative+Research+Professor+Lee+Parker&aqs=chrome..69i57.894j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

3.3 Data collection and analysis process

3.3.1 Data collection

Table 3.4: Data collection Strategy

Units	Informants		Location	Number	Subtotal
MEN-A (Ministry of National Education & Literacy)	Central Level	MEN-A (Secretary General) (1)	Conakry	11	11/17
		Planning & Management Department (Manager & Staff) (5), Communal Departments of Education: Dixinn & Ratoma (Directors & Staff) (5)			
	Regional Level	Regional Inspectorate of Education (Inspector & Staff) (4) Prefectural Department of Education (Director & Staff) (3)	Mamou	7	7/7
	Prefectural Level	Prefectural Department of Education (Director & Staff) (5)	Télimélé	5	5/5
	Sub-Prefectural Level	Sub-Prefectural Delegations of Education (DSPE / Mamou: 3) & (DSPE / Télimélé: 3) (6)	Mamou/ Télimélé	6	6/9
TFPs (Technical & Financial Partners)	Multilateral organizations	World Bank (Representative & Staff) (2); UNESCO (Representative & Staff) (2), UNICEF (Representative & Staff) (2)	Conakry /Mamou	6	6/3
	Bilateral organizations	French Development Agency (1), Japan International Cooperation Agency (1); KfW & GTZ (2); Canadian International Development Agency (1); French Cooperation (1); European Union (1); USAID (1)	Conakry	8	8/4
CSOs (Civil Society Organizations)	International Organizations	Aid and Action (1); International Plan Guinea (1); EDC & RTI (2); Child Fund (1)	Conakry	5	5/4
	National organizations	Coalition Nationale EPT (1); Forum des Educatrices de Guinée-FAWE (1); Club des Amis du monde (1); Intersyndical de l'Education (1); Fédération Guinéenne/APEAE (7)	Conakry	11	11/11
RC (Rural Communes)	Local authorities	Sub-prefectures of Mamou (3) & Télimélé (3)	Mamou/ Télimélé	6	6/8
Total	65 / 68				
	-Number of targeted individual interview sessions (n= 65); -Number of completed individual interview sessions (n= 68) -Number of completed focus group sessions (n=3); group 1: 4 people; group 2: 15 people; group 3: 6 people - Notes: individually administered survey questionnaires (n=37). -Within the subtotal column is presented, first, the number of people initially targeted to participate in the study and then the number of people finally reached out.				

Table 3.5: Background of the study participants

Individual interviews/Focus groups				
ID	Number	Age range	Gender	Position
MEN-A (Ministry of National Education & Literacy)	38	25 ~ 60	8 Female 30 Male	-Secretary General -Inspectors -Directors -Technical & Administrative staff
TFPs (Technical & Financial Partners)	7	30~ 60	3 Female 4 Male	-Program officers -Program coordinators
CSOs (Civil Society Organizations)	15	25 ~ 60	2 Female 13 Male	-General managers -Trade unions -Parents/Teachers Associations
RC (Rural Communes)	8	40 ~ 60	1 Female 7 Male	-Urban Communal Secretary General -Rural Communal Mayors
Total	68			
Survey questionnaire				
MEN-A (Ministry of National Education & Literacy)	35	25 ~ 60	6 Female 29 Male	-Inspectors -Directors -Technical & Administrative staff
CSOs (Civil Society O.)	2	25 ~ 70	2 Male	-Parent/Teacher Associations
Total	37			

Table 3.6: Research questions, Theory, Informant and Protocol types

Research questions	Approach	Informants	Instruments		
1. How responsive has been decentralized capacity management under EFA programme to Guinea's education system performance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political economy -Policy reform & Policy change -sector performance enhancement 	Policy documents and official reports (aid agencies); Regional programmes/plan evaluations; Prefectural programme/plan evaluations.	Desk study		
		MOE personnel at central, regional and prefectural level; Technical staff from key funding agencies; CSOs-NGOs-Parent/Teacher Associations, Teachers Unions and Community leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-structured interviews (1) ~ (14), (16) 	Survey (1) ~ (13)	Observation
		Communal education personnel; CSOs- NGOs- Parents/Teachers Associations, Teachers Unions and Community leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus groups (10) ~ (11), (13) ~ (14) 		
2. What changes this education sector reform has brought to Guinea's education system?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political economy -Policy reform & Policy change -Endogenous process of Change 	Policy documents and official reports (aid agencies); Regional programmes/plan evaluations; Prefectural programme/plan evaluations.	Desk study		
		MOE personnel at central, regional and prefectural level; Technical staffs from key funding agencies; CSOs-NGOs-Parent/Teacher Associations, Teachers Unions and Community leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-structured interviews (13) ~ (15), (18) ~ (31), (35) ~ (47), (51) ~ (56) 	Survey (14) ~ (40), (43)	Observation
		Communal education personnel; CSOs-NGOs- Parent/Teacher Associations, Teachers Unions and Community leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus groups (10) ~ (11), (13) ~ (14), (37) ~ (44), (46) ~ (59) 		
3. What factors have been determinant to bring about these changes, how and to what extend?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political economy -Policy reform & Policy change -Endogenous process of Change - (Exogenous change process?) 	Policy documents and official reports (aid agencies); Regional programmes/plan evaluations; Prefectural programme/plan evaluations.	Desk study		
		MOE personnel at central, regional and prefectural level; Technical staffs from key funding agencies; CSOs-NGOs-Parent/Teacher Associations, Teachers Unions and Community leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-structured interviews (17), (32) ~ (34), (48) ~ (50), (57) ~ (59) 	Survey (41) ~ (45)	Observation
		Communal education personnel; CSOs-NGOs- Parent/Teacher Associations, Teachers Unions and Community leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus groups (15), (17), (36) ~ (41), (43) ~ (59) 		

However, as already mentioned, the major aim of this thesis is completely detached from the generalization perspective. Rather it aims at contributing empirically to the literature of international education development assistance using capacity development as an implementation framework in recent education reform programmes in developing countries.

The conduct of the Fieldwork

Following the sampling schema of this study, the field study tried to maximize the chances of implementing the intended plan for this research. Overall, the number of total interviews and focus groups conducted amounts to 68 sessions as opposed to 65, thus three more sessions than initially planned. As it is commonly known, things do not always go as they are originally planned. That being said, however, the researcher managed to contact and meet with almost all the identified informants who were considered relevant to sufficiently inform this study (see table 3.4). Subsequently, invaluable suggestions were made to the researcher on additional informants to consider who, could provide further insights to this research project. Starting with the central level, at the Ministry of education (MOE), the first officer to be met with in this unit was the Secretary General to whom was submitted the official letter prepared by the researcher's affiliated institution to request for a formal authorization that allows the conduct of this study. Upon the green light granted to the researcher, the Secretary General who visibly was new to this position instructed the chief officers and staff of related services of the department and its dismembered bodies to make themselves available for the ongoing investigation.

MOE central level information gathering

Thus, the first strategic directorate to get engaged in the operation was the Strategic and Development Bureau—BSD (previously called the Statistics and Strategic Planning—SSP), where three individual interviews have been conducted; respectively with the national director (moderately familiar with the directorate activities) and two staff officers who are sufficiently versed in the planning activities of the Ministry. The second stage of this exercise continued with the Committee of Medium Expenditure Framework (CDMT) coordinator. Also, the pedagogical advisor of the Ministry joined the discussion by sharing his personal views on the reform under study. The other crucial stage of the interview sessions was held with the General Inspectorate of Education (IGE) of the MOE. Apparently, each of these higher educational

officers has been profoundly involved in the reform, and possesses first-hand experience in education planning and management.

The next step of the investigation at the central level continued with the dismembered bodies of the special zone of Conakry. Hence, the first unit to be contacted was the regional inspectorate of education whereby the researcher met and introduced the purpose of the research to the regional inspector. After a very constructive discussion with the inspector, the Strategic and Development Bureau was referred to me as part of the targeted division in this unit. The head officer of the regional strategic and development bureau made himself completely available and discussed thoroughly the topics raised in the interview. With the need to gradually gauge the effective implementation of the reform mechanisms at the level of these dismembered bodies, the investigation has been extended to the level of the communal directorates of education of the Conakry special zone. In this respect, three communal directorates of education (DCE) were met as opposed to the two that had been initially envisaged; respectively the Communal Directorate of Education of Dixinn commune, the Ratoma Commune, and additionally the Matoto Commune (the largest commune in the country). At the Dixinn communal directorate of education, three officials have been interviewed and these include the communal director of education, the chief of the section of pedagogical affairs and the chief of the section of the strategic and development bureau. The interview sessions at the Ratoma communal direction of education were held respectively with the communal director, the chief of the section of resources management, and the deputy chief of the section of the strategy and development bureau. On the side of Matoto communal directorate of education, major recommendations made to the researcher generally converged towards the chief of the section of the strategic and development bureau who, concretely proved to be well versed in education planning and represents a resource person within this direction.

MOE local level Investigation

The second zone of this fieldwork involves the dismembered structures of the MOE at the regional level. Typically, the same pattern followed at the regional inspectorate of education of the Conakry special zone, which also guided the investigation at the administrative region of Mamou. At this level as the hierarchy always prevails, the regional inspector of education was the first official to be met with and interviewed despite being newly appointed to this position,

and the content of our discussion turned out to be somehow productive. In the same unit, the chief of the division of the strategic and development bureau and the chief of the division of resources management have also been met and interviewed. As a sub-unit of the Regional Education Inspectorate (IRE) in the Mamou region, the Prefectoral Directorate of Education (DPE) has been equally contacted. In all, four officials joined the discussion and shared their views according to their positions and responsibilities. Respectively, the first interview session was held with the current prefectoral director of education, then with the former director (who is already retired), the chief section of the BSD (who interestingly and extensively demonstrated familiarity with the reform and knowledge of the bureau's mandate), the chief of the section of administrative and financial affairs, and lastly the chief of the section of human resources. Still, in the same Mamou region, the second sub-unit targeted by the investigation was the Sub-prefectoral Education Delegates—DSPE (previously termed DSEE—Sub-prefectoral Elementary Education Delegates). In accordance with the original plan, three DSPE have been met, and these include the DSPE of Poredaka district, the DSPE of Hourekaba district, and the DSPE of Gongoret, whereby a focus group session was conducted therein. However, it is worth recalling that the two first DSPE listed above appeared to have served for a very long period in their respective positions. In addition, one must stress that the difficulties surrounding the investigation in the Mamou region were strictly related to the organization of the CPPE (Prefectoral Steering Committee for Education and CRPE (Regional Steering Committee for Education). These two steering committees, which coincided with the conduct of this field study in the region, rendered difficult the availability of the potential informants at a convenient time.

The third target zone of this field study is located at the prefectoral level. Thus, for the sake of a balanced investigation, the prefecture of Téliimélé has been chosen based on certain criteria enounced already in the study's sampling strategy and site selection section. At first, prior consideration was given to the Regional Inspectorate of Education to which the Téliimélé prefecture belongs. And the motivation behind this decision is actually to provide a general idea of the managerial environment that presents this region. By doing so, the researcher had the opportunity to meet with the regional inspectorate of education of that particular administrative region of Kindia. Therefore, up to the expectations, a long and extensive discussion was made with the regional inspector who, fortunately, happened to be the former prefectoral director of Téliimélé and a renowned prominent cadre in the education sector. Also, an interview session was

held with the chief of the division of the strategic and development bureau of this IRE (which is supposed to inspect and provide support to the BSD of Téliimélé prefecture). Additionally, and by chance, three cadres of the Téliimélé DPE who came to attend a national workshop in education that was sponsored by the UNICEF have been contacted. Therefore, one interview session was held with the chief of the section of fundamental education and survey questionnaires administered to the two others who are respectively the DSPE of the Sarekali and Dara Magnaki Districts. Finally, upon arriving in the prefecture of Téliimélé, a real infatuation surrounded this occasion and led the cadres to organize a round table through which the researcher administered several survey questionnaires. Afterward, individual interviews were conducted respectively with the chief section of pedagogical affairs, the chief section of the strategic and development bureau, and the chief section of resources management. At last, a focus group session with four DSPE, which includes the district of Gougoudje, Tarihoje, West urban commune of Téliimélé and Konsotamy, completed the field study at the prefectural level in Téliimélé.

Encounters with Financial & Technical Partners

The subsequent layer of investigation intended in this research refers to the technical and financial partners whose involvement in the reform process was unquestionable. Being informed in advance of the protocol surrounding the functioning of these institutions, official correspondences were prepared and sent in order to facilitate access. However, among the targeted multilateral organizations, an interview session was held with the coordinator in charge of education of UNICEF country bureau for Guinea. Also, the researcher had a joint discussion with the national director and the staff officer in charge of education at the national coordination of UNESCO in Guinea. In view of the interest shown by the coordinator for this study, a report of the institution's activities on this reform was made available to me for documentation purposes. With regard to the World Bank, the researcher finally found the literature good enough to inform on the Bank's activities and its intervention on the reform in Guinea. However, room for additional views that might come from the researcher's request made to the Bank's representation in Guinea remains open for further enrichment of the study.

With regard to the bilateral organizations, the first reaction came from the European Union, whereby the staff officer in charge of development assistance shared with the researcher the EU's efforts on good governance—institutional reform based on decentralization—matters in

Guinea. The feedback received from the French Development Agency notified me that the officer in charge of education was on a short-term leave and that they will get back to me anytime soon. In the meantime, they did recommend referring to the agency's official website for any other related information. The Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) on its side, although recently established in Guinea, gladly shared its views through its program officer on intervention of JICA in Guinea's education sector. Furthermore, the agency program officer suggested introducing me to the JICA's headquarters in Tokyo for further information. On the side of the German cooperation agencies, the researcher had the chance to meet with both officers in charge of education matters of the GIZ central (Conakry) and regional (Mamou) bureaus. Regarding the Canadian International Development Agency, it was reported to the researcher that the country representation was no longer operational. As far as the USAID agency in Guinea is concerned, an interview session has been requested by the researcher to get further insights. However, it appears that the various reports—evaluations of USAID interventions in Guinea's education reform programs—which are already available provide ample information that the researcher estimates might be enough to inform this investigation.

Contributions from Civil Society

The third layer of inquiry envisaged in this investigation involves the Civil Society Organizations. Participation of these organizations in the reform process has been crucial, be they foreign or local. In reference to the international organizations, the researcher met with the executive director of Aide & Action, a French international NGO who extensively depicted the activities conducted by the NGO and general events that have marked the reform as a whole. Equally, staff officers of the Plan International Guinea in charge of educational matters have also been met. Thus, two interview sessions were held with respectively the national coordinator of education affairs who is based in Conakry and the regional program coordinator established in Mamou. As for the two American NGOs (EDC & RTI), it was reported to the researcher that they were sub-contractors in the implementation of the USAID projects designed in respect with capacity strengthening promoted under EFA reform program. However, upon completion of the projects, these consultants literally left Guinea. Nonetheless, reports of these NGOs activities, eventually, serve as a bulwark to inform the study in case of no personal insight obtained thereof. Also, following a brief discussion with the assistant of the regional coordinator of the child fund

office in Mamou, some substantial information has been generated for this study. Talking about the national organizations, the researcher was able to meet and interview the regional coordinator of the Club des Amis du Monde, which is based in Mamou. The education trade-unions coalition (intersyndical de l'éducation) did also manifest and share their opinions through focus group sessions that the researcher had respectively with its representative body at the MOE level, and then the main organ commonly known as SLECG, which is headed by Aboubacar Soumah with headquarters at the Donka area. The participatory approach sought by the reform has been demonstrated by the involvement of parents/students and teachers' associations (PTAs). As such, these associations expressed their views on the reform through their representatives at the national, regional and prefectural levels. At the national level, the researcher interviewed the president of the national federation of parents and friends of schools, named FEGUIPAE; both the regional and prefectural coordinators of PTA in Mamou; and the PTA coordinator of the Téliélé prefecture. Lastly and despite due consideration given to the national coalition of EPT and the Guinean educators' forum-FAWE, the researcher could not meet these two associations as they appeared to be ad hoc movements which supported the reform implementation.

Local authorities' link

Finally, local authorities duly represented by the rural communes—CR (previously termed rural communities development—CRD) represent the fourth and last target layer of investigation. Therefore, six local authorities respectively emanating from the rural communes of—Mamou and Téliélé prefectures—that were initially identified for this study have been contacted. In the Mamou prefecture, the researcher had an individual interview session with the former mayor of the urban commune (who had been a schoolteacher, and then a professor but now in retirement); also the mayor of Konkoure CR and the Poredaka CR were contacted through telephone. On the side of Téliélé prefecture, the researcher interviewed the general secretary of the urban commune, and also had some discussion on telephone with the mayors of Sarekaly and Gougoudje CR.

Survey and observation guise

Furthermore, a complementary step of this investigation integrated a survey questionnaire dedicated to the personnel of the Ministry of Education. This attempt is intended to better evaluate the performance of the system as well as the cadres that constitute it. In this respect, 35

questionnaires have been administered to the MOE personnel at the central, regional, prefectural and sub-prefectural level. As such, it is expected that the information generated from this tentative effort would eventually provide an approximate perception of the characteristics marking the Guinean educational system throughout the reform of the sector. In addition to the individual interviews and survey questionnaires, the researcher retrieved an important archival documentary composed of reports, legal and policy documents along with the field study. Equally, and as anticipated, the researcher had the opportunity to conduct several informal observations of infrastructure and equipment made available to the MOE as well as the staffing and operation of various offices at the central and local level. These observations offer the fullness of imbibing the day-to-day running of the departments in charge of delivering services that can help with developing the education sector.

In all, this data collection campaign lasted for a month and two weeks—from August 10, 2018 to September 25, 2018—and the researcher covered four different cities (the capital city Conakry, Mamou, Kindia and Téliélé). Now that the fieldwork has helped with gathering valuable information for this study, the next stage and on which the researcher worked is the transcription and cleaning of the data to make it ready for proper analyses.

Transcription of the raw data

A preliminary step in this exercise consisted of translating the interview and focus group sessions' protocols. Initially conceived in English, these research protocols were then translated into French in order to allow the study participants to apprehend what the research project is all about. In advance, taking this requirement of the field into account has helped in facilitating the conduct of the fieldwork. At first, it helped to establish the contact with institutions to which the potential informants belong but also get quick understanding of the requirements for participation in this study. Obviously, this goes along to suggest therefore the conduct of data collection at all levels and location targeted by the research in French.

As indicated in the consent form, the researcher was given the permission to digitally record all interviews and focus group sessions, which allows capitalizing all the information generated therein. As such, to ensure better capturing of these data, these recordings are first transcribed, and then translated thoroughly into English. In addition, corrections and accuracy checks of these translations are to be made to confer the raw data a better fit of sense making.

Ideally, translation of the original transcripts of the raw data was crucial to allow the researcher to easily create the codes needed for the coding and data analysis process.

3.3.2 Data analysis process

The explanatory analysis of my research is epistemological-based oriented. Hence, based on the reform actors' behaviors, dynamics and perspectives, the coding criteria are going to be diverse: descriptive, evaluation, magnitude, narrative, process, and themeing data. The coding procedure uses a hybrid form, both pre-set ("a priori codes") and open ("emergent codes"). The procedure follows this pattern: Coding (codes), sorting (categories), and synthesizing (themes). Finally, major emerging patterns are extracted to answer the questions posed by this research.

The analysis of the data collected for this research project followed a gradual process of scrutiny. Yet, the immersion into the literature and diversity of the research instruments—interviews, focus group, archival documents, survey questionnaires and observations—used to inform this study suggest the volume of the data to be processed. Thus, the gut feeling that emerged from the immensity of data generated in this study did alert me to make an early synthesis of the major themes. By doing so, the researcher began capturing key patterns through preliminary transcriptions and analysis made while carrying out the fieldwork. The use of this concomitant strategy proved to be paramount in the progress of the investigation. At first, it facilitates the refinement of the data collection techniques but also helps to apprehend specific aspects to be addressed at the level of each unit and subject types. Second, the recollection and organization of key patterns was easy to make and to relate each research question to its preliminary findings. Upon completing the data transcription, an early effort also followed to identify recurrent passages that transpose the elements, which appear to be part and parcel of the analytical structure that guides this study.

The trajectory chosen for this analysis was followed suit with the use of initial pre-set codes to guide the coding process. Hence, this process starts with the identification of major codes that present elements of answers connected to the research questions. Following this approach, the interrogations posed by the research project have been accordingly taken into account and categories that are likely to guide these responses aligned with the analytical framework. This exercise is further refined by the researcher's reflection on initial findings drawn from the field study, which easily facilitates capturing the overall categories of possible responses inductively identified thereof. In accordance with the dimensions that constitute the conceptual framework of

this study, the data analysis procedure will subsequently follow the integrated components and their constituting elements. Keeping this line of scrutiny, allows the classification of all initial codes and further identify additional or emergent codes that eventually come out along the coding process. With regard to the number of inputs or elements required to build capacity, the analytical framework does infer the presence of extensive preliminary coding schemes.

However, the immensity of information under treatment requires the use of appropriate data storage and processing accessory. Thus, to maintain the integrity of data, the Nvivo package—a qualitative data analysis software is being utilized to input and treat the whole data generated from the fieldwork—importing therefore files of all retrieved archival documents, records of my field notes and analysis journal, and extracts from the interviews and their transcripts as well. The use of the Nvivo software proved extremely crucial and important to ease the coding and analysis process, especially in managing the organization and retrieval of the data.

In addition, using the software better helped to make corrections of inappropriate transcriptions as well as provide accuracy checks of the raw data. It also smoothed the extraction of passages that relate to components presenting elements, which fall into the type of category susceptible to respond to the relevant research question posed by this study. In abiding by this logic of analysis, wider angles of perception were considered to enable accommodation of new perspectives. This exercise proved perfectly appropriate since it allows the integration of additional codes to accommodate elements in connection with the perception that the research questions have raised. As such, another round of screening went through the whole data set to ensure making these additional codes better fit the new categories and themes that emerge from the data. However, after this general data scrutiny, it turns out that those codes lacking proper fit—connection to a component leading to a category that can answer a particular research question—are dropped out systematically.

Moreover, an extra step was taken to make simulation of alternative patterns and trends generated by the software, which could overlap with initially identified patterns. Repetitively such an attempt was conducted to find whether there exist portions of the data that remained untouched or not properly coded. To complement this attempt, a data matrix is subsequently being used to establish relationship with different categories and generate a formalized body of knowledge consistent with the data. In pursuing these efforts of sense making of the data, a similar structure of Miles and Huberman (1994) was considered however. So said, the reduction

phase of the data as their indicated would consist of “selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in written up field notes or transcriptions”. Going through all these steps, eventually makes easy the ways in which the researcher addresses the issues under study, as it “often forces choices about which aspects of the assembled data should be emphasized, minimized, or set aside completely for the purposes of the project at hand” (NSF, 1997: Chap 2). The next phase that allows formalizing this data manageability refers to the data display. At this stage, the mass of data collected and initially coded can be condensed for the purpose of conclusion drawing; since the NSF (1997: Chap 2) posit that it “enables the analyst to extrapolate from the data enough to begin to discern systematic patterns and interrelationships”. At the same time, at this phase, “additional higher order categories or themes may emerge from the data that go beyond those first discovered during the initial process of data reduction”.

Practically, these two phases were intermittently applied in this analysis process. Moreover, this proceeds with Liamputtong & Ezzyin’s (2005, 270-3) recommendation—formatting pages of data into [...] columns [...] in the process of organizing the coding, which motivates the data matrix usage to help with presenting the data for a better management and interpretation. One must acknowledge that the data analysis stage is extremely crucial to confer a study its entire relevancy. Since making the data speak appears to be a tricky exercise, the same feature does manifest itself when it comes to interpretation—giving meaning to the data. Thus, transforming the raw data into conceptualized patterns that give actual meaning to the phenomenon under study proves to be hazardous and complex. As it falls within what Saldana (2009: 10) termed “qualitative inquiry” that demands meticulous attention to language and deep reflection on the emergent patterns and meanings of human experience. Therefore, in the process of formulating the knowledge sought to inform the inquiry raised in this study, a matrix table is being employed to give a proper representation and interpretation of the data. Virtually, the data reduction was made possible through searches of commonalities, which led to the identification of codes, categories and ultimately major themes. The matrix data, however, enables management as well as the displaying of large amounts of coded qualitative data in a format that helps you to interpret and describe it (Hesser-biber, 2010; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Furthermore, to capitalize on the use of this matrix table, two axes of display were used to present further insights of meaning making of the data and to draw implications emanating from the whole analysis. Firstly, the matrix allows for adding up relevant data—themes, categories or

codes—wherever the emergent patterns fall suit. Ultimately, this facilitates integrating large amounts of data to help develop understanding of its meaning—new perspectives or interpretation. Such possibility is manifested through any of the following formats: sections of a text, quotes, descriptions, rating (Miles & Huberman, 1994). As such, retrieval of intriguing quotations from the data also facilitate the selection of “key pieces of the evidentiary warrant to support [one’s] propositions, assertions, or theory” (Saldana, 2016:21). This perspective perfectly align with those of Booth, Colomb, & Williams, 2003; Erickson, 1986; Lofland et al., 2006. Secondly, the use of data matrix allows for presenting the data in a report, which eventually makes it easier to understand the process through which one arrives at a given interpretation. At the same time, it provides a wider spectrum to clarify interpretation of new perspectives or emergent patterns and possibly make new insights about the data

The fertile ground laid out by these sequences of data filtering, treatment and displaying, has paved the way in elaborating a set of corresponding patterns, themes, categories that are consistent with each of the study’s questions. Also, discernment of typical typologies or a set of concepts that reflect the consistency with the true spirit of the coded data was based on the behaviors, dynamics and perceptions of the reform’s actors. Proceeding as such, gradually, enabled the formalization of the core body of my analysis and the sequencing of the sections reporting the findings with respect to each level of capacity development investigated. As a result, the inferences made to address each of the research questions also aligned themselves with the conceptual framework for the purpose of harmonization. Overall, from the perspective of program evaluation—which is the area of interest of this study, “data display can be extremely helpful in identifying why a system (e.g., a given program or project) is or is not working well and what might be done to change it” (NSF, 1997: Chap 2).

The analysis of the data collected from the survey questionnaires is another fundamental step taken in this process. Thus, by contrast to qualitative inquiry, the survey analysis follows a different line of approach, which consists of quantifying the data, and provides explanation of what the numbers stand for as a material part of the analysis. In fact, such an approach sought to translate the questionnaire into frequencies, percentages, etc., to capture the level of impact that the program’s intervention, such as Guinea’s EFA reform program has had on a particular setting or agents targeted by the reform. This operation is achieved with the use of an Excel database to create a worksheet that facilitates the sorting out and organization of the data. Subsequent to this

data processing, is lodging the response items in a codebook format¹⁰, which makes the cleaning of the data much easier and convenient for the proper analysis itself. Indeed, it seems to me quite judicious to keep the particular aspect of this study, which is that of evaluation at the heart of the process of data analysis. Hence, such a move is motivated by the general assumption that most of program/project evaluators manifest with regard to the social environment complexity at play. Such a concern led to consider what “experienced evaluators found—that most often the best results are achieved through the use of mixed method evaluations, which combine qualitative and quantitative techniques” (NSF, 1997:Chap 2). In fact, this consideration echoes with Patton’s (1990) contention that when investigating human behavior and attitudes, it is most fruitful to use a variety of data collection methods. The concern raised in a study’s evaluation matters much since beyond the actors who define the reform’s outcome, the researcher himself represents an instrument of data collection; hence, a source of possible bias. Thus, for one of the possibilities to mitigate such a threat, “a multi method approach to evaluation can [be used to] increase both the validity and reliability of evaluation data” (NSF, 1997: Chap 2).

¹⁰refer to Jennifer Leahy (2004).Using Excel for Analyzing Survey Questionnaire (G3658-14)

CHAPTER IV. GUINEA EDUCATION SECTOR BACKGROUND AND REFORMS

4.1 Guinea education sector reform

The Republic of Guinea is a coastal country, located along the coastal side of the Atlantic Ocean in the West African sub-region. Guinea is bordered by Guinea-Bissau and Senegal to the North, Mali and Côte d'Ivoire inland to the East and Sierra Leone and Liberia to the South. It has 320 kilometers (199 miles) of coastline, and a land area of 245,857 square kilometers (94,925 miles). The country is geographically composed of four distinct natural regions, each having its diversities and specificities. This natural variety constitutes an element in considering Guinea as a “geological scandal”. Since the country is endowed with massive and major mineral (bauxite, iron ore, gold, diamond, nickel, copper, cobalt, chromium, manganese, uranium, Gemstones, Limestone, granite, dolerite, marble, ornamental stones), hydropower (as the “Water Tower” of West Africa, stems from it the biggest rivers—Niger, Senegal, Gambia—of the region) and agricultural resources (rich and fertile arable lands).

Despite its enormous potentialities, the country is no different from many other countries in West Africa in particular and the Sub-Saharan region in general in terms of limited access to basic social services. Although, it must be acknowledged that much more effort has been devoted in this regard ever since the country's full access to self-determination. An illustration to such an assertion derives from the following argument, which expounded that: “Since its independence in 1958, most of the policies implemented in Guinea, from its economy to its revolutionary educational system, were closely watched as a new African experiment in the making”.¹¹

Against this backdrop, this leads to contend that the early reform initiative of Guinea's education system has, on one side of the spectrum, been largely influenced by a policy of binding external assistance, while on the second side of the spectrum, internal realities marked by a deep political and economic uncertainty curbed the sectoral policy. Therefore, educational reform tends to have been delinked from the country's pressing needs, as policies so far formulated remained not adapted to the needs of individuals themselves and of the society.

¹¹ See <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/577/Guinea-EDUCATIONAL-SYSTEM-OVERVIEW.html> (Retrieved on May 7, 2019)

As such, this state of affairs imposes the necessity for the system to be thoroughly reviewed in a comprehensive and systematic way. This, in fact, has yet to be achieved in order to change the face of the education sector in the country.

4.1.1 Reform effort in the sector

Successive governments to power in Guinea have all placed education as their top priorities in the country's development agenda. This renewed commitment to the development of the sector was not adventitious but rather fueled by national vision and ambition. Like many other countries, the leaders who were in charge of Guinea's destiny soon also understood the merits of education in the promotion of socio-economic well-being of people and the country.

Therefore, being convinced that the basis of a real development goes through the qualification of a country's human capital, led them to favor wider reforms in the education sector. However, as educational reform refers to a change and/or shift in existing policies to engender a betterment of previous structures of the educational system, it has motivated related actions taken by Guinea's governments in the sector. Large-scale reform initiatives pertaining to education development in Guinea have revolved around three main intervention schemes. First, after the country's access to political independence in 1958, then the change of regime in 1984, and the advent of the global movement of EFA in the year 2000 with goals' achievement target in 2015.

4.2 Overview of Guinea's overall reform in the education system

4.2.1 Post-independence reform initiative

Shortly after the country's access to independence in October 1958, the first regime to inherit the colonial power undertook policies geared towards breaking away from the previous colonial system. To pursue these policies, the authorities under this regime decided to dismantle the French educational system and dismiss the western teachers. French as an official language of instruction was replaced by native dialects in all primary school levels. A new curriculum reflecting the president's predilection for socialist educational philosophy was handed down directly by government officials.¹²

¹²Refer to <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/577/Guinea-EDUCATIONAL-SYSTEM-OVERVIEW.html> (Retrieved on May 7, 2019)

The objective sought by Touré's regime in its educational innovation during the 1960s and 1970s was simply to rid Guinea of colonial influences and promote education self-sufficiency (Walmond, 2002). In order to achieve this ambitious educational policy, a mass education ("education de masse") was set allowing a wide access to education for all children in the country regardless of their social or regional origin, age or sex. With this mass education program, primary education becomes compulsory, "lower achievement requirement for access to secondary school was set for female, and a quota was reserved for them to the higher education institutions" (Barry, 2010:94).

The effect of these policies mixed with the lack of standardized syntax, appropriate textbooks, "poorly trained teachers and rapid enrollment growth resulted in a low quality of education, inadequate external efficiency, and inefficiency in the allocation of scarce resources. Moreover, the transition from primary school where the medium level of instruction was in national languages, to secondary school, where the medium of instruction was in French, reduced student comprehension in secondary schools and therefore undermined the quality of higher education. These policies remained in use in the Guinean educational system until the collapse of the first regime in 1984" (Barry, 2010:94-95).

In a study done by Corrie Elizabeth M (1988), she points out that, "estimate of the number of children in school at independence vary according to the sources consulted"(p.271). Former president "Sékou Touré (1976) mentions 40,000 while the figure of 42,000 is given in the bulletin on cultural policy prepared for UNESCO by the Guinean government (1979B). Guillerme (1980) is more precise, giving us the figure 45,090 or 9% of children of school age, 42,500 of whom were in primary schools (p. 389) while Rivière (1977) quotes the figure of 42,543 (p. 44)" (p.271) (See Table below). "Access to secondary school was enjoyed by less than 1% of the population and there was a total lack of facilities for higher education" (Corrie, 1988:272).

Table 4.1: Guinea: Enrollment in First Cycle schools

Year	Total Number	Number of Girls	Percentage of Girls	Gross Enrolment Ratio		
				M/F	M	F
1957/58	42,543	9,522	22.4	9.5	15	4
1960	90,629	-	26.2 ¹	30	45	16
1961/62	116,351	-	-	-	-	-
1965	164,119	50,221	30.6	31	44	18
1968	167,340 ²	52,385	31.3	-	-	-
1970	191,287	60,644	31.7	33	45	21
1972/73	201,578	-	-	-	-	-
1975	198,849 ³	66,909	34	30	40	20
1977	324,165 ⁴	-	-	-	-	-
1978/79	252,100	-	34.6	34	45	24
1979/80	262,783	-	-	33	44	22
1980	257,547	85,842	33	35	47	23
1982	247,702 ⁵	80,793	33.3	32	44	21
1984	284,386	91,087	32	36	49	23

Source: Compilation of various sources on Guinea gross enrollment ratio from independence until 1984 (see Corrie, 1988).

Administration, Organization and Planning

The administration of the educational sector after the independence was placed under one single ministry, the Ministère du Domaine de l'éducation et de la Culture (MDEC). This pattern changed later on in 1979 and was divided into three separate departments:

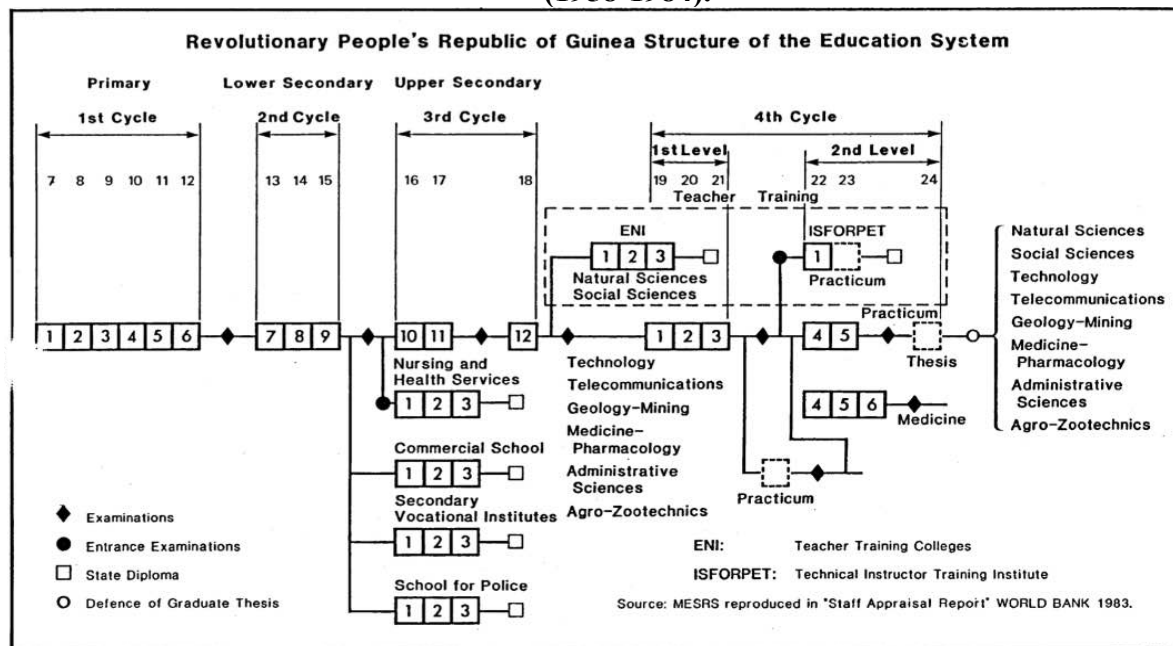
- the Ministry of Pre-University Education and Literacy Training (Ministère de l'Enseignement Pre-Universitaire et de l'Alphabétisation-MEPU), concerned with primary, secondary education and promoting literacy.
- the Ministry of Technical Education and Professional Training (Ministère de l'Enseignement Technique Moyen et de la Formation Professionnelle-METMFP). From 1981, this Ministry was also responsible for primary school teachers training.
- the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique-MESRS). It also covered the training of secondary school teachers and long distance teaching.

At each ministerial department, there was a subsequent division, which was charged with administering educational matters from regional up to the local level.

The study conducted by Corrie Elizabeth also explicitly detailed the organizational approach of

Guinea's educational system under the socialist regime (see Figure below).

Figure 4.1: Guinea structure of the education system under the country's first regime (1958-1984).



Source: MESRS reproduced in "Staff Appraisal Report" World Bank 1983

The structure of the education system in Guinea was organized in four cycles under Touré's regime and remained operational up to 1983. The first cycle starts from the age of seven and lasts for six years. Students enrolled in this level receive a primary school certificate after completing the course, which allows them to enter the secondary level.

The second cycle with a duration of 3 years (7th, 8th and 9th), represents the first tranche of secondary education and the age range of most admitted students vary from 13 to 15. Upon completion of these three years, students received the 'brevet d'études du second cycle' (BESC) and this certificate entitled them to enter the third cycle. The second part of the secondary education represents the third cycle and offers an extension of three other years, this level starts from the 10th to the 12th grade. The age range of students attending this level is from 16 to 18, at the end of this cycle they sit for an exam, named "baccalauréat". Specialization for Technical and vocational education starts at this level with various available options. The fourth cycle representing the higher education was divided into two stages (3 years as general stage and another stage for further specialization as specified in the structure. The research area in Guinea at that time was ambiguous and mainly centered on local aspects by the masses for the masses.

Despite these reforms put in place by the government of the first regime and the ambitious goals it sought to achieve, the social and economic conditions have shown no improvement. For formal education and professional training were geared towards producing workers for the public service and the content of education at all levels was highly politicized and far removed from the reality of life and from the needs of employers or self-employment (World Bank, 1990). At independence, educational opportunities in Guinea were among the lowest in Africa (World Bank, 1983). “Twenty years later, Guinea lagged behind every other Franco-phone African state that had retained the French pedagogical model” ([Education Encyclopedia](#)) .

4.2.2 Guinea Education Sector Reform from the 1980s

In 1984, a sudden change of regime occurred following the death of Sékou Touré. A military takeover, therefore, brought to power a new regime with a desire to break up with a longstanding system of isolation and controversial policy. As a vanguard signal, they announced a radical change and promised to open the country to the outside world.

Among the first measures taken by the new authority to power in order to separate itself from the policies and politics established by Sékou Touré’s regime, were the two national conferences on educational issues held in Conakry in 1984 and 1985. Several arrangements were put forward during these encounters, and the most significant decision made was the discontinuity of national languages as language of instruction and the re-introduction of French in the first grades of primary school. This was the first major reform organized by the new government, and it signaled a substantial departure from previous education policy (Walmond, 2002). However, it should be noted that the first challenge faced by its effective implementation was due to the fact that most teachers were lacking ability to teach in French. As a result of this, the performance of the reform was handicapped by the lack of appropriate resources to support it.

Nonetheless, along the line of the sectoral program reforms, a more coherent and comprehensive education sector reform followed in 1987. With the collaboration of external partners, the Government of Guinea adopted in 1989 an education policy statement with goals that extended until the year 2000. The subsequent introduction of this second set of educational reform policies stems from the resultant perception and analysis done by the joint teams of international experts and governments officials.

After many investigations and several meetings organized with a view to assessing factors underlying the outstanding weak performance of the education sector, their conclusions revealed a significant low efficiency and quality of education, and a poor and unequal coverage nationwide, especially at the primary school level. Though, this observation was common to other African countries during the same period, the case of Guinea as supported Walmond (2002), however, was distinct from most other countries along two important dimensions. First, the abysmally low levels of enrollment were evidently the result of both supply and demand constraints-despite a renewed interest in education after the change in Government, enrollments at all levels of education fell between 1984 and 1989 as a result of a failure to supply sufficient school places (particularly in urban areas) and declining demand for education due to low educational quality and limited employment (World Bank, 1990). Parents, particularly in rural areas, were uninterested in sending their children to school. Second, such a low level of public funding had previously been allocated to the education sector that Guinea could easily increase public spending. These factors meant that Guinea faced an educational challenge most African countries had encountered two decades earlier-it needed to spark demand for education through increased government spending.

The development and adoption of these national education strategies, including the Education Sector Adjustment Program (PASE I and II) and later the Education for All (EFA) program, was aimed at increasing the resources allocated to education, strengthen the Ministry's capacity for management and stimulate decentralized planning and management (Barry, 2010). However, despite different efforts made and the massive mobilization to support these reforms, it is still unclear, argued Barry (2010: 95) "if this policy has been a success in terms of planning and objectives. Although, it has attracted many donors, it has not been successful in meeting its target because of the conditions governing the policy implementation. Consequently, this and other previous policies have had a very limited success" (World Bank, 1995, 1999, & 2002; Diallo, Back, & Hickson, 2003).

Administration and management of the education system

In the set of this sectoral reform, a review of the education administration was one of the major components. As it has been in the past, the education service used to be under one single ministry or operated through a tripartite system; with the new educational strategy, only one ministry was in charge of the education matters at its early implementation stage. The Ministry of National

Education (Ministère de l'Education Nationale, MEN) consists of a Secretariat of State (Secrétariat d'Etat de l'Enseignement pré-universitaire, SEEPU) responsible for all pre university education, with only higher education being the direct responsibility of the Minister. SEEPU controls all secondary and primary schools through a provincial structure of 5 Academic Inspectorates, which, in turn, administer 36 prefectural-level Directorates of Education, and 210 sub-prefectoral Pedagogic Delegates (World Bank, 1990). This format has been changing over the time shifting from one to three separate ministerial departments, and the recent change occurred in 2007 and during the transition period 2008-2009. Somehow, it can be noted that the administration of education in Guinea fundamentally operates under different levels. In fact, with respect to early childhood education it is part of a system that has been incorporated under a specific department.

Actually, in regard to overall changes registered in the educational sector and the master plan it has always followed, the system has followed the usual trend. Hence, currently the scheme of three ministerial departments is adopted and they are responsible for all decisions and administration regarding educational matters in the various levels of the sector:

- The Ministry of Lower Education or Pre-University and Civic Education (Ministère de l'Enseignement Pré-Universitaire et de l'Education Civique-MEPU-EC), which is in responsible for all primary and secondary education (academic) and Civic education and Literacy.
- The Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training (Ministère de l'Enseignement Technique et de la Formation Professionnelle-MET-FP); it is especially in charge of the vocational and professional training.
- The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique-MESRS).

In addition to these, the Ministry for Social Affairs and the promotion of Women and children (Ministère en charge des Affaires Sociales, de la Promotion de la Femme et de l'Enfance), is also responsible for the pre-primary education.

Following the chronological order of the reforms, the sequence of their implementation and the content of the measures taken by Guinea government and its partners, it was expected that a large part of the system's problems could be significantly redressed if not nearly or entirely solved. But despite the ambitious and numerous efforts exerted, this system-wide approach has

drastically increased the management burden on both central and decentralized levels of the education system (USAID, 2006).

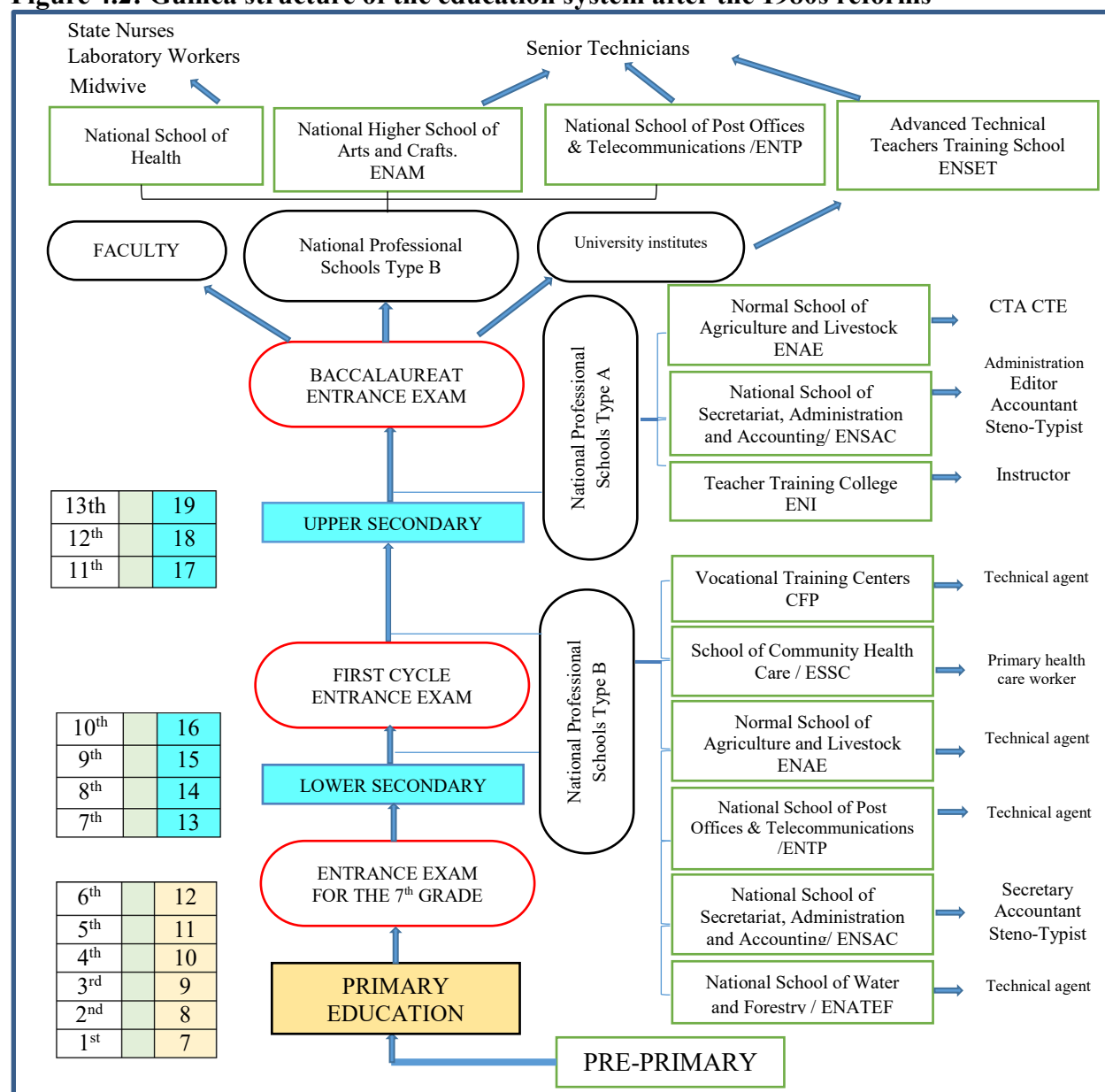
Overall, a strategic report of Guinea's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper concisely indicated that:

“The educational system as it stands suffers from a lack of coherence. The main problems are the lack of a comprehensive vision of the sector and the lack of coordination between the various players in the system. This situation has led to a compartmentalization of curricula between primary, secondary, vocational and higher education courses, leaving no opportunities for pupils to change paths. This also leads to a high dropout rate between the different levels. No qualification has been defined as the minimum necessary for the social integration of students. Material and human resources are wasted through duplication of services within the system. There are conflicting duties and responsibilities, and teachers are leaving the system. Underqualified contract workers account for more than 43 percent of the teachers' working” (2002:39).

Structure of the education system

The structure of the education system in Guinea is similar to that of other francophone countries and comprises three levels. It is organized into a 6-4-3-3(5) plan: six years of primary, seven years of secondary (4 years in Lower secondary schools, 3 years in upper secondary schools), and 3-5 years of tertiary education. In addition, there are various vocational and professional programs with duration of 3 to 4 years, available at the secondary and tertiary levels (see Figure below).

Figure 4.2: Guinea structure of the education system after the 1980s reforms



Source: World Data on Education/UNESCO-IBE (2011).

● The Pre-primary education

This level of education, which lasts for three years, is available largely in urban areas and is completely private. Children are received from the age of 3 years.

● The Primary education

The elementary education has a duration of six years. Students are admitted at the age of 7

years, sometimes more in the countryside. Primary education is compulsory and it is structured into three cycles: the preparatory course (CP1 and CP2), the elementary course (CE1 and CE2) and medium course (CM1 and CM2). At the end of this level, students receive the “certificat d'études primaires élémentaires (CEPE)”. Basic education includes pre-primary and elementary education.

● **The secondary education**

The first cycle of the general secondary education is offered in junior high schools for a period of four years. Students, therefore, are received at the age of 12 or 13 years after the entrance examination for access to the seventh grade. The second cycle of the general secondary education continues in senior high schools and lasts three years. The completion of these two levels respectively led to the Certificate of the first cycle studies (Brevet d'Etudes du Premier Cycle-BEPC) and the Baccalauréat Première Partie (Baccalaureate First Part) examination at the end of the 2nd year, Baccalauréat Deuxième Partie (Baccalaureate Second Part) examination after the 3rd year. A reform took place in 2008, establishing the single baccalaureate held directly in the 3rd grade (terminal). In the upper secondary schools, three options are available for all levels: social, experimental and mathematical sciences.

● **Technical and Professional education**

Technical and professional education is intended to train the workforce and qualified technical staff. Recruitment is done through competitive examination. Vocational training centers train technical staff from candidates possessing the BEPC certificate for a term of three years; upon completion of this training, a Certificate of Professional Competence (certificat d'aptitude professionnelle-CAP) is issued to the recipients. Professional schools are of two categories: A type recruiting at the BEPC level and B type after completing the baccalaureate level. Access to this training offering a patent of senior technician (brevet de technicien supérieur-BTS), after three years, is exclusively reserved for applicants holding a baccalaureate certificate level of general secondary education. The diploma of Technical and Vocational Education Teaching (Professeur d'enseignement technique et professionnel-PETP) is issued at the end of two-years training in a technical teacher college (Ecole normale d'enseignement technique). The access to training to PETP is reserved for applicants holding a BTS or its equivalent. The certificate of pedagogical ability for elementary teaching (brevet d'aptitude pédagogique à l'enseignement

élémentaire-BAPEEL) is reserved for students-teachers who have undergone training with a duration equal at least two years in a teacher training college. Access to training to BAPEEL is reserved to applicants holding a baccalaureate certificate level of general secondary education.

● **Higher education**

In higher education, attending a training of two years offers a general university studies diploma (Diplôme d'études universitaires générales-DEUG). The bachelor degree is issued after three years of studies and the degree in engineering after four years. After the bachelor degree's, a training for a period of one year leads to a master's and a higher studies diploma (Diplôme d'études supérieures-DES). After the master's degree, the training given access to a diploma of advanced studies (Diplôme d'études approfondies- DEA) has a duration of one year. The title of Doctor of Pharmacy is issued after five years of studies and that of Doctor of Medicine after six years.

● **Research and Development**

Research under the educational sector reform is basically conducted within two institutes: the National Institute for Pedagogical Research and Actions (Institut National de Recherche et d'Actions Pédagogique-INRAP), which develops the core curriculum for primary and secondary education, and the Higher Institute of Education Sciences of Guinea (Institut supérieur des sciences de l'éducation de Guinée-ISSEG), which is in charge of training qualified and professionally competent teachers. Besides these institutes, “there is actually no research and technology policy that can make an effective contribution to social and economic development” (Guinea-PRSP, 2002:39).

a- Cost, scope and scale of education in Guinea

In the education access program established by the Guinean government, in theory education at all levels is free of direct fees, but at the primary level, local Parents' Associations (Association Parents/ Elèves, APE), instituted in 1986, contribute to the building and maintenance of schools (World Bank, 1990). Families also bear some related costs like school supplies (materials), including uniforms which is compulsory and expensive.

The “government initiated reforms that led to (i) the adoption of an Education Policy Statement in 1989, and the launching of two Educational Sector Adjustment Programs (PASE 1,

from 1990 to 1994 and PASE II from 1996 to 2002) in the pre-university subsector; (ii) the adoption of a Technical and Vocational Training Policy Statement in 1994; (iii) the drafting of a Higher Education and Scientific Research Development Letter; and (iv) the launching of a Support Program for the Development of Higher Education (PADES). Furthermore, the education sector was opened up to private initiatives in keeping with the government's market-oriented policy choices" (Guinea-PRSP, 2002:34). This embryonic private sector which used to provide very limited primary, secondary and vocational/technical training mainly in Conakry (World Bank, 1990) has expanded in recent years. "Over the past few years, the private schools' share of enrollment in primary education has grown sharply. Private schools represent 63 percent of students enrolled in Conakry and close to 30 percent nationally" (World Bank, 2013:9).

It is also worth mentioning that Guinea higher education is still limited in terms of infrastructural capacity. Heretofore, Guinea has only three public universities, three university centres, ten higher institutes and thirty private structures (universities and institutes). Among these public universities, there are two in Conakry (Gamal Abdel Nasser and General Lansana Conte in Sonfonia); the third one in Kankan, the higher institute of mining and geology of Boké, the higher agricultural and veterinarian institute of Faranah, the higher institute of educational sciences of Guinea. It is also important to state that in addition to subsidies, the government buys places in private universities for some students due to the lack of capacity in the public universities.

b- Goals and achievement of the education reform

● Reform under the PASE I

The period 1989-2000 period was remarkably marked by important change, following the various reforms undertaken by the Guinean government, including the education policy declaration adopted in September 19, 1989, which targeted the following objectives:

the principal goals of PASE I were to reprioritize public funds allocated for education, increasing the proportion appropriated for primary education and the education administration and decreasing that for secondary and higher education, and to reform the school system to allow for greater quality. PASE called for education's share of the government budget to increase from 14 to 20 percent by the year 2000, with primary education allocated at least 40 percent of the operating and 75 percent of the investment budget (Walmond, 2002). To reach an enrollment rate

of 70% in the first grade of elementary and a gross enrollment of 53% by the year 2000, which involves a significant increase in the number of classrooms (starting with 200/year and growing to 800/year), it also involved the hiring and training of large numbers of teachers.

Alongside these changes PASE called for government spending on pedagogical materials to grow from 150 to approximately 1,000 Guinean francs per pupil; for the government to make textbooks available at affordable prices, promote private schooling, ensure lowered dropout and repetition rates, change the curriculum, and improve the working conditions of teachers. It also included goals related to the improvement of the Ministry of Pre-University Education's (MEPU) management capacities, including the creation of a management information system and computerization of personnel and financial management information (Walmond, 2002).

In the same spirit of the reform program, a concern arose regarding how to relate the education sector reform to Guinea's needs in terms of economic development. Thus, Donors and the government paid particular attention to the importance of linking education policies to the macroeconomic context for the purpose of sustainability. The government was urged to determine what resources were needed for educational reform and how the reform effort could be sustained over the long term (Walmond, 2002).

● Reform under the PASE II

With the PASE 2, reform is going in the same direction, that is to say, it aims to consolidate the gains of PASE1, concentrating efforts on the challenges of educational quality, and efficiency in management and equity¹³. However, the implementation of these two programs had known some differences in both commitment and coordination from donors and the Guinea government.

Following a thorough evaluation of PASE project implementation, Midling et al. (2006:1) observed that:

“During PASE's first phase (1989-1994), a limited number of bilateral and multilateral funders (principally USAID, French Cooperation, and the World Bank) provided conditional non-project budget support for the restructuring of the country's primary education system. Collaborative planning and decision-making among the Government of Guinea and its partners in the education sector was particularly effective, due in large part to two major factors: a very dynamic and well-respected Minister of Education, and the limited number of major funders in the education sector”.

¹³ See ORC Macro (2001), *Schooling in Guinea: Results of the EDSG-II 1999*

Table 4.2: Goals of the 1993 Education Policy Declaration

<i>Increase efficiency and general access by:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Reorganizing MEPU and decentralizing certain responsibilities■ Building additional primary school classrooms■ Building additional secondary level-facilities■ Computerizing the personnel management system and revising job descriptions for different sectoral actors■ Reinforcing deconcentrated services■ Establishing an emergency fund for rural areas
<i>Improve the quality of instruction by:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Introducing action research methods for in-service teacher training■ Extending multigrade classrooms■ Putting in place a network for textbook distribution and management■ Improving student health■ Establishing a small grants program to support classroom innovations■ Promoting girl's schooling
<i>Improve institutional capacity by:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Maintaining budgetary targets for the education sector (e.g., increase and maintain allocations for primary education)■ Increasing the participation of local communities in school finance and management■ Promoting private schooling

Source: Walmond (2002: 128)

And subsequently, Midling et al. (2006:1) indicated that: “After the start of the second phase of the project (1994-1999), the relatively broad participatory planning process that had existed at the beginning of the decade had deteriorated and, at the same time, the number of international donor agencies had increased substantially”¹⁴.

As Walmond (2002) also noted, almost all the people he interviewed while conducting his study concurred that there was a distinctly different quality in the implementation of the second PASE program. Whereas PASE I benefited from an apparent coherence and cohesion of actors around a common strategy for the education sector, no such framework or vision drove PASE II. For the education intervention implemented under PASE II, despite a modified Declaration of Education Policy (see Table 4.2), the continued functioning of the PASE Technical Secretariat, and substantial donor support, actions no longer reflected a “master plan” for the sector.

Rather, it was the pace, objectives, and approaches of different donors that determined the mobilization of people and resources as well as what was realized in the sector. Donors, for example, continued to build classrooms even though there was an emergent teacher shortage.

¹⁴See USAID (2006) - The original three major donors were joined by the African Development Bank, the Canadian International Development Agency, the European Union, Germany's KfW, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and UNICEF, and others, for a total of about 20 external partners.

Five different donors were funding in-service training activities in 1999, but without an overall government framework addressing the need for teachers, appropriate skill levels, and the relationship between such training and instructional goals. This lack of strategic cohesion had serious consequences for the sector. The observation deriving from the evaluation report of PASE project conducted by Midling et al. (2006) depicts it as follows:

“By the mid- to late-1990s, access to primary education had already begun to rapidly increase. However, instruction was still marked by low quality levels and a developing but still weak capacity for system-wide planning based on the collection and analysis of school- and student-level data. Moreover, schools were viewed as the exclusive domain of the state and there was very little community participation. Funding for basic education, particularly at non-central levels, was tenuous at best, and was often influenced by political and military factors. During the shift to project-based assistance under PASE II, there was mounting concern that activities that solely targeted the official educational structure were insufficient to bring about the kinds of change to the educational system that were envisioned in a transition from education for a minority of children to universal primary education (p.1-2) .

4.3 Past performance and Concerns of the sector

4.3.1 Efficiency and quality of education in Guinea

The analysis of the efficiency and quality of an education system in general is not an easy exercise to carry out, given the fact that there is usually constraint on data availability, and reliability of the variables to use for an accurate assessment is also challenging. As for the particular case of Guinea, this remains an open topic for further investigation to better determine the performance in this sector. Nonetheless, on the basis of two reference studies: "Survey on the questionnaire of the basic indicators of well-being". (L'enquête sur le questionnaire des indicateurs de base du bien-être-QUIBB¹⁵),"and "Diagnosis and Prospects for educational policy in the context of strong macroeconomic constraints and poverty reduction¹⁶", which were conducted respectively by the Guinea Ministry of Planning (2003) and the World Bank (2005), these studies offered valuable information and data which theoretically help with approaching this matter.

¹⁵ For more details please refer to Guinea Ministry of Planning (2003)

¹⁶ For more details please refer to World Bank (2005)

However, a study proposed by Diallo et al. (2011), whereby they advocate for a national education reform, articulate the same remarks. First and foremost, it should be recognized that the most important objectives of an education system is to get a large proportion of young people enrolled in the first year of a cycle and to complete it. That the education system is itself able to provide basic skills (reading, writing and counting) to these school children, is also very important to the individual and collective level for the training of human capital that the country needs to achieve its development goals.

a- Internal efficiency of education in Guinea: it is an indicator that allows us to measure the use of public resources allocated to the education system and its impact on the education sector.

- *At the primary level:* the internal efficiency ratio was 73% for 2004. This means that about 27% of public resources mobilized by the primary are partly wasted, since they are used for repeated years or for students who do not reach the end of the primary cycle. High repetition rates, averaging 25 percent for each grade of the primary cycle, greatly increase unit cost and reduce the system's efficiency.

Differences in repetition and drop-out rates exist between girls and boys with girls tending to drop-out earlier and at key points in the system. In the final year of primary studies girls tend to drop-out while boys repeat a grade. High drop-out rates in the formal school system and the limited scope of the national literacy program have contributed to an increasing illiteracy rate in recent years, estimated at 60 percent for males and 83 percent for females (World Bank, 1990). A good education system is one that has an internal efficiency coefficient close to 100%.

- *At lower secondary school level:* the efficiency ratio is 77%, taking into account both dropouts along the cycle and grade repetition. Without repetition, but taking into account abandonments, the coefficient is 92%. Its value is 8% with only the repetition, assuming that the system accounts for no abandonments. Thus, the system would benefit tremendously by reducing the frequency of repetition as it contributes largely to the loss of internal efficiency.
- *At upper secondary school level:* the overall index of internal efficiency is estimated at 75%.

Without repetition, the index is estimated at a value of 91%, while without abandonments its value would drop by 82%.

It appears from this analysis of the internal efficiency in the education system that if efforts are to be made at the primary level in the direction of retention and reducing repetition, at post-primary level the magnitude of repetition is the main handicap to a greater internal efficiency.

b-The quality of education in Guinea: quality of education is defined as an education in which pupils have good levels of learning after a number of years spent within the system; thus, to get an idea of the quality of education in Guinea, one has to pay attention to the achievements and retention of literacy by students.

Measuring Students achievements: Guinea has participated in the Confemen Educational System Analysis Program (Programme d'Analyse des Systèmes Educatifs de la Confemen-PASEC) assessment survey conducted in 1999-2000. The survey revealed that for the second grade, in French (as a subject), Guinea is in the same level as Burkina Faso and Madagascar with a slight advantage for both countries, but Guinea shows better results than Senegal. Still for the same level, in mathematics, Guinea has better results than Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal, but is at the same level as Cameroon. For the 5th grade in French, besides Madagascar, where one can observe the same level, Guinea gets better results than Senegal and performs less than other countries. In mathematics, Guinea is still surpassed by other countries except Senegal.

According to these results, Guinean students in the second grade have acquisitions levels closer to the average of its peers; however, students in the 5th grade have a level slightly below the average of all countries (see Table below).

Retention of Literacy: Among all peer countries of Guinea, on average, 73% of adults (22-44 years) who had six years of schooling in their young age are still able to read easily. This proportion varies significantly between countries (46% in Chad and 97% in Rwanda). With a rate of 83%, the position of Guinea appears to be quite favorable in terms of retention of literacy.

It is clear from this analysis that while there are still more efforts to be made with respect to educational achievements than retention of literacy, the quality of Guinea's education is somehow within the average of its peer countries (see Table below).

Table 4.3: International Comparison score of standardized tests in primary school

			Guinea	Average*	Burkina Faso	Cameroon	Cote d'Ivoire	Madagascar	Senegal
2nd	French	Average	13,3	13,7	13,8	16,2	14,4	14,0	9,9
	(noted on 24)	standard deviation	6,3	–	5,8	5,7	5,9	5,3	6,0
PASEC	Mathematics	Average	19,2	17,4	17	19,2	14,5	21,7	14,7
	(noted on 33)	standard deviation	8,5	–	8,0	7,3	6,5	7,1	7,8
5th	French	Average	9,7	10,4	10,2	13	11,6	9,5	7,8
	(noted 23)	standard deviation	4,1	–	3,6	4,3	3,8	3,8	3,4
PASEC	Mathematics	Average	12,9	15,2	15,2	16,2	13,4	18,9	12,3
	(noted on 34)	standard deviation	5,9	–	5,4	5,7	4,9	5,9	5,6
●Primary	French	Average	13,8	14,2	14,1	16,2	13,5	16,0	11,2
●PASEC	and arithmetic								
	2nd and 5th								
●Primary**	Language	Average	51,6	49,4	52,7	60,0	51,3	58,4	42,5
	and Arithmetic								

Source: World Bank (2005); *Average of 5 countries (other than Guinea) for the PASEC surveys

Table 4.4: % of adults (22-44 years) who can easily read by length of initial studies

Countries	Length of studies during young age						
	Without Schooling	2nd grade	3rd grade	4th grade	5th grade	6th grade	8th grade
Burundi	7,5	29,4	48,1	67,2	83,1	91,1	98,2
Cameroon	8,5	23,7	36,2	50,9	65,5	77,7	92,1
Cote d'Ivoire	6,5	22,4	35,5	51,2	66,6	79,2	93,2
Guinea	6,6	22,6	35,6	48,1	67,4	83,2	98,8
Guinea-Bissau	6,6	18,5	28,8	42,4	56,6	70,3	87,9
Niger	1,1	5,0	10,2	19,7	34,8	53,6	84,5
Nigeria	16,7	37,9	51,5	65,0	76,4	84,9	94,5
CentralAfrica republic	0,5	6,5	13,0	25,0	48,0	64,0	90,0
Rwanda	6,3	34,7	59,9	80,6	92,0	97,0	99,6
Senegal	12,1	25,9	35,8	46,9	58,5	69,1	84,9
Sierra Leone	3,8	10,4	16,6	25,5	37,1	50,3	75,0
Tchad	0,5	2,8	6,3	13,6	27,1	46,6	82,8
Togo	2,4	12,0	24,0	43,0	64,0	81,0	96,0
Average	6	19	31	43	60	73	91

Sources: QUIBB Data for Guinea and "Analytical and Factual Elements for a Quality of Policy in sub-Saharan Africa primary school in the context of Education for All," Alain Mingat; PAST / AFTHD, World Bank, 2003.

4.3.2. The equity in the Guinean education system

Since education helps in determining the future of the economic and social conditions of children who benefit from it, then it is obvious that a good education system is one that provides equal opportunities in terms of access to children of the same generation, regardless of socio-economic conditions of their parents.

To better understand the equity pattern in the Guinean education system, the following aspects have to be considered: disparities in enrollment by socio-economic characteristics (disparities based on gender, urban or rural nature of the educated population and regions).

- *By sex:* first and foremost, it must be emphasized that at the primary level, while the gross enrollment rate for boys is estimated at 89.8%, that of girls is only 69.2 %. More analytically, it is also helpful to realize that, with an access rate in the first year of 78% against 94% for boys, girls have fewer opportunities to access school. Moreover, once in elementary school, it is common that they do not continue their education. Thus, while 64% of boys enrolled in the first grade reach at least the 6th grade of primary school, only 40% of girls reach this level of study. This situation is not encouraging to the extent it is recognized that reaching the sixth grade is a very important condition for long-term youth literacy. The World Bank (1990), in a report also revealed that it is in villages rather than towns that the potential for improvement in educational coverage is greater. Girls are particularly under-represented in the overall system. Only about 17 percent of girls of primary school age are in school as compared to 40 percent of boys, and the continuation of girls to higher levels of education is significantly less than for boys. This trend reflects a traditional bias against education for girls, particularly strong in rural areas. This failure to provide equal opportunity to females in the Guinean education system ignores the significant self-employment potential of women, the proven links between mothers' education and the health and educability of their children and the positive connection between the education of females and reduced fertility
- *The urban-rural nature of enrollments:* while the rate of access in 1st grade in urban areas is 100%, it is 83% in rural areas. This difference of 17% however widens at the subsequent studies cycles. Moreover, while the average retention rate (1st to 6th grade) of the primary is 87% in urban areas, it is only 66% in rural areas. These observations suggest that most of efforts to be made in terms of school enrollment in the years to come should mainly be devoted to rural areas currently facing specific difficulties.
- *By region:* Guinea is structured into 8 pedagogical regions/Regional Inspectorates of Education (Inspections Regionales de l'Education-IRE): Conakry, Boké, Faranah, Kankan, Kindia, Labé, Mamou and N'Zérékoré. Problems related to supply are predominant since 5 out of 8 regions in Guinea are concerned, while problems in relation to demand are observed

only in three regions. Only Faranah, Conakry and Kindia have both a good supply and demand in terms of access. Kankan and Labé are experiencing supply problems for retention and access, and finally Boké and Mamou are confronted both with problems of supply and demand, and with retention as well as access (see Table below).

Table 4.5: Guinea: Gross School Enrollment Ratio by Region and by Gender

Regions	1998/1999 (% rate)			1999/2000 (% rate)		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Conakry	76.8	96.6	86.5	83.1	102.4	92.5
Boké	38.4	68.4	53.1	41.9	70.7	92.5
Faranah	30.2	62.8	46.1	38.0	71.5	54.4
Kankan	28.3	59.9	43.8	30.6	57.8	43.9
Kindia	36.4	68.0	51.9	39.5	67.1	53.0
Labe	29.9	46.4	37.9	37.9	54.0	45.8
Mamou	26.7	51.7	38.9	36.0	61.8	48.7
N'Zérékoré	40.0	75.3	57.2	38.1	65.5	51.5
National	39.9	67.6	53.5	44.3	69.7	56.7

Source: MEPU/EC (Ministry of Pre-University and Civic Education) / World Bank (2005).

The efforts undertaken in the education sector in Guinea in the 1980s have made noticeable progress in terms of quantitative gain. Indeed, it is important to underline that the advent of the second republic in 1984 has favored this major change in the sector, as indicated in a report of the Ministry (2004): "important reforms supported by a political will of the Government have been operated at the level of the Guinean Educational System in order to make it more competitive". This intervention in the education sector came at an indicated moment. For the sector's performance had suffered a serious decline in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The gross enrollment ratio (GER) at the primary level dropped below 30%. Other major issues accompanying this underperformance relate to disparities, mainly of a gender and regional nature. This situation seriously penalizes access to education in the country. However, various reforms pursued during the period 1985-2000, have made it possible to achieve, among other things, some significant advancement, namely:

- to advance the proportion of the national operating budget allocated to education from 14 to 25%;
- the increase in the number of school classrooms (both public and private combine) from 7,615 in 1989/90 to 18, 252 in 1999/2000, with 3,000 more new classrooms, mostly in rural areas;
- the increase in the total number of primary school teachers from 8,140 in 1990 to 17, 340 in 2000, which made it possible to redeploy horizontally and vertically 2700 teachers;
- improving the curricula and the production of teaching supports and materials;
- acquiring textbooks and guides for elementary and junior secondary school;
- the gross school enrollment ratio (GER) increased from 32 percent in 1990 to 57 percent in 2000;
- the gross school enrollment ratio for girls also increased from 17.3 percent in 1990 to 44.33 percent in 2000, where girls account for about 39.82 percent of the total number of pupils;
- there has also been a decrease in the illiteracy rate from 74 percent to 69 percent during this period.

Certainly, important changes were made during these 10 to 15 years of reform, the fact remains that the education sector still continues to face significant challenges and that of several kinds. For, in the first instance, it was noted that the level of school enrollment remains low. With reference to 1999, it was admitted that “the primary enrollment rate was 53.5 percent, as compared to a rate of 29 percent in 1989” (Republic of Guinea, 2002: 14). As for “the literacy rate, it was estimated at 25 percent of the population over the age”. What is more, Guinea’s school enrollment performance with respect to its sub-Saharan Africa peers deserves further attention; especially that of girls’ education and women literacy (see table below).

Table 4.6: Enrolment Rate and Proportion of Girls in Countries with very Low Enrolment

Countries	Gross Enrolment Rate				Proportion of Girls			
	1980	1988	1992	2000	1980	1988	1992	2000
Burkina Faso	18	34	37	37	37	38	39	39
Chad	43	51	65	57	28	30	32	30
Djibouti	35	46	41	45	41	42	43	42
Ethiopia	35	39	22	25	35	39	41	42
Guinea	36	34	42	37	33	31	32	31
Mali	27	23	25	24	36	37	37	36
Niger	25	27	29	29	35	36	36	36

Source: UNESCO

This lack of performance observed in the sector actually results first in a marked disparity in terms of access between genders, with the level of education of girls (37%) against that of boys (66%); then by a disparity between urban and rural areas, and more broadly this disparity is observed geographically and among the different regions of the country. Thus, a significant gap exists within the 33 prefectures in the provision of education. As such, two of the country's four main geographic regions lag behind both in coverage and literacy rate. By way of illustration, many areas such as Labé and Mamou struggled to enroll a large number of their school-aged children; the capital Conakry had a rate of 84% while the national average was 51% (MEPU-EC/SSP Guinée/ORC Macro, 2001). Given this state of affairs, gross primary enrolment ratio in Guinea fell far short of the 72 % average for sub-Saharan Africa during the period 1990-2000.

In addition, regional disparities revealed that “Moyenne Guinée [Middle Guinea] and Haute Guinée [Upper Guinea] had the lowest gross enrollment ratios at 38 percent (49.0 percent for boys and 28.3 percent for girls) and 45.0 percent (61.4 percent for boys and 29.2 percent for girls) respectively” (GOG/PSRP, 2002: 34). “These same regions also have the lowest literacy rates, at only about 13 percent in Haute Guinée and 19 percent in Moyenne Guinée, as against 23 percent and 26 percent, respectively, for Guinée Forestière [Forest Guinea] and Basse Guinée [Lower Guinea]. In urban areas, male and female literacy rates were 60 percent and 36 percent, respectively, while these rates were 25 percent, respectively, in rural areas” (GOG/PSRP, 2002: 14).

Besides coverage, the other front that besets the progress in the sector relates to quality in the provision of education. In this respect, these two features, infrastructure development and the hiring of teaching staff have been pointed out as they failed to keep pace with the enrolment expansion. As such, the pupil-classroom ratio increased from 41 to 43 between 1990 and 2000, and the pupil-teacher ratio increased from 38 to 46. The teacher-classroom ratio in rural areas fell from 1 to 0.8 over the same period. This situation gives rise to the double shift schedule, and also explains the existence of multigrade classes in rural areas. Overall, the pupil-classroom ratio revolves around 50 with extremes in Conakry and in some cities where it can reach 100 students per class. In the case of urban areas, the pupil-classroom rose from 80 to 120 in places while the teacher-classroom ratio fell from 1.1 in 1989 to 0.9 in 1999 (MEPU-EC/SSP Guinée/ORC Macro, 2001; GOG/PSRP, 2002).

As a consequence of these shortcomings present in the sector, it is disconcerting to note a weakening of the performance of the sector, which results in very high attrition rates at all levels. According to the study of the MEPU-EC/SSP Guinée/ORC Macro (2001), the repetition rate, for example, increased steadily between 1990 and 1996 from 19.8 to 25.4 per cent, to finally reach 28 per cent on the eve of the year 2000 with the application of rigorous measures to examinations.

On the supply side, besides gender and geographic disparities that have been stressed, there is, in fact, a need for further efforts to expand the supply of education for better access and equity in the sector, and above all, to qualify the educational system's services in order to meet the development needs of the country and its people. However, growing educational demand due to a rapidly growing school-age-population within the country, poses a serious challenge to the system. Given the fact that the Guinea education system is confronting various issues and concerns of all kinds, ranging from the priority setting, its policy formulation up to the last segment of the implementation framework.

In addition to this, the sector remains characterized, on the one hand, by insufficient infrastructure, unevenness in institutional capacity and limited budgetary resources. On the other hand, the lack of qualified human resources (low educational level and the shortage of teachers, the low quality of management and administration staff), the lack of equipment and teaching/learning materials. Among other things, these aspects listed here constitute a major obstacle to the development of the sector. However, the launch of the new reform program—Education for All—initiated by the Guinean government in collaboration with its partners in the sector has already raised great hopes.

CHAPTER V. APPROACH TO GUINEA'S EFA EDUCATION SECTOR REFORM

5.1 The process of the reform

Looking back over the course of the education sector in Guinea, one may have the impression that much has been accomplished, considering not only the enormous efforts that have been exerted to improve the sector, but also the many difficulties that have been overcome. These difficulties, in fact, are still numerous and diverse, and need to be overcome in order to assure a better basis of education in the country. However, there is every reason to believe that establishing such a conclusive mapping of the sector requires a comprehensive evaluation study, which would lay down better foundations for possible palliative measures to effectively address the prevailing situation in the sector. Thus, the state of basic education in Guinea at the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the year 2000, to say the least, seems to be similar to those of many other sub-Saharan African countries. Despite some progress made by the country, however, the performance indicators tend to have some similarities with its peers: low primary enrollment, high dropout rate, lower primary completion rate, and a significant imbalance in net primary school attendance between boys and girls (Back et al., 2003, Midling et al., 2006, Swift-Morgan, 2011).

Moreover, although diagnosis of acute educational problems prior to the reform inception appear to be unusual in Guinea, few studies (i.e., EDC / FQEL projects supported by USAID, the International Institute on Education Policy, and the Michigan State University team) have been conducted as a prelude to the introduction of the EFA program, and almost all raised similar existing issues by highlighting some foreseen concerns. In fact, with the advent of the EFA program, Guinea faced some peculiar challenges. These challenges, as indicated in the report of the World Bank (2001), are among others, (a) [not only] low [but also] “unequal access to basic education; (b) high cost to parents; (c) poor quality of education; (d) inadequate financing of basic education; (e) weak capacity for management and supervision(p.5). What is more, these internal problems faced by Guinea's education sector were exacerbated by security situations (i.e., arm conflicts) in neighboring “countries during the 1990s and 2000s, especially in 2000...which has resulted in placing significant stress on Guinea's scarce resources and affecting the distribution of external aid” (Back et al., 2003:7).

Against this backdrop, it appears to be much easier to grasp the real expectations associated with the EFA program in view of the “rapidly growing demand and size of the school-going

population, particularly at the elementary school level” (Midling et al., 2006: Appendix B-2). However, the above-mentioned shortfalls, and then the growing demand in good quality of education and its equitable provision, led Guinea, “like many other developing countries, to subscribe to the tenets, goals and targets of EFA to be reached by 2015, with the program’s goals being [supposedly] adapted to the country’s needs and priorities” (Midling et al., 2006: Appendix B-2).

Nonetheless, a general impression anticipates that the Education for All intervention program, intended to refurbish Guinea's education sector, although salutary, remains both too ambitious and ambiguous. The program, carried by a global movement, and adopting a holistic approach to the sector literally, overlooked essential prerequisites in the design and introduction of the program. Thus, despite the reform approach calling for strong ownership and partnership, planned policies and actions have failed to address existing needs in the education system. In reality, both instigators and reform agents/recipients have not fully played their part in ensuring the readiness of required aggregates for change. And also in defining the appropriate balance between the need for change and the feasibility of the proposed reform.

As the third reform initiated in its sector, “Guinea’s EFA, was officially launched in 2002, covering a planning period of 12 years. The program emphasizes three major areas of intervention: access, quality and management—as a framework for technical and financial partners’ interventions” (Midling et al., 2006:2). Furthermore, Midling et al., went on to posit the following:

“Unlike the previous PASE program, which focused exclusively on primary education, Guinea’s EFA program takes a holistic approach to education sector, bringing together three separate ministries and services from early childhood through the university level. This system-wide approach has drastically increased the management burden on both central and decentralized levels of the education system” (2006: Appendix 2).

According to the African Development Bank (2005:4), the provisions that guided this sectoral reform—“the Government’s sector policy—is based on the Education Policy Statement of September 1989, the National Education Orientation Law (1997), the recommendations of the World Education Conference (Jomtien 1990, Dakar 2000, etc.), and the MDGs”. This sector policy “is also embodied in the action framework that constitutes the EFA program (EFAP), which was formulated in 2001, with support from the World Bank Group, to address existing

constraints on the education system. The main objective of this program, which is to achieve universal primary education, and equitable development of the entire education system, is reflected in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), under the objective that seeks to increase the population's access to basic social services. In this respect, the Government undertook extensive reforms at several levels (structural, institutional, financial and educational) with a view to implementing this policy" (AfDB, 2005: 4). However, the Bank (ibid) further contended that:

"This policy does not take into account some of the recent orientations and developments in the sector (such as the MDGs, initiatives aimed at accelerating girls' education) which are, however, reflected in the EFAP. Updating the policy will help establish consistency between the major policy thrusts in education, and the strategies and objectives defined at the national and international levels". (AfDB, 2005:11)

However, the potential threats to the success of EFAP intervention rest likely on the supply side penalizing factors, which are considered to be "insufficient infrastructure, unevenness in institutional capacity, limited budgetary & qualified human resources" (Back et al., 2003:9).

5.2 The context of the reform

EFA program objectives and implementation structure

In view of implementing the education reform intervention under EFA program, the following:

"Ten priority actions have been identified to ensure that priorities are effectively taken into account. These are: (i) improving access to education for the entire school-age population; (ii) improving the quality and efficiency of the education system; (iii) reducing disparities to promote greater equity and greater social justice; (iv) developing an innovative system for training teachers; (v) pursuing institutional reorganizations in favour of decentralization of administrative management and the management of resources; (vi) implementing a policy for the maintenance of teaching equipment and materials, supporting the implementation of the maintenance master plan (PDM); (vii) developing a communication and information system; (viii) strengthening the involvement of the private sector and developing partnerships with civil society and grassroots communities; (ix) establishing conditions conducive to better management of post-primary education" (AfDB, 2005:4).

Subsequently, additional insights of the same report are expressed in the following terms:

"These actions (which are currently being implemented) reveal that the Government's strategic orientations and plans for basic education development

are underpinned by international initiatives that seek to accelerate education, such as the Fast Track Initiative and UNICEF's Initiative to Accelerate Progress in Girls' Education. The implementation of the first phase (EFAP 1) focuses mainly on access at all levels of the education and the increase number of students in Teacher Training Colleges" (AfDB, 2005:4).

This program was expected to continue until 2007, but due to social troubles and political instability that took place in Guinea, the program underwent some discontinuities and undue deferment. Later on, the program was morphed into a sectoral education program (PSE), with the first phase implemented between the period of 2008-2015 with the same components: access, quality and management. The second phase, also called, an interim program was scheduled between 2015 — 2017. Overall, the combination of these intervention phases "has resulted in improved access to education at all levels. It also resulted in an increase in the number of students in Teacher Training Colleges. Despite this, further efforts still have to be made to facilitate the achievement of intended objectives" (AfDB, 2005:4).

Achievements of the EFA reform program interventions

With the reforms, it is believed that a "significant progress has been made in school enrollment, but a lot more needs to be done to achieve the universal education advocated in the Millennium Development Goals and improve the quality of education" (Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), 2016:14). However, determining the progress made in terms of basic education amounts to establishing the scope of intervention of the sector reform policy. To do this, it is first of all important to know what basic education represents in each country, and with that, be able to assess the performance achievement at this level.

In fact, it appears worthwhile determining first what basic education represents in a given educational system. This would help to better determine the performance toward its development. The Global Monitoring Report of the UNESCO-IBE "synthesizes the results of analysis of 113 national definitions of basic education in relation to the formal education system" (UNESCO-IBE, 2007b:15). This synthesis reveals that, in two-thirds of countries, basic education definition follows the International Standard Classification of Education "(ISCED) and covers primary and lower secondary education. While, in the remaining third, the term is equivalent to primary education only or to primary plus some preprimary or secondary education" (UNESCO-IBE, 2007b:15) (see table below).

Table 5.1: National definitions of basic education

Basic education definitions (number of countries)	Countries
Primary education only (8)	Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Haïti, Maldives, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Portugal
Primary education plus at least one year of pre-primary education (17)	Albania, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ecuador, Guinea , Macao(China), Mexico, the Niger, Panama, Tunisia, Zimbabwe
Primary education plus lower secondary & at least one year of upper secondary education (7)	Argentina, Brazil, Republic of Korea, Oman, Philippines, Slovenia, Saint Lucia
Primary education plus some pre-primary & lower secondary & some upper secondary education (5)	China, Kenya, Myanmar, Peru, Thailand
Primary & lower secondary education (76)	Remaining countries use the term basic education

Source: UNESCO-IBE (2007d: 16)

The above table presents that basic education in Guinea's education system encompasses both pre-primary and primary [formal] education. However, youth and adults training programs have been included within the recent effort dedicated to basic education diffusion in the country, which actually falls under the EFA general goals and targets.

Indeed, in Guinea, pre-school is a full level of education in the education system. Actually, it is shown that its development has a direct and positive impact on basic education. In addition, it is found that children who attended preschool are better prepared for basic education. This, de facto, can be an effective tool for reducing repetition and dropout rates, and thus contribute to the success of the Education for All program (UNESCO-BIE, 2010).

It is for this reason that the proposed actions in recent reform program interventions have integrated early childhood development sub-components, although it should be remembered that this level has long been neglected in the country. Thus, the lessons learned from this apparent defect in the promotion of basic education, undoubtedly motivated a change of course in this regard. Therefore, under the EFA reform intervention, the program includes an early childhood development component (ECD) implemented through an integrated approach allowing a synergy between health, nutrition as well as the cognitive, psychomotor and psychosocial aspects of the development of children aged 3 to 6 years. The ECD is a pilot initiative that, during the first phase, involved six prefectures whose gross enrollment rates were among the lowest in the country. The activities were organized around four areas of intervention: the training of community animators; parental education; the transition between the ECD and primary

programs; setting up a monitoring and evaluation system (UNESCO-BIE, 2010).

Early childhood education

Against this background, it is important to retrace Guinea's progress in the provision of basic education services to its young children. At first, it is necessary, however, to take a look at the educational cycle dedicated to early childhood to better understand its overall implication on the provision of services. Indeed, preschooling aims to develop all potentialities and abilities—physical, psychomotor, cognitive and socio-educational—existing in the young child while preparing him/her to approach with serenity the primary education level.

Moreover, it also becomes clear that the development of pre-school education facilitates the acquisition and sustainability of basic education through the direct and positive effect it confers to children in terms of prerequisites—language acquisition and early literacy. As a result, this teaching cycle contributes, among other things:

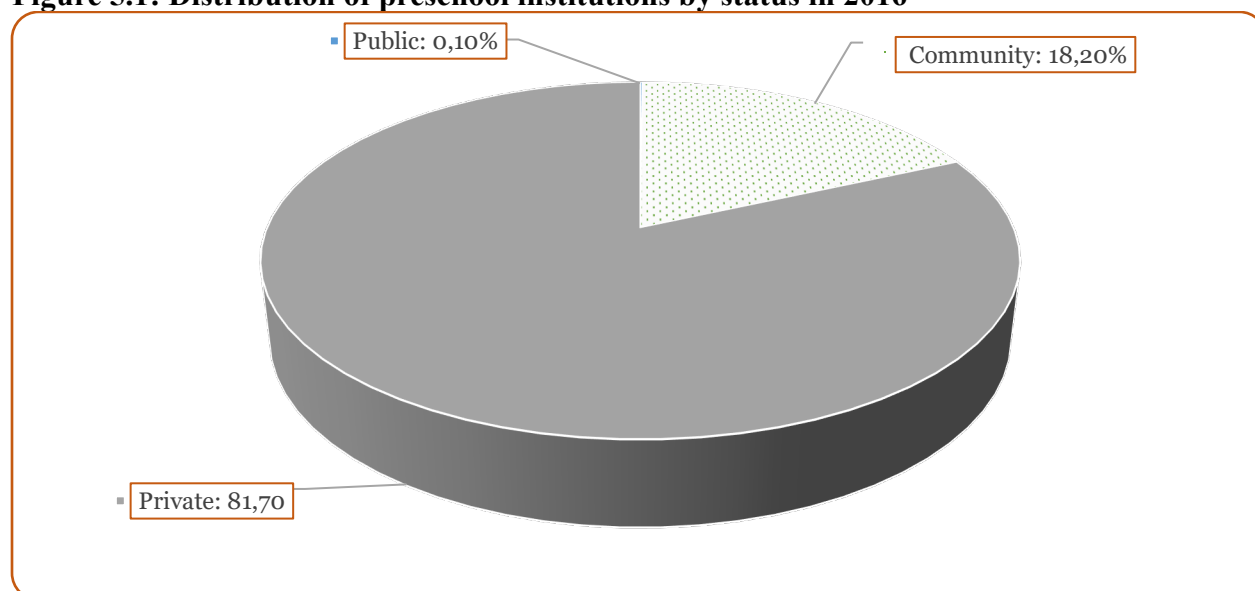
- to promoting equal opportunity between children with different socioeconomic characteristics and especially to the improvement of gender equity;
- to maintaining and improving educational quality, reducing repetition and drop-out, thus representing an effective means of reducing the cost of internal inefficiency of the system.

Due to its merit and its inherent status, pre-primary education is recognized as such as a natural and universal right. As such, many countries, especially Western nations, have given priority and universalized this level of education, while the countries of sub-Saharan Africa in general and Guinea in particular still lag behind. However, it must be emphasized that the country is committed to respecting, defending and promoting this sub-sector as a due right of its younger children. Yet, despite this commitment, the country is facing significant problems that inhibit Guinea's children from fully enjoying this right, more precisely, their right to education, as access to preschooling service is formally recognized as a sub-level of education in Guinea's education system. However, prior to the advent of the global campaign for basic education in the year 2000, the supply of public preschool was almost non-existent in Guinea. In fact, this trend is still far from being reversed despite repeated calls for concrete actions in favor of this sub-sector. To date, its coverage remains very disparate across the country with a high concentration of educational institutions in urban areas, thus reflecting a remarkable absence of public preschool institutions especially in the interior. In fact, out of 1,746 educational institutions, only two are public and all are situated in Conakry (the capital city); 190 are community-based and the rest

are private (cf. statistical yearbook 2014-2015).

As such, it appears that the system relies mainly on the private sector, which comprises more than 81% of the preschool total enrolment and 80.8% of educational institutions. Community institutions provide the rest. Public institutions are non-existent in the countryside. To date, the capital city—Conakry—still has more than half (52%) of institutions that host about 53% of preschool enrollment. The N'Zérékoré region follows with more than a quarter of the facilities in 2009. In all, these two regions account for 78% of preschool establishments. The regions of Faranah and Kindia have also made strides in community education. However, the regions where preschool institutions are weakly implanted include Labé, Mamou, Kankan and Boké.

Figure 5.1: Distribution of preschool institutions by status in 2016



Source: Data from the 2016 preschool statistical yearbook, extract from the Annual Performance Report of Guinea's Ministries of Education, 2017

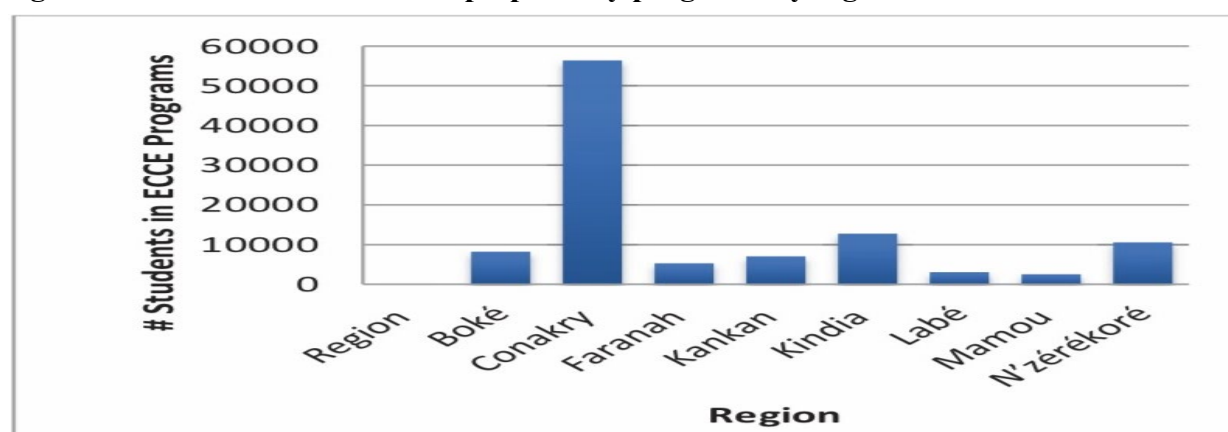
Overall, the situation deriving from the limited number of facilities and the significant imbalance in their availability partly explains the low preschooling enrolment rate over the years in Guinea. As previously indicated, before the inception of the EFA program, the rate of preschool enrollment was below five percent. Although data is lacking, the compiled estimates of gross enrollment rates show a very weak progression before the 2000s. This trend has accelerated thereafter to show an encouraging progress in crossing the proportion of five percent and giving a glimpse of an evolutionary growth (see table below).

Table 5.2: Evolution of enrollments at the preschool level in Guinea

Year	Total number	Gross enrolment Rate	Year	Total number	Gross enrolment Rate
1990-1991	---	---	2005-2006	80 217	6.1
1993-1994	10 260	0.7%	2006-2007	88 918	6.8
1994-1995	15 908	1.2%	2007-2008	99 819	7.3
1995-1996	21 850	1.6%	2008-2009	---	---
1996-1997	23 736	1.8%	2009-2010	---	7.5
1999-2000	---	---	2010-2011	---	---
2000-2001	---	---	2011-2012	---	---
2001-2002	---	---	2012-2013	---	---
2002-2003	---	---	2013-2014	---	---
2003-2004	67 881	5.2	2014-2015	152 093	8.4
2004-2005	74 582	5.7			

Source: Data compiled from RESEN Guinée 2004; ROCARE/ERNWACA 2010; SABER 2013; Guinea/MOE 2014-2017-2018.

As the table above presents it, the coverage of preschool education in recent years is still very low in Guinea—8.4% by 2015, one of the lowest rates in the sub-region (11% on average). At the national level, Conakry has the highest gross preschool rate. However, other regions like N’Zérékoré, Kindia have made some efforts thanks to the support of associations and NGOs-in the development of early childhood (see figure below). Although the Social Protection Ministry (MASPEE) regulates the provision of preschool services, the Guinean Government does not mandate this level of education dedicated to children aged 3 to 6 years old. Up until now, it remains established that most of the existing early childhood care and development (ECCD) services are provided by either private entities or communities, through associations and/or NGO initiatives.

Figure 5.2: Student enrollment in preprimary programs by region

Source: MASPFE, Statistics on Preprimary Education, 2010-2011 (extracted from the World Bank (2013:13) SABER Country Report).

In fact, such an undertaking is in itself a good thing since it helps to eliminate existing disparities between rural and urban areas.

Nonetheless, it should be emphasized that further effort is certainly required from all actors involved in ECCD services provision, however, a greater commitment of the government is much more needed to spearhead the development of this sub-sector. In essence, the harmonization of efforts in this direction necessarily requires an operational framework. This will not only define and guide the intended preschooling plans and programs but also, and above all, better regulate the activities of intervening actors. As for now, it is not quite certain the government can provide a substantial number of centers providing ECCD services throughout the country. Because not only is the number of unregistered centers unknown but also there are various types (Jaramillo & Tietjen, 2001:16) With regard to the types of ECCD centers available in Guinea, they vary according to their location. Nevertheless, these centers range from crèches, childcare centers, nursery schools, kindergartens and community education centers (CEC).

Moreover, the most common types of ECCD nowadays in Guinea first appear to be the “jardin d’enfants” (kindergarten) with a percentage share of 74.6% (targeting children from the age of two). Then, this is followed by the community education centers with a share of 10.4%, which are recent initiatives financed by NGOs such as UNICEF, Action-Aid and many others and operated by local community organizations. There are also the “école maternelle” (nursery school) with 4.10 % share and enrolling children of three to six years old (Jaramillo & Tietjen, 2001; World Bank SABER report, 2013)

Table 5.3: Number of ECCE centers by type and region

Region	Crèche	Childcare Centers	Nursery School	Kinder-garten	CEC
Boké			4	46	6
Conakry	24	6	1	569	0
Faranah				24	28
Kankan			5	46	20
Kindia	1	1	2	133	24
Labé		1	4	35	6
Mamou	1		2	19	11
N’zérékoré	3	1	33	57	34
Total	29	9	51	929	129
% Share	2.3%	0.7%	4.10%	74.6%	10.4%

Source: MASPFE, Statistics on Preprimary Education, 2010-2011

Additionally, it should be pointed out that despite the variety of these centers and their increased number in recent years, “the majority of ECCE facilities are still located in urban and peri-urban areas, which put children in rural areas at a disadvantage” (World Bank/SABER report, 2013: 13). Another disparity that deserves mention in the preschool provision relates to gender equity. In this respect, it was noted that the preschooling rate of girls remains above that of the boys. As such, the gross preschooling rate of girls in 2008 was 7.8% while that of boys was 6.5%. Further concern with regard to pre-primary education development in Guinea has to do with differences in socioeconomic groups. Under the current situation, children with disabilities and/or those from poor or marginalized families are likely subject to a limited access to preschool education services. This state of affairs deserves special attention. If not, the government's efforts to increase preschool enrollment to 30 percent by 2020 and expand coverage in rural areas may be unattainable.

Primary education

Elementary education has long been a priority choice in the Guinean education system. Of all the reforms envisaged in the education sector, the primary level has always been at the center of major concerns and plans. This has made many people more often than not confuse primary schooling with basic education, as is especially the case in Guinea. In any case, given the implication of this education sub-sector in the process of human and economic development, the Guinean government under the impetus of recent educational reform waves, also initiated measures in this direction. To support the development of primary education in the country, many technical and financial partners from bi and multi-lateral organizations displayed their interest and willingness in accompanying the government. Thus, following this renewed commitment, not only has the education sector been identified as a national priority but also primary education was made compulsory for all children in the country.

In Guinea, elementary education lasts six years. Children are admitted at the age of 7, sometimes beyond in the countryside. As stated previously, primary education is compulsory and is structured in three sub-cycles: the preparatory course (CP1 and CP2), the elementary course (CE1 and CE2) and the middle course (CM1 and CM2). A certificate of elementary studies (CEPE) sanctions the completion of this level of education. Moreover, under article 10 of the Framework Act on Education in Guinea—Law No. L/97/022/AN of 19 June 1997—it is expected that pupils completing this level be equipped with basic labor market skills, since the

law states that the purpose of elementary education is to:

- awaken the child's spirit through school exercises in order to allow the emergence and development of his/her abilities;
- ensure his/her physical, intellectual, moral, civic and aesthetic training and to awaken his/her initiative and critical sense;
- prepare his/her gradual and harmonious integration to his/her environment by giving him/her the means to either access a secondary, general, technical or professional school, or to insertion into active life;
- rehabilitate manual work as a factor of development of the intelligence and as a base of future insertion in the economic and sociocultural environment, thanks to a close liaison between the school and the socio-educational environment.

In order to translate this ambition into reality, the Guinean Government, with the support of development partners, has undertaken major reform programs in the education sector. Therefore, various education plans and programs have been formulated and implemented. The most recent of these initiatives date from the second half of the 1980s. These initiatives refer to the Adjustment Program in the education sector (PASE), the education sector program (PSE), and the Education for All (EFA) program. Though much effort has been made, registered results are considered as being far below expectations. In this respect, a vivid recollection of the reform intervention in the country posits that “back in 1985, an analysis of Guinea’s educational system revealed the need for sweeping changes in the system’s structures and content, as well as its aims. The Government initiated reforms that led to the adoption of an Education Policy Statement in 1989” (Republic of Guinea, 2002: 33). “Additional provisions have also backed the government initiatives in the sector such as the National Education Orientation Law (1997), and the recommendations of the World Education Conferences (Jomtien 1990, Dakar 2000, etc.)” (AfDB, 2005:4). These various reform initiatives are deemed to have a common vision that falls within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Education for All (EFA) program and the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS).

Overall, the actions taken following these reform initiatives have more or less contributed to the achievement of some results. With respect to the development of primary education, some progress has been made and the data show net improvement in indicators; the performance indicators when compared to the year prior the reform inception, show that a considerable evolution has been marked. In terms of access to “education, the gross enrollment ratio increased from 26.81 percent in 1990 to 57 percent in 2000. The gross enrollment ratio for girls stood at

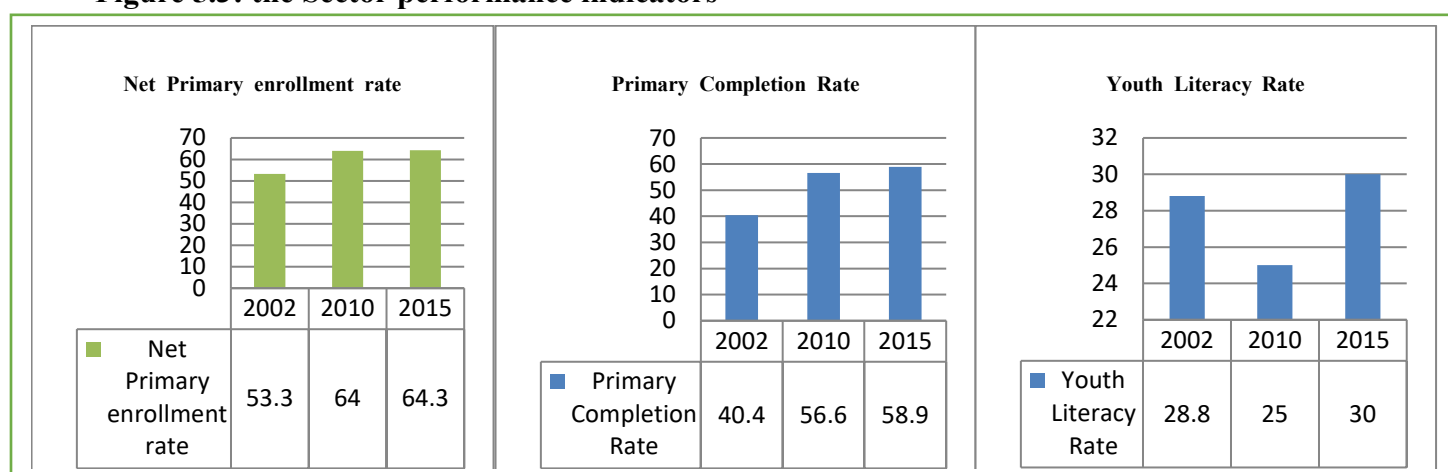
44.3 percent in 2000, as opposed to 7.3 percent in 1990” (Guinea-PRSP, 2002:34). The youth literacy rate in the same period was estimated around 25 percent. The introduction of the EFA program in the early 2000s also boosted efforts to improve access to education in the country.

A soaring trend in gross enrollment rates (GER) was observed thereafter, where according to the African Development Bank (2005) report, the rate at the primary level increased from 61 percent in 2001 to 77 percent in 2004, and the primary school completion rate increased from 34.7 percent in 2001 to 46.7 percent in 2004. However, Bank went on to indicate that despite this progress, access to primary education remains limited and unequal. In 2004, the GER for girls was 70 percent, compared to 83 percent for boys, while the GER in rural areas was only 51 percent for girls, compared to 65 percent for boys (AfDB, *ibid*).

Nonetheless, “the gross enrollment rate has stagnated around 79 percent since 2007 and at 70 percent for girls. In rural areas, the rate was 60 percent. The disturbing fact is that the dropout rate rose from 5.9 percent in 2007 to 11.6 percent in 2010, bringing down the primary completion rate to 57 percent in 2010” (AfDB, 2011: 5). As for “the net primary enrolment rate, it rose from 53.3 percent from 2002 to 66.7 percent in 2013. During the same period, the primary completion rate went from 40.4 percent to 61.9 percent” (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN/ECA), 2016:14).

Furthermore, the UN/ECA (2016:14) went on to indicate that “net enrolment of girls was 69.4 percent in 2013, compared with 80.7 percent for boys, with an estimated gender parity index of 0.85”. Adult literacy rose from 28.8 percent in 2002 to 31 percent in 2015.

Figure 5.3: the Sector performance indicators



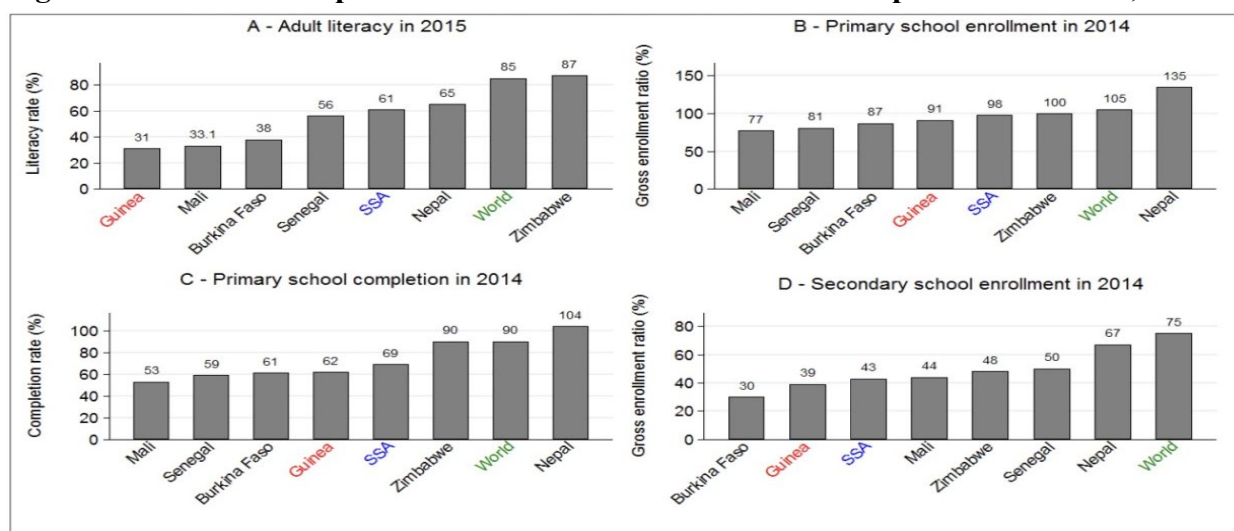
Source: author’s compilation of data from MOE (2016) and ECA (2016)

These performances observed above can be explained, to a large extent, by the increase in the supply of school infrastructure, which remains one of the major achievements of the Education Sector Adjustment Program (PASE), the program Education for All (EFA) and the Education Sector Program (PSE). It remains to be seen if this quantitative progress has not been done at the expense of quality and efficiency (MOE, 2013).

The same MOE (2013) report also provided some figures with regard to international comparisons. Guinea's school coverage is lower than that of low-income African countries at preschool and primary levels. With regard to primary education, Guinea's performance is also low compared with the average of the countries considered. In fact, the GER of the primary is 20% lower than the average of the comparator countries while the Gross Literacy Rate is lower by 30% of the countries comparable to Guinea.

However, universal basic education advocated in the Millennium Development Goals and EFA's main target by 2015 has yet to be reached in Guinea. The latest indicators show an increase in the gross enrollment rate from 78.0 percent in 2010 to 97 percent in 2016; an increase in primary completion rate from 56.6 per cent in 2010 to 67 percent in 2016 (Republic of Guinea, 2018).

Figure 5.4: Educational performance in Guinea and selected comparator countries, 2014



Source: World Development Indicators (extracted from the WB Systematic Country Diagnostic)

Despite the quantitative gains made over the last three decades, especially in terms of expanding access to education, the provision of basic education still faces major problems in the country. As such, the sub-sector remains confronted with quality, equity and efficiency issues. Important challenges to achieve primary education for all and to improve the quality of basic education are

among others:

“(i) the mismatch between supply and demand which results in the lack of capacity of the Guinean education system, mainly in rural areas and the plethora of classrooms in an urban environment ; (ii) the persistence of disparities (gender and area), the low access of children to school (about 30% of those of school age are out of school) and the inadequacy of national coverage of school canteens; (iii) the shortage of teachers and the misallocation of those available between geographical areas and urban and rural areas of residence; (iv) the low quality of teaching and learning due, among other things, to the lack of academic and professional capacity of teachers and textbooks, (v) the inadequacy of the training provided with the real needs of the labor market; employment; (vi) lack of funding of education (on average 3% of GDP against 4.5% in the sub-region) and (vii) the low internal and external efficiency of the system” (Republic of Guinea, 2018:13).

As far as the above-mentioned issues in the education sector are concerned, aspects related to quality and internal efficiency of primary education refer to: repetition, retention, primary completion rates, and manual/pupil ratios. Important steps have been taken to curb binding factors—academic variables (i.e., previously mentioned) as well as extracurricular variables (i.e., teachers’ motivation) to this effect. These measures include “(i) strengthening educational inspection and supervision, about 23,000 teachers and supervisors were inspected in 2016; (ii) the implementation of the EGRA (Early Grade Reading Assessment) approach and its gradual expansion from 80 to 150 experimental schools; (iii) the in-service training of 9,882 teachers and 819 primary school teachers, (iv) the provision of textbooks to students, and (v) the granting of subsidies to all 421 DSEE” (Republic of Guinea, 2017:23).

Moreover, the “Guinean education system is characterized by major disparities” (AfDB, 2005: vii). that are varied in nature. As already pointed out, the implication on this matter has to do with gender and regional gaps. This is further supported in the excerpt below:

“The magnitude of the disparities increases when area and gender effects are combined. Data indicates that 74 percent of boys in rural areas reach CM2 (the last year of primary school), compared to 25 percent of girls in rural areas. Less than 3 girls out of 10 reach the last year of primary school in rural areas, compared to 7 boys out of 10 in urban areas...These disparities are attributable to factors related to access to education (lack of school infrastructure close their homes; inadequate mobilization for girls’ education) more than to demand (choice of boys to the detriment of girls to reducing the

cost of education, when free access is limited; household work assigned to girls)” (AfDB, 2005:8).

In a first step, the table below is provided to better illustrate the disparities existing between genders and areas in the provision of education.

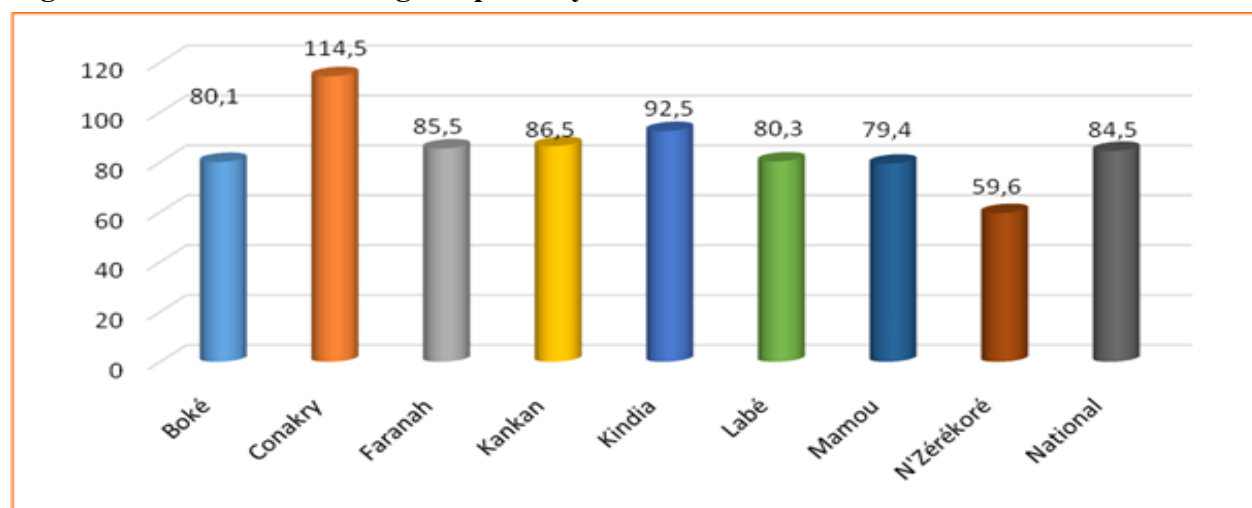
Table 5.4: Guinea: Gross School Enrollment Ratio by Region and by Gender

Regions	1998/1999			1999/2000		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Conakry	76.8	96.6	85.5	83.1	102.4	92.5
Boké	38.4	68.4	53.1	41.9	70.7	56.5
Faranah	30.2	62.8	46.1	38.0	71.5	54.4
Kankan	28.3	59.9	43.8	30.6	57.8	43.9
Kindia	36.4	68.0	51.9	39.5	67.1	53.0
Labé	29.9	46.4	37.9	37.9	54.0	45.8
Mamou	26.7	51.7	38.9	36.0	61.8	48.7
N’Zérékoré	40.0	75.3	57.2	38.1	65.5	51.5
National	39.9	67.6	53.5	44.3	69.7	56.7

Source: MEPU/EC (Ministry of Pre-University and Civic Education)

Following the recent reform in the sector, the changes that have occurred in the provision of primary education are reflected in the following figure below.

Figure 5.5: Evolution of the gross primary admission rate between 2015 and 2016



Source: Primary Education Statistical Yearbooks 2016 (Ministry of Education)

Against all expectations, the gross enrolment rate observed in recent years presents important disparities among regions. This evolution shows that in the region of Faranah (85.5%), Kankan (86.5%), Kindia (92.5%) and Conakry (114.5%), the trend exceeds the national average (84.5%).

However, the regions of N'Zérékoré (59.6%), Mamou (79.4%), Boké (80.1%) and Labé (80.3%) remain below the national average, although in most of these regions the dynamics of schooling tend to increase (Republic of Guinea, 2017).

In nutshell, this disparity observed within the country clearly demonstrates Guinea's educational weak performance as compared to the average in its sub-region. A summary of the sectoral status derived from the World Bank's Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) is quite alarming. The observation reveals that:

“The literacy rate is 30 percent, one of the lowest in the world. School enrollment and completion rates are relatively low compared to the average for sub-Saharan Africa. Inadequate financing, a concentration of teachers in Conakry, a lack of appropriate teaching skills, deteriorating infrastructure, and insufficient planning are among the constraints to improving the educational system. Public spending on education was 2.6 percent of GDP in 2014, which is close to half the average for Sub-Saharan Africa (4.6 percent) and low-income countries (4.2 percent)” (World Bank/SCD, 2018: xiii).

From the above-mentioned flaws, a possible explanation of drivers or inhibitors to Guinea's education system performance may reside in its institutional arrangement, hence the need to direct a deep inquiry into the system's structures, its usual operation and overall functioning, since a general understanding posits that “quality and equity in education provision is determined by how well the institutional and organizational architecture of the education system, as a whole, operates and functions. This concerns not just the quality of the teaching force, or the classroom learning environment, but also reliable research, planning, budgeting, management and administrative processes at all levels and the dependable release of funds for education sector policies and priorities” (UNESCO/CapEFA, 2011: 115).

5.3 Decentralization of education in Guinea under recent reform programs

Issues of the sectoral institutional arrangement

On the sector governance front, it remains evident that “several ministries have joint responsibility for the sector, making it difficult to manage the system because of lack of coordination and follow-up of actions; this affects management efficiency and quality control. For example, initial training for teachers is provided by the METFP, which lacks the competence to assess the relevance and quality of the training; the MEPU-EC, which is the Ministry concerned, only becomes involved in the management of teachers after training. These difficulties are exacerbated in the context of decentralization, as well as by the constant increase

in student flows. The weak technical and institutional capacities of the Ministries, [makes] capacity building [needs] a [further] necessity for the sector” (AfDB, 2005: 4).

Nonetheless, it is important to note that it is no surprise that Guinea is now confronted with major difficulties in the balanced management of the education sector. For it is worth recalling that, “Guinea has historically been a highly centralized country, shaped by decades of French colonial administration followed by socialist and repressive dictatorship” (World Bank, 2008:2). Thus, “the Guinean education system is generally organized in the image of the political-administrative structure of the country, which starts from the central level to the base, passing through the regional, prefectural and sub-prefectural levels” (MOE, 2013:23). However, in all likelihood, [the] “education [sector] remains highly centralized” (World Bank, 2008:2). It is then realizing its effect on the future development of the sector through the EFA reform intervention, which is actually built upon “Guinea’s PRSP identifies decentralization and improved governance as core strategies to reduce poverty in the country and to improve the education sector in particular” (Swift-Morgan, 2011: 15).

In fact, under the decentralized management component, further efforts have been put forward with the intent to improve educational governance, especially at the local levels. As such, “decentralization constituted a formal commitment of the Guinean State in the Collectivities Code. It aims to bring public management closer to citizens and has enormous potential: better adaptation of services to the needs of beneficiary populations and greater participation of citizens in the democratic management of public affairs” (MOE, 2013:23). The initial step toward this commitment started with “decentralization—first declared as state vision in 1985, but it has been pursued reluctantly” (World Bank, 2008:2). Furthermore, it is expounded that the process of decentralization in Guinea dates back to the transition from the highly centralized state built by Sékou Touré and the SAP that accompanied other liberalization reforms in the early years of the Conté administration (Condé, 2003).

Notwithstanding, as indicated earlier on, “the phenomenon of decentralization might have different meanings according to the context in which it is used” (Baskins & Erduran, 2009: 348). Also, the country’s historical course adopting it as a developing strategy equally matters. However, taking the concept from the administrative point of view, as this is what is being dealt with here; Baskan & Erduran (2009: 348) posit that, “one of the major issues of the reforms is

the decentralization of the systems to enable the communities to decide about their very own problems at the local level”. In this respect, they proceeded to cite Hanson (1998:111-128), who

“discusses the term ‘decentralization’ with regard to concepts such as deconcentration, delegation, and devolution and come out with three kinds of decentralization: 1) Deconcentration (transfer of tasks and work but not authority); 2) Delegation (transfer of decision-making authority from higher to lower levels, but authority can be withdrawn by the center); 3) Devolution (transfer of authority to an autonomous unit, which can act independently without permission from the center)”.

In an attempt to sum up his viewpoint, Hanson (1998: *ibid*) “defines (decentralization as the transfer of decision-making authority, responsibility, and tasks from higher to lower organizational levels or between organizations”. Moreover, another important fact that deserves due attention is the implication of context and peculiarity in each country’s historical evolution. In this regard, Baskan & Erduran (2009:348) point out that “the economic and political situation of the countries defines the type of decentralization they prefer when it comes to delegate powers from the center to the periphery, since the periphery is not always welcome with the new decision making powers when they are not equally supported with financial powers”. In light of the above, it is therefore interesting to look at this actual matter from the Guinean perspective. Hence, the starting point to consider in this attempt is the contextual meaning of the concept that is proper to Guinea’s geopolitical sphere. Thus, a very brief but concise synopsis is provided below.

Figure 5.6: Defining Decentralization in Guinea

Decentralization is defined as the transfer of authority and responsibility for public functions from the central government to sub-national levels of government. In francophone contexts, it is particularly useful to distinguish between two forms of decentralization, where decentralization reforms entail a mix of deconcentration and devolution, often moving via deconcentration to increased devolution.

- Deconcentration is understood as the allocation of responsibilities of services to regional branch offices which are part of the central government but geographically removed (in the Guinean context, these are regions, prefectures and sub-prefectures). These branch offices do not possess autonomy and remain accountable to the center.
- Devolution means the transfer of responsibilities for decision-making, finance and management to LGs, i.e. locally elected entities (in Guinea, these are Communautés Rurales de Développement or CRD and Communes Urbaines or CU). It is the most extreme form of decentralization and holds the greatest potential for improved responsiveness, participation and accountability.

Source: World Bank Report (2008)

Now that it is easy to appreciate the prevailing situation, the adoption and application of decentralization in the country was undoubtedly timid. This same observation is true at the level of the various public and administrative bodies. However, since 2002 a renewed intent is being displayed to comply with the reform programs (i.e., PRSP and EFA) principles that required gradual shift of public functions from the central to the local level. With this momentum, the back and forth of the decentralization process known between 1984 and 2006, which is due to an incoherent legal framework, was expected to come to an end given the fact that, “the government has confirmed its commitment to decentralization through the adoption in 2006 of the Local Government Code”. Also, “the Code presents an ambitious vision of devolution. At its core, it foresees the transfer of significant responsibility for service delivery to local government, especially in areas such as basic health, education services, etc.” (World Bank, 2008: 10). The manifestation of such a will in the education sector has been widely encouraged and supported by the development partners. And this can be easily understood through the general perception that motivated the program intervention initiatives as follows:

“Decentralization as referenced in country and international aid agency policy and project documents for Guinea refers more generally to shifting of planning and management processes and responsibility, eventually with a concomitant shift of funding, to lower levels of the administration system. Decentralization in this sense generally involves both the deconcentrated and decentralized organs and agents, sometimes through new mechanisms that bring the two together and add civil society representatives such as local NGOs and the Associations of Parents and Friends of School (Association des parents et Amis de l’Ecole—APEAEs) into the process”. (Swift-Morgan, 2011:15).

In essence, there have been a few but early pioneering advocacy measures and joint actions that aimed at vulgarizing initiatives intended to empower educational actors and agencies at the sub-levels in Guinea. Among these, there are pilot projects such as, *Projet d’école*—supported by the World Bank—whereby “the funding is transferred directly to schools; and under the Village Community Support Project (PACV), rural communities (*communautés rurales de développement* or CRDs) manage school construction and maintenance; and the *Projet Maillon*, a USAID financed project piloted in ten Prefectures, helped clarify roles and responsibilities of deconcentrated, devolved government, schools and Parent Teacher Associations including in the recruitment and oversight of teachers” (World Bank, 2008: 10).

Yet, despite these joint efforts of the development partners, the government's action has nevertheless been slow in following up. This, indeed, is explained by the fact that “although the Guinean government had for some time indicated its willingness for NGOs and other organizations representing civil society to convene meetings relating to educational policy, prior to 2004, there were no official policy documents establishing an effective role for grassroots organizations such as parents associations” (Midling et al., 2005: 12). However, with the continuity of advocacy actions on the ground, the Ministry with the support of the partners in the sector, finally, put in place an official policy on the role of communities in education in 2004. This made it possible to specify the “roles of parents associations in the system, explained parental and community representation at each level of the system, and described the general activities these actors should undertake to improve education” (Midling et al., *ibid*). In fact, expectation from these local bodies has very high, given their presumed responsiveness to local needs. Even though “differences in country circumstances sometimes make it difficult to assess the implication of the various types of decentralization” (Sillers, 2002: 7). Yet, the weight of the available evidence suggests that school-level decentralization has proved more successful in developing countries (Burki, Guillermo, and William, 1998).

Against this backdrop, there is a tendency to believe that, “with regard to *services*, Guinea’s decentralization experience to date has begun to demonstrate that empowering local stakeholders can have a positive impact on service delivery” (World Bank, 2008:8). However, true manifestation of this momentum is still delayed when it comes to keeping all promises in the education sector. In fact, this was clearly highlighted by the World Bank (2008: 4) report, further stating that “To date, decentralization—although a key pillar of education sector strategies—has had very little impact on the way the sector is organized. Involvement of local government is limited to participation in construction and maintenance of facilities through external projects and hiring of Community teachers on ad hoc basis”. In any case, as things are at the moment, there is a need to really adjust the decentralization process according to the code in force for a better application. Not only adapted to the realities of the country but also to each sector’s public services.

In a nutshell, the actual state of affairs from a general point of view, led observers to draw up a quite scant portrait of the decentralization process. The same report of the World Bank has pointed out that:

“Administrative decentralization needs to be adjusted in light of the new code. Currently, four factors constrain local government performance: (i) administrative parallelism or the parallel presence of deconcentrated and devolved levels of government (leading to redundancies, unnecessary complexity, and the blurring of lines of accountability; (ii) the inefficient distribution of roles and responsibilities between deconcentrated and devolved levels; (iii) oversight relationships (*tutelle*) that compromise local government autonomy and downward accountability to citizens; and (iv) weak coordination of actors in service delivery and development planning. If local governments are to absorb additional responsibilities, these issues need to be addressed”. (2008:3)

From the above, the functioning of the education sector’s administrative pattern is much telling. For the current operationalization of the educational services’ decentralization is in conformity with the new code of collectivities and the constitutional principles of the regionalization process. On both side of the aisle (decentralization/deconcentration), the obstacles seem to be identical, which are the inadequacy of the human and financial resources affected on the ground and a real delegation of powers and signature (ANLC, 2011: 13). So far, various indicators, also corroborated by Swift-Morgan (2001), suggest that:

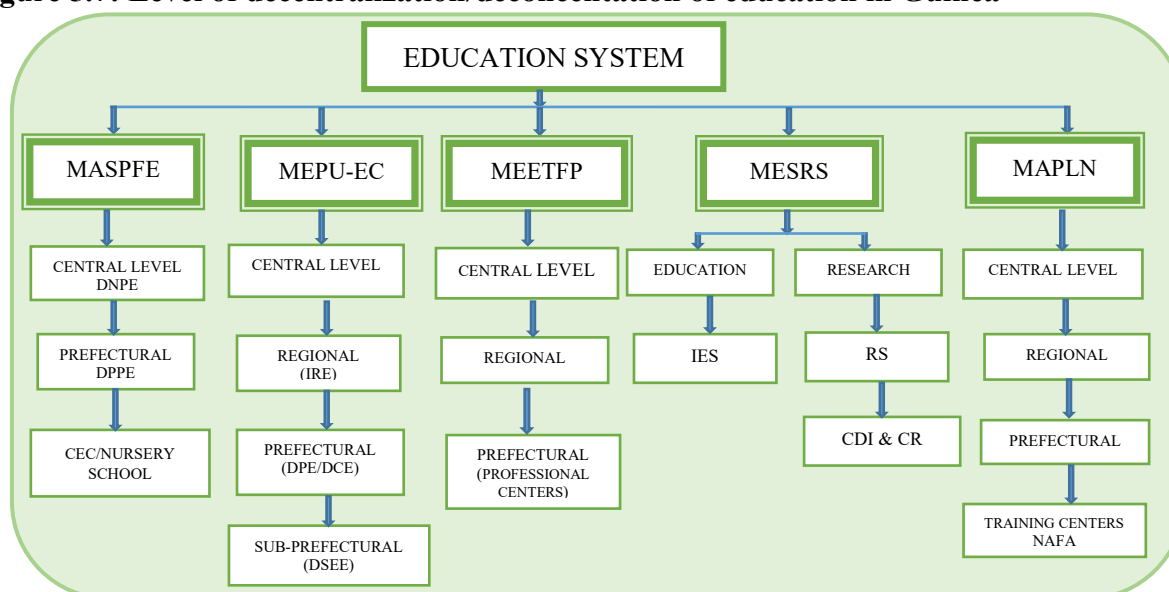
“The basic structure that exists today is one that includes some decentralization but is first and foremost deconcentrated, a term used to denote a process or structure ‘by which the agents of central government control are relocated and geographically dispersed’ (Sayer et al. as cited in Yuliani, 2004) or where local authorities are nominated by and directly accountable to the central government (2001:14).

According to the MOE (2013:23) report, theoretically, “the MEPU-EC (current MENA)—primary, general secondary and literacy sub-levels—is the most deconcentrated and therefore the most decentralized compared to the other levels of education (TVET, Tertiary)” (see figure below). However, the real situation in the education sector is that there is an advance deconcentration rather decentralization, argued one technical and assistant staff member of an international aid agency. PTFs (i.e., EU, GIZ) intervening in this area expounded that at the current stage there is only devolution of roles and responsibilities at the deconcentrated structures while the authority and resources are still retained at the central level. The ideal in the optics of improving local governance and service delivery is that, the different structures, either deconcentrated or decentralized, must operate in such a way as to satisfy the demand for basic

service, especially basic education services’ provision. To reach this end, the following recommendations of the World Bank’s report are quite expressive and worth reflecting upon as follows:

“For decentralization to work, fiscal, administrative and political aspects of decentralization must be aligned to ensure subsidiarity, capacity, and accountability. As a first step, roles and responsibilities need to be clearly defined. This has been accomplished in the Code but will need to be detailed for each sector. As a second step, capacities will have to be aligned with functions to ensure that local governments have the financial and human resources necessary to fulfill their new responsibilities. Having clarity on responsibilities, autonomy in decision making without unnecessary interference also contributes to local government capacity. Third, local governments (and service providers) need to be held accountable by their citizens to provide an incentive for performance”. (2008:12)

Figure 5.7: Level of decentralization/deconcentration of education in Guinea



Source: Etude diagnostique sur la question enseignante en République de Guinée/MOE (2013)

-Diagnostic study on the Issue of Education in the Republic of Guinea / MOE (2013)-

Note: **MASPFE** (Ministry of Social Affairs for the Promotion of Women and Children); **MEPU-EC** (Ministry of Pre University Education and Civic Education—now **MENA**: Ministry of National Education and Literacy); Ministry of Employment, Technical Education and Vocational Training; **MEETFP** (Ministry of Employment, Technical Education and Vocational Training); **MESRS** (Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research); **MAPLN** (Ministry of Literacy and Promotion of National Languages)

Moreover, it is expected that the PSE2, which is an interim program, and which is supposed to lead to another decennial program, will take into account the recommendations made below by the PSE1 (MOE, 2016:82).

The institutional architecture of the PSE responds to several constraints and objectives:

- the need to ensure coherence between the development of the sector and the more comprehensive policies of the country, as they can be expressed through the PRSP, for example;
- the need for a very operational and secure operation, capable of managing for a long enough period and throughout the national territory a heavy program of investments on the basis of multiple sources of financing;
- the desire to support the movement of deconcentration and decentralization, which goes beyond the only sector of education and which is very beneficial to it;
- the need to maintain coherence in the progress of a program in a sector whose governance is dispersed between several ministries with frequently evolving borders;
- the desire to maintain a fluid, regular and frank sectoral dialogue with the technical and financial partners and with civil society.

The multiplicity of these objectives results in a certain institutional complexity. The institutional architecture of PEPT (EFAP) and PSE has evolved since the early 2000s. It has stabilized recently and the PSE implementation manual describes it in all its details.

CHAPTER VI: IMPLEMENTATION OF DECENTRALIZED CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION MANAGEMENT AT THE INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

6.1 THE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

In this chapter, it comes down to unraveling the complexity of the elements that constitute the institutional environment. Better, as it is a matter of tackling a problematic of reform, the first anticipation suggests that any reform initiative intended to change an educational system's capacity necessitates a different form of—planning and management—structures and procedures. This, in fact, calls for a thorough needs analysis by equally defining appropriate mechanisms of actions and reactions for the system. Historical, social and cultural circumstances that are specific to Guinea's context impel introducing and institutionalizing change measures to ensure sustainability of the reform. But the apparent sidelining of sociopolitical and cultural variables in framing the sectoral intervention is conducive to the institutional void observed in the system as well as the low adherence to reform policies (see table below).

Table 6.1: Patterns of Guinea's institutional environment

Formal						Informal		
Law and policies				Procedures	System			
Law		Policies		Administrative	Political	Economic	Socio-cultural	Custom & norms
1 st Regime (1958-1984)	Constitutional Law of 15 November 1958	-systematization and intensification of the teaching of the ideology of the single party of the time		Highly centralized & blurring chain of command	Revolutionary & repressive	-Centrally planned & controlled (stagnating economy)	Mutuality & subordination (dis/trust, fear)	-Traditional statutory relations (reciprocity)
	Existence	Relevance	Adherence					
	invoked law	Non participative	Coercive adherence					
2 nd &3 rd regime (1984-to date)	Law	Policies		(Loose & weak Administration features)	-A hybrid democracy & unresponsive	- Liberal market but not steadily performing (fluctuating growth)	-Stratified & lenient society	- Modern contractual relations (rivalry)
	Law L / 97/022 / AN, adopting and promulgating the Education Orientation Law	-the sectoral policy letter of education (1989) -sub-sectoral policy letters (1989) -A Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2002); - A Sector Policy Letter for Education (May 2007);						
	Existence	Relevance	Adherence					
	Promulgated law	Participative but non inclusive	Low adherence					

Source: Author

To carry out the analysis of capacity development in Guinea's education reform pertaining to planning and management, however, requires a systemic structural diagnosis of the system's governance as a whole. As it is obvious and widely acknowledged, a reform process does not take place in a vacuum but rather in a given context or sometimes referred to as a "specific

environment”. Hence, any capacity development intervention in the planning and management of the sector would be mindful of the prevailing environment before the reform and act accordingly in order to bring about the intended changes. This goes to say that capacity development calls for a systemic effort to strategically reflect upon the three layers of capacity (individual, organizational and institutional) while paying particular attention to circumstances and country specificities (Fast Track initiative, 2008). This suggests that the institutional environment is an ultimate determinant in the success of any capacity development effort. As such, the analysis of the institutional context is paramount to depict the environment—conducive or nonconductive—in which the education system operates. To start with, let us recall that “institutions” are generally defined as the ‘rule of the game’. However, institutions can be formal or informal sets of rules that orient human behavior. With respect to this study, some sets of formal (law, policies, procedures, system) and informal (culture, customs, social norms) rules have been identified as the ones that most frequently shape the functioning of institutions. In the specific context of Guinea and its reform in the education sector, a retrospective approach was taken as essential to map the historical, socio-economic and political features of the country that have displayed a previous influence on the system.

Legal framework: the historical legacy shaping Guinea’s institutional dynamics

To address the question of legal framework establishment that regulates Guinea's educational system, reference must be made to the historical forces and traditional socio-cultural values that have and continue to shape the country’s institutional environment. In view of the tumultuous past that the country has gone through, and the enormous challenges currently facing the country, Guinea’s history can tell us much about its contemporary legal apparatus that governs the country as a whole and the education sector in particular. The successive governments that have headed the Republic of Guinea since independence have made important declarations of intent, placing education at the heart of their many concerns. Since then, several reforms have succeeded in the field of education in the country.

Under the first Republic, the Guinean education system was defined in the Constitutional Law of November 15, 1958 upon the accession of Guinea to full sovereignty on October 2, 1958. The system has taken its first steps in accordance with the Order No. 42 / MEN of August 5, 1959 of the Ministry of National Education, reforming education in the Republic of Guinea. Also,

the Decree No. 368/PRG of September 30, 1961, was additionally taken to supplement the provisions of the Order (UNESCO, 1973). These provisions laid down the major reforms' paths desired by the regime of that time. Among others, the most important measures taken are: i) the introduction of national languages in replacement of French in 1960; ii) the "cultural revolution" promoted and diffused to sweep the colonial devise in 1968; iii) the replacement of foreign teachers enacted in 1975 to make effective the intention of the regime remove any colonial aspects into Guinea's educational system (Corrie, 1988; Walmond, 2002); and further reforms in the sector were also included in the Five-Year Plan 1973-1978 with major focus on decentralization. Overall, the Order No. 42/MEN remained the major legislation that oriented the general objectives sought to be achieved by the education sector reform under the first regime until its collapse in 1984.

In accordance with the series of provisions prescribed within the constitutional order of 1958, two major policies have been embraced and pursued under the first Republic. First, the educational policy aimed as early as 1959, which was called at the time, "the Africanization of programs", was envisaged to root school curricula in African cultural values. It is in this logic that the Order No. 42/MEN of August 5, 1959, on Guinea's education reform, consecrates change and initiates the break with colonial education. According to the terms of this order, the purpose of the reform was to renew African cultural values, to make effective the right to education recognized to every citizen of the Republic of Guinea by the Constitutional Law of November 10, 1958, to allow Guineans to gain rapid access to the scientific culture and techniques that meet the real needs of the country. Second, the institution of the Socialist Cultural Revolution on August 2, 1968, with as a corollary, the systematization and intensification of the teaching of the ideology of the single party of the time; the introduction of local languages as teaching tools established in 8 national languages; the generalization of the teaching of agro-pastoral and zoo technical sciences to the whole Guinean school (Republic of Guinea, 2013; UNESCO, 1979B:34). In fact, almost all these measures intended to reform the education sector were viewed as "antiquated postulates" (World Bank, 1990).

Prescribed law but unevenly applied and enforced

Apart from the enthusiasm manifested during Guinea's access to independence, most of the announcements made at that epoch were tinged with propaganda. That is all the more obvious because since the breakup with the colonial master, the newly independent country under the

leadership of Sékou Touré swung into a one-party state based on highly centralized governance and socialist principles. With the euphoria of self-determination already gained, a number of conciliatory provisions were made and prescribed in the new constitution. Considered as a mark of renewal, the 1958 constitution integrated a range of various orders including a provision, which, according to Sheldon et al. (1994) provided for a system of checks and balances of government. They further contended that the same provision also guaranteed freedom of press, speech, association, assembly and religion and the right to join trade unions and strike. By the same token, with reference to the new education system, article 44 of the same constitution stipulates that all citizens of the Republic of Guinea deserves an equal right to education. However, in the eyes most observers, these provisions were considered as mere declaration of intents, which largely rested upon theory. Furthermore, Sheldon et al. (1994:20) argued that “in practice there were no rules to ensure that the Constitution would be applied and enforced. The real working rules were the supremacy of party structures over state and administrative structures and the establishment of Sékou Touré as the ultimate political authority”. They went on further to say that “the real working rules totally denied the principle of constitutional limits and eventually led to the brutal repression of human rights” (1994:20).

Too ambitious and unsustainable policies

Under the party-state, the democratic centralism on which PDG (Democratic Party of Guinea) was based was intended to drive most of the major decisions within the party. This was true “during the early 1960s, with internal debate held within the party regarding major national policy issues being discussed in national party congresses or special National Conferences. Over time, these debates diminished as the PDG became the personal instrument of Sékou Touré” (Sheldon et al., 1994:21). Hence, from this vantage point most contented that “national policies are formulated almost exclusively by President Touré. [And that] he has been somewhat utopian in his statements and has stressed the domestic themes of a unified socialist state under one-party rule and rapid social political development” (CIA, 1973:11). The translation of many of the PDG intents, especially with regard to social policies, fall into the following underlying reforms principles: i) mass education also originally called “education de masse”, offers education opportunity to every Guinean regardless of one’s social or regional origin, age or sex; ii) the prominence given to moral education to diffuse the single party philosophical ideas.

In the realization of many of these social undertakings, the Touré regime resorted to employing various methods, including “ideological education and increased domestic militancy. These methods are often harshly applied, however, and offer few material inducements” (CIA, 1973:13). As a result, “the implementation of Touré’s domestic and foreign policies was hampered by a lack of experienced and reliable administrators, by frequent ineffectiveness of foreign aid programs, and by corruption” (CIA, 1973:12). Aspects of participation and balanced representation in executing devised policies remain unobserved since “little was made to promote decentralization of local government units. Local communities were obliged to execute the directive issued by the central organs of the party. Centralization stifled local initiatives as the entire society became dependent upon the Party-State” (Sheldon et al., 1994:23). Moreover, the domestic policies put forward by Sékou Touré to promote national unity and pride was promoted through ethnic integration. Therefore, the party often adopted persuasive approach to raise the awareness of each Guinean of being part of a nation whose interests take precedence over individuals or tribal concerns. This suggests [...] much of the PDG program [to be] merely rhetorical, and decrees from Conakry (the central level) being frequently ignored by local leaders [leading to] strong official pressures to change the old order (CIA, 1973:13). In fact, talking about an “old order” often refers to the belief that “a scientific education had not been thought necessary for the African under the colonial regime” (Adamolekun, 1976:101). Thus, invoking the necessity of Guineans to gain rapid access to the scientific culture and techniques that meet the real needs of the country, contributed however to—deemphasizing French classical training—and “establishing Centers of Revolutionary Education as self-sustaining in which agricultural production theoretically is combined with political indoctrination”, while “Touré’s preoccupation with ideological indoctrination, in the long run, [has made] the schools as unresponsive to Guinea’s actual needs as they were under the French system during the colonial era” (CIA, 1973:14). Furthermore, the 26 years of the Party-State rule used the educational system to provide political patronage and in some cases, “intellectualism” was cause for persecution and exile. The curriculum was also highly political and largely irrelevant to the country’s needs” (World Bank, 1990:3).

With the advent of the Second Republic on April 3, 1984, the new authorities organized a National Education Conference in June 1984, which was dedicated to engage the education system by way of a new vision of Guinea’s education. In addition to the 1984 national encounter,

a second national conference took place in the following year in 1985. The organization of these two national conferences on educational issues testifies to the desire of the second republic authorities to distinguish themselves from the previous rulers (Walmond, 2002). Such a strong will was also manifested in the determination of the new authorities to remodel the education of Guinea's children through the Law L/97/022/AN, by adopting and promulgating the National Education Orientation Law. Hence, the educational system became de facto governed by a legislative and regulatory framework that recognizes the primordial and priority nature of education for the development of the country. Since 1984, education and teaching have been guided by the following main texts:

- the decisions of the National Education Conference in June 1984;
- the general provisions of the Orientation Law No L/97/022/AN of June 19, 1997 under its Title I, which states that:

- Article 1: the national education, within the meaning of the present Law aims to:

- raise the intellectual level of the population;
- train free men and women, capable of creating the conditions for their development at all levels, to contribute to the development of the science, technique and technology;
- adopt effective solutions to national development problems;
- prepare the conditions for an integral development assumed by the whole nation;
- keep the whole nation in the stage of contemporary progress as part of a program training structure;

- Article 2: Guinea National Education is democratic and secular, and is inspired by:

- the right of all human beings to receive the education and training corresponding to their aptitudes and purpose,
- the need for everyone to participate in production, in all its forms, according to his own abilities;
- the private, individual or collective initiative, can under the conditions defined by the law, contribute to the realization of this task;

-Article 3: Guinean national education is an African education. It integrates the values of universal civilization and is part of the mainstream of the modern world while developing the spirit of cooperation and peace between people and nations.

-Article 4: Guinean national education is continuous. It gives all citizens the opportunity to learn and train themselves in all sectors of working life for an improvement of knowledge in order to promote development and socio-cultural progress.

-Article 5: the objectives defined above are the result of this desire to make effective the right to education recognized to all citizens through the training of producers and qualified executives.

However, this prescribed Law in its article 15 not only repeals all the previous provisions including those of the ordinance No 42 / MEN of August 5, 1959, but also favored the formulation of new sector reform policies. Thus, with the change of regime in April 1984, Guinea put an end to the socialist option in force since independence, to engage in the path of economic liberalism. By clearly stating its priorities, the Government made mention in its political guidelines of April 1984 of the urgency to make profound changes in the education system, particularly in its purposes in terms of content and structures. Thus, the first decisions to come into effect to single out this rupture are: i) the abolition of teaching in national languages; ii) the suppression of the ideological teaching; iii) the re-establishment of French as a language of instruction; iv) the elimination of some thirty agro-zoo technical faculties that covered the country and the reorientation of students from these faculties to other field of studies; v) the opening of the education system to private initiatives, aiming to support the State's efforts to educate the country's children.

Moreover, to deal with all these aspects by taking into account all the dimensions envisaged by the reform, a general educational policy scheme likely to provide effective and coherent responses has been devised. With reference to educational policy documents (sectoral strategy, ten-year plan, etc.), Guinea has thus been able to acquire, in addition to the Education Orientation Law, the following:

- A Declaration of Educational Policy in September (1989);
- A law on the orientation of the education system (1998);
- A Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2002);
- A Sector Policy Letter for Education (May 2007);

- Sub-sectoral policy letters;
- Recommendations arising from the national consultations of the general status of education in October 2008;
- Recommendations from the Education Forum held in Conakry on September 5-7, 2011;

Overall, initial decisions and subsequent recommendations have assigned the education sector for its development three main or major objectives:

- the restructuring of the education system ([allowing better access and equity to education]);
- the improvement of the quality of education and training;
- the strengthening of educational management, planning and administration capacities;

To realize these objectives, several Education Sector Development Plans and Programs have been adopted and implemented by the Guinean Government and its partners. These include Sector Programs (supported by the World Bank) such as Sectoral Adjustment Programs for Education (PASE1 1990-1993 and PASE2 1993-2000), PADES, FIMG and Education for All Program—phase 1 (PEPT 1) 2002/2008) and more recently the Education Sectoral Program (PSE). In addition to these sectoral programs, partners such as USAID (the United States Agency for International Development), EU (the European Union), AfDB (the African Development Bank), IDB (the Islamic Development Bank), KfW/GTZ (the German Cooperation agencies), JICA (the Japanese International Cooperation Agency), AfD (the French Development Agency), UNESCO, UNICEF, WFP, SDF (the Saudi Development Fund), KDF (the Kuwaiti Development Fund), Action Aide and Plan International Guinea, have supported numerous projects (situated within or related to some aspects of the sector).

The implementation of these various decisions and recommendations [for some] has resulted in significant changes in the direction of improving access, quality and management of the education system at all levels. However, some observers judge inconclusive the results on the ground.

Promulgated law but not fully applied and enforced

In the aftermath of the first regime demise in 1984, a glimmer of hope was thought to be widely opened for Guinea to project itself into a harmonious future. The biggest expectation of public opinion at large and Guineans in particular was more oriented towards a consensus building around priorities with regard to national development, be it political, economic, social and cultural. In any case, the first measures announced by the new authorities aroused a certain enthusiasm and maintained such a feeling. However, this general impression unfortunately eroded gradually as time passed by without concrete acts. The new regime that came to power being largely composed of military, basically, resorted to the use of decrees as a means of governing for almost a decade. In 1987, the CMRN (the Military Committee for National Recovery) launched the development of a comprehensive education sector reform program. To carry out this initiative, the new government coped with the appeal of Donors to diagnose the education sector issues that would provide a framework for intervention in the sector. In response to this injunction, a series of consultations, as vividly recalled by Walmond (2002:122) took place:

“In 1988 the Government of Guinea created the PASE Interministerial Preparatory Committee (COPASE) that would be responsible for drafting a new education policy statement and coordinating all preliminary activities. Over the next twenty months, the COPASE oversaw numerous sector studies with the support of international technical expertise provided by the World Bank. It also organized several encounters with different stakeholders within the education sector and in the general community. In September 1989 the government adopted an Education Policy Declaration that delineated the objectives for the sector until the year 2000”.

Nonetheless, it is obvious that the question of legitimate and equal representation often arises throughout important decision-making processes. Yet, such an instance was likely expected to occur in the case of Guinea. Despite that fact, there had been a tendency to portraying consultations that took place between international experts and Guinea’s government officials’ teams as a symbol of “ownership” of the reform, both by national and international stakeholders as Kamano (1995) tends to emphasize it. Or else, the credit of doubt granted by Walmond (2002: 122) to the reform process in affirming that the “process appears to have been relatively participatory, with unions and others involved in discussions”. In contrast to this account,

another discourse differently portrayed the public opinion and matters of representation in Guinea both under the second and third Republic. Sheldon et al. (1994:56) appropriately make evidence of such a claim stating that:

“One of the most striking features of Guinean political history has been the limited participation of Guineans in the constitutional process. The making of the fundamental law of the land has generally been imposed from the top with little consultation of the people in the constitutional process”.

Yet, it is worth recalling that the two main texts (the declaration of educational policy in September 1989 and the education system orientation law of 1998) are both promulgated through this constitution. However, as clearly ascertained above, it is established that “several provisions exclude ordinary citizens from directly participating in constitutional processes” (Sheldon et al., 1994:57), despite reference and due mention of the constitution in protecting the [people’s] right to organize political, economic, social and cultural associations to defend individual and collective interests. What is more, despite this provision, “the December 23, 1990 Loi Fondamentale establishes an exceptionally strong presidential regime which sets few limits or checks on presidential power (Articles 37-45) and concentrates all formal executive powers in his [the President—Lansana Conté at that time] hands” Sheldon et al. (ibid).

With such expanded power, the president gives himself the latitude to dominate the entire decisional sphere of the state and its institutions without a real counter power. As stipulated in the constitution the President has among many others [powers] the discretionary power to:

- determine and manage national policy.
- insure the execution of law and dispose regulatory powers exercised through powers.
- set the attributes of each minister and ministry by decree.
- name all civil employees and magistrates and control the civil service.

Given this precedence, the deliberative process sought within any constitutionality became completely blurred. And yet Guinea’s second and third republics presumably present signals that point to this indication. As Sheldon et al. (1994: 61) contended along with many other informed observers of Guinea, “free and open deliberation has been severely hampered by several factors”:

- the dominance of the executive over the legislative bodies in the municipal and rural councils;
- the weakness of civil society and organized interest groups to systematically present their positions and defend their interests;
- the absence of national fora to discuss and debate major policy issues;
- the exclusion of representatives from the opposition in participating in government decision-making;

The spillover effect of such disruption in the manifestation of the constitutional order is enormous and it has affected the functioning of all sectors as well as the behaviors of the people working within. This state of affairs is worrisome in the face of inappropriate practices becoming increasingly rooted in people's lives, which seem to be accepted as normal habits. However, it becomes more imperative than ever for Guinea to depart from past mindsets of—a one-party regime or a military order—in which the law was subordinated to the needs of strong states men. Thus, an awakening of general consciousness on the part of the population is more than necessary in order to break with this constitutional inertia. As of today, this inertia appears to be burdened by stigmas of Guinea's history and lack of legal precedents, which tends to continue and further lengthen the process of aspiration to real change. According to the US State Department (2013) the “enforcement of the rule of law in Guinea is irregular and inefficient”. This observation is yet an obvious illustration and echoes perfectly with another critic, that “law enforcement [in Guinea] traditionally has been poor and inspired little trust or confidence” (Sheldon et al., 1994:65). However, in any case it has to be understood and admitted as Sheldon et al. (ibid) again rightly evoke it:

“The rules prescribed by the Constitution will not bring about the rule of law unless they are invoked by Guinean citizens and applied and enforced by the state institutions. The rule of law implies that the law is well disseminated, understood, and accepted as legitimate by all levels of the population” (1994:65).

Inadequate and complex reform policies / lack of coherent vision

Above all, it has to be highlighted that the design and implementation of sound policies should rest upon an enabling environment. Such a prerequisite is evidently vital to operate major reform intended to make major positive changes. To date, aggregation of various features of Guinea's

education sector tends not to provide such a glowing image, as the reform trajectory followed so far presents too many challenges with which the system is tirelessly striving to overcome. Nevertheless, the weight of precedent undertakings within the sector still places a heavy burden on the viability of recent education reform in the country. Yet, credit should be given to successive governments in Guinea for their ambitious reforms initiated since the change of regime in 1984. However, it is worth acknowledging that intended policies in this regard have not met the real expectations of these ambitions. As such, explanations to elucidate Guinea's discomfiting efforts in the improvement of its education sector may be ambiguous but requires particular attention. In an attempt to search for possible infringements that might have held back sustained achievement in the sector, three axes should be highlighted and given due consideration. Thus, from a critical and non-indulgent viewpoint, it can be deduced that the first flaw in Guinea's educational policy formulation is strictly related to the lack of preliminary and in-depth analysis of the sector. A supporting evidence of such a claim emerges from the concern expressed by some observers about the reforms wanted by the second regime. In this respect, various claims overlap with what Walmond (2002: 121) inferred:

“The reforms and policies produced by the 1984 and 1985 conferences, according to this perspective [ambivalent policy choice], were uninformed by sector analysis and had not laid out the objectives for the sector in quantifiable terms”.

An additional aspect of this policy flaw in the sector has to do with the overall results that fail to significantly address at least one particular area of the three main challenges—access, quality/equity and management—that constantly faces Guinea's education system over the years. Yet, this remains persistent, despite ceaseless efforts and mountainous technical assistances of many aid agencies within the sector. What is more, in view of these existential challenges, either non-consensual policies or those that do not reflect the real concerns of the country in general or the sector in particular continue to be taken. As a reminder, which can also serve as an illustration, we can note the observation made by Sheldon et al. (1994: 71):

“The Guinean State depends heavily on donors, especially in the area of investments and debt financing. The Guinean State depends on the donors for more than 80 percent of its public investment budget and 80% of the operating budget of major development projects....This heavy dependence of the State has

led the government to make policies that are often opposed by major social groups hurt by these policies [i.e. PASE] or are unpopular because they are perceived as imposed from outside”.

Another side of this policy breach, which deserves due mention, refers to recent policy initiatives that keep flouting past experiences or lessons learnt from previous reforms implemented in the sector either in Guinea or elsewhere. Yet, several recommendations of appraisal reports from either national agencies or development partners committed to the sector have deliberately signaled areas that need consideration for eventual intervention. However, recent orientations that have been so far followed in the sector have led some observers to diverging but at the same time complementary deductions. The very first glance at the sector depicts a déjà-vu scenario and further goes to qualify the last reform as being entirely repetitive or even complex. The double-faceted description of Guinea’s recent reform in the education sector asserts itself in the subsequent views. On the one hand, it is commonly agreed that “large-scale efforts to increase educational access and later quality in Guinea date back nearly 20 years and these system-wide reforms have evolved through a number of iterations. The first major reform emerged from the country’s structural adjustment program introduced by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in the late 1980s” (Swift-Morgan, 2011: 11). In the same vein, it is equally understood and admitted that the EFA reform program in Guinea also called “PEPT, the country’s national education system reform program, is synonymous with the country’s World Bank education sector credit and the combined basket of funding from international and bilateral aid agencies totaling more than \$420 million” (Swift-Morgan, 2011:13). On the other hand, it can be argued that Guinea’s EFA National Action Plan (EFA/NAP)—if there has been any prepared—is viewed as overloaded and complex. This claim is evidently supported by the nature of the plan drafted for the circumstance. In fact, Guinea EFA/NAP is being integrated into a broader socio-economic development policy paper. Thus, clear indications show that Guinea EFA program has been closely aligned with the country’s PRSP, adopted the same year (2002) and intended to drive and guide all development initiatives in the country (Swift-Morgan, 2002: 14). Additionally, an excerpt from a study conducted by Back et al. (2003:8) provides further details in this regard:

“The PRSP presents a results-based framework consisting of three parts: 1) to accelerate economic growth and create income-earning and employment

opportunities, especially for the rural poor; 2) to improve and extend access to basic services; and 3) to improve governance and strengthen institutional and human capacity. The high priority areas are education, health, rural development, rural roads, private-sector development, and potable water and sanitation, which account for 51% of total public expenditure from 2002-2004”.

Indeed, from the Guinean government perspective, the ultimate goal of PEPT is to contribute to poverty reduction, focusing on universal primary education as a priority for achieving the kind of social and economic development needed to reach this goal (Republic of Guinea, 2004).

Last but not least, another account with regard to the policy thrust is highly associated with the tendency of the education system to remain immune to drastic change. Most of the features presented by the system show a persisting reticence in assimilating policies that are likely responsive to current demands in the sector. This obstinacy to break away from retrograde practices bestows Guinea’s education system with the labeling of “old wine in new bottles” as far as its education policy formulation is concerned over the years. To illustrate this claim, the excerpt below is among many other voices that have repeatedly sent out the alarm signals to the inadequacy of services provided within the sector:

“Since the change of regime, the content of education at all levels remains old fashioned and outmoded and the teaching-learning process continues to be limited to lecturing, note-taking and recitation of often inappropriate contents. In the absence of any strategy, fragmented initiatives have been pursued (e.g. consolidation of agro technological institutes, expansion of vocational training centers), rather than formulating and implementing a comprehensive and coherent and coherent national policy linking education to the country’s employment needs” (World Bank, 1990: 3-4).

Against this backdrop, there is an urgent need to think over policy remediation measures on how to rid Guinea’s education system of unproductive policy redundancy. However, a good start with such a desired renaissance involves reconfiguration of the system on two fronts; reconsidering both its internal and external capacity to adapt and adopt sound initiatives with realistic strategies and means of implementation. As such, a complete switch over the conduct of education affairs becomes an extreme necessity in order to optimize finite efforts and scarce resources for a better sectoral performance. Therefore, the rational stance calls for an establishment of a simple system, which is apt to design or absorb systemic reform programs. With such an approach, it is

hoped to prevent duplication of roles or substantial asymmetries of interest, which can ultimately help avoid overlapping organizational arrangements, as “it is recognized that, individuals or organizations facing complex systems may have a much harder time learning what works and what does not work” (Ostrom et al., 1994: 326). Likewise, all stakeholders involved in the education policy design or dissemination must share a common understanding and priorities in the sector. Consequently, past interventions should serve as solid basements to build upon adaptable solutions to meet actual needs within the education sector or sub-sectors. However, this suggests giving preference to a tailor-made policy package to countries—like Guinea—with acute institutional deficiencies. In addition, courageous steps should follow such a move to endorse and vulgarize local policy initiatives that are self-reflective to pressing internal concerns in the sector. On such a stand, a complete shift should be made from the traditional *modus operandi* when it comes to the education development assistance. More specifically, ready-made or complex programs should not be preconized as the sole reform package intended to beneficiary countries. Nor should adoption of external prescribed policies be a conditionality for eligibility to receive a grant or assistance in education reform programs. Actually, such an advocacy is put forward to invigorate efforts seeking to end the hegemony of policy prescription based on replication of models implemented elsewhere. As such, Ostrom et al. (1994: 326) supported vividly this view in the following terms:

“Policy prescriptions based solely on models that generate deficient equilibria are likely to recommend either that external authorities impose and enforce rules or that no external help is needed. The prescription that external authorities must impose change leads to attempts to impose uniform national, regional laws. In any country where the attributes of the physical world vary substantially across locations, the same set of rules that engender positive outcomes in one physical location can engender negative outcomes in other locations. The imposition of uniform rules can lead to dramatic differences in outcomes or to extreme discretion on the part of officials who adjust the uniform rules to fit local circumstances”.

Dubious public administration and power of procedures

The viability of any entity depends on its organization. Thus, for an organization to be viable, all would depend on its structures. Similarly, the effective functioning of a country’s educational system equally depends on the administration of the sector. Given the constraint associated with the regulation of different constituencies evolving in an organization, the sectoral public

administration must operate within a sound legal framework. This implies that each constituting segment of the public administration must comply with the existing regulations and principles. However, “it is noticed that every country approaches these issues in the context of its own history and its own traditions” (Balan and Troanta Rebeles, n.d). Actually, most countries that have gone through colonialism or autocratic rule do still carry out the ripple effect of such regimes. In present time, many of these countries now enjoy full territorial sovereignty but expression of the state of law regulating the administrative procedures remains defective and suffers from many abnormalities. In fact, one major characteristic of the public administration, which is actually common to most developing countries’ bureaucracy, is the personalization of the function. Whereas, from the standpoint of effectiveness and smooth conduct of bureaucratic affairs, the depersonalization of positions must characterize the functioning of administration, argued Max Weber (1973).

In the view of diffusing rational and sane procedures, the public sector administration should be a duly instituted realm where both officials and ordinary citizens can interact constructively. In normal circumstances, compliance with appropriate procedural rules yield twofold benefits in the improvement of day-to-day activities that the administration of public sectors in general and the education services in particular is entrusted with on a regular basis. The introduction of neat practices and their strict application compel public authorities to fully discharge the duties they are vested with, as Balan and Troanta Rebeles (n.d) explain:

“In the first place, it is about the efficacy of the administrative steps. The situations a civil servant or an institution has to face every day are numerous and the existence of some standard procedures has the nature to increase his efficiency, especially that many times the situations are alike. The absence of some procedures pre-established could lead to the appearance of some ad-hoc procedures, fact that has the nature of leaving room for arbitrary in public administration’s functioning”.

Similarly, the establishment of impartial and appropriate administrative apparatus that is more concerned with the general public interest, however, enables enhancement of service delivery. Such belief is further supported by a supplementary view that Balan and Troanta Rebeles (n.d) advanced with insistence as follows:

“In the second place, procedures are necessary in order to assure the equal and impartial treatment of the administration’s beneficiaries.....both politicians and the civil society must exercise a control upon public administration. This would be very difficult in the situation that every public institution or every civil servant would work after his own rules and methods. Procedure and administrative law establish not only parameters for exercising the powers conferred to public authorities, but they also contribute to the quality of the process of decision-making. Norms that impose transparency, the reasons given for decisions, a reasonable duration of the administrative steps and modalities to challenge administrative acts can be considered as modalities of increasing the quality of the results, and consequently, of the public administration’s efficiency”.

With respect to the above assertions which prove quite edifying, however, aspects of many organizations’ techniques of administration present contrasting features. Instead, general observations reveal that many organizations tend to be more political than rational. Such a common understanding is moreover deepened by the nature of most political organizations, whereby personnel influence and people skills count for more than formal titles. As a matter of fact, these indices proper to the nature of every political organization characterize indeed the patterns of most if not all developing countries. Guinea, in this respect, is not an exception. As the most obvious characteristic of such features indicate, “organizations are more political and less rational when different parts of the organization have potentially conflicting goals” (Thompson (n.d)). Against this backdrop, overall features of Guinea’s public administration have been much more influenced by its historical but also political waves.

Lack of compliance with and commitment to bureaucratic rationality and authority

Initial contact with westerners, be it explorers or lately colonial masters by Guinean populations, has generally generated harsh feeling and enduring reluctance. This perception was even exacerbated by Guinea’s placement under guardianship of France. Guinea’s absolute domination and control by external forces created a feeling of generalized mistrust and suspicion, both within the official settings as well as on the side of ordinary citizens. This trend of discomfort kept growing over the years and deeply affected the nature of human relationships as well as the backbone of political life and the exercise of public powers. The first postulate of such conduct during the French colonial regime is manifested as Sheldon et al. (1994:35) posit it:

“During the colonial period, Guineans saw the colonial administration as an alien institution whose main function was to keep order and collect taxes. Africans

[Guineans] who worked for the colonial bureaucracy were expected to follow the directives of their French superiors”.

The image of such a nascent social rift stiffens itself along with multiple exactions of which Guinean society were victim under the colonial rule. The colonial administration was in fact characterized from the beginning, in Guinea as elsewhere, by extensive clientelist networks that bind it, through the indigenous Guinean elites, to different rival ethnic groups. And this bi-cephalic nature of the public administration remains another most acute attribute of the country's legacy. As such, the relations between individual and the state, ever since, have radically changed within Guinean societies. Instead of being relations of trust as they used to be, relations of patronage, clientelism and mistrust took over and got widespread. Moreover, a superstructure type of administration made of various local elites (chefs of canton, public administrators), however, aroused and perceived the state—the public administration—as a way to gain social advancement. Over the years, this state of affairs endures despite the physical disintegration of the colonial apparatus. In view of such a fact, which seems to be irreversible, it is believed that the main mission of the postcolonial public administration in Guinea is thought to be the "redistribution of wages and benefits" to the narrow circle of state officials. Now that more than half a century has passed, the country is striving to establish a viable public sector administration.

The logic that infers the frailty of Guinea's postcolonial administration connection to colonial inheritance has been given further consideration. General criticisms expound that colonization has deliberately favored the maintenance of organizations of authoritarian type. That is, for its large part the system of colonial exploitation relied on a decentralized despotism based on indigenous leaders. The Guinean administration following the accession to full sovereignty revived from the ashes of the pre-existing system. The desire of independence pioneers to take over the destiny of the country was dotted with a certain dose of amateurism and pronounced nationalism. As a result, this has certainly had an influence on the management of the administration of the young nation, Guinea. It is evident to this effect that concurring opinions have constantly pointed out these rather notorious instances along with the striking and constant narratives of Sheldon et al. (1994: 35):

“During the decolonization period, Touré and the PDG challenged the authority of the colonial administration and often preached non-collaboration. After independence, bureaucratic rationality was undermined by the culture of the

party-state in which ideology and political criteria took precedent over technical expertise in determining the operating rules of the state bureaucracy. The lack of respect for bureaucratic authority was further reinforced by the fact that low-level government employees holding high-level party offices did not feel compelled to follow the instructions of their administrative superiors. As a result, there was no clear-cut chain of command because of the blurring of party and bureaucratic functions. The lack of training in management skills also contributed to a low level of bureaucratic rationality during the Touré regime”.

From the above, however, some opinions began to inflect their positions with prospective changes announced by the new authorities of the second Republic. Expectations from promises made to some instance were immense with some underlying targets. Moreover, imminent among all measures, was to reverse the dormant amateurism and the accommodation of unsavory practices that has undermined Guinea’s bureaucracy during the first two decades of its independence. Although, joint efforts have backed this shared commitment up to a greater magnitude, but the enchantment accompanying this reform faded away due to the hostile environment in which the implementation took place. As a result, it began to unfold unmet reform goals in the agenda of reform initiatives in the Republic of Guinea. Sheldon et al. (1994) describe the failure of this attempt in these terms:

“During the Second Republic, the Conte regime with the support of the donors made an effort to reform the state bureaucracy and introduced greater bureaucratic rationality by starting the process of making job descriptions with specific requirements for each civil service post. This process, however, has been a slow one, and resisted by many in the bureaucracy who fear that they will lose their jobs to more highly trained and competent people and also by pro-government loyalists in the civil service who lack the qualifications needed to perform their job effectively and owe their position to political criteria and personal relationships”(p.35).

Until recently, the same rhetoric has led the debate on public administration in Guinea. Certainly, a considerable time has passed, and responsibilities have changed but still old practices remain. It became obvious that the most recent reforms, including the education for all program, have evolved in a very unfavorable environment. This state of affairs is proven by the National Agency for the promotion of good governance and fight against corruption (ANLC). In 2011, this agency released a report in which it reasserts the same alarming observation.

“we note the resignation of those responsible for their missions, and the dysfunction of the Administration is marked by: the proliferation of rules that change in an untimely way, the non-performance of current tasks, the weakness of the culture of great achievement, the destabilization of services, the absence of results-based provisional management; the ineffectiveness of internal control mechanisms, the lack of continuity of work and qualitative changes in the management of services because of the politicization of the administrative function, the weakness of the populations in the monitoring and evaluation of public policies” (2011: 25).

Evolving in the same institutional framework being so far defined, the public administration remains undermined by a pronounced politicization, whereby access to positions are sometimes based on political militancy and not the promotion of merit—as the most qualified candidates do not always get the position. The same observation applies to personnel management (hiring, compensation and training opportunity); the quality of relationships with supervisors is just as important as merit. As such, seniority as well as political and regional contacts become even more crucial and relevant. In addition, unanimous opinions, however, converge on the fact also mentioned by ANLC (2011:16), that public servants are not satisfied with their salaries and other benefits. To increase their incomes in order to meet their needs, they sometimes carry out other economic activities in parallel to their tasks without permission. Sedentarization, the lack of reward for excellent professional achievements and the renewal of staff up to the level of the section, sometimes even the cadres are for the officials, discouraging factors. Above all, widespread corruption took over everything that has been denounced previously, which is even perceived as salient in the education sector. What is more, aspects such as laxity—impunity and the absence of both positive and negative sanctions; lack of control; and total lethargy—retention of information and maintenance of secrecy, voluntary administrative delay, intermediaries—culminate at the top of the public sector administration in Guinea. Again, major constraints to significantly oppose these practices, as reaffirmed by the ALNC (2011:12) report are:

- Caducity and/or incorrect application of prescribed legal rules and regulations regarding structures, norms and procedures.
- disarticulation of structures, overlapping attributions and conflict of competences, both between structures as well as posts.
- mismanagement of the recruitment and career management system.

Loose education sector administration and procedures

It is obvious that any reform in any sector including education requires massive investments in terms of resources—human, material as well as financial. However, the provision of resources to implement such a given reform is not an end in itself, as adjacent to that are the adequacy and appropriate usage of these resources for optimal results. Yet, the transformation of these resources into tangible results equally requires rigorous and efficient management, which implies an updated and well-functioning machine. Reform programmes in the education sector in Guinea are not alien to these multifarious and interdependent processes. However, despite multiple interventions that Guinea has benefitted from in the sector, the system remains constantly strangled by a lack of diligent and appropriate means of actions. Resurgence of such difficulties in the management of the education system is highly associated with the nature of the sector's administration, which is in a total deliquescence. This state of affairs is largely due to the inadequacy of the regulatory texts, which stipulates the attributes of the administrative staff of education in Guinea. According to the Decree No. 97/196 / PRG / SGG, on the organization of the education system in the Republic of Guinea, Chapter three: the administrative and management staff, states that;

- Article 48: the administrative and management staff consists of teachers and administrative staff;
- Article 49: Principals and heads of schools are chosen among teachers from an aptitude list. The modalities of establishment of this list are determined by regulation;
- Article 50: Education administration and management staff due to their involvement in the educational activities have the benefit of the advantages related to the constraints and subject of the function.
- Chapter four: Support staff
- Article 51: Support staffs consist of agents assigned to specific tasks

Before going into further discussions on how the education administration pattern looks like and how it operates, let us first look at the personnel recruitment and deployment process. In fact, the recruitment and overall management of the public civil servants in Guinea, like anywhere, follow specific regulations and procedures. As such, it is established that as Sheldon et al. (1994:72) note:

“civil servants and all government workers are indeed governed by rules stated in the civil service code. This code lays down a wide range of rules, which deal with recruitment, rights and obligations of civil servants, salary scales and benefits, career paths and promotion rules, rules of procedures on sanctions for civil servants violating the rules, and mechanisms to resolve conflicts between management and labor”.

However, in the specific case of education, it is clear that the administrative and management staff derive mostly from a pool of teachers with a tiny portion of these agents without teaching background. That being said, the recruitment of the personnel intended to the education system prior to the year 2000, has been apparently done through an opened competition. Nevertheless, from the year 2000 onwards, the recruitment was based on title—documents screening, test or professional exam being introduced. Interestingly, there is one thing which deserves mention here, the education sector at its basic level, which is headed by the MOE, remains dependent on other ministries (Ministry in charge of public Services—MPS and the Ministry in charge of Budget—MB) as far as the recruitment of its personnel is concerned.

The regulations provide that the Ministry of Education transmit to the Ministry in charge of the Civil Service and to the Ministry in charge of the Budget, its needs in terms of teachers/personnel for the next fiscal year based on the school map. The Ministry in charge of the Budget, based on the information provided by the MOE, proceeds to the budget projection for the financial support of new teachers to be recruited on the one hand, and transmits the confirmation of budget registration to the civil service and the ministry of education on the other hand. On the basis of the need specified by the MOE, the Ministry in charge of the public service proceeds to the organization of the external competitions of recruitment. Moreover, there are two further concerns that should be singled out regarding the staffing of the education sector. The first concern refers to the reliability of the mechanism in place ensuring recruitment operations.

A sector and its whims of bad governance

In view of the opacity surrounding the recruitment process—falsification of documents, fictitious recruitment of permanent and contractual agents—that many people denounce has led to further tarnishing the image of this function. This, incidentally, suggests to some observers that applying to the education sector represents only a doorway to the public service, which, moreover,

invigorates the trend of absorption of qualified staff by non-state services. So, in the presence of such situations, corrective and incentive measures must follow up the initial training of the personnel being recruited, especially, when the recruitment does not put emphasis on prior requirements for the post, which is often the case. Actually, this points to the absence of a particular framework allowing an independent recruitment of especially appropriate cadres for the administration of the education sector. The second concern is related to the relevance of the preliminary stage of needs identification in terms of personnel (teaching and administrative staff) and openings of new positions (vacancies) to be filled out. As it is apparent, a failure in the projection and planning of necessary needs in personnel and resources jeopardizes a country's realization of its educational objectives, which is, actually, an obvious fact in Guinea.

Additionally, another fundamental aspect related to the personnel is its deployment. Not only, is it important for the sector/sub-sectors to have the required number of personnel of good quality, but also its deployment should respond to the needs present in the units. This is far from being the case in Guinea, even though it is considered that “the administrative management of primary schools in Guinea is among the best in Africa in terms of teacher allocation”, according to the World Bank (2005: 178). However, an entirely different picture emerges as to the distribution of resources and administrative personnel, especially planners and managers within the sector. Firstly, the absence of a defined framework for the recruitment of administrative staff represents a first obstacle to adequately provide the sector with performing staff. Secondly, the disarticulation of structures as well as the incorrect application of regulations, have most often led to an imbalance of capacities. While, “in a system that would be optimally organized from the point of view of administrative and financial management, there should be a functional relationship between needs and resources at different levels of aggregation of the system” (World Bank, 2005: 176).

Another facet of the education sector administration in Guinea relates to the management of its staff. At the outset, it should be notified that the educational system bears heavily the burden of fictitious and sedentary staff. And such practices, in fact, have three negative implications for the performance of the sector. The first implication is that of the workforce plethora. According to the World Bank (2005: 200), this refers to “the more general use of staff (whether their status is that of a teacher or an administrative staff) that provides support jobs for the system (in schools or in central and decentralized services). These support staff account for about 25% of

the total staff employed at the primary level, while the corresponding figure is on average slightly less than 15% in the countries of the region”. Such a view is corroborated by the human resources director of the MOE, who overtly, asserts the surplus number of personnel needed to run the day-to-day activities of the sector at the basic education level.

Moreover, there is also the caducity of regulations and/or their inapplicability, which often leads to conflict of interests and responsibilities. This state of total leniency favors the maintenance of complacency allowing the sedentarization of certain staff. The persistence of such acts within the education administration hinders real changes from taking place. Consequently, the chain of command is sometimes blurred between sub-level structures (i.e., regional inspectorates of education and the prefectural directorates of education located at the chief lieu of a region). Subsequent to this is the lack of personnel re-juvenescence, which de facto undermines the sector’s qualification. This further raises the question of the appointment to and the management of positions within different services, since the creation of posts at the sub-level structures (IRE, DPE, DSPE) depends on the central administration.

As indicated previously, the profile of the office staff mostly mismatches with its missions. And so is the number of personnel occupying these offices as the existing organic framework is outdated. However, the problem is less at the level of number than at the selection level of people. According to some heads of departments interviewed, new positions have come into being recently within their units. Yet, the creation of these positions barely obeys predefined criteria since there is no complete correspondence between profiles and responsibilities. In more general terms, the profiles are neither fixed nor clearly defined. Positions are thus filled without regard to the profiles or skills of the incumbents. Overall, a small number of the personnel is appointed based on competence, however, many are admitted through relationships and serve in the same positions for more than 10 years. What is most important to notice is that the large number of these cadres lacks personal initiative as well as qualification. More specifically, at the sub-levels, as expounded by GIZ (2017: n.d), “the local administrative actors, consisting of education authority employees, school advisors and head teachers, are not sufficiently qualified to fulfill their administrative and management tasks”.

This is sometimes the direct consequence of politicization — see more details in the section that follows—, which the education sector has been victim of for many years, prompting Ahouangansi (2018: n.d) to denounce it in these terms:

“Access to positions of high responsibility is also guided by the need to maintain a certain popularity to have an electoral weight and stay in power. This political logic is reflected in recruitments at the grassroots that do not meet objective criteria but rather criteria of allegiance and loyalty of the electorate”.

One more important element in education administration that deserves due consideration is the material and financial management of the sector. Under the EFA framework, the sector-wide approach adopted has involved various stakeholders in the reform program. Thus, with the intent to better coordinate donors’ effort to support actions dedicated to the realization of the reform’s objectives, the Ministry of finance ensures the mobilization and re-allocation of funds. While the Ministries in charge of education, especially the MOE serves as an executing agency of the reform program. This arrangement is reminiscent of the mechanism linked to the recruitment of the education personnel. The resulting fear of poor coordination is likely to encroach upon the smooth functioning of adjacent services. This concern was practically emphasized at the inception of the program by the World Bank (2001: 13) in the following terms.

“The various agencies of the three education ministries have demonstrated time and again their determination to move this sector forward. However, the same priority has not always been demonstrated by the actions of the Ministry of Finance. Too often, the sector has been subjected to financing delays which have hampered its functioning. This has been particularly true for non-salary expenditures and for timely payment of non-salary operating expenditures and for timely payment of non-civil service teachers”.

A subsequent aspect to this is that “the procurement management arrangements set under EFA, which proposed that ST(Technical Secretary) of each ministry manage the procurement related to the activities carried out by its respective Ministry under external funds, while the DAAF (Administrative and Financial Affairs Division) manage Government-financed procurement” (World Bank, 2001: 10). Nonetheless, the resulting facts of several remarks prove that external funds management by the ST was subject to regular procurement procedures and strict expenditures’ audits, while the Government’s funds management is confronted with recurrent disbursement problems and lack of viable auditing mechanism. In spite of the capacity building and the development of Medium Term Expenditure Framework (CDMT), however, the link between annual budget preparation processes and CDMTs is not yet assured, and problems persist in terms of capacity of sectoral administrations. A recent consultant report on the institutional diagnosis of the financial affairs directorates (DAF) of the sectoral ministries

showed that "these are not yet able to fully assume responsibility for the management of resources" (PSE1, 2013:29).

With respect to the reallocation of funds to the sub-level structures under the School improvement Component through small grants, it was established that: "the decentralization of financial management to the DPE (prefectural directorate of education) and CRD—Rural Community Development (now called CR—Rural Commune) levels has been developed in line with: (i) the devolution of budget responsibilities to the prefectural administrations and local governments (CR), implemented under the Capacity Building for Service Delivery Program (PRCI), and (ii) the village Community Support Program (PACV)" (World Bank, 2001:10). In this respect, it is reported that much more efforts have been made to strengthen budgetary de-concentration through the granting of credit delegations to de-concentrated services. However, "a significant portion of the funds allocated to these services is executed centrally at their own expense" (Republic of Guinea, 2017: 58). This state of affairs, however, corroborates the evidence that "it is important to note not only the suboptimal breakdown between the categories of expenditure but also the strong centralization of the management of financial and material resources at the level of central financial services and the scarcity of resources at the level of decentralized services" (Republic of Guinea, 2014: 21). In short, It goes without saying that the progress registered in the management of material and financial resources at both the central and the de-concentrated levels remains mitigated, especially the slowness in the effective implementation of the budget de-concentration (Republic of Guinea, 2014: 42). The indication, which further illustrates this situation, enounces on the one hand;

"The distribution of national resources for the development of the country is characterized by the centralization of the budgeting process and the lack of consideration for the needs of the field offices and local governments. Moreover, the availability of resources for development is subjected to centralized procedures, which do not solicit the contribution of field offices to the development of budgets. The field shares are unilaterally determined by central authorities without much regard for their needs" (Sheldon et al., 1994:82)

On the other hand;

"Irregularities in the pace of payments have affected the efficiency of implementation of activities. Payment dates have not always been optimal and repeated delays in the return of supporting accounting documents make these transactions difficult" (Republic of Guinea, 2014: 23).

Notwithstanding, it is worth mentioning that from the researcher's personal observation, a salutary step has been taken in the management of material resources at the central level (identification and labeling of all the property of the public administration). However, such an approach is not actually observed at the level of dismembered structures, as specified in the passage below:

“The management of physical assets within the departments has improved. Indeed, all materials and equipment acquired since 2015 have been stamped and an annual inventory carried out by the material and equipment accounting section of the DAF with the support of the National Directorate of Material and Equipment Accounting established in the Ministry of Budget. However, the de-concentrated services of the sector which acquire many materials and equipment require capacity building in material and equipment accounting to ensure good management of the public administration physical assets” (Republic of Guinea, 2017: 58).

An underlying feature of the material and financial capacity of the education system in Guinea relates to the notorious lack of resources available to the sector and its sub-sectors. The first important aspect to address refers to the remuneration of the education staff (teachers as well as administrative ones). In general, “the level of remuneration of education personnel is very low in Guinea, with an average value of 2.1 times the GDP per capita for the entire teaching force in primary education” (World Bank, 2005: 202). The second important aspect to single out has to do with the lack of material resources necessary for an effective service delivery within the sector. This lack of resources, which is often deplored by the staff, especially at the level of de-concentrated services, will be further discussed in subsequent sections.

The operating system within the institutional environment

The political variant

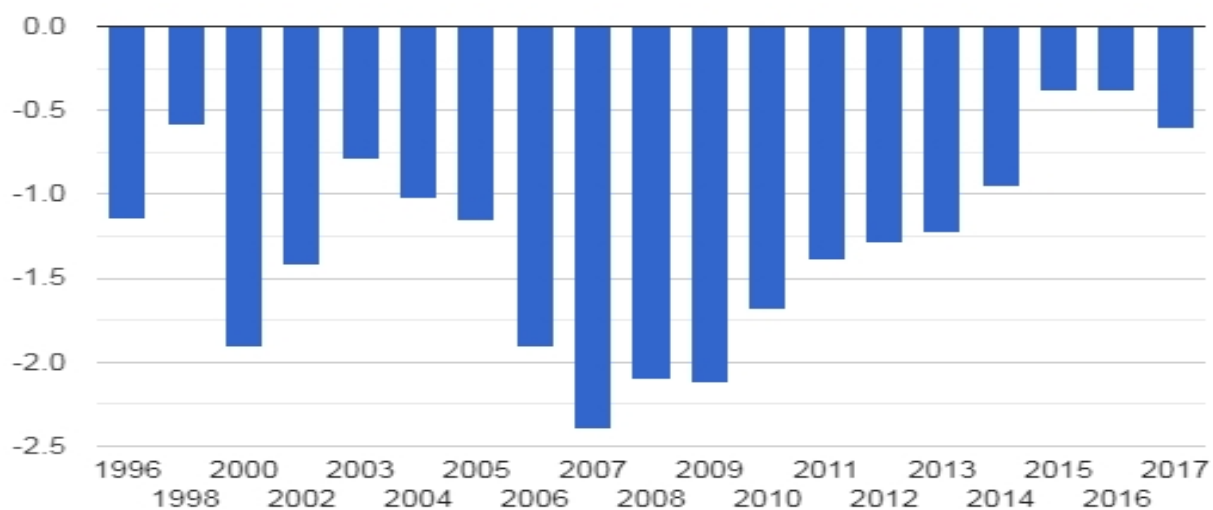
Guinea's endemic socio-political and cyclical crises

To start with, a narrative on Guinea's politics would pretty much be captured from the following passage, Stating, “the Guinea story since independence has been one of the holding on to what has been achieved, in the face of the strange and uncertain pressures of being a nation out on its own. In external, as in domestic, politics, Guinea's actions have been a curious amalgam of high-principled idealism and very realistic appreciation of power politics” (Whiteman, 1971: 358). At large, it is generally argued that the long spanning trouble, which marks “Guinea's [...] history, is rooted in the decades of autocratic single-party rule, marked by political violence and military

coups, which stunted the development of a political culture striving for consensus over confrontation. Guinea began engaging in democratic reforms nearly 20 years after many other African countries” (Maestrup, 2018:n.d). This unprecedented political turmoil is recalled by various but concurrent views as such; 26 years of [autocratic] civil rule by Sékou Touré—1958-1984, and 24 years of more [autocratic] military rule by Lansana Conté—1984-2008, [subsequently] the country embarked on [another short—2008-2010 but also deadly] military rule led by Moussa Dadis Camara (Businessafrica.net; Encyclopedia Britannica; Bangoura, 2015).

In fact, it is important to restate the historical facts in a more concise and precise way. Speaking from the magnitude point of view, Guinea has not experienced a severe violent conflict as a nation-state. Neither of a nature of armed civil conflict nor of a major rebellion that have destabilized the integrity of the country. However, repeated crises have spanned the life of this nation since independence. Again, as argued as follows “Guinea has struggled to remain on the path of political stability, social cohesion and socio-economic development (see figure 6.1). Guinea has experienced decades of political turmoil and instability through authoritarian regimes and coup d’états, fueled by deep social tensions” (Camara, 2012:n.d). More concretely, Guinea's instability has been much more internal than external instigation, as revealed by the most significant events in the country's socio-political history. To evoke the real causes of these crises, different aspects deserve to be taken into consideration, according to the more established facts.

Figure 6.1: Guinea-Political Stability



Source: The GlobalEconomy.com, the World Bank

The recrudescence of tension between the different socio-political forces of the country is the result of a marked negationism of the other in the coexistence of interests. However, an inherently long-standing unstable position and a web of complex antagonisms have long undermined the political terrain of Guinea. Some people even infer that the dominant current in the political exercise in Guinea is that of the infamous saying, "all for myself and nothing for others". Among these views, we can identify Sheldon et al. (1994: 29) who, humbly insinuates, "politics is conducted as a zero-sum game with the winner taking all or most of the fruits of victory". Moreover, they went on to rigidly expound that:

"The losers have not fared well in politics and [conquest] in Guinea. The Fulani and Malinké [the two largest ethnic groups in Guinea], for example enslaved, exacted tribute, and expropriated land when defeating their rivals. Following the colonial conquest, the French wiped out autonomous political institutions and transformed Guineans into subjects with few political and civil rights. Under the First Republic, Sékou Touré eliminated the opposition, created a one-party regime, and meted out harsh punishments to critics of the regime. Under the Second Republic, the military refused to establish political parties and insisted on maintaining full control over all of the country's levers of power" (ibid).

Nevertheless, democracy came into play in the country with the advent of the Third Republic. However, it should be emphasized that Guinea's opting for such a direction is being coercive rather than voluntary in nature. As, for fear of being isolated by the international community, the ruling army, headed by Lansana Conté adopted in December 1990 a new constitution by referendum. Hence, "this was a time of liberalization, marked by the adoption of a multiparty system and incipient public freedoms. Nevertheless, this period did not last very long" (Bangoura, 2015: 40). Despite the relaxing atmosphere that tended to initiate a climate of optimism, "Conté's regime was marked by human rights abuses, bad governance, impunity and weak rule of law" (Souare, 2014:1). For many observers of Guinea's politics, the first "free and fair" elections in Guinea's history were held in 2010. However, according to Diallo (2016:n.d), "political parties missed the opportunity to alter the political structure in place in the country. As a result, the political system remains characterized by unilateralism, corruption and predation". Most striking of all, however, the social fabric has undergone a very deep rift manifested by a very pronounced ethnic cleavage.

"Such a phenomenon, which before lay in dormancy, reached a high polarization scale based on ethnic grounds driven by unscrupulous political actors who stir up old ethnic quarrels"

(Sheldon et al., 1994:39). Against this backdrop, the fact that the past repeats itself, gives the impression that the old demons still continue to haunt this country. And, so would defend it Camara (2012:n.d) posits that, “this certainly reflects colonial practices of tribal division that engendered political patronage based on ethnic identity rather than central state policies”. Furthermore, he continued by stating that “through these ethnic lenses, Guinea’s history can be read differently depending on which community one belongs to—and all groups can draw on historical grievances against other groups based on perceived past inequities : the unequal access to education, public offices and business opportunities” (Camara, 2012:n.d). Given the continuing facts, all this would make one believe in a deterioration of the situation if nothing is done to reverse this trend. In any case, the ongoing time is much more determining. As Diallo (2016: n.d) noted while vigorously denouncing this ominous impetus pursued by the country's politics,

“At the heart of the issue lies the excessive personalization and ethnic-based nature of most Guinean parties. Instead of promoting the provision of goods and national development, parties serve as vehicles for personal advancement and patronage. The weak political and institutional structures in Guinea favour identity politics, cronyism and personal interest”.

Moreover, it should be pointed out that the ethnic rivalry is not the only driver of tensions in Guinea. Besides competition for political power, other factors such as socio-economic related issues are also more indicative. A statement drawn from the IMF (2012: 14) Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Report on Guinea, better exemplifies this other angle of reflection:

“It is important to remember that the crisis faced by the country is primarily due to mismanagement of public resources; weakness in the institutional, legal, and regulatory framework for business; and absence of dialogue with political parties, civil society, and the private sector” (2012: 14).

Reform efforts undermined by repeated crises

From the above-mentioned statement, it appears that socio-political troubles in Guinea are also triggered by the dramatic and much degraded living conditions of Guineans in general. In reality, the living conditions of Guineans have always been poor since independence and have not really seen real improvements. This extreme precariousness has consistently contributed to internal frustrations in people. Being into such a plight, the high cost of living that bears on people on a

daily basis is often manifested by large-scale protests. As such, this remains a piece of evidence, as expounded upon by Sano et al. (2018: 2) that, one of “the main cause of political unrest in Guinea is the presence of absolute poverty—the country has to build every needed basic infrastructure from scratch. In this state of affairs, it is very easy to get the deprived jobless destitute impoverished youths to the street”. This context of pronounced deprivation has dealt a hard blow on the well-being of all social strata in the country, which is characterized by a widespread and sheer lack of basic social services. As a result, this sometimes raises alarming voices, such that, “it is difficult to deny the statistics that place Guinea among the worst in the world for health, education, job opportunities, and overall standard of living. People are angry — especially the youth” (Gerber, 2013: n.d). Thus, as an indication of denouncing one of the causes of weak provision of education related services, one can read, “above all [Guinea] has a very corrupted education system—education makes the best you can be; so no education means no future prosperity. [Hence] there is a little wonder why there is often political unrest in the country, because people have no confidence in the corrupted system” (Sano et al., 2018: 2).

In relative terms, the determining factors in the rise of social tensions are intertwined as one inevitably engenders the other. So far, what has been observed in the specific case of Guinea is a gradual coexistence in terms of income inequality, poor governance and corruption, low levels of social benefits or the exacerbation of ethnic tensions. The culmination of these mixed factors exacerbated bad governance in the country, which resulted in the weakening of the existing socio-political framework by the end of the 1990s.

Reforms in the education sector affected by a sinister chronology of socio-political troubles

Since 2000, the Republic of Guinea has been the scene of multiple and recurrent political, economic and social crises. During the last years of Lansana Conte's term, a permanent political and social crisis had taken hold. Among the political and social unrest that have riddled the country, we can list the rebel attacks along the borders with Sierra Leone and Liberia. Also, the combination of internal as well as external shocks strongly infringed on the country's developmental plans. Besides political turmoil, the deterioration of Guinea's economic performance can be distinguished as one of the internal shocks. As for the external shocks, the fall in public support from donors is one element that deserves mention. In addition, the intensification of sub regional insecurity as a result of the conflicts in—Guinea's neighboring

countries—Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea Bissau and Côte d'Ivoire, and the massive influx of refugees into Guinea and the pressures this influx has exerted on public expenditure to the detriment of social spending also contributed to weakening the social sector's development in the early 2000s.

A turbulent decade compromises Guinea's EFA effective inception

In the consecutive years, the country continued facing a succession of popular discontent of all kinds. In 2001-2002, the standoff between the government and the opposition over the organization of a controversial referendum and the legislative elections has led to the closure of schools. Students and schoolchildren who feel that they are deprived of their right to education, took the streets to join the protest and burn tires. This momentum was then the beginning of a revolted youth era, marked by a galloping incivility and the loss of the culture of resignation.

Moreover, by some fate of calendar, the adoption of the education for all reform program took place during this very turbulent period. It then followed, according to Tity Faye (2008: 215) “a suspension of the financing of initiated programs, following the conclusion in 2003 of the IMF and the World Bank, on the situation in Guinea which was a condemnation. Yet the national economy remained dependent on the Bretton Woods institutions”. Thus, the year 2003 announced itself with more uncertainties. Especially as a prelude to presidential elections, scheduled during the same year was in the crosshairs with all the consequences they entailed. Also, the difficulties related to the increase in the price of staple foods in which the Guinean population was confronted in the summer were other elements of tensions. These series of critical moments let some people believe that “by the year 2003, there were fears that Guinea could become a failed state” (Souare, 2014:1). Other views are articulated in these terms:

“The risks of social and political implosion are all the more real as the Guinean economy is at its worst. While the economic and social crisis in the country is not a new fact, the year 2003 was still marked by the proliferation of demonstrations against the rise in the cost of living and the state of disrepair of the country” (Chambers, 2004: 33).

The slump in which the country was plunged was getting worse and became a widespread concern among the population. In addition, anxiety was also growing in the face of such a situation that did not tend to change. Meanwhile, the inflation was getting generalized across the

country with a rate that accumulated between 2003 and 2007 (Keita, 2007). Exasperated, the population expressed its dissatisfaction with a popular groan that gradually dislodged. This grumble will continue over time and it will mark a turning point in the history of the country. In its description of this rather particular period, Souare (2014:1) asserts itself in this way.

“The years 2006-2010 were significant in Guinea’s post-colonial history. They were characterized by extreme poverty, corruption, impunity, violation of human rights by the military regime of the late President-General Lansana Conte. It was also a period during which Guineans showed a great level of political consciousness and revolted against the malpractices through street protests. Civil society organizations along with trade unions and ordinary citizens took to the streets in June 2006 and also in January and February 2007 to express their disapproval of the ailing President and its corrupt acolytes”.

Demonstrations took place across the country, which severely interrupted the conduct of daily activities, particularly education services. The protesters requested serious changes and reforms in the governing system, including more openness in the democratic process and the implementation of concrete solutions to get the country out of the crisis.

Without respite, throughout the decade, Guinea has not experienced a remarkable stability allowing people to regain serenity as demonstrated by the succession of events in the country. The “socio-political landscape remains marked in 2008 and 2009 by the effects of the difficult global economic context, bad governance (which results in social movements, notably strikes), political instability, and the death of the elected head of state, the seizure of power by the army following the death, correlated with the surge of insecurity and the difficulty of bringing the country back to normal constitutional life” (National Committee for the Fight against Aids—CNLCS, 2010:32). In addition, it is worth mentioning the political instability and a number of violent incidents registered during the military junta, the National council for Democracy and Development (CNDD), between 2008 and 2009. These incidents resulted in the loss of life of more than 150 opposition supporters, dozens of raped women, and hundreds of wounded people, including many important opposition members during the biggest mobilization of all demonstrations intended to counter the intentions of the junta leader to confiscate the democratic power. The corollary effect of such an incident was the sudden failed attempt to assassinate the junta leader by his aide-de-camp, which almost put the country into a deeper crisis, but still hampered the peaceful conduct of daily activities throughout the country.

However, “the tumultuous moment that followed this military takeover eventually ended with the organization of the country’s first inclusive and democratic presidential elections since independence” (Souare, 2014:1). It should be noted that “a large number of international actors have monitored political developments in Guinea and played an important role in helping Guinean institutions overcome certain challenges” (Stremlau, 2010:10). With the aim of restoring constitutional order and easing the socio-political and economic climate, the 2010 presidential election has raised immense hope on both sides - national and international. However, the fact is that, the return of the spiral of violence was much feared, as if it had become a custom with the holding of elections in Guinea as it is in many other countries where democracy is still struggling to really take root.

Notwithstanding, the organization of the presidential election—although viewed as “historical” or as the “first free and transparent poll since independence”—its second round as well as the legislative elections of September 2013 that followed after led to relatively significant violence, and loss of life (Faye, 2014: 15). These saddening incidents resulting from previous causes compromised much more the quietude that so many people have hoped for, as depicted on a Guinean citizen platform—National Platform of United Citizens for Development (PCUD, 2018: n.d).

“Indeed, the inclination of political parties to control the main institutions of the country, including the CENI [Independent National Electoral Committee] and the resulting political game, against a backdrop of a lack of confidence, have led Guinea into an endless quarrel between the main political actors, the organization of contentious elections, which provoked demonstrations most often repressed in the blood, immense material damage and disrupted economic activities, thus weakening the private sector and further aggravating youth unemployment and the poverty of citizens”.

In far contrast, as the target year for achieving the objectives of the Education for All program was rapidly approaching, Guinea for its part was confronted with crises of all kinds. In addition to repetitive political crises, the country faced its worst health crisis following the Ebola outbreak. Because of this sanitary incidence, public schools in Guinea and its neighboring countries, Liberia and Sierra Leone, also affected by the disease, remained closed after the July-August 2014 break, depriving five million children of their education (WFP, 2015). Be that as it may, whether it is the sanitary crisis or the interruption of the teaching of children by the untimely

closing of schools, for many observers, all this is a result of bad governance due to a resignation of the political power incarnated by the state (Sano et al., 2018; Fribault, 2015).

Basically, it should be noted that the upsurge of socio-political crises in Guinea have had a gradual impact on the smooth running of education services in the country. The frequent interruption of education due to repetitive troubles in the country seriously affects the integrity of the education sector. Subject to various measures regulating the life of the country, the education system has suffered the full brunt of aggravated dysfunction registered during all these years. By a fact of timing, a general strike movement was launched by the teachers' union in 2015, the year that was meant to mark the closing of the EFA programme. The outbreak of this education trade-union movement is the most eloquent expression of the state of obsolescence in which Guinean education has been evolving for a long time.

Over-politicization of the Guinean education system

As mentioned previously, it is worth recognizing that the education sector is sick of its men and the hazardous policies that accompany it. In the face of this downward spiral of the educational system, observers who are aware of the situation have no other means than to sound the alarm. As is the case of Diallo (2018:n.d), who in his humble opinion notices that, “for a while, the national education sector of our country is shaken by a serious crisis. This seemingly cyclical crisis is only one part of the structural crisis that has for a long time been affecting a sector as strategic as it is vital for the future of our country, such as education”. Such a situation, in which this sector lives, is the logical consequence of the inadequacies in the governance of the country, which is the result of amateurism with multiple negative effects. While it remains obvious that "we cannot manage a sector as important as education with amateurism" (Labila Sonomou¹⁷, 2017); many other observers from the Guinean civil society (Balaya Diallo¹⁸, Diarra Doumbouya¹⁹, Baadiko Bah²⁰, Dansa Kourouma²¹) share this view. However, it is apparent that the problems that beset the education sector are both complex and endemic. The following criticisms, which are overlapping, justify this with vigor and consternation.

¹⁷Mr. Labila Michel Sonomou, President of Lawyers without Borders in Guinea (2017)

¹⁸Ibrahima Balaya Diallo, President of the Guinean Civil Forum (2017)

¹⁹Diarra Doumbouya, PMP certified Project Manager/Paris/Toulouse/London (2018)

²⁰Mamadou Baadiko Bah, President of UFD (a Guinean Political Party) (2017/2018)

²¹Dansa Kourouma, President of the National Council of Civil Society Organizations (CNOGS) (2017)

“The Guinean education system is handicapped by many difficulties and particularly its politicization. Indeed, each of the regimes that have succeeded each other since independence have despised previous achievements. The political rivalry pushed each new regime to suppress all the works of its predecessors, and to capitalize on its achievements...This situation deprives the education system of the accumulating effect of experience necessary for the successful structural and indispensable reforms. It is in these circumstances, for example, that after the advent to power of Lansana Conté’s regime in 1984, there was convened the national encounters of education that questioned the entire education system. This has led to the juxtaposition of several, often contradicting and conflicting measures that have blocked the path to sound reform” (Ahouangansi, 2018:n.d).

A similar tone exposes the same grievance, while at the same time being indignant at the situation, which has worsened over the years.

“The Guinean education is a victim of its excessive politicization since the era of PDG [Guinea Democratic Party—first ruling party in Guinea]. This trend was greatly aggravated in 2011 whereby all appointments in this sector were made first and foremost on the basis of political militancy or real or perceived sympathy with the new ruling party. If we want to get out of it, the Guinean education must be driven by an effective policy but it must be safe from politics as it is now” (Baadiko Bah, 2017:n.d).

Guinea’s education sector depicted above and the extreme conditions of depravation characterizing it have triggered these movements of unlimited general strike of teachers and researchers launched by the SLECG (Guinea’s largest education trade union). The growing waves of claims are multidimensional and involve many social actors (teachers, students and their parents). In addition, the clients of education services express their frustration at the lack of quality education for their children, on the one hand. On the other hand, according to Ahouangansi (2018:n.d), “the permanent standoff between the government and the trade-unions is also a symptom of the politicization of educational management. The strikes then became an instrument, no longer of corporate demands, but of pressure from the political opposition that often associate with trade unionists to amplify strikes”.

One thing remains clear; the current state of affairs surrounding crises in the education sector is largely motivated by the low level of living and working conditions of teachers and students (The National Council of Guinean Civil Society Organizations—CNOCS, 2017). The rise of protest movements in the teaching profession has significantly affected the functioning of

the education system. The recent events of 2017 and those ongoing at the time of writing this thesis suggest that the wind does not tend to run out of steam. In particular, with the rise of tensions and the continuity of the socio-political crisis brought by both teachers—who demand a salary adjustment and the opposition parties—contesting the results of the 2018 communal elections.

It was of a fundamental necessity to find permanent common ground in order to avoid compromising the education of young people who are undoubtedly the next generation of this country. Particularly, given that Guinea is facing an increasingly intense and diverse range of protest, especially with the forthcoming presidential elections that are right at the corner, expected to take place in 2020. In any circumstance, “it is urgent to stop the decay of Guinea’s education system. It is a national emergency on which social peace depends. For this, it is necessary to overcome all partisan divisions in order to develop a strategy to address the structural shortcomings in the system. The first step is the de-politicization of the system in order to bring the reform back to a search for efficiency” (Ahouangansi, 2018:n.d).

The economic variant

Issues and trade-offs in education financing

First, it should be pointed out that, after all, education is only an investment in human capital (Schultz, 1971; Neamtu, 2012). As such, its appropriate funding is of extreme necessity to allow its normal functioning and the execution of intended reform for its development. Too often, education is viewed out of the lens of a sector with a potential return to investment, since its immediate function is not to yield financial interest but to instill skills and knowledge. In any case, what is certain, is that education has a cost as well as a return. Likewise, in any other sector, whether economic or not, the achievement of set objectives necessitates consistent funding. Moreover, given the rationale behind any investment, the designated fund intended to a project deserves to be utilized in an efficient manner for maximization of its return to investment.

However, investing effectively in education is a very complex matter. Simply, taking the issues surrounding the funding availability and disbursement, the institutions entrusted with a fund can face trade-offs regarding how to allocate these finite resources to generate significant impacts at an optimum cost. Thus, here comes the relevance of capacity development as a priori approach to be considered in any effective project intervention. As the objective seeks in the

provision of assistance is not lengthening the transaction cost associated with the requirement of receiving it, rather fostering both the recipient country's features of financial and intervention capacity for the reform since they are intertwined.

Therefore, reforms pertaining to the development of education systems in the developing countries should adhere to the aid effectiveness principles—harmonization and alignment with a strong coordination of actors as well as a real partnership with and ownership of the reform programme by the recipient country. In order to reverse the effect of previous intervention strategies, such as the project-oriented based financial support schemes, the monitoring committee of EFA programme following the Dakar encounters called for a strategic shift in the funding approach, whereby, “the Dakar framework for Action called for significant increases in financial commitment by national governments and donors to the education sector to accelerate progress towards the Education for All (EFA) goals. It encouraged donors to support government efforts to increase aid for basic education and deliver it as effectively as possible” (GMR, 2015: 241). The burden sharing envisaged by the programme's steering committee appears to have been insufficiently fully adhered to by both governments and donors. To recipient countries, this approach sounds sometimes non-binding insofar as there has been the commitment of the international community to provide the assistance necessary to achieve the goals set by the global agenda in the development of education. But, the effective delivery of aid at the international scale dedicated to education has not benefited from a synergy of donors' actions.

In any case and largely, however, it remains unanimously obvious that the largest share of the costs related to the conduct of the EFA programme's activities should be borne by the governments of the recipient countries. The logic would like it to be so if one would, at any rate, expect the sustainability of capabilities in the long run. So, it is in this perspective that “the Dakar Framework implicitly recommended national government to take the lead in increasing financial commitments to EFA, with the EFA High Level Steering Committee proposing that 15% to 20% of annual budgets be earmarked for education” (GMR, 2015: 241). As such, a huge burden is being put on these countries in view of the many uncontrolled factors that determine the performance of a national economy. Given the fact that the “degree to which EFA [would] be financed depends on a (a) the growth of total government expenditure, which, in turn, is strongly influenced by the rate of economic growth; and (b) the share of government expenditure allocated to provide for basic learning needs” (GMR, 2008: 185). However, the fulfillment of

requirements and compliance with overall measures set to achieve EFA objectives present both opportunities and challenges. Taking a narrower look into the prospect of resource availability at the national levels offers a disparate perception on the generation of funds for education.

To do so, a general perspective based on global financial forecast will first assess the commitment of all regions to the funding of EFA reform program with respect to the economic environment that has prevailed. In addition, pay due attention to the fulfillment of the donor community with regard to the increase in its financial support to education. Then, a subsequent step will be taken to look more deeply at country level with the intent to apprehend how education was actually financed under this sectoral reform program.

Financing education in the developing countries

A deleterious macroeconomic climate skewed countries' funding commitment to the sector

At large, the financing of EFA programme, literally, was based on expectations that recipient countries' economic growth would maintain a relatively stable or increasing performance; and especially with a confident hope from donors to meet their commitments. However, the actual trends proved the contrary despite optimist projections made for most developing countries—South Asian countries and sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries. Some underperformance has been noted instead in some countries, and especially the disparate government commitments in the budget allocation for education are, among other things, much unexpected aspects in the financing of the programme. In addition, the mobilization of funds for education necessitates not only the commitment of national governments but also ensuring sustainable sources of revenue, and its efficient utilization. Thus, this requires diversifying the revenue sources such as tax collection, the ability of aid absorption, and fund redistribution, which equally depend on the will of recipient countries and their internal settings. Establishing a balance for these different aspects of education spending is essential as duly noted in the GMR (2008: 186):

“It is clear that countries that have made significant progress have tended to increase or maintain their education expenditure as a share of GNP, while in countries where progress has been slower, the share has tended to decrease. Besides the level of resources that governments allocate to education, ways to increase efficiency must be addressed. The institutional context in which public spending takes place requires more attention than it has so far received”.

Against this backdrop, differences registered in the achievement of educational objectives set by both the EFA and the MDGs reflect the difference of involvement of recipient countries. As

mentioned above, not only the initial devotion to develop the sector is necessary; but also sustained efforts are primarily expected from national governments to create a favorable environment for stakeholders involved in assisting the development of education in general and the achievement of EFA goals in particular. Sufficiently informed of the prevailing situation in the recipient countries, the Dakar Framework has put a lot of weight on good practices. Thus, demanding from all actors, especially States, donors and civil societies (i.e. NGOs) involved in the reform programme to incorporate characteristics of good governance in their intervention strategy. These series of binding measures are supposed to make aid and intervention in the reform process more responsive. These measures are manifested at three levels as foreseen by the agreements of the different summits in this respect.

“[the Dakar Framework, the Monterrey Consensus and the Paris declaration], underlined the importance of ownership, leadership, sound national policies, absorptive capacity and financial management as crucial for more effective aid. [And] the main role of donors was described as augmenting government expenditure in countries where the political will to achieve EFA was being demonstrated. Donors also have a responsibility, however, to help develop capacity in fragile states. In general, aid effectiveness depends on a partnership with aid recipient countries that are committed to improving education access and participation, and education quality” (GMR, 2008: 186).

Subsequently, transparency on the reform activities was another emphasis made in the Dakar Framework, which was intended to ensure that information on the consequences of each participant’s actions is routinely generated and made available to those charged with rewarding good performance and sanctioning improper conduct (Burki and Perry, 1998; Sillers, 2002).

“The Dakar Framework also called for greater accountability, with countries accountable to citizens. With much stronger influence from civil society organizations (CSOs) than at Jomtien, the framework specifically referred to a need to curb corrupt practices and increase the efficiency of domestic resources. CSOs had strong participation in the drafting of the framework, which pushed for greater commitments to EFA and regarded CSOs as key partners to hold governments accountable for their financial promises” (GMR, 2015: 241).

Overall, the international community, in its impetus to assist developing countries to mobilize necessary resources to uphold the EFA programme, convened various summits and international agreements. Right after the encounters in 2000, where the Dakar Framework for action was adopted, a series of meetings followed one another in the course of a year—the international

Conference on financing for Development in 2002 in Monterrey, Mexico, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 held in Johannesburg, South Africa, and also the G8 Kananaskis Summit of 2002 called for a New Focus on Education for All. This intensive advocacy for the development of basic education led to the establishment of the EFA Fast-Track Initiative in the same year in 2002. Perceived as a convergence mechanism of efforts, the Fast Track Initiative, which inspired others, later on became the Global Partnership for Education. In the subsequent year—2003, the High-Level Forum on Harmonization of Assistance took place in Rome, Italy, thus giving more tone to the quest for consensus. This momentum of agreement already forged was concretized by the 2005 G8 summit in Gleneagles and the high-level forums on aid effectiveness in Paris, Accra and Busan. Also in the sense of reinvigorating the principles and framework of EFA programme, the G8 Summit in 2006 in St. Petersburg recalled the necessity of supporting basic education development in the developing countries.

Nonetheless, given the need to refocus the debate on EFA funding at the national level, it is imperative and wise to place the cursor on the recipient countries themselves. As such, one can apprehend the level of commitment of national governments towards their national education reform programmes, and to also unveil one of the coin's sides as of EFA funding schemes is concerned. Generally speaking, the investment in social services is an implicit responsibility of the State. From a narrower and rational perspective, public intervention in education is reinforced by its high potential to enhance a country's human capital, which is crucial for a sustained socio-economic development. Hence, the logic behind the interest of governments in most countries in the world to commit to largely finance education. However, recent trends in education development, assumes that “domestic public spending is by far the most important source of finance for basic education” (Steer and Smith, 2015:3). Such a perspective is being actually stressed by the GMR (2015: 241).

“The Dakar Framework saw national governments as largely financing EFA: ‘Governments must allocate sufficient resources to all components of basic education. This will require increasing the share of national income and budgets allocated to education, and, within that, to basic education’”.

Internal and external shocks eroded spending capacity on education

Nevertheless, it should be highlighted that the increasing trend of economic growth that was perceived in many low-income countries in the years 2000s has not been reflected in all

countries' national expenditure for education, including the share for basic education. Although, the per capita income across all low-income countries presented an increase of 4% a year between 2001 and 2006, and even higher — 5.6% for the period 2006 and 2007, compared to previous periods—1991 and 2001 with 1.8%, and 2.2% between 1996 and 2000 (GMR, 2008); yet the internal shocks experienced by these countries remain for the least equally different.

Set apart, the global financial crisis of mid-2008, which curbed growth rate to an estimated 1.2% (i.e. SSA countries) (World Bank, 2010), “other endogenous factors such as, socio-economic, different historical and political developments, coupled with insufficient economic growth have affected education development in developing countries—especially SSA” (Nomura, 2011:14). Furthermore, with reference to SSA, Nomura (2011: 19) also argued, “public provision of educational services is always constrained by the availability of public resources. Many SSA countries have relatively weak public resource collection capacity, and hence, resource allocation for education is also affected”. Nomura went on to add that “for many SSA countries, it is very difficult to raise public revenue because of macroeconomic and growth instability, high debt ratios, weak tax administration and large informal sectors” (ibid).

In accordance with such features that present most if not all developing countries' economies, especially SSA countries, it is quite difficult to comply with the EFA financing benchmarks, as specified respectively below:

“[In 2006, the High Level Group on EFA proposed that government should spend between 4% and 6% of GNP on education and that, within government budgets, between 15% and 20% should be earmarked for education, with a focus on basic education” (UNESCO, 2006e, 2007c).

By the same token, it was also suggested that “for countries to finance the MDGs [EFA inclusively], it is estimated at least 20% of national income must be raised in tax revenue...With many low and lower middle income countries starting from a low tax base at the time of Dakar, meeting this target required and still continue to require much more effort” (GMR, 2015: 242). Sticking to this baseline requirement for governments to generate additional revenue through tax—20%, basically appeared unmet in many countries. The low tax collection trend foreseen in the aftermath of the year 2000 encounters fall short of this target with an approximate average of 15% of tax recoveries in some low and middle incomes countries. And this downturn, though, timidly continued throughout the decade but the number of countries capable of maintaining sustained efforts to mobilize their national income through tax collection decreased. Somehow,

the economic growth perceived during the 1999-2012 period is considered to have an impact on real growth in public expenditure on education. At least that is what Steer and Smith (2015:4) considered in expounding that:

“In developing countries, domestic public spending on education has been rising during the past decade. This increase has been driven by significant improved domestic resource mobilization. On average, tax revenues have risen from 14% to 16% of gross domestic product (GDP). Building on this larger tax base, most countries have allocated a greater share of their GDP to education (on average, 4.6% of GDP for total education and 1.7% of GDP for primary education in 2012)”.

In fact, public spending on education in the developing countries should be explored in a more explicit way, especially with regard to governments’ sources of funding. As such, mobilized resources to ensure public spending for education within a country largely emanate from the national income, which is often referred to as gross national product (GNP) and where such data is unavailable, the gross domestic product (GDP) is considered instead. However, one thing worth noting is that public education expenditure is usually expressed as a percentage of total government expenditure, and that financing of education often varies across regions and countries. This is all the more obvious because it is understood that governments allocate their public resources to a sector such as education, based on the country’s need and the level of priority given to the sector. This is readily expounded in consequent terms, that “the share of education expenditure in total government expenditure indicates how committed a country is to educational development” (Nomura and Bruneforth, 2011: 29). From a more general remark, education expenditure was not de facto subject to the economic growth in all low and middle-income countries; as yet some may expect it. The same trend is equally true with the share of public education expenditure derived from the national income of these countries, that being actually allocated to education; and so different has been the commitment of their governments. By and large, taking an evolutionary perspective on education expenditure across regions based on data released by official reports, one can clearly distinguish these differences. At first, a primary observation on the financial devotion was made a few years later after the Dakar gathering in the 2000, specifying that:

“While a majority of governments, particularly in the least developed countries, and most noticeably in sub-Saharan Africa, have given more financial priority to

education, including basic education, many still allocate very low shares of GNP and total government expenditure to it” (GMR, 2008: 140).

Tracing up the thread of financial commitments to the education sector by each region of the world would help to establish a clear understanding of the share allocation to education across the world—especially in the developing world. According to the GMR, in 2005, the countries of North America and Western Europe devoted the highest share (median of 5.7%), followed by Latin America and the Caribbean, and sub-Saharan Africa (5.0% each), Central and Eastern Europe (4.9%), East Asia and the Pacific (4.7%), the Arab States (4.5%), South and West Asia (3.6%) and Central Asia (3.2%). It should be noted that features of education expenditure in individual countries of a given region presented marked disparities, especially within the low and middle-income countries. Over the years, this trend has shown some changes, particularly in the developing countries. Updated data from GMR (2015) revealed that globally the median amount devoted to education as a share of GNP was equivalent to 5% in 2012. For low income countries, the median average was 4%. However, the increase or reduction in the share of education expenditure varied inconsistently among regions and countries, and have necessarily not depended on national income growth. This variation is in fact manifested through the observation, which indicates that “economic growth averaging 4.0% in sub-Saharan Africa was outpaced by growth in public expenditure on education averaging 6.1% a year. By contrast, in South and West Asia annual economic growth between 1999 and 2012 averaged 4.5%; public expenditure on education grew slightly more at 4.9 % per annum” (GMR, 2015: 243). Interestingly, the laudable efforts exhibited by the SSA region in increasing the share of expenditure devoted to the education sector intervened in the course of a lean period. Such a dedication remains at least determinative as it has been acknowledged in these terms “Overall, SSA countries tend to invest a relatively large proportion of the government budget in the education sector despite their relatively low GDPs per capita” (Nomura and Bruneforth, 2011: 29). Another account that demonstrates the distinct commitment of government spending based on the indicative share of education expenditure shows that “in 2012 the world median average was 13.7%, falling short of the 15% to 20% target. Sub-Saharan Africa is where countries have allocated the largest median share of government expenditure to education (18.4%), followed by East Asia and the Pacific (17.5%). South and West Asia allocated only 12.6%” (GMR, 2015: 246).

Changing patterns in education resources allocation and aid provision

Turning the focus of education spending allocation estimated as a share of total government expenditure, led to a subsequent step that is paying attention to the funding patterns of the educational sub-sectors. Although, it is generally known that major efforts related to the EFA campaign was oriented towards promoting basic education. The same pattern applies to the priority given to the mobilization and re-allocation of funds within the sector's sub-levels. At large, in most developing countries, primary education occupies the largest share of public education expenditure, especially in the SSA countries. Evidence on this consideration is provided in the following:

“SSA countries devote a much higher share of this allocation to primary education (2.2% of GDP) than other regions, ranging from 0.6% in Central Asia to 1.8% in the Arab States as well as Latin America and the Caribbean. This high level of expenditure is due to a combination of demographic factors and the strong commitment of governments and international partners to the development of primary education in SSA” (Nomura & Bruneforth, 2011: 31).

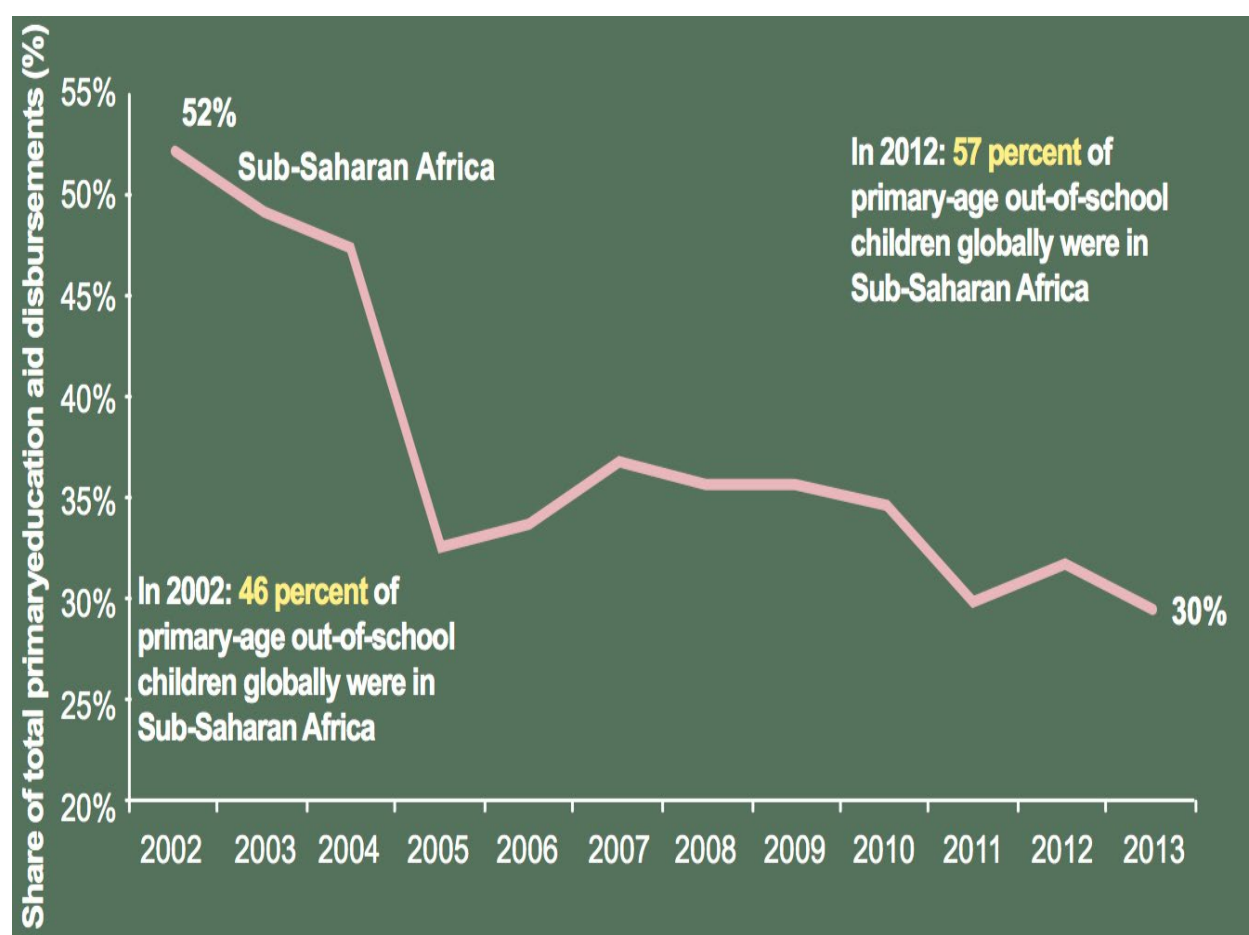
Despite the attention given to primary level of education until very recently, the locus of focus tends to have changed however. Such a move is being actually motivated by a gradual shift of the funding scheme and priority within the basic education itself. On the one hand, it is believed that “countries that are close to achieving the EFA target are shifting the focus to post-primary levels of education in order to expand opportunities for graduates of primary education” (Nomura and Bruneforth, 2011: 34). On the other hand, the decline in the share of aid to educational development registered during the last decade can be also taken into account. In fact, an early signal of this decreasing trend in aid to education was even felt in the mid-2000s. By all accounts, this is what was reported on the EFA/GMR (2008: 141).

“Aid for basic education increased systematically between 2000 and 2004, but declined in 2005 and remains inadequate. Too many donors give a higher priority to post-primary education, too high a share of education aid goes to middle income rather than low-income countries and the distribution of aid across low-income countries does not always reflected the needs”.

From this observation, decidedly, it is obvious that no real attention has been paid to this state of affairs, given the fact that this trend is apparently gaining momentum. In view of such a drastic reduction in aid at the primary level, there is reason to think of a making good balance between

these two levels of basic education. More concordant and recent sources reveal that development assistance for education, in particular, the primary level has experienced a decisive and significant setback since 2010. However, what is especially doubtful is the fact that the shift in the development assistance priorities for education across levels and regions does potentially have large distributional effects. Such effects are particularly felt into low income countries that heavily depend on this source of funding for basic education (Roser and Ortiz-ospina, 2018; Steer and Smith, 2015). In a sense of providing a more expressive picture, the reduction in aid to education was estimated to have fallen by a level of 9 percent (Steer and Smith, 2015: 5). And to exemplify such a drastic downturn, they based their estimate on the ODA share for primary education going to sub-Saharan Africa, which declined from 52 percent in 2002 to 30 percent in 2013, while the share in the total of out-of-school children in this region increased from 46 percent to 57 percent (see figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2: Total ODA share for primary education going to sub-Saharan Africa, 2002-2013



Sources: Estimated by Steer and Smith (2015:5) based on OECD-DAC CRS & UNESCO GMR.

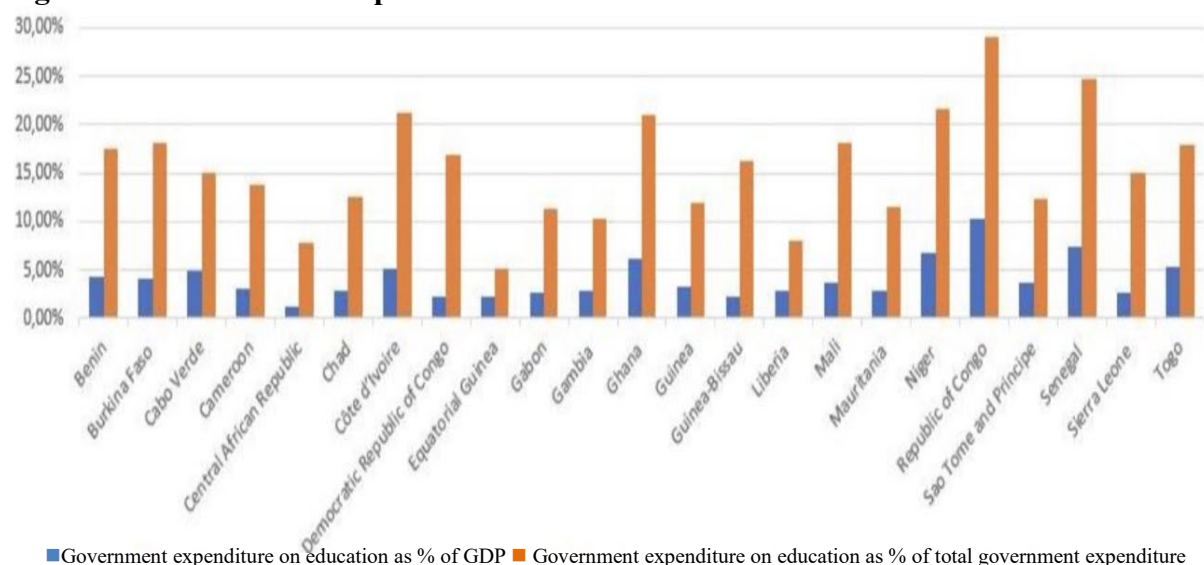
The Education sector financing at country level

Guinea's education sector plagued by inadequate funding

Now that a light has been shed on the fulfillment of the donor community concerning its commitment to increase its financial support to education, let us turn onto country level and see the rate at which fund was made available for the reform in the education sector. Especially, given that pledges were given to any country engaging in the implementation of the program. And this with reference to the following “no countries seriously committed to Education for All will be thwarted in their achievements of this goal by a lack of resources” (EFA/GMR, 2008: 141). Thus, zooming into the general context of low and low-middle income countries, and the specific case of Guinea in particular—a recipient country of the Fast-Track Initiative, which was granted funding support with a marked tutoring of the World Bank. Despite this advantageous position for Guinea, it was admitted that “the share of education expenditure in GNP increased in eighteen of the twenty-four countries for which data are available. It fell in Cameroon (to 1.8%), the Gambia (2.1%), the Congo (2.8%), South Africa (5.5%) and Namibia (6.8%), and stayed constant in Guinea (2.1%) (EFA/GMR, 2008: 143-144). In the same vein, it was noticed that “the proportion of ODA in public education resources varies greatly across the SSA region, [whereby] the amount of ODA for education that Liberia received in 2008 represented 72% of its public education expenditure, while for relatively high-income countries this figure was 5% or below, except for Cape Verde (see figure below). Among some middle-income countries, like Guinea, Mali, Rwanda and Zambia, ODA accounted for approximately 50% of their public education resources in 2008” (Nomura and Bruneforth, 2011: 33). Overall, the most recent ODA data revealed that the “aid to education in 2015 was 4% below 2010 levels. The education share of total aid fell for six consecutive years, from 1% in 2009 to 6.9% in 2015” (Global Education Monitoring Report—GEMR, 2017/2018). In addition, The Global Education Monitoring Report (2017) expounds that “over the period 2013-2016, 33 of the 128 countries with data on both indicators – or one in four – failed to meet both education financing targets, spending *less than* 4% of GDP on education and allocating *less than* 15% of their total public expenditure on education. These include low-income countries, like Gambia and Guinea, as well as high-income countries like Japan and Qatar. Middle-income countries such as Azerbaijan which spent 2.6% of GDP and

7.4% of total public expenditure on education and Lebanon, which spent 2.6% and 8.6%, respectively, also failed both thresholds”([World Education Blog](#)).

Figure 6.3: Government expenditure on education in West and Central African countries



Source: UIS UNESCO (most recent data)

Among major patterns that hinder the development of the education sector in Guinea, financial related issues remain at the center of concerns. The relevance of such an anxiety is motivated by the idea positing that the mobilization, management, and use of resources are important segments and drivers of a well-performing educational and training system. In other words, economic growth is an ultimate determinant in the improvement of income level and the living standards of a country. Likewise, it is also a determining factor in the orientation of public spending necessary for the development of the socio-economic sectors, and especially the improvement of basic social services. It is not meaningless to recall that Guinea's commitment to achieving the objectives set by the Millennium Development Goals, on the one hand, and the Education for All on the other, was without any doubt. However, what was doubtful, which was actually one of the country's major concerns, was that of the provision of necessary funding to complete the program.

In fact, the expectations being cherished at the time of formulating the national plan for the implementation of the reform in the education sector, foreshadowed a favorable trend of growth, which could thus help to replenish the state budget. Apparently, such an approach has guided the elaboration of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), which has been a blueprint for the

Education for All program initiated in Guinea since 2001. Another factor to invoke also relates to the increasing trend of economic growth that was perceived in many low-income countries in the beginning of the 2000s, which, moreover, gives the impression of a budgetary forecasting scenario with a repetitive aspect. As it was the case with the recovery of growth felt in 2010, whereby according to the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP, 2011-2013), the recent macroeconomic performance evolved around (4% in 2011), remaining therefore below previsions, which, targeted 5% per year, the rate of economic growth in Guinea. Thus, as it can be already noticed, it is in these conditions of improbability that the education for all program was planned with margins of error that were sometimes very significant. This has undoubtedly had noticeable repercussions in the execution of the whole program, without mentioning the untimely interruptions in the allocation of aid to this reform.

A growth trajectory trapped by a turbulent socio-economic past

Against this background, it is wise to review Guinea's economic performance in order to get an idea of the financial climate that prevailed throughout the reform. Despite the country's considerable potential for development, the effect of such an asset is still lingering on the economic weight of the country and especially on the daily lives of its citizens. The reasons for such a contrast are numerous and diverse. However, one thing remains clear, that Guinea is a victim of its own policies that continue to undermine all the initiatives that go in the direction of its development. That being said, most observers agree on the facts that the legacy of poor governance coupled with an institutional fragmentation hinder the smooth running of affairs in the country. Thus, speaking of the situation of its economy, the socio-political crises that Guinea has gone through over the past few years have significantly worsened the country's socio-economic indicators. They have led to a marked slowdown in growth, rising inflation and difficulties in servicing the country's debt. This resulted in a volatile macroeconomic performance way back in the late 1980s and early 1990s. A recent study conducted by the World Bank (2018: 19) on Guinea presents an extensive period of the country's growth trends, as it is concisely summarized below:

“Guinea has had persistently low, declining, and volatile growth rates. The country's GDP growth rate averaged 3.3 percent between 1987 and 2016, below the Sub-Saharan Africa average of 3.7 percent, as well as the averages for low-income countries (3.6 percent) and IDA countries (4.3 percent). The gap between Guinea and its comparators has widened over the past 20 years. For example,

from 1998–2016, Guinea’s growth rate declined to 2.7 percent from 4.3 percent in 1987-1997, whereas the rate for Sub-Saharan Africa and middle-income countries (as defined by the World Bank) increased to 4.6 percent and 5.2 percent, respectively. When converted into per capita terms, Guinea averaged a very low 0.6 percent in 1998-2016, about 1.2 percentage points lower than that of Sub-Saharan Africa, and 3.3 percentage points lower than that of middle-income countries. Guinea’s economy is very vulnerable to changes in terms of trade and volatility with respect to global commodity and metal prices (Figure: 6.4 and Figure: 6.5)”.

Figure: 6.4: GDP per capita Growth

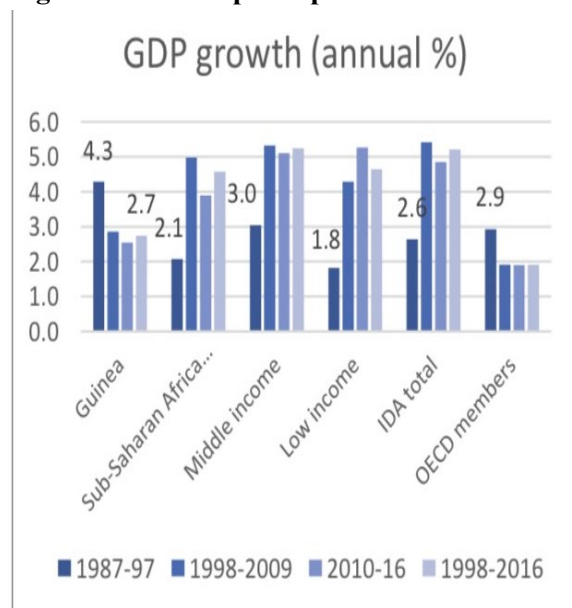
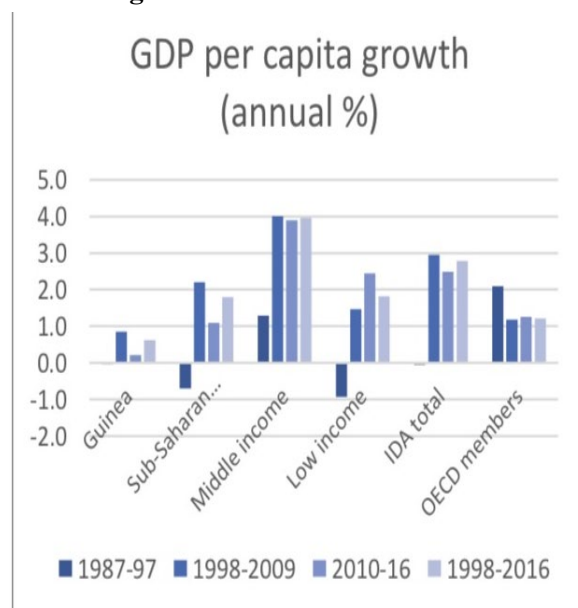


Figure: 6.5: Real GDP Growth



Source: Calculations based on data from World Development Indicators

A macroeconomic performance marked by a persistent volatility

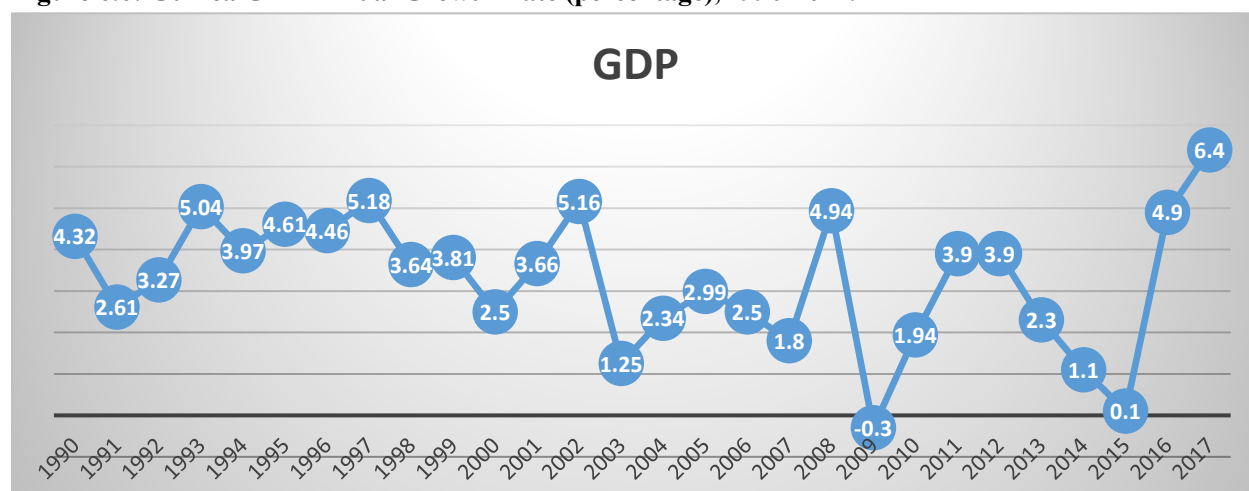
Based on various sources, a longitudinal approach was taken to depict economic performance of Guinea throughout the process of its education reform process. Thus, a study by the African Development Bank (AfDB) reports that the growth rate, which averaged around 4% during the 1990s, dropped to 1.9% in 2000 and 2.7% on average between 2002 and 2005. “In 2009 Guinea experienced the first economic recession since 1987 with a growth rate of -0.3% against 4.9% projected. In 2010, the rate achieved was 1.9% for a target of 3.7%. The share of the public deficit in GDP increased from 1.3% in 2008 to 7.2% in 2009 and 14.3% in 2010” (Kaba, 2014:12). Moreover, the same resonance emerges in a diagnostic report on the country where it was noticed that economic growth has been on ups and downs trajectory: Between 1990 and 2011, GDP grew at an average rate of 3.2% in volume per year. The economic situation during

this period has in fact gone through two main phases; GDP growth rates fluctuated around 4% on average in the 1990s, but since 2002, they have been fluctuating around 2% per year. In all, economic growth is not only irregular but also a declining trend. The growth rate fell sharply in 2009 (-0.3%, compared with 5.2% in 2002), not only because of the effects of the global financial and economic crisis but also because of the political crisis the country has been going through.

Another insight also relates to the period of relaunching the activities of the educational reform as it was planned in the phases of the development plan. According to the Economic Commission for Africa (2016:1), “the economic performance of Guinea between 2005 and 2014 fell short of the objectives set out in the various poverty reduction strategy documents and the sub regional average. During that period, real GDP growth was on average about 2.5 per cent per year, as against 5.8 per cent in the countries of West Africa and 3.7 per cent in Africa as a whole”. In the same vein, “the economic growth over 2007-2011 averaged 2.4%, as opposed to population growth rate estimated at 3.1% [per year] for the same period, and well below the objectives of the poverty reduction strategy—5% on average between 2007 and 2011”(IMF, 2013: 39).

From the above indications, the deterioration of the macroeconomic indicators and the outperformance of growth-enhancing sectors have had an aggravating effect on the living conditions of the population, which therefore compromises their rights, particularly with regard to access to basic social services, such as education, health and sanitation. This prolonged gloom has inevitably led to serious social consequences for the country. The Ebola epidemic, which hit Guinea in 2014 and 2015, has spread and taken time to be restrained by the fact that the country was vulnerable in many ways. The side effect of this health crisis has been diverse and is notably reflected in the economic growth, which fell from 2.3 per cent in 2013 to 1.1 per cent in 2014, its lowest since 2010. Moreover, “the Ebola epidemic also created a crisis of earnings, expenditure, inflationary pressure and foreign trade” (Economic Commission for Africa, 2016:1). The economy of Guinea has suffered the effects of the epidemic, as one can observe from the growth figures in the year after the Ebola outbreak. The country’s economic growth rate, which was expected at a rate of 0.7 per cent in 2015, wedged at 0.1 per cent, then rose to 4.9 per cent and 6.4 per cent respectively in 2016 and 2017 (see figure below).

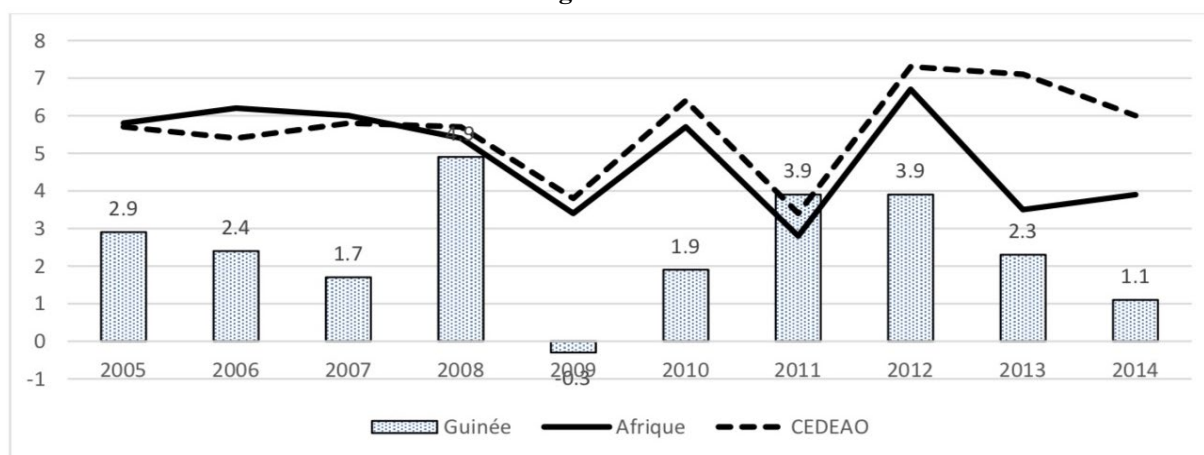
Figure 6.6: Guinea GDP Annual Growth Rate (percentage), 1990-2017.



Source: Author's elaboration based on data from the Central Bank of Republic of Guinea & tradingeconomics (retrieved from <https://tradingeconomics.com/guinea/gdp-growth-annual>)

Furthermore, it is equally important to point out that Guinea is still slow to keep up with the pace and standards of its sub-region in terms of macroeconomic requirements. The hope that was nourished with the restoration of democracy did not allow the country to maintain a good performance in order to reverse its unstable growth trend. The punctual recovery observed between 2011 and 2012 has faded away abruptly the following year, while “at the subregional level, economic activity has shown a positive trend since 2012, with the growth rate increasing from 5 per cent to 6.1 per cent in 2014. This was in part due to growth in the oil and mining sectors” (Economic Commission for Africa, 2016:2). And yet the mining sector is an important part of the country's economy because of its enormous potential (see figure below).

Figure 6.7: Real GDP growth, Guinea, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Sub region and Africa



Source: Macroeconomic framework, Ministry of Economic Affairs and finance Directorate General for Economic Affairs, July 2015, and African Statistical Yearbook 2015, Economic Commission for Africa, African Development bank and the African Union Commission, 2015.

Another important aspect to note is the difficulty of Guinea to comply with the subregional Macroeconomic Convergence and Stability Pact, as the Economic Commission for Africa (2016) also notifies it. The Commission states that the country has complied with only two of the six harmonized convergence criteria in 2014 (one primary and one secondary), as compared with four in 2013 (two primary and two secondary) (see table below). Most concerning is the fact that, despite the government's efforts to contain inflation, it remains above the required standards. As one can see from the table, this is still a factor that disrupts the balance of the country's economic life. In this respect, the IMF (2013: 39) expressed the same concern in these terms:

“Inflation control also is a continuing challenge for the authorities since it affects the living standard of the population, notably for the poor households. In this regard, there has been significant progress, but inflation is still high. In fact, year-on-year inflation leveled off at 19% in 2011, after standing at 12.8% in 2007, 13.5% in 2008, 7.9% in 2009, and 20.8% in 2010. Inflation has been contained thanks to restrictive budgetary and monetary policies, stabilized exchange rates, anti-speculation efforts that established pilot sales outlets for imported rice...For 2012, real GDP growth is estimated at 3.9%, and inflation at 12.8%. The exchange rate has stabilized, the currency market premium has virtually disappeared and international reserves of the Central Bank of the Republic of Guinea (BCRG) were at the equivalent of four months of imports”.

Table 6.2: Macroeconomic convergence criteria 2013-2014

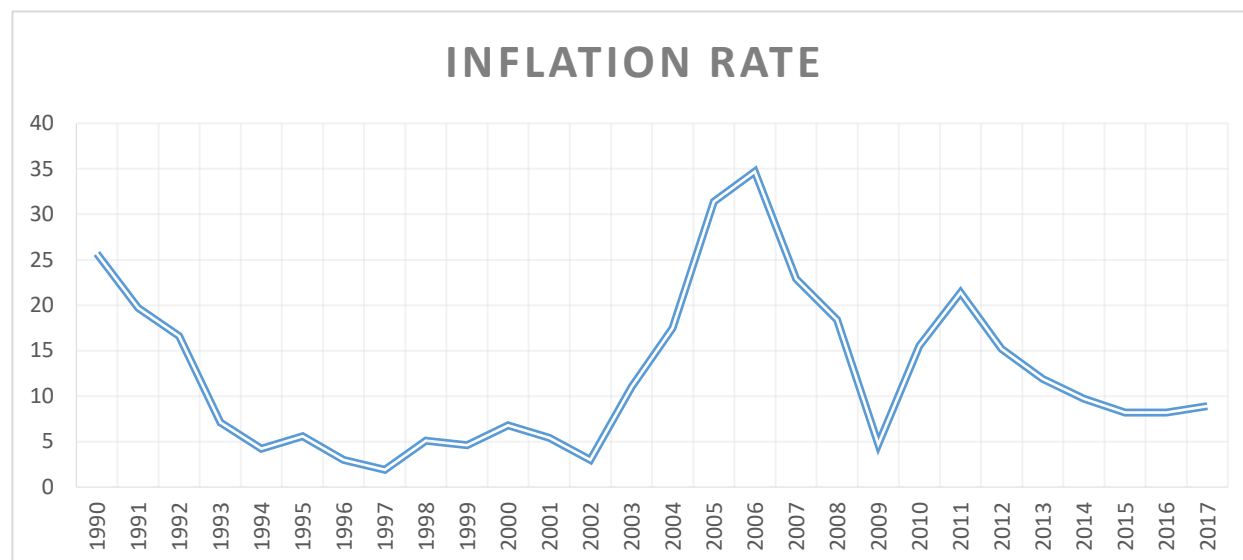
Criteria	ECOWAS norms	2013	2014
Primary criteria			
Budget deficit ratio including grants (commitment base) / nominal GDP	$\leq 3\%$	2.9%*	3.3%
Average annual inflation rate	$\leq 5\%$	11.9%	9.3%
Central bank financing of budget deficit / tax revenue of previous year	$\leq 10\%$	0%*	0.2%*
Gross reserves in months of imports	≥ 6	2.6	2.5
Secondary criteria			
Public debt / nominal GDP ratio	$\leq 70\%$	57.5%*	89.1%
Nominal exchange rate (stable)	± 10	-2.5%*	- 1.5%*

Source: Country performance reports 2013 and 2014.). *Criterion satisfied

Overall, it should be noted that the budget execution of EFA program activities has largely taken place in this context of uncontrolled purchasing power, which of course could have distorted the

pre-established plans. The evidence is that “in 2017, inflation rate for Guinea was 8.9 %. Though Guinea inflation rate fluctuated substantially in recent years, it tended to increase through 1998 - 2017 period” (World data Atlas, n.d) (see figure below).

Figure 6.8: Guinea-Inflation, average consumer prices (percent change), 1990-2017.



Source: Author’s elaboration based on Word Data Atlas, retrieved from <https://knoema.com/atlas/Guinea/Inflation-rate>

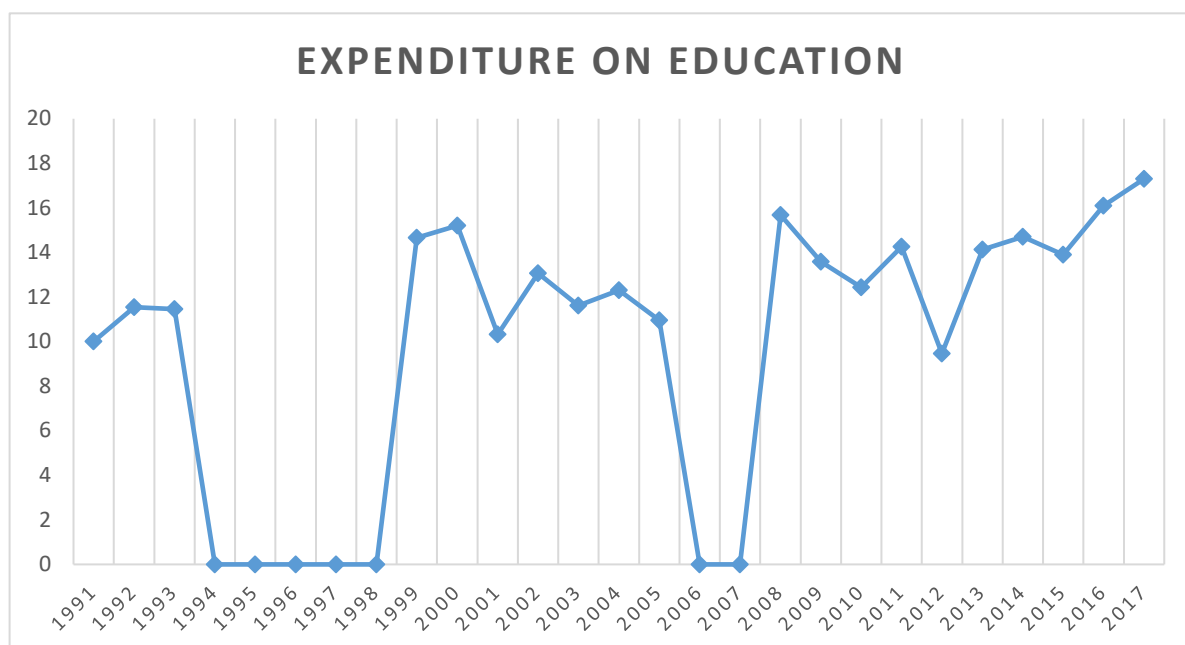
Now that the scene is being set in relation to the macroeconomic environment in which the overall EFA reform has evolved, however, it would be important to take a closer look at the funding of the sector during the implementation of the program.

Spending on Guinea’s Education Sector

From the outset, it should be recalled that major challenges were to be overcome as a prelude to the introduction of EFA. Among these challenges, inadequate funding for basic education has been singled out. The same observation was made with respect to public funding for education, the diagnosis of the educational system carried out, shows that the financial means are insufficient or decrease from year to year while the school population is growing at a steady pace (13, 35% in 2004, 17.23% in 2005, 12.25% in 2006 and 13.14% in 2007). Faced with this, there was an imperative to reverse this trend. Considerable efforts were then expected from the Guinean government to raise the budget for the education sector, particularly with a view to achieving the objectives set by the EFA program. This will not mitigate the two identified financial risks - the government's lack of expertise to support the financial implications of the

program and the failure to ensure adequate funding at the school level—when elaborating the program.

Figure 6.9: the share of current expenditure allocated to education



Source: Author's elaboration based on Data from the African Development Bank, retrieved from: <http://dataportal.afdb.org/>- Guinea: C/CDMT <http://www.youthpolicy.org/factsheets/country/guinea-conakry/>

The total funding required for the inception of EFA First Phase—2001-2005—was estimated around US \$ 420.14 million. The World Bank, through a loan agreement with the Guinean Government, contributed US \$ 70 million to this financing. This suggested that the remaining part must certainly come from the government and its partners evolving in the sector. Not only to cover the period indicated but also the subsequent phases of the program.

Basic education in Guinea remains inadequately financed

The Government's effort can be appreciated through the state budget and the share devoted to education in this budget. In general, it is understood that the share of education in the national budget clearly reflects the importance given to the education sector in a country. In the financing of education, especially basic education, a number of benchmarks were established to guide countries in the budget allocation for the sector. And more specifically set the reference margin for countries that are still far from achieving one of the overarching objectives of the EFA program.

In this regard, UNESCO recommended that countries engaged in the campaign for the diffusion of basic education should provide 6% of their GDP for this purpose, especially to those who have not yet reached universal primary education. Similarly, a benchmark of 20% (education share in the national budget) was derived from the analysis of countries having reached or close to universal primary enrollment and was then proposed as an indicative value by the FTI. In the same vein, the percentage of recurrent expenditures devoted to primary education was set by the Education for All Fast Track Initiative at 50 per cent.

The compliance with these indicative values supposedly denotes the level of commitment of the country toward the provision of education services. More specifically, the interest that this country has in promoting basic education. Thus, the level of financial allocation in relation to these values makes it possible to appreciate the extent to which the education sector is a priority of the government. Admittedly, opinions are divided on this matter. All the same, figures provided by evaluation reports can be used as reference. “According to the Education for All report on Guinea for 2015, between 2000 and 2013, education spending as a percentage of GDP rose from 1.8 to 3.8 per cent, which shows how much needs to be done if the sector is to be developed using public resources” (Economic Commission for Africa, 2016:14). This trend rattled down and the government spending on education came around 2.6 in 2014, which is lower than the mean for Sub-Saharan Africa (4.6 percent) and low-income countries’ (4.2 per cent) (World Bank, 2018). The evolution of resources allocated to the education sector shows that the sector receives on average nearly 3% of GDP since 2008, while 6% was the average recommended by UNESCO.

In addition to the percentage of GDP as an indicator of the value given to education, the level of priority given to education can be assessed through the share of current expenditures excluding state loan allocated to education. Over the period 2006-2010, current expenditure on education represented 16.7% of the State's internal resources. This figure is below the recommended level in the indicative Fast Track framework (20%) to which the country has agreed upon. This education share in the state budget represents 16.1% in 2016 against a forecast of 18%, which still remains below the average for the sub region (18.3 per cent). However, considerable efforts have been made compared to the year 2015 (13.9%) but much remains to reach the international benchmark (20%).

Table 6.3: Guinea's current education expenditure & total education expenditure as % of GDP

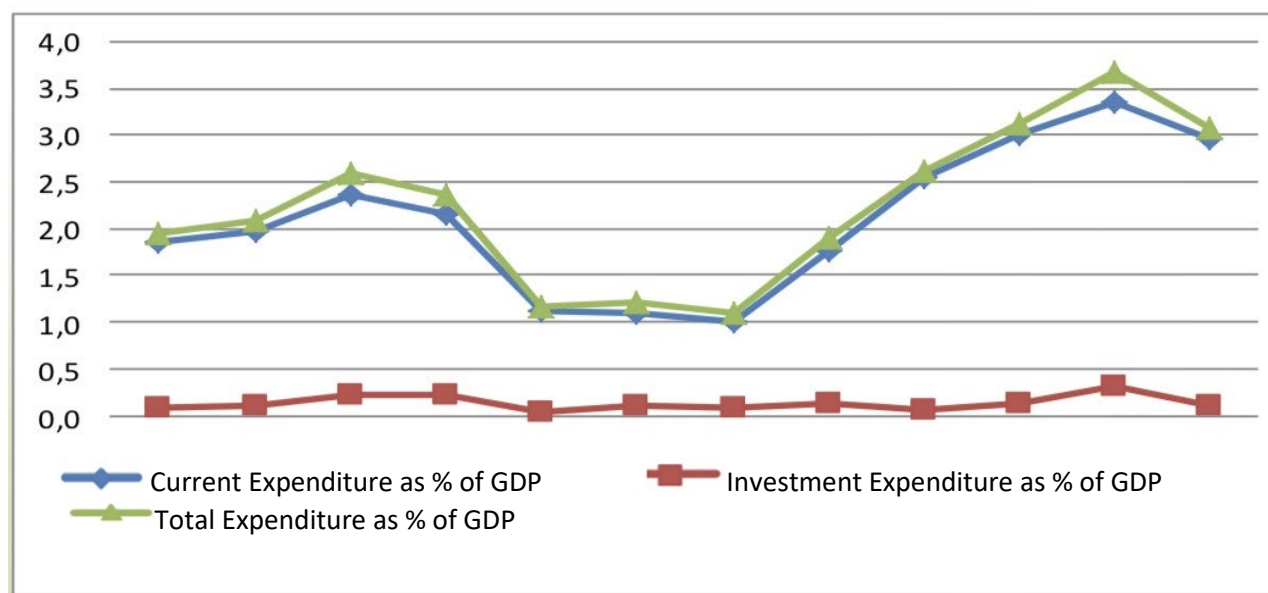
Year	Total expenditure of education as a% of GD	Year	Total expenditure of education as a% of GD
1991	2.02	2005	1.85
1992	2.01	2006	1.7
1993	2.09	2007	n.a
1994	n.a	2008	2.44
1995	n.a	2009	3.22
1996	n.a	2010	3.69
1997	n.a	2011	3.07
1998	n.a	2012	2.47
1999	2.36	2013	3.54
2000	2.56	2014	3.7
2001	2.08	2015	3.0
2002	2.59	2016	4.0
2003	2.37	2017	3.7
2004	2.21		

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, retrieved from <https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/guinea/indicator/SE.X>

Another aspect that demonstrates the priority that a country gives to the education sector is manifested through the share allocated to investment expenditure. In principle, in the planning of total expenditure on education, investment expenditure should be in line with current expenditure. Thus, to find a good combination of these expenses is then necessary for a better and especially harmonious performance of the sector. This finally ensures not only the functioning of the central and deconcentrated structures, to carry out the structural activities of the ministry but also and especially to invest in the construction and the equipment of the administrative and school infrastructures including the provision of all the pedagogical inputs—pedagogical, didactic materials and other office accessories. It should be noted that current education expenditure in Guinea follows a trend similar to that of total expenditure, at least according to the evolution of the figures. Despite the fact that the sector is still under-funded, improvement efforts are nevertheless being observed. Whereby, the sector operating expenses garner a large part of the total expenditures—87.34 percent by the year 2004 and 96 percent in 2011. The increase in current expenditure is explained by an evolution of spending from 1.1% of GDP in 2006 to 3.4% of GDP in 2010. Meanwhile, the assessment of investment expenditure in favor of education

remains appeased because of its small share (it remained stable around 0.1% of GDP during the same period 2006-2010). However, investment expenditure financed by the national budget

Figure 6.10: Evolution of Education Expenditure —Current and Investment.



Source: Etude diagnostique sur la question enseignante en République de Guinée/MOE (2013)

-Diagnostic study on the Issue of Education in the Republic of Guinea / MOE (2013)-

amounted to 4.2% in 2013 and 6.2% in 2014. These figures are slightly below the expectations that hoped to see investments in education go from 5% of total investments in 2011 to 7% in 2015.

A difficult and unequal budget arbitrage environment strangles the sector

Another aspect is that it is equally important to look closely at not only the evolution of the budget allocated to education, but also at how the budget is distributed across levels of education. First of all, it is important to note this remark made in one of the reports of the World Bank (2008: 37), which mentioned:

“The overall budget allocation to the education sector is still low and efficiency in the use of the resources needs to be improved. The share of public spending on education in terms of GDP was 2.3 percent in 2002 and has been declining since then to achieve 1.7 percent in 2006. This figure is far below that in the average-income countries in Sub-Saharan Africa which is around 3 percent. The highest performing countries spend on average 3.8 percent of GDP on education and spend an average of 1.7 percent of GDP on primary education alone, a figure that is close to what Guinea spends on its entire education system”.

As time has passed, many observers still believe that the sector remains under-funded, with an average of 3% of GDP against 4.5% in the sub-region (Guinea MOE/RAP, 2016/2017). In view of this situation, particular emphasis should be placed on basic education more broadly and more specifically on the primary level in order to depict the efforts that have been made towards achieving EFA goals. Overall, it remains apparent that the intersectoral allocation of the “education budget shows that Guinea has reduced slightly the share of the education budget to primary education” (World Bank, 2008:37). The share of primary education in the public resources steadily declined from 51 percent in 2002 to 41 percent in 2006, then after returning to its 2008 levels—47 percent (World Bank, 2008; Economic Commission for Africa, 2016) and finally slide to 42.3 in 2015. Clearly, it is to be observed that, “even though the percentage of recurrent expenditures devoted to primary education is about average in comparison with other French-speaking countries in the region” (World Bank, 2008:37); apparently, Guinea's commitment to comply with the indicative benchmark proposed by the Fast Track Initiative of 50% faltered since 2004, whereby the share of primary education has remained below this indicative value (see the table below).

Table 6.4: Education budget between the different levels of education

Education sector and sub-sectors																			
Basic education								Secondary Education				Vocational & Technical Education				Higher Education			
Pre-primary Education				Primary Education															
2002	n/a	2010	n/a	2002	51	2010	43	2002	16	2010	17	2002	9	2010	4	2002	23	2010	36
2003	n/a	2011	n/a	2003	51	2011	45	2003	16	2011	14	2003	8	2011	4	2003	25	2011	37
2004	n/a	2012	0.1	2004	49	2012	43	2004	17	2012	13	2004	7	2012	n/a	2004	28	2012	33
2005	n/a	2013	0.1	2005	48	2013	40	2005	18	2013	14	2005	6	2013	n/a	2005	28	2013	34
2006	n/a	2014	0.1	2006	41	2014	41	2006	19	2014	17	2006	6	2014	n/a	2006	34	2014	n/a
2007	n/a	2015	0.2	2007	48	2015	42	2007	20	2015	16	2007	4	2015	4	2007	28	2015	36
2008	n/a	2016	0.2	2008	47	2016	41	2008	15	2016	16	2008	3	2016	4	2008	34	2016	37
2009	n/a	2017	0.2	2009	40	2017	40	2009	15	2017	15	2009	4	2017	4	2009	41	2017	39

Source: LF 2002-2008, PLF 2009, LFR 2010, PLF 2011 (MOE/RAP, 2016), Guinea Ministry of Finance, World Data Atlas, Guinea: C/CDMT

As the table above shows, inter-and intra-sectoral budget arbitrations, the choice of national policy, have been unfavorable. Largely, budget arbitrations in Guinea remain unfavorable to education in general and primary education in particular. Compared with the average in other

countries or in the most successful countries in reaching universal enrollment, Guinea has spent and continue to spend relatively little on education (below 18% of domestic resources for current education expenditure against 20% in the indicative framework), and little for the primary education level (on average 44% of current expenditure against 50% in the indicative framework).

Table 6.5: Budgetary arbitration of education expenditure by level and comparison with other countries in the region

Country	% of public resources for education	% allocated to primary	% allocated to secondary (general & technical)	% allocated to the tertiary
Guinea	18	44.3	30.8	24.8
Benin	17	49	28	22
Burkina Faso	17	62	19	19
Cameroon	14	42	44	13
Madagascar	15	51	33	16
Mauritania	32	46	35	19
Niger	27	58	27	14
Togo	26	45	34	21
Average of 7 countries	21.1	50.4	31.4	17.7

Source: RESEN Guinée, 2004

The education system suffers a weak absorption and execution of the budget

To a large extent, the rate of budget execution of public resources to prioritized sectors remain weak. According to the IMF (2013: 45), it “went from 90.3% in 2010 to 76.5 % in 2011 and 88.7 % in 2012. In view of the high social demand [such as the education sector], this under-consumption of the budget poses a real problem of absorption capacity that [needs] to be vigorously addressed...”. From this general impression, however, it is advisable to examine the trend that has prevailed in the education sector. More precisely, in the perspective of implementing the reform undertook within the sector. Thereby, it is necessary to evaluate the level of absorption of resources devoted to the sector. Thus, it was reported as an indication that “in 2011, 91% of the resources made available to the sector were consumed with 95% execution rate for current expenditure and 30% for investment expenditure. The situation of investment expenditures is quite critical as only 4% of total education expenditure is dedicated to investment and if only 30% are implemented there is reason for concern as investments make it possible to ensure the sustainability and development of the educational system” (MOE, 2013: 32).

As indicated at the beginning of this section, Guinea generally has difficulties in effectively executing all planned expenditures, particularly those included in the public investment program and, to a certain extent, current non-wage expenditures. And this is also evident in the education sector as we can already notice it. In all likelihood, it is true that current expenditure has increased steadily and it is admitted that the rate of execution is satisfactory; however, investment spending has not kept pace and is performing poorly in the absorption of budget resources. Reversing this tendency becomes more imperative than ever given the features presented after the EFA program target year—2015. From a recent annual performance report,

“In 2016, the sector's budget was executed at 92.2%. Salaries reached the execution rate of (81%), investment expenditures (112.5%) and non-salary operating expenses (91.2%). Disparities are important between ministries in terms of budget execution. The Ministry in charge of technical education (76.4%) has the lowest rate of expenditure execution, while that of higher education stands out with the highest rate (111%) and is followed by the MEPU-A with 81.1%. The low level of salary performance is mainly due to the fact that the recruitment of programmed teachers for all levels of education was not completed in 2016” (MOE/RAP, 2016/2017:51).

The same report went on to specify that “the rate of execution of investment expenditure exceeding 100% is due to payments related to the construction of higher education infrastructure and deserves further analysis. Other departments (ministries) have lower rates including technical education (15.8%) and the basic education department—MEN-A (68.7%). Roughly and obviously, what results from most of the causes evoking this weak capacity of absorption of the budgetary allocations, is attributed among other things, to the “heaviness of disbursement of the funds, the length of time for the awarding of contracts, the delay in carrying out construction work and the preparation of accounts, etc.” (MOE, 2013: 32). Therefore, particular attention should be given to the constraints related to the execution of investment expenditures and consider corrective and enhancing measures to counter this further drag on the performance of the sector.

Subsequently, another angle that deserves to be examined is that of unit cost issues and the composition of current expenditures in the sector. Such an attempt makes it possible to gain a more approximate understanding of the internal scheme that favors or contravenes the improvement of services at each level of the education sector. The functioning of an educational system requires staff to provide services. This is all the more evident at the level of basic

education with a view to achieving universal primary schooling. However, and more generally, an educational system operates through the symbiosis of a teaching staff (classroom-based) and those not in a class situation—but are teachers by training or belong to this statutory body—and provide support functions, either within the institutions (management, supervisory, educational and administrative support staff) at the central or deconcentrated level of the system administration.

Indeed, the emolument of this large number of personnel represents a heavy charge for the education system. It is then, understood that the most important part of the education budget is devoted to salary expenditures. This, however, leaves few resources for other expenses such as training and school or office equipment. There is, therefore, a strong need to optimize the management of this staff. This implies the mastery and regular control of the workforce to ensure a balance between these two functions (teachers and non-teachers); for a system composed mainly of teachers without support staff would be difficult to function effectively. At the same time, a number of plethoric support staff would constitute an inappropriate burden on the system and ultimately harm the possibilities of effective schooling of children (MOE/RESEN Guinée, 2004).

From the above remark, it emerges that at the scale of the entire educational system, 58% of current expenditure is devoted to salaries, 15% to the operating expenses of institutions and administrations, and 22% of expenditure goes to the scholarships and other social expenses (school canteen, university project works, and boarding school operating expenses). The detailed analysis of these expenditures on basic education shows that at “the pre-primary, primary and general secondary levels about 90% of current expenditures go to salaries and 10% for the operation of institutions and administration” (MOE, 2013: 32).

Nonetheless, let us return to the emolument of the personnel and get an insight on the intensity of the burden that this represents for the system and by types of functions and level of education. In this regard, it was reported that “teacher payroll (direct compensation and bonus supplements and miscellaneous allowances) accounts for a large share of current expenditures in general education (93% at the pre-primary, 89% primary school, 89% in general secondary), in contrast to technical and vocational education (36% of current expenditures go to teachers' salaries) or higher education” (23%) (MOE, 2013: 32). Furthermore, the same report of the MOE (ibid) contends that there is relatively little expenditure on the operation of pre-primary, primary

and general secondary schools, which would not be without consequences for teaching-learning conditions. Also, the level of social expenditure is comparatively lower than for other types of education (less than 2% of current primary expenditure is spent on school canteens). Regarding scholarships and social assistance, they are not provided at primary and secondary school but represent only 2% at the pre-primary level (see table below).

Table 6.6: Current expenditures composition by level of education, 2011

Designation	Pre-Primary education %	Primary education %	General Secondary education %	Vocational & Technical Training %	Higher education %	Altogether %
Salaries	93	89	89	36	23	58
Operating costs	5	11	11	62	28	20
Establishments	2	7	4	36	26	15
Administration	3	4	7.0	26	2	4.3
Scholarships & Social supports	2	0	0	2	49	22

Source: Retrieved and processed data from Finance Act—LF 2011 (MOE, 2013)

The other variant relates to current expenditure excluding teachers' remuneration. To this, it was indicated that the Guinean educational system, compared to the average, 27.4% in the primary (range of 15 to 43%), 37.4% in the first general secondary cycle (range of variation from 24 to 56%), and 39.5% in the second general secondary cycle (range of variation from 18 to 53%). However, this suggests that “if in both secondary cycles the country's situation is relatively close to the regional average, this is not the case in the primary level, where the figure for Guinea (45.7%) is very significantly higher compared to this average (27.7%). While the possibility of seeking efficiencies in reducing the number of non-teachers at the secondary level cannot be eliminated, it is at the primary level that the most obvious improvement margins exist and must be actively sought” (see table below) (MOE/RESEN Guinée, 2004: 66).

As a last resort, it should be noted that while these figures refer to the situation of 2004, according to the opinions of the Directors of Human Resources of the MOE, there has been a significant increase in the number of personnel and charges of the Guinean educational system.

And that due to a lack of recent data, one cannot establish a completely updated table reflecting the current situation.

Table 6.7: Staff structure by function at different levels of public education

Level of Education	Teachers	Non teachers		Total	% of non-teachers	Payroll (GNF million)		Goods/ services (GNF million)	Current expenditure (GNF million)	% of current expenditure excluding teachers
		Establishments	Services			Teachers	Non teachers			
MENA	24 468	5 716	2 903	33 087	26.0	53 624	23 564	20 900	98 088	45.3
Primary	17 679 ²²	3 871	1 899	23 449	24.6	35 363	15 125	14 600	65 088*	45.7
Secondary	6 789	1 825	1004	9 618	29.4	18 261	8 439	6 300	33 000*	44.7
Junior	4 873	1 372	735	6 980	30.2	12 740	6 260	4 483	23 483	45.7
Senior	1 916	473	269	2 658	27.9	5 521	2 179	1 817	9 517	42.0
MOTVT	1 361	515	289	2 165	37.1	4 116	1 994	5 670	12 273*	66.5
Teacher Inst	240	61	54	355	32.4	844	293	1 147	2 284	63.0
Others	1 121	454	235	1 810	38.1	3 272	1 701	4 523	9 989	67.2
MOHESR	1 172	786	980	2 938	60.1	10 702	3 606	3 541	36 446*	70.6

Source: RESEN Guinée, 2004; *Pre-primary: 2 219 389; *Primary: 404 668 221; *General secondary: 150 922 469; *MOTVT (Ministry of Technical & Vocational Training): 23 081 044; *MOHESR (Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research): 439 409 276 (LFI 2011 data/MOE, 2013).

Informal socially proscribed behavioral patterns attenuating recent developmental efforts

Up until here, it has been shown that taking “institutional perspective in development policy, research, and capacity development”, “demands a deep understanding of the diverse social, economic and political institutions which influence the subject of the development agenda. [And] it applies to the evaluation of sustainable development programmes and many more concrete cases”, argued Walters (2007: 8). He further went on to adds that “if we don’t understand the institutional frameworks at play in development processes we will not be able to propose policies, interventions or solutions that will lead to the required changes. We need an understanding of and effectively address institutional constraints or make use of opportunities offered by the institutional arrangements” (Walters, 2007: 8).

In accordance with the above assertions, the focus of this section is to put the spotlight on social factors that instigate organizational change. As such, let us begin by highlighting that there is a widespread accord placed on education as a major driver of social change or development. However, perpetuating such virtues conferred to education would be much more dependent on its content. As, obviously, education always took place within a given society. And often, the type of education that societies desired the most is the one that can keep people psychologically embedded in their socio-cultural milieu. In fact, to reach such an ideal, the country specificity should be put in the forefront of any attempt. With regard to recent educational reforms in the

developing countries, policies and programmes introduction should be adapted to local constituents. In this respect, Ake (1988:19-22) rightly put it:

“We build on the indigenous by making it determine the form and the content of the development strategy, by ensuring that development change accommodates itself to these things, be they values, interests, aspirations and or social institutions which are important in the life of the people. It is only when development change comes to terms with them that it can become sustainable”.

By the same token, it is assumed that clear intents drove recent interventions in the development of education in the developing countries. However, “the translation of these plans into actions took a more revolutionary form rather than evolutionary”, contends Shumba (2014:228). Meanwhile, there is a growing consensus on the importance of relativizing a reform program so that it can fit within the context of [beneficiaries’] indigenous culture (Ogunniyi, 1988; Ogawa, 2007). A prior suggestion was made in this direction by Ogunniyi (1988: 8), advocating that for recent international development assistance to education to succeed in developing countries, “the aim should be geared towards accommodating rather than assimilation”. Actually, various proponents of social change through education have here and there nourished this flow of debate, whereby, two lines of thoughts stand and run counter to each other as far as education development in alien settings is concerned. On one side, there is a stance advocating for an education reform that adopts a modern form of education as an indispensable basis for a rapid modernization of the sector in producing knowledge and technology, and further as a panacea to all development challenges. On the other, an inward looking perspective stresses the endogenous character of social change, and pleads for an educational reform that reflects the cultural identity of each country, which is essential for self-reliance and assurance that societies need for their development.

Notwithstanding, there is need to find a common ground as far as achieving socio-economic progress is concerned in the developing countries. Thus, addressing the developmental needs of traditional societies within a more rapidly changing but modernizing world calls for a shift in the development paradigms. This would allow internalizing dimensions so far set at the margins but yet important and relevant in order to cope with the complex reality of current challenges in development assistance to education. A possible trigger that can recalibrate the whole paradigm shift of development needs would be establishing a bond between the capacity enhancement mechanism and the cultural identity of the recipient society. The establishment of such a nexus is

crucial, for enhancing people's capacity and commends acknowledging the cultural realities of their society. As such, the barriers that might exist in hindering the reform intervention can be dissipated, which would create a more receptive ground enabling better interaction of formal and informal values. Having such a flattened playground, obviously, renders the existing institution effective, for being drenched in its own pond, becomes prepared in adopting the changing waves of modernity. Inevitably, the performance of indigenous education must undergo some changes to comply with new circumstances.

From the above account, it can be suggested that the introduction of reform policies designated to improve the performance of the developing countries' education sector should be subject to a proper refinement to consider the local elements present within the system meant for intervention. Consequently, responding to and abiding by the following appeal would be of great importance.

“the prerequisites of a duly democratic system of education are syllabuses that are judiciously planned and consistent with the needs of the environment and the aims of society, an internal organization from which hierarchies and unjustifiable powers are progressively eliminated, and also, outside the educational field itself, the redistribution of vocational, social, cultural or political functions, whose prestige and advantages are judged less by academic standards than by the usefulness of the services provided” (UNESCO, 1979: 31).

In fact, in drawing a synthesis from the above statement, it can be emphasized that the effective functioning of an education system depends much on its planning and management. Thus, the intervention strategies, such as sector wide approach, tinged with marked insistence on sectoral governance improvement, and meant to assist education development in the developing countries, are in fact relevant. However, the more recent of western administration and education, as argued by D'Aeth (1974:109) “can be regarded essentially as dynamic processes of acculturation. An understanding of their nature is [equally] a prerequisite for the planning of education, which otherwise continues to be an artificial implant, unsuited to the needs of African societies and harmful to their inner values”. Driven by such conviction, D'Aeth in a first place contended that “the planning of education should therefore start with a consideration of the cultural background, and this is especially true of those countries in Africa” (1974:109).

Moreover, a similar and equal attention should be paid to the process of selection and transfer of alien managerial models to local venues. To make a careful choice and above all an

adapted approach in the way of reinforcing internal capacities of local entities is extremely essential. That being said, the major concern with any initiative going in this direction would be its compatibility aspect. The echo of such caution also resonates in these terms; “the external environments of organizations in the developing world are sufficiently different from those of Western nations as to significantly limit the applicability of the industrialized world’s management theories and tools” (Jaeger and Kanungo, 1990:1-23). Thus, it is in this same respect that Henry Bourgoin (1984)—the founder of the *Centre inter-africain pour le développement de la formation professionnelle*—posits this “on a different level, Western management systems and behavior must be adapted to African cultures”. Moreover, an evenly sagacious cautiousness is to be manifested when it comes to dealing with various dimensions of organizational environments, whereby, the sociocultural features are viewed as the most compelling ones compared to the others—economic, technical, practical, and legal, since the lack of fit of Western management with the cultures of developing countries is quite apparent. Therefore, the constancy of calls that militate for an upstream reconsideration of strategies dedicated to developing managerial capacities remains, however, present. This also gives rise to the need for re-examining the managerial requirements often set by donors with due attention given to a balanced strategic planning and policy initiative intended to develop organizational capacity in recipient countries. As such, it is understandable to envisage an intervention approach that is rather more meditative. And this point is reflected by the following assertion which induces that “one may think not only of the adaptation of policies and management to cultures but of the adaptation of cultures themselves” (Klitgaard, 1992:75).

Implication of socio-communitarian values on provisions of change

Consequentially, placing local specificities at the center of the change provisions has become more than a necessity. And the expression of such an integrationist pleading asserts itself subsequently and in the same tone as follows:

“The need to understand and take into account idiosyncrasies of African political and sociocultural structures is paramount if the development community is to help Africa reform, increase, and sustain the efficiency of its public and private sectors. It is the combination of both the sociocultural and technical-managerial elements of political and institutional development that will determine the quality and success of efforts in this area” (Dia, 1992:174)

Another indicative account supporting this same appeal puts its emphasis on a more regional perspective as it is clearly singled out below:

“The need to understand sub-Saharan Africa’s development problems through the prism of management is informed by the fact that different approaches to the region’s development have failed woefully because they ignored the importance of building endogenous African management capacities—skills, knowledge, and institutions (Edoho, 2001: 16)”.

Considering that divergent features characterizing each societal entity is now well established, suggests, therefore, making a clear distinction among the patterns that constitute social behavior. As “different communities have their different customs, traditions, beliefs and styles of living which is known as community culture. Similarly, each nation has some distinct patterns of ideas, values, modes of thoughts and behavior, and these are known as the national culture” (Kumar, n.d:2). These various traits inherent to each individual or social group, justify the need to act with a panoptic approach to better capture the uniqueness of every society. Taking such a holistic view of development assistance and/or strategies meant to empower its beneficiaries, entails apprehending the organic relationship among all actors and the various elements of the internal as well as the external life of each society. Keeping up with this stance, however, “contributes to better empowering, at large, each nation and each community so that each can constructively assert its cultural identity and endogenously promote its own development” (Yansané, 1996:117). Thus, the implication of giving priority to the attachment of the tree to its own roots would deserve all its importance. A free drive of this mark of good sense, allows sociocultural specificity to navigate within its own time, own waves and in its own context. As such, it can be admitted that “sociocultural context refers to the blending of social and cultural forces that affect people, their behavior, and their dispositions” (Adamolekun, 1990:81-97). As far as that goes, “sociocultural context of management involves the normative values, belief systems, customs, and symbols that constitute the culture of a society” (Edoho, 2001:44). Along the same line of thought, there are prudent views that urge for a planning with a conceptual framework that take into account the specific characteristics of communities. Likewise, it is worthwhile reckoning that “a prerequisite of effective planning is a sensitive awareness of the difficulties, and experience has shown that these are varied.[And] that the first[difficulty] is the diversity of cultural situations even within a single country, which means that local adaptation may be as important as central policy” (D’Aeth, 1974: 112). Moreover, all this refers to the “need to strike

a balance between central and regional planning and to decentralize the planning management functions without allowing the system as a whole to lose its coherence” (D’Aeth, 1974: *ibid*). With reference to the education sector, understanding the social and cultural forces driving an education reform is a prerequisite for planning it.

From the above, thus, it can be noticed that an array of viewpoints has forged the need to understand how institutions are intrinsically linked to the social organization of individuals, societies, organizations, and a country at large. Through the above, it clearly comes out that “institutions are patterns, which anchor behavior over time, through norms, rules, regulations of a formal or less formal nature” (Walters, 2007:7). Again, this leads to the perspective provided by North (1990:3), that “institutions represent formal and informal rules that shape human interaction”. However, these institutions constituting a set of formal regulatory frameworks are assumed to present aspects that are easy to capture. Whilst, the informal socially prescribed or proscribed patterns of behavior, also referred to as set of values, often perceived as naturally innate are not easy to apprehend. This remains, however, obvious as rightly put it Woodhill (n.d):

“Many institutions, particularly the more informal ones, are so much part of our life and so embedded in what we regularly do that we often take them granted and don’t even see that they exist. However, social, economic and political change is essentially about institutional change. If we want to create a change, such as including small-scale producers in modern markets, it is essential to look more closely at institutions. By their very nature of creating stability in society, institutions can be difficult to change. Much of the failure in development can be accounted for by a poor understanding of institutions and how to change them”.

Historical and traditional socio-cultural forces as potential mediators of reform in Guinea

To situate the investigation of informal socially prescribed patterns of behavior shaping the context of Guinea, it turns out to be paramount to briefly introduce the socio-demographic composition of the country. The history of Guinea as a whole is a very rich and varied repertoire that can sufficiently inform the evolution of the country. From the point of view of natural and human peculiarities, Guinea is a mosaic of differentiated landscapes. The current Guinean population is the result of a thorough mixture between early settlers (8th century), on the one hand, and those who came thereafter (11th, 16th and 18th centuries), on the other (Mogenet, 1999; Guinée/Direction Nationale de la Statistique, 2006). As a result, this population is varied both ethnically and linguistically. By the same fact, this gives rise to the existence of diverse ethnic

groups, each speaking their own language. Guinea is, however, made up of four natural regions quite distinct and demographically homogenous. The country owes its originality to its natural environment, which is characterized by climatic contrasts, mountain barriers and the orientation of the landforms that combine to give each region the peculiarities of the climate, soil, vegetation and way of life of the people. With such a configuration, an ethnic settling has also formed, which more or less identifies itself with a particular region.

Therefore, looking at Guinea's four natural regions, an ethnic and linguistic coexistence can also be observed and, above all, it should be made clear that there is a strong cohesion between these ethnic groups. According to Guinea's Ministry of Education and Culture (1979:16), overall, it can be distinguished that:

- In Maritime Guinea, we find mainly Soso-speaking populations: the Soussou, the Baga, the Landouma, the Nalou, the Mikiforé, the Manadany, to whom are added the Diakanké and Tyapi groups.
- In the massif of Fouta Djallon [or Middle Guinea] there are, next to the Peulh speaking Pular, the communities of Diallonké, Sarakollé, Diakanka, Bassari, Koniagui, Badiaranké and Fulacunda.
- In Upper Guinea, the common language is Malinka, which is spoken by the Malinké as well as the Peulh Wassoulounké.
- In Forest Guinea, there are several ethnic and linguistic groups: Kissi speaking Kissie, Toma speaking the Lomaghoi language, Guerzé speaking Kpéléwo, Konianké, Konon, Manon and Lélé.

As presented above, it is easy to appreciate that with “[too] many [...] ethnic groups that make up [the country], Guinea [has] socio-cultural and politically stratified societies” (Flaig, 2010: 10). This stratification of the Guinean society into sub-societies can be identified in terms of historic ethnic differences and differences in social status. Again, speaking of Guinean society, which is strongly hierarchical at the level of some of these ethnic groups—“the forest peoples having the least hierarchical structures and the Fulani [Peulh] and the Malinké the most stratified structures” (Sheldon et al., 1994:27)—is based on “traditional values cultivated in extended patriarchal families. It is the belonging to a family, a lineage, a caste or any other social entity that determines the place and role of the individual within the society” (Diakité, 2004:40). Thus, it should be acknowledged that “many of the informal values or working rules which shape Guinean [...] behavior are rooted in tradition. Though deeply embedded in Guinean society, these values are dynamic and changing in response to evolving political, economic, and social conditions” (Sheldon et al., 1994: 27). As such, it is correct to say without being mistaken that

the historical forces and traditional socio-cultural values which have and continue to shape the country's behavioral patterns and context, also exert greater influence on Guinea's educational reform.

Furthermore, Guinea's cultural and identity affirmation manifests itself when it comes to a national cause, especially if it emanates from outside. This fervor of self-assertion has been present in Guinean societies for a very long time. It also resulted in such a fierce resistance that major local figures— existing kings at the time— opposed the colonial conquest, refusing to submit to the invader and stood up to defend the independence and dignity [of Guinea]. This historical reminiscence of Guinea is worth telling because the formative elements of the country's identity derived thereof and has become well implanted. The evidence of such a fact is the spirit that always enlivened the Guinean, as it reads:

“the characteristic of an authentic culture, of a culture that has its roots deep in the people, is to resist all attempts to suffocate, to preserve and to perpetuate itself in the creative consciousness of the people like a seed always fruitful of progress. So are the moral, sociocultural values of the people of Guinea” (Ministry of the Education and Culture of Guinea, 1979: 9).

Still, on the same note, to reconnect with its best traditions of self-determination in the past, the Guinean people have deployed, under the banner of the Democratic Party of Guinea, intense efforts to free themselves completely from any kind of foreign domination. Hence, the resumption of these ideals firmly supported by Sékou Touré, who believes that:

“For society to develop itself by constantly increasing its means of existence, by continuously improving its mode of production and its relations of production, it must be free, totally free, free of its thought, free to make decisions, free of its action, free in the management of its patrimony. Only then can it give free rein to its creative genius” (Ministry of the Education and Culture of Guinea, 1979: 9).

Deeply kneaded in this belief, that is precisely what motivated the introduction—by Sékou Touré, Guinea's first president—of national languages replacing French as language of instruction after the independence. Therefore, the emphasis on African culture, history, and languages in the Guinean educational system was envisioned as a means by which the people of Guinea could assure the affirmation of the true identity of their national culture. It is to be believed that this ideology, although not officially pursued over the years, has indelibly marked the mentality of the Guineans, and these sequels remain at present within the society, or even in the country's current education system, whereby many of the sectoral or non-sectoral cadres favor the

rehabilitation of this type of education. These are, however, points of view that stemmed from interviews conducted by Walmond (2002:121) who relates that “many interviewers (particularly those associated with the principal donor agencies) claimed that the change in language of instruction was a symbolic reform...According to others, usually government officials, such a view underestimates the truly revolutionary nature of the new language policy”.

Moreover, the same nostalgic or perhaps patriotic feelings resurfaced during my interview sessions. More generally, the return to the source, emerging as a desired feature in promoting education in Guinea, is a sentiment that is widely shared among many of the senior staff within the Education Department but also within the Guinean civil society. This implies that, apart from the involvement of the population in the definition of priorities in the sector, taking into account the gains or values of the nation must be in line with any plan of educational reform. The following excerpts are quite edifying in this respect.

“In view of new needs emerging at the level of the [Guinean] society; [however] stresses the need to explore new ways and to train dynamic and successful elites in their own culture, capable of adapting inputs from outside and able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the communities to which they belong to lead them to take charge in a lucid and courageous way in their struggle for development” (Dr. Thierno Aliou Baniré Diallo²², 2018: n.d).

Another voice exclaims itself in these other words:

“The school has, under normal conditions, two main missions namely: the transmission of know-how (science, technology and technology) and the transmission of knowledge as well as life skills (morals and civic education). Unfortunately, in Guinea, the second fundamental mission is flouted or simply ignored. [As such] the Guinean administration and our society as a whole are in the image of the Guinean school. It is therefore time that we thought of the "moralization of our school" by teaching the universal values of fraternity, peace, unity, solidarity, among others. Our current educational system is devoid of soul, of ideology. Not only does the training received not allow graduates to find or create jobs, but most importantly, it does not help to shape the individual in order to make him/her a good citizen” (Aboubacar Mandela Camara²³, 2017:n.d).

²²Dr. Thierno Aliou Baniré Diallo, a former Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Guinea

²³Aboubacar Mandela Camara, Sociologist, a Guinean Teacher and Researcher

Extreme positions or parts taken by local actors and sometimes even by key actors involved in the reform represent as such a hindrance to the effective planning and/or implementation of any plan envisaged however. Especially, in the absence of a perfect adhesion of the executing agents as we can notice it already. As a result, this leads to default actions, in other words, to the adoption by particularly reform actors and more generally other local stakeholders, of biased attitudes.

This state of affairs deserves great attention. Thereby, it is important to set a coherent master plan with regard to the education reform policies through a consensual and inclusive agreement of all stakeholders, and more importantly, provide compliance mechanisms for an effective execution of the program based on defined priorities. In essence, this investigation reflects that the fact of maintaining a less subtle definition of actions from the central level, often affect their concretization on the ground.

A fact that corroborates itself with an observation made by Swift-Morgan (2011: 424):

“A misalignment of the initially stated intentions and official mandates of international and central level actors whose missions were to promote the reform in developing the management capacity of educational staff happened to derive from these objectives—originally expected to guide and promote the decision-making processes and strategic planning of local actors through these decentralized governance reforms—themselves influenced what activities went into the reforms plans and budgets, and what activities were ultimately funded and implemented by wielding particular financial and technical assistance. Ineluctably, this leads local actors to distort the planning of their activities—that reflect better the real educational concerns of their community—to consider activities that financial and technical partners are likely to support rather than because they were identified as the top priorities”.

However, it turns out that quite often, “the interest of the local and ethnic communities takes precedence over whatever the government may declare as national goals” (Dia, 1992: 176). Thus, Guinea, like many other countries, is confronted with this question of policy orientation in its educational sector. Just as the problem of accommodating the requirements of its external development partners to its own developmental issues in the sector. In response to this situation, D'Aeth (1974:115) provided a very exhaustive reflection by stating that:

“The formulation in recent years by African countries of principles and programmes for their educational development has a double significance. It states

what sort of society each wishes to foster, and arising from this what formal and informal institutions of education would be appropriate. It is also profoundly important in negotiating for aid. Whereas ten years ago aid projects were shaped largely by donor agencies, now each country can seek aid for what it has already planned; and in so doing give its own expression to new social and economic aspirations, while conserving some essential features of its traditional culture. When planning aims at bringing about major social change, with new ideologies and policies, it is bound to involve processes of acculturation; and human qualities are as important as the necessary logistics which figure in aid programmes. This approach can make a valuable contribution to the difficult task of achieving a more balanced partnership in aid relationships, in which there is equal respect for the needs and wishes of each donor and of the receiving country”.

Socio-cultural beliefs as major drivers of responsive strategic reform intervention

Moreover, the containment of informal social, political and cultural dynamics present in education policymaking, planning and management is very essential. For it makes it possible to anticipate the inherent expectations and consequently respond to different susceptibilities of the community. Also, with such attention, this may eventually bridge the positions between supply and demand or between decision-makers, executors and beneficiaries. Because, more often, “there is conflict between what the central administration plans and what the executing agent adheres to; same as what the people or the community at large desire” (D’Aeth, 1974:112). Again, the idea on the necessity of understanding socio-cultural features of education reform is a prerequisite since its planning, applies especially in environments where the currents of thought such as religion—“merged with the indigenous culture in subtle ways, expressing its own beliefs through existing institutions” (D’Aeth, 1974:ibid). However, in Africa “some countries are predominantly Islamic [i.e. Guinea], others have little or no Islamic influence” (D’Aeth, 1974:109). It should be noted that Guinean society is characterized by a strong hold of tradition. This is a strict observance of social and religious practices. Three religions occupy the spiritual landscape of the country: Islam (85%), Christianity (8%) and animism (7%). In the presence of such cultural sensitivity, social plans dedicated to locals—of a region or district—must be aware of this diversity. Just as it is pointed out by Diakité (2004: 46):

“In the Guinean society strongly Islamized, one of the most important areas of life remains religion. It is omnipresent at every moment of life and rubs off on all daily activities. In some localities, the building of a mosque takes precedence over that of a school or dispensary”.

As a corollary effect of such a socio-cultural orientation, it is not surprising, however, to note a diversity in the way in which educational services are delivered in the country at large and/or the local level in particular. As it is also indicated by Diakité (2004:74):

“despite disparities between villages, there is no doubt about the value of education. Koranic and French schools cohabit a little everywhere, frequented mostly by the boys”.

In taking note of the observation above, it should be mentioned that the gender inequality in the supply of education mostly stems from the same societal factor, which until now lacks of appropriate solutions. A situation that Back et al. (2003: 9) have revealed in these terms:

“Constraints causing gender and geographic disparities [in Guinea], especially against girls’ education...revealed that...several persistent socio-cultural beliefs and practices as well as religious practices act as barriers that factor into why so many girls who begin school do not complete primary school or never even go to school.....and traditional beliefs that place a low value on girls’ education and raise concerns that girls will leave home and lose traditional values”.

Furthermore, another step to consider, which is a central issue in strategic planning as well as management paradigm, rest largely on the devolvement of responsibilities to handle day-to-day activities. That being said, managerial leadership is so important to organizational vision. This entails the ability to anticipate the future and to devise strategies to align the organizational and its resources with the environment. However, what is quite often challenging is the identification and/or appointment of the right person with the appropriate skills. The most compelling of this requirement most often lies at the local level. To signify the prominence of leadership in the functioning of an organization and further, in its performance, D’Aeth (1974: 112) states that “whatever form the leadership takes, and however much it is politically colored, it is an essential means of local support for development”. In this respect, undertaking major reform requires understanding the details of social and political dynamics present within each community. Moreover, to unseal such fundament, which is often pursued within the informal realm, a strong leadership is of great importance. The implication in confronting change measures at the local level occurs when it comes to community issues of primary concerns. Thus, illustrations of these socio-political dynamics relate to the measures of redeployment of teachers and those related to the promotion of girl’s education in Guinea under PASE I (1990-1995).

“The participatory strategy that guided the national task force under the leadership of a committed minister (Aicha Bah), tempered any opposition to this initiative, said Walmond (2002: 137) through the contribution of “the organizations representing the “sons” of particular communities [to] help convince parents and local leaders of the positive aspects of the redeployment”. “The use of such strategy proves to be instrumental in areas where teachers, school directors, and in some cases DSEE becoming “notables” so fully integrated into the community through economic activities”—the purchase of local lands—or invested with some social obligations—appointment to local positions of responsibility in this community, are potentially inclined to use their local political power to resist redeployment (Walmond, 2002: 137). Another variant that displays socio-political tugs in supporting or impinging change effort also emerged in Guinea’s attempt to promote girls’ schooling with its first PASE. Under the same leadership of Minister Aicha Bah—with a strong will, did establish in 1992 a task force on equity (primarily composed of senior education officials), then strengthened by some influential men and women in Guinean society. Thus, among the chosen actions of intervention of the Equity Committee, were “the adoption of national government policy on the matter but also and more interestingly the involvement of local—religious—leaders as community workers responsible for catalyzing interest in girls’ education” (Walmond, 2002: 141).

In view of the above, it can be affirmed that leadership shares similar practices in various places; some of these practices, however, have inherently particular socio-cultural characteristics. Thus, distinguishing these features is equally important in a reform intervention program since the socio-cultural dimensions are very determinant in the success or failure of a change process. With regard to recent interventions pertaining to developing capacities in the governance of education in Guinea, it should be noted that the details of socio-political variables have lacked sustained attention, since the intended intervention did not permit to make a difference in improving the sectoral planning and management. From the viewpoints of several executives interviewed, many of them widely deplore the absence of a marked leadership that could infuse a new direction for such a dynamic, efficient and competitive sector. This lack of significant renewal in the functioning of the educational system remains seriously undermined by inert habits deeply anchored in the society.

It is of a more general impression that the behavior of today’s administrative cadres in Guinea is the reflection of an accumulation of social inclinations—of the precolonial and

colonial periods as well as the post-independence regime—that have strongly influenced the country. This leads us to reflect more closely upon the following statement “strong norms of reciprocity and redistribution prevailed in traditional Guinean societies. Those in power or with access to wealth were expected to share their wealth with members of the family and community” (Sheldon et al., 1994:32). In order to understand all the quintessence of such a fundament and its implication in social relations in society, it is worth taking a look at the emanation of this society itself. Thus, in this regard, it is generally known as Diakité (2004:40) evoked it in a very concise manner that:

“Every society or large ethnic group has its own system of values, functioning with reference to its custom and expresses itself in its own language. Despite the undeniable cultural differences that exist between communities, the family, in general, is the basic social unit. It models and regulates the lives of individuals; it constitutes the crucible of social solidarities. The physical presence and financial contributions to social and family ceremonies, including marriages, baptisms, circumcisions and bereavements, are a good test of the level of integration of the individual in his/her social environment. S/he is always solicited and must not spare him/herself for the cause of the community. S/he has to dedicate time, energy and money to ceremonies, without mention. It is about the approval of his/her behavior by society, which is difficult to reconcile with the affirmation of his/her personality”.

On the basis on this reflection, quite often, socio-cultural factors are very instrumental in guiding leadership practices. To blend oneself into this complex social network is however crucial for a team leader, as it is the case in the management of educational reform policy in a Guinean society, which mostly remains traditional and conservative. The coexistence between chiefs and subordinates still remains guided by the traditional habits of the society. With regard to the educational milieu, it was very interesting to find out how out-of-service relations could have an impact on the relationship between the chief and his/her subordinates. By way of illustration, the impression of the one in charge of the pedagogical training at the level of one communal direction of education in Guinea spoke plainly by openly affirming that:

The conduct of a chief toward his/her subordinates and/or collaborators have a great influence on the proper functioning of the service. Especially during very special moments (baptism, marriage, death), the attendance or mark of sympathy or not of the chief to the subordinate’s family matters constitutes a catalyzing element that incites or not the cadre to accomplish his/her tasks in a remarkable way. These are very important factors not to ignore when you are in a leadership position in Guinea.

Moreover, this other feature commending that “traditional leaders primarily needed to be integrated into the life of their community and share their wealth generously with their entourage and community” (Sheldon et al., 1994:32), is still very present in today’s Guinean setting. The extent of this consideration has repercussions on almost all socio-political and professional levels, with more or less varied proportions. Based on real appreciation of social interactions that have the potential to influence the professional attitude of public agents, Sheldon et al. (1994:32) further expounded that:

“Applied to modern Guinea, these norms [—of wealth sharing—] place heavy pressure on political leaders, wealthy businessmen, and other privileged elements in society [—e.g., civil servants—] to be generous in sharing their personal wealth with others. One of the main incentives to corruption within the Guinean civil service is the strong obligation individuals feel for supporting family and community members. When coupled with relatively low wages [which is actually the case in Guinea], this sense of moral responsibility to support family and community members often pushes government officials and civil servants at all levels of the state bureaucracy to divert public resources to meet these obligations”.

Societal relations and political behavior of Guinea’s society as engenders of serious institutional loophole

Subsequent traits also garnishing these social obligations are aspects related to age and seniority, which are highly valued elements in traditional Guinean society. Prior consultation with the elderly as an entity possessing a discretionary power of decision-making has been cardinal virtues in socio-relational and political dynamics in Guinea. An evidence of this kind is articulated in these terms “in our country, the power of the chief has always been tempered by the existence of councils of elders who had their opinion to give on all matters of public interest” (Ministry of Education and Culture of Guinea, 1979:23). Such socio-political arrangement has been the mode of functioning and management of day-to-day affairs in traditional communities. However, this state of mind is being thus transposed into Guinea’s administrative milieu, but with a contrasting mutation in some instances. This principle of seniority is conceived in different ways and also assimilated disparately. And that is the reason why it is not uncommon to see practices adopted by public service cadres that go against the administrative regulations. However, the fact that—the researcher—is aware of this reality and having reflected upon the conducts of various informants encountered during this study in different venues leads to confirm action of what has been advanced by Sheldon et al. (1994:77):

“Traditional beliefs also create strong drives or inhibitions in civil servants. For example, another force that drives the cadres is the fact that they believe that the elders’ blessings are very important for one’s personal advancement in life. With that belief, one does everything to deserve the blessings”.

Concomitantly with this fact there is another reality to present along with such belief, since it is laid bare and more interestingly—the researcher—has lived it recently through the field observations, which happened to be also signaled by Sheldon et al.(1994:77) as articulated below:

“One of the major problems hindering administrative efficiency has been what can be called administrative tourism” whereby civil servants receive a host of visitors in their offices who were there primarily for social reasons or to do unofficial business”.

By the same token, Swift-Morgan (2011:380) presented a similar account in primarily highlighting a participant’s view, who stated ‘the social is dominating over the administrative’; then she went on to argue that “in this way, the boundaries between the formal and the informal have blurred or even disappeared are for the most part not present in Guinea...as does the typical scene in any education (or any other public administration) office from the DPE on up to the senior levels of the central ministry”; positing therefore that:

“I observed first-hand how cousins and uncles and hometown friends and all manner of society come in and out to consult with officials on social and political business at a rate equal to or greater than the comings and goings of office staff on ‘official’ business. A portion of the first kind of business may have nothing to do with the realm of education and may have very little effect on it (other than the time taken away from the officials’ work day), but other aspects do affect the ‘official’ business” (p.381).

The other distinctive feature of the Guinean society, which relates to age class and seniority and which does strangle any major change, was that of the maintenance and perpetuation of gerontocracy in the administration. This attitude has expanded to such an extent that all sectors of the public administration have been and still remain confronted with this phenomenon. The education sector not being immune from such a practice pays the highest costs. Since the sector is the one that is considered to have major area of interests by the fact of its preponderance and the recurrence of intervention projects that are de facto sources of sharing roles and resources.

Thus, the various interlocutors met during the interview sessions did not miss to report the craze provoked by the reform projects or interventions in the sector. Which is likely perceived as being the instigator of what Swift-Morgan (2011: 317) ascertained as follows:

“the pursuit of interests other than education outcomes is the cultural aspect in Guinea [...] of older men holding greater power than younger, by virtue of their age instead of other characteristics or qualifications. In this way, older people in the education system and among the other education stakeholders, like some CRD presidents and many members of the APEAE leaderships, often maintain their positions irrespective of any evidence of their efficacy. This prevents younger people from gaining leadership positions even though they may have higher energy, greater vision, and other characteristics that could allow them to pursue the institutional interests of the position more effectively”.

The obstinacy with such a practice reinforced further the quest for self-interest, which became another major issue that afflicts the integrity of the Guinean administration including the educational system. The decision-making power structure is established in such a way that other segments constituting a department/unit is left out of the process without proper participation or prior consultation. The actual motif in acting as such is mostly destined to ensure a strong hold on authority and resources. This mechanism remains somehow omnipresent to the point that it is perceived as a way of perpetuating the nostalgic view of the country's past. What is especially striking in the re-appropriation of Guinea's societal values within the administration is its contrasting way of restitution. Basically, ‘*le pouvoir de tutelle*’ (central power & governance control) retained by the central ministry officials are less respondent to the point that it appears to be a non-derogative measure, given that:

“At all levels of the bureaucracy, the various actors do not act without prior instructions from their superiors and rarely make a decision without clearing it. Faced with a new situation requiring quick decision, they would rather wait and let the situation deteriorate rather than make the decision themselves” (Sheldon et al., 1994:79).

This internal struggle over power and resources control remains issues of extreme sensitivity not to touch upon for fear of—not—provoking possible reprisals. Hence, so often the educational personnel denounced it parabolically whenever it emerges throughout discussion related to the matter. Moreover, these aspects did resurface all through the discussions in which engaged actors have been interrogated along the course of this investigation. This tug of interests on the

part of parties involved in guiding reform efforts in the education sector is often reflected in Walmond's (2002: 145) observation:

“The increased budgetary resources for the education sector could obviously restrict the power and capacity of other parts of government. Competition for resources was fierce, and other ministries did not always appreciate education’s donor protected “stake”. Within the Ministry of Education, there was also competition for resources and power. Staff of different agencies, directorates, and administrative units all had significant interest in maintaining the status quo and preventing transfers of responsibilities or the creation of mechanisms that obliged greater accountability”.

The spillover effect of such informal attitude tending to override the established formal norms has, to say the least, come in different forms. This is something that has created a new phenomenon with characteristics of societal relations and political dynamic unlikely for a harmonious development of the country in general and especially for the good performance of the education sector in particular. The reality of these facts gives the impression that they are an entirely normalized attitude and that they become accepted norms in the present society of Guinea. From the political life of the country to the most restrained social milieu, it is lamentable to notice the drastic change in professional behaviors. And all of this can be demonstrated through the accounts of different observers. Successively, these accounts are delineated as follows:

“The public interest is often sacrificed in favor of personal interest, the interest of the ethnic group, and that of the political coalition. Many Guineans allege that Guineans often sacrifice the national interest in favor of personal ones. People cite examples in the way people make administrative appointments, and in the way they use public property for personal purposes...The widespread appointments of Sousou in lucrative positions was a response to ethnic group interest even when these appointments were not in the best interests of the country” (Sheldon et al.,1994:80).

Another account drawn from a report of the World Bank (2018: 41) expounds the following:

“For instance, one can observe large numbers of civil servants joining the Presidential party, the RPG [*Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinée (Rally of the People of Guinea)*] and seeking promotions in the public job placements. RPG militants and supporters [mostly belonging to the Malinké ethnic group] have been rewarded with positions in the National Assembly, public administration and government—with little attention given to requisite skills. Party politics continue to remain largely couched in terms of ethnic belonging, and ethnic-political networks permeate the administration”.

In the same wake, this other account plunges into the universe of the educational environment of the country in order to better impregnate those to whom it may concern of the drift that has taken this sanctuary so crucial for the emancipation of the Guinean society.

“A few years ago, one of my colleagues was appointed Director of Studies at a private school in the suburbs of Conakry. If I may, I would point out that s/he comes from Forest Guinea. Within two years, his/her mother tongue had become the second official language in this school; after, French, of course. Even worse, s/he had managed to drive out almost all the teachers who were neither from his/her region, much less from his/her ethnicity” (Aboubacar Mandela Camara, 2017: n.d).

Camara went on to add that:

“Ironically, s/he was treated with all the names of birds. S/He was dismissed and replaced by another; this time, a young Fulani from Middle Guinea. I bet you that today, more than 70% of the pupils and teachers of this school are from Peulh origin. Put a Malinké or a Soussou [there], you will be surprised at the speed of the mutation. Yet, it is said, "so much is the school, so much is the Nation.” ” (Aboubacar Mandela Camara, 2017: n.d)

So far, it has become easier to appreciate the momentum that presents the characteristics of Guinea’s society as a whole with a surprising but also astonishing mutation. At this point, it turns out to be quite judicious to re-edit the accounts in order to take remedial measures. And this supposes the need to evaluate and thus extirpate any supposedly intrusive elements in the socio-political and cultural relations governing interactions within this society that aspires for a better future. At the same time, revalorize and more importantly adopt practices consistent with current requirements that can favor an effective and efficient change for the society and its integral development. In fact, an impetus of this kind can help cushion the actual challenge faced in the establishment of an institution conducive to a sustainable development in Guinea.

CHAPTER 7: IMPLEMENTATION OF DECENTRALIZED CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION MANAGEMENT AT THE ORGANIZATION AND INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

7.1 Organizational Reform and Improvement

The structural arrangements of Guinea's education system

At first, it is worth recalling that the fact of reforming an organization involves necessarily making profound changes. However, promoting change in—an educational system of—a country with great uncertainty of existing challenges, unstable environment and complex sociocultural settings require not a mechanistic but rather an incremental and strategic management approach. As such, given entrenched practices and bureaucratic rigidity in Guinea's education governance, an adaptive management approach is indeed preferable provided that management processes, structures, values and organizational structures are adjusted to fit a particular set of conditions within the prevailing environment.

When talking about the organization of an educational system, it is often a question of identifying the structural aspect related to the level of actions, roles, relations and responsibilities. It is also about the respective functions of each unit and/or individual in the chain of command that goes from the Ministry down to the teacher in the most remote rural schools. The Guinean educational system in its general layout is organized in the image of the political and administrative structure of the country. And its arrangement naturally goes from the central level to the base through the regional, prefectural and sub-prefectural branches. The ministerial department embodies the central level of the Guinean educational system. The ministerial department as such is a set of public services, which is a political and administrative entity responsible for the sectoral policy within its field of intervention. Thus, the sub-sector of basic education which is the center of interest of this analysis is represented by the Ministry of Pre-University and Civic Education (MEPU-EC), henceforth under the name MEN-A (Ministry of National Education and Literacy). The mission of this ministry is to design, develop and implement government policy on education—elementary and secondary level—and literacy.

To accomplish its mission, as already indicated the ministry includes a central service and deconcentrated services. The central service is a state service whose territorial jurisdiction is unique for the entire nation. It implements government policy in the area of its specific mission. The Ministry, being the highest politico-administrative authority, however, also acts as the

Budget and Expenditure Authorizing Level. The Minister is also vested with the following powers: appointment, management, instruction, reformation, regulation and disciplinary. The ministry in charge of basic education (MENA) for its part consists of a general secretariat; a cabinet; support services; national directorates; related services; advisory bodies; public projects. Within the Ministry, the support services are responsible for ensuring administrative, human resources, financial and material resources; control; communication; programming and evaluation of the department's activities.

According to the framework of the recent administrative reform, support services include:

- the General Inspection;
- the Office of Strategy and Development (previously statistics and planning services);
- the Directorate or the Human Resources Division;
- the Financial Affairs Division;
- the Service of Modernization of the Information System;
- the communication and public relations unit;
- the Central Secretariat;
- The Reception Service;
- The Gender and Equality Service;
- The Documentary Resource Center.

Providing supervisory power, the central department relies on support services to run educational services. It is then important to know how this crucial and strategic department is structured and works in delivering educational services to the country. In the meantime, this attempt also commends to consider surveying the arrangements of the different levels—central, regional, prefectural and sub-prefectural; each level, it can be assumed, has the responsibility to develop the education sector but presumably with differing means of action. As such, it allows for establishing the degree of involvement of each unit and the agents, which compose it in the governance of the sector especially with regard to planning and management, two essential aspects in the improvement of the Guinean education system.

The Ministry, in the realization of its prerogatives, conceives with its partners, the developmental policies of the education. The national objectives identified in the sector are then

conveyed to the different deconcentrated structures in order to proceed to their eventual implementation. However, it should be pointed out that at the elaboration level of educational objectives or policies, only a handful of senior staff of the deconcentrated services are said to be involved. And their participation is sometimes perceived as formal for final adoption of the provisions. The education department is represented in each region. The units at this level have the responsibility to enact and implement the national education policy within the limit of their mandate and intervention zone. Actually, the educational offices at the regional level primarily must comply with the policy directives and make sure that the plans and activities meant for execution fall completely within the designated framework set by the central Ministry.

Delivery of educational services at the lower level rest upon the prefectural and sub-prefectural level which are responsible for translating government policy in the sector based on their respective missions. Having among others, multiple but very specific tasks, these entities enjoy a certain freedom of action in the execution of their mandate—supervision of the personnel, approval and constructions of schools. However, they are limited in other areas, such as decision making on the operating budget and the hiring of teaching and administrative staff. A situation which is not without effect to a certain extent for the easy and smooth conduct of activities at the local level.

To ensure the responsibilities of heads of department, at the level of the IRE, DPE and DSEE, the governing ministry decides on any appointment. Under normal conditions, can be eligible to maintain a post of responsibility at these levels the one with the following criteria: a teacher by profession and who already belongs to the public service; who presents intellectual, physical, psychological, moral and social qualities; who is cultivated and has developed professional skills; an agent of change and development; who has a good experience and be able to ensure and guide team work. Additionally, those eventually admitted to these positions are subject to be trained in schools or any other specialized and related fields. Admittedly, it should be noted that in a certain moment and in some respects, this conduct in the appointment of heads of services was strictly observed, according to some respondents in this study. On the other hand, in most cases, and especially in recent times, appointments to positions of responsibility hardly care about required criteria. However, faced with the obligations that are incumbent upon such a responsibility, it has become quite often easy for the appointee to do without the shortcomings associated with the position. Not through training, because even if the person received it, he or

she often does not benefit enough from it since the fact of already lacking basic notions makes a barrier to any improvement. Otherwise, the one or few resourceful person (s) within the unit return to take care of almost all the tasks and sometimes find him/themselves submerged and sometimes under more or less encouraging working conditions. A situation that remains at this stage of great concern because of the turn that takes the mode of appointment, which is often based on the political affiliation rather than personal merit. Whereas, ignoring technical ability requirement in the fulfillment of these strategic positions, again, is not without consequence. Chhinh and Sideth (2009:122) contended that “it is generally observed that people without sound background knowledge can be trained to do things perfectly. For instance, an illiterate person can be trained to be an excellent barber or motorbike mechanic. However, it is hard to train a person whose knowledge is limited to be a good manager, planner, and leader as these works require analytical, predictive, and evaluative skills”.

The Administrative organizational structure

The Education system’s Vertical structure

As in many other developing countries, the structural organization of the Guinean educational system is established vertically with a high concentration of prerogatives at the central level. Somehow, the rather timid yet praiseworthy efforts made up so far, has allowed for devolving some tasks and responsibilities to the rural communities. Hierarchically, responsibility levels are disseminated across three instances. At the regional level, which is the second political and administrative instance, the Regional Inspectorate of Education (IRE), represents the Ministry of Education and Literacy (MENA). Educational services at the prefectural level which is the third level of local authority are ensured through the Prefectural Director of Education (DPE). However, at the special zone of Conakry, such dismembering presents itself in this way: there is the Education Directorate of the city of Conakry—DEV-C (first dismemberment level). Then comes under its direct supervisory the Communal Directorate of Education (DCE). The lowest level of this devolvement and the closest to the communities is exercised at the sub-prefectural level through the Sub-prefectural Delegate of Elementary Education (DSEE). In the conduct of educational activities and their proper implementation, the MENA has for its part provided for in its internal provisions the establishment of a steering committee which is meant to be permanent. Following the structural format of the ministry, this committee is being also duplicated at the regional and prefectural level.

Nonetheless, ad hoc committees are sometimes set up to supplement the already existing entities with the main purpose of accelerating the achievement of any enacted reform programs' objectives. And this was what has been envisaged with EFA program and its implementation into subsequent phases. Whereby two entities were established under the supervisory of the EFA National Coordination: The Monitoring Committee (*Comité de Suivi du Programme—CSP*) responsible for the overall orientation, financing and evaluation of the program; the Coordinating Committee (*Comité Technique de Coordination—CTC*) responsible for coordinating and monitoring day-to-day implementation (World Bank, 2001:9). However, the steering and coordination bodies are also established at the different levels of the deconcentrated structures and they operate on a permanent basis.

Nevertheless, despite the establishment of such provisions, it was noted that:

“Although the monitoring and evaluation system put in place for the PEPT [EFA program] was able to produce data on a set of indicators, it proved to be ineffective because it lacked a global vision and the steering and coordination committees responsible for this activity did not work satisfactorily. It was therefore insufficient to meet the requirements of the Sectorial Education Program (PSE)” (MOE, 2014).

Thus, in order to remedy this shortfall, it has been envisaged in the preparation of the PSE framework, the government and its partners have agreed to set up an operational and reliable monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system. It was then under the common fund for basic education (FoCEB) interim plan that the piloting and coordination capabilities of the MEN-A were improved. As stipulated by the MOE (MOE, 2014).

“FoCEB is piloted and coordinated at both levels of the education system, through institutionalized bodies. At the central level, these bodies are: i) the Interministerial Steering and Coordination Committee (CIPC), which is the decision-making body; ii) The National Strategic Committee for Education (CSNE) which is the guiding body, iii) The Sectorial Group of Education (GSE) which is a platform for exchange between actors and partners of the education system and iv) the FoCEB Coordination”.

“At the deconcentrated level, we note: i) The Regional Steering Committees for Education (CRPE); ii) Prefectural Steering Committees for Education (CPPE); iii) Sub-Prefectural Steering Committees for Education (CSPE) and iv) School Development Committees (CDE)”.

Therefore, the DSEEs, as well as the services of the IRE and the DPE/DCE and in particular the services in charge of statistics and school mapping, human resources, administration and finance, the continuous training of staff, school infrastructure and equipment produce and/or collect and aggregate the information needed for the monitoring and evaluation of education/training activities in their area of competence (MOE, 2015: 50).

Each of these deconcentrated steering bodies, for their part, exercises very specific roles.

The Prefectural Steering Committee for Education (CPPE) is the steering, consultation and monitoring body of the education system at the Prefecture level. With responsibilities, among others, to ensure the coordination and monitoring of educational policy; the dialogue and reinforcing consultation with education partners at the prefectural level; the consistency of Prefectural Budgetized Plans with the orientations of the education programs, the directives and guidelines issued by the CRE (Regional Committee of Education) and the educational situation of the prefecture, including recommendations made by the Sub-Prefectural and prefectural actors. The Prefectural Planning Office, which serves as the Executive Secretary of the CPPE, provides ongoing support and ensures, among other things: the preparation of the meetings of the CPPE; monitoring the implementation of the decisions of the CPPE; relays of the CPPE with the CRPE, the DSEEs and the heads of the educational establishments of the prefecture.

Recommendations resulting from the Prefectural Steering Committee meeting—held once a quarter in regular session and in extraordinary session as on the occasion of the opening of classes (start of a new school year)—are submitted at the regional level for appreciation.

Indeed, by chance, the researcher during the conduct of this research witnessed the sessions at the level of the administrative region of Mamou; these meetings in the image of the CPPE also last for 3 days and bring together at the regional level all actors involved in the management of education. The CRPE session of 2018-2019, also held in the eight (8) administrative regions of the country, is the continuation of the CPPE, which is first conducted in all prefectures in the country. Its objective is to examine the orientations and recommendations of the CPPE so that the best ones are included in a regional vision with regard to the concerns and expectations of the population. Thus, the Regional Steering Committee for Education, which is the relay at the regional level, is at the same time a steering, consultation, coordination and monitoring-evaluation of the educational system at the regional level. Like the CPPE, the CRPE meets once a quarter in regular session and in extraordinary session.

The ultimate instance of these Steering Committees is embodied by the National Steering Committee for Education (CNPE), whose mission is to: ensure and deepen the consultation and strengthen the dialogue and coordination with representatives at the national level of technical, financial and social partners in education; check the coherence of national education development plans with national and sectoral policies and strategies, as well as multilateral and bilateral commitments and agreements; approve envelopes and budget allocations among the different programs; define and disseminate the objectives, strategies and results of the education program as well as the expected contributions of the education partners; identify and coordinate the technical, financial or in-kind participation of the partners by taking into account their specificity and mandate; validate expected program outcomes and monitoring/evaluation indicators; monitor the implementation of the educational program and the assessment of the achievement of its objectives; identify potential institutional obstacles that would impede the proper implementation of the educational program and take necessary remediation measures.

Like its relay bodies, the CNPE meets once every six months in ordinary session and in extraordinary session whenever need be. It should be noted that the Steering Committee of Education is a forum for exchanges and decisions to prune issues related inter alia to the performance indicators of the education sector for their betterment. In this momentum, however, it must be pointed out that efforts have been made to strengthen the steering and co-ordination capacities of the education system with the most recent Program—Sectorial Program of Education (PSE). According to the MOE (2017:60):

“This has resulted in the institutionalization and operationalization of steering and coordination bodies. The decrees setting up these bodies have been signed (Decrees of the Interministerial Steering and Coordination Committee—CIPC, Education Sector Group and the Coordination of FoCEB). The challenge remains at the level of their operationalization. Although the GSE regularly held its monthly sessions (3 in 2016), no session of the National Strategic Committee of Education—CSNE took place in 2016”.

The MOE (ibid) also added that:

“At the deconcentrated level, the sessions of the CRPEs and CPPEs have been held. It should be notified that these sessions are appropriate spaces for consultation which offer the opportunity to discuss educational problems and identify effective strategies to meet the challenges of the education system at

regional and prefectural levels. The CRPEs and CPPEs held in 2016 were real platforms of exchanges, discussions and search for solutions to the problems of the Guinean education. In particular, they made it possible to discuss the results of the past school year and to better prepare for the 2016-2017 school year”.

Further, it should also be pointed out that there has been an innovative initiative undertaken at the Community level. Whereby, the Sub-Prefectural Steering Committee (CSPPE) is being experimented in UNICEF intervention areas, specifically in the Téliélé prefecture. Such initiative hold the promise of allowing taking advantage of the proximity and consequently the follow-up of activities on the ground. Eventually, this initiative is therefore supposed to be disseminated at the national level.

Moreover, as indicated above, the Steering Committee operates conjointly with the National Strategic Committee of Education (CSNE). This body is supported and represented by various technical committees at the deconcentrated levels. To this end, it assists in the elaboration of Educational Plans—Prefectural Plan of Educational Development (PPDE) as well as the Budgetized Annual Action Plans (PAAB) (See the Appendix A). However, it is clear that all these committees remain very dependent on the central department. As, so far their main coordinators are all appointed by the central level. The same situation applies when it comes to their revocation. But also and most interestingly with regard to the approval and distribution of the budget, grassroots structures have little freedom in the use of the budget and their room for maneuver is also limited.

The education sector’s horizontal connections

Overall, the education sector presents itself as a sector in which certain activities are carried out in a transversal manner. This situation is very often observed between services of the same sub-sector or sometimes between the education sub-sectors themselves. And this applies both at the central level as well as the deconcentrated level. However, the inter-sectoral relations of the sector often remain marked by a strong dependency vis-à-vis other ministerial departments. Such administrative nexus is reflected through several responsibilities impart to diverse autonomous decision-making units. These linkages are manifested by an exclusive right conferred on the Public Service Ministry (MFP) over the recruitment of educational staff. The initial training for teachers is thus provided by the Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training (METFP) through the *Ecoles nationales* and the Teacher’s Training Colleges (ENI), which

according to the AfDB (2005: 3) lacks the competence to assess the relevance and quality of the training. As for the Ministry in charge of Budget (MDB), it ensures the budget estimate for the financial support of new teachers to be eventually recruited. Then, the budget of the basic education sub-sector is prepared by the Ministry of Education and is submitted to the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), which decides on the distribution of the budget among the different structures of the department. The Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization (MATD), is involved in the enactment of the education services decentralization process. The Ministry of Planning in Guinea (MP) is the primary department of the statistical and planning service (attached to the MOE).

The extension of such linkage at the level of the deconcentrated structures is reflected through the human resources management services (DRH)—affiliated to the MFP, the administrative and financial affairs services (DAAF)—affiliated to the MEF and statistical and planning service (now strategic and development bureau-BSD) affiliated to MP. Besides this traditional setting, there has been an additional framework set up under the EFA program, whereby the Technical Secretary (ST) within the department in charge of basic education should manage external funds procurement, while the DAAF handles government-financial procurement. This schema has remained active across the sector. However, the deconcentrated structures were not spared with financial delays which were sources of dysfunction. In fact, this is a situation that has been pointed out by managers at all levels IRE / DEV-C, DPE / DCE, DSEE. Although, the budget at these levels is established on the proposal of staff in each unit and its divisions and then gradually scaled up to the central level. However, its allocation in return poses some serious problems.

Apparently, the same concerns arise with regard to qualified personnel, which is often expressed at different levels, especially at the planning and management units. Faced sometimes with a sheer lack of resource persons due to unqualified or non-performing staff, the structures at the lower level through the DRH can simply report the issue. While, the decision to be taken is again incumbent on the central level, which often does not react appropriately to the need. In the face of such recurrent difficulties, the desire for more autonomy in personnel management is sometimes formulated at the level of these structures. Moreover, with a view to implementing the PSE, a series of measures were undertaken to strengthen the institutional, organizational and human capacities of the duly concerned services. Following the FoCEB interim plan, experts and

consultants—assigned to the planning (BSD), the CDMT and program budgets, the financial services (DAAF) and DRH—are required to work directly with their MEPU-A (now MENA) national counterparts (perennial structures) and transfer to them a set of specific skills. It must be recognized that while these transfer of skills may have certainly served the managers, the anchoring of newly infused approaches, however, remains a major challenge.

Coordination and Communication

Actually, it is important to note that “insufficient coordination and harmonization of interventions within [the MOE] or between ministerial departments has reduced the effectiveness of many actions of the EFA program” (MOE, 2014:18). This situation has also been pointed out in the report of the African Development Bank, stating that “several ministries have joint responsibility for the sector, making it difficult to manage the system because of lack of coordination and follow-up of actions; this affects management efficiency and quality control” (AfDB, 2005:3). Consequently, this lack of coordination can be viewed as an interpretation of the turn made by societal relations with a drastic mutation of habits. Such turning point has above all had an impact on the collegial conduct of public affairs. Yet during the conduct of this research, it was claimed by some cadres of the MOE, down to the deconcentrated services that the internal decision-making is a collegial process based one. However, aspects of the kind mentioned below are present in many circumstances in the management of the sector. .

“The most amazing thing for an African observer is the lack of consultation within agencies, between central agencies and their field offices, between central agencies and between government and their citizens or the social groups. Consultation does not seem to be part of the bureaucratic culture in Guinea. This is contrary to African cultural values” (Sheldon et al., 1994:79).

The effect of such conduct presumably leads to serious dysfunction in the sharing of information within the sector. It is obvious that the communication mode within the sector is purely administrative in nature. That being said, in the first place meetings—ordinary or extra-ordinary sessions—are in most cases the privileged means for exchanges and information sharing in all services. Thus, during intra or inter-departmental meetings, service notes are often issued to convene the related services. As for the education sector, the meetings that are convened are often of a different nature. On the one hand, there are meetings that take place between the different levels, whereby it is the central department that convenes the deconcentrated structures

or that the lower structures are convened by their immediate hierarchical authority. On the other hand, these are meetings that are held within the same units either central or deconcentrated.

In either case, these meetings often serve as moments of reporting missions, consultation or decision-making held sometimes periodically or under urgent circumstances, contend cadres met during interviews. It should be noted, however, that one-off meetings are usually organized and generally focus on administrative matters. A cadre of the General Inspectorate of National Education (IGEN) describes the format and usefulness of the meetings as follows:

Outside the meetings, the technical services meet with the General Secretary, responsible for the technical matters and transversal tasks are discussed, the roles defined by services and the result is shared in a cabinet meeting that includes all department heads. Quarterly meetings are held with the deconcentrated services and on the basis of reference terms (TDR) which reach them in advance, the questions relating to the implementation of the educational policy are dealt with.

In fact, in the opinion of the largest number of respondents, the traditional channels of communication conveyed through circulars, reports of missions or activities are still widely used in the sector. This makes it possible to address all the related questions and in a more concise way. New technologies are also being used through e-mail, which sometimes is available to some services and mobile phones as well. However, it should be pointed out that in most cases, the managers of these services, especially at the deconcentrated levels, as it will be discussed later, bear the costs associated with these telecommunications fees (both for telephone and internet).

Additional glitches to signal with regard to communication matters in the sector have to do with first, a poor circulation or retention of information within agencies and between agencies. As noted by Sheldon et al. (1994: 79), “subordinates at directorate levels did not know much about what was going on in their departments and were only regularly given bits of information related to specific tasks at hand. This lack of information creates a wait and see attitude”. Such a state of affairs has been corroborated by an extensive explanation made by a key official at the strategic and development bureau at the central department, stating that:

The circulation of information is lacking; it is the chief who is informed, the others are less informed, it is the chief who participates in the meetings and generally there is no report, so that means people do not have the appropriate information. However and usually there is always a leak of information, i.e., someone you did not think can come and report on the meeting does so.

Whereas, if you were present during the meeting you pick up more than what the other did as a report because the culture we have is more oral than written. People do not take notes, for example the leader may ask someone to do it [take notes] but instead of writing a piece of paper the request s/he simply listens like that, without taking notes. This is because the person is used not to a written but rather an oral culture. If it was written, you retain it more easily because the writing remains and the speeches fly away.

The other shortcoming in information sharing with the personnel is actually affected by the one-way traffic of information circulation. As indicated above, the staffs working in various units of the education sector, like the planners and managers at the lower level, committed to diverse tasks, do report activities on a regular basis but very rarely received comments in return. These are facts that remain yet frequent but junior cadres often do not wish to reveal, as it is supported by Sheldon et al. (1994: 79) that “information flowed from the field to the central levels, but no feedback is received at the field level”.

Ultimately, it is important to emphasize the internal nature of information gathering and dissemination. As already indicated, the units of the deconcentrated structures receive the information from the Ministry either through circulars (memo, electronic mail) or by telephone calls. Thus, these units (especially support units) are responsible through the statistical services to ensure the collection of information on the basis of forms prepared by the Ministry. The information they are responsible for generating includes: statistics (number of schools, number of pupils and teachers, including the list of teachers), supervision ratios and enrollment rates; the timetables; the report cards; inspection sheets; the material (didactic and logistics). This information is updated and made available to the supervisory hierarchy and provides a reference for decision-making. An important aspect to report to this effect is that the information often provided is not complete or accurate. As it was reported by planning officials at the levels of two different IRE (Conakry and Kindia),

Sometimes the total count provided in some respect is unreliable and we are obliged to go out into the field to verify the conformity of the information received with the reality. What is most difficult, specify these executives at the level of the IRE, is that often the requested information can be asked several times so that finally there is a reaction on the part of those committed to these tasks—DPE, DSEE, Schools.

Given the similarity of the difficulties that exist almost at all deconcentrated levels of the department, the inefficiency or administrative slowness is sometimes accentuated with the

problems of communication (very often non-existent or defective). As is the case of what indicated a DSEE in the Téliimélé Prefecture, the isolation of many schools poses real problems of connection. In such a context, education agents see proximity as an advantage and distance as a handicap, especially in having access not only to information but also to technical and material support.

Practices

Transparency and Accountability

Indeed, the most privileged mechanism in the implementation of almost all recent development programs, including the Education for All program, is alignment and harmonization. And this allows the anchoring of partnership, participation and strong ownership principles of the reform actions among involved actors and by the recipient country. Compliance with these aspects is a guarantee to ensure transparency and accountability for the success of the intervention program; be it elsewhere or in Guinea.

However, what should be admitted despite all measures taken is that the management process of the Guinea educational system still remains marked by a very complex structure that does not allow a reliable conduct and traceability of actions, whether it is from the internal linkages of the department in charge of basic education, or that of the department and its public service partners involved in education. What is more, access to information is a serious snag within the sector administration, as there is no operational website available to the education system as a whole. Also, it appears that the information, documentation and archives service (SINDA) in charge of collecting, listing, classifying, analyzing and archiving the documentation—collections of texts, laws and regulations of education and newsletter—of the MENA, with regard to realities is not effective in the field, because field observation shows that the two bulletins published quarterly by SINDA are very little used by the cadres of the sector and/or almost unknown to the general public. For example, be it a simple observer of the education sector making an inquiry, it would not be easy for that person to get a reply when, of course, the request touches upon information related to the management of the sector. It is even more difficult when it comes to a researcher acting with the aim of promoting a better understanding of the sector's problems and making proposals for its improvement. Such are the real facts surrounding any investigation that goes in this direction.

Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged, as posited by (Sillers et al., 2002:10), that “authority, accountability, and transparency are intimately linked. Reforms aimed at improving basic education through stronger accountability cannot succeed unless those holding the reins of accountability have access to accurate and timely information on educational results”. From the general governance perspective, it is believed that “Guinea’s institutional fragmentation can sometimes lead to inadequate checks and balances in [the administrative apparatus in general] and the political system [in particular]. [And] in many areas, there is a multiplicity of agencies, with considerable overlap” (World Bank, 2018: 39). In the same wake, the Bank (2018:34) reports that

“according to the Mo-Ibrahim Index of African Governance, the country’s overall score of 43.3 in 2016 is significantly below both the West Africa regional average (52.4) and the Sub-Saharan Africa average (50)...Low CPIA (Country and Policy Institutional Assessment) scores on public sector management and institutions show that progress toward achieving the country’s development objectives and delivery services in Guinea is hampered by the public administration’s limited capacity. Specifically, this refers to “property rights and rule-based governance”, and “transparency, accountability and corruption in the public sector”.

Getting back to the accountability prospect in the education sector, it can be gauged both from the internal and external perspectives. Addressing accountability from the internal point of view, the multifarious information circulation glitches is one aspect which prevents progress towards this end, although, the personnel encountered with during the fieldwork, whether it is the head of services or office staff, all ensure regular reporting at their respective level. Further, to confirm such views, the head of the General Inspection of National Education (IGEN) reassures that:

Audits, educational and administrative inspections are conducted that are of a formative nature, the teacher or planner/manager inspected gains in improvement of its practices at the end of the inspection visits. And that at each inspection, the central level ensures the respect of the responsibilities contained in the [procedural] manual and also, reports brought back to the hierarchy are analyzed and consequently appreciated by the IGEN.

Nevertheless, there is another aspect of this accountability that deserves further elucidation. And this actually relates to the devolution of tasks and sometimes resources without a clear indication of roles and responsibilities. This situation often raises questions of accountability among the

levels of different units within the sector but also the beneficiaries of education services. Mayors and representatives of APEAEs in the areas covered by this research have reported such issues to the researcher. These facts obviously tend to corroborate with a view expressed by one interviewee of Swift-Morgan's (2011: 379) study a few years back in Guinea, that:

“people at all levels can benefit from this lack of clarity, exercising authority when it is advantageous to them and turning to others when looking for assistance or a place to lay blame, as both DPE officials and CRD presidents appeared to do”.

This observation, which *de facto* applies to many levels, leads to address the external aspect of accountability in the sector. In fact, repeated appeals as well as many pleadings have been made to further involve local actors in the management of education. These local actors, of which students and their parents are the first beneficiaries of provided services, and the rest of the civil society, are largely less involved in monitoring the sector's achievements. This suggests that, there is a *laissez-aller* on both sides. On the one hand, the voice of the beneficiaries (represented by the parents) appears as having no real concerns in obtaining reliable information on the performance of the sector. A step that would, for sure, oblige the service providers—the department and its services in the forefront of it—to overtly report on its activities. In fact, views from the discussions with some civil society actors (former professors, mayors, and local NGOs chief staff) indicate that the majority of APEAE leaders very often do not have a formal education and those with a certain level of education, literally, lack the proper skills to participate actively in the management of education.

On the other, it appears that the legal framework that exercises control over the performance of the sector does not operate properly or function at all. As it turns out that from the formulation of education policy, through its implementation to its evaluation, neither decision-makers nor executors tend to express concern of professional obligation of accountability. In fact, the denunciation of Sheldon et al. (1994:90) is an evidence of this apparent fact.

“Retention of information is still the main mode of handling information in the bureaucracy [in Guinea]. Very few Ministries publish their yearly reports or make them available to the public when they prepare any”.

This situation deserves special attention and adequate corrective measures to cope with it. Subsequent to this above concern is the transparency issue in the education sector, especially in

the allocation and utilization of resources. Again, Sillers (2002:12) contended, “improvements in the transparency of financial flows within the educational sector are needed to ensure that budgeted funds reach schools and are used for the educational purposes”. Generally speaking, when it comes to the budget allocation to the different services of the sector, the DAAF is the one that is often referred to as being best placed to answer such a question. However, the DAAF when confronted on the budget re-allocation matters, defend themselves to be mere executors and that authorizing officers are the head of services. The lack of knowledge on the proportion of the budget allocated to services is also another issue at all levels. Given its highly sensitive nature, sometimes the personnel simply state being informed of the budget by precising not being aware of its re-allocation process. Thus, in respect of this management of financial resources, overall, the majority of the personnel is not fully informed of it, since the procedure that remained in force until recently did not favor great transparency. The enactment of the PSE and the FoCEB interim plan using the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (CDMT) raises hope of overcoming this failure in identifying the real needs and management of financial resources in the sector. Especially with these following announced measures: establishment of internal and external audits; publication of budget information to improve efficiency, accountability and transparency in the management of grants and [subsidy] allocations to deconcentrated structures.

Incentives

It is obvious that a planned reform program is often subject to a number of factors that come into play to favor or hinder its accomplishment. That being said, the actual functioning of any sector, including that of education, necessitates a certain number of pre-requisites, which can thus enable its performance. However, it should be mentioned that principal elements that affect performance are usually rationally based ones. Quite often, these patterns are formed of various sets of provisions or signals that are given to the officer, and which serve as a catalyzer for performance or non-performance. In fact, in the case of an organization such as the education sector, the pending incentives or disincentives are much more related to the administrative and organizational arrangements. In reference to Guinea’s specific case, it can be said that besides the informal socially prescribed set of values, its education sector’s internal formal arrangement does much to condition the professional conduct of educational officers.

As pointed out previously on several occasions, Guinea's administration in general is carried by a rather inconsequent dynamics. The flaws found in the governance of the education sector are indeed of several kinds. The effect of such failings has favored excessive politicization of the bureaucracy, a sharp decline of morals, and a resignation in the face of responsibilities incumbent on the office staff, which ultimately led to the loss of attractiveness of the sector as the optimal career choice. The social and political dynamics that are maintained outside the realm of officially mandated policies and procedures in fact have undermined the chances of creating incentives for professional emancipation. At first the social implication of these dynamics refer to the greater influence that social matters exert upon educational agents working together within a given unit. The greater attention paid to social obligations has a high implication on professional activities. As a senior officer confessed it, a disregard of personnel's social issues often results in a poor performance, which actually affects the service delivery effectiveness. The second variant of these dynamics is the socio-political blended type manifested through relational and nepotistic strategic posts placement. Under normal circumstances, managerial staff are derived from professional teachers who are qualified with enough experience in order to occupy higher posts such as, school director, DSEE, DPE (director or staff), IRE (inspector or staff). However, the actual dynamic at play in these appointments is far detached from the existing regulations. Senior cadres at different levels of the sector confide that:

The aspect of seniority or even less of the qualification are no longer decisive criteria in the choice and appointment to a strategic position. As now, it is not uncommon to see someone who is not a senior staff, not at all qualified or experienced to be placed on more professionally capable cadres; and this has serious consequences on the viability of the tasks to be performed as well as the functioning of the service in general.

A counter factor of this position somehow presents some other facts. Indeed, a sharp decline in the number of qualified postulants is being noticed in the sector whose goal would consist of replenishing crucial positions such as: inspection, planning and management of resources (human, financial and material). The fact of being reputed as a sector where merit is less recognized, and as a sector with low salary scale and above all the climbing of the hierarchy ladder remains mostly biased which makes bright and qualified young people no longer consider the education sector as a preferred choice of career. In fact, the literature has sufficiently proven

this in many places, especially developing countries. Thus, Guinea is not an exception, and many of the executives who are seriously concerned about the development of the sector lament that:

Incentive measures must be taken to push the young generation in making the education sector a resolute career choice. For there is a need for new blood, new energy and new skills to fuel up its functioning in order to meet the major challenges—use of ICTs in the collection, treatment, handling and storing valuable data—facing education in Guinea.

These aspects listed above are some among many other binding factors. Additionally, other aspects are related to disguised and deliberate obstructions whereby qualified personnel committed to a task are often confronted with enormous obstacles in the discharge of their duties. Either they are not let hands free to act fully and freely or even less to take personal but beneficial initiatives.

On the top of these constraints come the issues related to the inherent conditions of work. Among these, there is in the first place the wage margin, which is relatively low. Then, a sheer lack of resources (financial as well as material), which therefore justifies also the lack of planning and management tools, thus, constituting a handicap that affects the internal efficiency of the system. At this point, the decline in performance, morale and professionalism, according to the educational agents, both teaching staff (teachers, advisors and directors) and non-teaching staff (planners, managers and/or administrators) can be imputed to poor supervision, weak accountability, poor school infrastructure, and the absence of in-service training and support.

It is, however, interesting to point out some actual facts that education staff often insinuate when asked about their impression on the support and advice they receive from their superiors. And what comes out of the data is often mitigated because in most cases executives claim being satisfied with the support they receive. While, actually, they hold these views simply to dispense themselves with eventual reprisals on the part of their service. On the other hand, veteran cadres recognize unequivocally their disavowal with regard to the assistance [if any] they do receive.

Notwithstanding these disconcerted viewpoints, a completely different discourse emanates from the head of services, more precisely supervisors, who, flatly, reject any responsibility or reproach and denounce the fact of not being at all equipped to fully uphold their inspection tasks. Considering such line of defense, it makes it possible to assume why schools and personnel in very remote areas are most often deprived of means and the necessary support for their proper

functioning. In addition to what is often stated in the literature, the views shared by DSEEs and CRDs at various locations rightly confirm this situation of marked deprivation. During one focus group session, a DSEE in the prefecture of Téliélé adjudicated as such:

Imagine for a moment that me as the delegate manager (DSEE) of one of the Sub-prefectures harboring one of the most remote districts of the prefecture, whereby it is practically easier for me to come to the DPE in town for work or meeting sessions than to go for an inspection in most of the schools located in this district. Simply, because not only the roads are impracticable but the means of transport at my disposal poses problem.

Other elements that often come up through discussions with education staff at all levels and especially those responsible for the execution of tasks refer to the issue of team and actions leader. Almost the majority of inconsistencies noted in the literature, or denounced as flaws in the sector, are perceived by subordinate cadres as reflecting effects of poor governance. Actually, many respondents interviewed had frequently referred to this statement “whoever talks about governance, should think of texts and their application, and for that, it would be necessary that there are consistent and dependable people who are put forward to take care of affairs”. From the viewpoints of these respondents, the absence of a good manager undoubtedly causes all these obsessed deficiencies mentioned already (bad appointment, retention of information, lack of support or appropriate assistance, or poor distribution of tasks/work among other things) to be seen as discouraging facts for a large part of the staff in the sector. Again, from these remarks, meanwhile, it was also evoked the need for an exemplary conduct that must first emanate from the top since the lower level is just a logical continuation of administrative roles and tasks. At this point, many have expressed the wish to promote the merit-base, which is a guarantee of any good performance, because the performance of a service depends on the chief, whose primary role is to “get things done”. And to be able to play that role requires skills, as the sayings of some interviewees go:

The one who commands people must have a broad back, be open and docile and act with a lot of tact. Treat [his/her] subordinates as co-workers and not servants. S/he must be rigorous but fair and privilege the general interest to the detriment of [his/her] own person. It is also incumbent upon [him/her] to act according to the rules and to make them abide by and above all that s/he be the most determined in the accomplishment of assigned tasks. Thus, and only at this moment alone, the leader becomes a good and positive example, and a good lead for men and actions.

Moreover, additional elements have been singled out as potentially important incentives that the personnel also value much. Besides, the increase in salary that actually all Guinea's education personnel do aspire to, the associated benefits such as career paths and promotion count equally much but are not given due respect. And so, many executives do profoundly deplore and regret it. Affirming however that "the only thing that counts for an official is to feel that the service s/he renders is actually appreciated". And that "the right indicators that can prove this are manifested through either appreciations (positive or negative evaluation) or promotion". However, many also claim that "the administration in general and the education sector in particular suffers from an adequate mechanism of identification and attribution of promotions, and also from the application of written texts, regulations and sanctions". To a certain extent, the cadres constantly point to the imperative need to apply the incentives provided in the texts and the introduction of a performance bonus—a recommendation that is formulated in the PSE.

It is to be hoped that as in the past where sanctions (positive as well as negative) have served well, that their reconsideration could be used to favor fair reward and avoid arbitrary promotion or punishment.

Structures

Reflection of mandate

As already signaled, the Guinean education system has different levels of education. With regard to the basic level of education, which is the center of interest of this study, it covers the elementary, secondary and informal education. With the new provision, its scope has been then extended to include preschool and literacy training. The central structures and deconcentrated services in the regions, prefectures and Sub-prefectures ensure the management of these educational levels. This schema displaying the functioning of the ministry shows how vertically the division of roles, responsibilities and decision-making instances is. In all respects, the organization of the educational system in general and the sub-sector of basic education in particular, already gives the impression of its perfect integration into a strong centralization, with more power and resources concentrated at the top and leaving thus few capacities to the bottom levels. Such an arrangement is precisely reflected by one of the IGEN's senior executives—when asked about the distribution of roles and level of autonomy at the ministry level—as follows:

Hierarchized: At the top the central level that designs policies, monitors and coordinates implementation; at the base are the deconcentrated services that implement the educational policy, equipped by the central services that evaluate them.

It is true that recent approaches devoted to expanding access to quality education services call for a rebalancing of capacities, especially at the local level. Indeed, the education reforms initiated in Guinea have quite adhered to these intervention measures. However, this desire to empower grassroots structures remains a huge challenge. In fact, the literature is rather quite edifying on this matter as it is illustrated through the extract of Sheldon et al. (1994:78-79) that is provided below:

“The desire to control everything going on is a main characteristic of the behavior of the President, of the members of the council of Government, of bureaucrats and civil servants in Conakry [the capital city]. The rules of the games inherited from the colonial power and the First Republic contribute greatly to the control mentality and created a situation where everything was centralized. The way the government was structured attests to that”.

The overall descriptive picture provided with regard to the administrative pattern of Guinea, proves to what extent the guardianship authority has become well anchored in the culture of public power in the country. The ‘tutelle’ department is much generalized in the Guinean administration. Up to date, “the way central ministries operate is ample evidence for this centralization mentality” (Sheldon et al., 1994: 79). Despite the efforts made through repeated interventions in the education sector, the department in charge of this sector is still very marked by this centralization of capacities. And this in almost every aspect as it will be elaborated consecutively with more details. The process of decision-making in the functioning of the sector remains to a large extent concentrated in the hands of executives of the central department. This again reflects the legal framework at play which governs the administration of public sectors. In fact, this handicap whose main causes according to several studies, cited by the ANLC (2011: 12), derives from:

- the caducity and/or the incorrect application of laws and regulations in force in terms of structures, norms and procedures;
- the dislocation of structures, overlapping of powers and conflicts of competence, both between structures and between posts;

-the poor management of the recruitment and career management system.

Just like its institutional setting, the functioning of the structures of the education sector is also affected by the weakness of its regulatory framework. In the first place, talking about the distribution of roles and responsibilities within the sector, it is worthwhile recognizing the difficulties related to the coherence of the positions designated in the texts and their provisions. One of the major problems to be evoked is related to the de-multiplication of tasks without clear defined mandates. Besides the inconsequential recruiting procedures, it is necessary to point out the fanciful creation of posts or the unjustified redeployment of staff. Basically, from the appointment, through salary payment, promotion up to the personnel disengagement, everything revolves around the central department.

Such an arrangement has undoubtedly demonstrated numerous functional flaws at almost all levels. A practical indication of this fact is the coupling of roles and managers often denounce the lack of clear-cut responsibilities, which usually results in conflict of competences and/or interests. In fact, these practices render the process of rationalizing and clarifying the staffing structure and mandates and some key administrative processes difficult, especially at the regional, prefectural and sub-prefectural education offices. According to some heads of deconcentrated structures, especially those located at the regional headquarters—as is the case of Conakry with its DEV, Kindia and also Mamou with their respective IREs, instances of procedural flaws were raised by the heads of these units. Stating that, “sometimes, DPEs evolving under our authority make reference to the central authority at the expense of the established hierarchies”. In denouncing these actions, they do refer to correspondences transmitted to the central department or received by the DPEs without having been informed at all. They also assert cases where the DPEs impinge on the prerogatives (i.e. school inspections) of the IREs thereby creating a precedent of conflict of competences. In this respect, the internal functioning of units deserves due mention, since many of the created posts do not reflect the real needs of services. Most often, this situation results in inflating the workforce, thus causing enormous disorganization in the functioning of various divisions and sections of units. As discussed previously, this is in fact what most of the cadres interviewed deplore, uttering that:

The creation of posts does not obey to the predefined criteria. And in general the profiles are neither fixed nor clearly defined. Let's say, positions are filled without taking into account the profiles or skills of the incumbents.

Moreover, the effects of this mess surrounding the definition of mandates and positions also jeopardize the division of labor within services. Indeed, it should be pointed out that the division of labor in principle allows the effective execution of missions according to a specialization of tasks. However, office staff in the education sector met in the field claim to face these difficulties in carrying out their daily tasks. Whereby, the incompatibility between profile and responsibility are resulting causes of the inefficiency of certain cadres who often lack skills, initiative and thus are less productive. Such instances, which are generally recurrent, result in work overload for the very few qualified staff within units. To better elucidate this, an excerpt from an interview held with a senior staff of the Office of Strategies and Development at the Central Department, specifies that:

There are overlaps, for example, [the leader] can take your mission to you, intended for you, [s/he] can attribute that to another and also you are deprived of means to carry out your mandates.

Concomitant with this, it should be noted that the division of tasks in many ways suffers from stable structuring. Under normal conditions, activities within a department are performed at the sections and divisions level to finally be compiled at the unit level. This implies that the responsibilities are well distributed. However, this is not always the case, as executing agents in the education sector evolving in the field evoke it. These encountered and interviewed office staffs have successively stressed that:

It happens that you are disturbed at all times, as the leader does not try to know whether you are busy with something else or not, if s/he needs you, s/he calls you. For example, it is what made the activities we refer here [the data collection campaign, its clearance and fusion], to conduct them we have to move away from the office, if we are next to the chief we cannot concentrate because you have to go here and there, if not there is a meeting, you were not programmed, planned for that it happens that you are dragged in. Also there are times they [chiefs] put you on, saying there is this meeting, you have to go and represent us and generally the chiefs are replaced most of the time, all these are shortcomings because the head of service is the one who has the service act, it is s/he who can shout 'say my service' deals with this and that; while the people who guide the

files first talk about overlapping. Sometimes you can find the mission of the Direction of the BSD [Office of Strategies and Development], the statistical division is to do this work but it can be directed elsewhere, so this is what disturbs a little the functioning of the system.

Another important aspect that deserves mention is that of intra-service relations. More precisely, the internal linkages and the decision-making procedures within the basic education sub-sector. As it has been stressed throughout this report, the relations between services are more or less marked by weak coordination. It was, however, claimed by some service managers especially those at the level of deconcentrated structures—DCEs in Dixinn and Ratoma, the IRE in Kindia and Mamou’s IRE and DPE— thus asserting to the researcher that:

There is a certain level of collaboration to allow everyone to be informed of all activities. What is more, that decision-making is collegial-based type at the section and division level, and ultimately the director endorses consensual decisions at last resort.

In contrast, a different reading emerges from the relations between the central and deconcentrated structures, more specifically, issues in relation to various administrative procedures in the sector as signaled repeatedly in this report. As a reminder, it was observed that, “most decisions that are made in this country [Guinea] are made by the top level people without prior consultation with the other social groups and the populations [especially those at the lower level]” (Sheldon et al., 1994:79). The impact of such a dynamic is also reflected in the decision-making process within the education sector. So far, it is customary in the formulation of educational policy that grass root structures are less or almost not involved in this process. Despite the fact that cadres in the central department, assert for their part, working in concert with those of deconcentrated structures, the views and data collected from those at the lower levels, show that references to consultation on such matters are very limited. And by way of illustrating this, they successively express themselves in these terms:

Sometimes the heads of services are invited to take part in the meetings—consultations on certain matters. However, we as office staff, the central authority very rarely takes into account our views. While, on other issues, sometimes the technical agents do intervene not as representatives of a specific unit but rather as resource persons.

On the side of managers—heads of services—interviewed at different levels maintain that:

We, for example, heads of the deconcentrated services, such as IRE, DCE / DPE or national directors, come to attend national workshops. During these workshops, we happen to participate in the definition of educational policy and in the introduction of pedagogical innovations, of course, as resource persons representing our units. Otherwise, our roles are limited to a lesser extent in making some propositions and to a larger extent to the implementation of programs not as key agents that can actively make or influence choices and decisions. We, as DPEs, have no involvement in the validation of plans, the establishment of the school calendar. The same goes for the appointment and dis/engagement of the personnel or the choice of textbooks. In short, the department delineates the guidelines and we as executing agents, we act.

Resources

Subsequent to this logic of programs' execution, another central question that needs to be addressed—whose stake is fundamental for any reform—is that of resources, technical and/or intellectual, material, financial and technological. Obviously, it is generally accepted that for the realization of any activity, the involvement of resources is both undeniable and indispensable. That being said, the same logic also applies in the effective implementation of any reform program, be it political, economic, social or cultural. Thus, talking about the reform in the field of education, as is the interest for this study, implies of course the availability of resources. Hence, this supposes having an important human capital that can serve as a lever for an effective execution of planned activities. In this regard, mobilizing these human potentials is thus a necessary measure to be considered in the first instance. And above all, it is also important to create the conditions that could allow for their good performance and also allow them to be up to the expectations. However, what is observed in the context of Guinea's EFA reform is quite similar to what Potter and Brough (2004:339) contended in the case of India's health sector, stating that "administrative and organizational arrangements systematically undermine individuals' attempts to make effective decisions, provide quality of services or perform their work properly. However talented the person might be, however much training they received [...] the overall system inhibited effectiveness". Actually, in Guinea there is often a lively questioning about the professional aptitudes of education staffs evolving in the sector. In fact, it is inconceivable to admit that an entire sector as important as that of education can be completely deprived of cadres sufficiently capable of meeting the expectations of this sector. In any case,

one thing is certain that this is unlikely possible. And evidence of this posture can be derived from the ANLC (2011:5) report's prologue, which states that:

“At a time when the political and economic liberalism is progressively consolidating in our country, where the era of freedom, an exceptional moment in which our country now enjoys an unprecedented stock of human resources of high intellectual quality, cultural and moral resources, modern knowledge, recognized expertise, the question nowadays for the country is whether, at this stage of our development, we will always wait and rely on others, before bravely tackling the heavy obstacles to the progress of our nation, among which are the fight against the phenomenon of corruption and related practices and bad governance that threaten our own existence as a state and nation.”

Intellectual

Yet, “the Guinean administration in general and the education sector in particular has a pool of cadres who are talented and equally competent enough”. These are the views often held by some technical assistants of development partners evolving in Guinea. By the same token, they argue with a despairing tone that “the problem is rather systemic than structural” as a whole. And that “the main causes reside in the governance of the sector which is hitherto caught in a more political nature of vice thus perverting the institutional foundations of this sector”. The enigma surrounding the underperformance of the education sector in Guinea owes its response to the proper provision of personnel. Evidently, consistent sources as well as various points of view have sufficiently substantiated the inadequacy between the criteria of eligibility for a position and the persons actually occupying the posts. In fact, not only that, the recruitment procedures are done under completely opaque conditions but also the process of appointment to positions almost do not obey any pre-established criteria. What, however, prevails, as the literature and data from the field study show, is the existence of a high level of nepotism, favoritism, and social or patrimonial relationship to the detriment of individual and/or technical competency.

Given this dynamic, which is already firmly entrenched in the practices of public administration as a whole and in the education sector in particular, the mobilization and efficient use of human resources remains entirely compromised. As due references have already been made, these practices are manifested in many ways. With regard to recruitment, it has been reported that “the most qualified candidate does not always get the job. Better, through ties social, political, etc. the non-meritorious person finds him/herself in the educational system

without any prior qualification or competence”. In the second instance, the corollary effect of these relationship-based practices creates multiple incidents that prevent a good performance of the sector. For it often results, as Swift-Morgan (2011: 305) has pointed out, through “favoritism certain people having power or advantages over others and decision made within the context of the education sector but in the pursuit of individual, social or political interests, rather than in the interests of the education system”. The resulting implication of these relational-based personnel postings or any other type of relation protecting the personnel in their posts generates both hindrances and frustrations within the sector. On the one side, the openness to incompetence, which has already been created, is not only becoming stronger, but also tends to consolidate and expand, which in turn leads to sedentarization. Not only does this prevent younger people but also more qualified to integrate the system, as it is already the case in Guinea. On the other hand, qualified executives already evolving within the sector, but under the blows of the practices already cited above, generally suffer the influence of political ties, power and interests, groomed in the education system. As a result of these practices, competent personnel are often reduced to the level of mere executing agent without enough opportunity to exploit their potential. As resulting causes, they find themselves managed by someone less qualified and competent than them who put the spoke in the wheels of their career. In a way, these proven cases are depicted very precisely as such:

“More notable is the lack of internal ownership at the highest levels, and the fact that there appeared to be no effort at the central ministry to use the intellectual resources that had been built by the project within its own offices. As a result, the core group of technicians who had piloted the reforms was completely dispersed and no attempt made to use this considerable resource to continue the efforts” (Swift-Morgan, 2011:383).

Another indicative fact of these practices thus causing frustrations within the sector is that the (competent) staff is sometimes a victim of reprisals. As a result, they are either deployed or removed from their posts on unjustified grounds. And that can be easily appreciated from the excerpt of the interview held with a senior cadre of the education department.

Me for more than 20 years I was the head of the statistics section but a moment comes, they took me away for no reason and put another one, so all this is frustration ... the partners had confidence in what I have been doing but by the

end since the current structure is being established they have changed [too many things irrelevantly] ... all this represents problems of frustration.

Material

In addition to human capital, the availability of physical resources is also an essential segment for ensuring the performance of a sector. However, it is found that in Guinea, the infrastructural delinquency coupled with a lack of operational means is often pointed at as serious obstacles to the effective functioning of various services. As far as the education sector is concerned, the diagnosis made as a prelude to the introduction of the PEPT reform has clearly revealed the difficulties related to material means. Therefore, remediating measures were identified and intervention modalities envisaged in this respect. In order to strengthen the infrastructural capacity of the basic education to ensure better management of the sector, it was necessary to provide its department and some of the deconcentrated structures with more adequate premises. According to the scheme established for the execution of the EFA program, it was planned during the first phase to build a building to house the different departments involved in education. However, during the course of the first phase as well as the successive ones, the execution of this initial plan could not be carried out by fault—it was said—of re-prioritization of activities.

Notwithstanding this, what was observed during the conduct of the field study is that, the researcher did notice that the ministerial department in charge of basic education is now endowed with a brand new building and very well equipped. On the side of deconcentrated structures, the re-building or rehabilitation of premises of some regional IRE and prefectural DPE education head offices was also planned. Thus, among the target areas included in this research, it was noted by the researcher that only the IREs of Conakry and Mamou have benefited from the rehabilitation of their buildings. While for the equipment, the field observation does not reveal enough of signals in this respect. The IRE of Kindia in view of its present state, the posture of the building but also the available equipment sufficiently demonstrates the existing need at this level. Given its strategic position and according to the education agents interviewed, Kindia is an important area of experimentation for the education sector.

As far as the DPEs are concerned, the premises of Mamou and Téliélé have been renovated. The field observation reveals however that these head offices were not provided with

equipment. Indeed, as it will be discussed later, this state of affairs is very widespread in almost all the deconcentrated services of the sector. It must be recognized that apart from the central department, the deconcentrated structures remain in their entirety deprived of adequate means allowing them to carry out their missions. Moreover, this lack of means manifests itself in various kinds. At first, it should be noted that available offices are very small and confine staff in a very tiny space that even prevents them from easily moving inside. Added to this, there is a noticeable lack of furniture (tables, chairs) and other accessories. Until recently, most of the units of the head offices of deconcentrated education services are almost all equipped with wooden tables and chairs of poor quality, which quite often get easily deteriorated. What is most remarkable is the fact that storage and cupboards are even less present in the offices of these services whose main missions are to ensure the planning and management of education services. In most cases, the cupboards that the chiefs' offices are even equipped with are largely in a state of decay. In the course of the study, the researcher was able to see with his own eyes the messy condition of files archiving in the various offices of the statistical services, those of human and financial management services. This rightly demonstrates the urgent need of a rigorous and diligent improvement in their functioning.

Moving swiftly onto the office equipment, however, at this level, two observations emerge. First, at the level of the central department—the one that is supposed to be well endowed with office equipment, it was entrusted to the researcher that the computer equipment provided to them, although new, is not at all of good quality. For instance, the heads of services often brandish cartons that contained the products and the devices in their current state to justify the problems they face in their usage. That often the orders passed with the suppliers do not respect the normal procedures; and as a result often-corrupted materials are provided to the department. Secondly, after making a tour and having contacts with structures responsible for the management of education services in some communes of Conakry, it turns out that the situation is quite different. Although these services are in the Capital city and close to the central department their access to office equipment remains at least still limited. It is then the disparity existing in the acquisition of operational means is thus created within the sector. This fact can be perceived more easily in the proportion of access to ICT tools by the staff at each level, which will be discussed in subsequent sections.

As far as office accessories and consumables are concerned, very few offices have photocopiers. The same applies to printing machines. Therefore, among these existing machines, very few of them are permanently operational. Because most often, according to staff (Bureau of statistics and those of the management services), the machines have either recurrent technical failures or especially lack of ink cartridges. Thus, speaking of the communication means, it was clearly notified to the researcher that this aspect still remains a serious handicap. Because problems with availability of office fixed telephones still arise even at the level of the central department, as evidenced by a senior staff at the General Inspectorate of National Education (IGEN), “landline phones in the recent past were on networked fleet”. However, this mechanism is no longer operational and in their entirety, almost all the offices of the education services, especially those at the deconcentrated structures do not have fixed telephones. Despite the presence of mobile telephony and its wide coverage and use in the country, the majority of cadres—managers—interviewed in the field assert that they are using their own telephones and the related charges are also at their own expenses. Then, it was confirmed to the researcher with certainty and almost unanimously that the fax system is merely existent and is not used by almost all the agents of the education sector in Guinea. Instead, the heads of services and office staff all agree on the use of more and more electronic mailing system. In this regard, it was also claimed by the IGEN senior staff that, “every service has its mailbox”. However, again, the majority of interviewed cadres specify that the connection costs are at their own expense, which implies that they do not have a better use of this system because of the high cost associated with its usage.

Furthermore, the other aspect that deserves a clear mention in this variant related to equipment is that of transportation and logistics. Often, regular observers of the education sector including the researcher, wonder about the obvious impact of the assistance of development partners in rolling gear (i.e., vehicles, motorbikes, etc.) constantly announced by the Guinea government, more specifically, with regard to the education sector and its recurrent programs/projects intervention. Recognizing the importance of the mobility factor in the implementation of any program, it is often given due attention by development partners in their intervention. The education sector is therefore a prime beneficiary of such assistance in Guinea. Despite this fact, there is however, a need to question the efficient management of the rolling stock allocated to the country’s education sector. In view of what the central department presents, the deconcentrated structures in charge of education services could also be thought as being well

endowed with material resources, especially in means of transport. However, as previously noted with office equipment, services at branches level are unevenly provided in this respect. In the opinion of a large number of staff interviewed, only head of services are sometimes equipped with ‘service vehicles’. As for the divisions and sections of different services, motorcycles are placed at their disposal instead. Moreover, these cases apply very generally to education agents, as it is the case of the personnel in charge of statistics, and those responsible for inspections at the level of the DPEs and IREs as well as DSEEs at the Sub-prefectures’ level. What the situation on the ground apparently presents to the researcher is a marked absence of transportation means. The different IRE visited that were expected to have more resources, in fact did not, and the personnel met with respectively express a need in this direction, especially the staff at the BSD (in charge of statistics and planning). Turning, however, to the case of the DPEs, at this level, the presence at least of Motorcycles is being noted at each stage of the field visit to the DPEs targeted by this study. The discussions that have been held with the office staff at this level and with special delegates of sub-prefectural education clearly portray their renewed desire to be supported in many areas. Among other things, they claim to have great difficulty in making their move to accomplish their tasks with the motorcycles they possess, which are most often aging and tired and cost them a lot in their maintenance and fueling. Others further assert that “[we] sometimes prefer to abandon the motorcycles and use public transportation in carrying out inspection missions. This even makes it more difficult to accomplish these tasks”.

In a nutshell, it is important to note that, whatever the area of operation or the structural level it can be, it remains clear that the education sector is facing a marked lack of material resources that are necessary for its effective performance in order to deliver a good quality of education services.

Financial

In view of the effective implementation of reform in the education sector, an initial and, above all, a constant commitment from the government side is highly needed. Whether it is a national program or a program introduced by the international community—bi or multilateral agencies. As such, Guinea has subscribed and pledged to implement the Millennium Development Goals, especially those of the Education for All program. Thus, this suggests the government’s determination to deploy the necessary means but also to accept due support from donors in

achieving set objectives. Actually, at the introduction of EFA program, some steps in this direction were taken at the global level, which were then re-transposed onto the national level. In this regard, it was expected that:

"the objectives of the EFA Program (PEPT) in terms of funding would address the following concerns: the allocation of resources (level of expenditure and costs), efficiency (qualitative management and effectiveness); fair and equitable access to resources (area, gender and specific groups), the PEPT strategy consists of setting up a series of measures to improve the allocation of resources and decentralized management: Among other things, the following objectives would aim at: getting the share of education in the state budget to 19%, the share of primary education in the education budget to 49% [... the share of the non-salary operating budget of the sub-sector of pre-university education to increase by 40% " (UNESCO/IBE, 2006:6-7).

Nonetheless, despite this avowed willingness, Guinea has been among the countries that devote the least public resources to the education sector in relation to national wealth. Adjacent to that, opportunities meant to supplement the government funding gap have also been compromised by a reduction in the initial funding—Global Partnership for Education (GPE)—dedicated to the program's implementation. As it has been previously discussed extensively, the economic conditions that prevailed in the country have not kept pace with the formulated expectations that were rather optimistic in the execution of the reform program. Not only have financial resources been scarce but also the assistance provided has been clearly insufficient. This situation has strongly affected the balancing of allocations between the education sub-sectors but also and more importantly the allocation of funds to the different levels of management of the basic education.

Be it under normal circumstances or that of the period of EFA Program, it has been observed that budget arbitrations in Guinea remain unfavorable to the education sector in general and primary education in particular. Compared with the average in other countries or in the most successful countries in reaching universal enrollment, the country has spent and continues to spend relatively little on education (below 18% of domestic resources for current education expenditure against 20% in the indicative framework), and little for the primary education level (on average 44% of current expenditure against 50% in the indicative framework). This financial shortfall was felt in the functioning of the structures in charge of the sector up to the lower levels as well as in the realization of their planned activities. Essentially, difficulties associated with the

provision of financial resources are primarily of procedural order, which are generally due to the administrative complexity surrounding the preparation and delivery of the budget.

As already mentioned above, the budget is designed based on a template sent by the Ministry of Finance through the MOE. The deconcentrated structures express their needs in agreement with the different divisions/sections. Funds are thus allocated by the Ministry of Finance depending on its availability. The budget allocated to the units is perceived by quarterly installments, indicated chief managers in charge of financial services. Indeed, it was intended to ensure an equitable access to funding through the EFA reform program. The applicability of this measure, which was envisaged by the intervention, resulted in the delegation of credits or subsidies to deconcentrated services. However, it has been observed to a large extent that the budget deployment to the services concerned often falls far behind schedule. What is more, the budget management process is not usually very clear and both internal and external control is not very effective.

As stated above, the primary financier of the sector is the State which allocates funds in the form of credits through the MOE, which in turn makes it available to its structures providing services on the basis of pre-established criteria such as: number of pupils, number of classes, access to school, state of premises, equipment and materials, urgency of work, etc. Based on this information, the education head offices—specifically DPE/DCE—proceed to the funding remittance to DSEEs which, in turn, hand over the funds to the schools. This provision, which favors the allocation of credit to schools, is relatively new and has become effective under the EFA program. With regard to management, the Ministry of Finance through DAAF services carry out periodic evaluations. The managers in charge of financial resources at each level of the MOE, IRE or DPE/ DCE ensure that “they verify the conformity of purchase orders received and issued by the units to evaluate the actual use of the funds”. Indeed, it should be noted that concerns about the management of allocated funds remains alive within the deconcentrated services.

On the one hand, and in general, most of the cadres interviewed claimed not to be informed about the allocation of a budget intended to their units. A good reason for this, they assert the execution of the budget is only incumbent on a limited number of actors, head of Services (IRE, DPE / DCE), DAAFs, chiefs of Divisions/Sections and DSEEs. Thereby, the cadres went on to argue that everything related to funds management is of a sensitive matter and

that only the people directly involved are informed, and most often keep the information at their strict level. This makes the issues of transparency and retention of information further persistent. On the other hand, it is important to point out that the structures benefiting from these lines of expenditure at the lower level also express formal reserves as to the equity in the distribution of funds allocated to schools. For the criteria established in this purpose are denounced as not being clear and consistent, even though school size is indicated in this respect. This situation often results in disagreements between the heads of offices and the recipient services (especially schools)—tugging around significant differences, i.e., higher level of funding allocated to secondary school in relation to elementary and sometimes between levels of education within schools.

In the same thrust and overall, the credits allocated are considered to be insufficient. And it often happens that there is a considerable gap between the needs expressed and the resources made available. Faced with this shortfall, the services at the lower level resort to palliative measures. At first, they consider readapting their needs according to the credits made available to them. In the case of IREs, DPE / DCE, they sometimes do benefit from the assistance of NGOs and donors intervening in the sector (something that is not common and true in all places). In the case of DPEs, they also benefit from a financial contribution from schools, which, however, remains less important. As for schools, they benefit to a larger extent from the support of communities which also participate in the bailout of the budget of the community schools through their construction, their equipment and sometimes to the temporary assumption of teachers' salaries. Ultimately, the IREs point out concordantly that the overall financial difficulties facing grassroots structures are not only related to credit delays, but there is also a part of these funds that is sometimes imputed and used at the central level as a sovereignty budget—a case that remains at least established, as the MOE (2017:58) attests:

“With regard to fiduciary management, efforts have been made to strengthen budgetary deconcentration through the granting of credit delegations to deconcentrated services. At the MENA, for example, just over GNF 6 billion was spent by the IREs and DPE/DCE as a credit delegation, not counting the costs of national examinations. However, a significant portion of the funds allocated to these services are often executed centrally at their own expense. This situation could lead to loss of goods and services intended for them”.

Also, the senior executives at the level of the IREs specify that the expenses related to the inspection missions to the services and schools are not most often budgeted. And this represents additional charges for the heads of offices. To illustrate this situation, one of the IREs grasped the presence of an inspection team in mission in the region from the central department (Conakry) which was first introduced to the researcher and then reference was made to indicate that:

You see for example the team that is presently here does not have any resources at their disposal; everything rests on me while I also do not have a budget to deal with such situations. However, I am obliged to do my best to ensure their needs during their stay in my area. The same cases arise with our own cadres (inspectors) who are in charge of inspecting services at the local level, sometimes with schools that are difficult to access, and yet [we] have to struggle to provide them at least with the cost of maintenance or fuel tickets when available.

Ultimately, the other stumbling block to the management of funds that reveals a MOE (2017:58) report is the fact that:

The weak IT deconcentration of the public expenditure chain both at the central and deconcentrated levels is a handicap to the effective execution of sectoral budgets.

In order to remedy these various shortcomings, the PSE program is considering:

“In terms of budgetary deconcentration, the operating credit delegations to the deconcentrated structures of the education system will be continued. More specifically, at MEPU-A [now MENA], grants to deconcentrated structures (IRE, DPE / DCE, DSEE and schools) will be maintained with a view to implementing their action plan (see table below). To avoid delays in the implementation of these grants, the following measures have been taken: (a) a budget framework letter and eligible activities submission by the opening of classes to the beneficiary structures which in turn develop and diligently trace their annual action plan; (b) the provision of grants by the end of the first quarter; (c) monitoring and audit missions to be carried out by the higher levels and the central level; (d) the submission of supporting documents for the use of the grants accompanied by a technical report” (MOE, 2014: 65-66).

Table 7.1: Subsidies to deconcentrated services

Designation	Number of beneficiaries over the period	Average amount / beneficiary (in GNF million)		Amount (in billions of GNF)		
		GG	PTF	GG	PTF	Total
Subsidy (or Grant) to the DPE/DCE and IRE for the implementation of PAABs	46	300	150	41,1	20,7	62,10
Subsidy to the DSEE	419	5	10,50	6,29	13,20	19,48
Subsidy to Primary Schools	8000	1	1,49	12,1	32,5	44,59
Subsidy to Junior Secondary Schools	1543	1,8	0	2,70	0	2,70
Subsidy to Senior Secondary Schools	458	4	31,5	1,60	0,09	1,70
Subsidy to TVET	7	321	0	2,25	0	2,25
Total grants				6632	66,49	132,82

Source: extract from PTAB (Three-year Plan of Budgeted Activities 2015-2017) (MOE, 2014:66); Note: TVET (Technical & Vocational Education Training); GG (Guinea Government; PTF (Technical & Financial Partners).

Technological

In this increasingly globalized world, competition is becoming fierce in almost all areas of working life. Hence, a constant update on all fronts is necessary to stay in the race where demands become enormous and multifarious. However, the most important aspect remains the acquisition of knowledge and means of action. Since the conduct of any professional activity requires knowledge and a wise approach, on that basis, it is difficult to imagine for a single moment the possibility of coping with the enormous challenges associated with the improvement of capacities—intellectual, technical and technological—of individuals and societies without improving the social vector that actually favors it.

In view of recent efforts made in the development of countries in general and those of the Third World in particular, the place of education has remained predominant. Thus, the mobilization in this direction continues in making the education sector a key vector in the development process on all fronts. However, the obstacles in this regard revolve around the demographic explosion, the disparity between zones and genders in the provision of educational services, the inequality in the allocation of human, material and financial resources within the sector's management levels, among others. To counter these challenges faced by almost all educational systems of developing countries in the provision of good quality of education services, systemic and efficient planning becomes more essential and mandatory. Moreover, any planning that intends to be systemic and effective must take into account these previously mentioned elements. By doing so, it allows ascertaining the constraints, conditions and factors

surrounding education and better help to focus the objectives, goals and vision of the sector. Therefore, education planning has become both a national and international issue in promoting better projects and reform programs intervention. To this end, the availability of relevant information became an essential element as well as valuable assets for an appropriate and responsive decision-making for any initiative and under any circumstance.

From this backdrop, to date, the problems faced by developing countries in relation to data production have so far remained unequivocal. As a result, many of these countries still have a weak statistical mechanism for collecting, processing, transmitting and/or storing data. Yet, while talking about education planning, Guinea does not stay on the sidelines of it. Likewise, talking about the use of national statistical data in the formulation of the country's educational policy, Guinea neither would ignore it nor be an exception to it. However, it is important to note that Guinea's capacity in this regard remains largely limited. Moreover, this concerns the whole apparatus of the public administration, admits a report of the European Union (n.d):

“The effective planning of public policies in Guinea in connection with the implementation of the objectives set by the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) requires reliable statistics. However, Guinea does not currently have sufficient technical, human and financial resources to ensure the collection, compilation, analysis and distribution of exploitable statistical data”.

In the light of the above indication, let us take a look into such appreciation of the national statistical production system and its implication on the functioning of the education sector. However, before going any further, it is necessary to lift the veil on the contrast that emerges on the reports of EFA program completion and the views collected from the field by the researcher. In fact, the EFA's completion reports indicate that there has been acquisition of computer hardware ... and the training of cadres at different structures in the use of computer tools. However, it turns out that most of the office staff met with during the field study claim to have huge difficulties in the use of computer equipment. Actually, this remains a reality both at the central level as well as at the deconcentrated level.

Inasmuch as the resources available to the planning departments determine not only the quality of the data but also the speed and reliability in their collection, processing and dissemination, this justifies, in more than one respect, the extreme need to provide the planning units of any sector, and particularly that of education, with adequate resources. On this basis, the managers of the education planning units, on the ground and at different levels, have been careful

to highlight the importance of the BSD (Bureau of Strategy and Development) within the sector in different terms and as follows:

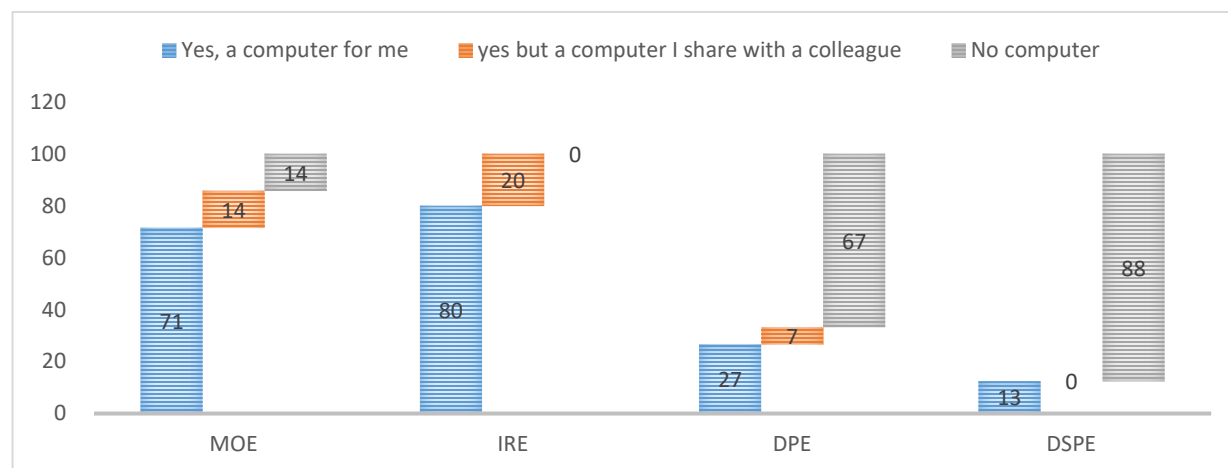
At the level of the central department, they contend that: “the BSD is the Achilles heel” or “the linchpin of the [education] sector”. Hence, the reason that pushed a ‘veteran’ cadre of the BSD within the MOE to argue that: ‘Statistics is a matter of national sovereignty which implies that one should be autonomous to be able to produce national statistics. This means that in the budget there must be lines provided for us to carry out activities, but... let us say’. The same story was heard at the level of deconcentrated services, where at the level of the IREs, BSD cadres assert that ‘the planning service represents the lungs through which the education sector breathes, hence the need to well equip this unit’. In reference to the cadres evolving at the level of DPEs and DSEEs, they all express a strong desire to pay more attention to their means of action, contending that, ‘the major challenges and difficulties existing within the sector remain more present to the lower level structures than those from above’. Better, for an effective performance of the system this requires a perfect harmony with the overall sectoral policy (availability of resources that reflect better actual situations and/or data feedback present on the ground and the adherence of communities to the activities in the sector).

Despite this state of affairs, it remains obvious, as previously mentioned, that the central department by its authority and its location remains the most endowed with resources. The provision of new information and communication technologies (NICT) equipment is relatively encouraging at this level, despite a small downside related to the quality of the equipment (especially computers). According to central departmental officials and field observation, the ministry possess landline telephones, printers, photocopiers and other accessories which are all operational and in good condition. Fax, is the only accessory that the department does not possess or use, and this was actually confirmed by almost all interviewed cadres. Thus, the deconcentrated structures located not far from the central department, present a different picture, because the availability of ICT equipment (computers, printers, photocopiers) at the level of the IREs and the DCEs of the capital city (Conakry) is really unbalanced. Some complaints related to the obsolescence of the equipment, breakdowns (software & viruses problems) and lack of consumables are evoked in some places and unanimity is however reached around the non-existence of fixed telephone and fax in these services. A slight difference also emerges at the level of regions, whereby from the number of personnel interviewed at the IREs, 20% of them

assert sharing the computers available within the unit. Moreover, with regard to the availability of equipment, most cadres denounce the obsolete state of the material and the difficulties related to their operation. In turn, they also specify the absence of fixed telephones and fax at their level, which poses serious communications problems.

In the light of the above, the gap actually arises at the level of prefectures and Sub-prefectures; because the lack of ICT equipment remains obvious just through a simple glance at the offices of respective units. A particular situation was expected, however, on the side of Mamou's DPE given its geographical position by enjoying the advantage of several NGOs (national and international) present therein, compared to Téliélé. Nevertheless, the planning and management services of these two prefectures are all in urgent need to revitalize their operation because 67% of the personnel assert having no access to a computer to do their work. In addition, required accessories are also almost non-existent, because the printers and photocopiers available to these DPEs indicate the office staffs "are very regularly out of order". Just like the previous levels, these two DPEs do not also have fixed telephones, let alone fax services. However, the situation at the DSEEs with regard to the provision of ICT equipment, obviously, is not even being considered as an absolute necessity for a qualification of the sector at the grassroots level. For the simple reason that of all the DSEEs met with and interviewed individually or during the focus group sessions, 88 percent of them, claim not to be equipped with computer tools and accessories. And even the 13 percent who assert possessing a computer, claim having acquired the machines on their own. Besides that, they do contend having no other equipment (no printer, photocopier, landline or fax) (see figure below).

Figure 7.1: Educational planners & managers who have at their disposal a computer to perform their work (in %)



Source: Questionnaire

Under this inadequate supply of equipment to the MOE that is disparate, insufficient in some places and of low quality or sometimes totally lacking, there is a risk of maintaining the services in charge of planning and management of the Ministry of Education in a precarious state. For mostly services at the MOE level up until now resort to manual practices through the use of forms and questionnaires to make inventories, data collection and archiving information. This is not without consequence because the delay and the reliability of the information to which the system is confronted so far result largely from the named practices.

However, it is hoped that the experimentation of the already announced tablets will serve as an overall and rapid solution to the improvement of operations related to these largely recognized failures within the sector. As expressed already by a senior cadre of the BSD at the central level and reiterated by some personnel at the level of deconcentrated services.

We also have a small problem because we have some delay in the publication of the statistical yearbook that is why we currently want to use the tablets to collect the data... We have already identified a number of Sub-prefectures, we took Kindia and Conakry here, we tested and found that the tablet for the collection of information is still conclusive so we think we can generalize it, so as soon as we have the funding to generalize it we can use the tablet and leave out the paper questionnaire that is to say we will collect these things [the data] and we will have a server here[within the Ministry] that we are going to install and all the information that will be collected and corrected at the school level will drop directly into the server.

At present, the observation on the ground shows that “the lack of integration or the low use of information and communication technologies in the educational system remains a relevant issue, argues the CNRE (2017).

A crucial aspect that goes along with the use of computer tools in the accomplishment of planners and managers work is the mastery of computing skills. However, it remains largely established that most of the staff asked about their computing abilities do not hesitate to acknowledge their shortcomings in this respect. And for the sake of clarity, this applies only to basic tasks conducted with computer, things that do not require advanced technical knowledge or the use of specific software. However, following the discussions the researcher had with staff of the planning and management units, they do actually evoke the lack of materials but also the lack of skills related to applied computing tasks. This remains in itself another major challenge to which the cadres of the MOE are seriously confronted, and which is true at all levels. The reason for this is that very few of the staff assigned to these planning units do have a strictly related

qualification to the field of statistics and/or similar specialties. This is why their familiarity with statistical tools is often not easy. Even more, the sometimes very technical nature of computer applications, makes their assimilation by cadres who do not have the basics a bit complicated. With the presence of such difficulties, it has been envisaged to make available to the different BSDs (central level as well as deconcentrated) some personnel who are at least proficient in computing and possessing some knowledge in the field.

In spite of these measures, the central department as well as its deconcentrated structures still remain very dependent on the constant support of consultants (either independent or dispatched by the technical and financial partners on the spot). A report of the MOE in fact makes clear mention of this state of affairs:

However, in terms of database design and management as well as statistical results analysis, the Directorate of Planning and Statistics is supported by consultancy services. Indeed, it suffers from a lack of statisticians and professional computer scientists. In addition, although the MEPU-A [now MENA] now has a regular and reliable statistical system, the other sectoral ministries still have to develop their own.

Just to lift a corner of the veil on the availability of a reliable statistical system at the level of the MOE, however leads to examine the durability of such a measure. A senior cadre from the planning unit within the Ministry itself, asserted, as indicated below that appropriate actions need to be taken as such.

Initially we do not have the possibility to have computer literates because they are expensive, under normal conditions we need a computer specialist who is assigned here, who is professional that is to say a computer scientist who did computer science, we need a statistician because the statistician language is not the same to the one who is assimilated and does mathematics and we need a demographer, people who have done financial analysis, we need people who study finance, we need professionals in these areas to do a thorough analysis of educational statistics. The educational statistics we produce are more quantitative than qualitative.

Indeed, no one doubts the impact of ICT and its potential on the development of the education sector as a whole. Not only would it facilitate and rapidly improve the teaching and learning process, but it would also give the management apparatus an advantage in their respective activities. This understanding has a broad consensus and is evident almost everywhere. Guinea, however, has also taken the step with the long awaited support of partners to make ICT an

essential support for the improvement of the sector and its services. In pursuing these efforts, it was observed according to a report produced with the support of *infoDev* that:

“Guinea has begun the implementation of ICT in the tertiary education sector in collaboration with donors. Donor efforts have also registered significant impact on the primary and secondary education sectors. Specifically, USAID has assisted Guinea under the GLOBE programme and launched other initiatives jointly with some state organizations....Poor electrification and telecommunication infrastructure, however, hinders the process. Connectivity is limited to certain urban areas and power supply is at best irregular even in the administrative region in the capital city, Conakry, where the ministries and principal organs of state are located. This phenomenon among others presents challenges to the deployment of ICTs across the country, particularly in the education sector” (Tutu, 2007: 2).

In accordance with some previous anomalies identified in the provision of resources for the proper functioning of the education sector, the national coverage of the communication network represents a huge challenge in the sense that:

“Guinea’s telecommunications’ infrastructure is the least developed in West Africa. The telephone density is only 0.3% for fixed lines and 1.7% for mobile/cellular phone penetration. However, between 2000 and 2005, the number of mobile phone users increased by 35%” (Tutu, 2007:3).

It is true and can be admitted that ever since, there have been some progress in the national coverage, thanks to the initiatives of development partners such as the USAID Leland Initiative, the World Bank and others, and the private investments of telecom players as well. Nonetheless, the fact remains that the ICT sector still faces considerable challenges, not only due to those mentioned above but also to socio-economic constraints (fiscal pressure, government financial and budgetary limitations, and the poverty and low level of ICT in the general and teaching population). These factors coupled with others make widespread internet and broadband coverage still limited (see table below). Yet, “mobile broadband service penetration—3-G mobile services—is [now largely disseminated across the country but its coverage in rural areas remains either limited] or of poor quality; and compared to the wider SSA, it is relatively underperforming” (World Bank, 2018:52).

Table 7.2: ICT in Guinea as of the reference year

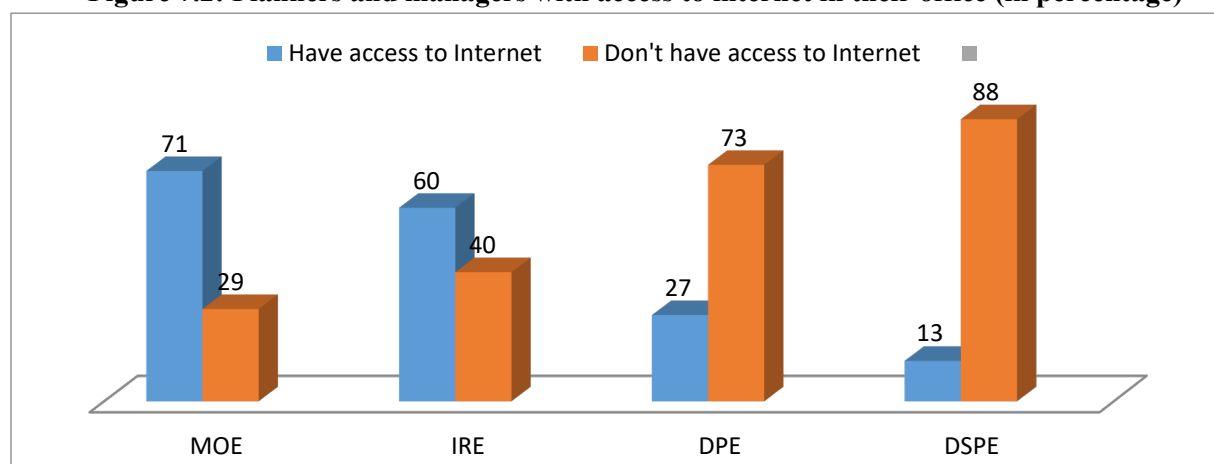
Indicator	Usage & reference year	
Telephones-main line in use	26,200 (2005)	0 (2017 est.)
Telephones-mobile cellular	189,000 (2005)	10.8 million (July 2016 est.)
Radio broadcast stations	5 FM; 3 shortwave (2006)	Government maintains marginal control over broadcast media; single state-run TV station; state-run radio broadcast station also operates several stations in rural areas; a steadily increasing number of privately owned radio stations, nearly all in Conakry, and about a dozen community radio stations; foreign TV programming available via satellite and cable subscription services (2011)
Radios	357,000 (1997)	
Television broadcast stations	6 low capacity (2001)	
Televisions	85,000 (1997)	
Internet service provider(s)	5 (2006)	First international fibre optic submarine cable installed in 2012 (2017)
Broadband-fixed subscriptions		1,100 (2017 est.)
Internet users	46,000 (2005)	1,185,148 (July 2016 est.) ; 9.8 % of total population

Source: The world fact book/CIA (2005/2019); retrieved from

<https://www.cia.gov/LIBRARY/publications/theworldfactbook/geos/gv.html>

Against this background, in large part, the internet connectivity in the country remains very limited and in the countryside, it is almost non-existent. Following this configuration, a very clear picture emerges as to the extent and proportion of education personnel with Internet network coverage at their respective working unit level. Thereupon, access to internet connectivity of cadres (planners & managers) at the central department has nevertheless undergone a real improvement, and this is due in large part to new facilities (broadband internet connection) provided with the construction of the new building. As a result, a large number of managers in the central department assert having access to internet in their office. Meanwhile, the level of access to the Internet by IRE cadres is relatively moderate since a certain disparity in the coverage, both in Conakry and in the regions does exist. However, this trend has been completely truncated by the gap that has widened at the level of the DPE/DCE where the connectivity to internet of education agents in these services remains limited. Moreover, the overall situation of DSEEs is rather marginal, because the network coverage is virtually limited, which implies that access to internet connectivity is almost non-existent (see figure below).

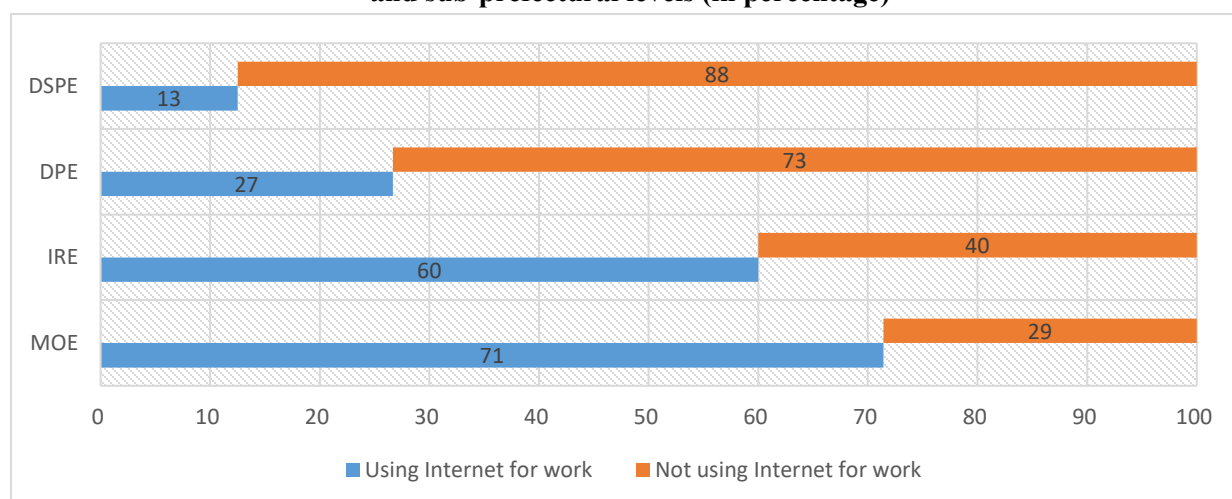
Figure 7.2: Planners and managers with access to internet in their office (in percentage)



Source: Questionnaire

Another implication that results from access to Internet connectivity is that of its usage by the personnel of education services in their daily work, particularly, the staff in charge of planning and management activities. Data from interviews with different agents working in these units revealed that the internet is largely used for sending and receiving documents via electronic mail. This represents in itself a significant improvement, which many cadres warmly welcome. However, not all education agents have easy access and usage of internet in their work. The reason for that must be attributed to the low level of managers familiar with ICTs. But also, others denounce the poor connection quality that does not allow undertaking large-scale activities using the internet available them. In addition, the proportion of education staff using the internet remains disparate, as revealed in their supply in computers (see figure below).

Figure 7.3: Planners and managers who use the internet for work at national, regional, prefectural and sub-prefectural levels (in percentage)



Source: Questionnaire

The overall situation regarding the access and use of the internet by education sector personnel remains strongly conditioned to the effective coverage of the network but also to its cost (connection charges and access to devices—especially smartphones because the majority of the personnel having said they have access to internet actually use their own mobile phones) which remains so far unaffordable. In all likelihood, the provision of broadband services in Guinea is still expensive and limited. However, remarkable initiatives are being deployed in this direction:

The landing of the first international fibre optic submarine cable in 2012, and the setting up of an IXP in mid-2013, has gone some way to developing the nascent broadband market by reducing the cost of internet bandwidth and improving the reliability of infrastructure. A National Backbone Network is nearing completion, connecting administrative centres across the country, though in practice almost all internet connectivity will remain via mobile infrastructure (Budde Comm, 2019: n.d).

The possible improvement of services and costs of internet, and the ardent desire of the PSE program to further integrate Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) into education services, would eventually serve to provide a better access and use of the internet by agents in the sector.

7.2 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT

The analysis of the institutional flaw within the education sector reveals that the “lack of competent human resources and of tools for planning and managing the sector constitutes a third constraint that affects the internal efficiency of the system” (AfDB, 2005:6). However, given the primacy of the human factor in the delivery of quality services in the sector, there was a need to ensure that staff are qualified enough to perform their tasks. In this case, ensuring the availability of adequate planning and management services was seen as a determining factor in the success of the EFA program. In the specific context of Guinea, this aspect was actually identified and put forward, as it was pointed out in this sense.

“Building the capacity of the SSP [the Planning & Statistical Services], which plays a key role in the planning of operations, constitutes a major challenge for efficiency in the management of the system. Indeed, the availability and regularity of reliable statistics that allow a rational and coordinated management of sector activities, is essential for the achievement of the EFAP (Education for All Program) objectives. Ongoing efforts, particularly technical assistance provided by some donors (USAID, France), and training for central and

deconcentrated managers should be supported. Strengthening management capacity is also important. Providing training in educational planning, management and administration to senior managers in the concerned ministerial directorates and technical services at the central and decentralized levels will contribute to the sustainability of current actions” (AfDB, 2005: 11).

In fact, it should be pointed out that the problem in this capacity-building effort in the education sector is due to the low level of qualification of the staff assigned to these tasks. A situation which in itself represents a subsequent element that renders the upgrading of cadres in the planning and management services is sometimes difficult. For reasons initially cited, the regulatory principle of access to the designated function is compromised in some respects. And practices involved in this process were largely emphasized in the literature but also reiterated by respondents met in the field. The shortcomings that are often denounced revolve around the lack of qualification required for the posts to be filled up. Also, the lack of competence on the one hand to exercise the function and the absence of experience required to fulfill the responsibilities related to the mandate of the unit, on the other. And above all, there is the fact that “the educational system of Guinea still lacks clear and separate track of integration of the teaching staff and that of the administration within the Guinean education civil service system” (Swift-Morgan, 2011:307).

Moreover, the existing framework which lays down the appointment criteria of administrative and management staff to positions of responsibility is not only old but is disregarded and not applied in its generality. The challenge to this end remains the lack of initiative to not only fill up this void but also to implement it effectively. It is to be recognized that interventions in the sector in recent years have had to address the issue of teaching staff and to identify shortcomings related to their qualification. In this respect, corrective measures have been taken into account such as to: recruit sufficient qualified teachers and rationally manage staffing and transfers; raise the level of recruitment of teachers while respecting the criteria for selecting candidates for primary teacher training; however, the problem remains in the actual and effective translation of this series of measures into action. The risks associated with the implementation of such a mechanism are first marked by an opaque and unreliable recruitment procedure. Also, co-optation and favoritism are other aspects that are very rooted into the system. In view of these expressed concerns in the recruitment process, inappropriate selections still persist through incoherent and sometimes fictitious recruitment of permanent and contract agents.

To this can be added other inconvenient acts of which it is revealed that “a good portion of the civil servants of the public administration [including the education sector] have bought their positions including the school certificates” (ANLC, 2011:22-16). The integrity of the recruitment procedure is also undermined by facts of nepotism and patronage. Whereby, “recruitment in the public administration, the most qualified candidate does not always get the position. In personnel management (hiring, compensation and training opportunity), the quality of relationships with supervisors is just as important as merit” (ANLC, 2011:16). The extent of the practices characterizing the recruitment of the education sector personnel is largely conditioned by socio-political dynamics. And these behaviors are sometimes maintained at the expense of accepted policies and procedures. These considerations have overtaken the objective criteria which should normally motivate any appointment to a key position in the education sector administration.

Another very salient point is that of the special status reserved to personnel who are supposed to occupy planning or management functions. Unlike the status reserved to teaching staff, that of planner or manager has so far received no specific distinction. Given the importance of such an attribution, the researcher had to emphasize this point by diversifying the investigation around this issue. And this was done not only through the interview sessions but also with individual questionnaires. Through these attempts, the answers provided to this effect all converge towards the same perception. Starting with the director of human resources of the MOE up to the delegate of elementary education at the sub-prefectural level, all agree on the lack of a particular status attributed to planners or managers as a specific body in the administration of the education sector. Given this state of affairs, a provision regulating the recruitment of planning and management staff is still lacking. And this regulatory vacuum has so far led to overly relaxed attitudes in the selection criteria of cadres at these positions. As a result, most of the positions filled in the different units are not through competitive recruitment. The views that emerge from almost all interview sessions with education cadres show that access to their respective positions is either through appointment (which is more frequent in Guinea) or through promotion (cases that take place sometimes without real motives and is often frowned upon within services). The use of other recruitment processes is, to say the least, hardly applied or even not applied at all in some cases. In the opinions of some cadres, ‘such an approach is not likely to give credibility to the integrity of the functions meant to be served’.

Moreover, the curiosity surrounding the process of staff recruitment in the public sector and specifically that of the education has motivated the idea of evaluating recurrent conducts in this respect on a case-by-case basis. To do this, an examination of the individual questionnaires administered to the cadres at different levels made it possible to determine the processes often used in this regard. In fact, among all cadres to whom were administered the questionnaire, the majority (65 per cent of the respondents) said they accessed their posts through an appointment (with 86% at the MOE level, 60% at the IRE level, 67% at the DPE level and 63% at the DSEE level). Promotional designation is the second process by which staffs claim admission to their positions, with a proportion of 22% of total respondents (of which 14% at the MOE level, 40% at the IRE, 27% at the DPE and 13% at the level of the DSEE). However, access to posts by staff following a competitive hiring obviously remains less prevalent within the education sector, as only 8% of the total respondents (5% internal and 3 % external) assert having gone through this process. It should be noted that this reality is largely observed only at the low level; with 7% of DPE cadres claim to be engaged through a competitive internal recruiting. While the elementary school delegates (DSEE) claim to be admitted to their posts through a competitive recruitment of which 13% internal and 13 external. With regard to secondment and transfer, the data show that they are still non-applied modes of recruitment. However, it was reported during the field study to the researcher that the IRE (regional inspector of education) in the Mamou region had accessed to the post through a replacement/secondment. As for Parent/Teacher Associations (APEAE), the designation process of group leaders is strictly through election (see table below).

Table 7.3: MOE Personnel Recruitment Process Percent (N=37)

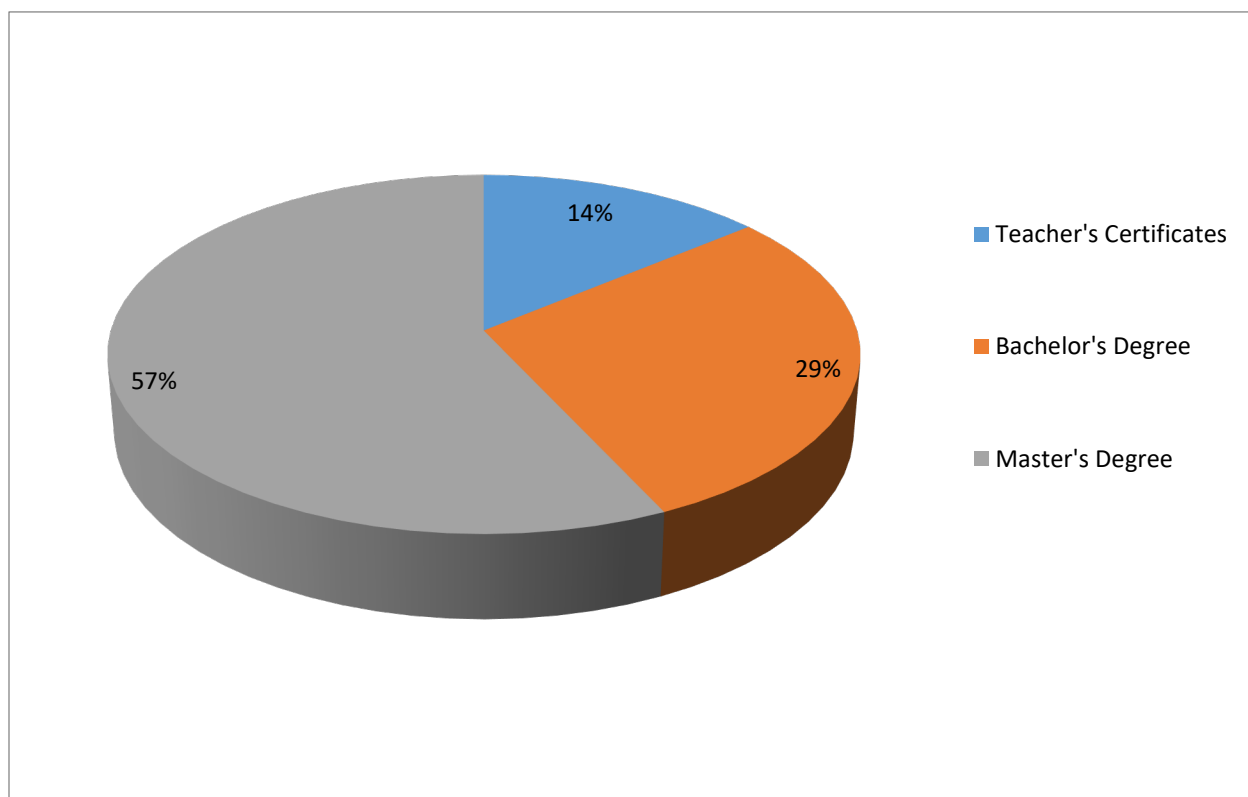
Level	Promotion	Internal Competitive Recruitment	External Competitive Recruitment	Nomination	Secondment	Transfer	Election
MOE	14	0	0	86	0	0	0
IRE	40	0	0	60	0	0	0
DPE	27	7	0	67	0	0	0
DSEE	13	13	13	63	0	0	0
APEAE	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
Total	22	5	3	65	0	0	5

Source: Questionnaire

Skills and Qualification

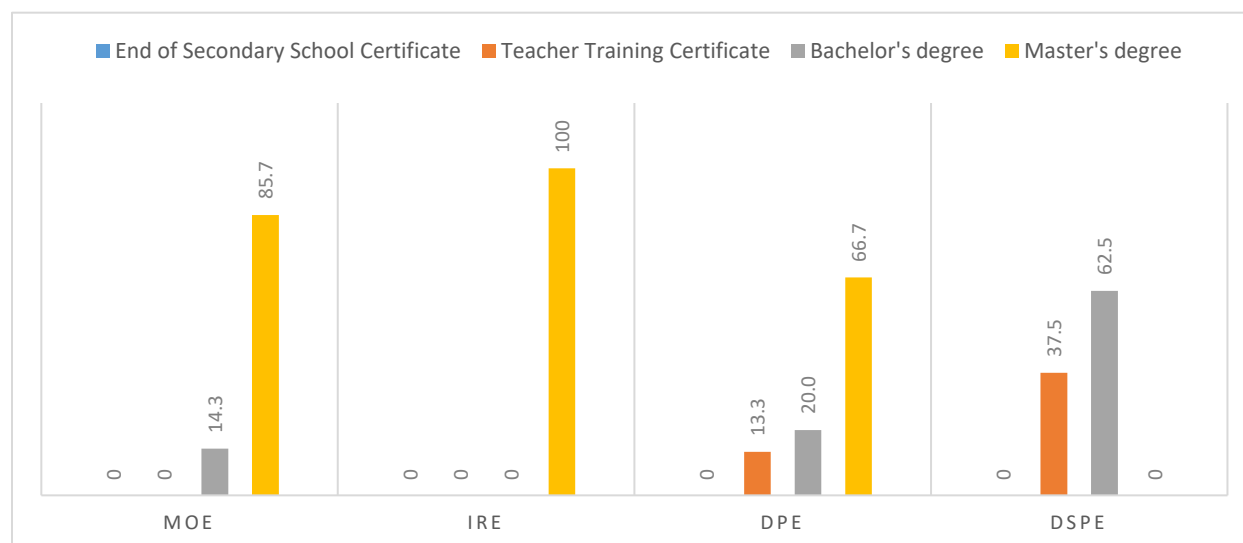
Another feature characterizing the provision of posts in the education sector is the lack of consideration of the personnel qualifications and/or professional background prior to their appointment. In view of this fact, being an exception to the rule has over the years become generalized throughout the system. As such, it is not uncommon to see incompatibilities at almost every level of the sector. Therefore, a large number of cadres with a high level of education remain largely posted at the highest level of services while low-level units are often filled up with cadres having limited level of training. A second aspect refers to the fact that a few cadres with required qualifications capable of handling strategic positions in the planning and management units are often relegated to subordinate positions. These practices and many others lead to a lack of control over existing professional needs at the level of each service, which seriously undermine regular maintenance of capacities as well as the culture of cadres self-improvement (see figures below).

Figure 7.4: Qualifications of MOE Personnel per level



Source: Questionnaire

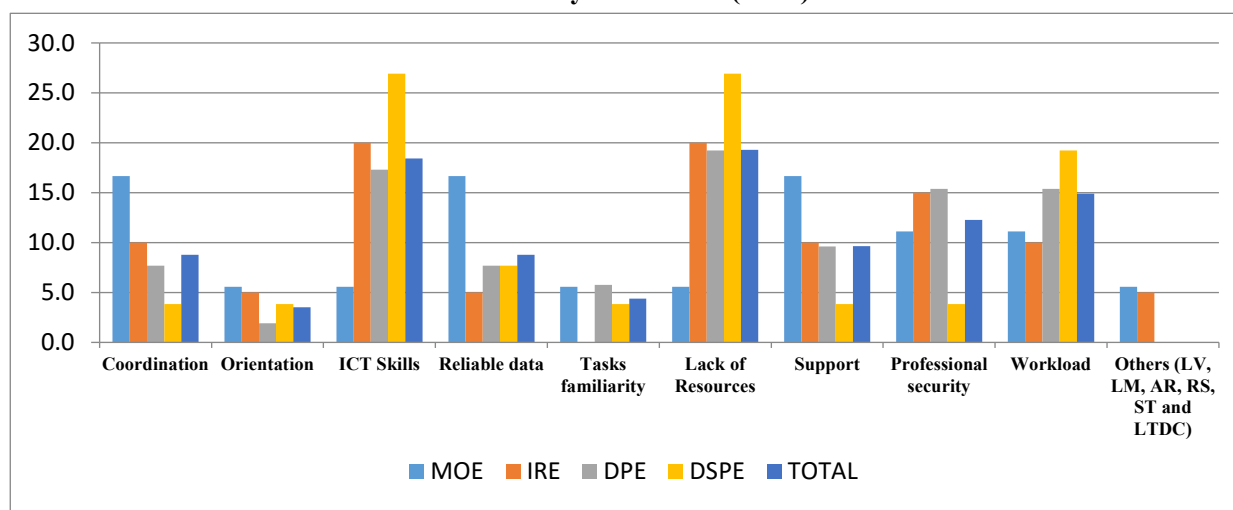
Figure 7.5: Distribution of planners by their highest level of academic qualifications (in %)



Source: Questionnaire

Thus, the above-mentioned shortfalls are practical manifestations of the lack of a specific framework defining the criteria for selection and recruitment of cadres to the planning and management of the education sector in the country. So far, it must be recognized that this state of affairs is not without consequences on the effective performance of education agents. Moreover, as it was signaled with the use of ICTs, multiple deficiencies in planning and management activities have been identified by cadres as major problems they face in carrying out their functions (see figure below).

Figure 7.6: Biggest challenges faced by planners & managers in carrying out effectively and efficiently their tasks (in %)



Source: Questionnaire; Note: others LV (lack of vision), LM (lack of means), AR (abusive recruitment), RS (repetitive strikes), ST (social troubles), LTDC (lack of training in data collection)

To further situate the shortcomings observed in the sector, it is necessary not only to tackle the laxity that has become widespread around staff recruitment, a situation that is denounced in various forms and by cadres at different levels. A cadre of the BSD at the MOE level has actually portrayed it as such:

People are not designated according to their merits or choices, [it] is either according to relationship, friendship, or according to linkages, your opinion is not sought to place you. Generally it is not you, so it depends when you make consultations, or sometimes check the publications in the newspapers and you postulate to pass but there too [at the Public service Ministry]— even right here [at the BSD within the MOE]—in that you can see the availability of a position at the level of an institution, you want to go but it turns out that the place is already occupied by somebody else, that means it is purely formal, they may announce saying that there is this and there is that but in fact the post is already filled up through recommendation.

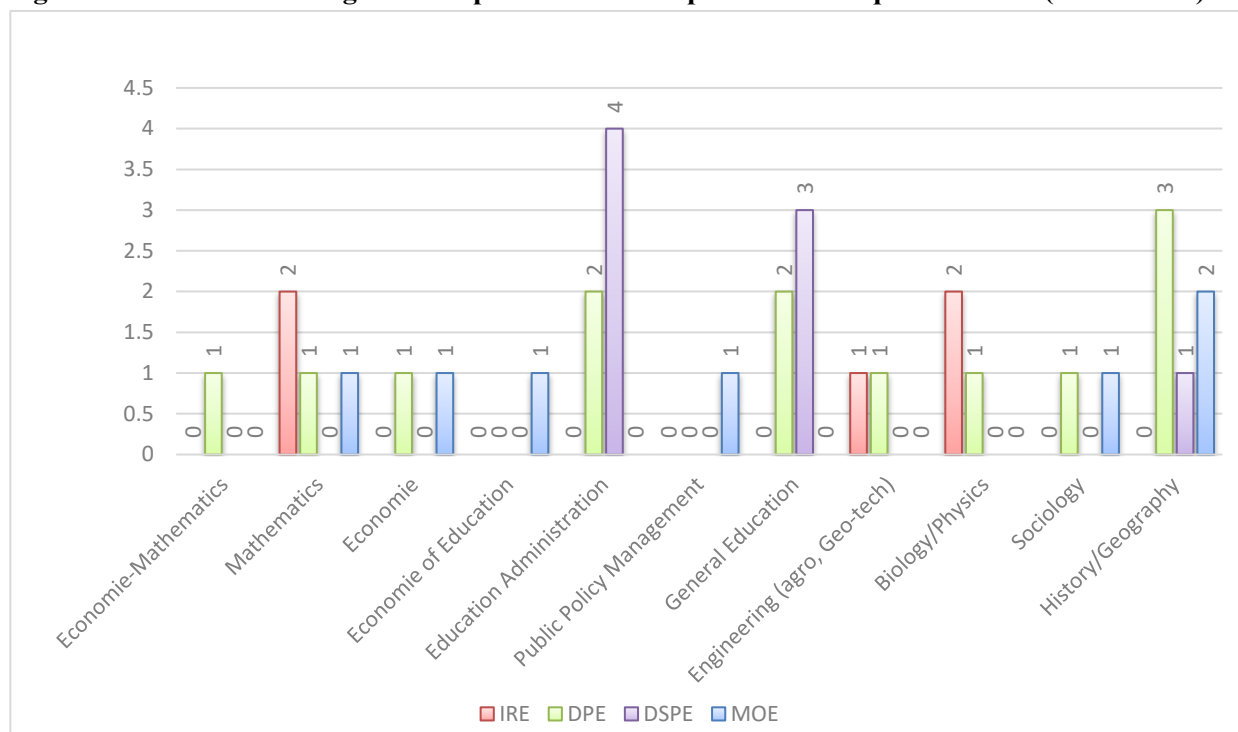
In addition, the same cadre of the BSD at the MOE level further indicated that:

The people in this section did not graduate from a school of [educational] statistics but they are assimilated to statisticians, given the experience they have capitalized. For example, I did Economics and Mathematics in high school and at the university I specialized in social statistics and since I graduated from university I am in this department, I am here for over thirty years, in fact I only know this. And there are others who are here as computer specialists, statisticians, but they are not necessarily graduated from [educational] statistic schools but they did mathematics in high school and statistics at the university, either descriptive, economic, or social statistics etc.

Indeed, other cadres of the planning and/or management units at the level of different deconcentrated structures made similar observations, however the assimilation effect which is often put forward hardly finds a reassuring point of attachment. The main source of discrepancies is the fact that a large number of the personnel whose educational background is far distant from the planning and/or management field claim to be perfectly assimilated to the actions conducted in these respective units, and this sometimes with a very limited duration of time in the exercise of the function. For the sake of illustration, the researcher came to learn from many of those responsible for planning and management in some of the IRE and DCE in Conakry but also in the countryside, Mamou, Kindia and Téliélé that these cadres educational background is related to either agronomic engineering or biology. Other similar cases are those of cadres whose academic background is related to mathematics, physics, history, geography and sociology. There are also those whose qualification is general education, i.e., teaching and

pedagogy. Thus, as it is shown on the figure below (although not entirely representative), cadres with planning and management mandate within the education sector whose educational background is related or close to these functions under consideration is tiny.

Figure 7.7: Academic background of planners who responded to the questionnaire (in numbers)



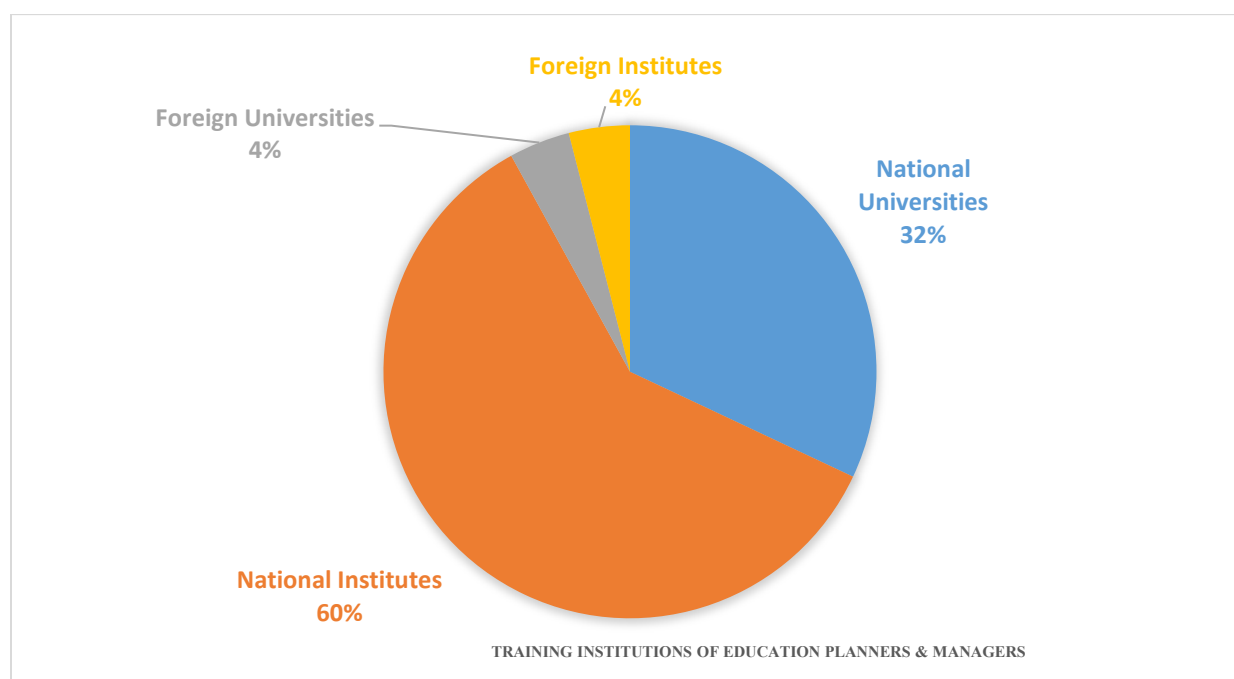
Source: Questionnaire

Subsequently, there is the fact that is due to the low level of acquisition and transfer of knowledge from abroad to the country. However, the adverse effect of this situation is growing, marked by a massive brain drain from Guinea to other countries (African as elsewhere). As such, Guinea's educational system is in two ways a victim of policies that have hitherto guided its functioning. At first, the system is initially criticized for failing to meet the country's socio-economic demands. Since the country's human development index remains very low compared to many countries around the world. The training provision available to young Guineans does not meet the requirements of Guinea's as well as the foreign labor market at all. In fact, this reflects the low level of entrepreneurship in the country but also the lack of competitiveness of Guinea's workforce as well as its local companies.

The other variant is that of the loss of attractiveness to which the sector is victim. As many of the well trained young people who are, somehow, the product of the system, have no intention

of serving the sector in return. At the same time, those people who had the opportunity to study abroad do not make it a vocation to return and serve the country's educational system neither. On the contrary, the sector is just providing a finished product without getting its benefit in return. The first figure below is evocative enough in this regard. The graph shows that only 32 per cent of the cadres currently serving the education sector have graduated from national universities and 60 per cent are trained in national institutes. As for those who benefited from higher education abroad, only 4 per cent who graduated from universities and 4 per cent trained in institutes, are currently serving the Guinean educational system.

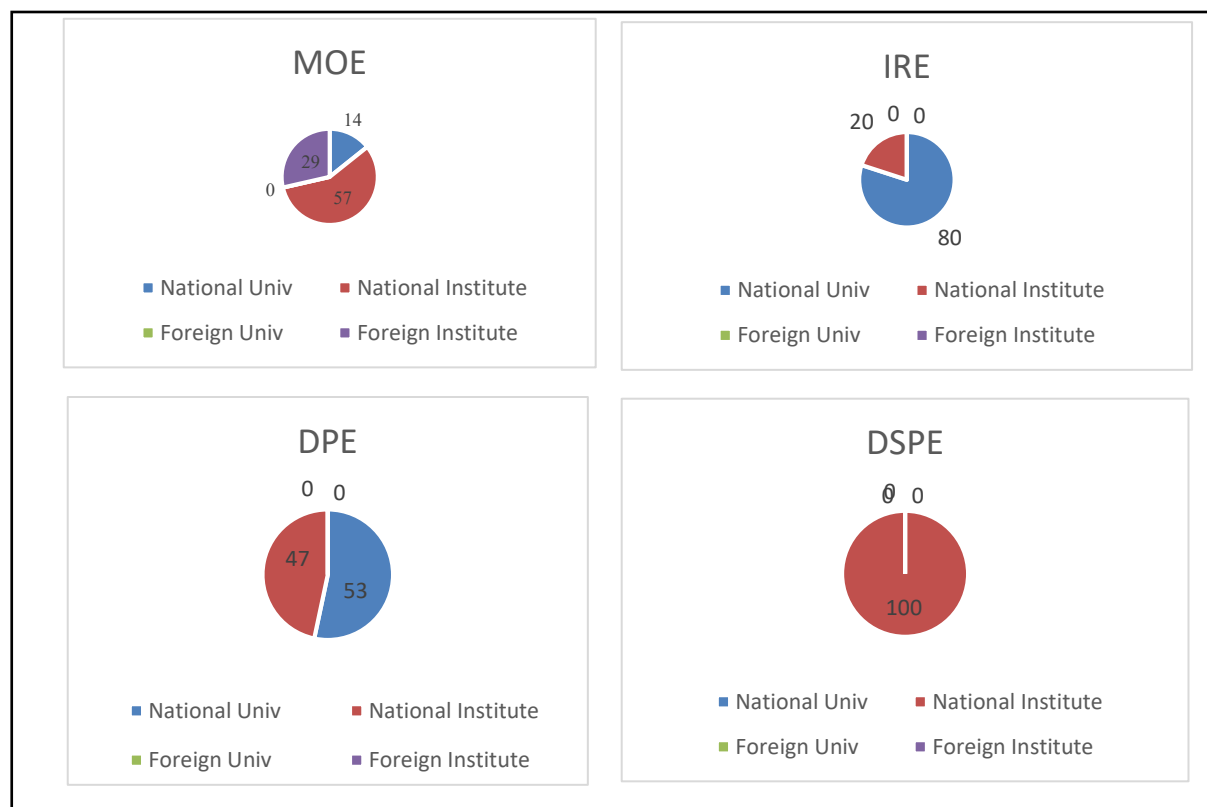
Figure 7.8: Background of educational planners and managers Training Institutions



Source: Questionnaire

However, a decomposition of these different proportions at the different levels of management of the system suggests to what extent the disparity in qualified personnel arises within the sector. Moreover, as it can be noticed from the charts below, almost all of the cadres who have received training abroad are actually concentrated at the level of the central department. With regard to those who graduated from national universities, 80 per cent of them serve at the IRE levels, 53 per cent at the level of DPEs. As for the elementary school education delegates (DSEEs), they have been all trained in the national institutes of the country.

Figure 7.9: Background of educational planners & managers Training Institutions at each Level



Source: Questionnaire

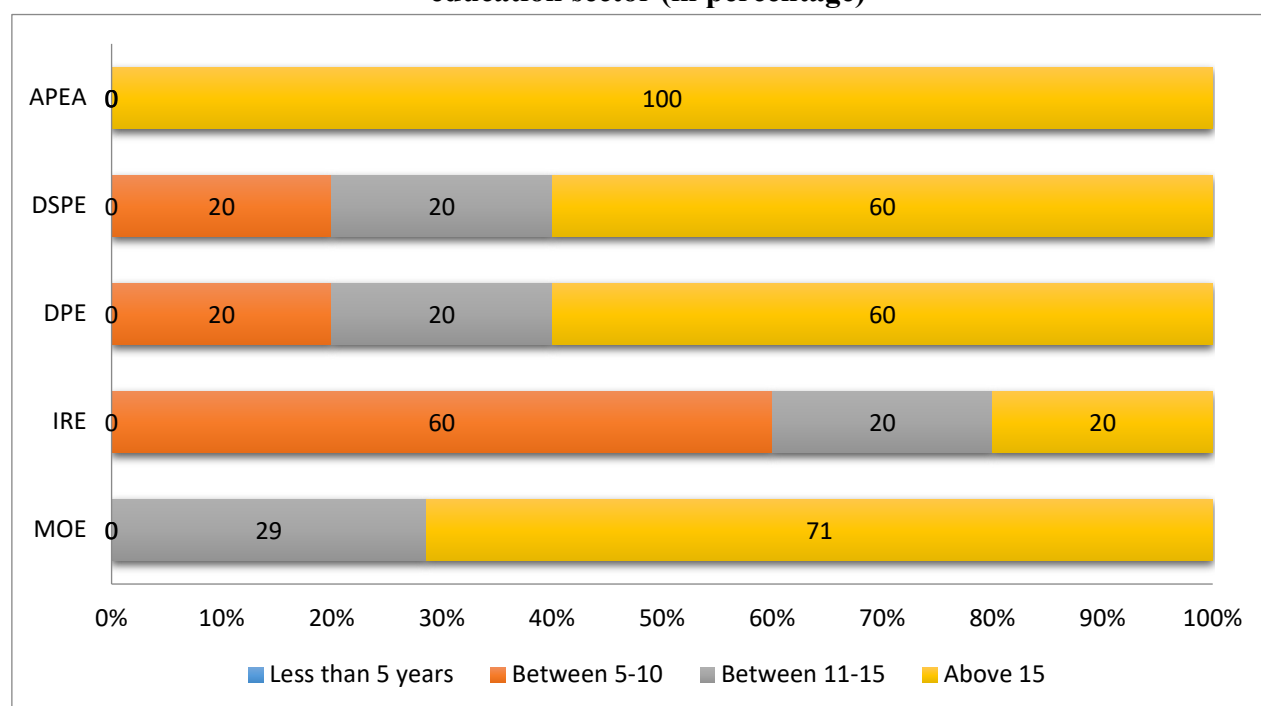
Cadres' Experience

Disparities in qualified cadres but also their congestion at a certain level of the education sector stem largely from the effect of sedentarization. This phenomenon has indeed had serious repercussions at different levels of the system. For instance, planners at the MOE level are relatively less educated than those at the IRE but have been in their position for many years. As a result they are not giving the chance to young planners to get in and exercise and eventually go up the professional ladder. Whereas at the regional level, planners have relatively high educational level and have not been in their position for so long; thus, this gives room for young professional to come in—[provided] that candidates have confident and self-determination to cope with the inspections' capacity-related tasks. However, the opposite pattern does emerge when comparing cadres at the IRE and the DPE levels. Cadres at the DPE level tend to have remained at the same level for so long and presumably for some reasons: lack of knowledge/skills, lack of promotion or influence from the community. Further, another possible reason point to the fact observed at the MOE level, as the less educated the planners are but the

longer the time spent at a particular level/position, the less inclined they would be to quit this unit/position. The same observation is being made at the DSEE level (see figure below).

In a nutshell, practices that go against regular provisions remain largely maintained within the system and only serve to further weaken it. The fact remains that huge and internal obstacles are instituted between the different levels of management of the sector that makes the improvement of the personnel to suffer in many respects. That not only the absorptive capacity of the sector in new knowledge and skills is constantly compromised because of the lack of attractiveness on the one hand, but also the recklessness of ancient cadres, on the other.

Figure 7.10: Education planners and managers' number of years of experience in the education sector (in percentage)



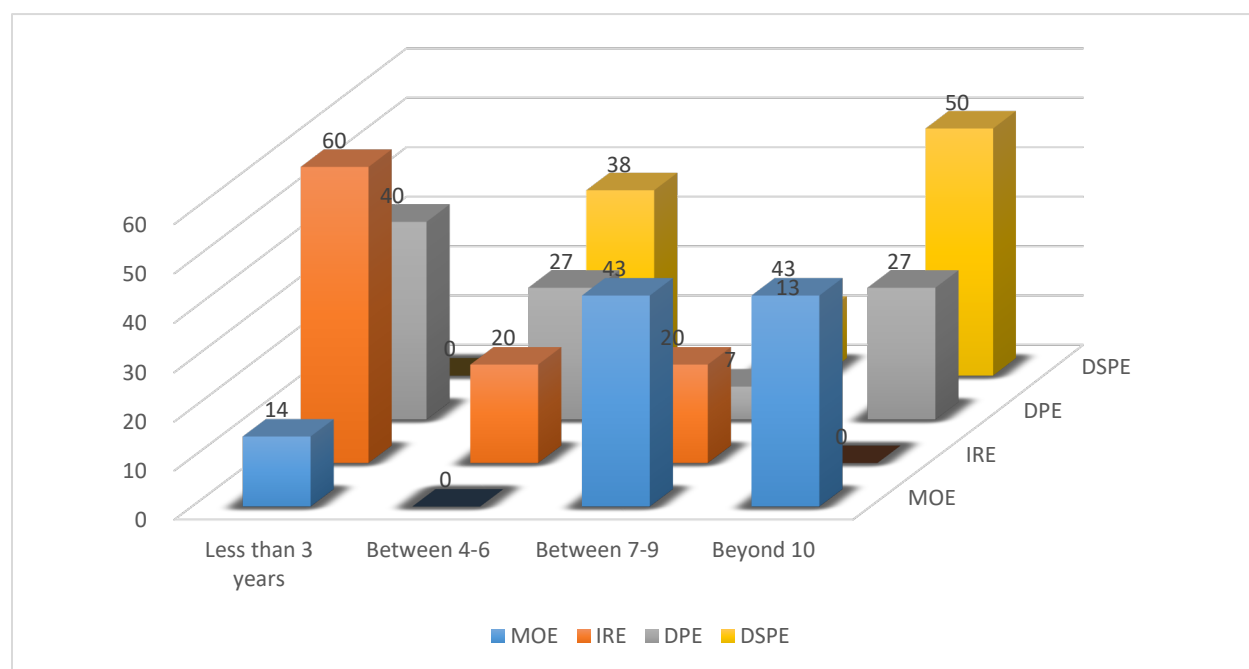
Source: Questionnaire

This state of affairs, however, has as first implication a loss in the sustainability of gains in the system—something that is evident to date. Second, there is a segmentation of the number of cadres having acquired experience in planning and management at different levels of the system. Although, the fact of climbing the ladder of a profession undoubtedly contributes to enrich the pool of cadres invested with such tasks and serve better the sector. An exception of one case can be drawn however. The former Statistics Officer in Téliélé (at the DPE level) was promoted to the same position at the IRE level of Kindia as a result of his good work, the cadre confided to

the researcher. However, such a process remains very tiny. Dispersal of staff based on their accumulated years of experience in planning and management is highly visible and expressive. According to the individual survey administered to the personnel of the planning and management units at different levels, it appears as shown on the figure below that the planners and managers with less than three years' experience are found at the level of the IRE (60 per cent) and DPE (40 per cent). However, the number of cadres with more than six years of experience at these two levels is almost very low, while at the central department 43 per cent of managers have crossed this threshold.

Moreover, cadres with more than ten years of experience in planning and management are found at the MOE level (43 per cent), at the DPE (27 per cent) and the DSEE (50 per cent). The data resulting from the field study also reveal the real concerns that exist within the departments in charge of planning and management. A possible lesson to be drawn from this is that the central department has more cadres with experience than those of the IREs and the DPEs.

Figure 7.11: Planners' number of years of experience in educational planning & management (in %)



Source: Questionnaire

Likewise, the agents at the level of the DSEE also have more experience than those they are supposed to report to from the hierarchical viewpoint but lack of resources. This situation is very intriguing, given the fact staff at sub-prefectural level depend on those at the prefecture for

support issues. The same expectations rest indeed upon those of the IRE vis-à-vis cadres of the DPEs and DSEEs as well. Hence, the requirements for Regional Inspectorates of Education (IRE) to possess the capacity (skills and experience) necessary to ensure the assistance needed at grass root structures (see above figure).

In the same vein, the cadres met with throughout this investigation were also asked on a number of elements that can likely promote good performance of staff at work. The views expressed by each of cadres are various but can be somehow classified under the umbrella of two variables, that of values and attitudes. Through various discussions held with education agents during the field study, there was often resurgence of terms such as humility, competence, genuine listening, professionalism, availability, civility, serenity, trust, and shared responsibilities. Indeed, the fact of scrutinizing in detail the insistence made on these values denotes an advocate for a general renewal in the sector.

Values

The essence of this advocacy is really indicative since the cadres invoke the desire to rid the sector of all defects of which it suffers in depth. In the first instance of these flaws, there is the fact associated with the abandonment of moral values at the level of the public administration, a fact which echoes in the report of the ANLC (2011: 25) as such:

“The lack of ethics, civility and patriotism, improper leadership, lack of self-sacrifice spirit and culture of merit. [To this is added] the resignation of incumbents to their missions, the dysfunction of the administration marked by: the proliferation of rules that change in an untimely way, the non-performance of common tasks, the weakness of the culture of success, the destabilization of services; lack of results-based provisional management; ineffectiveness of internal control mechanisms, lack of continuity of work and qualitative change in the management of services due to the politicization of the administrative function”

Therefore, the lack of real and concrete measures to contain these shortcomings has led to a moral weariness among education sector cadres. Such indifference has constantly led to poor working conditions and motivation. It also results in unstable decision matters that change continuously without significant progress within a context of permanent institutional, political economic and social instability. Despite these flaws that beset the sector, there is a tendency towards a common consensus from almost all education agents, as the only possible way to pull

the education sector out of its current lethargy obviously remains through a renewed consciousness in the governance of the education system. As such, there are voices among cadres that already call for a total break from the existing “vicious circle” and to establish instead ‘a new circle that will be rather virtuous’.

Furthermore, the prompts made by these education agents are also characterized by the need to revive the mentality, thus persistently evoking that ‘morality and integrity are cherished values in our cultures and societies’. In the pursuit of their advocacy, this bunch of cadres fervently call upon the integrity of both office staff and leaders, ‘to act with courage, abnegation, goodwill, intellectual and professional honesty to serve the country and not to use the sector to serve one's interests. For the future of young generations and that of the entire nation depends on the success of this sector’.

Attitudes

Along with this pledge of awakening, there is that of the sense of commitment and proper discharge of one duties. Both senior and junior cadres at the MOE’s different levels being also asked on what could instill good performance in their work, however, answered in terms quite similar to those of an IGEN senior cadre, asserting the following:

self-confidence, the will to move forward by learning more, the love of what you do, the willingness to question yourself, to evaluate yourself [bring about good performance in one’s work].

However, the answer to this question ‘how do you feel when you engage in tasks you do not know or you lack competence in?’ asked during the interview sequence to the same cadre, specifies the following:

[I] always remain serene and confident in the adage that says: it is enough to want to be able to.

Indeed, speaking of commitment and the will to do well, theoretically, is the intent expressed by all cadres. However, the problem resides in the capabilities and means of action. With regard to capabilities, as is the case herein, most of the staff, especially those at the deconcentrated structures, point to difficulties related to the distribution of tasks, training sessions and regular updates but also monitoring and evaluation. These few major problems hereby listed are indeed

perceptible in the field and in the conduct of routine activities. First, turning to the question of the distribution of tasks within services, the first element to elucidate is that of job description. In the opinion of a large number of the staff interviewed during this study, all claim that prior to the introduction of the procedural manuals, there was considerable difficulty in regulating activities within the units. In acknowledging these facts, some cadres even speak without embarrassment, stating that ‘we had difficulty distinguishing between the prerogatives that accrue to the entire Directorate, to those of the Division, the section and those which are ours’. In view of these difficulties, however, some progress has been made in internal management at certain levels, as indicated by the MOE report (2014: 11).

“The restructuring of two IREs and ten DPEs has brought significant changes in the functioning of these structures. It has streamlined the use of managers while clarifying their roles and responsibilities”.

The same report also indicates that:

“The implementation of the MEPU-EC (current MENA) personnel management databases has contributed to the improvement of the staff information system [i.e., the teaching staff]. On the other hand, the various operations of reorganization of the personnel data file led to unsatisfactory results, due to the persistence of difficulties in terms of work force control and the wage bill” (MOE, 2014:10).

In tandem with these efforts to remedy these shortcomings, the PSE 1 program has, according to another report of the MOE (2014: 23) allowed the “drafting procedural manuals and training agents in their use, setting up a staff transfer schedule”; the same report also indicates that:

“The Government as a whole is now on the way to a more comprehensive reform of the management of State personnel, including a comprehensive biometric census of permanent staff and contract staff including [education personnel] and the clearance of databases. Ministries in charge of the education sector have in advance all the elements enabling them to lend their support to this reform” (MOE, 2014: 23).

Indeed, possible interrogations likely to follow these achievements and/or announced initiatives remain those of their reflection on the ground. For, at the time of conducting this field study, the reality shows that the staffs of different structures were not really familiar with the use of the

procedural manuals. The same observation applies to the control and regulation of the workforce within different units.

Also, the other major challenge that the PSE 1 program has had to tackle, according to this report of the MOE (2014: 24) is that of the production of statistics as well as monitoring and evaluation functions. Here too, the shortage of qualified staff, especially in planning and management, noted through previous reform programs including the EFA program is an issue; however as a result of the efforts made during the PSE program, this has favored the following improvements:

“The production of statistical yearbooks, data analysis reports, monitoring of indicators and program evaluation, quarterly sessions of the National Monitoring and Evaluation Commission. Capacity building plans for actors have been developed and partially implemented. To date, deconcentrated structures are able to collect and produce their statistical yearbooks” (MOE, *ibid*).

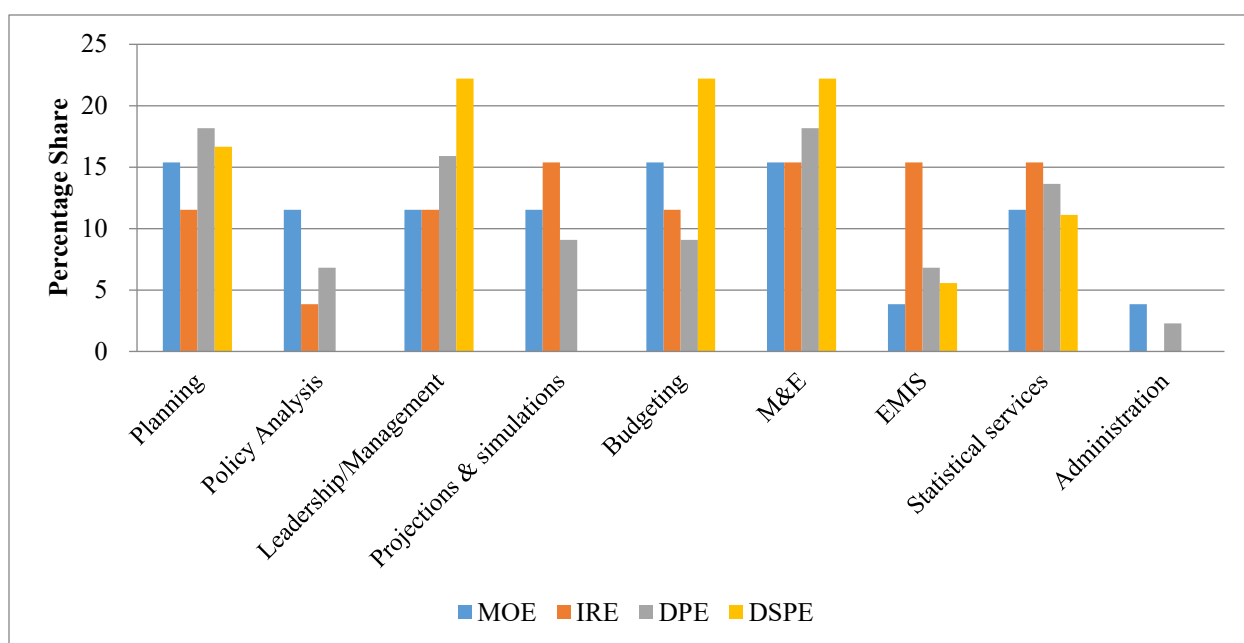
However, despite these improvements, to say the least, there are still areas of shadow that exist and need to be addressed. The report of the MOE (*ibid*) is very clear on this, specifying that:

“However, in terms of database design and management as well as analysis of statistical results, the Directorate in charge of planning and statistics is supported by consulting services. Indeed, it suffers from a lack of professional statisticians and computer scientists”.

In fact, this report's remark is quite clear on the issues existing within the services concerned in their entirety as regards their urgent need for improvement but also in the supply of new cadres who are, not only qualified but also competent enough (see figure below). Admittedly, steps have been taken in this direction, but their effect on staff performance deserves further reinforcement and/or constant upgrading. Actually, this was something that the report (2014: 64) did not conceal by suggesting the following:

“Given the arrival of new staffs on the statistical data production chain, shortcomings were noted in terms of: mastering the data collection tools, the detection and correction of anomalies, the processing and analysis of data. These deficiencies must be corrected through adequate training for a timely production of statistical data”.

Figure 7.12: MOE Personnel who received professional training in planning and/or management in education since occupying their current position (in %)



Source: Questionnaire

Moreover, the fact of trying to relate what the MOE reports indicate and the data generated from the field by the researcher makes it easy to assess the realities of the situations at the level of different structures. As the graph above shows, the need for training in planning and management concerns almost all levels. Above all, what is most surprising is the fact that there is a marked timidity of central level cadres as for their interest in training in almost all essential areas of planning and management. Indeed, what is above all interesting, is the fact that cadres at the deconcentrated structures are the most inclined to undergo training in order to improve themselves. This is a first fact to admit. The second fact which confirms further this evidence emerged from the interviews and individual questionnaire and helps explain the increase in the proportion of deconcentrated structures' cadres in the areas of planning and management. The reasons indicated in this regard are the fact that most of the young cadres who have recently joined the sector graduated from teachers training or education sciences national institutes where they have partly received training in school administration. Therefore, most of these cadres were dispatched at the lower level of the sector, especially as elementary school delegates (DSEE), as it can be noticed from the graph above.

Training opportunities

Actually, it must be emphasized that the personnel at different levels often express the desire for continuous training. However, the access to such opportunities sometimes is not an easy thing, assert some of the cadres. Taking for example the case of the central department where the problem is most salient, very few cadres indicated to have undergone retraining sessions in school administration. The other fact is that among cadres at the central level who expressed their needs for training, it happens that most often only the chief of services benefit while office staff mostly remained divided on the issue. For some, they claimed having participated in many training sessions, but once asked about the topics covered during these sessions, they remain unable to distinguish the nature of the topics. Others contend not often being given the opportunity to participate in the various training sessions held in their area of intervention.

In any case, what is certain is that the cadres met during interviews often insinuated the following, as expounded by Swift-Morgan (2011: 309), that “in the education administration there is a fair amount of favoritism. They [chefs of offices] make favoritism much more prevalent than technical competency”. Similarly, members of the civil society met with during the field study also corroborate what Swift-Morgan (ibid) further posited, that “actors reported that relations with people in power can also lead to other benefits and perks, with the classic example of being chosen to participate in meetings and workshops where international NGOs and funding agencies would be providing per diem. [Quoting a senior NGO representative in Labe, another region in Guinea]. ‘You know that when there are workshops people are much more tempted by the per diems and all that’...’such that by affinity they co-op people’ that they know to get them in to the session, whether they should be there on the basis of their role or profile or not – and in some cases taking the place of those who were intended to participate’.

As indicated above, given the limited capacities of the MOE (in terms of financial and human resources), it quite often resorts to soliciting the help of various partners to meet these training needs of its staff. Notwithstanding, it must be recognized that some training efforts are indeed made by the MOE through its dedicated bodies but their effect is often considered minimal. The reasons invoked in this respect are first those related to a lack of resources. However, the personnel deplore the irregularity of training offered for which frequencies are not recurrent at the lower level. The personnel also indicate that their training needs are not usually taken into account as the training programs are often planned from the top level. As such, these

programs fail to address the real needs necessary to contribute in bettering the conduct of their daily tasks.

Therefore, to ensure adequate and more relevant training programs, the central department generally calls upon the services of technical and financial partners. The conduct of these programs takes different formats, there are those organized through study trips to the UNESCO's institutes (UIS, IIEP) and other partner institutes in Europe, America and Asia—opportunities that many cadres have repeatedly solicited throughout this investigation. The other formats are seminars and workshops held across the country that are either organized or sponsored by TFPs such as the World Bank, UNICEF, AFP, USAID, JICA, Plan International Guinea and many others. An example of these workshops is the one held in the region of Kindia at the time of conducting this research, during which the researcher learned from participants representing their respective services who assert that: 'at the end of this meeting, we are also responsible for organizing restitution sessions in our units of origin and share the benefit of these encounters with the other personnel that remained in place'.

Furthermore, the problem with the possibility of extending these restitution sessions, also called cascade training process, relates to the integrity of the restitution itself and its sustainability as well. Like what emerges with the manual of procedures, despite the provision of training materials to cadres for the purpose of self-exploitation, the effectiveness of these materials remain mitigated. Some extol their merits while others claim not to benefit from their usage. Regarding the sustainability of these training programs, there are two resulting implications. The first implication that actually raises many questions to the point of creating controversy, relates to the suitability of the approach used by partners, as again put by Swift-Morgan (2011: 309-366) in quoting a study participant: "part of the problem was the culture created by these external funders and projects that participants must be fed and paid per diem at work sessions, leading people to think that they could not otherwise meet if these perks were not provided". The second implication relates to MOE's real and internal commitment to preserve the core of these technician cadres and make good use of their expertise to contribute to better empowering the education sector.

However, this is something so far unlikely to be, given the fact that efficient use of staff in Guinea's education sector remains a serious issue. Yet, some re-appropriation intents of internal potentialities already existing (knowledge acquired by a good number of cadres) within the

sector are more and more emerging among the staff at different levels. Voices of this kind that advocate for more internal dependence on the part of the education sector, resonate in these terms:

The ministry must at some point be able to assume its full responsibilities because the projects of assistance that still benefit the sector is not eternal. That being said, either the government through the department in charge of education must define a precise framework to ensure the relay and sustain initiatives in the sector or the Ministry itself take action in this direction.

Others went on contending that:

Because we must be convinced that these interventions that we have benefited from so far are certainly to strengthen our capacities as planners and managers of education, but it goes without saying that ownership is necessary and this requires the presence of a real will, trust and true commitment.

Reassuring voices like these also opine that:

it is true that financing is necessary to ensure the sustainability of most activities in the sector, however, for the holding of training sessions and other similar activities, services at different levels of the sector can make use of the existing internal mechanisms and with the means available to them to make the machine work, and this is where the role of good leadership comes in, since it is already certain for the country that partner support is of limited duration.

In addition, another form of advocacy that is more geared towards developing the capabilities of existing training institutes is also making room among staff in the sector services. However, to date it must be specified that the existing institutions that offer training in education, are all institutes or Ecoles Normales Supérieures (Teacher-training Colleges). Therefore, almost none of the public or private universities in the country offer courses related to the science of education. As it can be noticed from the table below, almost all these existing training institutes are intended for teacher training (especially primary schools), besides ISSEG (dedicated to secondary level) and ENPETP (for TVET: Technical and Vocational Education Training).

Table 7.4: Initial training institutions

N°	Training Levels	Institutions	Dates of establishment	Acts of establishment
1	Preschool teachers	* -	-	-
2	Primary School teachers	ENI de Conakry	1975	Décret N° 49/PRG du 24 novembre 1975
		ENI de Boké	1975	
		ENI de Labé	1976	-
		ENI de Kindia	1953 (Cours normal) 1975 (ENI)	Décret N° 49/PRG du 24 novembre 1975
		ENI de Dubréka	1991	-
		ENI de Faranah	1966 (ENP)	-
		ENI de N'Zérékoré	1975	Décret N° 49/PRG du 24 novembre 1975
		ENI de Kankan	1975	
3	General Secondary School Teachers	ISSEG	1979 (ENSup Manéah) 1990 (ISSEG)	Ordonnance N° 018 du 12 avril 1990
4	Technical and vocational secondary school teachers (TVET)	ENPETP	IFI (1980) 1986 (ENSET Matoto) 2004 (ENPETP Matoto)	Décret N°526/PRG/80 du 17 novembre 1980 Arrêté N°2004/009640/MET-FP/CAB du 6 Octobre 2004

Source : Extracted from Etude diagnostique sur la question enseignante en République de Guinée/MOE (2013)

-Diagnostic study on the Issue of Education in the Republic of Guinea / MOE (2013)-

It is also worthwhile noting that almost all these institutes have capacity limits in terms of qualified trainers but also places for applicants. With somewhat the exception of ISSEG, which still possesses some non-negligible capacity, and which is also the only institute in Guinea that offers training courses on the subject of education planning and management (see figure below).

Figure 7.13: ISSEG's missions

ISSEG has as mission:

- ✚ The initial and continuing professional and scientific training of the various animators of the Guinean educational system, sanctioned by the certificate, the professional license (Bac + 4 years), the Master's degree and the Doctorate. These include the training of:
 - Trainers of preschool teachers;
 - Secondary school teachers;
 - Trainers of teacher-training colleges;
 - Teaching advisors master trainers;
 - Pedagogical animators of secondary education;
 - Inspectors of elementary and secondary education;
 - Cadres responsible for the planning, administration and management of the education system;
 - Trainers of literacy training agents and community development assistants;
- ✚ The promotion of research in education and in the core disciplines as well as the dissemination and exploitation of results in relation to other relevant sectors;
- ✚ Dissemination of culture and scientific and technical information;
- ✚ Participation in the awakening of scientific curiosity among young people and the construction of national identity;
- ✚ Promoting the application of science, technology and technology to solving the country's economic, social and cultural development problems;
- ✚ the contribution to the development of the policy and the definition of reforms for the educational system:
- ✚ The development of exchanges and cooperation with other educational and research institutions in Guinea, Africa and in the world;
- ✚ The development of income-generating activities in evaluation; audit, consulting, training and service delivery.

Source: Extract from Etude diagnostique sur la question enseignante en République de Guinée/MOE (2013)

-Diagnostic study on the Issue of Education in the Republic of Guinea / MOE (2013)-

In addition to capacity development, there is also another aspect that cadres dwell on a lot, that of reorganizing the image of the system in order to give a greater attractiveness to the education sector.

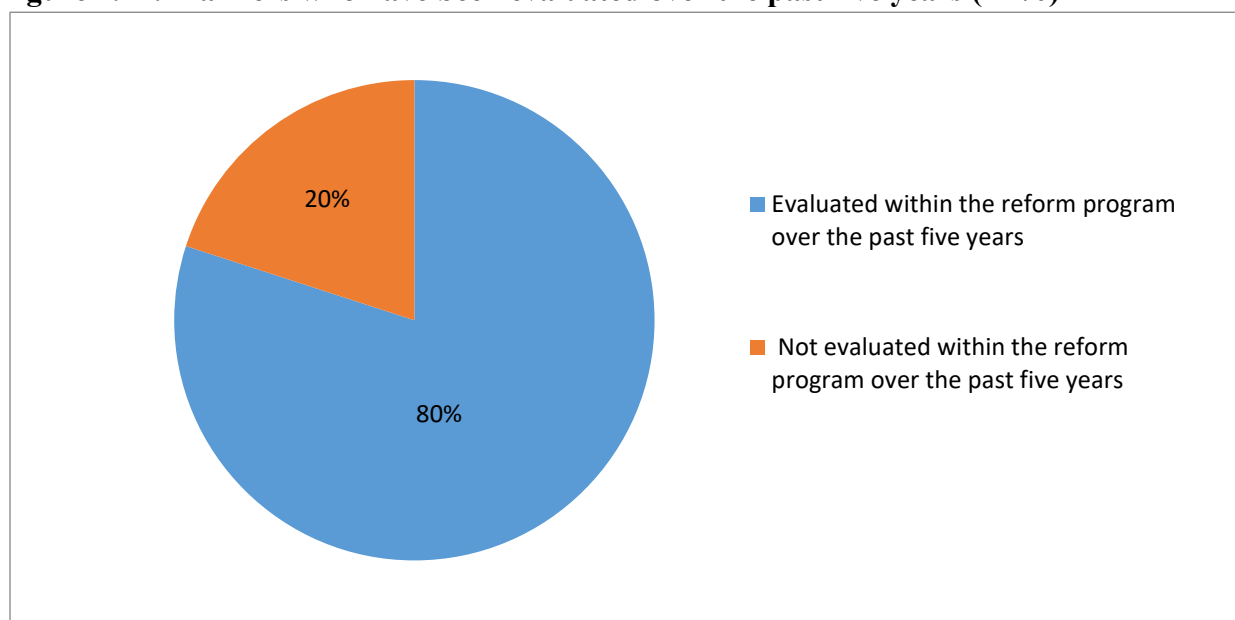
Effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation processes

Subsequently, the other variant of shortcomings that plague the cadres of planning and management services revolve around the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation programs. It is true that the distribution of responsibilities related to monitoring and evaluation activities is well established at each level of management of the sector. The MOE at the central level is generally responsible for all deconcentrated structures; the IREs look after the DPEs; the DPEs look after DSEE and the latter in turn look after schools. With this arrangement, the autonomy of each level is in principle guaranteed. This is, to a certain extent real, apart from a few irregularities that are sometimes reported (an overlap between the IRE and DPE missions in the regional capitals). However, monitoring and evaluation processes are often held twice a year according to the provisions in this regard. Sometimes, for various reasons, this planning is not respected in some cases, as it was reported to the researcher on a few occasions. Often, reasons associated with this failure are of a material nature, like cases of inspectors confronted with the lack of transportation means.

Moreover, another aspect to note in relation to monitoring and evaluation processes is the nature of their conduct. For among all the cadres met with and interviewed — 80 per cent do assert having been evaluated and only 20 per cent have not (see figure below)—their views on the effectiveness of the process is somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, there are those who claim that the evaluations in their current format serve to help and guide the staff (they are more in the form of educational consulting visits at the level of schools, posits a senior cadre of the IGEN at the MOE level). In addition, another inspector from the central department contended that now the inspection has changed its method and the inspectors no longer inspire fear. In view of this detente, other cadres wonder even about the impact of these inspections, which for them are quite limited since they rarely give rise to sanctions (either positive or negative).

Notwithstanding these discrepancies, some cadres claim to have benefited from these evaluations because, as a result of these evaluations, it has been possible to improve their methods of work. The aspect that found larger consensus is the return of information (feedback), especially from the central level to the lower level. And because of this, most of the staff at the deconcentrated levels lament that once the reports are sent to the direct superiors and to the higher level, usually no feedback is received in return however.

Figure 7.14: Planners who have been evaluated over the past five years (in %)



Source: Questionnaire

Motivation

In fact, discussing the issue of staff performance refers to a mixture of elements that favors or constrains such process. Most often, the salary treatment, the personnel living and working conditions, the relationships in the workplace are among other factors identified as allowing good performance. From this view point, the Guinean cadres do not oppose this fact and are not an exception to it either. Instead, the only fact that they are subject to exception on is lacking almost everything that is listed above. In the first place, is the lower level of wages that many cadres deplore, as stated by a BSD senior staff at the MOE level who draws a comparative schema.

The Guinean official does not compare to the Senegalese or Ivorian official, who have the same position, the same number of years of experience. They are better than the Guineans from the point of view of treatment, so you must know it.

This situation is crucial and calls for further efforts to alleviate such stress, which is so far borne by almost all the sector's cadres as a whole. Also, despite the working conditions that are in fact common to almost all developing countries, the most recurrent complaints besides the salary are of immaterial nature. And the frustrations that are expressed, as already discussed in previous

sections, vary between laxity characterizing staff management (recruitment, appointment and whimsical promotion), the lack of adequate support, control and inspection but also and above all good leadership. However, some cadres also put emphasis on the moral character of encouragement and recognition of good achievement in their work. A great—moral—comfort to which many cadres are attached to but it is not often given to the meritorious people. To illustrate the effect such incentives may have on staff morale, an excerpt from an interview the researcher had with a senior cadre of the IGEN mentions the following:

They are neither material nor financial, apart from my position's premium, they are moral and I love it. The respect, the consideration given to my remarks and suggestions, not only honor me but also galvanize my eagerness to always do well.

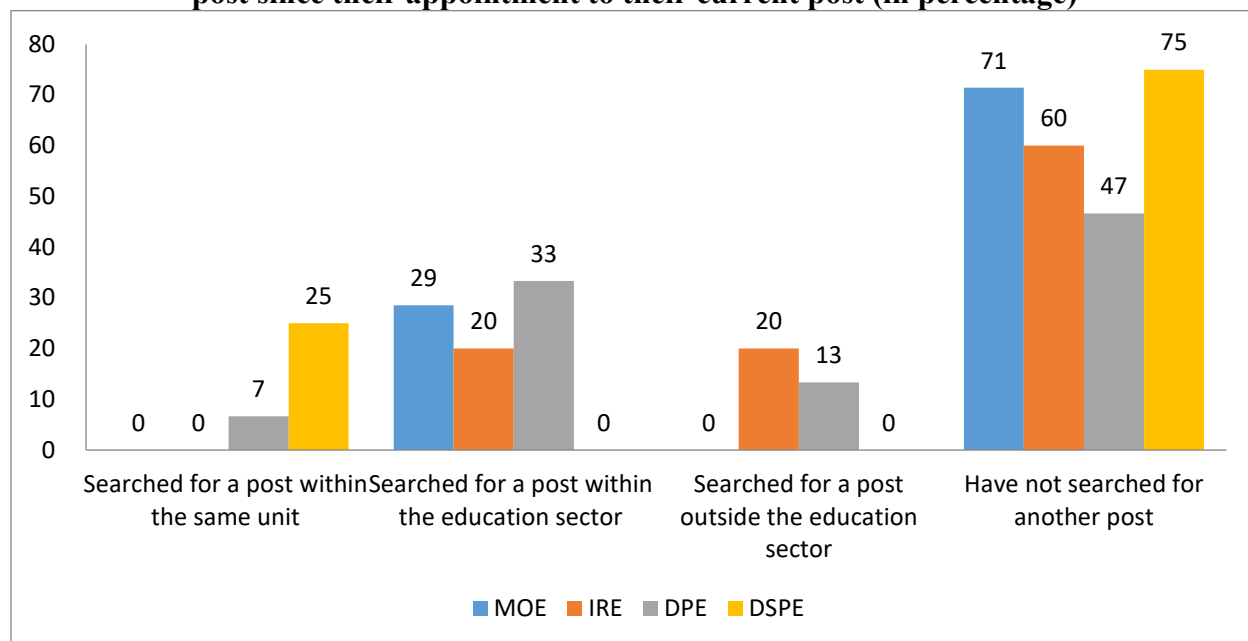
In some respects, all cadres in the education sector in Guinea demonstrate their commitment to the recognition of the merit and service they are rendering to the nation. And almost without exception, after being asked this question 'do you still have the same motivation in the same position, compared to the time before you occupied it? If so, why? If not, what are the reasons?' In response, the majority replied 'yes' and to justify it, some reasons of these kinds are often advanced:

I will always be motivated considering that for me at each position where they [the chiefs/hierarchy] put me on, it is a trust placed in me so I have to deserve it

Thus, assessing the credibility of such an assertion may appear challenging, however what is certain is the fact that, the public service personnel 'turnover' in Guinea is very little (see figure below). And this is due to two reasons: first, serving in the public service is perceived as a pension guarantee for life after retirement. Second, a cadre met with and interviewed explains that:

In fact, the Guinean is not so used to the private sector, it is towards these last years that the private sector is on the horizon, the Guinean has known that as soon as you finish school, you commit yourself, and you do not end up unemployed. It is only now that people are unemployed, otherwise we in the first republic, as soon as you finish school you have your job, you have your little salary and you continue like that until retirement.

Figure 7.15: Educational planners and managers who had already tried to obtain another post since their appointment to their current post (in percentage)



Source: Questionnaire

CHAPTER VIII: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This investigation has sought to determine empirically what changes the international assistance brought to education development using the decentralization trend of capacity development to achieve EFA in developing countries. Guinea as a typical case study offered a ripe context for exploring this new trend of education reform and development assistance. With emphasis put on the improvement of the education sector management, posed interrogations of this research dug out to reveal the relevance of the reform intervention. In a nutshell, the effective introduction and delivery of this new trend to education development assistance in Guinea is yet the starting point of new challenges for the system. As such, shedding light on the achieved changes, the responsiveness as well as the determinant factors of these changes, as a result of the new approach of international development assistance to education, purposely stimulated the whole research.

The multifarious requisites facing poor countries in enacting sound education reform programs, renders the solidarity of the international community more than ever desirable. This burden-sharing momentum manifested in the area of development of the education sector in developing countries came up with its own branding. And the deployment of international development assistance gradually evolved to take different forms and dimensions, which favored the metamorphosis of the educational policy landscape, its conception, formulation, adoption and implementation, with a more transnational character. As such, this makes de facto governance of the education sector and intended reform initiatives both a central issue and concern for recipient countries as actors and factors involved in determining the reform intervention process and outcome diversify. Guinea in fact displayed this nexus of dynamics surrounding global initiative reform intervention into local and education sectoral level.

From the vantage point of the investigation's findings, the study draws as conclusion that reform interventions in Guinea's education system are apparently ambiguous in their nature, fragmented in their conception, lacking coherence and means to implement planned educational policy. And that problems of readability, sustainability and harmonization of the sector's achievements and actions also prevent the system from thriving. As such, foreign consultants brought in as facilitators on the one hand, often end up masterminding the reform process and on

the other, informal institutions substituted the education system's formal and legal framework, which ultimately contributed in disrupting the normal conduct of the intervention's plans and change measures from taking root. At last and above all, the course of the EFA program intervention is literally devoid of means of action, reaction, and this within a disabling institutional environment marked by a repetitive socio-political and economic turmoil, and a complex administrative organizational arrangement.

Revisiting the research questions

This research focused on the following research questions. As a result of this inquiry, *the answer to question one—what changes this education sector reform has brought to Guinea's education system?—can be summarized in the following manner:*

The adoption of the EFA program in Guinea has led to the country's endowment with a national poverty reduction strategy paper. Moreover, the mobilization efforts to achieve this general plan have contributed in raising the awareness on the implication of human capital development in the fight against poverty. The integration of the education component as a central priority of the plan also allowed the country's commitment to ensuring the performance and sustainability of the education system and the achievement of universal primary education. The implementation strategy adopted was a vanguard in the awakening of the need for decentralization of educational services and ensuring its good governance. Consequently, this strategy finally encouraged a gradual mobilization of local communities and their participation in the development of the education sector. The enthusiasm generated by this reform has also favored an increase in the number of actors and development partners evolving in the education sector.

However, it appears that explicit policies and procedures have not supported— formalized plans and administrative structures—EFA intervention and/or implementation to achieve the program's goals. The education reform intervention is overall an iterative, heavy and cumbersome process infused with no proper diagnosis of prevailing matters in the system (a view of a cadre from the national M&E unit). As a result, the institutional structures and processes experienced no real adjustment with the advent of the new reform program. Overall, the optimal quantitative gains achieved in terms of education expansion still remain, to the detriment of quality, equity and efficiency. Yet, given the looming situation on the sector, a

blurred vision characterizes the sectoral prospective (uncertainty and incoherence in policy and its intervention—no clear road map drawn on financial, aid provision and support—to engage in a sustainable action plan).

In addressing question number two—how responsive has been decentralized capacity management under EFA programme to Guinea’s education?—, this study arrived at the conclusion that:

The agenda setting in Guinea’s education reform assistance is in various instances tinged with informal influences exerted by international agencies who, putting first their mandate forward, knowingly or unknowingly masterminded the choice of reform project activities. Moreover, through their power leverage in the provision of technical and financial support—intentionally or unintentionally—altered the nature of policies and plans that were rather indicative to immediate needs and beneficiaries, and favoring instead standardized programming which stifles the emancipation of any indigenous initiative in bettering educational governance in the country.

Furthermore, the cross-referencing of data on education in Guinea shows that recent interventions in this sector and its system have only been typical replications of initiatives already formulated and implemented elsewhere. What is more, prior implication of local level actors in the early stage of policy formulation that allows for a better grasp of local needs (reversing/shifting the existing power structures in order to empower local level structures) was merely or even not sought and/considered. The apparent restrictive deals that occurred in the reform introduction made frame, primarily, for the constriction of responsibilities and resources conferred on deconcentrated structures of the education services and also on local authorities, which characterizes the life span of EFA program intervention. In second instance, it justifies the overall unpreparedness of Guinea’s cadres to such a structural change, which they viewed as a dispossession of their own prerogatives.

As a result, this engendered resistance to the reform and/or conflict of interest within the sector at some levels (interviews with Aide & Action). Therewith, an adverse effect of rather too ambitious prevision and top-down planning also characterizes the reform whereby Guinea EFAP failed in its phasing [especially the third phase] to deliver strategic planning and management dedicated entirely to the bottom level (prefecture and sub-prefecture).

To elucidate question three— what factors have been determinant to bring about these changes, how and to what extent?—, the following elements provide that:

In general, a non-conducive institutional environment that is punctuated with repetitive socio-political and economic troubles surrounded almost the entire period of the reform intervention. The macro-institutional constraints that have endured over time have not left a completely stable environment conducive to anchoring institutional reforms in the country in general and the education sector in particular. As a result, recent reforms in the education sector have markedly lacked legal provisions, which would constitute the underlying foundation upon which all actions of the program's intervention should be based. Beyond all expectations on renewed approaches to educational performance, quantitative gains registered within the education system are attributable to the significant improvement in school infrastructure. However, the low quality of services in the sector remains attributable to institutional delinquency observed at several levels.

Moreover, deep observations of the system in place reveal that the educational sector's institutional efficiency remains strangled by a lack of organization (coordination and communication), clarity in the internal structures (roles & responsibility), resources (intellectual, material, technical/technological and financial) and control (transparency and accountability). Notwithstanding concerted efforts to enhance the service delivery mechanism, the general efficiency and performance of Guinea's education system is underpinned by a disproportionate devolution of power and resources within the sector, which is detrimental to effective decentralization in the planning and management of educational services, especially at the lower level structures. It is then that the excessive leniency and its generalization within the sector explains the fact that at large, capacity enhancement of the planning and management units of the education system suffered from a complete absence of an organic framework regulating the overall management of personnel and careers. In the same vein, the definition of strategic plans and their means of realization also suffered from a lack of accompanying measures both internally and externally due to the low capacity of the education system's evaluation, reaction and anticipation in the face of foreseen or unforeseen risks related to the reform program intervention.

Furthermore, it emerges that from the recapitulation of this study's findings, a certain number of implications have been drawn subsequently. Just an attempt to situate the limits of involvement of each stakeholder engaged in the reform; also, and above all, outline drivers and inhibitors to the program's intervention in the education sector in Guinea.

At macro level, the content of the reform ends up lacking a proper fit.

Against this backdrop, the area of interest of this study sought out to determine dynamics and related variants that conditioned the behaviors and attitudes of stakeholders in shaping the education reform process and outcome. The investigation took a marked and attentive look at the critical aspects that led to the transition of the Guinean educational system into an intervention program driven by a wave of global and structural reforms with multiple challenges. The Education for All reform program, launched under the banner of new approaches to international development assistance in education, loomed up with its own prescriptions. This in fact tightened the noose on the recipient countries.

Guinea with its status as an early subscriber to this program's goals, and a country elected as recipient of the program's assistance mechanism—the Fast-Track Initiative—has in many respects, however, experienced the reform's intervention roll-out. Starting from the real nature that motivated the need to consider reform in the sector but also and especially the inherent form circumscribing the contours of the intervention reveals the lines of demarcation between instigators and actors of the EFA program intervention in Guinea.

That being said, the initiative taken for large-scale reform has not been an emanation of the country's sectoral ambitions, which apparently has lost the thread in this respect, at least for the last three decades, starting from 1985. Thus, priority definition when talking about reform programs in Guinea had taken the form of something that quite often falls over the education sector. Recent implication of this fact is that the EFA program was adopted regardless of the country's specific concerns in the sector, particularly in terms of basic education development. For the translation of this global program to Guinea, the country has had to move away from the initial goal to take a holistic form. Yet, all levels of the education system should be given due attention but the relevance of each level to the country's prevailing needs should also guide the strategy design and priorities setting. Notwithstanding, serious difficulties facing the country in

the development and management of only its basic education sub-sector, the national EFA plan, which is being integrated into a general development plan—poverty reduction strategy paper, adopted a sector-wide approach to all stages of the education sector, thus, targeting sub-sectors other than basic education such as upper secondary and higher education. A fact, which in itself is a deficiency that signaled a poor departure in the introduction of the program. As such, a major point to be drawn from the study is that hidden competing institutional interests between international aid agencies, on the one hand and Guinea government officials on the other, propelled reform intervention in its early stages. Since, invested with great margins of maneuver, these aid agencies have not only influenced the decision-making process in the design of the country's program, leading in the first place to overloading the reform program, but secondly, to a disruption of the national policy process, and thirdly, to an increase in the transaction costs associated with the fulfillment of set requirements for receiving support, coordinating their—donor agencies and overall management of the reform —activities as well.

Moreover, the joint commitment made by both development partners and the Guinea government in providing the necessary funding for the correct implementation of the program have not really been effective. As, on the part of aid agencies, this was marked by delays and later on by their net disengagement, and on the side of the government, overall efforts made were largely insufficient. As such, this infers that the fundamental principles—harmonization and alignment of aid, and strong ownership and partnership among stakeholders—that form the basis of the new approach to international development assistance to education in Guinea have been flouted in this respect.

At meso level, prevailing competing interests among stakeholders ends up casting a gloom over the reform context. Whereas, undoubtedly, bearers of the reform program in Guinea are sufficiently aware of the relevance of context in the realization of the reform plans, in all likelihood, the measures envisaged and the mechanisms deployed did not align with the prevailing context of the country and its education sector. This is the simple reason that the playground “the institutional environment” in which the rules of the game are nested that can foster healthy political and economic interactions, or else, the organization that manages the administrative system to deliver good services, have certainly not been disentangled. Despite the fact that the institutional capacity of the country's education sector is being perceived as weak

and that its improvement deemed vital to the success of the reform intervention henceforth. Yet the commitment to insufflate appropriate change in this respect remains trapped by the internal “change agents” themselves. Although, the role of these change agents and their interests and incentives in shaping policy and institutional reforms appear to be the same in either countries with effect of autocratic or democratic regimes. It is then, attempts to reform overall institutions with highly political connotations made up of individuals from various social collectivities with divers, competing goals had to stumble over Guinea’s historical legacy crippled by hierarchies, and constant power struggles. Thus, inscribing the hallmarks of good governance, Grindle and Mason (2002:1) contend, “imply at times changes in political organization, the representation of interests, and processes for public debate and policy decision-making”, has not been the subject of real concern.

In spite of being particularly at the center of the program’s intervention, ‘policy and governance—especially education policy and governance—is inherently political and therefore reforms must accept and manage power, competition, and conflict between social groups who are first and foremost concerned with trying to adapt and survive in highly complex and volatile environments before acting on behalf of institutional goals’ (Bolman & Deal, 1997; Honig, 2006; Mc Dermott, 1999; Scott & Davis, 2007; Swift-Morgan, 2011). Thereby, given the prevalence of political patronage and clientelism in the Guinean education system, indulgence has always evaded concrete actions towards sensitive issues that directly deprives or reduces the interests, i.e., power and/or resources of certain key actors in the education sector. This observation explains why there is a contrast in the results of reform programs in the country. Whereby it can be seen that, after intervention, there is usually an expansion of educational coverage due to construction of additional schools, and the recruitment of more teachers (two reform activities that are sources of political and economic gains) for both the government and its key education officials. This is inevitably not without consequence, as determined by this study in relation to the devolution of responsibilities and resources across the sector (placing more opportunities at the top at the expense of grassroots structures. Such an approach has so far contributed to maintaining the status quo (blurring the chain of command), encouraging the pursuit of vested interests, thus reducing any possibility of performance of local actors and autonomous initiatives. And de facto the provision of quality and equitable services.

At micro level, the absence of formalized legal and regulated procedures thwarted the reform process. In fact, if in any reform initiative, political, economic and social factors are viewed as being so determinants, so would be the human factor, which actually is a very essential factor since it determines the entire process of the whole reform, at play. More specifically, through the policy planning, management, implementation and evaluation stages. Obviously, it is quite clear that explicit rules and procedures have been lacking in the formalization and framing of EFA reform activities in Guinea, especially, activities pertaining to the improvement of the education sector planning and management. As such, the internal and external efficiency of the education system suffered from various inadequacies. Firstly, the lack of competent human resources due to the absence of a specific and operational framework for recruitment and personnel management, which contributes to depriving the education sector of enormous intellectual potential. Secondly, a structural lack of physical resources was conspicuous, including equipment necessary to ensure the smooth running of planning and management activities. Thirdly, aspects related to performance enhancement in the education sector still dwelled on issues of authority, accountability and transparency—the central nerve of any educational reform process—, which further complicate any internal impact assessment work, related to the reform program's intervention. Subsequent to these defects is the inadequacy of the existing monitoring and evaluation mechanism available to the system, which in the first place makes tracking performance difficult, especially for sectoral governance related issues; direct support related needs for field agents; merit-based promotion in relation to career paths; good performance rewarding and/or improper conduct-sanctioning scheme.

Moreover, it should be emphasized that avenues for future research can be potentially derived from this study, since, above all, its initial aim is to revive the debate around educational reform initiatives directed towards national empowerment, triggered by national ideals, and eventually devoted to serve real national needs. Then, taking into account on the one hand, the elasticity of the concept of capacity development i.e., whose capacity is to be developed and for what reason, and on the other hand, the various but specific challenges facing the Guinean educational system, would certainly motivate other investigations to explore this implication on the access and/or quality aspects.

At last, to make program's intervention operate with a capacity development approach that unfolds itself with its genuine principles, suggests that the reform initiative be driven by an internal and inclusive desire for change. As, essentially, it is understood and should remain essentially an endogenous-driven process of change, and the role of development partners is not to "do" capacity development but rather to promote it. In virtue of this discernment, a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the country's actual and prevailing concerns in the sector should be brought to the fore to better consider a concerted, systematic and strictly inclusive approach that is especially tailor-made and endowed with its own means of action. In so doing, it would help to address constant but specific sectoral governance matters and that in a perennial manner. Likewise, Kingdon et al. (2014:28) in making reference to Buchert (1998:11-25) supported that "reforming critical educational issues is dependent on context; and "the implications for both government and external actors appear to be the same in that 'critical support must come from below, and successful and sustained reforms must rely on local rather than central and on national rather than international initiative and determination".

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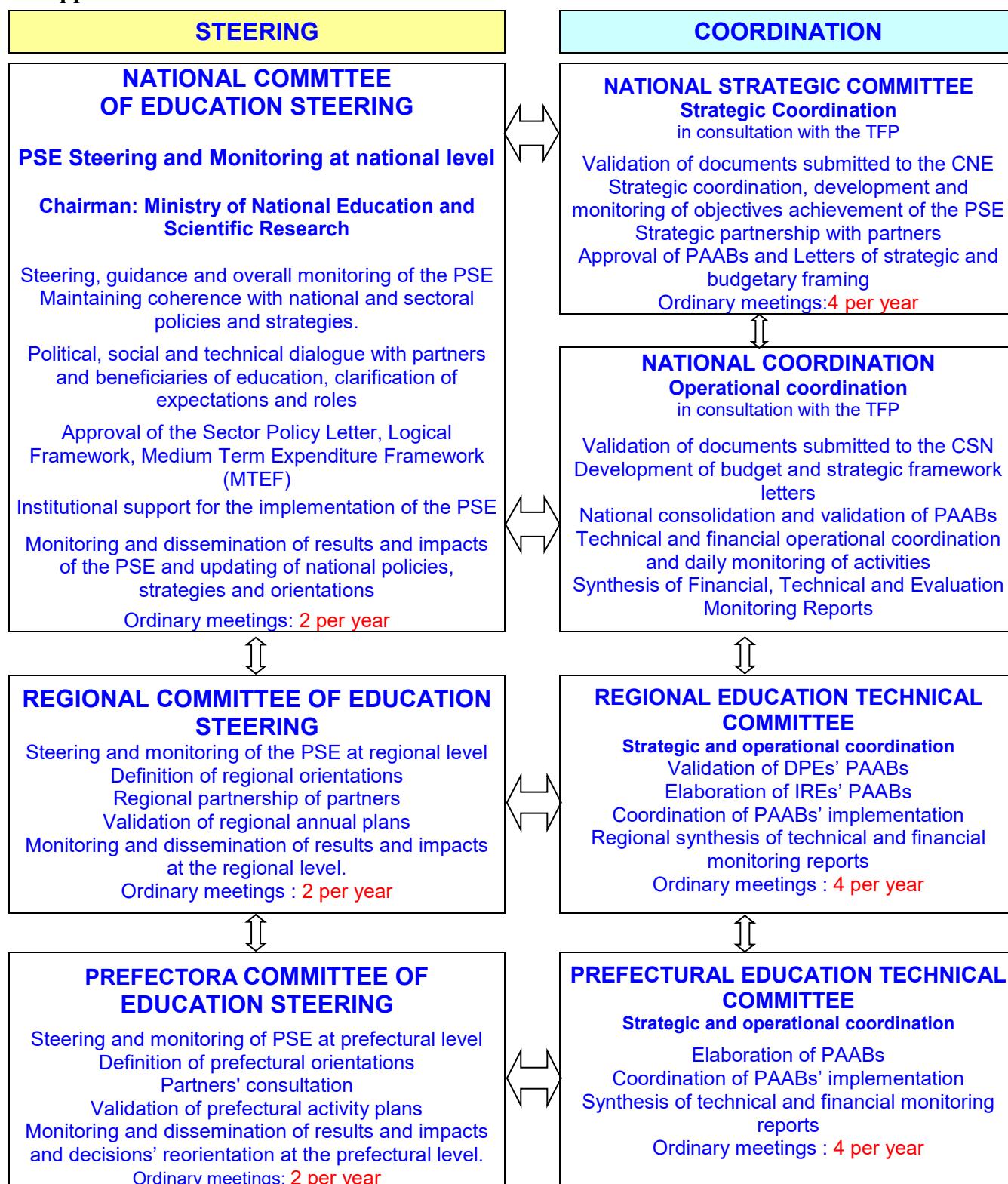
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Appendix A: THE PSE STEERING AND COORDINATION SCHEMA



Source: Ministry of National Education & Scientific Research/The Sectorial Education Program Implementation Manual (2007)

Appendix B: Features of Guinea's education sector capacity development at the Institutional level

Institutional shortfalls	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Instability of the institutional setting -Lack of vision for the sector -Politicization of the education sector -Frequent changes of managers at almost of levels -Constraints related to bureaucratic heaviness -Communities poverty; unavailability of local partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lack of a sound organization (segmentation of services) -Abusive recruitment ; Complexity of tasks -Personnel are often assigned without job profile and appropriate competence -Different training levels of personnel, which often mismatch with job profiles. -Lack of skills in data collection, especially school administration personnel, which affect the reliability of the data
Measures to improve the education personnel performance in planning and management	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Capacity strengthening (regular training & provision of resources) -Recruiting cadres who meet the job profile/requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Organize series of exchange sessions (seminars /workshops) on data utilization -Elaboration of budget & its eventual implementation -Effective control, support & supervision; -Leadership abilities
Measures that the personnel assert can help developing capacity in the education sector	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Strengthening the Capacity of the managers of the education system (training—academic, pedagogical & ICT, leadership and management skills—for the personnel -Allocate more resources (fund, material and equipment) to MOE structures, especially at the deconcentrated structures -Establish viable structures and appoint qualified personnel to manage these structures -Establish mutual trust within the sector and among the personnel since an existing generalized mistrust affects the performance of the sector. -Institute a better coherence to avoid segmentation within the system -Initiate a common & global educational vision & draft a sound sectoral policy letter (through general encounters) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Improve the personnel working conditions .Have fair, transparent & adequate usage of resources allocated to diff. services .More transparency and ethic in the management of resources & personnel .Raise the awareness and qualification of the personnel and its motivation .Put more transparency in the management of the education system .Strict enforcement of texts .Make management & leadership skills a requisite criteria of appointment in strategic positions and providing in-service training, monitoring/evaluation .Value competencies and rigor at work .Revitalize pre-service & continuous training for the administration personnel of both incumbents and new-appointees. .Qualification of careers in the education sector by restricting unfair practices including corruption among others .Align the education policy to the country's needs

Source: Interviews/Survey

Appendix C: Features of Guinea's education sector capacity development at the Organizational Level

Merits	Demerits
Organization and Coordination	
Existence of ad hoc frameworks coordinating plan, strategy & implementation process during reform programs lifetime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -High concentration of authorities at the central level -Lack of proper & established mechanism to channel funds at local levels -Fragmentation of structures & duplication of responsibilities across the sector -Irregularity of meetings within and between the units at each level of the education administration.
Logistical and material resources	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relative increase in the support & supply of equipment to the MOE - Relative increase in the use of IT equipment by the MOE personnel - Relative increase in the number of personnel using the internet for their work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Equipment supply to the MOE remain disparate, insufficient and sometimes of low quality - Access to internet is very limited at all levels of the MOE -Almost all units' offices lack accessories and consumables at all levels of the MOE. -The communication system and logistical means represent a performance handicap in almost all levels of the MOE
Difficulties often faced by educational planners and managers in their day-to-day activities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -“Human resources management” -“ Statistical data collection; data input, processing and clearance” -“lack of planning tools” -“lack of coordination” -“preparing development plan” -“Salary payment” -Close supervision & pedagogical inspection” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -“Teachers' monitoring & evaluation” - lack of material logistical equipment”; school isolation” -“Data input & management” -“Monitoring & evaluation” -“Training needs identification” -“Close supervision”; “Pedagogical management” -“Conducting audit” -“centralizing information”

Source: Interviews/Survey

Appendix D: Features of Guinea's education sector capacity development at the Individual level

Merits	Demerits
Recruitment of education planners and managers	
-Formal announcement of job vacancies in the sector	-No guidelines on recruitment procedures -Vacancy announcement is not regulated and observed for planners & managers -No qualification requirements for professional positions exist -Lack of skills/experience of many educational planners/managers at all levels -Old organic texts have long guided job descriptions & updated procedural manuals are not correctly utilized in the day-to-day activities.
Evaluation of the education planners and managers	
-Seasonal personnel evaluation by the National Education General Inspectorate (IGEN) - IGEN feedback judged useful to the personnel	-No regular and regulated evaluation by individual units of the MOE -Irregular supervisors' feedback & with less or no guidelines improvement provision
Factors of motivation/performance or lack of motivation/performance for planners & managers	
-Compliance with & applicability of legal texts -Descent salaries & generous emoluments -Acknowledgement of good initiatives & performance -Clear distribution of role & job description -Availability of regular & relevant training opportunities -Availability of resources& responsibilities (at local level) -Better involvement of social partners to support education	-Low salaries; absence of professional/social security -Lack of resources & poor working conditions -Lack of reward based on merit -Promotion possibilities are few and not often based on personnel accomplishment -Lack of support and proper supervision -Lack of training and orientation; -Heavy workload
Training needs for education planners & managers	
-High demands for training -great appreciation of previous training -Interest in participation in workshops	-Lack of training needs evaluation at all levels -Training program offered are irregular, lack frequency and follow up -Lack of institutes dedicated to education planning/management training

Source: Interviews/Survey

Appendix E:

PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT AND CONSENT FORM

The University of Tsukuba, Japan – Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences –Department of International and Advanced Japanese Studies

Mamadou Saliou Diallo, (Doctoral Student) E-mail: office@japan.tsukuba.ac.jp

Project: Analysis of Capacity Development in Education Management under the Education for All Programme in Guinea

Introduction

Thank you in advance for your interest in taking part in this research project. As it follows, further information about this project is going to be given to you, and this would hopefully guide your decision to participate in this research.

In fact, please consider taking your time to carefully read this information. Also, please feel free to ask for further explanation on whatever you consider unclear regarding this project.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and, if you wish not to participate, you may withdraw at any time.

About the research

This project is conducted by Mr. Diallo Mamadou Saliou as part of his doctoral thesis, and supervised by Professor Timur Dadabaev in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Tsukuba. Also, the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Tsukuba has approved this research project.

The purpose of this research is to analyze the sustainable framework put in place during EFA reform programme in order to strengthen Guinea's education system decentralized management capacity. Key questions guiding this inquiry are as follow:

1. What changes this education sector-wide approach brought to Guinea's education system?
2. How responsive has decentralized capacity management been under EFA programme to Guinea's education system performance?
3. What factors have been determinant to bring about these changes, how and to what extent?

About your participation

Upon your decision to take part, you will be requested the following:

To kindly participate in an individual semi-structured interview. This would take approximately one hour and the focus would be on Guinea's education system decentralized management capacity, to depict the gradual unfolds of the reform through the overall structures of the education system.

If you allow, the interview will be recorded on a digital voice recorder for research transcription purposes. Full transcription of the data generated will not be done but major excerpts from interview will be made available for accuracy checks.

Confidentiality and anonymity issues

The confidentiality and anonymity of the responses that you provide in this interview are going to be fully protected according to the provisions on the matter. Your personal information also will be kept and secured entirely. Treatment of any information that you provide will be completely anonymous and alias/code used instead. Stored data will be subject of destruction after five years upon completion and publication of the research work.

Feedback

Upon completion of this research project, the participant may request a copy of the main findings. Also, these findings may be eventually diffused through conferences and/or publications.

Participation

As stated above, participation in this project is voluntary. In case that you decide not to participate or to withdraw, you can do so without any prejudice.

Further enquiries

For any additional information about the research or concerns related to the conduct of the research, please contact the researcher or his supervisor.

Decision to participate

To express your willingness to take part in this project, please confirm having full knowledge and understanding of the information given herein and therefore sign the attached consent form provided below.

CONSENT FORM

Analysis of Capacity Development in Education Management under the Education for All Programme in Guinea

I have been given information about the above-mentioned project that Mr. Diallo Mamadou Saliou is conducting as part of his Doctoral thesis supervised by Professor Timur Dadabaev in the Department of International and Advanced Japanese Studies at the University of Tsukuba.

I have been told about the effect associated with the research, which includes protecting the participant anonymity, and have been given the opportunity to ask any questions I may have about the research and my participation.

In this research project, I will have as tasks to participate in an individual semi-structured interview. This would take approximately one hour and the focus will be on Guinea's education system decentralized management capacity, to depict the gradual unfolds of the reform through the overall structures of the education system.

I understand that during the interview session a digital voice device [will] / [will not] be used to record the information.

I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary; I am free not to participate and also to withdraw from the research myself and/or any raw data that I provided at any time. My refusal to participate or withdrawal of consent will have no effect or prejudice on me.

I understand that the data generated from this research will be stored and secured, and treated with confidentiality according to the provisions on the matter by the researcher.

I understand that transcription of the data generated will not be done but major excerpts from interview will be made available for accuracy checks by the participant.

I understand that upon completion of this research project, the information I provided will be destroyed after 5 years.

I understand that by signing this form I am indicating my consent to participate in the project.

I understand that the data collected from my participation will be used for academic purposes (i.e., doctoral thesis, journal publication, academic conferences), and I consent for it to be used in that manner.

Signed

-----Date-----/-----/-----

Name: -----

Appendix F:

Interview/Focus Group questions

Informant Type: Central, Regional & Prefectural Ministry of education officials

Name:	Interview Date:
Position/Title:	Unit:

Capacity at the individual level

1-Mandate

1.1 What is your mandate as an individual officer of this unit? Can you briefly describe your post/job?

1.2 Can you provide a document that describes your job according to your mandate? If not, how this information is officially provided to you?

2-Tasks

2.1 What are the overall activities that you conduct in your post?

2.2 What are the activities that you regularly conduct as the most or least related to your post?

3-Qualifications

3.1 What kind of qualifications do you possess?

3.2 How well do you think your qualifications match with your job requirements?

4-Training

4.1 What kind of general training have you received before? Do you feel you have enough training to do your job?

4.2 How did the training that you receive contribute to your own improvement, to the improvement of your job and your unit? What are the areas that you feel you still need some training?

5-Experience

5.1 What kind of experience do you have in general?

5.2 How much experience do you possess in the current domain that you work in?

6-Values

6.1 What are the specific values that you are requested to observe in the discharge of your duties?

6.2 What are the most common shared values in the fulfillment of your tasks? Do you regularly comply with them?

7-Attitudes

7.1 How do you perceive the introduction of new practices in the conduct of your daily tasks?

7.2 How confident are you with unfamiliar tasks or tasks that you lack competence?

7.3 What do you think can instill a mindset of good performance or in handling a workload?

8-Motivations

8.1 What motivates you in applying for this post? Do you still have the same motivation in occupying the same position, compare to the time before you occupy it? If yes, why? If no, what are the reasons?

8.2 Are you satisfied with your working environment, financial treatment and advancement, and the support and guidance you received? Do you often get timely feedbacks from your superiors?

8.3 What are the additional treatments and possibly favors that one can expect from similar position like yours?

Capacity at the Organizational level

In the conduct of this analysis, the first unit to be considered at the central level is the Ministry of Education (MEPU-EC) as a whole with particular focus on the Department of Planning & Management. At the regional level, the unit on which the analysis will focus is the IRE (Regional Inspectorate of Education). While at the prefectural level, the DPE (Directorate of Prefectural Education) will represent the unit of analysis. At each of these three level, a “division/or service” is used to describe the segments that compose a unit. At the sub-prefectural level, the unit of analysis is solely based on the DSSE (Sub-Prefectural Delegate of Education) office.

9-Mandate

9.1 What are the responsibilities and authority of this department?

9.2 What is the type of official document that clearly states its mandate? How does the functioning and/or the personnel of the unit comply with this document?

9.3 What are the specific goals of this unit? How does the personnel know or participate in setting these goals?

10-Tasks

10.1 What are the overall activities that the unit conducts? What are the activities that are the most or less related to its mandate? How much time does the unit devote for such activities?

11-Internal Management

▪ Communication and coordination

11.1 How is organized the communication within the unit? Is there a specialized body with such responsibility? If not, is there any other alternative?

11.2 Besides staff meetings, how does the information circulate within different divisions that compose a unit? How this coordination is established and by who?

▪ Transparency and accountability

11.3 In the unit, what is the pattern of the decision-making process? How important decisions are made (such as personnel management)? Who is involved in this matter?

11.4 Does the personnel know about the budget allocation, its origin and re-allocation? Who decides on this regard?

11.5 What is the accountability mechanism of the unit, if any? How does it operate vis-a-vis the hierarchy, the personnel and the service beneficiaries?

12-Incentives

▪ Supervision and support

12.1 Is there any mechanism that regularly checks the achievements of the unit? How is the work/performance of different services assessed and by who? What effect such an assessment may have on the personnel morale and motivation?

12.2 What kind of system exists to encourage and reward good performance in the unit?

12.3 Does the personnel of different services of the unit receive guidelines, training, or manuals on how to do their job? Do they receive regular feedbacks from their superiors?

12.4 Is there any training need assessment within the unit? If yes, on which basis? What impact does it have on the previous trainings?

13-Leadership

13.1 How inspiring is the model that presents your hierarchical superior to you? How efficiently are general directives set within your unit implemented?

13.2 Is participatory approach encouraged and good initiatives acknowledged by your hierarchical superior?

13.3 Are there requirements' set to keep a healthy relationship and better performance at work?

14-Structure

▪ Reflection of mandate

14.1 What is the organizational chart of this unit? How adequately is this chart used?

14.2 How compliant is the structure of the unit? What are the changes been made in the organization of the unit?

14.3 How are different tasks shared within the unit? Are they accordingly distributed?

▪ Complexity, clarity

14.4 How are the planning and management tasks defined?

14.5 How responsibilities are identified and shared within the unit? Distributed across or cumulated within one service? If distributed, how coherent are they?

14.6 How does the personnel conceive itself? As team members pursuing similar goals and working jointly or else?

- **distribution of roles & levels of autonomy**

14.7 How is structured the education system administration? What are the main/strategic levels? Are the responsibilities of these levels related to planning & management? If not, which level exercises such responsibilities? Is the distribution of responsibilities among different levels well established? If yes, does each level focus on specific functions? Is the autonomy of each level ensured and the necessary support assured?

14.8 Is there any other service in charge of planning and management besides the regular unit of the MOE (MENA)?

15-Resources

- **Material and financial resources**

15.1 Are resources allocated to the unit according to its need and priorities? Are the material resources (equipment) sufficient and in good quality?

15.2 What kinds of communication facilities exist in the unit? (Fax, telephone, internet, etc.) How accessible are they and by who?

15.3 Are the financial resources given to the unit sufficient? If yes, what are their main sources? How these resources are re-allocated and managed? What is the proportion of resources allocated to the planning and management division?

15.4 Do you think that the mobility and logistical issues represent a serious handicap to the unit performance?

- **Human resources**

15.5 Does the unit have enough personnel? If yes, how is it managed? If not, are there supportive measures to remediate to this shortage?

15.6 Is there any mechanism that contributes to update and enhance the personnel skills to efficiently implement the sector's plans and projects? If yes, how does it look like and who promotes it?

16-Information

16.1 Is the necessary information provided to the unit in a timely manner to adequately accomplish its tasks? Is this information relevant and reliable?

16.2 How this information is generated and treated? Is it computer-based or paper-based files or other means?

16.3 Does the unit possess a proper system of information collection and dissemination?

Capacity at the Institutional level

Formal

17-Policy and plan: *existence, relevance & adherence*

17.1 Does Guinea education sector have a specific education policy document? How appropriate is the policy document vis-à-vis current challenges in the sector?

17.2 Are there established plans that direct the sector development? If yes, are these plans aligned to the policy document and the EFA programme?

17.3 Who took part in the elaboration of the policy and plan documents? Has any consultation and/or participation been conducted? If yes, was it inclusive?

17.4 Do all stakeholders involved in the education sector reform adhere to this policy?

17.5 Are the objectives of the policy and plan clearly defined? Has there been a real commitment to these objectives?

17.6 Are there performance indicators to evaluate achievement of these objectives? How these indicators capture the education planning and management target set by the reform programme?

18-Procedures & staff management

18.1 How does the administrative pattern of the education sector operate and function?

18.2 Is there a specific cadre for education planners and managers? If yes, is the personnel working within the unit all officially hired?

18.3 How is recruited the education planners and managers? What are the procedures and pre-defined criteria?

18.4 How work tasks are assigned to the planning and management personnel?

18.5 Is there a career pattern for educational planners? Is there any career prospect for educational planners and managers? If not, do they have other preferences or work opportunities elsewhere?

19-Systems

19.1 What is the format of Guinea national education vision? Is there a legal framework that promotes it?

19.2 Has there been any recent innovative approach in Guinea's education sector?

19.3 How does the political economy look like at the outset of Guinea EFA reform programme? Has the political economy of the country presented constraints or opportunities for the inception and implementation of the education reform policy?

19.4 Has there been a real commitment to this education reform policy/programme? If yes, has there been a strong political will? Has there been a popular support to this reform programme?

Informal

19.5 Did the social and cultural specificities of the Guinea interfere in the formulation and/or adoption of this reform programme? If yes, to what extent? If not, what could be their advantage or disadvantage in the reform process?

19.6 What major roles customs and norms played in the mediation of the EFA agenda in Guinea's context?

19.7 How customs and norms have driven the local actors' adherence or reticence towards the policy reform adoption and implementation?

Informant Type : TFPs (Technical & Financial Partners)

Name:	Interview Date:
Position/Title:	Organization:

20. How would you interpret the reform of Guinea education system under the EFA programme? Did the reform policy formulation comply with the mechanism of sector programme support? If yes, what was the funding mechanism like? Did the reform policy consider Guinea's local

context and specificities?

21. Do you have an idea about Guinea's opportunities and constraints in the sector at the introduction of decentralized education management capacity reform?

22. What kind of consultation took place between your organization and Guinea government on the reform policy formulation/adoption?

23. Do you think your organization had any influence on the process of education decision-making? If not, why do you think so?

24. Were the plans and interventions of your organization aligned with the recipient country sector's needs and priorities?

25. What kind of coordination took place between your organization and Guinea government, and between your organization and other aid agencies?

26. In which area did your organization get involved in the reform process? Was it in the implementation process? If yes, at which level of the education system?

27. What are the major obstacles faced by your organization during the implementation of decentralized education management capacity?

28. Did the implementation process consider country local context and specificities?

29. Have they been major achievements in the decentralization of education management capacity? If yes, could you please indicate?

30. From your own perspective, what are the shortcomings that Guinea education system is still facing in terms of the sector governance?

31. Do you have any recommendations on how to remediate to these shortcomings? If yes, could you please enumerate?

32. Are there any other issues that have not been mentioned and that you would like to bring in?

Informant Type: CSOs (Civil Society Organizations)

Name:	Interview Date:
Position/Title:	Organization:

33. How would you interpret the reform of Guinea education system under the EFA programme?

34. Do you have any idea about Guinea's opportunities and constraints in the sector at the introduction of decentralized education management capacity reform?

35. What kind of consultation took place between your organization and Guinea government on the reform policy formulation/adoption?

36. Has your organization participated in the education decision-making process? Has your organization supported the government plans and interventions on the sector? If yes, how and in which way?

37. Did the reform policy consider the local context and specificities? Need and priorities?

38. Has there been a good coordination of the reform process between your organization and Guinea government, between your organization and other organizations?

39. In which area did your organization get involved in the reform process? Was it in the implementation process? If yes, did you have the necessary resources?

40. Did the implementation process consider country local context and specificities?

41. What are the major obstacles faced by your organization during the implementation of decentralized education management capacity?

42. Have they been major achievements in the decentralization of education management capacity? If yes, could you please indicate?

43. From your own perspective, what are the shortcomings that Guinea education system is still facing in terms of the sector governance?
44. Do you have any recommendations on how to remediate to these shortcomings? If yes, could you please enumerate?
45. Are there any other issues that have not been mentioned and that you would like to bring in?

Informant Type: CRD (Rural Development Communities)

Name:	Interview Date:
Position/Title:	Community:

46. Were you informed about the PEPT programme implemented in Guinea?
47. Have you been consulted on the reform policy formulation/adoption?
48. Did you participate in the education decision-making process?
49. Did the reform policy consider the local context and specificities? Your community need and priorities?
50. Did you support the reform plans and interventions on the education sector in your community? If yes, how and in which way? If not, why?
51. Have you been involved in the implementation process of the reform? If yes, did you have the necessary resources?
52. From your own perspective, what are the shortcomings that Guinea education system is still facing in terms of the sector governance?
53. Do you have any recommendations on how to remediate to these shortcomings? If yes, could you please enumerate?
54. Are there any other issues that have not been mentioned and that you would like to bring in?

Appendix G: Questionnaire

Analysis of Capacity Development in Education Management under the Education for All Programme in Guinea

The University of Tsukuba, Japan – Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences –Department of International and Advanced Japanese Studies

Mamadou Saliou Diallo, (Doctoral student) E-mail: office@japan.tsukuba.ac.jp

This questionnaire is submitted to you in the perspective to conduct a study on the capacity development strategies of Guinea education system in planning and management implemented under the EFA framework.

The questionnaire herein provided is individual and anonymous. The information generated is going to be analyzed by the researcher and will be treated in a confidential manner.

The responses to the questionnaire that you will provide are of great importance to this study. These responses will contribute to better guide the investigation on “capacity development in decentralizing education planning and management in Guinea implemented under EFA reform programme”.

In order to complete this questionnaire, less than half an hour is required. Thanks beforehand for your cooperation and kind assistance.

A. Mandate

Q1. At which level of the educational system do you work?

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1.1 <input type="checkbox"/> MEPU-EC (Ministry of Pre-Univ. & Civic Ed.) | 1.3 <input type="checkbox"/> DPE |
| 1.2 <input type="checkbox"/> IRE | 1.4 <input type="checkbox"/> DSSE |

Q2. Which post do you occupy?

(.....)

Q3. How did you get admitted to this post?

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3.1 <input type="checkbox"/> Promotion | 3.2 <input type="checkbox"/> Internal competitive recruitment | 3.3 <input type="checkbox"/> External competitive recruitment | 3.4 <input type="checkbox"/> Nomination |
| 3.5 <input type="checkbox"/> Secondment | 3.6 <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer | 3.7 <input type="checkbox"/> Others process | |

Q4. Did you receive an official document (e.g. job description) which specifies your duties and tasks?

- | | |
|--|--|
| 4.1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | 4.3 <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know (Go to Q7) |
| 4.2 <input type="checkbox"/> No (Go to Q7) | |

Q5. If you answered yes to Q4, what type of document is it?

(.....)

Q6. Does this document clearly describe your duties and tasks to perform?

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 6.1 <input type="checkbox"/> Very clearly | 6.2 <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly |
| 6.3 <input type="checkbox"/> Not clearly | |

Q7. Have some changes been made in the responsibilities of your office/department within the last five-ten years?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 7.1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | 7.2 <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|

Q8. If yes, what are the main changes?

(.....)
(.....)

Q9. Have your own responsibilities changed within the last five years?

9.1 ☐ Yes

9.2 ☐ No

Q10. If yes, what are the main changes?

(.....
.....)

B. Tasks

Q11. What are the tasks that you conduct regularly, listing them according to their recurrence? Rank them in order of relevance and importance.

Task in order of recurrence	Task in order of relevance & importance
11.1	11.4
11.2	11.5
11.3	11.6

Q12. Are these three tasks mentioned in the official document referred to in question 5?

	Tick if mentioned
Task 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Task 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Task 3	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q13. Please enumerate three main functions of your department/Unit

(.....
.....
.....)

Q14. Among the strategic education plans developed by MENA/IRE/DPE/DSSE, how do you react to the following statements based on each plan?

	MENA		IRE		DPE		DSSE	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
I know of its existence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I was involved in its preparation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I actively participated in the meeting, approved & validated the plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a copy of the validated plan in my office as reference	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I regularly use the plan in my work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C. Qualifications

Q15. What is your highest academic qualification?

15.1 ☐ End of secondary school certificate

15.2 ☐ Teacher training certificate

15.3 ☐ Bachelor's degree

15.4 ☐ Master's degree

15.5 ☐ PhD

The Institution name & place:

16. In which field/academic discipline did you obtain this degree?

.....

D. Experience

Q17. How many years of work experience do you have in the education sector?

17.1 ☐ Less than 5

17.2 ☐ 5-15

17.3 ☐ 16-25

17.4 ☐ More than 25

Q18. How many years of professional experience do you have in the area of educational planning and management?

18.1 ☐ Less than 5

18.2 ☐ 5-10

18.3 ☐ 10-15

18.4 ☐ More than 15

Q19. How many years have you been occupying your present post?

19.1 ☐ Less than 3 years

19.2 ☐ 4-6

19.3 ☐ 7-9

19.4 ☐ 10 and above

Q20. Have you ever been a school teacher (at least for a full academic year)?

20.1 ☐ Yes

20.2 ☐ No

Q21. What are the positions you have occupied within the last five years, and how long did you stay in each position?

(.....
.....)

E. Training

Q22. Have you received any professional training in education planning and/or management (or a combination) since 2002? If yes, please specify.

Theme	Yes	Year and duration	Venue of training	Who conducted the training (National professionals or non-national professionals or mixed)?
Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Policy analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Leadership/management	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Projections and simulations	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Budget	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Monitoring and evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>			
EMIS	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Statistics	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Others (please specify):	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Q23. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about job training since coming to your present post.

	Yes, very much	Yes, somewhat	Not much	Not at all	No training received
23.1 The training has been helpful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.2 My performance has improved.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.3 My job responsibilities have increased.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.4 I have been rewarded for doing a good job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.5 Promotion possibilities are better than before training.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q24. Among the duties and tasks for which you are responsible, which ones do you find the most difficult to complete?

(.....
.....)

Q25. Why?

(.....)

.....)

F. Availability of material resources

Q26. In your office, are the following resources available and functional?

	Available	Functional
Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fax	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Printer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Server	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local area network	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q27. In your office, do you have a computer to perform your work?

27.1 ☐ Yes, a computer dedicated for me 27.2 ☐ Yes, I share it with my colleague (s) 27.3 ☐ No

Q28. If yes, which computer programmes do you use the most?

(.....)
(.....)

Q29. Do you have access to the Internet?

29.1 ☐ Yes 29.2 ☐ No

Q30. Do you use it often for your professional work?

30.1 ☐ Yes 30.2 ☐ No

G. Motivation

Q31. Do you enjoy your work?

31.1 ☐ Yes 31.2 ☐ No

Q32. Please rate the help you receive from the follows sources when you encounter a technical or professional problem.

	Not useful	Useful	Very useful
My supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My colleague, within my office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other colleagues (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manuals/guidelines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Official documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Documentation center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(specify):.....			

Q33. Under the EFA reform programme, how many times have you participated in staff meetings in your departments?

☐ 1-2 ☐ 3-4 ☐ 5-6

Q34. How do you rate the meetings assessing the implementation and performance of the planning & management capacity under EFA programme sector reform?

34.1 ☐ Not useful 34.2 ☐ Useful 34.3 ☐ Very useful
34.4 ☐ Adequate 34.5 ☐ Inadequate

Q35. In the conduct of your tasks related to the EFA reform programme, have you been evaluated during the past five years?

35.1 ☐ Yes 35.2 ☐ No

Q36. If yes, was it useful?

36.1 ☐ Not useful

36.2 ☐ Useful

36.3 ☐ Very useful

Q37. If yes, was it adequate?

37.1 ☐ Adequate

37.2 ☐ Inadequate

Q38. How do you rate the following statements?

	I agree	I partly agree	I don't know	I partly disagree	I disagree
I am satisfied with the financial benefits of my work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am satisfied with the support and guidance I receive from my supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have enough autonomy to perform my work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I participate in important decision-making within my department or division	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have all the skills I need to do my work well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q39. What do you think about the following statements?

	MENA		IRE		DPE		DSSE	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
The MENA/IRE/DPE/DSSE needs skills improvement in planning & management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The MENA/IRE/DPE/DSSE should engage more in strategic planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The MENA/IRE/DPE/DSSE needs to make some change in its way of working	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q40. Since you have occupied your present post, have you tried to obtain another post?

40.1 ☐ Yes, a post within the same office

40.2 ☐ Yes, a post within the education sector

40.3 ☐ Yes, a post outside of the education sector

40.3 ☐ No

Q41. Please indicate the most difficult challenges you face to perform your work effectively and efficiently (more than one answer is possible):

41.1 ☐

41.2 ☐ Guidelines

41.3 ☐ Knowledge and skills in ICT

Coordination

41.4 ☐ Reliable

41.3 ☐ Familiarities of tasks

41.4 ☐ Adequate resources (computers, paper, etc.)

data.

41.5 ☐ Support

41.4 ☐ Job security

41.5 ☐ Time (work overload)

41.6 ☐ Others

.....

Q42. Do you have any ideas to improve your personal skills in educational planning and management? If yes, please explain.

(.....
.....
.....)

Q43. Do you have any ideas to improve capacity within the education sector in Guinea? If yes, please comment

(.....
.....
.....)

Thank you for your participation