

The Political Economy of Educational
Reforms and Capacity Development
in Southeast Asia

EDUCATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION: ISSUES, CONCERNS AND PROSPECTS

Volume 13

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Yasushi Hirosato • Yuto Kitamura
Editors

The Political Economy of Educational Reforms and Capacity Development in Southeast Asia

Cases of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam



Springer

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It should be noted that research funding for this book was partly available from the Grant-in-Aid of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan, through its Initiative on International Cooperation in Education.

Lastly, we believe that academics in both industrialized countries and developing countries have to play much more active roles in the process of promoting capacity development in the education sector of developing countries. For this purpose, we wish this book will contribute to accelerate such a process and enhance debates over how we should support “indigenous” educational reforms in developing countries, not only in Southeast Asia but also in many other regions of the world.

Yasushi Hirosato and Yuto Kitamura
Co-editors

Introduction by the Series Editors

The vast and dynamic Asia Region is home to approximately 60% of the world's population of 6.6 billion. It is a region of great contrast which includes some of the richest and some of the poorest countries on earth, as well as some of the smallest and some of the largest countries, in terms of land area and population size.

Southeast Asia is a particularly diverse subregion with several tiger economies, and at the same time some of the least-developed countries in the region. Most of these are multiethnic, multicultural, and multilingual countries.

This book examines how less-developed countries in Southeast Asia are modifying their systems of education and schooling to achieve a more equitable access to high-quality Education for All. It also examines how these countries are addressing major development challenges associated with achieving the Millennium Development Goals, lifelong learning, and education for sustainable development. As they move from the industrial age to the information age, there is a demand for an increasingly sophisticated workforce. The authors in this volume explore what changes countries can and should make to best promote changing skills development for employability.

The contributors examine how several less-developed countries in Southeast Asia (called Indochina) are reengineering their education systems to address such issues and challenges.

One of the strengths of the book is that the contributors have diverse backgrounds in education research, policy, and practice. As a result, the book helps build a bridge of shared knowledge and understandings between research, policy, and practice concerning education reforms.

As countries in Indochina seek to cope with meeting the demands of globalization, increasing international cooperation, and the move to knowledge-based economies, they are looking to reform their education systems with a particular emphasis on promoting best practices and educational innovation for development. Many are not just examining ways to adjust, or "tinker with," their education systems, but are exploring cost-effective ways of fundamentally reengineering their systems. The reason for such major reforms is that education is seen as a key to achieving sustainable economic and social development.

This informative volume commences by providing an integrated conceptual and analytical framework for considering education reforms and capacity building in developing countries, with particular reference to the prevailing and emerging situation in Southeast Asia. The authors go on to provide insightful country case studies of education reforms and capacity-building approaches adopted in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Lao PDR. These case studies deal with various levels of education: basic education, lower secondary education, and higher education.

In addition to examining the education reform process and capacity development approaches in the countries concerned, the case studies provide valuable insights concerning quality assurance, equity, the indigenization of education reforms and the benefits of south–south collaboration, rather than just north–south collaboration.

Some of the main trends and challenges faced by the countries analyzed in these case studies include: how developing countries can achieve quality education for all, where there is equitable access; the importance of developing competitive workforces by renovating secondary and higher education; an increasing acceptance of decentralization of decision-making and control as an appropriate way to proceed; and the importance of adopting a sector-wide approach (SWAp) to education planning.

This book argues that much has been achieved to date by developing countries in Indochina, in promoting education reform, although much remains to be done in this regard in identifying the most productive pathways to follow in future.

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Introduction

Yasushi Hirosato and Yuto Kitamura

Developing countries, including Southeast Asian countries, face an enormous challenge in ensuring equitable access to quality education in the context of deepening globalization and increasing international competition. They must simultaneously meet the goals of Education for All (EFA) at the basic education level and of developing a more sophisticated workforce required by the knowledge-based economy at the post-basic, especially tertiary, education level. To meet this challenge, developing countries need to reform/renovate their education systems and service deliveries as an integral part of national development. However, 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.

Provided that an ultimate vision of educational development and cooperation in the twenty-first century would be to develop indigenous capacity in engineering education reforms, this book analyzes the overall education reform context and capacity, including the status of sector program support using the sector-wide approach (SWAp)/program-based approach (PBA) in developing countries. We also address how different stakeholders have been interacting in order to promote equitable access to quality education, particularly from the perspectives of capacity development under the system of decentralization. In this book, based on analysis of the global trends of educational development and cooperation, we propose an “Integrated Framework” of international cooperation to education in developing countries. This framework posits capacity development as a key concept for enhancing aid effectiveness and comprises three main dimensions of integration: (1) interactions among stakeholders at various levels; (2) linkages among different subsectors in the education sector; and (3) linkages/combinations of different aid modalities, namely loans, grant aid, and technical cooperation. It is expected that by applying this model to assess current conditions of international cooperation to education in developing countries, donor countries and international agencies could clarify their roles in the process of promoting education reforms and enhance their aid effectiveness.

Taking this framework as a theoretical and analytical reference, we present case analyses of those less-developed countries in Southeast Asia, i.e., Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), and Vietnam, which are preparing or receiving sector program support using country-specific forms of SWAp/PBA. These country cases from the region called Indochina examine how the stakeholders in political arenas of each country have been interacting in the process of promoting education reforms focusing on basic education. In lieu of a conclusion, we discuss prospects of achieving EFA goals through capacity development of local stakeholders in developing countries.

It should be noted that the contributors of this book have diverse backgrounds, consisting of specialists from Southeast Asia (i.e., Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam), the USA, and Japan. This diversity of authors' backgrounds makes it possible for the book to present vivid pictures of education reforms in three country cases and unique perspectives for these countries to promote capacity development.

This book is composed of an introduction, three parts, and a conclusion. Followed by the Introduction, we present in Part I (Chapters 1–3) a theoretical and analytical framework of this book, which covers various dimensions of education reform in developing countries. Yasushi Hirosato and Yuto Kitamura, the editors, present a discussion of the historical background and significance of the prominence of sector program support in Chapter 1. This chapter particularly argues the need for turning development support for basic education into a program form in line with the major issues confronting the educational sector, and with the revision of the target attainment strategy for EFA goals and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In Chapter 2, Hirosato suggests an outline for a conceptual model for “indigenizing” education reforms from the perspectives of a political economy approach using the concept of internal and external costs. In Chapter 3, Kitamura and Hirosato present a framework (diagram) of the interrelationship among actors involved in the education reform process in developing countries. This framework (diagram) helps us understand how different actors interrelate in the process of education reforms, which is outlined in the educational development conceptual model presented in Chapter 2.

In Part II (Chapters 4–6), William K. Cummings argues that the experience of success stories of East Asian Newly Industrializing Countries (NICs) indicates that reforms of basic education need to be coordinated with reforms in other subsectors of the human resource development endeavor as well as with reforms in the broader economy and polity. The discussion presented in Chapter 4 should be considered as a future reference for countries in Indochina as well as other developing countries to further develop their social capacities of promoting and supporting required education reforms. Throughout these three chapters, we call for a new political economy of education reforms, and a whole discussion relates to the issue of “indigenous” capacity. In Chapters 5 and 6, we provide an overview of educational reforms and capacity development in basic education (Chapter 5 by Hirosato and Kitamura) and in higher education (Chapter 6 by David W. Chapman).

In Part III (Chapters 7–15), we examine three country cases from the region of Indochina, i.e., Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam.

Cambodia cases are in Chapters 7, 8, and 9, in which Sitha Chhinh and Sideth S. Dy introduce the education reform context and process, Ken Chansopeak focuses on the question of improving quality and equity of basic education under the large-scale education reform, and Chet Chealy discusses issues and challenges in the rapidly growing postsecondary education including the role of private higher education institutions.

Vietnam cases are in Chapters 10, 11, 12, and 13, in which Takao Kamibepu examines the education reform context and process, highlighting aid coordination process in basic education, Donald B. Holsinger discusses the issue of education inequality based on recent empirical data as well as the political economy perspectives, Le Cong Luyen Viet argues, taking lower secondary education as a case in point, that reform measures which are largely piecemeal renovations are not sufficient for the rapidly changing economy of Vietnam, and Gerald W. Fry provides a comprehensive picture of higher education reform and its challenges and opportunities.

Lao cases are in Chapters 14 and 15, in which Inthasong Phetsiriseng explains the education reform context and process focusing on decentralization and capacity development in basic education, and Keiichi Ogawa examines the development process of the higher education system in Lao PDR including the establishment of a national university, regional universities, and private universities, and discusses higher education management and finance issues.

In conclusion, we highlight and synthesize significant characteristics of three country cases which are presented in nine chapters in Part III. Hirosato and Kitamura examine the characteristics of program formation in the light of the key constituents of the Integrated Framework for international cooperation to education. Also, by referring to the analytical framework (diagram) presented in Chapter 3, Hirosato and Kitamura analyze how different actors interrelate in the process of decentralization in three countries of Indochina, and highlight the prospects for “indigenizing” educational reform capacity of developing countries.

Both the conceptual and analytical framework and the country case analyses are intended to help developing countries simultaneously meet twin challenges of ensuring equitable access to quality basic education and of developing competitive workforces by renovating higher education in an era of globalization.

Part I
Theoretical and Analytical Framework

Chapter 1

An Integrated Framework for Analyzing Education Reforms and Capacity Development in Developing Countries: Why, How, and for Whom?

Yasushi Hirosato and Yuto Kitamura

1.1 Introduction

The World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990 and the World Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000 led to the agreement on the Education for All (EFA) goals that aim to diffuse basic education. Throughout the world, especially in developing countries, attempts to realize these goals are being made.¹ The diffusion of basic education as symbolized by the EFA goals is widely recognized not as a task of the education sector alone but as one of many extremely important challenges facing the socioeconomic development of developing countries. This is readily appreciated by the fact that out of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted after the UN Millennium Summit of 2000 the universalization of primary education (Goal 2) and the elimination of gender disparity in education (Goal 3) are the same as the EFA goals.

Nonetheless, despite the wide variety and successive efforts of the international community, many problems still beset the achievement of the EFA goals. A review of the strategies for achieving the EFA goals is underway in many developing countries, donor countries, and international agencies. Part of such reconsideration efforts has given rise to international debate from the position of each stakeholder on the ideal means of providing aid in regard to the development of basic education in developing countries. The impact of this debate is embodied in action at the frontline of basic education support, with the Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp) and the Program-Based Approach (PBA) becoming mainstream.² Also, in the context of decentralization that many developing countries are currently promoting, the major focus is on the importance of capacity development on many fronts. Such

¹For details on EFA goals and the status of international cooperation to education underway for the achievement of these goals, refer to the websites of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) [<http://www.unesco.org/education/>] and the United Nations (UN) [www.un.org/millenniumgoals/] (both retrieved in September 2007).

²PBA signifies cooperation given based on the principle of providing coordinated support to locally owned programs of development. Typical examples are budget support to governments under the poverty reduction strategy and sector program support using SWAp (Lavergne and Alba, 2003).

capacity development entails the strengthening of individuals, organizations, systems, as well as the social system on the regional level by means of support through a program-based approach.

This chapter, therefore, bearing in mind the international trends relating to the development of basic education, sets out to argue the need for turning development support for basic education into a program form in line with the major issues confronting the educational sector, and with the revision of the target attainment strategy for EFA goals. To manifest such programs, we propose an “Integrated Framework” for international cooperation to education in developing countries. Then, the chapter discusses countries in Indochina (Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam) where education sector program support by means of PBA is underway, thereby contemplating the ideal way forward using the proposed Integrated Framework and the approach of capacity development aimed at achieving the EFA goals.

1.1.1 The Political Economy Analysis of Educational Development and Reform

As a method of analyzing the collaboration and coordination ongoing in the educational development and reform process of the education sector of developing countries and in international cooperation to education, the political economy approach has been pioneered (e.g., Corrales 1999; Crouch and Healey 1997; Crouch and De Stefano 1997; Moulton et al. 2001; Pandey 2000; Gradstein et al. 2005). The common features of the political economy approach today are that it is not bound by the theory of economics of education in the narrow sense, which pursues the efficiency of an education system based on what is known as the education production function, and the identification of the supply and demand mechanism in the education and labor market. It actually looks at the educational development and reform process in a comprehensive and dynamic way by analyzing all the issues relating to the educational development and reform process from political, economic, institutional, social, and educational perspectives within a historical context (Riddell 1999a). Such an analysis from the political economy perspective seems indispensable to the investigation of the educational development and reform process in transitional economies such as the countries of Indochina, which are examined as case studies in Chapter 5 and the chapters in Part III of this book. In these countries, aid agencies and various other stakeholders, both domestic and foreign, as well as existing interested parties complexly interact (Hiroshato 2001).

The political economy of educational development and reform subsumes the entire education sector, from central/local governments to school/classroom level. As such, SWAp/PBA is being introduced increasingly in the recent education reforms of developing countries. Therefore, a political economy approach can be effectively used as a more suitable conceptual and analytical framework in analyzing the political dynamism at work in the utilization of SWAp/PBA and the dynamics at play among

different actors. What is more, in the context of the decentralizing trend in educational administration/sector management, involvement in educational activities is not limited to central and local governments but has come to include stakeholders that constitute civil society and private sector in the broadest sense of the word, namely, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private enterprises, community organizations, school committees, teachers' organizations, and parents. This points to the need for the use of analysis adopting a political economy perspective (Buchert 1998). Nonetheless, not much research has been conducted into the analysis of the actions of actors in the overall education system structure or the education reform process and into the various requisites for reducing the transaction costs in relation to the development policies and strategies of governments and aid agencies.

Given this situation, Chapter 2 will attempt a reinterpretation and integration of the principles of efficiency and equity by using the concept of cost as referred to in institutional economics, based on a stance in political economy using the theory of political decision-making (equivalent to public choice) that was proposed by J.M. Buchanan and G. Tullock. Chapter 2 will also deal with educational development in developing countries and try to create a model of public policy as suggested by J.E. Stiglitz (the trade-off between efficiency and equity), with due reference to the theoretical framework of political economy discussed by economists from Buchanan and Tullock to the New Institutional School. This model will show that improvement in governance reduces the transaction cost in terms of focusing on the equity of educational development and reform.³ Henceforth in this chapter, the model to be presented in Chapter 2 is borne in mind and investigation centers on the framework for analyzing how diverse actors interrelate to minimize the transaction cost in the educational development and reform process.

1.2 Approaches to Analyzing Education Reform

1.2.1 *The Process of Education Reform*

When examining the mechanism of education reform in developing countries, it is vital to understand both the background and the process of reform. In the undertaking of education reform, some kind of target is always set and new policies introduced. For instance, Haddad and Demsky (1995) describe the process as follows. First, the country concerned carries out an analysis of the status of the educational phenomenon that is recognized as an issue. Based on this analysis, several policy options are suggested. In so doing, the domestic education context is not the only thing to be considered; the social and political structures, the state of the economy, and the country's priority tasks are among those that need to be considered when

³However, we need to examine what kind of interaction among actors leads to the reduction of transaction cost as an area for further research.

making the policy options. Furthermore, these policy options must be assessed for feasibility, affordability, and desirability (in economic, political, and other terms) before a decision is reached. Then, the policy plan is drafted and actually implemented. Finally, the policy's impact assessment is conducted and the implication for the next policy cycle is induced. This process flow is exceedingly complex in reality and is formed as a combination of diverse events and situations.

Based on the research already carried out on such processes of formation of education policy and development of the education system (i.e., Haddad and Demsky 1994; Lockheed and Verspoor 1991), Williams and Cummings (2005) claim that policy must be placed in a broad process so as to understand education reform. In other words, contexts, processes, policy and planning, implementation of policy, evaluation of policy/reform, and institutionalization and organizational learning all comprise education reform. In particular, in analyzing education reform in developing countries, the contexts and processes of reform must be given special attention. As regards contexts, not only should the domestic political, economic, and social factors be considered but also the global economic impact and the post-Cold War political schema of the international community from the wide-angled perspective in understanding the background that necessitates education reform. It is essential then to analyze the processes in order to understand how reform is being conducted in each stage (e.g., planning, implementation, and evaluation). In analyzing the processes, we must elucidate what economic and social changes occur and for what reasons. Through such analysis, it is important to identify what kind of measures are required so that stakeholders that were hitherto not always included in each of the stages of the reform process (i.e., the socially and politically disadvantaged such as women, low income households, and ethnic minorities) can be guaranteed participation in such processes.

Meanwhile, it would be possible to analyze the mechanism whereby education in developing countries develops quantitatively and functionally using the interrelationship among the following actors, namely, governments and local authorities, schools, community and household (including the student himself or herself), civil society and foreign organizations. Education policies are decided through these actors embodying and serving as intermediaries for diverse social factors. This leads to the particularly important necessity to direct attention toward the presence of diverse "actors" that support the context or process of education reform and to understand what roles these actors are playing. In short, by the actors constituting that society coming to some agreement, the path to reform is drawn up, enabling the introduction of actual policy (Kitamura 2007). By and large, there exists some kind of order emanating from values such as democracy or human rights, but at the same time certain imbalances can arise with some actors acquiring greater influence than others due to the interplay of political, economic, social, and even cultural elements in the context of diverse relationships of power. That is, it must be realized that some interest groups generally referred to here as "actors," as Haddad and Demsky (1995) point out, may try to serve their own interest by obstructing reform.

Alternatively, even if no direct obstruction is made to the progress of reform, the process of reform could be distorted to strengthen the re-creation of political, economic, and social rights of self-interest groups. Such is the criticism leveled by neo-Marxists. For example, Carnoy and Samoff (1990), while discussing the

role that education should play in a nation undergoing the process of rapid social transformation to create a fairer and more equal society, indicate that the following contradictions and complications tend to arise. That is, to build a new social relationship (including the equal distribution of wealth and assets), economic growth must be promoted. In this social relationship, the aim is that more people enjoy well-being. To this end, there must be emphasis on improving basic education in the education sector. Nevertheless, because emphasis is actually placed on the training of technical, management, and bureaucratic personnel who directly drive forward economic growth, many countries tend to increase investment into vocational and technical training in secondary education or into higher education rather than into basic education. This state of affairs often reinforces existing social class divisions instead of promoting the equal leveling of society, with such contradictions and complications triggering tensions over education policies.

It is essential then, in the global community of today, to understand the roles played by actors who function within the respective country and also the roles of actors who operate in an international context (i.e., aid agencies of donor countries, international organizations, international NGOs). These issues will be revisited in Chapter 3, which is designed to reveal how the various actors in developing countries mutually interact in the processes of education reform.

1.2.2 The Context of Education Reform

The purpose of education reform is basically to improve the status of the education system, finance, and practice in the five domains of access, equity, quality, efficiency, and relevance (Buchert 1998; Williams and Cummings 2005). Normally, a combination of these five domains is designated as the purpose of education reform. To analyze the entire picture regarding education reform, Riddell (1999a) claims that we need to use three lenses – educational, economic, and political – to view the picture. First, the use of an educational lens means the analysis of education reform through an interest based on education research. The latest approach focuses mainly on three areas: school effectiveness, school improvement, and teacher–learner interface. Through the economic lens that analyzes the economic aspects of education reform, research has been conducted based on ideas such as the education production function that shows the correlation between the input and output of education; or the performance incentives, that is, a shift of interest to the demand-side from such a supply-side view; or the concept of individual incentives and institutional incentives.⁴ The political lens may involve diverse theoretical

⁴Research that emphasizes the performance incentives (e.g., Hanushek, 1995) makes the criticism that the variables (e.g., educational level of teachers, their educational experience, class size, teachers' pay, and spending by school per pupil) that had been considered important in conventional research using the education production function are actually not important as factors that explain the output of education. Rather, instead of such observable variables, they suggest that what is important is the invisible way in which organizations work, such as the internal incentive structure within schools.

approaches of political science but depending on whether the viewpoint from society, state, or individual is adopted as the central view, the resulting method of analysis would differ.

In this way, the approaches to analyzing education reform differ according to the academic discipline that they are based on. Great care must be taken when conducting multidisciplinary analysis. To illustrate this point, the perspective for the three important themes concerning education in developing countries today, namely efficiency, effectiveness, and decentralization, varies according to the lens being used. For example, if we are to view through the educational lens, which chiefly analyzes the content of education services provided, the interest in the effectiveness of education overrides the issue of efficiency. By contrast, if using the economic lens for analysis, looking at education from the supply and demand schema, the interest is stronger in cost and profit issues revolving around the education system and practices rather than the content of education, meaning that the question of efficiency is given most prominence. Finally, in an analysis through the political lens, the interest lies in what purpose the various stakeholders have in participating in educational activities, and the interest basically is keenest on the issue of decentralization, which is closely related to the issues of power and authority, although some attention is directed toward efficiency and effectiveness.

What is most important in propelling education reform as Williams and Cummings (2005) point out is not the introduction of a simple top-down management model and reform process but discussion and harmonization among the various stakeholders. This begins right at the beginning of the reform process, from the policy target finalization and goes through the drafting, implementation, and evaluation of policies right up to the establishment of the policies and reforms by means of institutionalization. Give and take among differing interests and benefits are vital. As Reimers and McGinn (1997) described using the phrase “informed dialogue,” such an attitude coincides with the idea that suitable decisions can be made by information sharing between policymakers or administrators and researchers and also practitioners.⁵ This is important in the process of education reform regardless of whether it is in a developed or developing country. If such dialogue is pursued further, it is hoped that policies and strategies with a contextual focus will be formed, leading to plans for the resolution of social and political problems.

However, in the process of education policy formation ongoing in many developing countries, such dialogue is often lacking. The information that should be the basis of dialogue (especially academic survey and research findings) is not fully made use of, as Reimers and McGinn (1997) point out. In particular, they cite as an example the Basic Research and Implementation in Developing Education Systems (BRIDGES) project of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), to explain in detail the importance of informed policy-making. In addition to this process of policy formation, in the actual educational activities and in their monitoring and evaluation, surveys and research should be used (Buchert

⁵The articles contained in Ross and Mählek (1990) point out the importance of data and information use in the policy-making process.

1998). In this regard, Riddell (1999b) also points out that there are many cases in which survey research and monitoring/evaluation findings are not necessarily properly used as input into the education reform program supported by donors. These survey research and monitoring/evaluation findings should act as a link between educational administration such as donors and policymakers of developing countries, who are the actors involved in making the blueprint for education in the respective country in the “upstream” and the teachers, parents, and students, who are the actors that fulfill their own mission in the “downstream.” They must be used in the sharing of education reform targets. In other words, “marrying local versions of success with national visions is the challenge of bringing together school improvement efforts with school effectiveness research, and the challenge for evaluation is in producing data that will facilitate communication between and the valuing of these different perspectives on success” (Riddell 1999b, p. 392). This is all the more important because different actors have their own different interests. For example, it is important for donors to know how effectively and efficiently their aid money has been spent. For policymakers, the ever-important interest is the improvement of performance in the education frontline (i.e., school attendance rate and standards of learning).

1.3 International Trends Relating to Basic Education Development

1.3.1 Trends in Goals and Areas of Aid

Since the adoption in 2000 of the Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO 2000), which listed the EFA goals to be achieved by 2015, various international agreements have been created to give support to the diffusion of basic education in developing countries. The problem of resources mobilization for development assistance to developing countries became widely recognized as an important issue for the international community. It was agreed that the ownership of developing countries and the partnership among stakeholders should be reinforced; therefore, more financial resources should be mobilized to propel action on important development issues.⁶ The point reached so far as regards this debate is the adoption in 2005 of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. In other words, the model to follow in international development assistance became the establishment of ownership by

⁶ What lies behind this agreement is the impact of international debate relating to development aid generally. Above all, the International Conference on Financing for Development held in 2002 in Monterey, Mexico, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development held the same year in Johannesburg, South Africa, and the High-Level Forum on Harmonization held in 2003 in Rome, Italy, were the chief forums for consensus building.

the developing country and of partnership, by harmonizing aid and aligning it to the plan and strategy of the developing country itself (OECD High-Level Forum 2005). Then, in the process of such consensus building on development aid, we cannot ignore the role of the series of summits held by the G8 nations, which generated international debate aimed at promoting EFA. Especially, the G8 Kananaskis Summit of 2002 resulted in the declaration: *A New Focus on Education for All*. The G8 nations emphatically renewed their commitment to providing support toward basic education in developing countries.⁷ The 2006 G8 Summit in St. Petersburg placed emphasis on the necessity for support toward basic education in developing countries based on the principles and framework of EFA. It affirmed the importance for each nation of promoting the fostering of human resources that are rich in creativity.

Given such prominence of the international debate in support of promoting EFA, the EFA Fast-Track Initiative (EFA-FTI) began in 2002 under the leadership of the World Bank. This EFA-FTI is a new framework for financing basic education in developing countries, focusing on primary education, which is an especially important part of the EFA goals.⁸ Under the EFA-FTI, a number of low-income countries that had shown strong political commitment toward diffusing basic education are selected and donors make a heavy input of financial and technical aid, with the aim of putting these countries as smoothly as possible onto a fast track, leading to the diffusion of primary education. Notably, the EFA-FTI sets out not only to widen opportunities of access to primary education but also to improve the quality of primary education.

As of the beginning of 2008, the EFA-FTI is 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 mentioned earlier. The need to “operationalize” the international agreement on promoting EFA goals achievement precipitated action; the EFA-FTI was put in place to expand financial and technical support to the education sector of developing countries. To effectively and efficiently utilize this financial aid, the EFA-FTI introduced the Indicative Framework. This Indicative Framework is a distinctive attempt by the EFA-FTI and comprises indicators on standards and criteria relating to the efficiency and qualitative improvement of primary education.⁹ The Indicative Framework, it is hoped, will provide a “common frame of reference for all countries” (World Bank 2002a)

⁷For details of the discussions held in the G8 Kananaskis Summit, including discussions on education, refer to the Canadian Government’s G8 website, “Canada’s G8 Website” [<http://www.g8.gc.ca/>] (retrieved in March 2007). In addition, the Canada’s G8 Website offers access to official documents relating to G8 summits held from 2001 onward. In the Kananaskis Summit, the Japanese Government announced the Basic Education for Growth Initiative (BEGIN) as its commitment to assisting developing countries in basic education.

⁸For details of the introduction of EFA-FTI, see World Bank (2002a, b) and Kitamura (2007).

⁹For details of the indicators comprising the Indicative Framework and the support toward government budget expenditure for the education sector, see World Bank (2004; 2006).

in properly assessing the financial condition and policy results in the education sector. Among the countries we analyze as cases, Vietnam has been selected as one of the first EFA-FTI eligible countries, and Cambodia has already developed its proposal which has been examined by donors, as of the fall of 2007.

From 2007 and 2008, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which serves the role as international coordinator for promoting EFA, is to conduct a mid-term review on the status of EFA goals achievement across the world. In readiness for this, UNESCO adopted the *EFA Global Action Plan* in 2006, setting out the direction to be taken by the EFA goals achievement strategy. This *EFA Global Action Plan* lists the following as the agenda for the international community to focus on: (1) early childhood care and development, (2) access to educational opportunities by poor and disadvantaged children, (3) adult literacy, (4) gender issues relating to educational access and school environment, and (5) qualitative improvement in education (including teacher training, learning outcome, teaching materials, language of instruction, and school environment) (UNESCO 2006). In addressing these agendas, a more effective and efficient collaboration among various stakeholders must be generated. To this end, the *Action Plan* has been designated as a “living document.” That is to say, the *EFA Global Action Plan* does not fix the roles of each stakeholder but envisages a flexible change of roles depending on the progress of EFA goals achievement and the state of the international community at each juncture.¹⁰

1.3.2 Capacity Development as a New Approach in the Field of Development

An extremely important point when investigating the international trends relating to approaches toward aid is the rising interest in capacity development as a new approach in the field of development. In the 1990s, when the post-Cold War aid fatigue became apparent, discussions arose on the question: “Does aid really help developing countries?” In 1996, the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC) adopted a new development strategy entitled *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation* (OECD/DAC 1996). There was emphasis on the ownership of developing countries and the partnership among stakeholders, and a review of how aid should be given. The debate next led to the question of reforming technical cooperation, chiefly that of the United Nations Development

¹⁰Therefore, taking account of the state of affairs at each juncture, a regular review of the *Action Plan* is planned so as to reflect the opinions of donor countries, international agencies, and civil society organizations. In so doing, the EFA coordinator, UNESCO, will play the part of mediator. The information on *EFA Global Action Plan* is based on the authors’ interview in November 2006 of UNESCO’s executive officials and program specialists in the Education Sector at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

Programme (UNDP) (Fukuda-Parr et al. 2002). The former aid pattern adopted that overemphasized the strengthening of individual capacity and organization building was criticized as damaging the potential capacity of developing countries. The reasons for criticism included the policy distortion occurring from the additional influx of money that was divorced from the budget system of the developing country concerned, the overemphasis on the project implementation unit quite independent of existing organizations, and the increase in transaction cost involved due to the subject and procedure of aid for each donor being different. Consequent to the criticism, the international tide of opinion embraced the need for supporting the capacity development of developing countries when providing aid, especially technical cooperation (UNDP 2003).

According to the OECD/DAC, capacity is “understood in terms of the ability of people and organizations to define and achieve their objectives” at the levels of individual, organizational, and the enabling environment (OECD/DAC 2006, p. 18). Then, capacity development is “understood as a process of unleashing, strengthening and maintaining of capacity” and “necessarily an endogenous process of change” (ibid., p. 18). The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), which plays a spearheading role in developing discourse on aid, considers capacity development as a transfer of knowledge for, and empowerment of, poor people, and such efforts should focus on human resource development. Then, the conditions necessary to enable capacity development are knowledge, capability, and the presence of an effective and development-focused organization (Sida 2006). The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) also takes a comprehensive view that the process whereby the issue-addressing capability of the developing country improves on the combined level of people, organizations, and society (JICA 2006). All these definitions place emphasis on the process of capacity development and recognize the need of building capability not only on individual and organizational levels but also on the community level of diverse constituents, including political, social, and other systems.

The education sector is no exception to adopting this attitude of emphasizing capacity development. Rather, capacity development in the education sector is an even more important issue in two ways. That is to say, in considering capacity development in the context of the education sector, we need two perspectives: one is the improvement of various capacities required within the education sector when undertaking educational development and reforms, and the other is the contribution that the human resource development in the education sector can make toward the development of human, organizational, or system capacities of other sectors.¹¹ Although in this book we mainly focus on the former perspective of capacity development, Chapter 4 discusses how such wider scope of capacity development which takes into account both perspectives should be incorporated into the context of education reforms and human resource development in developing countries.

It is also worth noting here that the achievement of EFA goals seems to be pursued nowadays in the context of decentralization. The problem many developing countries

¹¹ However, the latter’s view of capacity development is the phenomenon that results from the expansion and improvement of the education sector; this chapter shall concentrate basically on discussing the capacity development of education sector as defined by the former.

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. 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. In many cases it is difficult to deliver the services that decentralization brings both effectively and smoothly.

Such rise in awareness of the problem was fed into the agreement embodied in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness adopted in 2005. Thus capacity development became a proposition central to international development cooperation. The Paris Declaration deals mainly with capacity development in public finance management and procurement, but 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. To undertake capacity development with such an aim, the developing country itself must determine an all-round strategy that includes system building, organization building, and knowledge management. Nevertheless, for this new approach in the field of development, that is, capacity development, to be promoted in the developing country's education sector, we need to reconsider the financial and technical assistance given by donor countries and international agencies.

To illustrate, the donor community coordinated by the World Bank is attempting to apply a variety of measures to improve aid to the primary education of developing countries through the process of realizing the aforementioned EFA-FTI. In this context, it is essential to consider the issue of capacity development in the education sector of developing countries where an increased influx of external aid is expected from the EFA-FTI. In short, between some developing countries that had received sufficient funding till now and other developing countries that have received little donor support (the so-called *donor orphans*), a gap has already opened in terms of capacity as a result of the gap in funds. With support from the EFA-FTI, this gap will hopefully be narrowed.

For low-income countries without the capacity of developing an education sector plan/strategy on their own, the FTI Education Program Development Fund (EPDF) is providing financial and technical support. A mechanism is being created to give support in building the capacity these countries need to draw up an appropriate education sector plan/strategy. For low-income countries that have difficulty in obtaining additional external financial support because the number of aid donors is relatively limited, the FTI Catalytic Fund was established to provide transitional financial support (for 2–3 years). The aid-recipient country should be able to enhance its own education sector plan/strategy in line with the financial support provided by the fund and should be able to seek long-term support from new donors in the future.¹²

¹²For details on the FTI EPDF and Catalytic Fund, see World Bank (2004a) and the website of the FTI Secretariat of the World Bank [<http://www.fasttrackinitiative.org/education/efafiti/>] (retrieved in March 2007).

Alongside the creation of such a mechanism and moves toward additional fund provision, the developing country's government (the ministry of education in particular) needs to offer training opportunities to education administrators on both central and local government levels and to strengthen organizational capacity, including administrative systems and accounting management systems in the education sector. Meanwhile, what is important for the donor countries and international agencies is to clearly draw up a long-term road map on basic education aid for developing countries. It is hoped that the donor countries by showing them a clear road map for support would enable developing countries, the main actors in capacity development, to engage in action on a sustained basis. In this connection, it is promising that some governments have started to take a more holistic approach and address capacity issues through the production of a Capacity Development Framework (CDF) under the commitments made in each country's version of the Paris Declaration of Aide Effectiveness. The CDF is expected to provide baseline information, interventions needed together with time-bound targets and results with associated performance indicators, in order to enhance capacities in a structured and coherent manner.

1.4 Conclusion

1.4.1 Diagram of an Integrated Framework for International Cooperation to Education

To summarize the overview given in this chapter about international debate and trends in development assistance to basic education, and trends in the sector support and the approaches taken, the emphasis is now on capacity development through support provided using a PBA while harmonizing aid, aligning it to the plan/strategy of the developing country itself and establishing the ownership of that country and the partnership among stakeholders. As a conclusion of this chapter, we propose an Integrated Framework for international cooperation to education, based on the premise that the education sector program support through PBA is effective in achieving the EFA goals, served by mechanisms such as the EFA-FTI. This Integrated Framework incorporates both improvements to the education sector overall and capacity development aimed at achieving the EFA goals. It is designed to provide a conceptual framework for the promotion of education sector support whilst being converted into programs.

In line with the discussion so far, Fig. 1.1 shows a rough diagram of the Integrated Framework. The constituents of the framework, as given on the left in the diagram, can be roughly divided into the poverty reduction framework and the education sector. The poverty reduction framework is a form of support that includes the "general budget support" that has been propelled by the World Bank and the UK since the