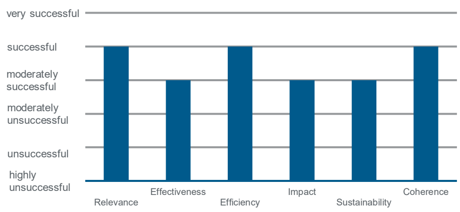
KfW Development Bank

Ex post evaluation
Education Development Fund II, Zimbabwe

Title	"Education Transition Fund" / "Education Development Fund" (EDF II)
Sector and CRS code	11220 Primary education
Project number	BMZ no. 2010 66 653, 2012 66 071 and 2012 66 584
Commissioned by	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Recipient/Project-executing agency	UNICEF Zimbabwe
Project volume/ Financing instrument	EUR 30.8 million Financial Cooperation (FC) grant
Project duration	March 2011 to October 2018
Year of report	2022
Year of random sample	2020

Overall rating:
moderately successful



Objectives and project outline

The objective at the outcome level of EDF II was to increase the quality of education, improve the management of education and improve vocational training performance. At impact level, the objectives were to stabilise the education sector and ensure equal educational and employment opportunities for Zimbabwean schoolchildren. To this end, grants were awarded to disadvantaged schools, an education information and management system was set up, teachers were trained, and special measures for early school leavers were set up and implemented.

Key findings

The project demonstrated developmental effectiveness by stabilising the Zimbabwean education sector, ensuring the operation of schools to a large extent and thus preventing a "lost generation". Sustainability is and was dependent on securing financing from the Zimbabwean State budget or UNICEF. The project was rated as being "moderately successful" for the following reasons:

– The results and developments in the quality of education, school attendance and numbers of pupils finishing school of the target group, as well as gender parity were positive.

– The reduction of inequalities to the benefit of poorer regions or economically disadvantaged schools and vulnerable groups of pupils could not be consistently and continuously achieved due to a lack of financial resources.

– The school development grants paid out helped the beneficiary schools to close significant gaps in their school infrastructure in a needs-oriented and flexible manner. At the same time, these schools strengthened their financial management.

– The sustainability of the impacts and financed measures is dependent on securing financing for the costs (in particular non-employment-oriented) in the education sector. There was no concept for schools to be able to finance this from their own funds.

– The use of the structures of the partner ministry and the decentralised actors in the sector (in the districts and in the schools) allowed for highly efficient implementation of the measures.

Conclusions

– The basic assumptions on the impact logic of the interventions and thus on securing long-term impacts must be monitored, risks communicated and the concept adapted in the event of significant deficits.

– Instruments with a self-ownership nature, such as the school development grant, can strengthen the capacities of decentralised units (in this case schools) and secure ownership. This enables efficient and flexible use of the financing funds.

– The reduction in donor funds over the course of the project significantly reduced the positive impacts.

Rating according to DAC criteria

Overall rating: 3 – moderately successful

Ratings:

Relevance	2
Coherence	2
Effectiveness	3
Efficiency	2
Impact	3
Sustainability	3

Overall, we rate the project as satisfactory and successful with reservations; some of the results achieved are below expectations, but the positive results dominate in terms of relevance, and in some cases effectiveness and efficiency.

In view of the major economic challenges and the urgent need for further support for the education sector in order to protect a generation from losing their educational and employment prospects, the evaluation paid particular attention to the DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

General conditions and classification of the project

The prevailing economic and political crisis in Zimbabwe in 2008 and the years thereafter severely weakened the education sector and threatened to create a "lost generation".[1] To prevent this, the Education Transition was established in 2009 by the Education Development Fund (EDF) through 11 donors, and UNICEF took over management and implementation.

In the first phase (EDF I, 2009–2011), the financing of schoolbooks and materials was intended to ensure school operations in principle. Building on this, the second phase EDF II was intended to structurally promote and develop the education sector (EDF II, 2012–2015, BMZ no. 2010 666 53, 2012 66 584 and 2012 66 071). This was followed by further phases with a shift in focus towards strengthening resilience (EDF III, 2016–2020, as well as 2019, 2020, 2021),[2] which were then no longer financed from the bilateral grant title, but from transitional aid.

In addition to six other donors, Germany's Financial Cooperation participated in EDF II.[3] The German financing share amounted to EUR 30.8 million, or USD 41.58 million. With a total volume of USD 118.8 million, the German share of EDF II is 35%. Due to the fund nature of EDF II, specific shares of individual donors and the results achieved as a result cannot be considered and evaluated separately (attribution problem).

Since a detailed evaluation[4] commissioned through UNICEF was carried out for EDF II in 2018 and information on this was already provided in the final report[5], only a brief report is presented here that looks at the share of German Financial Cooperation of EDF II. The project with BMZ no. 2012 665 84 is part of the 2020 random sample. BMZ no. 2012 66 071 and the share of EUR 6.2 million from BMZ no. 2010 66 653

[1] "Prevention of a lost generation" refers to projects and initiatives to create opportunities and prospects for a cohort of young people in crisis or war situations.

[2] BMZ no. 2018 18 640: EUR 25 million, disbursed in 2019 and 2020 BMZ no. 2019 18 168: EUR 10 million disbursed in 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022.

[3] In addition to Germany, EDF II was financed by: the United Kingdom, the European Union, Finland, South Africa, Sweden, Norway.

[4] Carried out on behalf of UNICEF: Summative Evaluation of UNICEF Support for Education in Zimbabwe EDF 2012–2015 / GPE 2014 – 2016 dated 16/04/2018, Evaluation Report (RFP No. LRFP ZIM/2017-9131685) by Mokoro Ltd. Oxford OX4 IJE

[5] Final report on the FC programme Education Transition Fund/Education Development Fund BMZ no. 2010 666 53, 2012 660 71 and 2012 665 84 dated 04/10/2018.

for EDF II were combined and evaluated together, as their contributions to the impact categories cannot be considered separately due to the EDF II fund concept.

Relevance

The overarching developmental objective of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) was primarily to help overcome the country's greatest need, stabilise the situation and thus also promote peace development.

In addition to stabilising school operations, the core problem in the Zimbabwean education sector was the necessary structural development and ensuring access to education, especially for disadvantaged children. To this end, EDF II addressed support for the necessary school infrastructure, the establishment of an IT-supported training and school monitoring system, financed training and further education of education managers and teachers, and the revision of curricula.

Schools[6] with poor economic resources that fell short of a defined school income were able to receive a school development grant (School Improvement Grant, SIG), which was to be used for the necessary school infrastructure and thus improve the learning conditions for pupils in the poorer regions.

In addition, appropriate measures for the reintegration of early school leavers should be designed and implemented and alternative development opportunities created[7] for early school leavers. The project's target group was all primary and secondary school children in Zimbabwe.

The objectives at output level were an improved learning environment and expanded school infrastructure as well as updated standardised teaching content, an extended scope of training including re-entry training, increased teacher professionalism and adequately functioning education monitoring. In addition, a focus should also be placed on skills relevant to vocational training and the needs of particularly vulnerable groups of students should be taken into account. At outcome level, the use of the outputs was intended to lead to improved management of education and an increased quality of education as well as better vocational education performance. The objective at impact level was to stabilise the education sector and ensure equal educational and employment opportunities for all Zimbabwean children.

In the Zimbabwean education sector, it was implicitly assumed that the education operation could in principle be financed by the public sector and via the school fees of private households[8]. EDF II addressed this issue, but the increasing scarcity of funds jeopardised the objectives of EDF II and did not lead to necessary adjustments. Consistent follow-up of the underlying assumptions and suitable communication about risks between the executing agency and the competent Ministry of Education were not planned.

From the perspective of the time and today, the core problems were correctly identified. The conceptual focus, including on disadvantaged children (mostly from poorer regions) and early school leavers, is still rated as correct and appropriate to this day. The EDF II concept incorporated targeted measures for newcomers and the school development grant for the economically worse-off schools. However, there were no safeguards in place to ensure that this part of the target group was favoured and thus achieved in the long term when the funds were cut back. Since EDF II focused on long-term education and measures for the structural development of the sector, such as the design of curricula and teacher training as well as pupils in disadvantaged regions, we rate the relevance as successful.

Relevance rating: 2 – successful

Coherence

The co-financing of EDF II through bilateral grant funds from the German budget also corresponded to the BMZ education strategy with regard to the mission “Leave no one behind!” With regard to internal coher-

[6] Rural primary and secondary schools are classified based on the economic status of their municipalities. Primary schools in poor communities are classified as P3, secondary schools as S3. Accordingly, they are entitled to a higher state subsidy per pupil.

[7] EDF II fields of action: School and System Governance, Teaching and Learning, Second Chance Education.

[8] It was not until 2020 that the Education Amendment Act was adopted as a reform intended to enable all school children to receive free school education.

ence, EDF II was supplemented by the TC module “Complementary education measures for children and young people without primary school qualifications” with regard to measures for early school leavers.

In terms of external coherence, the planned and implemented EDF II interventions supported the Zimbabwean efforts and objectives for stabilising the education sector, such as the Zimbabwean Education Medium Term Plan (EMTP 2011–2015), and supplemented the resulting EMTP Operational Plan. All of this was incorporated into the preparation of the strategy for the education sector in Zimbabwe (ESSP=Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016–2020). The explicit targeting of the most vulnerable groups of pupils was in line with the corresponding national action plan[9]. In parallel to EDF II, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) was set up in 2014 by the international donor community, which also aimed to ensure equal access to education, learning quality and system strengthening and linked directly to the tasks of EDF II with its focal points.[10] UNICEF also took over the implementation for the GPE. The measures financed via EDF II were agreed by the Zimbabwean Ministry of Education, the donors and UNICEF, which largely ensured coherence with the donors’ strategic objectives and, in particular, the Zimbabwean government.

EDF II usefully complemented the Zimbabwean education reforms and made an important contribution to stabilising the education sector. Coherence was supported through intensive cooperation with the responsible Ministry of Education. Through EDF II and UNICEF’s implementation, Germany’s development cooperation was able to contribute bilateral grants and, together with other donors within the meaning of MDG 2 at the time and SDG 4 today, to achieving inclusive, equal, high-quality education for all[11] in Zimbabwe. EDF II filled gaps that the Ministry of Education was unable to close, thus fitting into the necessary fields of action and strategy in a coherent manner and is therefore rated as clearly positive in terms of coherence.

Coherence rating: 2 – successful

Effectiveness

The objective at the outcome level was to increase the quality of education, improve the management of education and improve vocational training performance. The table shows the target achievement with regard to the outcome indicators from the impact matrix.

Indicator	Baseline 2011/ 2012	Target value 2015	Achieved value 2015	2022[12]	Indicator achieved?
Proportion of pupils who complete 9 years of primary education[13] (male/female = m/f)	68%	76%	Total: 79.1% m 78.0% f 80.2%	none Data	achieved
Proportion of lower secondary school pupils in their age cohort[14]	12%	20%	Total: 18.32% m: 16.09% f: 20.57%	Not specified	Almost achieved

[9] The National Action Plan for Orphans and Vulnerable Children Phase II (MoLSS, 2011).

[10] Focus on GPE according to Mokoro (further development of teaching and learning, supervision and management of teaching services and teacher development as well as strengthened strategic design and later also non-formal education and accelerated learning).

[11] MDG 2: Millennium Development Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education; SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

[12] Values from the final inspection 2022 for EDF III, which is financed as a successor project from transitional aid and still included measures to strengthen resilience.

[13] Survival rate to grade 7 from the impact matrix of the final inspection dated 04/10/2018.

[14] = “Form 4 Net Attendance Rate” from the impact matrix of the final inspection dated 04/10/2018

Proportion of 5-year-olds in pre-school classes[15] (%)	35%	55%	Total: 54.75% m: 53.93% f: 55.58%	Total: 45.92% m: 45,81% f: 46.02%	Almost achieved/2022 not achieved
Proportion of schoolchildren who showed appropriate performance in English (E) or mathematics (M) after grade 2, i.e. 4 years of school (incl. pre-school).[16]	E total: 49.2% m: 44.6% f: 53.8% M total: 45.8% m 42.9% f 48.8%	E total: 60% M total: 60%	E total: 53% m: 47% f: 57% M total: 66% m: 64% f: 69%	E total: 61.1% m: 55.7% f: 66.1% M total: 60.0% m: 56.9% f: 63.1%	Almost achieved
Number of particularly vulnerable children with access to school education[17]	403,398 (primary level) 114,054 (secondary level) 517,452 (total)	1,000,000 (total)	1,048,385 (40% of 2,620,965) total	2020 1,589,887, f: 789,537, m: 800,350	achieved

EDF II mainly achieved the objectives at output level. For example, curricula were revised, schools were provided with school books, more schools received a school development grant than planned, more school monitoring visits were carried out than planned and more education managers were trained. The planned number of teachers to be trained was almost achieved. The evaluation of the outcome (educational quality based on pupil and final figures) according to the indicators of the underlying impact matrix showed a largely positive target achievement. The extent to which the quality of education was actually increased was difficult to determine due to the data situation. In some cases, it remains open, for example, whether the trained teachers were able to implement what they had learned or to what extent the grants received for the school infrastructure actually led to an improvement in school equipment used. Interview statements during the evaluation confirmed the achievement of target indicators at the outcome level, regarding school equipment, teacher training, etc., but also that due to a lack of resources (e.g. materials), teaching content could not be implemented or school equipment was not purchased because the funds were used to cover school fees for the pupils. Nevertheless, it seems plausible that the measures had made a significant contribution to increasing the quality of education and thus to the objectives at outcome level, even though the lack of funding decreased their effectiveness.

The objectives with regard to the further development of gender parity were achieved (gender parity index permanently > 0.95).

The targets for completion rates for primary schools of 54.89% and secondary schools of 23% and the share of children in pre-school classes with the increase to 54.75% were also achieved. The target value of 93% for finishing primary school was missed. At 79.73%, however, this was significantly increased from a baseline value of 68%.

[15] = "Percentage of 5 year olds enrolled in ECD classes" from the impact matrix of the final inspection dated 04/10/2018

[16] = "Percentage of pupils achieving a or above the grade-appropriate level after completing Grade 2 in Zimbabwe" from the impact matrix of the final inspection dated 04/10/2018

[17] = "Number of OVCs supported with access to education" from the impact matrix of the final inspection dated 04/10/2018

Less effective measures were taken to reduce inequalities in disadvantaged school children.[18] The School Improvement Grant (SIG) initially actually led to an improvement in the teaching and learning situation in the poorer areas and thus also for vulnerable pupil groups based there. This effect was weakened by the downturn in funds.[19] The evaluation commissioned by UNICEF determined for the period 2012–2016, based on an analysis of school income, that the inequality of schools (i.e. between high-income and low-income schools) had not improved[20].

Despite the results achieved in the "Teaching and learning" and "School and system governance"[21] fields of action, effectiveness is rated as moderately successful, as the results of the field of action for the particularly vulnerable schoolchildren and for early school leavers ("Second Chance Education") fell well short of expectations[22].

Effectiveness rating: 3 – moderately successful

Efficiency

The following bilateral funds were used for the Financial Cooperation (FC) contribution to EDF II totalling EUR 30.8 million: EUR 7.6 million from BMZ no. 2010 66 653 plus EDF I carryover of 6.2 million from the same BMZ no. For this purpose, EUR 7.0 million from BMZ no. 2012 66 071 and 10.0 from BMZ no. 2012 66 584.

Due to a lack of donor funds, EDF II had to cope with a budget cut of over 17%. Nevertheless, most of the planned measures were implemented and most of the planned outputs were achieved at a reasonable cost. A distinct culture of efficiency was noted here. The "School and System Governance" area was cut the least and most of the funds from it were used for the school improvement grant. Measures for early school leavers ("Second Chance Education") recorded the largest savings and spent 47% less funds than originally planned. The time efficiency was rated as positive, as most of the outputs were achieved in the planned time.

Effective coordination with the Ministry for Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) was probably achieved particularly because EDF II (with the GPE[23]) was crucial in the sector and used the existing administrative structures, the implementation of larger-scale and extremely efficient cascaded training programmes and an efficient and resource-saving decentralised approach to the distribution of documents and material saved costs. The complementarity of GPE with EDF II enabled concerted monitoring activities and reduced costs. The production efficiency was therefore rated as good.

The allocation efficiency, i.e. in what ratio the input leads to the achieved outcome and impact, was rated weaker because the impacts of the interventions were weakened by fund cuts. UNICEF charged an administration fee of 7% (USD 7.8 million), which is comparable to UN projects with a similar structure.

Efficiency is rated positively on the basis of the stated performance, the importance of outputs with a smaller budget and the examples of efficient use of structures and processes.

Efficiency rating: 2 – successful

Impact

The overarching developmental objective for EDF II underlying this evaluation was to stabilise the education sector and ensure equal education and thus employment opportunities for all Zimbabwean children.

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[18] Known as OVC=Orphaned and Vulnerable Children

[19] With the downturn in donor funds, the assessment limit for this was lowered and only the schools with the weakest financial supply were able to benefit. The lack of grants (some of which had already been promised) hit the affected schools, which had barely been better equipped economically and had earmarked the funds.

[20] ZELA (Zimbabwe Early Learning Assessment) – Analysis in the Mokoro Evaluation Report, page XIV

[21] "Teaching and Learning" and "School and System Governance"

[22] See final inspection 04/10/2018: 2.06 ff.

[23] GPE = Global Partnership for Education

EDF II helped to ensure that schoolchildren from Zimbabwe continued to have access to education despite the severe crisis, thus preventing a “lost generation”. However, the disparity between the higher socio-economic status of schools and the lower levels of funding and performance of school children was not reduced[24] and the effects in terms of taking particularly disadvantaged school children into account remained weaker than planned. The school improvement grants enabled schools with the weakest financial capacities to finance the necessary school equipment and infrastructure and strengthened their financial management.

In fact, EDF II stabilised the Zimbabwean education system: Curricula were renewed, teachers and educational managers trained and reporting systems set up. However, the sustainable systematic development of a functioning education sector has not yet been achieved. In addition, there was still a lack of a concept for financing and covering the non-employment-related costs[25] of the sector as well as corresponding capacity building[26] in order to enable and secure this from its own capacities in the long-term. This is understandable against the backdrop of the permanent and worsening crisis situation.

EDF II is rated as moderately successful due to the important impact in stabilising and developing the Zimbabwean education sector and, in particular, due to the design of perspectives through educational measures for the majority of Zimbabwean schoolchildren during the crisis.

Impact rating: 3 – moderately successful

Sustainability

Despite the ongoing crisis, a significant part of the FC project’s positive impacts could initially be maintained and the capacities created could also be used beyond the financed phase: financed school infrastructure, renewed curricula were available, better trained teachers and education managers worked and are working in their positions. The decentralised capacities of the education sector were strengthened[27].

Due to the tense economic situation in Zimbabwe, financial sustainability is subject to major risks. The government’s expectation that parents could significantly finance school operations was not met, particularly in the poorer regions. The grants for school infrastructure initially made good contributions to this, but their impact gradually declined after donor funds were reduced overall and remained absent for more than half of the schools. Although the financed school infrastructure and the teaching materials purchased were still used even after further funds were not forthcoming, the Zimbabwean education budget lacked the funds for the necessary maintenance or additional procurements from its own resources.

Mokoro’s evaluation team stated that the interventions would only persist if resources and appropriate capacity development were secured. Sustainability thus remained dependent on external financing from donors. The impact of Phase II was largely secured through the design of the next phase, EDF III, which still included measures to strengthen resilience. The fact that EDF III (2016 - 2020/21) is now being financed from German FC transitional aid[28] in line with the crisis situation illustrates, on the one hand, the need for a corresponding fund as a transitional aid measure and, on the other hand, a reduction in the sustainability requirement appropriate to the context of the economic crisis situation.

The EDF concept with the central element of school improvement grant (SIG) proved to be sustainable. It was adapted to the situation and needs in each of the phases executed and improved (impact matrix, more specific indicators) and the grant was made more flexible with regard to use by the schools.

Since EDF II offered connectivity to follow-up phases and the capacities created (at schools, district level, in the ministry) and learning experiences continue to be used to this day, as well as support and thus

[24] ZELA (analysis in the Mokoro Evaluation Report, page 34)

[25] The only costs permanently borne by the state education sector were teachers’ salaries.

[26] The implementation of the EDF may also have prevented the Zimbabwean government from attempting to secure financing for the education sector from its own resources.

[27] Final inspection of transitional aid “Contribution to preventing a lost generation” EDF II (Phase II & IV) BMZ no. 2018 18 640 and 2019 18 168 dated 26/08/2022

financing by the donors, sustainability is rated as moderately successful, taking into account the existing risks to the long-term impacts.

Sustainability rating: 3 – moderately successful

Cross-project conclusions

- The follow-up of key assumptions and communication with the executing agency as well as the adjustment of the project concept, if necessary, are essential for securing the success of the project and long-term impacts.
- Elements with a self-ownership nature, such as the school improvement grant (SIG), can strengthen the capacities of decentralised units (in this case schools) and secure ownership. This enables efficient and flexible use of the financing funds.
- Focus measures and align them with the capacities of those affected and those involved in order to avoid overburdening and ensure results.

Notes on the methods used to evaluate project success (project rating)

Projects (and programmes) are evaluated on a six-point scale, the criteria being **relevance**, **coherence**, **effectiveness**, **efficiency**, **impact** and **sustainability**. The ratings are also used to arrive at a **final assessment** of a project's development effectiveness. The scale is as follows:

Level 1	very successful: result that clearly exceeds expectations
Level 2	successful: fully in line with expectations and without any significant shortcomings
Level 3	moderately successful: project falls short of expectations but the positive results dominate
Level 4	moderately unsuccessful: significantly below expectations, with negative results dominating despite discernible positive results.
Level 5	unsuccessful: despite some positive partial results, the negative results clearly dominate
Level 6	highly unsuccessful: the project has no impact or the situation has actually deteriorated

Rating levels 1-3 denote a positive assessment or successful project while rating levels 4-6 denote a negative assessment.

The **overall rating** on the six-point scale is compiled from a weighting of all six individual criteria as appropriate to the project in question. Rating levels 1–3 of the overall rating denote a "successful" project while rating levels 4–6 denote an "unsuccessful" project. It should be noted that a project can generally be considered developmentally "successful" only if the achievement of the project objective ("effectiveness"), the impact on the development objective ("impact") **and** the sustainability are rated at least "moderately successful" (level 3).