

Linking policy intent and implementation

Lessons from a school management program in The Gambia

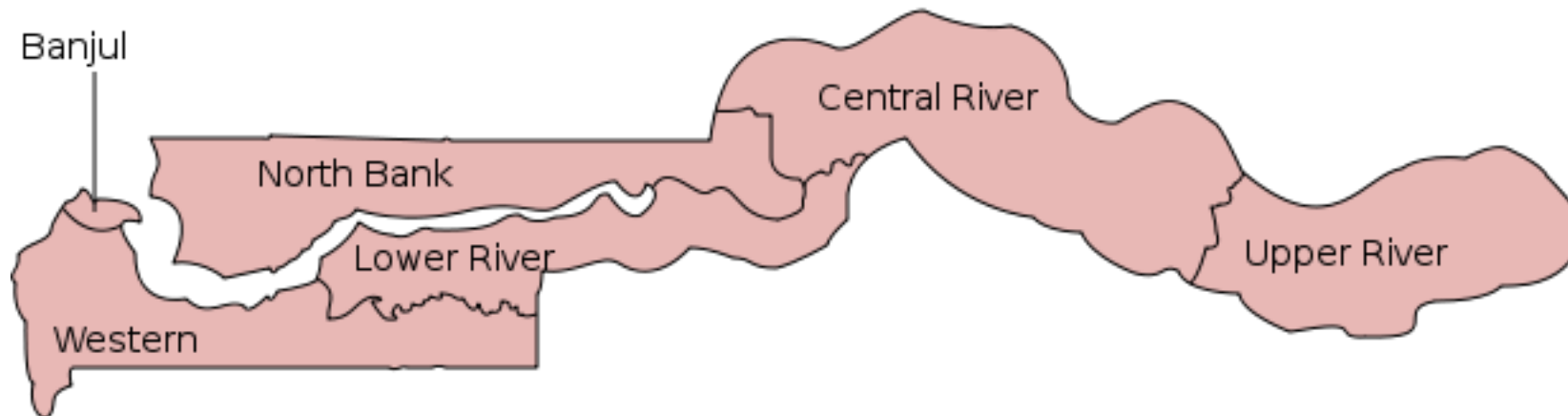
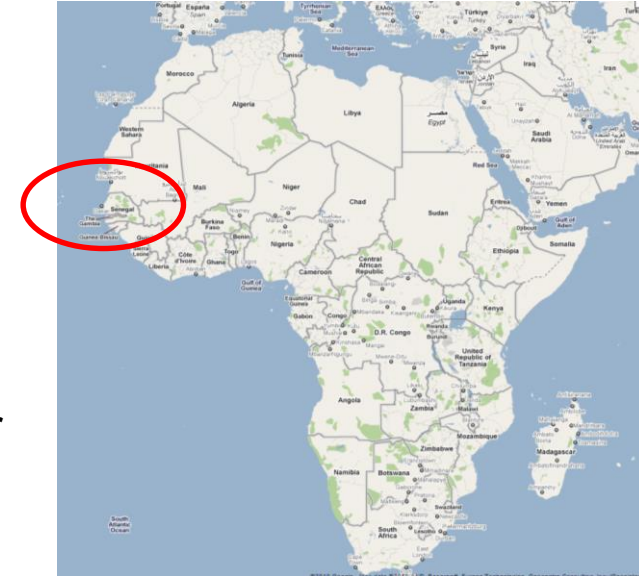
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World Bank

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Background on The Gambia

- **The economy:** 10380 sq km/ about 1.9 millions people, Mostly agricultural (70% + of labor force)
- **Education:** Great achievement on access and gender parity - Poor learning outcomes.

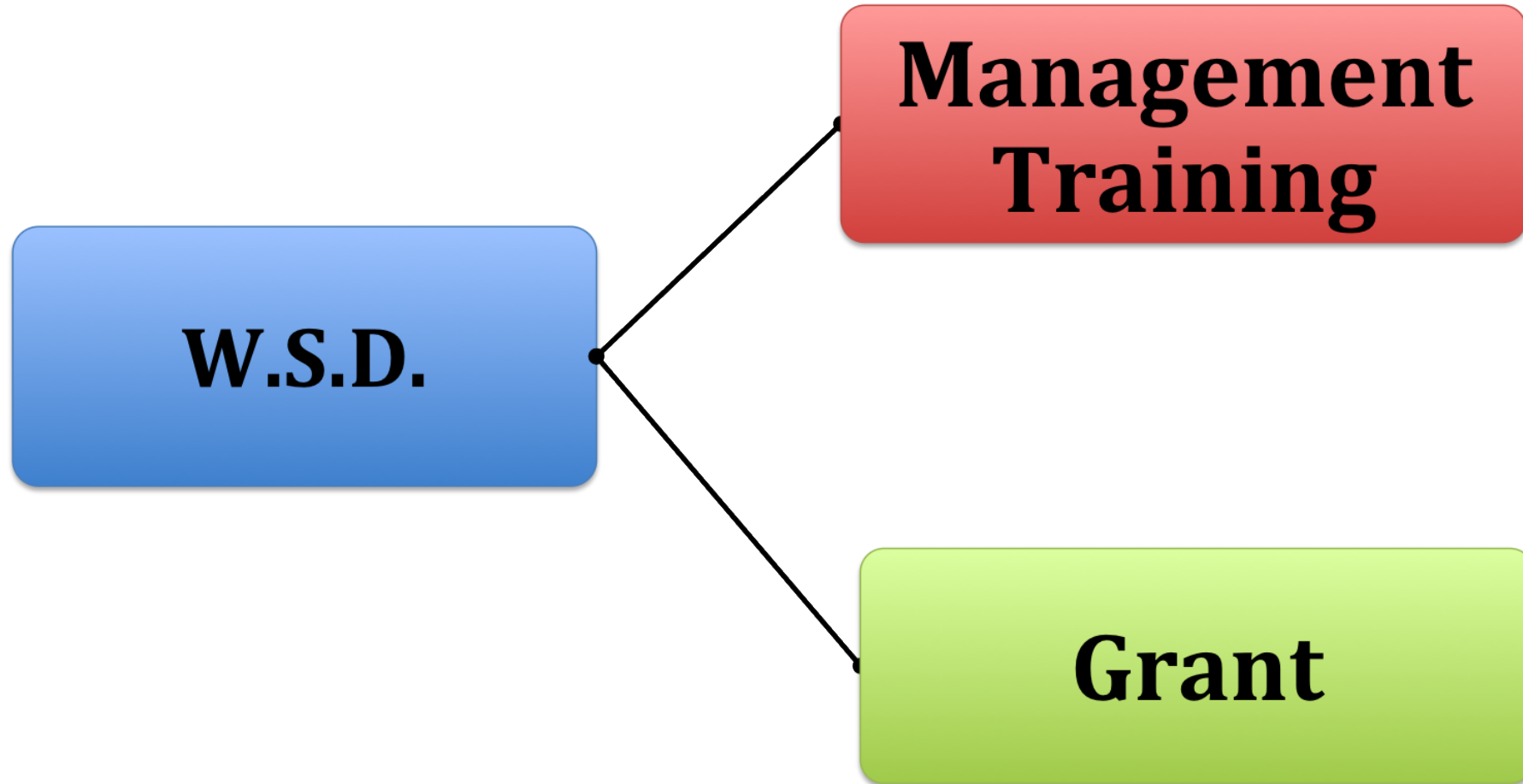


Research question

- Would a decentralized school management improve educational outcomes?
- In particular, what is the importance of local capacity in this process?
- **Tradeoff at play:**
 - **Central authority**
 - Has higher capacity (esp. Human resources)
 - but localized information is costly to obtain and manage
 - **Local community and schools**
 - have better localized information
 - Cheaper and more effective monitoring
 - But may lack capacity, especially in poor countries

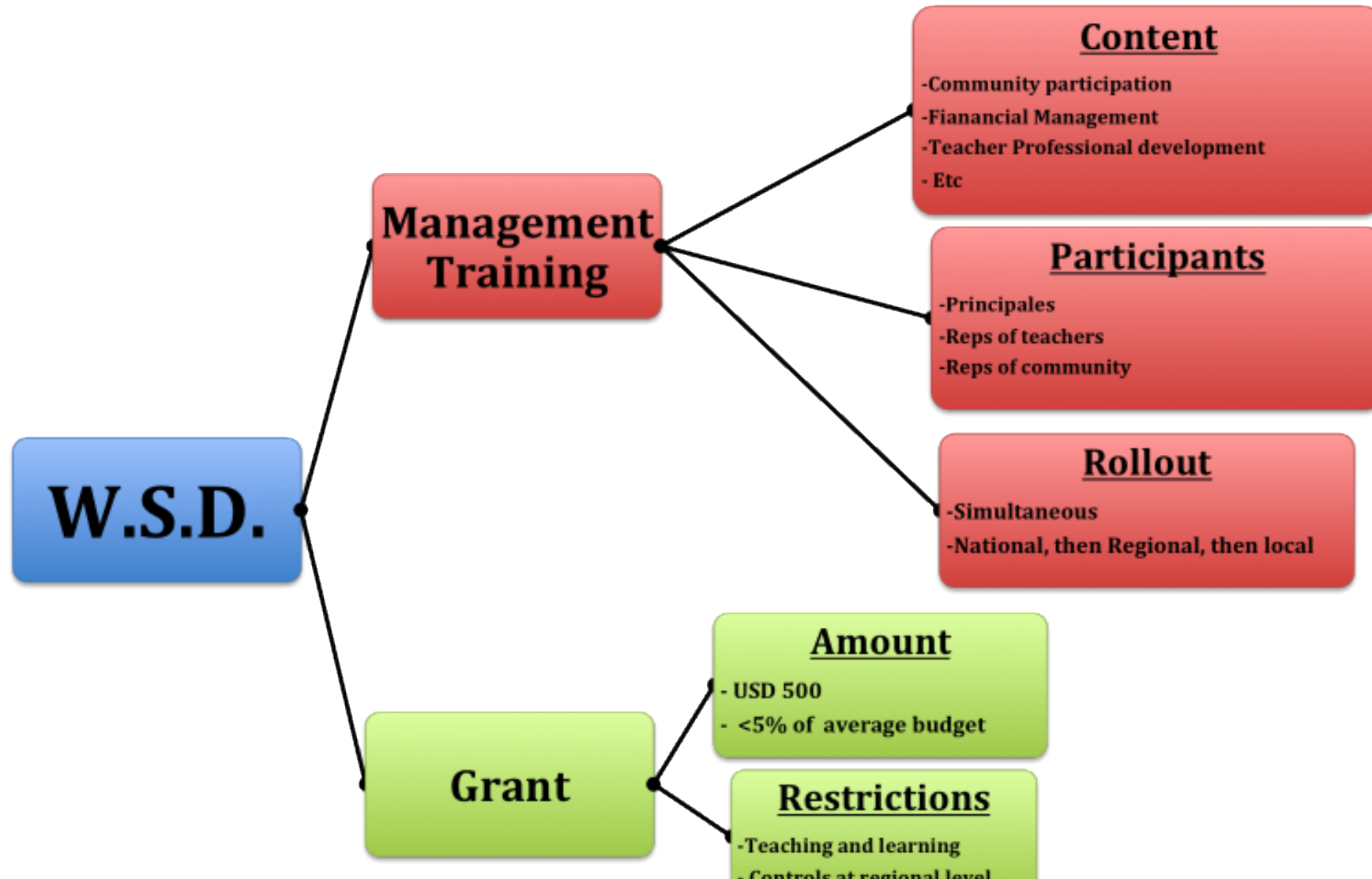
Whole School Development

Key features

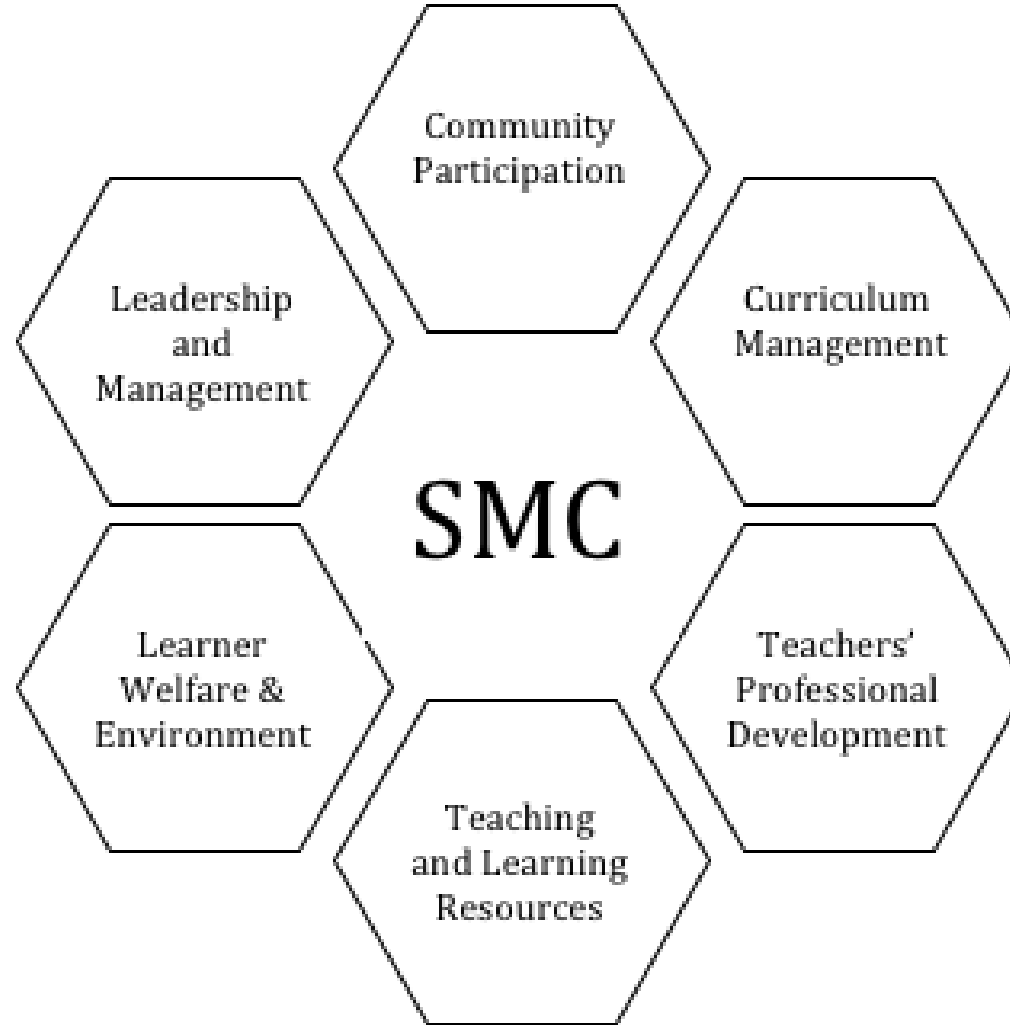


Whole School Development

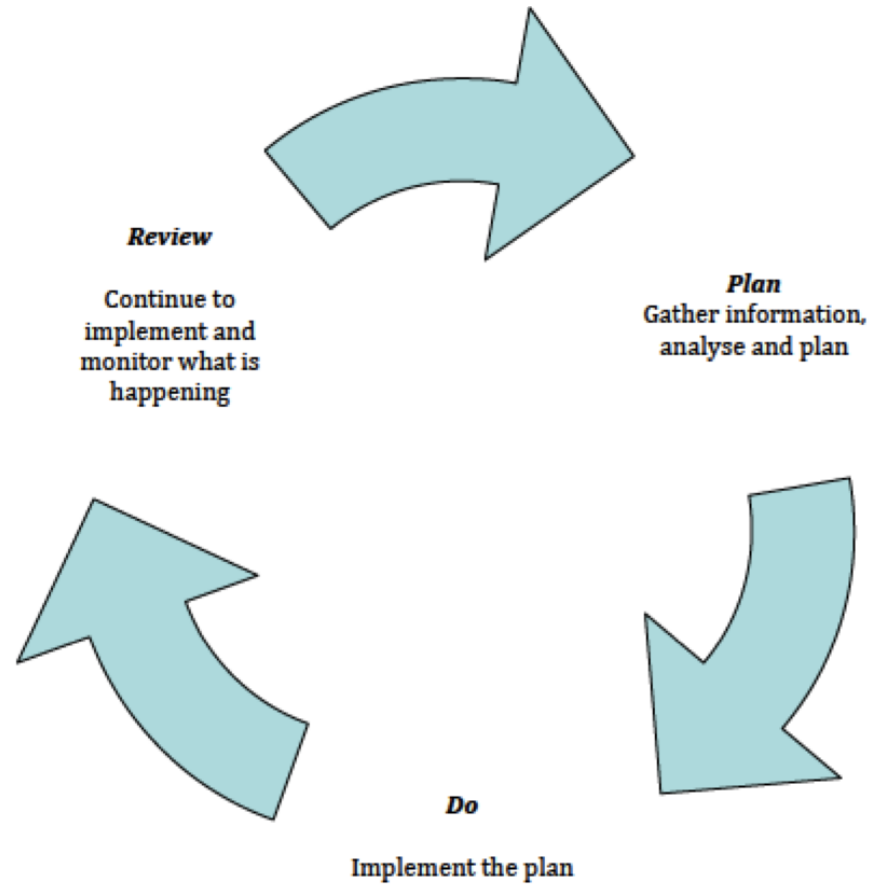
Key features



Management structure

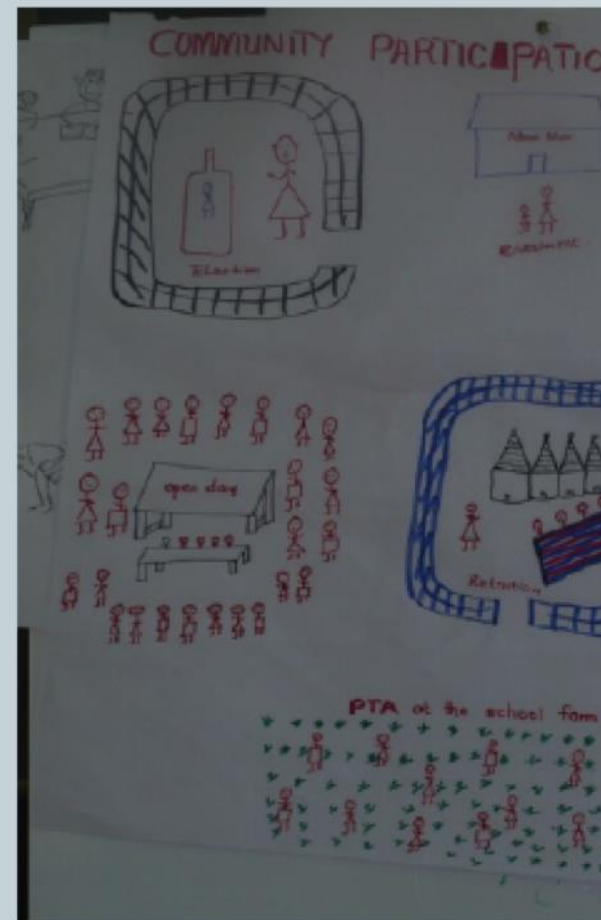


A cyclical process



Implementation

Intensive management training and a sustained support



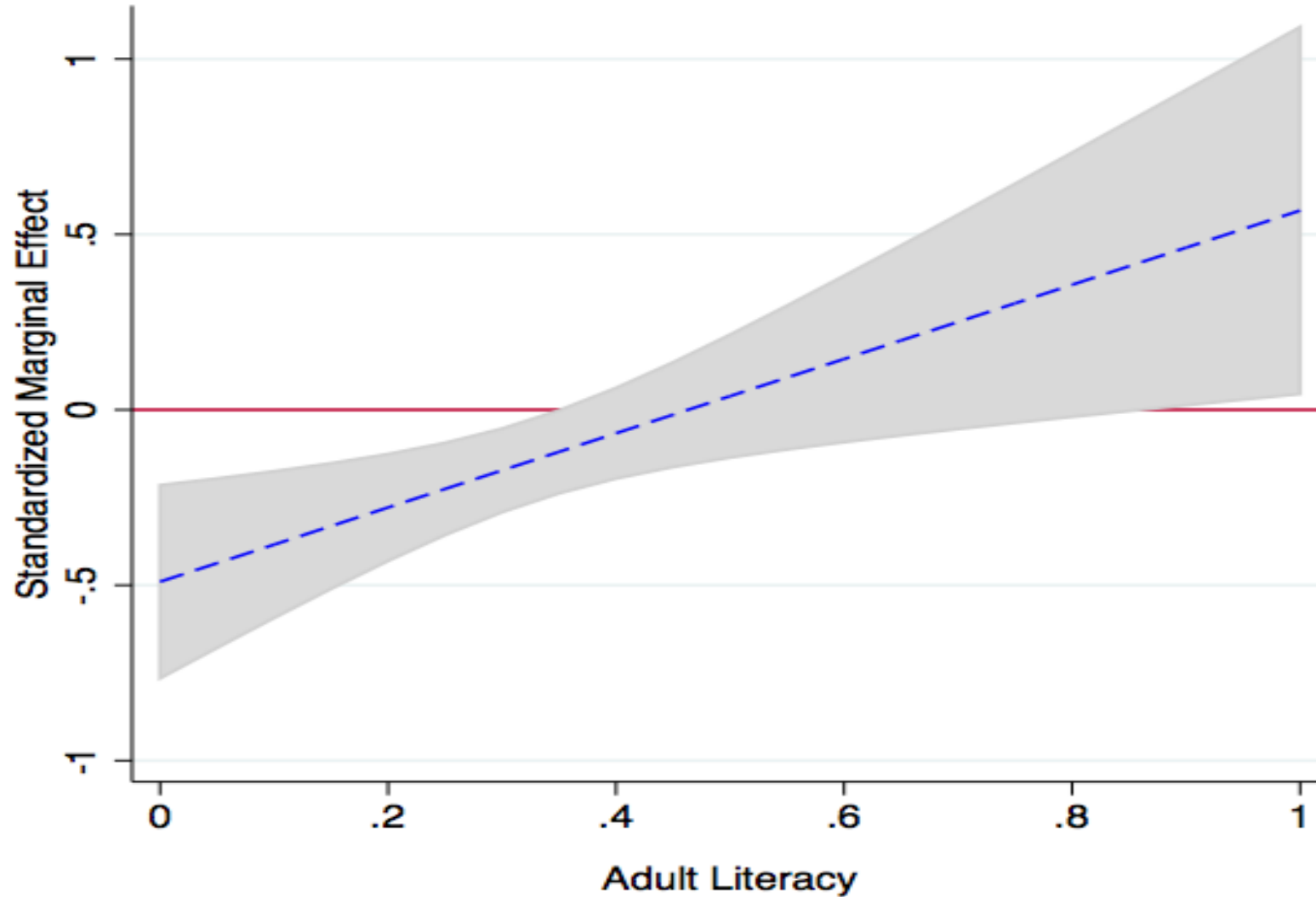
Key findings (I)

No effect on test scores

	WSD	Grant only
Learning outcomes	x	x
Participation - Teacher absenteeism	✓	x
Participation - Student absenteeism	✓	x
Participation - Parents	~	x

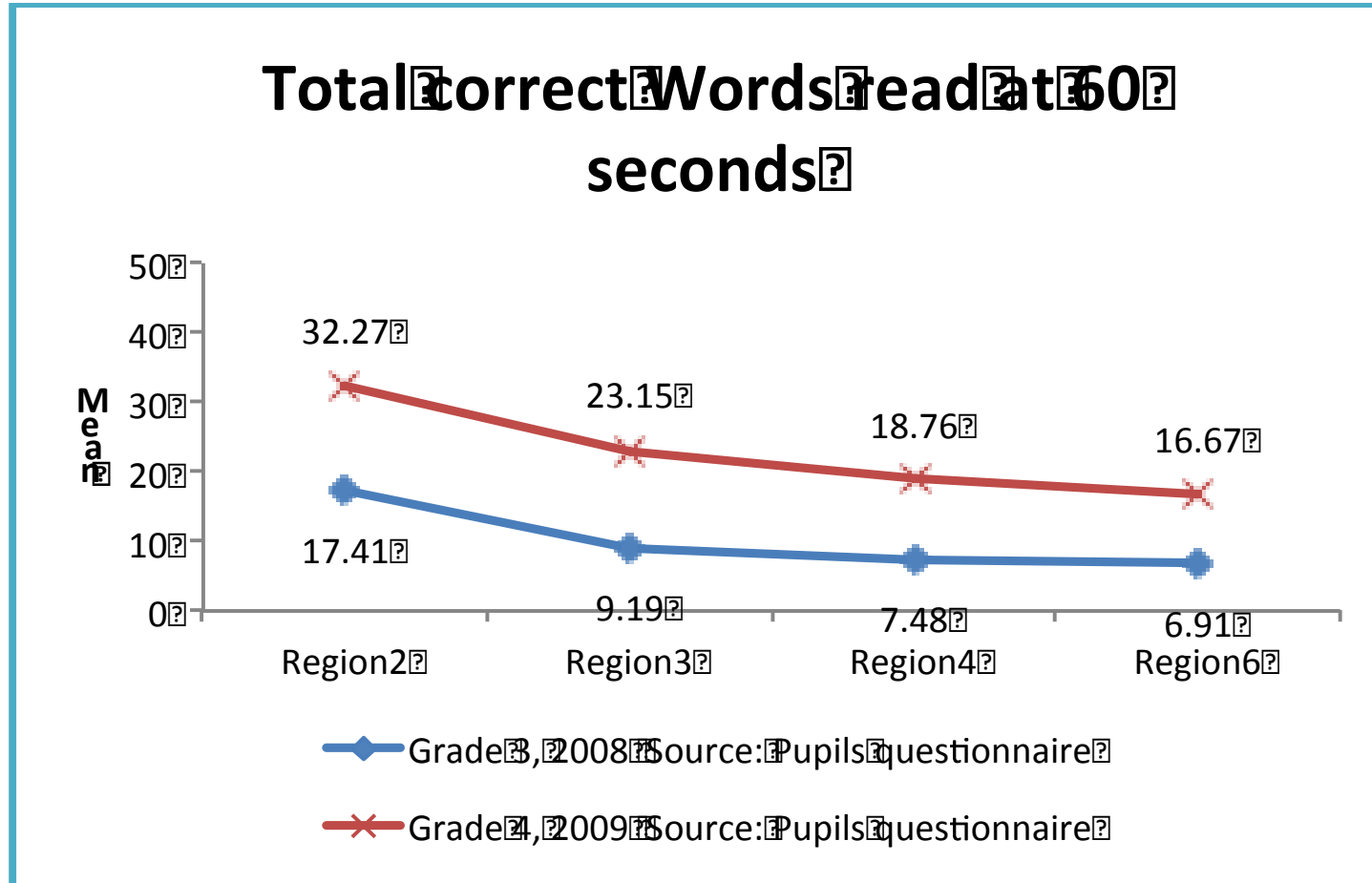
Key findings (I)

Likely to work where parents are educated



Lesson #1

One system, different challenges



Lesson #2

Who gets to define the question?

	Percentage of parents/caregivers who are satisfy with the performance of the school
WSD	96.45
Grant	92.04
Control	98.25
Number of observations	567

- Student learning standards low
- Teacher content knowledge problematic
- Yet, parents are in general satisfied

Lesson #2

Who gets to define the question?

Question: *“Do you think it would be a good idea to give decision making powers to the schools and the community (Like hiring and firing teachers, managing the curriculum, establishing fees etc.)? Please give your reasons regardless of your answer. “*

Over $\frac{3}{4}$ of the head teachers disapprove

- i. “It will not be a good idea as there will not be a fair play and the know-how will also be lacking among the community.”*
- ii. “No it is not a good thing. A greater percentage of the communities where most of the schools are located can not read and write. “*
- iii. “Almost impossible because a large portion of our communities are illiterate”*
- iv. “I don’t think it will be a good idea to do so because they aren’t equip enough to handle such issues. “*
- v. “No! if such powers are given to the community they could abused it and could even bring conflict in the school.”*

Lesson # 3

Redefining what “what works” means

1. Capacity to learn and adjust course (Search for questions)

E.g. of Gambia:

- » Teacher content knowledge
- » School fees
- » National language program
- » Etc.

2. Deliver learning

- Effect of one single program becomes secondary (Many necessary but not sufficient conditions)
- Enough to track trend (e.g. of Gambia: NAT / EGRA)