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For Effective Learning in Africa: Bilingual Education and Curriculum Reform

Seminar proceedings on Curriculum Adaptation

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The document is a working document still in the stages of production. It has been prepared to serve as a basis for discussions at the ADEA Biennial Meeting and should not be disseminated for other purposes at this stage.

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NOTE TO THE READER

This Report from the Seminar on curriculum adaptation is a shortened, analytical version of the **"Proceedings of the Seminar on Curriculum Adaptation"** (200 pages).

The methodology we used consisted of selecting **the features that are characteristic and revealing about current dynamics** from among the interventions of the delegations and resource people as well from as the discussions themselves.

This report constitutes a basis for other work and could be a reference point for a systemic approach involving three dimensions:

- the competency-based approach
- the use of national languages
- the gender approach to curricula

We will finish with a **transversal analysis** that makes it possible to see not only the promising prospects developed in the workshop but also to identify the key concepts that marked the seminar and which characterized the methodological and scientific approach.

For technical reasons, it was not possible to publish the full proceedings (200 pages). They can be consulted on the Internet site:

www.adeanet.org

INTRODUCTION

The Seminar on Curriculum Adaptation that took place in Cotonou (Benin) from 12 to 15 December 2005 was organized jointly by three international agencies, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), the Agence Internationale de la Francophonie (AIF) and the Regional Office for Education in Africa (BREDA/UNESCO).

The goal of this meeting was to bring together a dozen francophone and anglophone African countries as well as resource personnel in the field of education reform in these particular countries.

The countries participating in the Seminar included the following:

▪ Benin	▪ Djibouti	▪ Namibia
▪ Burkina-Faso	▪ Guinea	▪ Niger
▪ Congo	▪ Mali	▪ Senegal

The delegation from Zambia was not able to attend.

In addition to the representatives of the three above-mentioned international organizations, various resource personnel were invited, representing a number of research centers, which helped not only to stimulate discussion but also to provide a certain perspective on common points. These included in particular the CEPEC International, the IBE and BREDA.

The goal set by the Seminar organizers was to **stimulate discussion on introducing curricula suited to the current and future needs of the African context.** More specifically, the point was to identify and analyze the challenges arising in this process and successful experiences and best practices to be promoted as well as subjects that could be worked on for the purpose of sharing. The goal was also to **be able to set up a network for exchanging experience, sharing knowledge, and developing methodologies and working procedures in the field of curriculum reform.**

The contributions of the participants (countries and resource people) as well as the group discussion and work essentially focused on three main points decided by the organizers, that is:

- The competency-based approach (CBA),
- The "gender" dimension,
- The integration of national languages.

The participating countries started from a consideration of these three dimensions to develop the exchanges and discussion and enrich their understanding of the field of educational reform.

A presentation of the curriculum analytical tools developed by Adriana Gorga from the International Bureau of Education also helped to set a specific orientation for the discussion with regard to these three dimensions.

The contributions of the resource people on each of these three themes also helped to guide the ensuing discussion.

- *The CBA in curriculum construction – Analytical test,* by Charles Delorme of the CEPEC International;

- *Integrating African languages as languages of instruction in curricula*, by Mamadou N'Doye from the ADEA;

- *Gender and curricula*, by Mafakha Toure from BREDA.

Finally, the working groups were able to develop common possibilities for thinking and action with regard to introducing new curricula. The curricula developed follow a competency-based approach,

integrating the African national languages, and taking into account the gender dimension, the fight against poverty and HIV/AIDS, and the principles of sustainable development.

The Seminar on curriculum adaptation was thus able not only to pool the experience of the countries and the knowledge of the research centers that attended, but also to undertake an in-depth examination of education reform.

The purpose of this document is to present the presentations and work carried out during this meeting, as well as the discussion, thinking and possibilities for work raised by the participants.

During this discussion, the Seminar participants were able to make full use of this opportunity to be able to share and exchange views on the complex questions involved in curriculum reform. Teacher training, for example, flows directly from changes in curricula and raises issues about its understanding and the methodologies to be used.

The Seminar on curriculum adaptation thus helped to **clarify issues of terminology, methodology and practice.** Sharing experience is essential to helping the different countries to enrich each other's understanding and progress together. There was open discussion, and a deeper understanding was achieved, but the heart of the work – in the field – remains to be accomplished. **The lessons drawn point to the need for everyone to assume their responsibilities by continuing this work and contributing at every level to the progress of curriculum reform.**

The discussions to be held during the ADEA 2006 Biennial Meeting should head in this same direction and continue to enrich discussion about the competency-based approach, gender and the integration of national languages into the curriculum. This will provide a new opportunity for even more countries to be able to exchange views, learn and take on board the experience of others.

SEMINAR GOALS

1. General objective

To stimulate discussion on the introduction of curricula adapted to current and future needs in the African context, involving nine francophone and anglophone African countries, resource people and three international organizations.

2. Specific objectives

- To identify and analyze the challenges posed by the process of adapting the curricula in the different countries;
- To identify and analyze successful experiences and best practices in developing the curricula that will be promoted;
- To identify concretely the subjects and critical experiences that could be covered by analytical work and the production of documents for the purposes of sharing;
- To develop concepts and adapt methodologies and tools that could be used as effective aids for those involved in the work of curriculum adaptation;
- To set up a network for the exchange of experience and the sharing of knowledge between countries involved in this process;
- To define methodologies and work procedures that could guide and organize the work of the network.

1. AFRICAN EXPERIENCE WITH CURRICULUM REFORM

1. <u>Communication from the Congo by Mr Makita and Mr Toumbou</u>

(Extracts)

1.1. Implementation strategies

Programs for these three types of education are developed as follows:

A) Pr- school and primary

The "development of a new pedagogy" project of the ministry, which was supported by UNICEF as part of a cooperation program, used the **goals-based approach** to experiment with curricula for pre-school education and primary education in an urban and rural setting.

These curricula are currently in operation, having been disseminated by the French-Congo project (AREPA), which placed these tools in every school in the country.

The UNPF and UNESCO supported the development of teaching guides.

B) General secondary

The curricula were rewritten with the support of the UNPF, and, without being trialed, were generalized, due to the crying lack of such tools at the conclusion of the armed conflicts.

1.2. Considerations on the three dimensions of the seminar

A) Introduction of African languages as instructional languages at school

The Congolese constitution targeted two "national languages" alongside French, the official language. The problem of introducing them into the education system has been posed for many years. A number of works have been written, but unfortunately, things are still at the phase of analysis with regard to whether they should be integrated and by what means. A multilateral commission needs to be set up for this purpose.

B) Adoption of the competency-based approach

The Congo is a stakeholder in the sub-regional groupings that the Agence intergouvernementale de la francophonie is organizing on the competency-based approach. Its resource personnel are included in the AIF bank of experts.

A plan will soon be developed from the perspective of adopting this approach, based on the scheme: Training of resource persons – development of programs – experimentation – generalization by steps.

C) Taking the gender dimension into account in curricula

Gender does not pose a problem in the Congolese curricula. Thus sexist stereotypes are not found in the various textbooks written for primary school and used in the curricula.

A study will be conducted soon on the enrolment of girls in order to better identify gender inequalities, which are easier to detect in rural areas.

1.3. Analysis and summary of the discussion

Unlike in most of the other participating countries, the competency-based approach has still not been developed in the Congolese education system. The Congolese representatives explained that the goals-based pedagogy had been chosen, and that this is not an auspicious time to shift to the competency-based approach.

The country does not want to upset the education system too hastily and has decided **to take its time and to make certain of its approach.** With the support of resource people (trained by the AIF), the Congo wishes to set its own pace, as no "curriculum in the laboratory" should be imposed on the people and education system personnel, which would risk systematic rejection.

It is not possible at this time to shift hastily to the CBA, when the GBA has still not been generalized. With regard to the CBA, the Congolese representatives emphasized that there is no "national sovereignty", and that so long as the country is not ready, no new change will be undertaken. As a further explanation of this strategic choice, they explained that the **GBA constitutes the cornerstone of the CBA**, and that consequently, **extending the GBA and raising the awareness of trainers and teachers along these lines constitutes preparatory work for the future integration of the CBA**.

Nor is there haste with regard to the national languages. The Congo is not prepared to create any difficulties for progress with its curriculum by internal differences on this subject. The fight against AIDS and poverty will, however, be rapidly integrated into the curriculum.

Finally, the delegation concluded its discussion with the information that the country has no crucial problems with **taking gender into account**.

2. Communication from Mali by Mr Konandji and Mr Touré

(Extracts)

2.1. The strategies developed in the process

- The development of the General Framework to Guide the Basic and Normal Education Curriculum.

- Training curriculum organizers and directors (directors of teaching academies, CAP directors, central services agents, teaching advisers, school heads, teachers, NGOs, trade unions).

- The development of technical documents that can be used to help produce the curriculum: editor's guide, a plan for curriculum development by type of education and summary of the contributions of pedagogical innovations to be integrated into the curriculum (environmental education, convergent pedagogy, gender approach, education in family life and population issues, etc.).

- The development of the basic education level 1 and 2 curriculum.

- Testing in a sample of 80 schools (currently testing the second year of level 2).

- The development of a collection of methodological tools and a databank for testing the basic education curriculum with a view towards generalization.

- The application of the curriculum in first year by 2550 teachers.

Scientific support for all these activities is being provided by CEPEC International of Lyon and USAID (the JSI/PDY Program and World Education).

2.2. Challenges, constraints and obstacles

- These are related to the multiplicity of national languages. The use of native languages raises questions that require analysis. These include, among others:
  - How to manage the interactions and interferences between French and the national language?
  - How can learning in the learning language be constructed effectively and evaluated?
  - How can competencies in the national language be used for French?

- The production of guides and school texts in the 11 national languages.

- The lack of teachers who are native speakers of the local language in certain regions.

- Numerous teachers who are native speakers of the national language of instruction still have problems with transcription.

- The training of supervisory personnel responsible for monitoring and support (teaching advisers and school heads).

- The cost of training teachers in the curriculum.

- The level of academic qualification of some teachers (in particular local community school teachers), which makes it difficult for them to understand the curriculum approach.

- The difficulties and costs of producing textbooks in 11 national languages.

- The lack of a communications strategy for local communities and parents for the curriculum.

- The great mobility of teaching personnel.

- The competency-based approach can be difficult to implement for poorly trained teachers, in particular with respect to the integration of learning / interdisciplinarity, the evaluation of the competencies, and an active, differentiated pedagogy in overloaded classrooms.

2.3. Analysis and summary of the discussion

The Congo (which, with two national languages, has chosen to ponder their introduction into the curriculum) asked Mali about **the practical organization of the implementation of languages of instruction. The question of the translation of the curriculum and the newly designed teaching tools** was also raised. Other questions were posed, in particular concerning **training teachers** in the reform, **new evaluation methods** at the end of primary education, and how the new curriculum takes into account **excessive pupil numbers**.

In response, the representatives of Mali explained that **Convergent Pedagogy** (CP) has existed in Mali since 1989, and that it is used in the education system on an experimental basis for about 30% of Mali's schools.

The fight against poverty and AIDS as well as sustainable development principles constitute competencies that are already integrated into the new curriculum.

With regard to certification, Mali's representatives explained that there was no examination at the year 6 level, and basic education will form a single block.

3. Communication from Guinea by Mr Diallo

(Extracts)

3.1. The strategies developed in the process

A – Two methodological approaches were used in the development of the new programs in order to permit a coherent change at the level of the teachers and designers and without leading to a rupture in their implementation.

- The renovation-"clean-up" approach: this aims at adjusting old programs by introducing pedagogical innovations: education for family life / education for population issues ("EvF/EmP"), environmental education, etc.

- The restructuring approach: this is in continuity with the first approach, and is in line with the competency-based approach.

The CBA content was developed by following these steps:

- The choice and formulation of domains and sub-domains

- The development of a reference base of competencies

- The development of basic competencies and levels of competency

- The development of learning content and situations.

B – The programs developed are **in the process of experimentation in 38 primary schools** located in urban and rural areas in every part of the country. For the first and second trial years, the teachers concerned are those from the "CP" and "CE" (first three years of primary school). They have received methodological training.

3.2. Problems

The problems encountered include:

- A lack of financial resources to carry out regular visits

- The inability of supervisors to ensure complete follow-up of the innovation

- The inadequate training in the competency-based approach of most of those involved in designing the programs at the central level

- The lack of documentation about the innovation

- The lack of appropriate teaching materials

- A lack of motivation among the teachers.

3.3. Needs

- To strengthen managerial capacities in implementing the innovation through training sessions or discussion meetings between countries that have adopted the same approaches

- To procure funding for the design of teaching materials

- To set up a documentary base

- To set up networks for communication and discussion between countries in the sub-region with regard to the practice of CBA

▪ To benefit from international expertise in the design of teaching programs.

3.4. Analysis and summary of the discussion

Guinea has undertaken a competency-based approach education reform and is currently testing the first two years of its practice.

The questions posed to the delegation concerned **changes in the teacher training schools and how they take the new curriculum into account**.

With regard to questions about **the relations between initial training and continuing training,** work has begun in the teacher training institutes where the CBA will be introduced fully in 2007 (CP, CE and CM levels – first five years of primary school).

The national languages are not yet integrated into instruction. Six languages will be involved, and their choice will be made based on demographics. As Peul is considered a transnational language, it will certainly be included in the curriculum.

4. Communication from Benin by Mr Gbenou, Mr Hountondji, Mr Mensah, Mr da Conceçao and Mr Gognon

(Extracts)

4.1. The strategies developed in the process

The new study programs are being implemented gradually. They have gone through three phases:

A) The trial phase

This involved thirty (30) public schools, including urban, semi-urban and rural schools that are scattered around the country, with five (5) per *département*. Experimentation began in the 1994-1995 school year.

B) The extension phase

This began in the 1996-1997 school year and initially involved one hundred and fifty (150) public and private schools in the implementation of the new study programs. This helped to expand the support base for generalization.

C) The generalization phase

This began in the 1999-2000 school year and reached the CM2 level in the 2004-2005 school year.

This involved all the public and private schools in Benin (about six thousand). The following table summarizes the development of this stage in the process of implementing the study programs in Benin.

Note that structures for monitoring the trial, extension and generalization of the new study programs have been set up from the national level down to the school district level. This was the framework in which, for instance, the team for the generalization of the new study programs was created.

4.2. The main problems, challenges, constraints and obstacles encountered

These are inherent in any reform. Most of the difficulties experienced during implementation of the new study programs are specific to the education system and have existed for a long time.

These include the lack of qualified teachers (general culture, pedagogy), infrastructure and furnishings, financial resources, teaching materials (geometric solids, etc.).

The difficulties specific to the new study programs include:

- Resistence to change (teachers and pupils' parents, the reasons evoked: extra work for teachers, longer classroom preparation time, particularly related to the need for teaching material).

- The splitting up of schedules.

- Poor management of school time (disturbances due to sporadic strikes from 1999 to 2003). The programs were never able to be implemented. Gaps accumulated among the pupils.

- Lack of professional consciousness: service regularity.

- The collapse of authority.

- A lack of awareness-raising, information, and communication among education system players.

- The unreliability of statistical data (for the rational, effective allocation of pedagogical inputs).

- The absence of a mechanism for monitoring, controlling and evaluating the implementation of the responsibilities assigned to the supervisory and control agents.

- The politicization of the school administration.

- Corruption in the education system.

4.3. Analysis and summary of the discussion

The delegation from Benin was asked about **the state of progress of its pre-school reform and the introduction of the national languages.** The question of **timetables** was also raised as well as **obstacles to the implementation of the reform with regard to teachers**.

The representatives from Benin described the great **flexibility of the timetables** (more than ¾ of content) and the **high level of teacher training and autonomy**.

They also emphasized the fact that **grouping subjects by domain constitutes an enrichment**, not an impoverishment. The also clarified that in kindergarten the teachers work by project and not based on competency.

Finally, Benin said that a **permanent team to generalize the new curriculum** was set up at the Ministry, and that it will monitor progress with the reform.

5. Communication from Niger by Mrs Goza

(Extracts)

5.1. The strategies developed in the process

A) For the development of curricula

Participatory process involving:

- Strategic planning of curriculum activities.
- Establishment of various bodies (national, regional and sub-regional).
- Raising awareness of all organizations about the competency-based approach.
- Organization of sub-regional fora.
- National survey to identify learners' living conditions.
- Organization of a national forum.
- Raising the awareness of everyone involved throughout the process.

B) For the experimentation or trial phase

- Development of a strategic testing plan.
- Identification of schools and teachers.
- Training supervisors and teachers involved in the trial.
- Raising parent awareness.

C) For establishment and generalization

- Development of a strategic plan for establishment and generalization.
- Training of all supervisors and teachers.
- Reproduction of teaching materials.
- Reorganization of the curricula of the teacher training institutes of the Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENS).

5.2. The results

- Changes in teaching/learning practices.
- Impacts on the evaluation of learning results.
- Information about strengthening the relevance of learning.
- Other impacts.

5.3. Problems, challenges, constraints and obstacles

In terms of resources

- Human resources: the scarcity of national human resources, hence the call for support from international experts.

- Financial resources: difficulties in procuring internal and external resources.

5.4. Support needs

- At the level of conceptual clarity: proposal for an international colloquium on conceptual clarification.

- In methodologies.

5.5. Analysis and summary of the discussion

The delegation from Niger was heartily thanked for **its contribution on the gender issue**.

National languages have not yet been introduced into the curriculum. Several questions were raised in this regard. In response Niger explained that at the primary level, **there was no problem with scientific translation**.

It was noted that, in addition, **in Nigeria**, it is possible **to obtain a doctorate in Haoussa**.

From the viewpoint of the Niger delegation, **the question of the "maturity of languages" is not an issue**.

It also explained that the new curriculum had integrated **continuous evaluation**.

6. Communication from Burkina Faso by Mrs Traoré Zida, Mrs Youl Da

(Extracts)

6.1. The strategies developed in the process

The curriculum reform procedure recommends the establishment of a partnership between the Ministry of basic education and literacy (**MEBA**), through the **DRDP** and a specialized institution that has a wealth of experience in the field of developing curricula and is able to support the MEBA in developing all the primary education curricula.

6.2. The expected results

- More relevant programs that promote both the fight against poverty through the socioeconomic integration of young people and preparation for life, or the continuation of studies;
- Better trained and better motivated teachers;
- Less expensive teaching material that is available to all.

6.3. Problems, challenges, constraints and obstacles

- Availability of financial resources and of competent people;
- Resistance to change;
- Involvement of everyone concerned (authorities, civil society, trade unions, etc.);
- Total commitment of the teaching teams;
- Availability of material (documentation, textbooks, collective materials, consumables, etc.);
- Classroom numbers.

6.4. Support needs

- High-level scientific and technical support in order to train everyone involved adequately, in order to ensure the effective, sustainable transfer of competencies (conceptual clarity, methodologies, tools for analysis, supervision and action, etc.);
- The exchange of experience and the sharing of knowledge in order to build the capacities of those involved;
- Study trips in order to enable the main players to better take on board successful experiences in other countries (Tunisia, Djibouti,etc.);
- Other domains: determination of the instructional scheme: learning time, organization in sub-cycles, additive bilingualism, etc.

6.5. Analysis and summary of the discussion

As with Niger, the delegation from Burkina Faso was congratulated **for its contribution to taking gender into account in its reform.** Questions thus concerned **gender** and the **national languages** (progressive bilingual education).

The representatives from Burkina explained **the value of actions on behalf of girls** in the new curriculum.

In the northern areas, it sometimes happens that girls have been promised in early marriage. Current enrolment is **50% girls and 50% boys,** and **positive discrimination policies** have been established on behalf of girls.

There are more than 60 national languages in Burkina Faso. Only eight have been used in the new curriculum.

Finally, a report on the education budget showed that pupils succeed better in 5 years than in 6 years of primary education, thanks to more suitable schools that take into account the national languages.

7. Communication from Senegal by Mr Touré and Mrs Diop N'Diaye

(Extracts)

7.1. The strategies developed in the process

A) Construction strategy

The strategy for the implementation of the renewal plan is structured around the following points:

- Building the capacity of managers and program editors through workshops on training, production, sharing, validation and exchanging experience, etc.

- Sector-based construction following by pooling. Five sub-groups involving a total team of 40 people from different education sectors was set up:
    - Three (03) elementary sub-groups: language and communications, mathematics, study of the local area;
    - One (1) pre-school sub-group;
    - One (1) non-formal sub-group (basic community and literacy schools).

- Active work with the teachers: 34 teachers, school heads and literacy instructors trained during 10 days. They came back to "test" the instruments under the supervision of a harmonization committee member. This work took place over two years and helped to improve the tools introduced in the classrooms considerably.

- Scientific support, with leadership provided by Senegal. We have endeavored to provide aid for the support personnel (planning, documentation, instrumentation), with the national managers being in charge overall.

7.2. The results

A) The manual of competencies ("Livret de Compétences")

A competency-based approach does not at all exclude concern for "the content to transmit". Likewise, in the classroom, a competency can exist only in <u>significant learning situations</u> that enable the pupils

to integrate and draw on their achievements, and through <u>evaluation situations</u> that make it possible to determine the quality of the pupils' achievements and capacities.

B) The teacher's pedagogical guide

- THEORETICAL PART
  - Entry by competency
  - The pedagogy of integration

- PRATICAL PART
  - Language and communication domain
  - Mathematics domain
  - Education in science and social life domain
  - Physical education, sports and arts domain

7.3. Problems, challenges, constraints and obstacles

<u>The following description of the problems encountered or foreseeable is far from exhaustive:</u>

1. More is expected of a curriculum than it can provide. The exorbitant number of programs currently on trial in the schools could be a significant obstacle for establishing and generalizing the curriculum. In some school districts, no less than five programs have been developed "while awaiting the curriculum": STD/AIDS, health and reproduction, EVF/EMP, education in citizenship, education in human rights and peace, water/hygiene/sanitation, without even mentioning the so-called harmonized programs that add to the confusion – these are older programs (from 1979) that have simply been re-written in terms of competencies, with teachers that are supposed to apply them, without training, "while awaiting the curriculum".

2. Non-formal basic education could also be a difficult sector. This sector includes, among others (there are also the *daaras*), literacy and basic community schools, and has up to now been characterized by a diversity of interventions, with autonomous projects whose financing frequently comes from bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies. There is concern that in this respect the implementation could prove to be too complex, and all the more so as it will take place in the context of the "faire faire" ("making it happen") strategy, which makes civil society organizations responsible for the implementation of the programs. There is worry not only about a rupture in the mobilization of resources, but also because there has been such fragmentation in decision-making that there are constant conflicts over authority, which have blocked progress.

7.4. Support needs

- Building the capacities of curriculum designers and managers has now become a necessity: field trips, study trips

- Capitalization on products from "incubation centers"

- Assurance or rather a clearly stated policy vision that the reforms and their follow-up will no longer depend on changes in ministerial bodies.

7.5. Analysis and summary of the discussion

The issue of **institutional instability** due to external financing sources was raised on this occasion.

The representatives from Senegal explained that the **choices had been made** with regard to the notion of competencies. In this sense, **the Guide specified the conceptual choices (pages 12, 13 and 14).**

The delegation also emphasized the important role played by **funding agencies and international experts** in the implementation of this reform. In addition, it explained that the institutional relations between departments, different financing methods, and methodological and terminological differences had created difficulties in implementation, and had even led to a "**strategic pause**".

In this situation, **the introduction of national languages** is encountering resistance. The necessary maturation of national languages needs to be taken into account in order to go beyond "project status" in this area.

Finally, it was explained that ministerial responsibility was a crucial element for its different departments in order to ensure the successful implementation of the curriculum, if only to be able to stand up to the various internal and external pressures, like the occasionally conflicting policies of the TFPs.

8. Communication from Djibouti by Mrs Boulhan Houssein and Mr Nour Hassan

(Extracts)

8.1. The strategies developed in the process

The strategy to improve the quality of learning, a key goal of the education system reform, must meet the following challenges, among others:

A) Carrying the curriculum reform through to the end

The generalization of the CBA is in its final phase and next year (2006-2007) will reach the final level of primary school. However, at the level of middle school, the question is being sharply posed as to how to manage the initial generalization that will coincide with removing the bottleneck (access to middle school) and with the coming together of two cohorts of pupils, the one after five years of schooling (reform), and the other after six years (previous system).

B) Strengthening supervision and the evaluation of quality

The establishment of evaluation to fulfill the strategy function (evaluation-regulation-results) is underway. This will make it possible, among other things, to account for how well the curriculum reform and pedagogical practices function, as well as for their results at the local level, and to provide tools for supervision and regulation.

C) The professional development of teachers

Teacher training is important for improving the implementation of the reform. In this context, an annual training plan is being finalized as well as a practical guide to continuing training, which will help teachers develop their professional skills on an ongoing basis.

D) The availability of school textbooks

The ministry initiated a study on the book chain analyzing the methods and resources needed to make low-cost textbooks available on a lasting basis. The study reviewed every aspect of the chain, from design to marketing, with particular attention to the quality/price ratio. On the basis of the recommendations of the study, a national book policy was decreed, in particular **to provide every** D**jiboutian child a low-cost textbook for each discipline and each year.**

8.2. Support needed

- Evaluation expertise in order to build the competencies of the evaluation team
- Sharing experience in the field of education and national languages
- Sharing experience in the field of pre-school education
- Sharing experience and cooperating with other countries in the field of developing school textbooks using the competency-based approach
- Organization of a regional meeting to set up a database on the state of integration in order to enrich this process and eventually to interconnect the various national outputs, while respecting everyone's creations.

8.3. Analysis and summary of the discussion

The representatives from Djibouti explained that the implementation of the reform took place **gradually**. For primary schools, the experimentation lasts one year for each grade. There is a pause at the end of each year. The collective approach is assessed. For secondary education, the trial has not yet been generalized: only one middle school is currently involved.

This reform puts the pupil at the heart of learning. CBA encourages different classroom practice, pushing the teachers to gain more training. So the training reference base has developed.

With regard to the evaluation of competencies, the teachers now understand the "evaluation notebook". An integration notebook is developed for each week of integration (per competence and per discipline). The grades are examined in the course of ongoing controls (OTI in French and in Maths). The teachers are generally supportive.

9. <u>Communication from Namibia by Mr Munganda</u>

(Extracts)

The Primary Education curriculum was reviewed in mid-1998, and changes were made to the curriculum based on certain recommendations. Subsequently, when GTZ-Afrila came on board at NIED in the Sub-Division African languages as early as 2001, with the objective of contributing towards the enhancement of the quality of African languages materials for Namibia's national languages, the whole Lower Primary Curriculum (Grades 1-4) has currently been reformed and implemented in order to suit the needs and changes in society. The Upper Primary (Grade 5-7), the Junior Secondary (Grades 8-10) as well as the Senior Secondary curriculum (Grade 11-12) have also been revised – actually reformed – in order to have more relevant localized content and context. In actual fact, these reform activities in the Senior Secondary levels are to be implemented in 2006 in Grade 11 for first examination in 2007 for Grade 12 learners. The localized syllabi are aimed at replacing the current Cambridge H/IGCSE curriculum that was adopted when the Cape Education system was abolished in all Namibian secondary schools soon after independence.

9.1. The Challenges and Constraints

Materials development has been seen as an important tool to sharpen the reform processes. For every reform program there should actually be guiding documents or textbooks that aid and inform such changes. Textbook development in the many subjects offered in Namibian schools is actually intact, but for African languages this area is still an aspect of major concern. There has been some

improvement with regard to textbook development in the African languages, but most textbooks that are used are outdated, since they were produced before independence. The contents of such textbooks are mostly translations from other European languages. Some of these textbooks are stereotypical when it comes to characterisation of subject matters. If enough funds are not made available sooner to produce textbooks in African languages, it may actually take longer to balance the scale in terms of the provision of quality education in the areas of African languages.

9.2. Conclusion and possible suggestions

Appropriate, relevant and adequate textbooks, readers and other educational materials should be developed for mother tongue education in the African languages. For this purpose, new young authors should be trained to do this challenging work. There should actually be funds made available in order to produce local textbooks in a cost-effective manner, specifically tailor-made (written) for these localised syllabi in all the grades.

With regard to syllabus and textbooks development, especially in the African languages, it is important that teachers actually teaching the relevant grades should be involved from the onset in the development and translations of the textbooks and the localised Generic Language Syllabi so that there is consistency in use of terminology and understanding of certain issues decided upon during such processes.

This is necessary so that all unnecessary and prolonged debates during training workshops are cut out. Such a strategy also aids during the process (repetition) of syllabus modification (editing) in the relevancy of certain words/terms used within the syllabus content and context to ascribe the desired skills and competencies. Where applicable, other relevant reference materials like dictionaries (Eng/Afr) should also be consulted daily by both teachers and learners during the teaching and learning programs.

It is further suggested that more implementation training workshops in the relevant subjects are needed, to be conducted soon after the curricula or syllabi have been revised/reformed. Frequent effective and efficient school monitoring exercises thereafter, should be conducted in all schools in order to sharpen the skills of teachers and equip them well so that they are empowered, ready and prepared to teach the localised syllabus efficiently and with confidence resulting in improved examination results in the subject concerned.

9.3. Analysis and summary of the discussion

The participation of Namibia, an English-speaking country, made **a very rich contribution to the seminar and to the sharing of experience.** Questions were raised with respect to **the use of national languages** (ten national languages and three European languages), **school functioning and the financing of the reform.**

Namibia has developed group work based **on the learners**, making a genuine rupture with the colonial period. The competency-based approach has been developed above all in the field of vocational training, and is in the process of being used in general training, and the concept of competence is also used in the teaching of languages.

The use of national languages tends to be growing, supported by the creation of suitable teaching material. The delegation emphasized the important role of the GTZ, the German cooperation agency, in financing the textbooks.

The reform proposes organizing the primary level in two three-year cycles and the secondary level in two cycles, one of three years and one of two years.

In conclusion, the Namibian delegation emphasized the discrimination that existed prior to the country's independence, and which still has an impact on the education system.

2. ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION FOLLOWING THE GROUP PRESENTATIONS

The work in its entirety is at <u>www.adeanet.org</u>

1. <u>Discussion following the group presentations on CBA</u>

The Seminar participants were divided into two groups, one working on the gender dimension (Group 1), and the other on the theme of national languages (Group 2). Nevertheless, each of the two groups also held significant discussion about the Competency-Based Approach.

In this respect, the two groups were asked basically to consider four points:

1- To give a definition of the term "competence";
2- To give a definition of the term "curriculum" and describe its content;
3- To consider how to integrate the fight against poverty and HIV/AIDS as well as the Sustainable Development dimension into curricula using the CBA;
4- To review the strategies concerning the different planning steps to be implemented (preparatory and supervisory phase of the change).

After an initial presentation by the two groups on these four points, the discussion was led by Mr N'Doye, which took up the responses of the two groups. The discussion essentially focused on the first two points, as the groups had in fact made relatively similar presentations about the last two points.

With regard to the term "competence", the additional contribution by the Namibian delegation helped to clarify that the conceptions were not basically different between the English-speaking African countries and the French-speaking African countries. In both cases the emphasis was on "why" and on what was going on concretely in the schools.

The most in-depth discussion focused on the term "curriculum". An initial theoretical discussion left the two groups divided. For the first group, the point was to distinguish clearly between the pupil-curriculum, or learner's curriculum, on the one hand, and the curriculum environment or curriculum support measures, on the other. They felt that this distinction helped to highlight the importance of the links between the tool and classroom practice. According to this logic, the teacher is not an object of the curriculum but constitutes an obligatory transition for ensuring the curriculum's success with the pupils. This is the setting for any support measures, in particular teacher training.

In contrast, for the second group the pupils are at the center of the scheme. The curriculum is a teaching/learning process, that is, paired activities that go together. The members of the second group did not consider the idea of the learner's curriculum to be logical. According to them, it was not justifiable to separate teachers and pupils, and the curriculum must be considered as a complex, integral whole.

In order to re-focus the debate, several people from outside the two groups intervened to emphasize that the terms should not be opposed and that there is in fact "a pupil's curriculum" and "a teacher's curriculum". The question of teacher training that is integrated into these curricula is an open question. This does not involve a problem of terminology, but a disagreement related to the functioning and operation of a curriculum.
Charles Delorme intervened at this point to explain that "integrating" and "differentiating" are not incompatible.

He argued that it was imperative to differentiate the logic of training pupils from the logic of training professional adults. The learner's curriculum is a curriculum "that has its own coherence and function". On the other hand, the teacher's curriculum cannot be based on these same components. With regard to the latter, we speak more readily of a "reference base", as in other professional contexts. He emphasized the term "professional". If no distinction is made between the two types of curriculum, the risk is to make teacher training academic, when what is needed is genuine professionals. He also emphasized the importance of separating the teacher reference base from the pupil curriculum, not in order to oppose them but in order to better situate the teacher reference base so that it could deal with the problems that need to be resolved.

To conclude this initial discussion, Mamadou N'Doye returned to the fact that introducing an innovation is not sufficient in itself. Curriculum designers must take into account the impact and consequences of innovations undertaken in terms of training, both with respect to pedagogy and the definition of goals, competencies and content.

2. <u>Discussion following the presentation on "gender"</u>

The meeting began by congratulating this group for its output, given the complexity of the subject, and even though there has not been much attention to this subject with respect to the curriculum.

The Seminar participants then responded to the presentation with a number of comments and questions. The questions concerned in particular the way to view the gender issue, which must not focus exclusively on girls. Too much polarization on girls could in fact lead to an opposite effect. It is thus important to ensure a balance between the two trends. Nevertheless, it is true that girls must be protected by legislation in the school system against abuses, which are not all that rare on the part of certain insensitive teachers. The problem has been solved in part in Benin thanks to strict legislation protecting girl minors.

Mrs A Gorga du Bie spoke to the gender issue in an effort to demonstrate that this was in fact a problem of social construction. According to her, a struggle on this issue must develop cultural roots before this issue could be handled better and solid tools built.

There are analytical elements on this issue that must be taken into account (indicators, parity, equality in education, etc.). It is on the basis of observing existing inequalities and disparities that a genuine gender policy can be built on two points:

- A policy of fairness: how to apply equal treatment and act on behalf of the most disadvantaged to re-establish a balance and give everyone the same opportunity.
- Respect for differences: promoting girls, while respecting their particular features.

A gender policy must take into account a multidimensional approach, that is, acting at the level of the economy and the organization of society, as well as the school and the classroom.

By way of conclusion, Mr N'Doye explained that there were two errors that must not be committed when dealing with gender:

1- To treat gender policy with a unidimensional approach;

2- To forget that this involves an entire structure, composed of various levels of development: no single, confused action can solve the gender problem. Thus it is up to the education sector to act on school factors.

3. Discussion following the presentation on national languages

The problem posed to the group was to construct an argument with a view to deciding policy with regard to African languages and then to see how to implement advocacy strategies in the course of a plan.

Mrs Adriana Gorga de Bie launched the discussion by looking at the very use of these languages in African society (on the street, in ads, newspapers, etc.). She expressed her surprise in this respect not to see these languages practiced more in the social environment. There are, of course, textbooks and communications in national languages, but these seem to be relatively rare.

A fast-paced discussion took place between the participants, which wound up by recognizing that there have been many efforts undertaken in this area, but that in reality these languages are little used in the street (about 97%). It seems important to be able to work on this point in parallel with integrating languages into the curricula. The integration of national languages into African society is a key issue for democratization. In this sense, the fact that the development of democracy is directly related to the use of language seems indisputable.

The participants felt that one of the reasons for the poor results with decentralization in terms of participatory democracy is due to the fact that at the grassroots level people do not understand the official language, which means they cannot manage the system.

4. Discussion on workshop follow-up

Requests were formulated with the aim of maximizing the expertise of the resource people present in order to more deeply understand the questions posed from a technical viewpoint. The participants wanted more sharing and discussion, in particular with countries that have already been working on the process of curriculum adaptation.

Sessions could be organized in countries in such a way as to favor trial and simulation periods in order to observe, and thus better appreciate, concrete problems and situations. The idea is to organize workshops so that each person can leave with the expertise needed to enable them to be able to apply this in their own country.

There were also questions about the development of a teacher's guide for countries that do not yet have one (for example, Niger). Work could be undertaken in this regard with the resource personnel present and the representatives of countries with experience in the design of these types of tools.

The participants were also very interested in the tools presented by the IBE. The desire was to have tools that not only made it possible to launch this type of action but also to monitor what transpires during implementation. The participants could see that even if a tool was well developed upstream, it was very often during follow-up and implementation that problems were encountered.

In order for the participants to continue working together, it was necessary to identify the activities to be pursued and ways to organize them.

5. <u>Proposal for a work plan and follow-up</u>

Work in sub-groups helped to identify the need **for a work and follow-up plan so as to continue curriculum construction and implementation with respect to issues concerning national languages, gender and the competency-based approach.**

This led to the development of proposals for the following actions as part of work and follow-up plans:

- **Activities to go more deeply into "gender" and language issues in the countries**

- **Working together on analytical and monitoring tools**

- **Holding a review permitting discussion about the development of research-action and innovation**

- **Study trips - seminar**

- **Exchange of documents and expertise between countries**

> **These technical proposals are in the proceedings on the web site: <u>www.adeanet.org</u>**

3. ANALYTICAL TOOL FOR THE BASIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM (BY MRS GORGA, IBE)

The text in its entirety is at www.adeanet.org

1. Curriculum analysis tool

Concretely, this approach can accomplish the following main steps:

- identify learning needs in relationship to the fight against poverty;
- identify and describe learners' profiles (incoming and outgoing), as these profiles are described in curriculum documents or as they are envisaged by the project participants;
- develop consistency between learning goals and the content and resources used for education (teacher training, teaching material and approaches), as these were defined in the curriculum selected for the analysis.

2. Goals of the analytical sheets

Analytical sheets were developed to facilitate a critical reading of the curriculum documents actually in use in the nine countries. Two main goals were targeted in particular:

Goal 1:
Systematically examine the way in which the curriculum selected for analysis takes account of learning needs in relation to the fight against poverty.

Goal 2:
Identify the strong and weak points and useful lessons learned in relationship to the relevance of the basic education curriculum for meeting the learning needs identified for the fight against poverty.

3. Organization of the sheets
The tool is organized as follows:

- Sheet 1: Policy orientation: basic education and poverty (1 sheet)
- Sheet 2: Purposes of basic education (1 sheet)
- Sheet 3: Main approach of the basic education curriculum (1 sheet/cycle)
- Sheet 4: Language(s) of instruction (1 sheet)
- Sheet 5: Main disciplines (1 sheet/cycle)
- Sheet 6: Related educational content (1 sheet/cycle)
- Sheet 7: Competencies (1 sheet/cycle)
- Sheet 8: Teaching methods (1 sheet/cycle)
- Sheet 9: Pedagogical material (1 sheet/cycle)
- Sheet 10: Evaluation of academic achievement (1 sheet)
- Sheet 11: Teacher training (1 sheet)

4.   <u>**Summary of the discussion following the presentation of Adriana GORGA**</u>

At the conclusion of the IBE presentation, the participants expressed their interest in the tools, in particular for the countries that had not yet adopted the curriculum approach. Using the analysis of existing curricula or targeting insufficiencies with regard to issues such as taking gender into account helps guide "novice" countries in their approach.

For the "advanced" countries, these tools can be used when dealing with issues other than simply the education of girls.

Subsequent questions concerned the clarification of CBA and curricula terminology. The participants tried to find out whether "grassroots" players had been involved in the design of the tool.

With regard to the adaptation of the analysis, one participant asked whether this was still a matter of the 11 sheets described or whether another tool was used to analyse gender.

To answer the first question on the usefulness of these reflections for countries that have only recently begun to reform their curricula, Mrs. Gorga explained that this work concerned the consistency of the different levels of the curriculum and of different policy orientations. In such cases a tool like this is always needed insofar as the issue of consistency is concerned.

Mrs Gorga then clarified that, with respect to the competency-based approach, the point was not to adopt a descending approach (top-down) but an ascending one (bottom-up). It is thus necessary to develop a catalogue of the experiences and the strong and weak points of the competency-based approach in the curricula of different countries around the world and then to make these available to every country. The competency-based approach is new, but not recent: there was already talk of CBA in the United States in the 1920s. Mrs Gorga nevertheless explained that attention must be paid to what lies underneath the words, and not to use à la carte definitions…. Words and contexts always need to be situated in a specific context in a specific country.

Mrs Gorga continued her response by explaining that curricula are not measurement tools but tools to spur reflection. She believes that it is only possible to make measurements when the curricula are applied properly. This requires a qualitative analysis. The definition of a curriculum also takes into account the progress achieved in the course of the process of developing the curriculum. Likewise, the way in which the notion of competence is defined favours a functional interpretation. So these approaches need to be implemented based on a specific context related to socio-economic determinants.

In response to the questions about involving grassroots forces in developing the curriculum, Mrs Gorga explained that the work was carried out by paid teams. For the IBE, these teams constituted "grassroots" forces.

With respect to girls' education, Mrs Gorga noted that the issue would be discussed the following day, but she believed that girls did indeed have specific needs, in particular with respect to scientific knowledge. Finally, in response to the question about the 11 sheets, Mrs Gorga observed that it might turn out that more than 11 sheets were needed to formalize the structure of this tool.

4. EDUCATION REFORM AND THE COMPTENCY-BASED APPROACH, (BY MR DELORME CEPEC INTERNATIONAL)

Complete text at <u>www.adeanet.org</u>

1. <u>Introduction</u>

While developing curricula we occasionally need to make methodological decisions too rapidly, without taking the time needed to consider the consequences of one terminology or another. Under the pressure to meet results defined by Ministerial officials, but also by the various Technical and Financial Partners (TFP), designers of the competency-based approach need to prove their effectiveness and sometimes avoid asking themselves too many questions in order to maintain a certain level of productivity when drafting the competencies and the evaluation and generalization tools in the classroom alongside the teachers and pupils.

This tension between the necessary debate among researchers and the need to make specific decisions in the field can occasionally become intolerable, or generate disturbing contradictions. How do you commit yourself **with sufficient conceptual security** at a time when you are deciding how to develop a new curricula for all the children in a country for six or even nine years? From our viewpoint, this involves, in all lucidity, moving ahead prudently **while trying throughout the process to assess the risks being taken and make regular adjustments.**

This is why we have chosen in this contribution not to propose "ready-made" methodologies, as "ready-made" pedagogy fatally becomes "ready-made" thinking and over time will not enable those involved to take it up as their own, and thereby become autonomous. And all this is not to speak of guaranteeing interaction with the cultural and socio-economic situation of a country. Here we are thus choosing to present trends in recent pedagogical changes, the origins of the competency-based approach and the prospects it can offer, and the opportunities for its development, without for a moment forgetting in the course of all this to identify a few current failings that could compromise its proper use in pedagogical practice.

2. <u>Goals-based thinking and the competency-based approach</u>

Here we will pause a moment, by design, on this question, as we can see in current reforms frequent allusions or oppositions; goals-based pedagogy was, in its initial phase, part of a behaviourist, forecasting trend. While it is not useful today to mention the close relationship between pedagogical goals and behaviourism, it would nevertheless seem necessary to not reduce the goals-based thinking to behaviourism alone. To avoid a pendulum-like motion of sterile opposition at the theoretical level, we would like to show, as a significant case study, how goals-based thinking made for lasting progress in the field of teaching and pedagogy, and also to introduce the concept of competence.

We have also observed that, due to the **goals-based approach and the teacher's declaration of the possible results,** the learner can better situate themselves in a contractual relation, and can even develop their own learning strategies more autonomously. In education, **goals-based thinking** has certainly made for progress in teaching, but also for advances in classroom communications and a genuine contract pedagogy. It has also stimulated a **participatory** approach in which the teacher can be part of the design and selection of the goals. We will see subsequently that the competencies reference base reinforces the possibility of sharing power through a new level of cooperation between the instructors and learners.

Despite all this, there are numerous weaknesses and theoretical lacunae in the "first generation" of goals-based pedagogy, which led to new research that at certain points introduced the competency-based approach.

As a provisional conclusion to this point, we would like to draw attention to the fact that, while there was an epistemological rupture between goals-based pedagogy and the competency-based approach, considered in their respective theoretical fields, it is nevertheless the case that in pedagogical practice we can see a certain continuity with respect to the conception of the act of teaching and learning. In any case one option is to indicate to teachers that change can help to foster greater in-depth rigour, while avoiding becoming destabilized unnecessarily by propositions that, though innovative, are sometimes uncertain and poorly integrated by those who are proposing them and which lead to the idea that "radical ruptures" need to be introduced into practice by the competency-based approach.

3. <u>Identifying constants in the definitions of competence</u>

Based on the context, the concept of competence originates in one specific field or another. Currently the influence of cognitive work and socioconstructivist theories exercises a decisive influence on the competency-based approach, though, as we shall see later, it originates in other work in didactics. We can, however, identify common points that are undoubtedly irreversible that permit a consensus about the concept of competence.

> 1- Comptence flows from the logic of educating the learner, pupil or adult, and goes beyond the simple logic of instruction regularly condemned by all innovators, even though the education-instruction logic is the dominant practice in a great many classrooms….

> 2- Thus competence can be defined as an acquisition by the learner that goes beyond particular understandings or behaviours to mobilize knowledge, know-how or "knowing-to-be" ("savoir-être"). Comptence takes into consideration the various domains of education: cognitive, socioaffective, and sensory-motor. This comprehensive approach develops a necessary combination between these three dimensions and is not always present in the formulation of competencies that are often identified and proposed solely in the cognitive dimension, as is generally the case in the world of school.

> 3- Since 1993 we have ourselves proposed a provisional definition, which was taken up by CONFEMEN in 1995:

> "Competence is a total acquisition that integrates intellectual capacities, motor and body language abilities and cultural and social attitudes. A competence acquired at school can be recognized in that it enables the child or adolescent to resolve problems-situations in life or career preparation from a perspective of overall development. A competence results from learning that has meaning to the learner and which can thus serve the learner, but also their country. Furthermore, the acquisition of new personal competencies increases the motivation of the one who learns."

> This conception of competence is in line with the curriculum approach and makes for better coordination of school learning and the learner's environment. Nevertheless, this definition necessitated a better translation for pupil learning and the requirements for constructing the school curriculum.

> 4 – Other authors are currently insisting on defining competence as "knowing to act" or "the capacity to use one's knowledge and know-how or other resources"; "Mobilizing resources involves more than drawing on them or using them in varied situations"; "To integrate a competence it is necessary to resort to numerous situations belonging to a single category." G. Scallon, 2004.

> 5 – We could also cite the definition of Rogiers (2001):

"Competence is the possibility for an individual to make use of an integrated set of resources in an interior way with a view to resolving a family of situations-problems."

5- Remember that the term "competence" had already been adopted and proposed by the CEPEC in 1979, and that on the occasion of a Franco-Belgian-Swiss colloquium, we had subjected it to a scientific debate among academics. In 1992, as a synthesis of a decade of research-action, we proposed: "a competence is defined as a system of conceptual or procedural knowledge, organized like operational patterns, which makes it possible to identify a task-problem within a family of situations and to resolve it through effective action" … "A competence is defined in relation to a family of situations" … "Competence is one of the main organizers of education. It is part of the logic of organizing education which supplants the logic of explaining content." P. Gillet, CEPEC (1992).

These definitions were formulated by different teams in specific countries or contexts and are part of a certain consensus, with some minor variations. This approach is characterized by the desire to develop more complex, global acquisitions, which have meaning and permit a reinvestment in the short or even long term.

As an "operator" in the field of educational engineering

architecture
construction of the curriculum
evaluations
portfolio…

As related to conceptual representations of learning

setting in problem situations, socio-cognitive conflict, spiral-like approach
- Didactic transversality
- Place of content

The Fields
of
COMPETENCE

As related to the learner's project Pupil's Personal Project …

Question of MEANING

of the motivation
PROJECT pedagogy
School orientation
Become professional

As manifesting philosophical, anthropological choices

affirmation of values
social demand
socio-cultural, economic context
education-training debate

CEPEC Seminar / JCP summary / October 2005

4. <u>A few issues for the adaptation of curricula using the competency-based approach</u>

Note that the problematization approach is increasingly recommended for the education of pupils. In terms of competence, this is undoubtedly being developed today whenever the pupils have reached a certain level of cognitive development. Given the usual complexity of reform situations, this is a way of being able to conduct constructed thinking so as to be able to make useful choices, in a hierarchical way, by order of priority, and drawing more on conceptual and theoretical foundations than on adaptations of dogmatic terminologies that in turn refer to a rigid, weakly changing design.

5. <u>Strategies for developing a competency-based approach to curricula: Precautions and recommendations</u>

5.1. Make use of what exists and treat it as the foundation for change

Everyday practices in the classrooms and the routines of pupils and teachers must be given respectful consideration. We still note with surprise the extent to which the teachers are ignored in most countries that undertake reform. They are in general not sufficiently involved and their ability to speak out is so limited that some say that they feel like "hostages" in consultation meetings…. As we have shown briefly with regard to the transition from goals to competencies, it is necessary to consider the dynamics of continuity, as even if the current situation of many classrooms seems problematic, there are nonetheless good practices and ideas that currently enable the teachers to "make the best" of their classes and their mission. We propose that recent innovations – and we will cite a few, such as PFIE, EVF/MP, programs for peace, health education, but also, and above all, existing programs – could be subjected to a systematic analysis of their content, conducted methodically and scientifically.

5.2. Bring together the teachers, educational advisers, and supervisors in the field.
We believe that the usual diagram:

Design ➔ Experimentation ➔ Re-writing ➔ Generalization

takes much too much time and is ultimately not at all effective. This is first of all because the debate among the designers can go on forever and occasionally turns into a quarrel between academic researchers or technical specialists. It is undoubtedly not easy to bring in at every step in the process the teachers, educational advisers, and inspectors, due to administrative considerations concerning availability and – some feel – to competence! We believe instead that teachers already have the "competencies" needed to tackle the "competency-based approach" – this is the competency of practitioners who have not always had the opportunity to express or explain their viewpoint and thus to theorize it.

5.3. Relying on an education-action-research approach

We have noted that when the research-action approach works properly it leads to new forms of pedagogical cooperation but also to methodological creativity. Isn't there room to develop amidst the very fertile trend of "collective competence", new networks for production and sharing that would reinforce the **intense motivation of educators in the field?** Does achieving this require differentiating the term "motivation" from "per-diem" or other financial rewards? This kind of confusion about the term "motivation" also functions as an indicator of the difficulty of putting current reforms in place. It has become difficult for the various professionals, who are often influenced by the conditioning of the liberalism prevailing in educational milieu (calls for tenders, specialist workshops, per-diems), to mobilize themselves within the framework of their responsibility with respect to their public function if they do not benefit from any additional financial reward. Many of the new professional activities demanded by reforms like that involving the competency-based approach will inevitably require legal adjustments and new profiles of professional competencies. Without this, the production rhythms and results needed will not be met, and we do not believe that the recourse to consultants from outside the system, whether national or international, will suffice to solve the problems.

5. INTEGRATING AFRICAN LANGUAGES AS LANGUAGES OF INSTRUCTION IN CURRICULA (BY MR NDOYE ADEA)

The text in its entirety is at: <u>www.adeanet.org</u>

1. <u>Introduction</u>

1.1. Curriculum reform: What are the goals?

Clarifying the goals of a reform or of the integration of languages into a curriculum is a key element to be taken into account, as it will determine the orientation and the choice of integration models.

What do you want to achieve by introducing languages into the school? What are you seeking? Without clarification and a response to these questions, the reformer will go astray. What specifically are you seeking through the reform? This question is crucial today – because it is undermining a great deal of African experience. We have noted that some countries have expressed **the political determination to nationalize the language of instruction.** As in most cases the language of instruction was the colonial language, these countries want to replace it with an African language.

There are many nuances in this field. Some countries make this a political issue when choosing to nationalize the language of instruction, while others, though not opposed, do not necessarily wish to do away with the official language of instruction. Some countries are doing both of these at the same time. This is what is called **a policy of linguistic transformation, which should lead to a bilingual balance in the society.** This is the case of Eritrea. Somalia had very clearly set itself on this path even before that. Ethiopia has also adopted this viewpoint, as well as Tanzania.

- Some say that up to now schools have ignored our cultures, our knowledge and our values. By introducing African languages, the aim is **promote and value the culture, languages and history that constitute a cultural identity.** Schools must therefore play a significant role in this sense by means of introducing the languages.
- Others are seeking development. This requires **promoting endogenous potential.** Some argue that, "I can't develop so long as I don't promote my endogenous potential," as, for them, an outer-directed approach is not a developmental approach. In this case the aim is to use the languages in the school so as to **create a better relationship between learning and the environment, to learn how to observe and understand the environment and thus analyse and transform it.** So the goal here is to provide tools for analysis and understanding and capacities for transformation and promotion, but also, and even above all, capacities for the dissemination of knowledge in the society. It was in this sense that Sheikh Amtam said that it is impossible to develop without the national languages. He was saying that so long as foreign languages are used, it is difficult to disseminate knowledge broadly in the society. Hence the stock of education will remain sparse, and development will not take place.
- Others claim that the **introduction of the languages will improve learning.** Repetition and dropout rates or evaluations of the quality of learning could lead us to want to change the situation in a positive way. One of the solutions found is **the use of spoken languages** by children to improve learning.

1.2. The choice of the integration model

Once the main goal of language integration has been clearly determined, this does not mean there could not be other impacts related to other goals. The choice of a goal does not mean that other goals

are generally lost. This could be a matter of secondary effects, but not the main goal. At this point the question of the choice of models is posed.

A) What are the models?

The models are a **bilingual transition or strategy**. Bilingualism is not used as such, but serves as a strategy to improve learning. Strategy bilingualism breaks down into 3 models, which have in common what is called "early exit".

- *Model 1*: "early exit". In the first phase, generally the first 2 or 3 years, depending on the country, the language spoken by the child (first language, which is not the same thing as the mother tongue) is used as the medium for learning. The "official" language is an educational subject. In the second part of schooling, that is, the next 2, 3 or 4 steps, depending on the schooling, the official language becomes the medium and the language spoken by the child is abandoned. This is called early exit.
- *Model 2*: Same principle at the level of the first step. However, in the second step, the official language becomes the medium and the child's spoken language remains an object of learning and occasionally is used in some disciplines.
- *Model 3*: Same principle, but in part two the first language remains the medium and it is at the end of 6 or 7 years that language 2 becomes a second subject.

This is what is called a bilingual balance, or the additive model. You can thus have all of primary school in L1 as the medium and L2 as a subject. What changes in the two models is that for the rest of the schooling L1 and L2 are both the medium.

B) What are the results?

The measurable results concern two indicators:
- Cost effectiveness
- The acquisition of the official language

The first two additive models (described above) are considered to have the best return on investment. Model 3 is average, but the weakest model is still the subtractive model. A significant improvement in the acquisition of the official language can also be seen with these models.

1.3. A controversial subject: Choosing the language in multilingual situations

This choice represents a problem, but also a resource. Contrary to common perception, there are very few countries in the world that are monolingual, including in Europe. Certain linguistic policies have been lasting and have had an impact. France is not monolingual, but there was a Jacobin policy of imposing a language throughout its history. Switzerland did not go through the same history. It chose a different one. So did Belgium, and so on.

How do these countries get by with this multilingualism? Why are we not making it? I would like to attempt a few answers:

A) The language of the community or the spoken lingua franca

At the level of the State, the question is, what language is spoken the most? Undoubtedly the language of instruction. In another country, where there are not separate states but regions, the question is, what is the lingua franca of the region, how do the people communicate with each other? Generally this lingua franca is chosen.

B) The cost

This is a problem that is much discussed but little researched. The studies that do exist, in Africa or beyond, show that with respect to initial inputs, there is an added cost of 30 to 50%.

This is nonetheless affordable, as it represents only a tiny part of the Education budget. Very little of this budget goes to school textbooks. The main expenditure in our budgets is teachers' salaries. So

this is not what poses the problems. Nor does the cost of training teachers represent a major part of the budget. The extra burden is perfectly supportable by our current budgets.

What is more important is the cost-effectiveness ratio. Take the extreme but significant example of the bilingual schools in Burkina. A comparison can be made by taking several bilingual and several monolingual schools that are near each other. The bilingual schools require 6 years to produce an end of primary diploma, whereas the monolingual schools need 36 years. In this type of process, the issue is not how much it costs, but what it brings in. That is the most important.

1.4. The advantages and the conditions for success

A) The advantages
Communications
- Facilitation of learning
- Transmission of knowledge
- Communication of knowledge to the greatest number

Pedagogy
- Improved cognitive capacities
- The pupils approach learning with greater confidence
- The pupils can take initiative
- They take a more active role in the acquisition of knowledge (because they speak and understand the language of instruction)
- Promotion of participatory pedagogies in the classroom
- The competencies acquired in the first language (in reading and writing) serve as aids in developing the same competencies in the second language

Socio-cultural contributions
- A stronger interactive relationship between the school and the environment
- Continuity between education and the local milieu (family and community) and the school education
- More effective community participation
- Promotion of the local cultural heritage
- Reconciliation between the school and the society
- A socialization rooted in the community

B) Problems and challenges
Policies
- Lack of will/Indecision
- Absence of clear goals
- Low level of national dialogue
- Ideological factors
- Unfavourable view of the power of African languages in the society
- Mystification of assimilations: L1 = tradition, the past, conservatism and retreat; L2 = science, modernity, openness, globalization

Capacities
- Weakness of the didactic research
- Inadequacy of the preparatory work
- Weak planning before the action
- Insufficient capacities with respect to needs

Resources
- Weakness of the didactic research
- Inadequacy of the preparatory work
- Weak planning before the action
- Insufficient capacities with respect to needs

2. <u>**Analysis and summary of the discussion after the presentation of N'DOYE**</u>

Following his rich intervention, Mamadou N'DOYE was asked about a number of points, in particular the issue of the maturation of national languages (especially with regard to the sciences) and the problems of implementing these languages (teacher mobility, teachers who are not native speakers, complexity of the linguistic choice in large urban centres, etc.).

Some doubts were expressed as to the concrete use of national languages in the school system. Since the 1950s, UNESCO has asked the African countries to promote national languages in education. Up to now very few countries have committed themselves to this path. How could the Seminar participants convince the decision-makers in their countries to take this path? How should the African languages and the policy aspects at the national and ethnic level be handled?

The French-speaking countries function according to a centralized school model. The choice must be made at the level of the school, taking into consideration any specific interests. It is the affected communities who must determine the language to be taught in their schools.

With regard to the questions about the maturation of the languages, Mr N'DOYE reaffirmed that potentially any language could become a language of instruction at the University. According to him, the reasons for this blockage are explained by the fact that the formerly colonized African countries have a representation of the world that is in part alienated. Much work will need to be done to change these representations. Mr. N'Doye then gave the example of a number of non-African countries, in particular China, and the progress of the Chinese language throughout the 20th century. An enormous amount of work had to be done to achieve such results. What is important in Africa is not to give up or fall behind. Funds had to be found to do this, to produce dictionaries and grammar books, and so on.

In this light, a project of an organization based in Mali, with ACALAN (African Academy of Languages at Bamako), will take part in work to integrate the African languages into education in Africa. The linguistic choice in relation to the problem of teachers is part of the planning. To introduce the languages, it is necessary to hire teachers in the various languages and to prepare them to teach in the languages in these areas. Three issues thus need to be taken into account simultaneously:
-   hiring the teachers,
-   training the teachers,
-   deploying the teachers.

Implementing the linguistic dimension is not without difficulties. The political will is essential, but there is still no real linguistic policy in Africa.

Mr N'Doye presented four typical cases with regard to linguistic policy in Africa:

1- Status quo: the best known (as in the colonial era, things are left alone and nothing changes).
2- Policy of taking small steps (as in Senegal: one step forward, one step back).
3- Policy of transformation (as in Tanzania: towards a bilingual balance).
4- Revolutionary policy (nationalist policy, as in Guinea, Eritrea).

In conclusion, Mr N'Doye explained that in this context there are two orientations that should be avoided:

▪   To not have a policy on language.
▪   To take one language to the detriment of another.

6. THE GENDER DIMENSION IN CURRICULA (BY MR TOURE, BREDA)

The text in its entirety is at: www.adeanet.org

1. Introduction

Economic and social development around the world is affecting the regions of the globe, the nations and even social groups within a given country to varying degrees.

This development has engendered inequalities and the process of the heightened marginalization of half the population, i.e., the women. It has been shown by the analysis of changes in the economic development of different countries that today, despite having made significant progress, disparities continue to affect the lives of women in various areas:
- Poverty (70% of women are poor)
- The virtual absence of women on the political scene
- Women's average salaries are lower than those of men
- Discrimination on the job
- Illiteracy (2 out of 3 illiterate people are women)
- Access to education (and even to positions as teachers, despite preconceptions in that regard)

2. Conceptual clarification

2.1. Sex

Sex can be defined as "the physical difference that constitutes a man and a woman and distinguishes male from female".

Sex, according to the definition of Susanne BASOW in her work, "Sex: Alternates and Change", is a biological term that refers to humans and animals and qualifies them as females or males based on their sex organs or their genes.
Sex also designates the differences between individuals that determine whether they are masculine or feminine.

These differences are biologically determined; for example, sex is biologically determined by the chromosomes, the internal genitalia, the external organs, hormonal factors and secondary sexual characteristics.

Sex has the following characteristics:
- It is innate (you are born with it).
- It is absolute.
- It is universal (a man is a man throughout the world, and a woman likewise).

2.2. Gender

Gender refers to the relationships between women and men within their society and the way in which they are socially and culturally constructed. It is associated with social conventions that attribute different roles to women and men. The activities of a man or a woman, their behaviours, dress, role and status in the group are codified in every society.

Gender is thus a social construction. The term "gender" goes beyond the basically grammatical signification that is used to classify nouns as masculine, feminine or neuter.

3. What is a gender-sensitive policy?

A gender-sensitive policy is a set of principles that guide the ways of dealing with the disparities and inequalities that result from the social and cultural differences that have arisen between men and women.

A policy that takes into account the gender issue seeks to deal with these inequalities, which are the historic foundations of gender hierarchies and which act to limit the development of women's potential while simultaneously acting as obstacles to ensuring their basic human rights.

A policy takes gender into account when it systematically and consistently introduces the issue into the formulation of the educational project – the definition of achievable results – as well as the determination of the goals, strategies and monitoring indicators, throughout the process, from design to implementation.
This implies the development of guidelines that can guide planning and implementation in a way that ensures gender-related issues are an integral part of the program and activities.

The strategies that taken gender into account and the monitoring indicators used in overseeing the process and the expected results must therefore be developed and defined in terms of what is to be accomplished.
Gender issues risk disappearing at the operational level if they appear only in the general goals and are absent at the level of the immediate strategies and specific goals. In some cases, they are present at every step of the process, but are not actually taken into account because they are not budgeted.

4. How can educational planning resolve these problems?

To integrate the gender issue, it is important in the analysis to consider:

- The existing policy framework, such as the legal texts and the Ministerial statistics, the Education For All framework, and the action plan (in the case of Senegal the "PDEF").

- The design and implementation of a system to promote girls' education: awarding grants, distributing prizes and other awards to deserving girls who need them, in particular those from rural areas;

- Greater attention to specific gender-related problems in the curricula, in teacher training and in school textbooks, in order to eliminate sexist stereotypes;

- The hiring of more women teachers;

- The adoption of positive discriminatory measures on behalf of girls, particularly those who are doing well in math, science and technology;

- How to promote the enrolment of girls (opening school lunchrooms and reception areas in the schools, raising awareness among parents and communities, assigning women to positions of responsibility);

- Facilities that are adopted and convenient for girls and boys, including separate washrooms, outside walls, nearby middle schools, etc.

5. An analytical framework for the curriculum from a "gender" perspective

Levels where this theme is expressed

5.1. In the structure of the education system

- **The basic legal texts,** such as the basic law on education, the educational charter, which could include a set of gender-related aims.
- According to D. Hameline, "an aim is the affirmation of a principle through which a society (or social group) identifies and transmits its values. It provides guidelines for the education system and the ways in which educational discourse is conducted."
- **Statistics from the Ministry of Education, the policy on hiring, etc.**
- **The type of school activities practised** (for instance, no PE for girls, only boys perform manual work).
- **The ways programs are designed** (presence of a representative from a women's organisation).
- **The school structures and activities** (outside the classroom).
- **The implementation of projects at school**: projects integrated within the classroom, the school and the school community (involvement of girls in the projects and of women teachers and administrators in their design and supervision – what are their tasks in the process?).

5.2. In the school programs

Explicit or latent presence of the gender issue in the form of:

- **Content:** women's roles and responsibilities; stereotyped social roles, degree of involvement in the tasks, the types of tasks assigned to women and the fields in which they are working (activities that reproduce household activities); the places and times when they are present; management of the budget; the political authorities.

- **discriminatory stereotypes (the image and role of women).**

- **concepts**: fair, sustainable development (the degree women are involved or excluded), citizenship, tolerance, equality, relations between men and women, etc.

- **type of capacity**: to compare, to relativize.

- **learning situations:** The situation relates back to one where the woman appears in traditional or non-traditional roles.

7. CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE SEMINAR GENERAL CONCLUSIONS (BY MR. DELORME CEPEC INTERNATIONAL)

1. Introduction

It is necessary first of all to observe that the **inspiration** for this seminar was excellent – it was a real **challenge** to propose an interactive approach to these three themes, which had previously been dealt with separately:

- The competency-based approach and the curriculum
- African languages
- Gender

There was also a risk of not having enough time to bring together such a variety of countries, which have dealt with these themes to differing extents, and that this would not make for coherent, constructive progress. Yet thanks to solid organization and the ongoing, organized efforts of the participants, it was possible to achieve significant results.

These conclusions do not represent a synthesis of the ideas and output (this is the subject of other summaries included in the report), but an overall analysis of the trends and discoveries that marked the work.

1. The four-day seminar functioned well: it produced high-quality results and proposals, at the level of organization, the pace of work and the diligent efforts of the participants, as reflected in the diverse, numerous interactions. We could say conceptual innovations took place in a climate marked by exchange. This made it possible to develop a shared awareness with regard to new issues raised by the delegations and the way they are changing. It is worth re-emphasizing the importance of the participation of the Namibian delegation, representing the English-speaking countries, whose presence should be strengthened for the continuation of this work.

2. A seminar marked by variety. The variety of countries, of situations presented and of subjects considered proved to be a valuable resource. The plurality of viewpoints concerning "competence" and the implementation of the competency-based approach did not lead to sterile conflict and debate. Instead, the differences helped people to situate themselves with respect to others' opinions and choices, and in some cases they provided real support if a reform being implemented in a given country had not taken into account gender or with regard to the issue of the national languages. There were only rare cases of a linear comparison of the situation in each country. This led in practice to a measure of control and frequently to conceptual flexibility that avoided terminological dogmatism on the different themes.

3. The construction of new "practitioners' knowledge". The questioning and interferences arising from the issue of African languages and gender in fact led to a re-interrogation of the competency-based approach. By contextualizing this approach, new arguments or building blocks appeared for making choices in its favour thanks to the discussion that took place on national languages and the gender approach.

This was undoubtedly the main revelation of the seminar. By contextualizing the various situations and issues involved in education in Africa, a different understanding of the competency-based approach emerged, the originality of which points to new characteristics of the concept. This is a "historic moment", which will provide greater autonomy both conceptually and in practice. The contribution of research in Africa could then become not just significant but essential for the international scientific community.

Having taken this initial step, what is needed now is to consider the new steps to be taken to consolidate and operationalize these achievements and define coherent strategies suited to each country.

4. Identifying the concepts and themes that marked the work of the seminar

In a way, these **transversal concepts** inspired, guided and structured the discussion and achievements.

The concept of integration

It was at the time "competence" was chosen that this concept appeared. Competence is a proposal for **the integration** of learning that is often compartmentalized:

- Learning organized in an "integrative" fashion with a variety of viewpoints
- The integration of the school into its community and socioeconomic context
- The "integration" of the gender approach, but beyond that, the integration especially of girls and women into educational and political realities
- The integration of African languages into the school, through pupil learning, but also more generally in the school, which reinforces the option of a school that is more culturally and politically integrated

It is worth recalling that the concept of **integration** often arises in contrast with or to balance that of **exclusion,** marginalization or rejection, or of compartmentalizing or walling off. These contrasting terms were often used to describe the African schools produced by colonization.

The concept of difference, differentiation

This concept is very useful for avoiding conceptual amalgamation or confusion. It should then be possible to establish a situation of mutual recognition or stress, with the prospect of a possible dialectic for a new form of innovation.

The concept of interaction and the systemic

This concept is already embraced by competency, whose comprehensiveness makes it possible to grasp the interactive relations among these elements (the cognitive, socioaffective and sensory-motor domains).

- The systemic and interaction, to make possible a gender approach and the contribution of the African languages, particularly the "links" to identify and establish in these new learning methods
- The systemic approach, indispensable for **constructing the curriculum** and taking account of the plurality of its constituents and better examining the numerous **interdependencies,** and not linearity.
- The systemic and the seminar's systems of **inter-influence** that through the interplay of numerous **transactions** thus permit **creative** results.

5. Emergence in the seminar of a "collective competence"

A collective competence could be identified through the communications, the group outputs, the variety of expertise, the installation of the referent and a common language. In the current tree of knowledge and the "learning organization", it would be worthwhile to deepen the potential of the seminar so that the follow-up is in line with this approach based on exchanges and recognition and not on the application of existing models that come from outside. This would be a *sine qua non* precisely in order to breach new frontiers through the process launched in the seminar. Proposals for

action and for guidance would do well to draw on this learning organization dynamic so as to avoid compartmentalization and the influences of special interests.

Learning organization, solidarity, collective competence: these are key words for success.

6. What critical steps need to be taken in the group of participating countries?

The notion of critical mass is also useful, and in this regard there are two basic guidelines:

- Work on **authentic** situations and documents. Realities in the field must provide key input for future work. Favour an inductive approach over a purely or mainly deductive one. Better relations with teacher practitioners, the main artisans of change that is genuine, not merely declared or fantasized.

- Develop texts for better communications but above all to **theorize:** testimonies, life stories, narrations, reflections, comparisons, etc. Hence the value of a magazine or publications in the scientific community's international journals on these themes.

2. **Open-ended conclusion**

1- The basis for ongoing work has been laid to develop an adapted, integrative curriculum (national languages, gender, etc.).

2- It has been possible during the seminar to identify a certain solidity due to the manifestation of a great deal of consistency on the subject, but also due to efforts based on a shared clear-headedness.

3- A genuine process of creativity has taken root, based in the educative culture of the various participating countries. Now the conditions for its growth need to be identified.

4- But as always, in this type of situation, and in addition to the usual questions about resources, it must be said that this is above all a "matter of **responsibility**":
- Individual, collective
- National,
- International.

5- This responsibility must, however, be supported by the strong motivation of the different forces involved – this could also be called "**courage**" in the face of the numerous, clearly identified obstacles that will need to be hurdled in the coming period.

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