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**Reinforcing Capacity Building
of Schools and Communities
in view of Improving Student
Performance**

**School projects in Sub-Saharan Africa: lessons
learned through experience in Guinea, Madagascar
and Senegal**

by Georges SOLAUX and Bruno SUCHAUT

**Working Document
DRAFT**

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Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA)

International Institute for Educational Planning

7-9 rue Eugène Delacroix

75116 Paris, France

Tel.: +33(0)1 45 03 77 57

Fax: +33(0)1 45 03 39 65

adea@iiep.unesco.org

web site: www.ADEAnet.org

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
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| A et A. | Aid and Action |
| ABECS | Alternative Basic Education Programme for Children Out of School (Ethiopia) |
| ADEA | Association for the Development of Education in Africa |
| AFD | French Development Agency |
| AFVP | French Association of Volunteers of Progress |
| APEAE | Association of Parents and Friends of the School (Guinea) |
| BRAC | Bangladesh Rural Appraisal Committee |
| CDE | Committee for School Development (Guinea) |
| CDVPE | Department Committee for the Ratification of School Projects |
| CEBNF | Non-Formal Basic Education Centres (Burkina Faso) |
| CEG | General College (Madagascar) |
| CGE | School or Establishment Management Committee |
| CISCO | School District (Madagascar) |
| CM | Intermediate Classes |
| COBET | Complementary Opportunity for Basic Education in Tanzania |
| COPE | Complementary Opportunity for Primary Education (Uganda) |
| CP | Primary Classes |
| CPMF | Educational Advisors Teacher Trainers (Guinea) |
| C.P.P.E. | Prefectorial Committee for the Piloting of Education (Guinea) |
| CPRS | Contract Programme for School Success (Madagascar) |
| CRD | Rural Development Communities |
| DIE | Inspection and Evaluation Department |
| DPE | Prefectorial Department of Education (Guinea) |
| DSEE | School Delegation of Primary Education (Guinea) |
| EBM | Basic Education in Madagascar |
| EDIL | Local Initiative School (Togo) |
| EPP | Public Primary School (Madagascar) |
| EFA | Education for All |
| QEFA | Quality Education for All, Senegal |
| FAF | Farimbon'Asa iombonana ho Fampanandrosoana ny sekoly (School Funds) (Madagascar) |
| EDF | European Development Fund |
| FRAM | Fikambanan'ny Ray Aman-drenin'ny Mpianatra (Association of Pupils' Parents) (Madagascar) |
| IDEN | National Education Inspectorate (Senegal) |
| IA | School Inspectorate |
| INSTAT | National Institute of Statistics (Madagascar) |
| IPTE | Initiative of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries |
| MENRES | Minister of National Education, Research and Higher Education (Madagascar) |
| NGO | Non-governmental Organization |
| PADES | Partnership for the Development of School Establishments (Senegal) |
| PAOES | Project for the Improvement of the Provision of Education in Senegal |
| PAREEG | Support Programme for the Restructuring of Education in the Schools in Guinea |

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| PASEC | Programme for the Analysis of the Education Systems of the CONFEMEN |
| PCD | Town and Village Development Plans |
| PE and PDE | School Project |
| PDEF | Decennial Education-Training Programme, Senegal |
| PEFA | Education for All Programme (Guinea) |
| PPSE | Programme of Small Subsidies to Schools (Guinea) |
| PTD | Triennial Development Plans (Madagascar) |
| TFP | Technical and Financial Partners |
| SC | Save the Children |
| TBS | Basic Percentage of Children in Full-Time Schooling |
| UNICEF | The United Nations Children's Fund |
| ZAP | Administrative and Teaching Areas (Madagascar) |

1. SUMMARY

The AFD and the ADEA financed this study on the school projects which have been implemented in the three following countries: Guinea, Madagascar and Senegal. The observations were made and the data collected in the field from pupils' parents associations, administrative officers, Heads of schools, and teachers. The main elements of the conclusions reached and recommendations given as a result of the evaluation can be summarized as follows: The steps taken for the implementation of the school projects represent a policy of aid towards development (i) adapted to the regional context: the 'school project' approach is one that is adapted to the regional characteristics, since social mobilization in the school project is obtained by relating it to the culture and to the everyday social traditions and practices of the countries under observation; (ii) funds are allocated locally and are administered in an autonomous manner by the community. Social mobilization has been promoted by the addition of this financial dimension to the school projects; (iii) it activates the community with regard to questions related to schooling, generates various positive interactions concerning the generalization of access to education and to the quality of teaching. However, the very secondary nature of the educational dimension has to be understood in relation to its level of economic priority, and undoubtedly to the presence of too many managerial procedures which mask, at all levels, a lack of educational skills. The development of school projects presupposes an eventual administrative structure of management and assistance composed of those trained in decentralization and piloting, focusing on the educational elements of the projects. Progress can be made towards making the establishments autonomous by drawing up contracts between the hierarchical authority and the establishment under its supervision.

2. RESUME

1. As from 1983, three extensive political targets were developed:
 - the decentralization of the State and within this framework the devolving and decentralization of the school (Senegal, 1996).
 - The privatization of the public sector and the encouragement within this framework of the privatization of certain segments of the public service, which contained certain segments of the school.
 - The participation of communities in the management of the school through the establishment of school projects.
2. The incapacity of the State to maintain and extend the provision of education (teachers, classrooms) forced the communities either to pay for an increasingly large number of teachers and the running costs of public schools, or to create community initiative schools in the absence of any aid from the State or the TFP (community schools, local initiative schools).
3. The school project can be defined as a process involving the drawing up of a contract relating to educational activities between the school and the environment (in order to resolve in an efficient and relevant manner the problems identified in relation to the school's assignments). The school project is also a contractual process through which the actors agree to formalize their educational project in a "School Project, which lays down the objectives, determines the needs and necessary resources, as well as the contributions and the obligations of the School's various partners." (Supervisory Mission, PAOES, 2004). This definition cannot however entirely reflect the reality of the field, and the reading of the school projects shows that there is much diversity according to whether they appear in primary public schools, community schools, which attempt to fill the gap in the absence of a public primary school (with or without the support of an NGO), or in non-formal education (with or without the support of an NGO).
4. The observations made on the basis of the supervision of the project by the Ministry of Education in Senegal (by studying the document) show that many of the school projects that have been validated in the area present risks of an economic drift. The educational diagnosis is not shown in certain project files and the articulation of these activities with the children's other subjects is not obvious. The teaching teams are not well informed: in various cases, the teaching objectives aimed at (or to be aimed at) within the framework of the school projects were not singled out in those project documents analyzed. The reading of the project documents and the discussions that the mission has had with the local actors (departmental team, educational and community teams) show that there is an incomplete appropriation of the vision and objectives which underlie the school project approach as defined within the framework of the PDEF. In a general manner, the members of the management committee encountered do not seem to understand very well the framework within which they work and are not correctly carrying out their respective roles and responsibilities. The present design seems to lead to projects which are too cumbersome, difficult to carry out and to render successful.
5. The context and the projects being implemented have been analyzed in Madagascar and in Guinea through visits and discussions of a semi-instructional type which have been undertaken with the various actors involved: parents, Heads of schools, teachers and educational officers at the local level. The same guidelines for discussions were used for

both countries. They contain three principal subjects: the situation of the school, the activities undertaken, and their evaluation. In Madagascar, the idea of a contract programme has been present since 1994. UNICEF conceived this approach, which is of a bottom-up kind. The idea of a school project comes from the Dina School; it means applying the traditions to the school by involving all the actors in working towards a common objective: to improve the conditions of school enrolment. Since the year 2000, a pooling of ideas has taken place on a country-wide basis to generalize knowledge about the school project and to standardize the tools used. The data have been collected in 20 schools (out of the 57 that carry out the EBM/AFD project in the three CISCOS). Eight groups of actors were consulted from 21 to 27 November 2005 from the Antsiranana I and Ambanja CISCOS, and from 5 to 8 December 2005 from the Antsirabe II CISCO. A total of 141 administrative and educational officers and actors in the field were interviewed. The evaluation shows that (i) the implementation of school projects was accompanied by tools placed at the disposal of the educational communities, (ii) that the control of these projects is shared in diverse ways by the various actors and that the educational element is not yet a priority. In all the schools that were visited, all those interviewed were unanimous in their agreement: that the design of the school projects has clearly encouraged the mobilization and the taking on of responsibilities of the entire school community in the management of the school. However, the effectiveness of the project depends above all on the dynamism of the leaders as well as on the partnerships that have or have not been created between the Heads of school, the President of the FRAM, of the FAF and of the *Fokontany*.

6. The school projects in Guinea go back to the 1990s. The school projects must be explicitly aimed at objectives linked to quality. At the moment, the projects are taking place within a difficult context. The macro-economic indicators of the countries are not very good (inflation, devaluation of the currency ...). The most positive aspect of the school projects is that the money goes directly to its destination. This was not the case before, as the schools received no funds to pay for their running. There remains the fact that the administration tools of the school are not yet operational. For example, during the field visits, no charts were to be seen. The management of school stationery in the schools is not optimal, because of the absence of the management of the stocks or their sufficient provision. The school project has two principal objectives: social mobilization and the improvement of quality: it has four headings: teacher training, the running of the school council, educational activities, and the committee for the development of the school. As far as the positive aspects are concerned, it can be noted that the communities have taken on responsibilities concerning the administration of the funds allocated to the school. The financial supervision has become more effective: the CRDs open accounts and receive the funds directly. As for the improvement of quality, it is mostly undertaken through teacher training on various educational themes (for example, multi-grade classes); within this framework, projects are designed either at local level or at the school delegation level. Social mobilization seems to work well: the communities' requests relate to real needs, schools are built, teachers recruited, projects are designed, financed and executed; material traces of the execution of projects exist in the schools, with, for example, places where school supplies can be bought.

7. Overall, the steps taken for the implementation of the school project fall within a policy of aid towards development adapted to the regional context: the 'school project' approach is based on regional characteristics since the social mobilization in the school project is obtained by relating it to the culture and to the everyday social traditions and practices of the countries under observation. This policy is applied locally by the allocation of funds to the communities that autonomously administer them: even if the fact of allocating these funds to the communities can burden the educational dimensions of the project with debt, it would seem difficult to avoid this stage of local direct

financing. The populations, although poor, are asked to participate in the financing of the school. The financial dimension of the school projects became part of the conditions that were necessary in order to promote social mobilization, to resolve problems of access of children to school, and to increase their retention in the school system. One of the most important aspects of the school project is the process whereby the whole community is mobilized with regard to questions relating to schooling. This generates various positive interactions involving generalized access to education and to the quality of education. Social mobilization has brought about a local appropriation of the school as a common patrimony and it seems to have reinforced that of the parents, particularly as regards their participation in the meetings organized by the school. The debates which have taken place in the educational community are far from insignificant or purely factual. They foreshadow a better and less asymmetrical exchange of information in the future than in the past, giving more opportunities for the parents to take decisions concerning the schooling of their children.

8. However, the articulation of material activities along with the pupils' other subjects is not apparent and, in those project documents that have been analyzed, the teaching objectives are not clearly defined. This important obstacle could however be partially overcome if the management and the higher hierarchical levels of the school abandon the procedural priorities, or pettifogging attitudes towards the activities, in favour of giving educational autonomy to the teams. The procedures are very cumbersome, even though they permit some rules to be learned which are useful in the collective administration of the subsidies. The education process which has been imposed, and which is derived from the education methods used in the projects by the public services, probably betrays a lack of reference on the part of the promoters of the school projects who focus more on the procedure than on the definition of the quality expected from a good project as well as examples of them. This focusing on the procedure probably masks, at all levels, the fact that educational skills are inadequate: it is easier to say how to do something than to say what it is necessary to do. It can also be noted that decentralization (delegation of the State's duties to the local communities) and devolvement (i) constitute to this end the contextual conditions which are both favourable and necessary to the success of the policy of a "school project", but (ii) they presuppose a capacity building of the system at all levels with regard to piloting, which would no doubt prevent the criticism frequently made that the present design of the projects is too cumbersome, making them both difficult to manage and to render successful. An administrative, managerial structure and one of assistance, where the individuals have been trained in decentralization and in piloting, should thus necessarily already be in operation before the local implementation of the projects takes place.

9. The AFD and the ADEA have aimed at developing a particular expertise with regard to the devolved and decentralized management of educational systems as have numerous partners in education sector programmes. Furthermore, the devolved and participative administration of the education systems is today a major target written into education sector policies in those countries which are eligible for the Fast Track Initiative. Thus between the year 2000 and 2004, the AFD supported a total of 7 regionalized education projects in six different countries, at a cost of 52.3 million Euros, combining both school constructions and the capacity building of the local actors.

10. This commitment made by the AFD and the technical and financial partners to an innovative operation, for which there are relatively few comparative data, gave rise to the setting up in September 2005 of a mission for the partial evaluation of the current activities. This evaluation, financed by the AFD and the ADEA, and carried out under the authority of the ADEA Secretariat, took place with the help of national experts. It covered Guinea and Madagascar. Furthermore, documents provided by the AFD give data on Senegal. This report has been written on the basis of these three national approaches.

11. The report has five chapters: the overall referential policy of the school project, which aims at giving a political meaning to the activities undertaken; the analysis of the available data and those that have been gathered on Senegal, Madagascar and Guinea. A synthesis of the data gathered is given in the form of lessons learned which comes just before the conclusion.

4. THE POLICY REFERENTIAL OF THE SCHOOL PROJECT

4.1 What is the reason for school projects?

12. The reasons generally invoked in order to justify the setting up of school projects is based on the desire to develop social mobilization around the school and within the framework of decentralization, with the hope of seeing the latter benefit from the positive elements of its effectiveness. According to the terms of a note from the AFD (TDH EDU, 28 June 2004), “Decentralization is a mechanism to improve the effectiveness of education systems in developing countries. The studies of the impact on school results, which are relatively few, give results that are not easy to decipher, but are nevertheless positive, of a greater involvement of parents in the local management of the education system which is both more autonomous and more effective.”

13. This vision of social mobilization is based on an overall referential policy that it would seem useful to be placed back within the framework of economic development theories. Historically, the “myth of the State that develops” was preceded by the “puppet State” (Petiteville, 1998), and the pressures to liberalize the public sector have only been developed during the last twenty-five years. The economic development theories of the 1960s assigned to the State a role of overall development: “the voluntarism with regard to development by the elite of the States of the Third World seemed then to be at one and the same time obvious and the right way to resolve, without any political problems, the question of socio-economic development” (Petiteville, 1998). At the end of the 1980s, this view evolved and the functions of the State were called into question. They were accompanied by structural adjustment plans that forced the latter to slow down and even to almost stop the recruitment and initial training of State-employed teachers (of which the teacher trainers), as well as public investments (as in the construction of classrooms).

14. Within this framework, decentralization became the major target to be aimed at in the modernization of States, and it was destined to bring about an administration that was less central, less coercive and more democratic. As the central State is presumed to be broken up into fragments by the development of decentralization, the installation of “territorial poly-centralism” brings the actors’ political decision-centres closer to them as it does the administration of public life to the citizen. This systematic decentralization was accompanied by the shattering of the basic function of public services - that of rendering service to the public. In order to compensate for this geographical shift of the problem area, a liberal policy has been applied with the implementation of local overall projects. The geographical fragmentation of a public sector is thus compensated for by the association in one and the same local project of those sectors which are traditionally treated individually: by linking together various social dimensions the inherent complexity of the venture helps to prevent the risk of fragmentation. The overall nature of the projects makes up for the limitations of their geographical application.

4.2 The case of education

15. Three significant political objectives were then developed:

- the decentralization of the State and, within this framework, the devolvement and the decentralization of the school (see Senegal, 1996);
- the privatization of the public sector and the encouragement given, within this framework, towards the privatization of certain segments of the public service, of which certain segments of the school;
- the participation of the communities in the management of the school by the setting up of school projects.

16. In fact, the incapacity of the State to maintain and extend the provision of education (teachers, classrooms), has forced the communities either to finance an increasing number of teachers and the running costs of the public schools, or to create community initiative schools in the absence of any aid from the State or the TFP (community schools, local initiative schools). The initiative came from the ‘field’ and it is only afterwards that the communities, aided by the Technical and Financial Partners (TFP), progressively took over the management of the schools, where the State could no longer provide education.

17. The community schools vary according to the countries. In most cases, they are supported by the NGOs. Mention must be made of (Miauton, 2002) the relay schools in Togo, and the community basic education schools in Senegal, particularly with regard to: the support given by *Aide et Action* to the community schools. With the support of Save the Children (SC): in the Village schools in Mali; ABEK (Alternative Basic Education for Karamojong) in Uganda; ABECS-Alternative Basic Education Programme for Children Out of School in Ethiopia. With the support of UNICEF: the satellite schools in Burkina Faso. With the support of the State: the CEBNF – Non-Formal Basic Education Centres in Burkina Faso; COBET (Complementary Opportunity for Basic Education in Tanzania); COPE (Complementary Opportunity for Primary Education) in Uganda; the BRAC Schools (Bangladesh Rural Appraisal Committee) in Bangladesh, and the EDIL in Togo.

18. The centres are of different types: “(i) community schools which dispense an identical form of technical education as that given in the formal system, but based on an organization by the community: construction of the building, recruitment and the payment of the teachers by the parents/the community, (ii) community schools which develop an alternative form of education, through its methods (more child-centred), and in the contents: including the skills which are of use in everyday life (life skills), and/or by producing their own programme, (iii) complementary education centres which accept those children who are a little older and have been excluded from the formal system, and who want pre-vocational education and training.” (Monluc, 2003)

19. Alain Warzée (Warzee, 2005) states that in numerous countries the autonomy of the establishment “appears generally to be something like a space for piloting and implementing additional projects which will increase the emergence of solutions that are closely adapted to the particular difficulties of the establishments. Thanks to the proximity of the responses and to the inventiveness that it gives rise to, autonomy is often presented as an appeal for help; a solution seeming to come about of itself when confronted with the

difficulties that have piled up in certain of the education sectors or in certain establishments. So is autonomy the miraculous remedy to school failures?”

4.3 The School Projects

20. On this basis, how should we define the school projects (PE). What are their characteristics? The documents analyzed give the following results:

21; Definition: the process of drawing up a contract relating to educational activities between the school and the environment (in order to resolve in an efficient and relevant manner the problems identified with regard to the school's mission). The school project is also a contractual process by which the actors agree to formalize their educational project in a “School Contract which contains the objectives, determines the needs and the necessary resources necessary, as well as the contributions and the obligations of the various partners of the School” (Supervisory Mission, PAOES, 2004).

22. Conditions of achievement: ‘social mobilization’, which has as its principle the active and motivated commitment of the community in order to find solutions to problems of education and to obtain or safeguard community interests beyond the simply utilitarian.

23. Objectives: the school project aims at increasing the relevance and the effectiveness of school learning. The primary beneficiaries of the project are the children, the project being conceived for them (Supervisory Mission PAOES, 2004): an increased enrolment with more girls being admitted, the follow-up and the improvement of the school results in the various schools, the respect of the school timetable and the support of children in difficulty, the lowering of the number of failures (by repeating classes and dropping out), training (teacher management), the availability of personnel, the maintenance and the use of school textbooks, the maintenance of furniture and buildings.

24. Management of the mechanism: the school project must be evaluated in order to measure whether the objectives have been obtained and to know the impact it has on the system by the determination of the gaps that exist between the expected results and those obtained.

25. These definitions however are not fixed, and the reading of the school projects shows that a great diversity exists according to whether they appear in the public primary schools, the community schools which try to fill the gap due to the lack of a public primary school (with or without the support of the NGO), or in non-formal education (with or without the support of the State, or an NGO). Thus the school project in the public schools aims more at optimizing the running of a school that exists, either from the point of view of access, or from that of quality. One rarely finds school projects in those schools which have risen alongside public schools where the State has failed to provide them, since the main objective is to provide a school where there is a lack of State support. It is this bringing into existence of a school that forms the basis of the community project.

5. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA ON SENEGAL

5.1 Inclusion within the scope of a global policy on decentralization

26. The “school project” activity in Senegal is defined in the following elements: The Blueprint Law 91 – 21 of 16 February 1991, which states the guidelines and objectives of National Education policy and the Law 69 – 07 of 22 March 1996, which deals with the transfer of skills to the regions, to the towns and villages and to the rural communities, and its Decree of Application (no. 96 – 1136 of 27 December 1996).

27. The Decennial Education and Training Programme (PDEF). Designed within the framework of the “United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa”, the PDEF lies within the framework of the process of decentralization and it recommends the establishment of relationships for the exchange of ideas and for negotiations to take place between the central power and the actors in the field.

28. Within this framework, the school projects’ objective is the capacity-building of both the schools and the teachers in order to implement the PDEF’s educational reform: to draw up and to share an understanding of what it takes to build a successful community-type school, mobilizing around it actors and partners so that they can work together towards the common objectives of improving the quality of teaching, learning and school leadership.

29. The expected results: Phase 1 (2000-2003): enables the setting up of the instruments for the management and execution of the strategy, to test and evaluate the mechanism. Phase 2 (2004-2006): relates to the generalization of the programme to all the primary schools in the country and the decentralization of its management at the School Inspectorate level. Phase 3 (2007-2010): establishes the generalization of management by the school throughout the entire elementary education system.

5.2 The observations made in the various reports (Supervisory Mission PAOES, 2004)

30. The project for the Improvement of the Provision of Education in Senegal (6 million euros, convention of June 2000/programmed to finish at the end of December 2004, extended into 2005, lies within the framework of the PDEF and took place in the regions of Kolda and Matam. It has permitted the construction of 377 classrooms and the implementation of 160 school projects, and given support to the Departmental Inspectorate (IDEN) for capacity-building in piloting.

5.2.1. The critical recommendations made through the supervision of the project by the Ministry of Education

31. Economic primacy over education: Many school projects which have been validated in the area show risks of an economic drift. It would seem that when the projects are being set up, material activities are being given priority (henhouses, gardens, shops, phone centres, millet mills, etc...) and the educational elements are added afterwards. The educational diagnosis is not contained in certain project files, there is no obvious link made with what the students are learning.

32. The teaching teams are not very well informed: in various cases the educational objectives aimed at (or to be aimed at) within the framework of the school projects were not defined in the project documents analyzed. The teachers encountered in the schools do not seem to have a clear idea of the educational objectives that they would like to achieve through their respective school projects. They often have difficulty in apprehending or in making understood what a school project could be like when it actually improves the effectiveness of a given school. The project is sometimes not shared with the teaching team and seems to be only dealt with by the Head of school. In certain cases, everything leads to the belief that the Head ensures the leadership and remains the only or the principal actor of the project.

33. The local actors do not have a clear idea of the challenges involved: The reading of the documents about the projects and the exchange of ideas that the mission had with the local actors (departmental team, educational teams and the communities) leads to the belief that there is a really insufficiency in the appropriation of the vision and the objectives which underlie the strategy of the school projects as defined within the framework of the PDEF. In a general manner, the members of the management committees encountered do not seem to understand very well the framework within which they are working, and do not carry out correctly their respective roles and responsibilities.

34. Social mobilization according to the social context: the members of the school management committees (CGE) are often elderly people who are sometimes illiterate. In certain cases, the president and the treasurer do not know how to read, nor write. The constitution of committees reflects the desires of those having a certain amount of local influence. This often results in the frequent designation of people who are linked to them in one way or another, but who do not necessarily have the required skills to exercise the necessary collective supervision. Altogether, the present design seems to lead to projects which are too cumbersome, difficult to execute and to render successful.

5.2.2. The main recommendations

35. The promotion at management level of an effective mechanism for education and financial assistance and educational follow-up of the school projects.

36. The development of a strategy for the capitalization of the knowledge acquired and the systemization of the lessons learned.

37. The capacity-building of the actors, so that they become more capable of taking up their roles and responsibilities within the framework of the school project, and the involvement of the communities in the process of the preparation and execution of the projects.

38. The general capacity-building of the educational system and of the central and devolved services would seem to be necessary before being able to promote a devolved administration.

6. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA ON MADAGASCAR

6.1 Context and projects being implemented in Madagascar

6.1.1. Historical context

39. Talks have taken place with the actors representing the various structures involved in the activities linked to the school project. While the discussions were taking place, a number of varied documents were collected giving details of the different operations that have been carried out. A visit to the field in the region of Antsirabe also provided a more concrete view of the reality of the everyday activities financed by the AFD.

40. The idea of a contract programme has been in existence since 1994, UNICEF being the source for this bottom-up approach. There has been a progressive evolution of the objectives related to the idea of this contract. At the beginning, these mainly concerned the development of schooling, evolving progressively towards objectives of educational quality (school success ...). The notion of a school project comes from the Dina School. It meant applying traditions to the school by involving all the actors in an idea of common interest: improving the conditions in which the pupils were being schooled. As from the year 2000, thought has been given, at a national level, towards generalizing the idea of a school project and to standardizing the tools used. This has been concretized in various activities: the creation of the FAF in 2002 (that has allowed budgets to be allocated to the schools), and the CPRS. The main donors have also jointly given thought to the function of each of the actors involved in the school system, with the aim of achieving the objectives of education for all. There are certain elements which block the implementation of the contract programmes, of which the main ones are: the multiplicity of the tasks implied in the implementation of EFA, and the problem of the local, ageing human resources.

41. In spite of the numerous experiments and pilot projects, the entire Madagascan territory has remained untouched by this contractual approach. One of the particularities of primary education is that the parents must contribute to the financing of the school, particularly with respect to its running costs. The pupils' parents have thus created a federation called the FRAM (Association of the Pupils' Parents), and such bodies are to be found throughout the territory.

42. The ZAPs (Administrative and Educational Areas) have benefited recently from endowments of material means (bicycles, typewriters, and office stationery). However, in the majority of cases, the Chiefs of the ZAPs do not have an office and do not necessarily live in the towns or villages where they work but rather in the main town where the CISCO is to be found. For the 2006 budget, a budgetary item will be created in the CISCO budget specifically for the ZAPs. Quality circles will also be set up in the schools and run by the Chiefs of the ZAPs; the major problem in making these activities effective is that there are insufficient human resources available: the Chiefs of the ZAPs are, in their majority, elderly former teachers.

43. The DIE is in charge of administrative and educational management, and is organized in the form of a central department, with 6 regional centres. The CPRS (the Contract Programme for School Success) is a result of a UNICEF initiative, but at the moment this initiative has not been developed on a wide scale. The main objectives of the CPRS are to stimulate a more active participation by the communities. The projects that have been developed mainly involve the running of the school and the associated material aspects. The national workshop for dialogue, held in Tsiroanomandidy (17 to 20 May 2005), offered the opportunity of studying both the process and the tools associated with the CPRSs. A second workshop involving such dialogue took place in Antsirabe (28 to 29 June 2005), which enabled the finalizing with the NGOs of the processes and the tools to be used, as well as with the Ministry, the Catholic educational representatives and UNICEF. The CPRS guide was validated by the minister at the beginning of October 2005 and the authorization of its reduction was delivered to UNICEF shortly afterwards (in 22,000 schools). An experimental phrase of the guides is foreseen in 2006. In order for the projects to be financed, they must be considered relevant and respond to precise criteria; if the projects are accepted by the technical committee, competitive financing (taken from the Fast Track's additional funds) is allocated to the schools concerned, which is then added to the sum coming from of the school's own funds (FAF).

44. The school project is foreseen as a process of thinking about the diversified activities (centred on quality, the school environment ...). The length of the project has still not been foreseen, but, according to the CPRS guide, will probably be triennial. The AGEMAD chart will be used to identify the needs of the schools and thus will be useful in the preparation of the CPRS. The CPRS must itself be integrated into the FAF and have the agreement of its president. So that the CPRS functions correctly, a good regional and national publicity campaign will have to be organized; people will be recruited to carry this out according to both their skills in circulating such information and in those of leadership. This generating of public awareness of the activities will be primordial, as the parents frequently talk of the lack of teachers, multiple projects which come to nothing, as well as the lack of involvement of the local authorities.

6.1.2. The projects being implemented

45. The contract of education for children's success (the new denomination of the CPRS) has just been validated by the MENRES. A first version came out in the month of May and an evaluation was made. At the beginning of 2006, UNICEF will reproduce the accompanying documents (5 pages, recto-verso). The training of the leaders is then foreseen to train the actors in the use of these documents (this training will take place together with the NGOs). The document itself can be considered as a simple chart of the school (number of pupils and teachers and their distribution according to a few essential criteria). This chart is simple to use, as no indicators have been calculated and only the basic data is given. The questions asked about the school's situation will be based on these data. The causes of the problems and their nature will be raised and solutions will be proposed. For example, when massive absenteeism is noticed, a pirogue can be bought to bring the children to school in the rainy season. There will also be village lofts stocking food during the wedding period (a crucial problem in certain rural areas of the country). By means of these projects, it is hoped that a generalized dynamic current will emerge in solution finding. The school project also

foresees concrete modes of implementation of the activities with a timeframe, the total amount of funds available, and the distribution of tasks between the actors.

46. The tools proposed at the moment cannot be generalized as they are: the actors would not be able to use them by themselves. The NGOs mobilize a high level of human resources for the few schools they are involved in (Antsirabe: 22 schools and 3 full-time persons). A tool (not used) has been designed by the French Cooperation; it is useable by the schools autonomously and enables the passage from the chart to the school project. A guide which goes with it can also be obtained which gives information about the possible activities which could be envisaged. For example, in the case of a particular problem like a lack of classrooms, various proposals are given concerning the various activities that could be undertaken.

47. The real question related to the problem of the school project is: How to succeed in the piloting of a CISCO for three years without the help of an NGO? The children's parents have too much to do, and the school fund has not received any money for the past year. The AFVP is in charge of the element concerning the project's social mobilization in the Antsirabe II district; 22 primary schools (EPP), and a CEG are in part of the area where the intervention takes place. At the beginning of the project, the CPRSs existed only formally; the schools had not yet integrated the idea of the project but mainly perceived it as a means of obtaining finances for the school fund, and the activities were never implemented in concrete terms. In April 1994, the actors became mobilized in relation to the project, the construction of the school being the element which brought them together. The AFVP is at present only in the tool-design phase because of a problem concerning the delay in the timing of the activities, linked to the late delivery of the schools by the AFD. A legitimate question can be asked about whether the actors understood the various steps involved in the project. With this in mind, the AFVP set up training workshops in the schools which brought together the parents, Heads of schools, teachers, the representatives of the towns and villages (FRAM, FAF). The initial meetings had positive outcomes as they had been prepared in advance by the people concerned. A criterion of success of the policy of the school project is the involvement of the CISCO partners, the people in the field, and the degree of dynamism which is created in relation to the idea of partnership. The AFVP activities are however limited in that they only concern about twenty schools ...

48. *Aide et Action* has been in existence for ten years at Tuliar, and in Diego since 1992. It has also been in existence since the year 2000 in Antanarivo, and in Tanataf since 2004. At the beginning, the NGO intervened mainly in the construction of schools and very little in teacher training. Now that the construction has now been delegated to the AFD, the interventions of the NGO have gone from 'hard' to 'soft'. The aim is to establish a structure for the school children's parents by working together with the communities, the teachers, and the chiefs of the neighbourhoods. *Aide et Action* adopts a global vision of the school by integrating the school project into the town or village development plans (PCD). The aim is also to try and harmonize the activities with those of the PTD (Triennial Development Plans) in the CISCO. In Antanarivo, *Aide et action* intervenes by proposing training on subjects such as management, the settling of conflicts, the popularization of active teaching methods. Teachers' Quality Circles (CQT) have been set up which allow for the teachers on a monthly basis other teachers from various schools. These educational meetings help in making up for the educational meetings that the ministry is unable to organize.

6.2. Analysis of the data collected by the Madagascan national experts

6.2.1. Methodology of the survey

49. Both the context and the projects being implemented have been analyzed in Madagascar (and also in Guinea) on the basis of visits and of semi-managerial-type discussions which took place with the various actors involved: the school children's parents, Heads of schools, teachers, those responsible for education at the local level. The same guide was designed for both countries for these discussions. They are composed of three main headings which are summarized below.

50. The situation of the school, the inventory of fixtures, needs: characteristics of the school, the presence of a management chart and tools, priority needs of the school, positive development of a school project, knowledge of the contents of the schools project, degree of participation in the project.

51. Activities undertaken within the framework of the school project: nature and description of the activities, knowledge of the cost of the activities and the budget, calendar of activities, degree of investment in the activities, description of the tools used.

52. Evaluation of the activities: verification of the presence of tools, estimate of the degree of achievement of the activities, degree of the actor's overall satisfaction, identification of the difficulties and of the obstacles encountered, paths leading to actions to be taken towards improvement.

53. The data have been collected in 20 schools (out of the 57 of the EBM/AFD project in the three CISCOS). Eight groups of actors were consulted from 21 to 27 November 2005 for the Antsiranana 1 and Ambanja CISCOS, and from 5 to 8 December 2005 for the Antsirabe II CISCO. A total of 141 administrative or educational officers as well as actors in the field were interviewed. The evaluation shows that (i) the implementation of school projects was accompanied by tools placed at the disposal of education communities, (ii) that the supervision of the projects by various actors is shared out in various ways and that the teaching aspect is not yet a priority. An autonomous study report was drawn up by the national experts, the main points of which are summarized in this document.

6.2.2. The tools placed at the disposal of the educational communities

54. A certain number of means or tools are placed at the disposal of the educational communities to help them rationalize their actions. The school chart is a tool placed at the disposal of the Head of the school to improve his capacity to pilot. Committees are set up for the management of partnerships: (1) a Piloting Committee or a School Council, in order to ensure the piloting of the school project (co-ordination of the activities of the various actors and also the follow-up and evaluation of the annual plans of operation), its mandate covering a period of three years, (2) an "Infrastructure" Follow-up Committee, which ensures the follow-up of the civil engineering work that take place in the school until it is completed. The committee's mandate finishes once the work has been completed, (3) in

liaison with the construction or refurbishment of the classrooms, a “Maintenance Fund” Committee ensures that a fund is set up which is to be used for the maintenance of both the classrooms once the work is completed and for the furnishings and fixtures. The members receive training and have a mandate of three years, (4) a “School Stationery” Committee to ensure that the school stationery is sold and to manage the funds obtained in order to replace the school stationery as the stock diminishes. The period of mandate is three years, (5) an “Income-Generating Committee” which helps in diminishing the financial participation of parents.

6.2.3. The actors’ knowledge of the projects

55. The analysis of the actors’ perception of the project constitutes an indication of the level of social mobilization. All the actors (98%) know of the project’s existence. As far as the short- and medium-term aims and activities of the project are concerned, only 75% of the actors know about them. The teachers seem to be the least well informed about the project. Only about 60% are familiar with the project in its entirety and, worse still, 72% of the teachers surveyed are not even aware of the existence of the charts in their respective schools. The charts seem to be the most unknown factor, with over half the persons interviewed having no knowledge of them. In addition, in nearly all the schools the charts are still being drawn up. One school still had not received the chart that required filling in. However, from another point of view, it was observed locally that the working groups actually exist and are composed of members who have either been designated or elected. The participative diagnosis before the development of the project was made by associating all the actors with it - a step which stimulated the motivation of the local community. The setting up of a Maintenance Fund is now taking place in each school. In addition to the activities already foreseen within the framework of the development of the school projects, other activities initiated by the local community have taken place. For example, in five out of the 20 of the schools visited, the following have taken place: the restoring by the local community of the road leading to the school in the Toavala (Antsirabe II) EPP; the plantation of a quickset hedge to provide an enclosure for the school area in the Ambanja Centre (Ambanja) and Antsapanimahazo (Antsirabe II) EPPs; the laying out of a school courtyard in the Maherivaratra (Ambanja) EPP, the drawing up of birth certificates for pupils that do not possess them in the Toavala (Antsirabe II) EPP.

56. Difficulties and obstacles encountered: a delay was registered in the starting up of the construction work – it was to be started only at the end of 2004 (for the 20 schools visited: work was finished in 7 schools, work was taking place in 12 schools, and work had not been started in one school). This delay increased the difficulty of mobilizing the population as there was a reticence with regard to those mobilizing, who were called ‘liars’ by the school community. Thus, for example, the school community of the Toavala EPP stopped contributing until a maintenance fund had been set up, and are eagerly waiting for the construction work on their school to begin. Twice the children’s parents have stayed away from the meeting organized by those in charge of such activities. It is very difficult to mobilize the community due to the lack of availability of certain members of the commissions.

57. The successes. The effectiveness of the school project and its sustainability: in all the schools visited, all the entities interviewed were unanimous: the development of the

school projects has clearly encouraged the mobilization and the taking on of responsibilities by the entire school community in the management of the school. Its participation has brought about an appropriation of the school as a joint patrimony in Fokonolona (the entire population of Fokontany). This idea of joint possession seems to have constituted a significant and positive change of behaviour in the community with regard to school management.

58. The effectiveness of the project depends above all on the dynamism of the leaders as well as the partnerships that either have or have not been created between the Head of school, the President of the FRAM, of the FAF and with Fokontany. The mobilization of all the local actors has taken place in 20 of the schools visited, and seems to have strengthened that of the children's parents, particularly with regard to their participation in the meetings organized by the school.

7. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA IN GUINEA

7.1 Context and the projects being implemented in Guinea

7.1.1. The Guinean context

59. Various projects have taken place one after the other in this country (the PPSE, then the PAREEG), all financed by the World Bank, with the common idea of favouring bottom-up steps to be taken based on the needs of the field and those of the actors. School financing is therefore made according to the kind of projects which are submitted to the local education authorities. The idea of competitiveness or competition between the schools was already present, as only certain projects were retained as a result of selection. A training mechanism accompanied these innovative steps so that the actors could take them over more easily.

60. The school project must be explicitly centred on aims related to quality. In order to help the teachers in taking the necessary steps, a brochure has been designed and should be distributed to all the schools. A procedural manual on the management of school projects will also be duplicated. In terms of the evaluation of the operations, it appears that the schools that have benefited from subsidies show good results. The communities have become totally involved in the drawing up of projects and a spirit of solidarity has been noticed between the schools, the teachers helping their colleagues in the development phase. Teachers have now started to emulate this and have started to express themselves before the local authorities. However, difficulties exist, particularly those linked to monetary fluctuations which are harmful to the execution of the projects in their entirety. The operations envisaged in the projects are sometimes too specific (concerning, for example, one single teaching subject), certain of those in charge not possessing the necessary skills.

61. At the moment, the projects are taking place in difficult contexts. The macro-economic indicators of the country are not very favourable (inflation, devaluation of the currency ...); the development of primary teaching undergoing particular difficulties due to the extremely low level of funds available. A joint review of the donors took place in 2005, and even if the running of the programme was judged insufficient at the beginning, in one year significant progress has been achieved. The rate of disbursement was judged to be favourable and the donors have shown renewed confidence. If the quantitative development of the system is genuine (the TBS is at present 83%, and 70% for girls), progress still needs to take place concerning quality. There is an insufficient endowment of school textbooks, the standards to be attained being one arithmetic and one reading textbook per pupil for the two first years of primary school. These objectives have not yet been attained.

62. With regard to the pupils' learning, the available evaluations show that this is insufficient, particularly in the field of knowledge of the language. In order to make improvements, the curricula need to be changed; in this respect, experiments are taking place in using a skills-oriented approach. Another way is to look at the training of the teachers which also appears to be insufficient, particularly in the field of their command of the French language. At the moment, they are doing courses in alternance (9 months in an institution, 9

months of practical training, 3 months of training after the internship). Emphasis should undoubtedly be placed on the fact that there is a special need for continuing education and the development of regional training centres.

63. Other than the teachers' skills, the question of motivation appears to be essential, being as it is associated with the teachers' pay. There are cases where the payment of those under contract is delayed and the salaries are judged to be insufficient (29 US\$ for the teachers with tenure, 24 US\$ for those under contract). Another particular problem has come to light concerning the congestion which has appeared in secondary education as a result of the substantial increase in the numbers of pupils.

7.1.2. The projects being implemented and the findings

64. The project of the European Union (FED 8) corresponds to a financing of 9 million euros; it includes a school construction programme (73 schools to be constructed as from January 2005), and the social mobilization part is implemented by the Guinean NGO Plan with support in terms of school stationery. The 9th FED has not yet been signed due to the conditions that have not yet been fulfilled by Guinea. The assessments corresponding to the operations that have already taken place are not yet available, but will be shortly.

65. Germany participates through the NGO KFW in construction work: 800 classes (400 in Middle Guinea, 400 in Lower Guinea) are programmed. Two elements of the project are being carried out: the heightening of public awareness and its implementation. The population must be made aware of the project so that the school becomes their main preoccupation; when the work is being carried out the population must participate to a level of 10% of the construction price (the cost of a classroom being about 35 million Guinean francs, including the equipment). This is evidence of the communities' determination to become involved in the process of schooling. The contribution of the communities can also take place in respect of the aggregates (sand, cement, gravel ...), but also by offering their services in the form of non-specialized labour. Those in charge of heightening the public's awareness work upstream in order to inform the population of the main themes: the type, the usefulness of primary schooling ...).

66. The AFD only intervenes if the community asks it to (existence of a straw-hut classroom and presence of a community teacher). In Guinea, the element concerning social mobilization has not suffered too much from the drying up of the finances as *Aide et Action* has made up to a level of 100% of the sum held back during the period of suspension (the participation of *Aide et Action* in the social mobilization element is normally 26%, the AFD contributes, for its part, up to a level of 74%). Certainly the most positive aspect of the school projects is that the funds arrive directly at their destination, which was not the case before, as the schools received no resources for their running. There remains the fact that the management tools for the running of the school are not yet operational; for example, when field visits took place, there were no charts. The management of stationery in the schools is not yet optimal because of the absence of stock management together with sufficient estimates of future needs.

67. Two elements of the AFD operations were recently evaluated (social mobilization and infrastructures, the external evaluation mission which took place half-way

through an Education for All project in Guinea, October 2005, ID2S SA), from which it appears that the experiments should be limited, and that it would be better to try and generalize that which already functions correctly, like the distribution of funds to the CRDs and the schools. At a strictly educational level, the school projects seem, in fact, to have little impact, as they have been focused on school equipment. The training of personnel should be developed in order for it to have a more immediate effect on the quality of teaching.

68. Since the end of the 1980s, *Aide et Action* has changed its focus, particularly concerning the revision of its aims and intervention strategies, placing special emphasis on the implementation of Education for All programmes (Report of the Evaluation Review of the Triennial Plan 2002-2004, September 2004). In Guinea, the changes that have taken place in the association concern, first of all, the restructuring, with the creation of an *Aide et Action* co-ordination body and three autonomous projects (Foutah, Conakry and Forécariah).

69. The school project has contributed to changing *Aide et Action*'s ways of intervention. Where the supervisors could before be considered as substitutes for the school administration, the voluntary stepping back of the NGO to take another look at their intervention strategies has encouraged the State to step in and be more active. The priority objective of *Aide et Action* is to make the school children's parents more responsible with regard to the management of the education system, and to that end the school project constitutes a particularly relevant vector. The school project is perceived as an innovative action which could potentially have an influence on teacher training as well as on the teachers and on pupils' education.

70. With regard to the school delegations, support programmes are established for the school delegates of primary education (DSEE), which include tools for the planning of activities, training plans and social mobilization tools. During the last three years, the programme has contributed, through the capacity building of the actors, to the creation and the formalization of projects which favour the decentralized management of the education system. At the local level, the school project is piloted by the CDE (Committee for School Development), composed of teachers, parents and the pupils; it favours giving responsibility to the communities at their base for the development, implementation and follow-up/evaluation of their educational projects. At an intermediary level, the CRD (Rural Development Community) is piloted by the community council and turns the locally elected persons into the real actors of the development process through the design, implementation and follow-up/evaluation of their local development plan, which is based on that of education's. At a prefectorial level, the C.P.P.E. project (Prefectorial Committee for the Piloting of Education) plays a part in the combined institutional and community management process. This means the validation and the follow-up of the prefectorial plan for the development of education.

71. The school project has two main objectives: social mobilization and the improvement of quality: it has four main headings: teacher training, the running of the school council, educational activities and the committee for school development. One of the main problems is the implementation of activities associated with the school projects. Another of the major difficulties concerns human resources. The DSEE previously had no precise function as a link in the administrative chain; it worked mainly in distributing the salaries. Recently (over the last three years), *Aide et Action* has permitted that the functions of the DSEE be defined in writing, but they do not represent the facts - these texts are not fully applied. In addition, the officers at work do not have the required skills to fully exercise their

new functions. They represent an ageing population that needs to be renewed according to the new attributions defined by the texts. The CPMF (Educational Advisors Teacher Trainers) could be called upon more often to carry out this function, but their numbers are too few. An associated problem is the lack of material means placed at the disposal of the school delegations. *Aide et Action* has in fact placed motorbikes and fuel at their disposal in the areas targeted for intervention, but it has become urgent for the State to do this at a national level, as foreseen in the EFA plan. The NGO has also provided tools for the DSEE: accelerated method of participative research, a register of recommendations, etc. ... But the problem of training is a real one, the school delegation having difficulty in defining relevant activities. The NGO and the DSEE representatives do not agree on what the school needs. For example, the acquisition of table-benches or the drilling of a well is thought to be needed by the former; whilst the laying out of a sports field is more important for the latter.

72. As for the positive aspects underlined by the NGO, the decentralization process, placed in the sidelines for about ten years because of the absence of proper resources being allocated to the local communities, seems to have been stimulated once more by the local communities' code which is being developed by the minister. At stake is the incitement of the ministry and more generally the State to get the local communities to recruit and manage the teaching staff. It must not be forgotten that a large number of Guinean teachers are recruited and paid by the children's parents. They represent up to 80% of the teachers in certain areas, and there is a genuine need for them to be trained so that school management might become both more operational and more effective.

73. A second positive aspect that is advanced is the taking up of responsibilities by the communities in the management of the funds allocated to the school. The control of the funds thus becomes more effective: the CRD opens accounts and receives the funds directly. As for the improvement of the quality, it should be done mainly through the teacher training, using various educational themes (for example, multi-grade classes); within this framework, projects can be developed, either at a local level, or at the level of the school delegation.

74. The social mobilization element seems to function well: the communities needs are genuine, schools are constructed, teachers recruited, projects developed, financed and put into execution; material traces of the carrying out the projects exist in the schools with, for example, places for the sale of school stationery. The main problem remains the non sustainability of the activities due to the insufficiency of the State; it will be remembered in this respect that the EFAG project covers only 38 DSEEs out of the 380 in the country, even if other projects being carried out also give support to the school projects. The local structures (prefectorial and school delegation) are insufficiently involved. A change of orientation is taking place in order to contribute to the improvement of quality by more closely associating the local actors and by working harder to identify the needs as well as the activities to be carried out.

7.2 Analysis of the data collected by the national experts in Guinea

7.2.1. The general satisfaction of the actors

75. The same structure was used for the Guinean survey as was used in Madagascar. The study was carried out in the prefectures of Téliélé and Mali. A total of 35 persons were questioned coming from 8 sub-prefectures. The distribution made according to their qualifications was the following: 2 prefectorial directors, 3 primary school delegates, 7 Heads of schools, 10 teachers, 3 representatives of the Rural Development Communities, 10 persons responsible within as well as members of the Association of Pupil's Parents.

76. The most significant element and the most consensual which comes out of the analyses of the discussions is the general satisfaction of the actors with regard to the activities that have been carried out within the framework of the school projects. Everyone agrees that they are very useful for the daily running of the school establishments. The investment made by the NGO (*Aide et Action*), accompanying the projects, is also mentioned in the majority of cases. In addition to this satisfaction directly linked to the activities that have been developed, it is also clear from the discussions that the school projects have a direct impact on educational attendance and on public awareness about the usefulness of schooling. The idea of the school project, as well as the steps that are associated with it, have been well assimilated by the actors. The definition given by the person in charge of the APEAE illustrates this assimilation: "A grouping of all the elements needed for the renovation or the construction of a school ... Analysis of the school's situation, as a result of which we define the needs to be satisfied ... We put together documents to this effect to obtain the necessary financing and the carrying out of the activities." The teachers have also understood well the inherent logic of the school projects, as this definition shows: "a group of activities carried out to overcome the difficulties encountered by the school and the teachers".

7.2.2. The particular needs of the schools

77. The parents are unanimous with regard to the state of the school infrastructures which for all of them have a lack of the necessary means to enable a proper running of the school. The problems raised concern making the schools safe, drinking water, the absence of functioning toilets, a lack of school stationery of the smaller kind as well as school textbooks, and the need of better or more furniture. At the same level, the problem of the pupils' health was also raised, particularly the need for endowments of pharmaceutical kits. The schools also lack canteens, which could have a negative effect on educational attendance. More rarely there is mention of the fact that certain families are unable to contribute financially to the school clothing needed for their children. The isolation of certain school is also a particular problem which makes educational attendance difficult during certain seasons.

78. The teachers and the Heads of school insist more on the layout of the school buildings and their condition. There are an insufficient number of classrooms and they are too small to ensure proper working conditions. The lack of school textbooks is a matter that is always brought up in the discussions. In certain establishments, there are too few teachers so the school is unable to provide a complete cycle of education. This preoccupation is

furthermore shared by the pupils' parents, which indicates that making them aware of the usefulness of schooling has been effectively achieved.

7.2.3. The tools associated with the school projects

79. Even though the teachers seem to really understand the usefulness of the management tools, the charts were not present in all the schools that were visited. However, the plan of the activities undertaken within the framework of the school projects were displayed and kept in the school archives. The accounts (receipts and outlay of the school) are regularly kept up to date. The teachers also use the guides developed by the NGO to manage the various activities that have been programmed. One of the important elements which came out of the discussions is the mention made of training organized within the framework of the activities associated with the school projects. Some of this concerned literacy training for the children's parents. This can be considered as an indirect benefit derived from the school projects for the communities. Educational training for the teachers is mentioned much more rarely in the discussions. On all the sites visited, regular meetings are held within the framework of the CDEs and their various members are indeed present.

7.2.4. Activities focused on the material aspects

80. The activities conducted within the framework of the school projects mainly concern urgent measures to be undertaken, such as making the school secure through the buying of the wire fencing and its construction around the school to provide an enclosure. The renovation of the school buildings was cited by all the actors who were questioned. Emphasis has been placed on the renovation of the classrooms, but the accommodation of the Heads of schools also needs renovating in certain towns and villages. In almost all the cases, the school project helps to finance school stationery, and it is on sale in the towns and villages. The pupils' health is also focused on in the school projects and many of the latter invest in pharmaceutical kits. It can also be noted that the projects regularly finance: the creation of sports grounds, the drilling of wells and the creation of school canteens.

7.2.5. A positive evaluation of the effects of the school projects

81. All the actors questioned, whatever their level of responsibility and their degree of involvement in the activities, judge the effects of the school projects to be positive. These effects are first of all visible in the pupils' school attendance (fewer absences, increased enrolments, improvement of the pupils' health), without doubt the improvement of the school environment constitutes in the eyes of the parents a guarantee of success. With regards to equity, it has also been noted in certain schools that there has been an increased enrolment of girls. The teachers and those locally responsible for education (DSEE, DPE) have noted an overall increase in the communities' motivation vis-à-vis the school and a good understanding of the usefulness of schooling for all pupils.

82. A partiality for schooling seems to be a genuine result of the dynamism engendered by the school projects. The community and the teachers however express worries for the future when there are no secondary school establishments nearby, or that the latter will not be able to enrol a sufficient number of pupils.

7.2.6. The difficulties encountered and the obstacles to be surmounted

83. A general difficulty mentioned by all the actors is the economic context of the country which has brought about big increases in price so that certain activities initially foreseen within the framework of the projects cannot be financed in their entirety. It is hoped that the NGO might be able to invest more by financing the provision of the needs. Problems have been noticed in the forwarding of funds. Delays occur that have a negative effect on the carrying out of activities within the period of time specified. In certain cases, the delays in payment have, for example, forced the population to provide the pay for the construction workers in charge of renovating the classrooms. Going to the various prefectures to buy certain products can also be rendered difficult both by a lack of transport and the necessary financial means to buy them. Overall, the lack of sufficient financing is underlined by the pupils' parents, who call for the financial involvement of the State.

8. LESSONS LEARNED

8.1. Positive factors

8.1.1. A policy of development aid adapted to the regional context

84. The ‘school project’ approach is adapted to the regional characteristics to the extent that the social mobilization in the school project is in line with the culture, traditions and ordinary, everyday social practices of the countries observed, which are focused more on the collective rather than individual dimension of the social element.. Even if the idea of a community seems to have lost its sense in the industrialized world and individualism has made rapid progress, this is not yet the case in the developing countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. Jean-Claude Kaufmann (Kaufman, 2001) analyzes the historic process which has led the individual to the centre of the political and social preoccupations of the end of the twentieth century and notes in this respect that from the post-war years to the 1970s, the social movements have been “linked by the same central element: the liberation and the autonomy of the individual ... The dominant value is therefore self-accomplishment (ibid.), which is a complete change from the earlier disciplinary socialization (ibid.) by its extension into moral standards and everyday life. As from the beginning of the 1960s, the development of mass consumption masked the more personal search for a private universe. Everyone now wants to follow his/her own desires and make his/her own choice. It is necessary to underline the individualistic break of the 1960s The autonomous individual, at the basis of the new, day-to-day democracy, represents a key to the understanding of the changes taking place, because it is a genuinely effective factor and a real trend” (Kaukman, 2001). Such is not yet the case in the countries analyzed in this report, where the local public services of general interest (the school) have been established by the communities, whilst, at the same time, the individual and competitive strategies of schooling are being developed “in the Western World”. As a result, the fact of calling upon social mobilization constitutes an activity adapted to the local sociological context, and no “rape of the imagination” involved (Traoré, 2002).

8.1.2. A policy of development aid which takes place locally by the allocation of finances autonomously managed by the community

85. If the fact of allocating financial means to the communities can burden the teaching dimensions of the projects with debt (as we will see), it would seem difficult to avoid this stage of local, direct financing. Even though the populations are poor they are asked to contribute financially to the school. L’INSTAT noted, for example, that in Madagascar, at the end of the last century, many Madagascan parents were increasingly unable to take on the ever rising costs of education for their children. At that time, a doubling of school costs would have been translated overall into a proportional decline of 25% in the enrolment ratio. This doubling would have led to a lowering of 51% of the enrolment ratio of the children coming from the most disadvantaged levels of society. The decisions of the parents to put

their children into school are, amongst other things, influenced by the opportunity cost resulting from sending them to school, a phenomena which is accentuated by the fact that the parents do not fully perceive the usefulness of a school which dispenses school programmes with little attention given to the economic preoccupations of the environment in which the schools are implanted. The financial dimension of the school projects was, under such conditions, a necessary factor in the promotion of social mobilization to resolve the problems of the children's access to the school, in order to increase their retention in the system. Local financing has permitted the generation of additional resources in the environment to lighten the burden of household tasks, particularly those of the girls, and to enable their schooling and the reduction of opportunity costs for the families (generating resources for the poor families, the financing of the running of the school; reducing the burden which the families have to bear with relation to the teachers' pay.)

8.1.3. The positive value of social mobilization: a strengthening of community and collective action

86. The design and development of the school project approach or of the plan of operations for schooling are both based on a mobilization of the community, "the process approach", which activates the whole population with regard to the questions of schooling by generating positive community interactions between the community and the school.

87. The social mobilization with regard to the management of the school is accompanied by significant material and contextual effects: repairs, maintenance, and the equipment of the buildings are carried out locally by the people who have expressed a need for them in the local community. The only people responsible for this are those in the community. Social mobilization has brought about a local appropriation of the school as a common patrimony and seems to have strengthened that of the children's parents, particularly with regard to their participation in the meetings organized by the school. The debates that have been organized within the educational community are far from being insignificant or purely factual. They show that any future exchange of ideas will be less asymmetrical than in the past, particularly by their giving the parents more opportunity to take decisions concerning the schooling of their children.

88. The effectiveness of the project comes from the fact that it is based and depends on partnerships created between the Head of school and the various committees. The procedures are generally respected in the field and more often than not are accompanied by training or other activities. Certain summary attempts at the evaluation of the effects of the school projects have been made.

8.2 Non-insurmountable negative factors

89. Even though the training given has allowed members of the various school management committees "to improve their level", a similarity in the projects' content can be noted which has been influenced by the examples given during this period of training to the detriment of "inventiveness". However, can one be inventive with respect to school projects without having had the experience and above all without having ever had the prior possibility

of exercising one's autonomy within the margins of the prescribed liberty that has been authorized?

90. One criticism concerned the highly secondary nature of the teaching dimension with regard to the economic priorities of the projects. In fact, the economic drift is often suggested as being a negative factor. It should however be noted here that given the poverty of the people, it would be difficult not to give priority to the financial nature of the activities. It gives credibility to aid towards development in the education sector because it has also been noted that any delay in the achievement of the material aspect of the projects concerning the restoration or the equipment of schools puts a cap on the initial momentum. The people wait for this financial aid to come and make it into a condition of their continuing mobilization. The more significant and preoccupying elements with regard to the way that economic factors take priority over educational ones concern the facts that only a very few teachers have been asked to take action, their involvement has been delayed, they show a lack of knowledge of the projects' contents, and the Head of school often seems to be the only person in the educational team who is really involved.

91. Due to this, it is not easy to articulate material activities alongside the pupils' lessons, and the teaching objectives are not always well delineated in those project documents that have been analyzed. This obstacle could however be overcome partially if the management and the higher hierarchical levels of the school were to abandon the procedural, even pettifogging, priorities of the activity, thus giving more autonomy to the educational teams. It can be noted, for example, that even if the model for the development of the project contains information sheets that are well drawn up, the latter represent as a main document no fewer than 7 pages of tables to be filled in, accompanied by (i) one page of a diagram of which the organizational complexity is doubtlessly inaccessible to the average teacher, and (ii) an annex of 16 pages. In Senegal, the procedural drift appears in the successive stages of the development of the project which are the following (the Procedural Manual for the school project in Senegal foresees ten preliminary stages to the consent to as well as the financing of the projects). The procedures are thus highly complicated, even though they allow for the learning of certain rules which are useful for the collective management of the subsidies. The imposed education process is based on the methods used in projects run by the public services, which undoubtedly betray a lack of reference by the promoters of the school projects, who are more focused on the procedures than on the definition of the qualities expected of a good project and the examples of one such project.

92. This focusing on the procedure undoubtedly masks, at all levels, a lack of educational skills: it is easier to say how to do something than to say what should be done. For this reason it seems that the educational success of the school projects should be based on the preliminary and general capacity building of the general education system, of its central and devolved services. The promotion of local democracy does not mean a systematic abandon of the administrative structure. It means that it should be transformed from a hierarchical structure of vertical command to one of an organized piloting structure, without being based purely on the exclusive principles of authority, but above all on the principles of piloting. No longer should information be given on how something must be done and on the evaluation of activities based on a respect of the procedures. This should be replaced by giving, at various levels, the general objectives to be aimed at, by means of providing the people with the means to achieve them locally. Evaluation should not take place on the basis of the respect of the procedure but on the results obtained. This change of orientation in the administrative management should not only be applied locally but at all levels (for example,

inspectors, school inspectorate, ministerial departments, etc.). If this were so, the school project policy could flourish in the countries having undertaken an overall administrative reform centred on the evaluation of the results obtained which go beyond the boundaries of schools alone. Decentralization (the delegation of State functions to the local bodies) and devolvement (i) constitute in this manner favourable contextual conditions necessary for the success of the “school project” policy, but (ii) they are based on a capacity building in piloting at all levels of the system, which undoubtedly would allow for the avoidance of the criticism frequently made about the present design of the projects as being too complicated, difficult to carry out and successfully complete.

93. The role of training is important in a period of change. It should particularly allow for the committee members to understand the framework in which they are working and to know the implications of their respective roles and responsibilities. This training is so much the more necessary as the committee members are often very elderly persons who are sometimes not even literate. In this respect, it would seem to be useful to carry out an appraisal of the training and the diverse activities of capacity building which have taken place in order to identify appropriate approaches. The training could be based on a strategy which concerns the capitalization of knowledge and a systemization of the lessons already learned.

94. It is difficult to target the indicators concerning impact due to the problems encountered with regard to the continuity of the steps taken in Madagascar and in Guinea and the delay in the implementation of the projects. Furthermore, the focusing on the economic dimension of the projects to the detriment of the educational dimension has not encouraged the taking of measures to establish their effectiveness, or their impact on the pupils' acquisitions. Finally, these measures seem particularly difficult to apply at the moment as the learning objectives have been relatively badly targeted and also because of the lack of the availability of values concerning initial acquisitions at the time of the starting up of the activities.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

95. The recommendations are based on the idea (i) that the main beneficiary is the pupil and that the school must teach the basic elements of citizenship, and (ii) that it is not possible to develop effective projects without taking into account the particular sociological and cultural characteristics of the countries in which they are taking place.

96. A structure for administration, management and assistance, with the individuals being trained in decentralization and in piloting, must be functional prior to the local setting up of the projects. This recommendation aims at the avoidance of focusing on the “pettifogging” aspects of the projects and encourages the administration in each of these countries to carry out project evaluations which would eliminate them and allow the identification and the circulation of information on effective strategies; good practices; the steps to be taken and the tools to be used to inform the educational community (parents and teachers) about what is at stake with regard to the improvement of school effectiveness, giving a few examples of what has been achieved. Piloting means first saying “aims must be defined”, before saying “how they can be achieved”. The focusing on the procedures has led to the inversion of terms.

97. It would seem impossible to halt local financial support, even though the economic dimension has, for the moment, got the upper hand over the educational dimension. In the poorest regions, it is local financial support that triggers off social mobilization. This recommendation aims at acknowledging that solving the financing problems represents the most important vector through which initial mobilization takes place, even if they are later relegated to a secondary position. However, if the communities’ lack of resources really hampers the effectiveness of schooling and brings about certain economic drifts in the school projects, perhaps it is necessary to proceed by stages and first of all make sure that the schools are well equipped, well managed and that they received the appropriate subsidies for their running. Then the school projects could be more focused on the educational dimension and have more impact on the effectiveness of learning. As a result, the State and the partners should make sure, as a priority, that the minimal conditions necessary for the running of the schools are put in place before multiplying the school projects themselves.

98. Continuing the activities must however be progressively reoriented in order to focus the priority on the educational character of the projects. In order to do this, it will not suffice to make an inventory of what is missing or what has to be materially repaired, but rather a thorough analysis has to be made of the educational situation of the schools. This situation must be apprehended on the basis of the evaluation of the acquired knowledge of the pupils either with regard to the standards of the official programmes, (ii) or by means of the tested evaluation tools such as, for example, the PASEC. It is the identification of the initial level of the pupils, and its explication, that will provide the elements that justify the educational activities that need to take place within the framework of the project to fill in the obvious gaps. Here again, there is a genuine effort that needs to be made in the training and assistance to be given to the managers and teachers to change from the present form of management, focused on the procedure, towards a form of management focused on the results.

99. Even though the relationship between the Heads of school and the community has been developed by the implementation of projects, it would appear that a relationship

between the community and the educational team should be promoted in order to improve the greater effectiveness of the school. The following stages could be proposed: (i) the mobilization of the educational team in the project and particularly in the educational element of the project, (ii) when the latter team has identified the objectives of the activities, as well as the necessary means to carry them out, involve it in the mobilization of the community, (iii) which could go beyond its simple participation in the material management of the project to progressively integrating the educational and teaching elements of the project. Collecting the facts about the parents' expectations in relation to the school provides, at one and the same time, (i) an opportunity to make the families aware of the educational dimension of the projects and (ii) to integrate them progressively.

100. In the medium term, the piloting conditions which have been created should make it possible to progress towards the establishments' autonomy through the drawing up of contracts between the hierarchical authority and the supervised establishment. The means allocated should, at one and the same time, be relative both to the results obtained and to the project to be developed. In addition to the problem of the capacity building of the various segments of the sector, the problem of providing indicators regarding the projects' impact on the pupils' acquired knowledge seems to be the most difficult one to settle. First of all, an effort must be made to define the initial indicators in order to decide on the objectives to be achieved: even though the indicators, such as the increase in the basic rate of school enrolment in the area, decreasing rates of repetition, rates of enrolment of girls, which are either closer to or much lower than those of boys ... are useful indicators, they have to be completed by the results pertaining to the pupils' acquired knowledge. Another effort that has to be made is the identification of the educational activities that need to be carried out in order to attain these objectives. The educational side of the project is at stake. Objectives and indicators are part of the same approach as when the objectives to be attained are clearly defined they constitute, in fact, indicators of the project's impact.

10. CONCLUSIONS

101. This document has been established on the basis of the study of three countries: Senegal, Guinea and Madagascar. The highly perfunctory definition of the indicators of the impact of the school projects does not at present allow an opinion to be expressed on the effect that the school projects have on the pupils' acquired knowledge. Furthermore, it also seems to be a little early to undertake this type of analysis, many of the school projects having both been implemented for the first time and in existence for only two or three years. Thus the evaluation work conducted in this report has tried to analyze the contextual data of the operation called "school project", by particularly studying what has happened around the pupil and around the school since its implementation.

102. The contextual data allows this report to be ended on a note of optimism, by showing that social mobilization, considered to be the basis of both the achievement of school autonomy and of the implementation of its projects, seems to be on the right track. In the three countries, the communities, even if they are not always representative of the entire local population, took the opportunity which was offered to them to participate in the school management. At present, the communities are particularly involved in the material, economic and financial dimensions of management, but too little in its educational aspects. But how could it be otherwise, given the socio-cultural level of the populations concerned?

103. There is still work to be done to promote the projects' educational dimension, an essential condition of which being the training and the making of those concerned with management as well as the teachers aware of how to achieve participative management of a school. The "pettifogging" nature present in the projects' administration (terms of reference, terms and conditions, the setting up of various committees, complex procedural manuals) could make way for proposals on educational activities focused not only on the school environment but also on the pupils' learning, which remains the priority of any education system.

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