



Striving for Quality: The Next Steps

How can educational quality be improved as we work toward EFA? To answer this question, ADEA initiated an exercise in 2002 that, for over a year, involved the entire ADEA community: African ministries of education, ADEA Working Groups, development agencies, regional networks, NGOs and educationists. The results were impressive: 22 country case studies, 3 reviews of development agency experiences, 15 background papers, 4 thematic syntheses and a discussion paper entitled "The Challenge of Learning: Improving the Quality of Education in Sub-Saharan Africa". This bumper crop of research fuelled the discussions of the 2003 Biennale, which proved to be a rewarding forum for dialogue and learning about effective policies and practices for improving educational quality.

The participants' assessment of the Biennale was highly positive. They considered that the lessons learned from the exercise gave them a better understanding of the essential issues that determine quality, and that these lessons could help them to do their jobs better.

Now that the Biennale is over, however, what can be done to ensure that these lessons have a real impact and lead to changes in the learning process at the school and classroom levels?

Working on the seven pillars of qualitative improvement

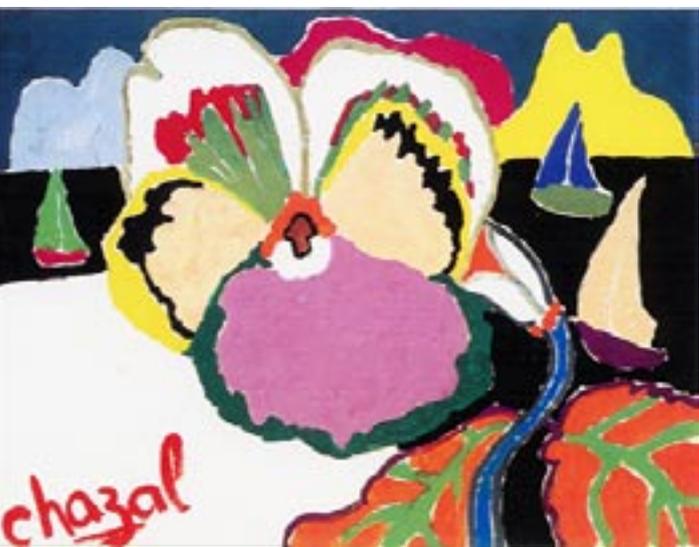
The ADEA Steering Committee meeting held in Geneva in April 2004 was devoted to this crucial question.

For ADEA, the major challenges are: establishing a culture of quality among the main stakeholders in the education system and development partners; providing them with policies, strategies, methodologies and operational tools to leverage quality improvement; and thus facilitating the transfer of lessons learned at the international and/or regional levels toward country contexts.

The emphasis has therefore been placed on the seven fundamental pillars identified by the quality study, on which efforts should be focused: creating learning opportunities; improving instructional practices; managing the challenge of equity; increasing school autonomy and flexibility; nurturing community support; ensuring a realistic financial framework; responding to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and to conflict situations.

ADEA proposes to build on these pillars as a foundation for extending and deepening the process of reflection, research and action, while integrating this process into the following fields:

- ▀ teachers' professional development;
- ▀ implementing reforms at the school and classroom levels;
- ▀ decentralization and diversification of provision, and participation by communities and parents;
- ▀ adaptation of curricula and use of national languages;
- ▀ monitoring and evaluation of quality;



La pensée, artwork by Malcolm de Chazal (Mauritius)

From the African Press

Making Headway in Distance Education

Focus

The ADEA Biennale on Quality

Taking Stock

The Quality of Education in sub-Saharan Africa

Close Up on an Education System

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equity, equality and financing issues.

For each of these fields, various strategies for action are planned:

- the continuation of *research and experimentation* oriented toward learning-by-doing, investigation of promising practices, the development of innovation in the field and the production of knowledge that is relevant in the African context;
- stepping up action in the field through support to *information-sharing and capacity building activities* through the organization of meetings between countries facing similar challenges;
- widespread *dissemination of knowledge through publications and other media*: publishing information on promising experiences, keeping others abreast of fields of knowledge that are crucial to quality improvement, and sharing the discussions and conclusions of the Biennale with a broader public;
- meetings to encourage *reform-oriented policy dialogue* and to build a consensus among education stakeholders with a view to joint action.

Moving toward action in the field

ADEA therefore contacted all the ministers of education in sub-Saharan Africa to invite them to show interest in one or more of these pillars, in accordance with their national priorities and their ongoing programs. The plan is to form networks of countries that share the same interests so that they can move forward together and broaden their experience on the basis of the lessons learned from the quality exercise, while continuing to exchange ideas concerning the problems encountered and the solutions tested. In support of this concerted approach, ADEA undertakes to mobilize regional and international expertise to assist African countries in their research and

field activities, and to get development agencies involved in supporting them in this process.

New partnerships for quality

The implementation of follow-up activities for improving quality also requires commitment from all partners of the education system.

Development agencies will be called upon to make quality improvement one of the priorities of their aid strategies.

ADEA Working Groups are also encouraged to make an active contribution to the follow up of the quality improvement issues that fall within their purview. It would also be helpful if the culture and the pillars of quality improvement were included in various aspects of their work programs: analytical work, capacity building, advocacy and networking.

As for regional networks and institutes, most of them have already indicated their willingness to work in partnership with ADEA on matters where their web of relationships and their specializations allow them to have an impact in African countries. In accordance with its mission, ADEA will aim at strengthening regional and national institutions that are mandated to build national capacity, as part of the unending process of improving educational quality.

A long-term investment

Research on the quality issue has thus opened up a broad field offering new dynamics for the actions undertaken by ADEA. Quality becomes a long-term investment and a framework for systematizing the activities of the association. Finding ways of maximizing the impact of these activities at country level will undoubtedly constitute a maturation and improvement of ADEA's mission to serve educational development in Africa.

MAMADOU NDOYE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, ADEA

The ADEA Biennial Meeting was held December 3-6, 2003 at the International Conference Center in Grand Baie, Mauritius. The theme of the meeting was "The Quest for Quality: Learning from the African Experience".

All-Africa Ministers' Conference on Open Learning and Distance Education, Cape Town, South Africa, February 1-4, 2004

Making Headway in Distance Education

By Cornia Pretorius¹, Journalist

Have distance education and open learning made way in Africa? Over twenty Ministers of Education met in Capetown to discuss issues related to implementation, quality, regional collaboration and regulation.

Distance education and open learning (DE/OL) is a package that is easy to sell in the marketplace of educational ideas, strategies and policies. Who would not want to buy a tried, tested and affordable product that is about giving hope, creating opportunities and allowing dreams for millions of people who desperately hunger for education?

Borders and buildings cannot fence in the reach of distance education and open learning - even less so since enabling information and communication technologies are conquering Africa's valleys and planes.

However, despite its vast potential, the package of distance education and open learning does not come without many user instructions in the fine print... "The promise of distance education can, however, all too easily be negated by bad practice," warned Professor Kader Asmal, the South African Minister of Education, as he opened the All-Africa Ministers Conference on Open Learning in Cape Town, South Africa in February this year.

Twenty ministers or so converged on Cape Town to debate the theme of the conference: "Transforming Education for a New Africa: Realizing the potential of open learning and distance education."

In the days that followed the conference set out to find a balance between

the promise and the pitfalls of DE/OL. According to Asmal's definition distance education and open learning means removing the barriers to learn through the mechanism of distance education that makes it possible even if teacher and student are separated by time and space.

Promises and assets

Participants appeared united in accepting the untapped transformational possibilities of distance education and open learning to take education—the lifeblood of development—to Africa's people in hot pursuit of the goals of Education for All.

The advantages are numerous.

DE/OL could democratize education by expanding access, in particular to those who have been marginalized by disability or gender. It could take education to people. It is more cost-effective than conventional education once economies of scale kick in. Distance learning could even improve the quality of primary and secondary education if used for the training of teachers in particular. Professor Mzobz Mboya, an education advisor to the secretariat of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) highlighted an initiative for the training of thousands of teachers in Angola, Malawi and Mozambique.

The participants agreed with Hafiz Wali from the Education Tax Fund in Nigeria, who said there was simply "no alternative" but to adopt DE/OL as the preferred educational solution to the growing demand for education.

How else, asked Wali, would Nigeria deal with the demand for education? Nearly 1 million candidates qualified for university admission this year, but only about 100 000 places are available. There are 4 million primary school leavers who need access to secondary education and Nigeria needs to train about 40 000 teachers.

Sir John Daniel, UNESCO Assistant Director General for Education, strikingly summarized this as he talked of the "eternal triangle of education" that consists of the three vectors: access, quality and cost. "The problem you face," he told the ministers of education, "is that with conventional methods the eternal triangle constrains what you can do. If you increase access by increasing class size people will accuse you of lowering quality. If you try to raise quality by putting more resources in the classroom you will raise cost. If you try to cut cost you will often reduce access and quality at the same time."

But, said Daniel, distance education is revolutionary because you can change the shape of the triangle and increase access, improve quality and cut costs at the same time. He had several examples to prove his claim.

"The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) now has one million students enrolled. It is ranked as one of the top ten Indian universities for the quality of its teaching and its operations at a fraction of the cost of India's conventional universities. The UK Open University has fewer students than IGNOU, only 200 000 of them, but it also operates at lower cost than other British universities and now ranks fifth out of the hundred UK universities for the quality of its teaching. Oxford University is in sixth place."

Notwithstanding recognized potential of DE/OL, participants' views

diverged on how to make the most of open learning and distance education, drifting from those who believe that learning should be delivered through wide-ranging application of information and communication technologies (ICTs) learning to a more cautious back-to-basic approach that favours strong student support, trained staff and the development of quality material.

Africa has bought into distance education and open learning. This was evident from a paper by Francis Mensah, director of Namibia's College of Open Learning. She pointed out that in 1998, a total of 159 institutions in 31 African countries offered distance education programmes. Even though a more recent figure was not forthcoming, six years later the number of institutions had undoubtedly increased as several speaker spoke about new initiatives.

Arnaldo Nhavoto, from the Open and Distance Learning Centre in Mozambique, told delegates how in recent times the government set up a Distance Education Task Force to create the conditions to put a distance education system into action in Mozambique. A National Distance Education Institute, among other things, will be established to promote and encourage the use of open and distance learning methods throughout the education system.

But distance education and open learning it is not a quick, cheap fix to all Africa's educational hardships. Like education in general it needs leadership, policies and proper ongoing investment in materials and people to bolster effectiveness.

Pitfalls and weaknesses

A once off investment, poor materials, poor support for students, poorly qualified lecturers, high dropouts or questionable exit qualification have undermined the status of degrees obtained through distance education and open learning.

Professor Barney Pityana, the vice-chancellor of the University of South Africa (Unisa), the world's oldest distance learning university, captured this sentiment "Distance education is causing ripples across the continent. And yet in many countries... there is no

universal appeal for distance education among would be learners and suspicions remain about the quality of qualification acquired by distance education."

Pityana also mentioned the problem of openness or the lack of it. Some institutions are not truly open as they demand minimum entry requirements. Some charge high fees which closes the door to many students.

Many participants were acutely aware of these constraints. In fact, what emerged during the conference from many ministers and institutions and in line with the spirit of the NEPAD is that Africa, is taking charge of the challenges.

One of these initiatives was the establishment of the African Council for Distance Education (ACDE) earlier this year in Kenya. The ACDE wants to open up learning opportunities to more people and is asking African governments to put more resources into the infrastructure for distance education.

Announcing the council to the conference, Pityana, and chairperson of the ACDE, said: "We have noted the context in which open and distance learning has taken root in Africa. We observe that with peace and democratization, there is population growth, rising prosperity, a thirst for knowledge, a need to bridge the skills gap, all in the context of rising expectations and diminishing resources. Conventional higher education will never be able to meet the demands... This is a golden opportunity for open and distance learning."

In a further drive to meet the ideal of a quality distance learning system spanning Africa, South African minister of education released a draft code of conduct for cross-border/transactional delivery of higher education programs. In essence, the code aims to ensure ethical practices in the growing "trade" of education for example, if a South African institution, offers programs in Rwanda that should be of the same quality as its local ones. Asmal's initiative was seconded by Elizabeth Ohene, Ghana's Minister of Education, who spoke of the

"distance education cowboys" who came in from elsewhere to sell their outdated degrees in Africa.

The conference also made several other recommendations. It asked for the development of national distance education policies, including guidelines; it asked for support for regional institutional entities to help build capacity and research in distance education and open learning. It asked for more partnerships between governments, the private sector and donor agencies.

The list of recommendations also emphasized the importance of collaboration, i.e. the sharing of information, experiences and research, working together on the development of quality materials and human resources and developing joint programs in areas such as teacher training.

Lastly the participants agreed to periodic reviews of distance education and open learning under the auspices of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa and MINEDEF and called for the alignment of existing bodies to help Africa to turn the recommendations into reality.

Jenny Glennie, the director of the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE) said much had been achieved during the four days. She said that a range of exciting experiences emerged, that the message of the importance of quality was well received and that there was a commitment to greater collaboration. The issue on the use of technology, however, did not yield a satisfactory outcome in terms of what is realistic and doable in Africa.

Clearly great strides were made during the conference. The requirements needed so that open learning and distance education can truly transform Africa were pinpointed. Now it is up to Africa to put them into place. ▀

"With peace and democratization, there is population growth, rising prosperity, a thirst for knowledge, and a need to bridge the skills gap, all in the context of rising expectations... This is a golden opportunity for open and distance learning."

1. Cornia Pretorius is a correspondent who covers education matters mainly for ThisDay, a South African daily newspaper.

The Quest for Quality: Towards a Learning Community

By Adriaan M. Verspoor¹, Consultant,
Ad hoc Working Group on the Quality of Education

In most African countries, less than a third of young Africans acquire the knowledge and skills that they are expected to master in primary school. ADEA's last Biennial Meeting explored a vital issue: How can sub-Saharan African countries improve the quality of education so that it is translated into effective knowledge?

The children who addressed the more than 400 participants at ADEA's Biennial Meeting in Grand Baie, Mauritius made it clear to all: they consider a good quality education the key to their aspirations for personal development and their

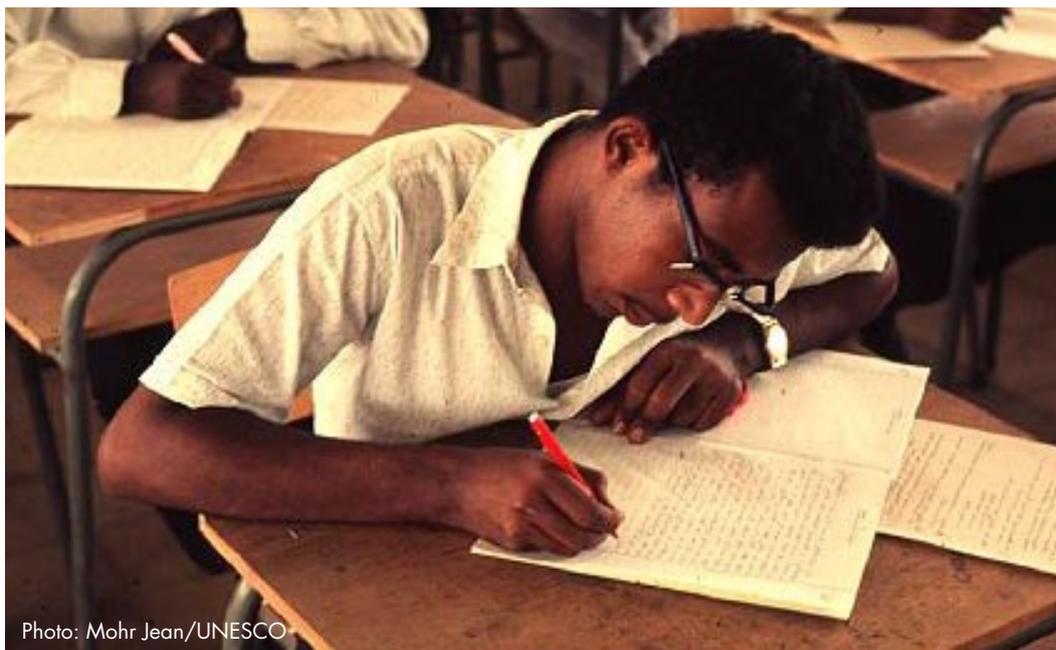


Photo: Mohr Jean/UNESCO

ability to contribute to national development. At the same time, Louis Steven Obeegadoo, Minister of Education of Mauritius, emphasized that the quest for quality never ends. Even in Mauritius, which has made remarkable progress in education development, quality issues remain at the top of the basic education agenda. In fact, there is no doubt that quality improvement is central to the sub-Saharan Africa education for all agenda: without it the goal of universal completion of primary education will not be reached. Countries cannot expect to accelerate social and economic development and progress towards peace and democracy as long as two thirds of the young Africans do not acquire the knowledge and the skills that are specified in their national primary school curricula.

Focusing on Learning Acquisition

"Whether or not expanded educational opportunities will translate into meaningful development—for an individual or for society—depends ultimately on whether people actually learn as a result of those opportunities, i.e., whether they incorporate useful knowledge, reasoning ability, skills, and values. The focus of basic education must, therefore, be on actual learning acquisition and outcome, rather than exclusively upon enrolment, continued participation in organized programmes and completion of certification requirements. Active and participatory approaches are particularly valuable in assuring learning acquisition and allowing learners to reach their fullest potential. It is, therefore, necessary to define acceptable levels of learning acquisition for educational programmes and to improve and apply systems of assessing learning achievement."

Article 4, World Declaration on Education for All, Jomtien, Thailand, March 1990

Quotes from
the 2003 Biennale

They said....

“ The pursuit of quality education is important to the development, not only of Africa, but also of the entire planet. ”

Michael Omolewa, Chairman of the UNESCO General Conference

“ Don't just tell us children to go to school! School should respond to children's needs.. It should provide the right sort of courses and should deliver on its promises to teach and to teach well. ”

Gilbert, Representative of the Association of Child Workers of Burkina Faso

“ One of the factors explaining the good results achieved in the education sector in Asia is the use of Asian languages. Concerning language choice in African schools one might say: 'better late than never' ”

Hon. Anne Thérèse Ndong-Jata, Minister of Education, Gambia

“ Ministries of Education would stand to benefit if children entering primary school were healthy and well nourished; if the children were ready to learn and had 'developed the rhythm of schooling at an early age. ”

Hon. Ndeye Khady Diop, Minister of Education, Senegal,

While admissions rates have risen significantly almost everywhere on the continent, dropout rates remain high and learning achievement is often unacceptably low. This affects in particular children disadvantaged by poverty and gender, who often do not have reasonable opportunities to learn, especially when they live in rural areas. Quality and equity are therefore concurrent challenges that must be addressed jointly.

The four days of discussions on the challenge of improving the quality of basic education in sub-Saharan Africa were structured around four major themes:

- ▶ Pedagogical renewal and teacher development;
- ▶ Decentralization and diversification of delivery systems;
- ▶ Implementation of basic education reforms and innovations;
- ▶ Relevance: Adapting curricula and the use of African languages.

The work of the task-force and the discussions at Grand Baie highlighted:

- ▶ the valuable and rich experience with quality improvement programs in Africa;
- ▶ the diversity of these experiences, reflecting the differences in history, culture and socio-economic conditions between countries;
- ▶ the importance of carefully documenting and effectively exploiting the lessons of this experience.

Emerging lessons of experience

The discussions focused repeatedly on the need to improve classroom practice. Participants recognized that, in the end, quality improvement takes place in the classroom, through the interactions of teachers and students. Effective instruction resulting in genuine learning must be at the core of the quality improvement efforts. Teachers thus are at the heart of any quality improvement strategy. But to be effective in their work they need the support of head teachers, the broader

education systems and communities and parents.

▶ **Teachers:** In many countries in the Africa region the EFA inspired acceleration in the growth of enrolments is resulting in teacher shortages and rapidly increasing pupil-teacher ratios. Moreover the HIV/AIDS epidemic has led to increases in teacher mortality and morbidity. Almost everywhere large numbers of teachers have been recruited without professional training, lacking the skills necessary for good quality instruction. Many countries in the region recognize the need to address simultaneously issues of quantity

and quality. Several are implementing sometimes far-reaching changes in the recruitment and training of teachers. Often this involves a shift towards the recruitment of teachers with better general education, a shorter pre-service training period, and intensified in-service training and school-based support. Participants examined the Guinean experience with the

reform of pre-service training and the Ugandan experience with its in-service teacher development and management system, with considerable interest.

▶ **Head teachers:** But clearly teachers need support in their efforts to ensure that genuine learning occurs in their classrooms. The role of head teachers as transformational leaders was emphasized at several occasions during the meeting. The demands on them are changing dramatically and are moving beyond the traditional administrator responsibilities to include instructional and transformational school leadership responsibilities. Effective schools are unlikely to develop without head teachers who are ready to lead instructional change processes. Only a few countries—Kenya is a notable example—have acted on this new agenda with changes in policy for head teacher selection, development and support.

▶ **System support to schools:** Effective schools, as was emphasized during the meeting do not operate in a vacuum. They need support from the broader education system. National

Teachers are at the heart of any quality improvement strategy. But to be effective in their work they need the support of head teachers, the broader education systems and communities and parents.

authorities need to ensure that schools have the capacity to change and that innovation and improvement at the school level is aligned with national policies and priorities. This implies the development, or more often the revitalization, of systems that can provide technical support and supervision to change efforts at the school level. Important changes are occurring in the relationship between national authorities and schools. Almost all countries in the region are decentralizing education management, but participants in the Biennial Meeting pointed out that the variation in the way countries are proceeding is considerable. Constitutional arrangements, colonial history and cultural traditions combine into a unique blend of decentralization policies in each country. But two trends are clear. First, there is a movement in several countries towards school based management of non-salary resources, through per student capitation grants as in Uganda and Tanzania or through competitive funding of school development programs or school-based innovations as in Guinea, Senegal and until recently in Tanzania. Second, many countries—including those that have adopted “school-based management” approaches—are moving to delegating more and more responsibilities related to support to and supervision of schools, to offices at the district level or even lower levels of the hierarchy.

► **Community involvement:** Similarly, communities and civil society are key partners in this process of school level change and improvement. Several countries reported that in addition to decentralizing administrative and managerial responsibilities, they are also mobilizing communities to become more broadly involved in the functioning of the school through the development and strengthening of parent-teacher associations, school management committees or similar organizations. Non-governmental organizations have

Many education systems consider failure a normal part of the education process... Sustained quality improvement will need to be based on beliefs and values that are different and that can provide the foundation for a culture of quality. The starting point must be the belief that all children, given the appropriate opportunity to learn, will be able to master the knowledge and the skills specified in the basic education curriculum.

often played a key role in strengthening the capacity of these community-based institutions as illustrated in Grand Baie by the experience of Save the Children in Mali.

Priorities for further reflection and action

Participants in the Biennial Meeting were aware that discussions in Grand Baie could only be a first step and broadly recognized the need for ADEA

to continue work on quality improvement. Several elements of the extensive agenda that could only be touched upon in Grand Baie will need to be explored further.

► **Pro-poor education strategies:** Equity is a challenge that no country that is committed to the EFA goals can ignore, especially as the objective has moved from universal enrolment to universal completion of the basic

education cycle. The challenge is to provide poor children, children living in rural areas and especially girls with equivalent opportunities to learn. This may require resource allocation policies that are designed explicitly to favor the poor and delivery modes that are adapted to the way of life of disadvantaged people, and take account of their priorities and constraints.

► **A culture of quality:** Many education systems consider failure—the absence of adequate progress in learning, often followed by repetition and dropout—a normal part of the education process. The discussion paper argues that sustained quality improvement will need to be based on beliefs and values that are different and that can provide the foundation for a culture of quality. The starting point must be the belief that all children, given the appropriate opportunity to learn, will be able to master the knowledge and the skills specified in the basic education curriculum. Systems that adopt a culture of quality as the basis for their operational practice, focus on learning as the central goal of

Quotes from
the 2003 Biennale

They said....

“ We want to transform our schools! We want transformation, not just change! We want children to inherit the values of democracy and equity, human rights, peace and solidarity. ”

Hon. Prof. Kader Asmal, Minister of Education, South Africa

“ Decentralization plans need to connect key issues such as the organization of instruction, the planning of programs, course content, financial management of funds and personnel management. ”

Jordan Naidoo, Faculty of Education, Harvard University, United States

“ Curriculum reform requires courage, creativity, perseverance and funding... Above all, reform implies, a change in mentality and a change in the work habits and behavior of all educators, including teachers, authors of textbooks, inspectors and school heads, politicians and parents. ”

Jacques Plante, University of Laval, Canada

the education system at all levels, ensure that teachers and administrators have the means and skills required to bring about quality results, and support flexibility and diversity in delivery mechanisms and in instructional practice.

► **Implementation.** Reforms and innovations that aim at improved teaching and learning have often floundered in the classroom. Reforms in sub-Saharan Africa are often especially complex as they combine objectives of resource mobilization, expansion of access and quality improvement. Moreover as noted in a paper on the challenges of implementation that was presented in Grand Baie, reforms often emphasize program design over implementation strategy, and have a tendency to prescribe a single recipe solution with centralized program management. The discussion paper argues for a rethinking of implementation models and a move towards strategies that provide for flexible and incremental progress, include arrangements for systematic learning from experience, allow for the simultaneous development and implementation of several innovations, recognize and value local experience, and consider policy development and implementation as continuous, iterative and mutually reinforcing processes.

► **Capacity development.** Every education system in sub-Saharan Africa has considerable untapped resources and capacities. Capacity building in that context needs to focus first and foremost on the improvement of existing functions and the activation of existing resources. The decentralization that many countries have embarked on permits the sharing of responsibility among a larger number of management units, can mobilize additional participants in the education development processes and create new approaches to the “going to scale” challenge. It is particularly important to involve “meso level” institutions such as research and training centers, professional organizations, and networks of schools and teachers in capacity strengthening programs. Equally important is the support to national level institutions including the ministries of education who face often dramatic changes in their role as their immediate responsibilities for implementation are reduced and their responsibility

for regulation, monitoring, evaluation, quality assurance and technical support increases.

► **Financing.** Financing a quality education system that provides opportunities to learn of acceptable quality to all children will require significant additional resources, as well as a more efficient use of these resources. Most important is the need to ensure that adequate resources are available to finance non-salary items such as textbooks, supplementary reading materials, teachers’ guides, sundry supplies and opportunities for in-service teacher training and support. In many cases this will require joint efforts of national governments, international donors, non-governmental and community based organizations, and parents. Yet public funding will always be the principal sources of funding and it is critically important that these resources are deployed in such a way that they ensure that no child will be thwarted in his or her desire to attend school because of the inability to pay.

The quest continues

Improving the quality of education is by its very nature a process of long duration. At Grand Baie the ADEA community started on this path together. But quite clearly more work—analysis, discussion, reflection and action—will be required. The praxis approach that ADEA has adopted for its work has proven to be most valuable in nurturing this process. It emphasizes learning through action and learning from action, to develop and improve action. Its starting point is participant analyses of national experience—reflection in action—which allows policy makers, educational professionals and other stakeholders to exchange experiences and share knowledge. The approach is expected to result in a broader vision, and institutional and technical capacities to constantly improve action. This is the learning process that the ADEA community will need to pursue to help countries underpin national quality improvement programs and processes.

This will require a much more careful documentation of the lessons of experience in key areas than has been the case so far. Of particular importance is moni-

toring the evolution of student learning achievement over time. Much progress has been made in this regard in recent years as MLA, PASEC and SACMEQ are helping countries to document trends in student learning and analyze determinants. Building national capacity in this area and in the area of educational statistics, research and evaluation is a priority that ADEA should continue to support vigorously through its working groups and its ad-hoc programs.

After the 2003 Biennial Meeting, quality improvement will remain a priority on ADEA’s agenda. ADEA will consider how it can best support learning processes in a several areas that the discussion and reflections during the biennial meeting suggest as areas of critical importance:

- **HIV/AIDS**
- **The use of African languages in basic education**
- **Early childhood programs**
- **Integrating alternative programs**
- **Mainstreaming gender.**

Towards a learning community

ADEA is well placed to provide a platform for the exchange and analysis of experience by key participants in the unfolding processes of quality improvement. Sustaining change and improvement at the country level to bring about increases in student learning achievement will require strengthening or developing technical and institutional capacity throughout national systems and internationally. Teachers and administrators, policy makers and planners will all be called upon to engage in learning to change values, beliefs and practices. Finding ways to facilitate, support and contribute to these learning processes in support of the quality education for all agenda, is the key challenge for the ADEA community—the secretariat, working groups taskforces and member organizations—that emerges from the Grand Baie Biennial Meeting. ▀

1. Adriaan Verspoor is an independent education consultant who coordinated the preparation of the discussion paper “The Challenge of Learning: Improving the Quality of Basic Education in Sub-Saharan

The Heads of State of Mauritius and Mali Honor the Biennale with their Presence

The Grand Baie Biennial Meeting was honored by the presence of two heads of state: Mr. Anerood Jugnauth, President of the Republic of Mauritius, and Mr. Amadou Toumani Touré, President of the Republic of Mali. Here are excerpts from their speeches at the opening session.

On challenges for future generations, NEPAD and development partners...

"...Today, the biggest challenge looming large on the horizon is enabling the creation of a generation of knowledge workers who with their multiplicity of skills and right attitudes will be able to adopt a flexible stand in coping with new challenges and promoting large scale innovations... Africa is a rich continent inhabited by people who constitute the major resource potential that so far has unfortunately not been totally utilized... It is also the reason why I am so gratified that significant actions are emerging and carry a promise for a better future..."

First of all, the development of NEPAD, an African-lead initiative that gives price of place to good governance. ...We have taken the pledge to raise standards of governance on the one hand, and on the other we assume responsibility for all actions that we as a continent can take to commit ourselves to a systematic elimination of those ills besetting us...

However, it will be idealistic to believe that we can be masters of our own destiny without any support from our development partners... Obviously, only making pledges is not adequate. It is my ardent wish that development partners live up to their responsibility as effective partners in all poverty reduction enterprises..."

Excerpts from the speech by Mr. Anerood Jugnauth, President of the Republic of Mauritius
Grand Baie, Mauritius, December 3, 2003

On education and employment, information and communication technologies and the outlook for African youth...

"...The match-up between education and employment is a challenge that African education systems need to tackle. Our schools and universities do not turn out enough graduates. But, paradoxically, we find it very difficult to offer degree holders a job. To put an end to this waste, school systems must be brought into phase with the socio-economic changes occurring in our countries and must provide training that meets the needs of the working world ..."

Information and communication technologies offer powerful new knowledge tools that can help our countries take short-cuts in many fields. One of the advantages to be derived from the new information technologies is distance education, exemplified by the African Virtual University in Nairobi...

We all agree that African youth is both our greatest asset and our hope of winning the development struggle. But we must not lose sight of the fact that these tens of millions of African children and teenagers, the living strength of our countries, constitute a serious threat for our societies unless the future offers real prospects for them ..."

Excerpts from the speech by Mr. Amadou Toumani Touré, President of the Republic of Mali
Grand Baie, Mauritius, December 3, 2003

Assessing the Quality of Education in Africa

By Khadim Sylla, International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO)

Evaluating the quality of education is a complex activity. It requires a system for collecting data and a rigorous scientific approach to the analysis and evaluation of the results. Three programs evaluate academic achievement around the continent: SACMEQ¹, PASEC² and MLA³.

Methods of measuring academic achievement using standardized tests are above all management tools and aids to developing educational policy. By taking as the object of study the contextualized results of the pupils, they offer a framework for management at various levels: managing learning by identifying shortcomings or progress in the pupils' work; dealing with inequalities by bringing to light differences in performance using specific criteria (gender, location, etc.); managing school organization and responsibilities, in particular by highlighting "institutional effects"; and regulating resources, in the sense of allocating them optimally based on an analysis of the performances achieved. Ultimately, methods of evaluating academic achievement are useful in managing educational policy based on the scale and relevance of the information that can be brought to bear on the degree of influence of intra- and extra-academic factors, such as the availability of textbooks, the level of teacher training or the socio-economic background of the parents. As such, these methods constitute a valuable planning tool, as can be seen from the wealth of information produced by the Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational

Quality (SACMEQ), the Programme for the analysis of education systems of the Conference of Education Ministers of Francophone Countries (PASEC) and the Monitoring Learning Achievement project (MLA).

Some research results⁴

The findings of the research conducted by MLA, PASEC and SACMEQ provide a variety of relevant information about the quality of education in Africa. The subject matters to which they refer are in general related to reading and math (at the primary level, arithmetic). This choice reflects a pedagogical rationale that is based on the organization and pace of acquisition of academic knowledge. While learning to read is considered the foundation of comprehension, math is assumed to develop a scientific and critical spirit in the pupil, a faculty for discernment and a certain degree of rationality. This is why the SACMEQ project, after having laid the methodological basis in the first phase (SACMEQ I) for evaluating how well pupils in year six of primary school have learned to read, broadens the scope of its second phase of investigation (SACMEQ II) to include math. PASEC follows this same logic by

Despite differences in methodologies between SACMEQ, PASEC and MLA, the results of these studies converge and confirm the general observation of the low level of educational quality in Africa.

evaluating the two disciplines for pupils in years 2 and 5 of the primary cycle. The MLA evaluates life skills in addition to the two disciplines already mentioned. By taking up this aspect of learning, the MLA is tackling one of the crucial goals of education. The levels dealt with in this project include, in addition to years 4 and 5 of primary education, year 3 of the secondary cycle.

The results of these studies give a sweeping picture of pupil performance and of current disparities, in addition to providing indications about the explanation for these results and comparative data between countries. While it is not possible in this article to take stock of all these surveys, some results are summarized below.

Reading levels are generally low in the SACMEQ countries

The results collected by SACMEQ on reading show significant variations in pupil results. Whereas the levels in Kenya and Mauritius are higher than 50%, other countries are having difficulty moving above the 40% threshold.

By introducing two performance criteria – a "minimum" score required for passing to a higher grade and a "desirable" score considered necessary to succeed in the higher grade – SACMEQ and the MLA are also attempting to evaluate the degree of achievement of basic skills and of skills for excellence. The results obtained by the SACMEQ1 study show that about half of the pupils (48.1%) have not achieved the minimum skills level defined independently by the authorities in each country.

Another approach used in the SACMEQ project measures performance levels in specific fields of learning (narrative, expository, documents), each of which requires the use of particular cognitive skills. The breakdown of the results obtained on this test using this approach will help to develop a more fine-tuned analysis and to draw up appropriate strategies for improving quality. Along the same lines, the SACMEQ II study proposes a notion of tests based on a hierarchy of aptitudes and cognitive abilities and on methodologies for collecting information that make it possible to draw comparisons between countries and over time.

A low level of language mastery

The PASEC results for year 2 in French show superior performance in Cameroon, with a score of 65.1%, and are significantly lower in Senegal, where the level is 43.5%, whereas Burkina Faso, the Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar lie in a range of between 50 and 58%. In math, for the same year of studies, the Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal have especially low scores (44.4% and 45.4%, respectively), while Cameroon and Madagascar confirm their overall performance with scores of 59.5% and 66.2%. In the case of Madagascar, the good performances in French and math seem to confirm the hypothesis that learning in the native language – in this case Malagasy – acts as a real accelerator in learning foreign languages. Along these same lines, the frequent use of French within families in Cameroon could explain the results for this country. In contrast, the predominance of the use of native languages as a means of communication within the family, combined with their absence within the schools in Senegal, is probably at the root of the poor results there.

Relatively fragile achievements

In analyzing the dropout rate – an indicator of the proportion of pupils experiencing great difficulty – the PASEC results show the problematic situation of Senegal (25%), the Central African Republic (22%), Djibouti (19%) and to a lesser extent Mali (17%). The PASEC survey also deals with the capacity of systems to provide lasting education for individuals by measuring the proportion of adults who can read easily after 6 years of schooling. This shows the difficult situation of Chad, Sierra Leone and Niger, where the level is about 50%. The level of Senegal and the Central African Republic is about 70%. Compared with survival rates, which fluctuate between 33% and 66%, these results reflect not only the internal inefficiency of the edu-

cational systems of the given countries and the wastage they generate, but also the lack of a literate environment that can help maintain learning achievement after study is completed.

Persistent disparities

The MLA results in year 4 of school show that minimum levels of reading, arithmetic and life skills are in general far from being achieved, with significant variations between countries and between disciplines.

The issue of quality, analyzed from the perspective of inequalities, is also dealt with in the MLA study. Its results

Because of its strategic advantage for managing and supervising educational quality, evaluating academic achievement should become a routine part of educational planning and stock-taking in Africa. However institutionalizing evaluation procedures requires strong commitment from governments.

tend to confirm the observation that girls tend to succeed better than boys in the lower grades, while the opposite trend, with greater success for boys, is true for the higher grades, with the exception of Niger, where girls do better than boys in year 8 of school. A geographic breakdown of the test results also shows higher success rates in urban areas than in rural areas, in all disciplines, with inequalities being most pronounced in Madagascar and Zambia.

Despite differences in methodologies between SACMEQ, PASEC and MLA, the three studies are representative to a large extent because of the variety of indicators generated and the diversity of the levels of study evaluated. The convergence of the results of these studies tends to confirm the general observation of the low level of educational quality in Africa.

The fundamental role of methodology

The validity of the findings of the tests to evaluate academic achievement and the relevance of the recommendations that flow from these depend on the quality and rigor of the research methodology used. Statistical inference, which legitimates the generalization of results from a sample of pupils, for example, or

Dakar Framework for Action

“What students are meant to learn has often not been clearly defined, well-taught or accurately assessed”

"Improving all aspects of the quality of education, and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills..."

...Evidence over the past decade has shown that efforts to expand enrolment must be accompanied by attempts to enhance educational quality if children are to be attracted to school, stay there and achieve meaningful learning outcomes.... Recent assessments of learning achievement in some countries have shown that a sizeable percentage of children is acquiring only a fraction of the knowledge and skills they are expected to master. What students are meant to learn has often not been clearly defined, well-taught or accurately assessed..."

Objective number 6,

Dakar Framework for action

Text adopted at the World Education

Forum, Dakar, Senegal, April, 2000

the comparison of results over time or between countries, demands the use of, first, sampling tools and methodologies characterized by a high degree of scientific rigor, and second, relevant methods for comparing performance between countries.

Even if this methodological requirement occasionally runs into difficulties due to changes in curricula within the various countries (comparability over time) and the prioritization of educational goals, which differs between countries, the search for appropriate solutions is essential in order to validate the conclusions of research.

Institutionalizing evaluation procedures

The strategic dimension of the evaluation of academic achievement within

the framework of managing and supervising educational quality suggests that it should become a routine part of the activity of educational planning and stock-taking in Africa. Nevertheless, evaluation systems benefit when associated with other, complementary approaches that are more qualitative, such as what is called "authentic" evaluation, which seeks to measure the ability of pupils in real contexts, based on "samples of performance", that is, activities that demand greater use of the pupil's capacity for reflection.

But it will not be possible to institutionalize evaluation procedures without strong government backing, where the development of capacities is at the heart of a rigorously planned approach. Making use of the experience of MLA, PASEC and SACMEQ may well

constitute a first step towards achieving this goal. ▀

1. SACMEQ covers the countries of southern Africa.
2. PASEC covers the French-speaking African countries.
3. The MLA targets all the countries of sub-Saharan Africa.
4. The results discussed in this article refer in the main to documents produced by MLA, PASEC and SACMEQ for the ADEA Biennial Meeting held in December 2003.

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Caucus of Ministers Meeting

The ADEA Caucus of Ministers of Education met on December 5, 2003 during the ADEA Biennial Meeting in Grand Baie, Mauritius. Forty-five ministers and ministry representatives were present at the meeting.

During the meeting, the following issues were discussed: NEPAD's implementation strategy in the education sector; the use of education peer reviews as a tool for sharing and support between African countries and education specialists; OECD's proposal for children with special needs.

The New Caucus of Ministers

At the end of the meeting, the Caucus of Ministers elected the new ADEA Bureau of Ministers. The new bureau is as follows:

Western Africa:

Hon. Mr. Fabian N.C. OSUJI, **Nigeria**;
Hon. Mr. Alpha Tejan WURIE, **Sierra Leone**;
Hon. Mr. Mamadou Lamine TRAORÉ, **Mali**

Southern Africa:

Hon. Mr. Simao PINDA, **Angola**;
Hon. Mr. Alcido Eduardo NGUENHA, **Mozambique**

Hon. Mr. Ona Ondo, Vice-President of the Bureau of Ministers presented a report on the activities of the Bureau since the last Biennial Meeting in Arusha. Some of the main issues discussed by the ministers during the Bureau Meetings were: (i) the question of the financial contribution of Ministries of Education to ADEA; (ii) country cooperation at the sub-regional level, including sub-regional ministerial meetings; (iii) the Intra-African exchange program; (iv) the EFA report; (v) peer reviews, (vi) the new rules governing the election of members to the Bureau of Ministers.

Central Africa:

Hon. Mr. Daniel ONA - ONDO, **Gabon**;
Hon. Mrs Rosalie KAMA – NIAMAYOYA, **Congo**;

Eastern Africa:

Hon. Mr. Kilemi Valerian MWIRIA, **Kenya**;
Hon. Mrs Jeanne d'Arc MUJAWAMARIYA, **Rwanda**

Indian Ocean:

Hon. M. Louis Steven OBEEGADOO, **Mauritius**.

The Caucus also elected Hon. Daniel ONA - ONDO, of **Gabon** as President of the Bureau of Ministers and Hon. Louis Steven OBEEGADOO, of **Mauritius** as Vice President.

Studies and Documents on Quality

The documents listed here were prepared in the framework of the ADEA quality exercise, and for the 2003 ADEA Biennial Meeting

Papers presented at the ADEA Biennial Meeting, 2003

Main discussion paper

The Challenge of Learning: Improving the Quality of Basic Education in Sub-Saharan Africa

Edited under the direction of Adriaan Verspoor

Supporting documents

Situation of the Learning Achievement

by Saul Murimba

Elements to Assess the Quality of Primary Education in French-Speaking Africa: Program for the Analysis of Educational Systems of the CONFEMEN countries (PASEC)

by Jean-Marc Bernard, Anthony Briant and Muriel Barlet

Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) Project in Africa

by Vinayagum Chinapah

Monitoring Performance: Assessment and Examinations in Africa

by Thomas Kellaghan and Vincent Greaney

Analytical and Factual Elements for a Quality Policy for Primary Education in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Context of Education For All

by Alain Mingat

Interactive Radio Teaching

power point presentation by G. Naidoo

Pedagogical Renewal and Teacher Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Thematic Synthesis

by Martial Dembélé and Bé-Rammaj Miaro-I

Relevance of Education : Adapting Curricula and Use of African Languages

by Nazam Halaoui

Synthesis of Studies on the Generalization and Sustainability of Reforms

by Kabule W. Weva

Accelerating Paths to Quality: A Multi-faceted Reality

by Jane G. Schubert and Diane Prouty-Harris

Quality of Secondary Education in Africa (SEIA)

by Jacob Bregman and Karen Bryner

Ensuring Quality of Distance Education for Higher Education: The Case of the African Virtual University (AVU)

by Magdallen N. Juma

Improving the Quality of Education in Sub-Saharan Africa by Decentralizing and Diversifying: Involvement and Empowerment for School Citizenship

by Boubacar Niane

Save the Children US Village Schools in Mali 1992-2003: A Future to Quality Access?

by Deborah Glassman and Mamadou Millogo

Field Training and Support for Young Volunteer Teachers in Basic Education in Niger: The Experience of the Paul Gérin-Lajoie Foundation

Paul Gérin-Lajoie Foundation

Local Solutions to Global Challenges: Towards Effective Partnership in Basic Education

by Ted Freeman and Sheila Dohoo Faure

Implementation Matters: Exploring their Critical Role in Transforming Policies and Investments into Results

by Ibrahima Bah-Lalya and Richard Sack

Improving the Quality of Primary Education in Africa: What Has the World Bank Learned?

by Jeanne Moulton

Universal Primary Education In Multilingual Societies Supporting its Implementation in Sub-Saharan Africa and beyond.25 years of experience in German Technical Cooperation

by Kurt Komarek

Several Lessons from the Implementation of a Curriculum Reform

by Jacques Plante

The Impact of the AIDS Epidemic on Schooling in Sub-Saharan Africa

by Paul Bennell

HIV/AIDS: a Threat to Educational Quality in Sub-Saharan Africa – Analytical framework and implications for policy development

by Eric Allemano

Country case studies

Cameroon: Pedagogical Renewal: Establishment of a New Teaching Approach (NAP) in Primary Education in Cameroon

Gambia: Using the Monitoring of Learning Achievement (MLA) Study to Investigate Quality Factors in Private Schools

Guinea: The Reform of Pre-service Primary Teacher Training in Guinea (FIMG): Review-Results of Implementation

Madagascar: Les contrats programmes et amélioration de la qualité de l'enseignement à Madagascar : un exemple de la gestion du système éducatif (The improvement of the quality of Teaching in Madagascar: an example of decentralized management) This document exists in French only

Mauritania An Approach to Improving Educational Quality in a Reform Context

Nigeria: Beyond Access and Equity: Improving the Quality of Nomadic Education in Nigeria

Senegal: Decentralizing the Management of Education and Diversifying Supply: The "Faire-Faire" Strategy

Uganda: Impact of Primary Education Reform Program (PERP) on the Quality of Basic Education in Uganda

Zambia: Primary Reading Programme (PRP): Improving Access and Quality Education in Basic Schools

Documents prepared by ADEA Working Groups

Working Group on Distance Education and Open Learning

Case Study on Distance Education for Teacher Education in Mauritius

by R. Rumajogee, F. Jeeroburkhan, P. Mohadeb and V. Mooneesamy

Working on Group Early Childhood Development

Early Childhood Development as an Important Strategy to Improve Learning Outcomes

by Karin A. L. Hyde and Margaret N. Kabiru

Working Group on Education Statistics

The Role of Statistics in Improving the Quality of Basic Education in Sub-Saharan Africa

by Glory Makwati, Bernard Audinos and Thierry Lairez

Studies and Documents on Quality

Working Group on Finance and Education

Financial Management of Education in a Decentralized Setting: Case Studies of Mali, Nigeria and Uganda
by Mohamed Chérif Diarra

Working Group on Higher Education

The Role and Contribution of Higher Education to Improving the Quality of Basic Education A Case Study of the Centre for Research on Improving Quality of Primary Education in Ghana (CRIQPEG)
by Emmanuel Adow Obeng, James Adu Opere and Joseph M. Dzinyela

Working Group on Non-formal Education

Improving the Quality of Basic Education in Burkina Faso

Working Group on the Teaching Profession

School Self-Evaluation: The Path to a Better School : A report on the implementation of the process of self-evaluation into schools in Swaziland: Lessons learned
by Dawn Quist

Graduated Working Group/Associate Member FAWE

Equity in Learning: The Gender Dimension
by Dorothy A.S. Mbilinyi

Documents prepared within the framework of the ADEA quality exercise

National case studies

Benin: Les conditions d'apprentissage pour une éducation de qualité au Bénin : l'application des normes EQF (The conditions of learning for quality education in Benin)

Burkina Faso: Pertinence de l'éducation Adaptation des curricula et utilisation des langues africaines : le cas de l'éducation bilingue au Burkina Faso. (Curricula adaptation and use of African languages: Bilingual education in Burkina Faso)
This document exists in French only

Burundi: Utilisation de la langue nationale comme langue d'enseignement. Elaboration et production des manuels des élèves et des fichiers du maître pour l'école primaire au Burundi. (Using the national language as the language of instruction. Preparing and producing teacher and pupil manuals for the elementary school in Burundi)
This document exists in French only

Lesotho: Study of the Provision of Physical Infrastructure and its Impact on Quality Improvement in Primary Education in Lesotho

Mali: La pédagogie convergente comme facteur d'amélioration de la qualité de l'éducation de base au Mali :analyse du développement de l'innovation et perspectives (Improving the quality of education in Mali: Analysis of innovations and perspectives)
This document exists in French only

Mauritius: Pre-Vocational Education: An Impact Evaluation

Namibia: Practising Critical Reflection in Teacher Education: Case Study of three Namibian Teacher Development Programmes

Niger: L'enseignement bilingue au Niger (Bilingual teaching in Niger)
This document exists in French only

Senegal: Le projet d'école et le cahier des charges : des outils de contractualisation pour le pilotage de la qualité dans l'éducation de base. (Tools for steering quality in basic education)
This document exists in French only

Sudan: Sudanese Experience in the Development and Evaluation of The Basic Education Curriculums

Zanzibar: Teacher Professional Development in Zanzibar: A case Study of the Teacher Centres

Background papers

Pédagogies et écoles efficaces dans les pays développés et en développement (pedagogy and efficient schools in developed and developing countries)
by Clermont Gauthier, Steve Bissonnette, Richard and Francis Djibo.
This document exists in French only

Improving Education Management in the Context of Decentralization in Africa
Jordan Naidoo and Peggy Kong

Capacity building for the improvement of the quality of basic education in Africa
by Jeanne Moulton

Adaptation of School Curriculum to Local Context
by Prof. Kabule W. Weva

Determinants of Primary Education Quality: What can we learn from PASEC for Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa?
by Katharina Michaelowa

Emerging Trends in Research on the Quality of Education – A synthesis of Educational Research Reviews From 1992-2002 in eleven countries of West and Central Africa
by Pai Obanya

Pour un encadrement pédagogique et administratif de qualité dans les écoles primaires africaines (towards quality pedagogical and administrative management in Africa primary schools)
by Jean-Pierre Brunet. This document exists in French only

Le rôle et la formation des directeurs d'école en Afrique (The role and training of school directors in Africa)
by Kabule W. Weva. This document exists in French only

Dévolution des pouvoirs à la base, Nouvelles responsabilités et développement des capacités locales pour ancrer la « citoyenneté scolaire » (Devolution of power: New responsibilities and local capacity building for anchoring "school citizenship")
by Boubacar Niame. This document exists in French only

Implantation des réformes au niveau des écoles et des salles de classe (Implementing reform at the level of schools and classrooms)
by Kabule W. Weva and Ilenda Mbemba. This document exists in French only

L'utilisation des langues africaines : politiques, législations et réalités (The use of African languages: Policies, legislation and reality)
by Nazam Halaoui. This document exists in French only

L'adaptation des curricula aux situations et réalités locales en Afrique sub-saharienne (Adapting curriculum to realities in sub-saharan Africa)
by Nazam Halaoui. This document exists in French only

Evaluation et enseignements des expériences d'utilisation des langues africaines comme langues d'enseignement (Evaluation and lessons learned from the use of african languages as the language of teaching)
by Hassana Alidou, Mallam Garba Maman. This document exists in French only

L'appréciation des coûts des manuels en politique d'intégration des langues africaines (Examining the costs of textbooks for the integration of Africa languages)
by Nazam Halaoui. This document exists in French only

Le financement d'une éducation de qualité (Financing quality education)
by Jean-Bernard Rasera. This document exists in French only

Quels indicateurs pour quelle réduction des inégalités scolaires ? (Reducing inequalities in schools: What are the indicators?)
by Aletta Grisay. This document exists in French only

**Documents
may be downloaded at:
www.adeanet.org**

Pedagogical Renewal:

The critical role of teacher professional development

By Martial Dembélé, University of Quebec at Montreal (UQAM)

Teacher professional development is a *sine qua non* condition for pedagogical renewal and quality improvement in education. Without it one cannot expect significant improvement in teaching and learning processes.

Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries are currently confronted with a formidable challenge: how to expand the size of their teaching force while improving its quality. In order to achieve universal primary education (UPE), SSA will need to recruit 1,361,000 new teachers between 2000 and 2015, representing an average annual increase of 3 % versus 2% between 1985 and 2000 (See Table 1 below: Increase in the number of public school teachers). Assuming that education systems are able to attract enough candidates to meet this demand, the critical issue is how to ensure that the supply is of the quality desired. This, in turn, raises important issues of professional preparation of teachers. Furthermore, given calls for pedagogical renewal, the 2,491,000 practising teachers will need to be provided with professional development opportunities.

This article is concerned with one of the essential ingredients for successful pedagogical renewal: teacher professional development.

A continuum of learning

Teacher professional development is increasingly considered “a continuum of learning, with teachers located at various places along the continuum” (Craig, Kraft and du Plessis, 1998, p. 1)¹. Along this continuum, three major phases appear consensual: preparation, induction, and continuing professional development. They vary in length depending on context and are distinct yet interrelated. In this respect, Feiman-Nemser’s (2001) task-oriented framework forms a practical agenda for both teachers and

teacher educators (see table 2 on page 16). It helps to identify the needs to be met at each stage and design learning opportunities accordingly.

An essential element for quality improvement

Successful educational reforms are those that alter the practice of teaching for the better; and teacher professional development stands as the principal means to this end. Indeed, as Guskey (Guskey, 2000, p. 4)² put it, “one constant finding in the research literature is that notable improvements in education never take place in the absence of professional development. At the core of each and every successful educational improvement effort is a thoughtfully conceived, well-designed, and well supported professional development component”.

Put differently, “innovations most likely to be implemented and to be effective are those that provide specific materials, professional development and other supports, in contrast to those that provide new standards and assess-

ments but then leave [teachers] to figure out how to accomplish these standards” (Slavin, 1999, p. 347)³. Examples of the latter abound in the policy and practice research literature.

Altering teaching practice is a complex undertaking insofar as it involves not merely altering what teachers do, but most importantly what they know, believe and value. In the logic of the continuum-of-teacher-learning framework, this implicates that altering teaching practice must begin at the pre-service level. Indeed, there is a “well established fact that the images and beliefs which pre-service students bring to their teacher preparation influence what they are able to learn” (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1016)⁴. In other words, the construction of practice can be said to begin well before formal

Altering teaching practice is a complex undertaking insofar as it involves not merely altering what teachers do, but most importantly what they know, believe and value.

Table 1: Increase in the number of public school teachers

	Numbers of Teachers (public sector) (in '000)			Average annual increase	
	1985	2000	2015	1985-2000	2000-2015
Anglophone Countries	1,191	1,557	2,180	+1.8 %	+2.3 %
Francophone Countries	601	825	1,512	+2.1 %	+4.1 %
Other	57	109	160	+4.4 %	+2.6 %
Total Africa	1,849	2,491	3,852	+2 %	+3 %

Source: Stastical document, MINEDAF VIII (World Bank databases).

Table 2: Central tasks of learning to teach

Preservice	Induction	Continuing Professional Development
1. Examine beliefs critically in relation to vision of good teaching	1. Learn the context—students, curriculum, school community	1. Extend and deepen subject matter knowledge for teaching
2. Develop subject matter knowledge for teaching	2. Design responsive instructional program	2. Extend and refine repertoire in curriculum, instruction, and assessment
3. Develop an understanding of learners, learning, and issues of diversity	3. Create a classroom learning community	3. Strengthen skills and dispositions to study and improve teaching
4. Develop a beginning repertoire	4. Enact a beginning repertoire	4. Expand responsibilities and develop leadership skills
5. Develop the tools and dispositions to study teaching	5. Develop a professional identity	

Source: Feiman-Nemser (2001, p. 1050).

teacher preparation. Consequently, prospective teachers' entering beliefs must be part of the curriculum of teacher education. Such a curriculum must be prospective, i.e., it must take into account not only what is but also what will be in schools in terms of content, pedagogy and student characteristics.

The foregoing is equally relevant for experienced teachers learning new practices for at least two reasons. First, most experienced teachers have been taught and must have been teaching in ways that are very different from the kinds of practices that are currently advocated by reformers as desirable (see van Graan et al, 2003, for an illustrative case).⁵ Second, they need to adapt to changing student characteristics, to the changing nature of teaching and societal expectations of schools and teachers, and to the fast pace of knowledge growth. Continuing professional development thus stands as both a necessity and a duty for teachers.

Current trends in SSA

Teacher learning is reported to be most enhanced when continuing professional development is: (i) a team rather than an individual effort; (ii) focuses on what teachers feel they need, with priority given to the teaching of basic subjects; (iii) is linked with student learning; and (iv) is conducted in or close to the classrooms of participating teachers,

with extensive practice, follow-up, and formative evaluation as well as sufficient material support and outside expertise provided in a non-directive manner.

One may think that these conditions are beyond the reaches of sub-Saharan African countries. This is not the case as it appears in the promising experiences documented in the framework of The Challenge of Learning Study (ADEA, 2003). They include Guinea's small grants program for teacher-led collaborative professional development and school improvement projects (PPSE), Teacher Self-Assessment in Namibia, Senegal's *Projet d'école*, Uganda's Teacher Development and Management System, and Zanzibar's Teacher Resource Centers. Other promising experiences worth highlighting are a set of school improvement projects supported by the Aga Khan Foundation in East Africa, with teacher development as a cornerstone (see Anderson⁶, 2002), and Results-Based School Management and Support in Burkina Faso. All these projects/programs illustrate an emerging trend, i.e., a move away from the decried centrally-driven, one-size-fits-all and one-shot workshop model, towards decentralized, school-based, teacher-led professional development activities.

In the current context of calls for pedagogical renewal in order to achieve at least universal primary education (UPE) that is equitable and of acceptable quality in sub-Saharan Africa by 2015,

teacher professional development stands as one of the critical issues and challenges that most countries need to face. The number of practicing teachers to cater to—many of whom are unprepared or under prepared to teach, and thus developmentally at the pre-service phase—and of new teachers to recruit makes the challenge daunting. ■

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2. Guskey, T. R. (2000). *Evaluating professional development*. Thousands Oaks: Corwin Press.
3. Slavin, R. E. (1999). Success for all: Policy consequences of replicable school wide reform. In G. J. Cizek, *Handbook of Educational Policy* (pp. 325-349). San Diego: Academic Press.
4. Feiman-Nemser, S. (2001). From Preparation to Practice: Designing a Continuum to Strengthen and Sustain Teaching. *Teachers College Record*, 103, 1013-1055.
5. Van Graan, M. et al (2003). *Practising critical reflection in teacher education: Case study of three Namibian teacher development programmes*. Commissioned by ADEA in the framework of The Challenge of Learning Study. Paris: ADEA.
6. Anderson, S. (Ed.) (2002). *School improvement through teacher development: Case studies of the Aga Khan Foundation projects in East Africa*. Lisse, The Netherlands: Swets & Zetlinger

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Making Education More Relevant

Curricular Reform in Sub-Saharan Africa¹

Among the factors identified as vital to educational quality, the relevance of educational programs is one of the most important. Many curricular reforms have been implemented since the 1980s.

To understand current thinking on the relevance of education systems and on curricular reform, it should be recalled that schools, in their current form, are not the product of the internal development of African societies. Rather, the system was imposed from outside by colonization. Colonial education rejected or denigrated local cultures and languages, relegating them to the status of “folklore” and “dialects”. Its purpose, through the exclusive use of the colonial language in schools and programs directed by a Euro-centric vision, was to extend and complete the colonial conquest by training, assimilating and co-opting an elite class of allies.

A first wave of curricular reform, undertaken following independence, was confined to expurgating the most shocking aspects of school programs and “Africanizing” their content, particularly in ideology-related subjects. This was done with the aim of asserting an African identity. African languages were introduced in schools for the same reason. There were also attempts to “ruralize” schooling in order to meet development needs, the best-known

example being that of Tanzania in the 1960s.

However, the need to overhaul school systems to take account of the new nations’ requirements has not met with an adequate response in most African countries, which explains why further curricular reforms have been undertaken in many countries since the 1980s.

What is meant by relevance?

When we say that curricula are relevant, it may well be asked: Relevant for whom? With respect to what? In terms of decision-making power and influence over the main lines of the curriculum (by the national government, pressure groups, international partners, etc.), standards of relevance may be quite diverse, or even contradictory. Nonetheless, with respect to learning and its relationship to real local situations and requirements, three key questions arise:

- ▣ What are students learning?
- ▣ Are they learning it well or poorly?
- ▣ What use is what they are learning to them?

Relevant curricula must ensure that the subject matter learned is meaningful. Learners are motivated to learn when they know what they are learning for and what use they can make of it, either for their individual development or to contribute to the development of their communities. In a rapidly changing, globalized world, one of the most vital characteristics of a relevant curriculum is flexibility, i.e. openness and adaptability both to local needs and to future trends.

Review and assessment of African experiences

Since the 1980s, we have been witnessing a second wave of curricular reform and innovation. These reforms can be classified in the following categories: (i) education orientation reforms, (ii) linguistic reforms, (iii) pedagogical reforms, (iv) reforms related to the organization and management of classes and student numbers.

Education orientation reforms

Many observers think that one indicator of the relevance of formal basic education is the degree to which it prepares children for integration into their environment and into the labor force. This expectation is used to justify the practices of professional predestination, pre-professionalization and productive work, but these options are far from enjoying a consensus, particularly because of the risk that they will limit children’s horizons and thus perpetuate social stratification.

The relevance of this type of education is an issue of current interest, since productive activities (agriculture, animal husbandry, market gardening, etc.) are re-emerging in several African education systems, including those of Niger, Burkina Faso and Ethiopia.

Moreover, the major challenges facing sub-Saharan Africa today have led many countries to introduce new

In a rapidly changing, globalized world, one of the most vital characteristics of a relevant curriculum is flexibility, i.e. openness and adaptability both to local needs and to future trends.

Curricular adaptation

The curriculum comprises all of the arrangements governing students’ education. It has three components: an *orientation* component (foundations, goals or skills, profiles, etc.), a *strategic* component (program, methods, time allocation etc.) and an *application* component (language of instruction, textbooks, classroom organization, etc.). Curricular adaptation means the revision of the curriculum to bring it into line with local realities and needs, or to the development of a new curriculum to take account of these same realities or needs.

content into school programs, relating, among other things, to the environment, demographics, health, nutrition, peace, tolerance, human rights, gender equality, democratic citizenship, and information and communication technologies. Examples of promising experiences include the Program for Training and Information for the Environment initiated by the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), Uganda's school-based program of AIDS education, and the Education-for-Peace curriculum in Sierra Leone.

Linguistic reforms, or bilingualism as a strategic choice

Since the mid-1970s, the linguistic issue has been framed in terms of using both African languages and the "colonial" language as a strategy for improving educational quality. The co-existence of the two in schools, commonly referred to as bilingual education, displays the following characteristics:

1. Use of the African language (L1) as the sole medium of instruction during the first year or two of schooling;
2. Introduction of English, French or Portuguese (L2) as subject matter toward the end of the first year or the beginning of the second;
3. Use of L1 and L2 as both subject matter and media of instruction as from the second or third year;
4. Gradual increase in use of L2 as pupils move up through the grades, with a corresponding decrease in use of L1.

Although the details of the shift from L1 to L2 differ from one country to the next, the underlying principle is the same: to lay the foundations in the language with which children are most familiar, so as to ensure effective learning in the second language later on. The application of this principle carries a number of advantages: a smoother transition between home and school; improved performance in L2 and in subjects such as mathematics and the sciences; and education that is culturally more relevant. These advantages are cited by several of the case studies prepared for the ADEA quality study (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Zambia).

Pedagogical reforms

One of the criticisms leveled at African schools is that pupils do not learn how to learn, nor how to be problem solvers or take initiatives. Research on learning indicates that effective learning strategies, including meta-cognition and working methods, are just as important as the content pupils are supposed to learn. These strategies should be taught in schools, since, once they have been learned, they can be applied to other learning situations or to tasks to be performed. This is a necessary condition for lifelong learning and the ability to adapt to new situations. The curricular reforms initiated as part of the EFA process should take this into consideration and put an end to the encyclopedism that characterizes school programs in many countries. The aim is to move from an approach focused on book learning to one centered on learning strategies and the development of cross-cutting skills.

That being the case, programs focusing on the teaching of encyclopedic content, i.e. in which the various types of content are not inter-related, have in most countries gradually given way to an approach centered on pedagogical objectives. In addition, since the 1990s we have seen fairly widespread acceptance of the skills-based approach. Unfortunately, only Djibouti has reached the implementation stage in this respect, and its experience is too recent to allow us to draw any conclusions. The other countries are still at the stage of designing or developing curricula of this type.

Reforms related to the organization and management of classes

Multigrade classes: Some sub-Saharan African countries, such as Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Madagascar and Senegal, have turned to the use of multigrade classes, for reasons that are more qualitative than pedagogical in nature. The fact is that multigrade instruction is often a strategy for improving indicators of access, since it enables school systems to record new enrollments every year in some rural areas, and in others to counteract the decline in student numbers due to migration or parents' deciding not to send their children to school.

Double-shift classes: Double-shift classes appeared during the 1980s and 1990s as a response to overcrowding in urban schools. In contrast to multigrade instruction, double-shift systems seem to have a negative effect on learning, with the primary result being a substantial loss of teaching time: on average, pupils under double-shift arrangements receive 200 fewer hours of instruction per year. Unfortunately, population pressure has led educators to give more attention to double-shift classes than to multigrade classes, with the result that the educational potential of the latter has not been sufficiently tapped.

Overall trends

At the organizational level, multigrade classes appear to be a promising option, since they have no negative effect on learning and allow more rational use of infrastructure and teaching staff while improving access indicators. Moreover, the teaching strategies on which they are based can be applied in a context of large student bodies.

But the main trend that emerges is that of bilingual education. This educational model has the merit of satisfying a number of expectations simultaneously: pedagogical effectiveness, assertion of cultural identity through language, incorporation of local knowledge into school programs, recognition of the value of endogenous potential, providing a social and cultural anchor for young people in school, and offering a gateway to the wider world through a foreign language in which they are more proficient owing to their initial literacy training in their mother tongue or first language. In view of the positive results obtained through bilingual education, one may ask why the use of African languages is not more widespread in Africa. Such reforms constitute a critical step forward in the reorientation of African schools, if we want them to become genuine instruments for personal, social, economic and cultural development. ▀

1. This article is based on Chapter 6 of the forthcoming ADEA publication "The Challenge of Learning: Improving the Quality of Basic Education in Sub-Saharan Africa".

7 Pillars of Quality Improvement

- C**reate learning opportunities
- I**mprove instructional practice
- M**anage the challenge of equity
- I**ncrease school autonomy and flexibility
- N**urture community support
- E**nsure a realistic financial framework
- R**espond to HIV/AIDS and conflict

The ADEA exercise on quality undertaken in 2002-2003 contributed to the identification of seven pillars for improving the quality of education in sub-Saharan Africa. These pillars may be the basis for national strategic frameworks which aim at quality improvement.

5 Elements Towards a Culture of Quality

- V**alues that make learning central
- A** belief that failure is not an inevitable part of the education process; and that all children can learn given time and appropriate instruction
- A** commitment to equitable outcomes and a readiness to manipulate inputs and processes to achieve these
- A**n improvement process that does not simply define outcomes and standards; but that focuses, first and foremost, on the means, processes and skills required to bring about quality results
- A** dedication to universal quality learning, yet diverse and flexible in delivery mechanisms and instructional practice

It is equally important to develop a culture that explicitly aims to promote quality and learning and that consistently moves forward a quality improvement agenda.

The most important responsibility of the leaders of the education system is to: (i) establish a culture that is driven and sustained by a set of values and beliefs on the process of teaching and learning; (ii) make sure that it is widely shared; and (iii) model and encourage behavior that put it into practice.

Taken from "The Challenge of Learning: Improving the Quality of Basic Education in Sub-Saharan Africa" soon to be published by ADEA.

WGCOMED

The first Steering Committee meeting of the ADEA Working Group on Communication for Education and Development (WG COMED) took place from March 1 - 3, 2004 at the West African News Media and Development Centre (WANAD) in Cotonou (Benin). Topics discussed included: reinforcing the capacities of African education journalists and ministerial communication officers; the Intra-African Exchange Program; COMED visibility at country level, and the Akintola Fatoyinbo Africa Education Journalism Award.

Intra-African Exchange Program (IAEP)

In March 2004 a Burkina Faso team, conducted by the Hon. Minister of Basic Education and Literacy of Burkina Faso, Mr. Ouedraogo, visited Senegal in order to exchange experiences on teacher recruitment and training, teaching for non formal education and the use and management of the *Volontaires de l'éducation* (volunteer teachers). Launched in 1996, the IAEP promotes the sharing of experience and expertise between professionals from African ministries of education.

WGDEOL

Mr. Anand Ramsamy Rumajogee, the former coordinator for the Working Group on Distance Education and Open Learning (WGDEOL) has left the group. The new coordinator, Mr. R.S. Lutchmeah, is the Executive Director of the Tertiary Education Commission, Mauritius. The WGDEOL Technical Committee met in Mauritius on 25 and 26 March 2004 to discuss the working group's priorities for 2004.

Ad Hoc Working Group on Quality

Adriaan Verspoor, Lead consultant for the ADEA Study on Quality, and Jordan Naidoo, one of the thematic coordinators, presented the work of the Ad Hoc group on quality during the recent Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) conference in Salt Lake City (USA).

Documents produced within the framework of the ADEA study on quality, will be published in 2004 and 2005.

Charlotte Sedel, a coordinator the ADEA quality study, has recently left the ADEA Secretariat. She is currently based in Dakar, (Senegal).

In light of the lessons learned from the quality study, ADEA will conduct a number of activities in support of improving the quality of education in Africa.

WGECED

The Working Group on Early Childhood Development (WGECED) has nominated Ms. Stella Etse as its new coordinator. Ms Etse is based within the UNICEF Regional Office for West and Central Africa in Dakar, Senegal. Ms. Jeannette Vogelaar, currently based at the Netherlands Royal Embassy in Maputo, Mozambique, will continue to represent The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is the WGECED lead agency. In June 2004, the working group will organize its first Steering Committee Meeting in Ghana.

WGNFE

The Working Group on Non Formal Education organized a consultative meeting January 28-29, 2004. In addition to discussions on the evolution of the WGNFE, other issues such as the governance and management of the working group, the programmatic thrust in terms of operational priorities and the gradual shift of the working group to Africa were also on the agenda.

WGESA

The Steering Committee of the Working Group on Education Sector Analysis (WGESA) organized a meeting and seminar in Maputo (Mozambique), March 29-31, 2004. WGESA 2004 programmatic activities, including peer reviews, as well as WGESA's coordination and anchorage in Africa were discussed. The seminar focused on strengthening the capacity of African education managers to accompany national action plans.

WGES

The Working Group on Education Statistics (WGES) has recently named Mr. Kokou Banninganti as the new WG Coordinator. Mr. Glory Makwati, who served as the interim coordinator, will continue to work for the NESIS project. In February 2004, WGES organized a workshop on school mapping in Niamey, (Niger).

Africa Education Journalism Award

The first round of pre-selection of articles entered for the 2004 edition of the prize took place in Paris April 19-22, 2004. The jury will meet in July in Libreville, (Gabon) for the final selection of winning articles. The Akintola Fatoyinbo Africa Education Journalism Award recognizes the best articles on education written by African journalists and published in the African press. ▶

Close-up on the Cameroon Education System

By Luc Gacougnolle,
under the guidance of Alain Mingat

Cameroon is a country with 15 million inhabitants and a GDP per capita of about 600 US dollars. It is composed of ten provinces, two of them English-speaking and eight French-speaking. Based to a great extent on this linguistic distinction, the country has two educational sub-systems with differing organizational structures: the English-speaking sub-system has a structure similar to that of other English-speaking African countries, whereas the French-speaking sub-system more closely resembles that of French-speaking countries in the region.

1. A difficult, though improving, macro-economic situation

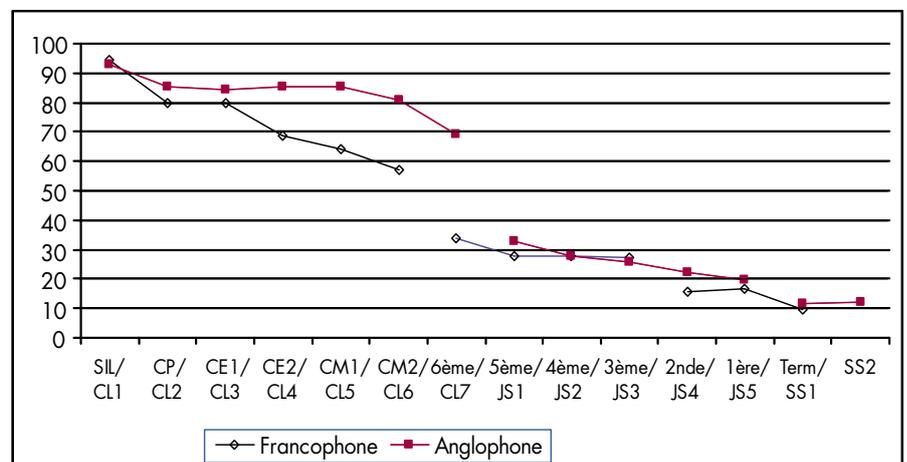
The development of education in Cameroon, like that of any country, faces demographic and macro-economic constraints. In terms of demographics, despite an expected slowdown in population growth, it is estimated that the school-age population could increase by more than 30% between 2000 and 2015. In addition to this substantial increase, the educational system is also likely to suffer the impact of an increase in AIDS, as it is expected that by 2015 slightly more than 10% of the school-age population will have lost their mothers, which will necessitate targeted measures

civil servants (and thus of teachers) and the elimination of grants for students in higher education. The situation has improved considerably since 1995, but it is worth noting that it was only in 2002 that government revenue per capita reached the level in real terms that it had attained in 1989.

2. An educational system that has suffered, but is improving

The educational system suffered a great

Figure 1: Profile of schooling by sub-system



[Scale moving from kindergarden on the left to high school completion on the right.]

to ensure the schooling of these vulnerable children.

In macro-economic terms, the country was hit by a crisis between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s. It was of course not the only African country to go through such an experience, but the crisis was particularly severe in Cameroon. The country undoubtedly was forced to take stronger measures than elsewhere to deal with the crisis, including a substantial reduction in the salaries of

deal from these macro-economic difficulties. Public spending on education per child aged 6 to 15 was cut in half between 1990 and 1995 and, taking into account population growth, it has still not regained the level of 1990. The gross enrolment rate in primary school fell 15 points between 1990 and 1995, although the secondary rate was relatively stable and the coverage of higher education improved. Since 1995, primary coverage has improved steadily, but it was really only with the elimination

Close-up on an educational system

The purpose of the Close-up section of the ADEA Newsletter is to summarize the characteristics of a country's educational system based on statistical and comparative data in order to shed light on the constraints and maneuvering room a country has to meet its basic goals, in particular quality universal primary schooling by the year 2015. The analysis is organized into three parts: a description of the main results of the system; an analysis of education policy in terms of its efficiency and the trade-offs made; and paths to reform in the form of simulations that take into account the system's constraints and degrees of freedom.

of primary school fees at the start of the 2000-2001 year that substantial progress was made. Between the start of the 1999 and 2000 school years, the number of non-repeating pupils increased by 59% in the first year of primary school, showing that the direct cost is very much a dissuasive factor in school demand, in particular for poor families.

There has thus been progress in the coverage of the system, but the failings of the state with regard to providing educational services are still having an effect. For instance, in 2002, 25% of teachers in public primary schools were "parents' teachers"; if to this percentage are added teachers paid by users of private schools (23% of primary staff are in the private sector, which is only slightly subsidized), the total of primary school children who have a teacher paid by parents rises to more than 40%. A recent household survey showed that family spending amounted to 44% of total spending at the primary level.

3. Inadequate retention during the primary cycle

The progress achieved with regard to the GER should not obscure the fact that from the point of view of pupil flows in

the French-speaking sub-system the functioning of the primary schools is not very satisfactory. While about 95% of children have access to primary school in the two sub-systems, only 59% of entering pupils in the French-speaking system reach the 6th year of school, compared with 80% in the English-speaking sub-system.

Since 1995, primary school coverage has improved steadily, but it was above all with the elimination of fees demanded for primary school at the start of 2000-2001 that substantial progress was achieved. This shows that direct costs do constitute a dissuasive factor in school demand, especially for poor families.

Several reasons for this have been identified: (i) repetition rates are higher in the French-speaking sub-system (28%, versus 17% in the English-speaking sub-system), and it is estimated that one additional point in the repetition rate leads to about 0.8 point less in the percentage of children who complete the primary cycle; (ii) a certain number of schools, in particular in the northern (French-speaking) part of the country, do not offer educational continuity over the entire cycle; (iii) there are different approaches to pupil evaluation, with the French-speaking sub-system emphasizing penalties on pupils, whereas the English-speaking sub-system takes a more positive approach; and finally (iv) there seems to be low demand for enrolment in the northern and eastern (French-speaking) parts of the country, particularly for young girls.

4. Inequalities in enrolment

Enrolments contrast sharply depending on gender, geographical region (rural or urban), province and level of household income. To give an idea of the scale of differences, about 90% or more of urban boys residing in the provinces of the centre, the coast, the west or the south have at least completed primary school, whereas this is the case for only about 40% of urban boys in the north and extreme north, 15% of rural boys from the same two provinces, and only 5% of their sisters.

Gender is the area showing least discrimination: a 14-point gap exists between the primary completion rate for girls and that for boys. In contrast, the gap is 25 points between young people who are from the poorest 40% of the population and those from the wealthiest 60% of the population. Geographical factors show even greater differences: a differential of 40 points exists between urban and rural areas. The differential between the provinces of the north and extreme north and those of the centre, coast or south is 60 points.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that gender-based inequalities in enrolment are moderate in primary school and the first cycle of secondary school, and then intensify. With regard to inequalities between provinces, these arise from the time of access to the first cycle of

Table 1: Changes in school enrolment, 1990-2002, and employment status of university graduates in 2001

Level	GER		Employment status of 30 year olds (%) (2001)			
	1990	2002	Unemployed	Informal sector	Modern job, low skills	Modern job, mid-level manager or +
Pre-school	13.3	13.8	-	-	-	-
Primary	96.3	105.4	16	73	10	0
Secondary 1	25.3	32.1	26	52	21	2
Secondary 2	18.8	16.4	27	34	31	7
Technical 1	6.1	6.7	22	52	24	3
Technical 2	3.3	3.4	29	36	25	9
Higher*	254	510	34	13	16	38
Total	-	-	21	58	16	5

* The GER (Gross Enrolment Ratio) is replaced by the number of students per 100,000 inhabitants.

Table 2: Distribution of current spending and unit costs per educational level in Cameroon and in several comparable countries, 1990 and 2000

Level	Indicator	Cameroon		Average comparable countries *	Ratio Cameroon/average
		1992	2000	2000	2000
Primary	% Current expenditure	-	42	53	0.79
	Unit cost (% GDP/capita)	10	7	13	0.54
Secondary	% Current expenditure	-	44	28	1.57
	Unit cost (% GDP/capita)	21	36	36	1.00
Higher	% Current expenditure	-	13	19	0.68
	Unit cost (% GDP/capita)	165	83	154	0.54

* This is the average for the following group of countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Mauritania, Senegal and Togo

secondary school and subsequently remain more or less stable, as if young people from disadvantaged geographic areas who have reached this level are then able to continue their studies without any additional difficulties. Finally, while income-based inequalities do exist at primary level (a 25-point gap between the two groups with regard to the completion of primary school), the gap increases sharply after that, with 10 times fewer young people in the first cycle of secondary education from the poorest quintile than from the richest quintile. In the second cycle, children from richer families are 40 times more numerous than those from poorer families. In higher education, there are almost no students at all from the lowest two income quintiles. These figures point to significant inequities in the Cameroon educational system.

5. The quality of learning is relatively good, but additional progress is possible

Pupil evaluations and the retention of literacy among adults show that the Cameroon primary educational system performs relatively well compared with those of many other countries on the continent. On the international scale of achievement of primary pupils that offers a comparison of 18 African countries, only

Kenya and Mauritius perform better than Cameroon¹.

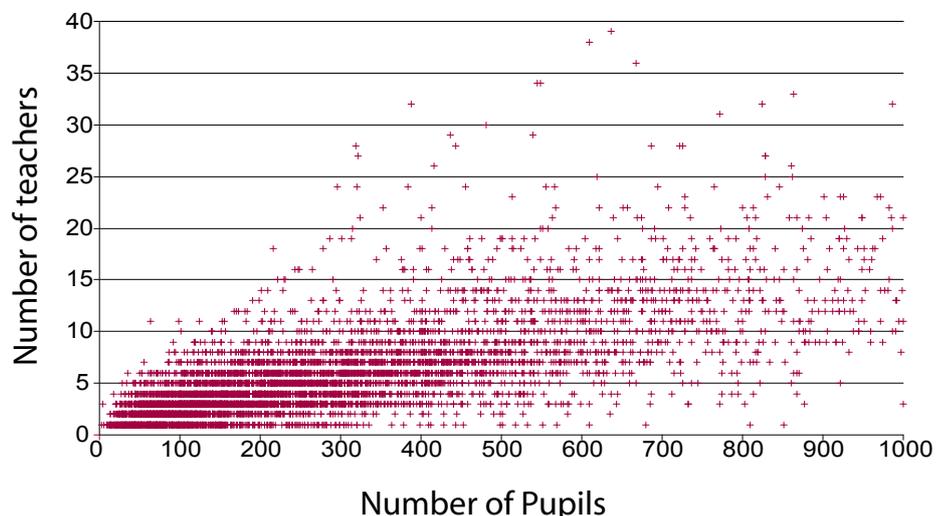
There are, however, significant differences between schools with regard to the level of pupils, although there does not seem to be any significant relationship between the resources employed by a school and the results obtained. This points to weaknesses in pedagogical management in the system. Substantial progress needs to be made in this regard in order to achieve a significant reduc-

tion in inequalities and a substantial improvement in quality.

6. Financial trade-offs between levels, the regulation of flows, and quantity-quality trade-offs need to be reviewed

Changes in quantitative coverage at different school levels since 1990 show relatively modest progress at every level,

Figure 2: Relationship between number of pupils and teachers in public primary schools, 2002-2003 (schools with fewer than 1,000 pupils)



with the notable exception of higher education (r.e. the left part of Table 1).

The right part of the table gives the employment status of young people. It can be seen that those who have been in higher education have difficulty finding jobs. Only 38% have a white-collar job, whereas 34% are unemployed; 13% are in the informal sector, where they earn only modest incomes. The observation that there is an excessive number of students is confirmed by the results of comparative analysis, which shows that African countries comparable to Cameroon from an economic standpoint have on average 270 students per 100,000 inhabitants, a significantly lower level than the average of 510 students estimated for Cameroon in 2002.

The structural assessment of the Cameroon educational system will be completed by an examination of the distribution of public resources and the level of unit expenditure per study level, using a comparative approach over time and space.

Table 2 indicates that the distribution of public spending by educational level and unit cost differs from what can be seen in other countries in the region. In 2000, the share allocated to primary (42%) and higher (13%) education is much lower than the comparable values (53% and 19%, respectively). The unit cost is barely more than half of that for the reference group.

The situation of secondary education appears to be more comfortable, with a share of current public spending that is significantly higher than that of the reference group and unit costs that are at a comparable level. Although these comparisons have limited significance, they are nonetheless interesting. This is even more the case if one considers changes in unit costs over time, in particular a fall between 1992 and 2002 of 30% in unit costs in primary and 50% in higher education, while at the same time per pupil expenditure in secondary education rose significantly.

Based on this information, it is clear that the structure of the Cameroon educational system is facing problems at both the primary and higher levels. The analysis points towards the following conclusions:

➤ **At primary level**, it is undoubtedly justifiable to increase resources and to target these to include pupils who do not have a complete primary education and to ensure the funding of “parents’ teachers” from public resources;

➤ **At the higher level**, it is undoubtedly worthwhile to revise the balance between quantity and quality in order to achieve better control over the number of students.

Only 38% of students in higher education find a job commensurate with their training. It would also be advisable to increase the level of expenditure per student, which fell by half between 1992 and 2002 (and is very low compared with the other countries in 2002) in order to improve the quality of graduates. This could take the form of an increase in resources per student, a better distribution of training to target growth sectors (professionalizing) and diversification towards more effective training approaches that are less costly for the government and better meet market demand.

In addition, the system needs to make trade-offs between primary and higher education. There are plans to double the number of pupils who complete the primary cycle between 2000 and 2015. In addition, the number of students in higher education must be contained so as to bear a reasonable relationship with labor market demand. In what ways is enrolment in the two secondary cycles likely to change? What methods can be used to regulate flows? What is the role of technical and professional training? These questions are at the heart of the country’s future educational policy.

7. Significant efforts are needed to improve the management of personnel

Ideally, the number of teachers in a school should depend only on the number of pupils. There would then

be a functional relationship between the number of teachers and pupils; the points representing the schools in a graphic showing these two magnitudes would all be situated along a common level – yet this is not the case.

The general improvement of management is an essential element in the country’s new educational policy. New policies and the mobilization of additional resources are definitely needed. But this will not be meaningful if management is not taken in hand at the same time.

While on average there is indeed a relationship between the number of teachers and pupils, the graphic shows that the points representing the schools are highly dispersed around the average. This is a sign of a

significant degree of haphazardness in the allocation of personnel to schools. For example, schools with 400 pupils have from 5 to 12 teachers. Likewise, there are schools with 6 teachers that have from 150 to 420 pupils (without considering extreme cases).

It is common in the African countries to find inconsistencies in the allocation of teachers, but this is particularly marked in Cameroon, as the country is ranked next to last among the 22 countries included in the analysis. We do not have any historical data on this issue, but it is likely that this problem accentuated with the intensification of budget constraints during the 1990s.

This inconsistency in the management of personnel can be compared with the weakness in pedagogical management. There is no doubt that an overall improvement in management is an essential component in the country’s new educational policy. New policies and the mobilization of additional resources are of course necessary. But these will not be meaningful if management is not taken in hand at the same time. ▽

1. It has been said, although with no factual basis offered for confirmation, that quality may have deteriorated in recent years.

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Enrolment Profile

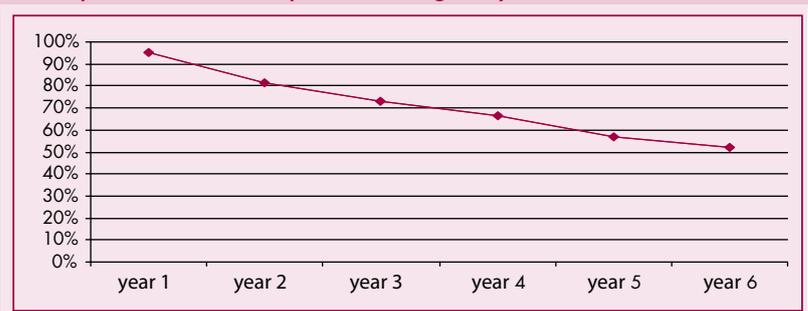
Definition

An enrolment profile is the graphical representation of the proportion of children reaching each level of schooling. Depending on usage, it can be either complete or restricted to the primary cycle or to the first and last levels of each cycle or even to a category of the population (girls, rural, poor, etc.). The abscissa thus shows the level of enrolment and the ordinate shows the proportion of children in the corresponding age category who reach each of these levels.

Value

The value of the enrolment profile is to visualize the losses that take place during schooling. In particular, it helps provide a more detailed view than the gross enrolment rate, which is an overall measure for a cycle, by providing details about the proportion of children who have access to school and those who complete the cycles.

Example of enrolment profile (imaginary data)



Calculation

There are several types of enrolment profile. Each type corresponds to different calculation methods and produces significantly different results. The choice of profile is determined based on both the available data and the information desired. Three methods are explained hereafter for a profile calculated for 2003/2004 on a primary cycle of six years (theoretical entry age: 7 years).

The first method, called *longitudinal*, consists of following a cohort of children over the six years in the period. This method takes the number of children who are 7 years old in 1998/99 (six years before 2003/2004) and calculates how many actually enter the first year. This first value entitled "NonRedC198/99 / Pop798/99" is the first point in the profile. Next the number of children who reach the second year is calculated, and so on up to year six, with each of these values yielding points on the profile.

This method is used to measure the actual loss in pupils from the cohort over the six last years. But it has the disadvantage of requiring relatively distant school and demographic data so as to assess the state of the system over the last six years. This also means it is not possible to observe the effect of any improvements made to the system over that period.

A second method, called *transversal*, consists of measuring the proportion of the populations of each age group in 2003/04 that reach each level in the cycle. The calculation is made by comparing the number of non-repeating pupils at each level in 2003/04 to the population of the age group corresponding to that year. This enrolment profile has the advantage of requiring data only from the latest year, and of representing current access at each level.

A third method, called *semi-longitudinal* (or "zig-zag"), calculates the gross access rate in the first year, and then, for access to higher grades, simulates the transitions observed for each cohort between the two last years from one grade to the other. Access to a grade is thus obtained by multiplying the access rate calculated for the preceding grade (by starting with the first year) by what is called the actual transition rate, which is equal to the ratio of the number of non-repeating pupils in 2003/2004 to non-repeating pupils from the lower level in 2002/03.

This profile thus represents access to each grade that the children from the first year will experience if over the next six years, the access and transition conditions between the levels remain the same as it currently stands.

Data required to develop an enrolment profile using the various methods

Methods	Required data	
	School	Population
Longitudinal	1998/99 to 2003/04	1998/99
Transversal	2003/04	2003/04
«Zig-zag»	2002/2003 +2003/2004	2003/04 (7 years)

ADEA Activities

March 25 - 26, 2004

Working Group on Distance Education and Open Learning (WGDEOL)
Technical Workshop
Grand Baie, Mauritius

March 29-31, 2004

Working Group on Education Sector Analysis, (WGESA)
Steering Committee meeting, and National Workshop
Maputo, Mozambique

April 13-16, 2004

ADEA Steering Committee meeting
Chavanne-de-Bogis, Switzerland

April 19-22, 2004

Africa Education Journalism Award –Akintola Fatoyinbo
Meeting of the jury for a first phase of article selection
Paris, France

May 6-7, 2004

Working Group on the Teaching Profession (WGTP)
Steering Committee meeting
London, United Kingdom

June 2-4 2004

Ad hoc Group on HIV/AIDS
Seminar to validate the Gabon HIV/AIDS national sector plan
Gabon

June 2-3, 2004

Working Group on Education Statistics (WGES)
Steering Committee meeting
Harare, Zimbabwe

June 2-4, 2004

Ministerial Conference on Education in Countries in Crisis or Post-Conflict
Meeting jointly organized with the Minister of Education, Kenya, The Commonwealth Secretariat, and ADEA
Mombasa, Kenya

June 6-9, 2004

Second Regional Conference on Secondary Education in Africa (SEIA)
Meeting hosted by the Ministry of Education, Senegal, the World Bank, and organized in collaboration with The World Bank Institute, the International Institute for Educational Planning, and ADEA
Dakar, Senegal

June 14-15, 2004

Working Group on Early Childhood Development (WGECD)
Steering Committee Meeting,
Accra, Ghana

July 6-8, 2004

Africa Education Journalism Award –Akintola Fatoyinbo
Meeting of the jury for final selection of articles
Libreville, Gabon

July 26-27, 2004

Technical Workshop to prepare the Sub-Regional Conference on Integration of ICT in Education: Issues and Challenges in West Africa
Abuja, Nigeria

July 28-30, 2004

Sub-Regional Conference on Integration of ICT in Education: Issues and Challenges in West Africa
Abuja, Nigeria

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Other Activities

March 17-25, 2004

Sub regional workshop on the Strengthening of Educational Planning
Limbé, Cameroon

April 19-25, 2004

Education for All week
UNESCO
Paris, France

June 14-16, 2004

Adult Education and Poverty Reduction: A Global Priority,
University of Botswana,
Gaborone, Botswana

June 23-25, 2004

“Scaling Up Good Practices in Girls’ Education in Sub-Saharan Africa,
Technical workshop/ policy consultation
Hosted by FAWE, in consultation with AfDB, the Commonwealth Secretariat, UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank
Nairobi, Kenya

Dates and venues may change. For more information please consult the ADEA web site (www.adeanet.org)



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