

Annual Review of the Africa Education Journalism Award

2004 Edition

Une initiative de l'Association pour le développement de l'éducation

The 2004 Winners

Editorial

Once again we are happy to present to you the winners of the Africa Education Journalism Award. The talented journalists for the year 2004 are: Nkgakga Monare, of South Africa, Fousséni Traoré, of Mali, Maggi Barnard, of Namibia, and Josette Barry, of Côte d'Ivoire. Congratulations to the prize winners to whom we wish every success for a brilliant career and an ever-renewed interest for education journalism!

Thanh Hoa Desruelles
ADEA Publications/
Communication Officer

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Akintola Fatoyinbo
**Africa Education
Journalism
Award**

Akintola Fatoyinbo: A Profile

Akintola Fatoyinbo was born on 12 February, 1943 in Ilesa, western Nigeria, where he had his early education. Moving to Ibadan after secondary school, he was employed as a clerk in the offices of the National Union of Nigerian Students. The experience provided an opportunity to meet university students from all over the world. It may have encouraged Akin's interest in pursuing an international career.

He went on to Germany where he studied journalism. At Deutsche Welle, where he worked in the Africa service after graduation, he was a member of a vibrant newsroom of African and German journalists, many of whom remained friends throughout his life. Returning to Africa, he served in different capacities in media and communication: in health information, with WHO in Ouagadougou, as Africa Regional Director of IPS Third World news agency, and with the World Bank, where he spent the greater part of his professional career, helping to promote African media and communication support for development programs.

It was in that context that he became involved in the creation of the West African Newsmedia and Development project initiated by UNESCO and funded by the Government of Germany. Seconded from the World Bank, Akin became Chief Technical Adviser of the project, serving in Cotonou, Benin from where WANAD, as it came to be known, trained over 1000

journalists, technicians and managers. When, in 1995, German funding ended, Akin provided leadership which led to transforming the project into an international NGO, the WANAD Centre, with partnerships among national news agencies and private media. Akin was elected its Secretary-general, a role he combined with his appointment as Senior Communication Officer for Africa of the World Bank.

Akin's vision and 'restlessness' led to the creation of the Communication for Education and Development Program, COMED in 1998. He was convinced that education held the key to African development; and that communication was a major support for promoting education. But how to translate this in practical terms?

Akin felt that the key was for African journalists to develop a specialisation in education; and that training was crucial to achieve this. He was also keenly aware of the need for education ministries to communicate better with the press. COMED was the inevitable outcome of these reflections: journalists working in mutual confidence with education communicators and other stakeholders. The World Bank, the Norwegian Trust Fund for Education in Africa and the ADEA supported Akin's enthusiasm with funding and technical resources.

Discussions with ADEA colleagues strengthened the idea of motivating journalists and their organisation to commit

themselves to quality work in promoting African education. The African Education Journalism Award was born!

When Akin passed on tragically in December 2002 in Dar es-Salaam, Tanzania, ADEA decided to rename it the Akintola Fatoyinbo African Education Journalism Award. It was a fitting tribute to a man of vision, who succeeded in 'infecting' everyone with his passion for promoting professionalism, specialisation and excellence in African media.

Alfred Opubor

*Coordinator, Working Group on
Communication for Education and
Development*

1st Prize

Articles in English

The Winner:

M. Nkgakga Monare

I was born in the winter 1975 in the rural areas of Limpopo province, 350 north of Johannesburg, South Africa. I attended my secondary schooling at Malebo High school where I graduated in 1994. At the boarding school, I managed and edited a school newspaper, called *Pioneer*. It focused on developmental issues at the school and around the community.

I started my journalism training at *Technikon Northern Gauteng* (it is now called Tshwane University of Technology after it merged with two other technikons).

At the *technikon* I worked as a reporter on the campus paper, then called *TNT Update*. I was covering a variety of issues, but focusing primarily on students politics. In my second year at the *technikon*, I freelanced and got an internship on the city paper, Pretoria News. But I continued using my campus contacts to cover students politics for them.

In 1998, the editor allocated me the education beat. As education reporter, I covered all spheres of education—from early childhood development, general education to further education, higher education and basic adult

education. My main focus was the provincial education but I also wrote on national policies and the way they impact on schools and other educational institutions.

I interacted mostly with teachers, school children, parents, students, academics and policy makers and analysts.

I then moved to *The Star* newspaper. As an education reporter, I gave particular attention to national education policies. *The Star* is South Africa's premier daily in the stable of the Irish-based Independent Newspapers Group. I left *The Star* and joined the *National TVB* News broadcaster.

I was then appointed senior education correspondent for the *South African Broadcasting Corporation* (SABC News), the state-owned public broadcaster. I was in charge of the broadcaster radio and television education desk, and I was responsible for coverage at provinces (rural and urban). I also covered matters related to the national policy. As a public broadcaster, my education reporting shifted from the economics and politics of education to a more socio-transformational orientation, paying attention to poor peo-

ple, access and affordability of education and the government's spending on education.

In 2003, I joined *The Sunday Times*—South Africa's biggest Sunday newspaper with more than 3-million readers—as senior education correspondent. *The Sunday Times* target audience is mainly the higher income bracket, and my reporting shifted back to the economics and politics of education, with socio-transformational issues taking a back stage. However, I continued to highlight all aspects of education, hence my article that won me this award.

I moved from *The Sunday Times* to come back to *The Independent Newspapers* as senior writer and political correspondent, first based at their Johannesburg Sunday title (*The Sunday Independent*) and now based at my former newspaper (*The Star*). Because of my passion for education, I am still an unofficial adviser to the newsroom on education matters.

In the meantime I continued studying part time. I now hold a BA (honours) degree from The University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg and I am busy preparing a Masters of Arts degree in media studies.

Nkgakga MONARE ▀

The blackboard sanctuary

Faced with a growing number of Aids orphans, a Pretoria school has come up with a model support scheme, writes MOSHOESHOE MONARE

KHANYI Mothutsi is a bubbly, talkative and smart 15-year-old pupil at Bokgoni Technical High in Atteridgeville, outside Pretoria. "Hi, I understand you are looking for me," she says, with a twang in her voice that is mocked by her peers as a product of her schooling at a former white suburban school. But behind her lively, broad smile lies a traumatic loss. Her nine-month-old brother, father and mother died last year of a "mysterious illness". And her name is not Khanyi Mothutsi, but that is what we are calling her to protect her. The girl's life-orientation teacher, Sithokoziso Blom, says Mothutsi is putting on a brave face, but inside she is emotionally hurt. "She seems okay on the surface



'We're faced with traumatised learners who need counselling and understanding. These are realities in our communities. Aids threatens our education system'

Excellence in Education
by the Gender Time and Liberty

The blackboard sanctuary

By Nkagga Monare, Sunday Times, August 24, 2003

Faced with a growing number of Aids orphans, a Pretoria school has come up with a model support scheme, writes MOSHOESHOE MONARE

KHANYI Mothutsi is a bubbly, talkative and smart 15-year-old pupil at Bokgoni Technical High in Atteridgeville, outside Pretoria.

"Hi, I understand you are looking for me," she says, with a twang in her voice that is mocked by her peers as a product of her schooling at a former white suburban school.

But behind her lively, broad smile lies a traumatic loss. Her nine-month-old brother, father and mother died last year of a "mysterious illness". And her name is not Khanyi Mothutsi, but that is what we are calling her to protect her.

The girl's life-orientation teacher, Sithokoziso Blom, says Mothutsi is putting on a brave face, but inside she is emotionally hurt.

"She seems okay on the surface

but deep down she is deeply traumatised by what has happened in her family," Blom says. "She needs emotional support."

Mothutsi says she is well looked after by a relative, but adds: "I miss my mom. I wish I could talk to someone."

Her teachers say her performance at school, once above average, has deteriorated since the deaths.

Blom says a number of pupils at Bokgoni are experiencing emotional breakdowns due to the loss of their parents.

"They are often teased by other heartless children, especially on Mother's Day about who are they going to give gifts to," Blom says.

Mothutsi is one of the 32 orphans at Bokgoni High; 17 parents have died since January due to what the school community euphemistically terms "mysterious illness".

And the number is rising. This week alone, two deaths were reported.

George Sono, a teacher, says the pattern of deaths and the nature of ailments suggest the true reality of Aids. "It's difficult for children to open up, but we talk to them and we get a sense of what's happening in their homes," he says.

Deputy principal Vivian Bopape

says: "We just announce at the assembly that they [the parents] have died due to illness. As long as children don't disclose [the cause] we don't inquire, because there is a stigma attached to Aids."

The situation has turned teachers into social workers and the school into a charity organization.

The government's nutritional scheme has not yet reached secondary schools, but Bokgoni did not wait for a government intervention programme. Instead, the school started a tuck shop, making and selling *sephatlo*, Pretoria's street sandwich (loosely translated as "half").

This is a quarter of a loaf of bread filled with chips, cheese, polony and mango atjar, explains teacher Violet Raphiri.

"We give [sephatlo] to the orphans free of charge. We noticed they were hungry most of the time and couldn't afford to buy something to eat. This affects their attention span and performance in class," says Raphiri.

Orphans such as Kedib one Rakgotso (not her real name), 16, who lost her parents this year, benefit from the school's feeding scheme. She and her brother live with an aunt who earns R320 a month. And while there is enough money for food for about two weeks, she has come to rely on the school's *sephatlo*.

"Our aunt just buys us cake flour and we are able to bake dumplings. But if the flour is finished, there's no money to buy bread," says Rakgotso.

But some pupils tease her. "Some orphans end up not going to get their free lunch, but we often intervene and talk to them," sighs Blom. "Some of these children can be cruel, you know."

Ignatius Jacobs, Gauteng Education MEC, says his department, along with the social welfare department, are investigating the extent of the problem and the number of orphans in the province.

"We are going to introduce a smart

card that will give orphans free access to basics such as food and clothes,” Jacobs says.

Elsewhere in South Africa, similar situations exist. There are 25 000 orphans in schools in Limpopo Province and Mandla Msibi, spokesman for KwaZulu-Natal’s Education Department, says a major challenge is to train teachers to deal with orphans.

Mpumalanga also has what education spokesman Thomas Msiza calls a “serious problem” with Aids orphans. “We don’t have programmes for material support as yet,” he says.

Apart from food, many of Bokgoni’s pupils have other needs that need to be met. Bopape says the school’s alumni donate uniforms. “We also ask our teachers to donate their clothes, which we give to some of the pupils for the matric dance. They don’t feel out of place and lonely that way.”

But the most daunting challenge to teachers is meeting the orphans’ emotional needs. “We are faced with traumatised learners who need [psychological] counselling and understanding. These are realities in our communities. Aids is threatening our education system,” Bopape says.

Blom is Bokgoni’s only life-orientation and guidance teacher. Although she is not a qualified counsellor, she holds sessions with pupils. “If I sense some emotional breakdown and other problems, I refer them to the community social workers as we don’t have educational psychologists around.”

Blom admits that she cannot cope alone. “It is not easy to attend to the emotional needs of all of them as I also have to attend to 400 children in my classes, I have to mark their work and monthly tests.”

Nevertheless, Bokgoni has grown into a beacon for 1307 pupils from Atteridgeville and surrounding informal settlements. Its tenacious optimism has seen pupils flocking to the school, previously spurned as a low-class handicraft college. (It now offers mathematics and science as compulsory subjects.) Pupil numbers grew from 130 in 1997 to more than 1 307 this year. As a result, teachers have been forced to use classrooms at two neighbouring schools.

Bokgoni’s results have also improved dramatically. In 1994, the 18 matriculants who wrote the final exams all failed. Last year, 88% of the 34 matriculants passed.

However, like at any other South African school, keeping quality teachers is a huge problem. The school is feeling the effects of the Gauteng Department of Education’s strategy of making most posts temporary. Out of Bokgoni’s 40 teachers, only 17 are permanent. The rest are employed on a three-month contract basis.

Still, after realising the true impact of HIV/Aids on their school, pupils have decided to bond together and form a “front” to deal with preventive measures and educational campaigns.

“We have realised the only way to deal with these problems is to encourage learners to get invol-

ved,” says Raphiri. The school has selected 18 pupils to form a “cabinet”; with each learner allocated a “ministry” or portfolio. These include the ministries of environment, education, health, sports and welfare.

“As minister of health my responsibility is to come up with a plan that will help us to spread the Aids message to the school, youth and the community,” says Kholofelo Mokwena, 16, a Grade 10 pupil.

“I would want my mother to talk more to me about Aids and sexuality, but she doesn’t. Hence I am leading this campaign to get more Aids education and parental involvement,” Mokwena says.

Chairman of the cabinet, Kgaohele Ramohwebo, 16, says their biggest struggle is to raise money to fund programmes and help orphans.

“We came up with a plan to donate at least R1 a month, but it is difficult to get money from pupils because most of us are from poor families,” he says.

The pupils have formed a Sepedi dancing group as part of their fundraising efforts. The group’s colourful costumes and heartfelt performances stand for strength, hope and determination to overcome the social hardships facing their classmates and their school.

At Bokgoni, teachers and pupils have managed to turn a centre of learning into a compassionate home for pupils living with pain and emotional emptiness.

Nkgakga MONARE ▶

The Sunday Times

The Sunday Times is a Johannesburg-based broadsheet selling over 500,000 copies a week and with a 3,5 million leadership—making it South Africa’s largest newspaper. It is distributed nationally and in the SADC region. Its audience cuts across class and race, but is mainly concentrated in the upper end of the market. Its content mix ranges from tabloid to serious political analysis. One academic scholar said “it wants to be everything to everyone”, but its main strong point is in intensive investigative journalism which made the paper a household brand in breaking news and presenting earth shattering exposés. It is also strong in education, health and other social issues, with emphasis on politics.

2nd Prize

Articles in English

The Winner: Ms. Maggi Barnard

Maggi Barnard has been a journalist at *The Namibian* newspaper for four years. She is based at Swakopmund and covers news in the Erongo region stretching over eight towns.

She began her career as a journalist in 1991 at a newspaper in Windhoek, the capital of Namibia. She moved to the coast in 1993 to take up the position as

editor and later Senior Communications Officer of a large mining company before joining *The Namibian* in 2000.

Born and bred in Windhoek, Maggi has spent most of her life in Namibia. She moved to South Africa for four years to study at the University of Stellenbosch where she obtained an honours degree in journalism. In 2002 she took up studying again and

completed her Masters in journalism in April 2004 through correspondence studies.

As the sole representative of *The Namibian* in the Erongo region, Maggi covers all the hard news from crime, tourism and local authority issues to courts. She also contributes regularly to *The Youthpaper* supplement and writes features for the weekly entertainment supplement, *The Weekender*. She has a great interest in environmental matters and is responsible for the weekly environmental page.

In her spare time Maggi carries out freelance work for publications in South Africa and Namibia.

Maggi Barnard ▶

The Article



Education on the move

By Maggi BARNARD. The Namibian, July 29, 2003

Most of us picture a conventional classroom with desks, chairs and a blackboard when we hear the word school.

It is not the case for many children in Namibia who have never been inside a proper classroom. This does not mean though they do not go to school.

More than 2 500 children in the area north west of Opuwo in the Kunene region are part of a very special and unique school, known as the mobile school.

It is registered as one school with a principal and three department heads, but consists of 30 units spread out all over the region. Instead of conventional, permanent school buildings, the units consist of tents, which are used as classrooms. The learners sit on fold-up camp stools at fold-up tables. There is a portable blackboard, while posters and pictures cannot be stuck on the walls, but hang from a line like washing.

The idea is to make the school as flexible as possible to fit in with the nomadic lifestyle of the Ovahimba and Ovathemba people in the region. The units can therefore be packed up and moved to a new location whenever the communities have to move to find new water or grazing for their livestock.

Units are also flexible with their school hours to fit in with household tasks, such as herding cattle or fetching water, the learners have to perform at home.

“When parents tell us they need the children at home in the morning for herding duties, we start school later,” a teacher at Onyuva (north of Orupembe), Bastar Tjipombo told the Youthpaper. He is one of two teachers at Onyuva teaching 35 learners from Grades 1 to 6.

According to Kabajani Kamwi,

regional director for education in Kunene, the programme started with six units in 1998. Today there are 30 units with 73 teachers and about 2500 children.

The programme ties in with government’s policy to provide education for marginalised children. “It was always a problem to capture the Ovahimba and Ovathemba children,” said Kamwi. The Norwegian government was interested in the policy to provide equitable access to schooling for all children and provided the money for a feasibility study in 1995.

The mobile school programme was launched in 1998 with the Namibia Association of Norway (Namas) as a partner.

According to Kamwi this agreement runs out in 2005 when government will take over completely. At the moment Namas pays half of the teachers’ salaries, and provides logistical support, learning materials and stationery.

It was clear the Onyuva learners did not lack aptitude and enthusiasm for learning as they eagerly asked and answered questions during a recent visit.

Kaingona Tjiumbua, who is in Grade 2, and one of only three girls in the school, said her favourite subjects were maths and English. She wants to become a teacher one day and asked what she needed to do to become qualified.

Another learner in Grade 5 said he liked maths because it helped to open his mind, and he liked to calculate fast. Most of the learners, wanted to become teachers, policemen, nurses or doctors. One of them said he wanted to be the chairperson of the Integrated Rural Development, and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) one day.

IRDNC is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) working in the region and took the Onyuva learners on a trip to Puros last year to see the wildlife and teach them about their responsibility towards the environment. Many of them saw

elephant, giraffe, zebra, ostrich and oryx for the first time.

This trip was clearly a highlight as they still fondly recalled all the animals they saw and what they had learned, from the experience.

“We want those animals at Onyuva as well,” said one, “so tourists would come here. The community will then start looking after the environment.” Another said if they had those animals at Onyuva they could introduce trophy hunting which would bring financial benefits to the community.

Euphrasius Dawids, senior field officer of the IRDNC said it was very exciting to take the learners on these trips. “It is great to see them coming out of their shells. These trips broaden their horizons so much as they are taken out of their environment to experience many new things.”

Many Ovahimba and Ovathemba parents are starting to realise the value of an education for their children. Before they were hesitant to send their children away to schools that were only situated in towns. This meant they could not help out with duties at home any more. In many cases children lost their traditions.

For the chairperson of the Orupembe conservancy, Uripurue Tjiningire, it is important that his two children finish Grade 12 and get a further education.

He said he would love to see one of them become a journalist. He has a boy and a girl at Onyuva. “It used to be very difficult for us to send our kids to school as it was not in our culture. It is only those parents who have opened their minds that send their children to school.” He said the mobile school has helped them a lot as they no longer need to send their children far away to school.

Maria Mupuraa, who serves on the Orupembe conservancy committee, feels it is a good thing that her son is going to school. She wants him to finish Grade 12. She said

it was not a problem that he was at school, because she had another child at home to help with the duties. "He is not interested to attend school." She wants her baby daughter to also go to school one day.

So far many more boys attend school than girls. The split is 70 to 30 per cent between boys and girls. Kamwi did not want to speculate on the reasons for this. The teacher at Onyuva said it was either that many girls were not interested in school, or the parents did not send them. The three girls at Onyuva were very enthusiastic about their studies.

According to the regional director

proof of the success of the programme is the tremendous growth in units from six to 30. "We are very pleased with the success. The communities have definitely become more open to the idea of school."

While the mobility of the units has presented some problems, such as a settlement splitting in two when moving to a new location, Kamwi said they had to keep on being flexible. On the other hand there is a move to make some schools permanent. About six of the units are no longer housed in tents. At Puros and Otjinungua, Raleigh International has helped to build

permanent classrooms. "We are trying to make the units conform to conventional schools as much as possible as we do not want to offer a second class education to these children," said Kamwi.

Whether they sit in tents on fold up chairs, or whether they have upgraded to a conventional classroom, the children in the Kunene have proved it is possible to be educated no matter what the circumstances are.

Maggi Barnard 

The Namibian

The Namibian is our country's largest and most widely read newspaper, an English daily circulating country-wide from Monday to Friday. It was started with donor funding in 1985, by the current editor Gwen Lister and a small group of committed journalists, to support the call for Namibia's independence from South Africa, which entailed a 40 year liberation struggle. The Namibian faced some daunting challenges during its early years. These ranged from efforts to prevent the newspaper being published at all, to jailing the editor and attacks on its premises by the opposing power's security establishment.

When independence came, under United Nations supervision in 1990, funding stopped and *The Namibian* was required to become sustainable. This it did through applying best practice business policies, while at all times upholding its total independent stance, hard work and a good dose of common sense.

Nineteen years later *The Namibian* remains totally independent. It was started as a non-profit trust, publishing around 24 pages from Monday to Thursday and 48 pages on Fridays. Four of the daily pages are in Oshiwambo, the language used by the largest number of Namibians.

The paper's readership cuts across all boundaries from the grass roots to decision makers.

It also includes regular weekly supplements on motoring, youth issues and entertainment.

The ADEA prize was awarded for an article on mobile schools published by the youth supplement, *The Youth Paper*.

1st Prize Articles in French

The Winner: M. Fousséni Traoré

I was born on July 15th, 1966 in Ségou, capital city of the fourth administrative region of Mali. Following primary education from which I graduated with the DEF (Diploma of Basic Studies) in 1983, I attended the regional High School (Lycée) of Ségou in the Human Sciences stream. I successfully completed the Baccalauréat in 1987 and was thus able to join the National School of Administration (ENA) from where I

graduated in 1992 with a Public Law Master's Degree.

In 1993, I created the regional weekly *Balazan Infos* with three school mates in my home town and ultimately became its chief editor. Following the closing down of the paper due to financial reasons, I was employed by the *FM Balazan Radio* as chief editor and worked in Ségou until I was appointed by *Le Républicain*. I first worked as a free-

lance journalist in August 1998, but was ultimately recruited as reporter journalist in November 1999 and was appointed chief editor in May 2004.

Within the framework of my studies in ENA, I submitted a political sociology thesis entitled: *Partisan systems and tribalism in Black Africa*. I also wrote several articles in the French economic daily *La Tribune* with which I have been working since 2002 as free lance. I have been Correspondent of the *Syfia International Agency* in Mali since 2003, and I have written several articles on the economy, the environment, education...

Finally, I am the 2004 winner of ADEA's Africa Education Journalism Award.

Fousséni Traoré ▶

The Article

SOCIÉTÉ

● Education

Quand les élèves gouvernent, l'école va mieux

Il est souvent affirmé que l'éducation est le chemin le plus sûr pour le développement d'un pays. Pourtant, l'école est souvent perçue comme un lieu où les élèves sont passifs et où les enseignants ont le dernier mot. Mais, au Mali, une expérience innovante est en cours : les élèves participent à la gestion de leur école. Cette initiative a permis de transformer l'école en un lieu de vie et de apprentissage actif. Les élèves ont pris en charge des tâches telles que la maintenance des locaux, la gestion des cantines et la tenue des archives. Cette expérience a permis de renforcer le lien entre l'école et la communauté, et de créer un environnement plus propice à l'apprentissage. Les résultats sont encourageants : les élèves sont plus motivés, les enseignants sont plus impliqués, et les performances scolaires ont augmenté. Cette expérience démontre que lorsque les élèves ont la parole, l'école peut vraiment changer.

La participation des élèves à la gestion de leur école a permis de transformer l'école en un lieu de vie et de apprentissage actif.

Quand les élèves gouvernent, l'école va mieux

Par Fousséni Traoré, *Le républicain*, 16 mars 2004

Ils vont en guerre contre l'absentéisme scolaire, l'insécurité. Ils interpellent leurs parents, l'administration... Et obtiennent de bons résultats. Au Mali, le succès des écoles gouvernées par les enfants ne se dément pas. Seule ombre au tableau : leur nombre encore limité.

Cinq filles et quatre garçons débattent gravement dans une salle de classe. Ce sont les ministres du « Gouvernement des enfants » de l'école fondamentale de Sangafara, un village de la région de Kayes, à 640 km de Bamako. Ils ont été élus par leurs camarades pour résoudre les problèmes de l'école. Au cours

de ce conseil hebdomadaire des ministres, le chargé de la Discipline fait le point. Les élèves se bagarrent moins, les amendes se font rares : la paix règne. Le ministre de l'Environnement s'inquiète du retard pris par la Mairie pour clôturer l'école et empêcher la divagation des animaux dans la cour. « *Le problème d'eau potable n'a pas été résolu non plus* », explique le ministre de l'Assainissement. Son collègue de la Santé informe le conseil qu'il s'est déplacé, il y a deux semaines, pour rencontrer l'équipe médicale et négocier la vaccination des élèves retardataires.

Une adolescente au regard vif dirige les débats. Elle a seulement 13 ans, mais tient à ce qu'on l'appelle Madame. Elle est le Premier ministre. Mariam Diarra, élève du CM2, prend sa mission très au sérieux. « Je suis fière de ce que je fais. Nous aidons les maîtres et nos parents. Mes camarades m'écourent et nous sommes respectés aussi bien à l'école qu'au village », explique-t-elle.

Retards, insultes, bagarres = amendes

L'école de Sangafara s'est dotée d'un gouvernement des enfants, il y a seulement un an. Mais que de choses réalisées depuis : une cantine, des rampes d'accès aux salles de classe pour les jeunes handicapés, un terrain de jeu et des équipements de sport. L'autodiscipline est désormais de rigueur : les retards, insultes, bagarres dans la cour, sanctionnés par une amende de 250 F Cfa (0,38 euros), ont quasiment cessé, à la grande satisfaction du corps enseignant.

« *La création du gouvernement a permis aux enfants, à l'école, de promouvoir la propreté et l'hygiène des enfants et leur as-*

siduité », reconnaît Abou Bacr Koité, le directeur de l'école. Le « *gouvernement* » interdit la vente d'aliments dans la cour de l'école. Il veille à la propreté du goûter vendu dehors aux élèves. La traversée de l'enceinte scolaire par les engins motorisés, l'accès des armes, etc. sont strictement interdits. Un accent particulier est mis sur l'hygiène. La cour de l'école est balayée et les toilettes régulièrement nettoyées par les garçons et les filles sans distinction. Les garçons sales se font laver par les filles en guise de punition. Et vice versa. Les grands assurent la protection des tout-petits, aussi bien à l'école qu'au village. Les meilleurs élèves encadrent et soutiennent leurs camarades en difficulté.

Cette nouvelle approche de la gestion de l'école malienne bénéficie du soutien de l'Unicef (Fonds des Nations-Unies pour l'Enfance). Le programme « *Gouvernement des enfants* » a été lancé à la rentrée 2002. Son but ? Donner aux enfants le goût de l'école et aux parents un « *espace sécurisé* » pour les filles, et améliorer le taux de scolarisation... L'école d'ordinaire ne traite pas de façon équitable les garçons et les filles. Les premiers sont responsables de classe tandis que les secondes exécutent les corvées de nettoyage et de balayage. Une discrimination que ne tolère pas le Gouvernement des enfants. « *On permet aux enfants de s'exprimer, de participer à la gestion des problèmes de l'école et de trouver des solutions. C'est aussi un outil pédagogique qui vise à donner un visage plus attractif à l'espace scolaire pour que les parents aient envie d'y envoyer leurs enfants, surtout les filles* », explique Frances Tumer, la représentante résidente de l'Unicef au Mali.

Parents et enseignants enthousiastes

L'initiative suscite l'enthousiasme des enfants, des professeurs et des parents. Aujourd'hui 350 écoles des régions de Kayes, Ségou et Mopti prennent part à l'opération. « *Nous avons été saisis par le Gouvernement des enfants pour faire la clôture de l'école, la fermeture des toilettes et de la cuisine. Cela signifie que les élèves s'intéressent à leur école et qu'ils pourront donc bien entretenir ce que nous allons faire* », explique Bourama Kanté, un parent d'élève. Ce solide sexagénaire constate que ses enfants se montrent plus responsables dans l'accomplissement des tâches quotidiennes à la maison. Le directeur de l'école de Sangafara note avec satisfaction : « *Ce que les responsables communautaires n'avaient pas l'habitude de faire, ils le font désormais. Les enfants les y poussent* ». Les enfants sont arrivés à faire changer l'image de l'école au niveau de la communauté.

Y a-t-il un lien entre cette prise de conscience et l'augmentation du taux de scolarisation ? Pour Patrick Bogino, administrateur du « *Programme éducation pour la vie* » de l'Unicef, certainement, les taux d'absentéisme et d'abandon scolaire ayant diminué. Mieux les écoles concernées ont toutes amélioré leur taux de recrutement au point que des problèmes de places se posent.

L'Etat malien, réticent au lancement de l'initiative, est actuellement acquis à la cause. La généralisation du Gouvernement des enfants à l'ensemble des écoles fondamentales, au nombre de 7000, est prévue d'ici 2007.

Fousséni Traoré ▶

Le républicain

Le Républicain is a daily newspaper with a circulation of 10,000.

Regarded as a newspaper for intellectuals, it was founded in the wake of the democratic transition of 1991. The first issue was published on September 16, 1992. Like all newspapers at that time, it sought to contribute to the consolidation of democracy and unreservedly embraced any cause in defense of individual and collective freedoms.

The context in which the newspaper was born inspired its editorial stance, and *Le Républicain* has remained faithful to this stance every since, despite the many changes that have occurred over its lifetime. The newspaper's purpose is to contribute to the construction of Mali, to defend individual and collective freedoms, to provide the public with wholesome, accurate information, and to promote the country's development.

Over the years, the domestic readership has found some counterparts abroad, where *Le Républicain* has forged many collaborative arrangements and partnerships. In this context, it received aid in 1998 from the Agence internationale de la francophonie. For many years, it was the exclusive representative in Mali of the pan-African weekly *Jeune Afrique*. Today, *Le Républicain* has correspondents throughout Mali and in some neighboring countries, including Côte d'Ivoire. It also has a network of subscribers in Mali and abroad.

2nd Prize Articles in French

The Winner: Ms. Josette Barry

After having read law at the Abidjan University, Josette Barry entered the Dakar Centre d'Etudes des Sciences et Techniques de l'Information (CESTI) University Cheikh Anta Diop from which she graduated as a journalist three years later.

In January 1988, she was hired by *Fraternité matin* as a journalist following a year of free lance work. But before that, she had been a member of the initial team of the first evening daily *Ivoir'Soir* published by *Fraternité matin*. Since then Josette

Barry concerned herself with early childhood problems and she wrote many articles about it.

When the *Education and Communication* supplement was created in April 2003, it was quite natural that the leadership should appoint her as its head.

As chief editor of the *Société*'newsroom since 1994, Josette Barry was also in charge of the Economics section between 2000 and 2002. For many years, she has been a militant within professional journalists' associations and she managed the *Maison de la presse* of Abidjan of which she is the first vice chair person.

Josette Barry ▶

The Article



Enseignement supérieur : le grand sinistré

Par JOSETTE BARRY, *Fraternité Matin*, 19 novembre 2003

En dépit de toutes les professions de foi visant à sa réhabilitation l'enseignement supérieur continue de se débattre dans les nasses du filet du désordre, de la violence. Pour tout dire, il est en ruines.

Ruine matérielle et financière mais aussi ruine intellectuelle et morale. Pourtant, l'échéance de toute entreprise visant à sa remise en état risque d'être retardée si la situation socio-politique ne se normalise pas dans les plus brefs délais.

Le moins difficile avec l'enseignement supérieur en Côte d'Ivoire, c'est que les maux qui le minent sont depuis fort longtemps connus. Et ce ne sont pas non plus les professions de foi annonçant la ferme volonté de le sortir du tunnel qui ont manqué.

Depuis au moins une dizaine d'années, colloques, actes et autres assises (la dernière fut celle de Yamoussoukro organisée par le professeur Seri Bailly) ont proclamé et consigné les actions à mener à court, moyen et long terme, pour amener cet ordre d'enseignement, le dernier degré dans la recherche de connaissances, a retrouvé son visage d'antan et espérer répondre aux multiples et légitimes attentes de la communauté.

Hélas ! L'enseignement supérieur public et ses universités notamment peinent à faire leur mue nécessaire pour faire ce bond qualitatif.

Il faut savoir que les difficultés ont commencé à apparaître lorsqu'en 1987, l'effectif de l'Université d'Abidjan est passé à 14 230 étudiants, alors qu'elle n'avait été construite que pour 7 000 personnes.

Ces difficultés se sont accentuées au fil des années, eu égard au fait qu'on affichait alors de très grandes ambitions pour l'enseignement supérieur avec le développement d'un pôle d'excellence à Yamoussoukro à travers les grandes écoles telles L'INPHB, l'ENSA et l'ENTP. L'Université d'Abidjan-Cocody qui est demeurée seule jusqu'en 1992 continuait de recevoir les milliers d'étudiants qui frappaient à sa porte.

Le fossé entre l'offre en matière de places disponibles, et la demande s'est davantage accru. Tant et si bien que l'ouverture à partir de 1992 et de façon successive de 2 autres universités publiques (Bouaké et Abobo-Adjamé) n'a rien changé à la situation. A côté de ces universités publiques et de leurs appendices, les unités de recherche de l'enseignement supérieur (URES) de Korhogo et de Daloa (dont l'implantation est un échec selon de nombreux observateurs).

Le dispositif est aujourd'hui complété par 100 établissements d'enseignement technique supérieur privé et 39 établissements hors ministères.

L'essor de l'enseignement privé

Le constat est le suivant aujourd'hui. Devant l'incohérence affichée du système d'enseignement supérieur public avec ses programmes d'enseignement inachevés, le peu de crédibilité de ses diplômes, le cursus rallongé des étudiants et la faible fluidité constatée du système. Devant les faibles taux de réussite enregistrés depuis au moins deux décennies et l'érection de la violence en « système de gestion » par les étudiants, le développement de l'enseignement supérieur voulu et encouragé est devenu une alternative incoutournable.

Car, alors même qu'on observe ce dysfonctionnement dans le public, avec un calendrier académique tronqué, on constate que dans les universités privées et dans les grandes écoles publiques, le fonctionnement reste globalement régulier. Il reste à souhaiter que le développement du privé ne contribue pas à renforcer le dysfonctionnement dans le public avec la fuite des cerveaux internes. Observée avec le départ des enseignants du public vers les structures privées, fuite, interne qui est venue s'ajouter à la fuite externe vers les pays européens notamment.

Le manque d'enseignants est depuis longtemps devenu notoire, dans les universités. Les conséquences on les connaît. Des enseignements ne sont plus assurés ou le sont en dents de scie. Dans certaines unités de formation et de recherche (les structures qui ont remplacé les facultés), le souvenir des travaux dirigés est lointain. L'on ne se contente que des cours magistraux délivrés dans les amphithéâtres (cf tableau portant sur les besoins en enseignants dans le public au titre de l'année 2003-2004).

Devant ce manque notoire d'enseignants, les offres de formation restent limitées avec très peu de filières professionnalisées. Autre risque, celui de voir se multiplier les filières de formation avec les diplômes maisons qui ont du mal

à être acceptés sur le marché de l'emploi. Ces diplômes maisons provenant du privé, en dépit des assurances données par le ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur, M. Zémogo Fofana, aux députés lors de son récent passage à l'hémicycle sur leur invitation. Malgré le flux observé vers les établissements d'enseignements supérieurs privés, le contingent d'étudiants candidats à une inscription dans les universités reste élevé. Une surpopulation devenue mortelle et qui a des conséquences énormes sur la qualité du travail fourni à tous les niveaux ainsi que sur la vie sociale sur les campus avec une politisation excessive du milieu.

La violence comme un exutoire

Mais aussi une image ternie des étudiants qui, à travers leurs organisations, utilisent de plus en plus, la violence comme un exutoire. Beaucoup d'encre a coulé, ainsi que beaucoup de salive sur la question de la violence. Celle-ci a même fini par être transportée hors du cadre des campus après y avoir été incrustée comme un kyste. Aujourd'hui, les étudiants tentent de l'ériger en système de gestion. La preuve de ce comportement est la récente descente que des éléments de la FESCI ont faite sur le temple des morts qu'est Ivosep le 18 octobre dernier. Cette grande misère morale côtoie quotidiennement cette autre misère en ce qui concerne les équipements et les infrastructures. Avec la dégradation constante des conditions de travail et de vie des étudiants, des enseignants et des personnes techniques d'appui. N'échappent pas à ce sinistre les services de scolarité et les centres régionaux des oeuvres universitaires. Si dans les premiers, le manque de personnel structurel qualifié et celui de l'équipement informatique ont donné lieu à la non maîtrise des effectifs et à la non gestion du cursus des enseignants, dans les seconds on assiste non seulement à l'obsolescence des infrastructures et à leur insuffisance caractérisée, mais également à la dégradation

conséquence de l'environnement dans lequel évoluent enseignants et enseignés et personnels d'appui technique et administratif. Avec en prime, le développement de la promiscuité et des maladies, notamment, des infections sexuellement transmissibles.

La question devenue lancinante des bourses constitue un autre champ de bataille. Elles font l'objet de grèves et de revendications récurrentes de la part des étudiants et contribuent à perturber le calendrier académique.

Mesures à prendre

La grande question que l'on se pose aujourd'hui est celle-ci : doit-on oui ou non maintenir la bourse et les aides, vu le très faible pourcentage d'étudiants bénéficiaires. Car sur 122.829 étudiants au total, c'est seulement 15% d'entre eux qui reçoivent la bourse. Le montant global de cette enveloppe est de 7.455.627.52. F CFA.

Pour ceux qui poursuivent leurs

études hors de la Côte d'Ivoire et qui reçoivent des bourses ou de Secours financiers, le montant octroyé est de 3.750.000.000 de FCFA. Pendant que l'Etat prend en charge 79% d'étudiants inscrits dans les établissements privés à un coût global estimé à 8.360.000.000 de F CFA. Le problème de l'opportunité de la bourse se pose dans les mêmes termes quand il s'agit des logements. Car seulement 29% (soit 16,3 %) sont officiellement logés. Pire, le système de gestion et d'octroi des logements, associant les étudiants à travers la FESCI, a montré toutes ses limites. De fait, les logements sont pris « en otage » par cette structure estudiantine qui impose son diktat dans leur attribution. Conséquence, on a observé impuissants à l'installation sur le campus d'individus venus d'ailleurs et qui ne justifient pas de la qualité d'étudiants, C'est de ce côté-là qu'il faut aussi rechercher l'une des causes de la violence qui s'est incrustée. dans les cités et sur

les campus. Pour tout dire, l'enseignement supérieur demeure l'un des parents pauvres du système éducatif ivoirien. Il ne reçoit que 18 % du budget de l'éducation dont 13 % sont consacrés aux salaires et au fonctionnement administratif. Des réformes qui regroupent des mesures d'ajustement et d'expansion ainsi que des actions visant à améliorer la qualité de cet ordre d'enseignement sont préconisées. Sur elles s'appuieront les nouveaux défis de l'enseignement supérieur qui portent sur la gestion des effectifs, la satisfaction des besoins en enseignants, l'ajustement des budgets aux besoins réels par l'intermédiaire de mécanismes pérennes de financement. Tout cela devra concourir au rétablissement du calendrier académique, à l'éradication de la violence et à la poursuite de la politique de décentralisation et de régionalisation.

Josette Barry ▶

Fraternité Matin

Fraternité Matin is a general-interest newspaper founded on December 9, 1964. Its sponsors were the late Félix Houphouët-Boigny and a few notables of the Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire – African Democratic Rally (PDCI RDA).

From December 1964 to February 2002, this national daily was considered a pro-government newspaper. During the 1980s its circulation approached the 100,000 mark. The revival of the press in the early 1990s, which brought nearly 200 new titles onto the market, raised fears that *Fraternité Matin* would disappear. The newspaper survived, however, and two years ago it changed its editorial stance, becoming the leader not only in circulation, with 25,000 copies a day, but also in sales. It also the largest seller of advertising space. Since April 2003, it publishes an edition every day, and a special section five days out of six. The special section topics are education, communication, sports, health, the economy, the environment, regions, "Frat-Mat" online and diplomacy, and diaspora.

In a few months, it will launch a sports weekly, an economic monthly and a monthly devoted to education.

Members of the Jury

The award process has benefitted greatly from the committed participation of a jury of distinguished educationalists and journalists who have carefully selected the winning articles.

We acknowledge, with appreciation, their great contribution.

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**Association for
the Development of
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**WORKING GROUP ON COMMUNICATION
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Akintola Fatayinbo **Africa Education Journalism Award**

The Africa Education Journalism Award recognizes the best articles on education written by African journalists and published in the African press. The award is intended to promote communication on education, and to enhance media interest in education in Africa.

Articles are selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- relevance of the topic addressed;
- objectivity and rigor in analyzing the topic;
- quality of the writing;
- originality of the article.

The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and its Working Group on Communication for Education and Development (WGCORED) are convinced that an effective means of promoting educational development is to encourage and foster communication on this topic. Journalists have a role to play in important helping people to understand social problems and promoting public debates around issues such as the challenges facing the education sector.

Partner organizations having taken part in the activities of the
Africa Education Journalism Award



The Africa Education Journalism Award is an initiative of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and the Working Group on Communication for Education and Development (WGCORED)

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