Bilingual Education in Burkina Faso

An Alternative Approach for Quality Basic Education

The book

This book presents the history, conceptual foundations, accomplishments and challenges of an educational innovation in Burkina Faso: that of bilingual education. This bilingual education system is designed as a continuum comprised of three levels: early-learning centers for preschool-age children (3 to 6 years), bilingual primary schools for children aged 7 to 11 years and multilingual middle schools for children aged 12 to 16 years. The new system is in keeping with the spirit of Burkina Faso's education reform law of 30 July 2007.

Bilingual education seeks to enable children to acquire a minimum level of education that gives them the basic knowledge and the tools they need to understand and improve their immediate environment. It is characterized by the use of national languages as both a medium and subject of instruction, the introduction of practical and productive activities, citizenship education, close ties to the local community, study and appreciation of the national culture, involvement of the local population in the design, planning and execution of school programs, and shortening of the duration of schooling by one to two years.

Bilingual education in Burkina Faso started with a pilot experiment at the primary level, which ran from 1994 to 1998. It has since been expanded and extended to other levels of education. Eight national languages are used in complementarity with French.

The author

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Bilingual Education in Burkina Faso

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Bilingual Education in Burkina Faso
An Alternative Approach for Quality Basic Education

by Paul Taryam ILBOUDO

Association for the Development of Education in Africa
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Preface

In recent decades, the leaders of sub-Saharan African countries and their technical and financial partners, recognizing the crucial role of education in development, have made sustained efforts to broaden access and improve educational quality for all.

Internationally, from Jomtien to Yaoundé to Dakar, we have seen the proliferation of studies, recommendations, appeals and advocacy for more equitable access to education and greater internal and external efficiency of African countries’ education systems.

In each African country, a variety of initiatives have been launched to achieve this, and reforms have been undertaken with varying degrees of success. For several reasons, however, the failures, errors and even successes of these attempts have not always been well described and disseminated so that they can serve as a basis for the formulation of better strategies and programs to improve education in the sub-region.

Burkina Faso carried out a “General State of Education” review in 1994 and adopted its educational reform law (Loi d’orientation de l’éducation) in 1996. In 1999, it adopted the Ten-Year Basic Education Development Plan (PDDEB) covering the 2000-2010 period; the plan was actually implemented in 2002, after the adoption of the white paper on education policy in 2001.
The General State of Education, which mobilized the entire social system to address the problems of the Burkina education system, set new goals for the education system and outlined a development plan for the future.

The education reform law stipulates that education is both a national priority and a right of every citizen. It sets the period of compulsory education at 6 to 16 years of age and specifies that the teaching languages are French and national languages.

The PDDEB’s targets for 2010 were to raise the rate of access to basic education to 70% of school-age children, and at least 65% for girls, to give more attention to practical and manual activities by integrating them tightly into educational content and practices from the very first years of school, and to increase the literacy rate to about 40% by scaling up effective literacy initiatives.

The education white paper covering the next ten years calls for maintaining the priority to the development of basic education, in quantity and quality, while also developing the post-primary levels.

In this context, we welcome the initiative of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), which in 2002 launched a wide-ranging forum to “take stock of the accumulated knowledge on promising strategies and policy options as well as on tools for the design and implementation of quality improvement programs”.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN BURKINA FASO
Burkina Faso appealed to its development partners to seek alternative approaches in order to improve the quality of basic education.

The bilingual education experience documented herein is one of these approaches. It is an action-research experiment conducted in Burkina Faso since 1994, under the partnership between the Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy (MEBA) and the Swiss Organization for Workers’ Solidarity (OSEO).

This case study presents the basics of the experiment, the programs and processes used, and its encouraging outcomes, which are worth sharing as part of the search for African solutions to the problems of African education. The experiment is of interest not only for the spectacular results obtained but also, and most importantly, for the real prospects of significant improvement in educational quality through the use of African languages as languages of instruction, in complementarity with international languages (French, English etc.), healthy and productive management of multilingualism, integration of schools into their immediate socio-cultural and economic environment, local ownership of schools, increased emphasis on cultural heritage, and the establishment of synergies and bridges between formal and non-formal education with a view to sustainable endogenous development benefiting the greatest number.

As a result of this conclusive experience and in view of its potential, the Burkina government is making preparations for gradual scaling up of bilingual education and has officially included bilingualism as an option in its education policy.
I am appreciative of the opportunity offered by ADEA to share this experience in Burkina Faso with other countries in Africa and elsewhere, and I would like to thank ADEA for the technical and financial support provided for this study.
# Acronyms and abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADP</td>
<td>Burkina Faso’s National Assembly (Assemblée des députés du peuple)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADEA</td>
<td>Association for the Development of Education in Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALFAA</td>
<td>Method of learning French based on literacy in national languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AM</td>
<td>Manegdbzânga Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEP</td>
<td>Certificate of vocational proficiency (Brevet d'études professionnelles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEPC</td>
<td>Junior secondary education certificate (Brevet d'études du premier cycle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAP</td>
<td>Occupational skill certificate (Certificat d'aptitudes professionnelles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBN</td>
<td>Banmanuara center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE1</td>
<td>Third year of Primary School (Cours élémentaire deuxième année)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE2</td>
<td>Fourth year of Primary School (Cours élémentaire troisième année)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEB</td>
<td>Basic education district (Circonscription d'éducation de base)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEBNF</td>
<td>Non-formal basic education center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEP</td>
<td>Primary education certificate (Certificat d'études primaires)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CERLESHS</td>
<td>Center for Research in Letters, Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>CFA</td>
<td>African Financial Community (issuer of CFA franc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFJA</td>
<td>Training center for young farmers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFPP</td>
<td>Pedagogical and pastoral training center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM1</td>
<td>Fifth year of Primary School (<em>Cours moyen première année</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM2</td>
<td>Sixth year of Primary School (<em>Cours moyen deuxième année</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>Multilingual middle school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNRST</td>
<td>National Center for Scientific and Technological Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>First year of Primary School (<em>Cours préparatoire</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP1</td>
<td>First year of traditional primary school (age 5-6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP2</td>
<td>Second year of traditional primary school (age 6-7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPAF</td>
<td>Permanent literacy and training center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDC</td>
<td>Directorate for Development and Cooperation (Switzerland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGEB</td>
<td>Directorate General for Basic Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPEBA</td>
<td>Provincial Directorate for Basic Education and Literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DREBA</td>
<td>Regional Directorate for Basic Education and Literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEE or 3E</td>
<td>Early-learning center (<em>espace d'éveil éducatif</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELAN-Développement</td>
<td>Association for the Promotion of Writing and Books in National Languages for Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENAM</td>
<td>National School for Administration and the Magistracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENEP</td>
<td>National School for Primary Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENSK</td>
<td>Higher Normal School of Koudougou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPR</td>
<td>Regional pedagogical team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDC</td>
<td>Foundation for Community Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INA</td>
<td>National Literacy Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRAP</td>
<td>Institute for Reform and Pedagogical Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASSN</td>
<td>Ministry of Social Affairs and National Solidarity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**MEBA**  Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy  
**MEBAM**  Ministry of Basic Education and Mass Literacy  
**MESSRS**  Ministry of Secondary and Higher Education and Scientific Research  
**NGO**  Non-Governmental Organization  
**OIF**  International Organization of French-speaking Communities  
**OSEO**  Swiss Organization for Workers’ Solidarity  
**PDDEB**  Ten-Year Basic Education Development Plan  
**PEV**  Volunteer Parent Educator  
**SG**  General Secretariat
Executive summary

1. Context
The conclusions of the Ouagadougou General State of Education in 1994 and the national education convention of April 2002 noted that the education system displayed serious deficiencies: internal and external inefficiency, poor performance, a system poorly matched to the socio-economic and cultural environment, etc.

In this context, the Burkina government – recognizing the need for change but remembering the negative impact of the sudden halt of the 1979 Reform in 1984 and the shock wave that it produced in the population – tacitly authorized experiments with alternative approaches.

To contribute to the search for alternative approaches, the Swiss Organization for Workers’ Solidarity (Oeuvre suisse d’Entraide Ouvrière – OSEO) and its local partners in Burkina Faso supported the Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy (MEBA) in developing a bilingual education system as an alternative to the current education system, taking into consideration the conclusions and recommendations of the 1994 Estates General and Article 4 of the May 1996 education reform law, which provides for the possibility of using both national languages and French in the education system.
2. Characteristics
Bilingual education is an innovation in which the national language spoken by the child and the country’s official language, (in this case, French), are used successively, and thereafter simultaneously and in complementary fashion (the successive introduction of the two languages, which does not correspond to reality, is more important than their subsequent simultaneous and complementary use).

Bilingual education forms an educational continuum with three levels: early-learning centers (espaces d’éveil éducatif – 3Es) for children aged 3 to 6 years, bilingual primary schools for children aged 7 to 12 years and the multilingual middle school (collège multilingue spécifique – CMS) for 13-16 year olds.

3. Objectives
Burkina Faso’s bilingual education experiment has the following objectives:

- increasing the internal and external efficiency of basic education;
- raising the quality and relevance of basic education;
- establishing synergy and bridges between formal and non-formal basic education;
- increasing the cost-effectiveness of basic education;
- integrating schools more tightly into their local environments, school ownership by grassroots communities and active community participation in the preparation, planning and implementation of activities.

4. Implementation strategies
OSEO, the initiator and main supporter of bilingual education, and the Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy (MEBA), the institutional partner, were responsible for implementation of program activities.
Implementation strategies included:

- a strategy of social negotiation, prior to the establishment of any bilingual school, in order to involve regional, provincial and local authorities and, most importantly, the fathers and mothers of pupils in the entire process, with a view to creating the conditions needed for local ownership of bilingual schools;
- genuine involvement of beneficiary communities in the entire process of program preparation and implementation, including the building of infrastructure, identification of discussion topics, education in culture and productive activities;
- use of a network of competent resource persons (linguists, pedagogical specialists, course designers, etc.) for the design of national-language and bilingual teaching materials, training of teachers and pedagogical supervisors, monitoring and evaluation of program activities.

5. Curriculum content

The bilingual education curriculum covers the content of the traditional school program in five years instead of six. This is made possible by the use of the pupil’s first language and the gradual introduction of French. In the first year, the national language, used as the medium of instruction, accounts for 90% of the program, while French, as a subject of study, occupies 10%. The share of the national language falls to 80% in the second year, to 50% in the third, 20% in the fourth and 10% in the fifth and last year. As from the third year, French gradually becomes the medium of instruction, alongside the national language, and its share reaches 90% in the fifth year. At present, eight national languages are used in bilingual education in conjunction with French: Mooré, Dioula, Fulfulde, Lyélé, Gulmancema, Dagara, Bisa and Nuni.
In addition to the official program, the bilingual education program includes practical and manual activities as well as cultural activities suited to the age of the pupils.

6. Outcomes and benefits of the project
Concerning performance on official examinations, the table below indicates that from 1998 to 2006, the general trend is one of greater efficiency of bilingual schools.¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of schools</th>
<th>Number of national languages</th>
<th>Number of pupils taking exam</th>
<th>Pass rate</th>
<th>Overall pass rate after 6 years of schooling (excluding repetition) (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>52.83%</td>
<td>48.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>85.02%</td>
<td>62.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>68.21%</td>
<td>70.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>94.59%</td>
<td>73.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>91.14%</td>
<td>69.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>77.19%</td>
<td>69.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total / average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,960</td>
<td>78.16%</td>
<td>65.69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MEBA Examination Directorate

In other respects, the following outcomes are noted:
- parents feel much more responsible for the education of their children and understand the purpose of schooling better;
- early childhood education is a useful preliminary for bilingual school;
- national languages are promoted and valued. Their use in bilingual education, in complementarity with French, renders education and learning quicker and easier;

¹. Bilingual school lasts five years for school-age children and four years for 9- to 14-year-olds.
• the shortening of primary schooling by one year and the greater internal efficiency of the bilingual system yield enormous savings for a poor country like Burkina Faso;
• graduates of bilingual schools are useful to themselves and to their communities;
• bilingual education is integrated into the local environment. Pupils learn to appreciate their own culture, and they know about and enjoy productive activities;
• the MEBA and its technical and financial partners are defining the strategy and process for gradual scaling-up of bilingual education.

7. Lessons learned from the bilingual education experiment

The main lessons drawn from the experiment with bilingual education in Burkina Faso may be summed up as follows:
• national languages have proved to be effective media of instruction in formal education and efficiency-enhancing shortcuts that bring savings while helping to raise the internal and external efficiency of the education system. The current action-research project has clearly established that the use of the national languages which children speak well when they first enter school is far from being a handicap for learning French, despite a persistent belief to the contrary; rather, it is a powerful means of accelerating learning and facilitates the teaching and acquisition of French;
• the linkage between education and productive activities improves learning outcomes and offers children more opportunities to succeed in life and to become integrated into their environment on leaving school;
• the use of national languages is more easily accepted when it is not imposed;
• the bilingual education experiment facilitates the adaptation of tools to other groups excluded from the education system; the visually impaired, for example, learn more quickly and efficiently when they have both national-language and bilingual documents in Braille;
• the bridge between formal and non-formal basic education creates complementarity and mutual enrichment between the two education sub-systems;
• the fear and mistrust felt by parents and even the intelligentsia regarding the use of national languages as instructional media can be overcome if proof of their efficiency can be established;
• the principle adopted in the process of scaling up bilingual education (in both geographical and linguistic terms), namely that of persuading people through good results rather than imposing bilingual education everywhere, is conducive to informed, responsible acceptance of the innovation by grassroots stakeholders;
• when schooling is coherent with actual local conditions, it is possible to obtain parents’ acceptance of and participation in their children’s education even in the most intractable environments.

8. Difficulties encountered
The difficulties encountered related among other things to the mindsets and attitudes of certain population groups, particularly the intelligentsia (fear of or veiled hostility to national languages etc.), the rigidity of class schedules, the limited resources available to respond to popular enthusiasm for bilingual schools, the additional work involved for teachers, and the fact that national languages are not used in official examinations.
Introduction

The bilingual education experiment in Burkina Faso was initiated in 1994 with the opening of two bilingual schools in the villages of Nomgana and Goué, located in Loumbila department about 20 kilometers east of the national capital Ouagadougou. These schools used only one national language, Mooré. The experiment then went through a phase of geographic and linguistic expansion to cover eight national languages and 28 of the country’s 45 provinces, and it is now in the process of consolidating this expansion or even further gradual scaling-up to cover the whole country.

At the time of writing, however, the presentations of the bilingual education experiment are partial and are not easily accessible because they are disseminated only locally. For this reason, one of the members of the team that designed the strategy and teaching aids for the experiment undertook to produce, with support from ADEA, the comprehensive presentation needed to share this experiment with the rest of the world, in order to disseminate the information more widely and elicit criticisms and suggestions for improvement.

2. The members of the design team were Norbert Nikiema, professor of linguistics at the University of Ouagadougou (team leader); Paul Taryam Ilboudo, teacher and linguist; Madeleine Ki Kabore, teacher and linguist; and Noaga Augustin Sawadogo, pedagogical advisor.
This book is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 1** describes the socio-economic and educational context of Burkina Faso, in which the experiment was conducted;

- **Chapter 2** recounts the history of bilingual education in Burkina Faso, indicating how an experiment that began on a very small scale in two villages and in the non-formal sector grew into an action-research program that led to the proposal of an educational continuum running from early-learning centers to junior secondary school as the framework for provision of bilingual education in Burkina Faso;

- **Chapter 3** presents the strategies used to implement bilingual education;

- **Chapter 4** presents the academic and non-academic results achieved;

- **Chapter 5** comments on the impacts of the experiment, the main difficulties encountered, the lessons learned, and prospects for capitalization of this experience.
Chapter 1. 
Context of the experiment

Burkina Faso, known as Upper Volta until 1984, is a country in the Sahel region with an area of 274,000 km², located about 1,000 kilometers from the sea. It is bordered by Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Togo and Benin to the south, by Niger to the east, and by Mali to the north and west. Burkina Faso became independent in 1960.

1.1. The socio-economic context of Burkina Faso

The country’s population, estimated at 12,444,200 in 2002³, is growing at a rate of 2.7% per year. It is primarily agricultural (80% of the population derives its livelihood from agriculture).

The population has a relatively high proportion of women (51.74%) and is extremely young, as about half (49.1%) of all inhabitants are under 15 years of age. The urban population is estimated at 19.23% of the total population. The rates of rural-to-urban migration and emigration are both high. Average population density is approximately 45 people per km².

Economically, Burkina Faso ranks 175th of 177 countries worldwide, according to the UNDP’s 2004 Sustainable Human Development Report, with the following indicators: life expectancy at birth, 45.8 years (2002); GDP per capita, 216,555 CFA francs (US$1,100) in 2004; 46.4% of the total population (53.3% of the rural population and 19.9% of the urban population) has annual income below the poverty line, which was estimated at 82,672 CFA francs (US$118) in 2003. The population group most affected by poverty is that of children under 15 years of age. These indicators confirm that Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries in the world.

Where social affairs are concerned, the government has continued to expand the budget of social sectors. Progress has been made in the health sector through increased immunization coverage, augmented staff in health centers and lower drug prices.


At the political and administrative level, Burkina Faso has been working since 1991 on macroeconomic adjustment and institutional reform through structural adjustment programs. A democratization process was also initiated in 1991. The current form of government is that of a civilian republic. All the judicial and institutional elements needed to establish democratic culture and reinforce the rule of law are present: a multiparty system, media pluralism (expansion of the independent private written press as well as community- and association-based radio stations), respect for freedom of association and of organization, etc.

Burkina Faso is a democratic republic divided into the following administrative units: regions, provinces, departments and villages. It has 13 regions, 45 provinces, 350 departments, and at least 8,103 villages. French is the official language, but 59 African languages are spoken in Burkina Faso.

The new socio-political context is also characterized by a major reform of public administration and a decentralization policy, which augur well for governmental efficiency and the participation of rural communities in decisions concerning their future. Municipal elections were held in April 2006, leading to the creation of 357 municipalities.

1.2. Educational and linguistic context
The traditional education system of Burkina Faso was largely inherited from the French colonization and resembles those of other Francophone African countries. We will therefore provide only a brief review of its structure, followed by a discussion of the main problems of the education system, which the innovation described herein is intended to help resolve.

Structure of the education system
Burkina adopted on 9 May 1996 and promulgated on 24 June 1996 its education reform law, Act 013/96/ADP, title III of which stipulates that the structures and subsystems of the education system are as follows: formal education, non-formal education, informal education, and specific education and training programs.

Formal education comprises:
- preschool education for young children, lasting from one to three years;
- primary education, which lasts six years, divided into three segments: two years of preparatory class (cours préparatoire), CP1 and CP2; two years of elementary class (cours
élémentaire), CE1 and CE2; and two years of middle class (cours moyen), CM1 and CM2. Primary education is principally concerned with children aged 6 to 12 years;

• secondary education, which lasts seven years, comprises general education, technical and vocational education, and artistic education, with each category having a four-year junior level and a three-year senior level;

• higher education, which is organized by type of education (general, technical/vocational, artistic) in training and research units (UFRs), grandes écoles and institutes, each having one to three levels;

• vocational training is provided in specialized training centers, in technical and vocational secondary schools, and in technical and vocational higher education institutions.

The administrative organization of the formal education sector is as follows:

• preschool education is administered by the Ministry of Social Affairs and National Solidarity (MASSN);

• primary or basic education comes under the Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy (MEBA);

• secondary and higher education come under the Ministry of Secondary and Higher Education and Scientific Research (MESSRS);

• any vocational training schemes currently existing within a ministry fall under the administrative jurisdiction of that ministry.

Primary education leads to the primary school certificate (certificat d'études primaires – CEP), while access to secondary education is conditional on passing a highly selective competitive examination for entry into the first year of junior secondary school. The number of pupils admitted to the junior secondary
level based on this examination varies each year according to the number of places available in secondary schools, but on average it is barely above 10% of those who pass the CEP exam.

Junior secondary school leads, for general education, to the BEPC (brevet d’études du premier cycle) junior secondary certificate, and for technical and vocational education, to the CAP (certificat d’aptitudes professionnelles) occupational skill certificate. At the senior secondary level, the corresponding diplomas are, for general education, the baccalauréat and, for technical and vocational education, the BEP (brevet d’études professionnelles) certificate of vocational proficiency (short track) or a technical baccalauréat (long track).

Non-formal education, according to the 1996 reform law, comprises “all education and training activities that are structured and organized outside the school system”.

Non-formal education providers include permanent literacy and training centers (CPAF), training centers for young farmers (CFJA), non-formal basic education centers (CEBNF), intensive literacy training centers for development (AFI-D) and other training and supervision bodies. Non-formal education is chiefly concerned with literacy training for youth and adults, age 15 and up.

The general provisions of the reform law stipulate that schooling is compulsory from 6 to 16 years of age (Art. 2) and that the languages of instruction are to be French and national languages (Art. 4).

Following Nikièma (2000a), we will now examine the way the formal and non-formal sub-systems work and the challenges facing basic education that led to the bilingual education experiment.
The contrast between the two components of basic education

Basic education consists of formal primary education and all non-formal education (literacy training for youth and adults). These two components present the following contrasts:

- Traditional formal education inherited from the colonial period uses French as the sole medium of instruction, while non-formal education uses only the local languages, referred to as “national languages”. We will come back to the objectives and consequences of this language policy.

- Formal education awards diplomas that enable the holder to apply for a salaried position in the civil service or private sector. Those who hold diplomas from the traditional system enjoy greater social status and have access to power, wealth and knowledge.

- Non-formal education, in contrast, is flexible and geared to immediate practical usefulness, but it does not lead to certification, nor does it award diplomas that lead to jobs and power. Knowledge acquired through national languages, and the languages themselves, are thus de facto treated as of lesser value, and such knowledge counts for little in administrative and legal matters.

The poor performance of traditional schools

The performance problems of the traditional school system may be summed up as follows:

- Traditional schools, inspired by the colonial system, have remained foreign to Burkina Faso society and have never become integrated into it. Such schools are inappropriate because they uproot children, cutting them off from their local environment.

- Those who leave these schools, whether they hold a diploma or not, are socially unadjusted and find it difficult to become integrated in their environment and to put their schooling
to use in life after school (see e.g. Jessua and Lecysin, 1993, and P.T. Ilboudo, 2000).

- Traditional schools are costly and weigh heavily on the budget: the average annual cost per pupil is about 33% of per capita GDP and education accounts for over 20% of the central government budget.
- Despite its cost, the internal efficiency of the traditional formal basic education system is very low, regardless of the indicator considered: low promotion rates and high rates of repetition, dropout and exclusion at all levels (see e.g. MEBA, 1994; Sanou, 1984; Korgho, 1984; and Mingat and Jarousse, 1987).

The following indicators also testify to the low internal efficiency and highly selective nature of Burkina Faso’s traditional education system: “40% average pass rate on the CEP and only 17% without repeating; out of 1,000 children entering the first primary year [CP1], only 205 reach the last year [CM2] without repeating, while 599 children require 8 years to get there. The average duration of primary education per diploma-holding graduate is 12.2 years, whereas the normal figure is 6 years, and the input/output ratio is only 26.5%.”

Qualitatively, the low level of teacher training, the selective and elitist nature of the system, and the unsuitability of the curriculum to the country’s social, cultural and economic development context all detract from the productivity of the traditional school system.

All this raises the problem of adapting the system to the realities and current needs of Burkina society.

The linguistic situation and the language issue in education

Studies by the National Center for Scientific and Technological Research (CNRST) have found that 59 different languages are used in Burkina Faso (see Kedrebeogo and Yago, 1982), for a population estimated at slightly over 12 million people in 2003. The great majority of these languages belong to three large linguistic families (Gur, Mandé, West Atlantic). There are large disparities between these languages (see Kedrebeobo, 2003): in geolinguistic terms, the center and east of the country (the most populated regions, comprising 29 of the 45 provinces) are relatively homogeneous linguistically, with 18 languages spoken, while the western part (less populated, 16 provinces) is quite heterogeneous, as 41 languages are spoken. These 41 languages in the western region are spoken by 30.80% of the population, while the 18 languages in the eastern region are spoken by 69.19% of the population.

The number of native speakers varies considerably from one language to another (Kedrebeogo, 1998). Mooré is spoken by slightly over half of the population (50.54%); 12 other languages have from 100,000 to 800,000 native speakers; and there are languages such as Sillanka, Biali and Jelkunan (Blé) that are spoken only in one, two or three small villages, with fewer than a thousand speakers.

According to the 1985 general census of the population, 90.11% of Burkina Faso’s population speak only 14 languages, which are dominant in one or more large administrative divisions (regions or provinces), while the other 45 languages are spoken by only 9.89% of the population. In addition, Dioula has become a sort of lingua franca in the linguistically heterogeneous western part of the country.
This multilingualism poses a serious challenge to the education system: which language(s) should be chosen (if it is really necessary to choose) as teaching vehicle(s) and on what grounds? When and for how long should national languages be used in the education system as vehicles of instruction?

The use of national languages in formal education has often been (and continues to be) a subject of debate, sometimes very heated debate. We will describe the language situation in education in order to pinpoint the issues.

French remains the only language used in formal basic education, although the five years of reform from 1979 to 1984 introduced national languages in a few schools and although, since the 1994 General State of education, national languages are used in innovative education programs on an experimental basis (see below). Other European languages and Arabic are also used in the formal system, but primarily at the secondary and higher levels, as media of instruction and/or subjects of study. The trouble is that, according to estimates, French is spoken by only 10 to 15% of the population (Nikièma, 2000a:127-28), and those mainly in the cities.

Article 4 of the 1996 education reform law states that “the languages of instruction are French and national languages” and that “the organization of language teaching is specified by cabinet decree”.

Under these legislative provisions and with tacit permission from the government of Burkina Faso to look for alternative approaches, a number of educational innovations have been tried, including bilingual education. Many of these experiments take account of the linguistic dimension, since it seems established that the use of the national languages spoken by pupils
as the medium of instruction, in complementarity with French, is one of the means of increasing the return on schooling and on the education system as a whole.

In Burkina Faso, the objections, often based on prejudice, to the use of national languages in schools range from categorical opposition to the very principle of their use to “serious” reservations concerning a number of problems and difficulties, both objective and subjective. Nikièma (1995) examines the various arguments put forward against the use of national languages in formal education. Those that recur the most frequently include

- “national languages cannot ... serve as media of instruction in subjects such as mathematics and the sciences; they would not allow access to modern scientific knowledge and techniques;
- the use of national languages will hinder ... learning or proper command of French, especially since the time devoted to French will be reduced;
- education in national languages is ... cut-rate education;
- the large number of national languages argues against their use in schools, and in any case, instruction in national languages would be too expensive.” (Nikièma, 2000b:130)

An attempted reform of education from 1979 to 1984, which for the first time allowed the use of three national languages as vehicles of instruction in experimental schools, was even called “a murderous reform whose irrationality and wickedness could be equaled only by the ruin of thousands of innocent children» (K.E. Ilboudo, 1984:21, quoted in Nikièma, 2000b).

The innovation described in this case study was developed in this difficult context, in which much remains to be done to restore esteem for national languages and dissipate the fear aroused by the idea of using them in the education system. This fear persists despite the fact that the current trend, both around the world and in Africa, is to view the languages spoken by pupils as vital
resources for the achievement of education for all. Concerning the context in Burkina Faso, it must be acknowledged that:

“although many studies around the world, in Europe, the United States, Canada … have demonstrated that any language can serve, with proper preparation, as an effective vehicle of instruction, doubt persists and is strengthened by all sorts of prejudices in Francophone Africa, particularly where the effectiveness of national languages must be demonstrated [again] to try to convince educators, academics, politicians, etc., not to mention the rural peoples who speak these languages.” (Nikièma, 2000b:131)

The bilingual education experiment that forms the subject of this case study may be considered as a contribution to the search for additional evidence of the effectiveness of national languages in education systems.

Innovations in education since the 1994 General State of education

After the General State of education (1994), which recommended the use of national languages in formal education, the government called on civil society to seek educational approaches offering alternatives to the traditional system. A number of innovations emerged, all of which opted for the bilingual approach during the first years of schooling: satellite schools, non-formal basic education centers (CEBNFs), community schools, Banmanuara centers (CBNs) and bilingual schools. We present briefly below the innovations that developed at the same time as bilingual education.

Satellite schools

Satellite schools, opened in 1995 with the support of UNICEF, are schools that admit school-age children for the first three years of primary schooling (CP1, CP2, CE1). They are located in villages too far from the nearest regular “mother” school for the youngest
children to walk. Hence the name: these three-year schools are the “satellites” of the six-year mother school.

The main purpose of satellite schools is “to bring the school closer to children, either in the villages or less than 2 or 3 km away by foot, and to facilitate their later access to more distant primary schools from the fourth year on” (Kibora et al., 1999:22). Along with French, satellite schools use national languages for literacy training and the acquisition of basic skills (reading, writing, oral expression and arithmetic). Starting in the fourth year (CE2), pupils from the satellite schools attend the traditional mother school for three years, to continue their schooling entirely in French. These children thus attend primary school for a total of six years, as in traditional schools.

Non-formal basic education centers
Non-formal basic education centers (CEBNFs) were created in 1995 by the Burkina government with financial support from UNICEF. They provide out-of-school children aged 9 to 15 with a basic education program having a pre-vocational component; the program is organized in four school years, each lasting six months, with four classroom hours per day. CEBNFs are intended to provide a minimum level of education and some practical and manual training related to learners’ socio-economic environment. They are supposed to enable these young people to pursue simultaneously their family and village activities. CEBNF completers are not explicitly prepared to continue their education in order to take formal school examinations.

National languages are used in the first two years of the CEBNF program to facilitate knowledge acquisition and integration of the school in its environment. The program is in French as from the third year.
Community schools
Community schools (keoogo in the Mooré language) were created in 1994 by the NGO Save the Children USA, established in Burkina Faso since 1977 and generally called the Foundation for Community Development (FDC), in conjunction with the central government and grassroots communities. This non-formal education project, whose philosophy and objectives are summed up by Kibora et al. (1999:33), aims among other things for improvement in the living conditions of disadvantaged children, balanced integration of schools into their environment, and real community participation in decision-making and in management of educational activities.

The use of children’s mother tongues during the first two years helps to achieve these objectives, particularly those relating to parental and community involvement in the implementation of the educational innovation.

A linkage (called a “bridge”) has been set up to children from community schools to enter the formal school system. “At each end-of-year evaluation, the evaluating committee makes a list of fourth-year children who meet the criteria for entry into the fourth year [CE2], or fifth year [CM1] for those with a grade average above 13 out of 20” (Napon, 2006:5-6).

Banmanuara centers
The experiment with the use of the Gulmancema language in schools is an extension of literacy training in this language, in Banmanuara II centers (CBN II) for teenagers and adults and in Banmanuara I centers (CBN I) for school-age children (Ouoba, 2004). The program lasts four years in the CBN II for teenagers and adults (who are admitted after two years of literacy training) and five years in the CBN I. The experience started in the 1995-1999 period, with the experiment of teaching French to 40 adult auditors, 9 of whom were women. An evaluation of their proficiency

I. CONTEXT OF THE EXPERIMENT
in French found encouraging results in terms of reading, written expression and dictation.

Graduates of these centers take the CEP examinations organized for sixth-grade (CM2) pupils.
Chapter 2.
Genesis and development of bilingual education

The bilingual education experiment in progress in Burkina Faso has some of its roots in two earlier educational innovations: the 1979 educational reform and the 1992-1993 experiment with the ALFAA method of learning French based on literacy in national languages.

2.1. The 1979 education reform
After a critical analysis of the country’s basic education system, which revealed the problems mentioned in section 1.2 above, in 1979 the government of Upper Volta (as Burkina Faso was then called) undertook a reform of education, particularly primary education. The main feature of the reform was the introduction of the three most widely spoken national languages (Mooré, Dioula and Fulfulde) as media of instruction, alongside French. This marked the first time such an initiative had been taken in the history of the country. The reform was abruptly halted after five years (in 1984) without a country-wide final evaluation and

6. The reform was initiated under the «Third Republic», which was overthrown in 1980 by a military coup; the military junta gave way to a People’s Salvation Council in 1982, which in turn was replaced by a revolutionary regime headed by Captain Thomas Sankara in 1983.
without any official questioning of the objectives and merits of the reform and the experiment in using national languages. However, an interim evaluation conducted the previous year by the Institute for Reform and Pedagogical Affairs (see IRAP, 1984) showed that the academic performance of the schools concerned by the reform were better than those of traditional schools in mathematics, French, and the early-learning subjects (observational sciences, history and geography).

The interruption of the reform led to confusion, even dismay, among the pupils of the experimental schools and their parents, who felt they had been trapped or, worse, tricked. Moreover, since the reform was halted when the first “guinea pig” pupils were in the fifth year, it was impossible to collect independent evidence as to the effectiveness of using national languages as media of instruction and to find out how many would have passed the primary school certificate (CEP) exam the following year.

It was therefore essential to conduct another experiment to confirm that using pupils’ mother tongues had positive effects on academic performance. As the formal education system had proved to be somewhat dangerous terrain for this, however, it was necessary to look to the non-formal sector to conduct this further experiment.

2.2. The ALFAA method of learning French
In 1990, a farmers’ association called Manegdbzânga (development for all) located in Loumbila department, not far from Ouagadougou, which had long been engaged in literacy training for its members in the national language Mooré, informed its partner, the Swiss Organization for Workers’ Solidarity (OSEO),

7. To our knowledge, there has been no study of what became of these experimental school pupils, particularly those in the fifth year.
that it wished to have its literate members learn French. To fulfill this request, OSEO provided support to a team of teachers and teacher-researchers of the Association for the Promotion of Writing and Books in National Languages for Development (ELAN-Développement), which developed and tested from 1991 to 1993 the method for learning French based on literacy in national languages (ALFAA method).

This method designed for adult education enabled adults who had already acquired literacy skills in their national language to learn French at a level of equivalent to the fifth and sixth years (CM1 and CM2) of traditional primary school in 150 days. The method proved successful, justifying its use in several Mooré-speaking provinces, and its subsequent adaptation to three other languages spoken in Burkina Faso (Dioula, Fulfulde, Lyélé) led the Manegdbzânga Association to request that it be applied to out-of-school children of the association’s members who were too old (9 to 14 years), under the legislation in force, to be admitted into the traditional formal school system, but also too young (under 15 years) to attend adult literacy centers. This gave rise to the idea of providing bilingual education.

### 2.3. The three phases in the development of bilingual education

There have been three main phases in the development of bilingual education: the pilot phase (1994-1998), addressed to 9-14 year olds, the phase of bilingual education for young children, and the phase of establishing early-learning centers and multilingual middle schools.

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8. As noted in section 1.2., adult literacy training is provided exclusively in national languages; access to French was reserved for children in school.
9. The evaluations were made by employees of the Burkina Pedagogical Institute (IPB).
The pilot phase

Instead of simply adapting the ALFAA method to teach French, and only French, to younger learners (9-14 years), the design team and OSEO seized the opportunity to offer Manegdzânga a bilingual school program using the national language in complementarity with French.

In order to make up the educational lag of these children, and taking account of the fact that they were psychologically more mature, it was decided to try a four-year program during which the children would receive the same education as that provided by primary schools in six years and would be prepared to take the primary education certificate (CEP) exam at the end of the program. It was the perfect opportunity to resume the experiment with bilingual education that had been interrupted five years after the 1979 reform, but this time outside the school system and on a private basis.

An “accelerated bilingual school” program was thus developed. Implementation of the program provided the occasion for excellent institutional cooperation among the following stakeholders: the designers of the ALFAA method, who were founding members of ELAN-Développement, prepared the teaching/learning materials; the experiment was conducted with the Manegdzânga Association, which among other tasks selected candidates in two villages that volunteered for the experiment and gave them prior literacy training; and the National Literacy Institute (INA), a technical arm of MEBA, handled monitoring and evaluation. OSEO provided financial support for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the experiment, pursuant to the terms of amendment V of 4 July 1994 to the cooperation protocol of 13 May 1983 signed with the MEBAM.
The program provided for the teaching of French (written and spoken) as a subject and teaching of other subjects in the local language (Mooré) for the first two years, after which French was to be used as the medium of instruction for the fifth- and sixth-year programs of traditional schools, leading to the CEP.

At the beginning of the third year of the pilot phase, it was vital for the experimental team to compare their pupils' level of attainment with that of pupils in nearby traditional schools. A comparative evaluation between the two bilingual classes and four fifth-year classes in traditional schools was organized by Judith Tapsoba, inspector for the district containing the experimental schools (Ziniaré II). The evaluation, conducted under the same conditions as for official exams, took place in December 1996, at which time the two bilingual classes had received 2 years and 3 months of schooling in Mooré and French.

The examinations were selected, administered and corrected at the same time by traditional school teachers designated by the inspector. The subjects tested (all in French) were French (dictation and questions, reading comprehension), arithmetic, observational sciences, history and geography. Table 2.1 presents the performance of each school.

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<th>Table 2.1. Results of the comparative test of December 1996</th>
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<td>No. tested</td>
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<td>No. pupils obtaining an average or better score (%)</td>
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2. GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION
It can be seen that in the traditional primary schools of Loumbila, Donsin A, Donsin B and Nomgana, the percentage of pupils achieving an average or better score were respectively 3.45%, 42.86%, 20% and 40.91%, whereas the experimental bilingual schools of Goué and Nomgana posted rates of 68% and 76.67%. The two bilingual schools had clearly outperformed the traditional schools, showing that the experiment had promise.

In June 1998, with special permission from the Ministry of Basic Education\textsuperscript{10}, pupils in bilingual schools were allowed to take the national official examinations, which are entirely in French. Of the 53 pupils taking the exam, 28 passed (52.83%). The pass rate of pupils from traditional schools (after at least 6 years of instruction entirely in French), were as follows: for the Ziniaré 2 district, which contains the pilot schools, 47.08%; and for Oubritenga province, which contains this district, 47.42%. The average national pass rate on the CEP in June 1998 was 48.60%.

Passing the certification exam was not the sole objective of the experiment. Chapter 4 presents the results of bilingual education, including those of the pilot phase, in greater detail.


In view of these positive results and unexpected level of success, MEBA and OSEO agreed that the experiment could be resumed and applied to school-age children (7-8 years), under amendment VII of 28 December 1998 to their cooperation protocol of 13 May 1983. This second phase in the development of bilingual education (1998-2002) was marked by the following:

\textsuperscript{10} Under the legislation in force, since the experimental schools were not officially recognized by the central government, pupils could not apply individually to take the certification exam: moreover, the law requires a minimum of 5 years of schooling to be considered for entering secondary school in case of passing the CEP exam with a good score, which excluded out of hand all children with only 4 years of schooling.
as early as the 1997/1998 school year, three schools were involved: the first two experimental schools, which had become public schools, and a non-denominational private school, where parents had agreed to embark on the bilingual adventure;
• course designers adapted the teaching materials to school-age children;
• the experiment expanded geographically to cover five Mooré-speaking areas, and linguistically\textsuperscript{11} to encompass five more national languages used for adult literacy: Dioula, widely spoken in the western part of the country; Dagara, which is predominant in the southwest; Fulfulde, the second most widely spoken language nationwide; Gulmancema, the dominant language in the east; and Lyélé, the dominant language in Sanguié province, in the center-west;
• the initiative was supported by other technical and financial partners of MEBA, notably the Royal Embassy of the Netherlands and the NGO Intermon-Oxfam.

This phase involved a total of 40 bilingual schools in 28 provinces, and 6 national languages were used as teaching languages along with French.

To integrate initial literacy training in the local language into school programs and to take account of the fact that the new target group was younger, the duration of the “bilingual education for young children” program was extended to 5 years. The “accelerated” program for 9-14 year olds was kept at 4 years, with its linguistic coverage being extended to include Dioula.

\textsuperscript{11} In the geolinguistic context of Burkina Faso, linguistic expansion necessarily means geographical expansion.
The third phase
Noteworthy aspects of this phase include:

• further growth in the number of bilingual schools, through both geographic and linguistic extension of the experiment;
• involvement of new partners in the education sector and other technical and financial partners of MEBA;
• the establishment of early-learning centers (3Es) and multilingual middle schools (CMSs).

a. Growth in the number of bilingual schools
This growth was brought about through:

• continued geographical expansion to cover other dialect areas, Gulmancema (Koulpelogho province in the south and Tapoa province in the southeast) and Fulfulde (Yatenga province in the north and Oudalan province in the northeast);
• experimentation in urban areas: the towns of Kaya (center north), Koupèla (center east), Ouagadougou, Koudougou (center west), Dano, Bobo Dioulasso (the country’s second largest city) and Pama (east);
• continued linguistic expansion with the launch of experiments using Bissa and French (Koulpéolgho province in the south) and Nuni and French (Sissili province in the south).

b. Involvement of other partners
The following are worth noting in particular:

• the entry of a private provider, which opened a private bilingual school in Tangyoko at the beginning of the 1998/1999 school year;
• the commitment of the Catholic Church to adopt the bilingual approach in the primary schools that it was recovering from the government12 (Kaya and Koupèla dioceses, as early as the 2001/2002 school year);

12. From 1969 to 1998, the Church had turned its schools over to the government. Beginning in 1998, it gradually took them back, and many dioceses have pledged to convert these schools into bilingual schools.
• support for bilingual education, starting at the beginning of the 2001/2002 school year, from the Swiss Cooperation Agency and the NGO Voisins-Mondiaux, the latter through its capacity-building and empowerment project PRECAP in Koulpéolgo;

• the involvement (2003/2004 school year) of the NGO Dakupa (center east) in the bilingual education program, with financial support from Intermon-Oxfam and technical support from OSEO and MEBA.

c. The establishment of early-learning centers and multilingual middle schools. These two “missing links” were created to fill the gaps in provision so as to offer a continuum of bilingual basic education, consisting of:

• first level: the 3Es, intended to democratize preschool education (3 to 6 years);

• second level: bilingual primary school (5 years) for children aged 7 to 12 years;

• third level: the CMSs (4 years) for bilingual primary school graduates aged 13 to 16.

Table 2.2 presents the situation of all these levels at the beginning of the 2005/2006 school year.

Table 2.2. The bilingual education sector in 2005/2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of school</th>
<th>No. schools</th>
<th>No. classrooms</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>National languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3Es</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,832</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public bilingual schools</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>10 639</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic bilingual schools</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>3201</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-denominational private</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bilingual schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total bilingual primary schools</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>14 262</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMSs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION
In this third phase, eight national languages are being used in bilingual schools: two Mandé languages (Bisa and Dioula), five Gur languages (Dagara, Gelmancema, Lyélé, Mooré and Nuni), and one West Atlantic language (Fulfulde). It should also be noted that in this phase, bilingual education was present in rural, semi-urban and urban areas alike.

2.4. Rationale and major options of the bilingual approach

Rationale of the bilingual approach
UNESCO has been advocating the use of children’s first languages in education since the 1950s (UNESCO, 1953). As early as 1965, the education ministers’ conference on literacy held in Tehran, Iran, recognized that literacy training in foreign languages had proved a failure and strongly recommended that literacy programs use the languages actually spoken by learners. Later on, the works of psycholinguists and educational psychologists highlighted the benefits and desirability of bilingual education (see e.g. Hamers and Blanc, 1983).

Cummins (1979, 1984), for example, has shown that in bilingual situations, the acquisition and consolidation of academic skills in the mother tongue make it easier to learn the second language.

In the same vein, Mitrofanova and Decherieva (1987:503) state that:

“since an individual’s mother tongue is the language he/she speaks best, in which he/she is most at ease in expressing thoughts precisely and understanding others, the most effective teaching will be precisely teaching provided in that language.”

In the context of Burkina Faso, where education provided in a foreign language is an inescapable fact of life, the testimony of a
technical and financial partner as important as the World Bank is particularly noteworthy, particularly after the halt of the 1979 reform and, with it, the experiment in using national languages as vehicles of education. The Bank affirms that:

“… when education must eventually be provided in a language other than the child’s mother tongue, the best policy, and the most effective in pedagogical terms, is initially to use the mother tongue as the language of instruction, and later on gradually to replace it with the national language.” (World Bank, 1987)

The model of bilingualism selected
While the program described here recommended bilingualism (national language-French) in school, the designers were aware that there are a number of different models of bilingualism.

Bilingual education is a system in which instruction is provided in two languages, used as means or instruments for teaching and learning; the two languages may or may not be introduced simultaneously (Hamers and Blanc, 1987).

According to psycholinguists, learning a second language can lead to “additive bilingualism” or to “subtractive bilingualism”. The former is a “state of bilinguality in which the child has developed the two languages in a balanced way, and this bilingual experience has carried benefits for his/her cognitive development; this state is found primarily when both languages are valued in the child’s socio-cultural environment” (Hamers and Blanc, 1987:447). Subtractive bilingualism is a “state of bilinguality in which the child has developed the second language to the detriment of his/her command of the mother tongue”.

13. Here, “national language” refers to the official language.
14. “Set of psychological states or factors related to the use of two linguistic systems” (Dubois et al. [1994], Dictionnaire de linguistique, Paris: Larousse).
The two types of bilingualism have different consequences both for learners and for the effectiveness of education. It is recognized that subtractive bilingualism “carries disadvantages for cognitive development; this state is found when the environment attributes less value to the child’s mother tongue than to a dominant language that carries more social prestige”. The experts agree, however, that additive bilingualism is the more beneficial bilingual experience for the child: “most of the positive results of bilingualism … have been achieved in this type of learning context” (Romaine, 1995:246).

In view of the above, the designers of the Burkina bilingual education program made a policy decision in favor of additive bilingualism and sought ways and means of bringing it about.

The type of bilingualism chosen is known to have consequences for educational strategy. The designers had a choice between the “transition” and “maintenance” models, the “immersion” model being rejected as incompatible with the policy of pursuing additive bilingualism. According to Hamers and Blanc (1987:457), the immersion option involves “schooling where instruction is provided in a language other than the pupil’s mother tongue; such schooling is generally organized by native speakers of the other language and as a result takes no account of the pupil’s mother tongue”. In short, immersion is the current practice in the traditional school system, whose deficiencies were discussed above and to which the designers were seeking an alternative.

In the transition model, “the pupil is allowed to use the language spoken at home and often is taught in this language until he/she is considered ready to cope with instruction in the majority language” (Baker, 1993:156). In our context, choosing this model would mean using national languages merely as a springboard providing easier access to French, with no intention of making
them teaching languages in complementarity with French. Baker (ibid.) points out, however, that the objective and outcome of using this model are in fact the same as in the immersion model: cultural assimilation and monolingual teaching.

In a maintenance model, however, “a minority language and a majority language are both used throughout the education of the linguistic minority” (García, 1997:414), the goal being full additive bilingualism. Thus, the maintenance model was the model most compatible with the designers’ policy decision, although it needed some adaptation before it could be fully or literally implemented.

The bilingual continuum as implementation framework for additive bilingualism

The creation of 3Es and CMSs gave concrete form to a vision of basic education as both a self-contained whole and a carefully sequenced continuum; this vision is in keeping with the education reform law but is somewhat obscured by the current administrative organization of the education system (see the description of formal education above). In this framework, bilingual education is provided to children from 3 to 16 years of age and thus extends over the entire duration of basic education, and of mandatory education as provided for by the education reform law. The “bilingual education continuum” consists of the following levels:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.3. Levels of the bilingual education continuum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st level</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6 year olds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration: 3 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 3Es, bilingual education can mean reinforcement of the local language and/or initiation in French, particularly spoken French. In bilingual primary schools, national languages are used as media of instruction, but are gradually superseded by French, generally starting in the third year (see below).

In CMSs, functional multilingualism is pursued through reinforcement of the local language, learning a second national language (a widely spoken language – usually Dioula, Fulfulde or Mooré – other than the national language used as a vehicle of instruction in the bilingual primary school), and learning a second international language, English, which in any case is on the secondary school program.

In addition to providing bilingual (actually, multilingual) instruction, the bilingual continuum is an educational sub-system that tries to inculcate, among other things, gender equity, self-esteem, tolerance and respect for others in a context of cultural diversity, and that incorporates the positive cultural values of the local environment and education in citizenship.

2.5. The objectives of bilingual education

General objectives
The general objectives of the bilingual education experiment in Burkina Faso are as follows:

• to increase the internal and external efficiency of basic education;
• to improve the quality and relevance of basic education;
• to establish synergy and bridges between formal and non-formal basic education;
• to increase the cost-effectiveness of basic education;
• to enhance the integration of schools into their environ-
ment, ownership of schools by grassroots communities, and
active community participation in the preparation, planning
and implementation of activities.

The specific objectives vary depending on the level (3Es, bilin-
gual primary schools or CMSs).

**Specific objectives of early-learning centers**
The specific objectives of early-learning centers (3Es) for children aged 3-6 years are as follows:
• to help offset the inadequacy of the services provided to
children by families, in terms of hygiene, nutrition, and
psychomotor development;
• to prepare the young child psychologically, physically and
mentally to cope with primary school;
• to democratize preschool education services in rural, urban
and semi-urban areas;
• to help free mothers and little girls temporarily from child
care tasks so that they have a calm moment to pursue their
own occupations: literacy, training, socio-economic and
cultural activities;
• to develop early bilingualism (national language and French)
among 3-6 year olds.

**Specific objectives of bilingual primary schools**
Bilingual primary schools seek to:
• give learners the ability to use and profit from their knowl-
edge of a national language and their literacy skills in that
language to educate themselves, acquire modern knowledge
and learn an international language (in this case French, the
country’s official language);
• to reconcile schools with their local environments by incorporating the environment’s positive cultural values in schooling and by involving the surrounding community;
• to contribute to the search for ways and means of bridging the gap between the formal and non-formal education systems, so as to render them complementary while providing the same «tools» and the same opportunities to those leaving both systems;
• to associate the act of learning with the act of producing, in order to prepare children to become informed, motivated stakeholders in local, regional and national development.

Since the 1979 reform was aborted, and with it the experiment in using national languages in school, educational innovations using the bilingual approach are expected to help find effective answers to objections to the use of national languages, and in particular to:

• demonstrate the effectiveness of national languages as vehicles of instruction, including in mathematics and science;
• demonstrate that using national languages does not hinder and may facilitate learning of French;
• confirm that the use of national languages helps to improve the internal and external efficiency of the education system;
• show a grasp of the various technical aspects of using national languages in formal education;
• confirm that bilingual education offers children the same opportunities as traditional schools and hence is not education «on the cheap».

Specific objectives of multilingual middle schools
Multilingual middle schools (CMSs) were created to allow pupils leaving bilingual primary schools to avoid being plunged into traditional secondary education, where all the important aspects of bilingual education promoted since the 3Es are wholly ignored.
The CMS is the last level of the basic education continuum and aims to produce well-rounded, responsible individuals who are active in development and in community life.

The CMS is supposed to round out what pupils have already learned in the first two levels of bilingual education, so that by the end of middle school they have a basic education that enables them to acquire:

- the basic knowledge required to understand their environment and the world in general;
- the tools required to bring about the transformations needed to improve their living conditions, develop their own personalities and develop their environment.

On leaving the CMS, pupils should be able to identify and analyze the problems facing them and to find practical solutions. The CMS prepares pupils for the three following options:

- to continue their education in higher secondary school and even in higher education;
- to take vocational training in specialized schools;
- to join the workforce immediately.

Specifically, the CMS aims to:

- have pupils learn the entire content of the traditional junior secondary program;
- have them learn other content that is specific to the CMS: culture, productive activities, national languages, etc.;
- promote functional multilingualism: the use of French as the medium of instruction; learning a second, widely spoken national language; learning practical English, with emphasis on communication skills;
- associate the act of learning with the act of producing;
- promote positive cultural values and citizenship education (gender, tolerance, etc.).
The strategies used to pursue these objectives are described in Chapter 3.

2.6. Quantitative development of bilingual education

Early-learning centers
An early-learning center (3E) is a center where children from 3 to 6 years of age are provided with human resources (competent parent educators, cooks) and appropriate teaching/learning and play materials, in sufficient quantity to develop their talents and their motor, intellectual and psychoemotional skills. 3Es are generally located close to bilingual primary schools.

The first three 3Es opened in April 2001, during the 2000/2001 school year, and their number has steadily increased since then. In the 2005/2006 school year, there were 36 such centers with 1,408 boys and 1,424 girls enrolled (see Table 2.4 and Figure 2.1).

Table 2.4. Number and enrollment of 3Es, 2000/2001 to 2005/2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School year</th>
<th>Number of 3Es</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Number of parent educators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000/2001</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001/2002</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002/2003</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003/2004</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004/2005</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1,054</td>
<td>901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005/2006</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1,408</td>
<td>1,424</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OSEO

There were more girls than boys enrolled in 3Es until 2002 (57.43% in 2000/2001 and 51.18% in 2001/2002). The proportion of girls then declined (48.93% in 2002/2003, 45.58% in 2003/2004,
46.08% in 2004/2005), but climbed back to 50.28% in 2005/2006 (see Figure 2.1).

In 2005/2006, there were 184 parent educators, 66% of whom were women. Despite the difficulties stemming from their volunteer status and the current limitations on their qualifications, parent educators have kept their commitment to the community and the children, some of them since the 2000/2001 school year. This offers the assurance that, with a little financial and material encouragement, this innovation could be put on a permanent footing without much difficulty, due to the commitment of communities and of those selected to teach the children.

Figure 2.1. Number of 3Es, 2001-2006

Source: OSEO

Bilingual primary schools
Table 2.5 and Figure 2.2 below sum up the situation of bilingual schools from 1994 to 2006. It can be seen that, after the pilot experiment in two classes from 1994 to 1998, the bilingual primary school program, which initially was restricted to the
private sector, scaled up at a rather fast and steady pace in both the public and private education systems, particularly after the 2000/2001 school year.

Table 2.5. Number of bilingual primary schools and classrooms, 1994-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School year</th>
<th>Number of schools</th>
<th>Number of classrooms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994/1995</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995/1996</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996/1997</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997/1998</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998/1999</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999/2000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000/2001</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001/2002</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002/2003</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003/2004</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004/2005</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005/2006</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OSEO

Figure 2.2. Number of bilingual primary schools, 1994-2006

Source: OSEO
Change in enrollments from 1994 to 2006
After the cohort of the pilot experiment, the number of pupils in bilingual primary schools also rose steadily. The majority of pupils were boys in both the public and private sectors as from the 2000/2001 school year (see Table 2.6 and Figure 2.3).

Table 2.6. Enrollment in bilingual primary schools (public and private), 1994/95 to 2005/2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School year</th>
<th>Public sector</th>
<th>Private sector</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994/1995</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26 29</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995/1996</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26 29</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996/1997</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26 29</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997/1998</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>51 56</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998/1999</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>49 72</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999/2000</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000/2001</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001/2002</td>
<td>1,394</td>
<td>1,206</td>
<td>2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002/2003</td>
<td>1,794</td>
<td>1,565</td>
<td>3,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003/2004</td>
<td>3,153</td>
<td>2,854</td>
<td>6,007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004/2005</td>
<td>4,422</td>
<td>4,077</td>
<td>8,499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005/2006</td>
<td>5,621</td>
<td>5,018</td>
<td>10,639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>16,922</td>
<td>15,181</td>
<td>32,103</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OSEO

Figure 2.3. Enrollment in bilingual primary schools (public and private), 1994-2006

Source: OSEO
**Multilingual middle schools**

So that the bilingual education approach would not stop at the end of primary school, the authorities authorized the creation of CMSs to take in completers of bilingual primary schools (though not exclusively). CMSs cover the entire junior secondary program as well as national languages, productive activities and cultural activities. The CMS is to traditional secondary education what the bilingual school is to traditional primary education.

The first CMS in Burkina Faso was officially opened on 31 December 2003 in Nomgana (Loumbila department), pursuant to ministerial order no. 2003-300/MESSRS/SG/DEP of 31 December 2003 “authorizing the opening of a multilingual secondary school in Loumbila, Oubritenga province”, and the second in Dafinso (Bobo-Dioulasso department) in October 2004 pursuant to ministerial order no. 2005-098/MESSRS/CAB of 17 May 2005 “authorizing the opening of a multilingual secondary school in Dafinso, Houet province”. Both are public schools.

Table 2.7 presents the number of CMSs and classrooms over time:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School year</th>
<th>Number of CMSs</th>
<th>Number of classrooms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003/2004</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004/2005</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005/2006</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The trend in enrollment in the two CMSs is presented in Table 2.8:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen that enrollments increased rapidly in both CMSs. Although gender parity existed in the first year, 2003/2004, the
proportion of girls unfortunately dropped in the following years (46.63% in 2004/2005 and 48.37% in 2005/2006).

Figure 2.4. Enrollment in the two CMSs

2.7. The situation of bilingual education in the most recent school year (2005/2006)
In this section, we examine the situation of the bilingual education continuum (3Es, bilingual primary schools and CMSs) during the 2005/2006 school year.

Early-learning centers in 2005/2006
A total of 2,832 children from 3 to 6 years old were enrolled in the 36 3Es operating in the 2005/2006 school year. Average enrollment per 3E was 78 children, with the third year being the largest class (35.73% of total enrollment). Girls numbered 1,424, or 50.28% of total 3E enrollment. The rising trend of 3E enrollment (see the figure below) has helped to raise the national rate of preschool enrollment to 1.6%, according to the Ministry of Social Affairs and National Solidarity (MASSN).
Table 2.9. Early-learning center enrollment, 2005/2006 school year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First year</th>
<th>Second year</th>
<th>Third year</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>1,408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>1,424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>1,012</td>
<td>2,832</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OSEO

Figure 2.5. Early-learning center enrollment during the 2005/2006 school year

Source: OSEO

Bilingual primary schools in 2005/2006

The situation of bilingual primary schools during the 2005/2006 school year was generally satisfactory, although Catholic bilingual primary schools showed declining enrollment due to parents’ difficulties in paying school fees, which were rather high in this context of poverty. Table 2.10 and Figure 2.6 below offer a synoptic view of the situation of bilingual primary schools, broken down by year (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th years) and by sector (non-denominational private, Catholic private, public) during the 2005/2006 school year.
Table 2.10. Bilingual primary school enrollment, 2005/2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>1st year</th>
<th>2nd year</th>
<th>3rd year</th>
<th>4th year</th>
<th>5th year</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-denominational</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>private</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S/total</td>
<td></td>
<td>142</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1,643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>private</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>1,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S/total</td>
<td></td>
<td>770</td>
<td>751</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>3,005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>2,065</td>
<td>1,785</td>
<td>1,067</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>5,743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>1,768</td>
<td>1,584</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>5,131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S/total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,833</td>
<td>3,369</td>
<td>2,028</td>
<td>898</td>
<td>926</td>
<td>10,874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% girls</td>
<td>46.72%</td>
<td>46.56%</td>
<td>46.34%</td>
<td>46.70%</td>
<td>48.57%</td>
<td>46.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,745</td>
<td>4,184</td>
<td>2,816</td>
<td>1,610</td>
<td>1,221</td>
<td>14,301</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OSEO

The girls’ participation rate held steady at about 46%, then rose in the fifth year to 48.57%. This steady performance can also be seen in Figure 2.6 below.

Figure 2.6. Bilingual primary school enrollment by type of school, 2005/2006

Source: OSEO
Multilingual middle schools in 2005/2006

In the 2005/2006 school year, the Loumbila CMS had 210 pupils, of whom 102 (48%) were girls; the Dafinso CMS, 131 pupils, 39% of whom were girls.

The two CMSs thus admitted a total of 341 pupils, with a girls’ participation rate of 45%. It should be noted that some graduates of bilingual primary schools are then sent to traditional secondary schools. Table 2.11 and Figure 2.8 show a perceptible increase in enrollment in the lower classes, which would seem to indicate that parents now have more confidence in this new type of post-primary school that provides instruction in areas specific to the bilingual continuum (national languages, productive activities and cultural activities) as well as in traditional subjects.

Source: OSEO
Table 2.11. CMS enrollment, 2005/2006 school year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>LOUMBILA</th>
<th></th>
<th>DAFINSO</th>
<th></th>
<th>GRAND TOTAL</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(48%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(39%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(45%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OSEO

Figure 2.8. CMS enrollment, 2005/2006

Source: OSEO
Chapter 3.
Implementation strategies for bilingual education

To give the experiment every chance of succeeding, we formulated a number of implementation strategies: pedagogical and institutional strategies, design strategies for teaching and learning materials, external strategies, monitoring and evaluation strategies, etc. This chapter describes these strategies to facilitate assessment of them.

3.1. Pedagogical strategies and curricula
These strategies concern each level of the continuum: early-learning centers, bilingual schools and multilingual middle schools.

Pedagogical strategies and content in early-learning centers
In the 3Es, special emphasis was given to the following strategies:
• use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction;
• use of the mother tongue as a means of communication, in order to enable the child to take up the socio-cultural values of his/her environment;
• use of spoken French to facilitate the transition to the first year of bilingual primary school;
• use of lessons learned from literacy centers and bilingual schools to raise the quality of the care and services provided by parents to children aged 3 to 6 years;
• strengthening of the community-based approach through parental involvement in the education of young children;
• a constant effort to ensure gender equity.

The main activities conducted in the 3Es are as follows:
• health, hygiene and nutrition activities;
• games, cultural and artistic activities;
• household activities;
• cognitive activities (graphics, initiation to mathematics, spoken French in order to develop early national language-French bilingualism);
• manual and practical activities.

Pedagogical strategies and content in bilingual primary schools
In bilingual primary schools, the main strategies used are as follows:
• use of the national language as the medium of instruction for the first two years, while at the same time developing pupils’ communication skills in spoken French for the first year, and subsequently spoken and written French in the second and third years;
• alternate use of the national language and French as the teaching language for the first few months of the third year, but increasing use of French from that point to the end of primary school;
• emphasis in the first two years on acquiring the three levels of proficiency in the national language: communication skills, textual skills and cognitive skills;
• use of bilingual transfer mechanisms beginning in the second and third years to accelerate learning of French and the teaching of cognitive aspects in French;
• use of manual and practical activities to give a more concrete idea of certain concepts included in the program (geometry, the metric system, purchase price, cost, profit, etc.);
• a search for means of reducing basic education costs by significantly reducing the period of schooling (by one year for school-age children and by two years for 9-14 year olds), while at the same time improving the quality and the internal and external efficiency of the school system.

It proved indispensable to revise the traditional basic education curriculum in order to adapt it to the philosophy, objectives, and duration of bilingual education (only 4 or 5 years, as compared to 6 years in traditional schools).

Revising the curriculum was also essential because of the faster pace of learning in bilingual primary schools due to the use of the national languages spoken by pupils. For example, in a bilingual school, the first-year arithmetic program teaches the numbers from 1 to 999, whereas in traditional primary schools the first-year (CP1) program gets only as far as 20. Rethinking of the curriculum was also concerned with other subjects which are not included in the program of traditional schools.

Specialist consultants were therefore commissioned to prepare a curriculum that would both be suitable for bilingual schools and cover in full the official programs of traditional schools. This curriculum was validated by MEBA at a workshop attended by members of the minister’s office and the MEBA general secretariat, by the central, regional and provincial directors of MEBA and by curriculum specialists, and it is now the curriculum used
in bilingual primary schools in Burkina Faso. We provide a grade-by-grade overview of the curriculum below.

**Content of the first year of bilingual school**
The first year is mainly devoted to initial literacy and numeracy (reading, writing and written arithmetic) in the national language spoken by pupils, to spoken French and to cultural and productive activities.

a. **Teaching in the national language**
   Instruction in the local language accounts for about 90% of classroom time. The approach used for initial literacy training is as follows: following a conscientization discussion, a key sentence summing up the discussion is used as a basis for reading and writing lessons15.

   – **The conscientization discussion**: targeted socio-economic topics that are documented and ranked by priority in prospective studies (health and hygiene, environment, solidarity, gender issues, etc.) are used to make pupils aware of problem issues in their environment, to think about them, and, on the basis of participatory analysis, to understand their mechanisms, propose solutions and take a resolution to work for positive change in the problematic situation studied, through concrete actions in conjunction with their parents or the surrounding community. This form of instruction can have an immediate impact on the child’s living environment.

   – **The reading lesson**: this lesson is based on the topic of the conscientization discussion and serves as a source of motivation for learners. After the first year of schooling, pupils can easily read documents in the national language used as the medium of instruction.

15. This approach is based on practice in adult literacy programs.
- The writing lesson: it is based on the reading lessons and may eventually lead to the writing of texts related to the topic of the conscientization discussion. It enables pupils to write easily in their language by the end of the year.
- Arithmetic program: this is also taught in the national language spoken by pupils, for better understanding and faster learning. For this reason, even in the first year pupils can do exercises using the four arithmetic operations on numbers from 1 to 999.

b. Teaching of French
Only spoken French is taught, and takes up about 10% of classroom time. The French textbook uses the communicative approach and tools for teaching French as a foreign language or a teaching language.

c. Cultural and productive activities:
As a complement to purely scholastic education, pupils in bilingual schools are introduced, from the very first year, to various aspects of their culture (values, songs, dances, proverbs, tales, how to play musical instruments, etc.), educational productive tasks, and practical and manual activities that are practiced locally and are suitable for their age. Parental participation is essential to these activities.

Content of the second year of bilingual school
The second year reinforces initial literacy training in the local language as well as pupils’ command of French.

a. Teaching in the national language (approximately 80% of classroom time):
- Reading: in the second year, pupils further the knowledge acquired in the first year and practice expressive reading of various documents in the teaching language.
– Writing: the lessons consolidate what was learned the first year, but focus especially on the organization of written messages and understanding the spelling system of the teaching language, in order to be able to write short letters, small essays, test papers, etc.

– To reinforce their reading and writing skills in national languages, second-year pupils have lessons in history, geography and observational sciences drawn from the third- and fourth-year program of traditional schools, but taught in national languages. These lessons consolidate their reading and writing skills in their own language, but also convey cognitive skills related to these subjects, thereby preparing them for the transfer of these skills to French in the third year of bilingual primary school.

– Arithmetic: the second-year arithmetic program goes as far as the number 10,000 and teaches the practical uses of numbers by means of operations and problems related to the socio-economic environment; pupils learn addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, and most importantly, they learn to solve concrete problems (calculation of purchase prices, costs, sale price, profit and loss, etc.). In addition to arithmetic, second-year pupils study, in the local language, the concepts of geometry and the metric system that are taught in the third and fourth years of the traditional program.

– Grammar of the national language, taught in the national language: in the second-year program, pupils study the grammar of their language and thus become familiar with grammatical concepts in their mother tongue: concepts relating to sentence structure (subject, verb, object), to word structure (base word, root, suffix, etc.), to tense/aspect/mood, etc. This course is designed to help pupils understand how their own language works, but also and especially to
prepare for and facilitate their learning of French grammar and conjugation.

- **History, geography, observational sciences**: the second-year program includes “curiosity awakening subjects” (disciplines d’éveil) in national languages: the history, geography and observational sciences programs of the fourth year of traditional primary schools, adapted and/or translated into national languages and edited for the second year of bilingual school. Among the many objectives pursued through these programs, we may note: i) enhancement of pupils’ command of the national language (spelling, expressive reading, oral expression, vocabulary, etc.); ii) the development of cognitive skills in the subjects concerned, which will facilitate the transfer to French in the third year of bilingual school.

**b. Teaching of French**

In the second year, study of French accounts for approximately 20% of classroom time. The French program continues to work on oral expression, but emphasis is also placed on reading and writing in French, which is taught as a foreign language using the ALFAA method described above. The “reading-expression-comprehension” textbook uses both languages (the national language and French) to promote the transfer of the psychomotor mechanisms of reading and writing from the national language to French. This learning approach, which starts from a comparative analysis of French and the African language concerned, makes it possible to establish a rigorous sequence, progressing from the sounds and graphemes common to the two languages; to graphemes that, though used in both, have different values in the two languages (e.g. c, h, j, gi); and finally to French sounds and graphemes that do not
occur in the national language (e.g. q, qu, x)\textsuperscript{16}. By the end of the year, pupils can easily read documents from the third or even fourth year of traditional all-French primary schools. The textbook also covers concepts relating to sentence structure (subject, verb, object), word structure (base word, root, suffix, etc.) and, implicitly, tense/aspect/mood.

c. Culture, productive activities:
pupils continue cultural and productive activities as in the first year.

Content of the third year of bilingual school
The third year is the transition year in bilingual primary schools. In the first trimester of the school year, the national language and French are used alternately as the teaching language. Special emphasis is placed on learning French, which will gradually become the sole medium of instruction. The main subjects taught in the third year are as follows:

a. Teaching in the national language (approximately 50% of classroom time):
In the third year, classroom hours are fairly evenly divided between French and the national language. For each national language, the emphasis is placed on:
– Expressive reading and reading of a variety of documents: the aim is to enable pupils to read easily various documents in national languages in order to prepare them for expressive reading. Role-playing games (for conversation) and reading competitions are used.

\textsuperscript{16} For the national languages used in adult literacy programs, there is a national alphabet set by decree in 1969 that is based on the African Reference Alphabet, which itself is derived from the international phonetic alphabet.
Mathematical operations and problems (arithmetic, geometry, metric system): through problem-solving techniques, teachers instill in their pupils the ability to solve various types of problems involving arithmetic, geometry and the metric system. Exercises are based on real-life situations related to pupils’ productive activities or environment.

- Techniques of written and oral expression: how to write a letter, summary or report; how to write a descriptive, narrative or argumentative text; how to write a presentation, a speech, etc. Pupils work individually or in small groups to master these techniques. In a few cases, field surveys or studies of the local environment make it possible to use the activity method to facilitate assimilation of the techniques. Teachers receive appropriate training on how to conduct such studies of the environment.

- Bilingual grammar: this makes it possible to use the national language as the medium for learning French grammar and expression. The teacher gradually introduces French grammar and conjugation via the concepts mastered through study of the national language. These concepts relate to i) sentence structure, ii) word structure, iii) tense/aspect/mood, etc. After reviewing the concept to be studied in the national language to help pupils comprehend it, the teacher proceeds by deduction to assimilation of the concept in French, reinforcing it through many exercises in French.

b. Teaching in French (approximately 50% of classroom time):
In the third year of bilingual school, the French program covers the entire fourth-year (CE2) program of traditional schools.

- Learners consolidate what they have learned in the various subjects taught in the national language and develop their
command of French. By the end of the third year, they are supposed to have learned enough French to continue their schooling in that language and to use the same schoolbooks as their peers in the fifth and sixth years (CM1 and CM2) of traditional primary school. French then becomes the teaching medium of bilingual primary schools. In all, French accounts for about 50% of classroom time in the third year, with the rest being devoted to subjects taught in national languages: curiosity awakening subjects, written and oral expression techniques, etc.

c. Culture, productive activities: pupils continue cultural and productive activities as in the first and second years.

Content of the fourth year of bilingual primary school
In the fourth year, a few subjects are still taught in national languages, but the bulk of the fourth-year program is taught in French, which becomes the principal medium of instruction.

a. Teaching in the national language (approximately 20% of classroom time). The plans call for the following subjects to be taught in national languages: reading, writing, arithmetic, written and oral expression.

b. Teaching in French (approximately 80% of classroom time): the fourth year of bilingual primary school follows the program used in the fifth year (CM1) of traditional schools.

c. Culture, productive activities: cultural and productive activities continue in the fourth year.

Content of the fifth year of bilingual primary school
The fifth year is the last year of bilingual primary school. At the end of this year, pupils take the official CEP examinations, which
are still entirely in French. Instruction in the fifth year is provided as follows:

a. Teaching in the national language (approximately 10% of classroom time): as in the fourth year, fifth-year pupils take the following subjects in national languages: conscientization discussion, reading, writing, arithmetic, written and oral expression.

b. Teaching in French (approximately 90% of classroom time): the fifth-year French program of bilingual primary schools covers the entire sixth-year (CM2) program of traditional schools.

c. Culture, productive activities: cultural and productive activities continue in the fifth year.

To take account of both the capital importance of the national language in the early years of schooling and the importance of French, the sole language used in official school examinations in Burkina Faso, the bilingual education experiment seeks to divide classroom time as shown in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1. Division of classroom time between the national language and French**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School year</th>
<th>Proportion of teaching in the national language</th>
<th>Proportion of teaching in French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st year</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd year</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd year</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th year</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th year</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Implementation strategies for bilingual education 77
Unfortunately, the number of hours devoted to the national language diminishes while that of French increases, especially in the fourth and fifth years. This is inevitable, because even though some subjects are still taught in national languages, French naturally predominates at the end of primary education because all the examinations are in French. National languages, cultural activities and productive activities are not yet covered by official exams.

This regrettable situation leads some teachers to focus exclusively on French in the fourth and fifth years in order to prepare pupils for examinations, while neglecting the national languages, cultural and productive activities that are so important to a good education.

It is to be hoped that the curricular reform in progress will put an end to this situation, so that all the subjects taught (including national languages, culture, productive activities) are evaluated and validated in schools and on scholastic and competitive examinations.

**Pedagogical strategies and content in multilingual middle schools**

In the CMSs, the main pedagogical strategies are as follows:

– the normal junior secondary program is maintained in its entirety;
– the philosophy and guidelines of bilingual education (use of national languages, linkage between education and production, cultural and productive activities, gender equity, parental involvement) are introduced right from the first year;
– introduction of a widely spoken national language as well as English;
• use of an approach based on the ALFAA method for learning English and the widely spoken national language, to give special emphasis on acquisition of operational skills in these languages.

The CMSs provide instruction in the following subjects:
• General subjects: these are the traditional courses in French, mathematics, life and earth sciences, history, geography, physical education, physics and chemistry, and English (using the communicative approach). In addition to traditional scholastic skills, these courses help to develop practical skills in administrative writing, writing of summaries and reports, use of broadcasts in English and understanding of English-speaking visitors.
• Courses specific to the CMS, namely:
  – reinforcement of the local language used as the medium of instruction in bilingual primary school;
  – simplified accounting;
  – learning to write and speak a second national language – one of the widely spoken languages, i.e. Mooré, Dioula or Fulfulde;
  – practical training in management of the community environment, local organizations and income-generating activities, and in reproductive health; information on the rights and duties of citizens; and the organization of informational and awareness-raising meetings on topics of concern to pupils and the community.
• Practical subjects: practical and manual activities, productive activities, and the cultural activities identified in conjunction with parents.

From the standpoint of bilingual education, the CMS is considered the last level of basic education in Burkina Faso. It should
therefore help young people to acquire the knowledge, know-how and life skills needed for their personal development and their participation in the economic, social, cultural and political development of their country. For this reason, on leaving the CMS pupils should be able to:

- grasp the various theories taught;
- understand the concepts studied;
- analyze real-life problems and propose solutions;
- solve mathematics, physics and chemistry problems;
- speak, read and write the second national language learned as well as English;
- use management tools and leadership techniques;
- manufacture the objects that they learned to make in the CMS;
- master the techniques of agro-pastoral production;
- formulate plans for income-generating activities.

**Strategy concerning feasibility studies, design, action-research and social negotiation**

The provision of bilingual education at all three levels of basic education requires a number of prior activities: feasibility studies, design, research and social negotiation. The most important of these are discussed briefly below.

**Feasibility studies**

Before an early-learning center (3E) or bilingual primary school is opened in a given location (either by building a new school or by converting a traditional school), a feasibility study is conducted, as well as a serious inquiry among the managers of the local and regional arms of MEBA (regional education directorates [DREBAs], provincial education directorates [DPEBAs], and school districts [CEBs]) and other branches of government,
customary and religious authorities, parents (both fathers and mothers) and the pupils themselves.

**Social negotiation**

For each link in the bilingual education continuum (3E, bilingual school, CMS), we use a strategy of social negotiation before opening the school in order to elicit the involvement of regional, provincial and local authorities and, most importantly, the fathers and mothers of pupils, in the entire process. The aim here is to lay the groundwork for local ownership of the school.

The establishment of a 3E or a bilingual primary school is preceded by painstaking social negotiation during which the philosophy, goals, content, teaching/learning strategies and methods, teaching materials, and the respective roles of all stakeholders are thoroughly presented, discussed, amended if necessary, understood and assimilated. During this process, the roles of the central government, OSEO and its partners are also presented to participants on the ground. This forms a social contract among the interested parties, each of which knows its role and undertakes to carry it out properly. Only after all this is authorization to implement the plan granted by the central education authority, which oversees the gradual, controlled extension of the innovation with technical and financial support from OSEO and its partners.

**Research**

If bilingual education is to be effective and to meet quality standards, sound research conducted by professionals in various disciplines needs to be undertaken before, during and after the experimental phase. In the case presented here, some of these studies are conducted by multidisciplinary teams in order to have multiple insights into the issues involved.
The experiment in progress gave rise to the following studies, among others:

- general studies of the local environment for short monographs;
- descriptions of the national languages used in the experiment, or use of existing linguistic studies of these languages: phonology, grammar, lexicon, dictionary, spelling system, etc.;
- socio-linguistic and dialectological studies;
- comparative studies of each national language used and French;
- linguistic interference studies.

**Design and publication of textbooks and other teaching materials**

The implementation of the experiment also involved an impressive amount of work to design and/or adapt, edit and reproduce teaching materials for each level of bilingual education. The initial concept was worked out by a team of experienced technical experts in Mooré, the most widely spoken national language of Burkina Faso and the language of the pilot experiment, and in French for certain subjects.

The documents resulting from this process are pre-tested, revised and validated in the language in which they were originally designed. Linguistics teams created for each of the other national languages used in the experiment then adapt and/or translate the materials into the other national languages, with technical assistance from the initial design team. After one to two years of use, the textbooks are evaluated with the participation of pupils, teachers, parents, school inspectors, pedagogical

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17. These were teams of three to four people, all native speakers of the language and active either in literacy training in that language or in formal education. Each team had at least one linguist with a master’s or higher degree.
advisors and courseware designers. These periodic evaluations are used to revise and improve the course materials, in order to make bilingual education more effective and to provide the ministry with more suitable materials for gradual scaling-up. The following textbooks were developed:

**Early-learning textbooks**
To take account of the socio-cultural context of Burkina Faso, a considerable effort was devoted to creation and adaptation of teaching/learning and play materials for the 3Es.

The most important of these are:
- the guide for volunteer parent-educators (PEVs): child psychology, teaching methods;
- play activity cards;
- a compendium of songs, tales and proverbs;
- coloring and drawing worksheets;
- premathematics worksheets.

**Bilingual primary school textbooks**
For bilingual primary schools, the following documents were produced, either in the national language or in bilingual form, for each of the eight operational languages:

a. **First-year documents**
- 1 phonics book;
- 1 teacher's guide for conscientization discussions, reading and writing;
- 1 arithmetic book;
- 1 teacher's guide for arithmetic;
- 1 language guide for teaching spoken French.

b. **Second-year documents**
- 1 grammar of the national language, written in that language;
• 3 documents adapted and/or translated from the second- and third-year (CE1 and CE2) curriculum of traditional schools: history, geography, observational sciences;
• 1 bilingual second-year arithmetic document and corresponding teacher’s guide;
• 1 French reading-expression-comprehension document and corresponding teacher’s guide;
• 1 second-year language guide.

C. Third-year documents
• techniques of expression (national languages);
• third-year arithmetic;
• French grammar;
• French conjugation;
• documents for the fourth year of traditional schools.

D. Fourth- and fifth-year documents
The fourth- and fifth-year documents of bilingual schools are the same as the fifth- and sixth-year documents of traditional primary schools, since bilingual school pupils will have to take the same all-French exams as traditional school pupils.

In addition to these documents used in traditional schools, there are worksheets for teaching techniques of written and oral expression in national languages.

CMS textbooks
In multilingual middle schools, pupils use the following:
• all documents from the first through fourth years of traditional junior secondary schools;
• a textbook and teacher’s guide for one of the three major African languages of Burkina Faso: Mooré, Dioula or Fulfulde;
3. Implementation strategies for bilingual education

- a textbook and teacher’s guide for teaching operational English focused on communication skills;
- technical information sheets for cultural and productive activities.

3.2. Training strategy for teachers and pedagogical supervisors

Training for early-learning centers
Pedagogical supervision in 3Es is provided by parent-educators and “steering committees” that have been trained in literacy, basic French, child psychology, health and nutrition, play activities, management, and monitoring and evaluation of income-generating activities. Their skills are reinforced through exchanges between 3Es.

During these training programs, all participants (parent-educators, steering committees, cooks) assimilate the way a 3E functions through the following modules:
- definition of the 3E and key concepts,
- national policy on integrated early childhood development,
- pedagogical content of early-childhood education (annual program, schedule, lesson preparation notebook, manual activities, etc.).

Certain modules are specifically designed for members of 3E steering committees, to teach them about not only their roles and responsibilities, but also the tasks that must be performed for a 3E to run properly. Steering committee members also assimilated the specifications for the 3E required by the community and were initiated in the preparation and execution of an annual work plan.
Training for cooks focuses on:
• study of the three food groups and malnutrition-related diseases,
• preparing a menu,
• calculation of a food ration,
• drawing up a recipe collection.

The cooks’ training is reinforced by practical demonstrations (preparation of dishes made from local products). Visits are also made to operating 3Es to round out the training in direct contact with experiences on the ground.

Training for bilingual primary schools
Teachers in bilingual primary schools come from the traditional school system. As the content and teaching/learning methods in bilingual schools are different from those of traditional schools, measures are taken to provide more targeted training on bilingual school teaching techniques and content for teachers, pedagogical advisors, inspectors, managers of central, regional and local MEBA departments, and professors in teachers’ colleges. Each year, training programs cover at least 26 different modules.

Teachers of first-year classes in bilingual schools take a six-week course with the following modules:
• Initiation to transcription of the national language that will be used as the medium of instruction alongside French. This two-week module familiarizes teachers with the sounds and graphemes of the language and, more importantly, enables them to master its spelling system and to apply it in oral and written expression exercises;
• Methodology for teaching four modules – conscientization discussion, reading, writing, oral and written arithmetic – in the national language (three weeks);
• Methodology for teaching spoken French;
• Methodology for teaching the productive and cultural activities modules;
• Initiation to activity methods and classroom decoration;
• Techniques for assisted self-evaluation of learning outcomes.

Second-year teachers in bilingual schools take a six-week course with the following modules:
• Refresher training in transcription of national languages, aimed at consolidating the first year’s training and equipping teachers to cope with the difficulties encountered in their experience of teaching writing in national languages in the first year of bilingual school.
• Grammar of the national language: in this module, teachers learn the grammar of the national language they use as the medium of instruction. Mastering the grammar is essential because they have to teach it to their second-year pupils.
• Second-year arithmetic in national languages: teachers assimilate the content and methodology for teaching second-year arithmetic, geometry and the metric system in bilingual schools.
• Expression-comprehension: this module, which is taught in the national language, aims to have teachers assimilate French sounds and graphemes, starting with those that are common to the two languages and progressing from simple to more complex ones. The module covers reading, expression and comprehension in French and enables teachers to acquire a substantial French vocabulary, at the third-year level of traditional schools.
• Teaching methods for subjects taught in national languages (history, geography and observational sciences). The methods used are similar to those for teaching these subjects in French, but aimed primarily at consolidating reading and writing skills in the national language, as well as facilitating knowledge acquisition in these subjects.
• Productive and cultural activities, practical and manual activities: through practical activities, teachers master the content and teaching methods of these modules, which they will have to teach their pupils. The modules aim to integrate children into their local environment and culture. The module on productive activities also lets them apply the theoretical concepts studied in class: garden plots can be used to study geometric forms and concepts such as perimeter, area, intervals, yields, etc.

• Modules on evaluation techniques enable teachers to apply the assisted self-evaluation system to the subjects taught in the second year of bilingual school.

Third-year teachers in bilingual schools take a five-week course covering the following subjects:

• Teaching techniques for “curiosity awakening” subjects (history, geography, observational sciences) in French: this course leverages what has been learned about these subjects in national languages to facilitate assimilation of the subjects in French.

• French grammar: this is taught using the national language as medium of instruction. As an introduction to each lesson, the teacher reviews the equivalent concept taught in the national language. The rest of the lesson and practical exercises are primarily in French.

• French conjugation: this module starts with concepts relating to the tense/aspect/mood system in the national language, to facilitate the teaching of French conjugation.

• Techniques of written and oral expression in the national language and French: pupils are taught, first in the national language and immediately afterward in French, each of the oral expression techniques (oral presentation, narrative, report, etc.) and each of the written expression techniques (letter, summary, narrative, description, etc.).
• Arithmetic (techniques for the transfer from the national language to French and problem-solving techniques) using the national language and French alternately.
• Evaluation techniques for the various disciplines, using the principles of assisted self-evaluation based on criteria ranked in increasing order of difficulty.

Lastly, during the various training sessions, teachers meet in language groups after each practice lesson for simulations and exploration of new concepts. In this part of the training session, these language groups have had discussions with the designers/adapters and translators of the documents concerned in order to gain a more precise grasp of certain concepts.

Training of inspectors, pedagogical advisors and ENEP instructors
Inspectors and pedagogical advisors in bilingual education are the same as those in traditional schools, but they too receive additional training specifically for bilingual education. These training sessions cover the same modules as those for first-, second- and third-year teachers as described above, but in less time. There are also modules on pedagogical monitoring, support and advice to bilingual schools.

Since the third phase of the bilingual education experiment, MEBA has issued instructions that training modules on bilingual methodology be introduced in the National Schools for Primary Teachers (ENEPs), where student teachers receive their pre-service training\(^{18}\).

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18. See order no. 14/MEBA/SG/ENEP of 10 March 2004 instituting training in the transcription of national languages and the didactics of bilingual education in the ENEPs.
In addition, regional pedagogical teams (EPR) provide in-service training for teachers, inspectors and pedagogical advisors.

Some institutional changes have been made:
• the creation, training and deployment of thirteen EPRs for bilingual education;
• revision of the programs of the five ENEPs and the Catholic Church’s Pedagogical and Pastoral Training Center (CFPP) to include bilingual education modules in pre-service teacher training;
• revision of the programs of the Higher Normal School of the University of Koudougou (ENSK) to include bilingual education modules in the pre-service training of principals, itinerant pedagogical advisors and primary education inspectors.

Training for multilingual middle school teachers
CMS teachers are junior secondary level teachers who receive specific training in teaching those subjects which are not part of the traditional education program. Training for CMS teachers addresses the following:
• Preparation for teaching the national language that was used as the medium of instruction in complementarity with French in the local bilingual schools. The aim is to train teachers to develop pupils’ oral and written communication skills and textual skills in this language.
• Preparation for teaching the three major national languages of Burkina Faso: Mooré, Dioula and Fulfulde. Pupils who do not speak these languages must choose one of them as their second national language. Pending the introduction of the skills-based approach, these languages are taught through the communicative approach, which employs the methods and techniques the most widely used today for teaching second and foreign languages.
• Teachers of productive activities receive training to help them teach pupils about various theoretical and practical aspects of livestock and plant production. This training also covers manual trades offering employment in the area: metallic joinery, carpentry, masonry, etc.
• Teachers of cultural activities receive training to help pupils master the techniques of musical and theatrical expression, to perform dance steps to a given rhythm, to use drawing and painting techniques, etc.

3.3. Institutional strategy
Bilingual education is part of a legal and administrative framework based on legislation (notably the education reform law, Act 013/ADP of 1996), on the recommendations of forums on education (General State of education, national convention on education), on the OSEO-MEBA cooperation agreement and its amendments, and on MEBA’s ministerial orders and circulars and MESSRS’s ministerial orders.

This section discusses the involvement strategies of stakeholders and the response to the demand for bilingual education (creation of bilingual schools or conversion of existing traditional schools into bilingual schools).

Involvement of the various stakeholders
One of the unusual features of the educational innovation presented herein is that it is implemented by civil society in partnership with MEBA, an arm of the state.

In order to ensure the full participation of grassroots communities, the implementation strategy puts special emphasis on parents’ involvement throughout the process: building of infrastructure (human investment in construction), curriculum development, transmission of knowledge (particularly for productive
and cultural activities), purchase of school supplies, etc. In this way, parents feel involved and embrace this new form of education that adapts to the local environment and incorporates – and enhances esteem for – their values and culture. Bilingual schools have drawn on parents’ skills to help teachers conduct cultural and productive activities, both in the classroom and in the village. Thus the village enters the classroom and the class goes out into the village, in a mutually beneficial to-and-fro movement.

To maximize participation and limit resistance to the innovation, the developers of the project decided to seek the involvement and participation of various social partners: basic education unions and associations of parents and mother-educators. This was achieved from the outset of the experiment and throughout its implementation. Advocacy activities were also undertaken, addressed to beneficiary communities, administrative and political authorities (ministers, members of parliament, regional governors, high commissioners, prefects, mayors, and the directors of central, regional and local departments of the ministries responsible for education), customary and religious authorities, information professionals, etc.

One precautionary measure was the deliberate restriction of the initial pilot experiment (see Chapter 2) to two cohorts with a total of 55 pupils over the normal age for primary school (9-14 years, to limit the risks to the children if the experiment failed) and a single national language (Mooré) in complementarity with French. The pilot experiment was taken to completion and the pupils took the official examinations. Only when the results of this independent evaluation were known and lessons drawn from them was the decision made to proceed with the geographical and subsequently linguistic extension of bilingual education.
The supply of bilingual education in response to community demand

Under the 1979-1984 educational reform (see Chapter 2), the locations of experimental schools were chosen by the central education administration. Given the context of diglossia in Burkina Faso, which engendered mistrust of any use of national languages in schools, there was considerable resistance. Parents, including the education system managers responsible for implementing the reform, withdrew their children from these schools or warned their relatives that an experimental school was planned in their area so that they could avoid sending their children to it. Warned by this type of behavior, and despite the undeniably satisfactory performance of bilingual schools on official examinations (see Chapter 4), MEBA decided not to open bilingual primary schools or to permit the conversion of traditional schools into bilingual schools without the prior agreement of parents. The ministry elected to convince people through the quality of the education provided and the good results obtained. It informed the public about the possibility of converting traditional schools into bilingual schools via circular no. 2002-098/MEBA/SG of 18 May 2002, while circular no. 2003-127/MEBA/SG/DGEB of 25 July 2003 spelled out the procedure and required conditions for such conversions and for opening new bilingual schools.

Despite this cautious approach, MEBA received many requests to open bilingual schools or convert traditional schools in 2003 and more than 300 in 2004/2005. This represents many more requests than the ministry could honor, given the insufficient number of teachers, inspectors and pedagogical advisors trained in bilingual education methodology.

3.4. Monitoring and evaluation strategies

To evaluate pupils’ performance, the program tried to introduce an objectives-based evaluation system using criterion-referenced
and prioritized evaluation instruments that allow for assessment of each learner against a scale of four levels of progressive attainment objects and skills development. Although this form of evaluation measures pupils’ actual level of attainment with respect to explicit objectives and thus allows for better targeting of learning for better results, this change of system has run into some difficulties, especially among school administrators who are accustomed to adding up grade points and ranking pupils against one another in order to produce traditional grade reports, rather than evaluating the extent to which they have attained educational objectives.

Thus, in order to reassure school administrators, teachers and parents who were not yet prepared for this evaluation method, as well as to ensure that the results would be comparable with those of the traditional system, the bilingual education program took the strategic decision to use, for the time being, the traditional system of measuring and evaluating scholastic performance. The sole exception is the first year of bilingual education, which uses the objectives-based, criterion-referenced and prioritized evaluation system.

In all cases, monitoring on the ground is conducted periodically by the competent departments of the Directorate General for Basic Education (DGEB) and by the school inspectors and itinerant pedagogical advisors of each province.

3.5. Development of partnerships and funding of the experiment

The bilingual education initiative benefits from a productive partnership involving civil society, the research community, the government and its development partners.
The MEBA-OSEO partnership

OSEO is MEBA’s technical and financial partner for the implementation of bilingual education. This partnership is governed by a cooperation agreement between MEBA and OSEO and by amendments that have designated bilingual education as a major area of cooperation.

For OSEO, this involves developing partnership relations and collaboration and consultation mechanisms with all parties concerned, or potentially concerned, by school activities. For example, the Provincial Directorates for Basic Education and Literacy (DPEBA), farmers’ organizations and public or private services will collaborate with bilingual primary schools and with OSEO according to their respective capacities and competencies, and on the basis of specific agreements.

OSEO, in conjunction with MEBA, takes responsibility for the production of outputs and the achievement of results. As such, it administers and manages operations related to the project, in conjunction with MEBA. It also handles quality control, and a system has been set up to perform this, at the central, regional and village levels.

The central level

A project team made up of six professionals in various disciplines was formed. This technical team, based in Ouagadougou, operates under the responsibility of the OSEO representative in Burkina Faso and in collaboration with the competent department of MEBA and other partner organizations. It is responsible

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19. From 1994 to 2002, the institutional anchor for MEBA-OSEO cooperation was the National Literacy Institute (INA); since 2003, the General Directorate for Basic Education (DGEB) has assumed this function.
for planning, monitoring and evaluation of operational activities and for capitalization of experience.

The MEBA department in charge of bilingual education is responsible, along with OSEO and institutional or independent consultants, for:

- designing and preparing documents for bilingual schooling in national languages;
- training and/or reconversion of teachers (general and bilingual teaching methods, transcription and reading in the national languages selected, modules specific to the bilingual education system);
- pedagogical monitoring, support and advice, with the frequency and instruments being decided by mutual agreement.

MEBA assigns teachers already trained in the ENEPs to bilingual schools and pays their salaries. It also mandates regional and provincial officials, inspectors and pedagogical advisors for the tasks of monitoring, support and advice.

The regional and provincial levels
At this level, OSEO and the DGEB work with the Regional Directorates for Basic Education and Literacy (DREBAs) and the Provincial Directorates for Basic Education and Literacy (DPEBAs), which are responsible for:

- participating in preparatory missions to school sites;
- monitoring activities concerning school construction, pupil recruitment and the opening of schools, teacher training, and monitoring, support and advice with respect to implementation in bilingual primary schools;
• conducting periodic comparative evaluations among bilingual primary schools and between such schools and traditional primary schools.

The grassroots community level
In communities having a rural development organization that is a partner of the project, this organization and the officers of the parent-teacher association are responsible for implementation of bilingual schooling in the village. Examples include the Manegdbzânga (“development for all”) Association in Loumbila department (20 km from the capital) and the Nongtaaba (“let’s love each other”) Association in Zaka (165 km from Ouagadougou). These associations have contributed substantially to the social mobilization of communities for bilingual education.

Partnership with civil society
a. Private non-denominational schools
During the 1998-1999 school year, the private non-denominational school sector, through the association Aide Directe in Tanyoko (Sanmatenga province), joined the bilingual education process. Tanyoko’s six-grade traditional primary school, which was built, equipped and managed by this association, was gradually converted into a five-grade bilingual school.

This association subsequently opened two other bilingual schools, at Silmiyiri in district 23 of Ouagadougou and at Zionsguo in the rural district of Bousma (Sanmatenga province), thus raising the number of private non-denominational bilingual schools to three. These schools received support from OSEO in the following areas: teacher training, supply of teaching materials, monitoring, support, advice and evaluation.
b. The Catholic Church

The Catholic Church, which had lent its schools to the government in 1969, decided to repossess them thirty years later, during the 1999/2000 school year. As this coincided with the beginning of the geographical and linguistic expansion of bilingual education, some dioceses decided to become involved in bilingualism. Thus, during the 2002/2003 school year, the Diocese of Kaya and subsequently the Diocese of Koupêla began the process of converting their schools into bilingual schools. Other dioceses gradually followed suit.

To support the efforts of these dioceses, coordinated by the National Secretariat of Catholic Education (SNEC), OSEO signed a partnership agreement with the Catholic education system on 31 January 2003. Through this partnership, OSEO provides support for:

- covering the cost of inquiry missions and social negotiations with beneficiary communities;
- training of teachers, inspectors and pedagogical advisors for bilingual education;
- provision of teaching materials;
- training of parent-educators and cooks for 3Es;
- pedagogical monitoring, support and advice;
- evaluation and institutional support.

Partnership in funding of the experiment

In addition to conviction and moral commitment, an innovation such as bilingual education requires technical skills and the mobilization of human, material and financial resources commensurate with the objectives of the program.

OSEO, which financed the first phase of the experiment, was fortunate to receive support in the second phase from other development partners which, having a favorable opinion of
bilingual education and its results, decided to provide financial support for its geographical and linguistic extension.

Breakdown of bilingual schools by development partner
OSEO’s partners in extending this experiment are the Royal Embassy of the Netherlands, the Swiss Cooperation Agency, Intermon-Oxfam, Voisins Mondiaux-PRECAP/K, the Manegdbzânga Association, and the Catholic Church.

Table 3.2 shows the number of bilingual schools supported by each partnership in 2002/2003, 2004/2005 and 2005/2006.


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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of schools</td>
<td>No. of pupils</td>
<td>No. of schools</td>
<td>No. of pupils</td>
<td>No. of schools</td>
<td>No. of pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSEO/Netherlands</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1,734</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2,341</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2,428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSEO/AM/Intermon</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>783</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1,130</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1,189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSEO/Intermon/Dakupa</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSEO/Intermon/Voisins Mondiaux /PRECAP-K</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSEO/Swiss Coop. (DDC)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSEO/Catholic Church</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1,446</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3,019</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3,201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSEO/private providers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSEO/converted traditional schools</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2,926</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>4,546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>5,104</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>11,811</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>14,262</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Breakdown of experiment co-financing
The implementation costs of the bilingual education experiment are covered through co-financing by OSEO and its finan-
cial partners: the Royal Embassy of the Netherlands, the Swiss Cooperation Agency, Intermon-Oxfam, and the Catholic Church.

The contributions of all these partners cover the cost of program activities such as:

• building and equipping school complexes in accordance with the standards recommended by the government of Burkina Faso;
• the design, publication and reproduction of teaching materials and training tools;
• training of teachers, pedagogical advisors, inspectors, and officials in the central, regional and provincial departments of MEBA;
• the salaries of program officers;
• the acquisition of means of transport for work in the field;
• pedagogical monitoring, support and advice;
• various studies, consultations and audits;
• evaluation missions;
• etc.

In addition to the financial and material outlays of development cooperation partners, the government of Burkina Faso participated in very substantial fashion:

• payment of the salaries and allowances of the civil servants involved in the innovation: teachers, principals, pedagogical advisors, inspectors, school administrators;
• provision of schoolbooks for the fourth and fifth years of bilingual primary school, which use the same documents as in the last two years of traditional primary school;
• occasional provision of sets of instruments for taking physical weights and measures, as well as other equipment.

The financial participation of the Catholic Church is still greater. It covers the following aspects:
• building, renovating and equipping school complexes in accordance with the standards recommended by the government of Burkina Faso;
• paying the salaries and allowances of the employees and supervisors involved in the innovation: teachers, principals, pedagogical advisors, inspectors, school administrators;
• provision of schoolbooks for the fourth and fifth years of bilingual primary school, which use the same documents as in the last two years of traditional primary school;
• as soon as possible, provision of sets of instruments for taking physical weights and measures, as well as other equipment.

Participation by parents
Parents participate not only financially, but also in kind or in the form of participation in activities that normally come at a price, but that are performed at no charge by pupils’ parents. These include:
• making a plot of land (8 to 10 ha) available for construction of school infrastructure;
• participation in the construction of school complexes: collection of aggregates (sand, rubble, gravel, etc.), provision of free unskilled labor for the construction work. Such participation considerably reduces the cost of school infrastructure;
• purchase of school supplies: slates, notebooks, pens, pencils, erasers, rulers, squares, compasses, chalk, school bags;
• feeding children at school: pocket money or contribution to school canteen;
• parents’ dues;
• participation in certain classes at school: cultural activities (singing, storytelling, proverbs, traditional music), support for the start-up of pupils’ productive activities (farming, gardening, animal husbandry, leatherwork, basketry);
coverage of a substantial proportion of schools’ operating costs.

A financial estimate of parents’ participation shows that they make considerable outlays for their children’s education. Parents participate more in bilingual primary schools because they feel more involved: the bilingual school is their school, the school that belongs to the village and not simply a school located in the village.

The Ten-Year Basic Education Development Plan (PDDEB) launched in 2001 provided for a) building and equipping 20 to 25 bilingual schools per year, and b), as from the beginning of the 2003/2004 school year, coverage of a substantial part of the costs of bilingual education. However, nothing substantive was done, and no explanation was given for this. As the successive MEBA authorities had shown themselves to be in favor of bilingual education, there had been no prior indication that this important innovation co-managed by MEBA and OSEO would not be covered by this extensive program for the development of basic education in Burkina Faso.

Costs of the experiment
All experiments are costly, and the one undertaken as part of this collaboration between MEBA and OSEO is no exception. It should be noted, however, that several factors helped to limit the cost of the experiment, notably:

• participation by parents, particularly in construction work;
• reduction of the duration of schooling by one year, which generates cost savings at several levels (one annual teacher’s salary, one classroom and teacher housing unit, textbooks and supplies, parents’ dues, etc.).
We will now examine the effects of these factors on the cost of bilingual education, considering each level of the continuum in turn.

**Costs in 3Es**
The operating costs for these centers amount to about 25,000 CFA francs per year and per child. This figure is well below that for nursery schools in urban areas, where the annual cost per child ranges from 50,000 to 250,000 CFA francs.

**Costs in bilingual primary schools**
A comparative study of the investment and operating costs of the traditional school and the bilingual school in the village of Nomgana arrived at the results presented in Table 3.3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit costs (CFA francs)</th>
<th>Bilingual school</th>
<th>Traditional school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actual no. of pupils</td>
<td>Ideal no. of pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit investment cost (construction and equipment)</td>
<td>23,299</td>
<td>14,818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit operating cost</td>
<td>54,148</td>
<td>44,176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77,447</td>
<td>58,994</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Korgho (2001:17).*

The table shows that the real annual cost per pupil in 2001 was as follows:

- Nomgana’s bilingual primary school: 77,447 CFA francs;
- Nomgana’s traditional primary school: 104,962 CFA francs.

Korgho (2001) explains that the average unit cost of a completer is obtained by multiplying the annual cost per pupil by the number of pupil-years. According to this estimate, one completer
having passed the CEP exam costs less in Nomgana’s bilingual primary school than in the traditional primary school in the same village: Korgho finds that one bilingual school pupil obtaining the CEP theoretically costs 455,388 CFA francs, as compared to 3,879,396 CFA francs at the traditional primary school – a difference of 3,424,008 CFA francs.

These costs amount respectively to 283% and 2,409% of per capita GDP.

Table 3.4 shows the internal rates of return of the two schools in Nomgana, according to the estimates of Korgho (2001).

Table 3.4. **Indicators of the internal return on the costs of traditional and bilingual primary schools in the village of Nomgana**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Bilingual school</th>
<th>Traditional school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chances of obtaining the CEP</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal duration of schooling</td>
<td>4 or 5 school years</td>
<td>6 school years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. time required per completer</td>
<td>6 pupil-years</td>
<td>37 pupil-years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost increase coefficient</td>
<td>1.47%</td>
<td>6.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal rate of return</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual cost per pupil</td>
<td>77,447 CFA francs (€118.06)</td>
<td>104,962 CFA francs (€160)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Costs in cmss**

CMSs have higher operating costs than traditional middle schools do because of the extra subjects that are specific to CMSs: three national languages, agronomy, animal husbandry, cultural activities, information technology and accounting.

Although the CMSs are public schools, the investment costs and operating or start-up costs of both the Loumbila and Dafinso schools are borne by OSEO.
Chapter 4.
Results of bilingual education

The results of bilingual education comprise both scholastic and non-scholastic outcomes. The latter include: the research conducted, the teaching materials designed, economic benefits, results of cultural and productive activities, the impact of parents’ participation.

4.1. Scholastic results of bilingual primary schools

Table 4.1, which presents flow rates for the two types of schools from 1998 to 2001, shows that, regardless of the indicator selected (promotion, repetition or dropout rate), bilingual schools have higher internal efficiency than traditional schools, for both girls and boys.

Table 4.1. Flow rates in bilingual schools and traditional schools, 1998-2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promotion rate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>42.02%</td>
<td>51.81%</td>
<td>47.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>40.08%</td>
<td>36.77%</td>
<td>39.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88.10%</td>
<td>88.58%</td>
<td>86.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Repetition rate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>9.73%</td>
<td>6.41%</td>
<td>6.72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The most important academic results for bilingual primary schools, however, are those indicating performance on official state examinations.

The tables and figures below present cumulative academic performance from June 1998 to June 2006. It should be noted that no pupils took the examinations in 1999, 2000 and 2001, because the pupils in the pilot phase consisted of a single cohort of 55 pupils from 9 to 14 years old, in school from 1994 to 1998. Annual recruitment of pupils of normal primary-school age began only in October 1997, after the positive results of the December 1996 comparative evaluation between four fifth-year classes in traditional schools and the two experimental bilingual classes, which had only two years and three months of schooling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bilingual schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>6.22%</td>
<td>3.90%</td>
<td>3.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15.95%</td>
<td>10.31%</td>
<td>10.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dropout rate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>1.17%</td>
<td>0.28%</td>
<td>2.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>0.77%</td>
<td>0.84%</td>
<td>0.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.95%</td>
<td>1.11%</td>
<td>2.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Traditional schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promotion rate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>39.46%</td>
<td>38.49%</td>
<td>40.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>32.44%</td>
<td>30.96%</td>
<td>33.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>71.90%</td>
<td>69.45%</td>
<td>74.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Repetition rate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>11.71%</td>
<td>11.92%</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>7.69%</td>
<td>8.22%</td>
<td>7.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19.40%</td>
<td>20.14%</td>
<td>17.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dropout rate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>6.19%</td>
<td>6.58%</td>
<td>3.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>2.51%</td>
<td>3.84%</td>
<td>4.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8.70%</td>
<td>10.41%</td>
<td>8.59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These pupils recruited in October 1997 took the official examinations in June 2002, after five years of bilingual education. In view of the good CEP results of June 1998 registered by the pupils of the pilot phase, the experiment of a four-year bilingual school program for 9-14 year olds was repeated in Dafinso (15 km from Bobo, the second largest city of Burkina Faso) starting in October 1998, using Dioula and French.

**CEP results**

Table 4.2. Bilingual schools’ results on primary certification examinations (CEP), June 1998 to June 2006, compared to national average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of schools</th>
<th>Number of national languages</th>
<th>Number of pupils taking the exam</th>
<th>Pass rate (5 yrs schooling, or 4 yrs for adolescents)</th>
<th>General pass rate (6 yrs schooling not counting repetition)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>52.83%</td>
<td>48.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>85.02%</td>
<td>62.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>68.21%</td>
<td>70.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>94.59%</td>
<td>73.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>91.14%</td>
<td>69.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>77.19%</td>
<td>69.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total / average</td>
<td>1,960</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>78.16%</td>
<td>65.69%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Source: MEBA Examinations Directorate.

Figure 4.1. CEP pass rate of bilingual schools compared to national average, 1998-2006
Observations

The June 1998 CEP exam

In June 1998, with special permission from MEBA, bilingual school pupils were allowed to take the official examinations organized at national level, which are entirely in French. Of the 53 pupils who took the exam, 28 passed it, for a pass rate of 52.83%. The pass rate for pupils in traditional schools (after at least six years of schooling entirely in French) was 47.08% in the Ziniaré II school district, where the pilot schools were located, and 47.42% for Oubritenga province, in which this school district is located. The national average pass rate on the June 1998 CEP was 48.60%. Thus, after only four years of bilingual schooling, including only two and a half years in which French was used, the pupils of the experimental schools performed better on French-only official examinations than did traditional school pupils having at least six years of schooling entirely in French.

The June 2002 CEP exam

Ninety-two pupils from four bilingual primary schools took the official examinations. They all had five years of schooling, including three and a half years in which French was used, since for the first intakes of bilingual schools, the first year was taught entirely in the national language, with French being introduced progressively as from the second year. On the June 2002 CEP examinations, the bilingual school of Goué (Oubritenga province) registered a pass rate of 75.86%; that of Nomgana (Oubritenga

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20. Under the legislation in force, since the experimental schools were not officially recognized by the central government, pupils could only apply individually to take the certification exam (instead of being presented by the school); moreover, the law requires a minimum of 5 years of schooling to be considered for entering secondary school in case of passing the CEP exam with a good score, which excluded out of hand all of the children in the pilot experiment, who had only 4 years of schooling. Moreover, some pupils in the experimental classes were over 14 year old, which would also have precluded their taking the exam if special permission had not been granted.

21. This pass rate was revised upward by MEBA, because the Examinations Directorate had calculated it at 42% in 1998. This explains why the rate of 42% was cited in some previous presentations of the results of bilingual education.
province), a pass rate of 80%; and the non-denominational private bilingual school of Tanyoko (Sanmatenga province), a pass rate of 84.21%. The national language used in these three bilingual schools was Mooré.

The teen center (Centre des adolescents, 9-14 years of age) in Dafinso (Houet province) achieved a pass rate of 100%. These pupils had four years of schooling, of which only two and a half years were in French. The national language used was Dioula.

The average pass rate for all these bilingual schools was 85.02%, whereas the average rates for the districts in which these schools are located were respectively: Ziniaré II, 67.46%; Pisla, 78.07%; Bobo IV, 52.86%. The national average on the 2002 CEP exam was 62.90%.

The June 2003 CEP exam
In June 2003, 88 pupils from three bilingual schools in Mooré-speaking areas took the official examinations, under the same conditions as in 2002, i.e. the pupils had only five years of bilingual schooling. The three bilingual schools obtained the following results: i) bilingual school of Goué (Oubritenga province), 88.88%; ii) bilingual school of Nomgana (Oubritenga province), 62.06%; and c) non-denominational private bilingual school of Tanyoko (Sanmatenga province), 53.70%22.

The average CEP pass rate for bilingual schools in June 2003 was 68.21%, as compared to the national pass rate of 70.01%.

22. The Tanyoko school, which obtained a pass rate of 84.21% in June 2002, saw its performance drop significantly in 2003. One explanation for this is that the examination-year class of this non-denominational private school had no teacher for at least a month, because the teacher in service departed after passing a competitive examination for teacher recruitment organized by the central government in December 2002.
The June 2004 CEP exam
In June 2004, 259 pupils from bilingual education institutions took the CEP exam. The institutions concerned were ten bilingual primary schools and a bilingual teen center in four provinces: five Mooré-French schools in Oubritenga province, two Dioula-French schools in Houet province, a Dioula-French teen center (9-14 year olds) in Dafinso, a Lyélé-French school in Sanguié province and two Mooré-French schools in Sanmatenga province. As in previous years, the 259 candidates had either five years or, in the case of 9- to 14-year olds, four years of schooling. The ten bilingual schools and teen center used three national languages in complementarity with French: Mooré (seven schools), Dioula (two schools and the teen center) and Lyélé (one school).

Of the 259 candidates, 245 passed the June 2004 CEP exam, for a pass rate of 94.59%, as compared to the national pass rate of 73.73% in that year. The national languages used with French were Mooré, Dioula, Fulfulde and Lyélé.

The June 2005 CEP exam
In June 2005, the number of bilingual schools having pupils who took the CEP exam practically doubled. Twenty-one bilingual schools in 11 provinces, using six national languages in complementarity with French, put forward 508 pupils to take the June 2005 CEP exam. As in 2002, 2003 and 2004, the candidates had either five years or, in the case of 9- to 14-year olds, four years of schooling. Of these 508 pupils, 463 passed the exam, for a pass rate of 91.14%. The national average on the June 2005 CEP was 69.01%. The national languages used alongside French were Mooré, Dioula, Fulfulde, Lyélé, Dagara and Gulmancema.

The June 2006 CEP exam
The number of bilingual schools having pupils take the official examinations was growing steadily, as were the number of
provinces and languages concerned and the number of pupils taking the exams. In June 2006, 40 bilingual primary schools in 11 provinces sent 960 pupils to take the CEP examination. These schools used seven national languages (Mooré, Dioula, Fulfulde, Lyélé, Dagara, Gulmancema and Bissa) in complementarity with French. They achieved a pass rate of 77.19%, as compared to the national pass rate of 69.91% for the June 2006 exam.

In total, 1,960 pupils from bilingual schools took the CEP exam over the period concerned, with an average pass rate of 78.16%. The average pass rate at national level over the same period was 65.69%.

4.2. Scholastic results of multilingual middle schools

We will begin by presenting the end-of-year flow rates in the CMSs, followed by the first results on the official BEPC examinations of 2007 and 2008. The flow rates are as follows:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School year</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1st year</th>
<th>2nd year</th>
<th>3rd year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003/2004</td>
<td>Promotion rate</td>
<td>70.37%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repetition rate</td>
<td>27.78%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dropout rate</td>
<td>01.85%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. pupils</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004/2005</td>
<td>Promotion rate</td>
<td>78.79%</td>
<td>52.63%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repetition rate</td>
<td>18.18%</td>
<td>39.47%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dropout rate</td>
<td>03.03%</td>
<td>07.90%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. pupils</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005/2006</td>
<td>Promotion rate</td>
<td>55.56%</td>
<td>68.33%</td>
<td>70.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repetition rate</td>
<td>37.30%</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dropout rate</td>
<td>07.14%</td>
<td>11.67%</td>
<td>00.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. pupils</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4. **End-of-year results of the Dafinso CMS, 2004/2005 to 2005/2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School year</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; year</th>
<th>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promotion rate</td>
<td>64.41%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repetition rate</td>
<td>35.59%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dropout rate</td>
<td>00.00%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004/2005</td>
<td>No. pupils</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promotion rate</td>
<td>81.40%</td>
<td>65.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repetition rate</td>
<td>16.28%</td>
<td>34.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dropout rate</td>
<td>02.32%</td>
<td>00.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005/2006</td>
<td>No. pupils</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5 presents the corresponding results for other secondary schools in Oubritenga province for the same period, to facilitate interpretation of the CMSs’ results.

Table 4.5. **End-of-year results of selected secondary schools in Oubritenga province, 2005/2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Promotion rate</th>
<th>Repetition rate</th>
<th>Dropout rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J. Edouard private senior secondary school</td>
<td>50.31%</td>
<td>30.82%</td>
<td>18.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zitenga general junior secondary school</td>
<td>49.65%</td>
<td>18.29%</td>
<td>25.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ziniaré municipal senior secondary school</td>
<td>33.31%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dapelgo general junior secondary school</td>
<td>24.52%</td>
<td>27.15%</td>
<td>44.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bassy provincial senior secondary school</td>
<td>56.60%</td>
<td>29.85%</td>
<td>13.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Micayah senior secondary school</td>
<td>42.42%</td>
<td>41.28%</td>
<td>14.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donsin general junior secondary school</td>
<td>62.76%</td>
<td>24.47%</td>
<td>12.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loumbila CMS</td>
<td>62.31%</td>
<td>33.17%</td>
<td>04.52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BF/MESSRS/DEP 2005
### Table 4.6. National promotion, repetition and dropout rates in secondary education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>No. examinees</th>
<th>No. passed</th>
<th>Pass rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Loumbila CMS &amp; Tanyoko</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In 2007 = 31.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Loumbila CMS</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dafinso CMS</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tanyoko</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>54.54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The above tables show that the promotion rate of the two CMSs is higher than that of the traditional general junior secondary schools in the vicinity and than the national average promotion rate in secondary education.

#### BEPC results

The CMS pupils took the examinations for the junior secondary certificate (brevet d'études du premier cycle – BEPC). Their results for 2007 and 2008 are presented below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>No. examinees</th>
<th>No. passed</th>
<th>Pass rate</th>
<th>National average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Loumbila CMS &amp; Tanyoko</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46.66%</td>
<td>In 2007 = 31.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Loumbila CMS</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38.89%</td>
<td>In 2008 = 38.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dafinso CMS</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25.64%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tanyoko</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>54.54%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comments on BEPC results

On the 2007 BEPC examination, the pass rate of pupils from the three schools (46.66%) was well above the national average (31.39%). In 2008, the pass rate of the Tanyoko school was much higher than the national average (38.44%) and that of the Loumbila CMS slightly higher, while the performance of the Dafinso CMS was disappointing. Clearly, there are disparities from one CMS to another, and from one year to another. It should be pointed out that, unfortunately, the BEPC exam currently does not cover certain important and innovative components of CMS programs, such as productive activities, culture and national languages.

From our point of view, the performance of CMS pupils is not satisfactory, because it could be better if the right conditions were met over the course of the experiment. It is indeed unfortunate that these experimental CMSs, which admit graduates of bilingual primary schools, did not have enough teachers with at least the minimum qualifications. At both Loumbila and Dafinso, there are very few permanent teachers, and the few others that eventually were assigned there were often student teachers in their first posting. Many teachers in both the basic subjects (French, math, physics, chemistry) and subjects specific to the CMS (productive activities, culture, national languages) are temporary teachers on short-term contracts. Thus, the education provided to CMS pupils has not been of the quality called for in the planning of the experiment.

The MESSRS is now aware of the problem and is beginning to take steps to provide the CMSs with an appropriate teaching staff, in number and quality. These measures will undoubtedly bring qualitative improvement in the results and impact of the CMSs, from which we expect to draw useful lessons for the subsequent extension of the CMS system as part of the reform of the education
system. The MESSRS is already planning to open two new CMSs during the 2009/2010 school year.

It should also be noted that the performance of bilingual school graduates cannot be judged solely on the results of the three experimental CMSs. More than 5,000 pupils from bilingual schools have passed the CEP, but most are enrolled in secondary schools all over Burkina Faso, because of the limited intake capacity of the CMSs. It is essential that a study be undertaken to determine the real rates of progression and academic success of these bilingual school graduates throughout the country.

4.3. Results of non-scholastic activities
All three levels of the bilingual education continuum have engaged at various times in non-scholastic activities. The following sums up the main results obtained from these activities.

In early-learning centers
The experiment in early-learning centers (3Es) is too recent for meaningful assessment of outcomes. We will therefore simply present some of the results expected of these 3Es:

• there is a 3E close beside each bilingual primary school and literacy center;
• quality-related discussions brought about by 3Es have modified the content and duration of bilingual education;
• the quality of services and care provided by parents (in terms of access and success) has increased, to the children's benefit;
• the 3Es in each province are now self-financing;
• the infant mortality rate has fallen as a result of 3Es, literacy training and awareness-raising for mothers on maternal and child health;
• certain gender-linked prejudices and stereotypes have changed significantly, in the direction of greater equity;
• communities’ enthusiasm for early childhood education is growing, and the activity has gained the participation of several partners;
• the academic performance of children who attend 3Es are better than those of children who have not had the opportunity to do so;
• the 3E offers a real opportunity to mothers and girls by freeing up some time to take literacy courses or technical training and to pursue income-generating activities;
• women’s living standards and status have improved;
• enrollment and literacy rates have increased, particularly in villages and among girls and women.

In bilingual primary schools
Many non-academic activities were conducted for or in bilingual primary schools. We report below on the outcomes of the main such activities: i) production of teaching materials, ii) various studies, iii) parents’ involvement, iv) human resource capacity building, v) cultural activities, vi) productive activities, vii) impact on curriculum reform.

a. Outcomes in terms of production of teaching materials
– A non-negligible result of the experimental bilingual education program is the mass of documents that have been designed and/or adapted in national languages or bilingual formats to cover the teaching modules used in bilingual schools. In addition, textbooks in arithmetic, observational sciences, history, and geography used in traditional schools have been translated and adapted. The bilingual education program now has the following documents available in each of the eight national languages used alongside French:
  – 4 first-year documents and the corresponding teacher guides;
– 7 second-year documents and the corresponding teacher guides;
– 3 third-year documents and the corresponding teacher guides;
– at least 5 documents (stories, proverbs, food recipes, compendium of play activities) have been created for 3Es;
– 3 documents have been created for CMSs.

All of these documents replace or supplement, depending on the case, those used in the traditional education system.

b. Outcomes in terms of scientific studies conducted

The outcomes include the various linguistic, socio-linguistic and dialectological studies conducted by teachers and researchers at the University of Ouagadougou and the National Center for Scientific and Technological Research. These studies provide a technical analysis of various aspects of the experiment in order to help ensure good quality and avoid improvisation and amateurism. In addition, there are many theses and student projects from the National School of Administration and the Judiciary (ENAM) and the Higher Normal School of the University of Koudougou (ENSK), as well as studies by foreign students who have come to Burkina Faso to do research on the bilingual education experiment.

c. Outcomes in terms of parental involvement

Through the parents’ association, pupils’ fathers and mothers participate in the activities of bilingual primary schools, notably infrastructure construction, curriculum development, recruitment of pupils and organization of their school time, and facilitating some educational activities alongside the teacher (cultural and productive activities).
The results of this active participation are clearly visible. Parents are appreciated and feel involved with the school and its activities. The community takes the school for its own; instead of a foreign structure, “a cyst in the village”, it becomes an accessible place and an integral part of the village. It is the school that belongs to the village and not simply a school located in the village.

This assumption of ownership over the school and the involvement of parents have an impact on certain parameters: they make it easier to recruit pupils (even in areas that are reputed to be resistant to schooling), leading to good attendance rates and the reduction or elimination of absenteeism, tardiness and dropouts; and parents keep better track of their children’s school activities because they are motivated and able to help children with schoolwork in the subjects taught in national languages in the first years (a good many parents are literate in these languages). Hence, parental participation has a considerable positive impact on the functioning of bilingual schools.

d. Outcomes in terms of human resource capacity building

Another important outcome is the experience acquired by the human resources involved in the experiment. Burkina Faso now has multidisciplinary human resources who are competent to perform the technical and scientific studies needed for the use of national languages in the education system. By way of example, the current stage of the experiment benefited from the participation of at least 50 high-level specialists: linguists from the university, education specialists, course designers, psychologists, early childhood specialists, translators and specialists in publishing in national languages. In addition, Burkina Faso now has a thousand teachers and hundreds of inspectors and pedagogical advisors trained for bilingual education. These resource persons could make an
important contribution by sharing their experience and could help to train other volunteers for bilingual education.
The capacity-building program involved the creation, formation and implementation of 13 regional pedagogical teams (EPRs) for bilingual education. The EPRs are the relay points to Burkina Faso’s 13 regions for the implementation of the following activities in favor of bilingual education:
– carrying out inquiry and social negotiation missions to villages that have requested bilingual schools;
– training of teachers, inspectors and pedagogical advisors;
– pedagogical monitoring, support and advice;
– pedagogical evaluation;
– etc.

e. Outcomes of cultural activities
The cultural activities of the bilingual education experiment have brought important results, such as i) learning of traditional tales, proverbs, songs and dances, ii) learning how to play the musical instruments used locally (tom-tom, balafon, castanets, flutes, etc.). Pupils come to enjoy it and develop talents that are highly appreciated by their parents and the local population.
Local traditions are gaining increased credibility in the eyes of the people, owing their reinvigoration by bilingual schools. These traditions had been dying out, as people turned their backs on them owing to the influence of the colonial school system (which had strongly repressed them) and of certain religions (which had demonized them).
In many villages where local traditions had disappeared in favor of half-digested imported cultures, we are seeing a rebirth of these cultural riches, which the people are glad to rediscover and enjoy.
In many places, bilingual school pupils carry off most of the first places and prizes in cultural contests (singing, dance,
theater, recitals, music, etc.) at the primary school district and regional levels. The cultural performances of some schools are so admired that these schools are often invited to perform at major regional or national events. To encourage this salutary trend for Burkina culture, a cultural excellence competition is organized every two years among bilingual schools throughout the country. The best troupes receive their awards at a national ceremony presided over by the minister in charge of basic education, with extensive media coverage and production of the best performances on DVD. This is a powerful stimulus that makes up somewhat for the fact that these disciplines are not taken into account in official examinations.

f. Outcomes of productive activities

Productive activities in bilingual primary schools are intended not to organize “disguised work for children” but to introduce them to practical and manual activities. There are three key objectives:

– to give them a taste for effort and for practical and manual activities, and awaken their hidden talents for such activities, with a view either to making them handy in daily life or guiding their subsequent choice of educational track;
– to provide motivation and an opportunity for practical application of what they learn in the classroom;
– to give them the pleasure of making useful objects with their hands and enjoying the proceeds of work well done.

The practical and manual activities conducted vary depending on the location, pupils’ age and the dynamism of the parents’ association: farming, gardening, animal husbandry, carpentry, masonry, leatherwork, sewing, macramé, fabric dyeing, decoration and improvement, etc.

In all these areas, the results obtained are appreciable. Pupils roll up their sleeves and enjoy their practical and manual
activities immensely. Those engaged in farming and gardening on small plots reap harvests that go to improve the fare of the school canteen. Raising poultry, sheep or goats interests pupils very much; in addition to acquiring a taste for these activities, they make a profit that, though small, constitutes significant income in this context of poverty. Pupils (particularly girls) have proved to be very good at animal husbandry, able to rival adults owing to the quality of their pasture-fattened livestock products.

Productive activities offer a noteworthy illustration of the results of bilingual education, particularly in the cases of livestock (pupils made a gross profit of 233,000 CFA francs after three and a half months of grazing their sheep), farming, gardening, and crafts. Table 4.7 summarizes the results of the sheep-raising activity of the first intake of pupils in the two bilingual classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bilingual school</th>
<th>Number of sheep</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Sale price</th>
<th>Gross profit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nomgana</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>225,000</td>
<td>356,000</td>
<td>131,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goué</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>187,000</td>
<td>289,000</td>
<td>102,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>412,000</td>
<td>645,000</td>
<td>233,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, practical and manual activities help teachers to get certain concepts across and help pupils to understand, assimilate and master them: carpentry work facilitates the teaching and learning of geometrical concepts, which take on a more concrete meaning for pupils (length, width, height, area, perimeter, right angle, etc.); animal husbandry gives them a better grasp of the notions of purchase price, cost, sale price, and profit/loss; gardening offers a practical application of the notions of interval and yield from a given surface area of land, etc.
g. Impact on curriculum reform
Certain measures taken in Burkina Faso are the direct or indirect consequences of the positive results of the bilingual education program. These include:

– revision of the programs of the five National Schools for Primary Teachers (ENEPs) and the Pedagogical and Pastoral Training Center (CFPP) of the Catholic Church to include bilingual education modules in teachers’ pre-service training;

– revision of the programs of the ENSK to include bilingual education modules in the pre-service training of principals, pedagogical advisors and primary school inspectors;

– revision of basic education curricula in Burkina Faso to make bilingualism one of the main pillars;

– in the current reform of the education system, the period of basic education in Burkina Faso is now considered to be 3 to 16 years (the ages covered by the bilingual basic education continuum).

4.4. Observations on the results of the experiment
In our opinion, the academic results obtained by bilingual primary schools (presented above), both in the comparative evaluation and in national official examinations, testify to the higher quality of the bilingual education program compared to that of traditional primary schools. Moreover, many studies and theses written at the University of Ouagadougou, the ENAM in Ouagadougou, and the ENSK have unanimously found that the bilingual schools are qualitatively superior to traditional schools (see e.g. Ouédraogo, 2001).

Apart from the academic performance of bilingual schools, it should be noted that bilingual education makes it possible to cut the cost of basic education, which is very important to an underdeveloped country like Burkina Faso. Bilingual education offers
cost reductions not only through improved internal efficiency (see Korgho, 2001, section 3.6.4.2), but also through the reduced duration of schooling. Kinda/Remain (2003:84) affirms that:

“scaling up bilingual schools would generate considerable savings in human, material and financial resources in relation to the PDDEB […] It is calculated that the following savings would be obtained, phase by phase, if bilingual schools were scaled up as from the first year of the PDDEB:

• first phase: 5.289 billion CFA francs
• second phase: 6.287 billion CFA francs
• third phase: 10.504 billion CFA francs, for a total of 22 billion CFA francs – over 16% of the resources considered in our study.

Scaling up bilingual education would therefore enable the state to achieve substantial cost savings.”

Bilingual education is thus not only an effective educational approach but also places less strain on the economy of countries like Burkina Faso.
Chapter 5. Impact, difficulties, lessons learned and outlook

Over the course of its implementation, the bilingual education experiment registered a number of impacts, encountered certain difficulties, and made it possible to draw important lessons and to consider the outlook for the future. These aspects are discussed in this chapter.

5.1. Impact of the experiment
The experiment has had identifiable impacts on village communities, teachers, inspectors and pedagogical advisors, the Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy (MEBA), and technical and financial partners (TFPs).

Impact on village communities
For a number of years, village communities’ acceptance of and enthusiasm for the experiment have been reflected in many requests for conversion of the traditional schools in their villages into bilingual schools and for the creation of new bilingual schools, but these requests are still unsatisfied. Parents and community members whose skills have been revealed and recognized in the village have been encouraged to become involved in
conducting cultural and productive activities under the supervision of or alongside teachers.

Local communities have provided both human investment, in the form of unskilled labor, and aggregates (fine gravel, pebble and sand) and water for the construction of school infrastructure. They also provided small but significant items of equipment for productive and cultural activities.

Village communities also make invaluable contributions to bilingual schools in relation to the cultural and productive competitions organized each school year, as well as through their favorable opinions and testimony on the efficiency, relevance and quality of bilingual education.

**Impact on teachers**
Some of the teaching staff in bilingual schools have become firmly committed to bilingual education. The sustained efforts, hard work and self-abnegation of these teachers are reflected in the internal and external efficiency of bilingual education, as shown by the academic performance of bilingual schools and the results of the competitions involving productive and cultural activities.

Each school year, the teachers’ commitment and spirit of self-sacrifice lead them to agree to attend training courses during school holidays and vacations. Moreover, some of them, having mastered the practice of bilingual teaching, have taken on the role of trainers for their colleagues. In general, the teaching force has proved very willing to work in bilingual schools and has become adept in conducting productive and cultural activities in conjunction with parents.
Impact on inspectors and pedagogical advisors
The solid results achieved by bilingual schools in only five years of schooling, despite the fact that these schools are subject to the same all-French official examinations, have gradually had an unforeseen impact on traditional schools: the traditional schools located near bilingual schools that have consistently performed well on examinations and in cultural and productive activities have started to cultivate excellence and strive for quality in their examination performance and cultural activities. This healthy competition is highly salutary for the Burkina school system.

Inspectors and pedagogical advisors have given up a high proportion of their school holidays and vacation time to attend training sessions on bilingual education, which has given them a solid grounding in the philosophy of bilingual education and in how its teaching modules should be conducted. Most of them showed professionalism and efficiency in conducting teacher training sessions and workshops held to review and analyze the implementation of bilingual education in their assigned areas. In the field, many of them have satisfactorily and efficiently conducted the vital inquiry and social negotiation missions that precede the creation of a bilingual school. Certain inspectors and advisors in charge of pre-service teacher training have included bilingual education modules in the programs of ENEPs (those of Fada, Ouahigouya, etc.) and of the Catholic Church’s Pedagogical and Pastoral Training Center (CFPP).

Impact on MEBA
MEBA has made many commitments and administrative decisions: assigning permanent civil servant teachers to bilingual schools, authorizing the conversion of traditional schools into bilingual schools at the request of the community, and authorizing the introduction of bilingual education modules in the ENEPs and the ENSK.
To supervise implementation of the bilingual education program, MEBA set up a department in charge of bilingual schools within its Basic Education Directorate and established regional pedagogical teams (EPRs) to run the bilingual education program at ground level.

In the process of informing the populace and conducting social negotiations, MEBA organized a national meeting on bilingual education in May 2003, attended by more than 500 senior officials. In light of the analyses and conclusions of the 2004 and 2005 evaluations of the bilingual education program, the state decided to include the bilingual dimension, with utilization of national languages, in the revision of primary education curricula.

The bilingual education program is well along in the process of being transferred to MEBA, while OSEO may continue, for a time, its capacity-building initiatives for MEBA officials and training institutes for teachers, inspectors and pedagogical advisors. The capacity-building effort is aimed at preparing for implementation of the decision to scale up bilingual education in a gradual and controlled manner.

One of the main outcomes of the program, however, is that Burkina Faso already has more than 1,000 teachers, 300 inspectors and pedagogical advisors, and 50 trainers of trainers who are competent to implement bilingual education. These resource persons could make an important contribution to the sharing of experience and take part in training other people for bilingual education.

Another outcome is that MEBA now has a validated curriculum for bilingual education and that, for each national language now being used in schools, the teaching materials needed have been developed and are available. This blazes the trail for the
use of any other national languages that might be selected as media of instruction.

The good results of the bilingual education experiment facilitated the decision to make bilingualism one of the pillars of the curriculum reform in progress, along with the skills-based approach. The decision to introduce bilingual education modules in the ENEPs and the ENSK for pre-service training of teachers, inspectors and pedagogical advisors also resulted from the positive experience of bilingual education in Burkina Faso.

**Impact on technical and financial partners**
The TFPs that have supported the bilingual education program and other educational innovations in Burkina Faso have given a favorable assessment of the approach and results of bilingual education and expressed their support for the plan to scale up bilingual education in a gradual and controlled manner.

**International impact**
Burkina Faso’s bilingual education experiment has elicited expressions of interest at the sub-regional level (study trips by groups from Mali, Senegal, Guinea, Niger, Togo, Benin, Côte-d’Ivoire and other countries) and the international level (presentation of the program at a number of meetings, workshops and seminars organized by ADEA, UNESCO, the Organization internationale de la Francophonie, etc.). Participants in major international meetings held in Burkina Faso have insisted on visiting bilingual education sites.

**5.2. Difficulties encountered**

**Difficulties in village communities**
Owing to the poverty of village households, some parents find it hard to buy school supplies and pay their school dues. Certain
village communities participated only half-heartedly in the collection of aggregates for construction, because the collection sites are too far away. In addition, in a very few cases, parents did not participate in cultural activities as they were supposed to, because they were unwilling to do so on a volunteer basis.

After several years of waiting and hoping, some villages have shown discouragement at the state’s inability to satisfy their requests to convert their traditional schools into bilingual schools or to open new bilingual schools.

Other difficulties relate to certain communities’ lack of confidence in national languages, the illiteracy or low level of education of some parents (making them unable to help their children with homework), and the lack of “endogenous” canteens (i.e. canteens run, staffed and supplied by the community) in some bilingual schools.

**Difficulties with the intelligentsia**

Some intellectuals and people with an extensive culture in French have expressed fear and doubt as to whether national languages can serve as effective media of instruction and learning. This attitude sometimes takes the form of a barely veiled hostility to the introduction of national languages in the education system. At the beginning of the experiment, it was even observed in some places that the pupils and teachers of bilingual schools were the laughingstock of their peers in traditional schools, who considered it absurd to teach classes in African languages instead of French.

**Difficulties involving teachers**

The main difficulties involving teachers are as follows:

- some teachers find it hard to change their attitudes when they are obliged to accommodate parents and technicians
from various development sectors in order to link the act of learning to the act of producing; they take a dim view of the intervention of these other stakeholders (parents, technicians) in the education program, which used to be their private preserve;

- some teachers trained in the ENEPs to teach exclusively in French experience difficulty in adapting to the philosophy of bilingual education and the new teaching approaches used. An additional constraint is the need to learn the neologisms created to translate new concepts into national languages, which are indispensable for teaching these concepts in national languages; some teachers are unwilling to make the effort required to learn this new vocabulary, leading them in some cases to return to the methods of traditional schools, especially in the fourth and fifth years of primary school (another reason for the return to older methods is their concern over the official examinations, which are still entirely in French);
- their training period is too short to allow them fully to assimilate the new knowledge and skills associated with bilingual education.

Other difficulties relate to the fact that teachers’ vacations are taken up with training sessions; to the insufficient support provided by parents’ associations and “mother-educator” associations to productive activities in some bilingual primary schools; to the lack of pedagogical monitoring, support and advice in some school districts; to the unsatisfactory level of teacher training in certain languages; and to the lack of dynamism and initiative shown by certain teachers.

Still other types of difficulties relate to some teachers’ low level of pre-service training, to their poor command of the national language spoken by pupils, and to a lack of rigor in applying
bilingual methodologies and preparing lessons. Some of the difficulties observed are not specific to bilingual education: lack of motivation and of love for the teaching profession, and the departure of teachers for greener pastures, leaving the bilingual school vacant – as was also done by many teachers in Catholic and non-denominational private schools, due to low pay and job insecurity.

Difficulties involving inspectors, pedagogical advisors and school administrators (in DREBAs and DPEBAs)

The first series of difficulties encountered at this level has to do with the mobility (assignments and promotions) of such supervisory personnel on completion of training sessions, the shortage or dilapidated state of means of transport for pedagogical monitoring, support and advice, lack of confidence in national languages and the fact that some supervisory personnel are untrained or insufficiently trained.

The second series of difficulties relates to the fact that some inspectors and advisors do not really monitor teachers (even though resources are freed up to allow them to do so), that monitoring reports are not submitted or not required by school districts, etc.

Difficulties involving pupils

Some pupils were not proficient in the national language used as the medium of instruction, or were too young (5-6 years old), both of which are obstacles to mastering the subjects taught. In some cases, moreover, the bilingual school use a dialect that the children do not speak well or use newly coined terminology that has not been properly assimilated by teachers, which affects the quality of learning of some pupils. In addition, many pupils, particularly in rural areas, have little occasion to use French...
outside of school, which slows the development of their communication skills in that language.

Some other difficulties relate to linguistic interference between French and national languages, at both the phonetic and syntactic levels, but these difficulties can often be overcome through appropriate exercises.

**Difficulties concerning the organization and provision of bilingual education**

The difficulties observed at this level include:

- The rigidity of school schedules and of the hourly slots allocated to various subjects, which makes it difficult to make the adjustments that are indispensable in view of the particularities of the new system, especially for the third, fourth and fifth years of primary schooling. In order to avoid being out of kilter with the standard system, as well as to ensure that their academic results are fully comparable, the developers of the bilingual education system cannot, for the time being, take the liberty of making substantial changes in the official schedule and using all the activity-based methods that are needed in the new system;

- The inappropriate content of some textbooks used in the traditional school system, observed when an attempt is made to translate them into national languages, and the reluctance of certain educational circles to accept the shortening of primary schooling from six to five years or the acceleration of certain learning processes thanks to the use of national languages;

- A huge amount of linguistic adaptation is required to adapt national languages if they are to be effective media of instruction in bilingual education. This work – writing grammars, coining neologisms to translate concepts taught in basic education that do not exist in national languages,
comparative analysis of the national languages and French, various studies, etc. – is very burdensome, as it has to be carried out by resource persons who already have their own jobs to do. The work is difficult and has only a provisional impact due to the lack of authorities competent to validate the results of this linguistic adaptation, the insufficient monitoring of teachers in some school districts and, most importantly, the fact that some inspectors and pedagogical advisors do not make proper use of the instruments and methods provided for pedagogical monitoring, support and advice;

• The exclusive use of French in the official examinations certifying educational attainment belittles national languages, all that bilingual school pupils have learned in these languages and all they have learned through cultural and productive activities.

Difficulties involving the MEBA administration

• The assignment of teachers, inspectors and pedagogical advisors who are trained for bilingual schools to other areas or other tasks deprives some areas of personnel qualified for bilingual education and makes it necessary to find additional resources to train replacements so as not to endanger the experiment.

• The fact that teacher assignments are often made quite late reduces the total number of hours in the school year in bilingual schools, which already have an accelerated program. For example, some teachers were assigned to bilingual schools in March 2001, and others in late November 2002, although the school year was supposed to start in mid-September.

• The fact that the school system authorities have not satisfied the many requests to open bilingual schools and not met the many requirements of bilingual education, both of which reflect communities’ enthusiasm for bilingual
education. This grassroots demand (which is desired by the authorities) should encourage faster scaling up, but the resources allocated are not keeping up with it.

- The fact that means of transport for pedagogical monitoring, support and advice are insufficient or obsolescent, the lack of orders and decrees implementing the provisions of the education reform law, the PDDEB’s cautious planning of funds for bilingual education and the lack of dynamism of some regional pedagogical teams (EPRs) despite the funds allocated to them.

Difficulties with technical and financial partners
In this respect, we regret the slow disbursement procedures of certain TFPs and the insufficiency, despite considerable efforts by other partners, of the funding provided to cover the expenditures of the bilingual education program (training, teacher workshops, advocacy, monitoring, support and advice, etc.).

5.3. Lessons learned
The main lessons learned from the implementation of the bilingual education program in Burkina Faso are as follows:

- The use of national languages facilitates teaching and learning, and makes it possible to shorten the duration of schooling while maintaining and even improving efficiency: most children who have been in the bilingual education program reach the sixth-year (CM2) level of traditional schools – after five years of schooling instead of six, in the case of children of normal primary school age, and after four years in the case of 9-14 year olds. In addition, the percentage passing the primary school certification exam is well above the regional, provincial and national averages. Although other factors (teacher training and supervision, availability of teaching materials, pupil/teacher ratio, etc.) also have a substantial influence on the results achieved,
it seems clear that this performance on official examinations could not be achieved in four or five years without the crucial factor: the use of a language spoken by pupils. It is thus clearly established that the national languages which children speak well when they enter school are effective teaching vehicles in formal education and constitute effective and efficient shortcuts that bring considerable cost savings while helping to raise the internal and external efficiency of the education system.

- The mother tongues of African learners are not a handicap for learning French, as a long-standing prejudice would have it; on the contrary, they are effective means of accelerating learning and facilitating the teaching and acquisition of French.
- Conversely, no matter which geographical or linguistic area is considered, pupils who perform poorly in French and other subjects are systematically those who did not have a solid grounding in the phase of literacy acquisition and learning the basics in the national language.

In this respect, Nikièma (2000a:48) noted at the end of the pilot phase in 1998 that «everything seems to indicate that acceptable performance at the end of initial literacy training is decisive for later success in school, and that if initial literacy skills are poorly assimilated, it is very difficult to make up for this later on». Nikièma points out that this is consistent with the findings of Cummins (1979, 1984): if «poor assimilation of literacy skills» is equated with insufficient assimilation of academic skills in the mother tongue, it can be expected that there will be difficulties in transferring skills to the second language, and hence, in the case of Burkina Faso’s bilingual education experiment, performance will be poor when French is used as the medium of instruction.
In addition, bilingual education can help to reduce educational costs through its internal efficiency and through the shortened duration of schooling. A five-year bilingual school offers the following savings over a six-year traditional school: one teacher’s annual salary, the cost of building and equipping one classroom, the cost of housing for the teacher, and the cost of school supplies, maintenance and cleaning corresponding to the pupils in one grade. In other words, six bilingual primary schools can be built for the cost of five traditional primary schools. Thus, the construction of five, 100 or 1,000 bilingual schools would allow the government to create, respectively, one, 20 or 200 additional bilingual schools to meet the educational needs of other communities.

To take another aspect of costs, Korgho (2001) has shown that a bilingual school graduate (in the case studied by Korgho) costs eight times less than a traditional school graduate. By reducing the duration of schooling from six years to five, bilingual education would make it possible to reap economies of scale if it were scaled up.

When schooling is consistent with local conditions, it is possible to obtain parents’ acceptance of and participation in their children’s education even in the most intractable environments. This is observed in Burkina Faso’s Sahelian areas and in the center-east region (Koulpéolgo), where the massive participation in bilingual primary schools stands in sharp contrast to participation in traditional schools in the same localities, which find it difficult to recruit enough pupils to fill their classrooms. The bilingual education strategy also makes it possible to provide for certain groups that are otherwise excluded from the education system: young children, the 9- to 14-year-old age group, and linguistic minorities.

The bilingual education experiment has made it easier to adapt tools to other categories excluded from the education system, such as the visually impaired, who learn more
quickly and effectively when their Braille documents are in national languages and bilingual formats.

- The fear and mistrust of parents and the intelligentsia with respect to using national languages as teaching vehicles can be overcome if proof of the effectiveness of these languages can be established. This proof lies in the numerous requests to create new bilingual schools or to convert traditional schools into bilingual schools and the calls for bilingual schools made by senior government officials, members of parliament, etc. Indeed, a question raised in the National Assembly and directed at MEBA asked why bilingual education had not been scaled up – this was a first in Burkina Faso, and a stark contrast with the attitudes displayed at the time of the 1979-1984 reform.
- The use of national languages is more easily accepted when it is not imposed from above.

5.4. Outlook for capitalization of the bilingual education experiment by MEBA

In light of the experience acquired, the results obtained, the difficulties encountered, the lessons learned and the increasing enthusiasm of both the populace and the authorities for bilingual education, we can indicate the short-, medium- and long-term outlook for capitalization of the bilingual education experiment by MEBA, which would become the implementing institution.

Short-term outlook

In the short term, the existing system could be consolidated and the supply of bilingual education organized. To this end, the following actions could be taken:

- involvement of other basic education stakeholders in the bilingual education program;
- establishment of an advocacy system for bilingual education in Burkina Faso;
• implementation of ministry circular no. 2002-098/MEBA/SG of 18 June 2002 authorizing the conversion of traditional schools into bilingual schools at the request of local communities;
• adaptation of bilingual education teaching tools and media to groups that are marginalized or excluded from the education system, particularly those with specific needs such as the blind and visually impaired;
• establishment and consolidation of all the links in the bilingual education continuum, particularly 3Es and CMSs;
• pre-service training for teachers, inspectors and pedagogical advisors in accordance with MEBA’s directives;
• carrying out the provisions of the PDDEB concerning bilingual education and extension of bilingual education to the “priority areas” designated in the PDDEB;
• revision of basic education curricula to include bilingualism (in progress);
• establishment of a social negotiation system for bilingual education with the involvement of government authorities at the highest level;
• the introduction of bilingual education modules in the pre-service training of teachers, inspectors and pedagogical advisors in the ENEPs and the ENSK (in progress);
• training of in-service teachers, inspectors and pedagogical advisors on bilingual education modules, to lay the groundwork for scaling-up of bilingual education;
• the formulation and implementation of an overall strategy for gradual, balanced and controlled scaling-up of bilingual education;
• the adoption of administrative and legislative instruments setting out a clear policy on language and management of multilingualism, which is an inescapable fact of our linguistic environment;
• inclusion in official examinations of national languages and the cultural and productive activities taught in bilingual education.

Medium-term outlook
In the medium term, we recommend:
• the creation of institutions responsible for conducting a coherent program of scientific research in support of all stages in the development of the bilingual education program;
• the creation, through bilingual education, of validated bridges between the formal and non-formal education systems;
• the production of various studies (socio-linguistic studies, dialectological studies, comparative studies of each national language and French, studies of linguistic interference, etc.) that are vital to establish the technical and scientific basis for bilingual education using the additional national languages that will be included as bilingual education is gradually scaled up;
• invigoration of national language commissions so that they play their role as academies responsible for validating neologisms and instrumentalizing the national languages selected as vehicles of bilingual education;
• stimulation of the university-level track of translation and interpreting in national languages.

Long-term outlook
In the long term, the following actions can be envisioned:
• extending the spirit and philosophy of bilingual education to the entire national education system;
• opening of bilingual sections (with instruction in national languages and inclusion of productive and cultural activities) in traditional middle schools.
The traditional education system of Burkina Faso, like those of all the Francophone African countries, was largely inherited from the French colonization. The school system is unsuited to the context of the country’s social, cultural and economic development, and it uproots pupils by cutting them off from their home environment. Moreover, the selective and elitist nature of the system makes traditional schools very costly, eating up much of the education budget. All of this brings into sharp relief to the problem of adapting the system to the current realities and needs of Burkina Faso’s society.

The bilingual education system described in this book, after the shock caused by the sudden halt of the 1979 reform in 1984 and its negative repercussions in society, seeks to resolve the main shortcomings of the traditional school system inherited from the colonial period, which has remained a “foreign” system that has never become integrated into Burkina Faso society.

The context was not particularly favorable in view of a) the poorly managed consequences of stopping the 1979 reform, b) the presence of two parallel education sub-systems, c) the objections, often based on prejudice, leveled against the use of national languages in schools, ranging from categorical opposition to the very principle of such use to “serious” reservations concerning
a number of problems and difficulties, both objective and subjective.

The educational innovation described herein was implemented in this difficult context, in which much remains to be done to restore esteem for national languages and dissipate the fears raised by the idea of using them in the education system, even though the current trend (both worldwide and in Africa) tends to see the languages spoken by pupils as vital resources for achieving education for all.

The bilingual education program studied here, developed since 1994 by the Swiss Organization for Workers’ Solidarity (OSEO) and the Ministry of Basic Education (MEBA), may be considered as a contribution to the search for additional proof of the effectiveness of national languages in the education system.

It is a comprehensive teaching/learning program offering a continuum with three levels: early-learning centers for children 3 to 6 years old; bilingual primary schools for children 7 to 11 years old; and multilingual middle schools for 12 to 16-year-olds. The bilingual education program includes literacy/education activities and learning of French, which are also available to out-of-school children aged 9 to 14 years and to adults. The objective of bilingual education is to have children, adolescents and adults acquire the knowledge, skills and behaviors that will enable them to become well integrated into a changing world while at the same time giving attention to their personal fulfillment and the development of their communities and their country.

The bilingual education experiment has gone through three phases: a) the pilot phase from 1994 to 1998, b) the phase of geographical and linguistic extension from 1998 to 2002, c) and the phase of gradually scaling-up, beginning in 2003. It has
spread to all 13 regions of Burkina Faso and uses eight national languages in complementarity with French. Its adaptation to the country’s socio-cultural and linguistic realities, its relevance and its internal and external efficiency have aroused increasing enthusiasm among the populace, administrative, political, customary and religious authorities, technical and financial partners, etc.

Its implementation, however, has run into a number of difficulties, including:

- the doubt, fear and reluctance of some intellectuals, teachers, school inspectors and pedagogical advisors;
- the rigidity of traditional class schedules;
- the limited resources available to meet the popular demand for this type of education;
- the huge amount of linguistic adaptation to be done;
- the fact that national languages, cultural activities and productive activities are not included in official examinations.

There are also reasons for satisfaction, since bilingual education has produced very satisfactory results in academic, social, economic and political terms: a) academically, the internal efficiency of bilingual schools is higher than that of traditional schools; b) socially, bilingual education has created a favorable climate for enhanced esteem for the national culture and the introduction of national languages into the education system; c) economically, pupils in bilingual education show great interest in productive activities, which generate considerable income and prepare pupils for active participation in economic development, while the most important economic contribution of bilingual education is the possibility of reaping economies of scale through the reduction of the duration of schooling and the internal efficiency of the system; and d) politically, bilingual education has created a favorable climate for important decisions on the inclu-
sion of national languages, productive activities and cultural activities in the reform of the education system and the revision of basic education curricula.

In addition to these benefits, bilingual education generates added value in the form of a) the establishment of bridges between formal and non-formal basic education, b) parents’ increased participation in their children’s education and their assumption of ownership over schools, c) the development of a new conception of the languages and culture of Burkina Faso, which are increasingly regarded as resources rather than as problems, d) the opportunity of using more effective activity-based learning methods owing to the use of national languages, which allow for dynamic interaction between teacher and pupils, and e) a more harmonious form of co-existence between national languages and French, which now stand in a relationship of complementarity and partnership in school.

In the light of all these achievements, we may conclude that bilingual education has generated great potential which we wish to see realized and enhanced in the curriculum revision so that bilingual education in Burkina Faso can gradually be scaled up.
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African Experiences – Country Case Studies

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Based on this praxis-oriented approach, ADEA endeavors to find solutions in Africa to the challenges facing the development of the continent’s education systems. ADEA thus contributes to institutionalizing a culture of learning based on the critical analysis of experience in order to promote future development.

To this end, ADEA systematically encourages the countries in Africa to document and share experiences that they consider successful.

The case studies are generally carried out by national teams in the African education ministries and concern a wide variety of subjects, including: experiments to expand access, to promote equity, to enhance relevance, to improve management and the use of resources; strategies to scale up and sustain effective policies and practices; promising initiatives to fight HIV/AIDS and to improve the quality of education for all.

The series African Experiences – Country Case Studies draws on this wealth of experience to make available the best studies, those that are capable of providing inspiration to other countries as they seek to renovate and improve their educational systems.
ADEA

A forum for policy dialogue about education in Africa

A network of professionals, practitioners and researchers in the field of education

A partnership between education ministries and development and cooperation agencies

A catalyst for educational reform

The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) has been in existence since 1988. Originally called Donors to African Education (DAE), it was set up to promote dialogue on educational policy in Africa and to serve as a framework for better coordination among development agencies.

Twenty years after it was founded, ADEA has come to represent a genuine partnership between education and training ministries in sub-Saharan Africa and their external development partners. It has also developed into a partnership of policy-makers, educators and researchers, and, based on its capacity to foster policy dialogue, a catalyst for educational reform. It is recognized today as a key actor in the processes of dialogue, sharing and learning for qualitative change in education aimed at promoting Africa’s development.

This status serves ADEA’s mission to act as a catalyst for promising policies and practices through the pooling of ideas, experience, lessons learned and knowledge.

Policy dialogue takes place within programs and activities carried out by the ADEA Secretariat and the Working Groups. The Triennales (formerly Biennales) on Education in Africa organized by ADEA are the keystones of its activity and events of the greatest importance for education in Africa. African ministerial conferences and ADEA Steering Committee seminars are also
auspicious occasions for promoting regional policy dialogue and exchanges concerning the agenda for educational cooperation on the continent.

The ADEA Working Groups (WGs) foster policy dialogue on education-related matters designated as priorities by African countries. There are currently nine WGs, which focus on the following areas: education policy support and management, communication for education and development, early childhood development, non-formal education, distance education and open learning, higher education, books and learning materials, the teaching profession, and mathematics and science education. Certain areas addressed by former WGs, such as education for women and girls, are still covered by ADEA's work program through the involvement of these graduated working groups as associate members of ADEA. In addition, ad hoc Working Groups are set up, for predetermined periods, to cover cross-cutting and/or emerging topics.

Among its other priorities, ADEA encourages the sharing of experience and the pooling of knowledge, particularly through inter-country quality nodes (ICQNs) and the Intra-African Exchange Program. The ICQNs bring together groups of countries to address a common challenge designated as a national priority in each country. They form a network for dialogue and sharing of experiences on the problems encountered and solutions tried.

ADEA also supports the implementation of the Second Decade of Education for Africa, as part of a strengthened partnership with the African Union.

Since 2001 it has organized the Africa Education Journalism Award to encourage the African press to cover education and thus contribute to the public debate in this field.

ADEA is also a source of baseline information about education in Africa. Its publications program seeks to share the lessons of
the Triennales (or Biennales) and to highlight ongoing successful experiences in Africa. The Secretariat publishes a quarterly Newsletter and an electronic News Bulletin. In addition, ADEA manages databases on its activities and on African education specialists and professionals.

For more information about ADEA, please see its Web site: www.adeanet.org
Bilingual Education in Burkina Faso
An Alternative Approach for Quality Basic Education

The book

This book presents the history, conceptual foundations, accomplishments and challenges of an educational innovation in Burkina Faso: that of bilingual education. This bilingual education system is designed as a continuum comprised of three levels: early-learning centers for preschool-age children (3 to 6 years), bilingual primary schools for children aged 7 to 11 years and multilingual middle schools for children aged 12 to 16 years. The new system is in keeping with the spirit of Burkina Faso’s education reform law of 30 July 2007.

Bilingual education seeks to enable children to acquire a minimum level of education that gives them the basic knowledge and the tools they need to understand and improve their immediate environment. It is characterized by the use of national languages as both a medium and subject of instruction, the introduction of practical and productive activities, citizenship education, close ties to the local community, study and appreciation of the national culture, involvement of the local population in the design, planning and execution of school programs, and shortening of the duration of schooling by one to two years.

Bilingual education in Burkina Faso started with a pilot experiment at the primary level, which ran from 1994 to 1998. It has since been expanded and extended to other levels of education. Eight national languages are used in complementarity with French.

The author

Paul Taryam Ilboudo was born in 1949 in Nomgana, Burkina Faso. He holds a post-maister’s degree (diplôme d’études approfondies) in education sciences and linguistics, and is currently working toward a doctorate in linguistics. He has served as a primary school teacher, a certified secondary teacher and a researcher in applied linguistics and adult education. Ilboudo is the author or co-author of a number of publications on adult literacy and applied linguistics. He designed and lead an experiment which tested of a 48-day intensive adult literacy program, as well as the establishment of continuing education centers for the newly literate in the national languages of Burkina Faso. He is also a member of the team that designed the ALFAA method of learning French based on literacy in African languages. He took an active part, as a member of the design team, in the experimentation with and development of bilingual education in Burkina Faso.