Norms for Monitoring Education Quality in Benin

The book
As part of the planning and monitoring component of its reform of primary education, Benin adopted an action plan for “schools of fundamental quality” (Ecole de Qualité Fondamentale – EQF). In its design and implementation, EQF is both a practical application of the operational concept of the reform and a central planning tool. EQF sets nationwide standards for quality schools. It then evaluates actual levels in relation to these standards, measuring the differences between current conditions in schools and the conditions called for by the EQF definition. Following this evaluation, the EQF process, taking a realistic, simple, flexible and participatory approach, makes the choices required for formulating a program of actions in schools in the light of the resources available. This exercise requires the participation of all stakeholders in the school system; the definition of the standards is adapted over time according to the results of the successive evaluations.

This volume, produced by a team of officials in the Programming and Forecasting Directorate of Benin’s Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, describes the mechanism through which EQF was designed and implemented. It also presents some of the results obtained from 1996 to 2001 in Benin’s primary school system, the lessons learned and the challenges still to be faced.

In addition to its role in the quest for quality, the EQF exercise is a practical tool for evaluating and monitoring projects and programs at the level of individual schools.

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Norms for Monitoring Education Quality in Benin

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Foreword

As recommended by the participants in the General Appraisal of Education in Cotonou in October 1990, the authorities of the Republic of Benin launched a reform of the education system in 1993, in order to provide better learning conditions for the coming generations.

The managers of Benin’s education system wanted to ensure that all school-age children really do have access to schooling throughout the country. But they were also aware that a whole range of problems needed to be resolved, problems which were of utmost importance because their goal was nothing less than to improve the quality of basic education.

At the Biennial Meeting of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), held in Mauritius in December 2003, the representatives of Benin gave a presentation on the design, methodology, implementation and evaluation of the “school of fundamental quality” (Ecole de qualité fondamentale – EQF) experiment in Benin.

The presentation caught the attention of the meeting organizers, who appreciated the effort made by the people of Benin to devise an educational system that, while remaining open to the greatest possible number of children and teenagers, also strives for quality. In a country like Benin, with limited resources, it is not easy to meet this two-fold challenge. It is therefore necessary to periodically evaluate requirements, set priorities and take the actions needed to achieve our objectives.

I am very glad to see that what we are doing here, sometimes under very difficult circumstances, is earning some recognition outside our borders and interests an organization as prestigious as ADEA. Thanks to ADEA’s cooperation and support, this volume will be disseminated in many countries, both in Africa and elsewhere in the world.
It is my hope that all readers of this book, here and elsewhere, share with us their remarks and opinions to help us make further progress, and I reaffirm my personal commitment to do everything possible to ensure that the “school of fundamental quality” becomes a reality in Benin.

Rafiatou Karimou
Minister of Primary and Secondary Education
Porto-Novo, Benin
15 décembre 2005
# List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADEA</td>
<td>Association for the Development of Education in Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEPC</td>
<td>Basic education certificate <em>(Brevet d’études du premier cycle)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAP</td>
<td>Teacher qualification certificate <em>(Certificat d’aptitude pédagogique)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE1</td>
<td>Second year of primary school <em>(Cours élémentaire 1)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE2</td>
<td>Third year of primary school <em>(Cours élémentaire 2)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEAP</td>
<td>Basic teacher qualification certificate <em>(Certificat élémentaire d’aptitude pédagogique)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEP</td>
<td>Primary school certificate <em>(Certificat d’études primaires)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>Pre-school year <em>(Cours d’initiation)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLEF</td>
<td>Children’s Learning and Equity Foundations (project)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM1</td>
<td>Fourth year of primary school <em>(Cours moyen 1)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM2</td>
<td>Fifth year of primary school <em>(Cours moyen 2)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>First year of primary school <em>(Cours préparatoire)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDE</td>
<td>Provincial education department <em>(Direction départementale de l’éducation)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDEPS</td>
<td>Provincial primary and secondary education department <em>(Direction départementale des enseignements primaire et secondaire)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEP</td>
<td>Primary education department <em>(Direction de l’enseignement primaire)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPP</td>
<td>Programming and forecasting department <em>(Direction de la programmation et de la prospective)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRF</td>
<td>Financial resources department <em>(Direction des ressources financières)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENI</td>
<td>Teacher training college <em>(Ecole normale des instituteurs)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ENSES  Higher teacher training institution (Ecole normale supérieure)
EQF  School of fundamental quality (Ecole de qualité fondamentale)
EQUIPE  Equity and quality in primary education Project in Benin (Équité et qualité dans l’enseignement primaire au Bénin)
GDP  Gross domestic product
GER  Gross enrollment rate
IFESH  International Foundation for Education and Self-Help
IIIP  International Institute for Educational Planning
MCDI  Medical Care Development International
MEN  Ministry of education (Ministère de l’Education nationale)
MENRS  Ministry of education and scientific research (Ministère de l’Education nationale et de la Recherche scientifique)
MEPS  Ministry of primary and secondary education (Ministère des Enseignements primaire et secondaire)
NER  Net Enrollment Rate
NGO  Non-Governmental Organization
NPE  New programs of study (Nouveaux programmes d'études)
PAEGB  Program in support of general education in Benin (Programme d’appui à l’enseignement général au Bénin)
PASE  Education Sector Support Project (Projet d’appui au secteur de l’éducation)
PD/EQF  First definition of schools of fundamental quality (Première définition de l’école de qualité fondamentale)
PIP  Public investment program
SSGI  Statistics and Information Management Department (Service des statistiques et de la gestion de l’information)
**UNESCO**  United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture

**UNICEF**  United Nations Children’s Fund

**USAID**  United States Agency for International Development
Summary

After Benin’s government adopted a framework paper for education policy in 1991, the country embarked on a sweeping reform of its education system. The framework paper sets out broad policy guidelines for the education sector, aimed at addressing the system’s functional problems and poor performance. Implementation of the reform at the primary level began in 1992-93 and continues to this day. Priority was given to primary education, the foundation of the system, which was assigned the official mission of providing compulsory schooling for all school-age children, and gradually making such provision free of charge.

The specific objectives arising from the broad sector guidelines were: i) to improve primary education by strengthening and improving systems and inputs (quality); ii) to increase opportunities for access to primary education of fundamental quality (equity); iii) to institute a lasting and financially viable system of primary education; and iv) to introduce an effective, efficient planning and management system that elicits broad public participation in primary education.

In principle, all of the actions planned in this reform program should help to improve educational quality. Benin recognizes, however, that quality can be raised only through a multiplicity of innovations at the level of classrooms, schools, and the school environment. The government therefore wishes to ensure that the focal point of primary education reform – i.e. the individual school – is ultimately the primary beneficiary of the reform. This is the purpose of the “schools of fundamental quality” (écoles de qualité fondamentale – EQF) action plan, which establishes a system of indicators – the EQF standards – defining the minimum conditions for intake, teaching and supervision that will ensure or contribute to educational quality.

To ensure the country-wide application and sustainability of this action plan, a strategy of rapid, massive scaling up was employed.
As soon as the first definition of schools of fundamental quality (PD/EQF) was published, the government launched a nationwide information and awareness-raising program to inform the public of the goals and fields of action of EQF in order to obtain the support and contributions of education officials, users, partners of the school system and development organizations. The main targets of this campaign were:

• program managers, directors and members of the minister’s office at the Ministry of Education;
• senior officials in the office of the President of the Republic, the other ministries and public institutions;
• development partners, bilateral and multilateral agencies, national and international NGOs;
• civil society (parents’ associations, private school operators, religious leaders, development organizations and teachers’ unions);
• communication professionals and the general public.

The EQF brochure used for the campaign was translated into the main local languages so that all concerned categories of stakeholders would have access to information on the reform. In addition, the EQF program was presented at several regional and international meetings on education. After this consultation process, the government took stock of the situation.

The EQF strategy calls for an iterative, gradual approach both to defining standards and to implementing policy actions.

The program is based on the principle of decentralized implementation of activities. A national team was formed at the central level, and EQF monitoring and evaluation committees were established in all provincial (département-level) primary and secondary education departments (DDEPSs), as well as in school districts. The committees were headed up by primary school inspectors. Once the PD/EQF was adopted, an information and awareness-raising program was devised and implemented.

The EQF standards – which are designed to serve as both an operational vision and a planning tool for implementation of the reform of
the education system in general, and primary education in particular – specified the learning conditions required for provision of quality education in Benin, as well as guidelines for the main stakeholders in schools.

The progressive implementation of these standards has brought tangible results, improving to some extent the conditions in which pupils are admitted, taught and supervised. This success is due to a combination of factors: a changing national socio-political and economic context; the motivation and availability of senior national officials; the willingness of development partners to grant budgetary aid; and improvement in the framework of education policy and strategies, the institutional framework and the school environment.

Five sets of standards were adopted to bring about EQF. They relate to: i) the qualifications of teaching staff; ii) learning materials; iii) the school environment; iv) equipment and furniture; and v) processes. The available data show the following results for the 1996-2001 period:

• Where teacher qualification is concerned, the situation has deteriorated: the number of teachers that need training to acquire the basic professional certificate (certificat élémentaire d’aptitude pédagogique, or CEAP) rose from 1,192 teachers to 6,446, bringing the percentage of schools having all teaching staff CEAP-certified, down from 68% to 23%.

• For learning materials, the situation is less clear-cut. However, the context and the various actions undertaken, particularly between 1998 and 2001, allow us to conclude that there has been improvement in this input, or more precisely, improvement in the availability of learning materials in schools. This is particularly true in the pre-school year and first primary year (CI and CP), where large-scale implementation of the new programs of study (nouveaux programmes d’études, or NPE) has begun.

• In terms of the school environment, the level of compliance with most of the standards is above or near 50%, an improvement over 1996.
• School equipment and furniture is the input showing the greatest improvement, as this indicator rose overall from 7% to 30%. This result reflects the actions conducted in this area.
• Lastly, for all processes: i) the activities of the teacher training network have improved slightly but remain at a very low level; ii) parents’ associations are participating more in school management; and iii) in over half of cases (58%), the standard of having no more than 50 pupils per class is not met.

The results obtained for internal efficiency show an overall trend of improvement. In absolute value, however, the levels reached are rather low, reflecting the extremely low quality of schools. The quantitative expansion of the school system has not been accompanied by significant qualitative development.

Benin is making a strong effort to introduce a system of EQF standards, but the country has come up against a number of constraints:
• A persistent shortage of qualified teachers, due to growing demand for education, to the management of available human resources and to training and recruitment policy. Twenty percent of Benin’s schools still have classes without a teacher. For the 2000-01 school year, the shortfall is estimated at 1,066 teachers. Furthermore, many teachers in service are not qualified: 40% of the teachers working in classrooms do not have the basic professional certificate. A further constraint is the dysfunctional state of the in-service teacher training network and the lack of a large-capacity institution for training primary school teachers.
• Low intake capacity at the primary level, due to lack of infrastructure, teachers and furniture. This weakness is reflected in overcrowded classes: nearly half of all schools (48%) have an average of more than 50 pupils per class, and thus fail to meet the EQF standard, which prescribes classes of no more than 50 pupils. Over one-fourth of pupils (28%) do not have a seat. All this testifies to the persistently weak supply of education.
• A shortage of textbooks in the last four years of primary school. Only one-third of Benin’s schools meet the EQF standards for learning materials. This deficiency, observed in all départements,
may be due to the fact that in 2001 the scale-up of the NPEs had begun for the first two years of primary education, but had not yet reached the last four primary years.

- *A degree of geographical inequity, with strong disparities between municipalities due to an incoherent policy on the distribution of the inputs that were supposed to contribute to educational quality, as well as to social and cultural factors.* Considerable regional disparities exist in terms of the supply of education, training of teachers, and monitoring of teachers. The policy on teacher training and supervision is also to blame here. Gender disparities are observed at the level of both access and internal rates of return, meaning that it is necessary not only to enroll more girls in school, but also – and most importantly – to keep them there.
1. Introduction

Context of the study
At a time when all stakeholders in education at all levels are seeking to achieve “quality education for all in 2015”, it is necessary to take the time for periodic evaluation of the performance of the education systems striving toward this vision of quality schooling for all. Thus the initiative of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) came at just the right time.

The ADEA formed an ad hoc working group on educational quality to support the countries of sub-Saharan Africa in their efforts to meet the challenge of providing quality basic education for all. The goal is to provide, by establishing a joint forum for reflection, a synthesis of the knowledge that has been accumulated on promising strategies and policy options as well as on tools for the design and implementation of quality improvement programs. In the long run, the aim is to help countries to develop and deploy quality improvement strategies that address national priorities for educational development, while taking the existing constraints into account.

Where methods and objectives are concerned, the exercise is based on a participatory process that commits the countries concerned to share their experiences and knowledge of the subject. The inter-learning process employed requires that each country begin by evaluating its own policies and actions in order to identify and analyze one or more successful or promising experiences of improving the quality of basic education. This analytical work should lead the stakeholders concerned to engage in critical thinking on the strengths and weaknesses of their actions, on the factors and conditions that determine them, and on prospects for development and improvement. It is a process of knowledge production and capacity building based on the ADEA’s watchword: “learning through action and from action to develop and improve action”.

1. Introduction
The ad hoc group is to prepare a synthesis of the current state of knowledge and devise a framework for formulating policies and actions to improve the quality of basic education in sub-Saharan Africa. This synthesis will be primarily based on analysis of country experiences, as documented by the country case studies and by a review of African literature on the topic.

On the basis of the lessons drawn from the case studies, a broader analytical process will be undertaken on policies, strategies and practices that are relevant in African contexts; although these contexts differ from one country to the next, they are generally characterized by scarce resources and weak capacity, and these characteristics must be taken into account in policy options for reform and action. The case studies will be the key to finding African solutions to African problems.

As part of the activities of the ad hoc group, and with a view to the ADEA Biennial Meeting held in December 2003, the partner countries were invited to present case studies on formal or non-formal educational experiences or on basic education for adults. Four main themes were selected:

- revision of teaching methods and teacher training;
- decentralization/devolution and alternative education systems;
- scaling up educational reforms and making them sustainable;
- the relevance of education, adaptation of curricula and the use of African languages.

In the present study, Benin analyzed the learning conditions required for quality education, based on the application of the EQF standards.

**Methodology**

The case study is based on evaluation of schools according to the EQF standards. This evaluation investigated both the national situation and the levels attained in the country’s individual regions and school districts, based on the EQF reports for each school for the
The results were compared with those of the first evaluation (1995-96 school year), and an effort was made to interpret the differences observed.

The study also identified prospects for improving the quality of primary education in Benin, highlighting the existing constraints, the lessons learned and the challenges ahead.

The approach adopted may be summed up in the following steps:

- formation of a multidisciplinary team consisting of a planner, an economist, a statistician, an educator and a sociologist;
- literature research: collection and utilization of the available documentation on the topic;
- evaluation of schools with respect to the EQF standards: making use of the available statistics, particularly those for the 2000-01 school year, a summary report of the evaluation was produced on the basis of the EQF standards by municipality, by département and at national level;
- a survey of focus groups to collect information that did not appear in the statistical database;
- a workshop to review interim reports and draw up a detailed plan for the final study report;
- drafting of the final report of the case study.

This report is presented in five parts:

- a historical overview of the development of Benin’s education system;
- the importance of the EQF action plan in the reform;
- EQF implementation strategy;
- the results obtained;
- constraints, lessons learned and challenges ahead.
2. Overview of the development of Benin’s education system

Since Benin became independent, in 1960, the history of the country’s educational policy falls into three periods:

• 1960-72: the education system was patterned on the French system;
• 1975-89: three years after the revolution of 1972, the government adopted the “new school” reform, based on a socialist development model and implemented up to 1989;
• since 1991: one year after the General Appraisal of Education in 1990, the government launched a sweeping program of reforms in the education sector.

The context of the 1991 reform

The General Appraisal of Education of October 1990 and the organizational and functional audit of the education ministry that followed both emphasized the dysfunctions and poor performance of the education system, despite the considerable resources allocated to the sector. Several major difficulties were identified:

• inequity of access (regional disparities, gender disparities, etc.);
• quantitative and qualitative deficiencies in provision (infrastructure, teaching and supervisory staff, textbooks, learning materials, etc.);
• little capacity for planning, monitoring and managing financial, human and material resources;
• low internal and external efficiency of the education system;
• a poor match-up between the education provided and the country’s development needs.

After the government adopted the framework paper on education policy (1991), which sets out broad policy guidelines for the educa-
tion sector, Benin embarked on a sweeping program to reform the education system. The reform encompasses all educational levels, but gives priority to primary education. The general aims of the reform, as defined in the declaration of education policy and education sector strategy, were to increase, on the one hand, the supply of education and the quality of service delivered by the education system, and on the other, internal and external efficiency.

Six basic objectives were set:
• equality of opportunity for all;
• improvement in the quality of education;
• rehabilitation of the institutional framework;
• training for self-employment;
• regulation of flows at all levels;
• control of educational costs.

The objectives laid down in the framework paper on education policy were updated in 1991 and 1994 to make them more relevant to the country’s development needs. Benin’s updated education policy is now aimed at achieving the following eight objectives:
• ensuring equal opportunity of access to education for all Beninese children from 6 to 15 years of age;
• improving the quality of provision;
• strengthening the institutional framework;
• expanding technical and vocational training;
• expanding and streamlining non-formal education;
• expanding adult literacy programs;
• streamlining the various types of public and private education and scientific research;
• raising funds and managing them soundly.

To translate these objectives into operational terms, 15 action plans have been developed. They may be grouped under three headings:
• the **institutional reform** part is based on six action plans focused on the following items: i) the budgeting process; ii) organization; iii) human resources; iv) administrative training; v) school equipment; and vi) financial viability /participation by the general public;
• the **instructional** part is based on five action plans: i) programs of study; ii) teacher training; iii) textbooks and learning materials; iv) documentation on teaching methods and a documentary network; and v) evaluation of pupils’ knowledge;

• the **planning** part consists of four action plans: i) school mapping; ii) increasing opportunities for access and equity; iii) schools of fundamental quality; and iv) information systems.

**The reform of primary education**

The purpose of the education system reform under way in Benin is to create the conditions required for acquisition of relevant knowledge and developing the skills needed for success, both in school and in working life.

The key feature of the reform is the emphasis placed on prior training of those who will be responsible for running the institutions created. Implementation at the primary level began in 1992-93 and continues to this day.

Primary education, the foundation of the system, is thus considered as the top priority; its official mission is to provide compulsory schooling for all school-age children, and gradually to make such provision free of charge.

The overall goal of the primary education sub-sector is to establish an effective, efficient, equitable and sustainable education system. The specific objectives arising from this goal are: i) to improve primary education by strengthening and improving systems and inputs (quality); ii) to increase opportunities for access to primary education of fundamental quality (equity); iii) to institute a lasting and financially viable system of primary education; and iv) to introduce an effective, efficient planning and management system that elicits broad public participation in primary education.

Implementation of the reform in the sub-sector is supported by the USAID program in support of the reform of primary education. The reform is based on several main thrusts: overhauling programs of
instruction; improving teacher training and supervision; increasing capacity to produce, purchase and distribute school books and learning materials; and establishing a system to evaluate pupils’ knowledge. Currently, the programs of study for the pre-school year and the first three primary years (CI, CP, CE1, CE2) are in the phase of nationwide implementation. These new programs, in keeping with the objectives set for the reform of primary education, require a new teaching approach and a new methodology, which have been added to the teacher training program.

Where planning is concerned, the emphasis has been on improving access and quality. Several measures have been taken to broaden access, with the implementation of the “Increasing opportunities for access” action plan, which is designed to increase the educational opportunities of every Beninese child, without regard for gender, region, or socio-economic and socio-cultural background. Special programs have been mounted to promote education for girls.

With regard to improving quality, the implementation of the EQF action plan has made it possible to define minimum standards that every school must meet, as well as the conditions for achieving qualitative goals in these schools.
3. The importance of the EQF action plan in the context of the reform

The implementation of the action plans was supposed to strengthen the education system’s institutional capacity for planning and for educational and administrative management. All actions taken as part of this reform should help to improve educational quality, but quality can be assessed only at the level of classrooms, schools and the school environment.

It is therefore important to ensure that the focal point of the reform of primary education – i.e. the individual school – is ultimately the greatest beneficiary. This is the purpose of the EQF action plan, which establishes a system of indicators – the EQF standards – that define the minimum conditions for intake, teaching and supervision needed to ensure or contribute to educational quality.

The evaluation and monitoring of these standards are helpful to school system planning and management, as they can be used to orient activities and investment programs in schools in such a way as to establish the learning conditions required for an education of good quality.

**EQF objectives**

Three basic objectives were set for EQF:
- to create a system of indicators that define the minimum conditions of intake, teaching and supervision for a school of fundamental quality;
- to facilitate management and monitoring of school system planning tasks;
- to plan and schedule actions and investments in schools so as to improve their characteristics and/or maintain them at the minimum required level.
Presentation of the EQF action plan

The EQF concept

EQF is a two-faceted concept: it is both an operational vision of the reform of education and a crucial tool for planning the reform.

Operational vision of the reform of the education system

Despite the complexity of the education system in general, and the reform of primary education in particular, the focal point of the system remains the individual school. It is necessary to ensure that the various components of the system – teacher training, textbook production and distribution, infrastructure, school furnishings, etc. – that the reform seeks to reinforce do in fact contribute to a synergistic improvement in educational quality, that is to say, to creating a school of fundamental quality. Whence the necessity of beginning by defining a vision of EQF, the key objective of the reform. This vision of EQF is nothing less than an operational vision of the goals of the reform.

Planning and decision support tool

Once EQF was defined, it became the target of reform activities, because the final evaluation of the reform’s success will be based on the quality and efficiency of schools. Thus, the second, strategic aspect of EQF is that it serves as the planning tool that motivates all actions taken as part of the reform. If these actions are to be effective in the medium and long terms, the definition of EQF must be:

• realistic, in that it takes account of national aspirations and of the resources available;
• simple, to provide a basis for medium-term planning of the reform effort;
• adaptive, since the progress made in the reform and the changing situation of schools with respect to the current definition will lead to modifications in this definition;
• participatory, since a definition developed by all stakeholders in the education system is more likely to be relevant and viable.
Generally speaking, EQF serves as:

- a basis for dialogue between the decision-makers and partners of the education system on the content and cost of an efficient school;
- a planning and budgeting tool;
- a conceptual framework for the development of an information system on quality;
- a frame of reference for monitoring and evaluating the progress achieved in schools with respect to each component (teacher training, textbooks, equipment and furniture, etc.);
- an aid for decision-making, planning, implementation of investment programs and monitoring of decentralized programs.

**The first definition of EQF**

The drafting and finalization of the first definition of schools of fundamental quality (*première définition de l’école de qualité fondamentale* – PD/EQF) was the product of a long participatory process consisting of a series of stages:

- a review of the available literature on indicators of education system quality;
- surveys relating to the factors that determine educational quality;
- synthesis of the results and drafting of a preliminary definition of quality standards;
- reactions, comments and criticisms from technical officials in school authorities;
- pre-validation of the preliminary definition as revised through workshops bringing together all those involved in provision;
- revision of the preliminary definition;
- validation workshop bringing together all stakeholders in the education system (inspectors, teachers, unions, parents and other ministries);
- finalization of the first definition;
- adoption of the first definition by the Ministry of Education.
According to the PD/EQF, a school of fundamental quality meets the minimum conditions relating to intake, teaching and supervision needed for an education of quality and a good rate of return. It offers pupils and staff effective oversight, stimulating working conditions and a decent environment.

The school of fundamental quality is thus a school which:

- has the resources needed, according to the EQF standards, to receive pupils appropriately and provide effective teaching and supervision;
- manages the available human, material and financial resources rationally and uses them efficiently.

The factors that determine the quality of a school may be grouped around six focal points:

- human resources;
- community support;
- learning materials;
- optimal conditions for teaching and learning activities;
- positive attitudes on the part of pupils, teachers, parents and the community;
- effective teaching and learning activities.

The factors that go into making a school of fundamental quality are grouped in four categories:

- **inputs**
  - quality of teaching staff;
  - school environment;
  - infrastructure and furniture;
  - programs of study and learning materials;
  - administrative capacity;
  - pupils’ socio-economic environment.

- **processes**
  - attitude of the school administration;
  - attitude of teachers;
  - teaching methods;
- teachers’ weekly workload;
- pupils’ weekly workload.

**internal efficiency**
- rate of return (pass, repetition and dropout rates);
- pupils’ performance.

**external efficiency**
- continuation in general or technical secondary education;
- salary of former pupils entering the working world;
- match-up between the employment situation and education;
- social, economic and political impact.

When the PD/EQF was being drafted, in March 1995, and with an eye to gradual introduction of the reforms, only the first two categories (inputs and processes) were taken into consideration. They were translated into some 50 standards in the areas enumerated above. These standards are described and explained in the document *L’école de qualité fondamentale : première définition*, produced under the EQF action plan (MEN, DEP and DAPS, 1995).

Although the PD/EQF and its 50 standards have been finalized and adopted, the definition itself remains subject to change, in accordance with the EQF strategy, which calls for an iterative, staged approach leading ultimately to simple, realistic definitions.
4. EQF implementation strategy

The EQF strategy favors an iterative, staged approach to both defining standards and implementing initiatives. Thus, the adoption of the PD/EQF in March 1995 – after the long participatory process described above – was the starting point for the implementation of the EQF program in Benin.

EQF implementation methods
The program is based on the principle of decentralized implementation. A central team has been put together, along with EQF evaluation and monitoring committees in all DDEPSs and school districts. The committees were headed up by primary school inspectors.

Informing and raising awareness among stakeholders in education
Once the PD/EQF was adopted, an information and awareness-raising program was developed and put into practice. A country-wide awareness-raising campaign was run in order to publicize the aims of the EQF and the areas it would cover, and to encourage the various stakeholders, users and partners in education and the development organizations to support and contribute to the EQF initiative. The campaign’s priority targets were:

- program managers, directors and members of the minister’s office at the Ministry of Education;
- senior officials in the office of the President of the Republic, the other ministries and public institutions;
- development partners, bilateral and multilateral agencies, national and international NGOs;
- civil society (parents’ associations, private school operators, religious leaders, development organizations and teachers’ unions);
- communication professionals and the general public.
The EQF brochure used for the campaign was translated into the country’s main languages.

As part of the campaign, presentations on the EQF program were given at a number of regional and international meetings on education.

Once this preliminary work had been completed, it was felt necessary to carry out an inventory of progress to date.

First evaluation of schools against EQF standards

The first evaluation of schools was carried out on the basis of data collected from across the whole of the country by the Statistics and Information Management Department (SSGI). The evaluation report provides raw data on how schools had performed against each EQF standard for the 1995-96 school year. It was found that no schools were in full compliance with all the EQF standards. Using regional and national summaries, it was possible to identify the number of schools that had reached a given standard and to calculate the progress that needed to be made for all schools to reach this standard. Later, this calculation served as a basis for evaluating the resources required to ensure that all schools reached this standard. The results were recorded in the report Evaluation des écoles par rapport aux normes EQF – Rapport statistique (MENRS, DEP and DAPS, 1997), which revealed, for example, that it would be necessary to:

• provide basic professional training to 1,192 teachers to ensure that all teachers had achieved a basic level of training and to recruit around 1,100 new teachers to cover the shortfall in staff;
• provide over 200,000 seats for pupils, build or refurbish around 4,864 classrooms, and provide 250,000 French and mathematics textbooks for pre-school and first-year pupils (CI and CP).

A detailed presentation of the situation is provided later in this report.
Overall, this first evaluation revealed the existence of a significant gap between the standards and the actual situation in schools: on average, schools were performing at less than one-third of the level of achievement set out in the EQF program.

**Identification of the first series of priority standards**

After holding workshops to feed back the results of the evaluation in all regions, the DDEPSs identified the priority standards considered essential to ensure a minimum level of quality for primary education in Benin. Ten standards were selected unanimously from the 50 standards listed in the PD/EQF, which serves as a framework for the EQF program. The first series is shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PD/EQF ref. no.</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>% of schools complying with the standard in 1996</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PESO1</td>
<td>Processes</td>
<td>Maximum 50 pupils per class Maximum 50 pupils per teacher</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISEO1</td>
<td>Inputs</td>
<td>Each class has a teacher</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPO4</td>
<td>Inputs</td>
<td>1 French book for every two pupils (CI and CP)</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPOS5</td>
<td>Inputs</td>
<td>1 math book for every two pupils (CI and CP)</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE03</td>
<td>Processes</td>
<td>Teachers receive training at least every 3 years</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP12</td>
<td>Inputs</td>
<td>1 seat per pupil (at twin desks)</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP08</td>
<td>Inputs</td>
<td>1 French kit for every 3 pupils</td>
<td>Not assessed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP13</td>
<td>Inputs</td>
<td>1 math kit for every 3 classes</td>
<td>Not assessed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP10</td>
<td>Inputs</td>
<td>1 sports kit for every 3 classes</td>
<td>Not assessed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The evaluation led to the reformulation of the priority for primary schooling: “a pupil with a roof over his/her head, sitting at a desk for two children, with textbooks in front of him/her, taught by a qualified teacher who has received training on a regular basis at least every three years and has access to appropriate teaching materials”.

4. EQF IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY
A series of indicators to be used for monitoring purposes was identified:

- ratio of pupils to French textbooks;
- ratio of pupils to math textbooks;
- classes/teacher ratio;
- pupils/teacher ratio;
- pupils/class ratio;
- pupils/seats ratio;
- the percentage of schools where teachers and principals were able to take part in a refresher training program.

**Schedule for actions and acquisitions**

The level reached at national level, in each département and in the 77 sub-prefectures (which have since become municipalities) was evaluated against the ten priority standards.

This exercise made it possible to identify priority investment areas and to draw up a schedule of actions and acquisitions to improve standards in schools in line with EQF priorities. The schedule for the 1998-2000 period was then drawn up for each département and subsequently at national level.

This is one of the EQF program’s key activities, carried out in all the DDEPSs in accordance with a single methodology.

A summary of this schedule as well as a note on methodology aimed at département-level committees are recorded in the document *Programme des actions et acquisitions suivant les normes EQF – Période 1998-2000*, produced in 1998. This document lists, for each département, the acquisitions to be made during the three academic years concerned.

Finally, the next stage of the process required implementation of a method for monitoring and evaluating the EQF program.

**Monitoring / evaluation**

The development of a monitoring system for the program had been
considered essential from the outset. Thus, as early as September 1997, the central EQF team had finalized a *Proposal for monitoring EQF and action plans.*

The notion of “monitoring” covers all activities that consist of overseeing the implementation of planned initiatives in a specific and sustained manner. In the context of EQF, it involves:

- ensuring that agreed schedules are properly adhered to;
- producing data to facilitate decision-making in order to improve planning of educational initiatives;
- measuring the impact of the program on schools;
- tracking the changes in the EQF conditions for intake, teaching and supervision of pupils;
- tracking and analyzing how the EQF program is implemented in schools;
- communicating the results of the monitoring to all key players in the system;
- where necessary, using the results of the monitoring to shift the focus of school activity and investment programs.

The evaluation methodology was based on two procedures, one quantitative and the other qualitative.

The starting point for the qualitative evaluation is an interview guide made available to the school monitoring teams which, with the support of the members of the central team, carry out interviews with teachers in a sample of schools selected from each school district. Summaries are produced for each school district and each DDEPS. The central team then produces the qualitative monitoring report based on the summaries from each *département.*

Quantitative evaluations are carried out with the support of the SSGI/DPP, based on the data available to this body. This results in the production of a statistical report, showing how schools are performing against the EQF standards.
Whereas monitoring and evaluation of the results of the EQF program measure the level of achievement against EQF standards, monitoring of the process analyzes the way the program has been implemented.

The first of these methods is used to clarify decision-making, while the process as a whole makes it possible to answer certain questions on the levels reached, actions to be taken as a matter of priority and the direction to be given to program implementation. From this point of view, it helps to improve planning and the efficient use of resources.

The frequency at which reports should be produced was defined in the EQF program monitoring system as follows:
- production of a national report on the level schools have reached with respect to the ten priority standards, every two years;
- production of a national report on the level schools have reached with respect to all 50 standards, every five years;
- production of a monitoring report at département level on program implementation in a sample of schools, every year.

After the first evaluation of all the standards for the academic year 1995-96, this case study, focusing on an evaluation of all the standards based on the results of the academic year 2000-01, comes at a timely moment and will fill an important gap in knowledge at a time when the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MEPS) is planning to re-launch the EQF program.

The whole of the process described above remains a key planning tool, since achieving the objective of providing a high-quality school system for Benin will depend on implementation of the actions programmed after the evaluation of schools.

**Resources**

The EQF program requires a number of conditions or resources to be in place that are essential to achieving the goal of quality education for all.
**Legislative strategy**

The implementation of the EQF program requires political commitment on the part of the country’s leaders, especially because significant investment is required. Political support is therefore indispensable in order to mobilize resources and remains an essential prerequisite for the program’s implementation. The information and awareness-raising campaign conducted in Benin has garnered political support – but it is not enough. The various regulatory and legislative instruments have not yet been adopted by the National Assembly and, as yet, the framework Education Act has not been promulgated.

A further essential prerequisite is the requirement that the EQF program (like all other projects in this sector) be in line with education policy. In Benin, the framework education policy adopted by the government in 1991, after the assessment carried out by the General Appraisal of Education in 1990, serves as a reference point. It selected six main areas of focus corresponding to the fundamental objectives assigned to the education system (see above, section 2).

As part of the reform of primary education, 15 action plans – including the EQF program – were developed based on the fundamental objectives that the education system was tasked with achieving. The plans were formulated by senior officials in the Ministry of Education, with technical support from development partners, in particular USAID. Together, these plans should help bring about quality education for all, as described in the EQF standards. These can therefore be seen as a resource that will support the implementation of the EQF program. We will set out the main initiatives taken since the reform of primary education (1992-93) through to the 2000-01 school year, the reference year for this case study, as well as the resources deployed to implement the EQF program.

**Educational strategy**

- **New programs of study**

The aim of the “reform of programs of study” action plan is to provide primary education with new programs of study (NPEs) based
on the skills a pupil is supposed to have acquired by the end of his or her primary schooling.

Several important activities have been undertaken within the framework of this plan:

• drafting of reference documents on the NPEs;
• training for those charged with designing the NPEs;
• development of the NPEs (pilot version) for all primary grades (pre-school, first, second, third, fourth and fifth years) in the six areas of education selected (social education, science and technology, art, physical education and sports, French, mathematics);
• gradual roll-out of the NPEs (still as a pilot scheme) as from the start of the 1994-95 school year in 30 schools (5 schools per département);
• the involvement of 150 other schools in implementing the NPEs from the start of the 1996-97 school year;
• full implementation of the NPEs in the pre-school year (CI) from the start of the 1999-2000 school year, followed by first-year (CP) primary classes in 2000-01;
• training in the approach and strategy behind the NPEs for teachers responsible for pupils from the pilot schools.

In-service training and the teacher training network

The aim of this action plan is to allow teachers already in post to apply the NPEs at the primary level.

During its pilot phase (1993-98), 90 inspectors (including all school district heads), 350 educational advisors and school principals, and 1,000 staff teaching in the pilot schools received training.

When the NPEs were being fully scaled up in the pre-school year (CI) in 1999 and the first primary year (CP) in 2000, training was provided to 600 trainers (including all educational advisors), 4,500 primary school principals in both the public and private sectors (i.e. all the primary schools in the country) and 9,000 pre-school
and first-year teachers (both public and private). Training for principals took place over both of the years concerned (1999 and 2000).

The staged implementation of the NPEs is now under way, with third-year (CE2) classes being included from the 2002-03 school year.

### Textbooks and learning materials

The aims of the “Textbooks and learning materials” action plan are as follows:

- to develop a national policy on textbooks;
- to provide primary schools in both the public and private sectors with math and French textbooks, in accordance with EQF standards;
- to promote the creation of a national publishing house able to produce textbooks for the NPEs.

Between 1999 (the year when the NPEs were fully implemented) and 2001, French and math textbooks strictly in accordance with the NPEs were published and printed entirely in Benin.

- Pre-school and first-year classes (CI and CP): 170,000 copies were printed for each course and each discipline in anticipation of a ratio of one textbook for every two pupils.
- Pre-school and first-year classes: 340,000 copies of French and math workbooks were printed for each discipline, allowing every pupil to have his or her own workbook;
- Pre-school and first-year classes: educational posters were produced for instruction in French;
- Teacher’s guides: 10,000 copies were designed and printed for each area of study;
- Second-year classes (CE1): the same manuals were printed in the same quantities when the NPEs were rolled out to second-year classes (2001-02 school year).
- The draft policy paper on schoolbooks has not yet been adopted by the government.
A dossier on management committees for schoolbooks is being developed.

**Evaluation of learning and academic counseling**

The first aim of the “Evaluation of learning and academic counseling” action plan is to reform the traditional evaluation and counseling systems used in schools in Benin and to put forward proposals for a new system that would make it possible to:

- monitor and assess objectively the achievements of pupils and the whole of the system;
- define methods for evaluating what pupils have learned and certifying levels of attainment at the end of primary schooling, on the basis of the guiding principles underlying the NPEs.

The reform of the evaluation and counseling system will take place gradually, in line with the pace of implementation of the NPEs.

The main activities carried out in this area are as follows:

- implementation of an evaluation mechanism in a small sample;
- design and implementation of a learning evaluation system based on the guiding principles underlying the NPEs;
- definition and application of the NPE primary education certificate (CEP/NPE) examination format. This examination was administered three times between 1998 and 2000 with the following results:
  - 1998 session: 92% pass rate,
  - 1999 session: 81% pass rate,
  - 2000 session: 85% pass rate;
- design and trial of the academic counseling booklet in schools.

**External strategy – partnership**

In order to implement its program of reform in primary education, Benin receives support from a number of partners, led by the United States through USAID. These contributions focus on:

- the acquisition of educational inputs;
- teacher training;
4.

- technical assistance provided through an institutional contract – the Children’s Learning and Equity Foundations (CLEF) project;
- technical assistance through grant agreements with, in particular:
  - World Education, which supports parents’ associations;
  - IFESH, which is involved in in-service teacher training in 40 school districts;
  - MCDI, which works in the area of health within the school environment;
  - Songhai, which provides technical training to those who are not in the education system;
  - World Learning, which has recently begun to support schooling for girls.

Other partners tend rather to provide support for the education system in all sub-sectors.

**Education finance strategy**

The study entitled *La dépense d’éducation au Bénin* (Oulaï and Péano, 2000) highlights the three main sources of funding for educational activities:

- the public authorities (central and local government), which re-distribute the revenues generated from direct and indirect taxation;
- households, which contribute to school funds or make direct payments for their children in school;
- external partners and NGOs, which provide financial assistance in the form of grants or of loans that are repayable by the national government.

According to the same study, 50 billion CFA francs were spent on education in 1996, or 4.4% of GDP. These expenditures were funded as follows: 59.9% by the public authorities, approximately one-fourth (24.2%) by parents, 13.4% by NGOs and external loans and grants, and the remainder (2.5%) from self-financing (*Table 4.2*).
Between 1996 and 2001, the proportion of the overall state budget earmarked for education has grown steadily. The education budget increased from 39,112 million CFA francs in 1996 to 67,323 million in 2001, an average annual increase of 11.47%. As the central government budget itself increased from 293,029 million CFA francs to 416,835 million (an average annual increase of 7.30%), it can be seen that education’s share of the total increased from 13.35 to 16.15% (Table 4.3).

### Table 4.2. Funding of education expenditure in 1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of finance</th>
<th>Amount (millions of CFA francs)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central government</td>
<td>29,454</td>
<td>58.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>12,138</td>
<td>24.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>3,118</td>
<td>6.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External – loans</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External – grants</td>
<td>3,181</td>
<td>6.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-financing</td>
<td>1,239</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>50,115</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on Oulaï and Péano (2000).

The education budget fell from 3.48% of GDP in 1996 to 3.30% in 1998, then rose again to 3.40% in 1997. This could herald a downward trend in the proportion of GDP devoted to education.

Overall, it can be seen that the state is striving to increase the resources earmarked for education, a move that has become more...
marked in recent years, particularly as debts have been written off as part of the efforts to combat poverty.

The EQF program has benefited from a significant level of financial assistance to support implementation, thanks in particular to the primary education reform program supported by USAID. We will now look at the results obtained by mobilizing all these resources to improve the quality of primary education in Benin.
5. Results

There are two ways of assessing school quality: either by evaluating the resources employed, or by considering the performance of pupils or of the education system in general. We will begin by analyzing the results obtained with respect to the EQF standards and will subsequently consider the effectiveness of the system as a whole.

Results obtained with respect to the EQF standards

For purposes of analysis, we will use five groups of standards: i) qualifications of teaching staff; ii) learning materials; iii) school environment; iv) equipment and furniture; and v) processes. The six standards relating to processes have been combined into a single category. The analysis is based on the evaluations carried out for the 1995-96 and 2000-01 school years.

Between 1996 and 2001, the number of schools increased by more than one-third, from 2,916 schools to 3,956 in 2001 (an increase of 35.7% in five school years). This increase must be taken into account when interpreting the results.

The national summaries of the evaluation of schools against the EQF standards appear in Appendices 2 and 3 (for the 1995-96 and 2000-01 school years respectively). The percentages represent the number of schools that meet a given standard as a proportion of the total number of schools. These summary sheets also present the overall statistics for these two school years.
Four standards are used to evaluate teacher qualifications.

- **Possession of the basic professional diploma (CEAP)**
  In 1996, 1,192 of the 12,833 teachers in service nationwide did not have the diploma attesting to basic professional training. The proportion was higher in 2001, as 6,446 of the 17,254 teachers in service did not have the CEAP. This shows that in 1996, 68.04% of teachers had the CEAP, but only 23.53% in 2001.

- **Half of the teachers in a given school have the required professional diploma (CAP)**
  Whereas in 1996 this condition was met in 87.11% of schools, only 73.13% of schools satisfied this standard in 2001. This translates into a CAP training requirement of 665 teachers, as against 307 in 1996. It can thus be seen that the training requirement has more than doubled.

All school principals have the required professional diploma (CAP)

In 1996, 97.87% of school principals had the CAP and therefore satisfied the professional conditions associated with this post. The 2001 evaluation showed a slight improvement, with 98.03% of principals holding the CAP. In absolute value, there was 62 irregular cases in 1996, compared to 78 in 2001.

The school principal receives training at least once every three years

Where this standard is concerned, a sharp improvement is observed, although the level is still low: from 45.92% of principals in 1996, this proportion rises to 65.04% in 2001.

The following points should be noted with regard to teacher qualification:

• the improvement recorded as regards the training of principals in school administration;
• the principle that only teachers holding the CAP degree can become principals is generally observed;
• the sharp drop in the percentage of qualified teachers, reflecting the fact that the teachers recruited between 1996 and 2001 were teachers on limited-term contracts\(^1\) or community teachers\(^2\) having no teaching qualifications.

Results at regional (département) level

To evaluate the results at the level of the départements, we used the average of the levels found for the four standards selected (Table 5.1).

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1. These teachers are hired on a renewable two-year contract with the central government.
2. Community teachers are recruited by parents' associations to make up for the shortage of teachers in public primary schools.
Table 5.1. Results of the evaluation of teaching staff qualification by département, 1996 and 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Département</th>
<th>Score 1996 (%)</th>
<th>Score 2001 (%)</th>
<th>Difference (percentage points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atacora</td>
<td>66.46</td>
<td>64.21</td>
<td>- 02.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantique</td>
<td>78.16</td>
<td>68.19</td>
<td>- 09.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borgou</td>
<td>63.29</td>
<td>61.46</td>
<td>- 01.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mono</td>
<td>88.19</td>
<td>58.09</td>
<td>- 30.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ouémé</td>
<td>78.91</td>
<td>72.92</td>
<td>- 05.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zou</td>
<td>70.94</td>
<td>64.22</td>
<td>- 06.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Benin</td>
<td>74.73</td>
<td>64.93</td>
<td>- 09.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The scores by département generally reflect the recruitment of less and less qualified teachers. From 1996 to 2001, the départements that experienced a greater quantitative increase in primary education are also those that took in more unqualified teachers. Mono département offers a good illustration of this phenomenon. For the 1996-2001 period, it recorded a 60% increase in the number of pupils and a 55% increase in the number of teachers, as compared to 42% and 34% respectively at the national level. Thus, whereas in 1996 it had the best score of any département on the qualification standard (88%), by 2001 it had fallen to the lowest (58%). This is corroborated by the fact that the départements in which the quantitative increase was lowest (Départements of Atacora and Borgou) were those which recorded the smallest differences between their 1996 and 2001 scores.

**Learning materials (IMP01-13)**

The availability of learning materials in schools improved between 1996 and 2001. In 1996, the national summary recorded a score of 32.26% for the “learning materials” input, as compared to 54.18% in 2001. It should be noted, however, that this statistic does not take account of the last four years of primary school. This explains the low score for 2001, particularly with respect to the results for certain components.
Teachers have a profile for each pupil
The level has increased slightly, but at 13.02% in 2001, it is still very low.

All teachers have the programs of study
In 1996, nearly 90% of schools had programs of study and teaching guides for teachers. In 2001, these materials were present in about 87% of schools. In terms of number rather than percentage, the number of teachers having study programs and teaching guides increased, from 2,617 schools supplied with these materials in 1996 to 3,428 in 2001. The programs of study probably need to be reprinted.

Keeping a log for each class
Teachers kept a class log in 2,823 schools in 1996, as against 2,675 in 2001. The shortfall with respect to the standard – that is, the number of schools not having a log for each teacher – rose from 93 schools in 1996 to 1,281 in 2001.
This result may be due to a more accurate evaluation. In 1996, it was observed in the questionnaires that some teachers and principals confused the class log with the attendance register.

- **Books and workbooks for the pre-school year (CI) and the first primary year (CP)**

In 1996, 1,650 schools had at least one French textbook for every two pupils, but in 2001 this number had fallen to 1,059. The deficit of French textbooks for pupils in CI and CP increased from 38,714 in 1996 to 43,278 in 2001. The supply of books was evaluated for the first two years combined, and it is possible that second-year books had not yet reached schools at the time of the statistical survey. It should be remembered that the 2000-01 school year was the year in which the NPEs were scaled up to all CP classes and that there were delays in the distribution of textbooks.

It may be noted, moreover, that the inadequate supply of learning materials does not seem to square with the resources deployed by the “Textbooks and learning materials” action plan. A study has been initiated to undertake specific analysis of this aspect of the reform.

- **Results at regional (département) level**

Results at the département level follow the same trends as the national results (*Table 5.2*).

**Table 5.2. Results of the evaluation of learning materials by département, 1996 and 2001**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Département</th>
<th>Score 1996 (%)</th>
<th>Score 2001 (%)</th>
<th>Difference (percentage points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atacora</td>
<td>31.96</td>
<td>55.38</td>
<td>+ 23.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantique</td>
<td>32.54</td>
<td>54.87</td>
<td>+ 22.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borgou</td>
<td>32.87</td>
<td>60.89</td>
<td>+ 28.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mono</td>
<td>32.04</td>
<td>54.08</td>
<td>+ 22.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ouémé</td>
<td>31.44</td>
<td>54.50</td>
<td>+ 23.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zou</td>
<td>32.78</td>
<td>46.13</td>
<td>+ 13.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Benin</strong></td>
<td><strong>32.26</strong></td>
<td><strong>54.18</strong></td>
<td><strong>+ 21.92</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**School environment (IES01-16)**

At the national level, 52.37% of schools on average satisfied the series of standards relating to the school environment in 2001, as compared to 38.62% in 1996. This reflects an improvement in the school environment and is reasonably indicative of the effort made, particularly with regard to new school infrastructure, reflecting a number of classroom construction projects and the public investment program (PIP).

In 2001, 3,140 schools out of the total of 3,956 had one teacher per class (79%), whereas the figures for 1996 were 1,925 schools out of 2,916 (only 66%). There was thus improvement with respect to this standard between 1996 and 2001.

For standards relating to the school environment, we will simply present a table comparing the levels reached in 1996 and in 2001 (*Table 5.3*).

It should be explained that the standards “Presence of a kitchen” and “Presence of food storeroom” are measured only when the school has a canteen. Apart from these two standards and those relating to the availability of a space to serve as a library (1.24%), water supply and water station (17.62%), and first-aid kit (28.54%), the levels reached for all the other standards show improvement between 1996 and 2001, with levels of 50% or more.
### Table 5.3. Results of the evaluation of the school environment, 1995-96 and 2000-01

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref. no.</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Score (%</th>
<th>Difference (percentage points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IES01</td>
<td>A teacher for every class</td>
<td>66.02</td>
<td>79.37 + 13.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES02</td>
<td>The school has a deed of property ownership</td>
<td>25.48</td>
<td>65.72 + 40.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES03</td>
<td>The school grounds are delimited and marked out</td>
<td>81.04</td>
<td>53.06 - 27.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES04</td>
<td>The playground is shaded</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>73.76 n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES05</td>
<td>The surface area is sufficient (3 sq.m per pupil)</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>79.70 n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES06</td>
<td>Classrooms are of permanent masonry construction</td>
<td>38.34</td>
<td>48.79 + 10.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES07</td>
<td>The school has toilets (latrines)</td>
<td>05.52</td>
<td>53.67 + 48.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES08</td>
<td>The school has urinals</td>
<td>18.96</td>
<td>47.37 + 28.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES09</td>
<td>The school has a water supply and water station</td>
<td>19.44</td>
<td>17.62 - 01.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES10</td>
<td>The school has an office (masonry construction)</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>58.80 + 05.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES11</td>
<td>The school has a library (masonry construction)</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>01.24 n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES12</td>
<td>The school has a storeroom (masonry construction)</td>
<td>38.00</td>
<td>47.90 + 09.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES13</td>
<td>The school has a kitchen (masonry construction)</td>
<td>05.21</td>
<td>38.35 + 33.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES14</td>
<td>The school has a food storeroom</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>37.08 n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES15</td>
<td>The school has an equipped playing field</td>
<td>79.32</td>
<td>79.27 - 00.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES16</td>
<td>The school has a first-aid kit</td>
<td>17.49</td>
<td>28.54 + 11.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


n.a.: not available

The only noteworthy exception concerns the delimitation and marking off of school grounds, which fell by 28 percentage points between 1996 and 2001, from 81.04% to 53.06% in 2001. This standard should be monitored to investigate the reasons for this steep decline.
School furniture (IEM01-06)

At the national level

At the national level, the report indicates that in 2001 about 30% of schools on average met the EQF standards for school furniture, as against 12% on average in 1996.

With respect to the standard “A seat for every pupil”, an overall deficit of 275,758 seats was recorded in 2001, up from 223,187 in 1996. However, the number of schools meeting this standard rose from 68 in 1996 (2.33%) to 606 in 2001 (15.32%). Considering the growth of the school-age population, these figures reflect a substantial investment. They are the result of actions undertaken between 1996 and 2001 to equip schools with twin desks for pupils and with the furniture needed by teachers. As the seating situation was one of the priority standards, it was included in the 1998-2000 investment program aimed at raising schools’ scores with respect to the EQF standards. Nevertheless, the level is still very low (15%).

Figure 5.3. Results of the evaluation of school furniture, 1996 and 2001

As shown by Figure 5.3, progress has been made not solely where seating is concerned, but for practically all school furniture. The exception is teachers’ desks, for which the level fell from 34.12% in 1996 to 32.23% in 2001.
At the regional (département) level
Table 5.4 presents the average results for the six départements.

**Table 5.4. Results of the evaluation of school furniture by département, 1996 and 2001**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Département</th>
<th>Score 1996 (%)</th>
<th>Score 2001 (%)</th>
<th>Difference (percentage points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atacora</td>
<td>6.13</td>
<td>26.70</td>
<td>+ 20.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantique</td>
<td>11.57</td>
<td>37.96</td>
<td>+ 26.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borgou</td>
<td>6.84</td>
<td>30.33</td>
<td>+ 23.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mono</td>
<td>6.84</td>
<td>27.43</td>
<td>+ 20.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ouémé</td>
<td>7.22</td>
<td>33.02</td>
<td>+ 25.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zou</td>
<td>6.92</td>
<td>26.51</td>
<td>+ 19.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Benin</td>
<td>7.74</td>
<td>30.28</td>
<td>+ 22.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The results by département show in general a clear improvement in the school environment between 1996 and 2001, but the average level is still quite low (around 30%).

**Processes (PQE03-05, PCAE01, PES01-02)**

Having reviewed the first category of standards, namely inputs, we now turn to the second, processes. These come under three headings: i) teacher qualifications; ii) administrative capacity; and iii) the school environment.

For these items, performance was measured against six standards. **Table 5.5** summarizes the results obtained at national level.
Table 5.5. Results of the evaluation of processes, 1995-96 and 2000-01

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref. no.</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Score (%)</th>
<th>Difference (in percentage points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1995-96</td>
<td>2000-01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE03</td>
<td>Teachers receive training every 3 years</td>
<td>13.24</td>
<td>24.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE04</td>
<td>Visit by educ. advisor or inspector / year</td>
<td>12.55</td>
<td>13.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE05</td>
<td>Principal is trained in administration</td>
<td>33.98</td>
<td>65.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCA01</td>
<td>Presence of management bodies</td>
<td>12.17</td>
<td>95.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PES01</td>
<td>Ratio pupils per class 50</td>
<td>24.45</td>
<td>42.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PES02</td>
<td>Visit by inspector / year</td>
<td>22.91</td>
<td>46.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The process of in-service teacher training has improved but remains at a low level (see the first three lines of Table 5.5).

Community participation in school management, particularly through parents’ associations, has become much stronger, rising from 12.17% to 95.96%. The granting of public subsidies, which replace pupils’ school fees, to public primary schools since the 2000-01 school year has contributed greatly to this increase. Management of these subsidies requires well-defined participation by parents’ associations, which has brought about the observed increase in the establishment of management bodies in schools.
As can be seen in Figure 5.4, the situation remains very poor with regard to in-service teacher training activities and the activities of educational advisors (25% and 14%, respectively). More than half of all schools (approximately 54%) did not receive a single visit from the school inspector or the educational advisor during the 2000-01 school year.

The summary of the evaluation of schools against the EQF standards allows us to draw the following conclusions:

- Where the qualification of teaching staff is concerned, the situation worsened between 1996 and 2001. As regards acquisition of the basic professional certificate (CEAP), training requirements rose from 1,192 to 6,446 teachers, bringing the percentage of schools having all teaching staff CEAP-certified down from 68% to 23%.

- For learning materials, the situation is less clear-cut. However, the context and the set of actions undertaken, particularly between 1998 and 2001, allow us to conclude that there has been improvement in this input, or more precisely, improvement in the availability of learning materials in schools. This is true in particular for the pre-school year (CI) and first year of primary school (CP), where full implementation of the NPEs has begun.

- In terms of the school environment, the level of compliance with
most of the standards is above or near 50%, an improvement over 1996.

- School equipment and furniture is the input showing the greatest improvement, as this indicator rose overall from 7% to 30%. This result reflects the actions conducted in this area.
- Finally, for processes, i) the activities of the teacher training network have improved slightly but remain at a very low level; ii) parents’ associations are participating more in school management; and iii) in over half of cases (58%), the standard prescribing a maximum of 50 pupils per class is not met.

## Results obtained with respect to internal efficiency

We will select a few indicators to assess the results in this area, which are summarized in Table 5.6.

### Table 5.6. Indicators of results, 1996 and 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Level in 1996</th>
<th>Level in 2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of repeaters</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>24.91%</td>
<td>19.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>25.45%</td>
<td>19.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>25.11%</td>
<td>19.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention rate</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>41.0%</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion rate</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>37.4%</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coefficient of efficiency</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross enrollment rate</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>84.58%</td>
<td>104.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>51.97%</td>
<td>72.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>68.84%</td>
<td>88.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender parity index</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The indicators calculated above help to measure educational quality from the standpoint of the return on schooling and school efficiency.

5. Results
Proportion of repeaters
The more repeaters there are in an education system, the less efficient it is. Repeaters as a percentage of total enrollments fell from 25% in 1996 to 20% in 2001, a drop of five percentage points in five years. This trend indicates some improvement, although a repetition rate of 20% is still too high for an efficient school system of good quality. The ratios calculated for boys and for girls are generally comparable.

Retention and completion rates
The retention rate and the other indicators of internal efficiency were calculated using the reconstructed cohort method. The retention rate, which indicates the percentage of pupils reaching the last primary year (CM2), rose from 41.8% in 1996 to 49.2% in 2001. The completion rate, which indicates the percentage of pupils who successfully complete CM2, rose from 34.3% in 1996 to 36.1% in 2001.

Although these two indicators show some improvement, the levels are very low and the difference obtained after five years is insignificant.

Coefficient of efficiency
The coefficient of efficiency is defined as the ratio between the number of pupil-years needed in principle and the number of pupil-years actually spent to produce a primary school completer. This coefficient rose from 0.38 in 1996 to 0.40 in 2001 (for girls, from 0.33 to 0.34). Under optimal conditions, it is equal to 1. The fact that it stands at less than 0.50 means that over half of the resources invested in primary education are “wasted”, i.e. that they are used to pay the costs of repetitions and dropouts.

Gross enrollment rates (GER)
GERs are used to measure access. They increased considerably between 1996 and 2001, rising from 68.84% in 1996 to 88.49% in 2001 – a jump of more than 20 percentage points in five years. It remains to be seen whether this massive increase in access will be followed by a reduction in disparities.
Gender parity index (GPI)

The GPI is the ratio between the GER for girls and the GER for boys. It therefore measures gender equity in access to education and allows regional comparisons within a country. Here, it is used to indicate trends in access and to identify any regression in the regional disparity observed in the initial diagnosis.

As indicated in Table 5.7, the GPI rose from 0.61 in 1996 to 0.69 in 2001, while the GER increased by 20 percentage points over the same period. Although girls’ enrollment did show improvement with respect to the pre-1996 period, boys’ enrollment increased in the same proportion between 1996 and 2001.

Table 5.7 allows us to gauge the enrollment effort in each département.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Département</th>
<th>Benin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atacora</td>
<td>Boys 2001 93.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantique</td>
<td>Girls 2001 58.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borgou</td>
<td>Boys 1996 61.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mono</td>
<td>Girls 1996 33.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ouémé</td>
<td>137.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zou</td>
<td>72.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>104.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>87.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>77.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>72.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Education, statistical yearbooks.
Figure 5.5. Change in GER by département between 1995-96 and 2000-01

Key: Light gray points plot the gross enrollment rates for boys (x axis) and girls (y axis) for the various départements in 1996. The dark gray points represent the same data for 2001. The arrows indicate the direction and magnitude of the change in gross enrollment rate between 1996 and 2001. Source: Graphic representation of Table 5.7 generated for analytical purposes.

All the points lie below the diagonal, which means that boys have a higher enrollment rate than girls in all départements. The Mono département posted the greatest increase, while the Atlantique département has reached the maximum rate for boys; the fact that the arrow points toward the diagonal indicates an improving trend in girls’ enrollment. The Borgou département appears to be lagging far behind all the other départements.

The results with regard to internal efficiency show an overall trend of improvement. In absolute value, however, the levels reached are rather low, reflecting the extremely low quality of schools. The quantitative expansion of the school system has not been accompanied by significant qualitative development.
6. Constraints, lessons learned and challenges ahead

The EQF program was designed to serve both as an operational vision of the educational reform under way in Benin and as a tool for planning this reform. It has brought a number of improvements to the education system, or at least gives us a view of how schools stand with respect to the quality standards.

However, the two evaluations of schools with respect to the EQF standards – the one conducted in October 1997 and the one carried out for this case study – have identified a number of constraints that have affected the quality of Benin’s education system in recent years.

Constraints on the quality of primary education in Benin

Various factors have undermined the efforts made by stakeholders in the school system in recent years to improve the quality of Benin’s education system.

• The persistent shortage of qualified teachers due to growing demand for education, to the management of available human resources and to teacher training and recruitment policy. Twenty percent of Benin’s schools still have classes without a teacher. For the 2000-01 school year, the shortfall is estimated at 1,066 teachers. Furthermore, many teachers in service are not qualified: 40% of the teachers working in classrooms do not have the basic professional certificate. A further constraint is the dysfunctional state of the in-service teacher training network and the lack of a large-capacity institution for training primary school teachers.

• Low intake capacity at the primary level, due to lack of infrastructure, teachers and furniture.
This weakness is reflected in overcrowded classes: nearly half of all schools (48%) have an average of more than 50 pupils per class, and thus fail to meet the EQF standard, which prescribes classes of no more than 50 pupils. Over one-fourth of pupils (28%) do not have a seat. All this testifies to the persistently weak supply of education.

- **A shortage of textbooks for the last four years of primary school.** Only one-third of Benin’s schools meet the EQF standards for learning materials. This deficiency, observed in all départements, may be due to the fact that in 2001 the scale-up of the NPEs had begun for the pre-school year and first year of primary education, but had not yet reached the last four primary years.

- **A degree of geographical inequity with strong disparities between municipalities due to an incoherent policy on the distribution of the inputs that are supposed to contribute to educational quality, as well as to social and cultural factors.** Considerable regional disparities exist in terms of the supply of education, training of teachers and monitoring of teachers. The policy on teacher training and supervision is also to blame here. Gender disparities are observed at the level of both access and internal rates of return, meaning that it is necessary not only to enroll more girls in school, but also to keep them there.

**Lessons learned from the EQF experience in Benin**

EQF is an iterative and evolving process. One of the strategies used to implement the EQF program in Benin was to give priority to certain standards. The selection of some standards for priority action made it possible to obtain concrete results and to avoid the risk of spreading efforts too thin with no apparent result.

However, some deficiencies in implementation were observed:
- teachers neglect or abandon the resources made available to them, due to lack of motivation, appropriate training, self-confidence and support;
• books and other learning materials are in short supply; moreover, even when they are provided, in some cases they remain stored in their packaging, in the middle of the school year, in the school storeroom or the principal’s office;
• failure to follow up on the first EQF definition;
• the shortage of teachers with respect to the number of classes to be taught.

Today, after a few years of inaction, the resumption of EQF program activity has revived the debate over the definition of EQF. Discussions are under way on a second EQF definition. The main issues mentioned may be summed up as follows:
• although the choice was made deliberately, it should be borne in mind that the first EQF definition took account of only the first two categories of indicators (inputs and processes), which reduced its scope. This amounts more or less to considering that schools have no obligation to produce results;
• about four-fifths of the 50 standards selected relate only to inputs, while only one-fifth have to do with processes. As a result, the first EQF definition attributed great importance to providing resources to schools, and gave little consideration to the sound management, efficient use and development of these resources;
• the lack of indicators on parameters as important as effectiveness, gender equity and community involvement in school management is another shortcoming that needs to be addressed.

Challenges ahead

Benin’s school system is undoubtedly developing in quantitative terms. Recent years have seen an expansion of the student population that, at first sight, would lead one to think that the supply of education is insufficient. The evaluation of school quality shows, however, that educational quality in Benin is still at a very low level, despite the resources provided to the sector in recent years.

This raises the question: are these resources insufficient to create the
desired quality conditions, and if so, would the provision of more resources suffice to improve quality?

The coefficient of efficiency of the primary school system in 2001 was 0.40. In other words, the system spends two and a half times the resources needed in principle to produce one completer. This corresponds to a completion rate of 36%, which means that of every 100 children who enter pre-school, only 36 succeed in finishing the last primary year. These two indicators show that resources are “wasted” in the educational process.

At the same time, the evaluation identifies certain deficiencies in supply (qualified teachers, teachers in general, classrooms, textbooks, teaching materials and school furniture are all in short supply).

In conclusion, not only are resources insufficient to begin with, they are also being wasted. This raises the practical question of how to manage the education system as a whole, the aim being to **find the ideal combination of resources to ensure an optimal return from the education system.**

In this exercise, all parameters should be taken into consideration. Further resources will undoubtedly be needed, but it is essential to use these resources more efficiently to bring better returns, both during the educational process and in terms of performance. To accomplish this, several questions will have to be resolved:

- Do education programs, textbooks and other inputs guarantee education of good quality?
- What strategy for the training and management of teaching and supervisory staff could ensure proper implementation of the program and ensure that it brings the expected results? The “human resource” factor is a decisive one.
- What support structures should be established to ensure that this undertaking goes smoothly?

In these circumstances, EQF remains an essential tool for monitoring and evaluation.
7. Conclusion

The EQF standards – designed and formulated to serve as both an operational vision and a tool for planning implementation of the reform of the education system in general, and primary education in particular – were used to define the learning conditions required for quality education in Benin, as well as to create the conditions in which it is possible to guide the actions of the main stakeholders in Benin’s school system.

The EQF standards are the result of a long participatory process consisting of various preliminary studies and surveys conducted by the EQF team as well as discussion and consultation phases that were as broad-based as possible, bringing stakeholders in the national education system together with development partners. A large-scale campaign was mounted to promote use of the standards throughout the country.

The gradual implementation of the standards has brought some tangible results that improve to some extent the conditions under which pupils are received, taught and supervised in school. It was possible to obtain these results only because of a specific combination of factors: a changing national socio-political and economic context; the motivation and availability of senior national officials; and the willingness of development partners to provide budgetary support to improve the framework for education policy and strategies, the institutional framework and the school environment.

Much remains to be done, however. Efficient implementation of the standards at the national, regional and local levels will make it possible to continue these efforts, with programs and actions that are increasingly relevant to the aim of gradually solving problems of equity in access to education and of the quality of the services provided, namely:

- broadening access to basic education to include all children of the appropriate age;
• improving internal efficiency so that all pupils actually complete basic education;
• improving external efficiency by ensuring that the education provided is relevant, so that pupils leaving school have acquired the skills needed not only to become self-reliant and to meet the challenges of their time, but also to help resolve the problems of their society and the sustainable development of their environment.

A number of challenges face decision-makers and stakeholders at all levels of Benin’s school system, primarily in relation to the following:
• the very high number of children who are either not enrolled in school or do not stay in school long enough to derive the full benefit of educational activities;
• the persistence of gender, local and regional disparities;
• the high rate of repetition and the low proportion of pupils who succeed in entering junior secondary school;
• the lack of relevance of what is taught in school with respect to life skill requirements and the needs of communities;
• the absence or inadequacy of synergies among teaching staff, parents and communities.

We remain convinced that smooth coordination of the efforts of all stakeholders in the system – based on quality standards and performance levels whose definitions evolve in accordance with changes in society – will facilitate the complete achievement of the goals assigned to “schools of fundamental quality”. In turn, such schools will allow equitable provision to the coming generations of basic education that prepares them to play a productive role and to shoulder the social and political responsibilities they will encounter in working life.
## 8. Appendices

### Appendix 1. List of EQF standards according to the PD/EQF (March 1995)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>STANDARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I- INPUTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQE 1</td>
<td>Qualification of teaching staff (IQE): 4 standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQE 2</td>
<td>All teachers have basic professional training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQE 3</td>
<td>At least 50% of teachers hold the required professional degree in education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQE 4</td>
<td>The principal holds the required professional degree in education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP 1</td>
<td>The principal is trained in the administrative, educational and financial management of schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP 2</td>
<td>Programs, learning materials, textbooks (IMP): 3 standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP 3</td>
<td>Pupil profiles (desired skills) are available to each teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP 4</td>
<td>Programs and teaching guides, or a combined program-guide, in keeping with pupil profiles and suited to the needs of the environment, are available to each teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP 5</td>
<td>Each teacher keeps a pre-formatted daily log to record what is covered in class and make observations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP 6</td>
<td>At least one French book or set of books for every two pupils.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP 7</td>
<td>At least one mathematics workbook per pupil in CI and CP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP 8</td>
<td>At least one mathematics textbook for every two pupils as from the second primary year (CE1).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP 9</td>
<td>One workbook (or set of workbooks) of awareness exercises as from CE1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP 10</td>
<td>At least one geometry kit per school, and at least 2 kits in schools with 6 or more classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP 11</td>
<td>At least one arithmetic kit per school, and at least 2 kits in schools with 6 or more classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP 12</td>
<td>At least one metric system kit per school, and at least 2 kits in schools with 6 or more classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP 13</td>
<td>At least one awareness kit per school, and at least 2 kits in schools with 6 or more classes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Norms for Monitoring Education Quality in Benin

#### IMP 12
At least one French kit per school, and at least 2 kits in schools with 6 or more classes.

#### IMP 13
At least one sports kit per school, and at least 2 kits in schools with 6 or more classes.

### School Environment – Teaching Staff (IES): 16 Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IES 1</th>
<th>Each class has a teacher.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IES 2</td>
<td>The school is in possession of a title document, namely: a property deed, a deed of gift, a prefect’s order or a lease agreement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES 3</td>
<td>The school grounds are clearly delimited.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES 4</td>
<td>The school playground is shaded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES 5</td>
<td>The school playground offers at least 3 sq.m of space per pupil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES 6</td>
<td>Classroom buildings of masonry materials include a veranda, are in compliance with construction and safety standards, and are suited to the environment (e.g. a roof is indispensable in areas where temperatures are high during the dry season).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES 7</td>
<td>Latrines: one set of 4 pit latrines for every 3 classes, in compliance with construction and health standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES 8</td>
<td>Urinals built of local materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES 9</td>
<td>Drinking water available in the form of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- a water supply (e.g. running water, hydraulic pump, covered well, covered cistern), and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- water stations (e.g. faucets, or covered earthenware jars or buckets equipped with drinking bowl)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES 10</td>
<td>A room to serve as the principal’s office, with an area of at least 12 sq.m (about 4 m x 3 m) and a ceiling height of 4 m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES 11</td>
<td>A library for pupils’ use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES 12</td>
<td>One storeroom with an area of at least 12 sq.m adjoining the principal’s office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES 13</td>
<td>One kitchen equipped with fixtures (for schools having a canteen).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES 14</td>
<td>One food storeroom (for schools having a canteen).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES 15</td>
<td>One playing field suitable for the sports specified in the primary school program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES 16</td>
<td>One first-aid kit per school or an infirmary for a school complex consisting of at least four schools (i.e. approximately 1,200 pupils).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Equipment – Furniture (IEM): 6 Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IEM 1</th>
<th>At least one seat per pupil at ergonomically appropriate single or twin desks (or tables and benches).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IEM 2</td>
<td>Each teacher has a table with drawers and a chair in accordance with the usual standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEM 3</td>
<td>Each class has at least one storage cabinet.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IEM 4 Each class has two (2) blackboards, mounted either on the wall or on easels.

IEM 5 An office for the principal in accordance with the usual standards.

IEM 6 At least one storage cabinet for the principal.

### 2. PROCESSES

**Qualification of teaching staff (PQE): 5 standards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PQE 1</th>
<th>Within the school framework (constant supervision by the principal and school inspectors), all teachers receive in-service training aimed, first, at improving their teaching methods, and second, at understanding and implementation of programs of study.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PQE 2</td>
<td>Within the units of the teacher training network, all teachers receive in-service training aimed, first, at improving their teaching methods, and second, at understanding and implementation of programs of study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE 3</td>
<td>As part of the in-service training organized by the DEP, the INFRE and the DDE, all teachers, including the principal, take a training course every three years aimed, first, at improving their teaching methods, and second, at understanding and implementation of programs of study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE 4</td>
<td>All teachers, including the principal, receive at least one visit per year from an educational advisor or an inspector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE 5</td>
<td>The principal receives refresher training every three (3) years in the administrative, educational and financial management of schools.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Administrative capacity (PCA): 2 standards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PCA 1</th>
<th>Existence of school management bodies (parents’ association, health committee, management committee, canteen management committee).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PCA 2</td>
<td>Existence of up-to-date management instruments: appropriate record books, programs of activity, inputs for activities, school archives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**School hours (PHO): 1 standard**

| PHO 1 | The minimum required number of teaching hours is provided. The hour requirement may be scheduled flexibly to take account of local needs after obtaining the permission of the DDE. |

**Evaluation (PEV): 1 standard**

| PEV 1 | Existence of an operational system for evaluating pupils. |

**School environment – teaching and supervisory staff (PES): 2 standards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PES 1</th>
<th>Class size (pupil/teacher ratio) is less than or equal to 50.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PES 2</td>
<td>The school receives at least one visit by an inspector.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluation of Schools in Benin with Respect to the EQF Standards

EQF Definition of March 1995

National Report

School year: 1995-96
Number of schools: 2,916
Number of teachers: 12,833

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INPUTS</th>
<th>Schools meeting the standard</th>
<th>Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S/CL</td>
<td>2,528 2,384 2,280.5 2,245.5 2,110 2,015 13,563</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>106,159 84,773 77,923 64,341 59,591 44,596 437,383</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>70,827 50,656 43,320 32,452 28,790 19,375 245,420</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>176,986 135,429 121,343 96,793 88,361 63,971 682,803</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification of Teachers (IQE 01-04)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IQE01: All teachers CEAP</td>
<td>1,984</td>
<td>68.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQE02: 50% teachers CAP</td>
<td>2,540</td>
<td>87.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQE03: Principal CAP</td>
<td>2,854</td>
<td>97.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQE04: Principal trained</td>
<td>1,339</td>
<td>45.92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Materials (IMP 01-13)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IMP01: Pupil profile</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>6.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP02: Programs</td>
<td>2,617</td>
<td>89.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP03: Class log</td>
<td>2,823</td>
<td>96.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP04: French CM</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP04: French CE</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP04: French CI + CP</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>1,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP05: Math CI + CP</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>20.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP06: Math CE + CM</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>4.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP07: Awareness CE + CM</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP08: Geometry kit</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP09: Metric system kit</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP10: Arithmetic kit</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP11: Awareness kit</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP12: French kit</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMP13: Sports kit</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Environment (IES 01-16)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IES01: 1 teacher/class</td>
<td>1,925</td>
<td>66.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES02: Title document</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>25.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IES03: School grounds delimited</td>
<td>2,363</td>
<td>81.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment - Furniture (IEM 01-06)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEM01: Seats</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>2.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEM02: 1 desk per teacher</td>
<td>995</td>
<td>34.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEM03: 1 storage cabinet per class</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>6.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEM04: 2 blackboards per class</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>11.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEM05: Office for principal</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>14.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEM06: Storage cabinet for principal</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>3.77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCESSES</th>
<th>Schools meeting the standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Qualification (PQE 01-05)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE01: Supervision by principal</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE02: Training in unit of teacher training network</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE03: Training / 3 yrs</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE04: Visit ed. advisor or insp.</td>
<td>366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE05: Admin. training</td>
<td>991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Capacity (PCA 01-02)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCA01: Management bodies</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCA02: Management tools</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Hours (PHO01)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation (PEV01)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Environment (PES 01-02)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PES01: Class size 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PES02: Inspector visit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary**

- Teacher qualification (IQE): 74.73%
- Learning materials (IMP): 32.26%
- School environment (IES): 38.63%
- Equipment and furniture (IEM): 12.06%
- Teacher qualification process (PQE): 19.92%
- School environment process (PES): 23.68%
Seats other than twin-desk units

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>305,849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-seat desk units</td>
<td>122,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-seat desk units</td>
<td>177,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-seat desk units</td>
<td>6,010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X: data unavailable.

EQF level for 6 départements

EVALUATION OF SCHOOLS IN BENIN WITH RESPECT TO THE EQF STANDARDS FOLLOWING THE "SCHOOL OF FUNDAMENTAL QUALITY" DEFINITION OF MARCH 1995

NATIONAL REPORT

School year: 2000-01
Number of schools: 3,956
o.w. with canteen: 472
Number of classes: 17,709
Number of teachers: 17,254

Number of pupils

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CI</th>
<th>CP</th>
<th>CE1</th>
<th>CE2</th>
<th>CM1</th>
<th>CM2</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>133,026</td>
<td>126,242</td>
<td>101,286</td>
<td>86,753</td>
<td>75,367</td>
<td>59,312</td>
<td>581,986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>98,835</td>
<td>91,115</td>
<td>70,537</td>
<td>55,735</td>
<td>43,894</td>
<td>28,896</td>
<td>389,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>231,861</td>
<td>217,357</td>
<td>171,823</td>
<td>142,488</td>
<td>119,251</td>
<td>88,210</td>
<td>970,990</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INPUTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUALIFICATION OF TEACHERS (IQE 01-04)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IQE01: All teachers CEAP</td>
<td>931</td>
<td>23.53%</td>
<td>6446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQE02: 50% teachers CAP</td>
<td>2,893</td>
<td>73.13%</td>
<td>665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQE03: Principal CAP</td>
<td>3,878</td>
<td>98.03%</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQE04: Principal trained</td>
<td>2,373</td>
<td>65.04%</td>
<td>1383</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LEARNING MATERIALS (IMP 01-13)

| IMP01: Pupil profile                  | 515    | 13.02% | 3441 |
| IMP02: Programs                       | 3,428  | 86.65% | 528  |
| IMP03: Class log                      | 2,675  | 67.62% | 1281 |
| IMP04: Reader CI + CP                 | 1,059  | 26.77% | 43278|
| IMP05: Math CI + CP                   | 2,212  | 55.92% | 26444|
| IMP06: Math CE + CM                   | X      |       |     |
| IMP07: Awareness CE + CM              | X      |       |     |
| IMP08-13: Teaching kits               | 2,972  | 75.13% | 984  |

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT (IES 01-16)

| IES01: 1 teacher/class                | 3,140  | 79.37% | 1066 |
| IES02: Title document                 | 2,600  | 65.72% | 1356 |
| IES03: School grounds delimited       | 2,099  | 53.06% | 1857 |
| IES04: Shaded playground              | 2,918  | 73.76% | 1038 |
| IES05: 3 sq.m per pupil | 3,153 | 79.70% | 803 |
| IES06: Masonry classrooms | 1,930 | 48.79% | 4,864 |
| IES07: Latrines | 2,123 | 53.67% | 1,833 |
| IES08: Urinal | 1,874 | 47.37% | 2,082 |
| IES09: Water supply and station | 705 | 17.82% | 2,250 |
| IES10: Principal’s office | 2,326 | 58.80% | 1,630 |
| IES11: Library | 49 | 1.24% | 3,907 |
| IES12: Store room | 1,895 | 47.90% | 2,061 |
| IES13: Kitchen | 181 | 38.35% | 397 |
| IES14: Food store room | 175 | 37.08% | 297 |
| IES15: Playing field | 3,136 | 79.27% | 820 |
| IES16: First-aid kit | 1,129 | 28.54% | 2,827 |

**EQUIPMENT - FURNITURE (IEM 01-06)**

| IEM01: Seats | 606 | 15.32% | 275,758 |
| IEM02: 1 desk per teacher | 1,275 | 32.23% | 7,175 |
| IEM03: 1 storage cabinet per class | 518 | 13.09% | 13,036 |
| IEM04: 2 blackboards per class | 781 | 19.74% | 14,840 |
| IEM05: Office for principal | 2,246 | 56.77% | 1,710 |
| IEM06: Storage cabinet for principal | 1,762 | 44.54% | 2,194 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCESSES</th>
<th>Schools meeting the standard</th>
<th>Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TEACHER QUALIFICATION (PQE 01-05)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE01: Teacher sup. by principal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE02: Training in unit of teacher training network</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE03: Training / 3 yrs</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>24.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE04: Visit ed. advisor or insp</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>13.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQE05: Principal trained</td>
<td>2,573</td>
<td>65.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY (PCA 01-02)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCA01: Management bodies</td>
<td>3,796</td>
<td>95.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCA02: Management tools</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEACHING HOURS (PHO 01)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVALUATION (PEV 01)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT (PES 01-02)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PES01: Class size ≤ 50</td>
<td>1,668</td>
<td>42.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PES02: 1 inspector visit/year</td>
<td>1,835</td>
<td>46.39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUMMARY**

Teacher qualification (IQE): 64.93%
Learning materials (IMP): 54.18%
School environment (IES): 52.37%
Equipment and furniture (IEM): 30.28%
Processes (PRC): 48.07%
EQF AVERAGE: 49.97%
Percentage of repeaters: 20.66%
X: data unavailable.

SUMMARY NATIONAL EQF EVALUATION
9. Bibliography


MENRS; DEP; DPP. 2001. École de qualité fondamentale: projet de deuxième définition. 60 pp.


African Experiences – Country Case Studies

ADEA’s African Experiences – Country Case Studies are intended to highlight promising experiences that are taking place on the African continent.

Identifying, analyzing and promoting successful experiences is an essential part of ADEA’s methodology and contribution to the development of education in Africa.

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. Then called Donors to African Education (DEA), it was set up to promote discussion about educational policy in Africa and to establish a framework for better coordination among development agencies.

Since its foundation, ADEA has come to represent a genuine partnership between African education and training ministries in sub-Saharan Africa and their technical and external partners. It has also developed into a partnership of professionals, educators and researchers, and, based on its capacity to foster policy dialogue, a catalyst for educational reform.

Policy dialogue takes place within programs and activities carried out by the ADEA Secretariat and the Working Groups. The Biennial Meetings organized by ADEA are 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.

ADEA Working Groups also foster policy dialogue around educational priorities that have been set by the African countries. There are currently eleven Working Groups, which focus on the following areas: education sector analysis, communication for education and development, early childhood development, non-formal education, distance education and open learning, higher education, finance and education, books and learning materials, the teaching profession, education statistics, and the teaching of mathematics and science.
Four ad hoc groups have been set up to explore concerns related to, HIV/AIDS, the quality of education, policy dialogue and post-primary education.

Among its other activities, ADEA encourages the sharing of African experience and know-how through its program of intra-African exchanges. The purpose of this program is to facilitate both study visits between countries and consultancy missions of African professionals sent to assist countries that request them. ADEA also provides support for national coordination of funding agencies. Since 2001 it has held the Africa Education Journalism Award to encourage the African press to cover education and thus promote public debates in this area.

ADEA is also a source of baseline information about education in Africa. It manages a number of databases on its activities, on external funding programs and projects, on educational statistics concerning Africa, and on African education specialists and professionals.

Finally, ADEA has a publications program which seeks to share the lessons of the Biennial Meetings and to highlight ongoing successful experiences in Africa. The Secretariat also publishes a quarterly Newsletter and a monthly Bulletin of Briefs.

For more information about ADEA please see its web site: www.adeanet.org
Norms for Monitoring Education Quality in Benin

The book
As part of the planning and monitoring component of its reform of primary education, Benin adopted an action plan for “schools of fundamental quality” (Ecole de Qualité Fondamentale – EQF). In its design and implementation, EQF is both a practical application of the operational concept of the reform and a central planning tool. EQF sets nationwide standards for quality schools. It then evaluates actual levels in relation to these standards, measuring the differences between current conditions in schools and the conditions called for by the EQF definition. Following this evaluation, the EQF process, taking a realistic, simple, flexible and participatory approach, makes the choices required for formulating a program of actions in schools in the light of the resources available. This exercise requires the participation of all stakeholders in the school system; the definition of the standards is adapted over time according to the results of the successive evaluations.

This volume, produced by a team of officials in the Programming and Forecasting Directorate of Benin’s Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, describes the mechanism through which EQF was designed and implemented. It also presents some of the results obtained from 1996 to 2001 in Benin’s primary school system, the lessons learned and the challenges still to be faced.

In addition to its role in the quest for quality, the EQF exercise is a practical tool for evaluating and monitoring projects and programs at the level of individual schools.

The authors
Honoré D. Dewanou, a managerial economist specializing in computer science and information technology, has spent some 20 years working in educational planning authorities in Benin. He is currently Deputy Director of Programming and Forecasting at the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.

Victoire Akpakpo, an economist and statistical engineer, is head of the Statistics and Information Management Department at the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.

Denise Georgette Grimaud is a sociologist and head of the Department for Promotion of Girls’ Education. She has practical experience in conducting activities to promote schooling for girls.

Janvier Odjou, a former teacher who is now an economist and statistical engineer, heads the Research and Forecasting Department.

Joseph Ahanhanzo is Director of the Programming and Forecasting Directorate of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.