



**Ministry of Education
and Literacy of
Burkina Faso**



Association for the
Development of
Education in
Africa



PROCEEDINGS OF THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTER-COUNTRY QUALITY NODE ON LITERACY AND NATIONAL LANGUAGES

May 2013

Proceedings of the Ministerial Conference of the Inter-Country Quality Node on Literacy and National Languages

A regional conference of the Ministers of the Inter-Country Quality Node on Literacy and National Languages was held in Ouagadougou from 02 to 04 May, 2013 to validate the Three-Year Action Program proposed by a workshop of the same Node which was held earlier in December 2010.

This conference was preceded by a seminar aimed at capitalizing, within the framework of South-South cooperation, successful non-formal education alternatives that bear the potential for scaling up and dissemination within the Node and in other interested countries.

The conference brought together representatives of Node member country educational and training systems, experts who are internationally recognized for their works on literacy and non-formal education, representatives of pan-African and international institutions including ACALAN, CREEA, the African Union, UIL, and technical / financial partners including Unesco, Unicef, USAID, the Canadian Cooperation, the Swiss Cooperation and Plan Burkina). Civil society organizations from Burkina Faso, Togo, Niger, Mali and Senegal were also represented.

Participants from ADEA included the Executive Secretary and WGNFE, WGEMPS and SAGE/BF of the Youth ADEA Network (Students for the Advancement of the Global Entrepreneurship, Burkina Faso/Member of Youth ADNetwork).

1. ON PROMISING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES USED IN LITERACY AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Thirteen country programs and two international programs were presented the latter by ACALAN and UIL on the issue of African Languages and the measurement of learning achievements in literacy and non-formal education (*see annex*).

Country programs were grouped into two categories:

- The programs that attempt to widen access to formal education through judicious arrangements at the non-formal education level and through building bridges between the two sub-systems in order to make it possible for deserving learners to shift from one system to another, and vice-versa;
- Those that try to directly respond to the needs of underprivileged learners in their environment through life skills development (including good command of reading, writing and numeracy) and basic technical skills to enable learners to better integrate their community and the labor market.

Listening carefully to the presenters and conducting an-depth analysis of foreseen challenges led to drawing useful lessons, to propose concrete corrective measures and to make recommendations for the way forward.

Participants observed that out-of-school children, youths and adult illiterates are in great numbers and constitute the majority of the population in Africa south of the Sahara as in many countries they constitute over 60% of general population. Paradoxically, less than 1% of public funding is dedicated to them while the remaining 99% are invested in the formal system.

This mass of poorly or non-literate people is composed of groups that are difficult to cover due to their specific and often precarious socio-economic conditions and to their extreme diversity, ranging from transhumant nomadic populations in rural areas to street children in urban settings.

The programs designed for them are multiple reflecting the diversity of the groups to target. Unfortunately, such programs are inadequate and do not meet the current education demand. Moreover, they are outward looking as they depend heavily on external aid, which in the longer run, poses a serious problem of sustainability.

The issue of national languages and their use as a medium for teaching, their relationship with official languages and, especially their place in administrative acts that govern the member countries of the Node, was recurrent issue during the debates.

Generally speaking, research, specifically research for action is still blatantly inadequate whereas these approaches include large innovations that should be further explored and supported.

Despite these major challenges, the conference acknowledged the relevance of most programs and their capacity to accommodate with conflicting demand. In particular:

- the seminar has noted that many of such programs focus on shortening the duration of learning so as to enable learners to catch up with their fellow students in formal education within 3 to 4 year;
- another clear concern is about ensuring education continuity through bridges, equivalences, certifications and other mechanisms;
- Beyond literacy, most visited approaches seem to really focus on acquiring skills for the labor market and community life;
- multifaceted institutional and highly innovative arrangements are being implemented following to reflect Government policy changes and financing opportunities in member countries.

These observations and others led to formulating about twelve proposals to take up the observed challenges, capitalize on success stories and envision scaling up for most innovative and promising approaches at the level of the Node (*see Annex*).

2. ON THE THREE-YEAR ACTION PROGRAM OF THE QUALITY NODE

The presentation of the 2013-2015 Three-Year Action Program of the Inter-Country Quality Node on Literacy and National Languages was focused on the general structure and conceptual framework of the Program. Six Priority intervention, which were defined since the 2010 workshop, form the main components: (1) capacity building; (2) financing; (3) monitoring & evaluation and capitalization; (4) quality of education provision; (5) Good Governance; and (6) Promotion of the Holistic Vision.

For each of them, priority intervention areas were pinpointed as well the action area to consider, the objectives sought, expected outcomes, priority actions to undertake and the implementation strategies to consider.

These various presentations were followed by discussions which led to many questions notably on the need to:

- further develop the national language dimension in the arguments of the Three-Year Plan of the Inter-Country Quality Node on Literacy and National Languages;

- give a new impetus to basic and applied research on national languages in the respective countries ;
- deepen the reflection on the appointment of a focal point for the Inter-Country Quality Node on Literacy and National Languages at country level;
- integrate the Three-Year Program within the vision of the post-2015 movement ; and
- further reflect on how to operationalize the sub regional pools of trainers.

At the end, the Conference participants agreed on 11 priority activities for the 2013-2015 period (*see annex*). The estimated cost for their implementation is CFA 930 992 200.

From These activities, the following have emerged as first priorities during the debates:

1. *The theme on bridging, accreditations and certifications;*
2. *Transnational education programs for nomadic people;*
3. *The use of the harmonized Arabic alphabet to boost access and equity in education.*

In conclusion, the Conference made the following recommendations to the decision-makers.

3. RECOMMANDATIONS

❑ To the Ministries in charge of Literacy and National Languages

1. Appoint a focal point, preferably a structure, in each country to ensure proper monitoring and follow-up of actions and to maintain an efficient flow of information on matters that are important to the Node;
2. Get the contribution of all partner institutions to take stock of and share promising approaches on literacy and non-formal education within the countries.

❑ To the Inter-Country Quality Node/Literacy and National Languages

1. Consider the feasibility of the activities planned within the limits of available resources;
2. Focus, for the beginning, on:
 - a. The theme on bridging, accreditations and certifications;
 - b. Transnational education programs for nomadic people;

- c. The use of the Harmonized Arabic alphabet to boost access and equity in education.

❑ To the WGNFE

1. Develop appropriate tools for assessing the relevance of alternative education innovative programs;
2. Contribute to advocacy with decision-makers and Technical and Financial Partners in support of the Initiatives of the Node.

Ouagadougou le 4 Mai 2013

ANNEXES

Annex 1

Promising Non-formal Education Approaches Reviewed at the Conference

1. The Community schools in Burkina
2. The Non-formal Basic Education Centers (NFBEC)
3. The Bridging Centers Tarbiyya Tattali in Niger

4. The Non-formal Community Alternative Education Program of the Niger NGO *Monde des enfants*
5. The *Tylay* approach of CORADE
6. The Multi-Actor Literacy Program in Mali
7. The Bi and Trilingual Education Programs and the AFI-D approach of the *l'ONG Solidar Suisse* NGO
8. The « Literacy and Health Support » SALSANI Program of Niger
9. The *Dudal* Education Program of the Niger *VIE Kande Ni Bayra* NGO
10. The literacy Program using the Harmonized Arabic Alphabet (AJAMI)
11. PALAM, a Literacy for Poverty Reduction Program **implemented** by the Government of Senegal

12. Functional Literacy and Support to Women's and Youth Initiatives in the Missabougou neighbourhood in Municipality VI, Bamako District
13. The Education for Development Centers (EDC) in Mali

14. ACALAN/AU experiences
15. RAMAA (Research for Action on the Measurement of the Achievements of Literacy Beneficiaries)

Annex 2

Possible Arrangements for the Sustainability of the Promising Approaches

1. Design education policies that are inclusive, with a holistic vision;
2. Develop communication plans for more visibility of and support to the promising initiatives;
3. Make the States know and take ownership of the promising alternatives;
4. Mainstream the alternative formula within the education policy frameworks;
5. Harness costs in such a way to make them affordable to the individual countries;
6. Pool resources and share experiences among the actors ;
7. Develop advocacy e.g. : the Bamako recommendation (3% of the education budget allocated to the NFE sector);
8. Develop strategic alliances with the other sectors (rural development, health, etc.);
9. Strengthen decentralization mechanisms for outreach education for target groups;
10. Preserve the quality of the approach, as it is a prerequisite for its acceptance by the general public ;
11. Promote multiple partnership (civil society, T.F.P, communities, institutional bodies) ;
12. Set up an effective implementation strategy ;
13. Effectively involve decision-makers in the creation of an enabling environment for the implementation of the promising approaches.

Annex 3

Financing

Item	Cost (CFAF)
Priority 1: Capacity Building	227 392 200
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of experts on the modules to be identified and developed • On-line Self-Training 	
Priority 2: Financing	21 725 000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting of an advocacy and resource mobilisation strategy document • Implementation of the strategy 	
Priority 3: Monitoring & evaluation	211 515 000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of harmonised collection tools • Monitoring trends in the indicators and sharing of good practices 	
Priority 4: quality of education provision	100 000 000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting of learning materials • Training of specialists in the drafting of editorial policies 	
Priority 5: Governance of education and promotion of national languages	41 000 000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of a joint implementation framework (partnership framework) • Training in language planning and mapping 	
Priority 6: promotion of the holistic vision	184 525 000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a reference implementation framework of the bridges together with an implementation MoU • Development and adoption of a NFE conceptual framework 	
Mid-term Program (Year 1)	144 835 000
Total provisional Budget	930 992 200

La liste des participants de l'atelier du PQIP /ALN

Conférence du 02 au 04 Mai 2013

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