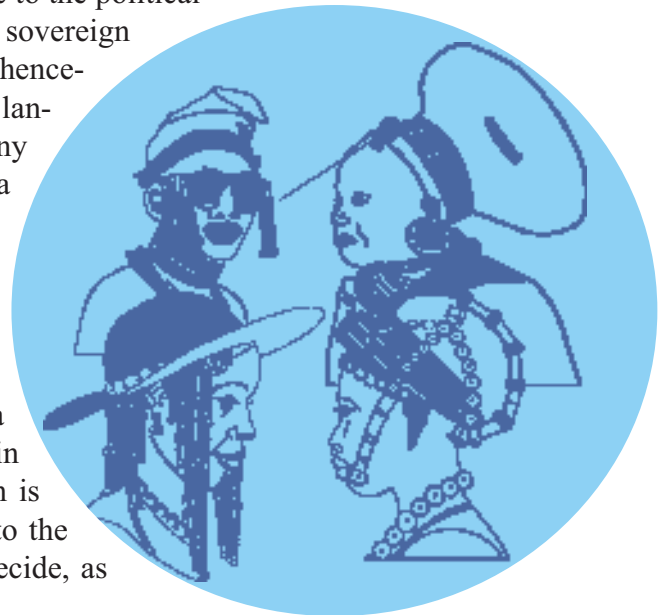


### The use of African languages in the educational systems is a highly political issue

During our search for data and information on the use of African languages in educational systems in Africa, we fell on two reactions, which seem to be rather characteristic of the stand often taken by a good number of senior African officials when it comes to the debate or false debate on whether or not African languages should be used in schools in Africa.

"Those interested in African languages are those deriving a profit from their use"

"The question as to whether or not African languages should be used in schools in Africa is simply an issue relative to the political will or decision to do so. If a sovereign State decides that education will henceforth be carried out in a given language, do you think there will be any teacher crazy enough to teach in a language other than the one prescribed? In all countries of the world, the choice of the languages used for teaching is decided upon by the political authorities that be. Linguists and researchers in Africa may only be called upon to throw in more light, that's all. The decision is an entirely political one. It is up to the various African governments to decide, as they deem fit".



Even though several studies show that much still remains to be done before African languages can actually function as languages of instruction in a formal African educational system, both linguists and researchers agree on the important role politicians have to play. The decision to promote the use of a given language as the medium of instruction, they both agree, lies squarely with the political authorities. Government has to step in when it comes to deciding on things such as:

- Valorizing African languages;
- Enhancing capacities or talents
- Providing teaching materials
- Non-merchandizing of education

## Valorization of African languages

As concerns the implementation of the policies geared towards the effective valorization of African languages, it can be said that it is time gesticulations made way to concrete action.

All that which could be said to deplore our failure to use African languages in our educational system has been said:

- The use of the child's mother tongue from the first day of school facilitates the child's acquisition of basic knowledge;
- The use of Africa languages in our schools opens up the door for a greater number of children to receive an education;
- The use of African languages for teaching and education is in keeping with social justice or justice in short.
- The failure to use African languages in educational systems and consequently in African administrative systems and structures is a serious handicap to progress and democracy (Napon 2001); Can we speak of democracy when the people concerned continue to be governed and administered in languages they do not understand? Is development possible in Africa when more than 80% of the population concerned has no access to the tools of development?
- How efficient can a country be when 90% of its population cannot read or write its own official language? (Kedrebeogo; 1998:2)
- Is it really that possible to govern, manage, dispense justice, educate and speak of democratization in a language which more than 80% of the country's citizens do not understand?

Frankly speaking, all kinds of arguments have been raised to justify, encourage and stress the need to use African languages in schools and in the public administration.

However, the remark always arrived at is that of a situation described almost unanimously as unacceptable, coming the more, as it is, after more than forty years of political independence and commitments taken to:

- a- Promote universal education for all in Africa;
- b- Promote African languages and culture.

In other words, Africans, both politicians and scientists, have taken more than half a century to condemn, cry out and speak against colonialization and its negative effects such as the prevention of the development of African languages and cultures. So too have the basic rights of millions of Africans to education, democracy and participation in the management systems of public affairs been breached. How much time will they take to work effectively for the elimination of the negative effects of colonialization on:

- educational systems in Africa;
- the administrative organization and management of

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- modern states in Africa;
- the production of scientific works in local languages;
- literary production in local languages?

Therein seems to lie the very gist of the debate on the use of African languages in educational systems in Africa. Sanogo (2001:4) holds African authorities responsible for the not very enviable plight of African languages in Africa's educational systems. "The question of African languages was relegated to second position while pre-eminence was given to such so-called urgent matters as economic crisis, political crisis and disease, etc. With that, linguistic problems were quickly pushed to the side and left to specialists in quest of theories".

Up to now an attempt to raise this question has only been in the field of education with make-do structures such as literacy centers, the INA (National Literacy Institute) Satellite Schools, CEBNF (Informal Basic Education Centers), etc.

African political leaders, in an attempt, to give themselves a clear conscience, have come up with all kinds of reasons to explain their lack of concern for their national languages. In short, government policy on languages is imprecise. There is no legislation in that field. The policy is also irresponsible, as a result of the catastrophic effects brought about by the way it is handled at present, a way of handling based on a status quo similar to resignation. It is this kind of attitude that prompted Calvet (1987) to describe French-speaking African countries as countries with no linguistic policy. The effective valorization of African languages implies that concrete measures have to be taken by African States.

The first measure is that of the remuneration to be paid for by the States. What is the market value of African languages? In other words, what are the comparative advantages to be obtained by being able to read and write an African language?

There are studies being carried out at the present in Mali (1) and Burkina Faso (2) to identify the means of valorizing African languages. The question of jobs at the level of public services is a matter that falls squarely with the State, as the State has the total freedom to act as it wants. It is thus up to each State to find the ways and means to valorize its national languages by opening up the jobs to be

assigned as priority to educated bilingual candidates. In short, each State will have to identify the public administrative positions, which can be filled by only persons mastering an African language besides French or English. Such fields may of priority be the following: the Public service, Justice, Politics, Management and Territorial Administration, Education and Training, Commerce and Trade, Transport, Health, Environment, etc.

But before getting to this stage, the problem of making African languages the country's official languages must be addressed.

As there are generally a lot of languages with unequal importance in terms of usage, number of speakers, geographical implantation, etc..., the policy of making a native language the official language of a country should be rather flexible, adjustable and vary from country to country. This should also be in keeping with the type of division and administrative layout of the territory and the decentralization policies in force in the countries concerned. Thus, while becoming official languages, i.e. the languages used in the public service and in the educational systems, the languages could be called to enjoy different status within the same country (Nikiema 2001).

Let us take the example of Burkina Faso whose administrative division of the territory is as follows:

- 1- Level one : the Village
- 2- Level two : the Division comprising several villages
- 3- Level three: the Province comprising several divisions
- 4- Level four : the Region comprising several provinces
- 5- Level five: the State, the Nation

Depending on their scope of usage and audience, African languages could enjoy the status of official languages alongside the French language in keeping with the decentralization method designed for the administration of the country:

- Divisional official languages
- Provincial official languages
- Regional official languages
- National official languages.

Provincial, regional and national languages deemed sufficiently representative at the provincial, regional or national levels should be declared the languages to be used within the administration and educational system at various levels. The three languages which up to now have been enjoying special attention by virtue of their scope of usage or wide geographic or demographic representativeness should be declared the "official languages" or the official State languages alongside the French language. These languages are the Moore, the Jula and the Fulfude. National languages which have a transnational and/or a sub-regional or regional representativeness can be declared transborder working languages in sub-regional and regional organizations.

If the problem of defining the status of African languages is not properly addressed, the use of these languages in educational systems would come up against numerous bottlenecks.

### **Psychosocial obstacle**

The generosity shown by linguists and researchers often stops at the level of the general debate on the promotion of African languages. When it comes to practice, only very few of these linguists, researchers and teachers of Africa languages are willing to work for the promotion of a national language other than their own mother tongue. The tendency to remain faithfully attached and hold fast to their respective cultures crops up again. Those who attempt to ignore this tendency face the possibility of being described as traitors by other members of their ethnic group (Gfeller; 2000:146).

Indeed, while we often see African linguists and researchers working on their own language or on the majority language in their linguistic areas in a bid to use such a language as a medium of instruction in schools and in literacy centers, it is rather rare, except where such a study is merely out of sheer scientific curiosity, to find African language specialists working for the promotion of an African language, no matter how popular, to the detriment of their own language even if their language is a minority language.

This problem deserves to be addressed and carefully examined at the level of linguistic departments, research centers, and especially at the level of the African Language Academy.

### **Self-defense and assertion of identity**

The most illustrative concept of "self-defense" is the policy and strategy put forward by the promoters of Francophonie for the defense and promotion of the French language. Is the French language one of the endangered languages? As far as the French language is concerned, the danger is English, but considering that English is spoken worldwide, why should the French language be more endangered than German, Japanese, Dutch etc.?

Be what it may, the French have through the Francophonie platform been searching feverishly for partners with whom to defend the exceptional French culture. On a smaller scale, it can be said that each African language has its own soldiers fighting for its survival. This is a trend, which does not augur well for the implementation of the policies and strategies geared towards the use of popular or widely spoken languages as languages of instruction in schools in most African countries.

That is why we believe it would be interesting to monitor the project being carried out by the African Language Academy and geared towards encouraging the use of widely spoken transborder languages as languages of instruction in schools in Africa, the more so as this project is based on a policy and strategy aimed at developing endogenous capacities. As pinpointed by Hutchison (2001:2) the African Language Academy can contribute to the rapid change of the status, role and place of African languages both within the public administration and education systems.

### **Capacity building**

Any realistic policy aimed at using African languages within the educational systems has to go hand in hand with a sound policy whose goal is the enhancing of talents within the continent. The strengthening of endogenous talents under review here is far more than just the training of linguists and literacy teachers of national languages. The ultimate goal here should be for us to have at our disposal:

- Professionals capable of translating scientific, technical and technological knowledge in such way as to make it available in African languages;

- Teachers capable of teaching science, mathematics and elementary physics at a very high level in an African language, with the same ease as they do when they teach in European languages;
- Book industries (the manufacture of books) in African languages.

The use of African languages should normally constitute part of a general policy to lay down new foundations for educational systems in Africa. In Mali, for instance, there is more and more talk of setting up Education Centers for Development. These centers (cf Segou's Report), called upon to replace the conventional schools (now obtaining in the country) will be endowed with objectives, a structure, equipment, a method of operation, and a style of construction commensurate with the type of area (whether rural or urban) and with the kind of dominant socio-economic activities of the area.

It would certainly be counter productive to talk about languages of instruction in Africa where there is no policy aimed at improving the quality, the pertinence and efficiency of education. Once the use of African languages is seen as part of such an approach, counter reactions, whether they come from parents or teachers, will diminish. What indeed are the components of quality education? Various partners in the field of education generally agree that to have quality education the following prerequisites have to be met:

- a quality school;
- highly qualified teachers;
- highly qualified supervisors;
- highly qualified administrative and management personnel;
- high-quality equipment;
- high-quality teaching materials;
- high-quality environment.

A good policy geared towards enhancing talents should normally also focus on ensuring a coherence of the strategies and actions taken in the field of education. Such coherence primarily concerns the contribution, if any, that African languages can make to addressing the problems that the educational system is supposed to solve, especially as concerns:

Ensuring access (to education), the quality and pertinence of (that education), gender equality, efficiency, particular qualities (of that education), participation, collaboration, mobilization, preparing (to take up a trade and getting integrated harmoniously into society), preparing to enter higher forms, etc. In short, all what this comes down to is being able to answer the following question: in what way will the use of African languages in school contribute to solving the crucial problems and major ills of the content?

On the other hand, there should also be a coherence between the training curricula for teachers and curricula used in basic schools: if teachers are not trained to use African languages beyond the level of mere "transcription of a national language", they will never be able to use these languages as a means of transmitting scientific and technological knowledge. Furthermore, if education becomes an option, as this seems more and more to be the case, it would be necessary to train bilingual teachers in National Schools for Primary School Teachers. This entails not only the production of teaching materials adapted to bilingual education but also that teachers and supervisions be available both qualitatively and quantitatively to meet the new challenge. This would underline the need to review the admission and graduation requirements for primary school teachers and supervisors.

Another challenge that has to be met will be to strike a balance between the training curricula for supervisors and that for teachers.

Apart from the need to train teaching staff, there is also that of ensuring coherence and harmony between the policies and strategies geared towards the development of formal and informal basic education. In addition, measures have to be taken to set up structures for admitting all those who would like to go beyond primary school without having to go through the conventional channels of the formal system in force. One such solution could be the opening up of training schools for candidates of all ages, a trend that will go to encourage the in-and-out movement of persons between school and the business world. Access to formal education should never be shut up forever to students once they leave school.

A coherent long-term solution will be to set up structures at secondary school level to receive

pupils leaving bilingual schools. In this wise, a kind of trimming can be carried out between the education system and the major national projects in this field.

A point in case is the project being designed for 1000 young girls. This is also the case with the project in Burkina Faso to maintain certain youths in their villages of origin as well as that to settle a number of young farmers and cattle rearers in agricultural and cattle rearing areas developed for that purpose. That is why we are totally in agreement with the measures envisaged during the Segou Workshop-Seminar on 25 August 1999, to redefine the role and place of the school within the framework of the Education Center for Development (CED).

Our vision of coherence also implies a more rational use of available resources. The buildings set aside for education and training can be used in two shifts: the formal system at primary level can use the buildings from 7 am to 5.30pm and the informal system from 6pm to 8:30pm.

In like manner, qualified personnel trained at the ENEP for teaching in both the French and national languages, could be more rationally used. With some adjustment of salaries, the staff so trained could well teach at both the formal and informal levels. This will further contribute to doing away with the bias whereby informal schools are considered as schools of little or no worth.

The final goal here will be to put an end to the existence of two parallel systems with no cross-over or bridge between them and at the same time set up a structure making it possible to cross from one system to another. By so doing, the educational system will be endowed with some amount of flexibility making it possible to leave the formal system for a certain period of time and return to it later, or leave the informal system and switch over to formal system later. The Burkina Faso bilingual school experience is one that has amply shown that there is no loser in a strategy such as this where no one is excluded.

A more coherent approach would also be that of restructuring the training system for primary and secondary school teachers:

- At the level of primary schools, the teachers trained must be able to teach all the primary school subjects in both French and a national

language of their choice.

- At the level of the secondary school, any teacher of one or more subjects must be able to teach the subject in French or in English and in one national language of his/her choice.
- At the level of schools for the training of teachers and supervisory staff, such as the National School for Primary school Teachers (ENEP) and the Advanced Teachers College (ENS), teaching will continue to be carried out in French or in English, but greater emphasis would be laid on the teaching of national languages. Every potential teacher or supervisor would be required during his period of training, to acquire the knowledge and abilities needed to teach one of the basic subjects of the school in a national language of his/her choice.
- As compensation, an encouragement allowance may be paid to each teacher using a national language to teach specialized courses such as mathematics, science, bookkeeping, law, elementary physics, etc.
- At the level of the informal system, the Ministries in charge of teaching and education will have to show more involvement through the use of well-prepared class syllabuses and schemes of work in the organization and management of "evening classes" in public establishments so as to give such classes a formal character.

In Burkina Faso, greater emphasis is being laid on management based on results, improvement plans and quality schools. According to a coherent and general view of the role education has to play in society, all of these concepts should be extended to other fields and sectors in order to show that the school is well integrated in its milieu. Accordingly, apart from plans to improve the school or projects to set up quality schools, we will also have tables showing a:

- Plan or project for the improvement of the village (PAV)
- Plan or project for the improvement of the Division (PAD)
- Plan or project for the improvement of the Province (PAP)
- Plan or Project for the improvement of the Region (PAR)

- Plan or project for the improvement of the Council (PAC) etc.

The question of languages and the problems of education cannot be examined without macro health and poverty alleviation policies.

## **Availability of teaching materials**

The absence of teaching equipment for African languages also constitutes a serious handicap to their use in educational systems in Africa. Gfeller (2000P.20-21) is quite categorical on this issue: "for local languages to be accepted in schools and/or within the administration they must be languages that can be written".

"One of the main subjects to be taught during the first years of primary school should be writing. While a pupil in the developed countries is called upon to choose from a wide variety of documents designed for him, the African child is often obliged to struggle very hard to obtain a single book, hence it is not rare to find the teacher teaching from the black board" p.20 "The development of methodology in Europe is moving towards individual education whereby the child is left to study on his own. The teacher places at the disposal of the child a series of teaching materials, which make it possible for the child to build up his own knowledge. The number of children enrolled in African classes (usually between 50 and 120 pupils per teacher) makes it obligatory for the teacher to explain a lot of things only by way of mouth to the greatest number of pupils possible. As the "paper" (whether printed or not) is often a rare commodity, the teacher has to forget about using teaching materials made of paper... The teacher has to manage as he can without the basics".

Hutchinson (2001:5) is also categorical on this point: a "literate, print-rich environment" is a prerequisite for any notable change in the situation of African languages. And, in order to create this environment rich in reading materials in African languages, he has suggested a number of measures to take:

1. Take stock of all the existing documentation in African languages;
2. Ask for foreign assistance to draw up a data base and the bibliographies of such documentation in or on African languages;
3. Take measures to acquire this documentation and ensure that such documentation is returned to the country, where possible, in collaboration with foreign institutions;
4. Draw up a plan to edit it in the language while at the same time giving priority to the edition

- which the people like to read and cherish;
5. Draw up a plan for the printing of oral traditions, epic poems which are not yet in printed form;
6. Encourage by way of open competition, etc the writing of novels etc, by the target population;
7. Increase the distribution of newspapers in African languages;
8. Organize and draw up a plan for setting up village and school libraries and a system for distributing documents in African languages;

As far as Nikiema (2001:8) points out, we must act rapidly on several fronts if it is our desire to publish in our national languages the documentation available. The advancement of literature depends on the progress of literacy in our national languages. But as things stand for now, it is not every national language we can as yet read and write. Hence there are still several languages which have no written material"

The absence of teaching materials written in African languages is probably due to problems linked to the modernization of Africa languages at a high cost of production. The market for books in local languages is very limited and parents are so poor they cannot afford to buy textbooks and equipment for their children. However, it would be an illusion to think that African languages can be used as languages of instruction in schools whereas there are no teaching materials.

## **Merchandizing of education**

In a CRDI<sup>1</sup> survey on how policies are drawn up in Africa (on major issues, problems and constraints), the question of production cost of teaching materials stood out as a serious handicap to the use of African languages as language of instruction. "A problem having to do with the existence of metalinguistic material is that of the high cost of production of teaching materials in mother tongues. This is one of the stumbling blocks often mentioned when developing linguistic policies in Africa (especially in the French-speaking countries). This question must be examined from a global point of view, with due consideration being given to the realities of the world market on books and education services.

According to Daniel Monteux (2000) and Ricardo Petrella (2000), we are witnessing a rapid

merchandising of education. Greater importance is being given to economic considerations rather than to aspects relating to the education of the citizen and the advancement of man.

Stakes other than linguistic and cultural problems can also jeopardize or curb the use of African languages in schools. Education at world level represents a market of more than two thousand billion dollars<sup>2</sup>.

The Francophone community, as we already mentioned, is first and foremost an economic structure, a choice market for certain products that would never have been sold elsewhere: Books, information and communication technologies, etc. According to Hutchison, (2001:4) quoting certain French officials and promoters of Francophonie, the Francophonie group constitutes a veritable language and cultural market.

Daniel Monteux (2001) in his article entitled "L'éducation en péril de marchandisation" points out that the textbooks market represents 11% of the turnover of every edition. In February 1998, still according to Daniel Monteux, Claude Allègre, the French Minister of Education declared in the Echos newspaper that: "We are going to sell our know-how abroad and our goal is set at a two billion turnover in three years. I am convinced that this would be the biggest market of the 21st century...Cooperation for development sake is over". It was with this in mind that "Edufrance", a public interest group created to sell higher education in the world, was set up. In the same article, Daniel Monteux underscored that France is the 2nd world exporter of educational services (and the 3rd exporter of arms).

Should the introduction of African languages into the educational systems in Africa bring about an upheaval of the educational services market, there is no doubt that these languages would be seen, not as partner languages, but as rival languages and dealt with as such. African languages will be partner languages for education in Africa, alongside European languages, as long as their use as medium of education does not jeopardize the structure of the world market for educational services destined for Africa. The reforms underway or in the pipeline for education systems in Africa will have to take into account this unavoidable reality. It is up to African countries to fully assume their responsibilities as regards the production and

distribution of books and other teaching tools in African languages.

1-Source:

[http://www.idrc.ca/books/focus/829/chp01\\_f.html](http://www.idrc.ca/books/focus/829/chp01_f.html)

2- Source: Cynthia Guttman(2000),

in *Courrier de l'UNESCO*, November 2000.

## **Modernisation of African languages**

The use of African languages in education systems will still be confronted for a long time to come by the problem of "Micro-Megas". Apart from having to disseminate scientific and technological knowledge, in general, what will be required will be to make African languages capable of managing both "micro" (extremely small) and the "macro" (extremely big). As a matter of fact, it has been noticed that when it comes to making certain precisions, whether such details be extremely small or extremely big, African languages cannot be used. Linguists claim that this obstacle can be overcome. We hope, in this respect, that the modernization of African languages will constitute one of the priorities of the African Language Academy, as the very survival of these languages depends on this.

Emile Camara et al (1995) in a document entitled "Traitement informatique des langues africaines : problèmes et prospectives" (Data Processing of African Languages: problems and prospects) sees the problem of access to modern information and communication technologies, especially the Internet, which is beginning to take a foothold in countries of the southern hemisphere, as a question of "life or death" for African languages. The computerization of languages right from their simple display on the screen up to the use of specialized tools (such as spelling and grammatical correctors, on line dictionaries, learning-orientation softwares, tools for carrying out translations and documentary research, etc) is a necessary step towards their "survival" in this new "information world". It has become a common thing to say that computerization is about to bring to languages a revolution comparable to that of the printing press or that of the passage from reading rolls to calligraphed books, in their time.

All operations concerning the handling of textual documents are henceforth computerized.

This revolution however has a considerable number of dangers for the future and survival of several languages and consequently for the survival of several cultures. Access to modern information technologies is very likely to even up languages and cultures thereby thwarting national linguistic policies"

African languages are practically absent on the Internet and will remain so for quite some time. The modernization of African languages should quite rapidly be able to address the problems of norms and standardization so that the users of these languages should not be excluded de facto from the world of progress. Emile Camara concludes his article as follows: "The manufacture of computer tools for African languages seems to be a major stake for the survival of these languages in this modern world based on communications".

The modernization of African languages deserves urgent attention, otherwise there is no denying that young Africans will show less and less interest in languages which open up the door to modern knowledge and to scientific, technical and technological know-how of their century.

(1) Segou Workshop-seminar (1999)

(2) Nikiema and Guissou: Consultation sur l'utilisation des langues nationales dans les actes administratifs (2001) (Consultation on the use of national languages in administrative documents)

## **Case study on the democratic republic of Congo**

Jean-Jacques Nkongolo (1998) in his study on " quelle langue d'enseignement pour la République Démocratique du Congo, une enquête à Kinshasa" (Which teaching language for the Democratic Republic of Congo, a survey in Kinshasa) raises the question as to the teaching language to choose for the education systems of plurilingual countries of Francophone Africa. The survey carried out in Kinshasa was geared towards obtaining the opinions of Congolese as to which language they would like to be used as teaching language and their reasons therefor. This study was based on the conviction that, for the major African languages used as medium of expression in schools to be efficient and contribute to the qualitative and quantitative increase of the general level of the knowledge of African pupils, a careful analysis has

to be carried out and a certain number of prerequisites or essential conditions have to be met. These include:

- 1- Carrying out an objective and exhaustive assessment of the sociolinguistic situation of the country concerned;
- 2- Pooling together all the material, financial, linguistic, pedagogic and human resources necessary for the proper organization of the linguistic reform envisaged;
- 3- Obtaining the acceptance of the project by the main actors concerned".

Nkongolo's study highlights a number of issues which, when not taken into account, are often the cause of bottlenecks in school reforms, especially when such reforms also include the choice of languages of instruction.

The study shows that despite the fact that the population often says it has no axe to grind with the introduction of national languages into the education system, a serious survey often reveals that the French language comes first in terms of the linguistic preferences expressed by those sampled (52.4% of those sampled). Another interesting revelation, as regards all the levels of education concerned, is that the number of persons in favour of schooling in French increases with age"

The conclusion of the survey by Nkongolo is full of information for all those interested in questions related to deciding on which languages to choose for teaching in Africa.

The Kinshasa survey clearly showed most people were in favour of studying in French rather than in Congolese national languages. The main reasons for this tendency were also clearly expressed by the persons interviewed.

Apart from economic, material and pedagogic prerequisites to which special attention is often paid in carrying out educational reforms, it is, in fact, difficult to effect any changes, especially those aimed at using Congolese languages:

- If such languages are not better valorized socially , i.e., utilized in all the major and vital sectors of national life besides being used in schools, (official and socio-professional status);
- If the languages concerned do not meet, through conscientious and organized work, a

minimum number of conditions, such as being rich in content and properly equipped with the tools indispensable for their use in schools;

- If the major partners to the Congolese school are not in favour of the change envisaged.

The use of Congolese national languages as medium of expression in schools, if so desired by public opinion and by the public authorities, requires very careful and patient preparation as well as the following indispensable and concrete prerequisites:

1. A firm decision and political will calling for the official use of Congolese languages throughout the country;
2. A political will translated into concrete action by a government decision and measures calling for the use of Congolese national languages in school;
3. The minimum financial and material resources required to undertake the linguistic reform in Congolese schools;
4. An extensive campaign to inform and educate national public opinion on the advantages of using the major Congolese languages progressively in school;
5. The setting up of an interdisciplinary language commission (to examine all the problems concerning all the existing languages in the Congo);
6. The design and adaptation of valuable teaching tools;
7. The training and regular further training of trainers and school inspectors versed in Congolese national languages;
8. The periodical and objective assessment of each stage of the linguistic reform.

## **Echos from Burkina Faso: on the road to bilingual school**

"I am 21 years old. I am in Form 4 in secondary school... I entered bilingual school at the age of 13"... It is with these words that Everest Zongo (2002) began his report on the bilingual education situation in Burkina Faso.

First launched in the small village of Nongana situated some twenty kilometers north-east of Ouagadougou, intensive bilingual training centers are beginning to open up new venues for the

use of African languages in educational systems.

The intensive bilingual training center at Nongana, has made it possible for youths who are normally excluded for good from the education system, to complete primary school in 4 (four) years instead of the usual 6 (six) years and to catch up with their childhood friends who entered conventional schools four years earlier. For these young boys and girls and their parents, they would never have had the opportunity to attend school had it not been for the bilingual school system.

Bilingual education or the bilingual school system is seen today in Burkina Faso as a "viable alternative form of formal basic education in Burkina Faso" Nikiéma, (2001). It saw the light of day through an intensive bilingual school program designed by the ELAN-Development association (an association for the promotion of books and written materials in national languages). This was at the request of a village association called "Manegdbzanga" situated in the Loubila Division of the Oubritenga province.

Between 1991 and 1993, a team of teachers and researchers from the University of Ouagadougou developed and experimented among literate members of the village association a method of teaching and learning the French language by means of knowledge acquired from reading and writing national languages. The success of this method called "les méthodes ALFAA" was reason enough for it to be used in several provinces and in several national languages such as the Moore, the Jula, the Fulfude, the Lylele and the Gulmacema.

In the light of the very encouraging results obtained, the "Manegdbzanga" association was forced to request that the ALFAA method be applied to non-school-attending children of 9 to 14 years of age who, being too old, in keeping with the conditions in force governing admission into schools, but too young to attend adult literacy centers, were excluded from all formal or informal systems of education. Hence the proposal to adopt a programme other than the one obtaining in conventional schools designed for preparing youths for the Primary School Certificate (CEP).

According to the initiators of the method, Professor Norbert Nikiéma among others, this training is solidly based on a language properly mastered by the child and on the knowledge

obtained through being able to read and write the language. At the end of the first four years, the results obtained were far beyond the most optimistic expectations of its designers and observers. After 4 (four) years of study, the first batch from the bilingual schools sat the primary school certificate examination and came out with a success score of nearly 48% against 42% for the national average.

When schools reopened for the 2001-2002 academic year, there were forty-two bilingual schools spread all over the country ready to teach in six national languages. The success story behind this experiment to set up bilingual schools lies in the following factors: The State participates actively in the ongoing experiment:

- It pays the salaries of the teachers and

supervisors;

- It sees to it that teachers are trained to use this new approach which requires appropriate pedagogy;
- It provides bilingual schools with the teaching documents required.

For this experiment to succeed the **commitment of the village communities** was also necessary and this commitment was translated into concrete action by:

- Their participation in the formalities necessary for the setting up of the bilingual school;
- Their participation in the management of the school;
- Their participation in the construction of the buildings.

## **The bilingual school: an alternative to the formal basic education system in Burkina Faso**

### **Present Situation of Conventional Basic Education**

The education system in Burkina Faso is made up of two parallel components: The formal conventional education (via primary schools) where teaching is carried out solely in French and the informal basic education system (via literacy centers) where teaching is carried out in Burkina languages.

The conventional basic education system (via the primary school) is known for producing poor results:

- By virtue of the fact that it is inappropriate, out of place and discriminatory, the school cuts off pupils from their environment, favours certain regions and has a preference for boys.
1. Formal basic education via the primary school has a poor internal production ratio, a poor graduation ratio, a high rate of pupils repeating class, a high rate of dropouts and high rate of pupils excluded from school at the various levels of schooling<sup>1</sup>.
  2. Its internal rate of success is very poor: the

average percentage of pupils successful at the First School Leaving Certificate is 40% and 17%, if the children never repeated a class. Out of 1 000 children entering the infants section, only 205 get up to class 7 without repeating a class. Some 599 get to class 7 after 8 years! The average number of years spent in primary school before a child can obtain his primary school certificate is 12.2 years as against the normal 6 years and the input/output ratio is only 26.5%<sup>2</sup>.

- Its external rate of success is discouraging. Children leaving school are not that useful to themselves or to their community.
- The system is expensive and is a high consumer of budgetary allocations.

The Burkinabé Government thus felt the urgent need to look for alternative solutions to replace this conventional primary education system whose reform is unanimously being called for by every one. It is thus within this framework, following the general meetings on education, that

<sup>1</sup> General meetings on education (p.25)

<sup>2</sup> MEBA, *Education pour tous au Burkina Faso* (p.8)

government authorized that alternative methods be experimented. Hence the satellite schools (ES), community schools, informal basic education centers (CEBNF), and bilingual schools now cropping up.

It was in a bid to contribute to this search for alternative methods that MEBA and OSEO, in collaboration with its partners in the field in Burkina, developed the bilingual education system as an alternative to the present system.

Bilingual education, as an alternative system of education, is different from the other innovative methods of education proposed. It is also different from the 1979 reform. (Annex No.2)

## **Bilingual education in Burkina Faso**

The experimentation with bilingual education in Burkina Faso was carried out in three phases.

### **Phase One**

The pilot phase carried out by the civil society took place from 1994 to 1998 with 15 young men aged 9 to 14 years, in the villages of Nomgana and Goué, in the Loumbila Division of the Oubritenga Province. This phase which centered on a Moore-French bilingual approach produced encouraging results:

- Results of the comparative assessment carried out in December 1996<sup>3</sup> : the Loumbila, Donsin A, Donsin B and Nomgana conventional primary schools respectively 3.44%, 42,85%, 20% and 40% whereas the two experimental or laboratory bilingual schools at Goué and Nomgana respectively scored 68% and 16,65% (Cf Annex III).
- In June 1998, pupils in bilingual schools were exceptionally authorized by the Ministry of Basic Education to sit official examinations. These children, who had spent only four years in school, scored 52.83% at the First School Leaving Certificate examination as against a national average score of 42%. Among those who repeated class in 1999 thereby spending five years in school, 12 out of the 14 who sat for the first school leaving

certificate passed the examination, representing a score of 85.71%. When we take into consideration the entire batch after five years of school, the results are as follows: 40 out of 53 successful at the first school leaving certificate examination, representing a 75.47% success rate in 5 years (cf annex III)

- Other results in the field of bilingual education were as follows: In the field of production, 233.000 CFA francs were made in the field of cattle rearing after three months of work. Output in the field of agriculture, gardening and handicraft also was on the rise. As regards culture, there was a greater mastery of songs, dances, fairy tales, proverbs and the use of musical instruments. Both parents and pupils also showed more concern in the promotion of education with a cultural or production overtone (cf annex III)

### **Phase Two**

The second phase, which ran from 1998 to 2000, began with the launching of the first phase of the geographical and linguistic extension program following the call made to the OSEO and the other technical and financial partners of MEBA by the Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy during the ceremonies marking the presentation at Nomgana of the results of the pilot phase.

In response to this call, OSEO, in partnership with INA, undertook the extension of geography to bilingual schools in five areas where the Moore dialect is spoken. OSEO also carried out the vulgarization of linguistics by setting up bilingual schools where teaching is carried out in two languages: Jula and French in Houet, Fulfude and French in Oubritenga and Oudalan; Lyelé and French in Kompienga; Gulimanceman and French in Kompienga, and Dagara and French in Loba.

Apart from the OSEO, the Dutch Embassy and the NGO Intermon-Oxfam also took part in this phase.

Twenty one schools using six languages were also made to participate in this second phase.

### **Phase Three**

The main features under this phase would be:

<sup>3</sup> In December 1996, the Conventional Schools which took part in the comparative test have been teaching entirely in French for four years and three months, whereas the two bilingual classes had only two years and three months of Moore-French, six months of which were spent using French as the medium of instruction.

- The continuation of the programme to vulgarize geography. The programme will be extended to other areas such as Topoa and Koulpeogho where the Gulimancema dialect is spoken and to Yatenga where Fulfude is the lingua franca;
- The experimentation of the programme in urban areas such as the Kaya, Ouagadougou, Koudougou, Koupèla, Daro and Pama area councils;
- The continuation of the linguistics vulgarization programme by launching the experimentation of Bissa and French in Koulpeolgho;
- Getting other actors such as the Catholic Church (once primary schools reopen in the Kaya and Koupèla schools dioceses), the Swiss Cooperation Mission and the NGO Voisins-Mondiaux participate in the programme;
- The beginning of the implementation of the education continuum through the setting up of the Education Awakening Centers (3E) for 3 to 6 year-old children, Special Multilingual (Secondary Schools (SMS), post primary schools for 13 to 16 year-old children leading up to the BEPC (The French diploma obtained after four years of secondary school).
- The confirmation of the feasibility of bilingual education for 9-14 year old children and adolescents in another language other than the Moore. Pupils studying in Dafinso in the Houet area scored 100% at the First School Leaving Certificate examination in June 2002.

The situation of this third phase stands at present as follows:

- 40 bilingual schools of which 3 are government, 7 catholic and 2 private non denominational.
- 7 (seven) national languages and the French language are being experimented. These are the Moore-French, the Gulimanceman - French, the Dagara-French, the Lyélé-French and the Bissa-French languages.
- The experiment is being carried out in 14 provinces situated in 10 of the 13 regions of the country.
- The 78 bilingual classes now existing have a total number of 3 278 pupils of which 1,186 are boys (54.48%) and 1,492 girls (45.51%).

Results obtained at official examinations:

- The three bilingual schools which completed 5 years of school, with 3.5 years of school work being done in French, obtained the following results at the F.S.L.C examination in June 2002:
  - Goué bilingual school (Oubritenga): 75.85%
  - Nomgana bilingual school (Oubritenga)
  - Tanyoko private bilingual school: 84.21%
  - Danfinso adolescents center -Houet):100%

These adolescents spent four years in school with only two and a half years studying in French.

The average score obtained by these bilingual schools was 85.02% whereas the general average for the areas in which these schools are situated was 67.40% for Ziniaré and 52.86% for Bobo IV.

It should be noted that the 10 regions concerned are the Central Plateau, the Center, the Center-North, the Sahel, the North, the South-West, the Center-East and East regions.

Furthermore the 14 provinces concerned are the Bam, the Kourittenga, the Sanemantenga, the Sanguié, the Boulkiemde, the Houet, the Loba, the Yatenga, the Oudalan, the Kampienga, the Tapoa, the Oubritenga, the Koulpeolgho and the Kadiogo provinces.

## **Objectives and characteristics of the bilingual school**

The main hypothesis of this experiment is based on the work by Cummins (1984) who claims that, when working within a bilingual context, the acquisition and consolidation of academic knowledge in a language which we master well (our mother tongue for example) facilitates our work in acquiring know-how in a second language .

The goal, among other objectives, of bilingual education, (i.e., using a national language and the French for example) is to:

1. Contribute to the search for solutions to problems of basic education within a multilingual context;
2. Increase the internal efficiency of the school significantly through a higher success rate, a drop or even an elimination of the number of

pupils repeating class or being dismissed from school;

3. Increase the external efficiency of the school substantially by making bilingual schools the springboards for local development so that those leaving these schools can become useful to themselves and to their communities as partners and beneficiaries of development rather than as persons earmarked for exodus, idleness and delinquency;
4. Reduce the cost of basic education, in the long run, by significantly reducing the time spent in school by at least one year.

An attempt is also being made under the experiment to develop additive bilingualism involving the combination of a national language and French (LN-F) in keeping with the following percentage of time spent per hour as indicated in the box below.

- 1<sup>st</sup> year: national language : 90% and French : 10%
- 2<sup>nd</sup> year : national language 80% and French : 20%
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year : national language : 50% and French : 50%
- 4<sup>th</sup> year : national language: 20% and French : 80%
- 5<sup>th</sup> year: national language : 10% and French: 90%

### **Comparison of bilingual education to the other forms of education**

Bilingual education is different from the conventional school system as well as from the innovations being carried out and from the 1979 school reform.

There are several main difference between the bilingual school and the conventional school

- Additive bilingualism: i.e. the usage by the child of a national language he masters very well and French throughout his stay in school;
- Gender equality both as concerns access to school and course content and putting into practice the trades learnt in school;
- Link between education and production: Pupils carry out manual activities such as farming, cattle rearing, handicraft, carpentry, related to the local economy. These activities are part of the courses taught and also constitute practical fields for the lessons learnt;
- Revaluating culture: Introduction into schools of such positive African cultural values as solidarity, honesty, tolerance, hard work , respect for the elderly, respect for life, as well as fairy tales and proverbs, songs and dances, indigenous music and traditional musical instruments;
- Participation of school parents: fathers and mothers take part in the drawing up of the school syllabus and in the definition of certain aspects of education in school such as production and culture;
- Reduction of the cost of primary school by cutting down the number of years spent in school: 5 year instead of 6 (for children of school age) and 4 years instead of 6 (for adolescents of 9 to 14 years of age).
- Establishment of a cross-over or bridge between informal and formal education;
- Bilingual education is an educational continuum: education-awakening center for 3 to 6 years-old children) + bilingual school (for 7-12 year old kids) and special post-primary school (for the 13 to 16 years old). The table below is an illustration of this continuum:

Difference between bilingual education and the other innovations such as the satellite school

<b>Education awakening centers</b>	<b>Bilingual schools</b>	<b>Post-Primary schools</b>
3 + 06 years	4 to 12 years	13 to 16 years

(ES), the Informal Basic Education School (CEBNE) and the Community School (cf annex II) being set up. Bilingual education, even if similar to some extent to some of the innovations being carried out, is different from these innovations in the following ways:

- It calls for the promotion of additive bilingualism whereby a national language and French are used side by side throughout the period of the child's stay in school (3E, Bilingual School, SMS) instead of using the national language only during the first years of school, as in the case of the other innovations;
- Relation between the act of studying and the act of producing;
- Promotion of positive cultural values;
- Establishment of cross-over between formal and informal education;
- Significant reduction of the duration of studies thereby cutting down costs;
- Making school parents participate in the drawing up of certain aspects of the curriculum and in practical training through their participation in the teaching of production and culture;
- The general meeting of parents associations brings together both the fathers and the mothers of the children;
- The acquisition of knowledge and know-how taught in conventional schools as well as other subjects such as production and culture which are not taught in the conventional schools;
- Promotion of education. In the villages where there is a bilingual school, the education project takes into account the nursery child, the school age child, adolescents, and adults since in the shadow of the bilingual school lies a literacy center for adults;
- Terminology available in the languages of experimentation for the translation of concepts necessary for teaching all types of subjects such as grammar, conjugation, reading, writing, mathematics, geometry, the metric system, composition, vocabulary, history and geography, nature study;
- Existence of a special curriculum for bilingual education;

- Existence of a special approach for the teaching of literacy in bilingual schools;
- Existence of a special method for the teaching of French : the French language literacy method using knowledge acquired from the AFAA literacy method;
- Reduced cost;
- Higher internal efficiency.

## **Difference between bilingual education and the 1979 school reform**

Bilingual education is similar to some aspects of the 1979 reform. However, it is different from the 1979 reform in the following ways:

- The 1979 reform was at the initiative of the State whereas bilingual education was initiated by the civil society;
- Experimentation of the bilingual system began with the launching of a pilot phase comprising the selection of 2 classes as samples. These two classes were allowed to go up to the end of the cycle and the results obtained were very encouraging;
- The State only got involved in bilingual education following the encouraging results obtained and the request made for land;
- Geographical and linguistic expansion took place progressively following the request for land and on the basis of the lessons learnt from the pilot phase;
- The number of national languages used is the same as those used for the literacy campaign;
- Teachers, inspectors, civil servants and senior government officials have been enrolling their children in bilingual schools contrary to the experience witnessed after the 1979 reform which saw the withdrawal by senior officials of their children from schools governed by the reform;
- Linguistic research indispensable and necessary for adapting this approach to another national language is a prerequisite for starting work in the other language;
- The teaching documents and their manuals, as well as the follow-up and assessment tools are

available for the experimentation of bilingual education whereas the 1979 reform suffered a lot as a result of the absence of these documents and tools;

- The training of teachers and inspectors is carried out before the launching of bilingual education in a given language;
- Bilingual education has undergone several independent evaluations by persons having nothing to do with the implementers of this innovation: researchers from the Florida State University (USA), independent researchers from France and from countries of the sub-region, post-graduate students from the University of Ouagadougou, pupil-Inspectors from the ENSK and students from ENAM etc.

Bilingual education has taken into account, both as regards design and implementation, the shortcomings pointed out by the general meetings on education and the lessons drawn from the 1979 reform.

## **Difficulties**

The experimentation of bilingual education has been encountering a number of difficulties such as:

- The mobility of teachers and inspectors during the school year;
- The gap between the means available at the present and the high demand caused by the growing craze for bilingual education.
- The inappropriateness to use the entire school vacation for the training of teachers and inspectors whereas the number of teachers and inspectors to train is on the rise. It would be more appropriate for training to take place within the framework of the ENEP (National School for the Training of Primary School Teachers) and the ENESK.
- The absence of an official structure for validating and standardizing the linguistic results obtained.

## **Prospects for the gradual generalisation of bilingual education**

Drawing up of a strategy for the implementation of the recommendations of the national meetings on education the prospects for the gradual generalization of bilingual education include:

- Implementation of Circular letter N° 2002-098/MEBA/SG of 18 June 2002;
- Extension of the bilingual education experiment to PDDEB priority areas;
- Extension of the bilingual education experiment in urban and periurban areas;
- Backing the drive to take into account other dialects of the languages already being used as well as other languages;
- Backing the drive to intensify the implementation of bilingual education in urban and periurban areas.
- Intensifying the efforts being made by other persons involved in basic education in Burkina Faso;
- Carrying out a comparative assessment of all the educational innovations in a bid to draw lessons therefrom and decide as to the guidelines to adopt for tomorrow's school in Burkina;
- Rendering operational the educational continuum programme for the 3 to 16 years old: 3 E, bilingual school, special post primary school with a final basic cycle ending at 16 in keeping with the law on school guidelines;
- Setting up of a system for lobbying for bilingual education in Burkina Faso with the assistance of the highest authorities of the State;
- Drawing up enactments for the implementation of the law on education guidelines, especially as concerns the promotion of national languages, the definition of national languages, official languages and regional languages.

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# NEWS IN BRIEF

## **UNISA Advanced Certificate in Education Workshop**

The Advanced Certificate in Educational Leadership of the University of South Africa (UNISA) is being adopted by a number of universities in Ethiopia. This decision was endorsed by a meeting of Deans of all of the five Faculties of Education in Ethiopia held in Addis Ababa in November 2002. The target audience consists initially of teacher educators in universities, teachers' colleges which train upper primary school teachers and teachers' institutes which train lower primary school teachers. In the long run the target audience will be the principals of primary school in Ethiopia. There are more than 10,000 primary schools in Ethiopia. Under the planned programme the five universities will begin by utilizing the UNISA materials, but will eventually move on to developing their own tailor-made programmes in this area. The UNISA materials, which provide principals and would-be principals with hands-on training through a distance education mode, is very practically orientated.

## **Postgraduate Diploma in Distance Education (PGDDE) and Master of Arts in Distance Education (MADE) Academic Counseling Workshops**

In collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) of India, IICBA is currently training Distance Education (DE) specialists in three African countries - Ethiopia, Liberia and Madagascar. A total of 115 students from these countries are enrolled with IGNOU for Postgraduate Diploma in Distance Education (PGDDE) and 14 students (from Ethiopia and Liberia) are studying for their Master of Arts in Distance of Education (MADE).

IICBA conducted, two concurrent Academic Counseling Workshops in Addis Ababa from 11 to 19 November 2002 for the benefit of PGDDE and MADE students. Some 38 Ethiopian students participated in the PGDDE workshop while ten students from Ethiopia are three from Liberia attended the MADE workshop. Three qualified and experienced IGNOU tutors led both workshops. A local tutor who is a PGDDE

graduate but also trained in the techniques of tutorship assisted them. A preliminary evaluation at the end of the workshops showed that both PGDDE and MADE students have found the workshops useful in clarifying difficult content areas and providing direction as to how to proceed in the future to successfully complete the study programs.

## **Graduation of PGDDE Students**

A total of 25 students from Ethiopia and Liberia, who had successfully completed the PGDDE study package graduated on 14 November, 2002 in a warm ceremony held in the presence of Her Excellency W/ro Genet Zewdie, the Minister of Education of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) and Mr. M. L. Conde, UNESCO Director and Representative, Addis Ababa Ethiopia at the Ghion Hotel, Addis Ababa.

Dr. Fay Chung, Director of IICBA in her opening address pointed out that the Institute initiated this training program in 1999 with the view of alleviating the dire shortage of Distance Education specialists in many African countries aspiring to improve access to second and third level education in general and teacher in service training in particular through Distance Education. The Director also noted that the current graduates constituted the first fruits of this initiative. Regarding the future of this initiative, she



*W/ro Hilina Yifru graduate student of PGDDE*

underlined IICBA's intentions to expand the program to other African countries and concentrate more on training DE specialist at MA and Ph. D levels.

Mr. Conde, on his part, expressed his appreciation for IICBA's concerted efforts towards meeting its capacity building goals in Africa. He recognized the current PGDDE graduates as the first concrete achievement of IICBA.

Her Excellency, Genet Zewdie, Minister of Education of the FDRE, after handing the IGNOU Diplomas, congratulated the graduates and expressed her gratitude for IICBA's contributions in the area of human resource development in Ethiopia. Her Excellency also acknowledged that the current graduates and those in the pipeline to be an invaluable resource for the realization of the planned expansion of Distance Education in Ethiopia. In this regard, the Minister urged the graduates to apply their newly gained knowledge, abilities and skills in resolving the problems that prevail in the Distance Education system.

## **End of year IGNOU Examinations**

IICBA at its Addis Ababa center, administered from 5 to 16 December 2002 IGNOU's Term end examinations for its PGDDE and MADE students in Ethiopia. As per the understanding existing between IICBA and IGNOU, the former is obliged to administer the PGDDE and MADE exams set and provided by the latter strictly according to its schedule, rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of examinations.

The center administered exams on nine courses to a total 16 candidates. The turn out candidates, as a percentage of those registered to take their exams at this session were high and 80% of the candidates registered showed up for the examinations. IICBA provided some support to candidates coming from the regions to enable them to participate in the examinations.

## **IICBA Education Planning and Economic Development Programme**

IICBA's Education Planning and Economic Development programme moved a step further through dialogue with the Open University of

Tanzania (OUT) and with the University of Dar es Salaam. It is hoped that OUT will be one of the universities which will offer the proposed Master's degree which IICBA has initiated with a team of experts. The underlying concept is that presently education planners do not have a good understanding of economic principles which influence economic development. Conversely economic planners in Africa do not have a good grounding in human resource development and adequate appreciation of the dynamics of the education system. The programme seeks to provide education planners with a better understanding in economics and economic planners with a better grounding in education.

## **Senior Executive Seminar for Ministers of Education, Dar es Salaam, November 2002**

The Eighth Conference of the Ministers of Education of African Member States (MINEDAF VIII), organized by UNESCO was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 2-6 December 2002. The theme of the Conference was "Taking up the Challenges of Education in Africa: from Commitments to Action" in the context of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The commitments made in this regard are contained in the "Millennium Declaration" adopted by the United Nations, in the "Dakar Framework for Action" adopted in 2000, and finally in NEPAD adopted at the Summit of OAU Heads of States and Government in Lusaka in July 2001. It is within the above context that UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA) decided to take advantage of the presence of African Ministers of Education and other senior education policy makers in Dar es Salaam to organize a one-day Senior Executive Seminar for Ministers of Education at the Courtyard Hotel in Dar es Salaam on 30 November 2002. The purpose of the Seminar was to sensitize the Ministers of Education to the synergies existing between education planning and economic development and the cost effective use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for education in the global age.

Ministers of Education and senior education policy makers from Botswana, Burundi, Eritrea, Gambia, Malawi, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania and Uganda, actively participated in the Seminar

(See Annex 1). Resource persons and educational experts from the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), the African Development Bank (ADB), African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), the World Bank, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and UNESCO IICBA were invited to present papers on topic issues.

The Seminar dealt with two main issues: firstly the linkages between "Education and Economic Development" and secondly "Cost-Effective Ways of Utilizing Information and Communication Technologies for Education". Under the topic "Education and Economic Development", the seminar examined the implications of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) for Africa's development. This was followed by presentations and discussions on "Human resources development and braindrain", the lessons African countries can learn from the experiences of East Asian countries, and IICBA's programme of work in this area. This was followed by group work where these areas were further examined in some detail. Participants were very interested and reviewed the two readings provided from "Globalization and its Discontent" by Joseph Stiglitz, and "Development as Freedom" by Amartya Sen. These writings, which were often contradictory to western philosophic understandings of the new world order provoked animated debates among participants.

The second part of the day was devoted to the topic on "The Cost-Effective Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Education for Africa". Three presentations were made: the first one was on the experience of Egypt in this area; the second was on the use of Virtual Reality and Technology Enhanced Learning, and the third one was a display of IICBA's produced video cassettes and electronic libraries. Very useful animated and practically orientated discussions took place.

### **Naledi3D: Teaching and Learning tools in virtual reality**

Naledi3D, a South African company, has been invited to assist IICBA in producing an interactive CD ROM on HIV/AIDs education. The objective is to produce an interactive teaching and learning tool utilizing virtual reality technologies.

### **M.Ed on the Use of ICTs in Sudan**

IICBA Director, Dr. Fay Chung, paid a visit to Khartoum to explore work on the transfer of the Master's degree on the use of information and communication technologies from the University of Pretoria to the Sudan University of Science and Technology (SUST). An enormous amount of work has already been achieved by the two universities. The transfer of technology has already begun in an admirable and impressive manner. The programme provides a model which can be emulated by other African universities which presently do not have degrees at this level.



*Senior Executive Seminar for education policy makers, Dar es Salaam, November 2002*