

Agence Française de Développement

Possible areas of interventions in support of GRA – August 2011

Sector Diagnosis and Policy formulation

Through funds entrusted to UNESCO, AFD provides financial support to BREDA-based **Pole de Dakar** (PdD) which is a team of experts (from both North and South), available on countries' request, to help national teams undertake sector analysis. PdD offers a wide range of services and tools including: **Country Status Reports**, Education financial simulation models, Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks, Teacher policy diagnostic assessments, School Quality Monitoring tools. For the last academic year, PdD has offered its expertise to 11 different French, English and Portuguese speaking countries of Africa.

Pole de Dakar also publishes research papers on policy issues and runs a **distant learner's course** (with Dakar university) to build national capacities for sector analysis and policy formulation. Working in close relation with UIS and World Bank staff, it has received EPDF grants up to 2009 and played a significant role in the FTI context (from diagnosis to endorsement of sector strategies in many African countries, data collection and quality control of data).

Pole de Dakar's annual working program is decided by a strategic committee (with UNESCO and donors contributing to the Pole).

Pole de Dakar's mission could be extended to document implementation issues and lessons learnt. It could also be the implementing team for several activities in the 3 GRA thematic areas (improving national reporting systems on financial flows or on OOS / developing tools to monitor school performance etc.)

AFD could be the supervising entity for GRA financial support to Pole de Dakar but FTI funds could also be channelled directly to a UNESCO multi donor trust fund. FTI-S GGP sitting in the strategic committee would help **align Pole de Dakar's activities with GRA**.

Assessment systems

Building strong learning outcomes assessment and monitoring systems (focusing on reading and mathematics without excluding other skills) is very important, particularly in the African region where very few countries are involved in the PISA, PIRL or TIMMS programs.

French Aid has provided CONFEMEN since 1991 with financial and technical support to develop and sustain **PASEC** (to assess learning outcomes in French speaking African countries and identify cost-efficient policies).

PASEC is currently streamlining its methodological tools and has also started networking with SACMEQ and national assessment systems : (i) PASEC will implement, in at least 7 different countries, new tests (maths, oral skills, reading and writing in grade 2 and grade 5) in keeping with competency-based curricula, (ii) PASEC and SACMEQ have had joint technical workshops to enhance collaboration between the two programs, and (iii) PASEC is

considering launching a distance training program to develop national capacities and sustain national and international assessment systems in the African region.

AFD will renew its financial support to PASEC but GRA support could boost partnership between all stakeholders; GRA could fund joint PASEC/SACMEQ workshops or training courses and facilitate joint research agendas. Outputs for such support would be more country assessments, distance-training activities and a common quality assessment agenda at the continental level.

AFD could be the Supervising Entity to channel FTI support to PASEC but a global partnership or consortium (including GRA GGP) would be useful to support the development of an African wide assessment system.

Multilingual instruction

AFD's board approved, in July 2011, a program called **ELAN** (Ecoles et Langues Nationales) meant to **support mother tongue instruction in French speaking Africa**. It will be co-funded and implemented by OIF (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie) with technical support from AUF (Association des Universités Francophones). Countries willing to scale-up and mainstream multilingual instruction will receive financial and technical support. This financial support is not meant to be implemented like stand-alone projects; inclusion in the sector policy and involvement of all the stakeholders will be a criterion for support.

Outputs will include design and implementation of scaling-up programs in 8 countries, design and production of textbooks and teaching aids, training, learning outcomes assessments, and cross-country workshops to disseminate lessons and tools. Quality insurance will be provided by a pool of experts and Open Educational Resources will be posted on a website.

GRA funding will not be required but collaboration with other development partners (i.e. GIZ, Swiss cooperation or ADEA) will be sought.

Teachers Practice and Training

PASEC has underlined the very weak impact of both pre and in – service training of teachers on pupils' learning outcomes in many countries; this should incite countries and partners to assess teachers practice and revisit teachers training and management. Little data and evidence is available on these issues in French speaking Africa where few universities engage into research in the field of educational science.

AFD will support 2 types of activity (i) analysis of teachers practice (in schools and TTCs) and (ii) sustainable deployment of comprehensive training systems using Distance Learning and Open Education Resources.

AFD's board approved in July 2011 a grant to support and develop **IFADEM** (Initiative Francophone pour la Formation A Distance des Maîtres), which is a sub-regional program for French speaking countries. IFADEM is co-funded and implemented by AUF (Association des Universités francophones) et OIF (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie). IFADEM also co-operates with TTESSA which is active in Commonwealth countries.

Outputs will include research on teachers practice, training modules, Open Education Resources (including video sequences), testing of innovations (M learning is being considered)

Additional funding from GRA could give more depth and scope to the research component on

teachers' practice. The OPEN (Observatoire des Pratiques Enseignantes » network, which is a network of universities could be mobilized to support African research teams and build such capacities within African universities. Such research using classroom videoshot and analytical tools would shed light on time of instruction and on other important aspects of teachers practice (task difficulty, teachers representations, attention paid to pupils lagging behind, formative assessment etc.) and contribute to strengthen capacities within African universities and TTCs. AFD could be the SE for such a research program in French speaking Africa.

Bridging with similar research in English or Portuguese speaking Africa and with other GRA or WB activities (such as the Service Delivery Index) would be very profitable.

Impact of poverty and school readiness on quality and school retention

Health, eyesight, nutrition, early cognitive development, child labor and availability of time for homework at home are influenced by poverty; they in turn influence learning outcomes. Understanding these mechanisms should help design relevant policies.

Burkina Faso is one of the very few countries that have an observatory collecting in-depth longitudinal data in both peri-urban (Ouagadougou) and rural context (Nouna province) on each and every household (with data collected several times a year on household activities, income, births, children weight, head circumference, schooling etc.). School cohorts and “family cohorts” can thus be followed up and socio-economic data could be matched with school data (repetition, drop-out, attendance) and learning outcomes measurement. This would shed light on the impact of poverty on access and learning. Pilots for improvement could be designed and tested (impact evaluation) in a second phase.

A research proposal (available in French) was prepared in 2010 by the University of Ouagadougou (Demographic Studies Institute) in partnership with Paris Dauphine University and submitted to AFD for funding but could not be funded because of budget cuts. This proposal could be reviewed by GRA-GGP. AFD could be the SE for this research program (but would welcome other partners to join or be the SE).