



Association for the
Development of
Education in
Africa

Meeting in Ouagadougou on issues regarding the Inter-Country Quality Node on Literacy and National Languages (ICQN/LNL)

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 (African Academy of National Languages), RCAEL (Regional Council for Adult Education and Literacy), the African Union, UIL (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning), and technical / financial partners including UNESCO, UNICEF, USAID, the Canadian Cooperation, the Swiss Cooperation and Plan Burkina). Civil society organizations and experts from Burkina Faso, Togo, Niger, Mali, The Gambia and Senegal were also represented.

Participants from ADEA included the Executive Secretary, Mr; Ahlin Byll-Cataria, and Working Groups members from WGNFE (the Working Group on Non-Formal Education), WGEMPS (the Working Group on Education Management and Policy Support) and SAGE/BF of the Youth ADEA Network.

The three-year cluster plan, as well as 15 educational experiences were reviewed. This process resulted in the production and technical validation of the three-year action plan and a

detailed assessment of alternative approaches in the areas of non-formal education and literacy. In its recommendations the conference particularly emphasized the need to:

- Further develop the national languages dimension to improve the three year ICQN/LNL plan
- Promote basic and applied research on national languages in different countries;
- Deepen reflection on the designation of ICQN/LNL focal points at the country level;
- Include the three-year programme in the vision of the post 2015 movement;
- Deepen reflection on the operationalization of the pool of sub-regional trainers.

The very high level experts present at the conference (general secretaries of ministries, national directors of literacy, NGO leaders) reflects the importance that countries attach to this inter-country quality node, but also the significant intellectual potential from which this cluster can benefit.

This was pointed out by the Minister of National Education and Literacy of Burkina Faso, Mrs. Koumba Boly Barry in her speech during the wrap-up session at the conference. Minister Boly Barry highlighted the fact that many innovative experiments do not exceed the vicinity of a village, a town or a province and hence resulting in a weakness when we generalize these experiences. “This is what brings us to the importance that the Head of State accords to the capitalization of these experiences and their scaling” Mrs. Boly Barry said. Also highlighting the diversity and richness of the carrier approaches in non-formal education and literacy, she stressed the need to think about how to assist innovative African education systems and support innovative experiences to ensure that their scaling becomes a reality by 2015.

Finally, she recalled the issue of the use of African languages, and the need to appreciate the countries that ACALAN is complementing in order to promote the use of national languages and develop policies on their integration into the educational system. “In this context, the work of experts is very important to sustain this division Literacy and National Languages”, the Minister concluded.

Finally, the Conference identified 11 priority activities for the period 2013-2015 at an estimated cost of 930 992 200 CFA Francs. Among these activities, the following three emerged after discussions:

- The theme on gateways and certifications;
- Transnational programs on nomadic education;
- The use of aligned Arabic characters to boost access and equity.

How to contact the ICQN/LNL

The Inter-Country Quality Node on Literacy and National Languages (ICQN / LNL) is a mechanism set up by 14 African countries with the support from ADEA to function as a catalyst for non-formal education, exchange good educational practices and synergize the efforts of these countries to develop the basic skills necessary to empower individuals and communities.

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