THE MAIN LEVERS FOR

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

OF THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION



Regional experience sharing workshop 21-25 February 2022

GENERAL REPORT June 2022



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Foreword

Programme to support the management of quality: how is this new?

The starting point is simple and is supported by an abundant literature: despite massive efforts over the last few decades, the quality of learning is lacking. While many more children now have access to school, what they learn and retain remains below expectations. The « learning crisis » is reflected in unsettling school achievements, with a large majority of children not mastering basic literacy and numeracy skills at the end of primary school¹.

Changing the focus of analysis for a better understanding

We now have at our disposal a large volume of data, particularly from sector analyses, together with numerous avenues to be explored to achieve the much sought-after improvements. However, the abundance of possible solutions contrasts sharply with the poor results in terms of an improvement in pupil performance. If each country has endeavoured to develop policies and strategies that, on paper, seem relevant and coherent in terms of the problems identified, where is the sticking point? To answer this question, it seems that a change of perspective is needed, and this is the starting point of the Programme to support the management of education quality.

The Programme looks at the issue of quality from an angle that has barely been analysed to date: the role of the actors.

Do they manage to make the most of the context (available information, mobilisation of existing tools, etc.) to point educational actions in the desired direction?

- What is really being done in their workplaces to improve the quality of education?
- Are their actions relevant, coordinated, coherent and directed towards improving the quality of education?

The Programme chooses to focus on the analysis of existing practices, those "already there", rather than on the shortcomings identified in the system. Its postulate is that this is the basis for identifying and proposing effective measures to improve student learning over time and so the quality of education. The said analysis must be conducted with, and by, the actors themselves.

Deconstructing preconceived ideas on the obstacles to quality education

The programme to support the management of education quality has three specific features:

 No assumptions are made concerning the obstacles: the programme strives to discover these through immersion with the actors, leading to a shared diagnosis. The

¹ Cf. World Bank. 2018. « World Development Report 2018: Learning to Realize Education's Promise. » Washington, DC: World Bank. doi: 10.1596/978-1-4648- 1096-1. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO

teams base their work on educational policy regulatory texts but also on what is stated by the actors and on what is observed by those conducting the analysis.

- It does not have a pre-established solution for improving the quality of education: proposals for improvement are developed with the different actors giving priority to promising practices that already exist within the system.
- It does not just make recommendations: on the contrary, it places the emphasis on the conditions required at individual level and at system level for the actions adopted to generate the expected improvements, thus increasing the chances of successful implementation.

Going beyond the analysis stage and supporting a change in practices

The Programme proposes a three-phase **highly participatory approach** featuring methodology inspired by action research that aims to **foster support for a change in practices**.

- The first phase consists in conducting a targeted participatory diagnosis, coconstructed by the actors from within the system based on the analysis of their practices, and not solely on the system's quantitative data. This means observing routine practices at every level of responsibility, linking them to expectations and analysing their relevance, effectiveness or again the purpose of these practices. On this basis, promising practices can be highlighted as can those considered as not very effective or even detrimental.
- The second stage consists in supporting the identification of practical actions to strengthen the effectiveness of the practices observed. Not being content with simply criticising practices, but helping actors to transform and improve them, this is also one of the added values of the support offered, particularly through the input of expertise at key moments.
- Finally, a third and final stage **aims to support the implementation of these actions**: if successful, they should then be included in the action plan of the Ministry concerned.

Rather than seeking to analyse the actors' practices, the Programme intends to aim at strengthening the capacity of the actors to analyse and regulate their practices in favour of the quality of education. Since there are numerous and above all evolving issues and challenges facing the education systems, the emphasis placed on the capacity of the actors to act and react in a constantly changing context is seen as a factor for success.

Obtaining sustainable results

Finally, by acting on and from the actors' actual practices, the intention is to **embed new methods of working and of collaboration in the systems for the long term**. Thus, it can be noted that all the actions proposed or encouraged are built around the following objectives, considered as decisive:

- Instil reflective practice² at all levels of the education system
- Involve the actors in charge of implementation, in the decision-making process

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² Reflective practice is the fact of stopping to reflect on one's actions, to be able to say how these can lead us to the desired objectives.

- Build a relationship of trust / empowerment with the actors
- Enable more collaboration
- Strengthen experience sharing

Supporting education authorities to diagnose and regulate their practices at all levels is the central issue on which the Programme intends to provide added value and contribute to efforts made to enable access to inclusive and quality education for all.

Continuing to conduct reforms without improving the capacities of the Ministry in this regard, will not be productive.

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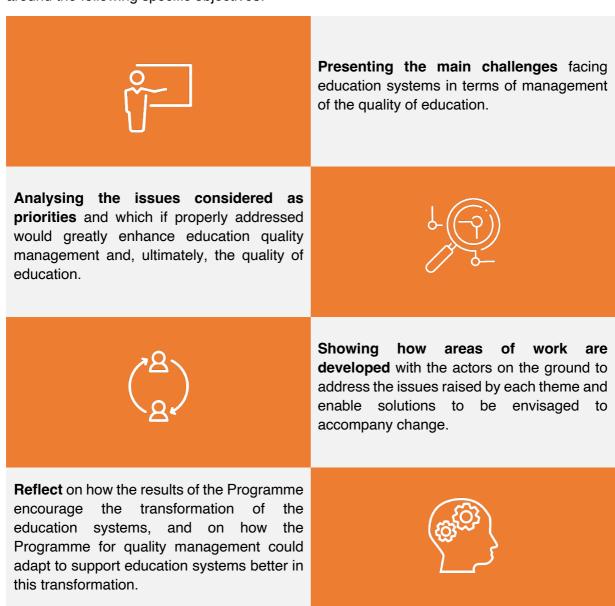
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1. Reminder of the objectives of the workshop

A regional workshop was initially organised by the Programme in December 2020. Bringing together around 200 participants, it dealt with the importance of the management of quality for the development of educational policy. At that time, the concepts of quality and of the management of quality as used by the Programme were specified.

The definitions used for these concepts guided the initiative for the analysis of quality management practices. For more information, we invite the reader to watch the video <u>vidéo de présentation</u> presenting the programme's diagnosis phase, to read the programme's methodological guide <u>guide méthodologique</u>, and also to become familiar with the resources shared during the December 2020 workshop <u>l'atelier de décembre 2020</u>.

The second regional workshop on the management of quality held from 21 to 25 February 2022 aimed more specifically at sharing the results of the Programme and was structured around the following specific objectives:



2. Organisation of the workshop

The workshop took place over 5 days as per the schedule below:

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Monday 21 February Day 1

Introductory session on the main findings of the

diagnosis of management practices

Tuesday 22 February Day 2

Theme « Repositioning evaluations to serve learning

and academic success »

Wednesday 23 Day 3

February Theme « Strengthening pedagogical support

mechanisms »

Thursday 24 February Day 4

Theme « Fostering dialogue and consultation between

central and devolved levels »

Friday 25 February Day 5

Theme « Promoting innovations within the education

systems »

The workshop was organised remotely (online), bringing together participants in a single venue in each country, wherever possible. On each day of the workshop, arrangements were made to hold virtual plenary sessions in the mornings, and face-to-face group work within each country, in the afternoons.

A discussion forum was also made available in order to capitalise on the elements of reflection and allow participants who wished to do so to continue exchanging freely, beyond the time demanded by the workshop schedule. This report is based in part on these elements.

Considering the number of panellists in the countries connected, and the estimated number of those connected in the residential workshops, the total number of participants (panellists + viewers) can be estimated at around 200 to 250.

3. Plenary sessions

Theme 1: « The main findings of the diagnosis of management practices »

Presentations

This subject was covered on the first day using three video presentations to highlight:



The main strengths and weaknesses of the management of education quality in the countries that have conducted the diagnosis.

Three lessons drawn from the diagnoses:

- Education systems have great difficulty in implementing what has been planned.
- There is a tendency to change educational policy when there is a problem, without paying enough attention to the issues of monitoring implementation, assessing the effects of action, and regulation.
- Continuing to conduct reforms without improving the capacities of education systems to master these two management functions will not be productive.



Priority issues that are common to all countries and the approach to address them

Five priority issues were identified by the diagnoses:

- Repositioning assessments to serve learning and academic success
- Strengthening pedagogical support through more closely aligned strategic practices
- Fostering dialogue and consultation between the different levels of the education system
- Supporting the dynamics of decentralisation and community mobilisation
- Promoting innovations within the education systems.

A three-pronged approach has been selected to address these issues:

- Design, with the actors, a set of proposals (solutions) to respond to these issues;
- Test the proposed actions on a small scale to identify the conditions needed for their successful implementation (theory vs practice);
- Formulate and propose recommendations for submission to the Ministry's work plan.



How the national research teams (NRT) conducting the diagnosis were trained

Training was provided through support from a remote supervisory team who were challenged to devise support that could transform the professional postures of the national research team (NRT) members.

Such a change of posture is complex since it depends on both psychological and psycho-social aspects. It implied developing a training environment that involved both the strengthening of technical skills (conducting an explanatory interview, leading a participatory workshop, building a semi-structured questionnaire) and the development of an approach based on analysis and peer-to-peer confrontation.

Questions raised

After the presentation phase, discussions took place with the participants, via questions directly from the countries, or via the online Chat. Below are the questions raised by the presentations and the initial answers provided.



Articulation between the definition of objectives and capitalisation within the education systems

- How can education systems have a good capacity to define objectives yet, at the same time, a poor capacity to capitalise on prior experience?
 - The capacity to define objectives is understood as the capacity to produce strategies: the actors are able to set targets and define objectives, they do not improvise.
 - However, this effort is not sufficiently effective for different reasons: the difficulty to build on lessons learnt, the tendency to compile data without interpreting them and the succession of partner interventions.



The main levers to be mobilised to develop continuity and improve system structure

- What are the main levers to be mobilised?
 - The main lever identified consists in developing a reflective practitioner posture, which means developing the capacity of the officials themselves to analyse the obstacles they face (interpret available information) and to develop actions to address them.
 - The first presentation focused on this issue in relation to school assessment data.



The contribution of communities and civil society to the management of quality

- What would be the place of communities in contributing to improve quality? What would be the place of civil society in the quality management process?
 - The programme's definition of quality education includes the place of communities in the definition of the four management functions. The role of these actors is therefore to be analysed in the same way as that of education system officials.
 - They have a major role to play in organising and managing all the elements related to strengthening the school environment, from monitoring pupils through to improving school supply (participation in school construction, recruitment and remuneration of community teachers, etc.)
 - Support to community actors must necessarily take into account the decentralisation and devolution dynamics currently underway and which condition the efficiency of their interventions. It is essential for their positioning to be clarified.
 - This is one of the priority issues identified by the programme in different countries and must become the subject of substantial areas of work.



A space for dialogue

- Is there no formal space for dialogue on evaluation data? Could you give some examples of forums to enable everyone better understand?
 - There are forums for sharing assessment data, but the way they are managed is most often characterised by very limited rationale: ranking of actors, stigmatisation of underperformers.
 - A specific presentation of the spaces for dialogue is provided in the themes related to data use and to dialogue and consultation within the education system.



Possible countries as models of quality management

- There must be some African countries that are successful in quality management. How do they go about it? What role do local actors play? How do they interact with the central level? How did they conduct this process?
 - While there is no model country in terms of quality management according to our diagnoses, there are however converging issues that concern all countries and on which both Ministries and partners must learn to act together.
 - This leads to the question of the creation of a community of practice, which is one of the objectives of this workshop, i.e. to think as a network without replicating practices before analysing them sufficiently.



The role of tools in quality management

- Tools have their place in the management of quality provided they are at the service of the actors and not the other way round.
- The diagnoses underline that tools benefit from a form of « sacralisation » in the eyes of the officials even though they cannot alone support the development of practices.
- On the contrary, one of the challenges is to promote efficient and intelligent support actions where tools are adapted to support the needs of learners in the training systems.



How to enhance the status of innovations

- When innovations are developed by teachers, the latter may be accused of deviance; appropriate training is therefore necessary to raise the awareness of actors at devolved levels, to share them. What should be done for the lowest level to get away from the omnipotence of the decision-makers...?
 - From compliance with standards to channelled autonomy, what is at stake?
 - One participant mentioned the idea of the "watchdog" advisor versus the advisor who strives to understand with the actors in the field. This leads to asking how to differentiate norms from the actors' autonomy. What then is "channelled autonomy"?
 - To respond, the problem should be envisaged as a cursor to be positioned between compliance with standards on the one side and autonomy of the actors on the other: so many situations, just as many different choices to be made.



The scientific and methodological motivation in the choice of inspectors as members of the national research teams (NRT)

- Why not have academic observers of the system to benefit from a fresh, external viewpoint?
 - The choice of inspectors was a strategic choice. It was precisely about targeting officials within the system, i.e. officials liable to contribute to its transformation. Nevertheless, academics were also directly involved in coordinating these teams.



Supporting changes in professional postures

- Deconstructing ingrained habits is an entire process. Namely, revealing prejudices and beliefs, confronting representations with the aim of deconstructing habits. What approach did you use to deconstruct the habits of pupils or teachers?
 - The presentation covered the training of the national research teams (NRT), which took place over several months, i.e. a long period enabling a change in their professional posture.
 - The programme also endeavoured to support the development of shared diagnoses, thereby acting on the social representations of teachers and other stakeholders.

Theme 2: « Repositioning evaluations to serve learning and academic success »

Presentations

This subject was covered on the second day through two video presentations focusing on:



Issues in using evaluation data

The use of data is at the heart of the four quality management functions. However, a sharp contrast is seen between the profusion of data collected and its use for the improvement of quality.

Little interest is shown in qualitative data even though they provide important information for understanding what is at play behind school results and education system performance.

Why?

- A lack of vision and national strategy for data use
- A lack of confidence in some data by stakeholders
- Insufficient time to exploit the data in greater depth and to widely disseminate the results.

How can actors be encouraged to exploit this wealth of information to truly benefit the improvement of quality?



The example of the Communal learning achievement days (CLAD) as a response to the problem of data use

The Communal School Learning Days (CLAD) is a project initially formulated by the Examination, Competitive examination and School Guidance Board of Niger (DEXCOS). The aim is to enable each commune to take on its evaluation results, exploit these results with the teaching staff and draw lessons for remedial action. Thanks to support from the quality management programme, DEXCOS has broadened its vision to other types of data (school statistics, classroom assessments, inspection reports), is thinking of involving actors other than those directly in charge of pedagogy and is currently reviewing the mandate of its devolved structures to provide them with the capacity to ensure the continued existence of the CLADs.

In summary, a CLAD takes place in 3 phases:

- Preparation phase: taking stock and analysing available data with the aim of identifying priority issues to fuel collective reflection.
- Implementation phase: grouping together education actors to identify responses and means of action that are registered in a communal plan for the improvement of education quality.
- **Follow-up phase:** supporting the actors in the implementation of the actions decided during the day.

Monitoring of, and support to, actors for the implementation of the communal action plan is scheduled as well as an update of progress for discussion at the next CLAD.

Questions raised

An analysis of the contributions from participants reveals three main areas of reflection:



Connecting the producer of data with the user



« I think we should reverse the approach or current practices: not evaluate and then ask what the evaluation will be used for but say what we wish to shed light on. And for whom. »

« The purpose of the evaluations we conduct in our education systems is seldom shared by all the actors. This can justify that we evaluate for evaluation's sake, whereas an evaluation must serve a purpose.»





« What strategies can be used to ensure that all actors have confidence in the data in order to take concerted action to improve the quality of education?»

« Evaluations don't work because we are asking the actors to do a job they have not been prepared for whether through their initial or in-service training. So, the solution resides in building the capacity of all actors in this field. »



These accounts spotlight the importance of connecting the production of data to their use:

- The results of analysis should be useful and meet an expressed need, which requires a dialogue between the people producing the data and those using them.
- Only data that we need should be produced.
- Every time data is relayed up to the next level, new information should be provided in return, to serve management.



Conditions for repositioning evaluations

« Also, not everyone can process and analyse evaluation data. Hence the problem of training specialists in the processing of data collected during evaluations.



« The rational use of data aimed at improving the quality of education cannot succeed without including modules on the use of evaluation data in the training package of future trainers. »



These accounts highlight the need to provide further training on key aspects such as:

- Curriculum adaptation, school supply and demand management, human resource management;
- Development of dashboards to identify where it is more difficult to succeed than elsewhere;
- Construction and evaluation of the evaluation systems.

A point of concern here is whether the objectives set can be met solely through the design and/or implementation of training modules. The diagnoses carried out have indeed highlighted that **learning to « act together » to better implement and use the data is also an important issue.** A trial-and-error approach is needed, which promotes innovative initiatives, and which must be monitored by the Ministry.

The exchanges also point to the importance for the Ministry to clarify expectations.

« Actors at all levels are requested to analyse the results before reporting them to the hierarchy, and we know that this is not done. And when the hierarchy receives them without the analysis, they wonder why the analysis has not been carried out. What can be done in such a situation? Do the actors who are asked to do this analysis know how to do it? (Niger) »



Finally, the importance of promoting the autonomy and empowerment of actors is also underlined.

« A change is needed, to move from the current centralisation to decentralisation at local level. If the users/practitioners are not involved, the work will have no real impact. »





Each level of actor has its own type of evaluation

Depending on their level, actors do not necessarily need the same type of data to steer their action:

- At central administration level, for example, the results of national and international evaluations should be used to develop educational strategies and policies. This dimension was little mentioned by the participants.
- At devolved administration level, the need for the central level to facilitate a redefinition of the purpose of evaluations is noted. The objective is to move from a logic of evaluation « for the sake of evaluation » to one where evaluation is linked to an intervention strategy to solve the problems derived from a shared diagnosis. An interesting avenue to be explored is how to strategically direct the implementation of evaluations so that the results can be used to identify, and intervene in, priority areas.
- At school level, in partnership with the devolved administration, the challenge is to use the results of assessments to develop effective remedial practices.

« One of the best strategies is to set up a monitoring team in each school involving all staff working in the school, who should analyse school results and propose remedial action. The regional or departmental directorate should monitor and evaluate the implementation of these actions and finally, at Ministry level, a central committee should ensure the strategic management of this policy orientation. »



Participants also underlined the need to produce qualitative analyses.

« Yesterday, in the group work, it was concluded that practitioners need to be trained because assessment, in its present form, hardly serves learning. The question is then about whether the tools correspond to the country context and to the needs. Quantitative data are favoured, whereas qualitative data are important too. This enables the practitioner to sit down and reflect on their practice. Teachers need qualitative information to make good decisions, which are based on good tools. »



Theme 3: « Strengthening pedagogical support mechanisms »

Presentations

This subject, which appeared central in all countries during the diagnosis phase, was addressed through two presentations highlighting:



Issues related to pedagogical support mechanisms and practices

The presentation described local support at each level of the education system: central, devolved and school levels, without forgetting the role of initial training and of TFPs.

- At teacher level, the concerns are:
 - The iniquity between rural and urban areas in terms of individualized support,
 - Inadequate identification of their needs,
 - Their perception of support as a compliance check that could lead to a sanction rather than as results-oriented pedagogical support.
- At director level, various factors appear to be obstacles to their supervisory role: on the one hand this positioning is not always clear and/or defined, and on the other hand the workload falling under their administrative, pedagogical and social responsibilities, together with the lack of specific training, also appear to be significant obstacles.
- At local supervisor level, the administrative burden, the lack of resources and the lack of training and methodological guidelines to fulfil their role are some of the concerns raised.
- **Finally, the central level** has to juggle with a variety of issues, including: TFP training strategies more or less in line with sectoral policy, and the difficulties of monitoring/supporting their own training, to name but a few.

The presentation also looked at the subject of **grouped support** as a lever for strengthening teachers' skills, as well as the difficulties related to **the absence of connection between initial training and in-service training.**



The experience of Senegal in the experimentation of Professional Practice Analysis Training Groups (PPATG)

The presentation highlighted the response envisaged by Senegal to strengthen the effectiveness of pedagogical support mechanisms. The response aims to set up Professional Practice Analysis Training Groups (PPATG) targeting:

- School principals, since the Senegalese education system delegates a good deal of local support for teachers to school principals;
- Inspectors, a profession with significant differences of opinion on issues related to compliance monitoring towards teachers.

The idea is to provide a **forum for sharing and reflection** « **among peers** », enabling them to take a step back to analyse their pedagogical supervision practices. These groups should enable the difficulties encountered by actors in their work routines to be flagged, and then to collectively construct new professional practices, put them into practice and collectively evaluate their effectiveness in order to be better prepared to face up to similar situations in the future.

This initiative requires both a group of practitioners, who are involved in the analysis and experimentation of professional practices, and a group of facilitators, who accompany and analyse the work with a view to identifying the conditions for successful changes in posture.

The presentation also endeavoured to explain in what way this approach differs from other mechanisms that already exist within the Senegalese system:

- In-service training mechanisms: because the development of professional skills takes place here in a way that enables pedagogical supervisors to analyse and evaluate their own practices through sharing and exchange with their peers engaged in the same collective reflection process.
- Coaching: since it is not a case of individually or collectively coaching pedagogical supervisors whose needs are known in advance.

Questions raised

Three issues related to the strengthening of pedagogical support mechanisms emerged from the discussions on the first presentation:



The positioning of the missions and roles of pedagogical support



The limits and opportunities of identifying teachers' needs for support



The cooperation of the different levels of the Ministry in management of the pedagogical support policy.



1: Positioning of the missions and roles of pedagogical support

This theme encompasses the mission of support staff (including the school principal) and the place and effectiveness of the so-called grouped support bodies (pedagogical units, pedagogical days, etc.).

The participants questioned the effectiveness of the pedagogical support bodies and raised a number of concerns, and more particularly the fact that:

- They tend to give priority to professional examination preparation, rather than to dealing with the difficulties encountered in their classroom practice;
- The training topics offered are not sufficiently adapted to the reality of their classroom experience.



« Concerning CapED, the problem stems from the supervisors themselves not mastering the way to support these bodies; they don't master this innovation. How do you expect CapEd to be effective? »

In the face of these questions, many other contributions came back to the role of the director and the complexity of their positioning to facilitate the desired changes.



« In Côte d'Ivoire, primary school head teachers, who are pedagogical supervisors, are appointed by primary education inspectors and take up their duties as head teachers without any prior training. How can they easily ensure the supervision of teachers in the classroom? »



« At the same time, the principal through all their functions has a pedagogical, social and administrative role. How can all this be done by a single person? All that is too heavy! »

Finally, other participants questioned the very relevance of the missions of pedagogical support officials.



« The diagnosis indicates the low contribution of support. Doesn't this confirm the position of teachers who are in favour of doing away with the support missions? »



« There is also the question raised by the targets of the actual value of supervision: do the targets really feel the need to be supervised? If not, why not? Is it related to the content of the supervision? Does the supervision not address their needs? »

In the absence of removal expressed by some, an avenue to explore could be that of repositioning the missions of pedagogical support. **Repositioning implies a change in posture of the supervisors that must be accompanied.** This issue will be the subject of specific attention in the context of the PPATG experimentation in Senegal, supported by IIEP-UNESCO.



« Reaching the objective assigned to pedagogical support and facilitating the emergence of a reflective teacher, demands a change of posture on the part of supervisors ».



« For the supervisor, there is a need to focus more on observation through different lenses in order to better direct the teacher's gaze and encourage the reflective practitioner ».



2: Limits and opportunities of identifying teachers' needs for support

The matter of collecting teachers' training needs was also raised by the participants: they pointed out that collection systems used do not enable the real needs of teachers to be reported.



« Who defines the training needs of teachers? Are they consulted to ensure that these are their actual training needs? The information provided by teachers on their difficulties must be taken into account in order to define support strategies. The same medicine cannot be given to several patients without a prior diagnosis.

The diagnoses show that the challenge is related to the conditions in which these needs are collected. Although tools do exist, they are mainly designed to collect general needs and intentions, which are not always linked to classroom realities. It was noted that in the discussions, initial training bodies were rarely mentioned as having a role to play in the collection and analysis of needs. However, involving them in the process could enable a move

away from the vertical approach (from the Ministry to the schools or from the schools to the Ministry) which, on its own, does not appear to be sufficient. They can in fact constitute a laboratory for innovation.



3: Cooperation between the different levels of the Ministry in management of the pedagogical support policy

The participants highlighted the difficulty of linking the guidelines issued by the central level to the needs expressed by actors in the field in terms of pedagogical support.



« How can the two approaches (top down and bottom up) be used to achieve quality in the supervisory framework? On this articulation of the two chains of communication, I can say that we cannot wait for the exploitation of the reports by the central level to act on the ground. There is no point in waiting for feedback on the reports; we must try to make the most of the advice drawn from the reports that are already available and move forward ».

One area for improvement identified lies in support for **the change in attitudes at each level**: while the Ministry is responsible for the major orientations, it must learn to leave sufficient room for manœuvre to the actors in the field so that they may experiment with new support methods. Conversely, at field level, the challenge is to encourage pedagogical supervisors to be the actors of their own change.



Configuration of the PPATGs

The participants questioned the configuration of the PPATGs. It is important to recall that this configuration is not definitive: while Senegal has chosen to target school principals and inspectors, it is quite possible to envisage working with other categories.

However, care must be taken to favour groups made up of professionals of the same hierarchical level, as the success of the exercise rests on trust between the participants.



Positioning of the PPATGs in relation to central level

The central level was involved from the outset in developing the PPATG's strategic guidelines. However, its experimentation is conducted in a virtually autonomous manner with respect to the central level, the key idea being to create favourable conditions for a change in supervisor posture, to move from that of a compliance controller to that of a reflective practitioner.



Scaling up

The subject of scaling up following the experiment was raised.



« I would like to draw the attention of my brothers in Senegal to the risks involved in the idea of « formalising the informal ». Niger has experienced this. But the CapEds, that originated from the spontaneous grouping of teachers to prepare professional diplomas, were misused and distorted when the Government wanted to formalise them. »

The above remark calls for vigilance concerning the rolling out of experiments in general. At this stage, none of the experiments supported by the Programme are at roll-out stage. However, such a challenge has already been anticipated, which is why particular attention is paid to the conditions for success of the experiments before they are proposed to the Ministry's action plan. The idea is to prevent the results produced on a small scale being considered as recipes to be replicated without taking context into account.

Theme 4: « Fostering dialogue and consultation between central and devolved levels »

Presentations

This subject was addressed through two presentations focusing on:



Issues related to dialogue and consultation between central level and devolved level

The presentation indicated that while there are many forums for exchange among actors within the education systems, these are marked by:

- A highly injunctive and compartmentalised operation.
- A « stop and go » phenomenon in public policies: the lack of continuity in reforms, or the redundancy in the production of tools or training.
- Professional practices and work habits that can prove counterproductive (tendency to compile data, falsify results, mechanistic application of management tools);
- A tendency to create and follow norms, rather than enabling or taking advantage of room for manoeuvre.

Finally, the presentation insisted on the fact that the general use of contracts leads to the need for dialogue and consultation putting responsibility on all the actors involved in achieving results.

Dialogue and consultation mark the transition from directive management to **participatory management**. This implies a shared diagnosis of educational issues, an identification of the actions to be taken to overcome them while ensuring that these actions are aligned with resources, and leads to the signing of a **performance improvement contract** (aimed at transforming the resources mobilised into results) indicating the mechanisms for monitoring and supporting the actors. It is a **process of system regulation**, **exchange and decision making between two hierarchical levels**.



Perspectives for management dialogue in Senegal further to the ADEM Dakar programme

This presentation shares an experience of **setting up a management dialogue in Senegal**, within the *Académie* of Rufisque. This experiment, conducted in the framework of the project to support the development of secondary school education (ADEM) was part of the transition from a sectoral management approach based on compliance to one based on **performance and empowerment**.

The *Académie* of Rufisque tried out a new model of dialogue to develop its academic project, through a **management dialogue based on a participatory and inclusive diagnosis** and **concerted management of education and training matters**.

The objective of this approach is to encourage a strengthening of the powers of those responsible at devolved level as well as greater empowerment of local authorities for genuine local management.

Following this experiment, Senegal intends to extend and generalise management dialogue as a governance strategy, particularly in connection with the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) reforms.

Questions raised

An analysis of the participants' contributions reveals three main areas of reflection:

- A proliferation of dialogue mechanisms
- Management dialogue is a « political process »
- Management dialogue is different from an « institutional communication process »



A proliferation of dialogue mechanisms

The existence of many spaces for dialogue, but doubts on their effectiveness...



« It seems to me that statutory frameworks for exchange do exist in the administrations, both horizontally and vertically. What is regrettable is the low functionality of the frameworks »

« In Niger, every year a meeting is held between the central level and those responsible at the devolved level, commonly called a management meeting, which always ends with recommendations. But the shortcoming is that no follow-up mechanism for the implementation of these recommendations is put in place. In addition, at the next meeting, there is no assessment of what has been done by the actors regarding the previous recommendations. »



...insofar as they are generally limited to sharing information or instructions

« In Niger, formal spaces do exist.



- At central level, there is the meeting of executives that brings together the heads of the central, regional and departmental divisions.
- At devolved level, there is the meeting of inspectors, the meeting of pedagogical advisors, the meeting of school principals and the meetings of the Communal Federations of Decentralised School Management Committees (FCC/CGDES).
- At school level, there is the teachers' council and the meetings with the participatory structures. However, it is clear that while the central level and the FCC/CGDES spaces function, this is rarely the case for the others.
- Often these spaces are limited to sharing information and instructions related to educational policy. The conclusions of this workshop could contribute to giving more value to these forums »



Management dialogue is a « political process »

Postures unfavourable to the emergence of a management dialogue between central and devolved levels



« In order to improve professional practices and work habits, a pattern of dialogue and consultation should be established at vertical and horizontal levels. At the top level, people think they have nothing to learn from others below them and that they should only give them orders. At the lower level, people think that they should receive everything from above. So, no personal enterprise. No reflection in view of a solution specific to their environment. So, open a window of consultations to listen to everyone, whatever their place. »

« Dialogue supposes a system where two poles or two entities have the capacity to interact easily. However, the habits in our systems show that the central level is generally part of a command and control/sanction paradigm visà-vis the devolved level. Thereafter, the devolved level is in a position of execution, leading to practices as a formality. So, there is not enough exchange based on reality, but on formalities. »





« A "complex" exists at each level which hampers dialogue and consultation between the central and devolved structures. Those at the top think they are in command and that the opinions of subordinates count for little. Those at the bottom also have difficulty making proposals to their superiors in case it causes them trouble if negatively perceived. It is therefore necessary to find a system to get rid of the "complex" crisis between the top and the bottom levels. As such, we welcome the arrival of this programme. »



« It can be hypothesised that in our systems, collective and individual mentalities are formatted in such a way that the central actor takes on the role of prescriber/controller and the actor at devolved level submits to the role of executor, who will be appreciated according to their compliance with the prescription. This is strongly rooted in the mindsets. »

What emerged from these exchanges is a **challenge related to the « margins for autonomy »** available to actors at devolved levels. This comes down to an eminently political decision since the actors at central level must learn to detach themselves from their role as prescriber in order to play the role of facilitator with a view to:

- Facilitating the definition of a common vision of what is expected,
- Obtaining a consensus on the roles and responsibilities of the actors in order to achieve the targeted objectives,
- Vouching for these dynamics over time.



Management dialogue spaces are different from other spaces for dialogue



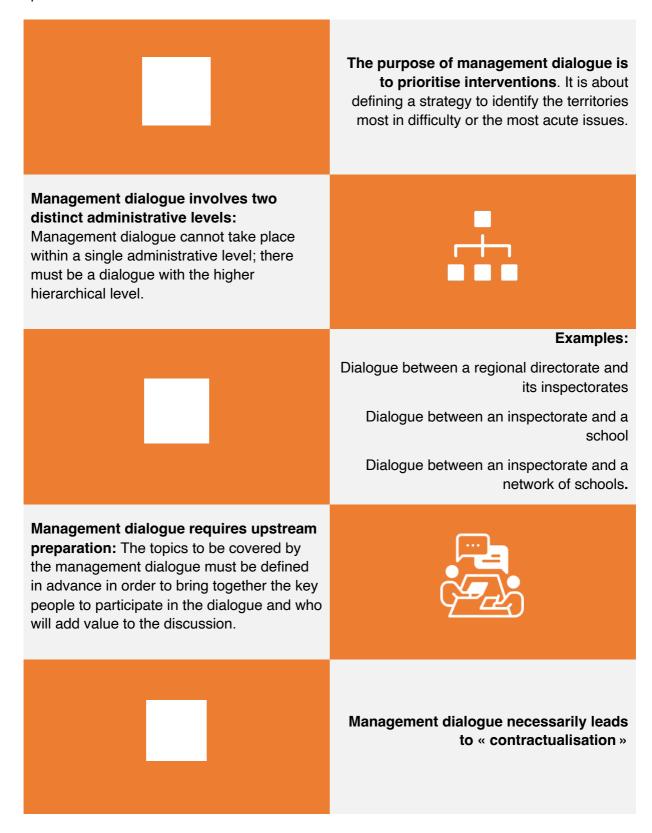
« Most often, communication between the central and devolved levels and down to school level is not fluid. This lack of fluidity means that information is not transmitted on time, let alone to the actors in the field. »

« The conditions for smooth communication from the central level to the classroom are not met: due to the absence of a communication plan, of communication officers or even a communication budget ».



Participants pointed out that the word « dialogue » is confusing. This calls for a point of vigilance which consists of specifying that management dialogue is not the same as experience sharing or an institutional communication process.

Management dialogue differs from other forms of « dialogue » by its **configuration** as specified below:



Theme 5: « Promoting innovations within the education systems »

Presentations

This subject was addressed through two presentations on:



How the central level is in a position to apprehend innovative initiatives coming from the field

Three experiences are presented:

- In Burundi: the focus is on a teaching-learning process that encourages pupils to reflect on their leaning. Although the initiatives presented seem to produce interesting results, it is shown that local supervision grant them little value, particularly because there is no formal space for talking about them, but also because they are not part of the prescribed practices.
- In Cameroon: the experience presented concerns learning through play. The presentation showed that while this approach is recommended for both the Anglophone and Francophone subsystems in Cameroon, the Anglophone subsystem seems to have adopted it more fully.
- In **Togo**, the experience concerns the implementation of **active pedagogy techniques**, aiming at better involvement of pupils by giving meaning to their learning and by enabling them to connect it to social, economic and cultural practices of reference to them.

Beyond the specific interest of each of these experiences, the core issue that emerges is **how the system reacts** when one of these initiatives is liable to contribute to solving a key problem for the system.



Niger's experience in organising group work for pupils

The Nigerien educational context, marked more particularly by the shortfall in teaching resources and the existence of overcrowded multigrade classes, **limits the possibilities for teachers to give due attention to pupils**, **especially those with the greatest difficulties**.

This presentation highlights a solution experimented in two schools linked to the teacher training institutions (ENI) in Niamey and Tahoua, to overcome these difficulties: **group work by the pupils** under the responsibility of a tutor pupil prepared by the teacher.

While this practice is seen as promising, it poses several challenges that require further reflection for its development. One of the greatest challenges is the **capacity of the system to adopt this practice** in order to develop pre-service and in-service engineering to prepare teachers (being trained or in service) to adopt the practice.

Questions raised



How the system reacts to innovations presented by the different actors

Many questions around the innovations presented

Many participants questioned the configuration, or even the added value, of the innovations presented. They pointed out a certain form of devaluation of these innovations by the authorities in charge of local support.

« Supervisors are suspicious of teachers' innovations. Usually, only the Ministry and the educational NGOs are considered to have the authority to experiment with and promote pedagogical innovations »

« Teachers are reluctant to demonstrate their pedagogical or didactic innovations because they are afraid of being reprimanded by supervisors who are focused and crystallised on the standard methodological prescriptions.



"The recognition and appreciation of the efforts made by the actors must become an integral part of the posture of the supervisor "

Participants also pointed out the long-established character of some of the "innovations" (Freinet, Montessori, etc.). These innovations, which do stem from past theoretical models, have never really had a chance to flourish. Moreover, traditional practices are based on a teaching model which in fact dates back to the 18th century, with the teacher teaching in front of pupils who are waiting. Active pedagogy breaks with this model once and for all.

Another set of participants emphasised the need for proof of the effectiveness of these innovations, of their capacity to produce results; in that case, the question can be turned around to ask why the same questioning is not applied to the traditional model, which has proven to be ineffective.

These factors, which touch on the actors' representations highlight the importance of asking oneself why it is so difficult to put aside the traditional frontal teaching model and try finally to succeed in imagining other ways of organising learning with new reference points.

What are the conditions for the development and sustainability of innovations?

Many questions were raised around the development and sustainability of these innovations. Some focused on the pressing need to provide input (materials and training for stakeholders).

« Learning through play is a very effective method. To be successful, teaching materials must be made available. Training would still be needed for teachers to evolve. »

The question of adapting these innovations to specific classroom realities was also raised.

« Learning through play is an effective method that catches the children's attention, but what happens in the case of overcrowded classrooms? If the environment is not conducive? »



The question of the contextualisation of innovative solutions, most often imported, also emerged. Here, once again, it's as though innovation always comes from elsewhere.

« Has this trend, first developed in Europe, been adapted to the methods and cultures of our countries? Do teachers draw inspiration from these methods to adapt them to their daily context and to their students? »

If a practice works in one context, it does not necessarily mean that it will work in a different context, implying a reflection on the conditions required for implementation. This is where the issue of how the system apprehends and appropriates these innovations arises. The hypothesis of the programme is that the conditions for the successful implementation of these innovations must be identified in order to consider their « scaling up".



Niger's experience in organising group work for pupils

The participants' exchanges focused on three main points.

The configuration of the tutored micro-teaching workshops (AMET)

Participants questioned the configuration of the AMETs.

"How are the groups selected? Why the choice of second graders (CE1)? How does this fit in with existing curricula? (CI) Are pupils exclusively in the work groups, or do they return to the classical model on occasion?

What is the teacher's activity during group work? How will the teacher know if pupils

What is the teacher's activity during group work? How will the teacher know if pupils are having difficulties in order to organise appropriate remediation? »

Answers were given by a contributor from an ENI who led the AMET experiment in Niger.

« Second grade (CE1) is a transitional class; we thought that some pupils might fail in grade 1 (CP), and that we could therefore make them catch up in grade 2 (CE1).



The exercises come from texts taken from the students' textbook.

Regarding the choice of groups: they are heterogeneous, since these practices are designed to be implemented in various class profiles, including multigrade classes

The activities take place outside of teaching-learning time at first, but the challenge is to integrate this practice into the teaching-learning process. »

The type of skills worked on by the pupils

Participants also questioned the type of skills the AMETs can develop in pupils.

« One concern: in the ENI speaker's account, it appears that the class is subdivided into groups and each group works on a precise type of exercise, focusing on a

specific skill. Is there not a risk of a scattered distribution of skills, since each group works exclusively on one skill? Or is there a plenary correction session? »

Here, it should be recalled that although each activity focuses on specific exercises, transversal reading-writing skills are practised in each exercise. Moreover, each small workshop rotates after 12 minutes so that in one hour to one hour and a half, all pupils have a chance to do all the exercises.

Scaling up

The question of scaling up after the experiment was raised. Will this involve a revision of the curriculum?

« Pedagogical innovations do not necessarily imply the revision of educational curricula. Pedagogical innovation should lead to reflect on the methods and strategies of curriculum implementation. Pedagogical innovation involves revising teachers' behaviour in the classroom and managing the content to be taught. Curricula can remain as they are and methods and strategies for implementation be reviewed. »

Or rather involve the universities?

« Innovations whatever their nature, pedagogical, administrative or management, and whatever their level (local, regional or central) are still "raw materials" that will have to be tested before envisaging their replication. In this respect, the country's researchers must work on them in collaboration with the ministry's designated resource persons. The efforts and steps taken within the framework of this quality management could lead to this if the country demonstrates its motivation and genuine interest in this direction. »

At this point, none of the experiments supported by the Programme are at generalization stage. Such a challenge has however been anticipated, which is why particular attention is paid to the conditions for success of the experiments to avoid the results produced on a small scale being considered as recipes that can be replicated without taking the context into account.

4. Group work

Proposed topics

On the first three days of the workshop, the afternoons were devoted to group work in the countries. Four topics were submitted to the participants for reflection:



Reflection on the state of the education system in relation to persistent issues as presented

The specificity of the group work on the first day depended on the progress of the countries in the programme. Thus, the most advanced countries (Burundi, Madagascar, Niger, Senegal and Togo), i.e. group A, were asked to reflect on the relevance of putting university research in education at the service of the persisting issues in their education system and they had to identify the contributions, the scope but also the limits of same.

Based on a presentation of the persisting issues, the other countries had to determine how these applied to their own context and illustrate the most eloquent issues with examples deemed relevant/interesting.



Reflection on the development of a training module on education quality management

On the second day, participants were asked to reflect on the feasibility of developing a training module on the management of education quality. The country teams were expected to give their opinion on the structure of the training, identify possible failings and determine in which institutional framework it could be implemented.



Reflection on the transformation of work relationships in the education systems and the development of the reflective practitioner

On the last day, participants were invited to reflect on and exchange around two themes: reflexivity and the transformation of work relationships. Two different activities punctuated the group work: an introduction to the concept of « reflective practitioner », questions designed to stimulate debate among participants, and a role play designed to put oneself in the shoes of a close collaborator in order to reflect on work representations and professional relationships.

Summary of the work

The exchanges during the workshop shed light on the programme's methodology, particularly on issues of substance and form that can be identified for each of the themes addressed during the seminar.

The variety of group work enabled discussion on the proposals and the proposed themes.

All the countries in Group A valued the link between educational research and persistent problems, thanks to the benefits that education systems derive from combining research and the implementation of public policies.

Some believe that this will help to reframe the training system by adapting it to the problems in the field and by enhancing the value of teaching practices.

Some points of vigilance have emerged:

- The need to facilitate access to an understanding of the objectives and motivations of this new option by education system actors.
- The absence in some countries, such as Burundi, of a training institution for inspectors, which makes this action impossible. The challenge for this country is therefore to « set up an institution responsible for training inspectors, since they are in the best position to observe the persisting issues identified in the education systems. »

The exercise put forward to Group B countries proved very interesting insofar as the countries documented the existing situation but also the challenges related to each of the themes. We therefore have a very general overview of what is being done around the five persisting issues in each of the participating countries.

In addition, the exercise of developing hypotheses to justify the relevance of each of the issues led the teams to reflect on their practices, to question them and to identify the prerequisites for success, which already places them in an interesting reflexivity.

During the group work on the second day, the training on quality management proposed by IIEP was considered promising and participants reiterated that quality management concerns all actors. The different participating countries highlighted the need to adapt the modules to each level of subsidiarity and responsibility and to consider expanding the modules to take into account current challenges. Examples: Digitalisation of education, inclusive education, management of school time by teachers, crisis and pandemic management.

Finally, it seems that the work on the last day was less well understood, even if the proposed exercise gave rise to ample debate among the country teams³.

It is interesting to note that the exercise brought to light many divergences in the teams' responses, which constitutes an interesting basis for putting into perspective the representations of each of the actors. Relevant debates were held on the expectations of one

³ It could be relevant for future workshops to accompany the moderators at the beginning of the workshop to make clear the instructions and ensure their common understanding.

another, which could lead to a questioning of the professional attitudes of the officials and in the long run, if followed by effect, a real transformation of practices.

On the other hand, the choice of participants and the large diversity of professional functions represented did not enable, in some countries, to reflect on the reality of professional relationships in the field.

5. Lessons learnt

The organisation of this second regional sharing workshop was a highlight for the Programme and a true challenge in terms of experience sharing and facilitation of the community of practice of the actors involved in the process. What lessons can be drawn for the future of the programme?

→ The added value of the programme is recognised by the actors, and its methodology must be widely disseminated

The programme's approach is very much appreciated by the actors where the diagnosis has been carried out. These stakeholders feel truly a part of the reflection being conducted. They indicate that opportunities such as the workshop, where officials from different levels of the system are brought together to discuss the problems they face, are practically non-existent in the systems and should be encouraged.

In several countries, the workshop was seen to generate a reflection on practices that continued beyond the actual time of the workshop. The topics addressed correspond to the realities, but above all to the needs of the participants.

It is therefore necessary to work within the education systems of the participating countries to make the Programme and its methodology better known, so as to encourage a broad adhesion to the Programme, going beyond those actors involved in the Programme's work. Good communication will ensure a good understanding of the Programme, which is essential for actors to subscribe to working on posture change.

→ The central objective of the programme is not fully understood

A point of vigilance has emerged regarding the core objective of the Programme, which is to strengthen the capacity of actors to analyse their practices themselves, identify the obstacles they face and find strategies to overcome them.

The discussions around the workshop presentations seem to demonstrate that participants tend to be waiting for solutions, rather than being ready and able to find these solutions themselves. This is clear from the focus by country participants on the <u>subject</u> presented (AMET, GEAPP), rather than on <u>how</u> the system should take ownership of these initiatives and what the conditions are for successful implementation.

While the programme proves relevant to the actors, it is therefore necessary to improve the communication on its core objective, so that all its facets can be understood correctly⁴. The Programme does not aim to identify solutions for the actors, but indeed to support them in

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⁴ The Programme has started working on this since the beginning of 2022 in order to define and implement a strategy of communication and dissemination of results.

strengthening their management capacities in the face of any situation, and in developing appropriate solutions for the issues they consider as priorities.

The experiments presented and supported by the Programme must therefore be understood as examples of solutions developed by the actors to address an issue they are faced with, but the challenge lies in strengthening their capacity to diagnose and propose solutions in the long term, in the face of issues that are meant to evolve.

→ Experience sharing is highly appreciated and encourages the facilitation of a community of practice

The analysis of the discussions during the workshop and during the « on-the-spot » evaluation conducted on the last day highlights the importance for the participants to have an opportunity to exchange and present their actions. The workshop is seen as a good opportunity to reflect on practices and issues and to share successful experiences. But it is also an interesting space to reflect on what doesn't work so well, and so, in a way, to put the actors at ease.

A hybrid format was chosen for this workshop which:

- Brought together participants from several countries online;
- Also brought together participants from each country in a residential mode;
- Offered recorded video presentations and live discussions;
- Offered face-to-face group work per country.

The interaction between a large number of actors, made possible by this format, appears to be a very positive point that should be developed further with a view to improvement (full advantage could be gained from group work in the countries with better support).

On a parallel, sharing spaces were also created between workshop participants in some countries (Cameroon, Madagascar and Niger): WhatsApp groups were created for sharing, and apparently this practice continued beyond the workshop. These aspects should be taken into account when thinking about how to enhance the forums for sharing information among actors.

In general, countries expressed a desire to learn more from each other's experience. Work needs to be done to explore what form this community of practice could take in order to meet the needs expressed.

6. To go further

- Quality Management Support Programme web page: https://at.iiep.unesco.org/programme-qualite
- Web page for the February 2022 workshop, including the workshop's daily Digest: https://dakar.iiep.unesco.org/programmes/atelier-regional-2022-les-principaux-leviers-pour-un-pilotage-efficace-de-la-qualite
- Video resources presented in the workshop:

Resource reference	Туре	Date used	Title and URL	Duration
Clip no. 0	Video	Introduction to the	URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tCo_BBFI_S0 Animated presentation of the programme	3'09
		workshop	URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kAUt6sc0TRs&t=11s	2'04
Clip no. 1	Video	Monday 21 February 2022	The main strengths and weaknesses of the management of education quality in the countries that have conducted the diagnosis URL: https://youtu.be/fwBWXRqtU9w	25'06
Clip no. 2	Video	Monday 21 February 2022	Priority issues common to all countries and the approach envisaged to address them URL: https://youtu.be/QfFMhl0DzQg	15'46
Clip no. 3	Video	Monday 21 February 2022	How were the national research teams conducting the diagnosis trained and how did they work? URL a: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rEUba LOuZE URL b: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fg26ilgyn8w	14'41 et 14'01
Clip no. 4	Video	Monday 21 February 2022	Project of synergy between the training of future education executives and work envisaged with the support of teachers/researchers and IIEP (video included in the presentation Capsule no.16ba) URL: https://youtu.be/1WYi4f0DNoo	10'12
Clip no. 5	Video	Tuesday 22 February 2022	What are the issues related to the use of evaluation data? URL: https://youtu.be/erZHzqVpweA	15'57
Clip no. 6	Video	Tuesday 22 February 2022	The experience of Niger in the experimentation of the Communal learning achievement days (CLAD) URL: https://youtu.be/RfCe9vck4c0	23'10
Clip no. 7	Video	Wednesday 23 February 2022	What are the issues related to pedagogical support practices and mechanisms? URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AAg8q5HtRME	26'36
Clip no. 8	Video	Wednesday 23 February 2022	The experience of Senegal in the experimentation of the Professional Practice Analysis Training Groups (PPATG) URL: https://youtu.be/u8j7ucyGoRk	21'42
Clip no. 9	Video	Wednesday 23 February 2022	The reflective practitioner URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrqwUCtXc54	10'28
Clip no.10	Video	Thursday 24 February 2022	What are the issues related to dialogue and consultation between the central level and the devolved level? URL: https://youtu.be/cXU5Bv7iis0	26'18

Clip	Video	Thursday 24	Management dialogue perspectives in Senegal following	
no.11		February	the ADEM Dakar programme	13'34
		2022	URL: https://youtu.be/avTnPV5glgc	
Clip	Video	Friday 25	The case of Burundi with the development of pupil	
no.12		February	metacognition centred on transversal skills related to an	12'32
		2022	aptitude for memorisation	12 32
			URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPTLnwAZuSg	
Clip	Video	Friday 25	The case of Cameroon with the development of a learning	
no.13		February	through play approach to access to knowledge	11'56
		2022	URL: https://youtu.be/Rb8rkWzYIC4	
Clip	Video	Friday 25	The case of Togo with the development of active	
no.14		February	pedagogy techniques	12'03
		2022	URL: https://youtu.be/tB5V4MF3gK8	
Clip	Video	Friday 25	The experience of Niger in organising group work for	
no.15		February	pupils	21'56
		2022	URL: https://youtu.be/IKm0jH4kZlw	

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