


Webinar #1 An analysis of educational quality management practices: approach and findings

 **June 20th, 2023**
2:00 pm - 3:30 pm GMT



Background and rationale

Addressing the learning crisis through an analysis of actors' roles

Since the adoption of the World Declaration on Education for All in Jomtien in 1990 and its renewal in Dakar in 2000 and in Incheon in 2015, governments and international organizations around the world have collectively committed to ensuring universal and quality basic education for all children, youths, and adults.

To attain this goal, sub-Saharan African governments adopted education sector plans and sometimes initiated many bold reforms of their education systems such as the revision of the curriculum, the extension of basic education to nine years or the reform of the teaching career.

Countries have also made significant investments in education by committing to provide free basic education or to devote at least 4–6% of their GDP and/or at least 15–20% of their public expenditure to the education sector, even though some have very limited resources.

Despite all these efforts – in an era when the world is pursuing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the new global education agenda for 2030 – the **quality of learning** is still not up to par. While most children now have access to school, what they learn falls short of expectations. This has elicited talk of a 'global learning crisis' and 'learning poverty'. The emergency is reflected in worrying learning outcomes, with 70% of 10-year-old children unable to understand a simple written text. The PASEC confirms this trend. It reports that nearly 60% of students on the African continent lack basic reading and numeracy skills after six years of primary schooling.¹ **The quality of education, therefore, remains a major challenge for education systems.**

The stark contrast between policies and strategies that – on paper – appear relevant and coherent in addressing identified challenges and the persistence of poor learning outcomes leads to one posing the following questions to **understand what has not worked**:

- > *Have the analyses of education systems carried out so far helped to identify the challenges faced by education systems?*
- > *What has not worked in past decisions, and what can be done differently, without repeating mistakes, to better support countries to improve the quality of their education systems?*

These questions led to the creation of the **Education Quality Management Programme**, implemented in 2018 by IIEP-UNESCO Dakar with the support of the French Development Agency (AFD) and deployed in eight sub-Saharan African countries: Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Niger, Senegal, and Togo.

The objective of this programme is to address the learning crisis from the perspective of the **role of actors**, relying on the hypothesis that it is possible to identify promising practices in their daily work and at all levels of the education system to achieve quality education for all.

This hypothesis led the teams to question what the actors in the education system are doing in their workplaces to improve the quality of education. It also sought to identify the challenges they encounter in their work routines that prevent them from achieving their goals. Therefore, the research question is as

¹ The World Development Report 2018: 'Learning to Realize the Promise of Education' (or WDR 2018)) warned of a global crisis in learning. Four years later, the World Bank warned about 'Learning Poverty: in Low- and middle-income countries 70% of 10-year-olds

are unable to read and understand simple text', World Bank, June 2022, in <https://www.banque mondiale.org/fr/news/press-release/2022/06/23/70-of-10-year-olds-now-in-learning-poverty-unable-to-read-and-understand-a-simple-text>

follows: **‘How do actors in education systems manage education quality in basic education?’**

The programme defines quality education as one that ensures that all citizens have access to school at the appropriate age, promotes smooth educational pathways, and guarantees the acquisition of relevant knowledge for all students while ensuring their health and well-being. This definition takes into account

equity requirements and encompasses most of the concerns of the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG4).

Education quality management is defined as ‘a chain of coordinated actions between several levels of an education system aimed at producing information and decisions to achieve the expected results.

An innovative methodological approach

To analyse the ability of education systems to manage the quality of education, the programme has adopted an innovative methodological approach inspired by **action research**. This approach involves supporting system actors to conduct a participatory diagnosis at all levels of the education system, from the classroom to the central administration, including the intermediate levels, that is, schools, their communities, and various decentralized administrations. This diagnosis used multiple data collection and analysis methods, including an analysis of working documents, immersive observation of practices, questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups.

This comprehensive and inclusive approach – co-developed with stakeholders in the field – offers an opportunity to examine the practices in each given territory in order to identify the obstacles and levers. One of the main innovations is: **talking with the actors in the field and getting them to talk to each other**, each at their level of intervention, allowing for the emergence of a context-specific analysis and potential perspectives that could provide a structural and sustainable response to the issues raised during the diagnosis.

For more information about the programme visit: <https://dakar.iiep.unesco.org/programmes/appui-au-pilotage-de-la-qualite-de-leducation-de-base>

The identification of workstreams: A path to address systemic challenges

The programme analysed **the main strengths and weaknesses of education quality management** in the first five countries that have completed the diagnosis – Burkina Faso, Madagascar, Niger, Senegal, and Togo. The analysis was based on a diagnosis of practices observed among actors at all levels of the system and scrutiny of sectoral policy documents.

The diagnosis also highlighted issues that cut across the entire education system and that various actor face in their daily work. These issues constitute a complex set of difficulties that significantly impact the management of education quality, but the solutions implemented so far have proven unsatisfactory.

What sets the approach advocated by the programme apart is that the diagnosis does not lead to recommendations but instead proposes opening workstreams. A workstream encompasses interconnected issues for which the programme invites education system actors to engage in more in-depth reflections, empowering them to develop context-specific solutions.

This experimental and innovative approach is being implemented in several programme countries, addressing different thematic areas. **It relies on local actors, considers their needs and constraints and seeks to identify new ways of addressing the identified challenges.**

Objectives of the webinar series

The main objective of this series – consisting of four webinars – is to present the achievements and results of the programme to technical and financial partners involved in the education sector. The series aims to discuss the synergies to be considered in the reflection on the sustainability of the programme’s outcomes.

The webinars will cover the following topics:

- The key findings on education quality management practices within the analysed education systems, as well as six priority areas of intervention (workstreams) for improvement.
 - A closer look at three ongoing workstreams, which are:
 - **Workstream 1:** Improving the use of data produced by education systems to improve learning.
 - **Workstream 2:** Developing and promoting innovation in education.
 - **Workstream 3:** Strengthening teacher pedagogical support mechanisms.
- For each workstream, the national actors will present the issues identified, the solutions proposed and piloted, and the first results.
- Discussions with technical and financial partners on the sustainability of the programme achievements while considering the synergies with their current activities.

The **first webinar** will focus on the innovative approach of the programme and will delve into the main findings from the diagnosis of education quality management practices.

The **remaining three webinars**, which form the core of the webinar series, will present the workstreams and the solutions they propose to enhance education quality management. The process in three of these workstreams is quite advanced, and each of them will be the subject of a separate webinar. The following is a detailed discussion about the content of each of these three workstreams:

- ⇒ **Workstream 1: Improving the use of data produced by education systems to improve learning**
Several quantitative and qualitative data about education systems are regularly collected but are not effectively used to enhance learning outcomes.
The second webinar will discuss the reasons for the lack of improvement cited by stakeholders and then present the **Shawara Karatu initiative** (Education Dialogue and Consultation) being piloted in Niger to address this problem. The webinar will also examine the initial changes and questions raised by the initiative, which call for certain transformations within the systems.
- ⇒ **Workstream 2: Development and promotion of innovation in education**
In response to challenges faced in their respective contexts, some stakeholders develop ad-hoc solutions that eventually prove beneficial for the entire education system if these solutions are identified and improved. During the analysis of education quality management practices in Niger, a specific practice involving student group work under the guidance of a trained peer tutor was identified. This practice has the potential to address several difficulties within the education system, such as teacher absenteeism, managing overcrowded and heterogeneous classes, and supporting students with learning difficulties. This practice has been developed and refined by the teacher training schools in Niamey and Tahoua under the name **AMET (Atelier de Micro-Enseignement Tutoré)**.²
The third webinar will explore how this practice was developed and discuss prospects for its integration into the system.
- ⇒ **Workstream 3: Strengthening teacher pedagogical support mechanisms**
All education systems have mechanisms in place for teacher pedagogical support. However, stakeholders at various levels of the education system, from the classroom to central administration, are dissatisfied with how these mechanisms function and their outcomes.
The fourth webinar will examine and explain the reasons for the dysfunctions cited by stakeholders at different levels of the education system. It will also demonstrate how the use of the **Professional**

² Tutored Micro-Learning Workshops

Practice Analysis and Coaching approach – currently being piloted in Senegal – by inspectors and school principals, can strengthen these mechanisms.

Participants

This webinar series is intended for **technical and financial partners involved in education in sub-Saharan African countries**.

Webinars modalities and format

Each webinar will be conducted online in French with simultaneous translation English. The estimated duration of each webinar is 90 minutes, with a combination of presentations and discussions (questions and answers).

The first webinar will take place on **20 June 20, 2023**, from **2:00 PM to 3:30 PM GMT**. The subsequent webinars will be held in September (Workstream 1), October (Workstream 2), and December (Workstream 3) of 2023.

To participate in the webinar series, register on the following link:

<https://surveys.iiep.unesco.org/index.php/726874?lang=fr>

Provisional Programme for Webinar n°1: An analysis of educational quality management practices: Approach and findings

<i>Time (GMT)</i>	<i>Activities</i>
14:00 – 14:10	Opening of Webinar #1 and introductory remarks
14:10 – 14:40	<u>Presentation 1</u> : Programme approach and key findings on quality management practices
14:40 – 15:10	Discussion <u>Presentation 2</u> : Priority areas for intervention (workstreams) - challenges and prospects
15:10 – 15:30	Discussion <u>Presentation 3</u> : Approach to address the workstreams and announcement of upcoming webinars Discussion

Programme of Webinar series

<i>Month</i>	<i>Webinar Title</i>
<i>June 2023</i>	<u>Webinar 1</u> : An analysis of educational quality management practices: Approach and findings
<i>September 2023</i>	<u>Webinar 2</u> : Improving the use of evaluation data: The example of the 'Shawara Karatu (Dialogue and Consultation in Education)' Initiative in Niger
<i>October 2023</i>	<u>Webinar 3</u> : Development and promotion of educational innovation: The example of 'Micro-Teaching Workshop' in Niger
<i>December 2023</i>	<u>Webinar 4</u> : Strengthening pedagogical support mechanisms: The potential of the practices analysis and coaching approach in Senegal