

Key findings of the diagnosis of education quality management practices in Togo

Executive summary



This study has assessed the level of education quality management within the Togolese education system. It was based on its ability to perform 4 functions considered fundamental to good management:

The "Setting objectives and driving action" function, which concerns the ability to define clear objectives and targets, adapted to the local context, and to drive action.

The "Negotiation of action and allocation of resources" function, which consists of enabling dialogue between players with a view to adapting action to the realities on the ground, and allocating the corresponding resources.

The "Supporting and monitoring action" function, which concerns the ability to produce and use reliable information to guide, support and transform the practices of those involved.

The "Capitalization, assessment of the effects of action and regulation" function, which involves documenting action, sharing and disseminating information, and using it to adjust and adapt projects and policies accordingly.

Function 1 - Defining objectives and driving action

A strong ability to define objectives and strategies at national level, but difficulties in translating them into a form that meets the differing needs of the regions

The diagnosis shows that the central administration has a good capacity to define objectives and strategies to improve the quality of basic education. It uses various documents and sectoral diagnoses to guide its actions and assess the quality of education. However, this capacity is not fully shared at other levels of the education system, due to formal approaches and complex tools.

It also emerges that policies to improve the quality of education are mainly driven by injunctive transmission channels and highly standardized intervention methods. Meetings organized by education authorities aim to present the strategy for implementing sectoral policy, but they do not encourage dialogue or the involvement of local teams. Standardized system management, formatted tools (e.g. regional and local planning tools) and a lack of perspective on the use of field observations limit the ability to manage the system effectively.

The Ministry's strategies and policies struggle to take account of the diverse realities on the ground, which weakens their ability to drive contextualized, effective action. For example, initial and in-service training does not take sufficient account of teachers' real needs, and the strategies developed standardize objectives without taking into account the cultural and psycho-social specificities of different territories.

Function 2 - Negotiating action and allocating resources

A lack of strategic dialogue and reflection between system levels on how to operationalize sectoral policy

Sectoral policy coordination fails to effectively motivate the players in the education system to take action. The levers used, such as micro-planning, coordination committees and coordination spaces, suffer from difficulties such as insufficient mobilization of resources and a lack of dynamism. This limits the system's ability to implement coordinated actions adapted to local realities, thus compromising the effectiveness of policies to improve the quality of education.

Recurrent difficulties in financing priority actions give technical and financial partners (TFPs) the opportunity to put forward their own priorities. The education sector is faced with a shortage of financial resources, leading to a situation where up to 80% of activities planned by decentralized services are not ultimately financed. These services are therefore heavily dependent on PTFs for funding, but the latter only finance activities corresponding to their priority areas of intervention. However, in the regions where TFPs are active, significant progress has been made, particularly in meeting the basic needs of the education system (school infrastructure, equipment, teaching materials).

Function 3 - Accompanying and monitoring the action

A lack of support for players limits the actual implementation of planned actions

Although the education system has a variety of monitoring tools at all levels, such as school projects, work plans, performance contracts, etc., analysis of these tools reveals certain difficulties. These tools mainly collect quantitative data that are not analyzed, which hinders interpretation of the effectiveness of activities in the field and limits the ability to regulate sectoral policies. What's more, some tools, such as the school project, are not well understood, particularly by parents, even though they can mobilize the community around common objectives.

The pedagogical support system, for its part, has little capacity to support the transformation of the practices of those involved in the education system, in order to enhance student learning and meet the specific needs of schools and students in difficulty. The policy of pedagogical support does not have sufficient impact on teachers' practices, regardless of their status, and the presence of volunteer teachers does not facilitate this management. However, the recruitment and training of a large number of trainee inspectors and pedagogical advisors at the INSE (Institut National des Sciences de l'Éducation) should enable us to develop a new strategy for involving these managers in the issues of strengthening teachers' skills, provided that training content is adapted to realities on the ground.

Function 4 - Capitalization, assessment of the effects of action and regulation

Inadequate mechanisms in place to draw lessons, adjust policies and scale up successful experiments

In Togo, the management of educational actions at the level of the decentralized administration is mainly based on accounting data monitoring, without any real analysis or interpretation. Although efforts are being made to take account of past experience and regulate educational policies, central administration tends to concentrate information and not share it sufficiently with agents at the devolved level. This limits feedback and the improvement of education quality management. At the decentralized level, staff confine themselves to consolidating assessment data and passing them on to their superiors, without actively using them to improve the way learning is conducted.

There is also a lack of capacity to promote the sharing and reflection of players at all levels on the elements impacting the steering of the education system, and to disseminate this shared reflection to adjust policies and projects. Two factors explain this situation: on the one hand, the institutional environment is not conducive to the development of a culture of consultation and dialogue, with a lack of clarification of the margins of autonomy available to decentralized players to implement sectoral policy in the field. On the other hand, professional practices, particularly managerial practices, are obstacles to the development of dialogue and consultation, with tendencies to hide data for fear of highlighting difficulties and being punished.

Some of the major difficulties identified in terms of quality management in Togo include the failure to apply national objectives at regional level, centralized management that limits the participation of local players, difficulties in coordinating and allocating resources, and insufficient mechanisms for capitalizing on and adjusting policies. These obstacles hamper the effectiveness of policies aimed at improving the quality of education in the country.