



United Nations  
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Cultural Organization

Dakar  
Office

Pôle de Dakar  
EDUCATION SECTOR ANALYSIS

# PôleMAG<sup>20</sup>

The Pôle de Dakar Newsletter - JUNE 2013

## EDITORIAL

### Revamping services to better meet the challenges of education

The paradigms of aid are shifting, and so are intervention methods by development actors. Ongoing consultations to prepare for the post-2015 all concur that lifelong equitable and quality education and learning should be promoted for all. These new challenges will call for new donor commitments. Solid and new partnerships will be essential for achieving goals and results.

In anticipation of these changes, the Pôle de Dakar strived to rethink its mandate and services proposed to African countries. A study on matching the support of the Pôle with challenges faced by partner's countries was launched to this end in late 2012, revealed new needs. While assistance to countries in carrying out their education sector diagnosis always seems to be a priority, other requests have clearly emerged, in areas such as preschool, Technical education and vocational training, higher education, matching training with jobs, support to elaborating an action plan and medium-term expenditure framework.

Based on these lessons, the Pôle de Dakar developed a new range of services, shown on page 2 of this publication. Service diversification is fully in line with the scope of major goals for the post-2015: work toward an overall approach to education, taking into account all sub-sectors, from early childhood to higher education, with a view to matching with the job market.

This new institutional positioning will entail: preparing the future; better meeting the demands of African Governments and providing best quality services.

**Guillaume Husson and Beïfith Kouak Tijab**

Coordinators, Pôle de Dakar

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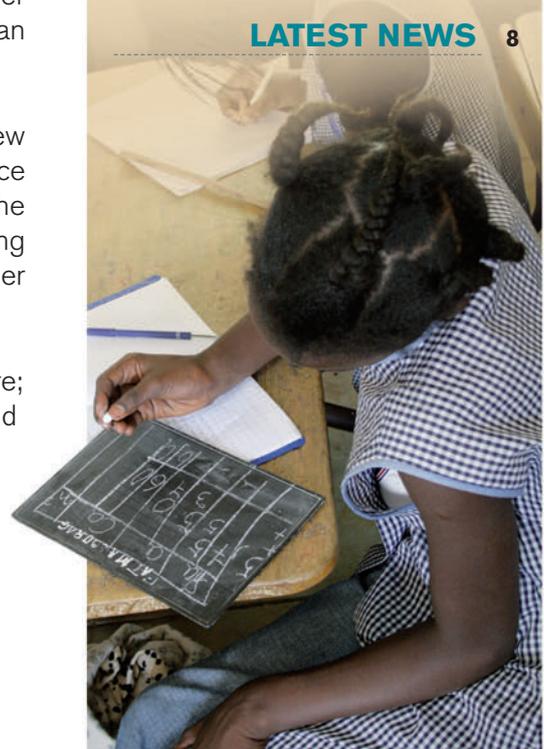
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## Our new range of services for African countries

### • Diagnosis of the education system – Country Status Report

Support for carrying out detailed diagnosis of the education system. Based on a methodological guide revised by UNESCO, the World Bank and UNICEF, this diagnosis reviews the main features of the education system (context, enrolments, efficiency, financing, quality, equity, etc.).

### • Specific diagnosis of sub-sectors

Diagnosis targeted to sub-sectoral issues of the education system (higher education, literacy, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and early childhood development).

### • Diagnosis of teaching issues

Diagnosis targeted at teaching issues: quantitative needs, recruitment, training, career management, deployment, etc.

### • Early childhood development programme

Support for developing national early childhood development programmes revolves around three tools: Sector financial framework; Survey on paren-

ting practices; and Child evaluation on entry into primary school.

### • Education-training-employment outlook

Analysis of status report of relationship between the education system and employment; prospective study on labour market needs and relevance of the institutional mechanism and piloting of education system/labour market matching.

### • Financial framework of education policy

Carrying out macro-financial framework for education policy options being considered, feasibility and sustainability analysis of policy options, estimating financial resources needed.

### • Support for elaborating education policies

education sectoral plan, action plan, and medium-term expenditure framework.

### • Education system management training

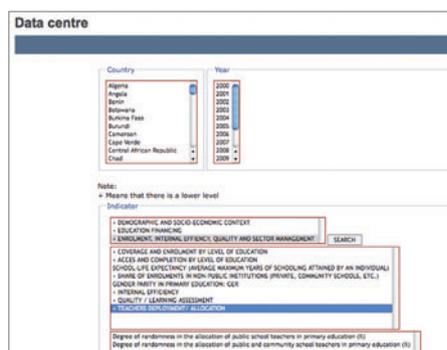
Distance learning for African senior officers responsible for management, financing and evaluation of education systems; 600 hours of training over 15 months.

### • On-demand short courses and training

The ultimate goal of the services proposed by the Pole de Dakar is to help decision makers to outline the best education policy options available. The services offered by the Pôle de Dakar are organised as part of an overall approach to national capacity building. ■



## A new indicators database now available online at Poledakar.org



The Pôle de Dakar has made its indicators database on education systems in Africa available online. The database, which can be accessed at [www.poledakar.org](http://www.poledakar.org), provides the main indicators of the education systems of 54 African countries, allowing for comparison over time and among countries.

Indicators are presented in three major themes: (i) general context of the education system (macroeconomic and demographic); (ii) financing of education and (iii) enrolments, internal efficiency, quality and sector management.

With close to 100 indicators, the database provides an overview of the status of education systems in African countries. The database can be searched by country and by year and the data exported into excel. ■

## Training in Sector Policy and Education System Management (PSGSE) is becoming useful for Senegal's Ministry of Education

Barely six months after the launch of the sixth training course in Sectoral Analysis and Management of the Education (PSGSE)<sup>1</sup>, the course seems to be bearing fruit in Senegal. Indeed, out of the 42 students enrolled, 15 were Senegalese of whom seven officers from the Education Planning and Reform Directorate (DPRE) of the Ministry of Education. Apart from being physically mobilized, officers from the Ministry are greatly involved in the programme. This opens the way for true ownership of the training course.

### Tools learnt during the training are tied to actual needs

The involvement of training beneficiaries is especially visible within the DPRE monitoring-evaluation division. The division is run by Oumar Babacar Diarra, and reports to the Ministry of Education. This means that it is responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the results obtained from education policy by producing an annual performance report. Up until last year, three different reports had been produced, making the exercise complex and resource intensive. The technical partners called for the entire exercise to be simplified and harmonized. "The training course on PSGSE has reached the ideal stage to enable us to review our monitoring and evaluation instruments", said Mr. Diarra. Under his leadership, some tools learnt in the course are currently being used in the new format of the annual report. Enrolment profile, retention profile or internal efficiency coefficient, the 2013 annual performance report already has a series of indicators directly stemming from the training. "While we partly have many theoretical aspects of sectoral analysis, the training programme helps us to acquire concrete tools; that is how it adds true value", he continued.



Head of monitoring and evaluation division, Education planning and reform directorate, Ministry of Education of Senegal. Sixth training course on PSGE.  
© Jonathan Jourde

### There is true willingness for national ownership

From next year, other training courses could be used to draw up the criteria for allocating public education resources more equitably. That notwithstanding, the officers of the ministry are realistic and do not believe that the shortest path to progress was reforming practices hurriedly. "We are trying not to be overly ambitious", said Mr. Diarra. "We must also take the time to share new tools with colleagues who are not undergoing training". Transfer of knowledge from the training is part of a long-term policy.

***"The training programme enables us to acquire concrete tools, that is how it adds true value."***

According to Mr. Diarra, another benefit from the training is better management of external service providers in sectoral analysis. "PSGSE has become a yardstick. This is another positive aspect of

the training, as well as a fundamental dimension", he added. By transmitting quality norms and standards, the training provides the tools to officers to better define the work they have commissioned, monitor and facilitate the work of consultants.

The initial assessment of the training experience for officers of Senegal's Ministry of Education is a positive one. It shows that capacity building is possible and the paths to progress can be multiple when they are driven by genuine national commitment. ■

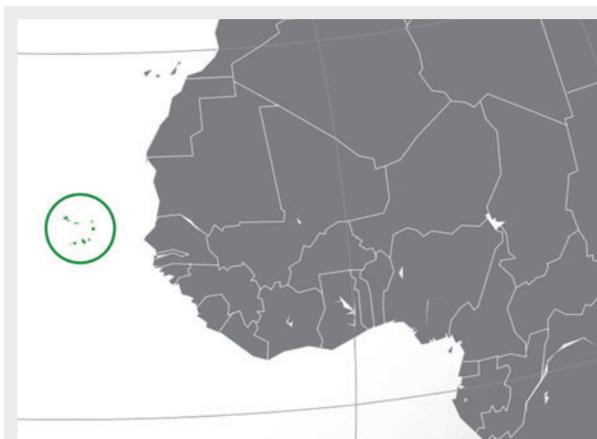
<sup>1</sup> PSGSE is the training course in Sector Policy and Education System Management jointly organized by the Pôle de Dakar and the Faculty for Education and Training Science and Technology (FASTEF) of Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar. The course, mainly provided through distance learning classes, is tailored for gainfully employed Francophone Africans. The sixth training course started in December 2012 and should be completed in April 2014.

## Cape Verde moves towards **universal coverage of pre-school education** by 2016



© Ministry of Education and Sports of Cape Verde

**In early April 2013, the second national early childhood development forum was held in Cape Verde. The forum, which brought together 90 of the major early childhood education stakeholders, was an occasion to discuss the great strides made by the country over the past 10 years.**



*Situated off the coast of Senegal, Cape Verde has about 512,000 inhabitants, nearly 35 percent of whom are below the age of 17 and 60,000 children under 6 years. Its capital is Praia. The country is made up of nine inhabited islands stretching over an area of 4033 Km<sup>2</sup>. The official language of Cape Verde is Portuguese.*

Developing an early childhood government policy is a relatively recent issue in education. It was in the early 2000s that a series of studies, published by the World Bank, showed that the years from birth to six years are a crucial period for the physical, motor, socio-emotional and language development of the child. These studies have shown that proper care of children from an early age could lead to positive external factors for the individual and society as a whole. These benefits were highlighted by James J. Heckman, Nobel prize laureate in economics, who said in 2000 that investing in disadvantaged children was among the "rare public policy initiatives that promote fairness and social justice and, at the same time, promote productivity in the economy and society at large". By reducing economic and social disparities, while improving education efficiency, an early childhood development programme is today considered as one of the most relevant investments in education policy.

### **One of the most dynamic countries in the area of early childhood**

Cape Verde was one of the first African countries to take up this initiative. Development of its national early childhood development strategy started in 2001. While a few difficulties cropped up due to the complex nature of this multi-sectoral and integrated strategy, major strides have been made. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Education and Sports and with local support from UNICEF, concrete early

childhood policy framework and programming tools have been developed.

To determine the overall architecture of early childhood activities, a financial framework of the programme was carried out in mid-2012. The framework opened up discussion on various options for the programme, in light of the financing available. Secondly, child evaluation on entry into primary school was carried out in late 2012, to highlight factors influencing the level of competence and identify appropriate improvements (see box). Lastly, a survey on parenting practices is under way. The first findings should be available in December. They should be used to identify the margins of progress existing upstream of preschool education.

Joint implementation of these three components and the detailed work carried out by the Ministry of Education and Sports greatly bolstered the development of an early childhood policy. With 86 per cent of children currently benefiting from pre-school education, Cape Verde has a coverage rate well over that of most countries in the subregion. In terms of quantity, there is a window of opportunity to raise coverage to 100 per cent. In terms of quality though, more effort is needed. To date, there are no arrangements to guarantee the quality and homogeneity of services provided. It is considered that 55 per cent of people who locally supervise the children lack the minimum skills required for the job. Also, at the local level, service providers are compelled to make do with what they have. All the municipalities or associations are not in a position to mobilize the resources needed.

#### **A national early childhood development programme expected by 2014**

There are still a few issues to be defined before developing an overall early childhood development policy. Following the national forum, the Minister of Education and Sports organized a donors' round table involving eight ministers. All stakeholders declared their commitment and it was decided that an inter-ministerial working group should be set up by mid-2013. The working group will be responsible for making proposals to help improve the quality of services by: setting standards for age of entry and duration in pre-school; revising curricula; defining responsibilities and coordination between the central level and local level; providing financial support from the central level; and strengthening the supervision and monitoring system.

Without any prejudice to the proposals made by the inter-ministerial working group or the final direction to be taken by

#### **Child evaluation on entry into primary school in Cape Verde**

Child evaluation on entry into primary school (2012 school year), which was presented at the second national early childhood development forum in April 2013, brought some major facts to light. These include:

- › 14 per cent of children aged 4 to 5 years do not have access to pre-school. Children from less privileged families are the most at risk of not obtaining pre-school education. However, widest disparities are observed among the islands, with non-preschool proportions varying from 0 per cent to 28 per cent.
- › The level of skills on entry into primary is 14 points higher among children who have gone through pre-school;
- › The high ratio between duration of preschool and scores obtained by children stagnates from the third year. There is thus no justification in prolonging preschool beyond two years;
- › There are only a few differences in the performances among private, public or community schools;
- › Some lapses do persist in the cognitive area for children who have been to preschool. However, children who have not been to preschool have shortcomings in nearly all areas.

Child evaluation on entry into primary was finalized in March 2013. Coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Sports, the work first received support from UNICEF in Cape Verde and technical support from the Pôle de Dakar and the UNICEF regional office for West and Central Africa.

the Government, some elements seem to be emerging. First and foremost, pre-schooling is a must for all children in the country. This, in fact, is a commitment made by the authorities, whose goal is to achieve universal pre-school coverage by 2016. Also, the most suitable standard duration should be two years, as the results of children who spent up to three years in pre-school are the same as those who spent two years. Lastly, there is willingness to use already existing structures so as not to introduce radical changes.

With the commitment shown by the stakeholders in Cape Verde and the work already accomplished, there is a great chance that an early childhood development programme will be finalized by 2014. ■

## Joint interview

### Meeting with early childhood stakeholders in Cape Verde

**The second national early childhood development forum was held from 8 to 12 April in Praia. What were the observations noted and what were the short-term commitments made?**

**Maria Teresa Araujo :**

The first observation is that of relative satisfaction. Many advances were made in the last decade, and while we have not achieved all we want, a national early childhood development programme is beginning to take shape. We now have targets such as universal pre-school coverage by 2016.

**Jairson Daniel Pereira Qores :**

Nevertheless, concerns have been raised about the lack of clarity in the role of people involved in managing the service; lack of standards in terms of age of entry and duration; and staff training and supervision. To meet these challenges, which require the involvement of all actors, an inter-ministerial working group was set up and should start work by the middle of the year.

**What are the objectives of this inter-ministerial group?**

**Domingas Rita Fernandes :**

The main objective of the inter-ministerial group will be to make proposals for overcoming any remaining challenges, especially in terms of sharing responsibilities and results that each actor must achieve. To this end, proposals should be made to strengthen the system of supervision.

**Nelilda Rodriguez :**

The issue of quality is also a key one. The working group should probably work toward developing minimum quality standards for pre-school education and activities upstream, through parental education. The group's mandate will not be closed, and it should be free to open up the scope of proposals.

**Jairson Daniel Pereira Qores :**

Overall, the major advantage of the inter-ministerial group will be to enable us to advance more quickly and inject new impetus into the system, to bring about synergy between the ministries and early childhood development stakeholders.

**Has a timetable been set for adopting an early childhood development programme?**

**Maria Teresa Araujo :**

We hope to adopt an early childhood development programme in 2014. However, it is preferable not to set an unreasonable timeframe. We are advancing gradually. The inter-ministerial group should start its work in a few weeks and the initial findings of the study on parenting practices should be available in late 2013. We are confident about the future. This issue has strong political commitment and the groundwork has been done for developing a national early childhood development programme. The Minister for Education and Sports has the approval and commitment of his counterparts. When our Minister for internal administration responsible for security tells him that "I prefer to invest in prevention rather than put the police out in the streets", we cannot but be optimistic about early childhood development. ■



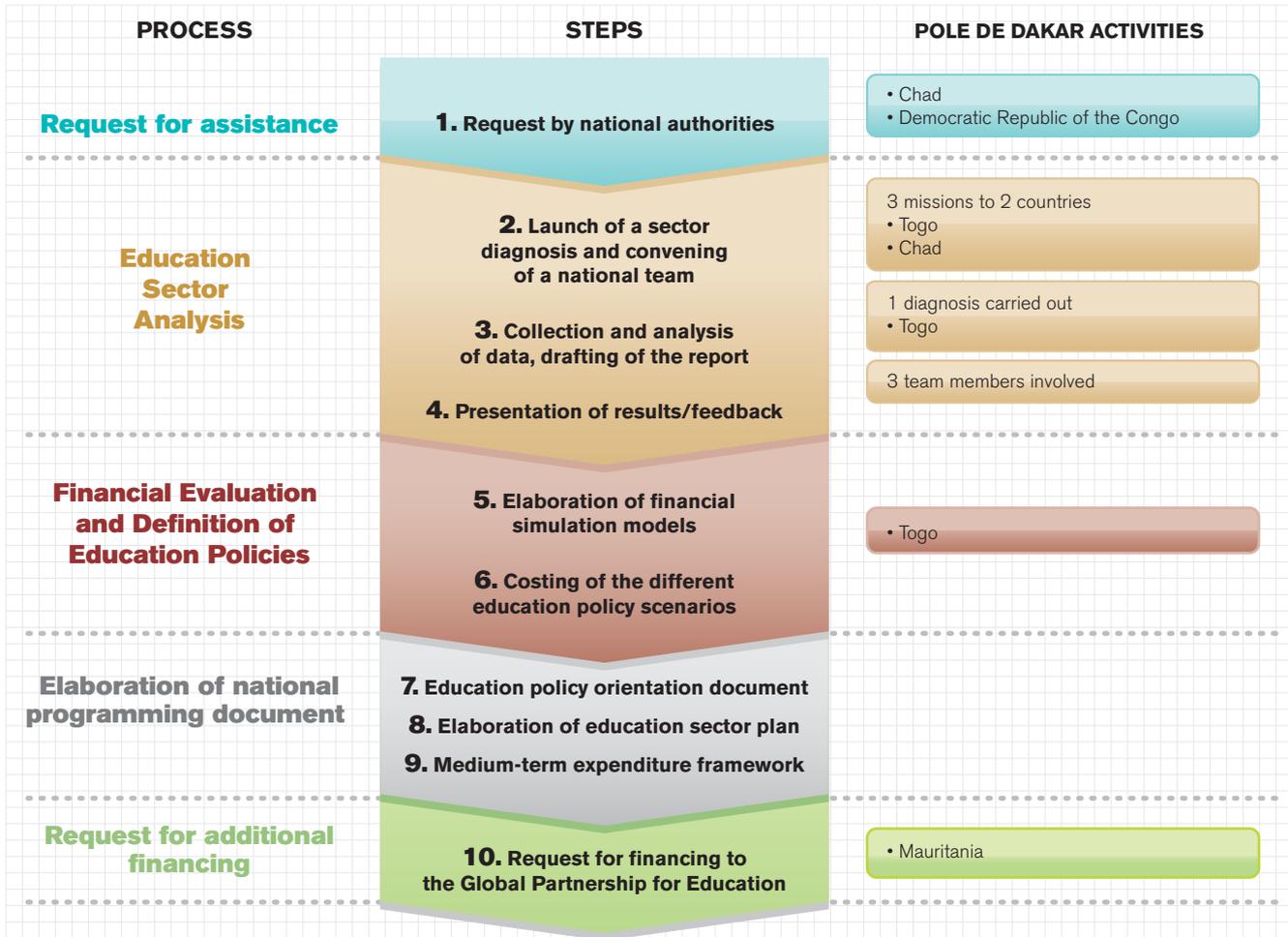
From left to right: Jairson Daniel Pereira Qores (Cape Verde institute for children and adolescents, Nelilda Rodriguez (UNICEF Office Cape Verde), Domingas Rita Fernandes and Maria Teresa Araujo (Cape Verde Ministry of Education and Sports); Dakar, May 2013. © Pôle de Dakar

WORK AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL

From December 2012 to May 2013

Country Status Report (CSR)

The work of the Pôle de Dakar is to provide direct assistance to African countries in education sectoral analysis, financial framework and designing their education policies. Assistance provided by the Pole and activities carried out by the team since December 2012 are outlined below:



Other activities of the Pôle de Dakar:

Teacher Training Initiative in Sub-Saharan Africa (TTISSA)

2 support missions to Uganda (February 2013), finalizing analysis; April 2013; presentation of results to Ministry of Education).

Early childhood development

2 support missions to Cape Verde (December 2012, Child evaluation on entry to primary school, April 2013; Second national early childhood forum and inter-ministerial round table).

Technical Education and Vocational Training

1 support mission to Chad (April 2013, support to UNESCO office in Yaounde for TVET policy review in Chad).

Seminars and workshops

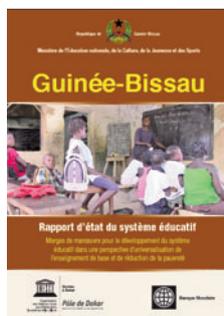
Technical workshop on national education accounts, Brookings Institution (January 2013, Washington).

Workshops on monitoring implementation of education strategies (February 2013, Burkina Faso; April 2013, South Africa).

Intervention at the training workshop on sectoral analysis and planning for education development, Centre international d'études pédagogiques (April 2013, France).

## New publications

Available online [www.poledakar.org](http://www.poledakar.org)



### Country status report of the education system in Guinea Bissau

Options for development of the education system, with prospects to achieve universal basic education and reduce poverty, Republic of Guinea Bissau, Pôle de Dakar, UNESCO, World Bank, April 2013. (French only)



### Country status report of the education system in Sao Tome and Principe

Sectoral analysis for improving efficiency of the system, Republic of Sao Tome and Principe, Pôle de Dakar, UNESCO and World Bank, June 2013. (French only)

### 2 new country notes:

Benin, system management needs improvement, February 2013.

In Sierra Leone, despite strides made, the education system remains fragile, June 2013.

## Pôle de Dakar team

### Departures



**Blandine Ledoux**, after seven years at the Pôle de Dakar, left her position as education policy analyst. She joined the secretariat of the Global Partnership for Education based in Washington as senior education specialist. There, she will meet Paul Coustère, former coordinator of the Pôle de Dakar, who is a senior education specialist and Jean-Marc Bernard, former country support officer and senior education specialist.

Ms. Ledoux will be replaced by Beïfith Kouak Tiyab as co-interim coordination officer with Guillaume Husson.

### AGENDA

9 and 10 July 2013:

High-level meeting in Kampala on Education for All in Southern and East Africa.

### Training course in Sector Policy and Education System Management (PSGSE) and Sectoral Analysis and Management of the Education System (SAMES)

24 to 28 June 2013:

PSGSE – group 2 of sixth training course

10 to 18 October 2013

PSGSE – group 1 of seventh training course

28 October to 1 November 2013

SAMES – group 2 of second training course

2 to 3 December 2013

PSGSE – group 3 of sixth training course

## Pôle de Dakar

EDUCATION SECTOR ANALYSIS

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