



Digest - Day: 5 Friday 25 February 2022

Presentation 1: How is the central level able to grasp innovative initiatives coming from the field?



Link to YouTube video:

<https://youtu.be/MPTLnwAZuSg>

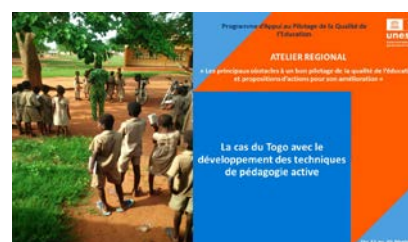
[Link to the narrative PDF](#)



Link to YouTube video:

<https://youtu.be/Rb8rkWzYIC4>

[Link to the narrative PDF](#)



Link to YouTube video:

<https://youtu.be/tB5V4MF3gK8>

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The presentation focuses on the promotion of innovations within education systems, and aims to reflect on two axes: innovations and their management by the system.

Three experiments are presented:

- In **Burundi**, the focus is on a teaching-learning process that encourages pupils to **reflect on** their learning. Although the initiatives presented seem to have interesting results, it is shown that they have difficulty in being valued by the local management, particularly because there is no formal space for them, but also because they are not part of the prescribed practices.
- In **Cameroon**: the experience presented concerned **learning through play**. The presentation showed that while this approach is advocated for both the Anglophone and Francophone education sub-systems in Cameroon, the Anglophone sub-system seems to have appropriated it more.
- In **Togo**, the experiment concerns the implementation of **active pedagogy techniques (TPA)**, aimed at involving pupils more in their learning by giving it meaning and by enabling them to make the link with social, economic and cultural practices that are a reference for them.

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

Presentation:2 Niger's experience of organising pupils' group work



Link to YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/IKm0jH4kZlw>

[Link to the narrative PDF](#)

The Nigerien educational context, marked in particular by the inadequacy of teaching resources and the existence of overcrowded and multigrade classes, **limits the possibilities for teachers to pay attention to pupils, particularly those with the greatest difficulties.**

This presentation highlights a solution experimented in two schools annexed to the ENI in Niamey and Tahoua, to overcome these difficulties: **group work of students** under the responsibility of a student tutor prepared by the teacher.

While this practice is seen as promising, it poses a number of challenges that require further reflection on its development. One of the most important challenges is the **capacity of the system to seize upon this practice** to develop pre-service and in-service engineering that enables teachers (both pre-service and in-service) to be prepared to adopt this practice.

APPENDIX: Questions/answers following the presentations on day 5

This document summarises the main questions raised by the discussions at the end of the presentations, as well as the answers provided.

Questions related to the first presentation

Theme 1: Increased questioning of the innovations presented

Many interventions questioned the configuration, or even the added value, of the innovations presented. In particular, the interventions pointed to a certain form of devaluation of these innovations by the authorities in charge of local support.

"Supervisors are suspicious of teachers' innovations. Usually, it is considered that only the ministry and education NGOs are entitled to experiment and promote pedagogical innovations (Burkina Faso).

"Teachers are reluctant to display their pedagogical or didactic innovations, because they are afraid of being reprimanded by supervisors who are riveted and crystallised on the usual methodological prescriptions. (Burkina Faso)

The recognition and valorisation of the efforts made by the actors should be integrated into the posture of the supervisor (Niger)

The interventions also pointed out the old character of certain "innovations" (Freinet, Montessori, etc.). These innovations, which certainly come from past theoretical models, have never really been able to flourish. Moreover, traditional practices are based on a teaching model that actually dates back to the 18th century, with a teacher teaching in front of waiting pupils. Active pedagogies definitely break with this pattern.

Another set of interventions highlighted the need for evidence of the effectiveness of these innovations, of their capacity to produce results, and it is then possible to turn the question around by asking why the same questioning is not being applied to the traditional model which has been shown to be ineffective.

These elements, which touch on the representations of the actors, underline the importance of asking ourselves why it is so difficult to put aside this traditional model of dialogued teaching and finally try to imagine other ways of organising learning with new reference points.

Theme 2: What conditions for the development and sustainability of innovations?

Many presentations raised the question of the development and sustainability of these innovations. Some interventions focused on the need to provide inputs (materials and training of actors).

"Play-based learning is a very effective method. To be successful, teaching materials must be available. Training would still be needed for teachers to evolve.

Other interventions raised the question of how to adapt these innovations to certain classroom realities.

"Learning through play is an effective method that hooks children, but how can it be done when classes are overcrowded? If the environment is not conducive?"

The question of the contextualisation of innovative solutions, which are most often imported, also emerged. Here too, everything seems to happen as if innovation always comes from elsewhere.

"Has this trend, first developed in Europe, been adapted to the methods and cultures of our countries? Do teachers allow themselves to be inspired by 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, which implies a reflection on the conditions necessary for its implementation. This is where the issue of how the system understands and appropriates these innovations arises. The hypothesis of the programme is that it is necessary to define the conditions for the successful implementation of these innovations in order to consider the question of their 'scaling up'.

Questions related to the second presentation

The participants' discussions focused on three main points.

1. On the configuration of AMETs

Participants questioned the configuration of AMETs.

"How are the groups selected? Why the choice of CE1? How does this relate to the current curriculum? (CI) Are the pupils exclusively in the working groups, or do they have the opportunity to return to the classical model?"

"What is the teacher's activity during group work? How will the teacher know if students are having difficulties in order to organise adequate remediation? (Burundi)"

Responses were provided by a stakeholder from an NIE who led the AMET trial in Niger.

"The CE1 is a transitional class, because we thought that some students might fail in CP, so we can catch them up in CE1.

The exercises are taken from the textbooks of the students.

In relation to the choice of groups: they are heterogeneous, as these practices are designed to be implemented in multigrade classes.

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

2. On the nature of the skills worked on by the students

Participants also discussed the nature of the skills that AMETs can develop in students.

"One concern: in the testimony of the ENI speaker, it appears that the class is subdivided into groups and each group works on a specific 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 remembered that although each activity focuses on specific exercises, each activity trains cross-curricular reading and writing skills. Furthermore, each small workshop is rotated after 12 minutes so that in a 1 hour to 1.5 hour teaching session, all pupils have the opportunity to do all the exercises.

Finally, other participants describe the experiment in their own words.

A nice experimentation and implementation of differentiated pedagogy through different types of activities. (Niger)

This experiment makes explicit the differentiated pedagogy through peer learning. (Niger)

3. On scaling up

The question of scaling up after the experiment was raised. **Should it involve a revision of the curriculum?**

"Pedagogical innovations do not necessarily imply the revision of educational programmes. Pedagogical innovation should lead to reflection on the methods and strategies of curriculum implementation. Pedagogical innovation implies the revision of teachers' behaviour in the classroom and the management of the content to be taught. Educational programmes can remain as they are and review methods and strategies for implementation.

...or rather by involving universities?

"Innovations, whatever their nature, whether pedagogical, administrative or managerial, and whatever their level (local, regional or central) are still "raw materials" that must be tested before any prospect of replication. In this sense, the country's researchers must work on them in collaboration with the appropriate resource persons in the Ministry. The efforts and steps taken within the framework of this quality management could lead to this if the country shows its motivation and real interest in this direction.

At this stage, none of the experiments supported by the Programme are at the stage of generalisation. However, the challenge of generalisation is anticipated, which is why particular attention is paid to the conditions of 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.
