
BENIN

TRAINING OF EDUCATORS: NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND TRAINING OBJECTIVES

for

CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND EQUITY FOUNDATIONS PROJECT (CLEF)

Prepared by:

Milton N. Adams, Ph.D.

Creative Associates International, Inc.
5301 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., # 700
Washington, D.C. 20015

Prepared for:

Agency for International Development
Cotonou, Benin

Project No. 680-0208
Contract No. 624-0208-I-00-4007-00
Delivery Order No. 3

APRIL 1994

**TRAINING OF EDUCATORS: NEEDS ASSESSMENT
AND TRAINING OBJECTIVES**

BENIN CLEF PROJECT
(IQC 624-0208-I-00-4007-00)

Conducted by

Milton N. Adams, Ph.D.

of

CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL, INC. (CAII)

Submitted to

USAID/Cotonou, Benin

APRIL 23, 1994

1. SCOPE OF WORK

This consultancy was directed toward attaining three major objectives defined in the Scope of Work transmitted by Creative Associates International, Inc. A fourth objective later emerged as a priority of the Teacher Training Working Group. These were:

Obj. 1) Identify teacher training needs in subject areas as well as in classroom teaching techniques and methods.

Obj. 2) Define objectives and an appropriate approach for the preparation of training modules for teachers, Inspectors, Pedagogic Counsellors, and School Principals.

Obj.3) Identify specific technical needs for the implementation of the various activities of the action plan, with a particular attention to assessing the possible areas of intervention of the IFESH volunteers. And the fourth objective:

Obj.4) Provide technical assistance to the Teacher Training Working Group in the task of clarifying the roles and attributes of those key positions defined in section (Obj. 2), with the aim of strengthening the overall performance of this pedagogical support network.

2. ACTIVITIES

The work during this consultancy involved four types of activities. These were:

- 2.1) Classroom observations and discussions with educators at schools located in the Departments of Oueme and that of Atlantique Abome.
- 2.2) Review of documentation provided by USAID and by the Direction d'Enseignement Primaire.
- 2.3) Preparation of working documents (attached as annexes).
- 2.4) Working sessions with counterparts in Porto Novo.

The following summary documents have been prepared as attachments to this report: a) minutes of meetings with the Teacher Training Working Group at Porto Novo, b) synthesis of notes compiled from the school visits, and c) the Calendrier de Travail and individual tasks for the preparation of working documents. Those annexes that are not attached to this report can be obtained from the Working Group "pilot", Mr. Hubert Mignanwande.

3. OUTCOMES

Obj. 1) A draft questionnaire has been developed for the determination of teacher training needs by subject area of instruction. This instrument is developed from the Student Profile document of INFRE, March 1994. This Profile delineates the basic competencies desired of students in each of the following discipline areas: French, Mathematics, Natural Science and Technology, Social Science, and Art/Sports and Physical Education/Leisure Education.

The draft questionnaire requires teachers to rate themselves against each of these competencies. They are asked to indicate their degree of confidence in their current knowledge and skills if they were called upon to conduct a demonstration class. The ratings are made on a four-point scale. When administered and analysed, this questionnaire will provide base-line data for the initial assessment of perceived strengths and weaknesses of the teaching corps in the key discipline areas.

This instrument will also provide valuable data for the determination of suitable teaching methods for the implementation of the reform. In the questionnaire, teachers are asked to rate themselves (i.e., their ability to effectively teach) across a cluster of 18 affective competencies defined in the Student Profile. These reflect such desirable values, attitudes, and habits of mind as: an appreciation for manual work, a capacity for individual and group work, discipline, precision and objectivity, adaption to change, critical thinking, resourcefulness, and others. In my opinion, these affective competencies would seem to represent the fundamental elements --building blocks-- for the construction of a pedagogy. That is to say, from these elements, an instructional designer would ask: "What do we know about teaching children to be resourceful, and adaptive, and what specific methods have been devised to successfully develop these capacities within children?" In determining the specific methods that should be introduced, one would be concerned with identifying those approaches which: a) combine the largest number of desirable competencies in a single, integrated approach, b) are compatible with the cultural milieu, and c) address the high priority training needs of the teaching corps.

The questionnaire will be complemented by data gathered from the field. Under the the model for in-service training developed during this consultancy, needs assessments in discipline areas and pedagogy are conducted during the experimental phase of curriculum implementation progressing annually from the lower to the higher grades. During the experimental phases, direct observations will be made in classrooms to determine what pedagogical difficulties teachers are experiencing with the new curriculum that can be effectively addressed through teacher training.

The questionnaire has been drafted and is to be edited and typed in French at the MEN/DEP office in Porto Novo.

Obj.2) This objective was difficult to fully attain because of the inadequacy of the current planning approach to teacher training. The current action plan for in-service teacher training should be reformulated/restructured within an integrated model, showing the full range of goals and objectives, accompanied by an annually updated strategic plan. This does not necessarily require a change in the focus nor in the activities of the action plan, rather a

more comprehensive framework for the rationale of its activities, and a detailed strategy for providing effective training that impacts on learning and schooling outcomes. This work -- expanding the action plan into a strategic planning document-- will, probably require an additional month of technical assistance. This work will also facilitate the task of identifying further technical assistance requirements over the next twelve months, and over the life of the project.

Once the work of restructuring the action plan into a strategic plan is completed, it will be possible to undertake the task of defining objectives and an appropriate approach for the preparation of training modules for teachers, Inspectors, Pedagogic Counsellors, and School Principals.

Obj. 3) The most important area in which technical assistance will probably be required is in the development of a Strategic Plan for Teacher Training. This should be undertaken as soon as possible. The nature of the planning document that is needed is discussed in detail in section 4 under "Issues and Constraints."

But, even in the absence of an integrated strategic plan, a number of areas were discussed in meetings of the Working Group that have implications for technical assistance. These involved specific training themes that would have high impact on classroom practice and teaching effectiveness and could be initiated at any time.

High Impact Training Themes. There was a general consensus among the members of the Working Group on the value of training in Interaction Analysis for inspectors and Pedagogical Counselors. This methodology allows observers to effectively document the communication patterns in a classroom and thus provide teachers with objective --non personal-- feedback on their teaching style. The method will be particularly useful in monitoring the impact of the reform curriculum as its methods move teaching from a directive to a more student centered approach.

Other themes suggested by this consultant which respond to the goals of the reform and the Student Profile are: a) Creative Thinking and Logical Presentation, and b) Interdisciplinary approaches to Teaching

IFESH Volunteers. The notion of American volunteers assuming direct responsibilities for the training of Beninese educators is not at all well suited for Project CLEF at this time. Though it is a well-intentioned gesture of American goodwill it is not the kind of project input that lends itself to the level of quality control that is required in an enterprise whose nature is as politically and culturally sensitive as education reform in this particular historical-political context. It is important that a more appropriate fit be found that will enable the volunteers to feel that they are making a significant, personal contribution in an endeavor that is fulfilling, socially useful, and appreciated by the host country.

For these reasons my first suggestion is that the volunteers be involved in English language training, since their expertise as educated native speakers will be generally accepted by all. There are several options. This expertise can be provided to Beninese cadres in the civil service and the business community. Often such high level administrators and business

leaders have already studied English formally and need regular opportunities to develop confidence in their conversation skills. Consideration might also be given to deploying some as primary school English instructors in schools located close to the border with Anglophone Nigeria. Within the context of the CLEF project, IFESH might be useful in the operation of an Education Information Clearinghouse, and in the production of a bi-weekly education newsletter, both discussed in section 4.2 of this report.

Obj. 4) This objective emerged as the concern of highest priority in my collaboration with the Teacher Training Working Group: the need to define the role, function, and attributes of key personnel in the pedagogical training network, i.e., inspectors, pedagogical counselors, RUP's, and school principals. In response, I developed a methodological guideline for the group in which I sought to integrate this particular task into the larger objective of designing a needs assessment (document attached). I also participated in several working sessions devoted to this analysis. Of the draft documents thus far produced (developed by individual members), only the function of the inspector has received a comprehensive review by the entire group.

The preoccupation with this task began to underline the weaknesses in the conception of the training program. It is highly impractical to fix a scope of work with prescribed levels-of-effort for key education administrators that does not take into consideration their involvement in the reform both as recipients of training and as trainers. The extent of their involvement is currently an unknown variable because of the absence of an overall strategic plan for the teacher training initiative. This "strategy gap" has obvious implications for the other objectives of this consultancy. Having communicated this concern to USAID, I devoted the remaining days to work with my "pilot" in formulating an integrated framework for this strategy.

4. ISSUES AND CONSTRAINTS

I believe that the pre-conditions required for the successful undertaking of this reform are currently present in Benin. Certain critical issues, however, should be addressed to maximize the effectiveness of these efforts.

4.1. Insufficient Capacity in Instructional Systems Design. The two most important tasks to be undertaken in the near future will be to: a) develop a strategic plan for the in-service teacher training system, and b) conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of teachers and others involved in pedagogical support activities. The lack of local expertise in these areas will undoubtedly require the continued use of technical assistance over the next twelve months. However, for the mid-term and long-term development of the project, a local capacity should be developed by sending at least one Beninese educator to the United States for advanced degree training in Instructional Systems Design and Development.

4.1.2 Absence of a Strategic Plan. The absence of an overall strategic plan reflects the larger constraint expressed above, but because of its importance it is addressed separately.

The strategic plan should present conceptual and technical/logistical solutions to the current problematic. It should offer a vision/projection/preview of how the new system will actually look and operate. Conceptually, the design will block out the scope, sequence and scheduling of training activities within a five-year timeline. Technically, it must address the questions: "Who will provide what type of training to whom, where, when, and with what effect?" In essence, it is a Logical Framework (Logframe) for the training component of Project CLEF. Related concerns that will also inform the design will involve such issues as:

4.2) Institutional Capacity. It will be necessary to strengthen local institutional capacity in teacher training to support longterm initiatives. This will require reinforcing the institutional base for teacher training --such as ENI and INFRE-- and strengthening the capabilities of the pedagogical support network --inspectors, pedagogical counsellors, RUPs, and school directors-- who form the backbone of the training delivery system. The exact nature of that reinforcement will become more apparent and made more explicit after the completion of the strategic plan.

4.3) Coordination. During the course of this assignment it became apparent that training activities are planned for teachers and/or administrators by the Working Groups for Curriculum and for Evaluation. It is important that these initiatives be coordinated in the organizational design to avoid duplication and intervention fatigue.

4.4) Incentives. Effective and attractive incentives must be identified for teachers and administrators whose participation and effort are crucial to the success of the reform.

At present, it appears that teachers are sufficiently motivated to prepare themselves for the CAP examination, since this traditional form of certification provides them with a desirable intellectual status and the prospect for career advancement. Helping teachers prepare for the CAP seems to be one of the principle functions of the Unites Pedagogiques. It is reported that this month some 1,400 teachers passed the practical component of this exam. In keeping with the CLEF philosophy of building upon and renovating existing structures, a strategy should be elaborated by which the CAP is an integral mechanism of the new system of reform incentives. This can be achieved by expanding the CAP to include a section on the "new pedagogy," in either the written, oral, or practical sections of the existing examination, or all three. Success on this section of the exam --and participation in subsequent career enhancement opportunities-- would necessity participation in reform teacher training activities.

For those teachers who successfully complete training in the new pedagogy and the CAP, there exist a wide range of possible incentives for consideration which do not impact upon budget allocations. These include such considerations as preference in choosing a school close to one's residence, preference in choice of class, preference in hours worked. Such considerations are currently made by administrators on a daily basis, but the rationale for decisions is rarely explicit nor consistent. Such preferences should be provided systematically to "master teachers" who have demonstrated their competence and professional commitment to an education career.

There are other non-salary incentives that impact on the quality of family life, finances, and purchasing power that can be made available to all teachers. Group purchasing discounts offer a very promising strategy for making the teaching profession more attractive and viable. Teachers -and others who work in the education sector-- no doubt, represent the largest professional group of salaried workers in Benin. Discounts for educators can be negotiated with key distributors of major household appliances. Similarly, discounts between ten and fifty percent can be arranged in those areas that contribute directly toward an educator's permanent education: bookstores, cinemas, travel agencies, etc.

4.5) **Reinforcement**. The inherent weakness of a multi-step "cascade" model is the inevitable drop-out of information from one training level to the next. To compensate for this, a "development support communication" campaign can be used to complement the teacher training activities. This might include one or a combination of the following options: a bi-weekly education newsletter, radio clubs, and an education information clearinghouse.

a) **Newsletter**. An education journal is currently published by INFRE. This can be supplemented by a more frequent, bi-weekly publication that focuses on aspects of the pedagogy and specific themes of the training program. This is one activity that may be suitable for the participation of the IFESH volunteers.

b) **Radio Clubs**. Radio is a very cost-effective means of diffusing a high-quality message to a geographically dispersed audience that avoids the problems of information fall-out referred to above. Briefly defined, radio clubs are groups of individuals with common interests (teachers) who meet on a regular basis to listen to a radio broadcast (related to training), discuss its message under the direction of an animator (pedagogical counsellors, and/or RUPs), and who then collectively develop action plans for its implementation. The most practical site for these meetings is the Unites Pedagogiques.

c) **Education Information Clearinghouse**. There is a general need for centers throughout Benin where teachers and administrators can seek and obtain books, journals, and article reprints about education issues, and pedagogy. This may be another suitable role that IFESH might assume.

5. TOWARD AN INTEGRATED TEACHER TRAINING SYSTEM

The concerns raised in the preliminary version of this report, underlining the need for an overall strategic plan for in-service teacher training in Benin, led to a meeting on Thursday, April 21, 1994 at USAID in which the issue was addressed and satisfactorily resolved. In attendance were: Mr. Michel Welmond, USAID Coordinator of the Primary Education Program; Mr. Muhammed Jacquet, MEN Director of Primary Education; Mr. Bienvenu Marcos, Directeur de l'Analyse, de la Prévision et de la Synthèse ; Mr. Hubert Mignanwandé, "Pilot" for the Teacher Training Action Plan; and this consultant.

In preparation for this meeting, Mr. Mignanwande and I had worked at developing a long-term, four-year "model" for in-service training, that would follow the timeline set for the progressive implementation of the new reform curriculum, by grade level. This model, took into account: a) the importance of determining the priority training needs of teachers, by grade level, during each experimental phase of reform implementation, b) the value of a longterm timeline for the preparation of teachers, by grade level, prior to the generalization of the reform, and c) the need for a parallel program of continuing education, based in the Unites Pedagogiques, that would address the critical issue of upgrading the academic qualifications of those teachers who are presently underqualified.

This strategy was presented at the meeting of April 21st, 1994, and it served a useful purpose as a paradigm for reflection, and discussion about the different expectations, functions, and roles of teacher training in Benin. It is attached to this report, as the: "In-Service Teacher Training Model."

An important outcome of this meeting was a consensus among the participants to take the training model that had been offered for consideration one step further, by developing an integrated policy statement on in-service teacher training that would define its philosophy, strategies, and modalities in a clear and succinct manner. Mr. Mignanwande and I were tasked with developing a preliminary, draft policy statement for internal review. The input that I was able to make before my departure is attached to this report, along with a conceptual model illustrating the three general types of initiatives that were discussed, "Model for an Integrated System of Teacher Training."

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

In concluding, I offer four sets of recommendations for consideration aimed at strengthening the MEN training initiatives over the next twelve months, and over the life of the project. Three of these are reiterated from the draft policy document on teacher training which can be found in the annexes of this report. These are:

6.1) Strengthen local institutional capacity in teacher training to support longterm initiatives. This will require reinforcing the institutional base for teacher training --such as ENI and INFRE-- and strengthening the capabilities of the pedagogical support network -- inspectors, pedagogical counsellors, RUPs, and school directors-- who form the backbone of

the training delivery system. The exact nature of that reinforcement will become more apparent and made more explicit after the completion of the strategic plan.

6.2) Appoint a Steering Committee for Teacher Training, with representation from those agencies currently engaged in, or envisioning significant involvement in this area. The work of this committee should ensure inter-institutional communication, coordination, and consistency of action.

6.3) Employ a systems approach to teacher training. To introduce such an approach it will be necessary to:

6.3.1) Complete the work on a policy statement, the draft of which is scheduled for completion by the end of the month.

6.3.2) Develop a strategic plan that sets training priorities for 1994/95 within the framework of the integrated model.

6.3.3) Develop a "Teacher Profile" delineating those qualifications, competences, and professional qualities that help define the "end" of its training initiatives.

6.4) Enhance local institutional capacity in Instructional Systems Design, as this relates to the development of in-service teacher training programs. This can be achieved by sending at least one Beninese educator abroad for advanced degree training in the general area of Instructional Systems Design and/or through a series of intensive workshops offered in-country.

PRINCIPAL WORKING CONTACTS

Teacher Training Working Group

Mr. Hubert Mignanwandé. Pilot/Inspecteur de la Formation des Maîtres. Professeur de Psycho-pédagogie à l' U.N.B.

Mr. Etienne Comlan Araba. Inspecteur de l'Enseignement du Premier Degré, Porto Novo.

Mr. Alfred Zondéhinkan. Inspecteur d'Enseignement. C.S. Abomey-Calavi

OTHER CONTACTS

Mr. Mouhamed Jacquet. Directeur de l'Enseignement Primaire

Mr. Bievenu Marcos. Directeur de l'Analyse, de la Prévision et de la Synthèse

Mr. Magloire Cossou. Inspecteur de l'Enseignement. Concepteur et évaluateur de Manuels Scolaires, Chef-Service SPIDE.

Mr. Michel M. Toudou, Economiste-Gestionnaire. Responsable du Plan d'actions "Evaluation des apprentissages et Orientation des Elèves."

USAID

Mr. Michel Welmond

Mr. Dennis Baker

Creative Associates, International

Ms. May Rihani

Ms. Joan Fiator

IFESH

Dr. John Lawton

Ms. Mina Jain

Ms. Marjanne Baker

LIST OF ANNEXES

1. **Input for Policy Statement on Teacher Training**
2. **Model for an Integrated System of Teacher Training**
3. **In-Service Teacher Training Model**
4. **Methodology for the Definition of Roles, Functions and Attributes of Key Administrators in the Pedagogical Support Network**
5. **Minutes of Meetings with the Teacher Training Working Group at Porto Novo**
6. **Calendrier de Travail of Teacher Training Working Group**
7. **Synthesis of Notes Compiled from School Visits**

(Attachments 5,6 and 7. are available from the group 'pilot.')

INPUT FOR DRAFT POLICY STATEMENT ON TEACHER TRAINING

PHILOSOPHY

1) It is widely recognized that education is of such critical importance to a society that access should be provided to all children in an equitable manner. Thus, by extension, the same principles of access and equity must also hold true for the continuing, in-service training of teachers who have the ultimate responsibility of dispensing an effective, quality program of instruction.

2) Opportunities for the continued professional development of teachers should be offered universally, and with regularity. Budgetary constraints, however, require that these opportunities be presented within a longterm, five-year perspective, to ensure that quality is not sacrificed at the expense of scope.

3) Training should always be considered as a means to an end, not an end in itself. Only after the "end" for which it is intended has been clearly defined can a strategy for effective delivery be designed.

4) Training is always employed to improve human performance. In the case of teachers, that performance is "effective instruction," --instruction that helps all students acquire those skills, attitudes, and habits of mind that facilitate their full participation in society.

5) The ultimate, criteria for determining the effectiveness of teaching, curriculum development, and teacher training programs is their impact on student learning, and on subsequent post-schooling outcomes.

THREE INITIATIVES

6) The integrated model that is proposed incorporates three initiatives. Central to this model is the training initiative directed toward preparing teachers to successfully implement the new curriculum and new pedagogy of the education reform. Access to this program is closely linked to the implementation schedule of the new curriculum. The second initiative is a program of continuing education aimed at providing assistance to underqualified teachers seeking to upgrade their certification status. The third initiative allows for ad hoc programs.

7) For both the reform initiative and the program of continuing education, a well designed, sequenced training program will be made available, based on a thorough, systematic analysis of needs, and a determination of the ideal "Teacher Profile." In the interim --and throughout-- the model provides for a third initiative of ad hoc programs that respond to the "expressed needs" of teachers and to the expert judgment of educators.

MODALITY

8) The modality for the delivery of all of the training programs in this model is the same: the "cascade" model, i.e., "formation des formateurs." The route by which this cascade training flows is through the current hierarchical network of administrative and pedagogical cadres, i.e., the inspectors, pedagogical counselors, RUPs, and school directors. While this four-step process functions in administrative matters, it is simplified to three steps in matters of pedagogical training by compressing counselors and RUPs into the same training phase.

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

9) Implementation of this integrated model can be undertaken with commitments to three key developmental steps: These are:

9.1) Appoint a Steering Committee for Teacher Training, with representation from those MEN agencies currently engaged in, or envisioning significant involvement in this area. The work of this committee should ensure inter-institutional communication, coordination, and consistency of action.

9.2) Employ a systems approach to teacher training. To introduce such an approach it will be necessary to:

9.2.1) Complete the work on a policy statement, the draft of which is scheduled for completion by the end of April.

9.2.2) Develop a strategic plan that sets training priorities for 1994/95 within the framework of the integrated model.

9.2.3) Develop a "Teacher Profile" delineating those qualifications, competences, and professional qualities that help define the "end" of its training initiatives.

9.3) Enhance local institutional capacity in Instructional Systems Design --as this relates to the development of in-service teacher training programs. This can be achieved by sending at least one Beninese educator abroad for advanced degree training in the general area of Instructional Systems Design and/or through a series of intensive workshops offered in-country.