



The Quality Link

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Improving Educational Quality for Sustainable Development in Africa

by Paul Spector, Institute for International Research, December 1994

This highlights a document that is currently being circulated for review and comment.

This paper is an attempt to bring realism into educational development and the environment in sub-Saharan Africa. It is divided into six sections. The introduction describes the enormous educational progress made from 1960-1985 in sub-Saharan Africa, and the subsequent decline of the late 80s and early 90s. It contrasts the educational histories of sub-Saharan Africa and the Industrial Nations and outlines the high cost of emulating European educational models. The second section reviews the status of education in sub-Saharan Africa in relation to economic growth. It compares sub-Saharan nations with respect to various measures of educational and economic improvement over the

last thirty years in relation to similar measures in the industrial countries. The third section identifies major problems and the fourth reviews the problems in more detail by adverting to lessons we have learned historically about successful and unsuccessful educational development efforts. The fifth section speculates about the future in an attempt to anchor thinking about educational improvements in reasonably optimistic scenarios of economic development in the region. The sixth section makes recommendations that we believe would bring the knowledge and skill of the masses of the sub-Saharan population closer to those of the industrial countries over the next thirty years.

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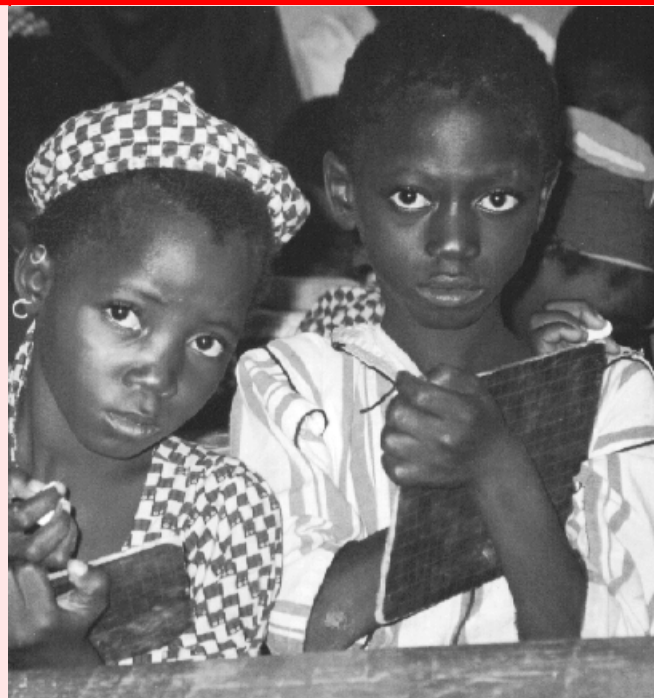
FROM THE EDITORS...

This edition of **The Quality Link** highlights the IEQ experience in fostering the **dialogue** on educational quality and shows how the dialogue is influencing the improvement of educational quality in the classroom. The dialogue can take place at the local, national, or international level, depending on the needs of the individuals and organizations participating in the IEQ project in a given country.

The editors of **The Quality Link** and all of the IEQ collaborators wish a fond farewell to Ina Laemmerzahl, previously the project coordinator and co-editor of this newsletter. Ina has moved to Oklahoma to pursue further graduate studies.

If you have any comments or questions regarding this newsletter and/or the IEQ project, please do not hesitate to contact us at the address below.

Sylvia Ellison & Gretchen Humon
Institute for International Research
1815 North Fort Myer Drive, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22209 USA
Tel: 703/527-5546; Fax: 703/527-4661
Email: 76105.205@compuserve.com



IEQ in Ghana

EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT THROUGH DIALOGUE: IEQ GHANA'S APPROACH

How can educators come together to improve the quality of education? What potential for improvement emerges from dialogue on classroom experience? These are questions that the IEQ project, through the active promotion of dialogue based on findings from classroom research, is trying to answer.

Promoting dialogue has been successful in Ghana where the cycle of research, feedback, and action has been an integral part of IEQ/Ghana. The multi-directional communication between the University of Cape Coast Research Team (CRIQPEG) and educators (e.g. teachers, head teachers, and circuit supervisors) has enabled the dialogue to evolve into a process of mutual sharing of information, reflection, and learning.

For example, during Phase II of the IEQ/Ghana project, research team members collected data on language acquisition and the learning environment of pupils in 14 primary schools. In particular, CRIQPEG team members **assessed** what pupils can and cannot read and write; how well they comprehend oral English; the extent of their exposure to written materials; how materials are used to enhance learning; and other factors which influence learning. CRIQPEG shared its findings with educators at workshops and bi-weekly school visits in which participants (CRIQPEG team members and educators) **assimilated** classroom findings through discussions of their practical implications, and gained a better understanding of the dynamics of language learning. By illuminating specific areas of strength and weakness, opportunities for improvement of the learning environment were identified. Through dialogue, participants developed interventions which were implemented (**action**) in the schools by the participating educators. The cycle continues as CRIQPEG team leaders collect more data as the interventions are applied, summarize the findings and share it with educators. The new data serves as a catalyst for further discussions, learning, and adjusted or new interventions. *Figure 1* illustrates this cyclical process.

The continuous feedback and subsequent discussions on interventions to improve pupil's learning ultimately empowers educators to sustain learning progress. The dy-

namic nature of the exchange encourages educators to build upon the interventions as the need arises thus requiring less assistance from IEQ's guiding research team.

Workshop Participant Reactions

Engaging people in discussions about what happens in the classroom inspires them to reflect on the learning process and how it can be improved. The following reactions from research participants (CRIQPEG team members and educators) demonstrate the impact of the dialogue process.

Research Guides Dialogue

Research interviews and assessment help CRIQPEG to understand the unique dynamics in each school and to use this information in refining the interventions and providing support:

Researcher: After offering a number of functional questions during the initial interviews of pupils, a pupil said in her local Ghanaian language, "I don't understand what you are saying." This meant that many pupils like this girl sit for hours in the classroom with the teachers teaching English and they do not understand a word of what the

teacher is saying ... [Now, in my discussions with teachers, I encourage them] to conduct regular interviews with children in their classes to assess their comprehension of English. For example, the teacher can say a sentence in English and ask the child to explain the meaning in Ghanaian language. If the child is unable to do this then the child needs help before the teacher can continue teaching in English. Also, this means the language policy should be interpreted with caution.

Researcher: During preliminary interviews we were told that there were low pupil enrollments and that parents were withdrawing their sons and daughters and sending them to a nearby school. I interviewed parents, teachers, and PTA executives both at a meeting and individually. At last the reason for the low enrollment in the school was given, namely, that the head teacher and the teachers (except for one) stayed outside of the town and were not serious with their work; that for most of the time they did not teach the children even when they were in schools. This gave me an insight and [during the intervention discussions and collaboration at the schools] helped me to relate with the head teacher and teachers in a special way in order to influence their attitudes towards work.

Dialogue Fosters Innovation

IEQ generates improvement through dialogue and reflection on research findings. Sometimes educators embrace new strategies with enthusiasm. Other times the intervention attempts do not work and then researcher and teacher must rethink the intervention process:

Researcher: I visited a class and found that the teacher directed most of his questions to a pupil — apparently of the high ability group. I arranged to meet with the teacher after the lesson. Our discussion revealed that he directed his questions to that particular pupil because the rest of the class were not able to give the needed responses. Our discussion probed further to find out the possible causes and [solutions]. He was encouraged to group his students using this pupil as a leader and to ensure peer tutoring.

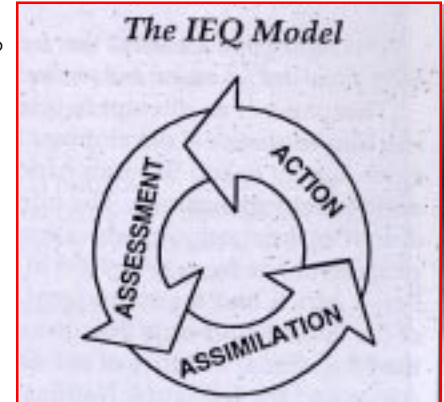


Figure 1

Researcher: We normally hold meetings with the teachers in the intervention schools during each research visit. During one such meeting, the team leader used words which tended to create the impression that the teachers were being rather slow in incorporating the suggested strategies into their teaching. Thereafter, the teachers sat aloof and would not contribute as they had previously done. After the meeting, some of the team members went around privately to cool down tempers. I have come to realize the futility of adopting a masterful approach in dealing with colleagues...in the future I intend to win such colleagues over to my ideas by making them see me more as a friend or fellow practitioner and not as a superior.

Dialogue Inspires Motivation

Researchers, head teachers and pupils notice a difference applied interventions have made:

Researcher: During an observation tasks done in one of the intervention schools, the attitude of the teachers and pupils gave me insights on how a little "push" or help can go a long way to motivate people. A teacher was able to teach a class with very little resources. The CRIQPEG team's materials and knowledge given to her encouraged her to make very innovative visual aids. The pupils were more attentive when they realized the enthusiasm of the teacher and more learning took place.

Head Teacher: [Through the discussions] I have had the chance to learn many teaching and supervision techniques. Child play involving puppetry as a means of promoting conversation in English has been very essential. I have been helped to prepare learning and teaching materials to help in class lessons. Teachers have been motivated by the materials given them.

Pupil: Now Teacher teaches well, and we understand.

Dialogue Extends Support

The IEQ process of involving educators from a variety of levels in the discussions of findings and solutions helps insure that needed support is extended to the intervention schools, and, based on comments from Circuit Supervisors and District Officers, beyond to other schools and teachers as well:

Circuit Supervisor: I have been observing teachers with the CRIQPEG team every time they visit the school and after, we normally meet with the teachers and discuss various points with them. A general consensus of the teachers is that they are all enthused about the programme and ready for innovations. My conversations with them give me a ray of hope for the future, that with time and with realistic teaching strategies, our children will perform. Through the meetings with the teachers I have learnt their problems and also possible solutions to these problems. I hope to use the information received from them to benefit other teachers during my school-based orientation and in-service training courses in the future.

Circuit Supervisor: In my rounds in the non-CRIQPEG schools I experienced a lot of shortfall in the strategies adopted in the teaching of English, as well as the level to which teachers interact with other teachers and pupils. The knowledge gained at the various seminars and workshops has helped me to correct the imbalance...I intend to extend the knowledge gained to other fellow Circuit Supervisors in the district who have been less fortunate to attend the seminars and workshops.

Supervisor of Instruction in District Education Office: I have started organizing seminars of some selected teachers in the District, with the theme: Promoting Reading -- A Challenge to the Classroom Teacher. Most of the intervention strategies learnt at the CRIQPEG Professional Development Seminars are being used.

Project Summary: GHANA

In Ghana, IEQ has formed a partnership with the University of Cape Coast Research Team at the Centre for Research on Improving Quality of Primary Education in Ghana (CRIQPEG) and USAID/Ghana to carry out an innovative classroom-based study to determine the acquisition of English language skills of selected Ghanaian primary school children. Phase I of the IEQ research examined the availability, source and use of instructional materials in English, Science, and Social Studies in six schools (classes 1-6) in the Central Region. In Phase II, CRIQPEG assessed the reading, writing, and oral language abilities of more than 1000 children in 14 schools (classes 2-5) in the Central and Western regions. Phase III activities, which started in October 1994, followed pupils in their next grade in order to monitor the impact of classroom interventions. CRIQPEG team members shared findings from classroom observations and other measures with head teachers and circuit supervisors. Together they developed ways to improve English proficiency. The local and regional supervisors now support teachers by observing the continuing implementation of classroom interventions and providing feedback.

Researcher: Back at home I engaged my children and their friends in the neighborhood in making use of odds and ends around and the result was wonderful. The experience has improved my performance as a secondary school science teacher as many of the materials produced by the children serve as teaching aids in the high school.

Such responses to the work of IEQ demonstrates the value and potential of IEQ/Ghana's approach of reflection and responsibility. Educators meet to learn about research findings from the CRIQPEG team and they (researchers and educators) subsequently work together to act upon those findings by developing new and improved instructional practices. The value of the interaction among educators through opportunities to exchange information is increasingly apparent. From the sharing of information among educators, to the increased interest of pupils in their own learning, the process is cyclical, thus building on foundations of information and action based on research.

*by Sylvia Ellison, IEQ Project Coordinator,
with contributory quotes from Ghanaian teachers,
local and regional supervisors and
CRIQPEG team members*

Project Summary: GUATEMALA

In Guatemala, IEQ is working with the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) and two Regional Education Offices to study the implementation and impact of *Nueva Escuela Unitaria* (NEU), an innovative pilot project designed for multigrade schools in rural areas. NEU is based on active learning principles that stress collaborative learning, peer teaching, use of self-instructional guides and participatory student government.

During the 1993 school year, the first full year of the development of the NEU program, IEQ studied a 10% sample of first and second grade children participating in the program as well as a similar group of comparison children. Sample schools were located in two regions, one with a predominantly indigenous population and the other with a non-indigenous or *Ladino* population. IEQ research team members tested children on reading, mathematics, creativity, and self-concept. The children's nutritional status was also measured. In addition, a subsample of experimental and comparison children at each of the study schools were the subjects of intensive classroom observation for two month-long periods during the school year. Twice during the school year, parents and teachers responded to questions related to their satisfaction with the curriculum being implemented in their schools. The researchers examined differences in the test performance of experimental and comparison children, and correlated observed interactions in the classroom with the children's academic performance on the tests.

In Year II, the IEQ team studied the same children as to further behavior change and its relation to academic achievement with an additional year of experience in the program and a series of seminars with supervisors and teachers were held to examine the results of the first year of the study and make decisions about fine-tuning the pilot program. During Year III, IEQ will examine the experience of children in "complete" schools (those having all six primary grades), continue to follow the sample of children who entered school during the first year of the research, and monitor the expansion of the NEU program to double its current size.

A major goal of IEQ is to strengthen the process of integrating classroom research on educational quality into the educational system. IEQ brings teachers, administrators and researchers together to discuss observations of reform efforts being implemented in primary school classrooms in order to further the dialogue on educational quality and to encourage the use of research as a tool in decisions related to educational reform.

To reach this goal, the Guatemala research team and the developers of *Nueva Escuela Unitaria* (NEU), the multigrade rural school reform under study, developed a series of workshops. The workshops used a number of different learning contexts to present data from the classroom. Teachers, supervisors and educational administrators used this information as a starting point to reflect on such issues as utilizing small group learning contexts in the classroom, stimulating creativity among students, meeting the needs of children whose mother tongue is not the language of instruction, promoting cross-gender collaboration, and using research and evaluation findings. The workshops were designed to be innovative; during the planning stage the director of the NEU program stated:

This will be a different kind of an evaluation. In my experience before with implementing programs, the results are shared with those of use who are developing the program but never with the teachers and supervisors.

The Workshops

Yetilú de Baessa, the IEQ Coordinator, facilitated the workshops. Although the workshops included group discussions of research and evaluation in general and IEQ in particular, the bulk of the workshop time was spent analyzing examples of classroom interaction from the IEQ research. The following, taken from a researcher's observations of a workshop, illustrates the type of interchange that commonly occurred in the workshops.

At two o'clock the workshop began and the Coordinator provided the group of teachers with an example of a small group of children working with the teacher in an activity designed to develop the children's creativity:

The teacher shows the group a piece of wrapping paper with pictures of little bears on it. She asks the group, "Now, let's write a story about the birthday of a little bear." Juanito, the sample child, asks, "Do we draw the bear?" The teacher responds, "Yes." Pedro asks, "Can I put that the little bear eats cake?" The teacher responds, "You can all put anything you want." Another boy seated next to Juanito says, "I wrote that the bear was born in January." The teacher answers, "That's good, you can write whatever you want." After a few minutes of work, Juanito says, "I finished my story." The teacher asks him to read it and Juanito begins to read in a low voice.

As the discussion of the vignette begins, one workshop participant observes:

"You can see the democratic aspect of the classroom."

A second teacher says:

"She doesn't respond rigidly but is very flexible with the children."

A third notes:

"She gives them liberty to express themselves both orally and in writing."

As can be seen, this example provoked ample commentary by the participants who emphasized that the teacher created a natural environment in which the children could use their imagination without fear or penalty.

The teacher was, however, at the same time developing reading and writing skills in an entertaining and motivating way.

The Coordinator then organized the teachers into eight groups. Two groups were to identify the elements of the NEU program apparent in the example show why they were important. Two other groups were to identify three aspects of the vignette that were positive for learning, while two more focus on how the interaction might be improved. The last two groups developed activities designed to promote creativity in children. Each of the groups spent half an hour working on their task then presented the findings to the rest of the groups. The groups that worked on aspects of the NEU reform identified the following elements of the program:

- ◆ Freedom of expression
- ◆ Reading comprehension development
- ◆ Teacher's respect for the children's ideas
- ◆ Utilization of materials that are familiar and available to the children

The discussion building on these points included the notion that the small group context gives the teacher the opportunity to use the children's own experience as well as allowing the teacher to accept all the products of the students as good and appropriate learning strategies. This resulted in the groups dealing with how to improve the learning experience. Their suggestions were to:

- ◆ Provide short stories and anecdotes
- ◆ Use more elements of the community that children actually own
- ◆ Make sure that both boys and girls participate, perhaps by working in pairs
- ◆ Dramatize children's stories in two languages

The discussion continued with the groups that identified positive learning aspects in the vignette reporting:

- ◆ Expression of ideas to others
- ◆ Building students' self confidence
- ◆ Increasing communication between students and teacher so that there is mutual confidence
- ◆ Students writing what they think and reading what they write

The groups working on an activity to stimulate student creativity presented next. One group offered the creation of a zoo. Another suggested the dramatization of traffic rules using play cars. Each of these activities was discussed among the large group, which decided that the suggestions were creative ideas to teach content rather than activities to develop creativity. At the end of the activity, the group reached a consensus that they usually spend most of their time on subject matter and should give much more attention to the socio-emotional side of the children.

The above example illustrates that *reflection over information on actual classroom interaction can lead teachers to develop steps for refining and educational reform.*

As a result of the workshop, supervisors obtained a better understanding of the difficulties faced by rural teachers in dealing with these issues by discussing such aspects as developing activities to promote cross-gender collaboration and creativity, or use of a second language. One supervisor stated:

I'm worried, we must be realistic and if it is in our hands, we should leave here and go do our part to improve things. We can't participate

in this workshop and go home indifferent; rather the opposite. We need to help the teachers so that, working together, we improve the results.

Inviting educational authorities to take part in the participatory workshops encouraged discussion of educational quality between administrators and practitioners. It resulted in the commitment of authorities to participate jointly with teachers and supervisors in organizing NEU workshops and in assurances of continued support for the program. This is illustrated by the following exchange between a supervisor and a representative of the Ministry of Education.

What will happen when there is no longer international financing (for the NEU program)?

I believe in NEU... Forget that doubt, these costs will be incorporated into the national budget.

Using classroom level data can provide teachers and supervisors with a better understanding of the utility of research and evaluation. Initially, participants defined evaluation only in terms of measuring student performance. At the end of the workshops, comments on evaluation and research made reference to the value of evaluation to implementing educational change.

Evaluation is not only testing, but also gathering information to make decisions.

Follow-up (Next Steps)

In their evaluation of the workshops, teachers and supervisors asked that they be continued. In response, the IEQ team will design additional workshops based on the results of the 1994 research. These workshops will be conducted earlier in the year so that teachers can incorporate their decisions into their classroom work. Workshops will be held with smaller numbers of teachers, most likely in their "teachers' circles," in order to make the workshops more manageable.

Teachers also suggested that the IEQ research be expanded to include more schools. This possibility is being discussed with the NEU developers. The IEQ team will also incorporate those things that teachers say they will emphasize as a result of the workshops, such as a greater emphasis on creativity of the students, into the research design.

*by Yetilú de Baessa
IEQ/Guatemala Research Coordinator*

IEQ in Mali

In the Summer of 1994, Mr. Adama Samassékou, the Malian Minister of Basic Education, launched consultations for an overall reform of the Basic Education system dubbed *La Nouvelle École Fondamentale (NEF)*. The NEF, or the New Basic Education reform, is defined as an effort to revive and harmonize every new initiative pursuing a quality basic education for Malian children. The driving force of the new reform is the belief that all initiatives from government, donor, NGOs, and other partners are doomed to fail if they do not lead to a sustainable effort. Since sustainable development will not occur if the country does not have the means to continue the effort after the withdrawal of the project initiator, Malians must encourage and develop community participation in educational reform.

In its approach, IEQ has been consistent with the tenets of the NEF by involving all partners of education in Mali in the research and design, planning, and implementation of interventions in order to arrive at rational decisions on ways to improve educational quality. At the end of Phase I, IEQ/Mali organized a national seminar to discuss the preliminary results of its research. The seminar brought together all the actors and beneficiaries of schools such as decision-makers, teachers, principals, donors, and parents in a discussion. Participants at the seminar recommended a number of interventions that they regarded as determinant in improving the learning process in the Malian classroom, such as the strategic use of maternal languages, and the introduction of community study centers.

In the current Phase II, IEQ/Mali's approach goes beyond discussion. Parents, teachers, community development professionals, and school administrators such as principals, inspectors, pedagogic advisors and regional directors, are involved as full research partners in the implementation of the recommended interventions.

Phase II: Teacher Training Workshops

IEQ's first activity of Phase II was to schedule teacher training workshops on classroom-based pedagogical techniques

Project Summary: MALI

IEQ began in Mali in the spring of 1993 to support USAID's Basic Education Expansion Project (BEEP). Phase I of the IEQ/Mali project involved the two collaborating research institutions, the Institut Pédagogique National (IPN) and the Institut Supérieur de Formation et de Recherche Appliquée (ISFRA), conducting field research on the learning process in the first two years of primary education, contributing to a better understanding of the link between classroom practices and pupil performance. IEQ/Mali held a national seminar in April 1994 to discuss the findings from the Phase I research. The seminar brought together parents, local, sub-regional, regional and central educational actors, decision-makers and partners to discuss issues specifically pertaining to language learning in Mali. The seminar was organized to conclude the project's first phase and begin plans for Phase II. In August, IEQ/Mali launched Phase II activities with the organization of regional training workshops held in Ségu (August '94) and Kayes, Mopti, and Sikasso (November '94). In February, the team revisited the region to observe how the classroom interventions introduced in November were being implemented.

for language learning and the initiation of study centers. For eight days in each of the four regions, 250 participants (84 first and second grade teachers, 42 school principals, 18 inspectors, 44 pedagogic advisors, 16 community development specialists, 42 parents, and 4 regional education directors) gathered to work with the IEQ/Mali team and consultants from IPN, National Directorate for Functional Literacy and Applied Linguistics (DNAFLA), and the Institute for International Research (IIR) on classroom research techniques and strategies for quality teaching.

Departing from the classical training formula based on administering pre-prepared modules to trainees, the IEQ team adopted the **participatory approach**. The team created opportunities for each participating educator to contribute his/her input and leave the workshop with their collaboratively-developed interventions. The IEQ team acted as facilitators, who, through question-response exchanges and discussions, helped participants work out appropriate strategies to better execute the new interventions. Furthermore, with the sense of ownership inherent to the process, each teacher was given the freedom to adapt those strategies to suit both his/her and the students' needs and abilities.

To guide discussions, the team of trainers identified and structured the discussion along the interventions:

- ♦ *What language learning techniques are best suited for use in large groups?*
- ♦ *What is an appropriate use of the maternal language in a classroom context and when is such use "abusive" in a foreign language class?*
- ♦ *What techniques are available for passing from students' full comprehension of a tale or legend in their mother tongue to a similar level of understanding in a foreign language?*
- ♦ *What pedagogic supports are available or might be prepared with local, low-cost materials to enhance the acquisition of French in the first two grades of primary school?*
- ♦ *What should the role and function of a community study center be? How can the school teacher take advantage of the operation of such a facility, and how can parents be encouraged to organize one for their children?*

Photo not available

Following a training workshop in Mali, school inspectors, the Regional Director of Ségou, and members of IPN and ISFRA discuss how to improve the workshop.

- ◆ *What is the impact of the pedagogic strategies and the community study centers upon classroom and school management, and the learning process?*

The most meaningful parts of the workshops were the daily classroom simulations during which participants used information generated during discussions to construct and present lessons to their peers. The discussions that followed these simulations were also learning experiences in and of themselves. In many instances, participants — particularly teachers — stood up to act out humorous classroom episodes in which the teacher is a tyrant in the classroom, depriving pupils of opportunities to talk or manipulate and share didactic materials, putting down obvious evidence of pupils' comprehension just because the response was given in maternal language, or punishing rather than encouraging pupils' creativity. Such behavior demonstrated an understanding of the new pedagogic interventions outlined in the workshops.

Reactions to the Participatory Approach

One of the host country research team members declared in his follow-up report that, "...from now on, it is the participatory approach that I will be using in my training sessions and meetings [because] I realize how much can be learned from a continuous dialogue between trainers and trainees." Echoing this, the Regional Education Director of Sikasso summed up the prevailing feeling at the end of each workshop:

Ten days ago, some among us were wondering what IEQ was all about. Today, [we] know...it is ownership of the school by the community;

it is the fact that every person — pupils as well as teachers—is the artisan of their own education; it is, perhaps, the long awaited identification and implementation of the school we need.

The purpose of the workshops was to push ahead participatory and student-centered approaches. The pedagogic and research techniques discussed were intended to help and fully involve IEQ's partners in the implementation, and the subsequent monitoring and evaluation of the Phase II interventions in order to dispense quality education in Malian schools. Each day's

discussions were designed to yield specific outcomes that would constitute a commitment from the participants to implement the interventions. In this regard, these teacher training workshops were a success. As one representative of the trainees put it in his closing address, "PAQE (IEQ/Mali) should be commended for its new pedagogical approach centered on the learner and the involvement of field actors in the elaboration of teaching and learning strategies."

The experimentation of these strategies covers close to five thousand pupils spread over 42 schools (84 classes) in the 18 inspectorate districts of Kayes, Mopti, Ségou, and Sikasso. In January-February, the IEQ/Mali research team conducted follow-up visits in the field to monitor the implementation of these interventions in classrooms and to meet with teachers, community development specialists, principals, pedagogic advisors, and regional education directors to discuss ways to improve the interventions for better student performance in classrooms. The team will go back into the field in April to collect data and assess student performance resulting from IEQ interventions.

by Alimasi Ntal-I'Mairwa,
IEQ Research Associate and
IEQ/Mali Project Coordinator



IEQ in South Africa

One of the ways dialogue occurs in the IEQ project is through meeting and discussing canon issues with colleagues from different countries. In 1994, IEQ hosted two groups of South Africans in the United States, and sent one group to Ghana, another IEQ country. The study tour participants included researchers from the IEQ Durban staff, representatives from NGOs involved in a variety of programs to improve educational quality, and administrators from the Department of Education in South Africa.

U.S. Study Tours

During their visits to the United States, the participants exchanged ideas with South African and American colleagues on evaluation, monitoring, materials development and pedagogy related to improving the quality of education. On the first tour, the NGOs concerned with Educare collaborated with IEQ consultants and with one another to create an evaluation design for their organizations. They also participated in the annual conference sponsored by the Center for Research, Evaluation, Standards, and Testing (CREST), worked with specialists in evaluation methodology, and visited pre-school centers.

During the second tour, representatives from several different NGOs (one from the educare grantee community, an NGO concerned with materials development and distribution, and an NGO working with in-service training and certification), as well as governmental representatives, met with American colleagues to observe classrooms, discuss educational initiatives, and learn about materials development. At the United States Conference for Education for All (USCEFA) conference, they presented information during a panel discussion of implications for education as South Africa struggles with reorganizing and reforming education to increase access to and quality of education for the disadvantaged majority population. To capture the impact of these interactions, the participants were asked to record the experiences that would enhance their specific responsibilities for improving education quality in their country.

Community and Parent Involvement Influences the Educational Process

Several South Africans commented on empowering the community and parents to

see themselves as essential and active participants in the schooling process:

We visited the Frederick Douglass Early Childhood Development and Family Support Center and heard that the struggle for equity in education is far from being over. Public schools in the areas where our hosts operate are under-resourced and as community workers our hosts have an uphill battle to get total involvement from the teachers and parents in addressing some of the negative social problems. [The discussion] drove home the importance of forming partnerships with the parents as central to the process. Parents are teachers and any policy which tends to undermine this will fail.

[At the Head Start Program at the Arlington Community Center,] a retired army official was conducting physical education classes for the preschoolers. The mere thought of this man finding the time with the youngsters struck me as something lacking back home. His dedication underlined the importance of parent involvement in education. [I envision running] workshops in the [South African] community for retired folk to see how their experience can make an impact on the learning process.

[The speaker] emphasized that parents [should not be excluded] because they are illiterates as they can still educate their children. I realize that we [in South Africa] need to educate parents to make them understand how important their role is and have a variety of activities for them to participate in and invite their opinions about what they want their children to learn.

Bilingualism and Multiculturalism Pose Challenges and Rewards

Bilingualism and multiculturalism are additional issues with which both American and South African educators struggle. The conferences and meetings provided opportunities to further explore these topics.

In communities where parents speak a different language the [teacher] trainers are used as translators and this has been denying them the opportunity to participate in discussions. This is the problem we have been grappling with for years.

Project Summary: SOUTH AFRICA

IEQ/South Africa's Phase I focused on a series of inter-connected training and technical assistance support for the design and implementation of impact assessments. Selected non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in basic education which currently receive grants from USAID/South Africa participate in these assessments. The second phase concentrates on implementing these assessments for clusters of grantees involved with Educare (early childhood development), in-service training, and specific curriculum areas such as language and science. IEQ will continue to work collaboratively with grantees designing and implementing the impact assessments, and will offer formal workshops on evaluation methodology that will include all aspects of designing, implementing and reporting on the studies.

Photo not available

South African children and teachers at a rural Educare center.

Successful Impact Evaluation Involves Trust and Taking Risks

As the South African government reorganizes and the funding for NGOs shifts from donor support to the national government, NGOs are increasingly aware of the need to demonstrate positive impact on the communities they serve. One of IEQ's goals in South Africa, to assist in designing and carrying out impact evaluations, helps the NGOs design and conduct such assessments. During both study tours, participants discussed data analysis, impact evaluation designs and assessment with American colleagues.

Dena Stoner [opening panelist at the CRESST conference] said that getting assessment right goes beyond technical aspects to build trust so that practitioners are able to TAKE RISKS. [In South Africa] we need to move toward sharing with teachers in the creation of instruments and getting their feedback as professionals who can inform research and transform teaching.

Tom Weisner, from UCLA, urged us to avoid qualitative/quantitative dichotomies in conducting research. The goal is to get us closer to what we want to understand. As I conduct more classroom research, it is helpful to be reminded that METHODS that work are not necessarily qualitative or quantitative but a combination of methods that will best help answer the research questions.

Building Partnerships Helps to Address Many Needs

Members of the group also commented on the relationships that they fostered.

We visited the National Geographic Society. They briefly described the program they are running for KIDS NETWORK which links up kids all over the world. She explained how the program gives children opportunities to act as scientists by gathering data which is then sent to [National Geographic] to be analyzed by a scientist. I hope to get some of the schools that are linked to [our program] in

the resource-based learning environment hooked up with this project. I hope to get IBM International to assist the kids in subscribing to the network. Exciting!

After a meeting with education faculty members at George Mason University's School of Education, Training of School Leadership Programme, one participant commented:

They would be in a position to address the critical issue of accreditation for some of our programs if a proposal came to them. They are very flexible and would consider seriously ways and means of assisting the programs in South Africa. In our quest for top quality management in all our schools it is important to know that through exchange programs one can call on institutions like George Mason to help train a cadre of top quality educational leaders.

Finally, as a South African participant stated after hearing a panel discussion featuring education programs sponsored by donor agencies in several different countries,

I was inspired with confidence in Southern Africa, because the South Africans are **changing themselves**. What South Africans are taking from outsiders is *help*, not an extraneous "lifeline." We shall be telling people in South Africa they must save themselves. Benevolent outsiders are there to provide critical, important *help*, but the actual structures must come from ourselves.

As the South African study tour participant implied in the above quote, genuine change occurs when people allow an idea or an event to transform how they think and then act. Through sponsoring activities and encouraging cross and intra-cultural dialogue, the IEQ project provides opportunities for visionaries to meet with one another to share their awareness and passion. IEQ provides the catalyst for the change to begin to take place.

by Dena Duerbeck, IEQ Research Assistant, with contributory quotes from South African educators involved in the IEQ project

IEQ in Uganda

With dialogue among stakeholders at all levels of the education system being one of the main goals of the IEQ project, the IEQ team in Uganda kicked off their work with a forum designed to bring these people together to create the project's research agenda. Following is an article for a newspaper in Uganda written by Dr. Lawrence K. Kanyike, IEQ/Uganda's research team leader, describing the forum and the IEQ/Uganda project itself.

The Minister of Education and Sports, Mr. Amanya Mushega, officiated at the opening of the forum to launch the Uganda Improving Educational Quality Project on January 31, 1995. The ceremony took place at Crested Crane Hotel, Jinja. Those attending included the Commissioners for Education, Mr. Stephan Maloba (Administration) and Mr. Kasolo-Kimulu (Inspectorate), and USAID's Deputy Director in Uganda, Ms. Leticia Diaz.

The project is managed jointly by the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) and the Institute for International Research (IIR) based in Washington. Funds are provided by USAID.

The project is intended to do two things. It is intended to carry out research to assist in monitoring and evaluating the ongoing primary education reforms in Uganda. Those education reforms include the improvement of teachers terms and conditions of service, the training of untrained primary school teachers, the training of primary school headteachers and the provision of teaching materials to schools. The research will focus on the effect of the reforms on the teaching and learning in primary schools for the benefit of the concerned policy makers and implementors and the public generally. Communication of the research findings to the relevant persons, including primary school teachers, will be a crucial aspect of the IEQ project's activities.

The second purpose of the project is to assist in building capacity for action-

oriented research at various levels of Uganda's education community. The research will be conducted by researchers based at universities and at other national institutions traditionally charged with education research responsibilities. But there will be plenty of room for primary school teachers and tutors in primary teacher training colleges to be co-researchers. Primary school teachers and tutors in primary teacher training colleges will not be merely subjects. It is expected that participating teachers and tutors will acquire or improve their skills for assessing their own teaching and the learning of pupils and accounting for the same. The teachers would then be enabled to take timely remedial measures they may consider appropriate. Apart from being able to conduct their own research, the tutors would also be better equipped to train teachers with positive attitudes about research and strong research skills.

While launching the project, the Minister stressed the importance government attaches both to the ongoing primary education reforms and to research. He urged the forum participants to take their responsibility seriously and make the forum a productive undertaking.

The main task of the participants, who included researchers and policy makers and implementors, was to develop a research agenda specifically relevant to the purposes of the Uganda IEQ project. But also the agenda was intended to be usable by any interested educational researcher. The Uganda IEQ project should therefore be seen as a catalyst for action-oriented research.

The forum reached its climax on February 2, 1995, after deliberations facilitated by thoughtful presentations of papers. Dr. A.M. Setsabi of USAID's Support Uganda Primary Education Reform Programme (SUPER) gave the keynote address. Some of the others who presented papers were Dr. Matthew Odada and Mrs. Deborah Kasente of Makerere University, Mr. Dan Sentamu of the National Curriculum Development Centre, Dr. David Ongam of UNEB, the President of the Institute for International Research (Dr. Paul Spector), and the Institute's Senior Research Advisor (Dr. Ash Hartwell).

A research agenda was set to investigate a number of priority issues. The issues included the factors that are related to school effectiveness, the relevance of the primary school curriculum to national goals, the motivation of teachers for effectiveness, the resources and methods teachers use to implement the curriculum and assess learning, and the role of the community.

The forum was closed on February 2, 1995 by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and Sports, Mr. E.L. Sendawula. In his address the Permanent Secretary reiterated government commitment to research and thanked the participants for their productive efforts.

The Uganda IEQ project is now developing its initial research plan to incorporate selected priority issues. The plan will be implemented at selected sites in the country during 1995.

The launching of the Uganda IEQ project makes Uganda the latest member of the countries in the network of IEQ projects around the world. The other countries are Mali, Ghana, Guatemala, and South Africa.

UNEB is set to blaze a trail in Uganda's educational development!

*by Dr. Lawrence K. Kanyike,
IEQ/Uganda Research Team Leader*

Project Summary: UGANDA

In Uganda, IEQ is collaborating with the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) to assist the Government of Uganda's long-term effort to rehabilitate primary education. This effort is called the Primary Education Reform Program (PERP), and is being supported by USAID through the Support to Ugandan Primary Education Reform (SUPER) Program. The reform aims to improve students' mastery of literacy, numeracy, and other basic skills; improve school administration, management, and accountability; and reduce inequities among different groups of children. The IEQ/Uganda effort began in October 1994, and involves UNEB overseeing a research program that enables a broad range of researchers to design and conduct studies linked to the reform.

The IEQ Launching Forum, 31 January - 2 February 1995, identified the following priority research questions, based on the recommendations and views of key stakeholders in the education reform program:

- ◆ What factors are related to school effectiveness?
- ◆ How can teachers be motivated to deliver quality instruction, and what can head teachers do to foster this?
- ◆ How do the teachers implement the curriculum?
- ◆ What instructional materials are utilized in the classroom, and how appropriate are these?
- ◆ What methods do teachers use to assess pupils? To what extent do teachers use assessment to improve learning?
- ◆ What factors influence community participation, and how can the head teacher increase community involvement? What are community suggestions to improve school quality?

IEQ'S UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 1995

Ghana:

- ◆ CRIQPEG team leaders visit intervention schools to collect feedback and provide support to teachers and head teachers.
- ◆ CRIQPEG team member to train on SPSS for the Macintosh at Fordham University.

Guatemala:

- ◆ Collection of baseline data in complete (first through sixth grade) schools.

Mali:

- ◆ Baseline data analysis.
- ◆ Finalization of the Phase II research workplan and instrumentation.

South Africa:

- ◆ Second Evaluation Training Workshop to strengthen grantees' capacity to conduct impact assessments of their educational programs at the classroom level.

Uganda:

- ◆ Start-up Research Workshop for principal investigators and supervisors of field research staff to further develop the research design and field test preliminary versions of observation protocols and instruments.

U.S.:

- ◆ Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) conference in Boston, Massachusetts. IEQ researchers will contribute to a panel discussion on IEQ activities in Ghana, Guatemala, and Mali.

APRIL 1995

Ghana:

- ◆ First meeting of the IEQ/Ghana advisory board.

Guatemala:

- ◆ Collection of data from parents on children's behavior change outside the classroom.
- ◆ Workshops on Year II findings with supervisors.

Mali:

- ◆ Phase II field research: classroom observation, interviews, and tests.

MAY 1995

Ghana:

- ◆ Classroom and pupil observations by CRIQPEG team members in the intervention schools.
- ◆ CRIQPEG team members visit intervention schools to collect feedback and provide support to teachers and head teachers.

Guatemala:

- ◆ Observation of individual children in the classroom.
- ◆ Workshops on Year II findings with teachers.

Mali:

- ◆ Phase II data analysis.

PUBLICATIONS LIST

Recent Publications

How Do Teachers Use Textbooks and Other Print Materials?: A Review of the Literature

Jeanne Moulton, September 1994
This report reviews the literature on teachers' use of textbooks and other print materials, both in developing countries and in the United States.

Curriculum-Based Assessment: Linking Curriculum, Assessment and Learning in Developing Education Systems

Abigail Harris, Fordham University, and Aida Pasigna, Institute for International Research, November 1994
Defines curriculum-based assessment, explains how it can be used to improve the quality of the education process, and describes the applications of CBA in developing countries (Part 1 of a three-part series).

Improving Educational Quality for Sustainable Development in Africa, DRAFT

Paul Spector, Institute for International Research, December 1994
*(Highlighted in this edition of **The Quality Link**, on p.1)*

Classroom Profiles as a Stimulus for Improved Policy and Practice, DRAFT

Jane G. Schubert, Institute for International Research, December 1994
Describes the process of converting research findings into policy and improved classroom practices currently being implemented in Ghana through the IEQ project; focuses on how findings became practical classroom strategies.

Improving Educational Quality: A New Approach, Biennial Report #2

Don Adams, University of Pittsburgh, January 1995
*(Highlighted in this edition of **The Quality Link**, on p. 15)*

In Press

La Nueva Escuela Unitaria: Una Experiencia Educativa Innovativa en Guatemala [Nueva Escuela Unitaria: An Innovative Educational Experience in Guatemala]

Submitted for publication in the OAS Journal "La Educación" by Yetilú de Baessa, IEQ/Guatemala, and Ray A. Chesterfield, Juárez and Associates
Describes the feedback provided to the Nueva Escuela Unitaria (NEU) program about the training of teachers during part of the NEU expansion effort.

Policy-Practice-Research-Dialogue Cycles in Improving Educational Quality

Don Adams, Mark Ginsburg, et al., University of Pittsburgh
Presents a cross-country analysis of the policy-practice-research-dialogue cycle of IEQ Ghana, Guatemala and Mali.

Descriptive Timeline of the IEQ Project in Mali: July 1992 - November 1994

Alimasi Ntal-I'Moirwa, Institute for International Research
Reviews major events in the life of IEQ/Mali that reflect the reality of supporting host country reform in a politically challenging and transitional environment.

The English Proficiency of Selected Ghanaian Primary School Pupils: Phase II Research Report

Beatrice Okyere, et al., CRIQPEG, University of Cape Coast, Ghana

Reports results of baseline data achievement in reading, writing, and oral proficiency in a sample of classes in grades 2-5.

Collaborative Research as Language Planning

To be presented at the American Association for Applied Linguistics Conference on a featured colloquium "Language, Policy and Planning: Political, Social and Educational Perspectives" in Long Beach, California on March 25-28, 1995.

Rick Donato, University of Pittsburgh
Documents the process of IEQ/Mali from its focus on the exclusive use of French in the primary grades to the use of national language as a medium of instruction.

A la Recherche d'un Consensus sur la Qualité dans l'Ecole au Mali [Toward a Consensus on the Quality of Education in Mali]

Joshua Muskin, Learning Systems Institute, Florida State University; Sékou Diarra, ISFRA; and Bréhima Tounkara, IPN
Looks at the results of Mali's varied educational initiatives and reforms since independence in order to shed light on the quality concerns of today's New Basic Education Reform.

Please contact Dena Duerbeck for copies of these documents at the Institute for International Research, 1815 North Fort Myer Drive, Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22209 USA or by email at 76105.205@compuserve.com.



Extract from

Improving Educational Quality: A New Approach

by Don Adams, University of Pittsburgh, January 1995

The 1980s and 1990s have seen increased international concern for educational quality, typically defined in terms of student achievement. This renewed attention on quality, to some extent, has shifted the focus of educational debates and reforms from educational growth and efficiency to the discovery of those combinations of inputs, processes, and outputs which are assumed to define or cohere to improved patterns of education for all children.

Another international trend, experimentation with various forms and meanings of educational decentralization and center-local partnerships, has also emerged, partly in response to the perceived weaknesses of top-down policies and attempts at expert-driven, programmatic development of educational reform.

Related to these two trends is the emergence of two correlative ideas:

- 1 Lasting improvements in educational quality must include an in-depth understanding of the current conditions at the classroom and school levels.
- 2 The process of initiating and sustaining educational change is becoming a more iterative, participatory process which involves, and preferably begins with, critique, evaluation, analysis, and feedback at the school and local levels.

In its commitment to a process of integrating new, research-based knowledge into the on-going operation of all levels of the countries' educational systems, the IEQ project reflects both trends in using research to influence policy and improve practice, and educational change as a locally-initiated, flexible, participatory, action-oriented process. This paper elaborates on the relationship between IEQ and the two basic bodies of international research on educational quality. It analyzes the distinctiveness of IEQ in its attempt at combining collaboratively-designed and locally-conducted classroom research into a radiating process of improving education in sample schools and concomitantly influencing practices and policies affecting the larger educational systems.

Improving Educational Quality for Sustainable Development...

continued from page 1

Recommendations include the following:

- 1 The need for a transitional paradigm shift is critical. Systems reform must eschew wasteful, largely futile attempts at European-style education that serve fully only the few who reach tertiary education.
- 2 Nations and cross-national regional education authorities should make low-cost reading materials and radio and television programs available on a widespread scale. Instead of reinventing the wheel in the name of nationalism, they should buy, rent, borrow and adapt already available materials which exist in large numbers and good quality all over the world.
- 3 Sub-Saharan Africa should make better use of the extant teaching force by a massive, concentrated effort to improve performance. Teachers should be provided with detailed, high-quality teaching materials, curriculum-based assessment methods and materials, and adequate teacher training to use them well. The curriculum should be recast and couched in environmental terms to make it more relevant to the lives and needs of the students.
- 4 Nations should educate local communities on how to take more active roles in education. Mutually sympathetic, cooperative relations should be encouraged between schools and parents in order to improve educational relevance, local governance, materials and financial support of schools and teachers, and to motivate educators to attain and sustain high quality performance.

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1815 North Fort Myer Drive, Suite #600
Arlington, VA 22209, USA
Tel. 703/527-5546
Fax. 703/527-4661

IEQ Management Team

Paul Spector, *Principal Investigator*, IIR
Jane Schubert, *Project Director*, IIR
Ray Chesterfield, *Associate Director*,
Juárez & Associates
Don Adams, *Knowledge Building Specialist*,
University of Pittsburgh

Newsletter Editors

Gretchen Hummon, *Research Consultant*, IIR
Sylvia Ellison, *IEQ Project Coordinator*, IIR

Newsletter Production Manager

Mariel Escudero, IIR

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