



REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EDUCATION IN AFRICA

***Junior Secondary  
Education : the West  
African Experience***

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## Contents

*Introduction*

Chapter 1 ..... 7

The Junior Secondary School in Nigeria - *O. C. NWANA.*

Chapter 2 ..... 25

The Ghana Experience of the Junior  
Secondary School Concept      *J.KUSI-ACHAMPONG*

Chapter 3 ..... 43

Junior Secondary Schools  
in Sierra Leone      *SANDY BOCARIE*

Chapter 4 ..... 67

The Middle School in the Gambia      *OUSMANE NDAW*

Chapter 5 ..... 75

The «College» in Guinea      *Diallo Aïcha BAH*

The contributors ..... 95

## Introduction

This publication is a collection of the papers presented at a UNESCO Sub-regional seminar on the «Middle School in the Gambia», held 26 - 28 April, 1994.

The seminar was organised at the request of the Gambia authorities for wide-ranging discussions on an aspect of the current national education policy document which restructured secondary education into two cycles : Junior Secondary School (JSS), known as the *middle school* in the Gambia lasting three years, followed by another three-year cycle of three years : the Senior Secondary School (SSS).

Since the introduction of the new structure in the Gambia in 1992, questions have been raised by all stake holders (teachers, students, the civil society, government officials, etc) on its exact intentions. Teachers and parents, in particular, felt that the entire Middle School question should be critically re-visited.

The process of «revisiting» was helped by educational actors from other West African countries whose educational reform efforts have also involved the creation of a junior secondary cycle. Commissioned papers from these persons (from Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Guinea) gave background information on the junior secondary school concept. The papers also involved a critical review of its on-the-ground implementation.

Plenary discussions on these papers were followed by group work labelled «Implications for the Gambia». While the Gambians drew lessons from experiences in the sub-region for the improvement of the Middle School, non-Gambian participants at the Seminar also felt that they too had lessons for their own countries from the Gambian experience. The Anglophone-francophone inter-change was found particularly useful.

The country experiences reported certainly do not cover everything that has happened to junior secondary education in West Africa. They are however sufficiently representative of



## Introduction

African attempts at implementing a major educational reform. UNESCO/BREDA believes that the Banjul experience is worth sharing with educational actors elsewhere. That is why the papers have been published to enable the educational policy dialogue that began in Banjul in April 1994 to continue everywhere else in the region.

Our thanks go to Dr. A. S. Taal, Secretary-General of the Gambian National Commission for UNESCO for co-ordinating the work of the Seminar. Our thanks also go to the resource persons and the participants who made the seminar the worthwhile activity that it proved to be.

UNESCO - DAKAR  
May, 1994

## Chapter one

### The Junior Secondary School in Nigeria

*By*

*O.C. Nwana*

#### Historical Perspective

The educational system of Nigeria was established by christian Missionary bodies during the second half of the 19th century. The first secondary school, the C.M.S. Grammar School Lagos, was established in 1857, while the first government secondary school, Kings College Lagos, was established in 1909. From that time to the time of political independence in 1960, a variety of secondary school types was established by Government, Christian Missionary Organisations, Islamic Missionary Organisations, Local Communities, and private individuals. The pattern of the secondary school was typically British namely :

- a) Up to the late 1940's
  - (i) One Year Preparatory Class
  - (ii) Four Years for Junior Cambridge Certificate Examination
  - (iii) Two Years for Senior Cambridge Certificate Examination
  - (iv) One Year for London Matriculation Examination
- b) From Early 1950's
  - (i) Five Years for Cambridge School Certificate Examination
  - (ii) Two Years for Cambridge Higher School Certificate Examination

From the pattern of courses offered in the secondary schools up to the late 1940's, it is clear that the secondary school

at that time could structurally be divided into two levels namely,

a) The Junior School starting from the Preparatory Class through Class One to Class Four and terminating with sitting for the Junior Cambridge School Certificate Examination. The vast majority of the pupils (estimated at about 70 %) terminated their school career at that point, and were readily absorbed by the civil service, the teaching service, the commercial, and the industrial sector as middle level manpower. At this point in time, secondary schools which presented candidates only up to the Junior Cambridge Certificate were referred to as Middle Schools, an example was the Government Middle School, Owerri.

b) The Senior School starting Class Five to Class Six at which the Senior Cambridge Certificate Examination is taken. A few talented pupils stayed back for a year to sit the London Matriculation Examination. At that point in time, secondary schools which offered students for the Senior Cambridge Examination were referred to as Colleges as against the term «Middle School» for their more junior counterparts.

The Junior and Senior Cambridge examinations were abandoned in the late 1940's and with it that concept of the Junior Secondary School and the Senior School. From then on, the typical secondary school was of five years duration ending with the School Certificate (West African School Certificate from 1956) ; with a few schools (less than 5%) offering a two-year Sixth-Form towards the Cambridge Higher School Certificate Examination).

Although the Junior Cambridge and the Middle School were discontinued in the late 1940's to early 1950's, there was yet a class of post-primary educational institutions known as *the Secondary Modern School*. The school was of two or three years duration. Its curriculum consisted of a combination of academic and vocational content, but being more vocational than academic. Generally, the Secondary Modern School was for girls. It emphasized reading, writing, arithmetic (but not mathematics), domestic science, agriculture, short-hand and type-writing, office-practice, and commerce. The Secondary Modern School, which was operated more in the Western and Northern parts of the country than the Eastern part was gradually phased out from early 1960's, and presently does not any more exist.

## **Curriculum review and the National Policy on Education**

After independence in 1960, the question began to be asked whether the entire educational system did not require to be reviewed to accommodate the new political stature of the country and the changing times. Questions of the like motivated the holding of the first ever National Curriculum Conference in 1969. Participants at the conference cut across various strata of the society whose interests were relevant to education. That conference, among others, recommended that the entire secondary education system be reorganised in structure, content, scope and style. This resulted in a number of national curriculum development workshops and seminars in which the structure (strata and duration), content (subjects and major themes to be taught), scope (depth of coverage), and style (delivery modes and teaching strategies) were undertaken.

Following the curriculum development exercises, a National Seminar on National Policy on Education was held in 1973 at which all the results of the curriculum development efforts and policy issues were brought into unified focus, resulting in the first ever National Policy on Education, published in 1976/77 which came into effect in 1976. Participating in the Seminar were educationist, educators, educational policy makers and implementers, government functionaries, employers of labour, religious interests, and non-governmental organisations.

Regarding the structure of education, the policy provided for the following :

- (a) Six Years of Primary
- (b) Three Years of Junior Secondary
- (c) Three Years of Senior Secondary
- (d) Four Years of Higher and Professional Education

This structure has come to be known as the 6-3-3-4 system of education, replacing the former system which provided for :

- (a) Six Years of Primary
- (b) Five Years of Secondary

- (c) Two Years of Sixth Form
- (d) Three Years of Higher and Professional Education

It is therefore the Nigerian new National Policy on Education that reintroduced the concept of the Junior Secondary into the system. The new National Policy became effective in 1976 beginning with the launching of the Universal Primary Education (U.P.E.). Consequently, the first pupils to commence the Junior Secondary school system began their career in 1982.

The intention of the policy was that the Junior Secondary School and the Senior Secondary School could as much as possible be under one roof while also making it possible for schools to be established as Junior Schools physically separated from Senior schools and under different administration. The policy provided that the Junior Secondary School will be both prevocational and academic, and as such will teach all the basic subjects which will enable pupils to acquire further knowledge and develop skills. Accordingly, the curriculum was structured along the following lines :

<b>Core Subjects</b>	<b>Pre-Vocational Subjects</b>	<b>Non- Vocational Subjects</b>
1. Mathematics	1. Introductory Tech	1. Arabic Studies
2. English Languages	2. Local Crafts	2. French
3&4. Two Nigerian Languages	3. Home Economics	
5. Integrated Science	4 Business Studies	
6. Social Studies		
7. Music & Culture		
8. Practical Agriculture		
9. Religion & Moral Instruction		
10. Physical Education		
11&12. Two Pre-Vocational Subjects		

Pupils are to offer altogether thirteen subjects.

The two Nigerian languages are to include the language of the area in which the school is located, and one of Nigeria's three main National Languages (namely Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba). Introductory Technology is an integrated technology package consisting of elements of metal work, wood work, electronics and motor mechanics. Local Crafts includes traditional arts and crafts carried out in different localities such as blacksmithing, weaving, dyeing, fishing, etc.

## **Unique curriculum features of the Junior Secondary School**

The curriculum of the Junior Secondary School differs from that of the system which it replaced principally in the following ways :

(a) It is broad-based featuring more subjects (thirteen in all) and through its core subjects is more comprehensive than the traditional system (which presented eight or nine subjects) in which only English Language and Mathematics were compulsory.

(b) It is pre-vocational in nature including such skill areas as Introductory Technology, Local Crafts, Home Economics, and Business Studies (which subjects were optional or not taught in any school of repute before the new policy)

(c) It gave pride of place to Nigerian Languages which were optional or not offered in the vast majority of Nigerian schools before the new policy.

Aside from the structure and content of the Junior School, intensive curriculum development efforts were undertaken to produce «Curriculum Guides» as against «Syllabuses» which were traditional. Whereas syllabuses consisted of subject-topics to be treated under the main subject matter (and which provided ample basis for setting summative-type examinations) curriculum guides specified in as much details as possible for each unit of study the following :

- aims and objectives
- subject matter to be covered
- activities to be carried out
- materials to be used
- evaluation strategies to be adopted

The expanded and enhanced curriculum provided the necessary argument for the duration of three years assigned to this stratum of secondary education.

Since the Junior Secondary School is a well-defined stage in the educational structure, as well as being terminal (in

state schools) for many secondary school pupils, its end is marked by a major assessment protocol referred to as the Junior Secondary School Certificate. The certificate is obtained as follows :

(a) Over the period of three years, assessment grades of all major assignments, tests, quizzes, projects, etc, undertaken are systematically compiled as well as summated by the school for each subject. This is the Continuous Assessment component of the final assessment.

(b) At the end of the course, a Summative Junior Secondary School Certificate Examination is undertaken by the State Ministry of Education for State Schools, and by the Nigerian Board for Educational Measurement for Federal Government ; Command, University, International and Private Secondary Schools. Candidates for this examination are required to offer a minimum of nine and a maximum of twelve subjects so selected as to include English Language, Mathematics, Integrated Science, Social Studies and a Nigerian Language. Some formations make a pre-vocational subject also mandatory.

(c) the grades in the final examination are combined with the Continuous Assessment grades in the ratio of 70 is to 30 to produce the final grades for the certificate. The 30% assigned to Continuous Assessment is apportioned as follows :

1st Year Junior Secondary .....	5%
2nd Year Junior Secondary .....	12,5%
3rd Year Junior Secondary .....	12,5%

The grades are reported in the same manner as those of the Senior Secondary School Certificate (or the General Certificate of Education) namely :

(i) Good .....	1, 2, and 3
(ii) Credit .....	4, 5, and 6
(iii) Pass .....	7 and 8
(iv) Fail .....	9

The Junior Secondary School Certificate is issued by the Examinations Development Centres of the various states for their schools, and by the National Board for Educational Measurement (NBEM) for the Federal, Command secondary schools. This means that there are altogether thirty-two authorities (NBEM, 30 State & 1 Federal Capital Exam units) for the Junior Secondary School Certificate. The West African Examinations Council is not involved in the assessment and certification exercise. To qualify for a certificate, a candidate must earn a passing grade (i.e. Pass, Credit, or Good) in any six subjects including English and Mathematics.

### **Problems in Implementing the Junior Secondary System in Nigeria**

As necessary background to treating some of the more serious problems that have bothered the system, it is perhaps necessary to point out that Nigeria is a Federation of thirty reasonably autonomous states with a Federal Capital Territory. The constitution features among other things responsibilities which belong to the Federal Government alone (styled Exclusive Legislative List) as well as responsibilities which the Federal Government shares with the State Governments (styled Concurrent Legislative List). Secondary education happens to be one of those functions that are on the Concurrent Legislative List. This means that both the Federal and the States can establish and run secondary schools. Of 6,000 secondary schools in the country, only 45 belong to the Federal while the rest belong to the States, Command, Universities etc.

Now for the problems of the Junior Secondary School. These include, in 1982 when the programme was commenced, only six states out of the nineteen states adopted the innovation. Thirteen states continued to operate the old 5-2 secondary school system. The reason commonly given was that the defaulting states did not see the need for lengthening the regular secondary course, and that the new system would cost more than the old system which they found heavy to bear. It is believed



that the true reason was political, the states wanted to demonstrate their powers as provided by the constitution. To ensure uniformity, however, a decree (Education Minimum Standards and Establishment of Institutions etc) was promulgated in 1985 which gave legal backing to the policy and thereby compelled all states to adopt the Junior School and Senior School model.

As indicated earlier, the National Policy on Education prescribed that each pupil in the Junior Secondary School has to offer altogether thirteen subjects. In practice, finding time-table space for the subjects within the conventional school day in the schools which are predominantly day-schools was a very difficult if not impossible task. It was generally felt by the school system that the time-table had become too congested. Although the idea of a broad-based education for our youths was generally acceptable, its operation seemed to have proved cumbersome.

Teaching Nigerian languages as part of the core-curriculum was part of our effort to establish national character and promote our culture. However, it has proved to be practically impossible to find qualified and practice therefore, only a small proportion of Junior Secondary pupils have been able to satisfy the Nigerian language provisions of the policy. Many schools have applied for waivers from offering these languages and they have been granted same. The situation is likely to persist for some time to come until the staff situation improves, and attitude to local languages becomes more positive.

The pre-vocational subjects in the curriculum are equipment-intensive. Most of the equipment (Type-writers, workshop tools, laboratory instruments etc) are not made in the country. They are imported and are very expensive. In practice, the schools lack the equipment in quantity and quality to enable the pupils acquire the much needed practical skills. Though these subjects are listed on the time-table, they are hardly taught.

Continuous Assessment is a crucial innovation in the new policy. However, study of the system has shown that it is not being properly undertaken. In some instances, there seems to be more emphasis given to testing than to teaching. In others,

teachers have created scores in an effort to fulfil all righteousness at the peril of reliability and validity. It was originally prescribed that continuous assessment should account for 70% of the total assessment while the final examination was to account for 30%. The incidence of cheating and other malpractices has informed the downward weighting of continuous assessment to 30%, and upward weighting of the final examination to 70%.

### **Implications of the Junior Secondary School concept for «Education for all in the year 2000»**

Prior to the 1990 Jomtien World Conference on Education for All in the year 2000, Nigeria had defined its basic education to be the Universal Primary Education project, which was part of her new National Policy on Education with the following features :

- (a) It is universal, meaning that there would be primary school space available for every Nigerian child of primary school age.
- (b) It is free, meaning that pupils pay no tuition fees (but books and other materials are not free).
- (c) It is not compulsory, but would be made so in the future whenever the circumstances became appropriate.

Being a signatory to the Jomtien accord, Nigeria has re-interpreted basic education as being the first nine years of schooling namely :

- (i) six years of primary, and
- (ii) three years of junior secondary schooling

With effect from 1992, all children admitted into the first year of the primary school will remain in school for nine years. In other words, the Junior Secondary School as part of Basic Education for all will commence in 1998, everything being equal (especially funds).

This policy decision will have implications for the Junior School beginning from 1998. It is noted that the present Junior Secondary is not universal, not free, and not compulsory. The transition rate from Primary to Junior Secondary varies tremendously from as low as 10% in some states in the North to as high as 80% in some states in the South. The national transition average stands at 45% and rated as lower than expected. Access to the Junior Secondary is through highly competitive state and national common entrance examinations. The pupils who go into the present Junior Secondary are the cream of the primary school and can be expected to cope with the predominantly academic content of the curriculum. When however the Junior Secondary becomes part of Basic Education in 1998 (i.e. becomes universal) the transition ratio will approach 70% and higher. At that time, all pupils who complete Primary-6 and who are willing, will move over to the Junior Secondary School whether or not they are capable of doing so. There would be no more common entrance examination to the secondary school as is now the case. Unless the curriculum of the Junior Secondary School is modified (essentially watered down to accommodate the sharply reduced quality of intake into the schools) the general quality of performance in the Junior Secondary Schools of the future would be expected to be far below expectation.

### **Evaluating the Junior Secondary School in Nigeria**

By 1991, the new Secondary School System had been in operation for nearly ten years and it was time for review. A National Secondary School Curriculum Review Seminar was held with a view to re-examining the structure, curriculum, and functioning of the secondary school system. Participants at the seminar consisted of Education Policy Makers, University and Colleges of Education curriculum and subject Experts ; School Teachers, representatives of the Nigerian Union of Teachers, and professional School subject Associations. The following are the major recommendations of the seminar which relate to the

Junior Secondary and which government has approved in principle :

(a) secondary School education will continue to be delivered at two levels namely the Junior Secondary (three years) and the Senior Secondary (three years).

(b) Effort will be made to train teachers for such subjects as Nigerian Languages, Intergrated Science, and Introductory Technology in which the system experienced severe shortages of qualified staff.

(c) The curriculum will continue to be both academic and pre-vocational, but government will improve the funding of the system to enable more adequate equipping of the laboratories and workshops.

(d) The number of subjects offered will be reduced to eleven.

(e) The curriculum of the subjects will be reviewed especially in subjects whose curriculum have been in use for over six years.

(f) Such new concepts as Citizenship Education, Environmental Education, Population Education, Drug-Abuse Education, and Earth Sciences (Geology) are to be infused into existing subject curricula.

(g) Agriculture and Computer Science should be classed as Pre-Vocational.

(h) Continuous Assessment will continue to be combined with summative examination towards the Junior Certificate.

(i) The emphasis of Pre-Vocational subjects should be more practical than theoretical.

Government has already accepted these recommendations in principle and they are gradually being implemented as for example :

(a) The manufacture of science and technology education equipment within the country is being intensified to redress the shortages caused by restricted importation occasioned by foreign exchange problems.

(b) A Nigerian languages institute has been established to accelerate the production of teachers of Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba.

(c) A Technical Teachers Training Programme has been put in place within certain designated Universities and Polytechnics to produce teachers in the pre-vocational and vocational subjects of the National Policy. The programme is reasonably well-funded.

(d) A National Board for Educational Measurement has been established since 1992 to take over the National Common Entrance Examination into secondary schools from the West African Examinations Council ; and to conduct the Certificate Examination for the Junior Secondary School level.

(e) The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council has initiated protocols for reviewing the curriculum of the school subjects some of which efforts will be completed within the current year.

Another dimension of evaluating the Junior Secondary school system is through the analysis of the performance of students at the Junior Secondary School Certificate Examination. One major problem with analysing these results is that with the exception of Federal Government and Command Secondary Schools (numbering altogether only 85 in 1993) for which the National Board for Educational Measurement carries out the examination, each of the thirty states of the Federation as well as the Capital Territory runs its own Junior secondary Certificate examination with variations. This being the case, comparisons of performance across the entire country become difficult if not meaningless. However, the following table presents the results of the Junior Certificate Examination for the Federal, Command, etc Schools as conducted by the National Board for Educational Measurement in the thirteen subjects which are either compulsory, or most commonly offered.

Analysis of the results shows that percentages of candidate who earn passing grades (i.e. Pass, Credit, and Good) are very high, being 90% and above. This means that failure in the examination is very rare and consequently that performance is good. Again, current transition ratios from Junior secondary to Senior Secondary in so far as Federal Government, Command and Allied Secondary Schools\* is concerned are very high, 90% and above.

**Table I. Performance at the Junior Secondary Certificate Examination**

Subjects	1991		1992		1993	
	Entry	& Pass	Entry	& Pass	Entry	& Pass
1 English	13,517	95.55	14,715	96.79	15,2	92.56
2 Mathematics	13,410	99.29	14,553	99.02	15,601	89.86
3 Integrated Science	13,485	98.09	14,565	95.98	15,602	92.25
4 Social Stds	13,327	97.60	14,529	96.75	15,568	88.42
5 Hausa	3,748	91.12	3,274	93.95	3,326	93.84
6 Igbo	3,011	86.91	2,728	91.72	2,951	93.00
7 Yoruba	5,401	89.89	5,575	95.41	6,247	92.28
8 Intro-Technol.	10,689	95.46	8,918	93.71	11,338	93.82
9 Home Econs	10,379	94.59	10,799	95.09	11,575	92.66
10 Agriculture	12,157	93.96	12,942	94.08	13,798	92.80
11 Fine Art	9,167	93.94	9,355	92.13	9,966	91.63
12 Phys & Hlth	9,926	95.13	10,796	93.72	11,894	91.92
13 Christian-Religious Knowledge	10,116	96.64	10,996	92.59	11,898	91.81

Source : National Board for Educational Measurement, 1984

\* = Command and Allied Secondary Schools are owned by different arms of the military - the army, the navy and the airforce.

It is to be noted that the Federal, Command, University, etc secondary schools are the best staffed, best equipped, and best run schools in the country as compared with State-owned schools. We do not have space to present the results from the state schools. However, generally, the performance of students is below that of the Federal Schools, and the transition ratios from the Junior Secondary to the Senior Secondary are lower (ranges below 80%).

The decision to promote candidates from Junior to Senior Secondary is both academic (using the scores and the number of subjects passed etc) and political (regarding how many places can be financially carried by the system at the senior level). These considerations vary from state to state. Using current Junior Secondary Three and Senior Secondary One enrolments, there is considerable variation in the transition ratio across the states. In some states, the ratio is as low as 20% while in some others it is as high as 75%. As earlier stated, the highest ratios are in the Federal Government Colleges which are as high as 90% and above. The national average transition ratio stands at about 55%

The National Policy on Education intended that, as much as possible, the Junior and the Senior School should be under one roof. This has generally been the case in schools of the southern states of the country. In the northern states of the country, however, many local (i.e. non-urban) communities which are far from state headquarters have only Junior Secondary School outfits. In other words, they have secondary schools without the senior secondary classes. For such schools (the numbers of which vary from local government to local government) the Junior Secondary is terminal. Transition ratio does not apply whether or not the pupils pass the Junior School Certificate. Experiences shows that many products of such schools permanently leave the education system and join the labour force either as unskilled or semi-skilled workers.

It has been stated earlier that the general level of performance at the Junior Secondary Certificate subjects is high. While stating so, it is fully realised that the examinations taken are not standardised. Until a proper National Assessment of Educational Performance system is put in place, evaluating national performance in the individual subjects of the Junior School Certificate (and also the Senior Certificate) will continue to be psychometrically unsound. In addition, until the system of assembling and combining Continuous Assessment grades with the Junior Certificate Examination grades is rationalised, the evaluation of the Junior Certificate and the Junior secondary School system will be less than valid.

In summary, Nigeria's experience with the Junior Secondary School has not been a matter of regret. Most if not all of the problems encountered are not necessarily to be traced to a two-tier (rather than a one-tier) secondary education system. The system has come to stay but it will require continued study and fine-tuning to ensure that it fulfills its mission. A number of suggestions have been put forward for its future review. One of such is that each Junior section of a school with both junior and senior sectors should have its own administrative set-up (e.g. Headmaster, Finances, separate buildings, labs, etc) to enable it have a character of its own unfettered by the demands of the senior section of the school. Although the idea seems sound and

perhaps attractive (especially to the Teachers Union), the cost implications would be tremendous if not impossible. It is noted that in Nigeria, the Junior Secondary School services not only the Senior Secondary School, but also those pupils intending to go to Technical Colleges (i.e. Trade/Skills Schools) as well as Grades Two Teachers Training Colleges.



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## **Chapter two**

### **The Ghana Experience of the Junior Secondary School Concept**

*By*

*J. Kusi-Achampong*

#### **Background Information**

Formal education was introduced to Ghana and other parts of West Africa by the Europeans and Gambia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone inherited their systems from Britain. The changes in the world, especially after the second world war, the products of the colonial education system, health hazards and increase in population resulted in a change of lifestyles and developmental processes.

Hence the period between mid 1950s and 1960s witnessed a rapid political change on the continent of Africa. Our leaders during the struggle for independence began to raise questions on the educational systems. This was indeed very necessary because the aims of the colonial education systems were basically to serve the colonial masters.

The Accelerated Development Plan of 1951 established free and compulsory primary basic education for all children of school going age in Ghana. To enforce this plan, the Education Act of 1961 was passed to provide the cornerstone of Ghana's Education system.

The decade following the Education Act 1961 was characterised by a considerable expansion in education. The need to restructure the system and identify new objectives in response to new aspirations of the post independence period was felt as far back as 1963 when the Government appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Amissah. The Amissah

Committee recommended a new education structure and the introduction of vocationally-oriented courses in the elementary school system. A similar committee was appointed in 1966 under the chairmanship of Professor Alew Kwapong. The Kwapong Committee showed considerable concern about falling standards and made recommendations for the maintenance of high academic standards throughout the system.

The committee echoed the recommendations of the Amisssah Committee on vocational education while stressing the importance of Ghanaian Languages and African culture as a whole. Since then, various Governments have attempted with varying success to provide facilities and opportunities for education of children in Ghana. The most far-reaching policy statement on the structure and objectives of pre-university education is contained in the *New Structure and Content of Education* (1974), following the appointment of the Dzobo Committee on Educational Reform.

This need to control the structure and direction of our education systems brought about new ideas for a change. Besides, the education system in Ghana in particular was in bad shape due to instability of Governmental machinery with its resulting economic hardships.

For example, there was a cut in Government expenditure on education in the late 1970s. There was a large exodus of teachers, lecturers and human resource at all levels of education as a result of economic decline of the late 1970s. Finally, there was an acute shortage of books, library services, equipment and materials. Since no nation can truly develop without education that would provide basic tools for the individuals to face the challenges of life situations in the country, there was an apparent need for education reforms in the country. It was against this background that the Government of Ghana launched the implementation of a nation-wide Education Reform Programme in 1987. The Reform was *to provide greater access to education, to improve the quality of education and to make education more relevant to the needs of society.*

## **Basic Education and the Junior Secondary School concept**

The national policy on *Basic Education* stipulates that all children from the age of six should receive nine years of formal education, as a matter of right.

The nine years compulsory basic education is made up of six years *primary education* and three years *Junior Secondary School Education* (JSS).

For the achievement of specific national objectives a revised national curriculum has been provided for all primary schools comprising the following subjects : Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Cultural Studies, Ghanaian Languages, English, Agriculture, Life Skills and Physical Education, Technical Drawing, Basic Technical Skills and Vocational Skills.

Pupils have automatic transition from the primary school to the JSS ; no entrance examinations are taken. It is estimated that 50% of pupils will move on to the Senior Secondary School (SSS), while the rest may go into apprenticeships and non-formal programmes.

As part of education reforms, a *new Senior Secondary School* (SSS) programme, which took off in September 1990, was designed to offer the opportunity to build on the foundations laid at the basic education level and to strengthen the general intellectual knowledge and skills required for occupation and for further education. A three-year programme, the Senior Secondary School, was designed to cater for various aptitudes in the technical, vocational, agricultural, business and general education fields.

## **National debates on the Junior Secondary School**

As a result of the introduction of the innovative programmes following the recommendations of the Amissah and the Dzobo Committees on Education, referred to earlier in this paper, the Middle School had been under-going considerable modification. In connection with the Amissah Report the last two years of the Middle School (grades 9 and 10) were to be

converted into a craft/vocationally-biased programme described as the *Continuation school*. However, where the Continuation School operated, the programme covered all four years of the Middle School. The Continuation School programme gave attention to such areas as crop farming, fishing, poultry, weaving, home science. *The New Structure and Content of Education* which followed the work of the Dzobo Committee recommended the conversion of the four-year Middle School into a three-year Junior Secondary School Programme with a technical vocational bias.

The curriculum changes of the Junior Secondary School programme included emphasis on science, cultural subjects, and technical-vocational subjects like carpentry, metal work, masonry, hair-dressing, home science, tailoring and welding. Like the Continuation School programme, the Junior Secondary School programme aims at predisposing pupils to vocations.

The adoption of a country strategy became necessary by the mid 1980s, when it became evident that the quality of education provided in the school system had deteriorated considerably and adversely affected the quality of the manpower produced.

This was against the background of acute shortage of books, equipment and other teaching materials. The curriculum had lost its relevance and the duration of pre-university education became too long and cost effective. Access to education had also reduced considerably with an increasing drop-out rate.

Recognizing the situation, the Government of Ghana, introduced the Education Reform Programme in 1987 to address the country's manpower needs and low literacy rate. Since that time, the government has continuously increased its budgetary allocation to the education sector. In addition, donors like the World Bank provided considerable support aimed at improving the quality of education in the country after the Social Sector Coordinating meeting held in Vienna.

Since this meetings, over 170 millions US dollars have been mobilized in external funding to support the profound and extensive educational reforms implemented in Ghana since 1987.

As part of measures to implement the reforms the first Education Sector Adjustment Credit (EDSAC I) Project, was adopted to support the first phase of the reform programme with emphasis on the nation-wide implementation of the Junior Secondary School programme.

EDSAC II was also negotiated between the Government of Ghana and the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank in April, 1990, to assist the Government with the continuation of the implementation of the Junior Secondary School programme (ERP). A Community Secondary School Construction Project (CSSCUP) was started in 1991 with the objective of strengthening basic infrastructure for newly established Senior Secondary Schools.

### **The Junior Secondary School in practice**

As already stated, the National Policy on Basic Education stipulates that all children from the age of six should receive nine years formal education as a matter of right. At this level, special efforts are being made to integrate the school with the home and the community. For instance, actions currently being taken include the strengthening of Parent/Teacher Associations, the introduction and intensification of the Curriculum Enrichment Programme, encouragement of communities to put up workshops for all J.S.S., etc.

Primary Education, being the basis for the rest of the Educational system has the following objectives :

- (a) Numeracy and literacy i.e. the ability to count, use numbers, read, write and communicate effectively.
- (b) Laying the foundation for inquiry and creativity.
- (c) Development of sound moral attitudes and a healthy appreciation of our cultural heritage and identity.
- (d) Development of the ability to adapt constructively to a changing environment.
- (e) Laying the foundation for the development of manipulative and life skills that will prepare the individual pupils to function effectively to his own advantage as well as that of his community.

- (f) Inculcating good citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in national development.

These objectives have been incorporated into a revised national curriculum comprising the following subjects for all primary schools : Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Cultural Studies, Ghanaian Languages, English, Agriculture, Life Skills and Physical Education.

Efforts being made to increase access include provision to date of one textbook for two pupils. It is expected that a one-to-one ratio (nation-wide) will be achieved by the end of the 1990s. Much work is proceeding in teacher quality improvement through the provision of both pre-service and in-service training courses for all categories of teachers.

The Junior Secondary School (J.S.S.) which has replaced the Middle School is of three years duration but forms an integral part of compulsory basic education. The content has been reviewed and greatly expanded to include practical skills orientation.

Consequently, in addition to the general subjects, the J.S.S. curriculum has been designed to provide opportunities for pupils to acquire basic pre-technical, pre-vocational, and basic life skills which will enable pupils to :

(a) discover their aptitudes and potentialities so as to induce in them the desire for self-improvement.

(b) appreciate the use of the hand as well as the mind in order to make them creative and favourably disposed to practical skills.

The following subjects feature on the curriculum at the J.S.S. level : Mathematics, Integrated Science, Social Studies, Cultural Studies, Ghanaian Languages, English Language, French (optional), Agriculture, Life Skills, Physical/Health Education, Technical Drawing, Basic Technical Skills and Vocational Skills.

Every pupil is expected to study all the subjects, except French, which may be studied only if there is a qualified teacher on the staff. All schools are expected to select at least two out of the twelve vocational subjects identified as useful to be

studied and for which raw materials are available throughout in different parts of the country.

The J.S.S. is both terminal and a qualification for further education. It is estimated that 50% of pupils will move on to S.S.S. whilst the rest may go into apprenticeships and non-formal programmes. This has constituted a major step forward in the quest for increased access to secondary education.

In general terms, the new Secondary Education programme offers the opportunity to build on the foundation laid at the Basic Education level and to strengthen the general intellectual knowledge and skills are required for the world of work and for further education.

The traditional secondary school was found to be placing too much emphasis on academic work and remaining too far removed from socio-economic development and national manpower requirements.

The new Senior Secondary Programme seeks to correct these defects and provides programmes which will promote individual as well as national development. It is a three-year programme designed to cater for various aptitudes in the technical, vocational, agricultural, business and general educational fields.

### **Progress made so far**

Most of the major actions outlined under the reform programme for the period 1987 to 1994 has been carried out as follows :

The structure of the school system has been changed from 6:4:5:2: to 6:3:3: by the nation-wide implementation of the J.S.S. programme which completed its 3rd year in June 1990 after the students had sat for the Final Year Exam conducted by the West African Examination Council under the title of Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE).

As at 1992 there were 5,135 Junior Public Secondary Schools with 592,867 pupils throughout the country. The number of Public Senior Secondary Schools has also increased to 413 with enrolment of 225,277.



The last batch of candidates sat for the Common Entrance Examination (C.E.E.) to the Secondary School in March/April 1988. However, all intake into the three-year Junior Secondary School is automatic and compulsory.

New syllabuses for primary and Junior Second schools have been developed and textbooks (except for the Ghanaian Languages) have been written to make the curriculum more relevant and consistent with Ghana's socio-economic and cultural conditions and needs.

Under the Educational Sector Adjustment Programme (EDSAC) large quantities of schools supplies, textbooks and other basic equipment for science, agriculture and technical skills have been provided to Junior Secondary Schools and over 20,000 teachers have received in-service training.

The textbook fees of c120.00 collected from pupils in primary class III to JSS III are paid into a «Revolving Fund» for textbooks replenishment. The reprinting is being done with the assistance of the UNESCO coupons scheme.

A National Planning Committee has been set up to plan and co-ordinate the implementation of programmes. It comprises professional and technical personnel from the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Universities, the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), the National Service Scheme and other relevant bodies.

District Implementation Committees have been formed to liaise with the National Planning Committee and various local communities to assist with the implementation of the reforms.

Educational Broadcast programmes are being streamlined to be teacher oriented in order to upgrade their teaching skill.

Every JSS, except the newly established ones, has been supplied with 22 library books to start their library projects. There are also a few community libraries in the system.

## **A Glimse at the Future**

Inspite of the achievements, there are still problems : ineffective use of teaching and learning materials, mismanagement and poor supervision of schools, inadequate

supply of textbooks and equipment and the existence of workshops in many Junior Secondary Schools.

In March 1994, a National Forum on Basic Education Reforms to the year 2000 was organised by the Ministry of Education at which the following were critically examined :

- Ghana's Economic Strategy and Investment in Education
- Ghana's Human Resource Development Strategy
- Ghana's Strategies for Basic Education
- Questions of quality in Basic Education

The forum identified a number of administrative issues, especially with supervision of schools and financing which if tackled vigorously, would lead Ghana to achieve its desired goal of providing basic education for a greater percentage of its youth with requisite skills that would help them contribute to the social and economic development processes of Ghana.

## Annex

### GHANA

#### Students rip education reform apart

The fledgling education system was on the dissection table at the Accra International Conference Centre on June 20, and wielding the scalpels were the pioneer students, writes *Ajda Yeboah-Afari in Accra*. On hand to collect the dismembered parts were the education authorities, including Minister, Mr Harry Sawyerr, and his deputy, Mr Kwabena Kyereh.

The occasion was the national forum organised by the ministry to afford the first batch of Senior Secondary School (SSS) students the opportunity to tell the nation about their experiences during the three-year course of study. The programme had culminated in the first SSS Certificate Examination last November/December, which produced the shocking results that led to widespread condemnation of the education system and which eventually forced the ministry of education to hold the forum.

The news of the ministry's intention to convene the meeting was received with cynicism in many quarters. Many Ghanaians felt that it was a public relations exercise aimed at placating a public that was strongly hostile to the new education system.

Explaining the rationale behind the forum, deputy Education Minister Kyereh told *West Africa* that although the authorities were fully aware of the issues raised by the students, it was necessary for the general public to also hear views as well as gather more facts for an enquiry on the results.

However, the large numbers of students who filled the Conference Centre, coupled with the passion with which those who mounted the platform recounted their experiences, left little doubt in the minds of observers as to how the students saw the whole education reform exercise.

It was quite evident that they saw themselves as guinea pigs. The recurrent themes were lack of textbooks; inadequate training for teachers of the new system; the non-availability of workshops and science equipment; and the short time within which the broad syllabus had to be completed.

Noted Edna Aryee, formerly of Wesley Grammar School in Accra : "In fact I've been praying for this chance (to let the public know what they went through)...Can you imagine it ? Four months to our exams, the government brought us the new textbooks. Are we magicians ? We needed time."

The students also complained that the general dislike of the reform programme by many Ghanaians had led to the treatment of the pioneer students as second-class, not only in their schools (where the old system is being phased out) but also by ministry of education officials.

They were disparagingly referred to as "J.J.'s experiment" or "Rawlings' guinea pigs". Some members of the public who spoke at the forum backed the students' claims.

The students made a number of suggestion that they hoped would lighten the burden of the next set taking the exams. They wanted the number of subjects reduced from nine to "a more manageable number like five"; workshops and science laboratories to be fully equipped; teachers to be properly trained; textbooks to be readily available and supplied on time; and students to be allowed to re-take the exams in June 1995 rather than at the end of this year to enable them to have enough time for revision.

For the hundreds of students, parents and observers who attended, it was a day well spent. It was reminiscent of the national forum held in January 1987 at the start of the Junior Secondary School system, which eventually produced the SSS students.

It remains to be seen whether the ministry will act on the suggestions. Many observers, though, are quite sceptical. Said Mrs Nancy Thompson, headmistress at Ebenezer Secondary School in Accra : "Why the rush ? We rushed (in implementing the education reform) and this is the result. What race are we running, and against whom ? Mr Minister, please don't let us rush. Do we want to assemble here next year for another post-mortem ?"

From WEST AFRICA

page 1186 of 4-10 July 1994

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## Appendix

### Republic of Ghana : Senior Secondary School Reform Proposed Curriculum

The new senior secondary school reform has been developed in response to criticism that, in the past, this level of education had been overly academic and, thus, removed from the country's development and manpower needs. The reform will include a core curriculum to be followed by all senior secondary students, along with five specialized programmes, two or more of which will be offered in each school. Students will select one specialized programmes, within which they will follow *one option*, consisting of a package of *three subjects*.

The *core curriculum* will consist of *seven subjects* : English, Ghanaian Languages, Science, Mathematics, Agricultural and Environmental Studies, Life Skills, and Physical Education. Option to be made available under the *five programmes* are listed below. (The fact that a school offers a particular programme does not mean that the school will offer all of the options listed under that programme. The number of options that any school will be able to offer will depend on the number of students in that school, since the overall student-teacher ratio in a school should never be less than 20 : 1)

#### I. Agricultural Programme

##### *Option/1*

General Agriculture (soil science, crop science, animal science, farm management)

Farm mechanization

Horticulture

*Option/2*

General A

Horticulture

Agricultural economics and extension

*Option/3*

General Agriculture

Farm mechanization

Horticulture

## II. Commerce Programme

*Accounting Option*

Introduction to **business management**

Any two of : **accounting**, business maths and **costing**,  
or clerical

*Secretarial Option*

Introduction to business management

Typing (40 wpm)

Clerical office duties

## III. Technical Programme

*Building Option*

Technical drawing/engineering science

Building construction

Woodwork

*Metal Work Option*

Technical/drawing/engineering science

Metal Work

Another

*Applied Electricity Option*

Electricity/electronics

Physics

Mathematics

*Auto Mechanics Option*

Technical drawing/engineering science

Auto mechanics

Metal work or another

**IV. Vocational Programme**

*Home Economics*

Management in Living Management in Living

Food and Nutrition OR Clothing and Textiles

Clothing and Textiles General Art

*Visual Arts*

Art General (history, appreciation, general concepts of art) Plus any two of the following subjects (to be selected by schools not students) :

basketry

leather-work

graphic design

picture making

pottery

sculpture

textiles

**V. General Programme**

*Arts*

*Option/1*

English Language

Literature in English

French

*Option/2*

English Language

French

Ghanaian Language

*Option/3*  
Economics  
Geography  
History

*Option/4*  
English  
Ghanaian Language  
Drama and poetry

*Option/5*  
Economics  
Geography  
French

*Option/6*  
Government  
Literature in English  
History

*Option/7*  
History  
Christian religious studies/Islamic studies  
A third subject, to be decided by school

*Option/8*  
Music  
Literature in English  
Ghanaian Language

*Option /9*  
Economics  
Geography  
Mathematics



*Science*

Integrated options will be constructed from any three of the following subjects :

Biology

Chemistry

Physics

Mathematics

*Applied Electricity Option*

Electricity/electronics

Physics

Mathematics

*Auto mechanics Option*

Technical drawing/engineering science

Auto mechanics

Metal work or another.

## Chapter three

### Junior Secondary Schools in Sierra Leone

*By*

*Sandy Bockarie*

#### **The Background**

The education system in Sierra Leone has been variously described as being in disarray or in a crisis-situation (World Bank 1993, National Education Action Plan 1994), a situation caused by a lack of sustained political will, grossly inadequate funding (exacerbated by falling donor assistance), and wasteful use of available resources especially over the last decade. Basic education is of a generally poor standard and, despite being based on a «partnership» between government and local communities/churches with families investing huge sums, participation in it is low - secondary education also operated on the «partnership» principle but until last year extremely selective, is also suffering serious financial and quality problems. Drop-out rates are high and illiteracy is estimated at 79% for all adults (69% for males and 89% for females). School enrolment, which has been falling during the past decade, is currently estimated at 55% for the primary grade with pronounced regional differences. Thus, while the enrolment rate is estimated at 70% to 80% in Freetown, it is only 20% in parts of the Northern Province. Technical and vocational training provision is not remotely capable of meeting the country's demand for skilled labour and middle-level manpower. The curriculum is outdated and unsuited to Sierra Leonean development needs.

The formal Education system prior to the implementation of the «6 -3 - 3 - 4» system in september 1993, consist of six years of primary, up to seven years of secondary , and a

minimum of six years of tertiary education. The normal secondary cycle was five years. Those who did not complete the five years cycle could transfer to a three-year course in trade schools or a two-year certificate course in Agriculture at Njala College of the University of Sierra Leone (USL). After completing the 6 years primary cycle, students had to take the Selective Entrance Examination (SEE) in order to enter the secondary cycle. After completing the 5-years secondary cycle, students had the option of taking the general certificate of Education (GCE) Examination at the ordinary level. Depending on their performance in these exams they could continue for another two years of senior secondary education (lower and upper 6 form), or qualify for entry into USL, the teachers training college (TTC) the Technical Institute , or the Nurses Training School. Another option was to continue in the 6th form and take the GCE Advanced «A» level examination to qualify them for admission to the second year of a four year degree programme in USL.

It was against this background that the change, of which the junior Secondary School (JSS) is a part, was introduced in Sierra Leone in September 1993, and variously referred to as the 6-3-3-4 structure of the system of education or Basic Education.

Since this change the school system has begun a transformation to a system of six years of primary, three years of junior secondary, three years of senior secondary and generally four years of tertiary education. This brings the structure into line with Ghana and Nigeria with whom Sierra Leone has shared the West African Examinations Council (WAEC). Consequently, the system of examination will then become the following :

- a) the SEE will be replaced by the National Primary School Examination (NPSE) which is based on a broader curriculum ;
- b) the GCE "O" and "A" level examination will be phased out as the first (1993/94) Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) cohort moves through the system. These exams will be replaced by the Junior School Certificate Examination (JSCE) for students completing three years of JSS and the Senior School Certificate Examination

(SSCE) for students completing three years of Senior Secondary Schooling (SSS). The NPSE and JSCE will be national examinations developed and administered by the local WAEC office in Sierra Leone while the SSCE will be a regional examination developed and administered by WAEC headquarters.

These changes in the structure of the education system and the corresponding examinations constitute the inception of the JSS in Sierra Leone with its first set of students admitted in the 1993/94 school year and appropriate curriculum revision undertaken to provide a broad and more comprehensive education in the earlier years.

The change to JSS, as against a five-year mainstream grammar school secondary cycle, was in pursuit of the long overdue relevance in African systems of education. For a very long time African countries (as reflected in resolution of conferences of their Ministers of Education) had sought relevance in education. From the time of the Adis Ababa conference of 1961 to the Lagos Plan of Action in 1976 on the theme «Problem of Educational Reform in Relation to the Needs of Economic, Social and Cultural Development», and the Harare Conference of 1982 on the theme «Educational Problems as they relate to the Economic, Social and Cultural Development in Africa» relevance has been the main target of changes in the education process.

In 1991 the Dakar Conference of Ministers of Education focused on the struggle against illiteracy and improved teaching of Science and technology as they relate to development in Africa. This and the other conferences cited above bring together the highest political decision-makers on education in Africa and have all emphasized relevance as it relates to socio-economic development of the continent. The aspects dealing with illiteracy and improved teaching of science and technology are the business of basic education of which the middle school or JSS is a part and it is at this level that both aspects take effect.

In the 1991 Conference of African Ministers of Education, the Director General of UNESCO reminded participants that the central focus for the conference was the development

of Basic Education for all. In that context, he reminded participants, that account would be taken of the proper articulation of basic education with the other types of education and its contribution to the cultural, social and economic development of society. This concern of the Director General may have fuelled Sierra Leonean's eagerness to design a basic education programme with a broad JSS curriculum. In the same conference the Prime Minister of Senegal reaffirmed the views of the Director General when he stated that education, as a prerequisite for the full development of the individuals' potentials and skills, was the chief means of ensuring that all resources were put to the best possible use. And that it is for this reason that every African government had a duty to pay special attention to education, evolving educational strategies that were integrated into economic, social and cultural development and marshalling all domestic resources with that in view. It is therefore an understatement that relevance in education has been and continues to be the focal point of African education.

But Africa has not been unique in seeking relevance in education. The system of education adopted by a country or region depends, to a great extent, on the historic, political socio-economic circumstances of that country or region. Students graduating from the educational system of that country are expected to fit themselves comfortably into the different job slots available, to conform to the customs and traditions of the society and to further the growth of the country.

Before the industrial revolution began in the 18th century in Europe most societies were static, change that took place were slow, almost imperceptible and educational systems were fossilised. The industrial revolution changed all that. Beginning in England, this revolution ushered in large scale industrial production and the manufacture of machinery as the dominant economic practice of western nations, replacing agriculture and small scale making of handicraft.

The industrial revolution changed the patterns of living in the increasing number of countries that it entered. Inevitably countries began to drastically change their systems of education to meet the new challenges, especially the giving of literacy and

skills to the large number of new wage earners, and knowledge of science and technology to those needed to create machines, improve the existing ones and operate them efficiently. In short relevance in education has always been sought in Western Europe as we now do in Africa.

In Sierra Leone, education has inevitably changed with large changes in society. Before the colonial period Sierra Leone was a static agrarian society like pre-18th-century Britain. Education was fashioned for that society, where social roles were firm and entrenched, agricultural and agrarian pursuits hunting and finishing the primary occupation, with some handicrafts and simple trading. The standards, customs and more of the society were fixed and were learnt thoroughly and successfully in the indigenous schools of formal education we now pejoratively refer to as secret societies. With colonialism society became divided into the small number given western education to serve the colonial system and the large majority left to continue in the old ways. Those who attended the Whiteman's school were encouraged to do so to read the Bible, to become good christians; and to serve as teachers, catechists and pastors. Others were schooled to become writing clerks to help the colonial masters to run the country at the lowest level of authority, to become artisans and simple technicians and to maintain the capitalist economic system. Leadership was not encouraged nor were creativity and originality.

When independence came it caught Sierra Leone unawares in terms of education. The predominant model of education we had adopted was that of England and Wales with very little attempt to adopt it meaningfully to the needs of Sierra Leoneans. The predominant subjects in the schools were the Humanities, the Classics of Greece and Rome, and Religion. Science and technology were either absent or played down. The graduates of the system were not encouraged to develop creativity and the skills necessary to operate a viable economy in which they would be the entrepreneurs rather than the shop boys and shop assistants ; to make things rather than to import them.

In the fifties Sierra Leone joined the West African Examinations Council together with Nigeria, Ghana (then Gold Coast) and the Gambia. In this way English-speaking West Africans began to develop their own external examinations, and gradually cut themselves from the umbilical cord of the Cambridge School Examinations Syndicate. It was from this point that Sierra Leone children began to make Africa, and not Europe, their centre of interest, and to learn, for the first time, about their rich past and their own environment.

However, these changes were not enough as our system of education was still modelled on that of Britain. For instance, in the early sixties the Common Entrance Exams along the same lines as the 11+ examinations of England for the end of primary education was replaced by the SEE for secondary education. We discarded the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate of England, replacing them with the GCE "O" and "A" levels, without fully considering whether these new examinations suited our circumstances. These new examinations were developed for the best English students, about 25% of the population, who could successfully negotiate the demanding Grammar School courses.

In England, the majority of English secondary school children took a less rigorous external examination at the end of secondary schooling. We did not think it necessary to provide a similar examination for our less abled children, and we forced all our secondary school students to go through the GCE rigour with predictably disastrous results. The most important reason why these results are so disastrous is that majority of the candidates should not have taken the academic route leading to the "O" and "A" levels.

The first comprehensive attempt to take care of this situation and to develop a system of education relevant to the new needs of the country was the Education Review of the early seventies initiated by the University of Sierra Leone. This review looked at every level of education in the country and every aspect of it and published a report in 1975 significantly entitled «All our Future». Unfortunately, the economic recession exacerbated by the oil crisis disallowed the developments and educational reforms proposed by the review. All our future

became a source for different educational administrators to find isolated ideas for reform like that of changing the school entry age from five to six years. Another recommendation in the review which could not be implemented then was the establishment of a junior secondary school by reducing the seven-year secondary cycle to six years and splitting this in the middle so that it is made up of two parts of three years duration each.

Meanwhile, Nigeria and Ghana were rigorously examining their own systems of education, which they, like Sierra Leone, had inherited from England. These two countries separately came to the conclusion that their systems could not meet the needs and aspirations of their young people and manpower requirements. They therefore decided to abandon the “O” and “A” levels and devised several external examinations for school students - one at the end of nine years basic programme of education for all pupils, and the others at the completion of other courses - the senior school certificate and a range of technical, vocational and commercial examinations.

The decision of Nigeria and Ghana to opt out of the GCE system of examinations created problems for Sierra Leone. All five English-speaking countries in the sub-region (including Liberia) are members of WAEC, and when all ex-British colonies took the GCE as the school terminal examinations there were vast economies of scale in the development and administration of the examination. Sierra Leone and the Gambia, the two small countries of the Council, benefitted immensely from this arrangement as Nigeria and Ghana bore most of the costs. About 90% of the cost of the examination was shared between these two countries as can be seen from the proportion of international contribution to WAEC by country indicated below :

Nigeria	: .....	63%
Ghana	: .....	27%
Sierra Leone	: .....	6%
The Gambia	: .....	2.25%
Liberia	: .....	1.75%
<b>Total</b>	<b>: .....</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



In addition to the financial burden of running WAEC which Sierra Leone was incapable of shouldering and the absence of a relatively inexpensive alternative there was the lack of skilled personnel in sufficient quantity and the vast supporting infrastructure (computers) required. There was also the question of international acceptance of the terminal certificate produced.

It was because of all these considerations that the then Ministry of Education set up a task force in 1989 with the following terms of reference :

- a) to study the situation of our national and international examinations and to advise as to whether we should follow the examples of Nigeria, Ghana and Liberia by conducting our own National High School Leaving Certificate Examinations and seek international recognition of our certificates ;
- (b) for more international credibility, we consider the possibility of reverting to the London GCE or AEB or the Cambridge School Certificate Examination, or we adopt both, that is the Sierra Leone High School Leaving Certificate Examination or the London GCE to be taken by all 5th formers;
- (c) to study the feasibility of retaining the following examinations :
  - Civil Service Entrance Examinations
  - Pitmans, Stages 1 - 3
  - RSA Stages 1 - 3
  - City and Guilds, Stages 1 - 3
- (d) to examine the possibility of re-introducing the form 3 examinations with emphasis on Rural Development/Agriculture/Vocational/Technical Subject to be taken by all form 3 students ;
- (e) to advise on other matters relating to examinations.

The Task Force found out that it could not isolate the examination system from the rest of the education system, as examinations are necessary products of the system. The

members therefore agreed to widen their terms of reference and came up with recommendations to change the whole structure of school examinations and system into the 6-3-3-4 structure as this change would meet the national needs and aspirations.

The work of the task force was followed by the important international conference at Jomtien, Thailand in March 1990 at which Sierra Leone was represented. The decision was reached by this conference to widen the enrolment into primary school until all children between the ages of 6 and 12 are in school to give all primary school completers the opportunity to continue their schooling for at least three more years, making the primary and junior secondary school one continuous course of basic education. Not surprisingly, Sierra Leone helped by UNICEF, accepted the Jomtien initiative and set up a Basic Education Secretariat. The setting up of this secretariat marked the beginning of work towards Junior Secondary or Middle School.

From the foregoing it is clear that the new structure of the Sierra Leone system of education, as recommended by the task force on examinations and the Sierra Leone Education Review Report, the idea of providing basic education to all school-going children and the JSS are closely interrelated, with the JSS being an outcome of both the new structure and the undertaking at Jomtien to provide basic education to all school-going Sierra Leonean children. It is therefore advisable to look at the JSS in the wider context of the new structure of the Sierra Leone education and examination system.

## **Policy Provisions for Junior Secondary Schools**

It became government policy to run JSS in Sierra Leone in September 1993 after it had been decreed that the education system had changed to a 6-3-3-4 structure. But as stated earlier aspects of this policy had already been enforced, even though in piecemeal, as a result of earlier developments in education in Sierra Leone (as in the recommendations from the Education Review and Task Force on Examinations). The increase in school entry age to 6 years and the reduction of the duration of the primary cycle to 6 years had been made government policy much earlier. Therefore the first policy provision was the

declaration of the 6-3-3-4 closely followed by the establishment of Junior Secondary School.

By August 1993, a total of 199 existing secondary schools were recognised and approved as JSS schools distributed by region as follows :

Western Area (including Freetown)	: 36 JSS Schools
Northern Region	: 60 JSS Schools
Eastern Region	: 53 JSS Schools
Southern Region	: 50 JSS Schools

**TOTAL** **199 JSS Schools**

Policy also dictated that JSS is part of the basic education provision in Sierra Leone, meaning that both primary and JSS should give students the minimum of knowledge, skills, educational experiences and attitudes that are required for further education or for useful training for employment. It also became policy that the new system will encourage every student to go successfully through the years of basic education in spite of academic ability so that other talents can be identified to be developed later. All pupils who finish primary school and sit the NPSE are to be provided JSS places. No pupil would be designated as having failed the NPSE and therefore not worthy of a JSS place. This is done in order to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity of receiving 9 years of formal basic education. Pupils are expected to move from one stage of the JSS programme to the other without hinderance.

The policy also stipulated that the curriculum of JSS will be a diversified one with nine core subjects, which all JSS schools must offer, and several electives chosen according to the policy of the school and the needs and interests of the students.

It is to be noted that as far back as 1971 the idea of a diversified curriculum for the first three years of secondary Education was believed to be the most appropriate (1970 White Paper on Education). This led to the revision of the four core subject areas of Science, Mathematics, Social Studies and English. Curriculum packages produced from this exercise

included the Core Course Integrated Science (CCIS), National Programme of Social Studies (NPSS), New Mathematics Series and an English Language Teaching Syllabus. These materials were distributed to schools for use in the first three forms of secondary schools. For various reasons these materials which were produced from World Bank funds were given limited use and disappeared from the schools.

The diversified JSS curriculum stipulated will now include as core subjects Agriculture, French, Integrated Science, Language Arts, Mathematics, Physical and Health Education, Religious and Moral education, Sierra Leone Language and Social Studies.

The study of a Sierra Leone Language as a core subject at the JSS level is now policy because of the finding by the task force that :

(a) knowledge of Sierra Leone language other than one own language would contribute to inter-tribal communication at the most basic level and to greater understanding ;

(b) national languages would acquire more prestige and respect and more readily gain in integrity if taught in our institutions.

Every JSS pupil is therefore required to offer one of the four major languages of the country.

Another reason for the inclusion of national languages as a core curriculum offering is that of pride in our indigenous culture of which language is the most significant manifestation. Sierra Leone is one of the few countries in the world that had before this time refused to give official recognition to its national languages and which, instead, downgrades them. In fact, a new policy is now being worked out by the Department of Education by which the community language will be used for teaching in Classes 1, 2 and 3 of the primary school.

In addition to the nine core subjects it is also policy that other subjects are taken as elective by all pupils. These electives at the JSS level are sub-divided into pre-vocational and non-vocational to provide for middle-level manpower training. The pre-vocational electives include Introductory Technology ; Electronics; Local Crafts ; Home Economics and Business

Studies. The non-vocational electives include Arabic and Creative Arts. In each of the three years of JSS each pupil must study three electives in addition to the nine core subjects, two of which must be chosen from the pre-vocational group.

It is government policy to develop talents in schools for the world of work. At this level the primary purpose is to initiate the pupils into the world of work so that guidance counsellors can identify those gifted in this direction. There is a dearth of middle-level manpower essential for economic growth in Sierra Leone. The skills cultivated by these students would earn them employment (mostly self-employment) in a country with very few opportunities for work in the white collar sector but which very much needs dependable craftsmen and artisans. Without this opportunity the majority of our school leavers would become frustrated vainly looking for non-existent clerical jobs.

All graduating students from the JSS course will take the JSCE, which is a national external examination conducted by the Sierra Leone office of WAEC for the Department of Education. This policy provision drew heavily from earlier practice. Up to 1965 Sierra Leone conducted a middle school programme that certified candidates to enter middle-level manpower training institutions and the Civil Service. This programme ended in 1966 without replacement. The middle school examinations provided not only a first exposure to an external examination but discriminated fairly accurately the academic students from those to enter the vocations.

The assessment procedure prescribed for the JSS is one in which each students' progress is monitored by a Guidance Counsellor, and continuously and systematically assessed. Monitoring and assessment of the students are considered by policy provisions to be important because the grades they produce will :

- (a) form part of the students' JSCE marks ;
- (b) help the principal to place the student in the next level of education ;
- (c) guide the student in choosing the kind of employment most appropriate for him.

Other policy provision for the JSS include a pupil/teacher ratio of 1 : 25 and a fee of Le4,500 per annum per pupil at this level of education. It is also expected that double shift schools are abolished and that JSS schools that do not meet the objectives of JSS education shall be «de-recognised».

These policies were formulated to guide the introduction of the JSS programme with basic assumptions including the provision of the programme and adequate financial support for the schools. The extent to which these assumptions have been met is the subject of an evaluation exercise. However, the debates that have taken place since the inception of the JSS programme suggest that a lot of inputs are still required for the successful implementation of the change.

### **National debates on the Junior Secondary School**

A lot of propaganda was undertaken on the change to the 6-3-3-4 structure of education in Sierra Leone of which the JSS is a part. One of these which was on the lips of most people throughout the country and in the press generally was that the new structure was meant to downgrade academic excellence and erode standards. The change agents, that is the Department of Education argued that the concept of standards is misunderstood by those who criticise especially «conservative diehards who are suspicious of every change». According to the Department of Education standards are not sacrosanct and unchanging : They should be judged against the criteria of set goals. Standards are being kept, they argued, if the educational outcomes attain the set goals.

One of the main goals of the new system, according to the Department, is to develop, to their highest, the abilities of the students according to the overt and objective report in the students' continuous assessment scores. It is, according to the Department of Education, the objective of the JSS to give the best education to every student according to his ability.

The debates in the mass media (radio and newspaper) and by prominent individuals in the Sierra Leone society before and after the inception of JSS indicated the lack of preparation of the system of education to have such a change implemented.

The areas requiring adequate preparation according to the debates were :

- (a) availability of funding to finance such an elaborate and expanded school programme ;
- (b) facilities and resources required for certain newly introduced subjects ;
- (c) development of some subjects and availability of curriculum materials ;
- (d) availability of teachers ;
- (e) availability of accommodation for the large number of pupils that were to be involved in the JSS.

The schools were considered to be unprepared for the inception of JSS because the required facilities/resources had not been provided. The new subjects introduced as part of JSS, like Introductory Technology, Electronics and Creative Arts require special facilities and resources to be taught which were not present in the schools.

The debates also questioned the funding of the change generally. There was the suspicion that the funds promised by donors (including UNICEF) had not been received and that in consequence the requirements for implementing the change would not be available. Indeed, a huge quantity of equipment and tools were required for the new ideas constituting JSS and it was clear to many that the Department of Education which already had an overstretched budget, could not fund the change. UNICEF support like many donors required matching funds from the Sierra Leone government while the loan that was awaited from the African Development Bank had not been finalised. The concern of the public about funding the change was therefore based on what was already known about the schools and the Department of Education. Many even thought that the inception of the whole bundle of changes implicit in 6-3-3-4 was rushed for these reasons.

In some newly introduced subjects no curriculum materials were known to be in existence. Other subjects, there were, that had not even been developed. Sierra Leone languages had never been taught in schools and so very little was known

about teaching them in schools. They had to be developed as a school subject. These and many other issues were the concerns of the general public, and the feeling was that these necessary arrangements must precede the introduction of JSS.

The availability of teachers in the schools to teach the various subjects newly introduced as part of JSS was also raised. Indeed there were few trained teachers for some of these new subjects but there were others for which no teachers existed. Some core subjects like Sierra Leonean languages were appearing in the entire education system as new. Questions were asked about the availability of teachers to handle these subjects.

By admitting all pupils who take the NPSE into JSS 1 as dictated by policy meant additional accommodation in the schools. Many people were not sure of government ability to provide JSS 1 places to all the children. A total of about 30,000 pupils in Class 6 of primary schools every year to be accommodated in about 200 JSS schools will give an average of 150 pupils per school per year. The chances of overcrowding in JSS classes would be very high in these circumstances, considering the size of some of the schools approved. It was also feared that in the third year of the programme the population in the schools will become difficult to cope with in terms of teachers and equipment and tools required. Of course, some schools have a tradition of admitting certain categories of candidates who take the end of primary school examinations. These traditions were to be forced to give way to the JSS.

In addition to these several other questions were asked about the junior secondary cycle including :

- (a) how many pupils enter the JSS cycle ?
- (b) what is to happen to the Selective Entrance Exam ?
- (c) is the purpose of the NPSE the same as that of the SEE it is to replace ?
- (d) is there going to be any continuous assessment input into the NPSE ?
- (e) is the NPSE likely to be a better exam than the SEE ?
- (f) what is the duration of the JSS ?
- (g) how are pupils assessed and promoted at the JSS level?
- (h) what are the subjects offered at the JSS level ?



These and many others questions were compiled with answers in a brochure by the Basic Education Secretariat for the debates. Although the answers to these questions were clear the issues they addressed were prone to misinterpretation. For example, it was widely believed that the JSS and corresponding examination system had no room for failures. All pupils that take the NPSE shall pass that exam and be given a place in JSS 1. This meant to some people that pupils need not study because they would go to JSS whatever their performance.

The same misconception was given to the continuous assessment procedure at the JSS level for promotion from one stage to the other. It was widely believed that since mass promotion was to be followed at JSS level pupils need not study. In the minds of several members of the public this will bring about lowering of standards in education. It was believed that the absence of competition in the schools that this practice may imply, will make children not to work hard enough. The Basic Education Secretariat on the other hand advocated that the approach will make pupils to show their talents and that these will be identified and developed rather than forcing every child through a highly competitive academic career.

On the whole, the Basic Education Secretariat was of the firm conviction that all the issues raised in the debates will be resolved only if the JSS programme was put into practice and so it was. The first intake into Junior Secondary School took place in September 1993.

### **The Junior Secondary School in practice**

The JSS programme started this academic year and so much more is to be known after the programme has had a full year cycle of implementation.

The inception of JSS in Sierra Leone however was preceded by a huge propaganda campaign on the radio, in the newspapers and by groups of people who moved to various parts of the country presenting the new idea. There were theatre groups that dramatised the innovations and the Executive Secretary in the Basic Education Secretariat presented argu-

ments to the Sierra Leone public in favour of the introduction of the change. Leaflets and brochures were prepared on the change and panel discussions held. Teachers unions, parents groups and students in institutions of higher learning were brought together for discussions. Opinion leaders were made to talk on the change even though negatively in cases. Some of these remarked on the lack of preparedness of the Department of Education and the schools to mount such a change. It is to be noted that the University and Teacher Training Colleges were very conspicuously left out of all this propaganda activities until after commencement of the change.

Alongside these various forms of propaganda activities were seminars and workshops for training and retraining of teachers to handle new subjects like Sierra Leone languages, Introductory Technology, Religious and Moral Instructions, Electronics etc. Teachers were also trained in Continuous Assessment and Guidance and Counselling. Workshops were organised on the writing of curriculum materials in the new subjects. Other plans for the implementation of JSS included the preparation of guidelines to the various actors including personnel at the Department of Education. The planning even undertook the preparation of a model time table for use in schools (appendix I). On the whole the main strategy of implementation of JSS was one of firm conviction that the programme was best for Sierra Leone and should be put into practice at all cost. It was with this conviction that the Basic Education Programme was simultaneously introduced at both the primary and junior secondary levels rather than at the primary level first and allowing it to progress systematically to the secondary.

The first students of the JSS programme were admitted in September 1993 from amongst Class 6 students that had taken the SEE. All Class 6 students of the primary school were admitted into JSS 1 that year and there were no failures declared in the SEE.

Being in its first year of implementation the relationship of JSS with the primary and senior secondary cycles can only be conjectured. The aim is that the introduction of JSS will reduce if not completely eliminate dropout rate at the transition stage from primary to secondary education. This would however

depend on whether or not all the factors that contribute to dropout rate are eliminated by the introduction of JSS.

At the end of JSS it is expected that students would either enter the job market or continue in one of the post-JSS institutions (i.e., senior secondary, technical and vocational institutes and vocational and trade centres).

Since no graduates have yet left the JSS it can only be conjectured that these 15-year old will either enter the job market, the senior secondary schools, the technical and vocational institutes or vocational and trade centres. What will really happen remains unknown until three years from now. Even the elaborate examination system proposed as part of the change is still to be implemented and one can only guess as to how it will work out. The first of the proposed exams, the NPSE, is to be taken for the first time in June 1994 and so no one knows what the performance of the students will be like as compared to the SEE.

One aspect of the change to JSS that involved preparation is continuous assessment and guidance and counselling. Teachers on the job attended in-service workshops for this purpose and those in initial training are expected to undertake courses in continuous assessment and guidance and counselling. The Milton Margai Teachers College, a college specifically intended for teachers of JSS, has already mounted a course in continuous assessment and guidance counselling. In the schools, guidance Counsellors were appointed from amongst the regular teachers on the school staff and sent for the in-service training courses that were organised.

The strategy adopted for teachers of the completely new subjects introduced by JSS in the school curriculum like Introductory Technology, Electronics, Local Crafts and Sierra Leone languages was that people who had some training in these fields but for some other purposes (mechanics, primary school teachers) were given some in-service training and sent to the schools to teach. In many cases this training lasted for only 10 days. In short, the training given to teachers to have the JSS programme take off was a crash one. Subjects like Business studies, Arabic and Creative Arts which already existed in the curriculum of some teacher training institutions used the existing

teachers in the schools for the JSS, even though in exceedingly small numbers. In all cases where teachers on the job were trained such training was expected to have a multiplier effect. The exception was continuous assessment which was already being used and taught at Njala University College to teachers in pre-service training. This meant that those graduating from Njala University College already had some idea and could effect it without much problems.

The JSS programme has affected also school organisation. For example, the increase in the number of subjects has meant that schools days had to be lengthened in duration and still congested with activities. Some schools have had to introduce double shifts to be able to accommodate all the pupils they have had to take because of the policies on entrance into secondary schools.

The schools experience an acute shortage of the materials they require to teach both the old and newly introduced subjects in the programme. The effect of this shortage is having disastrous effect on the success of JSS. The hope is that funding from donor agencies will be used to equip the schools but the funding has already been too late to influence the onset of JSS in Sierra Leone.

The JSS programme is in its first year in the schools and so its full implementation cannot be presented but the signs are that adequate support is required for its impact to be felt in the Sierra Leone education system.

## **Assessment of the JSS in Sierra Leone**

The commencement and steady progress of the JSS programme in Sierra Leone came about as a result of tremendous effort by the Department of Education of the Government through its Basic Education Secretariat. The first NPSE is being prepared by the local office of WAEC in Freetown for the second set of entrants into the programme. It is estimated that about 30,000 students will be taking this examination so that by September 1994 the first set which entered in 1993 will be in JSS 2. However, the public is still concerned about the mass promotion of students in the JSS programme and considers it a means

of lowering standards of education in the country. On the other hand, the admission of all Class 6 students to JSS 1 last year indicates that the envisaged objective of reducing or eliminating drop-out rate during the transition phase from primary to secondary school is being achieved.

The newly approved and recognised JSS schools now have a good balance between vocation and non-vocational subjects. Provided that the equipment and materials required for realistically teaching vocational subjects are available in the schools the objective of introducing JSS students to the world of work early enough in their education process will not be achieved. The presence of vocational subjects in the schools' programme is already a good indication of achieving this objective but the presence of the subjects alone will not be enough. The tools and equipment required will need to be provided to make a meaningful impact.

The use of continuous assessment in the schools is to give a full picture of the students' talents. This approach appears to be on course as far as the JSS programme in the schools is concerned. It is to be hoped however that the anticipated multiplier effect of the in-service training provided takes place so that all teachers will practice continuous assessment. If, in turn, the continuous assessment grades are used in guidance and counselling then the students at the end of three years will be directed to the various training slots that would benefit their aptitudes and talents. Sierra Leone will then produce the manpower its human resources can provide.

The objective of providing literacy in a Sierra Leone language is also being vigorously pursued by the JSS programme as most schools now teach one or the other of the four major national languages. The purpose for doing this will not be fully achieved until students are made to be taught in a language other than their own. It is literacy in the mother tongue and another Sierra Leone language that will bring about the anticipated inter-tribal unity.

In general, the introduction of JSS has compounded the problems of education in Sierra Leone. One such major problem is that of the availability of required resources in the schools. The introduction of JSS introduced an added shortage of teachers

and educational materials in the schools. The schools recognised as JSS schools already had an acute shortage of teachers and educational materials for the then existing subjects in the old programme. By increasing the number of subjects offered at the JSS level the demand for these resources are bound to be stretched beyond limits.

The JSS programme was introduced without teachers for the new subjects that were created. The in-service training courses offered did not solve this problem as the quality of training and number of teachers produced were inadequate. In one region of the country with fifty three JSS schools only 35 teachers were trained for the 5 or more new subjects introduced by the programme. Besides, the recruitment of mechanics who had received ten days in-service training as teachers left a lot to be desired.

The approved schools for the new programme were ill equipped. Without additional tools and equipment it will be practically impossible to teach new subjects like Introductory Technology and Electronics.

The curriculum that was to be followed by the JSS schools had not been fully developed at the time the new programme started. Draft syllabuses had been designed for some subjects but no textbooks were available in the country for them. In some cases the syllabuses consisted of list of topics without an indication of their scope and sequence. A proper curriculum design and development exercise is required for the new subjects that have been introduced by the commencement of JSS.

Another problem area facing the JSS programme is accommodation. Enrolment in the JSS programme will be more than doubled by the admission of all Class 6 students into JSS 1. this will be against a background of inadequate classroom accommodation in the schools. The commencement of JSS therefore necessitates capital development of the schools by way of new buildings for classrooms, laboratories and workshops. Correspondingly, the financial implications of these developments create an alarmingly state of affairs in the schools. In the case of students enrolment in JSS there will be reason for increasing

the playground because of the significance attached to Physical and Health Education.

On the whole, it has become very clear since the decision to go 6-3-3-4 in Sierra Leone that change in education requires much more preparation than could ever be anticipated because a change at one level always has implications for the other levels. For instance, the onset of the JSS programme necessitated commencement of professional teacher training courses for technical, vocational and business education at even the University. At the moment, a programme in Sierra Leone languages is being worked out by the Language Education Department of the University of Sierra Leone. We have also learnt in Sierra Leone that we cannot conduct our education enterprise in isolation. There always appears to be a need for cooperation with especially our West African Anglophone neighbours. A number of former ties tend to bind us together with the other members of this subregion in the field of education and our options are too few if we are to conduct a meaningful and respectable system of education.

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## Chapter four

### The Middle School in the Gambia

*By*

*Ousmane NDAW*

The decade 1976-1986 saw a rapid, quantitative expansion in all sectors of Education in The Gambia. Over 50 pre-school Institutions were opened through private initiative. Primary school enrolment increased from 24,629 in 1975/76 to 69,250 children in 1985/86. At the secondary school level, enrolment in secondary technical increased from 4635 in 1975/76 to 10,852 in 1985/86. There was also a marked expansion at the secondary high school from 2199 to 4905 at the end of the decade.

These achievements in the expansion of educational opportunities were guided by the Education Policy 1976-1986. However, when the policy period ended in 1986, in spite of the achievement already mentioned, many concerns were being expressed about the quality and relevance of the education being provided in the schools.

In September 1986, a National Conference on Education organised by the Ministry of Education examined critically the concerns that were being voiced about the ability of the country's education services to genuinely meet individual and national human resource development needs. It was the recommendation of the National Conference on Education that guided the formulation of the current Education Policy 1988-2003.

The policy established the basic aims that should guide the work of schools in the Gambia :

- (a) To promote a broad education which will enable the school leaver to develop his or her full potential and thereby to contribute to life in his or her community and the nation at large ;

- (b) To develop the physical and mental skills which will contribute to nation building - economically, socially and culturally ;
- (c) To foster a sense of service, loyalty and dedication to the nation ;
- (d) To develop creativity and a critical mind ;
- (e) To develop moral, religious and ethical values ;
- (f) To create an awareness of the importance of democracy and human rights and the responsibility of the individual in fostering these qualities ;
- (g) To provide an education which will prepare the school-leaver to acquire vocational skills and utilise them in order to earn a living and become an economically self-reliant member of the community ;
- (h) To develop an understanding of the contribution which science and technology can make to development ;
- (i) To develop an appreciation of the cultural heritage of The Gambia and of the cultures of other peoples ;
- (j) To develop a healthy body.

In translating these aims into practice, two major objectives set in the policy in relation to the middle school can be detailed as :

- increasing access to basic education in grades 1-9 and
- developing a broad based curriculum for grades 1-9.

The middle school in The Gambia should therefore be seen as an integral part of the basic education concept which should provide 9 years uninterrupted education to all those who enter the system. However, material and financial constraints make it necessary to proceed by :

- increasing enrolment ratio in grades 1-6 to 75 percent by the year 2003, and
- increasing the transition ratio from grades 6-7 to 60 percent by the year 2003

The desire to provide basic education to all who enter the school system can be seen in the structures that were established going back to the 1920s and the colonial period. In The Gambia up until 1958, the school structure that was in place provided: 2 years of infant school, 7 years elementary school, and 6 years high school.

During this period, all those who entered the system were assured of at least nine years of basic education. Pupils could proceed two ways :

- a. (1) 2 years infant school  
(2) 4 years lower elementary (Std 1-4)  
(3) 3 years upper elementary (Std 5-7)
- b. (1) 2 years infant school  
(2) 4 years lower elementary (Std 1-4)  
(3) 4 years high school (Std 1-4, 5B, 5A)

In this arrangement proceeding to upper elementary or high school was determined by the performance of the student at the standard four selection examination which was national. Those who passed could proceed to high school whilst the rest proceeded to standard five. In time however, this structure developed its own flexibility with elementary students in standard 5-7 being offered places where available, at various levels of high school depending on their performance and the recommendation of their school heads.

In 1958, a new structure established which provided :

- (a) Six years of primary schooling,
- (b) four years of the secondary modern school, and
- (c) six years high school (later reduced to 5)

This structure remained in place till the introduction of the current *Education Policy 1988-2003*. However, during this period, the Secondary Modern schools changed to Junior Secondary school and finally to Secondary Technical schools ; the four years duration remained. Even where the names changed, the mission of this type of school remained the same. They admitted the second best students from the National Common Entrance examinations and provided them with a broad based education that include technical and vocational

subjects over a period of four years. The problem of this type of school could best be illustrated by examining the problems of the secondary technical schools, the latest in the range.

The secondary technical schools were technical only in name, as they lacked the necessary tools and specialist rooms that would enable technical subjects to be properly taught. Even though the first World Bank Education Project equipped and upgraded four of these schools namely Crab Island, Brikama, Latrikunda and Pakalinding secondary schools and provided training for technical and science teachers, problems arose in the use of the equipment to make teaching in these areas effective. The eleven schools that were not equipped experienced considerable difficulties in teaching the vocational subjects to the extent that some of them were excluded from sitting some of the subjects in the Secondary Technical School Leaving Certificate Examination conducted by the West Africa Examination Council.

That only children who score the second best marks went to secondary technical schools meant that these schools were seen as second best schools. Pupils with the best marks went to high school. Thus parents, students and even teachers were opposed to secondary technical education, preferring that their children repeat the exam in the primary schools rather than go to secondary technical school. This situation did put a lot of pressure on the high schools and created considerable wastage in the primary schools. The fact too that students in form 1 of secondary technical schools are allowed to re-sit the Gambia Common Entrance Examination to gain admittance to high school confirmed the fact that people saw high school education as «first best». This is further confirmed by the second chance given for admission to high school at the end of the secondary technical course.

This second best image clearly adversely affected the role and function of the Secondary Technical School to the extent that by 1986, the Secondary Technical School constituted what was probably the most difficult problem facing the then Education Department.

This is why during the National Conference, the future of the Secondary Technical School provided very heated dis-

cussion because the Conference was determined to terminate the existence of Secondary Technical Schools.

During the Conference, various options were discussed but the most acceptable one was to accept basic education in its full meaning and provide nine years of uninterrupted schooling to all who enter the system. This proposal was finally accepted as one of the major recommendation of the Conference .

The `1988-2003 Education Policy modified this recommendation and established a new structure as follows : (a) six years of first level schooling : Grades 1-6, (b) three years of middle school : Grades 7-9, (c) three years of high school : Grades 10-12,

(d) two years in the «sixth form» : Grades 13-14.

The policy also provided that all secondary technical schools be transformed to middle schools to cater for the majority of the children who finished the primary school course - 60 percent by the year 2003. The children who will not benefit from the middle school education will be provided opportunity at the end of the primary school course in skill centres to acquire skills for employment. More specifically, the policy provides that :

(a) Middle schools be established in the existing secondary technical schools to provide for the greater cohort of the primary school

(b) The three year middle school course be part of the nine year basic education programme

(c) That the end of middle school be a terminal Stage

(d) Double shift schooling be introduced in selected middle schools to help cope with the increased number of students that will be entirely those institutions

(e) Pupils take to an exam at the end of the middle school leading to certification

(f) Adequate linkage be established between first level and the middle school

(g) Adequate resources be provided to make the middle school meaningful learning centre

The above policy provisions are expected to ensure close relationship between the first level and the middle school and between the middle school and the high school. The middle school is part of the 9 year basic education course and the examination at the end of the middle school course is both terminal and selective to high school. This means that the courses offered at all levels must be structured in such a way that they run into each other.

The subjects offered at the middle school comprise two categories namely *core subjects* and optional subjects. The core subjects comprise : English Language, Mathematics, Social and Environmental Studies, Science.

On the *optional subjects* list are : Agricultural Science, Islamic Studies/Christian Religious Education, French, Wood work, Metal work , Technical Drawing, Arts and Crafts, Home Economics, and Physical and Health Education.

Teaching and examination syllabuses have been prepared in readiness for the first examination in 1995.

For the purpose of the examination, the subjects will be divided into three groups : Group One (which comprises the core subjects) are compulsory. Candidates can offer a minimum of six subjects and a maximum of nine, selecting at least one subject from groups two and three.

Continuous assessment will form part of the examination process, and at this stage, the modalities are being worked out for piloting in 1995 and 1996 and full incorporation in 1997.

It is difficult, at this stage, to state the extent to which the envisaged objectives of the middle school has been achieved. The middle school was introduced in September, 1992. In the two exams that has been taken so far, there was 43% transition from Grade six to seven in 1992 and 51% transition in 1993. Considering that in 1991 the transition was 35.8%, it could be said that some progress has been achieved in the area of increased access.

Two major problems remain, namely the provision of well trained teachers and a substantial increase in the transition rate.

Perhaps it may not be an exaggeration to state that the transition rate from Grade six to seven poses the greatest challenge to the Education Reform Programme. In 1987, the

National Conference of Education recommended 9 years uninterrupted basic education. The time is now right for the recommendation to be re-visited and see if in the light of our present condition and given a more efficient management of resources, it would be possible to achieve 100% transition from Grade six to seven. Ghana has achieved it. And perhaps if the only lesson for the future The Gambia learns from this seminar is how to achieve uninterrupted 9 years basic education, this seminar would have achieved its objectives.

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## **Chapter five**

### **The «College» in Guinea**

*By*

*Diallo Aïcha BAH*

Guinea has, since its independence in 1958, attached a great importance to Education and training as tools for economic, social and cultural development.

Huge resources have been devoted to funding the development of the education system. Thus, in 1970, it was estimated that 6.4% of the Gross National Product was spent on education, showing Guinea as the greatest spender on in West Africa. By the end of the first Republic (1984), the level commitment slowed down, but still remained above the average for the sub-region.

The «College» or lower secondary school, held an important place in this system. But its development was linked to the various reforms the education system went through, from 1958 to 1984, most often to the detriment of the quality of education. This chapter will discuss its evolution over the years (stressing the strengths and weaknesses of the «College»). There will be a special focus on the progress made since 1984. Finally, the future prospects of the «College» will be outlined, taking into account constraints and priorities states in the Education Policy Statement of September 1989 and implemented through the Education Sector Adjustment Programme (ESAP).

#### **Origins and antecedents of the «College»**

Until the end of the colonial period, the Guinean education system was copied from the structures of the French education system. Secondary school experience did not have a real development before independence, as priority was always given to the training of personnel with only the basic minimum of schooling, to assist the colonial power.

The Conakry Higher Primary School Camille Guy (EPS) was the first type of «Collège» established in Guinea, in the 30s. This very selective establishment, enrolled the best 40 pupils who were successful at the Primary School Leaving Certificate (CEPE). After three years, students who were successful at the final exam, were allowed to sit for compete for entrance to the William Ponty Teacher Training College in Dakar or to the Teacher Training College of Katibougou in Mali.

In October 1949, the EPS was replaced by modern and classic «colleges» of Conakry which enrolled pupils who were successful at the «college» enhance examination after the CEPE. The length of training was four years, ending up with (BE) at the modern «college» and (BEPC) at the classic «college». The holder of these qualification could seek admission to William Ponty while the best could pursue their studies in the Lycée Technique Maurice Delafosse, also in Dakar.

At the beginning of the 1950-1951 school year, the Conakry «College technique» was opened which, after four years training, delivered the (CAP), and after five years, the (BIT). The holders of the (BIT) could enroll at the Bamako School of Public Works.

At the same period, the girls' «Cours Normal» and the «Collège Classique» for girls were established with the view to providing girls with equal education with their male counterparts in the «colleges classique et moderne» of Donka. These are the only four secondary institutions which existed at the eve of independence.

## **Major reforms during the First Republic**

The educational system of the Republic of Guinea has vadergone a great deal of changes. The evolution of the guinean school sysm has been far from linear, indeed, it has in fact been discontinuous,punctuated by ups and downs. There were many reforms, at least 19 of them, in 26 years. Nonetheless, in this difficult route, three main stages can be pinpointed which were not only corrective, but also steps towards the implementation of the policy measures, previously agreed upon. The outcome of this reform was to free Man and Education in order to make

them useful to the former and to society. The implementation of these goals, sometimes suffered from deadly blows, in the choice of means as well as, in their utilisation.

The lack of clarity and precision in the approaches, the lack of coherent planning of actions, the excessive politisation of structures as well as the content of schooling, the lack of political wisdom of the leaders, are just some of the many obstacles which negatively plagued\_educational system.

### **First Phase of Reform : 1959 - 1968**

This is the period of decolonisation in all spheres, and that of the implementation of national independence. Decree n° 042/MEN, of 5 August 1959, on the Reform of Education in the Republic of Guinea, define levels of education, programmes, time-tabling and certificates. This first reform had the following objectives :

- (a) revive African cultural values ;
- (b) the right to education to all citizens, as acknowledged by the constitutional law of 10 November 1958
- (c) to provide access to a more advanced scientific culture and to technologies which meet the real needs of the country.

The reform was adopted at the Fifth National Conference of the Democratic Party of Guinea, (the only official political party of the time), in August 1961 and its implementation was decided by the Sixth National Conference, held in Labé, In December of the same year.

Whith this reform the levels of education shall be the following :

- (a) the primary education cycle of four years duration, leading to the First Cycle.
- (b) the second cycle testing five year's duration (5 - 9 grades) and consisting of the lower secondary schools for general education, and lower technical secondary schools. For reasons of lack of resources, 5th and 6th year classes remained attached to the first cycle,

instead of being transferred to lower secondary schools. In lower secondary schools, pupils were taught basic subjects such as French Grammar, Maths, Science, French, World Literature, Negro-Africa Literature and Languages. Practical realities determined the choice of courses of study.

At the end of the lower secondary school, all pupils sit for an examination called BESC or Lower Secondary School Certificate or a vocational examination for those attending technical lower secondary schools.

(c) In the third cycle of education (the lycée) or higher secondary education, existed in two streams: (general secondary education or technical secondary education). The qualification at the end of this cycle, was the Baccalauréat, taken in two parts.

At the end of the 1962-1963 school year, Guinea had 24 general lower secondary schools, 8 technical lower secondary schools, 1 technical lycée and 3 classical and modern lycees. Over 1,530 candidates sat for the lower secondary school certificate examination only 340 were successful, (i.e 22%)

Second cycle teaching personnel were trained in :

- Dabadou (Kankan) Secondary Teacher Training College, for the teaching of basic school subjects, in both general and technical lower secondary schools. Students graduating from this school were called Lower secondary school teachers.

- Conakry Technical Secondary Teacher Training College, for the teaching of technical subjects, in both types of lower secondary schools. Teachers trained in this institution were called technical teachers of the second cycle.

In February 1964, the Eighth National Conference of the PDG (Democratic Party of Guinea), introduces radical changes to the on-going reform of education. To increase enrolment significantly, and within a short period, the cycle of studies was changed as follows :

- mass education (first cycle) : 5 years

- lower secondary education (second cycle) : 4 years
- higher secondary education (third cycle) : 3 years

The opening of general lower secondary schools was extended to all towns, and a technical committee was set up, to work out and implement programmes for grades 7-9 over four years of studies, in compliance with the new structure.

In June 1965, the meeting of the National Council of the Revolution of the PDG held in N'Zéréloré, committed the Party and the Government to taking all necessary measures to concretise the concept «linking school to life». From then on, farming and cattle-breeding became the first concern, and some lower secondary schools became farming-institutions.

Decisions taken had little effects on practice, because of the lack of sensitisation of the people, on the one hand, and the lack of conviction in those responsible for the implementation, on the other hand.

In 1966, this strong policy of schooling at the grass root level, produced excellent results, and Guinea, during that period, enrolled 200,000 pupils, in primary school, as against 40,000, in 1958. Nevertheless, this had its drawbacks : lower secondary schools could not absorb this mass of pupils who had completed the first cycle. In order to kill two birds with one stone, the Guinean Government created Lower Secondary Schools in rural areas, for the sake of enrolling this huge number of pupils and realising «linkage of school to life», especially in the agropastoral domain. A great emphasis was also put on manual work, in the goal of schools.

The establishment of these first types of Lower Secondary Schools for Rural Education facilitated the admission of pupils considered the scums of the educational system. That did not delay protests from both pupils and parents who could not understand this institutionalised measure.

The January 1967 ordinary session of the National Council of the Revolution decided on the use of national languages as media for teaching and carried out a new modification of the cycle of studies as follows :

- First Cycle : 6 years duration instead of 5

- Second Cycle : 3 years duration instead of 4
- Third Cycle : 3 years duration.

The Higher Council on Education was created at the same time to help the Government in the development of general directives on education.

The end of the first stage corresponds with the total control of school by the Party and the supremacy of politics over pedagogy.

### **The Second Stage : 1968 - 1975**

This was the Socialist Cultural Revolution stage, during which the social and economic context was marked by a considerable decline of the enthusiasm of the population. This determined policy of schooling, at first, implied new choices at the political and pedagogical levels. Indeed, it was urgent to find solutions to the burning issue of lower secondary schools for rural education which, both pupils and parents were not happy about.

On August 2, 1968, during a meeting of the Central Committee of the PDG, the Chinese-inspired Cultural Revolution was adopted. The principle of mass education was applied at all levels, without distinction. The emphasis put on practical knowledge over the acquisition of academic competence, led to the overgeneralisation of manual production activities in schools, the compulsory use of national languages as medium of instruction, a watering down of the curriculum and the weakening of the constraints previously enforced on the movement of students to higher classes.

Every school became a Centre for Revolutionary Education (CER). A second cycle was established in each sub-district and drastic measures were taken against any future desertion of pupils from rural areas to urban centres.

In 1971, the fifth session of the Higher Council on Education, decided on the creation of «socialist cities» in suburban and rural areas. As loudly proclaimed, its aim was to transform the countryside. After much trouble in the setting up

of infrastructures, the year 1974 was fixed for the opening of the first «cities». Portrayed as the image of the future, the first «socialist cities» - for those which were built - were, in fact, a vision of unachievement and insufficiency of all kinds. This situation of failure led to the opening, at the end of the third cycle, of a 13th year class.

### **The Third Stage : 1975 - 1983**

As all the «socialist cities» failed, the Guinean Government was now faced with the problem of finding a solution to this huge number of pupils who completed the two cycles of secondary school. On the economic plane, the Government launched an ambitious programme of agricultural development, using existing qualified manpower. It was the urgent need to train this manpower that led to the establishment of thirty-two Agro-Zootechnical Colleges which, in a few years, trained several dozen thousands of agriculture technicians.

At the end of 1983, the Guinean school system was confronted with serious imbalances and distortions, at all levels and, in all domains, at the structural level as well as, on the quantitative and qualitative aspects.

In the lower secondary school, the enrolment did not rise beyond 13% while wastage through repetition and drop out was high : over 1,000 pupils in the 7th grade, less than half (475) completed the lower legde of secondary education.

For the entire secondary school system (lower and upper), there were, (in April 1984) 89,756 pupils looked after by 5,091 teachers. This teaching staff was very heterogenous, because it comprised 660 assistant teachers, 2,605 ordinary teachers, 759 trainee teachers, 747 agricultural assistants and only 924 graduates of higher training institutions. So, 17% of teachers had the required qualifications. One could understand why, at the end of the First Republic, the education system, as a whole and lower secondary schools, in particular, offered low quality education.

## **Present state of the Lower Secondary School in Guinea**

The advent of the Second Republic, in April 1984 marked a decisive turning-point in the educational policy of Guinea. For the first time, the country launched an education reform based on a global and pedagogical policy.

As already hinted in the first and second National Education Conferences (May-June 1984, April 1985), the main thrust of the education reform, clearly showed, in its Statement of Education Policy, adopted by the Guinean Government, in September 1989 to wit: «priority to basic education, development of accomodation facilities and improvement of students' working conditions, reinforcement of management, control and training facilities of education, improvement of classrooms and teachers' qualifications at all levels». From this Statement of the Education Policy, a wide programme of rehabilitation of all the education system, called Education Sector Adjustment Programme of the Sector of Education (ESAP), was developed and launched in October 1990.

Special emphasis was put on lower secondary school, as the transition step between, on the one hand, elementary education and higher cycles, and on the other hand, elementary education and vocational and technical schools.

### **General strategy of implementation.**

The lower secondary school corresponds to the first cycle of the secondary education. General education is offered during this cycle, over a period of four years (grades 7-10).

Each lower secondary school is under the authority of a Principal, whose responsibilities involve :

- a) administrative and management tasks, i.e ensuring that official guidelines and instructions are respected and implemented and that school assets are correctly managed ;
- b) pedagogical tasks : to set up and conduct academic units and giving impetus to in-service training of the staff ;



- c) tasks of a social character : maintaining good relationship with the Association of Parents and Friends of the School and the local authorities and involving the school in the social and economic development of the community.

The immediate assistant to the Principal is the Director of Studies. The latter is responsible for making sure that study programmes are well executed and assisting in the control of teachers.

Under the authority of the director of studies, the general warden and his assistants, are responsible for maintaining order, discipline, hygiene and security in the school.

There also exists, in each lower secondary school one or two guidance counsellors. They are responsible for guiding and helping students in their choice of suitable streams of studies after «collège» and for maintaining close relationship with parents.

The secretary-librarian completes the list of the administrative and support personnel. All this personnel is appointed by an administrative decree issued by the Minister of Pre-University Education and Vocational Training.

The teaching staff of lower secondary schools is composed of University or Higher Teacher Training Institution graduates and assistant teachers from an in-service teacher training institution. In some «colleges» part-time teachers are also called upon, to assist in the smooth running of the school.

Teachers are organised in «technical groups», according to the subjects they teach and some play the role of head-teachers advisers on the organisation of classroom activities. The teachers' council is grouped around the principal, the teaching staff of the entire «college». It is the measurement and evaluation body of the whole teaching-learning process.

The support personnel is composed of a clerk and a night-watchman.

## Curriculum and Learning Materials

Education at the «College» level is aimed at reinforcing the basic knowledge acquired in the primary school, its broadening and the progressive orientation of pupils in relation to their skills and the needs of the society. «College» offers a set of diversified opportunities and resources, to enable the full blossoming of teenagers.

In conformity with the proceedings of national workshops on the readjustment of pre-university education programmes of August 1987, the curriculum in use should guarantee, in the student completing «collège», a general culture in the basic subjects as well as in the social and historical realities of the country. This curriculum comprises eleven subjects, for a total teaching load of 30 hours a week and distributed as follows :

French	8 hours
History	2 «
Geography	2 «
Civic Education	1 «
English or Arabic	2 «
Mathematics	6 «
Physics	3 «
Chemistry	2 «
Physical Education	2 «
Biology	2 «

Concerning methods and materials the total lack of materials that characterised the pre-1984 period was corrected in 1985, the Guinean Government ordered a large quantity of textbooks and stationery for a total amount of more than 120 millions French francs ; 1,000,000 books (the equivalent of two books per primary and secondary pupil), representing half of the investment made, the other half being allocated to stationary (exercise-books, writing slates, pencils, collective materials, etc...).

More over, as a support to the introduction of new curricula (decreed in 1987) the National Pedagogical Institute and the Centre for Language Development, developed a large

number of teaching notes and pedagogical guides for teachers in «collèges».

The construction of «collèges» and «lycées» laboratories and practical work rooms is going on slowly but steadily.

In lower secondary school, the evaluation of students' learning is both formative and summative. In the framework of continuous assessment, each teacher is to carry out written and oral tests and to give two marks per students per month. Two tests are planned during the school year and a yearly average of 10/20 is required to move to a higher class.

At the end of the 10th grade, students write the lower secondary school leaving certificate examination (BEPC). Every student holding this certificate can, directly, enroll in a lycée or in a type A vocational school.

Education in the lycées is divided into three streams (social sciences, natural sciences and mathematical sciences). Every student is exposed to scientific and arts subjects to enable him or her to enter a university or higher vocational schools. Studies in lycées lead to the full Baccalauréat the first part taken in grade 12 and, a second part in grade 13, called the «terminale».

## **Achievements of the Lower Secondary System**

The impact of the policy of the government of the second Republic, is now being felt in real terms, since the launching of the Education Sector Adjustment Programme in 1990. The results achieved, at the level of the secondary education in general, and that of the «collège» in particular, are quite interesting.

### **Increase of infrastructures and progressing of enrollments.**

In 1983, Guinea had 190 colleges and lycées. From 1984 to 1989, this figure went up to 222, due to the establishment of 32 schools. During the three years of the implementation of ESAP. Though priority is given to basic education, 18 new secondary schools have been built and equipped.

Guinea had by 1994, 240 institutions of which 184 «colleges», 25 lycées and 31 «colleges» -lycées amounting to some 2,000 classrooms of which, 1,700 (85%) are in good condition. Along this a real progress in enrollment figures, in secondary schools, as shown on the following chart :

School Year	Enrollment				
	All Secondary Schools	Total	" Colleges "	Total	Total
			Girls		Girls
1991 - 1992	224	70 516	17 595	17 459	3 310
1992 - 1993	232	76 083	18 893	21 450	4 810
1993 - 1994	240	82 819	20 504	22 209	4 363

Source : Dept. of Statistics and Planning, MEPU - FP (1994)

### Improvements in Teacher Training :

The teaching staff of Guinean secondary schools was by 1994 composed of 3,439 members all of who hold the DES (equivalent of a masters degree) which means that 59% of teachers hold the required qualification, as against 17% in 1983. Women teachers, number only 420, which is a low figure indeed.

One should acknowledge that considerable investments have gone into raising qualifications of both Lower and Higher secondary school teachers. Training workshops for teachers' upgrading have been organised, either at the National level or at the decentralised level.

More precisely, 700 qualified primary school teachers are in charge of classes, at lower secondary school level (400 in the French language, and 300 in Maths) have been retained for a year at the CPL ; Today, they possess the same competence as a general secondary school teacher. The CTA (Agricultural Technic Controller), as far as they are concerned, have undergone reconversion into the primary school training «colleges» (ENSEC), and have become, after two years training, teachers of general secondary school education direction, which

manage all Lower and Higher secondary school education, have organised and ensured the training of the heads and managing staffs of these schools, in pedagogical and administrative management.

Finally, for the purpose of human resources, competence and qualifications, about 1,800 lower secondary school teachers have been redeployed for the benefit of primary education.

### **Improvement of learning and improvement in output**

Teaching staff competence and qualification and the improvement of classroom working conditions, have had beneficial effects on pupils learning and the outcome of schooling. Repetition rate has fallen by 26% and during the past three years. The rate of success at the *Brevet* level has been :

- In 1991, candidates 12,765 passed 6,618 success rate 52%
- In 1992, candidates 15,453 passed 8,096 success rate 52%
- In 1993, candidates 17,826 passed 8,750 success rate 48%

### **Conclusions**

The predictably rising figures of children, at the end of primary education, as a positive outcome of the ESAP, requires a new orientation at the end of this cycle. In fact, in years to come, secondary schools will not likely absorb all primary school leavers, both for reasons of budgetary constraints, and for reasons connected with the requirements of the job market. There comes the necessity for having flexible mechanisms, in order to ensure transition between basic education and the world of work. The introduction of a post-primary education idea oriented towards vocational training, could probably, reduce the entering force in the secondary schools and upstream, to the access to Higher education. During the past years, while implementing the «ESAP» research in the field of technical and vocational education (involving the private sector) was carried out. In January 1994 the policy statement on technical and vocational education was adopted by Governments. This will

take care of the growing number of primary, junior and senior secondary leavers.

The reinforcement of teacher training, in science subjects, while taking special care in the development, production and implementation of teaching-learning materials, spings from local conditions. Innovating and adapting teaching content, sustaining the production of national textbooks, those are some of the main objectives which will underly activities related to secondary education to be implemented in the next phase of ESAP.

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B.E	Brevet Elementaire
B.E.P.C	Brevet d'Etude du Premier Cycle
C.A.P	Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle
B.I.T	Brevet Industriel Technique
C.E.R	Centre d'Education Révolutionnaire
C.T.A	Contrôleur des Travaux Agricoles

## Appendix I

### Stages of Pre-University Education in Guinea

#### **FIRST STAGE : 1959 - 1968**

*A. Reform adopted by the 5th National Conference of the Guinean Democratic Party (GDP)(August 1961) and its implementation decided by the 6th National Conference held in Labe in Decembre 1961.*

3rd Cycle	12th year	BACC 2	General and technical teaching Lycees
	11th year		
	10th year		
2nd Cycle	9th year	BESC	General and technical teaching colleges
	8th year		
	7th year		
	6th year		
	5th year	CEPE	
1st Cycle or Elementary Education	4th year		
	3rd year		
	2nd year		
	1st year		

*Note :* For material reasons, most of 5th and 6th year classes remained attached to the first cycle instead of being transferred to Collège. Consequently, second cycle teaching would last 3 years instead of 5.

**B. Modification of the 1961 Reform by the National Revolution Council of the GDP in February 1964.**



3rd Cycle Secondary Education	12th year
	11rd year
	10th year
2nd Cycle Secondary Education	9th year
	8th year
	7th year
	6th year
First Cycle Or mass Education	5th year
	4th year
	3rd year
	2nd year
	1st year

C. Modification of the study cycle by the National Council of the Revolution of the GDP, in January 1967.

Second Cycle	9th year
	8th year
	7th year
First Cycle	6th year
	5th year
	4th year
	3rd year
	2nd year
	1st year

*Second stage* : 1968 - 1975

Lauching of the Socialist Cultural Revolution : 2nd August 1968

- \* Mass education in all cycles.
- \* Excessive Generalisation of Productive Activities
- \* Compulsary use of National Languages as a medium of Tuition
- \* Every School Became a Revolutionnary Education Centre.
- \* Creation of «Socialist Settlements» in 1971.
- \* Opening of a 13th year in the 3rd Cycle, in 1974

13th year	( 1974 - 1977)	unique BACC
12th year	(1974 - 1978)	unique BACC
11th year		
10th year		

- \* Suppression of the 13th year, in 1978.

*Third stage* : (see 2nd stage as from 1978)

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\* = Information as at the time of publication in August 1994.