

Common curriculum framework for basic education teacher training in the ECOWAS area

Abstract

This common curriculum framework for teacher training in ECOWAS countries was submitted to the multi-country UNESCO office in Abuja, Nigeria, in July 2016. This framework was prepared by consultant Philippe Jonnaert of the *UNESCO chair for sustainable development (CUDC)* at the *Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)*.

This document proposes a *Curriculum guidance framework (COC)*, which can be shared by all education systems in the *Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)* and Guinea, for training teachers working in an expanded basic education system over 9 or 10 years of free compulsory schooling.

The COC takes the form of a *Common curriculum guidance framework* for teacher training. The points considered relate equally to a universal vision of education and to *Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4)*, education targets 2030, the goals of the *Basic Education in Africa Program (BEAP)* and the results of an inventory on teacher training in the ECOWAS area. Various proposals are then formulated for the operational application of this COC via teacher training in the ECOWAS area.

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List of acronyms

[Non-exhaustive list]

APC:	Skills-based approach
API:	Integrating teaching method
BEAP:	Basic Education Africa Program
BEPC:	Lower secondary education qualification
IBE:	UNESCO International Bureau of Education
BREDA:	UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Africa.
CAFOP:	Centre for education training and initiatives
CAP:	Teaching certificate
CEB:	Basic education districts
ECOWAS :	Economic Community of West African States
CMEC:	Council of Ministers of Education, Canada
COC:	Curriculum guidance framework
CONFEMEN:	Conference of ministers of education in French-speaking states and governments
CRPF:	Regional teacher training and improvements centre
CUDC:	UNESCO chair for curriculum development
DGIFPE:	Directorate general for inspecting education personnel training institutes
DIFOP:	Division of life-long training, initiatives and educational research
DPENA:	Provincial divisions of national education
DRENA:	Regional divisions of national education
ENI:	Normal training institute for primary school teachers
ENEP:	Normal training school for primary education
EFA:	Education for all
FAD:	Distance learning
FASTEF:	Faculty of education and training science and technology
GCT:	Advisory technical group
OWG:	Open working group
GTZ:	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (Germany technical cooperation agency)
IEMS:	Middle school education inspector
IFM:	Lecturer training institute
INFRE:	National training and research institute for education
ENS:	Higher School for Teachers Training
ENS-UK:	Higher School for Teachers Training of the University of Koudougou
EPU:	Universal primary education
INSE:	National institute for education

ISSEG:	Higher institute for education in Guinea
UIS:	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
LMD:	Licence (Bachelor's degree), Masters, Doctorate.
SDG:	Sustainable Development Goal
MDG:	Millennium Development Goal
PDEF:	Ten-year education and training plan
PEM:	Middle school teacher
PPO:	Target-based teaching
PSE:	Sector-based education program
PTF:	Technical and financial partners
UEMOA:	West African Economic and Monetary Union
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UQAM:	Université du Québec à Montréal
VAE:	Validation of experience

Introduction

Most ECOWAS countries are currently working towards an expanded basic education as defined in UNESCO's *Basic Education in Africa Program* (BEAP). This program aims to establish a training continuum throughout a basic education system covering 9 to 10 years of free compulsory schooling. This basic education combines primary education and the first two years of secondary education into one single coherent block. This approach is also based on pre-primary education: a structured education in early childhood.

Education systems need a body of qualified and professional teachers in order to meet the targets of this approach to expanded basic education. Initial and continuous teacher training currently varies between States, and primary levels are not harmonized with the first two years of secondary education, as shown by the inventory conducted by Mafakha Touré (2015)¹. Furthermore, the BEAP is not yet systematically taken into consideration, however education systems in the ECOWAS area are committed to this program. Furthermore, current targets for education between now and 2030, i.e. ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, referring to Sustainable Development Goal no. 4 (SDG 4), have not yet been taken into consideration by all States in the target area.

This document aims to propose a common curriculum guidance framework for teacher training in the ECOWAS area. Taking a universal approach to education as a starting point, the author specifies this approach based on the international agenda, and SDG 4 and the targets for education for 2030 in particular. This approach is then placed in the context of the BEAP. An educational inventory is then proposed for countries in the ECOWAS area. Finally, a common curriculum guidance framework is proposed. The initial profiles of applicants for teacher training at the current time reflect the wide range of backgrounds of teachers in countries in the ECOWAS area. A harmonization process for training courses is then suggested to allow applicants to convert their initial profile into the final profile. This document concludes by considering the wider context.

¹ Toure, M. (2015). *Diagnosis of the current curriculum framework in UEMOA countries and Guinea*. Report submitted to the UNESCO multi-country office Abuja.

1. A holistic approach to the curriculum

A holistic approach to the curriculum implies a general approach to education. Prospects for learning, improving knowledge and developing skills must be consistent for all pupils regardless of their identities, characteristics and differences. Whether considering the learning programs of pupils, assessment, teacher training, teaching policies and school manuals or educational programs, a holistic curriculum covers and optimizes consistency between all of these aspects.

The curriculum of an education system traditionally involved educational programs and a list of items to be learnt. Such an approach is no longer appropriate today. Curricula are based on upstream educational policies, laying down the main guidelines established by a State for its education system. The activities of pupils and teachers in classrooms lie downstream from curricula. The curriculum defines the full procedure for applying the guidelines defined in educational policies, right up to the classroom. This leads to a learning process at school for pupils and their individual enhancement within their community. On this basis, a curriculum is a means of applying *educational policies* (Depover & Jonnaert, 2014)².

Producing an exhaustive list of all educational policies and guidelines suggested for an education system and training courses would be difficult. The States have therefore drafted an intermediate document summarizing the main guidelines, providing the basis for the structure of their education system and helping to ensure consistency. The *curriculum guidance framework* or COC plays this role. The professionals applying the curriculum ensure that these guidelines are met at each stage in the development of the curriculum, whether the aim is to develop educational programs or to prepare school manuals, define an assessment policy or initial or continuous training plan for teachers, schedule training courses or specify the certification procedures for these course, or define a teaching method or a language policy for the education system, all based on the same curriculum guidance framework.

The COC document is intended to summarize the main guidelines for all components of the curriculum, to ensure a certain degree of consistency between these components. In the present case, teacher training in the ECOWAS area, a *common curriculum guidance framework* will ensure a level of consistency for basic education teacher training, not only within each of the States, but also between the States. The common curriculum guidance framework described in the following pages and paragraphs specifically refers to basic education teacher training in States in the ECOWAS area. This framework is therefore based equally on both international agendas and local situations in the States.

² Depover, C., Jonnaert, Ph. (2014). *Quelle cohérence pour l'éducation en Afrique. Des politiques au curriculum. Hommage à Louis D'Hainaut (Targeting consistency in education in Africa. From policies to a curriculum. Paying homage to Louis D'Hainaut)*. Brussels: De Boeck University.

2. An approach to education for ECOWAS countries

2.1 Introduction

Frame 1: A shared approach to education for the coming decades

"(...) young people, while intensely focused on the present, are also driven by the potential future offered to them by society. Teachers bring this potential, whether they realize it or not. If this future looks dark or uncertain, young people's interest in education will partially disappear. This is a fundamental problem facing today's education system. Reforms, adaptations, and the improvements themselves only have meaning in the context of a long-term approach, targeting the coming decades. "

Kahane (2002: 8)³.

Before considering the problem of a common guidance framework for teacher training, targeting an expanded basic education in ECOWAS countries, we need to agree on a *shared approach to education*.

It would appear that, in the ECOWAS area and in Guinea, and according to the various documents on the current educational policies of these States, an education system is generally considered as a means of training capable citizens able to contribute to their community, while helping to develop this very community. But what does education really mean? The perception of education can vary substantially depending on its allocated role. On this basis, it is important to specify a shared approach to education, which ECOWAS countries can share in order to adopt a common and consistent teaching policy, which teachers can actually apply.

This part of the text starts by reiterating a universal approach to education. On the basis of the current international agenda, this approach must then be specified with targets for education, to be achieved by 2030. The current context for an expanded basic education is overturning current teacher training policies. This approach to education and the various educational contexts is now transferred to a holistic policy and ultimately placed in the context of local perspectives for each State. This part of the text starts with general aspects and later focuses on specific aspects.

³ Kahane, J.-P. (2002). *L'enseignement des sciences mathématiques. Commission de réflexion sur l'enseignement des mathématiques. (Teaching mathematics. A brainstorming committee on teaching mathematics). Report to the Minister of National Education.* Paris: Odile Jacob.

2.2 A universal approach to education

Frame 2: Education, culture and society: a specific approach

"We are the only species which teaches, regardless of how you understand this concept. Mental activity is experienced with others, constructed in view of communication, and revealed via cultural codes, traditions and many other channels. This takes us well beyond the walls of a school. Education is not confined to classrooms, but also reaches the family dinner table when all family members attempt to find a shared meaning to the events of the day, or when children attempt to help each other to give meaning to the adult world, and even when a supervisor and their apprentice discuss their work. "

Bruner (2008: 8)⁴.

This initial section of the framework document suggests a current approach to education with a cultural and social role. The approach proposed in the following paragraphs is currently universally recognized. This approach could provide a general reference framework for a shared approach to education for ECOWAS members.

Jérôme Bruner (2008)⁵ refers to the words of Goodman (1978)⁶. According to the latter, reality is constructed and not discovered. The construction of reality or the world in which an individual lives depends on the *meanings* which the individual can or cannot attribute to objects, events, actions and the people met in the community and beyond. And yet, individuals can construct these meanings thanks to the traditions, tools and mind-set of a given culture.

On this basis, education corresponds to the support provided to young people over a period of variable length, or even throughout their lives, allowing these individuals to acquire the *symbolic and cultural tools*, which are indispensable in order to *construct meanings* for their surroundings. This process leads these young people to construct their personalities, adapt and integrate their community and the world, to become those who contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of and changes to their society as the wheel of life turns.

Symbolic tools can take many forms, including language. This expression also refers to all other verbal or non-verbal symbolic and cultural channels, whether coded or not, allowing individuals to develop their personality and construct meanings for their surroundings from a very young age. Individuals can share the cultural and social traditions and codes of their community thanks to these symbolic tools. Every gesture, sign, position or attitude, every ritual, every word said by a mother to her child *plays a cultural and social role*. These gestures, words and attitudes allow children to gradually acquire the indispensable tools they need to construct meanings for their surroundings. Learning, speaking, remembering, imagining, creating, reacting, adapting, constructing, modifying and interaction all *play cultural and social roles*. Education therefore plays two roles: *social and cultural*.

Vygotski (1985)⁷ considers *social interaction and situations* as central features in personal development. Over and beyond cultural foundations, the mental activity of a human is never isolated. This activity occurs with the support of other and has a *social context*.

⁴ Bruner, J. (2008, 2nd edit.). *L'éducation entrée dans la culture. Les problèmes de l'école à la lumière de la psychologie culturelle* (The culture of education. Problems at school considered from a cultural psychology viewpoint). Paris: Retz, (1st edition: 1996; original title: *The culture of Education*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press).

⁵ Bruner, J. (2008): op. cit.

⁶ Goodman, N. (1978). *Ways of Worldmaking*. Indianapolis: Hackett.

⁷ Vygotski, L. S. (1985). *Pensée et langage* (Thought and language). [French translation by Françoise Sève, followed by *Commentaires sur les remarques critiques de Vygotski* (Comments on the critical comments of Vygotski), by Jean Piaget]. Paris: Éditions Sociales.

The above paragraphs lead to an educational approach rooted in the cultural, social and economic facets of a society. Education aims to:

- provide helpful support to young and not-so-young people, enabling them to acquire the symbolic, cultural and social tools necessary to construct meanings for their surroundings;
- provide these individuals with the ability to adapt and integrate their community thanks to these symbolic tools, while contributing to cultural, social and economic adaptations and developments for the society, and the world, as the wheel of life turns;
- allow these individuals to consider the long term and the future of their society and the world.

Each and every teacher contributes to this approach by progressively helping their pupils and students to acquire symbolic tools. Pupils now understand the meaning of mathematics, for example, as incorporated in this approach. These contrasting factors help to construct the meanings of a wide range of objects or phenomena, which the pupils and students will face, providing that the mathematics covered at school play a cultural and social role.

However, this approach must take its roots in increasingly precise contexts in order to ultimately satisfy the endogenic realities of each society, and their integration in the world, otherwise it will remain utopic.

2.3 The international education agenda

Frame 3: Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) no. 4

"Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."⁸

International agendas provide a specific framework for this universal approach to education, by setting down a few markers. The *Education for all* (EFA) goals have significantly influenced contemporary debates on education and the guidelines for educational policies defined by the States over the last three decades. These goals are used to specify the universal approach to education. Although the Education for all goals have only been partially achieved at the current time, they generally help to define this approach to education:

"The deadline for achieving the Education for all (EFA) goals and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) on education has been set to 2015. In April 2000, participants at the World Education Forum at Dakar, Senegal, adopted the Dakar Framework for Action – Education for all: meeting our collective commitments⁹ and confirmed their commitment to meeting the six EFA goals, aiming to cover the basic requirements of learning for all children, young people and adults. In September 2000, world leaders met at the United Nations headquarters to adopt MDG, including two goals on universal access to primary education and gender equality in education, recognizing the critical role played by education in human development. " (CMEC, 2015: 4)¹⁰.

The EFA goals¹¹ and the MDG¹² have led to significant progress in terms of access to education, and the figures are impressive. However, some difficulties remain in all countries, hampering the achievement of these goals. These agendas have been redefined since this time and propose targets for the post-2015 period, while confirming that EFA goals and MDG will be met by 2030. The States are paying attention to

⁸ United Nations General Assembly, (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. A/RES/70/1 (21 October 2015). Seventieth session, points 15 and 116 on the agenda. On-line document:

http://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/ares70d1_en.pdf

⁹ Dakar Framework of Action: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001202/120240e.pdf>

¹⁰ Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), (2015). *UNESCO World Education Forum 2015, Incheon, Republic of Korea, 19 - 22 May 2015. Report of the Canadian delegation*. On-line document:

<http://www.cmec.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/347/UNESCO%20WEF%20Report%20May%202015%20EN.pdf>

¹¹ The six EFA goals: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/efa-goals/>

¹² The Millennium Development Goals <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

the results of current debates on the definition of these goals for education in order to provide quality universal education for all. These goals affect their educational policies.

The *Muscat Agreement* (UNESCO, 2014)¹³, from the *Global Education for all Meeting* held in Oman in May 2014, the feedback of the *Open Working Group* (GTO/OWG)¹⁴ and the results of the *UNESCO World Education Forum*¹⁵ held at Incheon in May 2015 (see the *Incheon declaration -Education 2030*)¹⁶, the works of the *UNESCO Institute of Statistics* (UIS)¹⁷, the *Advisory technical group* (GCT) and the *Thematic indicators to monitor the Education 2030 agenda*¹⁸, reflecting the current drive to grant priority to the *quality* of education.

According to Tawil & al. (2012)¹⁹, the change in international approach to education has led to an increased desire to improve the *quality of education*. Educational policies are therefore changing substantially. Quality now appears to be primordial, while the international approach focused primarily on wider access to education in the 1990's.

"Having the right to quality education means accessing pertinent learning programs, suitable for requirements. However, in this world dominated by diversity, learning needs vary between communities. Consequently, leaning programs must reflect the conditions which each culture, each population, considers necessary to live with dignity, in order to be qualified as pertinent. We must accept the existence of a wide range of different ways to define quality of living and, on this basis, an extremely wide range of ways of defining the content of learning programs." UNESCO (2015: 34)²⁰.

The *Sustainable Development Goal* (SDG) for education, SDG 4²¹, goes beyond quality and specifies the approach to education described in the previous section. This new approach is fully reflected in SDG 4 and guides the education 2030 agenda. The Incheon declaration and its framework for action²² are based on the "(...)following principles:

¹³ UNESCO (2014a). *Global Education for all Meeting, UNESCO, Muscat, Oman, 12 – 14 May 2014. Final declaration of the World EFA Meeting 2014. Muscat Agreement*. On-line document:

<http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/muscat-agreement-2014.pdf>

¹⁴ United Nations (2014). *Open Working Group proposal for Sustainable Development Goals*. Document A/68/970, available on-line: <http://undocs.org/A/68/970/>

¹⁵ World Education Forum 2015: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002332/233245E.pdf>

¹⁶ *Education 2030. Incheon declaration and framework for action*. On-line document:

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002338/233813M.pdf>

¹⁷ <http://www.uis.unesco.org/pages/default.aspx/>

¹⁸ <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/43-indicators-to-monitor-education2030.pdf>

¹⁹ Tawil, S., Akkari, A. & Macedo, B. (2012). *Beyond the conceptual labyrinth: the notion of quality in education*. Thematic contributions, Research and prospects in education, UNESCO, March 2012, no. 2.

²⁰ UNESCO (2015). *Rethinking education. Towards a global common good?* Paris: UNESCO.

²¹ See frame 3.

²² *Education 2030. Incheon declaration and framework for action; (see note 14).*

- **Education is a fundamental right, which opens up access to other rights.** To protect this right, countries must guarantee universal and equitable access to inclusive and equitable compulsory education and learning programs, free of charge, leaving no-one out. Education targets the full development of human personalities and promotes mutual understanding, tolerance, friendship and peace.
- **Education is public property, and the state is a guarantor.** Education is a common cause, which implies that formulating and enforcing public policies is an inclusive process. Civil society, teachers, the private sector, communities, families, young people and children all have an important role to play in exercising the right to a quality education. The state has a key role to play in defining and ensuring compliance with standards.
- **Gender equality is an integral part of the right to education for all.** To convert this vision into reality, we must adopt a rights-based approach, guaranteeing that girls and boys, men and women, can not only access the different learning cycles, from start to finish, but are able to express themselves in education and thanks to education. ²³

The previous section specifies a universal approach to education according to the series of markers laid down by the international education 2030 agenda: ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. The international education agenda is inspired by a humanistic vision of education and legal notions, focusing on "*the principles of human rights and human dignity, social justice, peace, inclusion and protection, as well as cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity, and shared responsibility and accountability.*" UNESCO (2016: 6)²⁴.

²³ Education 2030. Incheon declaration and framework for action; (see note 14).

²⁴ UNESCO, (2016), op. cit.

2.4 A shared approach to education

The approach to education to be shared between ECOWAS countries has therefore been more precisely defined and can be passed on by teachers, if each State adapts this approach to its specific context, realities and limitations.

Frame 4: A shared approach to education

The proposed approach to education is based on humanistic values.

This approach is based on the principles of human rights and human dignity; on the principles of social justice, peace, equity, inclusion and protection; it incorporates cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity. This approach targets access to quality education for all on the basis of these principles.

This approach to education is rooted in the cultural, social and economic aspects of a society, but also in universal aspects, transforming each individual into a citizen of the world.

This approach to education attempts to:

- provide helpful support to young and not-so-young people, enabling them to acquire the symbolic, cultural and social tools necessary to construct meanings for their surroundings;
- provide these individuals with the ability to adapt and integrate their community thanks to these symbolic tools, while contributing to cultural, social and economic adaptations and developments for the society, and the world, as the wheel of life turns;
- allow these individuals to consider the long term and the future of their society and the world in a responsible and critical manner.

When it comes to creating an operational framework for an approach to education with a curriculum and educational programs, Tyler (1949)²⁵ traditionally raises four questions: (1) which citizens must be trained? (2) Which society is targeted? (3) What educational experience is required? (4) What inspections are required? Local answers must be provided to these questions. These answers will provide an endogenous version of the approach to education specified in the previous sections.

Even though these paragraphs propose a common curriculum framework for ECOWAS countries, it will always be necessary to reposition this framework according to the realities of each State. Furthermore, adapting to actual contexts will allow pupils and students to construct the meanings of their home reality. The States will be responsible for adapting the universal approach to education to local contexts; this process cannot be specified as part of a common guidance framework. However, in parallel, this work to adapt to local contexts relativizes a universal approach to education, which may appear utopic if its roots are not based in the local traditions and cultures in the States. The approach proposed in these paragraphs resembles *tension between universal and local facets*, the *international agenda and local views*. However, this tension is the key to sharing an approach to education with all ECOWAS countries while incorporating their specific cultural, social and economic facets. This tension between a universal approach and local adaptation is also the key to allowing teachers to apply and represent this approach.

The following paragraphs fit the proposed approach to education itself in a specific context: the *Basic Education in Africa Program (BEAP)*. This universal approach to education must be placed more precisely within the Africa-specific perspective, which requires a complete rework of teacher training in ECOWAS countries.

²⁵ Tyler, R. W. (1949). *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instructions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

3. An expanded basic education

Frame 5: An expanded basic education and teachers

"The development of expanded basic education, according to the indications proposed at the Kigali and Maputo meetings (...) will lead to major consequences for teachers. More teachers must be recruited, particularly for the lower levels of secondary education; their training must be revised, both before and after they join the profession; all teachers must benefit from more options to interact and work together, as well as permanent access to professional advice and support. "

BREDA/UNESCO-BIE/GTZ (2009: 39)²⁶

The shared approach to education proposed in the previous part of the text must be placed in the current context of the *Basic Education in Africa Program* (BEAP). The BEAP targets a holistic reform for the first 9 to 10 years of schooling for young people in Africa: the expanded basic cycle.

This program satisfies the *Kigali call for action* (2007)²⁷. This program is based on reforms targeting social justice, equity and inclusion, "(...) and mainly focuses on three major directions:

- *expand quality basic education (primary) to cover a period of 9-10 years, consequently including the lower cycle of secondary education;*
- *consider this cycle within a holistic perspective and ensure that it is open to all, consistent and gradual;*
- *develop an integrated curriculum framework focusing on the capabilities and skills corresponding to the expectations and needs of all African children and teenagers, providing a basis for lifelong learning. "* BREDA/BIE-UNESCO/GTZ, 2009: 6)²⁸.

Primary schools and the lower cycle of secondary education must be reworked for this extension to basic education as well as, in some cases, early childhood facilities, forming a consistent whole over 9 to 10 years of schooling. For example, in this context, the first two years of secondary education are now the final years of the basic cycle. The purposes of these two years change radially when expressed as part of a final profile. On this basis, the aim is to harmonize, not only the structure of basic education, but also its content, via educational programs, assessment, teaching methods and teacher training, within a new final profile.

The development of this expanded basic cycle is based on a holistic approach with a 9- to 10-year training continuum, with no rupture. This cycle is based on access, quality, relevance, inclusion and equity. SDG 4 and the education 2030 agenda goals are confirmed in this context. The concepts and fundamental principles behind the basic cycle are, according to BREDA/BIE-UNESCO/GTZ (2009: 21)²⁹:

- the right to education;
- All aspects of lifelong learning;
- enacting for inclusion;
- quality and relevance;
- capabilities and skills: the outcome of learning;
- democratization;

²⁶ BREDA/BIE-UNESCO/GTZ (2009). *Basic Education in Africa Program (BEAP) Responding to demands for access, quality, relevance and equity*. ESchborn: GTZ, IBE/2009/P/01. On-line document: http://www.ibe.unesco.org/sites/default/files/BEAP_policy_paper_09_en.pdf

²⁷ <http://www.adeanet.org/clearinghouse/en/kigali-call-action-expanded-vision-basic-education-africa>

²⁸ BREDA/BIE-UNESCO/GTZ (2009), op. cit.

²⁹ BREDA/BIE-UNESCO/GTZ (2009), op. cit.

- a holistic approach to developing basic education;
- equitable diversity.

This expanded basic education perspective will have significant effects for teachers. In particular: recruit more teachers, revise their initial and continuous training; provide professional support and advice; organize discussions between teachers in practice-based communities; define a career plan; ... Much remains to be done. More specifically, the aim is to create a continuum from primary school to the end of the second year of secondary school. The purposes of the first two years of secondary education must be fundamentally revised to achieve this continuum. These years are no longer introductory years for general secondary education, but the final two years of basic education. The point of basic education is to prepare pupils for life, to provide them with a general training based on their physical, intellectual, civic, moral and social development. A certain degree of professionalization is also targeted. Basic education focuses on the following missions:

1. Develop a critical mind, creativity and scientific curiosity for pupils.
2. Prepare pupils for a trade (profession) or to continue with higher studies depending on their interests and abilities.

Furthermore, the last two years of basic education fulfil the following roles:

1. Integrate all points learned in basic education.
2. Ensure the professionalization of basic education for pupils who will start work after their basic education.
3. Guide pupils towards the different routes into secondary education.
4. Provide certification upon completion of basic education.

These various aspects (purposes and missions of basic education; the purposes of the last two years of basic education) must be taken into consideration when training teachers for basic education.

The teacher training inventory for ECOWAS countries reflects a clear diversity and the lack of application of the BEAP in the current teacher training structure. The following section describes this inventory.

4. Analysis of the current state of teacher training in ECOWAS countries and Guinea

4.1 Introduction

Frame 6: The need to equip education systems with a sufficient number of trained teachers

“Universal primary education (UPE) will remain a distant dream for millions of children living in countries where teachers are in insufficient number in classes. Current discussions on the development agenda for after 2015 include the objective of supporting the offer and training of teachers as part of efforts aiming to ensure that every child learns in a stimulating and positive school environment. (...)

(...) The region facing the greatest challenges by far is sub-Saharan Africa, which in total makes up more than half (63% of global needs) the number of additional teachers necessary to achieve UPE between now and 2015 and two thirds (67% of global needs) between now and 2030. In this region, 7 out of 10 countries experience an extreme shortage of teachers. The situation of many countries could deteriorate because the governments are facing overcrowding in classes and an increase in the demand for education of school age populations that continue to grow steadily: for 100 children of primary school age in 2012, there will be 147 in 2030. For this growth alone, sub-Saharan Africa will have to create 2.3 million new teaching positions between now and 2030, while at the same time addressing the 3.9 million vacant positions due to attrition. (...)

(...) Having a sufficient number of teachers is a necessary condition, but it is not enough to improve the quality of education: the new teachers will also have to be motivated, well trained and willing to broaden their pedagogical tools.” UIS (2014: 1 and 2)³⁰

The ECOWAS countries overall have the same tradition in terms of teacher training, a tradition inherited from a common colonial past. As underlined by Touré (2015)³¹, the training of teachers in francophone Africa used to take place in Senegal at the William Ponty normal school. Throughout their evolution, after the independences, the countries undertook reforms specific to their national context, even if the essence of French tradition in terms of teacher training remained the model of reference in the UEMOA countries and Guinea. The analysis of the current state of teacher training presented in the text that follows came from reports by Touré (2015)³² presented at the Abuja UNESCO office in September 2015 as other reports from studies carried out on the ECOWAS countries. A summary of this literature follows. From these reports the authors distinguish the common elements in the different ECOWAS countries in terms of their teacher training policies and practices, but also by evoking particular aspects proper to some of the

³⁰ UIS-UNESCO (2014). *Wanted: Trained teachers to ensure every child's right to primary education*. Montreal : UIS, Policy Document 15/ Information form 30/Octobre 2014/

³¹ Toure, M. (2015), op. cit.

³² Toure, M. (2015), op. cit.

countries that demonstrate efficiency. The analysis mainly concerns the training of teachers in basic education (playschool/pre-school, primary, middle school and literacy teaching).

The following points are dealt with: the goals of education and training, teaching policies, training institutions, training programs and modalities, the acquiring of skills from experience.

4.2 Goals of Education and Training

Since Jomtien 1990³³ and Dakar 2000³⁴, the UEMOA countries and Guinea have followed the example of other countries in Africa and the rest of the world by setting up multi-year programs for sector-based education development. Indeed, during the 2000 Forum on Education in Dakar³⁵, the West African states committed themselves to leaving no country with a credible plan behind, regardless of its level of resources. Thus emerged numerous ten-year plans for education development (Mali, Niger, Guinea), the *Ten-year Plan for Education and Training* (PDEF) followed by the Support Program for Quality, Equity and Transparency in Senegal, *Sector-based Education Programs* (PSE) in Guinea, Niger and Togo, as well as guidance and framework Acts in the education sector.

The education goals of these plans all have in common their ambition to make the education system a way of ensuring a harmonious and integral development of the citizen who, equipped with intellectual, creative, physical, moral and civic capacities, can contribute to the social and economic improvement of the countries. Something that is also worthy of note is the desire of the countries to ensure through education and training the development of cultural elements that strengthen national unity as well as universality.

The countries considered in this group wish to train men and women capable of working effectively in economic, social and cultural development and advocate education for freedom, pluralist democracy and respect of human rights. To do this, education must help citizens to acquire knowledge necessary for their harmonious integration into the community and their active participation in the life of the nation. The broadened basic schooling chosen by these countries is mandatory up to the age of 15 to 16, with free schooling making headway in many. The questions that must be answered are what teaching policies to adopt, what type(s) of institution to train these basic education teachers, with what kinds of entry and exit profiles, what programs, what training, assessment and certification methods? The answers to these different questions will build on the existing ones that we will present in summary in the text that follows.

4.3 Teaching policies

All big reforms initiated in the ECOWAS countries and in Guinea are accompanied by a revision of the teacher training facilities, because to improve the quality of education available, one needs a sufficient number of competent teachers. Conscious of the insufficient number of trained and qualified teachers, the grim status of the profession and the badly or non-defined training and certification standards, the African countries reaffirmed in Kigali in February 2015, at the *Regional Conference for post 2015*³⁶, their desire to equip themselves with holistic teaching policies. They also called for a concerted action to increase investments for recruiting, training, placement, management, assessment and continuing professional development and the increased social well-being of teachers at all levels of teaching.

³³ UNESCO (1990). *World declaration on education for all and framework for action to meet basic learning needs*, (adopted by the *World Conference on Education for All, Meeting Basic Learning Needs*, Jomtien, Thaïlande, 5-9 March 1990). Paris: Unesco ; Secretariat of the International Consultative Forum on Education for All.

³⁴ UNESCO (2000). *The Dakar Framework for Action. Education for all: keeping our collective commitments. With the six regional frameworks*, (adopted by the World Forum on Education, Dakar, Sénégal, 26-28 April 2000). Paris : UNESCO.

³⁵ UNESCO (2000) : op. cit.

³⁶ *The Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Ministerial Conference on Education Post-2015, Kigali, Rwanda, 9-11 February 2015. Declaration for Sub-Saharan Africa on Education Post-2-15. Kigali Declaration.* http://www.web-edu.tv/IMG/pdf/kigali_statement_fr_final.pdf

All the countries in the zone in question (ECOWAS and Guinea) have an initial and continuing teacher training policy. But beyond these policies, which merely concern training, the countries wish to endow themselves with a holistic policy that takes charge of all the aspects of the teaching profession, including initial and continuing training, recruitment, management and professional development, payment and teacher motivation. In view of this, Senegal developed and validated a pertinent policy for recruitment, training and use of human resources³⁷ in 2014. It is mentioned in this document that the training of education staff must provide an initial and continuing training of quality for all teachers, regardless of their sub-sector. One of the integration methods would be the adaptability of education staff: a basic teacher should be able to evolve in the development of early childhood, primary teaching, the first two years of secondary and alternative forms of education.

Likewise, countries such as Benin, Guinea and Mali decided to go beyond the simple policy and training documents at hand. They have undertaken to set up policies that integrate training, recruitment, management and professional development in view of lifelong education. In this way, each of these three countries carried out a *holistic diagnosis* of the teaching question that gives a comprehensive picture of the profession. On the basis of this diagnosis and by using the development guide of a teaching policy³⁸ on teachers made available by the Secretary of the special team, these countries are preparing to develop a holistic policy that considers not only national needs, but also respects international commitments.

Already, all the ECOWAS countries have opted to spread out basic education over 9 or 10 years of schooling. In this sense, in terms of teacher training, the countries intend to set up programs and training facilities allowing them to gain competent and motivated teachers for a broadened basic education of quality.

4.4 Training Institutions

The institutions specialized in the training of pre-school teachers are relatively few in number, particularly in countries like Burkina Faso, Guinea and Senegal. In Senegal especially, in all the Regional centers for teacher training and improvement (CRFPE), a general basic training on pre-school education is given to all the student teachers. Guinea for its part experimented with the training of early childhood educators in one of its Normal Primary teacher schools or ENI (from the French *Ecoles normales d'instituteurs*) and wishes to expand this pilot exercise. But for some countries still, the training of early childhood educators is exclusively entrusted to private, catholic organizations. Sometimes, teachers are given the positions of early childhood educators.

In terms of primary teacher training institutions, it is mainly the ENI that go by different names depending on the country where they are located: ENI in Niger, Guinea and Togo, Primary Teacher Training Institutes (IFM) in Mali, Pedagogical Animation and Training Centers (CAFOP) in the Ivory Coast and Normal School for Primary Teaching (ENEP) in Burkina Faso. Other institutions have more extensive responsibilities such as the Education Staff Regional Training Centers (CRFPE) in Senegal. Despite this diversity of names, these teacher-training institutions generally recruit people who have just completed the end of secondary school exam, the baccalauréat (or Bac), for a training duration that ranges from 9 months to 3 years, depending on the destination body when they have finished (schoolteachers, teaching assistants, contractual) and also on the level of recruitment. In Benin, the duration of training can be extended to up to 4 years. In some cases, like in Burkina Faso, the student-teachers are recruited at the end of middle school with a *Brevet d'études de premier cycle* (BEPC). In Togo, to be a pre-school teacher the BEPC plus 2 additional years of study is needed, for primary teaching the requisite is the baccalauréat plus 1 year of additional study.

On a whole the countries have training structures for general secondary school teachers, all disciplines included, except in those related to art. In general, middle school teachers are trained in university

³⁷ Education staff training policy project, provisional version, 2014, Dakar, Senegal.

³⁸ UNESCO. 2015, *Teaching Policy Development Guide*. Summary, Teachers for Education 2030. Paris : UNESCO.

institutions, the Normal Superior Schools (Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Togo, Benin, Guinea-Bissau, Burkina Faso) or in specialized university level institutions like the *National Institute of Education Sciences* (INSE) in Togo and the *Superior Institute of Education Sciences* (ISSEG), or institutes of a special nature like the *National Institute for Training and Research in Education* (INFRE) in Benin. For example, the *Normal Superior School of Koudougou University* (ENS-UK) trains post primary teachers to teach two disciplines in post primary classes to finish the basic education cycle. In Togo, it is required to have completed 3 years of study after the BAC to teach in middle school. In Senegal, the ENS changed to the *Faculty of Training and Education Sciences and Technologies* (FASTEF) and became part of the Cheick Anta Diop de Dakar University. Secondary school teachers are trained here two years after their Masters degree, middle school teachers one year after their bachelor degree or two years for a higher qualification. FASTEF also provides a distance-learning course that results in a diploma for contract teachers hired with no initial training. Let us note also the case of Togo whose university has the broadest range of teacher training available regardless of the teaching level practiced.

There is also a tendency forming, which could be called the *Universitization* of teacher training.

4.5 Training Programs

Most of the UEMOA countries and Guinea have a competency framework for teacher training. This framework is very similar to the one proposed by the World Bank, even if the skill domains are not clearly spelled out. Based on their national framework, each country developed a training program either in a module format or that of a classic discipline program. Indeed, many countries have adopted the modular system: Guinea, Burkina Faso, and Senegal.

The choice made by these countries is to shift towards a more professional teacher training. A professional teacher is nowadays conceived to be one who is in reality and of which ALTET (2010)³⁹ demonstrates the following characteristics, moving in the direction of the reflexive practitioner paradigm:

- A base of knowledge associated with professional action
- An aptitude for acting in a complex situation, to be able to adapt, to interact
- A capacity to impart their knowledge, know-how and acts
- An autonomy and a personal responsibility in exercising their abilities
- An adherence to collective norms and representations essential to professional identity
- A member of a group that develops promotion and improvement strategies.

In most of the countries, teacher training is still a long way off these characteristics. One tries to put the emphasis on the approach by competence (APC), as adopted by the CONFEMEN member countries. However many approaches still coexist: in Togo both pedagogy by objective (PPO) and APC are used, in Burkina Faso they are proceeding very eclectically with the integrative pedagogical approach (API) a socially constructive approach that, as its name suggests, integrates the input of other innovative pedagogical approaches. Training units are defined within the training program. These are upgrading units of academic, professional pedagogical and practical training. In some countries emerging themes are added to these, like inclusive education, citizenship education in Guinea and Guinea Bissau, or daily life skills in Niger. There is a noteworthy tendency also in some countries to offer basic school management training to trainee-teachers, a way of preparing them for future school principal tasks. Let us note that some countries have, as an exception, school principal sector training. Bilingualism and the introduction of national languages is also a choice for some countries like Benin, Burkina Faso, the Ivory Coast, Niger, Togo and Senegal.

³⁹ Altet, M. (2010). Two decades of teacher training in the IUFM : a professional training process. *Education Research* (CREN, Nantes), 8, 8-23.

4.6 Methods of Training

The training of teachers in the sub region is carried out in conditions that are sometimes lacking totally in material, qualified tutors, and financial resources. We want trained, efficient teachers in the field without having the means to buy sufficient educational material or to pay qualified teachers. These different demands combined make it necessary to have many training methods available: to put together theoretical and practical training, to structure and harmonize initial and continuing training, to mutualize the resources of these two types of training, to have recourse to information and communication technologies. The teacher training methods generally work in rotation, but in different combinations: theory-practice in Senegal; theory-practice-theory in Burkina Faso and Guinea; practice-theory-practice in Niger and in Togo practice-theory-practice-theory. This rotation is sometimes paired with classic distance learning courses or online classes like in the case of Senegal with FASTEf or in Togo with the Directorate of Continuing Training (DIFOP). The countries understand increasingly that one must get the most out of alternating between activities in the training centres and in the field of practice (Vanhulle, Merhan & Ronveaux, 2007)⁴⁰ favouring often short, structured rotations, with an emphasis on integrating theoretical experience and practical knowledge.

Having recourse to information and communication technologies in the training of teachers is a concern that is shared by all of the countries. When they are not used as a delivery method, they are integrated as tools to help prepare classes or carrying out teaching in class.

At the beginning, during and at the end of the training program, training institutions make use of different assessment methods depending on the moment's needs: diagnostic assessment, formative evaluation and summative evaluation. At the end, a final evaluation recognizes the training with a Pedagogical Certificate of Aptitude (CAP).

4.7 Continuing Training

The subsection of continuing training exists in every education system of the countries concerned. In most countries it is guided by a national policy of continuing training either structured or not with the initial training. At the national level there is a board or department dedicated to the continuing training of teachers. The continuing training of elementary school teachers is provided at all times by the decentralized structures of education: proximity coaching by school principals and pedagogical consultants (Guinea, Niger), inspectorates of Education and Training but also of Academies in Senegal, regional inspectorates of education and pedagogical units in Guinea, the *Circumscriptions of Basic Teaching* (CEB), the *Provincial Directorates of National Education* (DPENA) and the *Regional Directorates of National Education* (DRENA) in Burkina Faso, Academies, Pedagogical Animation Centres and learning communities in Mali. The periodic grouping of elementary school teachers in units of pedagogical animation under the monitoring of their supervisors is a common practice in several countries such as Guinea, Mali and Niger. There are some cases in which the initial training institutions intervene in continuing training notably when it is a training resulting in a diploma.

The *Inspectors of Lower Secondary Education* (IEMS) provide continuing training of secondary school teachers with classroom visits in Senegal. In Burkina Faso, the *General Directorate of Inspections and Training of the Personnel of Education* (DGIFPE) and the inspections departments of regional directorates provides the continuing training of secondary school teachers. In Niger, the continuing training is done through seminars and field visits, the pedagogical units regrouping in one establishment the teachers of a same subject and the inspectorates of secondary education through pedagogical consultants.

⁴⁰ Vanhulle, S., Merhan, F. & Ronveaux, C., (2007). Du principe d'alternance aux alternances en formation des adultes et des enseignants : un état de la question. In F. Merhan, C. Ronveaux & S. Vanhulle (Dir.), *Alternances en formation*. Bruxelles : De Boeck Université (Raisons éducatives).

There rarely is, in the regarded countries, a sufficiently well designed continuing training program with enough resources to implement it. In most cases, the continuing training is done as part of funded projects by external *Financial and Technical Partners* (PTF) and is not always included in coordination with the initial training.

4.8 Validation of Acquired Professional Experience (VAE)

Contract teachers, community teachers, adjunct teachers and other teaching agents would like to shift towards new tasks or higher competence levels. They need to convert their professional experience into diploma, degree or professional certification. Yet, few are the countries among those mentioned in which you would find a *Validation of Acquired Professional Experience* (VAE) in the basic education. People are definitely reflecting on this though and some countries even try alternatives, such as Senegal, in order to motivate people with extensive experience but who don't necessarily have the required certification to practice as basic education teachers. In Benin, VAE is practiced formally and concerns primary school teachers who have at least 25 years of experience who wish to become educational consultants without being obliged to do more training.

On the whole the ECOWAS countries are committed to reforming their education systems and in turn their teacher training systems. Here and there innovations are introduced timidly either in the area of program organization, training approaches or continuing training management techniques. But to respond to the demands of regional integration and to the setting up of a common market, teacher training needs a harmonized framework to direct and channel innovation towards quality training for teachers who are capable of facilitating the learning of pertinent and durable knowledge among pupils.

5. Common Curriculum Framework for Teacher Training in Countries of the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) and Guinea

Frame 7: challenges relating to the teaching, training and coaching of teachers.

The document BREDA/BIE-UNESCO/GTZ (2009:39)⁴¹ on BEAP highlights the following challenges on teachers' issues:

** Developing criteria in order to provide highly qualified and well trained teachers,*

Making good use of untrained teachers and members of the community.

** Training teachers efficiently using skill based, entrepreneurial and professional training based learning.*

** Making efficient and effective use of Information technology as well as online distance learning as an integral part of continuing teacher training and remedial training programs.*

** Linking remedial teacher training to related improvements in the institution's management and the strengthening of educational boards/committees and parent teacher associations*

** Further encouragement of career opportunities for teacher and creating measures so that they do not leave the profession.*

** Developing educational support programs for industry based instructors who are responsible for skills development with respect to school-age children.*

The common policy framework for teacher training in ECOWAS countries is based on the ideas mentioned above. Various different parameters of the common policy framework are listed below while the previous sections gave an argument-based description of these parameters.

1. This policy framework is based primarily on a **shared vision of education**.

The educational view offered is humanist. It is based on the principles of human rights and human dignity, as well as the principles of social justice, peace, equality, inclusion and protection. This vision takes into account cultural, linguistic and ethnic differences. Through these principles it aims to offer everyone a quality education. This perspective on education is rooted in dimensions of a society that are cultural, social and economic, as well as universal, making every individual a citizen of the world.

Such a perspective of education commits to:

- Providing useful support mechanisms for young people, and adults alike so they can build the symbolic, cultural and social resources necessary to construct meaning from the world around them
- Offering parties involved the opportunity to adapt and become integrated in their community while at the same time contributing to cultural, social and economic adjustments and developments within their society.
- Promoting people in a responsible and critical way, in the long term and in the future of their society and the world.

Teacher training is based on this perspective of education.

⁴¹ BREDA/BIE-UNESCO/GTZ (2009), op. cit.

2. The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 4 defines the context of the International Agenda within which current teachers training is necessarily included.

"Ensure universal access to quality education on an equal basis, and promote learning opportunities throughout life."⁴²

Access, quality, equity, inclusion and lifelong learning are recurrent and interdisciplinary themes in the various teacher training programs.

3. The generalization of an extended basic education in the ECOWAS zone alters the basic training structure but also changes its foundations and its goals.

The program for basic education in Africa (BEAP) does not only affect primary school and the first two years of high school and the existing training opportunities in pre-primary school, but it also implies a new perspective in teacher training. Teachers must now meet the expectations of an education that is seen as one unit even though it covers a period of 9 or 10 years of free compulsory education. In Africa, BEAP constraints put heavy strains on some of the dimensions of teacher training. As regards teacher education and profession, the analysis given in the previous section implies that we face a considerable task and huge challenges.

There are multiple challenges in basic education for teachers' training and profession:

- An expanded basic quality education is seen as one unit covering a period of 9 to 10 years, including the first cycle of secondary education. Therefore, the training of teachers for basic education must cover the whole period of 9-10 school years.
- Viewed as a continuum, without any break, this basic education is part of a **holistic perspective**. Teacher training, which is relevant to basic education, has therefore to be considered as a whole and not divided up into disciplines or sub-divisions of primary or secondary education. Thus, teacher training also has to meet this holistic perspective.
- Basic education is compulsory and free over the duration of 9-10 years. Open to everyone, it is *inclusive and equitable*. Teachers must therefore be prepared for this inclusion meaning that all children – regardless of their differences and characteristics – can receive training and relevant learning that meet their individual needs. A teacher of basic education must be able to deal with diversity among the pupils.
- Basic education is *consistent and gradual*. In his/her education, from one year to another, a child must have teachers who work together in the same educational project, within a real community of practice. A teacher should be trained within this team spirit, within the collegiality between the teachers of a school participating in the development of a true community of practice. It is such a community that ensures consistency throughout basic education.
- A curriculum framework for basic education is focused on the abilities and skills corresponding to the expectations and needs of all children and youth in Africa, as being the basis for a lifelong learning. Teacher training should be based on learning and on its concepts and processes, so that the achievements of basic education can provide each pupil with strong and essential knowledge for lifelong learning.
- The first two years in high school become the final years of basic education and their aims are changing: at the end of this period of basic education, the pupil enters the labour

⁴² United Nations General Assembly (2015). *Transforming Our World: Sustainable Development Program in 2030. A/RES/70/1 (21 October 2015). Seventieth session, paragraphs 15 and 116 of the agenda. Online document: http://unctad.org/meetings/fr/SessionalDocuments/ares70d1_fr.pdf*

market and must be prepared for the jobs available in his/her community. He/she must quickly become an actor of the social, economic and cultural development of his community. Basic education must therefore prepare the pupil to enter his/her community labour market by giving him/her an introduction to the various jobs and by allowing him/her to develop an entrepreneurial spirit. The training of basic education teachers should include both an introduction to each labour market available in the communities of the students and a spirit of initiative and entrepreneurship.

4. An inventory showing the **diversity of teacher training opportunities**

Frame 8: The challenge of recruiting trained teachers

"In the countries where primary education systems have developed rapidly, many teachers have been hired without having the necessary training. In 2012, according to UIS data, less than 75% of primary teachers were trained according to national standards in 30 out of the 91 countries providing data. More than half (17 out of 30) of these countries are located in Sub-Saharan Africa, with a percentage of trained primary teachers less than 50% in Angola, Benin, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and South Sudan. Since 2000, many political leaders have responded to the need to quickly develop educational systems by recruiting teachers with temporary contracts and little formal training. UIS data indicates that during the last part of this decade, there were many more teachers on temporary contracts than teachers on public service contracts; this percentage reaches almost 80% in Mali and Niger and over 60% in Benin and Cameroon. Some countries facing shortages of teachers have significantly reduced their teacher/pupil ratio by increasing the number of contract teachers. However, this policy raises the important issue of quality, since most of contract teachers are not trained (UNESCO-UIS, 2014: 7 and 8).

The analysis of teacher training in the ECOWAS countries shows a variety of contexts, both in training opportunities and in the profiles of the teachers. This situation does not meet the qualified teachers' current needs for a broadened basic education.

Meeting the challenges of an equitable, inclusive and quality basic education for pupils' lifelong learning requires trained and qualified teachers, motivated enough to develop relevant teaching/learning activities covering the whole period of 9 or 10 years of basic education. All teachers should receive post baccalaureate training to ensure that they have experienced a full basic and secondary education. Thus they could take a step back to work with their students on the educational contents and learning, about which they have built their own knowledge during their studies.

They must learn how to organize their teaching, meet the educational challenges in front of the diversity of pupils, involve pupils in their own skill-building and knowledge-building processes, motivate them to become responsible citizens of their community, according to their environment, and also members of the whole village. All these skills cannot be improvised and can only be acquired by solid training. Through initial training and continuing education, the future teachers must have had time to grow and explore the vast horizons of teaching, in order to be able to collaborate with their colleagues in the school in a true community of practice, to open up to the world, to follow the didactic and pedagogical news, to operate virtual resources to keep themselves up-to-date, to communicate, to innovate, to grow professionally and personally.

Therefore, the current training opportunities must take into account the various profiles of all the teachers currently working in the primary schools of the ECOWAS zone and of Guinea, to lead them as far as possible in their professional future:

- This training must therefore be *holistic* and take into consideration all the facets of the work of a teacher and must provide the future teachers with as many tools as possible, enabling them to cope with the variety of situations they will experience.
- This training must integrate them within *communities of practice*: the future teachers must quickly put themselves in touch with their environments through different kinds of training. Their own group of students, in initial training, must also become a community of practice through several projects they will achieve during their training.
- This training must initiate the future teachers into *emerging communication and information technology tools*. Thus, these future teachers will contribute to reducing the digital gap which is widening between the countries using ICT and the others.
- This training should involve the future teachers in matters relating to the *curriculum development* of their educational system. They will consequently be actors of and participate in the developments and reforms of their educational system throughout their teaching career.
- This training must be *open* and allow the teachers to discover a multitude of worldwide educational and didactic notions. They will be able to choose the tools that best suit the needs of each pupil.
- This training should be *professional* for the future teacher to discover his profession in which he will behave as a real professional and be in charge of the pupils that the society entrusts to his care.
- This training must be *qualifying* and must enable the future teachers to master the contents of their future teaching and learning activities.
- This post baccalaureate education must be rooted in the *LMD policy* to enable teachers to progressively acquire credits that can be accumulated within a clearly defined career plan.
- This training should raise awareness among the future teachers of the *mobility* within the ECOWAS zone and in Guinea to create a genuine area of exchanges between the teachers coming from the same sub-region.

6. Recommendations

15 recommendations are made by way of a conclusion.

1. Raise all teacher training courses to *university level* and apply the LMD system with the potential capitalization of training credits and equivalent credits obtained by validating experience.
2. Formally record *continuous development training* for teachers.
3. Ensure strict consistency between initial training for *basic education* teachers and the challenges, limitations and requirements of the new basic education structure.
4. Recognize each of the *training* phases of a teacher as part of their own *career plan*.
5. Recognize experience validated in the form of *credits, which can be capitalized* for either teacher training or career progress.
6. Establish *gateways and bridges* between the various training levels thanks to the training credits accumulated by the teacher and the validation of experience.
7. Organize the career route of a teacher both *within basic education and elsewhere* (teaching advisor, inspector, expert in curriculum development, etc.).
8. *Professionalize* teachers from the start of their training pathway.
9. Plan for training courses for all *contractual teachers*, regardless of their current profile and coordinate these courses with the initial training courses of teachers in order to progressively bring them to an acceptable level of training.
10. Teacher training, at any level, must be *holistic* and incorporate all of the facets of the teaching profession and equip future teachers with as many tools as possible, enabling them to manage the wide range of situations they will face in the future.
11. From the initial training phase, future teachers must be made aware of the importance of participating in *practice-based communities*, via various projects, ensuring that they avoid any form of isolation in the profession.
12. Future teachers must be initiated in *current information and communications technologies*.
13. Initial teacher training must involve the future teachers in questions on *developing the curriculum* for their education system. The future teachers will therefore actively participate in improvements and reforms to their education system throughout their teaching careers.
14. Initial teacher training must be *open* and allow the trainees to discover a wide range of teaching trends around the world.
15. This training pathway must ensure that the future teachers are aware of *mobility* options within the UEMOA area and Guinea in order to create a fully-fledged teacher exchange area in the sub-region.