
**Proposed training courses and plan for teachers in
basic education in the ECOWAS area**

Abstract

This proposal briefly describes the teaching categories for primary and lower secondary levels. It then describes a skills reference framework for training teachers currently adopted by several countries, and which could be used as a reference framework for ECOWAS countries. Training programs are then proposed for each of the categories identified, to allow teachers to acquire the minimum level of qualification required to teach basic education at a University-level institution offering teacher training options. The proposal then focuses on existing training courses which could be considered for training teachers in basic education. Three training courses are suggested: courses for training teachers between early childhood level and initial primary levels; courses for training teachers for upper primary levels and illiteracy programs, and courses for training teachers for lower secondary levels. For example, a training plan is proposed for the initial training course.

The proposal also covers continuous development training for teachers in basic education, granting a primary role to university-level institutions offering teacher training programs, while inserting continuous development training in teacher career plans.

Contacts

Rokhaya Fall diawara, r.diawara@unesco.org

Abdoulaye Barry, bendebarry@gmail.com

<i>List of acronyms</i>	4
Proposed harmonized training courses and plan for ECOWAS countries	5
1. <i>Introduction</i>	5
2. <i>Initial profiles of basic education teachers</i>	5
3. <i>Final profile and skills reference framework for teachers in basic education</i>	7
3.1 <i>Final profile</i>	7
3.2 <i>Skills reference framework</i>	7
Field 1. <i>Professional skills</i>	7
Field 2. <i>Teaching skills</i>	7
Field 3. <i>Academic skills</i>	8
4. <i>Potential training pathways for the various basic education teacher categories</i>	8
4. <i>Training courses for basic education teachers</i>	10
Variant 1: Pre-school, primary and literacy teachers are trained via short-term university programs and lower secondary teachers are trained via a Degree program.....	11
Variant 2: All teachers benefiting from the previous courses are trained to degree level.....	11
Variant 3: Basic education teachers are trained to degree level, either as general teachers or specialized in a subject area	12
5. <i>Training plans: Outline for training course variant 1</i>	12
Basic education teacher training for pre-school /lower primary levels	14
A training route for literacy and basic education upper primary teachers	14
A training route for basic education lower secondary teachers	15
6. <i>Continuous development training courses and career plans for teachers</i>	15
7. <i>Recommendations</i>	16
<i>Conclusion</i>	16

List of acronyms

[Non-exhaustive list]

APC:	Skills-based approach
BEAP:	Basic Education Africa Program
BEPC:	Lower secondary education qualification
BREDA:	UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Africa.
CAFOP:	Centre for education training and initiatives
CAP:	Teaching certificate
ECOWAS :	Economic Community of West African States
COC:	Curriculum guidance framework
CUDC:	UNESCO chair for curriculum development
ENI:	Normal training institute for primary school teachers
ENEP:	Normal training school for primary education
EPT:	Education for all
FAD:	Distance learning
FASTEF:	Faculty of education and training science and technology
IFM:	Lecturer training institute
ENS-UK:	Normal institute of higher education of the University of Koudougou
INSE:	National institute for education
ISSEG:	Higher institute for education in Guinea
LMD:	Licence (Bachelor's degree), Masters, Doctorate.
SDG:	Sustainable Development Goal
PEM:	Middle school teacher
PSE:	Sector-based education program
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

Proposed harmonized training courses and plan for ECOWAS countries¹

1. Introduction

When considering an expanded basic education system covering 9-10 years and its new allocated functions, we could raise the following questions: 1) Which structure could be considered to cover the basic education levels and these functions as best possible? 2) What types of teachers must be trained to teach at the defined levels? How can we provide continuous development training for teachers in basic education, while ensuring that their professional development and career plan is a source of motivation and intimately tied to their professional experience gained throughout their career? Brainstorming focusing on the curriculum guidance framework (COC) has already provided answers to the first question on structuring.

This proposal attempts to provide answers to the other two questions. To achieve this, this proposal starts with the prevailing situation for basic education in UEMOA countries and Guinea and goes on to suggest a set of alternatives for the initial and continuous development training of teachers in view of implementing basic education over 9 to 10 years. This proposal also describes the various teacher categories currently existing at primary and initial secondary levels, and then establishes an ideal final profile and a skills reference framework for basic education teachers before describing the possible training routes for these categories in order to achieve this ideal final profile. This proposal then covers initial training and training courses and plans based on the LMD system, which university-level teacher training institutions could provide in order to achieve the final profile in question. The proposal concludes with structured and institutional continuous development training and the professional development of teachers designed to motivate beneficiaries.

2. Initial profiles of basic education teachers

Basic education over 9 to 10 years in ECOWAS countries is provided by teachers with a wide range of profiles: early childhood workers, primary school teachers, high school teachers, literacy teachers. At pre-school level, some early childhood workers had received training in pre-school activities, while others had received primary school teacher training, and others had no real initial training. The same situation arises at primary level, where some teachers graduated from normal institutes after their A-levels, some teachers graduated from ENI after achieving lower secondary education qualifications (BEPC), some contractual teachers have little or no teacher training, and some are community leaders or parents with no initial training. In some countries, at this level, some teachers have also been prepared to teach both at primary level and for literacy programs. In the literacy sub-sector, specialist literacy and other personnel can also be found, with extensive experience in the field, without necessarily holding recognised qualifications.

With reference to the education levels of the *International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED)*, the various profiles can be shown in the following table:

ISCED level	Level 6	Level 5	Level 4	Level 3	Level 3	Level 2	Other
Training of the potential teacher (minimum level)	Bachelor's or equivalent	Short-cycle tertiary	Post-secondary	Upper secondary	Partial upper secondary	Lower secondary	Did not reach lower secondary

¹ The proposal focuses on French-speaking ECOWAS countries. Clearly comparisons can be made in terms of how teachers are recruited, the approaches to certification and multi-skills, however, particularities in countries such as Nigeria, Ghana and Gambia can be considered at a future date based on works by IICBA in the context of harmonizing teacher training programs in ECOWAS countries.

Table 1: Initial profiles for initial teacher training

Legend:

- ISCED: International Standard Classification of Education
- BAC: A level (Baccalauréat - French version only)
- BEPC: Lower secondary education qualification (French version only)

Basic education teachers in ECOWAS countries with A levels and a Bachelor's degree or equivalent are classified under ISCED level 6. These teachers are mainly employed at high school and lower secondary levels and are specialised in a teaching discipline. In some cases, these teachers actually teach two subjects: mathematics and physics, physics and chemistry, natural sciences, history and geography, French and history, etc.). In some countries, these teachers have received teacher training at a normal institute of higher education (Ivory Coast, Senegal, Benin, Niger, Mali) or a Higher institute for education (Guinea, Togo) or even an education faculty (middle school teachers in Senegal).

Teachers with A-levels and short-cycle tertiary education are classified at ISCED level 5. Relatively few teachers at this level teach in high schools. These teachers are mainly present in primary schools and in early childhood classes in recent years. These teachers do not generally hold university qualifications and stopped their general education for some reason and started to teach, generally as no other options were available. This teacher category also generally lacks initial teacher training. Their teaching skills are primarily the result of professional experience, and a few continuous development training sessions.

Basic education teachers with A levels and post-secondary non-university training mostly teach at primary level. These teachers are classified at ISCED level 4. Most teachers at this level have received initial teacher preparation at training institutes such as ENI, EFI, CAFOP, etc. Most teach primary classes and, depending on the length of their initial training, hold the necessary teaching skills to teach at primary level.

Teachers with lower secondary and pre-university qualifications: this category includes teachers in countries, which used to recruit or still recruit their primary school teachers at upper secondary level . This applies to Burkina Faso, with the training courses organized by normal training schools for primary education (ENEP) or some former ENI in the 1990's in other countries. These teachers are classified at ISCED level 3.

Teachers with lower secondary education qualifications (BEPC), but which failed to complete their upper secondary courses, are classified as ISCED level 3. These teachers have not received initial teacher training and started teaching after a very short training course ranging between a few weeks and three months. The academic level remains low and the quality of teaching suffers.

Some teachers, who only hold lower secondary qualifications, enter into basic education without any initial teacher training. These teachers have benefited from continuous development training sessions over the years, focusing on aspects of teaching practices. These teachers are classified at ISCED level 2. Many teachers at this level teach in remote rural areas and often manage multi-level classes or primary schools with one single or incomplete class.

One final category includes basic education teachers without a lower secondary qualification or any other academic qualification. This category includes several contractual teachers (community teachers and parent teachers) recruited to make up for a teacher shortage due to the construction of several schools by parents and communities. This approach has several drawbacks from academic and teaching viewpoints.

In many cases, the various categories of profiles existing in basic education, people who intend to obtain recognition as basic education teachers, require a system to recognise existing experience, followed by teacher training in due form in a teacher training institution. In fact, several active categories in this segment of the education system have acquired relevant teaching skills, which are worth recognising. Unfortunately, as concluded in the inventory, these countries cannot offer such a system, or barely, although all parties agree that the skills acquired via on-the-job training are worth recognizing. The academic level of some categories, particularly at ISCED levels 3, 2 and other, is also such that A level training is required to start with. In the section covering the different backgrounds of these various categories, we will consider the possible pathways to ensure these profiles acquire the academic and professional levels they need to teach in basic education.

3. Final profile and skills reference framework for teachers in basic education

The following paragraphs propose a framework final profile for a basic education teacher. This reference framework is taken from the works of Jonnaert (2008)² carried out based on a collection of written documents on teacher training drafted by the World Bank (2005)³. Given that the final profile indicates that the trainee teachers understand the skills reference framework at the end of the training program; we will also establish the main skills to comprise this reference framework.

3.1 Final profile

The *final profile* is a curriculum concept which specifies what individuals having received training are capable of implementing after completing this training (Jonnaert, 2008). Three main fields of skills can be used to summarize the final profile of a basic education teacher after completing training:

- Professional skills;
- Teaching skills;
- Academic skills.

These three fields are specified in the skills reference framework.

3.2 Skills reference framework

The above three fields, which globally represent teacher activities, comprise twelve skills, which the teachers must understand at the end of their training.

Field 1. Professional skills

1. Adopt critical thinking as a professional, interpret facets of knowledge and culture while teaching
2. Contribute to a project targeting professional improvements
3. Teach in a responsible manner according to ethical standards

Field 2. Teaching skills

4. Prepare teaching-learning situations, which are appropriate for the pupils and subject in question, thereby meeting the set expectations of the study programs.
5. Organize and lead set situations able to meet the set expectations of the study program.
6. Assess progress for pupils compared with the set expectations of the study program.

² Jonnaert, Ph. (2008). Ébauche d'un profil de sortie pour la formation des enseignants (Draft final profile for teacher training programs). Montréal: Observatoire des réformes en éducation (Observatory for educational reforms). Observatoire des Réformes en Éducation (Observatory for educational reforms).

³ World Bank (2005). *Élargir les possibilités et développer les compétences des jeunes. Un nouveau programme pour l'enseignement secondaire* (Expanding options and developing the skills of young adults. A new secondary education program). Washington: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / World Bank.

7. Plan, organize and supervise how to work in groups or with classes to simplify learning and enhance pupil socialization
8. Adapt teaching methods to the range of pupil backgrounds
9. Incorporate information and communications technologies (ICT) when preparing for situations, class management and professional improvements
10. Communicate clearly and precisely, both verbally and in writing, in any professional teaching context

Field 3. Academic skills

11. Skills 11. Cooperate with school staff, parents and the different social contacts in order to meet the teaching requirements of the school
12. Skills 12. Work with other teachers on teaching activities in order to better meet the expectations of the study program, while bearing the needs of pupils in mind.

This reference framework can be detailed on the basis of the level of education targeted by the trainee teachers in order to obtain the skills to be acquired by basic education teachers in UEMOA countries and Guinea, in accordance with the training courses proposed below.

The various initial profiles of individuals entering basic education in UEMOA countries and Guinea are transformed into the required final profile thanks to a wide range of training courses and the validation of experience for some, with a common core training program and specialisation depending on the chosen level of teaching within basic education for all.

The following paragraphs indicate the possible pathways for the 7 teacher categories listed in point 2.

4. Potential training pathways for the various basic education teacher categories

Based on the assumption that all teachers in basic education should reach at least ISCED level 5, i.e. complete short-term tertiary education, the various teacher categories described previously should benefit from a wide range of training routes. For teachers who have already achieved levels 5 and 6, we could consider completing an L2 qualification. On this basis, possible pathways could be described as follows.

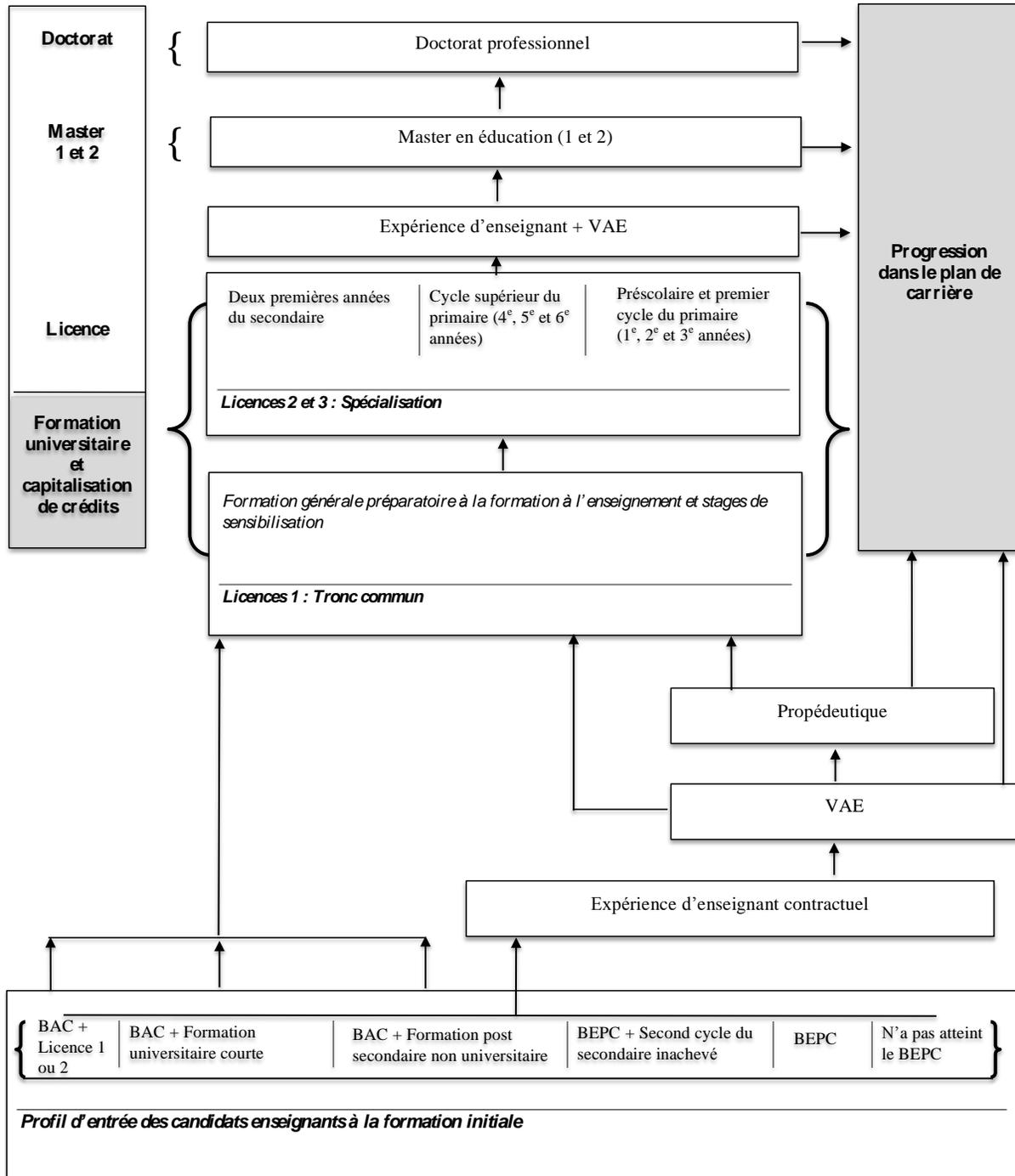


Table 2: Potential teacher training pathways

ISCED level 6 teachers (with A levels and a Bachelor's degree) do not generally hold experience as contractual teachers. This period is short-lived for teachers, as is the case for recent graduates teaching in middle schools in Senegal. Teachers in this category generally teach at secondary level for their initial years, and hold the necessary teaching and professional skills to continue with their studies to Bachelor or Masters level (M1 and M2) and subsequently study for a professional doctorate via formal continuous development training.

Teachers at ISCED level 5 (with A levels and a short-cycle tertiary education) frequently lack the appropriate training in teaching methods. These teachers can also be found at lower secondary level and have taught the same subject for many years. The experience of these teachers can be formally recognised, and by completing a few classes at degree level, they can acquire an initial university qualification in less than 4 semesters. This qualification will open the doors for higher study either within a university or in the context of institutional continuous development training. The number of classes credited will depend on individual teaching experience and years in teaching.

Level 4 teachers holding a post-secondary qualification in teacher training will need to reinforce both their academic skills and their teaching methods. If these teachers have already undertaken initial basic training on teaching theory and practices, they will need to extend this training in order to manage the various changes occurring in the field of education and take up position based on their analyses and considerations. Degree level university training will be necessary in order to switch from a simple teaching position and take up a more professional role. The basic education system increasingly needs thinking teachers, able to criticise and reach intelligent decisions based on the range of factors which arise in their work, and on the learning conditions and particularities of their pupils, in order to ensure long-lasting quality education.

Practically all teachers at other levels need to meet requirements before starting university-level education. Teachers who have completed lower secondary education and hold a secondary level teacher training qualification can barely boast the academic level required to teach their allocated subject and their teaching methods are inadequate. These teachers must start by undertaking additional academic training before they can reinforce their teaching capabilities with the appropriate training. Other teaching categories with experience in contractual teaching may be able to validate some of their professional practices via the "recognition of experience" (VAE) process, before starting teacher training. Depending on their level of qualification, which can be determined by testing, they may require preparatory programs of varying lengths before starting degree-level training.

4. Training courses for basic education teachers

The basic education teacher certification reference framework prepared by the nine ECOWAS countries with the support of the UNESCO office in Dakar proposes a certification framework for teachers⁴ corresponding to the level required to enter primary teaching. This framework suggests two options or specialisations in order to incorporate the various skills required for each of the two sub-cycles within the basic education cycle: i) a "Pre-school & primary teaching" option; ii) a "Lower secondary teaching" option. Four fields of skills have been defined: a) preparing classes, b) giving classes, c) assessing learning, d) extra-curricula activities. The skills proposed in this certification framework primarily relate to teaching as indicated in the skills reference framework described in section 3.2. The framework does however include a few professional skills in the context of the ECOWAS "Extra-curricula activities" certification framework. The skills reference framework described above, and the ECOWAS certification reference framework can be compared. Given that the fields of skills in the reference framework would appear more exhaustive, it would be preferable to complete the ECOWAS certification reference framework by defining the skills required for professional and academic purposes.

Countries in the ECOWAS area have committed to reforming expanded basic education over 9 to 10 years, and need to define suitable training courses for the new characteristics of basic education. If we refer to the

⁴ The UNESCO regional office (2016), Summary of works on launching a certification framework for teachers in ECOWAS countries.

work carried out by researchers from the UNESCO chair for curriculum development of UQAM⁵, we now propose a description of a few training pathways for basic education teachers. Once a consensus has been reached on these pathways, the standardised and descriptive content of teaching units and the standardised and descriptive content of components will be treated in view of the national context.

In accordance with the fields of training adopted by REESAO⁶, the field of training is *Training and education* and the course "Basic education teacher training". This system may combine several training courses. We propose three training courses: a) courses for training teachers between early childhood level and initial primary levels⁷; b) courses for training teachers for upper primary levels and literacy programs, and c) courses for training teachers for lower secondary levels. Each of these training courses comprises training pathways.

The expanded basic education over 9 to 10 years selected by the countries in question covers levels 0 (early childhood), 1 (primary) and 2 (lower secondary) of the ISCED classification 2013 which establishes 8 levels of education. Teacher training in these countries is organized at level 3 for secondary teaching (ENEP in Burkina Faso) and non-university post-secondary for primary teaching (level 4) (ENI, IFM, CAFOP) and level 5 (university) for lower secondary teaching in ENS, ISSEG, FASSTEF and INSE. In order to structure teacher training pathways according to a prototype which meets the requirements of an LMD-based teacher training structure, ECOWAS countries must decide to focus basic education teacher training at short-term university or degree level. However, given that, according to the ISCED classification, level 3 programs must be completed before initial programs at levels 5, 6 and 7 can be started, A levels must be required when recruiting teachers for training. In principle, this should not cause major problems, as A levels are already required when recruiting primary school teachers in several countries.

ISCED level 5 short-term higher education programs require at least two years of training, while Bachelor's degree or equivalent training at ISCED level 6 requires three to four years of training. On this basis, we propose 3 training courses, justified by the fact that we incorporate teachers from the literacy sub-sector in with the basic education teachers. Training a teacher to be able to teach for early childhood education and primary levels as well as literacy, as suggested in the previous proposals, would be complex. On this basis, three variants exist for the training courses which we offer, with reference to ISCED education levels:

Variant 1: Pre-school, primary and literacy teachers are trained via short-term university programs and lower secondary teachers are trained via a Degree program

- Early childhood and lower primary teachers are trained to ISCED level 5, a university program taking at least 2 years
- Upper primary and literacy sub-sector teachers are trained to ISCED level 5, a university program taking at least 2 years
- Lower secondary (primary level 3) teachers are trained to ISCED level 6, a university program taking at least 3 years

Based on this variant, other scenarios could be considered, while maintaining the multi-skilled approach preferred by ECOWAS countries. We could particularly consider:

Variant 2: All teachers benefiting from the previous courses are trained to degree level

- Pre-school and lower primary teachers are trained to ISCED level 6
- Primary and literacy teachers are trained to ISCED level 6

⁵ Guide to preparing the higher education training route in Benin, the Ivory Coast, Niger and Togo, July 2012, References: Multinational – Support project for higher education in UEMOA countries.

⁶ REESAO and DEA 2008, LMD training guide for higher education institutions in French-speaking Africa. ACCRA: Working group on higher education, involving African universities. Electronic version: <http://www.aau.org>

⁷ In this context, we refer to the breakdown suggested in the curriculum guidance framework: a lower primary cycle (currently CP and CE1), an upper primary cycle (currently CE2, CM1 and CM2) and a 3rd cycle (currently lower secondary)

- Lower secondary teachers are trained to ISCED level 6

On this basis, all basic education teachers would leave teacher training university institutions at the same level, which would have the advantage of eliminating level-based discrimination and ensure that all basic education teachers have the same value. The decision to specialize in a specific level would be based on the preferences of the teachers. Teachers can continue with their training at Masters and doctorate level thanks to continuous development training, while remaining in basic education.

Variant 3: Basic education teachers are trained to degree level, either as general teachers or specialized in a subject area

This variant is similar to the proposal made in the ECOWAS certification framework. On this basis, we would have:

- A training route for general basic education teachers (pre-school/primary/literacy)
- A training route for basic education teachers specialized in a subject area (lower secondary)

This variant is very similar to the two specializations described in the ECOWAS certification framework. With this variant, all general teachers will be trained in order to be able to supervise early childhood education, teach at primary level, or assist with literacy programs. For the final phase of basic education (current lower secondary), teachers will be trained to be able to teach all subjects within a given field.

All of these variants will clearly include common core training modules, followed by a specialization depending on national requirements and the preferences of the trainee teachers. Teachers without initial training will be able to benefit from the system to validate their experience.

5. Training plans: Outline for training course variant 1

The basic education teacher training plan proposed in a previous call for tenders indicates the same type of training and a common training plan for all basic education teachers. Training is considered as 180 credits spread over 6 semesters. The training plan indicates 20 training credits in the selected subject and 10 training credits on educational psychology and professional training from the 1st to the 4th semester, followed by 10 credits in the selected subject and 20 credits on educational psychology and professional training for the final two semesters, for all teachers undergoing training. In this proposal, we have opted for training plans, which differ depending on the basic education cycle targeted by the teachers.

Let us consider a proposal based on variant 1 above. This proposal will separate pre-school/lower primary teacher training and upper primary/literacy teacher training, for a total of 120 credits spread over two years, from lower secondary teacher training, with 180 credits spread over three years. Given that all three training courses are part of the same main training course, core training activities and core training modules will exist, particularly educational psychology and professional training, emerging issues such as HIV/AIDS, gender, and sustainable development education. Mandatory classes will also be organised in a class bank, allowing trainee teachers to meet the requirements of the program depending on their initial profile. Optional classes will also exist. Furthermore, some modules will focus on subject-specific training to make up for academic short failings. The recognition of experience must be considered to allow some personnel categories to highlight their past experience before starting training. However, the number of credits recognized for these personnel categories may not exceed a threshold, such as 15.

In terms of training for lower secondary teachers, the following specializations will be available depending on the subject field: 1) mathematics, science and technology, 2) Social sciences and humanities, including civic education, 3) languages, 4) Arts. Teachers will therefore acquire both academic and teaching skills in a given field. A common module could be considered for educational psychology matters for all trainee teachers undertaking this training course. Specializations will be taken into consideration for teaching and subject-based skills.

Training time will be broken down based on the number of credits per semester (30 credits) for a combination of modules worth 3 or 3.5 credits each, with internships ranging from 2 to 8 credits. Each training course comprises four modules.

- ***Subject-based module***: this module will comprise academic refresher or improvement courses in the field taught together with classes on contemporary issues such as HIV/AIDS, SD, ICT
- ***Module on familiarity with teaching standards***: professional ethics, code of conduct
- ***Module on educational psychology and teaching methods***: basis of education, history of the education system, sociology in education, psychology, teaching methods.
- ***Internships***: introductory, observation, reduced responsibility and full responsibility

A brief training plan is given below for each of these modules and for the 3 training courses.

Basic education teacher training for pre-school /lower primary levels

Modules	Number of credits per semester			
	Sem. 1	Sem. 2	Sem.3	Sem.4
<i>Subject-based module:</i> Subjects taught, emerging issues (HIV/AIDS, SD, ICT, etc.)	15	12	9	6
<i>Module on familiarity with teaching:</i> professional ethics, code of conduct	6	4	3	3
<i>Module on educational psychology and teaching methods:</i> basis of education, history of the education system, sociology in education, psychology, teaching methods.	6	9	12	15
<i>Internships:</i> introductory, observation, reduced responsibility and pre-professional integration	3	5	6	6
Total	30	30	30	30

Table 3: Credits for pre-school and lower primary teacher training

A training route for literacy and basic education upper primary teachers

Modules	Number of credits per semester			
	Sem. 1	Sem. 2	Sem. 3	Sem. 4
<i>Subject-based module:</i> Subjects taught, emerging issues (HIV/AIDS, SD, ICT, etc.)	15	12	9	6
<i>Module on familiarity with teaching:</i> professional ethics, code of conduct	6	4	3	3
<i>Module on educational psychology and teaching methods:</i> basis of education, history of the education system, sociology in education, psychology, teaching methods.	6	9	12	15
<i>Internships:</i> introductory, observation, reduced responsibility and pre-professional integration	3	5	6	6
Total	30	30	30	30

Table 4: Credits for literacy and upper primary teacher training

A training route for basic education lower secondary teachers

Modules	Number of credits per semester					
	Sem. 1	Sem. 2	Sem. 3	Sem. 4	Sem. 5	Sem. 6
<i>Subject-based module:</i> Subjects taught, emerging issues (HIV/AIDS, SD, ICT, etc.)	12	9	6	6	3	3
<i>Module on familiarity with teaching:</i> professional ethics, code of conduct	6	6	6	3	3	-
<i>Module on educational psychology and teaching methods:</i> basis of education, history of the education system, sociology in education, psychology, teaching methods.	9	9	12	15	15	15
<i>Internships:</i> introductory, observation, reduced responsibility and pre-professional integration	3	6	6	6	9	12
Total	30	30	30	30	30	30

Table 5: Credits for lower secondary teacher training

Common modules will clearly exist for the three training courses, and candidates will be able to transfer within the training pathway to avoid dead ends. Furthermore, pre-school/primary or primary/literacy teachers having benefitted from a university training program worth 120 credits will be able to obtain a degree in their specialized field by topping up their credits to 180 via continuous development training. They will also be able to teach lower secondary levels with a degree in a given field by obtaining credit for classes completed and satisfying a certain number of other requirements for the program. On this basis, continuous development training is now a component provided by university institutions as part of teacher training programs, completing the existing activities organized by the ministerial structures in charge of continuous development training.

6. Continuous development training courses and career plans for teachers

Basic education teacher training at levels 5 and 6, based on the LMD system, has the advantage of removing teachers from the dead ends, which most teachers currently face during their careers. In the countries in question, teachers frequently spend their entire career teaching at primary level or in high schools, with no other career options open to them. By incorporating training programs in the LMD system, teachers will systematically have the option of continuing with their training at higher levels, such as 6, 7 and 8 for some and 7 and 8 for others, moving their career along as preferred. Thanks to this new approach, basic education teachers benefit from a career plan, which is currently not an option in most education systems in Africa.

Two types of continuous development training would be available to teachers: training courses leading to certification issued by teacher training institutions and ad hoc continuous development training organized by national continuous development training structures. The first type of continuous development training will be organized by training institutions and is essential, as it determines any change in rank for the teacher and career developments. The training program provided by university-level training institutions can allow teachers to achieve higher ranks within their specializations and must affect their progress in terms of rank and level within the civil service. For example, a basic education teacher at pre-school/primary level graduates with a degree or a Masters, or even a doctorate. This teacher will therefore be qualified and obtain the rank and wages corresponding to their level of education. The training institution can also allow teachers to change specialization. For example, a primary/literacy teacher may complete a degree and teach a subject

at lower secondary level. In all events, continuous development training reflects the commitment of the teacher and can lead to career developments.

The continuous development training programs created by the structures of the Ministry of Education and its regional offices will focus on updating specific subjects or innovations to the education system. Cooperation between the structures of the Ministry and training institutions is required in this respect. Furthermore, these training courses must be recognized for teachers.

Continuous development training for basic education teachers must therefore be more formal and institutionalized by university-level institutions providing teacher training. The role of the structures in charge of continuous development training for teachers must be redefined and focused towards managing the flow of teachers wishing to benefit from formal continuous development training. The continuous development training sessions launched by the Ministers of education must be organized in coordination with the universities and be incorporated in the recognition system for experience, with credit.

The career plans of teachers must be defined within basic education, although these teachers are not confined to basic education levels. The aim is to allow all teachers, with their basic education teacher qualification, to reach higher ranks, equivalent to those of other levels of education, depending on the qualifications required or recognized via initial and continuous training or based on recognition of experience. No teacher must face a career dead end simply because they are basic education teachers.

7. Recommendations

1. Validate the various final profiles identified in this report and the training pathways defined based on the particularities of the individual ECOWAS countries. In this respect, it is important to compare these profiles with the situation in English-speaking ECOWAS countries.
2. ECOWAS countries should adopt the final profile of the basic education teacher and the skills reference framework proposed in this report and ensure consistency with the certification reference framework prepared by ECOWAS countries with the support of the UNESCO regional office in Dakar. The various experts who helped prepare these reference frameworks must coordinate with each other to start with;
3. Validate the variants proposed in terms of training courses and the training plan for variant 1.
4. Once the variants have been stabilized, the countries may adapt the format of the training courses according to the LMD approach using the kit prepared by the CUDC for UEMOA countries

Conclusion

Harmonizing teacher training plans and courses within the ECOWAS area is primarily a matter of political willpower, even within countries in the region to start with and subsequently at regional level. The main benefit is that all countries have decided to implement a basic education over 9 to 10 years and some countries have even abolished the examination at the end of the primary level, marking the transition to secondary level. Teacher training at university level according to the LMD system helps to improve the quality and enthusiasm of teachers, both of which help to improve the quality of education. The existing teacher training structures are frequently below university level. In order to meet quality requirements and provide university-level teacher training, these training institutions must be closed or converted by allocating the appropriate teachers and equipment. This process would require a large-scale reform and the States would need support.

In order to harmonize training courses at regional level, a fairly flexible framework must be adapted in order to allow room for national particularities while reaching an agreement on the standards applicable to teacher training and the operation of university level training institutions. The adoption of the LMD system by the countries represents an existing catalyst for the creation of harmonized training courses. Transforming ENI, IFM and CAFOP into higher education institutions remains something of a challenge. We need to determine how the countries can satisfy both qualitative and quantitative requirements in terms of teachers using its higher education institutions.

