



Réseau Ouest et Centre Africain de Recherche en Education Educational Research Network for West And Central Africa

ERNWACA News No. 6 July 2004

1. National Activities – Gambia
2. Regional Activities – ICT and education; HIV/AIDS and education
3. Studies and Research from Gambia – Science teaching; early childhood development; architecture degree
4. ERNWACA member profile – Makaireh N’Jie, National Coordinator of ERNWACA-Gambia
5. General Information – Ernwaca Cafés; UEMOA studies

This issue of "ERNWACA News " focuses on education in the **Gambia**. The Gambia has a population of 1.4 million and an economic growth rate – among the highest in the world – of 4.2%. About 45% of the population is less than 15 years of age and 65% are young people for whom education and training must be provided. The 2004-2015 national education policy framework has recently replaced that of 1988-2003. ERNWACA-Gambia contributed to its development, through a highly participatory policy dialogue process that mobilised children and adults, non-literate as well as literate members of society, government, civil society, the private sector, radio, and television. Forums brought together school children, teachers and parents from both rural and urban parts of the country to discuss strengths and weaknesses of the previous education policy and make suggestions on the development of education over the next twelve years. Sessions were facilitated in local languages to encourage greater participation; interpretation into Wolof and Mandinka was provided during national conferences. The new policy seeks to invest in human capital and draws on the Gambia’s Vision 2020 and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme (PRSP). Based on the quality of its education policies, the Gambia became one of 5 ERNWACA member countries, of a total of 11 in Africa, selected as a “Fast Track” country and as such is supposed to receive intensive support from technical and financial partners to attain 2015 Education for All (EFA) goals.

1. National Activities– The Gambia

• **Reminder** – Mrs. Ann Therese Ndong-Jatta, Gambia’s Minister of Education is a member of ERNWACA’s regional steering committee and a strong supporter of ERNWACA in general and ERNWACA-Gambia in particular; she is also a member of the Secretariat for the AU Decade for Education in West Africa (DEWA), 1996-2005.

• **Research** – ERNWACA-Gambia conducts research in several areas: technical education and vocational training (TEVT), curriculum development, teacher training, girls’ education, financing and management of education, quality of education, early childhood development (ECD), and higher education. Click to access [ERNWACA-Gambia publications](#). In 2003 ERNWACA-Gambia submitted to DFID in the United Kingdom a proposal for transnational research (with Ghana, Mali and Senegal) on "How technical education mediates the impact of government policies on poverty in anglophone and francophone West Africa," contributed to an annotated bibliography on the quality of education 1992-2002 in 11 countries and participated in the ERNWACA 2002 Small Grant competition.

• **Members** – About thirty national researchers are members of ERNWACA-Gambia. The national government provides ERNWACA with a villa as office space, which ERNWACA shares with the Gambia



Economic and Social Development Research Institute (GESDRI). ERNWACA-Gambia has a six-member management committee. The committee meets at least twice

a year and is comprised of Makaireh N’Jie, National Coordinator; Pap Sey (Department of State for Education); Abraham Joof (West Africa Examinations Council); Musa Sowe (Gambia College Faculty of Education); Abdoulie Bittaye, Deputy National Coordinator; and Yves Bennett (advisor). A dozen persons make up the national scientific committee, including Ms. Aminata Jateh, Ms. Awa Auber, Mambiran Joof, Oussainou Loum, William Cole, Soulaïman Barry, Lamin Ceesay, and Jonathan Mogbo. At its last meeting in February 2004, the management committee set membership dues at US \$5 per year. A General Assembly is planned before the end of 2004.

• **Contact** – ERNWACA-Gambia, PO Box 4457, Bakau, phone: (220) 44 97 627, fax: (220) 497 816, gambia@ernwaca.org.

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2. Regional Activities

• **1st regional Critical Perspectives on Education seminar: schooling, gender, and skills development in West and Central Africa**, Bamako (Mali), 13-15 September 2004 – organized by ERNWACA and the Network for Policy Research Review and Advice on Education and Training (**NORRAG**), with support from the Swiss Development Corporation. Under the auspices of the Malian Ministries of Education and of Employment, researchers, policymakers, workers, and businesspeople will examine the national and regional relevance of two international publications: Gender and Education for All: The Leap to Equality, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2003/4, <http://www.efareport.unesco.org/>, and Vocational skills development in sub-Saharan Africa, [World Bank document](#). ERNWACA national coordinators and other invitees will present policy-oriented papers that will be published in "NORRAG News" before the end of the year.

• **ICT and Education** (financed by IDRC) – ERNWACA is conducting this multi-case study on the integration and use of computers and Internet in 5 countries – Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Mali and Senegal. The 40 pioneer schools – primary and secondary, public and private – selected for the study have a total of 50 000 students and 3 000 teachers. The project co-directors, Kathryn Toure of ERNWACA and Thierry Karsenti of University of Montreal, and Professor Mohamed Maiga, ERNWACA-Mali researcher, visited the 8 pioneer schools in Ghana in March 2004. In April 2004, the co-directors, along with Professor Djeneba Traore, co-director of Mali's national research team for this project, visited the pioneer schools in Senegal. The qualitative data for the 40 schools will be collected by the end of this academic year. Quantitative data will be collected via questionnaires to students and teachers during the 2004-05 academic year. A data analysis workshop is planned for October 2004 in Ghana. Research results will be available via interactive CD-ROM in about June 2005. Consult the profiles of ERNWACA ICT researchers, contact persons for national ministries of education and of information/communication for this research project, and lists of national scientific committee members: http://www.rocare.org/EDU_TIC.htm.

• **HIV/AIDS in West and Central Africa: Education Research Response**, ERNWACA and IIEP workshop, 16-18 June 2004, Bamako (Mali) – The Malian Ministry of Health opened this workshop, attended by 35 researchers and policymakers from the region, and the

Ministry of Education closed it and invited all participants to dinner. Researchers presented reviews of almost 200 policy and research documents from seven ERNWACA member countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal. Participants then developed a regional research agenda on the impact of HIV/AIDS on the education sector and the education response as well as conceptual frameworks for national and transnational studies. In addition to ERNWACA's main partner for this research, the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP/UNESCO, Paris), other partners also participated, including: SNEC and SYNESUP teacher unions in Mali, Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), Southern African Development Community (SADC), ADEA Working Group on Education Sector Analysis (WGESA), Mobile Task Team West (MTT-West) and Family and Schooling in Africa (FASAF) international research network of Union for African Population Study (UAPS). In preparation for the workshop, Francois-Joseph Azoh, ERNWACA-Cote d'Ivoire National Coordinator, traveled to Yaounde from March 29 through April 4, 2004 to work with ERNWACA-Cameroon researchers on regional synthesis documents. Many of the documents reviewed are available at <http://hivaidsclearinghouse.unesco.org>. The ERNWACA/IIEP papers will be available there shortly; the workshop final report is available by emailing news@rocare.org. Click to read the [article in L'Independant](#) of Mali.

• **UEMOA Study on Higher Education** (financed by ADB) – This study of the Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa (UEMOA) seeks to diagnose higher education in its 8 member countries (all francophone), identify regional activities that add value, and stimulate sustainable, qualitative reform. SOFEG, a Canadian firm, was retained to conduct the study and the research team is comprised of Canadians and Africans. Data collection was conducted in part through a series of national seminars organized by ministries of education this year. ERNWACA's regional coordinator participated in the regional launch workshop in Ouagadougou, held 5-6 February. The national workshop in Burkina Faso, held 23-25 March, was attended by Emile Bih of ERNWACA-Cote d'Ivoire; Ernest Ilboudo, ERNWACA-Burkina Faso Coordinator; and Benoit Kabore of ERNWACA-Burkina Faso. Naim Deen Salami, ERNWACA-Benin Coordinator, participated in the Benin workshop, held 27-29 April. Philippe Amevigbe, ERNWACA-Togo Coordinator, asked Togolese authorities to invite ERNWACA to the national workshop in Togo in May. Denis Dougnon of ERNWACA-Mali was asked to be the reporter for the national workshop in Mali, 8-10 June 2004. The last

workshop was held in Cote d'Ivoire, 14-19 June. A regional workshop to share findings is planned for early 2005. For more information, contact Augustin Niango, UEMOA director of higher education, phone (226) 31 88 73/74/75/76), augustin.niango@uemoa.int.

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3. Research and Reports

• **Cost-reducing strategies and laboratory management techniques for Biology and Chemistry teachers from junior and senior secondary schools in the Gambia and Nigeria**, Pr. Jonathan Ositadinma Mogbo, Dr. (Mrs.) Felixina Jonsyn-Ellis, ERNWACA-Gambia, December 2002, 55p. (ERNWACA Small Grants competition 2002)

Teaching of experimental scientific subjects such as biology and chemistry requires adequately equipped laboratories, well trained teachers, sufficient materials of good quality, and good laboratory management techniques. However, African governments often lack resources to satisfy these pre-requisites for quality science instruction. The present study covered a sample of 950 junior and secondary school teachers of biology and chemistry in the Gambia and Nigeria, including 800 in Nigeria and 150 in the Gambia, in both urban and rural areas. The study identified the following cost-cutting strategies used by the teachers in the two countries: using substitute or recycled materials in the absence of conventional materials, including the creative use of local materials; developing a capacity to quantify materials used and monitor laboratory expenses; small-scale use of experiments or group work when there are not enough materials for each pupil; capacity to repair and maintain equipment; capacity to stimulate an experiment in a real-life situation. In this comparative study, the authors note that the Nigerian biology and chemistry teachers are more skilled than their counterparts from the Gambia in strategies to reduce costs and in laboratory management techniques. This performance is attributed to higher levels of training among the Nigerian teachers. The authors recommend that national programmes to train biology and chemistry teachers in the Gambia be prioritised and suggest that some teachers' lack of experience and training could be remedied by continuous in-service training over defined periods. As for the urban/rural disparity, it could also be attenuated by the provision of appropriate human and material resources. Click to consult the [study](#).

• **Early childhood development teacher training in the Gambia, and new ECD Manual**, ERNWACA-Gambia for UNICEF, 2003, 28p.

The number of Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers in Gambia doubled between 1992 and 1998, from 125 to 265, however, enrolment is still low at 17% (20% of children in urban settlements compared with 14% in rural settlements). ERNWACA-Gambia, in collaboration with the ECD Unit of the Department of State for Education (DOSE) and UNICEF, led a research and curriculum development team responsible for developing an integrated training program for ECD facilitators at Gambia College. The team relied on multiple inputs including: the draft national policy framework for ECD, a review of curriculum and quality control of the current program, a previous study on gaps in the current program (i.e. overuse of English as opposed to national languages), and a small-scale survey of ECD providers (using interviews with center managers and facilitators, parents, community leaders, and central government and observation of the activities and performance of facilitators). The team developed a 3-year program and a 116-page [Integrated ECD training manual](#) with five modules: 1/ nutrition and child development, 2/ personality development, 3/ basic skills, 4/ teaching and learning resources, 5/ home/community/school relationships. The manual addressed previous deficiencies, such as the lack of modules on safety, violence prevention, gender sensitization, physical education, and cultural subjects such as music and religion. To improve ECD teacher training, researchers made several recommendations: 1/ address the wide disparities of trainee education and experiences by including a standardized written examination followed by individual interviews as part of the selection process, 2/ lobby government to recognize the Certificate received by trainees of the new ECD program, 3/ develop a Resource Centre at Gambia College for prototyping locally-produced and cost-effective materials for ECD centers and for further training of facilitators in developing new teaching and learning materials. Click to consult the [study](#).

• **A sustainable built environment in the Gambia (DAL FAP/GTTI project)**, report with reference to the March 2004 workshop, ERNWACA-Gambia, April 2004, 15p.

The Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI) in partnership with Dalhousie University in Canada is developing, over a five-year period, a degree program in architecture, based on current and desired knowledge and skill levels of professionals in the construction industry and of builders in rural areas. ERNWACA is responsible for developing instruments to measure knowledge and skills in planning, design,

and construction and for establishing baselines from which to measure longitudinally changes in Gambia's built environment. Changes will be assessed periodically after graduates of the degree program have been in the workforce for several years. A documentary study of community policies, regulations, and plans and central government policy and planning documents as well as sector studies is also being conducted to analyze the relationship between official public discourse on empowerment of local communities and social control and authority, locally. The report referenced here refers to the March 2004 workshop where the validity and reliability of a 27-item self-completion questionnaire to evaluate current knowledge/skill levels was tested with 52 participants (27 male and 5 female). The report also includes preliminary results from the documentary study. Click to consult the [report](#).

4. ERNWACA Member Profile

Mr. Makaireh N'Jie, National Coordinator of ERNWACA-Gambia



M. Makaireh N'Jie obtained a masters degree in education in 1979 from the University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom. He was director of the Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI) from 1982 to 2001. He has participated in numerous studies on education in the Gambia including "Parent-teacher associations at lower basic schools" and "Gambia College Academic Review." He presented papers on higher education in the Gambia at the 3rd national conference to prepare the next national education policy and in Ottawa (Canada) at the invitation of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). In June 2004 he traveled to Nairobi to participate in meetings of the Secretariat for Institutional Support for Economic Research in Africa (SISERA). Since 2001, Mr. N'Jie is National Coordinator of ERNWACA-Gambia and as such participated in the ERNWACA 2002 Dakar Strategy Session and will attend the 2004 Strategy Session in Bamako in September. He also participated in a public advocacy training seminar organized by SARA/AED/USAID and puts into practice lessons learned not only in gaining government support for ERNWACA but also in ensuring that research results are translated into policy and programmatic changes. Mr. N'Jie speaks Wolof and English, is married, and has 6 children (4 girls and 2 boys).

(Extracted from [ERNWACA Researcher Profiles database](#), available by clicking "Researchers" from

ERNWACA's homepage. Search by research area for education consultants from West and Central Africa.)

5. General Information

- **Ernwaca Cafés** – reflective learning spaces where Ernwaca researchers and partners share research and experiences and discuss pressing education issues. The first Ernwaca Café, on **Values and Education in Africa**, was held 20 February 2002 at the Student union house at Cheick Anta Diop University of Dakar (UCAD). Two cafés have been organized this year:

- 17 April 2004, **Ernwaca Café in Senegal on literacy**, click for [Soleil coverage](#);

- 11 May 2004, **Ernwaca Café in Mali on HIV/AIDS and education**, where 5 papers were presented by ERNWACA researchers and practitioners from GTZ and UNESCO and discussed by 30 invitees: researchers, members of government and national institutions, representatives of NGOs and technical/financial partners, school directors, students, and journalists. Click for more information on [Ernwaca Cafés](#).

- **CIES 2004 and 2005** – Thanks to the support of the Honorable Minister of Education of Senegal, Mr. Moustapha Sourang (member of ERNWACA's regional steering committee), two members of ERNWACA-Senegal, including ERNWACA-Senegal National Coordinator Ousmane Gueye, were able to attend the 48th conference of the Comparative International Education Society (CIES) on **Development as freedom: the role of education** in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA from 9-12 March 2004. Click to read [Soleil coverage](#). CIES 2005 will be held 22-26 March 2005 at Stanford University in California (USA) around the theme **Beyond Dichotomies**. For more information, contact conference Coordinator Martin Carnoy at martin.carnoy@stanford.edu. Registration information will soon be available at www.cies.ws.

- **From Policy to Practice: Laying the Groundwork for Implementation of National Education Plans** – this seminar organized in Maputo (Mozambique) from 29-31 March 2004 by the [ADEA](#) Working Group on Education Sector Analysis (WGESA) and the Ministry of Education of Mozambique was attended by 30 central government employees and researchers from East and Southern Africa and by invited guests Valdiodio N'Diaye (president of ERNWACA-Senegal and ENS Director), Hamissou Oumarou (Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy in Niger) and WGESA steering committee members from West and Central Africa, Adiza Hima of

CONFEMEN and Kathryn Toure of ERNWACA. For more information, contact Ibrahima Bah-Lalya, WGESA Coordinator at phone (33) 1 45 03 7735 or i.bah-lalya@iiep.unesco.org.

• **Training workshop on expanding resources** – organized by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in M'Bodiene (Senegal), 3-5 May 2004. Thirty project managers and heads of research institutions and networks attended, including Kathryn Toure, ERNWACA Regional Coordinator, and Pierre Fonkoua, ERNWACA-Cameroon National Coordinator. For additional information, contact Kafui Dansou, kdansou@idrc.org.sn.

• **EDUFORM international education and training fair** – organized in the context of NEPAD, in collaboration with ERNWACA and CODESRIA, 11-15 May 2004, Dakar (Senegal). Twenty ERNWACA-Senegal member researchers presented papers on education and training. The discussions inform and enrich Senegal's 10-year program for education and training (PDEF). A second fair is being planned for 2005. For more information: senegal@rocare.org or www.sencomane.sn.

• **Scaling up Good Practices in Girls' Education in Africa** – policy consultation organized by the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) in Nairobi (Kenya), 23-25 June 2004. Participants from 25 countries, including senior ministry of education and ministry of planning officials, attended. It was agreed that promoting girls' education improves education for all – both boys and girls. "Good practices" discussed included FAWE Centres of Excellence, child-friendly school environments built around the right to an education, the TUSEME Speak Out initiative which uses theatre for development to empower girls (developed in Tanzania), policies for re-entry of adolescent schoolgirl mothers, quality training in science and math and technology for girls, HIV/AIDS life skills and peer counseling programmes, teaching sexual maturation, cost reduction strategies and scholarships, flexible school calendars, reduction of home/school distance, provision of boarding facilities, mobile schools, community mobilization and gender sensitization. ERNWACA was represented by its regional coordinator. Please consult ADEA [paper on "Scaling Up"](#) by Joel Samoff and Martial Dembele of ERNWACA's regional scientific and steering committees. For more information: fawe@fawe.org or www.fawe.org.

• **Study on the implementation of measures to encourage girls in primary and secondary education** – this UEMOA initiative seeks to increase

girls' participation in education in all 8 (all francophone) countries of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) so as to improve human resources in the region and reinforce the role of women in regional integration. Specifically, it will review and assess the effectiveness of mechanisms to encourage girls' education, highlight added value actions and conditions that make a difference in increasing girls' participation, and make recommendations to orient sustainable program development and implementation. The study follows up on Recommendations no. 03/99/CM/UEMOA and no. 04/98/CM/UEMOA regarding the promotion of girls' education. For additional information, contact Celine Compaore, gender and development specialist, Department for the Promotion of Women, UEMOA Social Development Division, phone: 226 31 88 73/4/5/6, celine.compaore@uemoa.int.

• **Call for CVs to be part of ADEA WGESA pool of experts for national educational system peer reviews** – seek Africans with experience in developing national policy, implementing educational reforms in Africa, and conducting formative evaluation and research; must be published in professional journals and recognized by peers in West and Central Africa and beyond. Must be excellent synthesizer, writer and daily user of Internet. Please send CV, one-page motivation letter and, if possible, short writing sample, by 30 July 2004 to mldiarra@rocare.org.

• **Call for applications for training in Open and Distance Learning (ODL)** – the *Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie* (AUF) and the University of Montreal (Quebec, Canada) seek applications from professors in Burkina Faso and Mali; training in integrating information and communication technologies in teaching is offered and 15 scholarships are available. For more information: http://foad.refer.org/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=34.

• **Upcoming electronic journal "Education for International Development"** – published by the Educational Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP) and financed by USAID, invites subscribers and contributions as well as input on content and format. Contact Justin Mortensen, American Institutes for Research (AIR), phone: 1 202 403 5247, jmortensen@air.org.

• **Upcoming electronic discussion forum on Non-Formal Education** – organized by the ADEA Working Group (WG) on non-formal education (NFE) to improve understanding about the relevance and place of NFE in the wider context of basic education for all and sharpen the WG range of support services to stakeholder

groups in Africa. Join by clicking <http://www.adeanet.org/wgnfe>.

• **Seeking correspondent who is pedagogical advisor or primary school director** – Mr. Bechir Bergaoui is a pedagogical advisor in the suburbs of

Tunis (Tunisia) and organizes training for groups of primary teachers. He seeks a correspondent – pedagogical advisor or primary school director – for mutual exchange of experience(s). For additional information, please contact bechir.bergaoui@laposte.net.

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