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Promotion of Quality Education in Africa: Examining the Language of instruction Issues

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1. Introduction

In order to provide access to primary education to all school-aged children, African governments have significantly invested in the promotion of universal primary education (UPE). In this regard, they have made significant progress over the last four decades, tripling or quadrupling the national enrollment rates. The Education for All (EFA) conference held in Jomtien provided a greater incentive by identifying quantitative benchmarks and a deadline by which the target must be achieved. EFA has had several positive effects on educational policies in Africa. Due to EFA, several governments have developed national plans of action in order to promote access to basic education to all children, youth and adults. The enrollment rates of school-aged children has increased in most African countries and moreover, governments, civil societies and international donor communities have recognized the need to promote policies that reduce and even eliminate gender inequalities in education. Due to EFA, reducing and eliminating gender inequality in education became a critical policy element that put African girls on the school maps. Several initiatives geared towards the elimination of gender inequality in formal education have been implemented since 1990.

Providing access to schools to all children should not be the only goal of EFA and Fast Track Initiative (FTI). Efforts should also be geared to promote quality education for all. In this regard to the promotion of quality education, most EFA policy documents state the importance of developing conducive learning environments. Several factors account for the delivery of quality basic education. Among these factors one can identify school-based factors such as the availability of well-trained and competent teachers in schools and classrooms, relevant curriculum and availability of quality educational materials as well as the promotion of adequate school-based language-in-education policy. An effective language-in-education policy clearly specifies in bi/multilingual which languages are used as media of instruction and which languages are taught as subjects in the curriculum. It is important to state that while language of instruction is not the ONLY factor for improving quality instruction as indicated above, it is clearly among the most important factor. Effective learning cannot take place without communication and communication takes place when teachers use a language or languages that learners (pupils or students) can understand. The use of languages that learners do not understand as media of instruction triggers serious communication problems in the classrooms. Ineffective communication hinders African pupils' ability to learn (Alidou and Brock-Utne, 2006). Therefore, we suggest that it is impossible to improve learning without seriously addressing the following question:

- Do children understand what they are being taught?
- Can they read? Can they write in the language of instruction?
- How do teachers facilitate comprehension and learning among students when the language of instruction constitutes a communication barrier?

It is very difficult or even impossible to deliver quality education through a language that is not spoken or understood by learners. Unfortunately, in many African countries

the language of instruction used from primary school to tertiary education is a language that is not well understood (both orally and in writing) by the majority of the learners. This situation persists and undermines many educational reforms undertaken by the ministries of education during the post-independence era and even after Jomtien.

It is important to notice that ten years after Jomtien and despite intensive efforts to promote UPE many African countries are still struggling with access and quality issues. More children are going to school, however, the majority of them are not remaining in school. The high drop out rates among primary school pupils indicate that schools are not adequately addressing the educational needs of these children. Effective teaching and learning depend on effective communication and interactions in the classrooms. Students perform well in school when they master orally and in writing the medium of instruction. Unfortunately, in Sub-Saharan African countries, the monolingual language-in-education policies implemented in schools rely on the use of English, French, Portuguese or Spanish languages that the majority of African teachers and students do not master well.

2. Language-in-education policies in Africa

With 1500 to 2000 languages spoken as means of daily communication among its inhabitants, Africa is considered the most multilingual and multicultural continent on earth (Wolff, 2006). African people are also among the most multilingual people on earth. In communities where more than two languages are used for daily communication, the majority of people living in that community speak at least two languages. Outside schools, languages are used as resources for within group communication as well as for inter-group communication. For this reason Wolff (2006) argues that multilingualism is not only the norm it should also be viewed as a resource that must be carefully used in not only planning language and communication but also education and development. A careful analysis of the sociolinguistic situation of different countries indicates that outside the formal domains multilingualism is well managed by the population. Different languages are used for various purposes. Most people cherish the fact that they can speak more than one language. It is therefore important not to impose one language over the other but through a well organized social dialogue to determine what languages can be used as languages of instruction at the local, regional and national levels. Studies show that when the input of the population and all stake-holders (particularly the elites) is factored in language planning and language policy the chance of mobilizing social support for the policy is greater and sustainable. This strategy was used in Niger (where ten languages are recognized as national languages) to select five regional languages which are used as languages of instruction in the experimental bilingual schools created since 1973. In recent years in order to promote the “Primary Reading Program” (PRP) which is a late exit transitional bilingual program whose aim is to promote the development of academic literacy in both Zambian languages and English used as languages of instruction and subject matters in the formal basic education curriculum, Zambia’s ministry of education organized a national forum which provide strong guidance and support for the language-in-education policy.

The fact that many languages are spoken across borders it is important to adopt both a national and regional approach to language-in-education policies in Africa. Countries which share the cross-border languages can work together in developing adequate teaching and learning materials in these languages. It also important to know that some languages are minority languages in few countries. The same languages may be majority languages in other countries. Consequently addressing language of instruction issues from sub-regional perspective can help in promoting cost-effective policies on one hand and on the other hand it can also contribute to minimizing the majority/minority language dichotomy. Books can be produced jointly by two or three countries where the cross-border languages are used. In collaboration with ministries of education and linguists and educators from different countries, publishers can produce textbooks in cross-border languages that can be used in two to three countries which share the same languages. Currently, books produced in Nigeria and in the following languages Fulfulde, and Hausa are used in Niger without many problems. Books produced in Niger are also finding readers in Nigeria. These examples show that policy related to language policy in education in Africa must be informed by practices and how multilingual populations use resources that are available to them. What is happening in most cases, language policies are based more on assumption and they do not seem to recognize that there are developments taking place on the ground.

Unfortunately, during the colonial and post-colonial eras, multilingualism was considered a problem by not only the colonial administrations and the newly independent countries and their governments. For all the colonial administrations (British, French, Portuguese, Spanish), the goal of schooling was not to guarantee equity through “mass education” nor was it aiming at providing “quality” by examining the language of instruction and/or the contents of the curriculum (issues which are at the heart of post-colonial education debate and the current Education for All (EFA), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other contemporary education policies). To the contrary, during the colonial era, schooling was very selective and its aim was to train few African males who could serve the colonial administration. There is, however, a difference in the language-in-education policies. With regard to language policies, the British and German colonial administrations used a transitional bilingual model which allowed the use of African languages in the first three years of schooling. English was used from fourth grade onward. The transitional bilingual programs therefore are programs which use successively children’s mother tongues or community language and official languages as means of instruction. The mother tongues or community languages are used to ease learning and transition into instruction in English or second languages which are not the students’ main language.

The French, Portuguese, and Spanish colonial administration used a different type of language policy. They implemented a monolingual model which was in sync with their linguistic and cultural assimilation ideology. At independence, the majority of Sub-Saharan African countries had less than 20% of educated people. They entered the independence era by facing the challenge of providing as soon as possible access to basic education to the majority of the population.

During the post-colonial era (1960s-1980s) the majority of African countries for various political, economic and technical reasons opted to continue the language policies they inherited from the colonial era. Therefore in former British colonies such as Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Zambia mother tongues or community languages were used as means of instruction from grade 1 to grade 3 while English is taught as subject. From grade 4 to grade 6 English became language of instruction. In Sierra Leone, English is language of instruction at all levels, except in primary grades 1 and 2, where the community language is also used as medium of instruction. In the former French and Portuguese colonies such as Burkina Faso and Mozambique, French and Portuguese were respectively used as the main languages of instruction from grade 1 up to tertiary education. Some variation seems to have developed in French speaking countries. Guinea during the late President Sekou Toure promoted the use of national languages as languages of instruction throughout primary schools. Unfortunately this policy was never evaluated and it was terminated when President Toure died. Madagascar has promoted two types of language policy which promoted the use of Malagasy as language of instruction. During the eighties with the support of Germany and the World Bank Madagascar promoted the use of Malagasy as the medium of instruction in all primary schools. This policy was ended in the early 1990s. Currently the new language-in-education policy advocates the use of Malagasy as language of instruction in grades 1 and 2, switching to French in grade 3.

The decision to maintain the language policies inherited from the colonial era seemed politically easy because newly elected or appointed government officials did not want to address the political debates or issues that the choice of few languages among many might create in a context where nation-building depending on creating national cohesion among people who belong to different ethno-linguistic groups or nationalities but they are suddenly members of the same nation. The second aspect that was advanced among many other reasons was the cost-effectiveness of the retention of English, French, Portuguese and Spanish as dominant languages of instruction in either transitional bilingual schools in countries where these languages are official languages. Thirdly, at the beginning of independence even if African countries wanted to promote the use of African languages, it was claimed that there were very few experts who can carry out the different tasks involved in language planning as well as the implementation of language-in-education policies.

Several studies produced both by African and international experts indicated that the use of European languages as dominant languages of instruction have created more educational problems and the outcomes may be more costly. The most recent study conducted by a team of experts commissioned by ADEA provides an extensive analysis of the issues related to the post-colonial and post-independence language-in-education policies adopted by most African countries (see Alidou and Al. 2006). We will refer the readers to this study for a critical review of all the issues. With regard to quality education it is apparent from the study that in order to promote quality education in Africa and respond to the call to promote Education for All, the question of the medium of instruction needs to be effectively addressed.

2.1. The medium of instruction and quality teaching and learning in Africa

Language is the main tool that human being possess to express and share their cultures, knowledge, thoughts, etc. Therefore, effective teaching and learning can only take place in classrooms which promote effective communication and interactions among teachers and pupils and among all learners. The use of a common language that all parties understand is necessary for effective communication and interactions to take place. Gay (2000) also adds that:

“Language and communication styles are systems of cultural notations and the means through which thoughts and ideas are expressively embodied. Embedded with them are cultural values and ways of knowing that strongly influence how students engage with learning tasks and demonstrate mastery of them.” (Page 81).

In spite of the recognition that effective communication and interactions between teachers and pupils and between pupils are key factors that facilitate learning, these very important aspects (i.e. effective communication and interactions in the classrooms) are neglected in actions and decisions related to the promotion of quality education in Africa. Instead of regarding the promotion of African languages as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION as a primarily pedagogical matter, the medium of instruction question has primarily been treated as either an ideological, political or economic matter. This is so in spite of the serious academic problems faced by the majority of African pupils (Alidou, 2003).

The exclusive use of official languages such as English, French, Portuguese and Spanish as main languages of instruction by teachers who do not always master well these languages hinders pupils’ ability to learn effectively in school settings. Interestingly, outside the school systems, African children and adults learn and develop adequate indigenous knowledge base and skills (farming, fishing, carpentry, commerce, etc.) through apprenticeship. Prior to coming to school most African children are engaged in highly sophisticated problem solving activities. They are active participants in all socio-economic and cultural activities taking place in their own communities. They help their parents with family chores and responsibilities. From six years old and up they are sent to the market to sell and buy goods. In the rural areas, African children learn at a very young age how to take care of animals and how to farm. The learning or apprenticeship is facilitated by the use of languages that they use daily as their mother tongue or their first languages. These children accomplish often sophisticated commercial transactions without any language or cognitive problems. Yet, when they arrive in schools this potential they bring to school is not exploited. They are expected to use immediately languages they are unfamiliar to them, namely French, English, Spanish or Portuguese, as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION. They are put in a situation where they are learning both the languages of instruction and the knowledge transmitted through these languages. This situation carries several negative consequences that impact on quality teaching, learning and education.

Far from helping children enhance their linguistic and cognitive abilities and becoming successful learners, the first years of schooling are, on the contrary, seriously

frustrating for the African students as well as for their teachers (Alidou and Brock-Utne 2006; Alidou and Thyness 2006). The use of languages that are unfamiliar to children has a negative impact on classroom communication and interactions and minimizes the teachers' ability to teach effectively. It forces teachers to resort to the use of traditional and teacher-centered teaching methods. According to Obanyia (2004:17) in this context, African classrooms are places where

““Talking and chalking” replaces genuine teaching and learning”.

Indeed, classroom observation studies conducted in several countries in Africa show that when English, French, Portuguese or Spanish are used as the main LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION, teachers do most of the talking while children remain silent or passive participants during most of the classroom interactions. In this context, teachers appeal to teaching techniques such as chorus teaching, repetition, and memorization, and recall, code-switching and safe talk in order to conduct their lessons. Since Jomtien, several pedagogical interventions geared to improving quality education have been promoted in Africa. Teachers receive short-term training in cooperative learning, pedagogy oriented toward the development of competencies among learners. All these initiatives can be optimized if teachers and students were using a language that they master well. It is difficult for teachers to integrate these pedagogical techniques when the language is a serious barrier. (Alidou, 1997; Alidou, 2003; Benson, 1997; Brock-Utne et al. 2003; Brock-Utne 2005; Hovens, 2002; Rubagumya, 2003).

According to Banyan (2004), in Nigeria, in order to alleviate the communication problems that they face and in order to help pupils understand new concepts and participate actively in a new lesson, teachers rely more on the use of mother tongues than English. Therefore the estimate use of mother tongue is 85% of the teaching time and only 15% of the classroom interactions are conducted in English. Even during the revision of a lesson rely more on the use of mother tongues than English. 70% of the interactions during revision are conducted in mother tongue vs. 30% in English in spite of the fact that this is not a new lesson. With regard to assignments, teachers use equal time for the same assignment. Therefore the assignment is explained first in mother tongue then translated in English in order to make sure pupils know what is expected of them.

In order to remedy the communication problems related to the use of languages that are unfamiliar to children as languages of instruction and improve the delivery of education, several well renowned African and international linguists and educators have argued for the promotion of bilingual education in order to improve educational outcomes. Over the last four decades, few countries have used national languages along their official ones as languages of instruction. The impact or effects of language-in-education policies on the delivery of quality education or schooling depend upon the aims and the structure of the program, and the implementation strategies used by the ministries of education (MOE). It is therefore important to assess these programs by taking into consideration what research predicts may be the possible outcomes depending upon the model retained. It is also important to recognize that in promoting bilingual education or any educational

innovations, the medium of instruction is certainly a very significant element that needs to be appropriately selected given a country's or community's sociolinguistic profile.

However, it is also important to recognize that it is not the only aspect that accounts for the success of the innovation. Aspects such as teachers' linguistic and pedagogical competence, availability of adequate educational materials, social support for the innovations, selection of a model that can lead to optimal teaching and learning need to be considered. Often these measures that must be factored in during the selection of a particular language-in-education model are neglected. It is expected that mother tongues used as language of instruction alone is enough to foster positive changes in education. This has not been the case, thus far. In the context of EFA and the Fast Track Initiative (FTI), it is important to determine what the most effective bilingual models are. It is also important to learn from countries which have already implemented the use of African languages along with official ones (English, French, Spanish and Portuguese) as language of instruction. It is important to know why some bilingual programs were more effective than others. It is mostly important to learn about what the main elements that policy-makers should know are in order to promote effective use of national languages as language of instruction along with the official languages.

3. Models of bilingual education and their effectiveness

Cheryl Roberts (1995) warns us that there are various types of bilingual programs and that it is very difficult to define them or make a clear cut generalization about them. It is also very difficult to determine their exclusive impact on the delivery of quality education. Even though most of these programs may have as stated goal the attainment of additive bilingualism, they may not achieve this goal for several reasons. Therefore she argues that each bilingual program should be evaluated by examining its goals and outcomes independently and together. Ministries of Education policy documents may state additive bilingualism and biliteracy as the goal of specific bilingual programs but they may not have adequate resources to facilitate the appropriate recruitment and training of bilingual teachers, the development of adequate educational materials in L1 and L2 and the program can lack the support of the community or parents.

Effective bilingual education models are grounded in sound theory and best practices that are associated with the development of bilingualism and academic biliteracy among all participating learners. They are developed by taking into account language acquisition theories and principle such as linguistic interdependence between learners' first language (mother tongue or community language) or L1 and second language (regional or official languages used as language of instruction) or L2 and positive transfer of cognitive and literacy skills developed in L1 into L2 as advanced by Jim Cummins (1991). For this transfer to happen and influence positive learning outcomes among pupils, it takes five to seven years effective use of the first language as language of instruction and effective teaching of L2 as early as grade 1 (Cummins, 1991). Therefore the aim of an effective bilingual program must be to enable learners to develop full speaking, reading and writing mastery in both L1 and L2 and be able to perform academically well in the two languages even if one is later on dropped as medium of instruction within the school system. This is what is called balanced bilingualism and biliteracy. According to Wallace Lambert (1975) bilingual education programs produce two types of outcomes. The first type of outcome is subtractive bilingualism which is associated with ineffective bilingual programs. In these programs students lose their L1 while they are learning their L2 or medium of instruction. The second type of outcome is additive bilingualism which is produced by effective bilingual programs. According to Cheryl Roberts (1995) additive bilingualism is developed when schools maintain pupils' L1 as language of instruction and help them learn effectively L2. Cummins (1991) conducted several studies related to the outcomes of bilingual education programs. He argues that subtractive bilingualism leads to linguistic and academic failure among students while additive bilingualism leads to linguistic and academic success among bilingual learners.

Submersion programs: They are associated with very poor learning outcomes

Submersion programs are educational programs that do not make any accommodation for the use of learners' mother tongues or first language. They expect pupils to learn the language of instruction (often a language which are unfamiliar to them) while they are also learning the contents of the school curriculum. This is a sink-or-swim situation

where the learner is expected to do his/her best to acquire the language of instruction and do well in school. This is of course very difficult to do. In this case very few students are able to survive in the school system. This program produces two outcomes: subtractive bilingualism and high rate of school failure among students whose L1 is different from the school language.

The submersion program is unfortunately the model that is prevalent in most school systems in Africa. At the advent of their political independence, most African countries retained an European language (English, French, Spanish or Portuguese) as their official languages and also the main languages or exclusive language of instruction. As Kathleen Heugh (2006:69) pointed out, a subtractive model involves a straight-for-L2 medium of instruction. Often the classroom is the only place where children hear the language of instruction. Unfortunately, they are obliged to learn in this language while they are also learning for the first time the contents taught through this language. Teachers are not officially allowed to use children's mother tongues for instruction. However, faced with serious communication problems that negatively impact teaching and learning, teachers are often forced to use these languages in order to help their students understand the lessons. This medium of instruction policy is associated with the most negative educational outcomes. The use of unfamiliar language as language of instruction impacts immensely on pupils' linguistic and cognitive development. Therefore, it is not surprising to find out that pupils demonstrate very low learning outcomes when assessed or evaluated in the official languages (English, French, Spanish and Portuguese). The inadequacy of the medium of instruction policy should be considered among the main factors that explain the poor academic achievements, particularly literacy reported for African countries in the Global Monitoring Reports since 1990 and other assessments.

Transitional bilingual model: They often produce negative learning outcomes

In both North America and Europe, in general transitional bilingual education models were implemented with regard to the education of new immigrant children. In these programs, children's first language (L1) is used as bridges to learning the main language of instruction or target language called also a second language (L2). In the majority of transitional programs pupils are exited very quickly before they have developed adequate literacy skills in their L1. Pupils are often exited from the bilingual program with only basic communication skills in the L2. Their literacy skills in the L2 are very limited. Skutnab-Kangas argues that the main purpose of these programs is mainstreaming or assimilation into the dominant language culture for example English in the case of America for the education of Hispanic students and German in the case of Germany for the education of Turkish students.

Studies conducted in North America and Europe show recurrently that this model of bilingual education is very ineffective. Students who attend these programs experience serious educational problems. They have low academic performance as they continue to have difficulty learning in the L2. Early exit transitional bilingual programs particularly do not facilitate acquisition of academic literacy in the L2. They also produce subtractive bilingualism just like submersion programs. They reduce learners' competencies in both their L1 and their L2. In many cases, it is difficult for learners to develop even functional literacy in the L2 (Ramirez et al., 1991, Skutnabb-Kangas, 1990). To help readers

understand the structure of an early exit bilingual model, we present below the early transit bilingual model from Washington State in the U.S.:

Grade	K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4
Language of instruction (% ration English/Spanish)	Spanish (80%)	Spanish (70%)	Spanish (50%)	Spanish (30%)	Spanish (0%)
	English (20%)	English (30%)	English (50%)	English (70%)	English (100%)

(Source: Terry Berguson. <http://www.k12.wa.us/MigrantBilingual/instructionalmodels.aspx>. Accessed 6/29/07)

The early exit program illustrated above is similar to the majority of programs found in Africa. These programs emerged either during the colonial period or during the post-independence era. Pupils' mother tongues or L1 are used as language of instruction from grade 1 to grade 3. From fourth grade onward, instruction is conducted in the official language of the countries or L2 (English, French, Spanish or Portuguese). During the colonial era, mother tongues were used by missionaries for evangelization but also as language of instruction in the first three years of schooling in the British and German colonies. This model of bilingual education is similar to the early exit bilingual program described above. Mother tongues are used as a bridge before pupils can use the official language of education (English). It is important to state that during the colonial era, pupils were taught by native speakers of English who have appropriate teacher training. In the post-colonial era, most former British colonies such as Nigeria, Kenya, and Uganda maintained the use of mother tongues as language of instruction in the first three grades of primary school.

In order to facilitate learning particularly in the lower primary school's grades and ease transition to instruction in the official languages other countries have also promoted mother tongue-based bilingual programs either at a small scale (experimental bilingual programs) or large scale by promoting the use of national languages along with the official languages as language of instruction in all primary schools (Somali and Ethiopia).

In Burkina Faso for example, the official documents related to bilingual schools called "Ecoles Satellites" run by the MoE and UNICEF state that mother tongues are used as language of instruction in the first three grades and French takes over in fourth grade as language of instruction. We have worked for 10 years in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. Our classroom observations indicate that in the Ecoles Satellites, the implemented language-in-education policy is radically different from the official language-in-education policy. Untrained teachers cannot teach effectively in the mother tongues. Often they do not even know how to transcribe very well these languages. Therefore they quickly switch to teaching in French as they have been taught. In the Ecoles Satellites there is a serious lack of educational materials in the national languages used as language of instruction. Learning in both mother tongues and French is very difficult in the Ecoles Satellites which actually use the traditional curriculum. Therefore one can argue that the use of mother tongue for oral communication certainly ease communication at the beginning of schooling but the fact that teachers have very limited teaching competencies in both mother

tongues and French makes this bilingual model very ineffective. It is on paper a bilingual education. However, in practice we classify it as a monolingual school which relies on the use of mother tongues to facilitate oral communication between teachers and pupils during the first few months of schooling. A serious attention needs to be given to these schools in order to promote quality teaching and learning.

In her evaluation of primary schools and language use in Madagascar, Ingse Skattum observed also the same types of problems we observed in the Ecoles Satellites. She found that teachers who are not cognizant of the official Malagasy have serious difficulties teaching in this language. She also found that very poor teaching of French is involved in the classrooms. She made several recommendations with regard to how to address the language teaching issues in order to promote effective teaching and learning in both Malagasy and French in Madagascar.

Ingse Skattum also found that in Mali where the *Pédagogie Convergente* is promoted within a late exit transitional bilingual model, limited mastery of literacy in national languages among teachers minimizes the impact of the very promising educational reform undertaken by Mali. Skattum and her Malian colleagues suggested that serious attention must be given to effective teacher training in teaching in the mother tongues and the official languages, academic literacy and the development of adequate linguistic research that benefits bilingual schools.

Several studies discuss the success of the experimental bilingual program implemented in Niger since 1973. The initial success of the transitional experimental program implemented between 1973 and 1983 is attributed to a large extent to the fact that teachers used L1 as language of instruction throughout the primary schools even though the official document stated only three years. Teachers were allowed to use L1 if it was needed. Teachers were also well trained in active pedagogy and they received regular and adequate school-based support from well qualified linguists and teacher trainers. During the evaluation conducted by UNESCO the experimental school pupils performed significantly better than the regular school pupils who attended the submersion programs where French was used as the exclusive language of instruction (UNESCO 1985, Bergman & al. 2002) . Alidou conducted a comparative study in 1997 in Niger. She found that the experimental bilingual school and submersion or regular school pupils who had six years of instruction in French performed equally and poorly on most tests administered in French. Her study showed that that the use of L1 did not negatively impact pupils' ability to learn French. However, it was difficult to establish a strong statistical difference between the two school systems.

Transitional bilingual programs promoted in Africa produced positive learning outcomes at the initial stages and in comparison to the majority of the submersion programs implemented in the countries, they seemed to help pupils transition into exclusive instruction in English or French. However, an extensive review of several bilingual programs in African showed that the success of these programs is not maintained throughout the educational system (Alidou & al., 2006). Few factors explain the ineffectiveness or limited strengths of transitional bilingual models promoted in Africa. Besides the scientific weakness of the model, there are other contributing factors such as the reliance on poorly trained teachers, the scarcity of adequate teaching materials in both L1 and L2 and lack of strong support for mother tongue education among African and international elites and the population.

In order to improve quality education, Zambian MoE decided to tackle seriously the issue of literacy at the primary school level. By developing and implementing the “Primary Reading Programme”. This is a late exit transitional bilingual program that includes the development of academic literacy in first and second languages among primary school pupils. According to Sampa (2003), the main characteristics of Zambia “**Primary Reading Programme**” which started as a pilot project in 25 schools and now implemented in 4,271 schools in Zambia are:

- **Child-centered methodologies** that build on children’s experiences and move their learning from the known to the unknown. The teacher is more of a facilitator of learning and allows children to explore their experiences
- **Continuous assessment procedures** are built into all the literacy courses to allow a teacher to pause after a short period of time to see the level of performance of learners as whole class, as groups and as individuals. The teacher should then be able to plan and provide activities that should improve the reading and writing levels of children. Always the weakest children should be a priority during the lesson and should be given extra attention in order for them to catch up
- Provides a **monitoring system that makes the teachers’ lessons transparent**. Teachers are ready to be visited at any time and to share their lesson experiences with other people such as fellow teachers, head-teachers, inspectors and members of the community. Teachers are always open to accept criticism and build on their weaknesses
- **Learners are well guided on the use and care of books, especially exercise books**. The exercise books tell a story on how much work has been done by children and how much assistance has been given to individual pupils. An up-dated record of every child’s performance in the literacy course is kept and revised after every assessment.

The dissemination of research findings through a national debate organized in November 1995 and attended by MoE experts, the civil society and the international donor community was very helpful and critical in raising awareness among parents, teachers, students and the whole population. The National Reading Forum was also an event which the population particularly the national experts to make recommendations with regard to the types of intervention that the MoE should take. From this forum the MoE had the clear mandate to promote from grade 1 to grade 7:

- 1) Mother tongue literacy
- 2) Literacy in English

The Forum also went further and made recommendations related to what type of teaching methods and materials should be used to teach literacy in mother tongue and literacy in English. In order to ensure transfer of literacy skills from mother tongues to English, the Forum retained for mother tongue instruction the “Language Experience Approach to initial literacy” and the use of Breakthrough course along with program called Write-to-read which is also written from a Language Experience Approach perspective. For the teaching of literacy in English the national curriculum namely the English component of Zambia Basic Education Course (ZBEC) was recommended. After the National Forum for Reading, the MoE developed a plan of action was developed. The main components of this action plan included: Capacity development and production of adequate teaching and learning materials.

The capacity development included the design and implementation of the in-service training and the pre-service training program to train teachers and student-teachers with regard to the new approaches to teaching languages and literacy. The training of teacher trainers, supervisors and teachers was done at three levels (national, regional and local levels). A “Cascade

or roll-over” model of training was used to initiate all teachers and educators. The training for literacy in mother tongues and English took 2 years from November 2001 to February 2003. The training included also professional development training for curriculum specialists in charge of the development of materials in all seven national languages and English and training of assessment specialists who can develop standards that specify the expected performance level for each grade and for both Zambian languages and English. Teachers and students as well as parents have clear information about how pupils are assessed at the end of each educational level. Therefore they know the specific goals and objectives they should achieve.

Currently, ADEA and the medium of instruction from Zambia have reported very positive results related to the implementation of the Primary Reading Program (PRP). With regard to English for example, in 1999 the national average for was 4.8 points for grade 2 pupils. It jumped up to 24 points in 2007. This result indicates that the PRP made a significant and positive impact on pupils’ learning and literacy skill development in English. For Sampa (2004:27), the drastic improvement and high achievements in Zambian languages and English are attributed to quality teaching and learning which are taking place in the classrooms. When pupils develop adequate literacy skills in their first and second languages, they perform better academically. The fundamental question that one still needs to pose is to what extent the gain accumulated in lower grade by pupils attending Zambia schools where the PRP is implemented can be sustained throughout the educational system (i.e. from primary school up to tertiary level). We suggest that the model be strengthened by adopting the teaching of Zambian languages as means of instruction for at least six years given the strong literacy component included in the curriculum.

According to UNESCO (2005)¹ literacy is a key factor in promoting quality education. It specifically stated that

Central to the curriculum is the teaching and learning of reading and writing. Literacy is a critical tool for the mastery of other subjects. It is also one of the best predictors of longer-term learning achievement. Literacy must therefore be considered a priority area in efforts to improve the quality of basic education, particularly for learners from disadvantaged backgrounds Gauthier and Dembélé, 2004).

UNESCO also added

“In multilingual societies, the choice of language of instruction and language policy in schools is critical for effective learning. And assessment is important if lessons are to be learned for good classroom practice. Carefully considered options for providing and distributing learning materials, classroom facilities and physical infrastructure also play their part in better learning”.

Considering the above statements, one can argue that Zambia has developed an effective strategy for promoting the Primary Reading Program. Five factors account for the success of this policy. They include:

- 1) **The adequate needs assessments** conducted by the MoE and the external research done by Eddie Williams. We believe this should lead to retention of a bilingual model that fosters additive bilingualism.

- 2) **The social mobilization** for the promotion of equity and quality in education through the organization of a national Forum on reading. This led to a consensus building about the use of mother tongues and English as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION for the literacy and clear pedagogical choices involving particularly the selection of teaching methods and the type of reading and writing materials.
- 3) **The crafting of an adequate plan of action and its implementation** (capacity development including **building up the capability of the MoE's staffs** engaged in the planning and implementation of the Primary Reading Programmes, intensive teacher training; the development and supply of adequate teaching and learning materials in all languages used as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION and the design and implementation of adequate monitoring and evaluation systems to determine the progress made by pupils).
- 4) **The design of effective monitoring and evaluation system** (national, regional and local levels) that clearly define the expected outcomes (i.e. Competency based Learning Assessment) and the progress made by learners, teachers, and school districts per region.
- 5) **Adequate utilization of external technical assistance** from Overseas Development Agency's experts.

It is, indeed, important to recognize that in order to develop the existing policy, Zambian MoE benefited from the technical assistance of experts from the Overseas Development Agency (ODA). The role of the technical Assistants was working closely with Zambian educators and linguists in order to build at the MoE and at the national university and teacher training colleges (TTCs) national capacity which could implement effectively the national basic education policy and the Primary Reading Programme

In order to promote quality bilingual education in Africa, important to understand why different studies or evaluations of the same programs produce different conclusions. The UIE-ADEA and GTZ team of researchers concluded decisively, based on the review of several bilingual programs in Africa, that most transitional bilingual programs do not produce additive bilingualism and biliteracy among pupils. Therefore it is difficult to expect that adequate outcomes or highly positive learning outcomes from transitional bilingual programs can be maintained for long time and when implemented on large scale. To promote quality education, it is important to invest in the design of programs that influence the development of additive bilingualism and academic biliteracy.

Ineffective effective language-in-education models implemented in Africa: use of more than two languages as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION with no clear language policy

Few countries have adopted a multilingual model of education without a clear policy guidelines and technical support for the teachers. Several languages are used as languages of instruction and subject matters in the primary and secondary school curricula with relying on principles of language learning and language teaching. In these cases we recommend a re-assessment of the language learning goals and the provision of adequate training for teachers.

In countries such as Rwanda and Burundi, a multilingual model of education is currently implemented. In Rwanda, pupils are taught in Kinyarwanda the national

language in the first, second and third grade and French and English are taught as first subjects. French becomes language of instruction in fourth grade. It is in fact an early exit bilingual program which adds teaching of English either as subject. We conducted several classroom observations in Rwanda' Teacher training college as well as primary school classrooms. We found that in The TTCs student teachers do not master French or English language. They are more fluent in Kinyarwanda. The observation conducted in the primary schools show that teachers and students prefer to use Kinyarwanda for respectively teaching and learning. They have serious difficulty expressing themselves in French and English yet the curriculum includes the use of French as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION.

It is also important to understand why different studies or evaluations of the same programs produce different conclusion. The fact that the results obtained by the bilingual schools' pupils on achievement tests is superior than the results obtained by the submersion schools' pupils may not necessarily mean these models that lead to optimal teaching and learning or quality education in Africa. The UIE-ADEA and GTZ team of researchers concluded decisively based on the review of several bilingual programs in Africa that most transitional bilingual programs do not produced additive bilingualism and biliteracy among pupils therefore it is difficult to expect that adequate outcomes or highly positive learning outcomes from transitional bilingual programs. To promote quality education, it is important to invest in the design of programs that influence the development of additive bilingualism and academic biliteracy.

Maintenance, enrichment (two-way or Developmental bilingual programs) and immersion programs are effective bilingual programs:

Three types of bilingual programs (maintenance, enrichment, and immersion programs) have been associated with the development of additive bilingualism, biliteracy and high academic achievement among students (Thomas and Collier 1997, 2002; Ramirez & al., 1997). In all the three programs the maintenance of Language 1 (L1) as medium of instruction and effective teaching of Language 2 (L2) are key factors that influence appropriate linguistic development as well as the development of adequate literacy and academic skills. The goal of maintenance programs is to develop bilingualism and biliteracy among English as second language (ESL) learners. Students receive language arts instruction and instruction for other subjects in the curriculum in both their L1 and their L2. Students are therefore transition into mainstream classes where instruction is done in L2 but they continue to receive similar type of instruction in their L1. Therefore they are able to develop academic literacy and additive bilingualism.

In enrichment programs second language learners as well as native speakers of L1 are taught together both L1 and L2 and they learn also the contents of the curriculum in these languages. Students with different linguistic background are put together in the same classroom and they are expected to help each other learn the second language. Therefore English is L2 for Hispanic pupils and Spanish is L2 for native speakers of English. They are taught by bilingual teachers who have received effective training in dual language instruction or by two teachers who are native speakers of respectively L1 (English) and L2 (Spanish).

The immersion programs promoted in Canada were originally designed for the education of native speakers of English who want to learn French as a second language. These programs are associated with additive bilingualism and positive academic achievements when they are offered mainly to speakers of English as L1. The goal of immersion programs attended by minority language students is similar to transitional bilingual program. It is assimilation of French learners.

The most common features of the effective bilingual programs (maintenance, enrichment or developmental, immersion) found in the U.S. and Canada is the following: maintenance of learners' first language as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION throughout primary school (five to seven years), development of strong academic literacy in L1 and L2 (whether L2 is used as a LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION of instruction or subject in the curriculum). The other very important points are the availability of well trained bilingual teachers and use of adequate L1 and L2 pedagogy along with appropriate teaching materials in both languages. Moreover, in all these programs pupils' languages and cultures are well recognized, respected and promoted in the programs. For Cummins (1981) only students who experience additive bilingualism and develop academic biliteracy are able to demonstrate strong and positive learning outcomes.

In Africa, three bilingual programs have been identified in the literature as strong bilingual programs that produced additive bilingualism as well as strong academic outcomes. The first study was produced by Malherbe in 1943. In his study Malherbe indicated that in South Africa, pupils who are exposed to mother tongue instruction throughout primary school which lasted seven years and dual language instruction (Afrikaans and English) in secondary education (grade 8 to grade 12) demonstrated strong mastery of all languages used in the programs (mother tongues which are African languages, Afrikaans and English). Their performance was better than pupils who were in monolingual schools which used exclusively either Afrikaans or English (Malherbe 1943; Kathleen Heugh, 2006).

In relatively recent years (1980s and 1990s), two countries have implemented strong bilingual programs that produce additive bilingualism and positive academic outcomes. The first one is the Ife Six Years Primary Project (SYPP) and the second one is the bilingual program in Ethiopia. The faculty from Ife University under the leadership of Professor Fafunwa developed this coherent primary school with the use of Yoruba as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION throughout the primary school. They also believed that one of the main goal of primary school was to help pupils learn effectively the official language of the country namely English. Therefore they included in the curriculum effective English teaching methods and English was taught by teachers who master the languages and specialized in its teaching. During the experimental phase, only one school was developed as a laboratory school in order to test the feasibility of the model.

Beside the selection of effective model which included the use of effective L1 and L2 pedagogy, two key elements were included in the project: a curriculum innovation component and a monitoring and assessment component. With regard to curricular change, the curriculum specialists produced adequate teaching and learning materials in the LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION (Yoruba) and English. Instead of relying on translation of the regular

educational materials printed in English and often in the United Kingdom (U.K) Nigerian curriculum specialists involved in the project developed teachers' guides and textbooks for pupils in five subjects taught as part of the primary curriculum contents. Whenever needed they obtain technical support from international experts. The five subject areas are: mathematics, sciences, social studies, Yoruba as subject, English as subject and health and sanitation. According to UNESCO, 183 textbooks were produced in Yoruba and English. The catalogue of educational materials included teachers' guides, textbooks and supplementary reading in both Yoruba and English.

With regard to the impact, several studies showed that the project produced strong and positive impacts. Fafunwa & al, (1980), Bamgbose (1984, 2000) and others showed that pupils who attended the SYPP developed additive bilingualism, strong literacy in L1 (Yoruba) and L2 (English). The performances of pupils on the national achievement tests were compared. The performance of pupils who attended the SYPP was better than the performance of students who attended the regular school system which used an early exit bilingual model (mother tongue as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION in the first three years of schooling and English as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION from fourth grade onward). The tests' results showed that the pupils who attended the Ife SYPP performed significantly better in all subjects including English than the pupils who attended the regular government's schools.

With regard to the monitoring of pupils' learning, the project established an adequate monitoring system which allowed teachers and parents as well as the local government body to follow the progress made by the pupils. In 1980, it was established that only 10% of the Ife SYPP's pupils dropped out of school. During the same period 30% of pupils from government run schools dropped out of school. Therefore the rate of drop out was three times higher in government schools. In addition the Ife SYPP cohort was followed up in secondary and tertiary levels. According to UNESCO and Fafunwa, out of 820 pupils who enrolled in the project in 1973, more than 300 students had graduate from Nigerian universities by 1987.

In spite of the success of the Ife SYPP Bamgbose reminds us that the Federal government has not yet generalized the use of mother tongue as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION in primary schools in Nigeria. However, it is important to notice that the Oyo state has retained the bilingual education model used in the Ife SYPP and it has successfully generalized it in all Oyo state schools. According to Thomas Fasokun², more than 60,000 pupils and 2,100 teachers participated in the statewide experiment.

What are the main factors that accounted for the success of the Ife SYPP experiment?

- 1) It is an education in mother tongue with a strong mother tongue and second language instruction methodologies. The strength lies in the development of strong academic literacy in both mother tongue and English through the teaching of well trained teachers who master Yoruba as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION and English as a second language (subject taught as a second language throughout primary school).
- 2) Academic literacy is developed by making available to teachers and pupils quality educational materials in both mother tongue and English. Complementary reading which fosters love of reading among children was encouraged by providing supplementary reading materials

² Thomas Fasokun (2000) Aliu Babtunde Fafunwa (1923-).
<http://www.ibe.unesco.org/publications/ThinkersPdf/fafunwae.pdf>, accessed June 17, 2007.

- 3) Training of teachers and curriculum developers was a key element in implementing the Ife SYPP. This training involved all subject matters including mathematics and sciences taught in Yoruba. Often bilingual project only focus on the language of instruction and social studies that are believed to be soft subjects leaving out cognitively demanding subject matters such as mathematics and sciences. Pupils need develop literacy in all subject matters included in the curriculum. It is only such strategy that allows them to develop overall academic literacy that they need to be successful in schools.
- 4) The curriculum of the primary school is delivered in mother tongue and its content is culturally relevant. It integrates not only pupils' socio-cultural, economic background and the need to provide children the opportunity to access modern knowledge
- 5) Teachers and researchers as well as parents were involved in monitoring progress made by children.
- 6) Linguists from the University of Ife were simultaneously involved in corpus planning activities which helped developed and modernized the Yoruba language. The project did not wait until the linguistic work is finished. Instead both descriptive and applied linguistic activities were carried out to support the project.

Kathleen Heugh, Carol Benson, Berhanu Bogale and Mekonen Alemu Gebre Yohannes (2007) conducted an evaluation of the bilingual education program implemented in Ethiopia. They found that the current language policy implemented since 1994 advocates the use of mother tongues or nationality languages as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION from grade 1 to grade 8. Amharic is taught as a subject and language of wider communication. English is also taught as subject since grade 1. The language policy allows also the teaching of other foreign languages as subject for cultural and international communication. The model which is officially included in the MoE policy document is an effective bilingual model. However, studies show that for various reasons the model is not consistently implemented in the whole country. Kathleen and her colleagues indicated that it is well implemented in three regions which use respectively Oromiya, Somali, and Tigray as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION. They stated that the positive effects. They observed quality teaching by qualified bilingual teachers, appropriate classroom interactions and communication and pupils had appropriate language proficiency and they had positive learning outcomes. Their performances in academic tests were adequate and better than students who where is transitional bilingual programs where mother tongue instruction was quickly replaced by teaching in English due to many reasons including parents and teachers' negative attitude towards mother tongues, lack of adequate training for teachers in all teacher training colleagues, scarcity of adequate teaching and learning materials in few Ethiopian languages used as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION in the schools, etc.

From the studies conducted at different time periods and different multilingual and socio-historical contexts one can without hesitation state that even in Africa, bilingual programs which use pupils' L1 for six to eight years along with adequate teacher training, quality textbooks in both L1 and L2 and strong support from the community and the MoE

produce strong linguistic and academic outcomes. It is also realistic to suggest that in order to promote quality education in multilingual contexts such as Africa, it is important to design programs that optimize teaching and learning among respectively teachers and learners. Such programs influence the development of additive bilingualism or balanced bilingualism and academic biliteracy among all learners (Alidou et al., 2006). It may also help to recognize the characteristics of ineffective bilingual education models in order to avoid implementing them.

The use of mother tongues as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION for six to eight years alone cannot guarantee quality education. **It should be stressed that the use of mother tongues along with effective first and second language pedagogy and the development of academic literacy in both first and second languages are as far as the language of instruction issue is concerned the main factors that can influence effective teaching and learning in bi/multilingual classrooms.** Unfortunately, in most African countries (except in the case of the Ife Six Year Primary Program (SYPP) and currently in Zambia where the Ministry of education promote explicitly reading and literacy as integral part of its national education policy) the development of academic literacy in first and second languages has not been very well planned. Most mother tongue-based education programs and project focus more on teaching in the first three years in mother tongues and they neglect effective teaching of reading and literacy. Consequently, on paper the models that are promoted seem adequate but in practice it has been very difficult to produce outcomes (particularly in terms of academic achievements among pupils) which are significantly different statistically from the outcomes produced by regular schools which promote officially a monolingual policy by using the official languages as language of instruction from grade 1 onward. Bilingual programs which use mother tongues transitionally for 1 to 3 years do not show optimal learning in the mid and long-run (see Alidou & al. 2006). However, they are this model is the most promoted model in Africa.

The message here is clear: bilingual models which use first languages or mother tongues for six to eight years and integrate strong literacy curriculum for both first and second languages (as subject in the primary schools) will promote quality education in Africa. Children should be taught how to read effectively and how to read to learn. Therefore teachers should be well prepared to teach reading and literacy development as subject matters but they should also be trained to effectively teach reading in content areas such as mathematics, social studies and sciences in both first and second languages.

Language of instruction particularly the use of first languages and mother tongues is, indeed, an important aspect that promotes quality teaching and learning. However, in order to optimize teaching and learning, two other aspects must be taken into consideration: **the development of responsive curriculum** that takes into consideration children's socio-cultural and economic background as well as the need to learn new and modern knowledge. The second aspect is the promotion of **active pedagogy** that relies on **active and participatory learning**. These are pedagogical innovations that are easily integrated in contexts where the mother tongues or the first languages are used as common means of communication between teachers and pupils as well as with parents.

The success of the famous Ife SYPP is based on the following factors:

- The use of a bilingual model that effectively promotes pupils' mother tongue (Yoruba) as the LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION from first to sixth grade and effective teaching of English as a second language by very competent and well-trained teachers

- The elaboration of responsive curriculum: Effective school curriculum takes into consideration the prior knowledge that children develop at home before coming to school and also the knowledge base they continue to develop from home. It builds on the knowledge and experience that learners bring in the classroom (Susan Malone, 2004). The Ife project took this learning principle and it developed all the subject matters (mathematics, social studies, sciences, health and sanitation, Yoruba and English) were rewritten in Yoruba (not translated) using active pedagogy and children's socio-cultural and economic background as the foundations of the curriculum.

- **The production of adequate teaching and learning materials in all subject matters and in the mother tongues and international languages.** Reliance on translation is not a good policy for curriculum development or the promotion of quality education. Adequate funds should be allocated for the production of quality materials.

- **The establishment of effective teaching and learning monitoring system:** teachers and students must be clear about the benchmarks that they should achieved. The curriculum which should be based on competencies should clearly specify at each educational level what should be taught and learned and how pupils should show mastery. A different assessment system is therefore needed in this context. This system should in a very reliable way indicate the progress made by the learners. The current assessment systems used in Africa are very unreliable and they do not accurately assess students' performance.

The review of all the mother tongue-based bilingual programs or projects in Africa indicate that the use of mother tongues is not in general followed a systematic review of the curriculum (both contents of the curriculum and teaching methods). The fact that one speaks a language does not qualify a person for teaching in that language particularly in languages. It is important that African teachers be adequately trained to teach in their mother tongues or national languages and it should be expected that this training is similar to how native speakers of French, English, Portuguese and Spanish who aspire to be teachers in their countries are trained. Secondly, in order for pupils to develop adequate oral and written competencies in the second languages or international languages (English, French, Portuguese and Spanish) they should also be taught by teachers who master these languages and teachers who are also effectively train to teach these languages as second languages and also to teach in these languages as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION. This is expected in order to achieve the goal of achieving quality education in both mother tongues and the official and international languages.

Therefore the use of mother tongues while it facilitates communication in the classroom does not necessarily change what teachers are teaching and what pupils are learning. **The inadequacy of the education system may continue to be experienced**

even in contexts where bilingual education is retained as the language-in-education policy if a holistic and systematic review of bilingual models, language teaching as well as teaching of other subject matters' methods and the curriculum contents are not revised. This revision must be done in a way that makes educational innovation coherent. Just changing a language of instruction or changing a teaching method while the language of instruction remains a barrier is not going to influence quality education.

In the context of EFA and FTI, countries which are promoting mother tongue-based bilingual programs as part of their EFA plan of action can be supported in order to promote quality teacher training in both first languages and second languages instruction and learning. Pre-service as well as in-service teachers should be designed to equip teachers for teaching in and first languages as well as second languages. In order to help teachers master the new teaching methods they should be supported through regular mentoring and supervision by their supervisors who act on site as pedagogical leaders. Therefore a capacity development program must be designed to train facilitators and teachers in the new teaching methods.

Adequate resources should also be allocated for the revision of the curriculum in order to produce quality educational materials in all languages retained as language of instruction as well as the international languages. Often ministries of education do not have at their disposal curriculum specialists who focus on bilingual education. It is therefore important that in the context of the EFA and FTI donors support African countries which are implementing mother tongue-based bilingual education by allocating for both short and long-term technical assistants who will work closely with national curriculum specialists and linguists for the production of adapted educational materials in mother tongues and the official and international languages. This strategy was used during the implementation of the Ife project where the Ford Foundation financed short term technical assistance in order to help with not only the development of curriculum but also it supported faculty from the university of Ife who were conducted linguistic research related to the project. In Zambia, the Overseas Development Agency (ODA) provided both technical assistance for teacher training and production of educational materials and financial support to the MoE for the implementation of the Primary Reading Program.

3. What have we learned from the review of research on the use of African languages as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION in order to improve quality education?

The provision of quality education depends highly on the educational system's ability to be responsive to all learners regardless of their socio-economic status, language and cultural background. Therefore quality education must address at the same time access or equity issue by ensuring that all children enroll in schools and also quality issue which ensures that children who attend schools have relevant education. They are without doubt several factors that account for educational quality. Among them language of instruction plays an important role. Quality education implies that the educational system includes a strategy that helps children develop appropriate cognitive development and they are able to achieve well academically and socially. How can this happen if the language of instruction is a barrier? The primary goal of the promotion of bilingual education or the use of national languages as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION within EFA context is to use means of communication that optimize teaching learning among teachers and learners respectively. Effective teaching and learning takes place only when the LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION of instruction is well understood by all learners.

In Africa where most countries are multilingual and most children and adults do not understand the official languages (English, French, Spanish and Portuguese), the most adequate educational policies that MoE can adopt are policies that include appropriate language-in-education policies that take into account the countries' sociolinguistic profiles and mostly determine from local, regional and national levels what languages should be used as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION and which ones should be considered as languages to be learned for not only inter-ethnic groups communication but also for African and international communication. Therefore, in the EFA and FTI countries should be supported in order to make adequate language-in-education policies. It should be clearly stated that in all African countries an effective language policy for education must guarantee mastery of at least learners' L1 (community or any language retained as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION because it is the most familiar one to children attending school in a particular village, region or country) and mastery of the official international language (either English, French, Spanish or Portuguese depending upon the country). Mastery of the LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION and international language implies develop of strong bilingualism in both languages and strong academic literacy. It is only when learners have achieved these linguistic and literacy goals that language of instruction can help them become academically competent. Therefore the assessment of their learning outcomes will show grade appropriate performance or competence not only in language areas but in all subject matters included in the curriculum. For this to happen, effective instruction in the L1 throughout at least primary school and retention of L1 as language of instruction for few subject matters in lower level secondary education is important. Research shows that it takes at least five to seven years adequate instruction in L1 and learning of the international language or L2 in order for bilingual learners to develop full academic literacy in both L1 and L2.

Effective bilingual models aim at promoting additive and balanced bilingualism by using mother tongues as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION for 6 to 8 years and teaching effectively international languages such as English, French and Spanish as subject in the curriculum. The switch to full instruction in international languages occurs only when students have developed full competencies in these languages. Effective models of bilingual education take into account how children develop language competencies. They rely on first and second language acquisition theories, linguistic development of the languages and cultural issues related to teaching and learning. Effective bilingual programs use the expertise of teachers who have native like or near native like competence in both the national languages used as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION and the international languages taught as both subject matters and LANGUAGE OF

INSTRUCTION in the formal basic education curriculum. Such expertise can be developed through adequate training in teaching mother tongues and international languages if the identified teachers are already proficiency in the languages.

Some of the main elements that policy-makers should consider in integrating language policy as a main component of educational planning are:

1) The development of academic literacy among students in both the mother tongues and the international languages such as English, French, Portuguese and Spanish should be viewed as important goals that must be achieved in order to promote quality education.

2) Capacity development is an important factor that must be well designed. The promotion of the use of mother tongue based-bilingual education requires careful planning. It is important to make available to Moses technical assistants that can help officials at the Moses develop cost-effective plans of action that can be supported by all stake-holders at both the national and international level. These plans should include:

3) Capacity-building for officials from MoE who should carry out all the tasks involved in implemented a selected language-in-education policy

4) The provision of pre-service and in-service teacher training: Research related to quality education indicates that qualified teachers are central to the promotion of quality teaching and learning. It is important to provide effective bilingual education training to all teachers and their supervisors. The training of trainers' model can be used to create a national, regional, and local critical mass of trainers that can train both pre-service and in-service teachers. In order to optimize on the training all modules related to teaching the LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION and all the subjects included in the curriculum should be taught as integrated part of the pre-service teacher training curriculum. This strategy will help countries disseminate pedagogical innovations to a maximum number of teachers and it will also reduce un-teaching and re-teaching teachers who were taught through traditional methods of teaching. It is very difficult to un-learn once one has mastered a particular teaching method.

5) The design of an effective monitoring and evaluation system: an on-going monitoring system should be developed along with defining a framework that specifies learning expectations without limiting teachers and pupils' abilities to seek additional knowledge and be creative. Teachers and pupils and their parents should know at the beginning and the end of each educational process what is expected of them and how it will be assessed or evaluation.

6) The promotion of literacy through the production of cost-effective textbooks and reading materials by using national publishing companies or encouraging partnership between local publishers and international publishers. The production of the books must be done in the African countries in order to allow local curriculum specialists and writers to contribute to the production of culturally relevant educational materials. Namibia is implementing the use of national languages as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION and English and it relies mainly on national publishing companies. In Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger local publishers are developing regional and international partnership in order to produce books in African languages. This trend should be encouraged by revisiting and revising the current international book policies. These policies do not take into account African economies and the power of purchase of African publishers.

7) The promotion of flexible procurement policies: The international donor community (particularly the World Bank) and governments should promote this in order to facilitate the promotion of local publishing companies. This action should be viewed as a strategy to promote effective and efficient education in Africa. The Project implemented by INWENT in West Africa (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal) show that it is possible to produce at low cost quality educational materials in Africa. Similar project was implemented by GTZ in Ghana and Niger. The Association of African Publishers (APNET) can be involved in developing adequate publishing policies that can facilitate the active participation of African publishers.

With regard to the cost of producing quality educational material in African languages, Kurt Komarek (2003:19)³ who led several bilingual projects for GTZ in Latin America and Africa (Madagascar and Ghana) stated in his paper presented at the ADEA biennale held in the Mauritius Island:

The development of a textbook in African country is significantly cheaper than the same process in Europe or America. Ignoring the salaries of the foreign experts, which are part of GTZ support, the development phase for Mina Miasro Nuxexle Kple Nungonglo 2, the textbook for the teaching of literacy in Ewe, Grade 2, needed an investment of about 2350 US dollars comprising the honoraria for the national writing panel, the 2 illustrators and the proof readers and lay out. Without any doubt the cost of these specialists in Europe or America would be incomparably higher. Together with the subsequent printing of 10,000 copies the overall unit cost was about 0.70 US dollar.

Kurt Komarek also argues promoting African languages as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION has the potential of creating a very lucrative textbook industry which also creates jobs in the continent. With regard to Namibia which has promoted all its national languages as languages of instruction he says that this decision that positively impact the development of a new economic sector in this country:

Namibia with its roughly 2 Million inhabitants composed of different speech communities has a sound language policy as well as textbook policy. In 2001, the catalogue of only one private publisher list 860 available titles. Of these, 596 are in Namibian languages other than English which is the official language. The same publishing house offers altogether 72 full time jobs, signed 80 contracts per year for the development of new titles and offer another 250 contracts to translators, lecturers, designers and illustrators. The share of non-English titles in the overall turnover is up to 40% annually. The expectations of profit were high enough to attract a foreign investor (Kurt Komarek, 2003:19).

8) The costing of bilingual education policies

There are already international development agencies which have implemented several bilingual education programs in Africa. Among them, GTZ and INWENT along with NORAD can be cited as agencies which have supported effectively mother tongue-based bilingual education in Africa. These agencies have the technical capacity to determine the cost of bilingual programs. Their expertise can be sought in establishing the cost of bilingual education. François Grin (2005) has also proposed an economic approach to determining the economics of language policy particularly as it applies to bilingual education. His approach can be used in determining in different contexts the cost of effective bilingual education. It is important to know that the

³ Kurt Komarek (2003) Universal Primary Education in Multilingual Societies. Supporting its Implementation in Sub-Sahara Africa and Beyond. 25 years of experience in German Technical Cooperation. Paris:ADEA.

majority of African countries are at the initial stage of the reflection in terms of language education policy. Few countries such as Ethiopia and Tanzania have experiences that can be considered in evaluating the cost of bilingual or multilingual education. What is important to recognize that producing educational materials is a critical aspect that was very costly. Due to the availability of advanced technology such as computers and adequate software for processing African languages the cost of publishing in African languages has been significantly reduced and technical problems related to the writing system can easily be overcome.

9) The progressive scaling up of effective bilingual education model throughout the basic education system: In spite of the fact that there is an extensive body of research that shows that the use of African languages as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION can be effective, we would like to emphasize that African countries are similar in many socio-historical aspects but they are also different in many other linguistic and educational aspects. Therefore the implementation of the use of mother tongues as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION cannot be done by simply duplicating experiments done in different countries under different political and economic conditions. Therefore we highly recommend learning from contexts which are similar. It is also important to make sure that an adequate needs assessment is done in the country by a team of experts who have an extensive experience in bilingual education prior to the selection of the bilingual education model and the development of the action plan.

It is also important to stop the culture of experiments as Kurt Komarek pointed out (2003). The search for hard core evidence or “scientific proof” has created paralysis in the African context. There are many experiments that indicate with an effective design and allocation of adequate resources African countries can promote quality educational programs by using national languages as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION along with effective teaching of international languages. However it is equally important not to promote at a large scale bilingual education programs which have not been well planned.

The approach used in Zambia with the Primary Reading Program is a planning model that can be adapted in other African countries. It was first implemented in few school districts. The fact that a monitoring system was integrated in the plan, the program officers could assess the effectiveness of the programs and identify problems they were occurring. They were able to identify ways to overcome the problems before the program was generalized all over the country. The monitoring and the assessments conducted during the first phase of the program provided information and feedbacks that policy-makers needed in order to decide at which point and at which speed to up scale.

10) The creation of regional networking and promotion of best practices: Based on our experience working at the regional level in West Africa, we believe that promoting regional dialogues among educators who are embarked on similar innovations is very motivating and enriching. The exchange of experiences can be also used for not only promoting adequate awareness among decision-makers such as Ministers of Education and Secretary Generals, it also creates a network among technical experts at the regional level. This strategy promoted by the German Foundation for International Development and Ministries of education from Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger has influenced greatly the quality of capacity development for bilingual education in West Africa.

11) Addressing effectively the resistance to the promotion: African countries are becoming increasingly democratic societies. Therefore policies are more and more debated in parliaments before they can find political and financial support. The use of African languages as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION is a very sensitive issue that cannot be undertaken with

convincing political parties, the Elite and the entire population. From within Africa, the resistance against the use of African languages stems from Elite closure (Scotton-Myers, XX), namely African Elite use of linguistic power (competence in international languages such as English, French, Portuguese and Spanish) to maintain their social and economic advantage over the majority of the population which does not speak or operate in these languages. Scotton-Myers (1990:27) stated that Elite closure is:

A tactic of boundary maintenance. It involves the institutionalizing of the linguistic patterns of the elite, either through official policy or informally established usage norms in order to limit access to socioeconomic mobility and political power to people who possess the requisite linguistic patterns.

The second type of resistance comes from parents who want their children to have access to the language of power and languages that provide people a chance to have access to better paying job. Therefore this genuine material consideration cannot be disregarded. This is a genuine concern that should be taken into consideration as Education for All seeks to promote education for social justice and equity. It is important to reassure parents that the use of African languages as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION will in fact facilitate learning of the international languages if bilingual education is well implemented.

The third type of resistance comes from external forces, namely the international donor community. Very few donors have supported African countries which decided to implement the use of African languages as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION in formal schools in spite of the fact that in most international conferences and frameworks such as EFA 1990, the Declaration made in Dakar in 2000 reconfirming the commitments made in Jomtien to promote access and quality education through the most effective and efficient ways. Malone (2001) reminds us that very few international development agencies (bilateral and multilateral) have clear policy statements with regard to the question of medium of instruction. The World Bank was very supportive of the promotion of bilingual education in Latin America but in Africa there are not many instances... It has to some extent provided some support for the promotion of la Nouvelle Ecole Fondamentale and la Pédagogie Convergente in Mali but overall it has not fully other African countries which are embarked in the promotion of mother tongue based bilingual education. In Madagascar, in the context of the FTI, where the World Bank and UNICEF are lead donors, the local donors have supported the revision of the language policy to support mother tongue instruction and improve learning of foreign languages. The approach adopted of building consensus in the country and incorporating the revision of the language policy within the new EFA plan, with external partners funding studies, technical assistance and eventually implementation once the plan is approved, seems like a unique experience which should be followed – i.e. it is not an approach being implemented through a donor project, but through the revision of the national policy, which will be implemented gradually, and which is supported by the partners. An explicit support from the World Bank and other important partners may motivate other donors.

11) Social mobilization or social marketing of effective policies including the use of African languages as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION for the promotion of quality education

Wolff (2006) argues that ministries of education need to develop capacities to demonstrate not only the effectiveness of bi/multilingual education but that it is the most viable educational policies. In this regard governments should use effective strategies used in social marketing to communicate the effects of educational reforms and they should also publicize and explain to

parents who may not be literate the difference between different models of education. Such strategies should also help in promoting acceptance of the use of mother tongues as medium of instruction among both the elites and the population. Parents do not mind the use of mother tongues if their children are succeeding in formal education. Therefore it is important to show to them that the use of mother tongues or community languages as language of instruction does not shortchange their children.

In this context a partnership between the MoE and the public and private media organization is important. The role of the media is to publicize educational innovations and to stimulate healthy debates about these innovations. This strategy can impact healthy competition among different groups of educators who are promoting different models of education in order to respond to the access and quality dilemma that faces African countries.

12) Legal Policy frameworks: Institutions such as the World Bank have always stated that they cannot provide support to educational policies which are not legally supported or defined. There exist already political and legal frameworks that facilitate the promotion of language-in-education policies that rely on the use of African languages as language of instruction and bilingual/multilingual education. African governments have signed several international, regional, national conventions and charters which calls for the use of African languages as language of instruction in order to promote quality education. In 1953, UNESCO published its seminal book on the “Use of Vernacular Languages in Education”. In this book, it stressed the right of every child to be educated in her or his mother tongue. African countries have to some extent responded politically to this call by pledging to implement several plans of action including the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Cultural Charter for Africa (1976), the Lagos Plan of Action (1980), the Declaration of the Cultural Aspects of the Lagos Plan of Action (1985), the OAU Language Plan of Action for Africa (1986), the draft charter for the promotion of African languages in education developed in 1996 in Accra, Ghana, and the Harare Declaration (1997). The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and the African Union (AU) both strongly recognize the role of literacy and mass education for socio-economic development. It is clear that African governments do recognize the need to promote African languages for literacy, education and development. In several countries, national parliaments have drafted laws that promote the use of African languages in education. At the international levels, EFA 1990, Dakar 2000, the Millennium Development Goals are policy frameworks which include the use of children’s mother tongue within bilingual education in order to promote quality education.

13) Some recommendations and guidelines for planning: An action plan

Re-evaluation (or adjustment) or design of a language education plan (Task should be done within 3 months)

MoE should conduct a needs assessment to determine what type of language-in-education policy is effectively implemented in schools and to what extent it is effective. In some countries, there is no stated language policy. It is therefore important in this case to carry out a needs assessment to determine the best language policy that these countries should adopt. In either case, the needs assessment should lead to the development of a clear language education implementation plan.

The language education plan of action should be carried out by a task force which includes experts from the MoE, national departments of education particularly the teacher training and curriculum units, linguists from national universities and research centers, representatives of the parent association and the civil society. In general MoE do not have all the expertise available in the country therefore, the FTI should include financial and technical support for MoE in order to

help them carry out the needs assessments that lead to the design or re-adjustment of the existing language policy for education.

The national plan of action should determine clearly what languages should be considered as language of instruction from local, regional and national levels. This determination should be based on a clear assessment of the sociolinguistic profile of the country and also the resources (financial, technical and national priorities).

Public awareness (an on-going activity): The results of the task force should be presented in local, regional and national forum in order to mobilize support from the public. Such strategy was used in Zambia before the promotion of the Primary Reading Program which is a centre piece of Zambia's strategy to improve the quality of its basic education system. The forum should provide feedback that the MoE can consider in writing the final version of the action plan that is widely publicized through broadcast and print media in all national languages in order to help the population understand the new language policy that is implemented in the schools. This public awareness strategy should be maintained as an on-going activity that keeps the public updated and involved in the educational process.

Monitoring and Evaluation and provision of technical assistance (on-going activity and technical assistance should be available during the implementation of the policy at least 6 years): The action plan should include an effective monitoring and evaluation system that is carry out by the MoE and national and external evaluator. This is an important aspect that helps to determine the impact of an educational reform. However, many ministries of education do not have the technical capacity to develop and implement effective qualitative and quantitative assessments of their own educational systems. Therefore it is very difficult to determine whether an innovation is producing effective results such as learning outcomes.

In the FTI, we recommend that MoE be supported by providing technical assistance during the implementation of the policy in order to help build MoE's capacity with regard to monitoring and evaluation of not only the language policy but the overall delivery of quality education. With regard to language of instruction and teaching of foreign languages, it is important to identify and assign African and international technical assistants who have expertise in not only linguistics but mostly pedagogical expertise including design of effective language education programs in schools and communities but also evaluation of these programs. Most ministries of education do not have human resources who can effectively carry out these tasks. We highly recommend support in these areas. Therefore the FTI should include a budget for the hiring of technical assistants who will assist MoE in carry out effective monitoring and assessment of their programs.

Such assistance should be provided during the implementation of the innovation therefore we expect a long-term commitment for at least 6 years (6) until the policy is well established. This is the minimum time expected for the implementation of a bilingual program that influences the development of additive bilingualism and high academic achievement among learners. The technical assistant should work closely with experts from the MoE as well as the team of educators who are implementing the policy at national, regional and local levels monitor the effective implementation of the policy at all school districts and school levels in the country.

Planning for the Development of academic literacy and Effective learning outcomes planning

Creation of centers for the development of national languages and curriculum development (Short and mid-term activity)

A strategy used by the Ife SYPP is to create a team of national experts who were involved in developing the national languages. This team included linguists as well as curriculum development specialists who work as an integrated team to produce reference linguistic documents such as orthographies and reference grammars but they also produced educational materials such as readers as well as textbooks in national languages and English for all subject matters included in the curriculum. The same strategy is recommended here. Local, regional and national education centers must include national language curriculum development units whose main task is to produce reference documents in the national languages selected as media of instruction as well as subject matters. The work of these centers should be coordinated at the national level by experts from the national universities and teacher training centers who should be deployed to carry out this task exclusively. It is more efficient and effective to create a center for the development of national languages and curriculum reform.

The creation of the centre may require funding at the initial stage of the policy. This should be therefore anticipated in the MoE budget and the FTI should provide provision for its creation. It is also important to state that once the center is created linguists and curriculum developers who are deployed for the production of educational materials do not require additional funding as they receive salaries from the ministry of education. What needs to be budgeted in the creation of the center, funds to conduct research on national languages used in education as well as funds for the production of the educational materials and trips to different educational centers and schools. The centers should be focal points where all activities related to the implementation of the language policy in education are carried out.

Support to national universities' linguistics and language departments and other language agencies in order to carry out language description activities as well as the production of terminologies, dictionaries and other reference documents such as orthographies and grammars of national languages. Since the mid-1980s due to structural adjustment programs, African higher learning institutions have seen their research capabilities diminish due to lack of adequate funding from the governments and international donor agencies. Most of the funding allocated for the implementation of EFA is directed toward formal basic education. Therefore in the FTI it is important to see the work of universities particularly departments of linguistics and languages as a critical task that should be carried out in order to improve quality education.

Recommendation for models of bilingual education and language teaching methods:

Couples of aspects must be considered here. One should respond to the following questions: What languages are used as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION and what languages are taught as subject matters? How should MoE structure their bilingual program? The work of the task-force highlighted above should be to determine what languages should be used as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION. Once this determination is done by the task-force and the choice is approved through national debates and deliberation, a bilingual education program that promotes instruction in L1 or mother tongues for six to eight years (6-8 years) along with strong teaching of international languages as subjects from grade 1 up to grade 6.

Few countries are implementing ineffectively the use of three to four languages in primary schools. In Rwanda for example, Kinyarwanda, French and English are used as LANGUAGE OF

INSTRUCTION and subject matters in the schools without a clear guiding principle. Our classroom observations indicate that in most cases teachers and students have full proficiency in Kinyarwanda but not in the other languages (French and English). The fact that they do not have adequate training in teaching from a multilingual approach along with their limited proficiency in the international languages render communication and classroom interactions very complicated and ineffective. (Is this not repeated earlier?)

In cases similar to Rwanda with relatively few national languages to deal with, we recommend the retention of Mother tongues as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION and teaching of French and English as subject matters in the curriculum throughout primary school. In secondary school French and English are taught by specialist teachers. This is the model that we recommend for most African countries as due to lack of resources they are not capable of providing adequate multilingual training for all teachers. Making sure that teachers are well trained to teach two languages used as medium of instruction and subject matters in the curriculum is already an important benchmark for many African countries.

In multilingual cases like Ethiopia Kathleen al. (2007) have recommended a trilingual model of education. In this case, the regional language serves as medium of instruction for 8 years and a national language which is the lingua franca (such as Amharic) and an international language (English) are taught as subjects to all learners. With regard to English development of communicative competence should be the aim in primary school and the development of academic competence and literacy should be the aim of teaching English in upper secondary or tertiary education. It is important to know most African students do not leave their countries to pursue further education. Those who do so, learn the language of instruction prior to starting their academic courses. This is the case of students from Niger attending U.S. universities. They arrive in the U.S. with very limited or no proficiency in English but they are provided intensive English course that prepares them for learning in American universities. It is important for policy-makers to know that the first aim of public education is to train individuals who can function adequately in their home countries. This goal should not negate the possibility of learning a foreign language. In Africa, learning a foreign or international language has become a priority that negatively impacts learning and quality education.

The implementation of effective bilingual programs should include student outcome indicator or expectations. The following should be considered:

- All learners attending the bilingual programs should become fully proficient in the mother tongues and the international or official language and grade 3 should not be considered a transitional level for learning in international or official languages
- All learners are academically literate in both mother tongue (L1) and official/international language (L2). This goal should be attained by the end of eight years of schooling.
- All learners should develop content areas mastery in L1 and L2 and they are assessed in L2 only when they have achieved full proficiency and academic literacy in L2.

It is only in the stated conditions that African students can demonstrate whether they have learned or not learned effectively. Assessment of learning outcomes can be done effectively when the language of instruction does not constitute a problem for learning.

Recommendation for improving quality of teaching: Revising Teacher Training Programs (short and medium activity)

The evaluation of most bilingual education programs found in Africa indicates that ministries of education do not have a very consistent and effective strategy for bilingual education. The FTI should therefore allow MoE to revise their current teacher education programs in order to strengthen their quality. The curriculum of the teacher training programs must be revised to accommodate the new language policy Alidou & al. 2006).

Training of Teacher Educators or training of trainers (short, med-term activity): In most African countries, teacher educators were trained as teachers of regular schools. Therefore they do not have competencies in training teachers for bilingual education. In order to improve quality education in all basic education, it is important to develop a capacity development training program for the teacher trainers. The preparation should include a strong knowledge base of: bilingual education, principles of teaching mother tongues and second languages, academic literacy, monitoring and assessment of learning and mentoring.

A critical mass of teacher trainers should be trained and these trainers should provide training to all teachers at the school levels. They should be supported by experts of bilingual education during at least throughout the implementation of the pilot or the small scaling of the innovation. A strong monitoring and evaluation component should be integrated in the design of the

Pre-service teacher training (on-going activity):

Pre-service training in mother tongues and all national languages which are used as LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION. It should also be revised to include effective training in French and English as an international language for primary teachers. Specific modules are designed and integrated in the initial teacher training program and before being deployed in the schools pre-service teachers have at least three months training specially in bilingual education and teaching in both mother tongues and international languages.

Teachers' language proficiency should be assessed before training and deployment in the schools. Each teacher should be able to receive training in the national languages they speak well. Teachers should be carefully deployed in regions where the languages they speak are used as languages of instruction. This will prevent students from being taught by teachers who do not speak well their languages.

In-service training, mentoring and monitoring (an on-going activity): An effective school based and district level training, mentoring and monitoring should be develop to assist teachers. Monitoring learning outcomes is an effective way to make sure bilingual education policies stated in national documents are well implemented at all levels of education particularly at the school level. It is also a way to promote a culture of quality in the delivery of education. Most MoE, school districts and schools do not have an established in-service, mentoring and monitoring system to support teachers. Therefore national, regional and local educational budget as well as the EFA programs should include such budgetary provision. Within the FTI countries should be supported in order to revise their teacher training programs and implement effective learning monitoring systems at the school level.

Provision for the production multilingual educational materials (short, mid-term activity):

One of the major problems that undermine the promotion of bilingual education in Africa is the lack of adequate materials in national languages. Teaching and learning in mother tongues must be sustained by the availability of quality teaching and learning materials in all languages used as

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION or taught as subject matters in the curriculum. The EFA plan of action adopted in most African countries does not include provision for textbooks in mother tongues. It is important that ministries of education get support with this regard. The retention of national languages as languages of instruction motivates national and international publishers. Therefore once the policy is generalized private publishers will be competent in producing educational materials in national languages. A textbook policy that integrates the production of educational materials in national languages should be integrated in the FTI as a strategy to improve quality education.

Costing the promotion of bilingual education in Africa (short term activity: two-three months): Over the last four decades, one of the arguments that are advanced against the promotion of bilingual education in Africa is the cost of such enterprise. Yet there is no serious empirical study conducted at the continental level to determine the real cost of bilingual education. In the context of FTI, it is important to support ministries of education by conducting a cost analysis of bilingual education programs which are currently implemented as well as to make budgetary prediction about the cost of new programs. During the needs assessments for the development of action plan an education economist must be part of the team and his/her task should be to analyze systematically the cost of bilingual education. Since African MoE do not always have human resources who can conduct such study, it is important to rely on the expertise of institutions such as GTZ which have implemented bilingual education programs in many countries in Latin America and Africa. They should be able to provide a technical assistance to MoE in order to carry out this task.

Conclusion

Addressing the medium of instruction issue by promoting effective bilingual models in African schools and communities must be considered as one of the most important policy intervention geared towards the improvement of the overall quality of education in Africa. Effective bilingual models are models that foster additive bilingualism and academic literacy in the languages of instruction. In these programs literacy instruction is a critical component of the curriculum and teaching and learning in the learners' mother tongues or first languages is maintained for six to eight years while learners are also learning effectively the second language or international language (English, French, Spanish or Portuguese).

The World Bank (2005) is right when it says that

“ The use of first languages can contribute to the attainment of EFA goals and should be part of the World Bank's dialogues with educators and policy-makers.

We believe that the World Bank and all the international donors can support African countries by providing within the FTI context adequate political, technical and financial support that they need to promote effective use of national languages as languages of instruction in bi/multilingual education programs.

Therefore the EFA plan of action and the FTI must include provision to help African countries address effectively these pedagogical problems. When parents see that their children are learning and achieving well in school they do not object to new educational

policies particularly if such policies guarantee social mobility and access to international languages.

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