Community dynamics improve the quality of education in Togo

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Promoting child rights to end child poverty
Context and educational issues

- Togo is a country in West-Africa, bordering on Burkina Faso (North), Benin (East), Ghana (West) and the Gulf of Guinea (South),
- Surface = 56,000 Km²
- Population = 6.6 million inhabitants of which almost 50% children
- The National education policy promotes quality education for all, equal opportunities and reducing inequalities in school
- However, indicators of internal efficiency and quality of learning in primary education are decreasing
Context and educational issues

- 75.7% completion rate: 69.7% for girls and 81.2% for boys
- Repetition rate of 21%: 21.2% for girls and 20.8% for boys
- Very low learning results in the 5th grade with scores of 30.6/100 in French and 36.4/100 in mathematics standardized performance tests
- Because schools, parents and communities invest little in the quality of education a large number of children repeat/fail several times and eventually leave school before the age of 15.
Strengthening the community dynamics: a solution for the low quality of education in Togo?

- **General hypothesis of the programme**
  Mobilisation of parents and community helps to improve children’s learning

- **Secondary hypotheses of the programme**
  ✓ Community dynamics play an important role in reducing gender inequalities in academic achievement and in improving student performance
  ✓ Community preschools (not officially recognised) initiated by parents free girls and improve learning in school
Strengthening the community dynamics: a solution for the quality of education in Togo?

**Hypotheses**

- Supporting remedial teaching initiatives by the parents improves school performance of students.
- Monitoring and analysis of school results by parents helps them to get involved in improving the school performance of students.
- Active participation of parents in the creation of school projects alongside teachers and students allows them to make a diagnosis on education and make proposals for improvement.

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Strategies used

- Strengthening capacities of and making community actors more aware of and accountable to the right of children to quality education
- Implementation of participatory community diagnosis to identify the causes of inequality in achievement and to propose solutions
- Promotion of child protection practice and policy amongst parents and teachers
- Active learning methods
- Participation of students and parents in school management

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Results after 3 years?

- **Community actors** (parents, community leaders, children) have been strengthened and mobilised in favor of quality education.

The Parent associations:

- are trained in school governance (participation in the management of educational resources, decision making, formulating proposals for better school management)
- Are aware of the importance of monitoring the learning outcomes of the children
- monitor absence of students and teachers, help solve conflicts between students and teachers and parents

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Results after 3 years?

The role of community preschools

- The community preschools are initiated and managed by the community
- The animators of the preschool centres are trained with support of Plan but are paid by the communities
- The preschools enabled girls of school age to go to school and helped the youngest ones to prepare for primary school
- The centers fostered the holistic development of children particularly in terms of physical well-being, cognitive skills, language skills, social skills (interactions with peers), emotional skills and life skills
- Children who went to the preschools have better performance in core subjects such as literacy, numeracy and language when they reach the first grade
Results after 3 years?

- **Parents support remedial teaching initiatives**
  - Students, parents and teachers jointly fixed days and times for remedial teaching that fit with local customs (incl. household work)
  - 3rd to 6th grade students with learning difficulties improved their performance as a result of extra lessons in math, grammar, spelling and reading.
  - Success rates on primary school final exams increased from 70.95% (boys) and 60.62% (girls) to 85.33% and 84.30%
  - 60% of schools involved in the programme improved their end-of-cycle results, opposed to 16% of other schools.

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Results after 3 years?

- High drop out rates, especially for girls persist

- Drop out rates decreased from 6% to 5% between 2010 and 2013

- However, drop out rates remain higher for girls (6.2%)
Results after 3 years?

- Monitoring and analysis of school results by the community
  - Parents are aware of the importance of following up students’ performance through interactions with teachers.
  - Learners and teachers are stimulated by parents to engage in schoolwork through school visits and joint meetings.
  - Parents and savings and loan group members are aware of their roles and responsibilities in supporting the improvement of students’ performance.
  - Parents are more positive towards letting their children take part in remedial teaching and group work.
Results after 3 years?

- **Initiating school projects**
  
  - Community actors (students, parents and teachers) take part in diagnosis and planning of school projects to improve access and quality of education.
  
  - They approach education authorities and NGO’s to support these actions.
  
  - School projects take into account inequality in learning results (better division of domestic work between girls and boys, violence free schools and homes).
Challenges and future perspectives

• Ensure sustainability of actions to improve the quality of learning through innovations like ‘tutoring’
• Unite actors to advocate the state to institutionalise and promote community preschools
• Scaling up the ‘school projects’ initiative to the national level as a participative community based analysis and planning method to increase education quality
• Take initiatives on political and community levels to increase girls school retention
• Learning without fear focus
• Ensure post project monitoring and measuring impact
Merci à vous
Thank you