

EDITORIAL

Education changes lives.

This incredible capacity to change lives towards a better individual and collective development is only possible if education is equitable. It is therefore necessary to do everything in order guarantee to each child, no matter his sex, ethnic origin, social status and of course his disability, a full access to quality education. The 6 countries of the APPEHL project (Taking actions for the full participation of children with disabilities through education) are fighting on a daily basis to ensure that the fundamental right to education for children with disabilities is respected and that they benefit from a personalized quality education that will help change their lives.

This desire to have an equitable education for children with disabilities reflects in by the actions implemented to overcome the barriers to education.

The physical inaccessibility of schools is a barrier for children with a physical disability. We will see how in Burkina in Burkina-Faso, the APPEHL project has succeeded in mobilizing the Ministry of National Education on this thematic.

The lack of teachers trained to take into account the special needs of these children and the lack of tools to train those teachers, are also two major obstacles to inclusive education. Togo and Mali articles showcase two success stories with regard to the training of teachers.

The absence of structures and rehabilitation professionals prevent children with disabilities from fully expressing their potential. In Mali, speech therapies are organized to help children with an intellectual disability and/or a cerebral palsy to improve their language skills and therefore their communication.

Unfortunately, children with disabilities still too often face negative clichés and rejection from their communities because of their disability and this is a brake to their development, self-esteem and therefore to their access to education. In Senegal, the Day of the African Child was an opportunity to remind some major principles defended by the APPEHL project: a quality inclusive education for all children.

As you read this newsletter, you will also notice the absence of an article on the state of our project in Liberia. In fact, due to the dramatic health and human situation that dominates presently in this country, all our teams are mobilized to help in the fight against Ebola. Our thoughts are with them and the Liberian population as they face this terrible epidemic.

To end on a positive note, all the countries of the project are mobilized in September and October in the drafting of phase 2 of the project. Much has already been done but much remains to be achieved, however the journey ahead is exciting for all us!

Sandrine Bouille, *Regional Coordinator of the APPEHL project*

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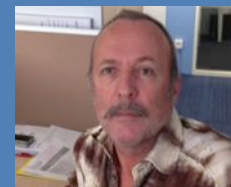
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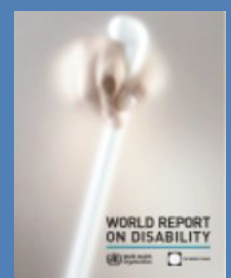
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DID YOU KNOW?

Global data show that employment rates are much lower among men with disabilities (53%) and among women with disabilities (20%) than among men without disabilities (65%) and women without disabilities (30%).

Source: W.H.O.

NEWS OF THE PROJECT

BURKINA-FASO

- **Accessibility and educational infrastructures: a pilot project in collaboration with the Ministry of Education of Burkina-Faso**

In November 2012, Handicap International has proceeded to an accessibility diagnosis of 5 pilot schools of the Inclusive Education project, with the technical support of Vida Brasil. The results of this diagnosis were shared with the partners and educational actors working in the pilot schools located in the project's zone. From then on, a participative process has begun and has ended up in the signature of a convention on mutual assistance with the General Direction of the Research and Sectorial Statistics (GDRSS) of the Ministry of National Education. Based on the conclusions of the diagnosis, this direction that has in charge the realization of the educational infrastructures has proceeded to the establishment of a statement of work and has also selected four service providers on the basis of specific criteria.

The works have begun in the month of January 2014 and have focused on improving the accessibility of the 14 pilot schools in the Central and Central East region. The arrangements for the accessibility of visually impaired people have not been taken in account in this first experience due to a lack of budget. The works have consisted in the realization of ramps with handrails, in the demolition of stages in the classrooms, the lowering of blackboards to 0,70m from the ground and the removal of all the protrusions.

The final reception of the works is expected on October 2014. Meanwhile, the parents, the students and the teachers are satisfied by what has been done. This first pilot phase has allowed the Ministry to witness concrete examples on the importance of improving accessibility in schools and the positive impact it has. It will surely prompt the authorities to take in account accessibility norms in the realization of educational infrastructures. Among these accessibility norms, the different types of disabilities should always be taken in account.



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MALI

- **Speech therapy in the service of children with disabilities**

Handicap International through its Inclusive Education project in Sikasso has contractualized two Malian speech therapists whose work consist in correcting communication impairments detected on some children with disabilities studying in targeted schools. The objective is to encourage a better participation of those children at the academic and community level.

This speech therapy support is in 3 levels:

- Sensitizing parents of children with disabilities, community agents and teachers on the thematic of speech therapy;
- Drawing up an initial assessment form for each children;
- Implementing speech therapy sessions;

In total, 8 disabled children with an intellectual disability/Cerebral-motor handicapped benefit from this speech therapy support through 50 re-education sessions spread over 6 months (from June to November 2014).



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- **Institutional validation of the braille and sign language training manuals**

On the 20th of June 2014, **order n° 198/MEPS/CAB/SG, on the institutional validation of the braille and sign language training manual** was signed by the Ministry of primary and secondary education of Togo (MPST).

This signature is the culmination of a long process implemented by the working group on the schooling of children with disabilities in Togo.

Indeed, within the framework of the “Inclusive Education” projects, managed by Handicap International, with the financial support of UNICEF, the AFD and the city of Luxembourg, a working group on the schooling of children with disabilities gathering agents from the Ministry of Education and Social Action, associations from the education and disability sector was established in 2010. The objective of this working group is to promote at the national level, concrete strategies on how to better include children with disabilities in schools. This group has validated a training manual on inclusive education and an order on the adaptation of exams for candidates with disabilities.

On this basis, an advocacy was carried with the MPST for the institutional validation of these two documents. The training manual in inclusive education was thus institutionally validated in May 2012 by an order from the MPST.

A huge step was completed in the implementation of concrete actions for the schooling of children with disabilities in Togo. The next job of the advocacy group will be to get on to the Ministry again for the signature of the order on the adaptation of exams which we hope will not take long.

- **Training of trainers in braille and training of regional trainers in sign language**

After the institutional validations of two training manuals on the themes of visual impairment-braille and hearing impairment-sign language, it was necessary to provide the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MPSE) with a competent team of trainers capable of training future teachers in braille and sign language.

From the 11th to the 14th of August, training was organized for trainers on visual impairment and braille at Handicap International offices in Lomé.

This training has allowed the participants to take ownership of the content and training methods proposed by the manual. These new trainers will facilitate the training of teachers of Tône from the 1st to the 5th of September.

Following the first part of the training of regional trainers in sign language, the 16 future regional trainers met from the 19th to the 21st of August 2014 in Lomé for the second part of the training. These regional trainers are classified as following: 5 for the Savannah Region, 3 for the Kara region, 5 for the Maritime Region and 3 teachers of trainers. The training was facilitated by Handicap International’s team (Virginie HALLET, Bénédicte LARE) and Amivi CRA Komlan from the MPSE.

The trainers were formed in teams to prepare, with the help of the manual, the training of teachers from Tône and Kara. The first training session will be held from the 22 to the 26th of September 2014 and from the 29th to the 3rd of October 2014.

NIGER

- **Evaluation on the integration of the Inclusive Education module in the Teacher Training Schools**

The integration of the Inclusive Education module in the Teacher Training Schools (TTS) program has allowed this module to be taught in the TTS of Maradi, Tillabéry and Dosso. Nearly 6000 trainees benefited from this training. This training was divided in four classes (Sociology, Psych-pedagogy, Professional ethic, Legislation and Didactics). In order to better appreciate the pertinence of the process and estimate the results achieved at the end of the first year, a study/assessment was realized by an independent consultant with a view to pick out the strengths, the areas that should be improved, the difficulties and make recommendations. After the collection and analysis of the data, a knowledge-sharing workshop was organized on the 17th of July 2014 to validate the study. Some major actors participated to this workshop, such as the management team of the TTS and the Central Directions of the Ministry of Primary Education. After the presentation of the study's results, some discussions and workshops took place. At the end of these discussions, some recommendations were made in order to improve on the long-term the monitoring system. The workshop participants also recommended that the module should be popularized through sensitization campaigns or trainings in TTS and the introduction of the Inclusive Education module in four other TTS in Niger (Tahoua, Agadez, Zinder and Diffa) at the beginning of the academic year 2014-2015. It should also be noted that the General Director of the reform, promotion of national languages and civic education, in the presence of the Program Director of Handicap International Burkina-Niger launched the workshop.

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SENEGAL

- **Celebration of the Day of the African Child**

Handicap International has celebrated the 2014 edition of the Day of the African Child in the district of Bignona with the local partners of the Inclusive Education Project. This event took place on the 16th of June and the theme was: “Child friendly, quality, free & compulsory Education for all children in Africa “.

Children were the major actors of this day as they organized a sensitization caravan throughout the streets of the city with the participation of 18 schools, the children’s parliament and many other associations that promote the rights of children: “Diam Waleyi Casamance”, Action Enfance Senegal, Arc-en-Ciel etc...

After the caravan, children have favored the public with plays and poetic recitals on the Day’s theme.

These activities took place in the presence of many local authorities: the prefect, the Mayor, Heads of services, religious and traditional leaders.

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AGENDA OF THE NEXT QUARTER

- SENEGAL
 - Implementing inclusive sports and leisure activities within schools (following the training of teachers and members of Sports and Cultural Associations)
 - Finalize the implementation of performance contracts with Education and Training Inspections (ETI)
- TOGO
 - Monitoring the education plan for the academic year 2014-2015
- NIGER
 - Training of 20 teachers of pilot schools in braille and sign language
 - Support communes on advocacy and awareness actions
- MALI
 - Training agents the Academies of Bougouni, Koutiala and Sikasso on the thematic of Inclusive Education
 - Provision of teaching material to schools
- BURKINA-FASO
 - Advocate for Inclusive Education to be taken into account in Communal Development Plans of 25 communes
 - Training workshop/presentation of the sign language and hearing impairment module developed in Togo
 - Support communal commissions in the orientation process and enrollment of newly identified children with disabilities

Within the framework of the training on accessibility that took place in Sikasso (Mali) in June 2014, Hugues Nouvellet, Technical Advisor – Inclusive Local Development and Accessibility has kindly accepted to answer our questions in order for us to have a better idea of what accessibility really is and the issues surrounding this thematic



Hugues Nouvellet, *Technical Advisor – Inclusive Local Development and Accessibility*

Hello Hugues, could you tell us in few words what is the definition of accessibility?

In few words, we can say that accessibility is a thematic that cares about the universal access to the environment for everyone: access at all times and for all, according to the RPCU principle:

- Reach, Penetrate, Circulate, Use.

Accessibility particularly applies to housing, transport, public spaces, new information and communications technologies (NICT), etc. A good accessibility also means that the uninterrupted chain of movement is well respected because if only one link of the chain is not accessible then moving becomes impossible. One last aspect to consider is that accessibility is one of the preconditions for the access to services.

Why are physical accessibility questions important in Inclusive Education projects?

These questions are very important first of all because accessibility is a right recognized by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) ratified by all West African countries. I also think that education is one of the main keys that led to the respect of individuals' rights. It is therefore essential for all children to be able to go to school, whatever they have a physical/intellectual disability or not.

What were the objectives of the training that gathered APPEHL's project managers in Sikasso (Mali) in June 2014?

This training that took place in Sikasso had many components; first of all we wanted to train the project managers and ILD (Inclusive Local Development) actors from Sikasso on the implementation of an accessibility diagnosis, based on the process addressed in Handicap International's methodological guide "Establishing an accessibility diagnosis in low and middle-income countries".

We also had the opportunity to carry out the diagnosis of Babembabougou's school and we have presented the results of this diagnosis to local authorities. At the end of this training, a monitoring committee was set up for the universal accessibility of Sikasso's schools.

We sometimes feel a lack of involvement of local authorities when it comes to accessibility, why is that?

I think that the lack of information and sensitization on the thematic of accessibility is a very big issue. Also, another issue is the idea that accessibility will only benefit to children with disabilities when it also concerns teachers, parents, pregnant women, etc. Another argument that I often hear from authorities is that the cost for accessibility is too high. But when we look at all the positive impacts of a good accessibility, then the cost is not that high.

We often notice that some structures such as DPO (Disabled Peoples' Organizations), SMC (School Management Committees), and Parents' Associations have difficulties having a strong advocacy among local authorities for a better accessibility, how do you explain this?

The low structuration level of the organizations can explain this and it unfortunately decreases the power of their advocacy. They are often seen as not credible by authorities. In order to solve this issue, we should establish an IDOR diagnosis (institutional development and organizational reinforcement) of organizations and then elaborate a reinforcement plan of its members' competences.

What is your last word?

If we accept accessibility as a pre-condition for the access to services, then I am sure people will better understand the importance of making our environment more accessible.



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PUBLICATIONS

✓ EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND DISABILITY: A DISCUSSION PAPER

- OMS, UNICEF, 2013
- http://www.who.int/disabilities/media/news/2012/13_09/en/

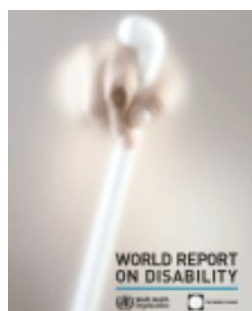


✓ SOME PREVENTIVE RULES AGAINST EBOLA VIRUS

- OMS, 2014
- <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs103/en/>

✓ WORLD REPORT ON DISABILITY

- OMS, 2011
- http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/en/



NEWSLETTER APPEHL

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