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REPORT

DOCUMENTATION OF EXPERIENCES AND PRACTICES OF PROVIDING SUPPORT TO LOCAL ACTORS WITHIN THE AIDE ET ACTION INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

PRACTICAL INFORMATION SHEETS

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INFORMATION SHEET 1- Building a Consortium around a cause (Cambodia)

1. Background

The Cambodian Consortium for Out of School Children (CCOSC) was originally established to take up the challenge of providing access to primary school for more than 50,000 children from 2014 to 2017. This \$20 million project, co-funded by the Education Above All Foundation's Educate a Child (EAC) programme, brought together 19 NGOs in its first phase. More than just a consortium, the CCOSC is a real vehicle for shared learning, cooperation and the promotion of best practices in educational development, both at the national level and in South-East Asia as a whole.






A consortium agreement clarified the relationship between the parties, particularly with regard to the organisation of their work, project management and the rights and obligations of the parties, including liability, intellectual property rights and dispute settlement.

The contract's implementation was based on the principle of cooperation between all parties; therefore, it was recognised that both advantages and disadvantages had to be shared by all the consortium members in terms of their project commitment.

2. Description of the actions/approach implemented

In order to cover all the issues, the consortium members were structured into 5 components covering the different barriers in access to education in Cambodia.

Each member was integrated on the basis of its expertise on a particular issue:

Children with disabilities	Children from ethnic minorities	Over-aged students	Street & marginalised children	Poor and remote children
				

How the consortium works: key bodies

Steering, Management	<p><u>Steering Committee (bi-annual):</u></p> <p>The Committee was chaired by the Country Director of AEA Cambodia who was also the head of one of the components, Save the Children Cambodia, and other representatives of Consortium Members (Director or equivalent).</p> <p>Its role was to review the programme progress report, formulate ways to overcome the challenges faced and plan the activities for the next six months.</p>
International Coordination and Quality Advice	<p><u>Advisory Board (bi-annual):</u></p> <p>The Board was composed of senior officials from the Ministry of Education, key experts/practitioners and AEA to provide advice on the implementation of the project at the macro level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It focused particularly on how to link the CCOSC to other Education for All initiatives at the national level and in the region. ▪ It ensured cooperation with the main programme stakeholders, including the relevant ministries, UN agencies and NGOs, to ensure the smooth implementation of the programme. ▪ It was supported by a project quality assurance consultant.
Sub-national Technical Support & Quality Advice	<p><u>Technical Working Committee (bi-annual):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Technical Committee was comprised of education officers from the ministries' departments, AEA and representatives of Consortium members. Its meetings were held on a bi-annual basis to give an update on the progress achieved and share technical inputs for better quality programme implementation. - The Committee provided technical inputs to improve equitable access to education and quality and inclusive education of all the thematic components. The Committee also coordinated the implementation of projects at sub-national level and provided recommendations on the quality of the programme.
Self-assessment, documentation	<p><u>Partnership Meeting and Learning Forum (annual):</u></p> <p>To provide an update on the progress achieved in the programme, to share experiences and lessons learned during its implementation, and to work together to overcome challenges and develop shared knowledge about cross-sectoral approaches for mainstreaming in programme implementation.</p>

Operational implementation	<p><u>Thematic Component Groups (quarterly):</u></p> <p>The Consortium was organised into 5 components according to the challenges in access to education. Each thematic area was made up of international and local organisations with proven experience and credibility in their respective fields. Each meeting began with a field visit.</p>
Local sectorial coordination	<p><u>Provincial working groups on the education sub-sector (quarterly):</u></p> <p>This involved increased coordination, cooperation and collaboration between partners active in the same provinces and districts to promote synergy and efficiency. The groups supported by the consortium expanded to 20 of Cambodia's 25 provinces. The coordinators of these groups were elected by their members.</p>
Links to international networks	<p><u>Regional Network for Out-of-School Children (quarterly):</u></p> <p>The Regional Network is hosted by the UNESCO Regional Office for Education for Asia and the Pacific. The CCOSC was invited and subsequently took up a seat on the Network's Steering Committee, which met on a quarterly basis in Bangkok, Thailand. The first of these meetings took place in March 2014, and AEA represented CCOSC.</p>

3. Results

This was the first forum in Phnom Penh facilitated by AEA's Inclusive Education Advisor and a member of the NGO Light for the World.

The forum members met on a quarterly basis in 2015, then the consortium decided to regionalise the forums by holding an annual forum in each of the 4 regions: Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, Kampot and Ratanak Kiri.



Each consortium member had different expertise and skills. The diversity of members and platforms offered enormous opportunities for mutual technical support, in order to achieve the consortium's goals. For example, most of the members of the "Street Children" component developed the ability to help provide livelihoods for poor families. They could then also offer support to members of other components facing

the same difficulties. Intersectoral meetings too increased, at the initiative of the thematic component groups.

The learning forums made it possible to broaden the sharing of experiences and knowledge to actors who were not Consortium members and who were experts in the issues concerned.

19 best practices were documented for sharing with other stakeholders and were also implemented in their Consortium's own programmes for the benefit of children's education.

Video documentation was carried out in each component of the consortium and was accessible to all members.

4. Challenges

The main challenge was the timing of meetings and each member's availability. Hence, AEA did the necessary follow-up to confirm the dates and send reminders, while remaining flexible.

During the first phase, investment in the different bodies, opening-up to a large number of partners and collective learning were advantageous enough for all members to maintain the momentum with assiduity and while ensuring their availability during the three years of the project.

5. Toolbox

- "A coordinated approach: Case study on the Cambodian Consortium for Out of School Children".
- Collection of 19 best practices' information sheets by the Consortium members

INFORMATION SHEET 2 – A peer-to-peer training system engineering (Cambodia)

1. Background

Between 2014 and 2017, the first phase of the Cambodian Consortium for Out-of-School Children (CCOSC), led by Aide et Action, brought together 19 very diverse NGOs, all of which – whether they were small NGOs in the field or large international organisations – developed a solid expertise on one of the facets of the issue of out-of-school children.

In order to cover all the issues, the consortium members were structured into 5 components that covered the different barriers in access to education in Cambodia (street children, children with disabilities, children from ethnic minorities, etc.). The Consortium's belief in terms of capacity building of its members was that the training needed to be focused mainly on peer learning between the members as well as other satellite organisations.

2. Approach

Quarterly component-wise working seminars, open to other NGOs with field visits and an expert lead partner

Annual workshops for the exchange of experiences between the Consortium's components

A personalised follow-up of each small NGO by AEA to support them in their development but also "sponsorship" by other NGOs

The Consortium's capacity building mechanism was based on 3 training spaces, mainly between peers, and on a process of learning by doing with support being provided.

Working seminars lasted 3-4 days to facilitate collaborative learning

3. Results

1. Development of expertise on the issue

For all the Consortium members: A broader and more in-depth understanding of the issue of out-of-school children.

For the international NGOs in the Consortium: Good knowledge of the actors in the field and their actions.

For the local NGOs in the field: A broad sociological understanding of the issue at the national level.

2. Development of management and organisational capacities

For the local NGOs in the field, belonging to the consortium has enabled them to enhance their reputation and has promoted the growth of their organisations and their likelihood of obtaining new partnerships. Through training in project management tools and personalised follow-up, AEA provides support to their growth. It has also provided on-demand telephone support.

Testimony of the NGO Rabbit School Organisation, which had already worked in collaboration with AEA before the consortium was established: "Between 1997 and now, we have grown from 8 to 51 people working for Rabbit School Organisation. We now support 557 children, compared to 4 in 1997. Through the consortium, we have developed further and are now recognised as specialists with regard to children with intellectual disabilities by other NGOs (Plan, Save the Children) and by the Ministries of Education and Social Affairs. AEA's support in this growth phase has been invaluable in improving our project management skills."

3. Strengthening methodological and innovation capacities

Workshops on the exchange of experiences and practices are a way by which all NGOs are able to refresh and expand their practices and promote innovations, whatever the area they work in (for example, the NGO API has made it possible to open the field to new activities for expression and learning by children through stage performances by disseminating its experience in this field).

Members of the thematic groups have even taken the initiative to develop inter-thematic sessions. For example, sessions between those working with street children and children from ethnic minorities, disabled children and children in extreme poverty, as the issues often intersect.

4. Learning from others and pooling expertise

Every NGO acknowledges that it has learned from the others, which has enabled it to refresh its practices. Everyone pooled their resources, which enabled them to develop better tools, thereby increasing the project's impact.

In the project's second phase, now that the habit of working in collaboration with others has taken root, the consortium will work on the basis of a territorial approach in Cambodia's 25 provinces.

4. The project's motto

Let flowers of different colours grow together in the same garden. Let us never try to make everyone uniformly the same colour, the same fragrance; rather, let us respect diversity, as that is what makes the garden beautiful.

Samphors Vorn, Country Director, AEA Cambodia



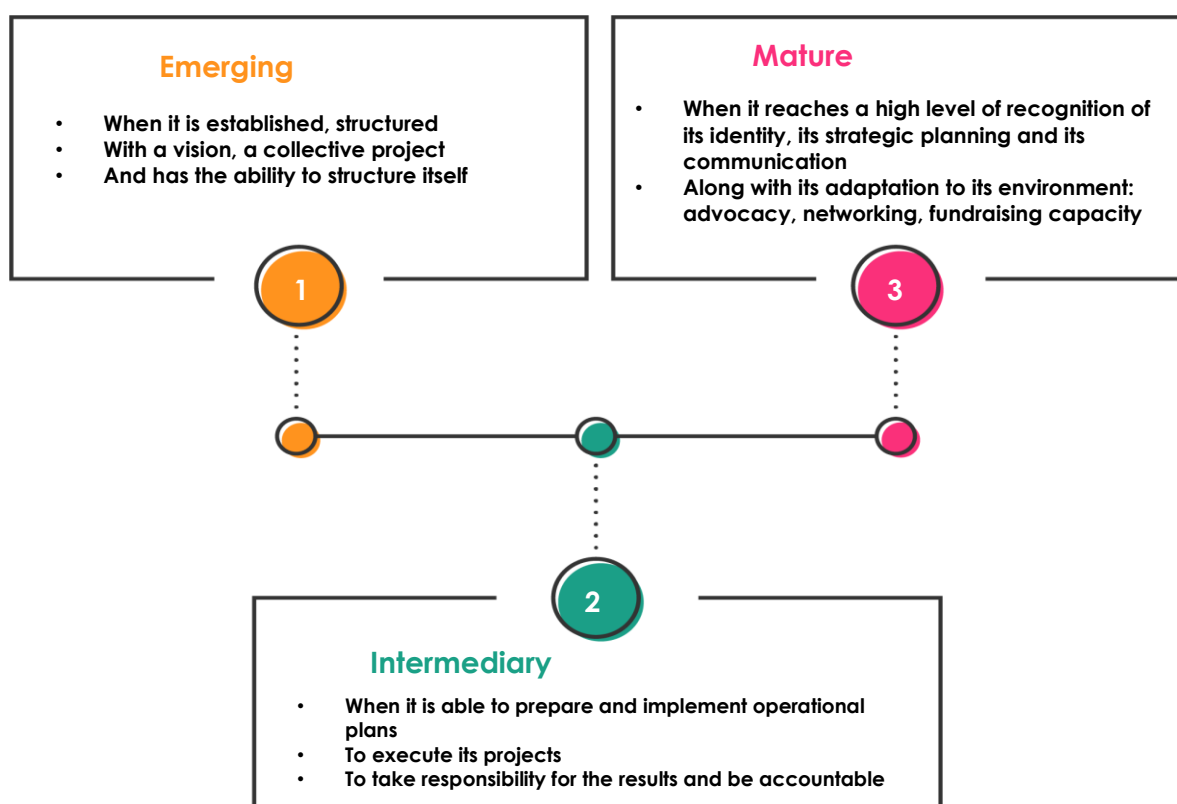
5. Toolbox

- Target areas, resource mapping and capacity building needed
- Compendium of 19 Best Practice Sheets

INFORMATION SHEET 3 – The frame of reference of the degree of structuration of CSO collectives (Guinea)¹

1. BACKGROUND

The PROJEG ("Programme Concerté de Renforcement des Capacités des Organisations de la Société Civile et de la Jeunesse Guinéenne" or Concerted Programme for Capacity Building of Civil Society and Youth Organisations in Guinea) has been at the service of Guinean civil society actors going through a period of democratic transition. Its aim was to build their skills and promote dialogue between civil society actors and government authorities. After having created collectives gathering local CSO under shared goals for almost ten years, the PROJEG defined a strategy for the sustainability of these CSO collectives, centred on their autonomy. The tool that made it possible to measure the degree of autonomy achieved by the collectives is called the "frame of reference of the degree of structuration of the collectives". According to this frame of reference, for a collective of CSO to be autonomous, it needs to gradually start identifying itself on the basis of its main characteristics, rising through 3 stages: emerging, intermediary and mature. A group of actors is said to be:



¹This information sheet has been produced based on previous documentation work: Sustainability by providing support for the empowerment of groups of actors. The PROJEG experience, 2016-2019, Aide et Action & Initiative Développement, 2020.

2. APPROACH

It consists of 3 stages:

- **Stage One:** Adoption of an approach approved and supported by the AEA project team and the project's governing bodies, and building of the teams' skills in terms of providing support to and strengthening the autonomy of the collectives.
- **Stage Two:** Choice of a neutral positioning by moving from fulfilling coordination responsibilities to taking up the position of a support provider, with the following activities:
 - Assignment of support providers in pairs in areas other than their usual area
 - Definition of principles and selection criteria for the groups to be supported
 - Pre-identification of eligible collectives/groups
 - Interview with pre-identified collectives
 - Selection and validation of collectives.
- **Stage Three:** Change of posture. Thenceforth, the control function turns into a function of providing support to collectives. This change – a deconstruction in the way the organisation operates – leads to a redefinition of the organisational chart, with new job descriptions and the recruitment of a human resource in charge of monitoring and evaluating the project. This resource person is in charge of the monitoring and exercising the control functions necessary for steering the PROJEG and reporting on the results. The project leaders are therefore freed from monitoring-supervision duties, so that they can concentrate on providing support to the groups according to their needs.

The transformation of PROJEG took concrete shape through the transfer of responsibilities from the executive secretariat to the actors' collectives. The groups' responsibilities consist of:

- Free choice to engage in the process of accompaniment towards autonomy
- Development and implementation of their strategic and operational plans
- Definition of their approach and method of collective work
- Design and implementation of their internal and external training plan
- Internal autonomy in the governance of the collective, the identification of their needs, and their negotiations with PROJEG
- Development and implementation of their internal and external communication plans.

3. RESULTS

PROJEG's executive secretariat assumed additional responsibilities, focused on:

- Capacity building of the collectives, based on the needs identified by the collectives themselves
- Facilitation of the collectives' strategic planning workshops
- Support and accompaniment
- Support of collectives on issues specific to their organisations
- Support to the collectives in the self-assessment of their progression towards autonomy.

These working and management approaches, based on empowering the staff, have made it possible to reduce stress and feelings of loss of power among the project team. In short, the process has enabled the professionalization of the project team, who have been able to combine different skills: (i) facilitation, (ii) training, (iii) advisory support, (iv) coaching, (v) assistance, and sometimes (vi) mediation, based on the requests of the collectives and according to their progress towards their objectives.

At the level of the collectives, the following results have been identified:

- Development of leadership, a feeling of unity and of belonging to the collectives
- Responsibility in carrying their actions and structuring themselves
- Development of skills and expertise to match their mission
- Greater reputation and influence vis-à-vis the authorities, legitimacy among the population
- Ability to mobilise partners and resources
- Efficiency in their work, thanks to the mutual trust built between members of the collectives.

4. BEST PRACTICES/INNOVATIONS

Three best practices have emerged from this experience. These include:

- The definition of a "maturation grid" for collectives, making it possible to assess their degree of autonomy objectively.
- The formalisation of the transfer of competences from the project team to the collectives, even if this leads to a loss of power and leadership for the team.
- The construction of a joint vision for and by each collective is a factor of cohesion which has enabled the autonomous design and implementation of projects.

5. LESSONS LEARNED

The external perspective provided by the intervention of external resource persons has helped to develop skills within the project team. The resulting increase in confidence is a guarantee of leadership that was essential to the process of providing support to the collectives.

6. PERSPECTIVES

There are two items to be considered in order to improve the process of empowering actors:

- Assessing the support provided, enabling both the collectives and the project team to evaluate the evolution of their journey and draw all the possible lessons from it.
- Developing a mechanism for peer-to-peer capacity building between the collectives themselves.

INFORMATION SHEET 4 - PROJEG: Formalising the support provider/receiver relationship (Guinea)²

1. BACKGROUND

In 2016, after spending 6 years developing multi-actors projects in Guinea, PROJEG defined a strategy for the sustainability of the collective dynamics it had created. The strategy focused on a support process for the empowerment of collectives of Guinean civil society organisations.

In order to formalise the relationship between the support provider (PROJEG) and those receiving the support (the CSO collectives), an autonomisation and empowerment strengthening plan was drawn up for each collective. The plan resulted in a contract drawn up between each collective and PROJEG, presenting the roles and responsibilities of the two stakeholders in the empowerment strengthening process.

Each collective had to carry out activities for the benefit of the population and internal structuring activities in order to increase its own autonomy in accordance with its vision. As for the PROJEG, as a provider of support for the collective, its role consisted in providing information and methodological support for the collective's benefit.

2. APPROACH

The formalisation of the relationship between the support provider and receiver was carried out through 3 main stages:

Stage One: supporting the collectives in identifying their vision and their needs in terms of capacity-building in order to achieve this vision

The PROJEG team facilitated workshops to enable each of the 12 collectives to define:

- Their vision in terms of the mission (what they wanted to do, their *raison d'être*)
- Their vision in terms of their organisation (how they wanted to function and organise themselves internally in order to carry out their mission)
- The actions to be carried out to achieve these visions: the projects and activities to be implemented, but also the internal structuring actions (drawing up legal documents and operating rules, setting up internal information and communication mechanisms towards members, etc.).

²This fact sheet has been produced based on previous documentation work: Sustainability by providing support for the empowerment of collectives of actors. The PROJEG experience, 2016-2019, Aide et Action & Initiative Développement, 2020.

- The collective's needs in terms of capacity-building in order to be able to implement its activities and progress towards its vision. The aim there was to ensure that the demand for AEA's support emerged directly from the collectives.

Stage Two: Arbitration of capacity-building needs and negotiation of AEA's support

The capacity-building needs identified by the collectives were divided into two types:

- Internal: Those that could be carried out by the collectives themselves (by pooling the experience of members), for instance: planning and implementing projects and activities, setting up the collective's governance bodies, setting up mechanisms for monitoring and transparency vis-à-vis members, or drawing up an operating charter.
- External: Those for which PROJEG's support was necessary, for example: training in various fields (advocacy, documentary research, facilitation techniques), technical/methodological support for certain specific projects, support in defining a resource mobilisation plan.

They were then negotiated and arbitrated according to the collectives' priorities and PROJEG's (financial, technical and human resource) capacities. Some capacity building needs that were common to several collectives could be pooled (example: training sessions gathering members from different collectives). In addition, some external support was carried out directly by the PROJEG team, while other support services were outsourced (external trainers, etc.).

Stage Three: Contractualisation of support services

All the internal and external capacity-building activities were compiled in a "Plan for building empowerment" for each collective, which specified the commitments of the two stakeholders, the capacity-building activities to be carried out, and the modalities.

The plan was annexed to the agreements signed between AEA and each of the collectives within the framework of the PROJEG.

3. RESULTS

The documentation work carried out in 2019 highlighted the main results of this process:

For AEA's PROJEG team:

- The formalisation and contractualisation of the support relationship enabled the PROJEG team to reposition itself, moving from the role of a facilitator and

project leader, to the role of support provider for collectives that implemented and steered their projects themselves.

- As a result, the team transferred certain responsibilities to the collectives (definition of their objectives and actions, organisation of collective work to carry out these actions, accountability for the actions carried out, etc.); and in return, took on complementary responsibilities in terms of capacity building of the collectives, providing support and advice, etc.

For the collectives receiving PROJEG's support:

- Development of a sense of belonging among the collectives' members, and a sense of responsibility for the actions and for the structuring of the collective.
- Improvement of the collectives' skills and expertise, both in terms of the themes dealt with and working methods (project management, advocacy, etc.).
- Improvement of the internal operation of the collectives: diversification of leadership, improvement of collegial functioning, establishment of group work processes and mechanisms, establishment of communication and transparency tools.
- Development of relations between the collectives and other actors: increased legitimacy and recognition of collectives among public institutions and other stakeholders, mobilisation of new operational and technical partners, etc.

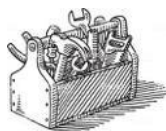
4. LESSONS LEARNED AND PERSPECTIVES

As part of the approach, at the outset, both parties had to define the objectives of the support services and the results to be achieved. This would allow to measure the progress in the different areas of empowerment and capacity-building. Moreover, the existence of a reference framework, which also contained indicators concerning the empowerment level of collectives at the beginning of the collaboration, would help in assessing the added value brought by AEA's support during this process (at the mid-term and end of the project). However, such a monitoring mechanism could not be set up within the PROJEG framework.

The formalisation of the relationship between the support receivers and the support provider enabled a better definition of the strategies for financing the support services and for working on the development of an autonomous economic model for the collectives.

The formalisation of the support services also made it possible to ratify the respective responsibilities of the stakeholders (support provider/receiver) and to set up mechanisms for monitoring and readjusting the support provided.

Finally, formalising the support services made it possible to highlight this sometimes informal or invisible function, and to make it more visible.



Toolbox

- *Workshops to support collectives in identifying their vision and their capacity building needs (Nov-Dec 2017)*
- *Consolidation and arbitration of needs for capacity building of collectives, and preparation for negotiation (March 2018)*
- *Negotiation and arbitration workshops on capacity building with each collective (June 2018)*
- *Agreement: agreement between PROJEG and each collective (Dec 2018)*
- *Implementation of actions for capacity-building of collectives (2019)*

INFORMATION SHEET 5 – The use of Change Oriented Approaches (COAs) in the support of actors (France and Senegal)

1. BACKGROUND/PROBLEM

Since 2015, Aide et Action has experimented the use of Change Oriented Approaches (COAs) in projects in France, Senegal and then in several West African countries.

COAs were developed by F3E to monitor and assess changes induced by an action. The aim was to develop a "theory of change" to which the project aimed to contribute, and then to set up mechanisms for monitoring changes.

In AEA, these approaches initially aimed at assessing the effects of citizenship education activities carried out in schools, which are by definition complex, very qualitative and difficult to measure. However, over time, COAs have also proved to be useful in involving various stakeholders (children, teachers, parents, etc.) in the design and planning of school-based projects.

2. APPROACH

COAs shift the focus away from classic "logical framework" approaches to design and monitor development projects. They introduce certain innovations:

- Start from a positive vision of what you want to contribute to, rather than starting from the problems being faced
- Identify stages of change to progress towards this vision, rather than solutions to problems
- Beyond activities alone, take an interest in the actors and bringing changes in them, and recognise that changes can only stem from the actors themselves, who must therefore be involved in the process
- Assume that a project only contributes to broader changes, and think beyond the project framework
- Assume that change processes are not mechanical or linear, but complex and iterative, and that projects must be able to adapt to this complexity.

The COA approach consists of 5 steps:

1. **Analyse the context:** Analyse the situation and draw up a list of the observations made by the various stakeholders. The analysis should pay particular attention to the actors themselves.
2. **Define a collective vision:** Bring as many people involved in the project around the table to define a common vision to which they would like to contribute. The aim is not that of starting with problems and defining activities to solve them, but rather of describing an ideal situation in 5, 10, 15 years, which will serve as a common frame of reference and to which the project must contribute.
3. **Define the various paths to change:** Describe the gradual developments that should take place and the various stages of change in order to move towards the vision. Paths of change can be defined for each of the actors involved, or by sub-themes. They will then serve as a frame of reference for monitoring changes.
4. **Define activities and strategies** according to the paths to change, actions that will contribute to producing the desired changes.
5. **Organise monitoring-evaluation:** Develop data collection tools and processes to observe and monitor step by step the progress along the paths to change, and to objectively assess the changes occurring. The monitoring of changes generally involves three stages:
 - Describe the changes: what has changed?
 - Explain the changes and analyse them: why did they take place? What were they due to?
 - Learning from the changes: What lessons can be learned? What adjustments should be made to the action being undertaken?

3. RESULTS/FEEDBACK

Although COAs can be used in very different settings and with very different actors, at this stage, AEA has mainly implemented them in schools. The following 3 experiences from France and Senegal illustrate three different types of use:

- **With children: Example of the Camp Marchand Middle School, Rufisque, Senegal (SOLIDE project):**

In the framework of the SOLIDE project (Local and International Solidarities for Development through Education), AEA supported the implementation of citizenship and international solidarity education activities in schools. At the Camp Marchand middle school, a simplified version of the COAs was used so that the children who were members of the school government could themselves:

- Diagnose problems in the school (waste management, schoolyard cleanliness, disputes between pupils, lack of green areas)
- Imagine the ideal school (waste sorting system, setting up a library, greater respect for the environment)
- Identify the changes to be made

- Plan the activities to be implemented within the school government framework.

This process enabled the children to feel more entitled to express themselves on school issues and to actively participate in the definition of activities implemented within the SOLIDE project framework. The teachers observed an improvement in self-confidence, a greater participation of children in the life of the school, and a greater awareness about environmental issues.

- **With a teaching team: Example of the Saint-Genès-de-Fronsac School, France (SOLIDE project):**

AEA and its partner association, Cool'eurs du Monde, provided support to the 5 teachers of the primary school in Saint-Genès-de-Fronsac for defining their vision and paths of change for the school, before defining the activities that would be carried out in the school within the framework of the SOLIDE project. On the basis of a "vision of the ideal school in 5 years", three paths of change were defined, concerning (1) a greater level of autonomy of pupils, (2) the development of cooperation between pupils, and (3) coordination between the different educational community members (school, extracurricular activities, parents, municipality, etc.).

The theory of change defined was displayed in the teachers' room at the school. It enabled them to step back from the existing school situation, formalise their joint ambition for the school, which had been implicit until then, and give meaning to all the activities they were implementing without perceiving their overall coherence. It also gave them a frame of reference to monitor the changes and progress made throughout the school year, notably thanks to two change monitoring sessions conducted by AEA and Cool'eurs du Monde.

It also facilitated the implementation of the SOLIDE project's activities in the school, since Cool'eurs du Monde's activities were defined within the framework of the vision and paths of change, and in coherence with the other actions carried out by the teaching team itself.

Example of vision and paths of change: Case of the Saint-Genès-de-Fronsac school, France

Vision of ideal school in 5 years:

1

Bubble 1: Educational community: How do we get along with each other?

Mutual trust between teachers and parents, links with the whole educational community: parents, partners, municipal employees, cohesion in living rules between school and extracurricular activities, an idea for a unifying project to get all the players to work together: naming the school.

2

Bubble 2: Cooperation between pupils and greater pupils' autonomy

Involvement of children in school governance and decision-making, practices of self-regulation relations between children (dispute mediation, development of empathy), tutoring and bridges between classes, children's autonomy in learning (each at their own pace, becoming aware of their progress).

3

Bubble 3: Infrastructure

A library in the school, better adapted infrastructure, new equipment

4

Bubble 4: Opening-up of school

A more open cultural/social vision for students, more gatherings to experience diversity



- Autonomous initiatives and projects.
- Getting a positive feedback on the first individual initiatives.
- Proposals coming from pupils.
- Pupils become aware of their responsibility for their own progress.
- Pupils are aware of their strengths and limitations.
- Pupils have progress benchmarks and receive feedback on their progress.
- Pupils trust the adults.
- Pupils have confidence in themselves.
- They have learnt about knowing themselves.

Path to change 1: Autonomous students

- Spontaneous cooperation between students.
- Experience the pleasure of cooperation.
- Sense of belonging.
- Sense of shared responsibility.
- Sense of belonging to the school, opening-up of classes.
- Awareness of reciprocity (helper - helped).
- Knowing how to express their feelings and needs.
- Feeling concerned about what others are going through.
- Being aware of oneself and one's own difficulties.
- Being aware of others.

Path to change 2: Cooperation between pupils

- Consistency in the actions of the educational community.
- Coherence of the educational community's discourse.
- Experience the pleasure of working together
- Awareness of shared responsibility.
- Sense of belonging.
- Mutual trust.
- Feeling considered and considering others.
- Awareness of each person's role

Path to change 3: A united and cohesive educational community

- **With school governing bodies: Example of the PAEBCA project in Senegal:**

Within the framework of the Project for the Improvement of Basic Education in Casamance (PAEBCA), AEA aimed at strengthening social mobilisation and participatory management of primary and secondary schools. To do this, COAs were used with community management bodies of schools (Management Committees, Parent Teacher Associations, school governments) to organise time slots for the identification and planning of actions to be carried out in schools.

By reflecting on the changes that needed to be addressed, COAs encouraged the participation of people who were not necessarily comfortable with the usual planning methods (children, parents, communal authorities, etc.). They also made it possible to establish a shared diagnosis of the problems in the environment and to involve all the players in the process of defining a vision for the school, along with an action plan. In each school, various needs were identified (school infrastructure maintenance, school hygiene and sanitation, community-based academic support, etc.) and work was carried out under the supervision of the School Management Committee with the technical and financial support of AEA.

COAs have also proven to be useful in developing Life Skills among children through their participation in various activities: learning to plan, take initiatives, deal with everyday life issues (hygiene, maintenance of infrastructure, waste management), improving self-confidence, etc.

4. LESSONS LEARNED AND PERSPECTIVES

COAs facilitate the participation and involvement of various actors in a project. On the one hand, because they make the planning process more accessible to all as compared to traditional methods and, on the other hand, because they make it possible to compare the points of view of various actors and summarise them to form a joint vision. It is not a set method, but a flexible enough approach that can be adapted to the context and the actors concerned.

By projecting themselves in a positive medium-term vision, COAs also allow actors to step back from their daily activities and give meaning to their actions.

However, it is not always easy to articulate COAs and the logical framework to implement them. While the log frame sets a framework for action and for the results expected that are often quantitative and short term, COAs push one to think about the dynamics of wider and longer term change, even if it sometimes means moving away from the initial project roadmap. It then becomes necessary to give oneself room for manoeuvre and be able to readjust the project according to the needs and evolutions.

5. TOOLBOX

- COA toolbox on the F3E website: French: <https://f3e.asso.fr/boite-a-outils/> / English: <https://f3e.asso.fr/boite-a-outils/prisme-toolkit/>
- 3 tool-sheets based on the experiences of the SOLIDE project: "Planning and assessment for primary school children", "Using COAs with secondary school children", "Using COAs with a school team".

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Case study - A path that teaches a lesson: Elements illustrating AEA's trademark based on experiences in Senegal

- Commitment to defending those excluded from the education system

AEA's commitment in Senegal to defending those excluded from the education system has resulted in particular in support provided to two types of schools: associative schools in Thiaroye and Basic Community Schools (ECB, Écoles Communautaires de Base).

For the associative schools, AEA has provided support to an existing dynamic within underprivileged population groups. This community initiative was born in 1988, during a crisis in the formal education system. From one associative school in 1988, the number rose to 13 in 1999, in the densely populated neighbourhoods of Ganaw rails where there were only 2 formal public schools. When they had been set up, these associative schools faced considerable difficulties, among which were the following:

- Narrow, unsuitable premises: Houses rented or abandoned following the floods were used as classrooms.
- Insufficient and uncomfortable equipment and furniture: The classrooms were too narrow (3m/4 or 2.5/3) for the standard table-benches used in formal education to fit. "Cross benches" were the type of furniture adapted in this case and pupils used their knees as a support for writing.
- Teachers were recruited on the job without any pedagogical training.
- Non-recognition by the academic authorities of associative schools, resulting in a virtual absence of quality pedagogical supervision.
- Insufficient school supplies and textbooks.

AEA's support resulted in the development of a degree of trust among stakeholders (teachers and managers) as it put the associative schools in touch with the Education Inspectorate, which provides supervision and in-service training for teachers.

Basic Community Schools (ECB) were first established in the Kolda region in the difficult educational context of the 1990s, marked by an insufficient supply of educational facilities in relation to demand, with more than 80% of elementary school children not entering sixth grade at the end of the cycle (6 years of study). Increasingly poor school results, particularly for the elementary school leaving certificate and entry to 6th grade, led to a lack of interest in school among communities. ECBs then emerged as a response to the educational demand of families, particularly in remote and deprived areas. The state encouraged the model of basic community schools that adapted its teaching to the realities and needs of

the environment, with the use of national languages as a subject and language of instruction.

In 1994/1995, AEA supported the ECB initiative developed by the NGO ADEF/Afrique, through sponsorship for the follow-up of two volunteers from ECB classes in the Kolda region. The positive results recorded in terms of the relevance of the model and the potential for pedagogical innovations motivated AEA to open 10 ECB classes in ten villages in 1995/1996 in areas with low enrolment rates.

Its intervention had the following results:

- The development and approval of curricula and a manual in the national language of the ECBs for the 1st and 2nd year, in collaboration with the Education Inspectorates of Kolda and Vélingara.
- The whole-hearted ownership of the model by the concerned communities, because they wanted it urgently, following the failure of the State or because they refrained from sending their children to the type of traditional schools that were less open to the expectations of the people.

In conclusion, AEA responded to the problem of exclusion of children from the education system by intervening in areas without formal schools in Kolda or in peri-urban areas, such as Pikine (suburbs of Dakar), where there was insufficient capacity.

Participation in school governance: AEA has worked on the participation of actors (local authorities, parents, grassroots community associations, students, etc.) in the management of schools. There were many weak areas in the interventions by these actors: disorganised interventions, unavailability of texts and regulations governing management and participation bodies, and the failure to comply with procedures for the renewal of these management bodies. As for the pupils, they did not abide by the rules of collective life (incivility of pupils at school, hygiene in school and in its surroundings). AEA then focused on training elected officials and parents so that they learned about and took ownership of their roles and responsibilities, and learnt about influence and advocacy techniques. This intervention resulted in a greater involvement of the following actors:

- Local authorities: They got involved in preparing for the start of the new school year.
- Parents: Participated in sessions on sharing school results, motivating students to attend tutoring classes, encouraging the School Management Committee (SMC) to hold reporting sessions on the management of the Voluntary Action Plans (VAPs)
- Associations (grassroots community organisations and neighbourhood/village development associations): Cleaning up schools, raising awareness among parents, registering children and combating violence, preventing early marriages and child labour.
- Teachers: Got involved in supervising pupils in science clubs or school governments to run forums on the fight against violence, hygiene in

schools, and providing support for the development of income-generating activities (theatre, garden, film screenings, etc.).

- Pupils: Started taking part in the beautification of the school, in raising awareness among their peers against violence, in the fight against the deterioration of school equipment and infrastructure.

- **Promotion of innovations**

AEA has promoted innovations in the struggle against child labour by creating a pre-school for early childhood in Diogo in the commune of Darou Khoudoss in the Thies region, enrolling at least 120 children. The commune covers an area of 520 sq. km. and has a population of 40,000 inhabitants spread over 31 villages and/or neighbourhoods.

This rural commune, with its seafront, falls under the Niayes zone, which is marked by the predominance of market gardening. Three-quarters of Senegal's vegetable production comes from this part of the great coast.

Diogo is reputed to be the main provider of child workers in the market gardening areas. Market gardening is a very profitable activity that absorbs the entire working population, including women. Women constitute a major workforce that takes care of picking the produce during the vegetable harvest period. The women always go to the fields, accompanied by their children aged between 3 and 5 years old, despite themselves, due to the lack of pre-school facilities able to accommodate them or of people to look after them at home. These young children, by dint of going to the market gardens, constitute a potential breeding ground for child labour. The opening of the pre-school has enabled the enrolment of 120 of the 400 children aged between 3 and 5 years old identified during the diagnostic study conducted by AEA.

A pre-school integrated in a primary school has huge advantages: firstly, it has contributed to the improvement of the Pre-school Gross Enrolment Rate of the Mboro district under which Darou Khoudoss falls. The GER (2% in 2012) was already considered low because of the lack of early childhood infrastructure. Secondly, it ensures a smooth transition from pre-school to primary school – all pupils are to be enrolled in the initiation course (CI). Finally, in pedagogical terms, it has been noted that pupils who have attended pre-school are more likely to succeed in the primary cycle than pupils who have not had the chance to attend pre-school: "pre-school education builds the foundations for learning in school."

Daily Life Skills: The development of a range of life skills (DLS) in students and communities. Tools are produced and made available for teachers to use in order to provide pupils with skills for dealing with life issues specific to each locality. And micro-financing incentives are granted on the basis of action plans. These life skills help pupils develop the behaviours necessary for peace and sustainable development.

In the PAEBCA project, 87 schools and institutions supported in the development of their action plan based on the change-oriented approach received support for the implementation of their action plan at a rate of 50,000 CFA franc per school, for an overall budget of 4,350,000 CFA franc.

In addition, AEA supported 100 parents of children who had been freed from work (for a total amount of 2,500,000 CFA franc, at a rate of 500,000 CFA franc per group as a grant for 5 Economic Interest Groups), and encouraged them to structure themselves into Economic Interest Groups, and to develop, finance and implement income-generating micro-projects.

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