

ATD Fourth World – Burkina Faso's

Cooperation Among all Stakeholders to Ensure Education and Training that Enriches Everyone

1. Adapt the educational program as an outcome of dialog among all the stakeholders in the educative community, including those who are the most isolated. Incorporate professional know-how, for example, and adapt the school hours and rhythm to match communities' food security needs.

"If succeeding means working in an office or as a politician, I can tell you that there are not many of us people in poverty who succeed. This is the reason why many poor families get discouraged from supporting their children in school. It is why I propose that at school, they also teach children practical know-how. That would allow us to believe that school is also for us."

2. Highlight the importance of education given by parents, families and the community, as well as its complementarity with that given by schools.

"Normally, traditional know-how and knowledge learned at school should go hand-in-hand, but that's not always the case. Traditional know-how teaches us to live in solidarity, however, we realize that school cultivates individualism. Schools have to find ways to support our values of solidarity."

"To be appreciated by people, you have to know how to control yourself and understand your environment and know what sort of speech would be hurtful to this environment. In a family, when work or a special event involves the entire family, you mustn't set yourself apart. In the community, when you see people meeting together, you have to do whatever you can to take part in that togetherness. That's going to allow you to be well appreciated."

3. Nurture cooperative educational methods drawn up in a partnership with the communities and in recognition that all parents, whatever their social status may be, are partners in the educational success of their children.

"You can not learn alone. You can not bring up a child alone."

"That means that for everyone to have an education, children must be a part of a broad and diversified educative community."

4. Recognize and support informal means of education and training.

"The teacher isn't the only person with knowledge. In an open school, everyone with knowledge that many others ignore, can come and teach the class something."

5. Put an end to the discrimination and stigmatization from which children and parents in poverty suffer.

"One day my daughter told me, 'Daddy, at school they said that I'm going to school for nothing and that I'll never get my diploma because my daddy is poor; he empties latrines; he makes ropes to sell them.'"

6. Continue efforts to keep schooling free-of-charge, so that no child from an underprivileged environment be prevented from going to school for financial reasons.

"When I was able to save 150 francs, I bought a notebook and put it in my children's school bag."

7. Recognize that indirect educational costs are obstacles preventing children from families in deep poverty from going to school.

"People say that school is free. But there are always things you have to pay for, either the cafeteria, the Parent-Teacher Association, or others; these contributions are obstacles for parents with very low resources."

8. Making sure teachers are trained to incorporate a better awareness and comprehension of social exclusion, and to develop friendship and cooperation among students, encouraging children's efforts, and reinforcing those made by their parents.

"It was really hard when I was in school. The teacher said once, 'Your mom can't afford to buy you a school bag!' And he made fun of me. Some of the students laughed. As I was only a child, I was ashamed, and I often got angry. That's how violence begins."

"Often we went to school on an empty stomach. (...) I know that our stomachs were filled with our parents' courage; had we not had that, nothing would have been possible."