

Mr Raphaël Ndiaye, National NGO Co-ordinator of Senegal

The NGOs will make their presence felt at the Dakar forum'

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Which of the six regions defined by the secretariat of the Conference has been the most effective in efforts to achieve Education for All over the years ?

R. Nd.: Firstly, we should point out that the six regions are as follows: sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and Arab countries, Asia and the Pacific, North America and Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and finally, the nine most populous countries which are located in Africa, Asia and North America.

In view of this classification, you must agree that it is difficult to answer your question precisely. Simply because, being involved only in the NGO component, I do not have an overview of what is done here and abroad by all the different actors. Close attention to the Dakar Forum, to which everyone is invited, should provide the answer to this question.

As for NGOs, more specifically, it is already certain that in Arab countries, for example, NGOs are less developed than in sub-Saharan African countries. And NGOs are also more developed in Senegal than in other African countries. Finally, there are international NGOs which, though based in Europe, organise many activities in Third World countries.

What exactly do the NGOs want to be included in the new framework of action being finalized in Senegal, so that we can look back on the Dakar Forum as a real success ?

R. Nd.: We call for concerted efforts from all people of good will. This could play a capital role in the achievement of education for all. All efforts need to be capitalized on and harmonized in order to achieve real success in the education sector.

A synthesis of the frameworks for action of all six regions could reveal weaknesses that will be discussed to find urgent solutions.

The draft world framework of action should be enriched, even though progress has been made. The Jomtien framework of action (1990) was well thought out and remains valid. But, it is important to take account of the evolution of the situation, new demands and past errors.

The Jomtien meeting did not include such components as new information technologies and AIDS, which has become a virtual threat to Africa's education system. Therefore, the declaration by sub-Saharan Africa includes the HIV/AIDS pandemic among its priorities.

African NGOs have decided to make an indelible stamp on the Dakar Forum. Why, for instance, have they been so bent on holding a debate on African renaissance during the forum ?

R.ND.: Before, during and after independence, Africans have always manifested a determination to assert their dignity. We Africans are an integral part of humankind and demand to be included in the great decisions that govern the world. But with the loss of ideology this approach has either been forgotten or set aside.

Today, it seems necessary to reassert that Africa, though with only two per cent share of world trade, wants to be an essential part of humanity. South Africans, who had their dignity denied under apartheid, are the standard-bearers of the renaissance concept.

During the forum, we would like to highlight this concept, especially to let our partners know that the time has come to make education universal.

Furthermore, education is the process whereby men can bring their potential to fruition. An African renaissance cannot come about without education.

Concretely speaking, what is the NGOs' approach to African renaissance ?

R.ND.: Our current situation, our problems, our ambitions, and perspectives will be on the menu at a round-table. Given the historical significance of the renaissance, an event has been planned for some time on the Island of Gorée, a symbolic location that was the point of departure for a large portion of the black Diaspora, some 5km off the coast of Dakar.

The second approach will involve the organization of a 'Sound and Light show' in which children play the key role. The theme will be 'A Thousand Arms Stretching out Towards the Future'. It will be played by a thousand children of all social backgrounds in line with the racial and cultural diversity that are among Africa's assets. It is scheduled to take place on the night of 25 April on Soumebedioune Bay. The show is co-organized by ENDA Third-World and the Council of Non-Governmental Organizations.

▲ MORE THAN 300 PARTICIPANTS from some 60 Non-governmental Organisations will on 24 and 25 April in Dakar hold an international consultation ahead of the 26-28 World Education Forum at the Meridien President hotel in the Senegalese capital. The NGOs begin meeting on Monday, 24 April at the African Centre for Higher Management Studies (Cesag) situated in the centre of the city.

▲ TUESDAY APRIL 25: The participants will fine-tune a summary of their deliberations and produce a framework of action to be adopted at the forum and endorsed

Sixty NGOs in attendance

Activities and Attractions

see an outline of the basis of NGO participation. They will then present a draft declaration before the meeting winds up at mid-day.

▲ A 'SOUNDS AND LIGHTS' show will be presented by 4000 children is also planned for Tuesday, 25 April at the Bay of Soumebedioune (on the western shores of Dakar).

Your Host

Official name: Republic of Senegal
 Capital city: Dakar
 Currency: CFA Franc
 1 French Franc = 100 CFA Francs
 1 Euro = 656 CFA Francs
 Official language: French
 Main religion: Islam
 National holiday: April 4th
 Area: 196,722 sq km (76,124 sq. miles)
 Senegal lies between latitude 12.5°-16.5° North and longitude 12°-17° West, on the western fringe of the African continent. The country is bounded on the West by the Atlantic ocean (700 kms of coastline). The countries that share borders with her are from North to South: Mauritania, Mali, Guinea, Guinea Bissau. The river Gambia stretches from the coast toward the interior of the Republic, thus almost separating the Northern part from the South. The country was divided into 10 administrative regions of 30 'departments' (divisions) on March 24, 1984: Dakar, Diourbel, Fatick, Kaolack, Kolda, Louga, Saint-Louis, Tambacounda, Thiès and Ziguinchor.
 Population: Senegal has an estimated 8,786,765 inhabitants (in 1988, 38.6% of the population lived in urban areas, 61.4% in rural areas). The density of the population is 44.6 inhabitants per square km. Rate of the population growth: 2.8 % per year. Life expectancy: 56 years for women, 54 years for men. In 1990, 38.3% of the adult population could read and write.
 Languages other than French: Wolof (spoken by over 80 % of the population), Sérère, Pulaar, Diola, Mandingo and Socé.
 Main Resources: Fisheries, Tourism, Groundnuts and Phosphates.
 Religions: Islam (90%), Christianity (5%), Animism (5%).
 The Republic of Senegal, has a multi-party political system, with a Prime Minister as head of government.
 The new President of the Republic, Mr. Abdoulaye Wade, was elected on 19 March. Wade was born at Kebemer, in the northern part of the country on 29 May 1926. He is married with two children.
 After his elementary and secondary education in Senegal, Wade attended the Universities of Besançon, Dijon and Grenoble in France and graduated with a doctorate degree in law and Economics. Back home, he taught law and economics at the University of Dakar where he rose to become dean of the faculty of law of the University. He later worked as consultant to the OAU and the ADB. He is a member of the International Academy of Comparative Law.
 Mr Wade established the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS) in 1974. He won a seat in the national assembly in 1978. He was re-elected in 1993. He won the presidential election in March securing 58 % of the vote in the run-off against President Abdou Diouf, largely as a result of the massive support he got from the opposition, notably, Moustapha Niassé, the current Prime Minister.

Interview with

Svein Osttveit

Executive Secretary of the World Education Forum

'The governments cannot and should not do it all alone'

Education Forum : How did the idea about a World Education Forum come about and who are the brains behind it ?

Svein Osttveit : The background was that of a very slow progress in providing and expanding basic education through out many regions of the world. It was felt that existing mechanisms for co-operation did not suffice to address this critical situation. There was an urgent need to make a concerted effort, joining all relevant partners. UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank and UNDP (UNFPA joined later) decided, following the Jomtien meeting, to set up the EFA Forum in order to facilitate and accelerate the process through better monitoring, advocacy and co-operation.

Why bring together all actors in education instead of the usual traditional governmental conferences ?

SO : Because of the recognition that governments cannot (and should not) do it all alone. Especially following "the expanded vision" of basic education presented in Jomtien, where education for all comprises much more than formal schooling, it is essential that civil society, media, local communities and others actively take part.

Could you elaborate on the Major trends of EFA since Jomtien ?

SO : The first years witnessed first of all a consolidation of partnership. The five conveners (mentioned above) were gradually joined by more active and comprehensive representation from several other EFA partners, including education specialists from the regions. The last years have witnessed a much more important role played by bilateral donors and NGOs. The EFA 2000 Assessment contributed further to mobilization of partners as well as considerably strengthening the basis for data and information on key education for all indicators as well as increasing capacities at national level in the field of monitoring and policy making.

In your view, what would the situation of global education today without EFA ?

SO : The provision of international support would have been much more fragmented as well as a weaker data base on basic education issues. It is also clear that less co-ordination among key partners and weaker advocacy would have meant even slower expansion of educational opportunities.

What would you consider to be the major obstacles against EFA ?

SO : Poverty, lack of political will, HIV/AIDS, conflict/civil war, population growth.

More in the next edition

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Conference schedule

	MORNING	AFTERNOON
Wednesday 26 avril	Opening ceremony Keynote addresses	Plenary session : «Improving the Quality and Equity of Education for all». Parallel strategy sessions.
Thursday 27 avril	Plenary session : «Making Effective Use of Ressources for Education». Parallel strategy sessions	Plenary session : «Co-operating with Civil Society to Achieve Social Goal through Education». Parallel sessions.
Friday 28 avril	Plenary session : «Promoting Democracy and Citizenship». Plenary session : Fulfilling Our Shared Commitment to Education for all	Plenary session : Taking off in the New Millennium : The New EFA Alliance». Approval of Framework of Action. Closing ceremony