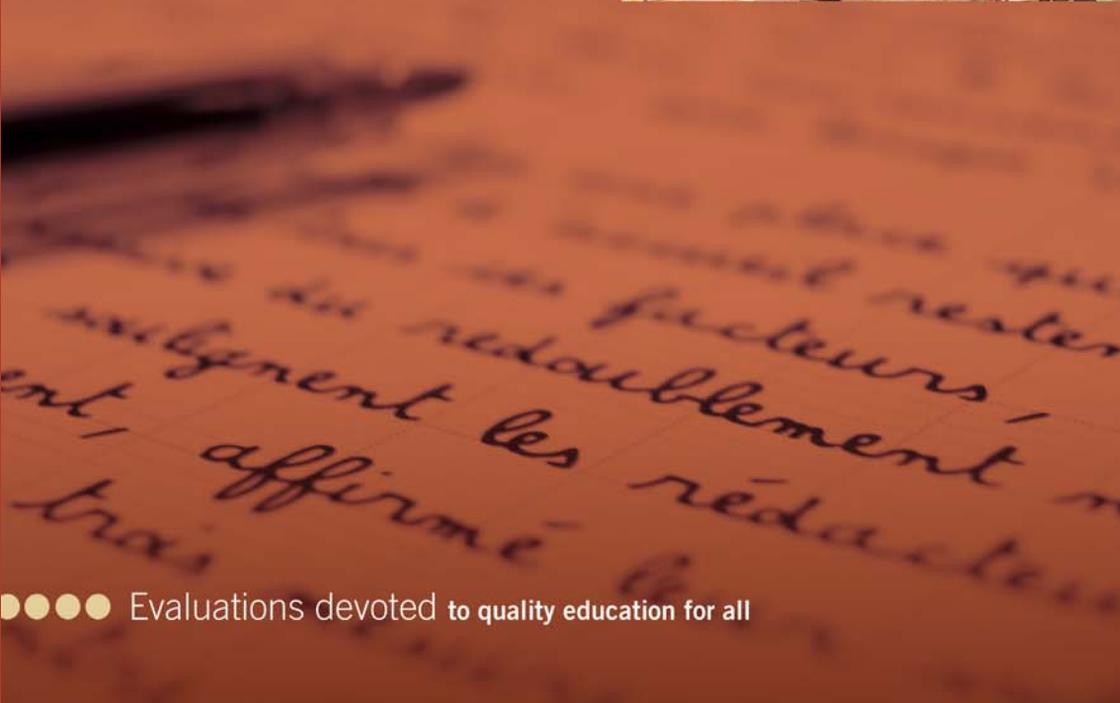




Conference of Ministers of Education
in countries sharing the French language

CONFEMEN Programme for the Analysis of Education Systems (PASEC)



●●●● Evaluations devoted to quality education for all

Quality

Commitment from French-speaking ministers

Deeply concerned by the grim picture of education world wide drawn up at the first World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien 1990), the Ministers of Education of French-speaking States and governments answered the call for mobilization.

The very same year, within the framework of the Conference of Ministers of Education in countries sharing the French language (CONFEMEN), they initiated thinking in order for the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of education to be recognized as inseparable in the efforts made for universal enrolment. Then, the following year, they took the necessary steps for practical action by setting up the **CONFEMEN Programme for the Analysis of Education Systems (PASEC)**.

CONFEMEN set PASEC four goals:

- Identify examples of efficient schools by comparing, on a national and an international scale, pupil performance, teaching methods and means implemented.
- Develop, in each participating State, an internal, permanent capacity for evaluation of the education system.
- Freely disseminate results, as well as evaluation tools and methods.
- Reinforce CONFEMEN's Permanent Technical Secretariat's role as permanent observatory of the education systems.

education—for all

A tool to assist decision-making

Regarding educational policies, ministers of Education are faced with at least two major challenges: make sound choices which will enable everyone receive quality education and ensure that choices made are workable taking into account the limited resources.

By conducting national evaluations on the quality of primary education, PASEC's role is to guide these choices. Based on precise quantifiable criteria, PASEC studies provide CONFEMEN member State decision-makers with objective information on the strengths and weaknesses of their education systems.

There are three kinds of evaluations:

- **Diagnostic evaluation** is used to measure pupil achievements over a school year, and to identify factors which have a positive or negative influence on learning. In this way it is possible to make a diagnostic assessment of the quality of primary education.
- **Cohort monitoring** consists in monitoring the progress of a single group of pupils for five consecutive years, measuring their school achievements each year. This type of evaluation is useful particularly in analysing the effects of repeating.
- **Thematic evaluation** is based on the principles of diagnostic evaluation, with one difference in that it is concerned with a precise topic of educational policy, such as the impact of double shift or that of the recruitment of contract teaching staff.

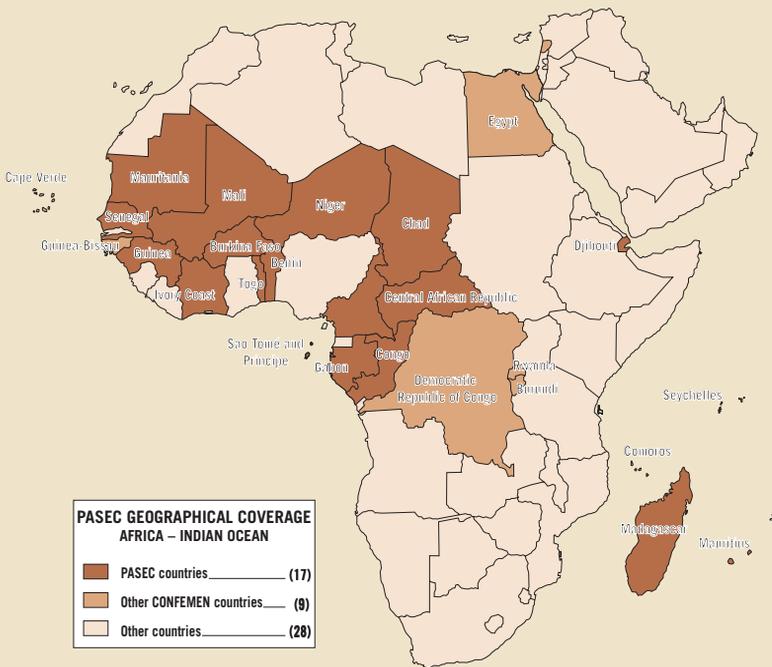
Meticulous methodology

The methodological principle behind PASEC studies is simple and invariable: it is based on comparison. No education system is strictly homogenous and this diversity is the source of information to be used in order to identify the most successful schooling patterns. With this in mind, PASEC makes the connection between the school progress of pupils and the material and organizational conditions of their schooling. Thanks to consistent procedures and survey tools, PASEC evaluations make it possible to establish comparisons between different countries. This results in highly reliable conclusions.

PASEC evaluations

Countries involved

To date, 17 countries in Africa and the Indian Ocean have benefited from a PASEC evaluation.



Stakeholders

The **ministers** in charge of Education in the CONFEMEN member States and governments decide upon PASEC's activities at each ministerial conference. They initiate evaluations to be conducted in their country by submitting an application to CONFEMEN which is then examined by PASEC's scientific committee. Once the study has been carried out, they are also responsible for organizing a national seminar for the presentation of results.

The **technical advisers** have their home base with the CONFEMEN Permanent Technical Secretariat (PTS) in Dakar. They are in charge of running the PASEC evaluations: arranging for the necessary conditions to carry out the studies, supervising the sequence of operations in the field, taking on responsibility for the analysis of results and the drawing up of reports, and carrying out wide-scale dissemination of results.

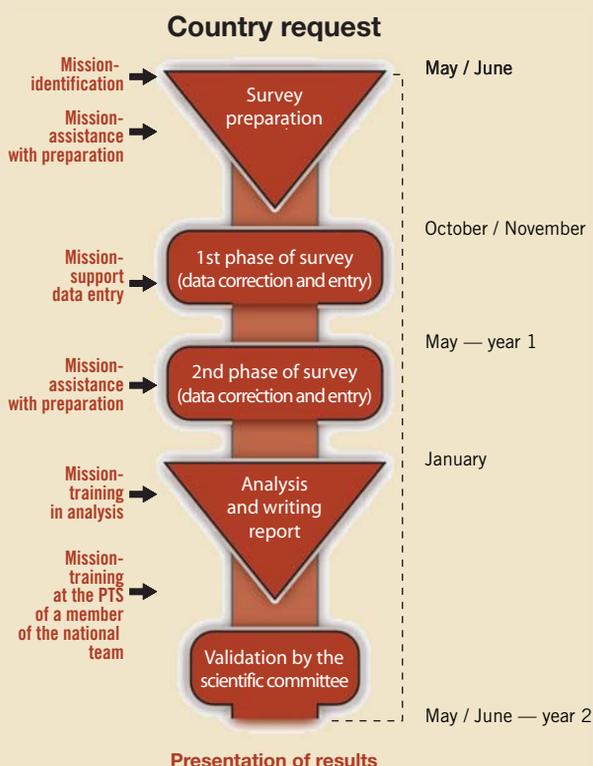
from A to Z

Survey procedure

PASEC evaluations take the form of sample surveys. A typical survey includes:

1 - monitoring over a school year of a sample of second year and fifth year primary school **pupils**, selected from some 140 schools representing national diversity. These pupils are tested twice in French and mathematics, at the start and at the end of the year, in order to measure their progress;

2 - a contextual survey aimed at characterizing the social and material environment as well as learning conditions in the school, using a questionnaire for pupils, teachers and headmasters.



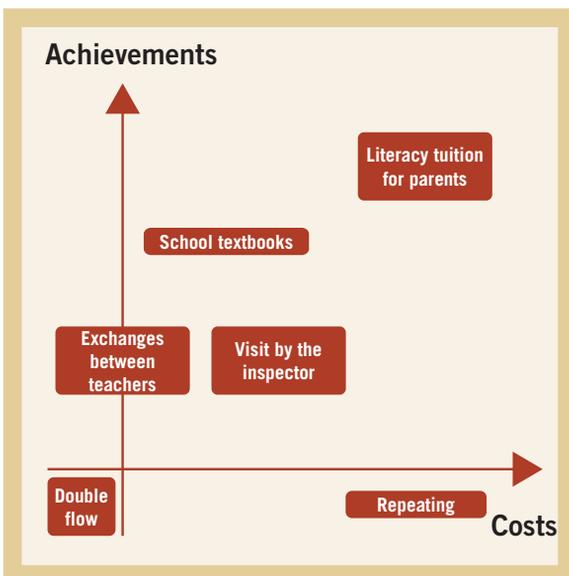
In each country, **national teams** are made up of ministry of Education executives. During the evaluations, these teams take care of operational logistics and participate in the analysis and drawing up of the final report.

The **scientific committee**, which represents a guarantee for the PASEC methodology, is responsible for validating the studies in scientific terms and following the progress of research activities. The committee meets at least once a year, establishes PASEC's activities and conditions which are then submitted to the ministers, and presides over the study of the applications submitted by the different countries.

Some results

PASEC evaluations offer a significant advantage: they not only measure the effect of some factors on school achievements but they can also establish a relationship between the effects and the costs. At the outcome of 17 studies, some constants can be observed. The following graph, which illustrates approximatively the cost-efficiency relationship of some key factors, thus provides a synthesis of the results obtained by PASEC.

This graph highlights the fact that **it is possible, thanks to certain educational policy choices, to improve the quality of education without involving excessive cost**. Indeed, some factors, like having and using school textbooks, have a very beneficial influence on pupils' school achievements, for a relatively low cost. Whereas, other factors requiring substantial financial resources have very little effect on learning. In this respect, repeating is at the top of the list.



PASEC is

Capacity building activities

PASEC has organized an **international training workshop** every year since 1996 bringing together national team members. Since 2003, these workshops have gained new importance thanks to the active participation of the Intergovernmental Agency of la Francophonie (AIF). Covering precise topics related to evaluation and centered on the acquisition of concrete working methods, these meetings are intended to be a place for training as much as for exchanging experience between participants.

Over the years, the workshops have contributed to setting up a **network of PASEC experts**. Indeed, the expertise of certain members of the network is increasingly called upon to support the national teams in carrying out their evaluations, thus enabling a true South-South partnership. In addition, long-term capacity building possibilities have been provided to some technical managers of national teams, who are currently members of the PASEC team at the PTS.

also involved in...

Projects conducted in partnership

CONFEMEN collaborates with several other **international institutions**, and this benefits PASEC in different ways. A continuous partnership with the AIF enables PASEC to increase its research activities and enhance its work, with the production of reference books for example. To that can be added a cooperation agreement with the Regional Office for Education in Africa (UNESCO-BREDA), concerning joint missions to support the various countries in developing EFA national action plans, as well as cofinancing arrangements with the World Bank for carrying out studies.

PASEC also has contacts with several **research teams** in the education sector, in particular the Institute of Research in Education (IREDU, France). It has also provided support to Cornell University (USA) and to the Laboratory of applied economy of the National Institute of Agronomic Research (INRA, France) in carrying out a complementary survey following the PASEC cohort monitoring conducted in Senegal. **Research networks** such as the Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa (ROCARE) and the Francophone Association for Comparative Education (AFEC), also figure amongst PASEC's partners.

Publications (in French only)

Seventeen national reports on the determining factors of success at school: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Djibouti, Guinea, Ivory Coast (2), Madagascar, Mali (2), Mauritania, Niger, Senegal (2) and Togo

Seven brochures summarizing and simplifying the results of the PASEC studies: Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo and teaching issue (9 countries)

Repeating:
an African school mirage ?

Teacher profiles and quality of primary education in French-speaking sub-Saharan Africa:
Results and perspectives of ten years of PASEC research

The factors of efficiency in primary education: Results of the PASEC programme on nine countries in Africa and the Indian Ocean

Guide for the evaluation of factors of performance in primary school:
Practical evaluation manual

Methodological notes:
bias in selections, hierarchical models, sampling techniques

Collection of CONFEMEN tests for primary education: French and mathematics

PASEC CD-ROM: The factors of efficiency in primary education: data and results of the PASEC evaluations in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar and Senegal (instruments, reports and data)

The 41 CONFEMEN member States and governments



Since 1960, CONFEMEN has been working for the promotion of education in the French-speaking world. Membership is open to any French-speaking State or government.

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Congo
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Djibouti
Egypt
France
French community of Belgium

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Guinea
Guinea-Bissau
Haïti
Ivory Coast
Laos
Lebanon
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Togo
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