

A 14 year old girl, who is in the second class of high school (5ème) in a city in the Centre-South of CAR, shows her writing ability (name has been changed).

THE CHILD'S RIGHT TO EDUCATION IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

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Dedication

*To the children of the Central African Republic,
who are the hope and the great potential of this country.
May your voices be heard,
your strength, resilience and ambition witnessed.
May the adults of this world finally stand up and tell you:
you are not alone.*

“Taking a new look at the challenges of the C.A.R. educational system, most importantly insofar as it concerns the teaching of the “smallest ones” after the periods of crisis and tensions in all orders, has constituted the principal preoccupation of the authors of this document. In this respect, the work gives us an overview of the difficulties; constraints as well as challenges that we face in raising the education system as a whole.

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The Minister of primary education, secondary education, technical education and alphabetization.

BANGUI, 12 October 2017

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1. Introduction

“In the Central African Republic (CAR), the right to education does not exist.” This is a remark often made by people in the CAR. What does it mean? According to international and national laws, signed by different CAR governments, CAR children have several rights, including the right to education. By signing these documents, the CAR government has promised to:

- Grant every CAR child the right to education,¹ including internally displaced children on sites (IDP sites);²
- Provide access to education for all children until the age of 16;³
- Make all public education free of charge;⁴
- Make school education obligatory for children from age 6 to age 15;⁵
- Make sure that no one shall be treated cruelly or in a degrading manner (including punishment), in particular children under the age of 15;
- Sentence to prison any teacher who has sex with a student who is under age 18;
- Actively prevent corruption;⁹
- Develop non-formal education for children who have been out of school for a long time;¹⁰
- Use both Sango and French as languages of school education.¹¹

In return, children from age 6 to 15 are obliged to attend school,¹² to perform the tasks given to them as part of their education and to respect the rules of the school.¹³

These laws should, technically speaking, protect the child’s right to education. However, many *Centrafricains* are worried that their children are not receiving proper education. We often hear people complaining about the degrading level of education in the public schools, the absence of teachers and the shortage of materials. Not to mention the corruption and violence sometimes found in CAR schools. In spite of some hard working teachers and efforts made by NGOs and the Ministry of Education, research consistently shows that the level of education in the CAR is amongst the lowest in the whole world.¹⁴ In present-day CAR, it is not uncommon to find children in class CM2¹⁵ who cannot even write their own name.

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- 1 Constitution de la République Centrafricaine (2015), art. 7; Loi no. 97.014 (1997), art. 50; African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (Banjul Charter) (1981), art. 17; International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1966), art. 13; Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (1989), art. 28-29.
 - 2 2009 African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention), art. 9.2(b);
 - 3 Constitution (2015), art. 6 and 7; Loi no. 97.014 (1997), art. 1 ; CRC (1989), art. 28.1(a).
 - 4 Constitution (2015), art. 7; ICESCR (1966), art. 13.1.
 - 5 Loi no. 97.014 (1997), art. 6 ; CRC (1989), art. 28.1(a).
 - 6 Constitution (2015), art. 3; Loi no. 10.001 Portant Code Penal Centrafricain (2010), art. 118-120; Banjul Charter (1981), art. 5; Convention against Torture and Other Cruel , Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Convention against Torture) (1984), art. 1 and 2; CRC (1989), art. 19.1, 28.2.
 - 7 Code Penal (2010), art. 74 : « Quiconque aura volontairement fait des blessures ou porté des coups à un enfant au dessous de l’âge de 15 ans accomplis ou qui l’aura volontairement privé d’aliments ou de soins au point de compromettre sa santé, sera puni d’emprisonnement d’un à cinq ans et d’une amende de 100.002 à 600.000 francs ».
 - 8 Code Penal (2010), art. 86, 87, 110.
 - 9 United Nation Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) (2005), art. 5.
 - 10 Loi no. 97.014 (1997), art. 5.
 - 11 Loi no. 97.014 (1997), art. 42: “Sango and French are the two languages of teaching. The teaching of, and in, Sango is introduced into the curriculum of primary school in the year 2000”; CRC (1989), art. 29(c).
 - 12 Loi no. 97.014 (1997), art. 6.
 - 13 Loi no. 97.014 (1997), art. 50.
 - 14 See, amongst others : UNESCO (2012).
 - 15 This is the last year (6) of primary school.

1.1 The research

we have studied the child’s right to education in the Central African Republic. To do so, we have spoken to 137 people (of which 44 children), in addition to reading research documents, to find an answer to our main question: “what is the meaning of the child’s right to education in the Central African Republic?”.

To answer this question, we have divided the results into several sub-questions:

- 1 What is the meaning of “education” in the CAR?
- 2 Who decides over education in the CAR?
- 3 What influences children’s access to education?
- 4 What is the quality of education in CAR classrooms, and why does it have (or lack) a certain quality?
- 5 How does the concrete situation in the town or village where the CAR child grows up, influence its right to education?
- 6 What are possible solutions?

In short, we want to know why CAR children do not have a right to education, or at least, not really. Who is responsible, and what can be done to change it? These are the questions that we will be answering in this report.

To find an answer to this question, we did five things:

Formal interviews¹⁶

We interviewed 87 people, asking them what they thought was the meaning of the child’s right to education in the Central African Republic. Interviews usually took around 45 minutes, with some exceptions of longer conversations that lasted over 2 hours. People were interviewed in 10 different places in CAR, spread out over the country, including villages, towns and bigger cities.¹⁷ They include both people living in their own house and people living on IDP sites, people living in conflict zones as well as people living in relatively safe areas. This is an overview of the people we talked to:

Primary workplace / role	Child	Parent / tuteur	Teacher / school director	APE	NGO / UN employee	Education inspection	Politician	Religious leader ¹⁹	TOTAL
TOTAL	31	23	11	2	10	5	6	5	92 ²⁰

16 Formal and informal interviews took place between August – December 2016.

17 To distinguish, the following count has been maintained: village = < 1000 inhabitants; town = 1000 – 20.000 inhabitants; large town = 20.000 – 100.000 inhabitants; city = >100.000 inhabitants.

18 A wooden stick with rubber bands attached, used for corporal punishment. See § 5.5.1.

19 Other than helping me by sending out the questions per text message, UNICEF CAR has not been involved in the research in any way and can therefore not be held accountable for any of its outcomes.

20 Unfortunately the Ureport does not provide completely clear data on the respondents. So what we can say that of all Ureporters (23.462) 1% is of age 0-14, 27% of age 15-19, 41% of age 20-24, 19% of age 25-30, 5% of age 31-34 and 7% is 35+. 66% is male, 34% is female (see <https://centrafrique.ureport.in/ureporters/>, accessed 12 April 2017).

Informal, recorded discussions

We also engaged in 50 informal discussions about the child's right to education in CAR, discussions that were recorded. These conversations were more spontaneous discussions about the subject of the research, where the researcher for example tested certain theories or discussed specific subjects (such as the use of the *chicotte*²¹ or the role of corruption). These discussions were held with the following people:

Primary workplace / role	Child / tuteur	Parent / school director	Teacher / school director	APE	NGO / UN employee	Education inspection	Politician	Religious leader	lawyer	(non-political) Employee min edu / affaires sociales	Researchers	Student	TOTAL
TOTAL	14	4	9	1	7	1	3	8	1	3	4	2	57 ²²

Observations in schools

We sat in 10 classrooms and 1 director's office to observe, in 6 different schools (2 private, 4 public) in 5 different places in the CAR.

Questionnaire

In cooperation with UNICEF, we sent out a questionnaire through the "Ureport" system.¹⁹ Through text messaging, 5 questions about personal experience with primary education in the CAR were answered by 2.984 young people, generally of age 12-35.²⁴ Results of this questionnaire will be presented in §5.3.1 and §5.4. The questions posed for the questionnaire can be found in attachment 2.

Other

- We visited 7 different IDP sites in 4 different places;
- We observed/participated in a two-day mission of an NGO distributing books over village schools in a mining area;
- We observed a meeting of the national education cluster in Bangui.

21 A wooden stick with rubber bands attached, used for corporal punishment. See § 5.5.1.

22 Again amongst these people are people who fulfill double roles, when both these roles were of importance to the discussion; for example, three religious leaders were also teachers. The total amount of informal, recorded discussions is 50.

23 Other than helping me by sending out the questions per text message, UNICEF CAR has not been involved in the research in any way and can therefore not be held accountable for any of its outcomes.

24 Unfortunately the Ureport does not provide completely clear data on the respondents. So what we can say that of all Ureporters (23.462) 1% is of age 0-14, 27% of age 15-19, 41% of age 20-24, 19% of age 25-30, 5% of age 31-34 and 7% is 35+. 66% is male, 34% is female (see <https://centrafrique.ureport.in/ureporters/>, accessed 12 April 2017).

1.2 This report

This report is written, in the first place, for the people of the Central African Republic, in particular its teachers. You are the first people that have the possibility to make a change in CAR children's lives, because you see them and work with them every day. We recognize that your working conditions are amongst the hardest of teachers in the whole world and we are hoping to be able to give you some guidance in how to fulfil the hard, yet immensely important, task that rests on your shoulders.

Secondly, the report is written for the authorities ruling over education in the CAR (national and international politicians, NGOs). For them, the report will show the daily reality of education in the CAR and recommend actions to be taken to realize the CAR child's right to education, beginning with supporting the teachers and children themselves.

The aim of the report is not to provide the "correct answers" to the problems encountered with education in the CAR, but rather, to voice different views and to provide input for discussion. It is our hope that you, the people who work on education in the CAR, will use this report as the starting point for discussions about education. We can talk about education together, in the streets, in the classrooms, in the parliament. We can discuss and learn from each other and try to improve our society. We cannot do it alone. Together, with an attitude of openness, curiosity and respect, we can change education in the Central African Republic. Let this research report be a starting point for that conversation.

Interview nr. 62. An employee of the Ministry of Education.

The first question is, do children have rights? In the context of the CAR, I personally think that we have to relativize that concept, compared to the Western world. Traditionally, in the CAR context, we think that the child does not have rights, only duties. He²⁵ has to go to the field, to fish, to help the adults with the work. When he will attain a certain age, he will have rights. Today, there are changes. The youth asks for their rights. They are influenced by European ideas, human rights et cetera. Whether that is an advantage or an inconvenience, we still have to analyse.

25 For purposes of readability, the pronoun "he" will be used throughout the report. Please note that in these instances, "she" and "her" can be read instead.

2. Education and the CAR social order

To coherently analyse the situation regarding the child's right to education in the CAR, we will first present an analysis of the social order of the CAR; the landscape in which the discussion takes place.

In the CAR, after about 25 years of civil war, people are sick and tired of the constant insecurity. They are tired of never knowing when someone is going to point a gun at them and force them to do something that they don't want to do. They are tired of being subjected to violence and extortion by people who are physically stronger – be it an older brother, a police officer or the member of an armed group.²⁶ On a more personal level, many feel ashamed because of their low level of education and their failure “to become someone”.²⁷

However, when it comes to CAR children, they are largely being educated them in the same manner. CAR parents and teachers are constantly forcing the child to do what the adult wants, through violence.²⁸ Many parents abandon their children, and teachers abandon their students.²⁹ The quality of education received by most children – if they get any education at all – is often so poor that it does not give them the tools they need “to become someone” in life.³⁰

2.1 Education in the CAR

In the CAR, there are two places where the child can receive education: at home and in school (or, as the locals call it: “éducation familiale [family education]” and “éducation moderne [modern education]”). At home, children learn from their family members many practical things such as how to take care of the household, how to cook, how to wash clothes, how to make *manioc*, how to hunt. In addition, they learn many things about social norms and customs, such as how to respect your parents, how to wash your hands, how to handle money, etc.³¹ For some children this is the only form of education that they will receive in their life, as some CAR children will never go to school.

Interview 12. A 12 year old boy, who is not in school. He lives in a village in Southern CAR.

“Education for me is the fact to pay service to my family; to go and draw water, to prepare something to eat for my parents, and to not go out walking a lot. My mother has taught me how to work the land, not to steal, not to hurt friends, and when you find something to eat, you have to share it with your friends. And together, when it is late, we return to the house. [...] My aunt has said that if they don't enrol me in school, I will not know how to write my own name. [...] I wish to go to school, to learn, to prepare my future.”

Unfortunately, even this form of education is not received by all CAR children. Children might live with family members that don't take care of them, or they might live on the street without a family at all (the so-called *enfants abandonnés* (“abandoned children”)). In CAR there are children that lack this form of education, and one could say that the right to education of these children is being violated.

26 Interviews 5, 6, 7, 8, 31, 52, 55, 61, 93.

27 Interviews 3, 14, 15, 40, 45, 48, 50, 57, 68, 71, 72, 82.

28 Interviews 1, 9, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 39, 40, 41, 43, 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 53, 54, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 75, 78, 80, 81, 82; observations 1, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 22. See also Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (2016).

29 Interviews 1, 2, 7, 14, 21, 24, 36, 38, 43, 44, 45, 50, 51, 59, 60, 61, 75, 89. See also UN Doc CRC/C/CAF/2: pp. 117-119.

30 See section 5.

31 Interviews 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, 22, 23, 28, 35, 36, 39, 56, 57, 60, 61, 64, 65, 83. See also Bah-Gayn de Gaulle (1984), who defines education (which he is researching in a CAR context) as “the means to transfer [the cultural univers of haibts, religious customs and morals that form the distinct feature of society] from one generation to the next (p. 1 of chapter 1).

Interview 65. A religious leader, in a city in the Centre-South of CAR.

“One Saturday I saw little children of 3, 4 years old, who were carrying a small plate with vegetables, and who were following their older sister and their mother. They were going to the market to sell. I said to myself, the child’s right is not respected because he has to carry something that is not in accord with his age. That child needs to go to school. But then I thought, maybe the parents of that child do not have the means to pay for school fees. To not leave him in the grass, they teach him how to take care of himself. By taking him to the field, and letting him take things to sell, and say: see, you don’t have any shoes, if you sell something, we can buy you shoes. It is a way to teach him how to take care of himself.”

Nevertheless, for this report we have chosen to focus on the child’s right to school education, because this was the form of education that seemed to cause the most worrying amongst both children and adults in the CAR.

2.2 General perception of school education

School education, in general, is seen by most *Centrafricains* (children and adults) as something very important. There are several reasons why:³²

- learning enables you to build a future
- through education you can become a “*grand person*” (a person of importance)
- someone who knows how to read and write has a higher social status in the community than someone who does not
- through education you will be able to find a job and earn money, money which you can use to financially support your family

Children in CAR are generally very positive about school. They like learning and are very eager to develop themselves, to “become someone”. They see their teachers as the person who mostly helps them in reaching that goal.³³ Those who are not able to go to school, or who perform badly, feel bad and stupid compared to their friends who do thrive in school.³⁴

Interview 41. An 8 year old girl in a private school, in a city in the Center-South. “It is good here [at school]. They teach the children well. If there is something that you don’t know, they show it to you.”

Children who have been to school generally speak respectfully about their teachers, being happy about their teachers explaining them things they want to understand.³⁵

However, many *Centrafricains* are quite negative when discussing present-day schools in CAR. As much as they agree that children need education, they highly doubt whether this much needed education can be found in CAR public schools. Adults argue that the quality of public school education has significantly decreased over the last 15 to 20 years. Although private school education is argued to be of much better quality, many families are not able to pay the higher school fees for private schools so it does not serve them much purpose.³⁶

32 Interviews 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 30, 32, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 46, 47, 49, 50, 54, 56, 57, 58, 61, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 72, 73, 82, 83.

33 Interviews 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 18, 30, 31, 33, 40, 41, 45, 54.

34 Interviews 3, 12, 40, 45.

35 See footnote 33.

36 Interviews 1, 4, 5, 10, 11, 14, 16, 26, 36, 37, 49, 57, 60, 61, 64, 65, 73, 74, 76, 82, 83, 85, 86, 97. This accords with observations 6, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20 and 22.

2.3 Education for peace?

The UNICEF slogan for the return to school in 2015-2016 was: “*retour à l’école = retour à la paix*” (“return to school = return to peace”). It is widely recognized that education can be an instrument for creating peace, but it can also be used to create war. It was Nelson Mandela, the political activist who freed South Africa from the racist policy of apartheid and became its first black president, who said: “education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” With this in mind, we have to ask a difficult question: **is the education that most children receive in CAR schools an education that will lead to peace?**

Interview 61. A religious leader and director of an NGO field office, in Western CAR.

“Since about twenty years, the mentality of people in the CAR has changed. Traditional values, such as solidarity within the family and patriotism, have largely disappeared. What used to be traditional authority does not weigh much nowadays. What remains, is an authority that imposes itself on different levels, through violence. This form of authority is badly accepted by the new generations. This is the difficulty that we see: the new generations do not listen, and adults try to impose authority with violence. It is the only way they have of trying to make the youth listen. In this way, young people internalize violence, they grow up with this model. In CAR society it is everyone to themselves; either you impose your will on someone else, and when you cannot, you suffer to their dominance (‘on s’impose où on peut et on subit où on ne peut pas s’imposer’).”



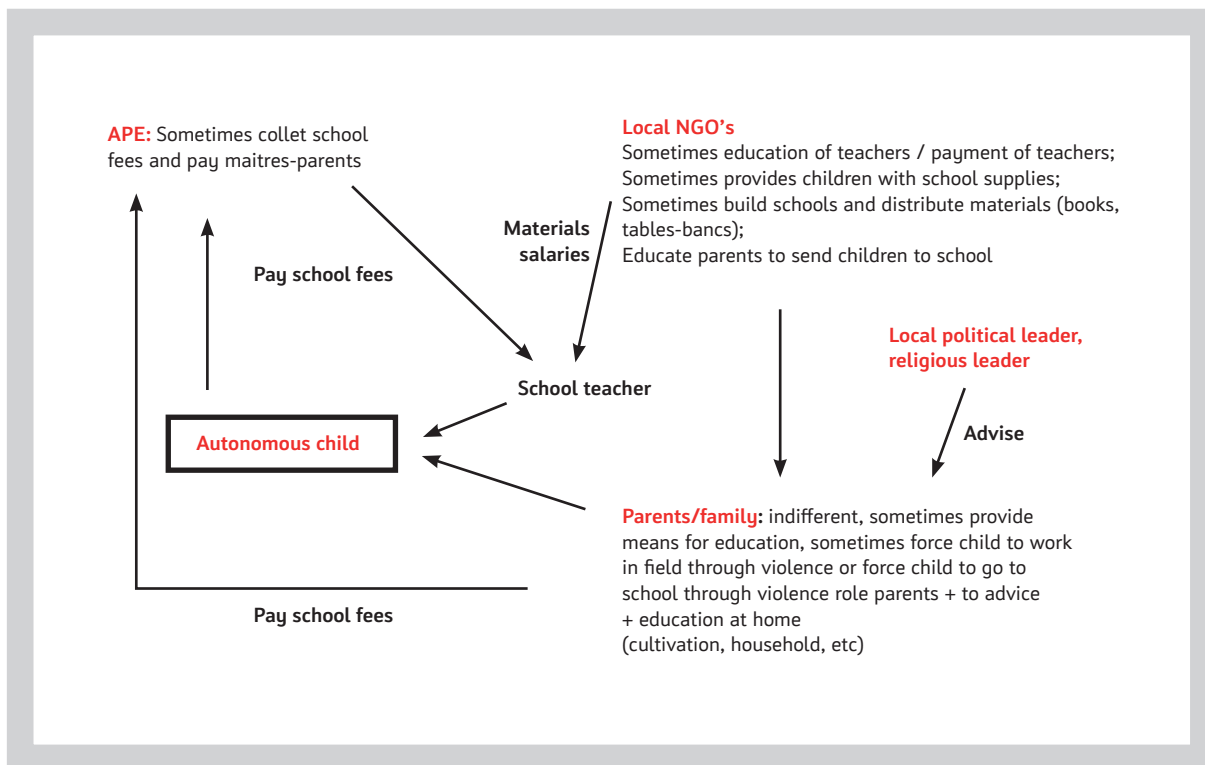
2 UNICEF (2015a) 18sept 2015: the “Back to School” press conference, with Minister of Education Eloi ANGUIMATE and UNICEF CAR representative Mohamed MALICK FALL.

3. Who decides over education in the CAR?

In the CAR there seem to be two different levels on which decisions on the child’s right to education are made. The one level is the local level, where school directors, APE,³⁷ teachers, parents and children decide over the daily education of children. The second level is the national level, where CAR government and the NGOs decide on what happens in the CAR educational field. The two different levels will be explained below.

3.1 The local level

When studying the way the decision about whether to go to school is made on the local level, the following picture emerges:



3.1.1 The autonomous child

At the local level, the CAR child seems relatively autonomous when it comes to education. Although some children say that it is their parents’ choice whether they go to school or not (29%), most children argue that they themselves decide whether they go to school (71%). This is confirmed by teachers and education inspectors who observe that children are often left to themselves, especially when the family cannot afford school fees.³⁸ These children have to go around searching money for school fees, asking all adults they know for money, working for money or, in the case of girls, finding a boyfriend who will pay for them.³⁹ Although some children are heavily influenced by their families in taking this decision, they still argue it is them who decide, and they do indeed sometimes act against the wishes of their family.

37 See footnote 18.

38 Interviews 4, 7, 42, 43, 47, 48, 49, 53, 54, 57, 81; observation 12.

39 Pregnancies are also a reason for girls to drop out of school. According to WHO data, 23% of CAR women between age 15-19 has given birth (World Health Organization (2016): p. 105).



3. Children in a village in western CAR follow the class through the window.

Interview 24. A 13 year old girl, who has been out of school since age 11. She lives in a town in the South-East.

MH: Why did you stop school?

Ata: it was a problem of [financial] means.

MH: What was the problem?

Ata: My parents did not want to support me and me myself I did not have the possibility to earn money to buy school supplies.

MH: Why do you think your parents do not want to support you?

Ata: I will try my best to get back into school this year.

MH: How?

Ata: I pray to God and maybe He can help me and give me some money, which could help me to buy notebooks and pens, to go to school.

Case: a private school in a middle-large city in the east, class CE2. There are 117 students in the classroom (most are around 8-10 years old). During a writing exercise, the teacher notices that one boy is not writing. He asks why. The boy says he cannot write because he does not have a chalk. The teacher replies: "What do you mean, you don't have a chalk? We often tell you, if you don't have chinks, then you go and search for wood, you sell it and then you have 50 CFA.⁴⁰ Or you work in the field. You are big enough, take your responsibility to get your chinks!" When no one is looking, the boy takes a chalk out of the backpack of his classmate.

3.1.2 The role of the family

Interestingly, most parents/tuteurs who are in charge of children (71%) argue that they are the ones who decide whether the child goes to school or not. They do this either through violence ("if my child does not listen, I use the *chicotte*"), or through advising the child (*conseil*).⁴¹

There seem to be four different types of relations CAR children have with their family;

- 1 Children live without family, either because they have been abandoned by their family or because they are orphans and there is no family around;
- 2 Children live with a family that is indifferent to them; they are allowed to live in the same house as long as they don't bother anyone. They receive little care and have to find their own food;
- 3 Children are perceived as part of the family's workforce; they work together with their caretakers, for example on the field or in the mines. Any money they make, they hand over to their caretakers;
- 4 Children are cared for by the family, without having to give anything in return. Caretakers feel that "if you have put a child on Earth, you have to take care of it". Therefore they try to do what they can to educate, feed and support the children.

Interview 50. A mother of 6 children, in a city in the centre-South of the CAR:

"After my father died, my mother abandoned me. She left me with my aunt and went away. I think it was a bad thing that she left me, it is not at all normal. She left with a new husband to have new children with him [...] I had to go to school without having breakfast, and when I would come back there would be nothing to eat, there was no help, so I decided to quit school. I stopped at age 12 [...] my former classmates whom continued to go to school, now are respectable people and when I see that, it doesn't do me good."

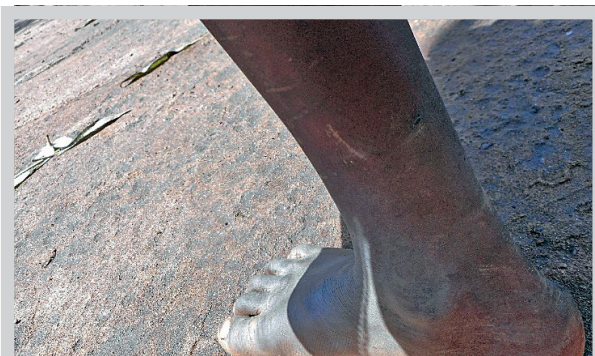
Of these four types of child-family relations, only families of the third and the fourth type are involved in the decision whether children go to school.

40 About \$ 0,08.

41 Interviews 4, 15, 23, 25, 34, 46, 47, 49, 50, 54, 55, 66, 69, 72, 82; observation 17.

Families of the third type, who perceive children as part of the family's workforce, don't want the child to go to school for one, or a combination, of the following reasons:

- The family does not see the use of school education; they argue that the quality of public education is so poor that after six years in school children still don't speak French. Besides, what is the use of speaking French when you will spend your life working in the field or on the local market?
- The family feels that they did not choose to have these children; this occurs for example in some instances when caretakers are raising a child that has been abandoned by its (biological) parents. The child is perceived as having to earn the right to be part of the family, to share the house and the food, through work.
- The family feels that the proper place of the child is to help the family through earning an income and/or doing household chores.



4. Max montrant les cicatrices de ses jambes

Interview 18. An 8 year old boy in a town in the South-East.

"It is important to study. Sometimes in the morning, my grandmother tells me I have to work in the field. When I tell her I want to go to school, she hits me with a "chicotte". Of the scars on my legs, some are from the chicotte, some are from when I play and I fall. Often I get up early when it is still dark, before everyone else wakes up. I brush my teeth and go to school."

Families of the fourth type, who care for the child without expecting anything in return, do what they can to provide the child with the best education.

This can be either school education or home education, or both – depending on what the family finds most useful for the child. In relation to school education, considerations involved are:

- The family thinks that children should go to school
- The family thinks that (at least) some of the children in the family should go to school
- The family thinks that only boys should go to school; girls have to be educated in running the household and taking care of children (by taking care of younger brothers and sisters)⁴²
- The family thinks that school education in CAR is unapt for CAR reality, and so they prefer to educate the child at home, teaching them a profession (e.g. cultivating, hunting, fishing)
- The family cannot afford to send children to school

Children who live in these kinds of families often feel very supported. Ideally, they are supported in going to school and even helped with their homework. The latter is not always possible because many caretakers themselves have never been to school. In that case, however, the fact that parents show an interest in what the child has learned at school, still is a powerful source of support⁴³

Interview 20. A girl of 13 years old, who is in class CM1 of a private school, in a town in Eastern CAR:

"Sometimes my mother tells me to take my notebook and to revise the lesson that we have learned at school. And me, myself, it happens that I too take the notebook and read. So, it comes from two sides. If my mother sees that I don't feel like doing homework, she tells me to do it [...] she has that right because it is my mother and she suffers with me. She thinks that in the future I will be able to help her if I find a job".

Interview 36. A 20 year old girl who recently got her high school diploma (BAC) at a public school, in a city in the Centre-South of the CAR: *"In our family, everyone encourages the child to go to school. In our family, if you don't learn, if you abandon your studies, you will be detested by everyone. [...] The aunts, the uncles, they give us advice. Finally, I take the decision, but I am encouraged by the advice of the family."*

42 Interviews 4, 10, 11, 14, 16

43 Interviews 1, 2, 9, 19, 20, 36, 37, 39, 41.

During childhood, CAR children often move through different family situations. For example, a child might be cared for as a baby, and then start contributing to the family income by working in the mines for a few years, then live on the street for a while, before they move to the household of different family members.⁴⁴ This process of moving around different family situations is greatly influenced by poverty, armed conflict and disease.

The child's right to education is greatly influenced by the different type of family situations children find themselves in. Most likely, the instability of family situations for children makes them more autonomous; knowing that you often cannot count on your family to help you, makes that you have to take care of yourself.

3.1.3 The role of the school and the teachers

Although the school and its teachers don't directly decide whether children go to school, some of their actions do, sometimes greatly, influence this decision.

First of all: without teachers, there is no school education. This is first and foremost how teachers influence the child's possibility to follow school education – by being present in the classrooms. This might seem obvious but is in fact a great challenge for CAR education, because:⁴⁵

- Quite a few teachers who have gone through the teacher-education program and are now qualified to teach, prefer to find an employment elsewhere, because the salary of teachers is often quite low and teachers are little respected in general
- CAR teachers are often unwilling to go to the countryside, mostly because the chances of getting paid outside of the few cities that have (financial) banks are little.⁴⁶ Another factor is that teachers are unwilling to work in areas that are insecure, because of ongoing armed fighting
- Teachers who are employed in a school often don't show up in the morning, they go on a strike, simply take time off or engage in different work (mostly because of their very low and irregular payments)

*Maitres-parents*⁴⁷ are usually appointed to replace qualified teachers (*“enseignants titulaires”*).

On the other hand, we find teachers (*including maitres-parents*)⁴⁸ throughout the country, who are very motivated. They engage in building schools, building school banks, visiting families to see if the children can come to school. They prepare their classes and come to teach, often for little or no payment.⁴⁹

44 Interviews 1, 6, 14, 33, 36, 37, 38, 41, 44, 50, 55, 75, 76, 77, 78.

45 Interviews 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 16, 18, 22, 35, 37, 46, 49, 50, 53, 60, 65, 69, 72, 79, 80, 84, 87; observation 22.

46 According to a survey in 2016, only 1 out of every 10 commune capitals has 'some form of banking system, which is either a bank agency or a local credit mutual' (out of a total of 179 communes). See: Central African Republic (2017): p. 13, Showing that of the 7 regions in CAR, in 4 regions 0% of the principal towns have electricity available.

47 These are adults who are selected within the local community for having a relatively high level of education (for example, they have followed education until the 3rd grade of high school). They are appointed as teachers and paid by the students and/or their caretakers.

48 Henceforth, throughout this report, “teachers” will be taken to mean both *maitres-parents* and qualified teachers.

49 Interviews 14, 29; observations 6, 9, 16, 20.

Interview 14. A 40 year old man comes from a small village in the centre of the country.

After having lived in the bush for about 2 years, fleeing armed conflict with his family, they now live on an Internally Displaced People (IDP) site in the outskirts of a large city. There is a temporary school on the site, an NGO project, where he teaches. “Every end of the month we receive 30.000 CFA.⁵⁰ It is too little. We are parents, we have a family to take care of. With the 30.000, it really does not suffice. We don’t have [agricultural] fields,⁵¹ we don’t have any other revenue than this work [...] Sometimes, you might get sick, you have to buy clothes for your children, food is a problem too. In less than a week, the money has disappeared. [...] A just salary, for me that would be 100.000 CFA.⁵² Then you can take care of your family and maybe even save a little, so that in the future maybe you can buy a bicycle.”

Another way in which schools indirectly influence the decision whether children go to school, is by their regulations. Influential school rules include: ⁵³

- Demanding students to bring certain school materials as a condition for following the lesson. For example, students are required to bring a certain amount of notebooks and pens to class, otherwise they cannot attend
- Demanding students to wear uniforms
- The amount of the school fee

Interview 45. A girl of 13 years old, who has been accepted in first class of high school (6eme). She lives in a village in the Centre-South of the CAR. *“Before, at the beginning of each school year I had a little money to buy notebooks and if I didn’t have enough, the teacher would help me by giving me one or two notebooks. But since I went to high school, no [...] I have three notebooks. When I go to school the teacher controls, and if I don’t have 12 notebooks, she sends me out.” She does not go to school anymore.*

3.1.4 The role of local NGOs, APE, local political leaders and religious leaders

The role of local NGOs, APE, local political leaders (village chiefs, mayors, etc.) and religious leaders is quite limited when it comes to the decision of whether a child will go to school. There are two ways in which they are indirectly involved;⁵⁴

- 1) By influencing the decision through “*sensibilisation*” (a form of collectively educating people in a certain area);
- 2) By creating the necessary conditions for children to be able to attend school.

Sensibilisation: The people mentioned above say that they try to influence parents so that they will send their children to school. They do this by talking to parents, either in a larger group or by visiting the different households. In this role, they explain the benefits of school education, sometimes stressing the child’s right to go to school.

Alternatively, these parties in some rare instances advise against sending children to school. We have heard of one religious leader who told families that sending girls to school was against Allah’s will. However, several other Islamic leaders argued exactly the opposite, saying that in fact the Islam encourages both boys and girls to go to school.

50 About \$ 50. With this salary, NGOs pay teachers who have a family well below the international poverty line, which is set by the world bank at \$1.90 per person per day.

51 So that they cannot grow their own crops and thereby supplement their income and/or their diet.

52 About US \$165.

53 Interviews 4, 5, 12, 21, 22, 24, 25, 29, 42, 43, 44, 45, 51, 53, 57, 60, 80, 81, 127, 128.

54 Interviews 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 22, 28, 47, 53, 55, 57, 70, 79, 80, 81, 84, 93.

Creating conditions for school education: Often the mentioned parties (NGOs, APE, local political leaders and religious leaders) try to help to create the conditions so that children can go to school. They do so for example by building schools, distributing kit scolaires,⁵⁵ paying teachers. This kind of aid comes from different places at different times. For most children and families, it is completely unclear why, when, and for whom this help arrives. Distributions of resources in their eyes are randomly organized, at one time giving something to students of one school but not to the neighbouring school, paying certain teachers but not others, paying teachers for a period 6 months and then leaving the village, etc.⁵⁶

Interview 44, with a group of 4 mothers. They live on an IDP site in a city in the Centre-South of the CAR. When we meet them, they are playing a board game. Two are carrying a handbag, they all wear earrings. None of their children go to school.

Resp. 1 (35, 3 children): In CAR, some parents don't have the resources to send their children to school, they prefer for the child to stay at home, to work, to sell something so that there is money to prepare something to eat. It is only a problem of resources [...]

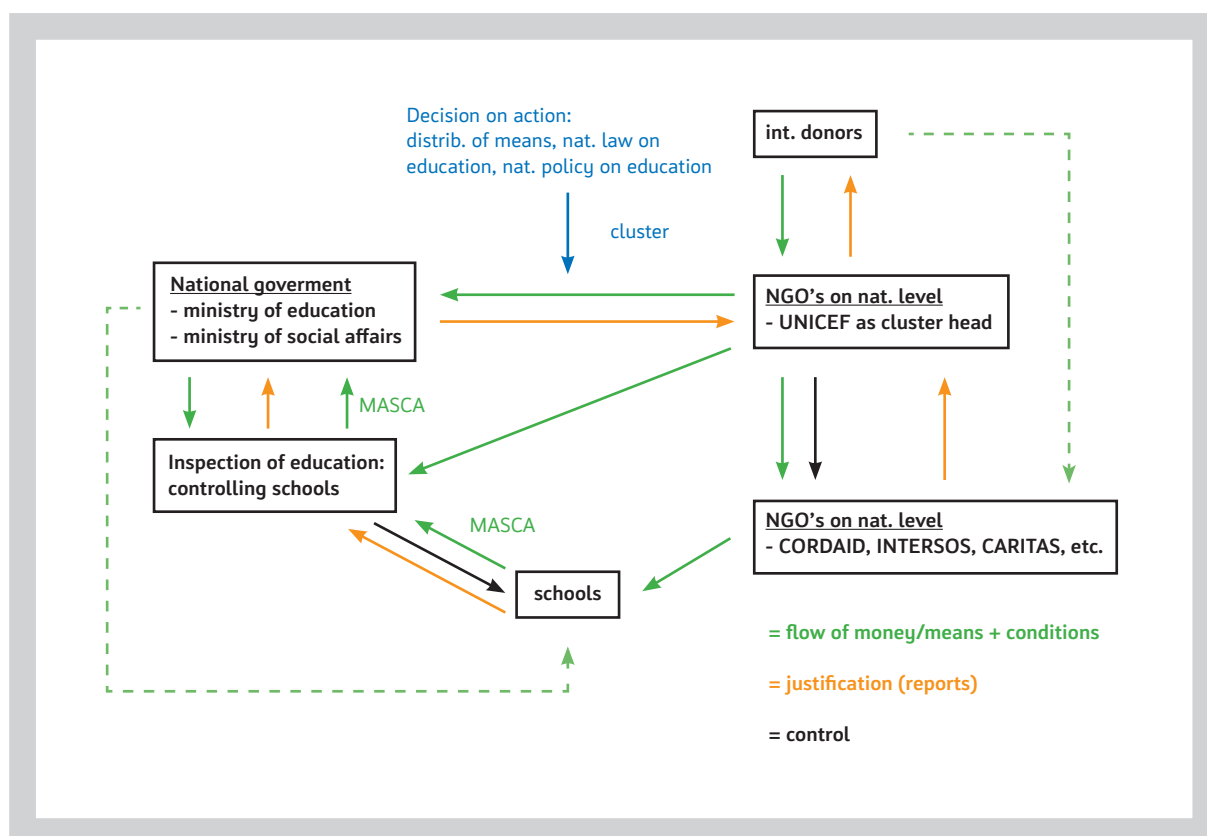
Resp. 2 (45, 6 children): We wait for the people of the NGOs to come and give us something, so that our children can go to school.

MH: You are waiting for the NGOs to give you resources? What sort of resources?

Resp. 2: They have to give us money so that we can enrol the child in school.

3.2 The national level: government and NGOs

On the national level, decisions are taken about how to organize education in the CAR. These decisions include decisions such as where to build schools, how many teachers to educate and where to send them, what to spend money for education on, etc. In short, all political decisions about education in the whole country are taken at the national level. Generally, political relations on the national level can be pictured as follows:



55 A "kit scolaire" is a small package with school materials. The contents of these packages vary, but they can include a backpack, chalks, notebooks, chalkboards and/or pens.

56 Interviews 14, 44, 80, 81, 84, 120, 121. See also: Norwegian Refugee Council, Renouf, J.S. (2015): p. 24.

3.2.1 Political power: the donors, NGOs and the national government.⁵⁷

On a national level, decisions made about education are subject to a complicated power relation between donors, NGOs and the national government (most notably the CAR Ministry of Education).

In the CAR, when political decisions have to be made in regard to education, the education cluster (a group of different NGOs that work on education in CAR)⁵⁸ seems to have most power. The cluster is led by NGOs, and although they consult with the government, and the official idea is that NGOs are there to support the CAR government, in the end, it seems that NGOs take most decisions. This situation is possible because they control most of the money for education. The Ministry of Education has a very low budget.⁵⁹ Therefore, if anyone working at the ministry of education wants to start a project, they have to turn to NGOs to ask for money.⁶⁰

In addition, government employees have a very bad reputation with NGOs. Some NGO workers are not sure whether their colleagues in the government are sufficiently motivated to improve CAR education. Maybe government people don't care (allegedly some employees of the ministry of education only show up at work about 30 minutes per week) and they lack the necessary governance skills.⁶¹ This is another reason why it is often the NGOs who make the final decisions.⁶²

CAR NGOs get most money from international donors.⁶³ This money is not simply given, but it comes with conditions; for example, we give you 5 million dollars, but you then have to build 500 schools and pay 700 teachers for a period of 4 years. These results have to be reported back to the donors after a project has finished. Some possible consequences of this, for CAR education, include:

- Education policies and projects are based on what international donors want, not on what is needed in CAR schools
- NGOs, and not the government, become responsible for education in CAR
- People in schools feel that national rules are imposed not by their government but by “foreigners” (for example the rule that the *chicotte* may not be used, or the rule on having to use the French textbooks. See also section 5)
- Because of having to report to international donors, an emphasis is put on quantitative, short-term goals (building X amount of schools, training X amount of teachers) instead of more qualitative, long-term goals (for example: researching the needs of teachers and students, developing high quality schoolbooks, properly educating teachers, etc.)⁶⁴

57 We have chosen to leave the role of former colonial power France out of this section. There is a “conseiller technique”, an advisor to the Minister of Education who works at the Ministry of Education and who is paid by the French government (and follows directions from Paris). Although it was clear that this position is not exactly ceremonial, investigating the precise political power that comes with it would require more time and resources than were available to us at this moment.

58 In 2016, the CAR education cluster consisted of “about 35 active members, including the Ministry of Education and 18 INGOs” (see: République Centrafricain cluster education (2016a)).

59 Interviews 7, 11, 22, 27, 52, 53, 61, 62, 74. Several people remarked that for 2016 the national budget was only 4% of the total government budget.

60 Interviews 11, 16, 129; observation 19.

61 Interviews 11, 27, 52, 129.

62 Interestingly, according to academic research, in many African countries the political power of NGOs seems to be limited by government restrictions (see for example Bratton (1987); v.d. Borgh & Terwindt (2014)). The fact that this seems to be different in CAR, at least when it comes to education, might be explained by what Lombard refers to as “wholesale outsourcing”; ‘Previously, concessions were primarily granted for resource extraction, but now, through foreign aid, all government prerogatives have been turned into concessions as well, amounting to the wholesale outsourcing of the country’s sovereignty’ (2016a: p. 9), referring to Smith (2015). Lombard further describes the dynamic between donors and Central African politicians [and INGOs, I would add], as follows: ‘what brings everyone together is the idea of the state [...] and yet everyone involved knows that this is at best a stage set, which allows people to put on a performance while ducking in and out behind the scenery to conduct other business with varying degrees of openness’ (pp. 64-65).

63 In the field of education, over the last years, the major donors have been the Global Partnership for Education and the European Union.

64 For example, according to the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan 2017-2021, the first of four criteria for the prioritization interventions is : “Will the activity have an immediate and visible impact on peacebuilding and recovery and/or reducing critical risks and fragility factors?” (World Bank Group (2017): p. 18).

Interview 11. An employee of an NGO, working on the national level.

MH: So who would you say is governing the education decisions on a national level?

Resp: It's definitely the NGOs. Definitely. I think there is a power relation, because humanitarian agencies have all of the money [...] they streamline funding from the [donors]. So with all of those functions, the power between [NGO] and the Ministry of Education is incomparable'.

MH: Interesting, it is so un-democratic in a way.

Resp: It is, but then [NGO], they have all the expertise. Even the strategic document of the recovery plan, it is entirely developed by [NGO]. The Ministry of Education has 1 or 2 focal points, but the whole process is very much led by [NGO]. Because there are very clear deadlines and deliverables that need to be met with a certain quality of the work, and it's clearly known that the Ministry of Education won't be able to acquire the standard if they do it alone.

MH: The standard of the donors?

Resp: Exactly. [...] the fact that the humanitarian organizations take such a, have such a ... it almost takes away the responsibility of the government in providing access to education for the population. It almost takes away their credibility.

Friday morning, 9.00: a meeting of the Education Cluster. The meeting takes place at an NGO office in Bangui (observation 3).

The meeting starts with a communication expert who takes about 20 minutes to inform all participants about the recent cholera outbreak. He elaborates on the risks, symptoms and expected development of the deadly disease in CAR. As a communication expert, he argues that the best way to inform all CAR citizens about having to wash their hands and not drink contaminated water, is through children. The idea is to inform the children, so that they can inform their parents. To inform the children, the communication team has developed an animated short movie. It has been tested by showing it to groups of children. The children loved it, and the video has a clear message, in both Sango and French.

Although it seems like a great approach, especially from the perspective of Western donors, no one asks how children are supposed to watch this video in a society with almost no electricity, tv's, smartphones or computers.⁶⁵

International donors could also give the money to the CAR government instead of to NGOs. However, they seem not very willing to do so, because the government is perceived by the international community as unable to do their job properly, and sometimes as simply corrupt.⁶⁶ Donors worry that by giving their money for education to the CAR government, the money will simply disappear and not help CAR teachers and students. It has to be noted that many people interviewed indicated that NGOs are plagued by corruption as well (see also § 5.4.3).

3.2.2 Political power in the field: local NGOs and the education inspection

In the field, spread out over the country, we find two different groups of actors that represent political power over education in the field, namely: local NGOs and the education inspection ("*Inspection Academique*").

NGOs in the field

With "NGOs in the field" we refer to all field offices of NGOs that work on education. These can be subdivided into three different groups;

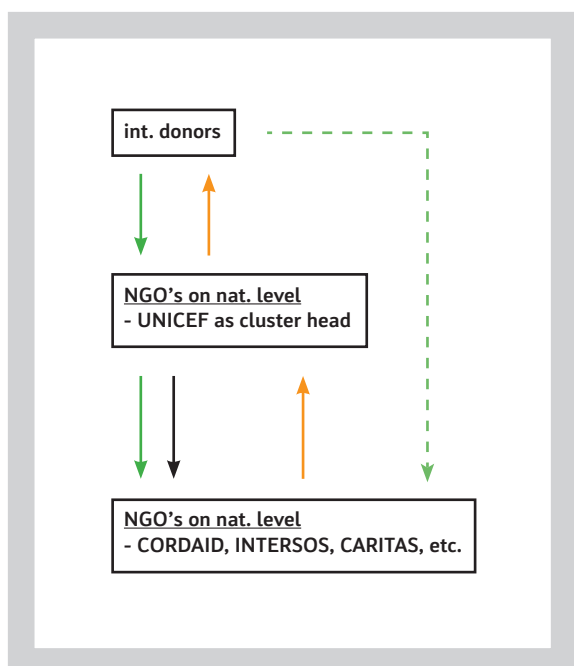
- International NGOs (INGOs) that operate on international, national and local level, such as UNICEF, CORDAID, NRC, and many others;
- National NGOs that operate only on national and local level,⁶⁷
- Local NGOs that only operate locally, for example who only have one office and sometimes even one employee.

65 See also World Bank Group (2017): p. 13. Showing that of the 7 regions in CAR, in 4 regions 0% of the principal towns have electricity available.

66 See, among others: Gan Business Anti-Corruption Portal (2016); Transparency International (2016) ranking CAR as 159th most corrupt out of 176 countries; Freedom House (2017).

67 For an overview of which NGO is where when it comes to education in CAR, see: OCHA (2016a).

The money of donors usually comes in on the level of the NGOs, mostly on the level of the education cluster, who then together with the Ministry of Education decide what the money needs to be invested in. Imagine they decide to distribute schoolbooks over 30 schools in the Ouham-Pendé region. Most of the time, the NGO will then subcontract one or several national or local NGOs that have a field office in the area, to take care of the distribution. The national or local NGO in turn has to report back to the NGO operating on a national level, who reports back to the donor.⁶⁸



Some donors, however, prefer to go around the education cluster and donate to national or local NGOs directly.⁶⁹

Within this organizational structure, the catholic religious networks seem to take up a special position in the CAR. Although they are sometimes organized in the form of NGOs (Caritas), they sometimes are the result of private initiatives. In the CAR you will find priests in several places who have founded and run schools, finding the money for this wherever they can (through the church network, donations of people who attend the mass, contacts with foreign donors, etc.).

The Education Inspection (Inspection Academique)⁷⁰

The education inspection represents the political power of the government in the field. For the purpose of inspection, the country is divided up into 8 regions.⁷¹ Regional teams often consist of an education inspector at its head, who is the boss of different sector chiefs (*chefs secteurs*), pedagogical inspectors (*inspecteurs pedagogiques*) and enrolment inspectors (*inspecteurs*

de circonscription). They are in charge of monitoring the schools in all their aspects, and report the results of this inspection back to the Ministry of Education. They monitor:

- The amount of students enrolled in the schools
- (*enseignant titulaire*), intern (*vacataire* or *contractuel*), *maître-parent*)
- The quality of the education in the schools

Another core task of the inspectors is to collect the “MASCA” (“*Mutuelle d’Assurance Scolaire Centrafricaine*”). This is an obligatory insurance that every student in the CAR has to pay together with their school fees. The MASCA costs 250 CFA per year.⁷² The objective of the insurance is to ensure that, in the case of an accident during school time, children get the necessary medical care. For example the cost for medication and casts if they break a leg will be paid for by this insurance. However, it seems that in practice the insurance almost never pays for anything. Because the insurance company is state-owned, this money in a way is more of an extra taxation.⁷³

68 See for example UNICEF (2015).

69 Interviews 11, 96.

70 Interviews 4, 7, 16, 17, 22, 42, 52, 53, 79, 105.

71 For a map, see OCHA (2016b).

72 About \$ 0,40.

73 Interviews 75, 80, 81, 84, 127, 128. See also the Commission Education Sociale, Culture, Jeunesse et Sports (2003), who indicate as an issue of the educational system, the lack of payment by the MASCA to parents whose children have been injured (b 9), and UNESCO (2010): p. 4.

Some other tasks that these inspectors say to be engaged in (depending on the team) are:

- Monitoring the use of the *chicotte*, corruption and sexual abuse in school
- General control of teachers' behaviour towards students
- *Sensibilisation* of parents and children, convincing them of the importance of school
- Helping NGOs in the distribution of educational materials over schools
- Making decisions on the local level together with NGOs about the distribution of educational material, resources, and the construction of schools

Interview 53. An education inspector (*chef secteur*) in a large town in Western CAR.

Resp: For us [inspectors], being responsible for national education, when we take a teacher who has hit, hurt or worried a child he has to pass before a judge.

MH: So imagine you find a teacher who has hit a child, what do you do?

Resp: Well, just to scare him that can happen, pull the ears or whipping the buttocks, etc. But in any case the punishments in the form of torture and the punishments with severe injuries, the parents complain in front of the judge, we support that [...] the small punishments continue, they make the students sit on their knees [...] but not to hurt the child.

*MH: But to whip (*chicotter*) the child, that doesn't hurt?*

Resp: Yes, that hurts, but that's why we have forbidden that on a national level.

MH: Yes, but you were just talking about whipping the buttocks.

*Resp: That is acceptable ("ça va"), but it hurts so that's why we say you should not punish the children anymore [...] It is the reality of the terrain. Even if it is forbidden, there are teachers who continue to use the *chicotte*. However, during our yearly meetings with the teachers, every trimester we remind them. And when the inspector comes, they hide the *chicotte*.*

In contrast to CAR teachers, education inspectors are paid regularly and they earn quite a good salary (around 180.000 CFA⁷⁴ for *chef secteurs*).⁷⁵ The World Bank has shown that in the CAR the government education budget spent on salaries for non-teachers (education inspectors, ministry employees), is much higher than in most other African countries.⁷⁶

For the inspectors to do their work, they have to be able to move around between different villages. To this purpose, they are financially supported by the NGOs on the national level.⁷⁷

Interview 7. An education inspector (*chef secteur*) in a town in the Centre of the CAR.

Resp: You know, the majority of the teachers, they have been teachers for a long time. When the inspector comes, they know exactly what they have to do. The problem sometimes is the [financial] means that would allow the teachers to be on top of their game.

MH: And finally, you find that there are no resources, there are no tables, etc. [in the schools], and after you write a report?

REsP: Yes we always write reports, when the NGOs come, leaving their stuff, we accept it. There are the ones [NGOs] who truly help us and some who don't.

MH: So the reports are written in fact for showing to NGOs, hoping that they will give you resources?

Resp: Yes, to help the schools.

MH: So this is the most important function of the inspectors here?

REsP: Yes.

⁷⁴ Almost \$ 300 per month. School directors/enseignants titulaires get paid almost \$ 100 per month, maitresparents are paid \$ 60 per month at most.

⁷⁵ Interviews 7, 22, 53, 65.

⁷⁶ In 2008, for the primary cycle, this was 27% of the total budget (with 5% spent on non-salaries). See Banque Mondiale (2008) : pp. 71-72.

⁷⁷ Interviews 16, 17, 27, 64, 65.

4. Access to education

In the CAR, many children do not have access to (school) education. On a national level, NGO/government policy therefore often focuses on creating access to school for children.⁷⁸ In this section a number of factors limiting this access will be discussed, including current policy solutions and their effectiveness.⁷⁹ However, it has to be noted that “access to education” does not mean much if you do not also take into account the quality of education. A potentially risky trend in the CAR as regards national policy, is to focus on access to education (by building schools, convincing parents to enrol their children, etc.) and to neglect the quality of education.⁸⁰ Building schools is relatively easy, but a building does not offer education. In the worst case scenario – and the CAR might be just the place where worst case scenarios turn into reality – children are *en masse* being pushed into already overcrowded classrooms, where often teachers do not show up, teach incorrect information (think of incorrect spelling), and propagate discrimination and violence.

An education inspector’s report might proudly state that now 80% of the children in the area go to school – which camouflages the fact that more students in the classroom has lowered the already low quality of education. Many schools in CAR have so many students and so little teachers, that students to be divided up into classes of 200,77 and the school day has to be divided up so that class A has lessons in the morning (7.00 – 11.00), class B has lessons in the afternoon (11.00 – 15.00).⁸²

Therefore, this section on access to education should not be read without reading section 5 on quality of education.⁸³

74 See for example the 2017-2019 Humanitarian Response Plan (OCHA 2016c). The strategy of the Education Cluster is summed up as follows : 1) equal access to safe and healthy learning environments for girls and boys (age 3-18) affected by the [2013 armed] crisis; 2) protection of girls/boys (age 3-18) who are not in school due to the crisis, giving them access to alternative quality education adapted to their needs; 3) protecting the rights of children affected by the [2013] crisis by ensuring their access to education for peace and psychosocial care (p. 26).

79 The more social-emotional factors influencing access to education, such as the motivation of parents and of teachers, are discussed elsewhere in the report.

80 The 2015 analysis of education in CAR by the Education cluster, for example, focussed only on obtaining quantitative data (number of schools open/closed, enrolment, number of teachers present) and had no qualitative component. So at least in theory, when there is a building where 100 children and a teacher are present, even if they do nothing at all, according to these data that counts as “education” (République Centrafricaine Education Cluster (2015): p. 8).

81 Interviews 14, 27, 43, 51, 55, 60, 85, 92; observations 14, 15, 16, 22. Official numbers show a teacher:student ratio of about 1:80. However, it has to be noted that these numbers do not necessarily give an accurate picture, because this usually concerns an average per school (x amount of students / x amount of teachers), a calculation that does not take into account the fact that the lower classes (CI, CP) are much more crowded than the higher classes in primary school (CM1, CM2). During our observations, these higher classes usually contained about 30 students. In the lower classes, we have observed several classrooms with 150-200 students.

82 Interviews 1, 7, 37, 78, 80.; observation 16.

83 See also the 2016 National Survey, in which the writers argue that ‘about half of the households perceive access to basic services, such as education [...] to have worsened. This highlights the fact that an 80 percent enrollment rate in primary school is likely missing much of the education picture – such as quality of education and access to post-primary education’ (Groupe de la Banque Mondiale (2017) : p. 42).

4.1 Poverty

The CAR is one of the poorest countries in the world – even rated the poorest country in the world for 2016.⁸⁴ Although enrolment in public schools is supposed to be for free, according to national⁸⁵ and international law,⁸⁶ students have to pay to be able to enrol in school (whether private or public).

According to the latest decision of the Ministry of Education, enrolment for public primary schools should cost 1800 CFA⁸⁷ per year for the first child and 800 CFA⁸⁸ per year for every following child. This sum consists of:⁸⁹

250 CFA MASCA⁹⁰

250 CFA schoolbooks

300 CFA sports

1000 CFA APE (which is used to pay *maitres-parents* and other school necessities, such as school building maintenance etc.)

For the student in CM2 (the last class of high school) this goes up to 2450 CFA to include a school identity,⁹¹ high school preparation and CEF1.⁹² Secondary school (F2) officially costs 2500 CFA⁹³ per child per year.

Poverty in general is a factor that greatly influences the child's access to education.⁹⁴ Not only do families lose workforce when children go to school, but the children themselves too might lose their immediate source of income (although work and school can be and are often combined). Regardless, the school fees are often perceived as unaffordable. Moreover, the public school fees are often higher than the amount prescribed by the Ministry of Education. School fees differ among schools, who often add a monthly amount to be paid for *maitres-parents* to the annual subscription fee. This is mostly about 250 CFA per month per child. In contrast to the Ministry's decision, we have never heard any reports of a difference being made between the subscription fee for the first and subsequent children. In addition, children need appropriate clothing, school materials (notebooks, pens) and sometimes school uniforms to be able to go to school, making it more costly.⁹⁵

School fees for private education are usually much higher than in public education (normally between 30.000 – 100.000 CFA per child per year)⁹⁶ and private education is therefore accessible only to the wealthier families.

There is one positive exception to this rule: the ETAPE (“l’Espace Temporaire d’Apprentissage et de Protection de l’Enfance”, or: temporary safe learning spaces) schools at IDP sites are freely accessible to all children. However, even in these situations where school is completely free, not all children of the sites go to these schools.⁹⁷ It seems therefore that it is not only poverty that limits the child's access to education in the CAR.

84 See Gregson (2017). Over 2015, the GNI per capita in CAR was \$ 330, according to the World Bank (2017).

85 Constitution (2015), art. 7.

86 ICESC (1966), art. 13.1.

87 Almost 3 US dollar.

88 \$ 1.30.

89 See the published decision by the ministry of education: République Centrafricaine (2016).

90 For an explanation of the MASCA, see 3.2.2: the education inspection.

91 During our research we have never come across this “school identity”, it was not mentioned by anyone we spoke to, so in fact we are not quite sure what it is.

92 CEF1 is a school diploma for whomever has finished primary school successfully. However, the existence of this diploma was never mentioned to us during the research by any of the respondents.

93 A little over 4 US dollars.

94 Interviews 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 38, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, 49, 51, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 70, 71, 80, 120, 121. See also: Banque Mondiale (2008): p. 44.

95 NGO FMSI therefore already concluded in their 2013 report to the UN: “We urge the government to allocate a much bigger slice of the state's budget to education. It is imperative that primary education be made not only compulsory but also free when families do not have to pay for insurance, furniture or exam fees, and that secondary education becomes more of a reality to the State's children” (FMSI (2013): p. 5).

96 Interviews 5, 39, 42, 60, 78, 81, 82, 87, 95.

97 See § 4.2.1.

4.2 Armed conflict⁹⁸

Another factor greatly influencing access to education in the CAR is armed conflict.⁹⁹ During fighting schools are closed, school buildings and materials are destroyed,¹⁰⁰ schools are occupied by armed groups,¹⁰¹ people flee away from their home (including teachers), the roads are too unsafe to walk to school.

Interview 10. A mother of four children, who lives in a town in the centre of the CAR. *‘There are parents who do not send their children to school anymore because of the fighting, I personally always send them. Those two [pointing at two of her children], they go to school in the centre. Sometimes I hear gunfire, I run and I bring them back home’.*

School can also become a site of trauma, when armed violence enters the classroom;

Interview 5. A girl 14 years old, who is in class CM2 of the public school. She lives on an IDP site in a town in the centre of the CAR.

After the Seleka¹⁰² arrived, they often disturbed the schools. For example, one day, when I arrived at school, we wanted to put up the flag, and the Seleka said no, you should not put up the flag. When we started the lessons, the Seleka came, and started to scream [...] they stole chalks and asked the teacher to pay, but the teacher refused [...] the situation was getting dangerous. I lied down, hiding underneath the desk. When it calmed down, I got back up to finish the lesson.

Interview 6. A girl of 15 years old, who used to go to a public primary school. She lives on an IDP site in a town in the centre of the CAR.

MH (at the end of the interview): Is there anything I have forgotten to ask?

Resp: Yes. You have forgotten a very important subject. It is about young girls and the Seleka, they have been abused, they used their force [...] when we went back to school, the Seleka came out and they picked out four girls to take them into the bush [...]

MH: To do what?

Resp: They have hurt them [...] many carry diseases now, they have been contaminated with diseases.¹⁰³

4.2.1 ETAPE schools

Once displaced people get to an IDP site, sometimes a temporary safe learning space (ETAPE school) is set up by NGOs. Teachers are drawn from among the IDP population and get some basic training. However, in practice, IDP children seem to be enrolled in schools near the site more often – insofar as they are enrolled in school at all. Of the 7 sites that we visited in 4 different places, only 2 sites had a school.¹⁰⁰ This was not because they were new sites; in one town, for example, we found an IDP site hosting about 2500 IDPs. They had been there for about 3 years by the time we visited (August 2016). There were no schools on the site or in the environment, and so these children had not been in school for (at least) three years. According to UNICEF and OCHA data, it seems that about 82% of IDP children do not receive ETAPE education.¹⁰⁵

98 For more on the effect of armed conflict in CAR on education, see, amongst others: Jesuit Refugee Service (2016); Human Rights Watch (2017).

99 Interviews 2, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 25, 26, 38, 52, 53, 54, 60, 87, 93. See also World Bank Group (2017): pp. 6-7.

100 According to UN OCHA, 1 in every 10 schools in CAR has suffered an attack (presumably counting since 2013). See OCHA (2016d).

101 See also: Human Rights Watch (2017).

102 One of the armed groups.

103 Referring to sexually transmissible diseases, most likely HIV/AIDS.

104 Observations 2, 4-8, 11, 12.

105 According to OCHA, there are currently about 400.000 IDPs in CAR. They also estimate that about 40% of the IDPs, so about 160.000, are children in the school age of 3-18 (OCHA (2017)). According to UNICEF data, 27.844 IDP children had access to ETAPE spaces (in March 2016), amounting to about 82% of IDP children who do not have access to ETAPE education. (See Remacka (2016)).

4.3 No schools

An obvious problem with access to school is when there are no schools in the area where the child lives. The CAR is very scarcely populated, there are many small villages and no means of transportation. It is therefore quite unpractical or even impossible, especially for small children, to walk the necessary 10 or 15 km to the first school building (not to mention the insecurities of the CAR roads).¹⁰⁶ In terms of policy however, building primary schools for every village does not make sense either; besides from the costs, there would not be enough children and teachers for every different class.

The lack of schools seems most urgent when considering secondary schools.¹⁰⁷

Interview 13, the chief of a small village in the centre of CAR.

Resp: The problem is the sense of maturity. My other child, he is a bit grown, that's why I decided to send him to the school that is at 5 km distance. The other children are small, if they go 5 km, they can get hungry and they can even fall on the road.

MH: I understood there is also a school at 2 km distance, why do they not go there?

Resp: There are issues between the village at 2 km distance and our village. Because when the education inspection stop by, they give kits scolaires, and in the distribution they favour everyone who is in the school in their village. And we have not received anything [...] when we decide to clean, we work on cleaning the school building, the village there says it is their building, it's their school, it's their village and so they can work on the school [...] Every time there is trouble so the parents don't dare to send their children to the school anymore.

However, it has to be noted again, that even if there is a school building, this does not necessarily mean that children get quality education – or even any education at all. In a country like the CAR where the weather allows for one to be outside the whole year through (although sitting in direct sunshine or in the rain are not good conditions for education, so a certain roof is required), perhaps the focus shouldn't be on school buildings. Again, if there are no good teachers, there is no teaching material, etc., a building seems less than a guarantee for education. Moreover, there is a risk that when the school building becomes synonymous with (school) education, children will not get an education if there is no school building, even when there are suitable learning spaces, teachers and materials available.

Interview 28. Chief of a small village where there has not been a school for the past couple of years. At the time of the interview (August 2016), school was supposed to start again in September.

MH: Why do you not ask the literate parents to teach the children, each a few hours per week?

Resp: They cannot accept to teach if we don't pay them.

MH: But what if they would just teach half a day per week?

Resp: That would be good, but it is not possible. They have to go fishing. If they don't go, how will they feed their children?

MH: I have trouble believing that teaching for only 4 hours a week will make the difference between eating and not eating.

Resp: I cannot command them. If they don't want to, can you force them?

MH: You are the chief, do you not have that power?

Resp: I have power, but I cannot force people.

MH: So what kind of power do you have in relation to education?

[...]

Resp: Before, the young people were receiving the village chief. Nowadays, after the arrival of human rights, if you ask them to do something, they don't accept it. When they don't accept it, you have no right to take it by force.

¹⁰⁶ Interviews 10, 16, 42, 43, 45, 53, 56. According to the 2016 survey, among the 10 largest localities in each commune (whereby the CAR is divided up into 179 communes), 44% have a public primary school (Groupe de la Banque Mondiale (2017)).

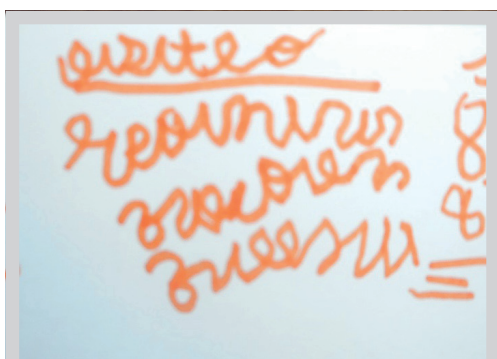
¹⁰⁷ See: Groupe de la Banque Mondiale (2017) : pp. 15-16.

5. Quality of education

As has previously been argued, access to school in and of itself does not guarantee that the child will actually learn. To protect the child's right to education, this education needs a certain quality.¹⁰⁸

It's not just how many children go to school – it's what they learn there¹⁰⁹

Interview 40. A 16 year old girl, who is in Seconde 2 of a private school, in a city centre-South of the CAR. *“To educate a child is to show him how to be a good citizen. It is not just saying ‘You must do this, you must do that.’ It is to show: this is the difference between good and bad. In my school it is good. They teach the children well. If there is something that you don't know, they show it to you”*



5. A girl proudly shows how she has learned to write “I go to school” in her English lesson.

Most people argue that the quality of education in the CAR, especially in public education, is very poor. They also argue that the quality of education has steeply diminished over the years.¹¹⁰ Although there is little data available, this observation seems to be confirmed by research on literacy in the CAR; according to UNESCO data, 64% of people between the ages of 15-24 were illiterate in 2015, which is a steep increase since 2000 (when it was 39%).¹¹¹ So even though more and more children go to school,¹¹² the quality of education is going down.

Using the same dataset, we can make a (very) rough estimate that about 29% of children who attend primary school do not learn how to read and write.¹¹³ Knowing that the quality of education in private schools is much higher than in public

schools, we can safely assume this number is much lower in private schools, and much higher in public schools. Of the 32 children that we interviewed, 23 children answered the question whether they could write a simple sentence such as “my name is...” (which they were asked to demonstrate).¹¹⁴ Most children in public school could not write a simple sentence, and all children in private school could.

Public school		Private school	
Able to write	Unable to write	Able to write	Unable to write
4	12	7	0
25%	75%	100%	0%

So why is the quality of public education in the CAR so low? There are many factors that have an influence, of which the most important ones will be discussed below: malnutrition (§ 5.1), availability and quality of educational material (§ 5.2), the position and quality of the teachers (§ 5.3), corruption (§ 5.4), rules and punishment (§ 5.5) and the national policy for improving the quality of education (§ 5.6).

108 According to the Africa Progress Panel, chaired by Kofi Annan, “In retrospect, the [Millennium Development Goals] framework may have inadvertently deflected attention away from learning and created an incentive for governments – and donors – to concentrate their efforts on getting more children into school” (Africa Progress Panel (2012)). See also Banque Mondiale (2008): p. 89.

109 Africa Progress Panel (2012): p. 4.

110 Interviews 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 14, 16, 26, 36, 37, 49, 57, 60, 61, 64, 65, 73, 74, 76, 82, 83, 85, 86, 97. This accords with observations 6, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20 and 22. See also: UNESCO (2010): pp. 15-16.

111 UNESCO (n.d.).

112 Again, there are little data available. According to UNESCO, the number of out-of-school children steadily decreased from 331,029 in 2006 to 206,651 in 2012 (UNESCO n.d.).

113 According to the dataset, about 36% of people of age 15-24 in CAR in 2015 know how to read and write. Assuming they learned this in school, and the 15-24 year-olds were in school around 2006, when 65% of primary school aged children were enrolled in school, this amounts to 65%-36% = 29% who were in school but don't know how to read and write.

114 If simply asked, the children would often say that they could, whereas if asked to demonstrate, they sometimes changed their answer saying that they actually couldn't. Some children said they could write, but wrote incomprehensible gibberish. The sample includes children in both primary and secondary education. Children who were in school < 1 year and those who were < 8 years old were excluded from the sample. The average age of the children in the sample is 13,1 years.

5.1 Malnutrition

In the CAR, a large part of the population suffers from malnutrition. This does not necessarily mean that people are hungry. It simply means that the CAR diet lacks necessary vitamins and minerals. A standard CAR meal is quite limited, both in variety and in nutrition; it mostly consists of manioc,¹¹⁵ prepared in different ways, and sometimes some meat or fish. Nuts (peanuts), vegetables (aubergine, koko, avocado, tomato, mais, beans, unions), fruit (bananas,¹¹⁶ plantain, papaya), insects (caterpillars, grasshoppers, crickets, termites), bread and rice are sometimes, irregularly, added to the meal.¹¹⁷ According to a research by the World Food Programme, 60% of CAR households have insufficient food consumption due to a too limited diet. In addition, many children are said to suffer from intestinal worm infections, which worsens malnutrition.¹¹⁸

There are different reasons for the malnutrition of so many CAR citizens. Although the CAR soil is very rich and weather circumstances are quite favourable for farming all sorts of crops, the range of food that people (know how to) farm is very limited. There are very little or no different seeds available, and in some areas going to your farm is too dangerous due to armed violence.¹¹⁵ Based on our experience in the CAR, we can add that another factor is the people's love for manioc. Manioc is tasty, cheap food that fills the stomach quickly. Unfortunately, it has very little of what the body needs (vitamins, minerals). So you don't feel hungry, but in fact your body is not nourished.

This can be seen, for example, by the prevalence of stunting (when children do not grow as they should according to their age), which is a sign of chronic malnutrition. In the CAR, almost 41% of children under 5 years old have stunted growth.¹²⁰ When you are malnourished, this has consequences for the development of your brain, which in turn has consequences for your ability to learn in school. Basically, if your brain does not develop well because you do not eat well, it will be much harder for you to learn anything.¹²¹

Also, seeing that CAR children eat on average 1,3 meals a day,¹²² they can sometimes be very hungry when they are in the classroom, which does not help for learning either.

Interview 36. A 20 year old girl who recently got her high school diploma (BAC) at a public school, in a city in the centre-South of the CAR: *“There are the students who don't eat, who say: look, I'm hungry and I'm not going to school. When I'm famished, I don't learn. That's what they often say.”*

5.2 Educational material

A general lack of educational material, and specifically of qualitative material, has been indicated as limiting the quality of education in CAR.¹²³

115 Cassava. According to the research of the WFP, 81% of CAR households produces manioc (World Food Program (2016): p. 26).

116 There are many bananas in CAR, but people often say that it is something only little children and monkeys eat.

117 See World Food Program (2016) :p. 25. See also Groupe de la Banque Mondiale (2017): pp. 30-39.

118 See World Food Program (2015).

119 World Food Program (2016).

120 World Health Organization (2016).

121 See, amongst others: Berkman et. al. (2002); Mendez & Adair (1999) Africa Progress Panel (2012): p. 8.

122 World Health Organization (2016): p. 28.

123 Interviews 14, 29, 51, 53, 60, 65, 80, 81, 98. See also: République Centrafricaine Education Cluster (2015): p. 12; FMSI (2013).

5.2.1 French education

CAR education is still a copy of the French colonial educational system. According to researchers Congueau & Moradi (2014), the French, back in the day, used education to “turn Africans into Frenchmen”.¹²⁴ Even though the national language is Sango and according to both national¹²⁵ and international law,¹²⁶ education should at least also be in Sango,¹²⁷ all learning materials are in French (a foreign language to almost all children start learning in school). Of course, learning to read in an unknown language makes it harder to learn.¹²⁸

Interview 11. A French woman working for an NGO at the national level.

Resp.: One of the big issues is that children at home always speak in Sango. Always. And then when they arrive at school they are expected to speak in French [...]. The whole curriculum is in French. The teachers, a lot of them are not even graduates, they might have dropped out at age 15 and just know about how to read and write. So you go into a school and no the blackboard, it's full of mistakes. And so the children are expected to learn that. The way they teach is basically audio transmitted. They memorize everything. And so when they're reading they will be pointing to words, and they will say something different. So then when reading a text, because they've memorized it, and when they point they just point but [...] you can see that they are not actually reading. The quality is so, so poor.'

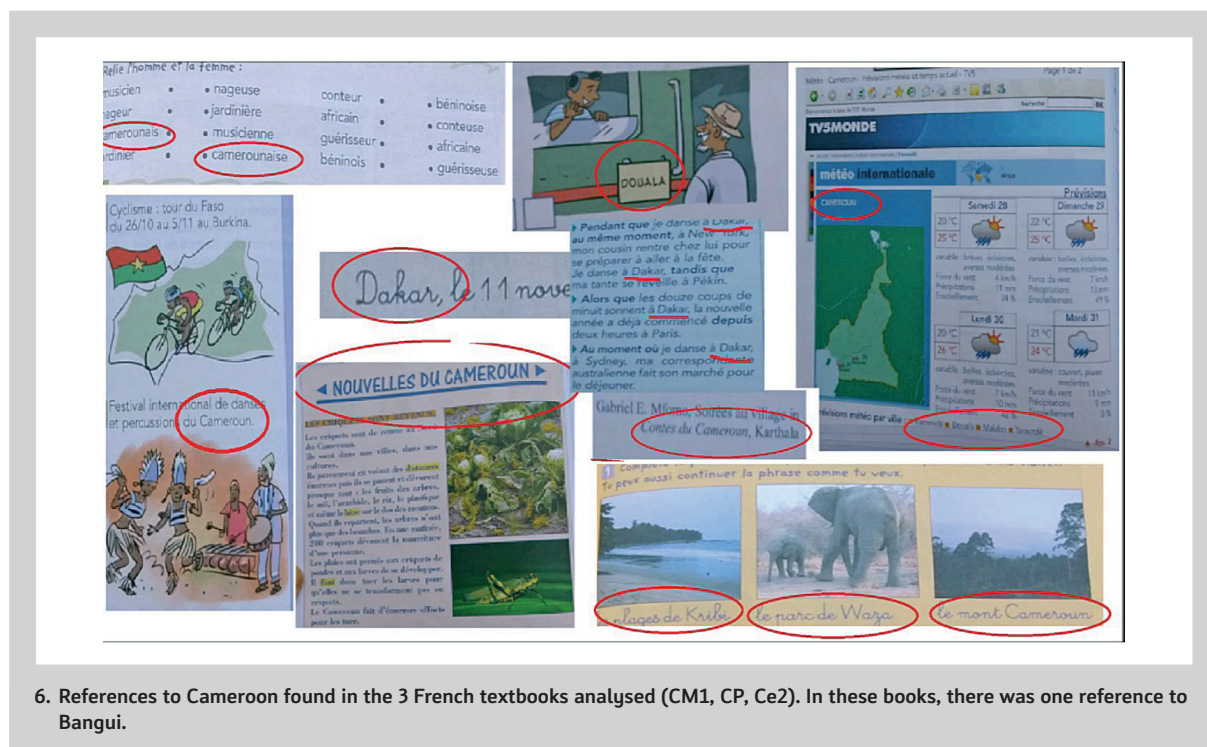
In primary education, there are two official schoolbooks, according to national guidelines: the French- and mathematics books called “Ma Semaine”. Teachers complain a lot about this obligatory material, mostly because its content does not seem to match CAR reality. The stories in the French book are often about things that do not exist in (most of) the CAR, such as how to take the train, the desert, TV programs (see picture below for some examples taken from these textbooks).¹²⁹



1. Examples in textbooks that very few CAR children are familiar with (such as TV programs, camels, trains).

- 124 Congueau & Moradi (2014), on the difference between French and British colonial rule: “French ideology aimed at assimilation; to turn Africans into Frenchmen, education was considered key. Schools could not operate without government permission, they had to employ government-certified teachers and follow a government curriculum, and French was the only language of instruction” (p. 1). See also R.P. Clignet & P.J. Foster (1964): p. 194.
- 125 Loi No 97.014 (1997), art. 42: “Sango and French are the two languages of teaching. The teaching of, and in, Sango is introduced into the curriculum of primary school in the year 2000”.
- 126 CRC (1989), art. 29(c).
- 127 Some give the argument that Sango is not a written language and that it therefore cannot be used in education. Bah-Gayn de Gaulle has refuted this argument in 1984, showing several academic studies and the creation of an official Sango dictionary, as well as ways to incorporate new words (pp. 138-143).
- 128 See: Dutcher, N. (2004), arguing that ‘we cannot overemphasize the importance of the use of the child’s first language in school’ (p. 19) and ‘the paradox revealed in the knowledge that children learn best in a language that they know and the reluctance of the international community and many countries to acknowledge this fact and follow up with policy and action’ (p. 37); Lim, F. (2016); Bah-Gayn de Gaulle (1984); Hoppers, W. (2005): p. 122; Ouana, A. & Glanz, C. (2010).
- 129 These pictures are taken from the French “Ma Semaine” books for classes CM1, CP and CE1.

Teachers argue that it is too complicated to teach the children a foreign language through stories that they cannot relate to. One school director whispered that he thought the government had made some corrupt deal with Cameroon, because much in the book seems to be about Cameroon (see picture below). However, in fact the books are edited and written and published in Paris, and printed in Italy.¹³⁰



5.2.2 Lack of buildings, tables-bancs and learning materials

Another problem for education often mentioned is the lack of learning materials.¹³¹ To some degree, this outcry seems related to the idea that you should ask NGO workers for material goods. To illustrate: one time we went with an NGO team in the field to distribute learning materials (mostly textbooks) over different schools in some remote villages in Western CAR. A local teacher told us these books were most needed, because they were working with very little, old material. However, while the NGO team was distributing the books, the researcher took a walk and discovered a house with all kinds of trash on the floor, including the same books the team was currently distributing (this later turned out to be the house of the president of the local APE).¹³²

130 The publisher of this method is called “Nathan”. They are very proud of their ethical company policy. On their website they write that they are “acting as a socially-responsible company”, by “acting to respect human rights and rights of the child, especially the basic right to education. Nathan is a partner of Unicef, working to raise awareness among young people of the rights of the child, international solidarity and citizenship. Nathan is developing special schemes to combat illiteracy and to help the insertion of young people and adults in difficult circumstances into the world of work”. See: Nathan (n.d.). The Italian printing company is called “Rotolito”.

131 Interviews 4, 7, 14, 17, 25, 29, 47, 52, 53, 54, 57, 60, 70, 80, 85, 87, 93, 120, 121.

132 Observation 13.



7. Local teacher: “we cannot work without books.”

However, it is an important factor that little learning material is available – not only in schools but outside of schools as well. Outside the cities, for most of the country written language occurs relatively little. There are (almost) no books, no street signs, no flyers, no market signs.¹³³ Some children claimed that even though they were able to read and write before when they were in school, by now they had forgotten.¹³⁴ It is not that surprising to forget and become illiterate, if these skills are never used in daily life, and schools are closed for longer periods.

Interview 50. A father of 4 children, a village in Western CAR.

Resp: In the school here, we are really short of teachers, there are many students. But more than a shortage of teachers, we lack buildings [...] sometimes at 7 in the morning, the students of CP1 and CM2 start, they have lessons for three hours. They go home and from 10 to 12, it's CP2 and C1. Because they are many and there are no classrooms.

MH: Why is it that you don't construct more classrooms and tables-bancs?

Resp: Due to our country. If the state thinks of [our village] for education, they could do it. And the NGOs also come, they say that they will participate, if they say so we can do it.

MH: Can you not organize yourselves? Cut wood, construct?

Resp: We can do it. The mayor went into the two classrooms the other day. She saw, and chose to use her own money to pay for boards, give meters to measure, to construct tables-bancs.

MH: I don't understand why you need money for that? Because there is enough wood, you could cut the trees, construct. Can you explain to me why you don't?

Resp: We are waiting. One has to wait for the contribution of money, to pay for the fuel, a chainsaw, an axe. This year we wanted to do it, but seeing as it is the beginning of the school year, we are studying to make the contribution.

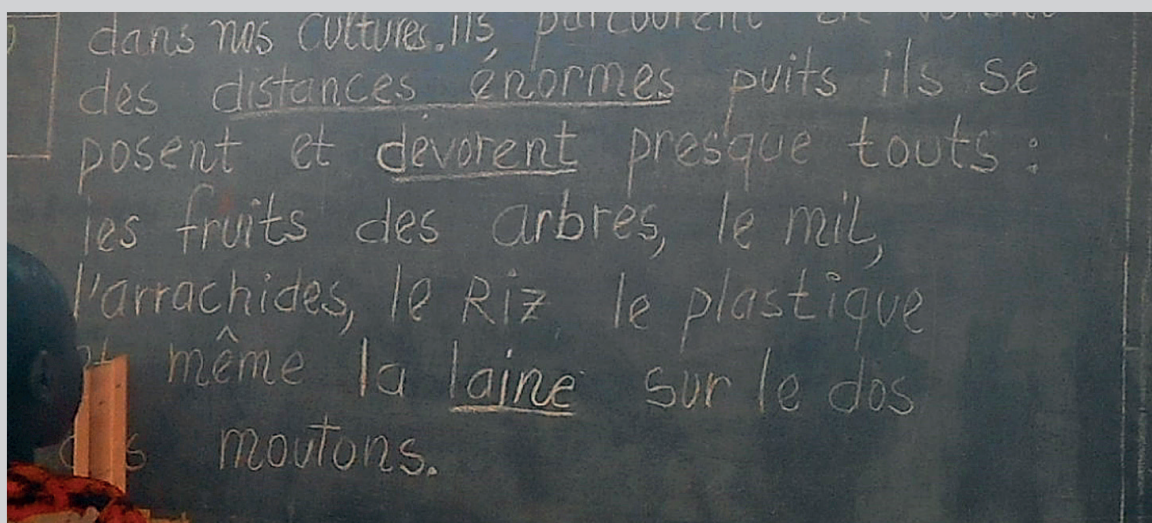
133 See also Diambomba, M. (1998): pp. 27-31.

134 Interviews 6, 12, 16, 21, 24, 37, 38.

5.3 Position and quality of teachers

As has been mentioned earlier in this report, teachers have a crucial role when it comes to the child's right to education in CAR. Both children and adults recognize the importance of the teacher for their learning process.¹³⁵ However, teachers in CAR, especially teachers in public schools, are treated very poorly in terms of education and payment.

First, the level of education of the teacher is very poor. Obviously, this is especially the case for the *maitres-parents* who have no official teacher qualification and have had no or very little teacher training. However, it is the case for qualified *enseignants titulaires* too, who have had a short formation and who have very little opportunities to learn more throughout their career. Their teaching skills are generally low. Not only do they not completely master the things that the students are supposed to learn (such as French spelling), but also they do not have good skills to teach (pedagogics and didactics). For example, during a typical reading lesson, the teacher will read out the words written on a chalkboard. A child is then asked to come and read the text to the rest of the class. Instead of truly reading the words, the children learn the text by heart and pretend to "read" it themselves by repeating the words of the teacher.¹³⁶



2. Observation 6: reading lesson in a classroom on an IDP site. The correct spelling and grammar of this text would be: "Les criquets sont de retour du nord du Cameroun. Ils sont dans nos villes, dans nos cultures. Ils parcourent en volant des distances énormes puis ils se posent et dévorent presque tout: les fruits des arbres, le mil, les arachides, le riz, le plastique et même la laine sur le dos des moutons."

Second, teachers are paid poorly. Not only are their salaries often below the international poverty line,¹³⁷ but teachers are regularly not paid either because the state and/or the parents are short on cash. For the teachers who are on the state payroll, it is extremely difficult to get their salaries unless they live close to a bank – and there are hardly any banks in the country.¹³⁸ This means that teachers have to either send someone to the nearest city, a dangerous and expensive journey that takes several days to weeks, hoping they come back with the salary, or they travel themselves, leaving the class without a teacher.¹³⁹

Both these factors, poor level of teacher education and the poor payment of teachers, heavily influence the quality of education in CAR. It makes the profession of teaching especially unpopular. This in its turn results in a great shortage of teachers, and consequent overcrowded classrooms.¹⁴⁰

135 See footnote 32.

136 Interviews 3, 7, 16, 17, 20, 22, 27. 52, 57, 61, 64, 65, 74, 80, 81, 84, 92; observations 6, 16, 18 See also: République Centrafricaine (2002): p. 18.

137 See §3.1.3.

138 Interviews 4, 6, 7, 11, 14, 16, 17 22, 23, 27, 36, 47, 48, 49, 51, 52, 54, 57, 60, 65, 70, 75, 78, 80, 84, 85, 86, 96, 120, 121; observation 12. See also Groupe de la Banque Mondiale (2017) : p. 12.

139 interv 4, 6, 7, 11, 14, 16, 17 22, 23, 27, 36, 47, 48, 49, 51, 52, 54, 57, 60, 65, 70, 75, 78, 80, 84, 85, 86, 96, 120, 121; observation 12.

140 Interviews 4, 7, 10, 14, 16, 17, 22. According to the National Commune Monography Survey, local authorities indicate that the main challenges for primary schools are the insufficient number of teachers or the lack of teacher qualification. See: Groupe de la Banque Mondiale (2017): p. 15

5.4 Corruption

Although it is a taboo subject, it is no secret that the CAR suffers greatly from corruption on all levels of society.¹⁴¹ And it should come as no surprise that corruption greatly influences the quality of education. Below the effects of corruption on education will be discussed, as it is found on different levels (the classroom, the government and NGOs).

5.4.1 In the classroom

The form of corruption that most directly influences the quality of education in the CAR is corruption in the classroom. There are two forms of corruption found in CAR classrooms; corruption according to the marketplace model (marks for sale) and the extortion model (when the teacher forces the student to pay, as a condition for education). There are two means of payment: money or sex.

1 Marketplace model:

- a. Marks for sale
- b. Exam answers for sale

2 Extortion model:

- a. No teaching unless the teacher gets paid
- b. Children are hit if they don't pay
- c. If you don't pay, the teacher will make you fail the exam, you'll have to redouble the class

Many children in our research had quite detailed stories about the corruption they have witnessed or participated in, in the classroom.¹⁴² Seeing as it is such a hidden, taboo subject, it is quite hard to say anything about how often it occurs. An indication may be given by a questionnaire we sent per text message via the Ureport system:¹⁴³

Question 1 (1157 respondents): During my education, I have had experience with corruption in the classroom...

once	14%
2-5 times	51%
often	19%
never	15%
I have heard about it	2%

Question 2 (892 respondents): I have paid to have a good mark, with money or by sexual activities...

once	11%
a few times	6%
often	4%
never	79%

So, 84% of the respondents have had direct experience with corruption in the classroom. 21% admits to having paid themselves to get a good mark at least once, either by money or by sexual activities.¹⁴⁴

141 See, among others: Gan Business Anti-Corruption Portal (2016); Transparency International (2016); Freedom House (2017).

142 Interviews 2, 3, 5, 6, 18, 21, 24, 35, 36.

143 See § 1.1.

144 However, as the respondents are people who can read and write in French and who own a mobile phone (to be able to answer the questionnaire), they can be assumed to be the "better off" students – the real occurrence of corruption in classrooms might therefore in fact be higher. On the other hand, even if the first three questions of this questionnaire were specifically about primary education, the connotation of "during my education" includes all levels of education, and thus goes a little beyond the scope of this research, which focuses on primary and secondary education.

***Paying money for marks*¹⁴⁵**

In CAR, marks are often for sale. It is a tricky business; sometimes a teacher might be insulted if you offer them money, sometimes they might be glad, sometimes they might even punish you for not giving anything. Both paying and not paying can get you in trouble. Both children and parents can pay teachers, to help the student move on in his education (at least on paper).

Interview 3. A boy of 13 years old, who lives in a city in the centre-south of CAR. He is in class CM2 of a public primary school.

MH: To have good marks, is there corruption?

REsp: The teacher asks for money.

MH: And how much does that cost?

Resp: The students collect the money together. So the whole class contributes. Everyone together [...] during the exams, we make the gesture, this will allow for the teacher to show us a good part of the subject, and to help us answer the questions. During the exam he gives the right answers.

MH: How do you get the money?

Resp: I ask my father.

MH: And he gives it to you?

Resp: Sometimes he doesn't [...] then I don't eat breakfast [to save the breakfast money].

So students can sometimes pay to have good marks and pass on to the next year. However, seeing as there is a limit in the number of students who can go to the next year, sometimes this means that a student who did not pay will therefore fail the exams (even if they know the answers).

Interview 5. A girl of 14 years old, who lives on an IDP site in a town in the centre of CAR. She is in class CM2 of a private school.

Resp: When you study, and you have your mark, if someone comes who gives money to take your mark, they will take your mark and give it to the one who has given money. So in the end, if you have passed the exam, they take your mark and give it to someone else. And if you go and protest, it's a problem. When the student wants to reclaim his mark, and the parents of the student come too to claim the mark, it will turn into a fight. If that happens, it's over, the teacher will not favour you, he will not count on you anymore, he will abandon you in the classroom. Next, the teacher will create problems so that they can send you away from school and send you elsewhere.

MH: Did that happen to you?

Resp: Not to me, but it happened to my close friends. It made me very sad.

Even if the practice is condemned by most people, perhaps it is understandable that teachers who earn so little money are tempted to hand out marks for money. But does that really justify the practice? One university professor, who teaches becoming-teachers, argued:

Interview 42. *"I teach ethics. For teachers, to not sell marks, to not flirt with the girls. Once, a man said to me: "I live in the 7th arrondissement [of Bangui]. Too far from school. I do not have a scholarship to come to school. I am poor. If a student gives me money, will I not accept it? I have a wife and children at home. [The authorities] told me to do an internship far from home. I do it." I said: ok, it's clear, there is a problem of financial means. Why have you chosen to become a teacher? You know that in the CAR the teachers do not have money. Either you depend on that sum [of your salary], or you go do something else."*

***Paying by sexual activities*¹⁴⁶**

Another way to pay for good marks is by engaging in sexual activities with the teacher. Although the practice seems to occur both with girl and boy students, sex between boy students and teachers seems to be more of an exception, whereas sex with girl students is relatively common place in CAR education. As with payment by money, students who have sex with the teacher can get in trouble both for having or not having sex with the teacher.

145 Interviews 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 16, 18, 21, 22, 24, 25, 34, 35, 36, 40, 42, 43, 45, 46, 49, 53, 60, 64, 65, 73.

146 Interviews 2, 5, 7, 16, 21, 22, 35, 36, 42, 65, 103, 104. See also the research by Mimche & Tanang (2013).

These two researchers asked 765 respondents of age 10 and older, in different areas in CAR, whether they had been the victim of specific forms of psychological, physical, economic and/or sexual violence in school during 12 months before the questionnaire. Their results show that 7.9% of girls and 1% of boys reported having had "sexual activities imposed on them for marks" (p. 52).

Interview 36. A 20 year old girl who just got her high school diploma (BAC) in public school, in a city in the Centre-South of the CAR.

Resp : Sometimes the teachers know of themselves that they are infected [with HIV/AIDS], and still they permit themselves to infect the students, because the students are children, they do not understand and the good marks attract them.

MH: Did a teacher ever propose anything like that to you?

Resp: Yes. There was a teacher. I had my father to protect me against that. For example: if you don't understand something, and you go and ask the teacher to ask for an explanation, he will say "my student, look, I know that I am your teacher, so I will tell you tonight, between us." Whenever a teacher would tell me that, I would stop asking for help. [...] Another example: a teacher asked for my phone number. I told the monsieur I do not have a phone. He asked me to take his number. I took it, after I went to see my father. My father advised me: call him. I called him, on my father's phone. The teacher asked whether I could come and see him somewhere so that we could talk. I passed the phone to my father, and he said: "It is forbidden, mr. teacher, with a student. So you will apologize and please do not bother my daughter at school." As a consequence, the teacher took half of my points so that I failed his course.

One of the consequences of this practice, in addition to diminishing the value of school diplomas and exam results, is that teachers and students are getting sick and even dying, because the practice spreads around HIV/AIDS.¹⁴⁷ This is said to contribute to the shortage of teachers.¹⁴⁸

Another question is whether students or teachers are responsible for this practice. In the discussion, again the autonomous position of the child comes to the fore, as most (both adults and children) argue that the child is at least partially responsible for the situation. Often, girls choose to have sex with the teacher, they even flirt with him, to get good marks or because they simply want to be in a relationship with the teacher.¹⁴⁹

147 UNAIDS estimates that in 2015 about 3,7% of CAR people between ages 15-49 is infected with HIV/AIDS (2017). According to the world bank / PNUD estimation in 2008, about 13% of all teachers have HIV/AIDS and about 70 teachers a year were dying from the disease. However, in 2008 the percentage of people between ages 15-49 that were infected was still 10,7%, so the number of infected teachers has probably gone down since then (Banque Mondiale (2008): p. 3).

148 See the Guardian (2001).

149 Interviews 16, 22, 35, 36, 103.

Interview 22. An education inspector (chef secteur) in a town in the centre of CAR.

Resp: There are girls who want to continue their studies. So they dress in a certain way. They show themselves. Sometimes that's what attracts the teacher.

MH: That is against the law, or not?

Resp: Yes. But it is a double-edged knife.

MH: Why?

REsp: Because if there is sexual harassment, it is not just the teacher, it is the girl too. Because of her behaviour.

MH: So both are to blame?

Resp: Exactly.

MH: She is harassing the teacher?

Resp: OK.

MH: No matter what age?

Resp: Surely. We often think of 6eme, the children who are often 12 years old. But it is a little difficult, because a child of 12 cannot execute a sexual harassment. Those are the ones of 18 years old, who are blocked in their studies but forces themselves to continue. So it starts there, the way of dressing.

MH: And imagine a girl of 16 years old, or...From what age is the child to blame?

Resp: At the moment, even the girls of 7-10 years old who see their older sisters dress up, they think it really is a better way to dress. If the parents don't pay attention in the family, the girls will follow.

MH: That is hard for the teacher?

Resp: It all depends. Say for example that a girl has the habit to go to school with a shirt [...] [the teacher's] task is to reproach the girl [...] if there is already a sexual thought on his mind, he can let himself go. Both are wrong, both are in error.

MH: No matter what age the girl has?

Resp: No, those who have attained the age of puberty do this, before they don't. I don't know the age of puberty, those of age 14...who have discovered their private parts. But the teachers are to blame when they are the ones who approach the girls. Because they are attracted by certain behaviour...they are obliged to make advances.

5.4.2 On the level of the government ¹⁵⁰

On the level of the government, too, we find many different forms of corruption that directly or indirectly influence education in CAR. There seem to be three general occurrences of corruption on government level (in relation to education):

- 1 Money that is supposed to be for education disappears;
- 2 Nepotism: when government jobs are given to family members or friends of those in powers (for example positions within the education inspection);
- 3 Favours-for-money, such as teachers paying government officials to look the other way when for example they are sent to teach in a certain town and they do not want to go

In this context, the policies of nepotism and favours-for-money create a large information gap.

The consequence of favouring your family members and giving them the jobs of inspecting education, is not only that they are often incompetent to do their work, but also that they are under pressure to write in their reports exactly what people in power want to hear. As a consequence, data in the reports of the inspection is often unreliable,¹⁵¹ meanwhile this is the data that NGOs, donors and government mostly base their plan of action on. So even when there is money for education, even when the needed materials are bought, distributed, etc. often the intervention does not give the schools, the parents, teachers and children what they really need.

There is for example an interest for the inspectors and the government to show how they are doing really well. They might therefore overstate the amount of students enrolled in their area (some went as far to argue that in their area 100% of the children between age 6-18 were in school), and provide false enrolment data to the national level.

150 Interviews 16, 17, 22, 27, 36, 42, 43, 52, 60, 65, 73, 80, 104.

151 Interviews 7, 43, 52, 60, 65.

Second, according to national regulations, the education inspectors propose whom they think should be integrated as teachers paid by the state (*enseignants titulaires*). So they sometimes propose certain candidates, on the condition that these candidates pay them a percentage of their monthly salaries.

Third, on the level of finances, it seems that money already disappears before it even reaches the Ministry of Education. As a consequence, there are often delays in the payment of teachers, and the employees of the Ministry have no means to realize their education plans.

Interview 74. An employee of the Ministry of Education: “Every year, [the government] announces: “you have this sum available”, and that sum rests blocked at the level of the ministry of Finance. We receive practically nothing. For example: there is a photocopier, but [international donors] have to pay for the ink patterns [...]”

Interview 16. A former employee of the ministry of education: “Between what comes in and the usage of the money, there is a problem...due to impunity, there are no consequent punishments, so sometimes if there is a little money, the money disappears, it continues, continues, it creates a large gap [...] it is not at the level of the Ministry [of Education], it’s at the level of [the Ministry of] Finance. The minister [of education] himself has problems getting payment. [...] they cut the salary of the minister in half because there is not enough money [...] Everything that the people and the companies pay, it has to go into the fund of the state. On that level, there are things put in place, a detouring system. With impunity, it goes on and on [...] it’s been like that for years.”

Interview 7. An education inspector (chef secteur), who works in a town in the centre-north of the CAR.
Resp [after a long conversation about the state of education in CAR, speaking slowly and emotional]: “It is really that it is a little, in general, with the services in Bangui, it is really difficult, doing the paperwork, you have to give something, so that it works out...[stops not to cry] ...it is really blocking me. That corruption there, one doesn’t know what to do...certainly, it happens at a high level, it’s the poor people that suffer. When we see someone a little high-placed, it is really difficult, really difficult. Even ... [silent]
MH: Even if you know something, it doesn’t help to say it?
Resp: No. It’s hard. It’s power.

Interview 60. A former education inspector, who now works for an NGO in the centre-west of CAR.
Resp: For example, a teacher who does not want to be assigned, they have to go and talk to the education inspector, to ask him whether she can stay here, and this can be done through money or prostitution. [...] on a higher level, the nominations of the headmasters, they are sometimes nominated because they pay. Not because of their capacities. Or they can be nominated because of their political positions. Such as for example the education inspectors.
MH: Concretely, what does it mean, for example are the reports of the inspection adapted to the preferences of the Ministry?
Resp: Yes, yes. For example, if the number of teachers [in the area] is insufficient, one cannot say concretely I need a teacher. One cannot say the truth because it is the minister who has nominated you. [...] one cannot critique.
MH: So what do you do?
Resp: We don’t tell the truth. We camouflage things.

5.4.3 On the level of NGOs ¹⁵²

At the NGO level, corruption seems to be even more taboo than on the government level. As with the government, whenever several members of an organization engage in corrupt activities, it does not mean that the whole organization is corrupt. However, there does seem to be corruption when it comes to NGOs in CAR who work on education. This mostly seems to happen whenever a field office is handling money transferred down to them by NGOs on the national level. They get transferred money to for example build a school, pay teachers, etc. NGO field offices report back to the national level saying that they build a school, but in fact have not done the work – or only in part - and kept the money for themselves. Or a field officer goes to a school to pay teachers, on behalf of the NGO, but he gives them only part of their salary and keeps the rest to himself.

152 Interviews 7, 11, 16, 17, 43, 52, 62, 65, 84.

These practices are largely influenced by the fact that travelling through the CAR, over bad roads and with armed groups around, is extremely insecure for NGO employees. The CAR is one of the most dangerous countries in the world for NGO employees; according to the Aid in Danger analysis, from January 2015 – June 2016 11 aid workers in CAR were killed, 3 were kidnapped and 23 were assaulted or injured.¹⁵³ Therefore, NGOs operating on a national level prefer to hand over tasks to people who are already in the field.

The consequence of the limited NGO presence in the field, and especially the little contact between NGO people working on the national level and the local communities, is also shown in a research by NGO NRC. In March 2015, they interviewed 689 people, asking about their perception of humanitarian aid in CAR. Two of their key findings were that:

- 1) A large majority of the respondents thought that NGO work was not monitored and evaluated enough. If it would be controlled more, this could prevent many mistakes and cases of fraud.
- 2) ‘Many respondents accused [local NGO staff] of profiteering from their positions, notably by keeping a portion of the aid to be distributed; by ensuring that their relatives get the available jobs instead of the locals; by distributing goods to their relatives rather than to the most vulnerable; by ignoring the local chiefs or not engaging with the communities enough’.¹⁵⁴

Interview 64. A religious leader and head of an NGO, in a city in the Centre-South.

Resp: In the context of NGOs, often I have had to send back people who asked me to give them a percentage of the sum received. I wonder sometimes whether the head [of the organization] is aware. To give an example, recently we gave a sum of money so that certain people could be lodged, and the person in charge of this, of the organization took a percentage before giving it to the people in need. [...] After, they were fired. When we discover this kind of activities, we automatically involve the people involved.

MH: It occurs often

Resp : That’s it.

MH : In general I don’t arrive at getting this kind of information. You know other NGOs too?

Resp: [name of another INGO]. It is important to know that in most cases of corruption it is the employees who are corrupted and not the NGO itself. It is important to make the difference. But certainly if we discover it we fire them immediately. For a long time we select and we denounce the corruption. We give “a kick in the ant’s nest” (« un coup de pied dans la fourmilière »). There is also the problem of incompetency. Certain employees of NGOs are incompetent because they have received their position through a political election by a member of the family, the ethnicity...

Interview 16 with an employee of an NGO, working on the national level.

REsp: The NGOs, normally the money for education should go to the government. But seeing as the government has management issues, they pass also by the NGOs. And often [laughs] they find trouble with the NGOs.

MH: How does that work?

ResP: If sometimes there are schools to be built, money is given to NGOs and the state supervises. But the NGOs can do the work incorrectly too. And the problem that is created at the level of the state, we can encounter it on the level of NGOs. So a supervision is needed that is sufficiently strong, to reduce the risk.

There are indications of corruption on a national level too. Some respondents wonder, for example, why and how NGOs operating on a national level are party to the decision (and deal) to publish and distribute the books “Ma Semaine” (see § 5.2.1), or why the chalk in the school kits is bought in China/Taiwan.

153 See Aid in Danger (n.d.).

154 Norwegian Refugee Council, Renouf, J.S. (2015).

5.5 Rules and punishment

As in most schools in the world, schools in the Central African Republic have rules. Rules in CAR classrooms include for children to have to arrive on time in the morning, to have to listen to the teacher and to be silent in class.¹⁵⁵



8. A chicotte in a CM1&CM2 classroom of a public school.

A question currently up for debate is whether or not corporal punishment should be used in schools, and if so, in what form. In addition, a question is whether physical violence (hitting, kicking, etc.) should be used only when a student breaks a rule, or whether it can simply be used whenever the teacher wants to. The section below will discuss:

1. the different forms of corporal punishment found in CAR classrooms
2. the different opinions on the matter
3. alternative punishments

5.5.1 Forms of corporal punishment in CAR classrooms

With “corporal punishment”, we mean any form of physically hurting the child, meant as a punishment.¹⁵⁶

In CAR classrooms, by far the most common instrument used to inflict corporal punishment is the “*chicotte*”, a wooden stick with rubber bands attached (see picture).¹⁵⁷ In Western countries, the *chicotte* is famous for being used by colonizers against (African) slaves;¹⁵⁸ in CAR, it is still frequently used by adults to control and/or punish children. The use of the *chicotte* is widespread; according to the Ureport questionnaire, 88% of almost 2.984 respondents have been hit with the *chicotte* in primary school, of which 11% even on a daily basis. In addition, 91% says they have seen their classmates getting hit with the *chicotte* in primary school, of which 36% witnessed this form of physical punishment on a daily basis.

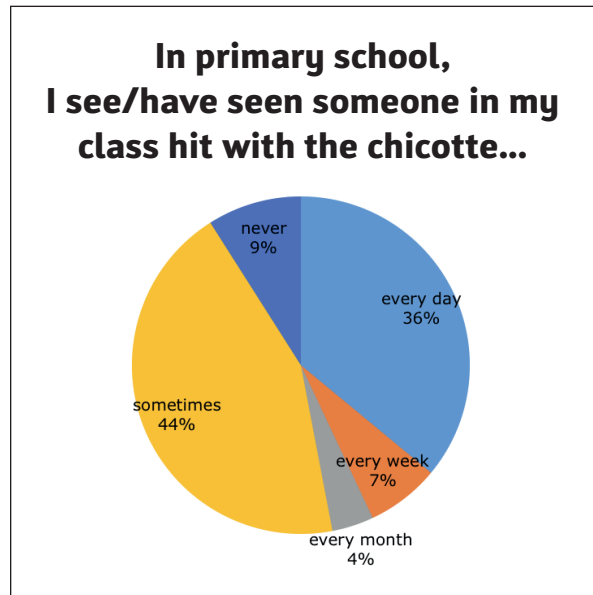
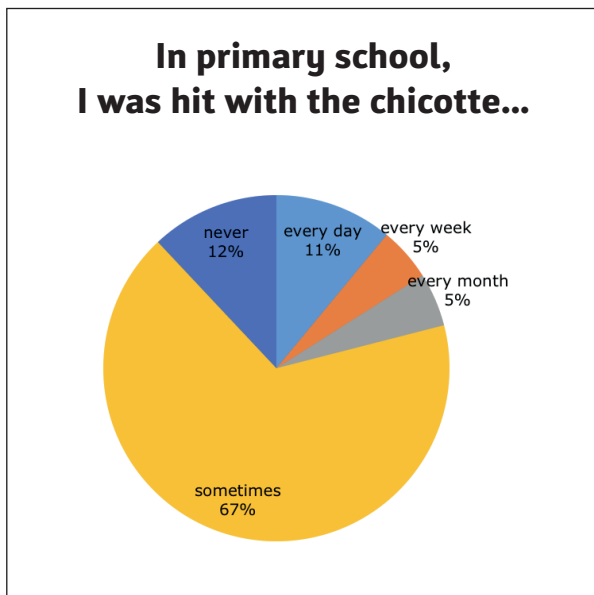
155 Interviews 1, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 31, 32, 33, 35, 30, 39, 40, 41, 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 53, 54, 58, 59, 67, 75, 80.

156 Or, as used in academic writings: the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience physical pain, for the purpose of correction or control of the child’s behavior. This is an adapted definition of Straus’s definition. See Straus, M.A. (2000): p. 1110.

157 Interviews 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 16, 17, 19, 21, 24, 31, 32, 35, 36, 39, 40, 41, 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 53, 54, 58, 59, 65, 78, 80, 81, 82, 92; observations 10, 14, 15, 16, 22.

158 See, amongst others: Peté & Devenish (2005); Lombard (2016): p. 117.

To whomever has never experienced getting hit in this way, it might be telling that when in Saudi Arabia they sentence criminals to get flogged – a practice generally classified as a severe human rights violation¹⁵⁹ - they do so with a light wooden cane. Using rubber would be much more painful and physically damaging.



Total been hit	Total never been hit
88%	12%

Total seen hit	Total never seen hit
91%	9%

159 See UN Committee Against Torture (2017) and Human Rights Watch (2016).
There are different ways of using the *chicotte* in the classroom:

1 The teacher hits the child on the body¹⁶⁰

This is the most occurring way of *chicotter*, when a teacher uses the *chicotte* to hit the children mostly on the buttocks, sometimes on other body parts such as legs and the back (or simply “anywhere”). Of course the force the teacher uses influences greatly in how painful this is, but the instrument is in itself a painful one. Hitting with the *chicotte* often leads to scarring. When the teacher uses his/her full force, this form of punishment can have serious health consequences such as hyperventilation, blindness, infection and even death.¹⁶¹

Interview 1.1, boy of 16 years old, in 3rd grade of high school, private school, in a city in the centre-south of CAR.

Resp: “If you hit the child, s/he can become ill, it can complicate the situation [...] when I was in primary school, there was a student who had diabetes. The teacher hit him in a way, he fell, he fainted, they took him into the hospital...”

2 The teacher hits the child on the body while the child is in a difficult position¹⁶²

Students are sometimes told to stand upside-down against the wall (*pieds au mur*) or sit on their knees. They will then be hit in this position.

3 The teacher orders other children to (help to) hit their fellow student.¹⁶³

It is not uncommon for teachers to order children to hit the other students. They may have favourite students who they pick to keep order, and whom they give a *chicotte* to hit other children.

Interview 2.6. A girl of 8 years old, who is in class CE1 of a private school, in a city in the centre-south of CAR.

Resp: “The teacher says that I can take the chicotte when people are talking and I whip hard three times, like that they return to their seats. And they have told me that if whipping hard three times does nothing to them, then I have to whip 20 times. That is in general for the boys, because the girls in general when I whip them they cry and so after two hits of the chicotte I stop.

MH: Is it you who decides to do so, or does your teacher ask you to do that?

Resp: the teacher tells me to do it.

MH: Does she often ask you to do that?

Resp: Yes.

MH: And do you think that’s normal?

Resp: A little bad. Because, imagine whipping a little very hard, then I risk to injure a child. And also the teacher, she injures the children a lot.

MH: Yes? How does she injure them?

Resp: She whips them by the feet, and that leaves marks and after there is blood that flows. [...] It would be better not to chicotte children at school. Because when you chicotte children too much, they will have the habit of chicotter the others, for example my friend she loves to chicotte the others.

160 Interviews 1, 8, 18, 35, 36, 41, 48, 58, 59, 78, 82.

161 Several children reported their classmates having to go to the hospital, one child reported the death of a classmate. See also NewStatesman (2015) and Malone (2008).

162 Interviews 35, 36, 41, 58.

163 Interviews 8, 35, 36, 41, 78, 82.

A second practice is when students are ordered to take up the feet and hands of the students that has to be punished, and pull them apart while the teacher uses the *chicotte* to hit the student on the back.

Interview 1.35, a boy of 11 years old who is in class CM1 of a public school in a large town in the West of CAR.

Resp: Sometimes if you don't do the things that your teacher asks of you, sometimes the teacher puts you on your knees. Sometimes you have to stand upside-down, two feet on the wall. Sometimes your teacher puts you in "otono".

MH: What's that?

Resp: that's when the teacher asks four people, two take the hands, and two take the feet, and pull. And like that, the teacher gives you a good hit on your butt. With the chicotte. That's what we call "otono".

MH: And what do you think of it?

Resp: I think it is very bad.

MH: Why?

Resp: For me, otono is very bad because it is dangerous. Sometimes, while pulling the child like this, children risk breaking their arms.

MH: That happens?

Resp: Sometimes it breaks, and sometimes you find a dislocation. The arm moves itself [out of the shoulder socket].

MH: Have you experienced this?

Resp: Yes.

MH: Can you describe the situation?

Resp: All the people, all the children who have had this form of punishment, they are children who talk a lot in the classroom, who do not respect the principles that the teacher has given.

4 Other forms of corporal punishment¹⁶⁴

Lastly, there are other forms of corporal punishment in CAR classrooms, such as:

- hitting children with other objects (ruler, stick);
- making children stand outside in the burning sun for a period of time;
- making children stand upside down against the wall for a period of time.

5.5.2 Different opinions on the matter

According to national and international law, using the *chicotte* is illegal.¹⁶⁵ However, opinions on the subject of corporal punishment vary greatly among CAR people, both among children and among adults. These views were expressed during our interviews:

View	Nr. of adults	Nr. of children
1. The chicotte should not be used because it teaches violence to children	5	2
2. Corporal punishment should be used when children don't know the response to a question	2	6
3. Children should not be asked or even forced to hit each other	-	2
4. The chicotte should not be used because it doesn't work	4	3
5. The chicotte should not be used because children will not come back to school	5	2
6. The chicotte is necessary to install discipline (to make sure that children follow the rules)	5	6
7. The chicotte should be used to motivate the students	3	2
8. The chicotte should not be used because it is dangerous	5	7

164 Interviews 1, 41, 45, 49, 53, 58.

165 See: Constitution (2015), art. 3; Code Penal (2010), art. 118-120; Banjul Charter (1981), art. 5; Convention against Torture (1984), art. 1 and 2; CRC (1989), art. 19.1, 28.2; Code Penal, art. 74 : « : Quiconque aura volontairement fait des blessures ou porté des coups à un enfant au dessous de l'âge de 15 ans accomplis ou qui l'aura volontairement privé d'aliments ou de soins au point de compromettre sa santé, sera puni d'emprisonnement d'un à cinq ans et d'une amende de 100.002 à 600.000 francs ».

1. The chicotte should not be used because it teaches violence to children¹⁶⁶

Proponents of this view argue that corporal punishments is no good, because you do not want to teach children that using violence is a good thing. So you as a teacher should not use violence either.

Interview 18. A boy of 8 years old, in class CP2 of the public school in a town in the south-east of CAR.

MH: Are there rules in the school?

Resp: Yes.

MH: Like what?

Resp: You should not hurt other people [...] You should not fight.

MH: And if you fight with someone, what happens?

Resp: They don't leave it, they correct.

MH: What kind of correction?

Resp: They hit us and after they give the advice not to fight anymore.

MH: How do they hit you?

Resp: With the chicotte. [...] I think it's bad.

MH: Why?

Resp: Because they forbid us [to hurt other people].

2. Corporal punishment should be used when children don't know the response to a question¹⁶⁷

In addition to disobedience, a reason often mentioned to use the *chicotte* is because children do not know the answer to a question. Some are of the opinion that it is necessary to hit in this case, because otherwise the child does not learn. This argument was heard quite often by both children and adults. Parents in some cases pay teachers to hit their child more.

Interview 31. A boy of 12 years old, who is in class CM1 of a private school, in a town in the Northwest of CAR.

Resp : If the teacher asks a question and you don't answer, he will hit you with the chicotte.

MH : And if I ask, 5+5, what is it ?

Resp : 10.

MH : Imagine you reply to me saying « 11 ». Can I hit you with the chicotte for that ?

Resp : Yes.

MH : Why ?

Resp : Because I do not know the sum.

MH : Can you explain that to me ? I can hit you because you do not understand the sum ?

Resp : Yes.

MH : But what will it do ? You don't understand, I hit you, and after you understand ?

Resp : Yes.

3. Children should not be asked or even forced to hit each other¹⁶⁸

Many children complained about this practice. Hitting their classmates is embarrassing to them, and afterwards they feel guilty. Also they are afraid to do permanent harm to their friends, which might get them in trouble. Children who are ordered by the teacher to hit their classmates feel that they have to do it, because otherwise they themselves will get hit by the teacher.

166 Interviews 14, 16, 18, 39, 43, 60, 64.

167 Interviews 3, 21, 31, 40, 48, 50, 59, 78.

168 Interviews 36, 45.

Interview 83. A girl of 12 years old, in class CM1 of a public school, in a town in South-Eastern CAR.

MH : *Do you also sometimes hit the other [classmates] ?*

Resp : *Yes.*

MH : *Why ?*

Resp : *It is the teacher who tells me to do it, and I do it.*

MH : *And what if you don't ?*

Resp : *They hit me with the chicotte.*

MH : *How do you chicotte the others ?*

Resp : *On their buttocks.*

MH : *How many times, normally ?*

Resp : *2 times.*

MH : *And what do you think of that ?*

REsp : *It's not good. It's not what is in my heart.*

MH : *What does your heart tell you ?*

Resp : *I have seen that it is not good, when I hit like that, it hurts me.*

MH : *And the others...*

Resp : *When I am whipping them, it hurts my heart. When I leave the school I say sorry.*

MH : *And what do they say ?*

Resp : *They accept it.*

4. The chicotte should not be used because it doesn't work¹⁶⁹

Some people in CAR education argue that the chicotte should not be used, because it doesn't work. That is to say, it doesn't create obedient children, it doesn't teach children. More specifically, it creates lazy students. They argue that children get used to the *chicotte* because they are hit so often. And so, when they have to do their homework, they choose not to, because they prefer to endure the pain of getting whipped 3 or 5 times.

5. The chicotte should not be used because children will not come back to school¹⁷⁰

Some adults testified to having decided to stop going to school after getting a particular beating from the teacher. Some children argue that they, or their classmates, sometimes go to school but not enter the classroom, because they do not want to get beaten.

6. The chicotte is necessary to install discipline (to make sure that children follow the rules)¹⁷¹

Some people argue that in fact children are not hit hard enough and this is why the quality of education in CAR is so low. Sometimes parents even ask the teachers, and/or even pay the teachers to hit their child harder and more often, because they believe that in that way s/he will learn more.

Interview 65. A religious leader and father, in a city in the centre-south of CAR.

Resp : *I don't think [the teachers] hit in the right way. Not like in our time.*

MH : *What is the difference?*

Resp : *The difference is, in our time they were using the chicotte with force. Now, when you hit hard, and it leaves marks on the child, the father and mother will get angry at the teacher.*

MH : *So the teachers don't hit hard?*

REsp : *They don't use the chicotte, it is only to scare the children. They whip on the clothes.*

MH : *So how should it be done?*

Resp : *In our time, we took our clothes off.*

MH : *And on the buttocks?*

Resp : *Yes. Without clothes. It's harder.*

MH : *That hurts.*

Resp : *Yes, that hurts. I see now that the teachers when they use the chicotte, they are afraid to do it with force.*

169 Interviews 1, 36, 41, 46, 60, 65, 75. See also Middleton (2008), who writes: "As some individuals noted, there were children who were soon rendered indifferent to punishment, dividing the world into arbitrary authority and themselves." (p. 269). In a research by Anderson & Payne, in which they interviewed 290 10/11 year old children from Barbados about the effect of getting hit in the classroom makes the students behave better, 54% argued that hitting the child does not make "bad" students behave better. (1984: p. 382).

170 Interviews 36, 41, 60, 62, 65, 75, 81.

171 Interviews 1, 2, 16, 31, 40, 41, 48, 49, 80, 82, 107.

7. The chicotte should be used to motivate the students¹⁷²

Another argument that is regularly heard as a reason for having to use the *chicotte*, is that it is necessary to motivate students. If children don't get hit, they will not work. The argument is connected to the fact that the *chicotte* is part of African culture.¹⁷³

Interview 40. A girl of 16 years old who's in classe S2 (high school), a private school in a city in the Centre-South of CAR.

Resp : I studied in [school 1], and I came here [school 2] last year, because of security reasons.

MH : How was your first school ?

Resp : It was really good there [...] there was even a priest who taught me how to study my lessons. When I couldn't do it he would hit me and teach me everything. I loved him a lot because it is thanks to him that I can do maths.

MH : You say he hit you ?

Resp : Yes.

MH : And you like it ? Why ?

Resp : Because it is a way to correct me, to teach me how to study, to learn my lessons.

MH : How did he hit you ?

REsp : With a *chicotte*.

MH : But how do you learn maths by getting hit ?

Resp : He told me : look what you did, it's not good. He hits me and after he speaks. He shows me.

MH : Do you think you would have never learned if you would not have been hit ?

Resp : Yes, because I am very stubborn. I like to laugh a lot with everyone but I don't like to study. When they hit me, it works.

MH : Do they hit you in [school 2] too ?

Resp : The only time they hit me was when I arrived too late, in the third grade.

MH : Are you sorry that they don't hit you anymore ?

Resp : Yes, because I am used to the *chicotte*. They have to hit me before I can work.

MH : Is there no other way to motivate you ?

Resp : Yes, they can withhold food, lock me up in my room and after it's ok.

MH : Is there no positive motivation ? For example to learn something that interests you a lot ? [...] Do you know something that motivates you like that ?

Resp : To play football. My father shows me the rankings and tells me how to do better. Because I love football a lot.

MH : So imagine he would use football also for [teaching] maths.

Resp : It's true that I like that very much.

MH : I'm asking you because where I come from, we motivate the children like that, and we don't hit them [...] What do you think ?

Resp : They can give us instructions without the *chicotte*, but... We are used to the *chicotte*. We are Africans.

MH : How is that ?

Resp : Africans love the *chicotte*. Like a camel, if you hit him with the *chicotte* he will do what you tell him to do, and if you don't, he will not do it.

MH : So you think it is a good thing for the Africans ?

Resp : Yes.

8. The chicotte should not be used because it is dangerous

Many children and adults told us stories of how the use of the *chicotte* can in fact be dangerous. If a teacher hits in the wrong way, in the wrong place or because he doesn't know that a child is already sick, children might get seriously sick, they end up in the hospital and might even die.¹⁷⁴

172 Interviews 16, 21, 40, 51, 78, 92.

173 This an argument that in our research has only been used by African people. No western person said anything similar.

174 Interviews 1, 5, 16, 22, 35, 36, 40, 41, 45, 70, 72, 80.

5.5.3 Alternative punishments

Children who were interviewed mentioned many different forms of punishment, which can be used by teachers when students are behaving incorrectly.¹⁷⁵ It is quite understandable, with the amount of students per classroom, that teachers feel unsure about how to keep all children calm enough to be able to even teach. Therefore these alternative punishments may be useful for whom does not want to use corporal punishment. Some of these have as an advantage that they are in fact educational, so children can learn something from doing these tasks. These are alternative punishments that CAR children think are effective:

- 1 Give the student a homework task, to do an extra « recitation ». Or let them do some work while the other students play outside
- 2 Tell the student to clean the classroom/playground after school
- 3 Expel a student for 3 days or a week. If the bad behaviour repeats, send the student away from school
- 4 Give the student a sentence that he has to write. For example, you have to write « I will not speak in the classroom » 250 times, and hand it in the next day. And if the student does not do the work, the next day he has to write it 500 times.
- 5 Talk to the student. If that doesn't work, convoke the parents and talk with both the parents and the child
- 6 Give the student some advice. Explain that their parents are suffering to pay for their school fees, and/or that if you don't do your work, at the end of the year you will not pass to the next class
- 7 Give the child who misbehaves a warning. If they continue to misbehave, send them home for the day
- 8 Send the child to the school director
- 9 Do not let the child come in when he is late in the morning
- 10 Let the child who misbehaves sit on its knees for a few minutes

Interview 19. An 8 year old girl who is in class CP2 of the public school in a town in the Southeast of CAR.

MH: Are there rules in the classroom?

Resp: Yes. When I go to school, our teacher gives us advise, saying that we have to study and listen to the teacher. When we go home, we have to listen to our parents.

MH: Do you always listen to your teacher?

Resp: Yes.

MH: So what does he tell you, for example?

Resp: He tells me: you are my children in this classroom. I teach you so that you will understand [...]. That is why I ask you not to make noise. You have to tell me if there are children who make noise, so that I can correct them.

MH: Ok, and to correct, how does that happen?

Resp: He gives advice to those who make noise, if they continue, he will hit them, or if he doesn't hit, he will send them home. You should not make noise, you have to be silent to learn.

MH: And, do you sometimes make noise?

Resp: No.

MH: And are there other punishments?

REsp: No. It's just to encourage the students to study better.

¹⁷⁵ Interviews 1, 5, 14, 17, 19, 20, 31, 32, 36, 39, 40, 43, 46, 49, 51, 55, 64.

5.6 National policy for improving the quality of education

Many actors that decide over education on a national level do not seem to be aware of what is going on in CAR classrooms.¹⁷⁶ It is hard to tell whether this ignorance is the consequence of genuine unawareness (possibly because of the inexistence of true information), of deliberate “not wanting to know” or even of deliberately withholding information. For example, corruption in classrooms in particular and, to a lesser degree, corporal punishment, are subjects that are not discussed or even often denied.¹⁷⁷ In both national transition plans for education in CAR, corruption is not mentioned at all.¹⁷⁸ Malnutrition is supposed to be tackled by the World Food Program by means of school meals, but it is unclear what actions are taken so far.¹⁷⁹

Interview 11. An NGO employee working on the national level.

Resp: This is one of the big issues, monitoring activities, finding out what is going on. And a lot of the time people report that they're doing things, and when you get to the field there's nothing there. So that's one of the big challenges.

MH: It must be so hard, you being lied to all the time.

Resp: Yes. But then you must realize that you can only do what's within your capacity. I cannot go and check every source of information. [...]

MH: And did you hear anything about corruption in schools?

Resp: Ehm... Corruption in schools...ehm...between..no I wouldn't..yeah, yeah, a lot of parents paying. Yeah. A lot of like, so, basically enrolment should be free except for a small contribution, but a lot of the time parents are asked to pay fees that are way higher than they should be. [...] So we just passed a note circulaire from the ministry, reminding, detailing all of the prizes. To make sure that people don't pay more. And also a lot of, I've heard stories of bribing for marks, but then also beyond corruption like violence in the schools, stuff like that.

MH: What kind of violence?

Resp: A lot of gbv [gender based violence] incidents. So sex for grades and things like that.

MH: I haven't read any reports or anything.

Resp: I don't think there's anything that has been documented. It is not so widespread, I don't think it's out, if you see what I mean,

MH: You think it's, like, incidents?

Resp: Yes.

MH: Right. So you hear stories of incidents but you don't think it's like a systematic?

REsp: It's difficult to say.

Interview 4. An inspector working for an NGO in a large town in the West of CAR (the same town as the boy of interview 35 who explained “otono”)

Resp: [Physical punishments] is used in the far corners, in the small villages, they continue to use the chicotte. [...] No, the chicotte is not used [...] since I have become an inspector, I have never seen it.

MH: Truly?

Resp: Yes, I haven't seen it.

176 Interviews 4, 11, 17, 22, 26, 27, 52, 53, 64, 84, 87, 129.

177 Neither is it mentioned in the analysis of education in CAR by the education cluster in 2015 (see: République Centrafricaine Education Cluster (2015)). In the transition plan 2014-2017, corporal punishment is mentioned, when the authors argue that in the ETAPE schools, because IDP children been traumatized, “corporal punishments are forbidden, while it is known that are often used in the ordinary environment”. The ministry of education indicates that, due to the fact that this prohibition has not led to an explosion of “turbulences”, they will use this to promote the end of corporal punishments in schools. “These practices are particularly inappropriate in a context of a return to peace” (République Centrafricaine, Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de l'Enseignement Technique (2014) : p. 32).

178 See: République Centrafricaine (2002) and République Centrafricaine, Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de l'Enseignement Technique (2014).

179 There seems to be a “school meals programme”, organized by the World Food Program (see République Centrafricain Education Cluster (2015): p. 20). However, we did not encounter this in any of the interviews nor during our school observations, except for one teacher who mentioned that APE members engaged in cooking with the PAM food for schoolchildren, and one NGO employee complained that teachers eat the food themselves. There is little information to be found about this program, and it seems like it only exists in the capital (see World Food Program (2015))?

5.6.1 Plans and results

The plans for education in CAR on the national level have been written down in two policy documents; the 2003-2015 National Action Plan for Education for All¹⁸⁰ and the 2014-2017 Transition plan.¹⁸¹

In the first plan, the government wrote that they intended to make more of a match between the economic needs of the CAR and the educational program. To realize this, they wanted to attain a 100% teaching in and of Sango, and they wanted “to develop a culture of citizenship, of peace in school and in the community”.¹⁸² Concrete goals were, amongst other, to educate 750 teachers per year and to recruit the teachers already qualified who were unemployed. Unfortunately, evaluation and/or results of this plan do not seem to be available.

According to the 2014-2017 plan for education, there are 6 political priorities for education in CAR:

- 1 To install emergency education (ETAPE, see § 4.2.1)
- 2 To take up the recruitment, formation and deployment of teachers
- 3 To progress towards free primary education (mostly by paying *maitres-parents* through APE's)
- 4 To accompany children in school, in the post-war context (including the distribution of new schoolbooks)
- 5 To restore the minimal capacities in terms of governance of the education sector (mostly by giving materials and education to political actors)
- 6 To prepare a new, more long-term national education plan

Concretely, UNICEF intends, together with 5 partner NGOs to distribute *tables-bancs*, chalkboards, *kits scolaires*, to pay a motivational prime to *maitres-parents* and to follow and help the teachers through education of education inspectors.¹⁸⁴

Results

There are two documents reporting results over the year 2015; the annual report of the education cluster and the UNICEF annual report to the Global Partnership for Education.

According to the first, the key progress toward the 2015 strategic indicators are portrayed as follows:¹⁸⁵

Indicators	Target for 2015	Achievements	% achieved
Number of displaced children and youth who have benefited from educational activities in temporary learning spaces and host schools	70 000	73 150 (49% sont des filles)	105%
Number of youth (16-24 years) who benefited from vocational training activities	2 000	302 (176 sont des filles)	15%
Number of students enrolled in September 2012 who have returned to schools (disaggregated) by sex and age)	568 500	641 500	113%

180 République Centrafricaine (2002).

181 République Centrafricaine, Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de l'Enseignement Technique (2014).

182 République Centrafricaine (2002).

183 République Centrafricaine, Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de l'Enseignement Technique (2014).

184 République Centrafricaine (2002) : pp. 21-23.

185 République Centrafricaine (2002) : p. 25.

As has been argued, the focus is mostly on quantitative results in relation to access to education, instead of on quality of education.

In relation to the donation of the Global Partnership for Education (one of the two largest international donors for education in CAR), the cluster intended to focus on access, quality and governance of education, between 2015-2017. Unfortunately, many of the quality improving targets for 2015 have not been met, as you can see in this table:¹⁸⁶

	Results	Indicator	Baseline (2011-2014)*	Target 2015	Target 2016	Target 2017	Current situation (Dec 2015)*
Outputs	Quality						
	Community teachers are supported by PTA and CPR to provide better quality teaching	A regularly updated census for community teachers is available	No	Yes-initial database	Yes-update database	Yes-updated database	No
		Clear criteria and administrative procedures are available for selection of community teachers who will receive subsidies	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		No. of PTAs supported to improve the management of community teachers	0	600	600	600	0
		No. of community teachers receiving subsidies through PTAs	0	500	500	500	0
		No. community teachers trained in CPRs	0	500	500	500	0
	A sufficient number of textbooks are delivered to students	Average number of pupils per textbook in the targeted schools	10	10	1	1	10
		Logistical means are ready to conduct student headcounts before distribution	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
		New reading textbooks distributed to students	n/a	n/a	200,000	100,000	n/a
		New math textbooks distributed to students	n/a	n/a	200,000	100,000	n/a
	Classes are given by new trainee teachers	Average pupil-teacher ratio ¹¹	89:1	91:1	90:1	88:1	
		No. of new trainee teachers recruited	0	500	500	500	0
		No. of new trainee teachers trained each year in CPRs	0	500	500	500	0
		No. of new trainee teachers practice-teaching each year	0	0	500	500	0
No. of trainee teachers officially integrated in the public service as contractor teachers.		0	0	0	500	0	
A functioning salary transfer mechanism exists close to the teachers		No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	
Efficient Education System							
Regular education sector activities are organized by the MoE.	End of year exams for CM2 are organized by the MoE	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	n/a	
	No. of central and local level MoE officials trained on the preparation of education response in emergency situations	0	25	25	25	25	
	No. of locally trained pedagogical service department officials	0	200	200	200	0	
	Statistical yearbooks are published	Most recent publication in 2012	Basic school statistics available	Statistical yearbook published	Statistical yearbook published	In process	
	Education Country Status Report ¹² (CSR) type sector analysis is carried out and sector strategy developed	No – the latest publication in 2008 for 2008-2020	Draft sector analysis	Sector analysis finalized	Sector strategy finalized	In process	

186 UNICEF (2015): pp. 6-13. Unfortunately, at the time of writing (April 2017) no annual report for 2016 is yet available.

In terms of the budget for this project for 2015, UNICEF reported that on a budget of more than 7,3 million US dollars¹⁸⁷ (of which they only spent 5,2 million),¹⁸⁸ they spent more than 1,1 million¹⁸⁹ (>21%) on “transfer of funds to implementing partners”. They also spent > \$ 100.000¹⁹⁰ more on salaries than budgeted, \$ 32,329¹⁹¹ on “R&R [Rest & Recuperation] and annual leaves” which was not budgeted for, and \$ 44,186¹⁹² on “operation costs”, which was not budgeted for either.¹⁹³

The latest plan for CAR, which includes education, is the 2017-2021 National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan.¹⁹⁴ This plan argues that the ‘provision of basic services [including education] is a priority for the country’s medium- to long-term development’. According to the report, the idea is to improve access to and quality of education. Actions will include:

- **Implementation of a nationwide school canteen strategy**
 - 1.200 school canteens
- **Provision of school supplies**
 - Distribution of 150.000 school kits to children
- **Launch of teacher training and recruitment programs, including basic teacher training tools**
 - Recruit 1000 teachers
- **Introduction of nonformal education, targeting children and youth who have been excluded from society**
- **Launch of a nutritional supplement and food fortification campaign**
 - Training and recruitment of 700 staff members on the topic of reproductive health and child nutrition
- **Building 218 schools**

Of these plans there are no results yet.

187 CFA 4.509.781.955,-

188 CFA 3.212.447.420,-

189 CFA 679.556.185,-

190 CFA 61.777.835,-

191 CFA 19.972.156,28-

192 CFA 27.297.154,17-

193 See: UNICEF (2015): pp. 18-19.

194 World Bank Group (2017).

6. Two exemplary case studies

To illustrate the complexity of what is going on when it comes to education in CAR, it might be informative to look at two cases as a whole, to see all the factors that influence the quality of education. Below we have described two case studies, one of a town (case study 1) and one of a village (case study 2). We stayed in the village for 6 days and in the town for 8 days.

Case study 1: a town in eastern CAR¹⁹⁵

The inhabitants of the town V. live mostly of farming and commercial activities. However, over the last years, the town has been under threat of armed groups and therefore people do not always go out to their fields. The city hosts two large IDP camps, filled with people from the surrounding area who have fled to the safety of the town. Roads in the area are extremely bad, leaving the city relatively isolated. Little trade is possible, food and other basic needs are scarce. The capital is far away.

The town has six schools; one pre-school, two primary schools that share 3 buildings with in total 8 Classrooms (one school uses the classrooms in the morning, the other in the afternoon), one private Catholic (primary) school, one lower secondary school (*collège*) and one higher secondary school (*lycée*). In this analysis, we will zoom in on the Catholic primary school and on one of the public primary schools, called V1.

At the Catholic private school, this year there are about 700 students, divided over 6 classrooms. There are 6 teachers, all *maitres-parents* whom have had little education. To illustrate, the school director's level of education: he dropped out of the last class of high school after failing the final exam twice. After that he followed 2 months of pedagogical formation.

Subscription costs 7000 CFA per child per year, costs for school materials and uniform excluded. The teachers get paid 20.000 CFA per month, the director earns 25.000. Last year only 400 of the 644 students paid, the others were not able to pay (most of them whom were orphans from the nearby IDP site). In spite of the high number of on average >100 students per teacher, the level of education in this school is high. Teachers and students speak French, students are able to read and write, the class atmosphere is good, students and teachers are concentrated on the work.

Why is this school so successful? Here are some factors, based on interviews and classroom observations, which seem to be different in this school compared to less well functioning schools:

- Teachers are paid regularly - although very little
- The amount of students per teachers is much lower than in many public schools (where 200 students per teacher is no exception)
- Teacher presence is written down and monitored by the director; he uses a notebook to register which teacher arrives at what time, and when they leave. If they do not teach, they do not get paid
- The teachers use little physical punishment. The *chicotte* is not used, children do not get hit. If children come late in the morning, they have to run around the school. If children do not work, they get told off by the teacher, pointing them at their responsibility to learn
- When students do not know the correct answer they are encouraged and helped by the teacher to think about finding the right solution
- There seem to be sufficient schoolbooks, students have about one book per 3 or 4 students
- There seem to be sufficient *tables-bancs*
- Overall there seems to be a very positive atmosphere in the school. There is a lot of singing, dancing, teachers giving compliments, children are happy to go to school and proud to learn. Perhaps the role of the church is an influence here. In addition to the classroom activities, the priests organize many activities outside of the classroom, such as scouting, parties, music, dancing competitions, theatre plays

The school director: 'We are worried about the level of education of our teachers [...] the teacher education often comes from NGOs, who only work with public schools. This is a catholic school [...] the children that we are educating here, they are no foreigners, they are of our community. But they [the NGOs and the government] don't help us.

195 Interviews 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 127, 128; observations 8, 20, 21 and 22.



3. A 13 year old boy who is in class CM1 of the private school in V. “We are not allowed to write Cristiano or Messi on the school building.”

At the **public primary school V1**, the situation is quite different. Teachers often do not show up, children sit around waiting in their classrooms for hours. When they do show up sometimes they are drunk. For the schoolyear of 2015-2016, the summer holiday started in May and ended in October, lasting 5 months. Thanks to an NGO the school has some textbooks, but none for class CM1 because the NGO in question forgot them in Bangui.

Inscription fees are 2900 CFA, in addition students pay 200 CFA per month. School attendance goes down quickly. At the beginning of the schoolyear in class X there were 375 children enrolled, 2 months later only 208 are still there.

The use of the *chicotte* is commonplace, not only by teachers hitting children but also by teachers telling children to hit each other, mostly if they do not know the answers to questions.

Teachers get paid very little – the *maitres-parents* get a few thousand CFA per month (between 2000-20.000); the qualified teachers officially get 80.000 CFA, but there is a problem for the transfer of this money and so it rarely arrives.

Interview 80. The school director of a public school, in a town in Eastern CAR.

Resp: It is better to put the boys and girls apart. What I see here, the big boys mix with the girls. They threaten the girls, sometimes, using their force on the girls. If there is a table like this, the guys don't want her to sit down. If she is about 13, 14 years old the boys start touching the girl. It is better to separate girls and boys [...] it would also be better to be able to close the school [...] the military come here. They talk to the girls. What can we say? [...]

MH: Have you tried to say something?

Resp: Yes! I told them, it is not OK! There was a [girl], she was in class CM1, she arranged to meet with her husband, a [military]. He stayed behind the door [of the classroom]. The girl went out, during the math lesson. I went out and I saw the girl, with the man. I told the girl: either you choose school, or you go home. With math you really have to follow the lesson. I went to see the mayor. He said, [the military] are people who are not controlled, but he would speak with their captain. They said that..Even before yesterday, there were again 2 here. [Sounding angry:] the only solution is to finally close up.

Finally, in terms of **intervention**, the town has 3 inspectors, of whom 2 have been “on holiday” since before the summer. By December 2016 they had not yet returned.

A temporary school (ETAPE) will be created for a period of 6 months, to accommodate for IDP children. Local people have been summoned to speak about this project. They are very cynical about it, arguing that they have often heard promises of these kinds of projects but they never follow through. For example, a temporary school is built, but it is built with so little quality that it collapses again after 3 months, before teachers and students have even been installed.

The NGO employee who is leading this project admits to the likelihood of failure of the project:

Interview 84. An NGO project leader, in a town in Eastern CAR.

Resp: We are going to construct a school, the ETAPE for learning and protection of children. We have done an evaluation and we realized that there are almost no school buildings [...] so we said to ourselves, we'll start with creating a temporary school.

MH: How many students are in one classroom?

Resp: There are classrooms where you will find 200 children.

MH: Here in the centre?

Resp: In the public school V1. It is one classroom with 2 classes. We have to find teachers. We asked the education inspector, he told us there are 52 teachers, but they are not there. So we have to educate maitres-parents. We are still searching those. [...] there are only 4 qualified teachers. We will also distribute kits scolaires. It's a project financed by [NGO]. And we will also help the refugee children. We will engage in psychosocial support, for the psychological wellbeing of children.

MH: How long does it take?

Resp: 6 months. [...] Every time when a project ends, the project is turned back. And we have to start again from zero.

MH: Why?

Resp: Because there is no continuation. Ideally, one starts a local project and once you leave it is continued at the local level. Here it is difficult, if you leave, everything stops. [...] In addition I have seen that that the humanitarian plan is not efficient. Because you cannot do an education project of 6 months. First, for example, you begin. The schoolyear has already started, we will take 6 months, and that period of 6 months it is... there are no qualified teachers...normally you should prepare all of that before the start of the schoolyear. An education project of 6 months...[...] I think the problem is on the level of humanitarian coordination [...] at the level of the education cluster. You have to start before the start of the schoolyear and guide these children at least until the end of the schoolyear. In that way, there will be quality.

MH: I imagine that, this project starts now [in December], but first you will have to do research, have meetings...before you have really started, and then you have to start building the school building...

REsp: Yes that's it.

MH: Finally when you can start the education, teaching, the project is already finished?

REsP: Yes, that's it! That's the problem, that is what I am telling you! First we have to make the kits scolaires, we first need material from Bangui, that takes at least a month to arrive here. And for example, when we distribute the kits scolaires, [the schoolyear] has already begun. Those who could not enrol in school because they did not have school supplies, they have already missed this year [...] the poor children are already eliminated.

Case study 2: a village in the centre-south of the CAR¹⁹⁶

The village S. in the Centre-South of the CAR has about 600 inhabitants, most of whom are fishermen. To make a living, the villagers sell their fish at the market in the nearby city. People are dependent on whether or not they catch fish. There are times when the fish bite often, which are financially good times, and times when there seems to be no fish in the river at all. Income is therefore fluctuating. Adults living in the village are very low educated. Most cannot read and write. Because of their low level of education, many of them find education very important, they want a better future for their children.

In 2008, someone from the city came to the village; a teacher who had had some instructions on how to teach from an Irish volunteer. He proposed to build a school. The village chief accepted his proposal and so they created a school. However, with the war going on in 2013, the commercial activity was low and as a consequence, parents were having trouble paying school fees. In reply they closed the school, only to reopen in September 2016.

Since 2016 there is a second teacher, an ex-military who is the new school director. The school has 110 students. It is unclear what classes these students are in (CI-CM2?). They are divided up into two groups. The director teaches 30 students, they are in a school “building” without walls, some *tables-bancs* and one chalkboard. The 80 other students are with the teacher, on *tables-bancs* placed underneath a tree, one chalkboard in front of the class. The school is known to the education inspection, but there is no government support. The children take exams, only the teachers have schoolbooks.

According to both the teacher, the director and the president of the APE, school fees are 1000 CFA for enrolment, then 250 CFA per child per month. However, parents are not able to pay and the teachers complain about not receiving any salary.

Interview 70. The school director: *‘The parents brought us here, to teach their children. I thought there were some financial means, but there are none. So we are looking for other help for the school.*

MH: Do you have a salary?

Resp: Not even. We don’t receive a salary. We complain, but we cannot abandon the children. They are angels, we cannot abandon them. If we do, it would be a great sin [...] maybe if you could help us, to see if someone can help us to buy notebooks, to buy books and all that...

MH: What if they don’t pay, do you send them home?

Resp: No, never!

However, when we talked to the local population, they told us quite a different story. First, school fees seem to differ per person, depending on personal negotiation and whom they have to pay to. Some people pay the director directly, some pay the teacher, some pay the president of the APE. According to the 7 parents and 7 children in the village whom we all asked about this individually, fees for enrolment are set at either 2500 or 1500 CFA.¹⁹⁷ Monthly fees are 750 CFA¹⁹⁸ per child. If they are not paid in time, the children are sent home until the money was paid. Some admitted to having personal debt-arrangements with the teacher or the director, but most had paid.

Mother: “for us it is embarrassing, because [the teachers] give all their capacities to teach the children. We see that, we are willing to pay, but we don’t have the means.”

Girl, 5 years old: “Every day, we don’t eat, they pay [the teacher], we don’t eat, they pay. My parents say: we can’t eat, we have to pay for school”.

196 Interviews 28, 29, 45, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124; observations 17 and 18.

197 \$ 4,25 or \$2,55.

198 \$ 1,28.

Especially for the larger families (many consisted of about 6 or 7 children,¹⁹⁹ making for the monthly school fees to add up to 7.500 CFA),²⁰⁰ seeing the poverty of the village people, this amount of school fees is very high. With these sums, the salary for the director and the teacher add up to about 80.000 CFA²⁰¹ (enrolment) + 80.000 CFA (monthly), about 3x the salary of a regular uneducated teacher.

Of course it is hard to tell in this situation who is lying. However, there were some indications;

- Most people in the village were dressed poorly, the clothing of both adults and children was often extremely worn down – whereas the teacher and director were quite well dressed (including the director wearing a shiny ADIDAS watch).
- One day when we arrived at the village, we found many children out of school. When we asked why, they all said they had been sent away by the director, because of not having paid the monthly school fees. Parents seemed emotional and desperate, asking us for help. When we asked the director about the situation, he said it was the president of the APE who had sent the children away. While we were talking, the president of the APE showed up and, not knowing who we were, started pleading with the director to please let his daughter come back to school, saying he would have the money ready next week.
- Of the 6 days we spent in the village, the teacher was absent for 2 days (leaving the kids to work on their own). One day they said he was sick, but at the end of the day we ran into him in the city. He said he was coming back from a meeting. He seemed drunk.

199 There is very little known about contraceptives in CAR. Whenever people do know, condoms, birth control pills and hospital treatments are deemed too expensive. One woman said she got injections at the local hospital but then still became pregnant. Whenever we would speak about contraceptive techniques, such as not having sex during your fertile period, all parents without exception were listening attentively, asking questions and wanting to know more. No one ever mentioned religious arguments against contraceptive techniques, and so it seems that in the CAR, the large family sizes are more a consequence of ignorance rather than the wish to have many children.

200 \$ 12,75.

201 \$ 136.

7. Possible solutions

As has been described at length in the report, there is a lot of room for improvement of education in the CAR. When it comes to the child's right to education, there is really only one question that has to be answered:

How can we make sure that every child in the CAR can get quality education?

There are many factors influencing the possibility and quality of education in CAR. The current research has discussed many of these factors. In this section, we will suggest possible solutions, based on the solutions suggested to us by respondents, combined with possible solutions from literature.

In general, based on our research, we believe two factors are crucial to changing education in CAR. These are:

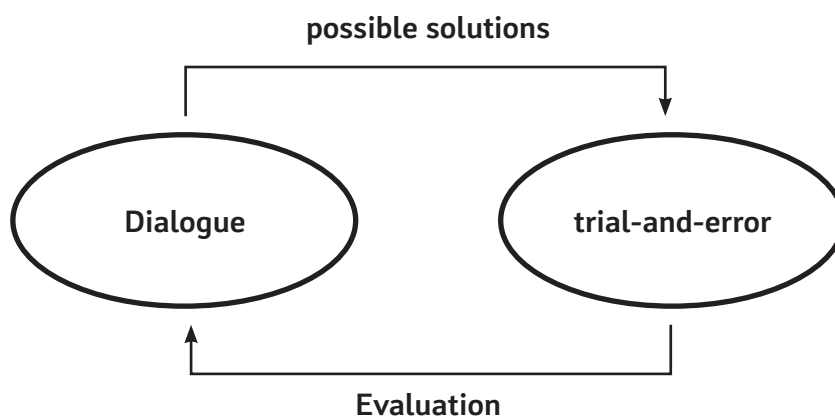
1. Dialogue

To improve education in CAR, the different actors involved will have to talk and listen to each other. For example, education inspectors and NGOs have to listen to children, so that they know what is happening in the classrooms. The government has to listen to the teachers, so that they know better how to support the teachers in their work. Teachers have to listen to their students to find out what they do or do not understand. Donors have to listen to the *Centrafricains*, so that their investments in CAR education will have much more positive effect.

In the current research we have listened to many actors involved in children's education in CAR. To improve education in CAR, we suggest that all of the actors engage in dialogue, that they cooperate to come up with a plan and improve education.

2. Trial-and-error

Because there is not one absolute solution to the complicated problem of education in CAR, and the current practice is so far off from ideal, we believe that the way forward is through a process of trial-and-error. When the different actors engage in dialogue, they suggest a possible course of action and try it out. After a trial period, the different actors engage again in dialogue to evaluate the outcome of the trial; what works and what does not work? Based on this evaluation, a next step of action is chosen, which is then again tried out, evaluated, etc. The process keeps going on and on, like a circle, improving CAR education step-by-step.



Concretely, the following suggestions came up when discussing how to improve education in CAR:

7.1 Feed the students

As has been indicated, it is mostly CAR children themselves who decide whether they go to school or not.²⁰² A reason for children not to go to school, or why they are in school but do not learn, is because they are too hungry. Lastly, the brain development of children is often impaired due to a too limited diet, which makes them physically less able to learn.²⁰³

202 See § 3.1.1.

203 See § 5.1.

203 See: Vermeersch & Kremer (2004): pp. 43-44; Tooley & Dixon (2006).

A solution to this problem could be to distribute meals in the schools. The World Food Program has a lot of experience with distributing school meals in schools in different countries, and this practice has been proven to have positive effects on learning – but only if the quality of the teaching is sufficient.²⁰⁴ However, there is no research on how this works in the CAR context, so this would have to be tested.²⁰⁵

A related, more sustainable solution would be to teach farmers (adults and children) how to farm different kinds of crops with different nutrients, and provide them with the necessary means for farming these crops (seeds, equipment).²⁰⁶ This kind of education could also be included in the school curriculum.

7.2 Reduce school costs²⁰⁷

Although national and international laws dictate that primary and secondary education should be free,²⁰⁸ all students in CAR have to pay school fees. This is a reason why many children are not able to go to school.²⁰⁹ Some ways to solve this problem, in part or in whole, are:

- Cancel the MASCA (*Mutuelle d'Assurance Scolaire Centrafricaine*). As has been explained, this 250 CFA fee is obligatory for all CAR students, and it basically a tax on education.²¹⁰
- Provide scholarships for specifically vulnerable groups, such as children without parents, girls, etc.²¹¹
 - o Schools might let certain children participate for free, for example all orphans.²¹²
- Distribute kits *scolaires*. Although this is already done in CAR, the current policy can be improved by:
 - o Distributing pens and notebooks instead of chalk and chalkboards, so that students can take their work home and study it (especially since there is so little written text available in CAR society)
 - o Distribute according to what schools demand from their students (e.g. amounts of notebooks necessary, which differs per school)
 - o Distributing the kits at the start of the schoolyear
 - o Giving the kits to the children directly
 - o Distributing kits to all children who want to use them to go to school. Or if that is not possible, be transparent about why certain children are selected for distribution whereas others are not
- Make sure some or all of the teachers in schools are paid by the government and/or NGOs, so that the *maitres-parents* do not have to be paid by the parents and/or the students
- Don't ask students to wear uniforms. Don't oblige students to bring a certain amount of notebooks, chalks or other material as a condition to follow the lesson

204 See: Vermeersch & Kremer (2004): pp. 43-44; Tooley & Dixon (2006).

205 For an overview of school meal programs in different African countries, see: Drake et al. (2016).

206 Experiments with farmer education in other African countries has shown that 'small improvements in farming techniques [...] have direct impact on household well-being through improved food-security or income' (Taylor et al. (2012): p. 732).

207 Interviews 42, 48, 53, 96, 97.

208 Constitution (2015), art. 7; ICESC (1966), art. 13.1.

209 See § 4.1.

210 See § 3.2.2 and § 4.1. See also Commission Education Sociale, Culture, Jeunesse et Sports (2003a, 2003b).

211 This practice has been successfully targeting girls in Bangladesh. The girls got scholarships (of half the tuition money) for the first three years of secondary education. Other programs paid children that came to school a small amount. See Bellew & King (1993): p. 297-300. Obviously, in a CAR context, such a program would have to be accompanied by carefully thought-through anti-corruption measures.

212 See § 6.1.

7.3 Adapt CAR education to the CAR context²¹³

A reason why children are out of school and/or why they learn little if they do go to school, is because CAR education is so little adapted to the CAR context.²¹⁴ An education more adapted to CAR society could be a clear incentive for parents and children to see the use of school (if it can teach you the skills and knowledge useful for life in CAR), could help CAR economy to move forward, could educate many citizens and could influence the problem of malnutrition. Measurements that can be taken include:

- Use Sango as the primary teaching language, at least in primary school. It has been proven many times that students learn more if they get taught in their mother tongue.²¹⁵ Until this day, several government documents voice the wish and/or decision for education to be in Sango, but these plans have not yet been realized.²¹⁶
- Introduce Sango as a school subject
- Introduce school subjects that relate to CAR society such as national history, agricultural techniques, commercial economy, etc.
- Adapt the school curriculum so that children learn knowledge and skills that are relevant in CAR society
- Develop educational material that is adapted to CAR society in content and language.²¹⁷
- Involve the (local) community in the development of the curriculum.²¹⁸

To give an example of what these measurements could look like: knowing that basically all CAR people engage in some form of agriculture (mostly professionally, but otherwise growing crops to supplement income from other employment),²¹⁹ sharing knowledge about agriculture could be useful.²²⁰ Planting seeds in the school garden could be both a lesson in farming as well as a science project, where the students learn the names of different crops, learn to write these names, learn to research the conditions in which the crops grow best, learn to calculate how many seeds they have and how many crops they have. The project could end in the practice of commercial activities (going to the market, selling and buying) that could be combined with lessons in calculation.

Interview 22. A Chef secteur (education inspection) of a town in eastern CAR: *“When there’s a good understanding between the CAR institutions and the Western institutions, we can take a breath [...] We need to a reorientation of education. I wish to reorient the children, and so the one who learns about mechanics, even if he does not finish school, he can already create something. [...] [The current education system] forms the bureaucrats who have a place in the administration for the government [...] the system of orientation and education should be more open. To learn auto mechanics, agriculture, construction of buildings ...in this way we can save a lot of Central Africans who do not have a job.”*

213 Interviews 16, 51, 60, 62, 64, 96. See also Diambomba, M. (1998): “the [CAR school]system is inefficient [...] the majority of students becomes unemployed at the moment they quit school, even those who finish their studies with success. This unemployment is generally attributed to the qualitative inadequacy between the skills acquired at school and those that are demanded by the job market, but they also seem to result from a distortion between the school programs and the characteristics of the job market. In fact, while the majority of economic activities is in agriculture, the educational programs are focused on the industry and services (p. 14); Bah-Gayn de Gaulle (1984); Dutcher, N. (2004); Lim, F. (2016) ; Bellew & King (1993); Thompson (2001).

214 See § 5.2.

215 Dutcher (2004), arguing that ‘we cannot overemphasize the importance of the use of the child’s first language in school’ (p. 19); Lim, F. (2016); Ouana & Glanz (2010).

216 See: République Centrafricaine (2002): p. 22 “to assure 100% the teaching of and in Sango on all levels of education”. See also Loi No 97.014, art. 42: “Sango and French are the two languages of teaching. The teaching of, and in, Sango is introduced into the curriculum of primary school in the year 2000”; CRC (1989) art. 29(c).

217 See § 5.2 on how this is currently not available. The 2002 plan for education for all, the government already planned to “establish a coherence between the needs of the national economy and the content of the educational programs” (République Centrafricaine (2002): p. 21), and that CAR children should develop knowledge, competences and attitudes that they need for the solution of issues encountered in daily life (p. 23).

218 Bah-Gayn de Gaulle (1984) has designed four steps to achieving this goal, in relation to urban farmers in CAR (pp. 110-114). On education in a CAR context he writes: ‘the educational system can only appeal to participation if the population concerned is invited to elaborate the programs [...] we have to create a space for desire, because for a farmer who experiences zero need to read and write, the best methods of literacy will turn out inefficient’. Such a system would have to take into account the economic, social and cultural needs of the population, and would therefore firstly have to identify the educational needs (pp. 108-109).

219 See also Groupe de la Banque Mondiale (2017): p. 21-23.

220 See also BAH-GAYN DE GAULLE (1984): ‘The students participate very little in the selection of methods that are imposed on them. They have a passive and consumer-like function [...] in the Central African Republic [...] school is not adapted to the CAR socio-economical and socio-cultural plan’ (p. 109).

7.4 Take care of the teachers

The one thing that most people think will really change the quality of education in CAR, is by educating and paying the teachers. For these two issues, the following possible solutions came up in the research:

7.4.1 Payment of teachers²²¹

- Do research on different options for a system of (state) payment of teachers. Important is that a system can provide **regular payment**. Options are:
 - a) Payment through church networks: allegedly, this works well in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and we have seen examples of this working well in CAR too. The advantages are that church organizations are relatively trusted by the community and they possess a relatively protected status when there is armed conflict. Their *animateurs* could perhaps distribute the salaries over the different schools in the area, which is already done in some areas. However, the question is whether they would be able to take up this role on a national level, seeing the security risks involved in holding on to much money.
 - b) Payment through a phone credit system: the salary is sent as a phone credit. Most slightly larger villages have a phone credit point. Here people could pick up their salary. The problem with this solution is the reliability of the shop owners (do they not keep part of the money?) and their limited possibilities of paying a high sum in cash. There is simply too little cash money in CAR economy, especially in smaller towns and villages. So for this solution to work, there would have to be a distribution of cash money into the country, as well as a control system to prevent fraud.
 - c) Payment through NGOs: money gets transferred to a local NGO, who then pay the teachers. This is already practiced in some parts of CAR. However, there is a problem with the credibility of these NGOs in the eyes of the population, and the issue of fraud.
 - d) Payment through APE's.
 - e) Let the CAR tax officers, who travel around anyway, take the teacher salaries for a certain area and pay the teachers.
- Make payment conditional upon presence: teachers only get paid for the days that they teach. Their presence gets registered, with them signing a logbook with the date, time of arrival and time of departure every day.
- Allow for growth in teacher salary, so that better and more experienced teachers get paid more than young, inexperienced teachers. Salaries can either go up by age or years of experience, or based on results (for example pay raise based on anonymous voting by students). Alternatively, teachers that do well might get a (financial) bonus.
- Heighten teacher salaries (see § 7.4.3).

221 Interviews 7, 14, 36, 49, 51, 60, 93, 96.

Interview 80. A school director of a public school, in a town in Eastern CAR.

MH: You are paid by the government?

Resp: Yes.

MH: How much is your salary?

Resp: It depends on the category. We are paid as interns, a salary of 80.000

MH: Every month?

Resp: it's difficult every month. Sometimes it skips one month, two months. It is difficult because we are in [town]. Sometimes they pay [in the capital], but for the money to arrive here, it's not easy. We have to wait 1, 2 months. There are no NGOs who work here, we have to wait until they come from Bangui. So the NGOs there, they give a paper, a cheque, they will send it to this town. It happens that we go for 5 months without salary here.

MH: There is no other way?

Resp: No.

MH : No credit transfer (« transfer de credit » by phone) ?

ResP : It's not easy. They are small shops. To do the transfer, someone must have a good habit, there is not sufficient money. Sometimes they take it, they will tell you they did not receive your salary, while they have it already. They give you a small part. They will give you 5.000 and take 1.000. It's not easy.

MH: And the NGOs, they do so too?

Resp: That doesn't work here. You have to pay the person that hands in the check. We send someone, we get organized. Everyone has to pay 5.000 for transport, and 5.000 for the return.

MH: That is someone who works for an NGO?

Resp: Yes. The people of the tax office [who are not from NGOs, MH]. Who work for the wellbeing of the state. They control taxes. They spend two months here, 1 month in Bangui.

MH: Why do you have to pay?

Resp: It's a human being.

MH : But he will travel anyway for his work ?

Resp : If we don't pay him he will not touch our money and it will stay in Bangui.

MH: And a tax controller, what do they do?

Resp: For example at the level of the mayor. The customs agents, those kinds.

MH: And the NGOs don't do this?

Resp: No.

MH: And with the church?

Resp: Yes, often we pass by the church. But recently the priests don't go out.

7.4.2 Quality of teacher education²²²

Possible solutions to raise the level of the quality of education teachers are able to provide, is by:

- Improve teacher educational programs by improving the qualitative content (in terms of materials, didactics, pedagogics, aims – also connected to teaching things that are relevant to CAR society, see § 7.3)
- Provide education for teachers who are already teaching on a regular basis.
- Get necessary expertise on pedagogy and didactics from abroad, for example from neighbouring countries. Invite guest lecturers from abroad
- Teach the teachers how to deal with the students in a good manner, to create a positive pedagogical environment. For example, to explain an exercise if the student does not understand

222 Interviews 1, 7, 16, 50, 51, 52, 60.

7.4.3 Teacher presence and motivation²²³

A related problem is that teachers often do not teach. They refuse to go to the urban schools they are being sent to, and if they are around they often do not show up at work in the morning, or they sit outside. In addition to better, more regular payment and education, other factors that might influence this are:

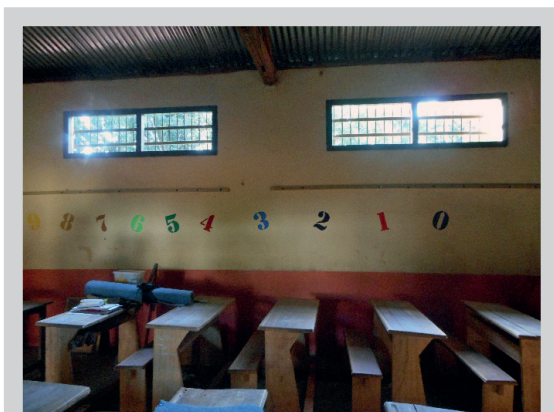
- Integrate the teachers who have followed teacher's education, but are not employed as teachers. Meaning: give them a contract and a place in a school.
- Check and register teacher presence (see § 7.4.1)
- Make it attractive for teachers to teach in urban schools.
- Heighten salaries so that teachers do not have to work other jobs on the side. Suggested monthly amounts have been ranging from 70.000 – 200.000.²²⁴
- Provide a better level of teacher education (see 7.4.2).²²⁵

All these issues are difficult to solve quickly. However, there are currently some local initiatives going on in CAR, showing that it is possible to make a change based on these solutions. An example is in Bozoum:

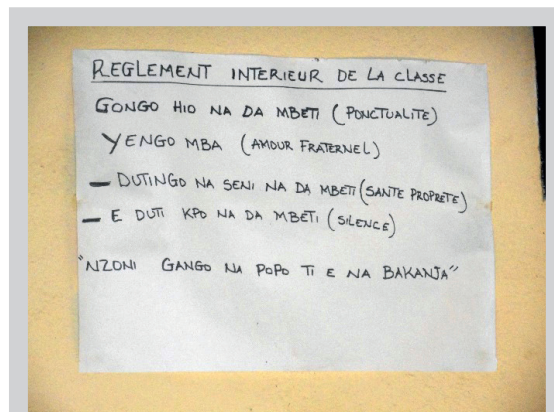
Case: education project in the zone of Bozoum: 2013-2015.

The NGO Caritas takes a leading role over local public schools in the area, working together with the education inspection. Over the period of two years, they organized teacher education, distributed kits *scolaires*, took over part of the payment of teachers, including *maitres-parents* (75% of the teacher salaries is paid for by the NGO, 25% is paid by the local community), they paid the teachers a small extra amount of salary so that they would stay during times of insecurity. Lastly, they employed “animateurs” who monitored the presence of teachers, distributed materials and tried motivating parents to pay the necessary school fees.

In Bozoum, through the support of a Czech NGO, Czech teachers came to teach pedagogics and didactics to the local teachers. In the school, they have painted educational material on the classroom walls and they teach the lower classes partly in Sango.²²²



9. The rules of the classroom are put up on the classroom wall. They are written partly in French, partly in Sango. The last line reads: “Welcome to everyone who comes to our class”.



10. Numbers painted on a classroom wall in Bozoum.

223 Interviews 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 16, 36, 39, 41, 43, 50, 51, 52, 60, 61.

224 § 119 - § 346. However, in a cross-cultural comparison of public and private (registered and unregistered) education between schools in Ghana, Nigeria and India, the researchers found that although government employed received a 3-3.5 times higher salary than teachers in private schools, the pupil achievement in government schools was much lower than in private schools, and teachers were much more often absent and/or non-teaching in government schools. Therefore indicating that higher salaries do not automatically lead to teacher presence and/or higher quality education (Tooley, J. & Dixon, P. (2006): pp. 452-456).

225 In the 2002 National Plan for Education for All already mentions “teachers more and more demotivated due to the devalorization of their function” (p. 23).

226 This efforts of this NGO in relation to education have been ongoing for at least the last 20 years, the described situation being the latest of known results. See: Caritas Bouar (2015) Rapport final du projet septembre 2014 – janvier 2015 : Appui à l'éducation en urgence dans 50 villages de la zone de Bozoum. Also : observation 24, interview 96.

Both the quantitative and qualitative results of the project seem to be very good. For the project in the whole area, the intention was to teach 110 teachers, instead they provided education for 181 teachers. Of the planned 6.000 students whose education was to be improved, they almost reached the double amount (12.135). The project incorporated 6 more schools (64) than originally planned.²²⁷

The qualitative results are obviously harder to measure. However, at least in Bozoum, the three children we randomly selected and interviewed all showed a very high level of education [drawings]; they were able to read, write and speak in French, to do calculations and to reason logically.²²⁸

7.5 Non-formal education

Education can also take place outside of the classroom. In case there is no school in the area, there is no teacher available or if students want to learn more outside of the classroom, it might be useful to provide alternatives. Education in the family and through apprenticeship forms a traditional part of CAR culture.²²⁵ These forms of education might be used more intensely to achieve learning goals pursued in schools, such as learning to read and write and to make calculations. Options for non-formal education in the CAR context are:

- If literacy is a goal of education, make sure that there are written texts in the environment of the child (for example, install libraries).²³⁰
- Provide education over the radio. Seeing as relatively many people in CAR have access to a radio,²³¹ one can imagine a daily educational program being broadcasted by a national radio station. This could be a form of sharing quality education with both children and adults. There have been many experiments with this in other African countries, so CAR could learn from these experiences.²³²
- Provide textbooks, notebooks, pens and other educational material to families and/or local communities.
- Provide learning material to children which is suitable for individual learning.

7.6 Education for peace²³³

Most people in CAR say they want peace.²³⁴ To solve the situation of insecurity, the idea is that armed groups will be made to hand in their arms, the country will engage in justice reform to end impunity, etc. However, it seems too simple a view to argue that handing in arms will stop people from fighting. What makes so many CAR people take up arms in the first place? How do young CAR people learn that violence is a solution to their problems? Why do they resort to violence when they get the opportunity?²³⁵

If the wish is to create a peaceful CAR society, there seems to be an important role for (non-violent) education.

Interview 16, a former employee of the ministry of education: *“Another problem with education in CAR is [...] violence. Because violence is generalized in the country. We hit the children, we hit the women, we hit the vulnerable people. [...] when we have a position of superiority. And in the schools, there are multiple forms of violence. For example for the girls, even the boy students, they can use violence against the girls. They can violate them, the teachers can violate them too, so it is really, everyone, with the crises that we have known, everyone is stressed, so there is a lot of violence. It has almost become automatic.”*

227 Caritas Bouar (2015) Rapport final du projet septembre 2014 – janvier 2015 : Appui à l’éducation en urgence dans 50 villages de la zone de Bozoum : p. 4.

228 Interviews 30, 31 and 32.

229 See §2.1. See also Thompson (2001): ‘Alternative forms of learning have historically been an important part of the processes of socialization in Africa. Responsibility for the education and socialization of the young which included transmission and preservation of the cultural heritage was vested in the family and community. Learning was by doing through a variety of means viz, skills training, role performance, apprenticeship, mentoring, role modelling and participation in rites of passage. The roles which education was expected to fulfil were functional and life enhancing. Learning to know, to do, to be and to live together was integrated and holistic. The needs of the individual learner were organically linked to the needs of the community. Communalism was an underlying principle of education and learning.’ (p. 8).

230 As seen in a large town in CAR; observation 23.

231 See: Central African Republic (2017): p. 13.

232 See for example: Murphy et al. (2002); Senabulya (2012); Lewis (2014); Koutonin (2013); Rogers et al. (1999). See also Bah-Gayn de Gaulle (1984), who in the CAR context suggests to build audiotheques (p. 232).

233 Interviews 14, 15, 16, 42, 43, 60, 61, 80.

234 See Groupe de la Banque Mondiale (2017) : clearly the CAR people indicate the promotion of ‘peace, security, and reconciliation’ as the primary priority for the country (pp. 26-30).

235 See, among others: Lombard (2016a, 2016b).

Interview 61. A religious leader and NGO employee, living and working in a large town in Western CAR.

Resp: We need a change of methodology, and a change of system. The alternative to a violent system is a system based on understanding and dialogue. Even with the children in school. The educational system is based on memorization, so there is always a situation of “I tell you what you have to do, what you have to know”. So the child, like a recorder, has to reproduce what has been said. But it doesn’t work like that, the children are not machines. They register what they hear but they do not necessarily accept it. [...] we need a system that is based more on making children think and understand, more than registering [...] a dialogue based on the idea of developing social attitudes and behaviours together, guided by an adult who has more experience than a child. To evolve together.

Some possible solutions came from our research:

- Create a good/positive atmosphere in the classroom, for example through giving compliments, singing, dancing and rewards for good behaviour.²³⁶
- Involve the local community in education at school.
- Discuss the use of the *chicotte* and other punishments.²³⁷
- Discuss and try to eradicate corruption in education on all levels, both the marks-for-sale and the marks-for-sex, as it creates strong feelings of injustice, anger and helplessness.²³⁸ What could possibly help against corruption are second corrections, so that each exam gets corrected by two different teachers. Another thing that might help is to publish the results of exams, corrected by the two teachers, on the school walls. Lastly, send student home who are wearing sexy clothes.
- Recruit and pay more teachers, so that the amount of pupils per classroom can be lower and therefore the classrooms safer. Possibly separate boys and girls.

Interview 14. A teacher in a village: *‘In the morning, the students come to do work. They come in the morning, at 7, they clean up the dead leaves, they sweep the classroom, they do a little sports, they run, do a race, they amuse themselves. After you start the teaching directly. Now [that the NGO forbids us to let the children do work], in the classroom you have to motivate them. To give them the motivation to work. You let them sing, they feel at ease. When you start the lesson, they will understand rapidly.’*

7.7 What else can the different people involved do?

In addition to the solutions discussed so far, our respondents suggested some specific things that people involved in CAR education can do.

Government and NGOs working on the national level: ²³⁹

- Focus on quality of education instead of access to education.
- Provide teacher quality education, educate more teachers and pay the teachers.
- Go and look in CAR classrooms to see what the reality is in those institutions (also outside of the capital). Listen to local people, including children.²⁴⁰
- Develop community-based programs, involving local communities, for example by building a school building together, deciding on the school organization together with the community, etc.
- Engage in long-term educational projects rather than short-term projects.
- Start national dialogues on corruption²⁴¹ and corporal punishment in education.
- Control the work of local NGO’s and of the education inspection.
- Heighten the national budget for education.

236 See case study 1 (§ 6.1). See also Hoppers, W. (2005): ‘reports indicate that positive outcomes in terms of retention, completion, and learning achievement are associated less with the quantity of resources than with the positive learning environment in a community school [...] key factors in this environment include community supervision, intensity of teacher-pupil interaction, and above all language, that is, the use of national languages for instruction and communication’: p. 122.

237 See § 5.5.

238 See § 5.4.

239 Interviews 1, 4, 7, 14, 16, 22, 36, 40, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 60, 61, 66, 93.

240 See also Norwegian Refugee Council, Renouf, J.S. (2015) ‘the people are generally appreciative of the aid provided. The most frequent negative comments related to the limited or absence of communication between aid agencies and the affected populations (p. 24) ‘a particular worry in the CAR context is how frequently respondents lamented that they are not listened to by aid workers in respect not only of their needs and concerns but also of their ideas that are not taken into consideration. Additionally, they contend that aid workers seem to lack or not show enough empathy towards the plight of the CAR population, a claim acknowledged by a certain number of aid workers. Part of the reason may be that only limited genuine contact exists between aid workers and the communities they seek to serve (p. 31).

241 It seems that there was a campaign addressing the subject in 2014, initiated by NGO FADEC. See: FADEC (2014).

Interview 64. A religious leader in a city in the Centre-South:

Resp: I am participating in a project that intends to construct 50 schools, 10 are already being constructed. [...] It will be a private school, but it will be for the poor.

MH: How? [...] Does that mean it will be free for the people who do not have the [financial] means?

Resp: Seeing as the means are different from one family to the next, we ask the parents to give their time, to work on the land. Maybe they do not have money, but they have strength. It is to permit to anyone to work, to allow for his child to go to school [...] I have launched a club to construct schools with the population, I have done this before and that worked well [...] I say to the people: "You see there is sand, there are stones and there are strong youths who can make the bricks." I want the people to identify with the school that we have constructed. [...]

MH: Do you think it is important that the people identify themselves [with the school]?

Resp: Clearly, because behind all that is respect. For example, if a parent sees a child spraying graffiti on the wall, he will intervene. That would not be the case if the school was the property of the church or the state, because that is impersonal. What is important is the contribution of each person involved [...] and that the profits from working the field go into the school budget.

Teachers:²⁴²

- Learn a good technique of dealing with students, creating a positive and peaceful atmosphere in the classroom.
- Do not hit the children, but engage in dialogue with the student if they misbehave.
- Follow the student's development.

Parents:²⁴³

- Follow your child's education, show an interest in their schoolwork.
- Advise your child on why education is important for his/her future, to motivate your child.
- Pay school fees and send your child to school.

International community:²⁴⁴

- Provide financial support for grassroots initiatives and for national projects that have a grassroots approach.
- Provide financial support without the imposition of western norms and interests. For example, support CAR locals in the development of educational material.²⁴⁵

242 Interviews 1, 3, 5, 16, 36, 39, 41, 43, 60, 61.

243 Interviews 1, 2, 15, 36, 43, 53, 54, 56, 60.

244 Interviews 16, 51, 60, 62, 64, 96.

245 Currently, new educational material is being developed, and this is supposed to be more adapted to the CAR context. It is however again a deal with a French publisher (this time ACHAT), and the material developed will be in French (Interviews 62, 74, 108).

8. Conclusion

In 1984, Thomas Bah-Gayn de Gaulle, himself a Central African, wrote:

‘The human factor is fundamental to all development: that’s why we should give priority to education [...] in the new situation, development should not be the privilege of a minority anymore, but a collective affair, that concerns the total of the population, from the capital until the last village in the bush.’

In the CAR, there is a large potential to improve the education system. This is because the *Centrafricains* (both children and adults) think that education is very important. It gives them a chance, a shot at a better life. However, the quality of education – and public education in particular – is currently quite disastrous. A lot will have to be invested by international, national and local actors to improve the situation.

This report has tried to describe the current situation of the CAR educational system, and to give possible solutions to improve it. On a national level, much more effort has to be put into improving the quality of education, rather than focussing on access to education. It is no use to push children into already overcrowded classrooms where they hardly learn anything. An important factor is that it would be good if education would be more adapted to the CAR context. What would help too is to take better care of the teachers and to feed the students.

On a more local level, it would be good to start a dialogue about certain aspects of the education system that might not necessarily contribute to the quality of education, such as the issue of corruption and the use of the *chicotte*.

Lastly, if both the international and the national community want peace in CAR, there is an important role for education. As long as children are educated in violence, injustice and corruption, it is unlikely that violence will cease to dominate CAR society. However, as Nelson Mandela said: “education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”. It can be used for the better, if you use it well and patiently.

Hopefully today we can start a long, forward process of dialogue and trial-and-error, in a collective effort to improve CAR education.

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Attachment 1: National law on the child's right to education in CAR

Excerpts of laws insofar relevant for the current discussion on the child's right to education.

Central African Republic Constitution (2015)

Art. 3: Everyone has the right to life and physical integrity. They may only be infringed in these rights by application of a law. No one may be subjected either to torture, or to rape, or to cruel, inhuman, degrading or humiliating acts or treatment.

Art.6: The State and the other public collectivities have the duty to create the prerequisite conditions and the public institutions that guarantee the education of children.

Art. 7: Everyone has the right of access to sources of knowledge. The State guarantees to all citizens access to instruction, to culture, and to vocational training.

Education and instruction must be provided to youth by public or private establishments. Private establishments may be opened with the authorization of the State, within the conditions established by the law. They are placed under the control of the State.

Parents have the obligation to provide education and instruction to their children until the age of sixteen (16) years at least.

The State and other public entities have the obligation to create and to ensure the good functioning of the public establishments for the education and the instruction of youth.

Education is gratuitous in the public establishments at the various levels of education.

Law no. 97.014 Focusing on Education (1997)

Art. 1: The Central African Republic recognizes Education as being a national priority. Each citizen has the right to Education and Knowledge. Access to instruction, culture and vocational training is guaranteed to the child and the adult, without regard as to the sex, social rank, ethnicity, religion or political affiliation.

Art. 4: Preschool education, primary schools, institutions of secondary education and higher education, and non-formal education centres contribute through the transmission of knowledge to the upholding of gender equality, chance equality and the promotion of peace.

Art. 5: The Central African Republic must develop structures of non-formal education in order to integrate the children without access to education or the illiterate adult, in particular the women in the process of economic development.

Art. 6: School is compulsory from six to fifteen years old.

Art. 8: The nation has as principal objective the basic education and as objectives the improvement of the education of girls and to reach eventually the schooling for all.

Art. 12: Primary education of level 1 has as mission to ensure that every child has a basic general and practical education. He must be integrated to the environment. Primary education of level 1 has as objectives the transfer of basic learnings: language, reading, writing, mathematics. It must develop the intellectual, manual and physical capacities of the child, the spirit of entrepreneurship, as well as transfer the moral and civic values, favour the education to family life and orient the child to the labour market.

Art. 13: Primary education of level 1 is given at the primary schools. Scholarship last five (5) years.

- First year of primary school (old preparatory courses)
- Second year of primary school (old elementary course 1)
- Third year of primary school (old elementary course 2)
- Fourth year of primary school (old middle course 1)
- Fifth year of primary school (old middle course 2)

Art. 14: The exam and diploma Certificat d'Etudes Fondamentales 1 (C.E.F. 1). Mark the end of the primary education of level 1.

Art. 15: Depending on their abilities and academic performances, the students are oriented either to the primary education 2 or to the centres of practical formation.

Art. 16: Primary education 2 assures the deepening of the basic theoretical and practical knowledge acquired during the level 1 and favours the integration of the students in the working life and the labour market.

Art. 42: Sango and French are the two languages of education. The learning of and in Sango is introduced in the primary education in the year 2000. A rational policy of utilisation of the two official languages in the State services is promoted in order to support their use in the education.

Art. 47: The State strives to dedicate at least 25% of its annual spending to Education.

Art. 50: Obligations of the pupils and students are derived from their rights to education, to information and to orientation. The obligations of the pupils and the students consist of accomplishing the tasks inherent to their studies. They include assiduity and the respect of the rules of procedure and common life in the establishment. They demand the pupils and the students to consider the movables and immovables goods as being part of the patrimony of the national collective and to protect them.

Art.51: The specialized teaching staff is responsible for all activities. As such, they provide support to the personal work of the pupils and monitor their studies, in particular through the intermediary of the compulsory school booklet.

Art.53: The State must stimulate teachers by taking salaries, bonuses and various compensations on.

Art.63: The Minister or Ministers responsible for National Education and Higher Education ensure the continuous training of the educational and administrative staff in order to improve the quality of the public education service.

Art.68: A council of education is created. This council consists of representatives of the State, the region, the local communities, public and private institutions, economic and social sectors. The council issues opinions on the various aspects of region's educational action, decides on the school map and the training projects. It suggests measures to improve the functioning of the education system in the region.

Art.72: A school and university health service [...] supports the development and fulfilment of students and teachers. This service is provided by a medical body under the Ministry of Health and Population. The mission of this service is to monitor and ensure health coverage to the school population.

Art.73: A school health service is established at the level of each academic inspection.

Law no.10.001 on the Central African Penal Code (2010)

Art.74: Any person who has intentionally injured or beaten a child under the age of fifteen years, or who has voluntarily deprived him of food or care to the extent that his or her health is in danger, shall be punished with imprisonment from one to five years and a fine from 100 002 to 600 000 francs.

Art.86: Any indecent assault perpetrated or attempted without violence on the person of a child of either sex shall be punished with imprisonment from one month and one day to five years and a fine from 100,002 to 800,000 francs. The term of imprisonment shall be from two to five years if the female child, who is eighteen years of age and is not emancipated by marriage, is a pupil of a school and the perpetrator of the attack is working in that school.

Art. 87: Any indecent assault perpetrated or attempted on the person of a child under the age of fifteen years of either sex shall be deemed to be rape.

In the preceding cases, if the perpetrators are the ascendants of the person on whom the assault was committed, if they are of the class of those who have authority over the person, if they are teachers or pawnbrokers to the persons above mentioned, or from a educational institution of which he or she is a pupil, if they are ministers of a worship, or if the guilty party, whatever it is, has been assisted in his or her crime by one or more persons, the penalty shall be increased by one degree.

Art.110: Any erotic attraction of an adult to a child constitutes the offense of paedophilia.

Anyone who has been found guilty of paedophilia shall be punished with an imprisonment from two to five years and a fine from 100,002 to 2,000,000 francs. In the case of a repeat offense, the penalty shall be doubled and the offender shall be subject to the additional penalty provided for in Article 21, paragraph 3, of this Code.

Art.118: Submitting a person to torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or acts of barbarity shall be punished with forced labour.

Art.119: The offense defined in the previous article is punishable with forced labour in perpetuity when committed: 1. On a minor under the age of eighteen years; 2. On a person whose particular vulnerability, due to age, disease, infirmity, physical or mental disability or pregnancy, is apparent or known to the perpetrator; 3. On a legitimate or natural ascendant or on the adoptive father or mother; 4. On a member of the Government, a Parliamentarian, a Magistrate, a Juror, an Advocate, a Doctor, a Public or Ministerial Officer or any other agent entrusted with public authority or with a public service mission, in the exercise of his or her functions or duties, where the profession of the victim is apparent or known to the perpetrator; 5. On a witness, a victim or a civil party, either to prevent him from reporting the facts, to file a complaint or a lawsuit, or because of his denunciation, complaint or statement; 6. By the spouse or partner of the victim; 7. By a person entrusted with public authority or with a public service mission in the course of, or in connection with, the performance of his duties or his mission; 8. By several persons acting as authors or accomplices; 9. With premeditation; 10. With the use of force. The penalty incurred is twenty years of forced labour when the offense is committed on a minor under the age of eighteen years by a legitimate, natural or adoptive ascendant or by any other person having authority over the minor.

Art.120: Torture is punishable by the death penalty when it precedes, is accompanied by or follows a crime. In the case of permanent mutilation or disability, the penalty shall be that of forced labour in perpetuity.

Attachment 2: Overview of interviews and observations

Interviews:

Nr	m/f	age	role 1	class / position	private/public	residence	role 2
1	m	16	child	3eme	private	city	
2	f	14	child	5eme	public	city	
3	m	13	child	CM2	public	city	
4	m	36	NGO / UN employee	controller	-	large town	parent / tuteur
5	f	14	child	CM2	private	town (IDP site)	
6	f	15	child	CM2	public	town (IDP site)	
7	m	-	education inspection	chef secteur	-	town	
8	f	11	child	CP2	public	town (IDP site)	
9	f	12	child	5eme	private	town	
10	f	34	parent / tuteur	mother	-	town	
11	f	28	NGO / UN employee	-	-	city	
12	m	12	child	CP2 after summer?	public	village	
13	m	51	politician	village chief	-	village	parent / tuteur
14	m	-	teacher/ school director	maitre-parent	public (bache)	village (IDP site)	
15	m	39	religious leader	-	-	site)	
16	f	-	NGO / UN employee	-	-	city	(non-political) employee min edu/aff sociales
17	f	40	NGO / UN employee	-	-	city	
18	m	8	child	CP2	public	city	
19	f	8	child	CP2	public	town	
20	m	13	child	CM1	private	town	
21	f	18	child	CE2	public	town	
22	m	49	education inspection	chef secteur	-	town	
23	m	55	religious leader	-	-	town	
24	f	13	child	CM1	public	town	
25	m	45	parent / tuteur	father, grandfather	-	town	
26	m	42	NGO / UN employee	-	-	town	
27	m	-	NGO / UN employee	-	-	town	
28	m	61	politician	village chief	-	city	
29	m	38	teacher/ school director	-	public	village	
30	m	11	child	CM2	private	village	
31	m	12	child	CM1	private	town	
32	f	14	child	4eme	private	town	
33	f	9	child	C1	private	town	
34	f	23-25	parent / tuteur	mother	public	town	
35	m	11	child	CM1	public	town	
36	f	20	child	BAC	public	town	
37	f	12	child	CM1	public	City (IDP)	
38	f	10	child	école d'art	public	City (IDP)	
39	m	17	child	terminale	private	City (IDP)	
40	f	16	child	seconde S2	private	city	
41	f	8	child	CE1	private	city	
42	m	-	teacher/ school director	coordinator, inspection teacher	private	city	
43	m	43	teacher/ school director	directeur, prof uni	private	city	
44	f	30	parent / tuteur	mother	-	city	
44	f	45	parent / tuteur	mother	-	City (IDP)	
44	f	35	parent / tuteur	mother	-	City (IDP)	
44	f	19	parent / tuteur	mother / child	-	City (IDP)	child
45	f	13	child	CM 2	public	City (IDP)	
46	f	60	parent / tuteur	aunt	-	village	
47	m	39	APE	president	public	city	parent / tuteur
48	f	19	child	none, stopped CM1	public	village	
49	m	33	parent / tuteur	father	-	village	
50	f	27	parent / tuteur	mother	-	city	
51	f	40	teacher/ school director	director	public	city	
52	m	37	NGO / UN employee	-	-	large town	
53	m	-	education inspection	chef secteur	-	large town	
54	m	12	child	CM2	public	large town	
55	m	49	parent / tuteur	vader	-	village	
56	f	55	politician	mayor	-	village	
57	m	-	politician	secretary to the mayor	-	village	
58	f	9	child	CP2	public	village	
59	m	13	child	CM1	public	large town	
60	m	43	NGO / UN employee	director	-	large town	education inspector, teacher
61	m	55	NGO / UN employee	coordinator	-	large town	religious leader
62	m	-	politician	-	-	large town	
63	m	-	education inspection	chef secteur	-	city	
64	m	-	religious leader	-	-	city	
65	m	-	religious leader	-	-	city	
66	m	24	parent / tuteur	father	-	city	
67	f	11	child	C1	public	village	
68	f	27	parent / tuteur	mother	-	village	

69	f	parent / tuteur	father	-	village	
70	m	- teacher/ school director	school director	public (onofficieel)	village	
71	f	parent / tuteur	mother	-	village	
72	f	parent / tuteur	mother	-	village	
73	m	parent / tuteur	father	-	village	
74	m	politician	conseiller	-	city	
75	f	teacher/ school director	maitre-parent	private	city	
76	f	parent / tuteur	grandmother	-	town	
77	f	parent / tuteur	mother	-	town	
78	f	teacher/ school director	maitre-parent	public	town	
79	m	APE	president	public	town	
80	m	teacher/ school director	school director, enseignant titulaire	public	town	
81	m	teacher/ school director	director	private ECAC	town	
82	m	31 parent / tuteur	father	-	town	
83	f	12 child	child	public	town	
84	m	37 NGO / UN employee	chef projets COOPI	-	town	
85	m	- teacher / school director	director PO + VO school	-	town	
86	m	- student	higher education	private	-	
87	m	- religious leader	-	-	city	NGO / UN employee
88	m	- student	VO	private	city	
89	f	- religious leader	soeur	-	city	
90	m	- (non-political) employee min edu/aff sociales	-	-	village	
91	m	- (non-political) employee min edu/aff sociales	-	-	city	
92	m	- NGO / UN employee	coordonateur	-	city	
93	m	- NGO / UN employee	coordonateur (armed group)	-	town	
94	m	- parent / tuteur	-	-	town	
95	m	- religious leader	-	-	town	teacher / school director
96	m	- religious leader	-	private	town	teacher / school director , NGO / UN employee
97	m	- religious leader	-	-	large town	NGO / UN employee
98	m	- teacher / school director	director IDP site school	-	large town	
99	m	- researcher	phd	-	NL	
100	v	- researcher	ass. Prof	-	NL	
101	v	- researcher	ass. Prof	-	NL	
102	v	- researcher	phd	-	NL	
103	m	- NGO / UN employee	-	city	(in interv 1.1)	
104	m	- lawyer	-	-	large town	
105	m	- education inspection	-	-	large town	teacher / school director
106	v	- NGO / UN employee	-	-	city	
107	m	- religious leader	-	-	large town	
108	m	- (non-political) employee min edu/aff sociales	-	-	city	
109	v	- child	-	public	city	
110	v	- child	-	public	village	
111	m	- child	-	public	village	
112	v	8 child	-	public	village	
113	v	6 child	-	public	village	
114	v	5 child	-	public	village	
115	m	8 child	-	public	village	
116	v	5 child	-	public	village	
117	v	12 child	-	public	village	
118	m	- teacher/ school director	-	public	village	
119	-	- child	-	public	village	
120	m	- APE	-	public	village	
121	m	- teacher / school director	-	public	village	
122	v	- parent / tuteur	-	public	village	
123	v	- parent / tuteur	-	public	village	
124	m	- parent / tuteur	-	public	village	
125	m	- politician	-	-	city	
126	m	- politician	-	-	city	
127	m	- religious leader	-	private	town	teacher / school director
128	m	- religious leader	-	private	town	teacher / school director
129	m	- politician	-	-	city	
130	f	14 child	5eme	-	city	
131	f	14 child	-	-	city	
132	f	15 child	-	-	city	
133	f	16 child	-	-	city	

Observations:

Nr.	Date	Description	Place
1	8-8-2016	children being hit because of crying (making noise).	city
2	10-8-2016	visit site 1	town
3	12-8-2016	meeting cluster education	city
4	17-8-2016	visit site 2	town
5	17-8-2016	visit site 3	town
6	18-8-2016	observation site school	town
7	22-8-2016	visit site 4	city
8	28-8-2016	visit site 5	town
9	8-11-2016	observation private school	city
10	9-11-2-16	observation private school	city
11	10-11-2016	visite site 6	city
12	10-11-2016	visite site 7	city
13	24-11-2016	distribution school materials	village
14	24-11-2016	observation public school	village
15	25-11-2016	observation public school	village
16	26-11-2016	observation public school	large town
17	11-12-2016	child being hit bec of going home during school break	village
18	15-12-2016	observation public school	village
19	16-12-2016	observation ministry of education	city
20	20-12-2016	observation private school	town
21	20-12-2016	observation: payment APE - school director	town
22	21-12-2016	observation public school	town
23	27-11-2016	observation: library	large town
24	2-9-2016	Observation: school	town

Attachment 3: Questions for the Ureport Questionnaire

1. Mon école fondamentale est/était...

- 1 Une école privée
- 2 Une école publique
- 3 Je ne suis jamais allé à l'école

2. A l'école fondamentale je suis/j'étais chicoté...

- 1 Quelques fois
- 2 Chaque mois
- 3 Chaque semaine
- 4 Chaque jour
- 5 Jamais

3. A l'école fondamentale je vois/j'ai vu quelqu'un dans ma classe être chicoté..

- 1 Quelques fois
- 2 Chaque mois
- 3 Chaque semaine
- 4 Chaque jour
- 5 Jamais

4. Pendant mon éducation, j'ai eu d'expérience avec la corruption dans la classe...

- 1 1 fois
- 2 2-5 fois
- 3 Souvent
- 4 Jamais
- 5 Jamais, mais j'ai entendu parler

5. J'ai payé pour avoir une bonne note, par argent ou par des actions sexuelles...

- 1 1 fois
- 2 Quelques fois
- 3 Souvent
- 4 Jamais

Colofon

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