

CELPA Niger Literacy Project



Evaluation Report

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CELPA-Niger Literacy Project 2008-2010

PYM Norway / BN / Norad

“In the next presidential election, we will be able to chose for ourselves which candidate to vote for, and write his name on the ballot. Last time, it was the election officer who made the choice of a candidate for us.”

“We have leant to purify our drinking water. Since we know that dirt causes illness, we will continue doing this until the end of our lives”

“When we resell what we have bought whole sale, we can now calculate a suitable price to ask, so that we make a profit.”

**Hélène Boëthius, Moumouni Moutira Boureima,
CAP-ABLE Consulting, April 23rd 2010**

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1. Brief description of the project

CELPA Niger is a mission organisation working to establish local churches. The organisation started its' work in 1998, and has a vision for holistic development of the people of Niger – physically, spiritually and morally. A special emphasis is put on promoting the social development of women. The strategies are: leadership training and local capacity building through development projects and through the churches.

CELPA Niger started their social work with a professional training centre during 2001 to 2007 in the capital Niamey. After this first project, a second project for adult literacy and rural development has been taking place from 2008 on four new locations: Hallambaré and Louloudjé south of Niamey, Filingué and Chical north of the capital. CELPA as church is present in the four villages. The project will end in December 2010.

Village	Location	Inhabitants	Language
Filingué	180 km north of Niamey	52,400	Hausa
Chical	18 km from Filingué	2,300	Hausa
Hallambaré	130 km south of Niamey	3,600	Gurmanche
Louloudjé	136 km south of Niamey	1,200	Gurmanche

The project “CELPA-Niger Literacy, Niamey” is financed by PYM Norway and Bistandsnemda/Norad for a three year period. The project consists of courses in reading, writing and basic maths in local languages (Gurmanche and Hausa) and components of development training and activities. The total budget for the three years is NOK 2 053 610 (2008: NOK 646 065, 2009: NOK 610 505, 2010: NOK 797 040). This is equivalent to around 150 million f cfa.

The desired outcome/user effects described in the project plan are the following:

- The ability to use reading and writing in the mother tongue ;
- Increased capacity for health care and nutrition;
- Improved household economy through income generating activities and micro-enterprise;
- Improved living conditions;
- Awareness and increased understanding of the surrounding world;
- Capacity to be proactive in one's own development;
- Understanding of the value of education for girls;
- Better self esteem;
- Understanding of caring for the environment (preventing desertification)

The strategies for reaching these results are:

1. Non formal education in reading, writing and maths in local languages (Hausa and Gurmanche). The courses run for 4 to 5 months, 2 hours 4 to 5 times a week. On each location, there are two groups per year, one for men and one for women, except in Filingué in 2010, where there is a group for women and one for young girls.
2. Training and awareness creation in psychosocial skills (health, nutrition, child care, agricultural techniques, animal husbandry, and the management of cooperatives).
3. Microcredit for raising sheep.
4. Creation of grain banks.
5. Distribution of improved seed and chemical fertilizer.
6. Digging of open wells.

The activities started in 2008 in Hallambaré and Chical, adding Filingué and Louloudjé in 2009. The participants are young people and adults who have not been to school, aged 13 to 50 years. The majority are between 15 and 25 years old.

2. The evaluation

The year 2010 is the last year in the project period, and BN/Norad has asked for a final evaluation of the period. The objective of this study was to evaluate the **relevance** of the project; the **impact** and the **sustainability** of the project for the beneficiaries and in the local community; and also the **effectiveness** and the administrative, professional and financial capacity. On the basis of this, we have also made recommendations for a new phase of the project.

The evaluation team from CAP-ABLE Consulting consisted of Ms H el ene Bo ethius, Swedish, and Mr Moumouni Moutira Boureima, Nigerien living in Belgium.

The approach used for the evaluation was the participative reflection. The evaluators discussed and work closely with the project leadership, encouraging each one to observe, and to analyse and reflect on the work done together and the observations made in the villages. The results of these reflections in group are the basis for this report.

The following methods were used:

- Study of documents: plans, reports, project documentation, cash books, verifications etc.
- Discussions and work with the administration and the project leadership (R emi Agb e, project leader, Noma Afana, book keeper, L eonard Boliabo, cashier and office worker, rev. Mangalyt, chairman of the project committee) concerning the activities, the planning and follow up, the communication, the difficulties, the financial management and the activities compared to the plan.
- Discussions with the leadership of CELPA Niger in Niamey (Rev Willy Myabwa, chairman, Dr Bent Lindberg, vice chairman, Rev Omar, Rev Mangalyt)
- Visits to the four project villages: Filingu e and Chical to the north of Niamey, Hallambar e and Louloudj e in the south; observation of project activities (literacy, micro-enterprise, grain banks, wells, breeding etc.)
- Discussions with the participants, both men and women.
- Discussions with the facilitators and the evangelists.
- Meetings with the local inspectors from IDENF, the Non Formal Education Inspection, from Say (Hallambar e and Louloudj e) Mr Issa Di ebou, and from Filingu e (including Chical), Mr Souleymane Seydou, and of Niamey, Ms Amadou Fatouma Laya.
- Meeting with the national Director of Non Formal Education, Mr Tidjani Amadou, on the Niger government policy for non formal adult education.
- Meeting with Dr Bent Lindberg, Missionary from PYM with CELPA Niger, talking about his study on the community health situation in Hallambar e. Discussion on his recommendations to including health education in a second phase of the project.
- Meeting with the literacy coordinator of SIL, Ms Annelise Djuve, concerning SIL's work in literacy.
- Examination of the teaching materials and the pedagogy used.
- Examination of the budget and the results, discussion on routines for financial management and the cash box management, and the relevant documents.

3. The stakeholders

In all development projects, there are a number of different stakeholders, who participate in different ways in the project.

We have identified a number of different levels, starting by the village level and ending on the international. On each level, we identified the agents and their responsibilities. We also identified the main agents on each level. During this exercises, the group concluded that the agents operating on the departmental level are mostly

different government agencies, with IDENF as the major agent, being responsible for the training of the facilitators for the literacy courses and for the follow-up of the courses.

The other government development agencies are responsible for the other activities. These agencies have taken responsibility for the carrying out of the different components of the project (see the table below). They work out Terms of Reference where they specify the activities which will be carried out and the budget. The costs include transport, daily allowances¹ for the employees of the agency, and other costs. An example of a ToR is enclosed the report submitted to PYM.

While examining the agents and their responsibilities, we concluded that the dependence on the government services creates a situation where the quality of the project will never surpass the capacity which already exists in these services. One of the CELPA leaders said: *"We have made ourselves 100% dependant on IDENF. It's the capacity of IDENF which determines the quality of the project."*

Several factors have contributed to creating this dependence, of which the most important are:

1. The government agencies have a need to have a certain control over the multitude of development efforts taking place in Niger through a host of private organisations. They want to ensure the quality of the interventions, and create order and coordination between all the activities. This is very relevant and understandable, given the large number of actors of varying quality who operate in the country.
2. On the other hand, the government agencies do not have the funding which would allow them to carry out their own interventions on the field. They depend on the civil society actors to carry out specific projects. Without the funding and the civil society projects, the government agencies cannot operate in the field. There is thus a sort of necessary symbiosis, which could be very fruitful, but which also creates the risk of diminishing the character of the civil society as a counterweight towards the state.
3. The CELPA project leadership does not have the specialized knowledge necessary for carrying out the activities planned for the project, neither in adult literacy nor in agriculture, animal breeding, etc. Because of this, they have not been able to carry out a discussion about the different components of the project on an equal level with the government agents, but have been forced to accept the techniques and solutions suggested by the government agents.
4. It should also be noted that there has been some passivity from the project leadership towards the government agencies. The leaders have been satisfied with knowing that they have carried out the activities and made their reports, without any deeper reflection and evaluation.
5. We have also noted that there is a lack of active coordination of the project from CELPA on the department² level, ensuring that the components of the project complement each other and create a synergy effect. Without such coordination, the project risks becoming no more than a series of different activities in the same villages, financed by the project.

Recommendation:

In order to allow CELPA to function as major agent in the project on all levels, it is desirable that **the coordination of the activities on department level is handled by CELPA**. This could be the responsibility of the evangelists, who would then function as local coordinators reporting back to the central leadership in Niamey.

This will only be possible if those responsible for this coordination receive **supplementary training in literacy and project coordination**. If possible, it would be good to include the government agents in such a training activity. In that way, they would all have the same technical starting point, which will make the cooperation easier, and the capacity will be increased on a wider level.

The following recommendations were given by the project leaders after the stakeholder analysis:

- **Awareness raising in the project leadership**
- **Change the division of roles and responsibilities**
- **New partners to increase the capacity of CELPA**

¹ Examples of per diem: The Direction for Agricultural development, May 11 to 12 2008, 20 000 f cfa per day, 3 days for tow persons = 120 000 f cfa. The IDENF inspector, May 15, 2008, 3 days at 5000 f cfa = 15 000 etc.

² The department is the smaller administrative unit in Niger. Say is the department covering Hallambaré and Louloudjé, and Filingué covers the two project villages in the north.

- *Assist in increasing the capacity of IDENF*
- *Seek better methods and better teaching materials*

In addition to the responsibilities listed below for the different stake holders, we recommend that the following responsibility is added for CELPA Niger, as legally responsible for the project:

- *Approve and sign the reports and the annual plans and budgets*

Also, the following responsibility should be added for the project leadership:

- *Collect data on the participants, organise these and analyse them in order to ensure that the activities function satisfactorily.*

Village level

Stakeholder	Groups of participants (Major actor)	Literacy facilitators (Major actor)	Village cooperatives	Traditional local authorities	Literacy committee /village council
Responsibilities	Decide on where to hold the course. Build the class room. Keep up the class room	Teach the participants, Evaluate the progress. Keep class registers.	Manage the local investments (grain bank, micro-credits) Carry out the cooperative's activities (fields).	Receive CELPA representatives. Invite the villagers to information meetings. Help choosing the literacy facilitators. Grant land for class room, grain bank and cooperative field.	Follow-up of activities. Represent the village towards the project leadership.

Department level:

Stakeholder	Inspection IDENF (major actor)	CELPA evangelists	Agricultural agency	Animal husbandry agency	Community development agency	Town hall
Responsibilities	Training the literacy facilitators Follow-up of the literacy courses. Final evaluation of the participants. Writing reports and keeping statistics (submitted to the project leader and the ENF office)	Informal follow-up of the literacy activities and the other activities. Represent CELPA locally. Facilitate meetings with traditional leaders, IDENF and CELPA. Sometimes teach a specific subject in the discussion parts of the literacy courses.	Training the participants in agriculture 2-3 days, once per centre in 2008. Follow-up the activities started by the participants. Advice to participants and to the project leaders. Writes ToR for activities and submits to project leadership. Reports to project leader and government.	Train participants in animal husbandry 2-3 days once in northern centres in 2008. Follow-up of activities practiced by the participants. Advice to participants and project leader. ToR for activities submitted to project leader. Reports to the project leader.	Training in community dev – how to work together, management. Creation of cooperatives. Ensure official registration of cooperatives. Advice to cooperatives and to project leaders. Reports to project leader.	Gives permission to carry out activities. Legalises documents concerning land for grain banks.

National level

Stakeholder	CELPA Niger (major actor)	CELPA project leadership	CELPA project committee	DENF	Ministry of the interior	The auditors and the project evaluators
Responsibilities	<p>Legal owner of the project.</p> <p>Responsible for the sustainability.</p> <p>Partner with PYM.</p> <p>Decides strategies and contents of the project.</p>	<p>Ensures the execution of the project according to the plan.</p> <p>Writes the annual budget and the annual activity plan.</p> <p>Uses the budget according to plan.</p> <p>Ensures daily follow-up of activities.</p> <p>Reports to CELPA and to the funders.</p>	<p>Takes overall decisions concerning the project activities.</p> <p>Approves the annual budget and activity plan.</p> <p>Controls the use of the budget.</p> <p>Approves reports.</p> <p>Responsible for changes in employments (in consultation with CELPA board)</p>	<p>Creates the national program for adult literacy and non formal education.</p> <p>Provides literacy books.</p>	<p>Gives authorisation to CELPA to carry out its activities.</p>	<p>Audit and evaluate the project, give advice and report to the funders and to CELPA.</p>

International level

Stakeholder	PYM (major actor)	BN	Norad
Responsibilities	<p>Major funder.</p> <p>Edits the funding application, including the overall budget, and the plan submitted by CELPA Niger, and submits it to BN.</p> <p>Partner with CELPA, communicates the guidelines for carrying out the project.</p> <p>Technical advisor for the project management.</p> <p>Transfers funds.</p> <p>Receives annual reports and gives feedback and questions, and sends them to BN.</p> <p>Ensures the evaluation.</p>	<p>Intermediary between Norad and PYM.</p> <p>Ensures that PYM and CELPA follow the guidelines of Norad.</p>	<p>Ensures the funding.</p> <p>Sets up the long term development objectives: give capacity to people living in poverty to improve their living conditions and to increase the capacity of the civil society.</p> <p>Makes spot checks of projects.</p>

The participants

While discussing the different stakeholders, it is important to mention a weakness on the level of participants. The literacy courses are at the centre of the project. In the planning, the idea was that there would be one homogenous group of participants – the literacy course participants would be the same as the members of the cooperatives, the beneficiaries of the micro-credits and the agricultural aid etc. This did not come about. The following things need to be considered:

1. Only one basic course in literacy has been offered, lasting 4-5 months. There is no second or third level course for those who have finished learning the basic primer. This means that each year, the study of the basic primer is restarted, enrolling new participants. This has led to that each year, a number of participants

from the previous year have left the study groups, either because they have learnt the basic skills, or because they did not want to take the course a second time over. Others have been added. There is no data available to determine the number of new participants, or how many have retaken the course a second and third time. Nor are there any complete lists of the participants of the other components of the project, permitting to follow the participation from one year to another.

It would have been better to **offer a course with three successive levels to the same participants**, allowing a restricted number of people to obtain a higher proficiency. There is no practical usefulness in being semi-literate. It is also important to **establish lists of the participants** and to ensure that the participation in the different activities is coordinated.

2. Several of the components, such as the cooperatives and the micro-credits are activities which require the ability to read, write and calculate in order to function well. It would have good to link these activities directly to the results of the literacy courses, waiting to the end of the first level course (or even the second) in order to **offer the development activities to those who have a certain level of reading, writing and maths**. This would ensure a higher level of achievement in the development activities, and at the same time creating a motivation for acquiring the basic literacy and numeracy skills.
3. In all non formal adult education, a certain amount of drop-out has to be expected. It is not unusual that around 50% of participants who have enrolled at the beginning drop out before the end of the course. It is also to be expected that not all succeed at the final test³. In order to have a group of 15 to 20 participants who have become literate at the end of a six month period, it is necessary to enrol at least 40 learners at the beginning of the course.
4. The table in section 4B below shows that up to 50 participants have been enrolled in some courses. Still, according to the project leadership, only 25 primers were bought per course. This is not to be recommended. In order to ensure good learning results, **each participant needs to have her/his own books**. One way of ensuring that the learner does not abandon the course, and that he/she takes care of the books, is to ask for a small (nominal) fee for the books, e.g. 100f per book.

4. The project activities

A. Training the facilitators / animators

IDENF is responsible for the training of the facilitators. The training for new facilitators lasts for two or three weeks. The first week is spent on learning the orthography of the language which will be taught. During the second week, the methodology and principles for teaching are taught, and each participant teaches a model lesson.

In January 2008, 11 facilitators were trained in Niamey. The following persons were trained:

Zerma:

Rémi Agbé, Alice Adje⁴, Hadiza Alkassoum, Moïse Boubacar, Djibril Mohamédina.

Hausa:

Ibrahim Terry (evangelist, Chical), Maïmouna Terry (Chical), Omar Gounabi, Binta Garba.

Gurmanche:

Kangué Djiwa (Hallambaré), Étienne Soubou (evangelist, Hallambaré).

Originally, the evangelists at Chical and Hallambaré were supposed to have taught the courses, but later the decision was taken that the literacy courses should be separated from the church work, and that the facilitators

³ In Niger, the success rate (reaching the levels 5 and 6) is approximately 30% of all those enrolled. In this project, the rate is around 20%. However, IDENF “embellishes” the statistics by counting also those who reach the levels 3 and 4 of the test as having passed. A person who is at level 3 or 4 is nevertheless not able to use her/his reading and writing skills in real life.

⁴ The persons trained in Zerma have taught courses in Niamey in the churches. This is also true for Omar Gounabi and Binta Garba.

should be chosen among the population of the villages⁵. There were also some facilitators who left. The following persons have been trained later during the project.

Hallambaré: Mme Kilipua in 2009, M. Kampalemba in 2010.

Louloudjé: M Gbaba and M Seyni in 2009.

Filingué: Sa'adatou Dan Inna, Moustapha Laouali in 2009, upgrade training in 2010.

Chical: Abdoul Karim Touma, Saidou Nassarou and Mme Rakia Salifou in 2008.

The total number of facilitators trained is 20. At present, 7 are working. The two groups in Filingué have the same facilitator. The facilitators received 25 000 f per month in 2008 and 2009, and 30 000 f in 2010 as remuneration for their work.



B. Non formal education in reading, writing and maths

The literacy courses are, as the project name indicates, at the centre of the project. The courses are given during dry season, from February to May or June. Normally they last 4 or 5 months, with meetings for two hours four or five times a week. The courses are in the local language, Hausa in the north and Gurmanche in the south. According to the class registers which we have examined, the participation is not very regular. Each participant is present around twice or three times per week.

The courses, as well as the other activities, started in two villages in 2008, Hallambaré and Chical. The rationale was to evaluate the results and the functioning in these two villages before continuing with the two other villages. A new application was made for 2009 was made to PYM in August 2008, based on the original application and on the half year report for the first six months of 2008.

On each location, there are two groups per year, one for men and one for women, except in 2010 in Filingué, where there is no men's group, but a group for young women and one for married women.

The participants study the primers and the maths books in the local languages produced by the government. In one course, the men's course in Hallambaré, the group was studying a post literacy booklet during our visit.

The IDENF inspectors make three follow up visits per course (according to their planning, they ought to make one visit per month, but the reports show that in reality they make three visits per season), one at the beginning to verify that the courses have started, one in the middle to look at the quality of the teaching and the progress of the participants, and one for the final evaluation. A report is written for each of these visits and submitted to the project leaders. See the documents attached with the copy of the report sent to PYM for an example of such a report.

As mentioned above, it was difficult to find data showing the number of participants in each course. The facilitators have registers of the learners, but these registers are not copied and sent to the project leader. It seems that the project leadership has never asked for this information, and has not seen the need for it. The reports from the inspectors lack in detail. Below is a table with the data that we were able to collect, village by village, for the three years.

⁵ See appendix II A, where one of the evangelists gives his explanation of how this decision was reached.

The final test grades the participants in six levels: 0 = illiterate. Levels 5 and 6 means the learner has skills in reading, writing and maths which can be used in real life. Levels 3 and 4 correspond to what can be called semi-literate, i.e. the learners are familiar with the letters, and can read some words and syllables, but cannot read and write in a useful way. IDENF counts participants at levels 3 to 6 in their statistics as having succeeded, which we find incorrect, since development is supposed to give people skills which can be useful in real life, to diminish poverty and give access to common arenas in society.

From the data in the table below, it can be seen that in 2008, less than 50% of the learners finished the course, and less than 10% of those enrolled passed the final evaluation (levels 5 and 6) ⁶. The passing rate of those who took part in the final test is 18%. For 2009 there are no figures for the numbers enrolled, but the success rate for those who finished the course is again 18%.

In the reports from CELPA to PYM, the system of IDENF has been followed, counting those who have reached levels 3 to 6 as having succeeded.

According to experiences from many literacy projects, a “normal” result is that at least 50% of the participants enrolled succeed. A lower success rate indicates that there are weaknesses in the project which should be corrected. It has to be added, however, that the first few years in a project are always the most difficult. The more the population gets used to non formal education, the better success rate can be expected.

Several factors may have affected the results. The method and the materials have weaknesses which ought to be corrected before the next project phase. The training of the facilitators and the follow-up need improvement. The courses ought to start earlier to allow for at least six months of study. The regularity of the participants needs to increase. It is important to adapt the days and hours of study to the other activities of the learners, to make it possible for them to continue their other regular activities parallel to attending the courses. There is often a “mango rain” in March, when people want to start preparing their fields for sowing. In this period, it may be better to have the courses late in the afternoon to allow the participants to first go and work in their fields. All this should be discussed between the project leadership, the learners and the local literacy committees.

	Total	Hallambaré		Louloudjé		Chical		Filingué	
2008		F	H	F	H	F	H	F	H
enrolled (Feb)	151	51	49	-	-	24	27	-	-
1st follow-up	?	?	?	-	-	19	20	-	-
completed (June)	72	22	18	-	-	16	16	-	-
succeeded 5/6	13	2	3	-	-	3	5(9 ⁷)	-	-
2009		F	H	F	H	F	H	F	H
enrolled	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	32
1st follow-up	225	24	16	33	30	17	24	52	29
completed	194	24	16	25	15	17	24	48	25
level 3/4	59	10	3	9	5	6	10	13	3
level 5/6	34	1	7	2	2	3 (0)	2	10(8)	7 (5)
2010		F	H	F	H	F	H	F	JF
enrolled		?	?	?	?	16 ⁸	20	50 ⁹	?
present at visit		32	16	26		10	8	26	19

C. The village libraries

IDENF recommends that a village library is set up in each place where there has been a literacy course. These libraries consist of a cupboard with books in the local language treating various subjects useful for the

⁶ In the first half year report for 2008 to PYM, CELPA wrote that “After five months of the courses, it is positive to note that around 80% read, write and do maths.” This seems like a heavy exaggeration, even if the levels 3 and 4 are included. The result in 2009 show that less than 50% of the learners enrolled reached levels 3 to 6.

⁷ Those who passed in maths.

⁸ Ten of which retake the course a second time.

⁹ Of which 15 retake the course.

villagers. There is a register for noting the name of the person who borrows a book, and the date of returning the book. The project has installed such libraries in Hallambaré and in Chical. The participants, and also other literate people from the village, borrow books.

The IDENF inspectors expressed a desire that group activities are organized around the libraries in order to encourage reading and discussion of what has been read. This could be a way to ensure that new readers continue reading and writing, and that they learn new things and apply them in their daily lives. We would like to take this one step further, and recommend that ***the use of the libraries is included in a second (and if possible also a third) course of 6 months, which also includes writing of texts related to the activities of the participants, and applied maths.***

D. The development components.

There is no document kept by the project coordinator which systematically summarizes the project activities. The table below is made by the evaluators in order to display the information we have collected.

Activity	Hallambaré	Louloudjé	Filingué	Chical
Training in psycho-social skills	The teaching on health, hygiene, environment etc. is integrated in the literacy courses. A participative discussion is held once a week.			
Distribution of agricultural products (accompanied by teaching given by the agricultural agency)	2008 : speedy millet, improved sorghum, fertilizer. 2009 : Fertilizer, improved sorghum, peanuts, white beans (millet from the previous year re-sown) <i>2010 (planned) : Fertilizer, speedy millet, re-sow sorghum, peanuts, white beans.</i>	2008 : -- 2009 : -- <i>2010 (planned) : Fertilizer, speedy millet, sorghum, peanuts, white beans.</i>	2008 : -- 2009 : Fertilizer <i>2010 (planned) : Fertilizer and seed</i>	2008 : Speedy millet ¹⁰ , fertilizer. 2009 : -- ¹¹ <i>2010 (planned) : Fertilizer and seed</i>
Cooperatives (The cooperatives are formed and supervised by the agency for community development)	2008 : Two cooperatives created, 24 M et 26 F. Field and cash box together. Committee from among the participants. 2009 : Sorghum field, peanuts and white beans (sorghum and beans did not yield, peanuts will be sold and money put in cash box) <i>2010 (planned) : Common field, training of members.</i>	2008 : -- 2009 : -- <i>2010 (planning) : Creation of cooperative</i>	2008 : -- 2009 : Women's cooperative created by CD agency outside of CELPA project. <i>2010 (planned) : Training</i>	2008 : Two cooperatives created, M and F. Two days of training in June. 2009 : No training or activity except the grain bank. <i>2010 (planned) : Discussion and encouragement during literacy courses.</i>
Grain banks	2008 : -- 2009 : Built. The budget did not	2008 : -- 2009 : --	2008 : -- 2009 : Built.	2008 : Built ¹² , stocked with millet in October. 2009 : Stock distributed, partial

¹⁰ The millet bought in Niamey as speedy millet was of a bad variety, which grew more slowly than the normal millet. The harvest failed.

¹¹ The participants were discouraged, and did not want to try again.

¹² For 2008, the plan was first to dig a well in Chical. The decision to build a grain bank instead was taken after an advice by the mayor in Chical. This was not checked with PYM beforehand. PYM found out about the change during a field visit in February 2009.

Activity	Hallambaré	Louloudjé	Filingué	Chical
	allow for stocking this year. <i>2010 (planned) : Stock Oct-Nov, re-sell May-July 2011.</i>	<i>2010 (planned) : Construction and stocking</i>	<i>2010 (planned) : Stocking</i>	restocking <i>2010 (planned) : Continue the activities</i>
Micro-credits	2008 : -- 2009 : -- <i>2010 (planned) : 1 500 000 f reserved for raising sheep (July-Aug). The loans are given individually.</i>	2008 : -- 2009 : -- <i>2010 : planned</i>	2008 : -- 2009 : -- <i>2010 (planned) :</i>	2008 : 39 persons received 35 000 to raise a sheep. 24 paid back ¹³ . 2009 : 26 received between 35000 and 50000. <i>2010: continues micro-loans with the money recuperated.</i>
Wells	2008 : -- 2009 : Well installed and kept up by village committee <i>2010 : nothing planned</i>	2008 : -- 2009 : Well dug. <i>2010 :</i>	-2008 : -- 2009 : -- <i>2010 : nothing planned</i>	2008 : -- 2009 : -- <i>2010 : nothing planned</i>
Other	Local literacy committee created and functioning.	Local literacy committee created and functioning.		

E. Micro-credits for raising sheep.

The plan for the micro-credits is that each participant receives a sum for buying a young sheep to raise and resell with a profit after six months. The animal breeding agency gives advice and carries out the follow-up. CELPA pays the agency for the follow-up. After selling the sheep, each one repays the loan to CELPA, who keeps the amount in an account separated from the project accounts. This account is managed by the project leadership (Afana, Rémi and Léonard). It seems as if there are different methods for repayment in different places. According to one piece of information, the interest is 5%. According to a list from the file with the reports, the interest is 5000f per year, regardless of the amount borrowed. At another time, we were told that there is no interest on the micro-credits. On reading the draft of this report, the project leadership explained that the only micro-credits given so far, in Chical, were repaid without interest in 2009. This year, an interest of 5% will be added. The person who succeeds in repaying the loan can have another loan the following year.

F. The grain banks.

The goal of the grain banks is to ensure that the participants have access to food at an affordable price during the hunger season in May-July. Grain is bought in the market when the prices are low, normally in October. The food is stocked in sacs in the grain bank, a building built with cement blocks, and with a cemented floor and a corrugated iron roof. In Chical the stock was lent to the learners in May 2009. They sold a part to the villagers, and with the money earned, they bought rice and corn, which they stocked and resold later. The loan of millet was partly reimbursed in kind after the harvest. Some people did not get a harvest because of the draught.

The CELPA project owns the land and the building. They received the land as a gift from the villages. The village cooperatives manage the activities.

G. Distribution of improved seed and chemical fertilizer.

The goal with the distribution of seed and fertilizer is to improve the level of food autonomy. The quantity and the varieties distributed have varied from village to village. In Chical, the millet bought at Agrimex as speedy

¹³ This is the information given during the evaluation. According to a later communication, only 2 were unable to repay, and 4 repaid in part, i.e. 36 repaid fully.

millet was not good, and the harvest failed, which discouraged the participants to the point that they did not want to buy seed the following year. In Hallambaré, some participants say that the fertilizer burns the plants, but some others were satisfied, and say that they had better harvests.

H. Digging open wells

The wells were dug by experts. They are open, with cement rings to fortify the walls. They are constantly in use. The wells have a simple mechanism for pulling the buckets.



5. The direct effects of the project

We questioned the participants concerning the effects which they were able to see in their lives by the activities of the project. These are their answers:

WH = Women from Hallambaré, MH = Men from Hallambaré
WL = Women from Louloudjé, ML = Men from Louloudjé
WF = Women from Filingué, YWF = Young Women from Filingué
MC = Men from Chical, WC = Women from Chical

Hygiene and health

- We have learnt to put a lid on the pots with food to avoid flies and dust, which cause diarrhoea. WH, WL, ML
- We have learnt to boil the water to purify it. More than half of us do that. Since we know that dirt causes illness, we will continue with this until the end of our lives. WL, ML
- We have learnt to clean and sweep our houses. YWF
- We wash our clothes more often now than before. WL, ML
- We wash our hands, because dirty hands can cause diarrhoea. We also wash the fruit. ML

Uses of reading, writing and maths in the activities:

- By knowing how to read and write, we can better plan our work. ML
- We have learnt how to manage money in our small enterprises. WL
- When you know how to multiply, you can manage money. WH
- Four persons in our group do commerce, and we have learnt how to calculate the prices to get a profit. This helps us a lot, we make more money than we used to. MH
- When we resell what we have bought whole sale, we can calculate a suitable price to ask, so that we make a profit. ML

- Earlier, we made a lot of unnecessary travel. Now we write letters, and send them to the person, instead of travelling. MH
- We can write things down, especially secret things and things we don't want to forget. WL, ML
- We can read the time. WL
- Ask other people to do errands for us by written messages. ML
- Write down people who receive credit, their names and the sum they owe. ML
- I have learnt how to keep a cash book. WL

Changes because of the development components:

- The well has changes our lives; before, we had to walk 9 km to get water. WF
- Half of the women in Hallambaré have received fertilizer.
- We received seed so each one could sow in their fields: millet, sorghum, millet and peanuts. The sorghum succeeded. The birds ate the millet. WH
- We were given fertilizer and learnt how to use it, and this increased our production. WF
- We planted a field together with peanuts and beans. The peanuts did not succeed, because it didn't rain enough. The beans failed completely. WL
- We did not have any group activity. WF
- We have learnt how to vary our food more, especially what we give to the children.
- We can write our names, and count money. MC

From the replies above, it is clear that for many persons, the project has created important changes in their lives. Their habits have changed in areas like hygiene and health, which will undoubtedly have direct effects on the health of the family. Elementary skills in maths contribute to improve the family economy. Knowing how to read and write makes it possible to write and receive letters, read booklets on useful subjects and participate in democratic processes, like elections.

It is worth noting that it is especially the teaching during the literacy courses which has led to evident and important change in the lives of the participants. The supplementary activities, which are often the most costly, have led to less recognized change among the participants. It is important to consider this when planning a new phase of the project, as well as in the planning of the activities for the rest of 2010.

There were fewer concrete responses as to how their lives have been changed from the participants in Chical and Filingué, compared to the villages in the south. In the north, the responses were more general, like "hygiene", but they could not say what they do to better take care of their hygiene.

For the two villages in the south, we can say for sure that the literacy courses have led to real changes in behaviour, which will be of help to the participants, especially in the area of commerce. It is also clear that the health teaching has had effects in these two villages. The agricultural activities (seed and fertilizer distribution, cereal banks) have had less effect. Nobody mentioned the micro-credits as being helpful.

6. Evaluation of the different project components

The objective of this study is to evaluate the relevance, the impact and the sustainability of the project for the beneficiaries and in the local community, as well as the efficiency and the administrative, professional and financial capacity. Below is a discussion of each component in the project as to relevance, impact, sustainability and efficiency.

With **relevance**, we understand that the component replies to felt needs of the participants and of the local population. **Impact** replies to the question to what extent this component makes a real difference in the life of the participants. This question has already been discussed in section 5, but here we will make some conclusions. **Sustainability** is about whether the work of the project will have lasting effects. Will the change in behaviour caused by this component still be visible in 5 years time, after 10 years, or even later? **Efficiency** compares the money spent, and the work and time invested with the impact. Was it worth the effort?

A. Non formal education in reading, writing and maths

Relevance: Our observations and meetings with the learners show clearly that basic education is a felt need among the participants, and that it is very relevant for all development of the area.

Impact: For the participants who have succeeded in acquiring the basic skills, especially maths, but also reading and writing, the impact in their lives is great, and they can tell about many useful ways to practice their skills in order to create better income (commerce, communication, management, etc)

However, the success rate is very weak, between 10% and 20%, while one would normally expect a literacy project to have a success rate of at least 50%. For a second phase of the project, it is recommended to take measures to improve the success rate considerably.

Sustainability: A person who starts reading, writing and calculating in his/her daily life, and who finds it useful, will not cease these activities. His/her life is changed for ever. But for those who are rather semi-literate, for whom reading, writing and maths are painful and hard, the risk is great that they will fall back into functional illiteracy. They do not use their skills in daily life. It is therefore important to add a second level course, or preferably two, in order to ensure that the skills learnt are useable and useful for the learners.

Efficiency: If the success rate is increased to 45% or more, this component could be seen as efficient. The cost for the courses are not big. In order to increase the impact, the follow-up and the facilitators' training need to be increased, which would increase the total cost. But if this increases the number of participants who succeed, the efficiency will increase as well.

Recommendation: *Continue with non formal education, improving the methods, the materials, the facilitators' training and the follow-up, in order to ensure that the success rate increases. Integrate the courses more with the development components.*

B. The village libraries

Relevance: It is undoubtedly very important that the newly literate persons have things to read, to increase their reading skills, and also to learn new things while reading. Even so, a new literate does not only need to read, but also write, and develop her/his capacity to apply the new skills in other areas of daily life. We recommend that the libraries are combined with a second level course in reading, writing and maths, with participative discussions and practical application of the skills.

Impact: We did not find evidence of any impact on the participants from the libraries. This does not mean that the impact doesn't exist, only that the learners and the facilitators did not speak of this during our meetings.

Sustainability: The books are stored in metal cupboards, and there is a system for borrowing which seems to function. It has to be seen for how long the library will continue to arouse interest, and if the books will be damaged or lost after a certain time. A regular follow-up from the project leadership is probably necessary in order to make the libraries continue to function. It is also necessary to add new books from time to time.

Efficiency: The cost for a village library is quite low, and if the library is well looked after, it could have an impact on the beneficiaries, as they learn new things while reading.

Recommendation: *Integrate the libraries with a second level literacy course.*

C. Psycho-social training (especially hygiene and health) during the literacy courses.

Relevance: There are real needs for learning about hygiene and health, and the population seems very aware of this, and open to learn new things and to change their behaviour.

Impact: The learners in the southern villages have clearly learnt hygiene practises which ought to have a real effect on their health. The project leadership needs to find out why the same result was not reached in the northern villages.

Sustainability: A learner said that "We will always continue doing this until the end of our lives". This shows that the teaching about hygiene, where it worked, has had a sustainable result.

Efficiency: To measure the efficiency more clearly, it would be necessary to make some quantitative research, with questionnaires given to a number of participants, or visits in the homes, to ascertain the

changes which have actually taken place in their hygiene habits, and the effects which they consider that this has had on their health. We can only say that the participants in the south appreciated the teaching, and that a number of persons have changed their habits. The investment in time and personnel seems to have yielded a good result.

Recommendation: *Emphasise this component even more during the courses, and add more practical uses. Investigate why the teaching in the north did not work as well.*

D. Distribution of seed and fertilizer

Relevance: In the southern villages, the participants complained that the earth is “tired”. There is not enough land to allow for periods of letting the land lay fallow to let it recover. There is a real need to increase the food production. This is a strongly felt need. But it does not seem to have been the participants who suggested the distribution of seed and fertilizer. This was rather the suggestion of the agricultural service. We doubt that this is the most relevant activity for increasing the food production within a non formal education project.

Impact: The impact is conditioned by the rainfall and a correct handling of the seed and the fertilizer. There have been several failures in the distribution of seed and fertilizer, for various reasons. It is also important to note that chemical fertilizer does not always have a good effect on the plants. In one village people said that the fertilizer had burnt the plants. Also, using it over a longer period risks impoverishing the soil rather than enriching it.

Sustainability: The distribution of seed is sustainable only if the new products succeed and are accepted by the population. It also has to be possible to re-sow the seed year after year, with the same results. If the seed has to be bought each year from a distributor outside the village, it is not sustainable. Also, distributing something for free without asking any effort on the part of the recipient is not good pedagogy, if we want to transform the beneficiaries from victims into persons who act to change their own future. It rather creates a dependency on the government’s agricultural service.

Efficiency: The efficiency of this component was not great. The cost and the work invested did not yield sufficient sustainable impact.

Recommendation: *Discuss with the participants what the different possible methods are for increasing the food production, e.g. dry season gardening, planting fruit trees, producing natural manure, planting several varieties in the same field etc. Decide in each village on one common activity to do each year. Integrate this activity with the teaching and the practice of reading, writing and maths.*

E. The cooperatives

Relevance: Creating cooperatives can be relevant, if the participants are motivated and interested in working together in cooperatives. We have not been able to gather information on this. Before planning the activities of a new project phase, this question has to be put to the participants. It is important to remember that the course participants whom we met are not necessarily identical with the members of the cooperatives. The link between the two components is weak.

Impact: As far as we were able to find out, the cooperatives have not functioned well in most of the villages, except in Hallambaré.

Sustainability: The sustainability of a cooperative is directly linked to the competence of its members to handle the management of the activities, which in turn depends on their skills in reading, writing and maths. It seems as if the project leadership has not considered this. There has been no effort to synchronize the cooperative’s activities with the literacy activities. The cooperatives can be created during the second level literacy course, using the course sessions to write the texts for the cooperative, practicing reading, writing and maths around the activities of the cooperative.

Efficiency: Since the cooperatives have not functioned properly, the efficiency is not great.

Recommendation: *Investigate the interest among the participants for creating cooperatives, and what they would like to do in those cooperatives. Adapt the contents of the advanced literacy courses according to these desires, and create cooperatives during or at the end of the advanced course.*

F. The micro-credits for breeding

Relevance: There is a need in the population for income generating activities, and breeding is an activity already established in the area. The population often expects that every development project should have a

micro-credit component. Still, we are not convinced that micro-credits are the best strategy for sustaining and improving the animal breeding. The way the micro-credits were given has not allowed the participants to make their own decisions or to create activities which would let them change their living conditions, or to take care of their own situation.

Impact: In Chical, 39 persons received the sum of 35 000 f each in 2008. Two of them were not able to pay back, and four paid back only a part. Some paid back, but without making a profit. One participant made the comment that he prefers not to have a debt, since one never knows if it will be possible to pay back. This seems to indicate that the impact has not been as positive as one could expect.

Sustainability: The work with microcredit is difficult, asking a lot of expertise and reflection. In order for microcredit to be sustainable, they need to bring about something permanent to the participants. The buying of one sheep which is raised and resold doesn't leave anything in the hands of the person who received the credit, except, if all goes well, a small sum of money. Then it all has to start over again.

Efficiency: In comparison with the impact, the strategy with the microcredit is not efficient. If the goal is to increase the cash income of the participants, other alternatives need to be discussed, which would be more sustainable and less costly.

Recommendation: *If the micro-credit component is to be kept, the credits should be given to the cooperatives for their common activities, so that one individual does not have to carry the burden of repayment. Also, there should be something left after repaying. E.g. the project could distribute a flock of some young sheep with a male, and ask that the cooperative pay back the same number of young sheep after two years. There will then be a small flock left with the cooperative. This would also mean that the project leaders would not need to manage any money after having bought the first animals.*

G. The grain banks

Relevance: There is a real food problem in the villages, with a hunger period in April-July, when there is a lack of grain, and the prices go up enormously compared to prices after the harvest, in September-October. The basic need for the people is to have enough to eat all year round. This need can be met in different ways: a) In offering food at a reduced price during the months of shortage, or as a loan to be reimbursed after the harvest (these are the two ways of using the grain banks). b) Facilitating an increased production of food, to allow each one to have enough to eat all year round. c) Making sure that people earn enough money to be able to pay the higher price during the hard months. We are not convinced that the grain banks is the most relevant strategy.

Impact: Since only one bank is functioning, and only one cycle of resale and restocking has taken place, it is not possible to evaluate the impact.

Sustainability: The management of the grain banks is very vulnerable. It is enough with one bad season, with one failed crop, in order to break the cycle of buying and reselling. All which will remain is then a building. There will be a need for more exterior funding to restock the bank. As with any system which involves money, there is a high risk of theft or embezzlement¹⁴. The basic need is to increase productivity.

Efficiency: The cost for the grain banks is considerable, and their functioning is very vulnerable. The efficiency is therefore not good.

Recommendation: *Seeing the vulnerability of the grain banks, and the fact that they do not contribute to an increased food production, we recommend that the project leadership chooses another strategy which is less costly and which is rather oriented towards increasing food production, and towards income generating activities during dry season.*

¹⁴ The CELPA project committee makes the following comment: « The grain bank is vulnerable only if one lends the stock in order to recuperate it at the end of the harvest; as was done the second time. We assure that the grain bank activities will be focused only on buying grain in the time when it abounds, and selling it when there is a shortage.” Even so, if the harvest fails one year, there will be no grain to be bought at a low price, and it will not be possible to continue.



H. The wells

Relevance: The participants in the southern villages have testified to their need for water, and the great difference which the wells have made in their lives. We can conclude that the relevance is great. The wells are also relevant in allowing the women to participate in the literacy courses. If they don't have access to the wells, they must spend most of the day getting water.

Impact: The wells have had an important impact in the villages, especially in easing the burden of work for the women, and making it possible for them to participate in the courses. There is also an obvious health effect in providing clean water.

Sustainability: Since the wells are open, and the mechanism for drawing the water are very simple, there are no major risks that the wells will stop working. However, one of the wells is starting to dry up, and there is a need to deepen it with a few metres, to ensure that there is water throughout the year.

Efficiency: The cost for digging the wells is comparable to that of constructing a grain bank (around 3 million f cfa), and the sustainability and relevance are more evident. We find that this component is efficient.

Recommendation: *If the number of villages where literacy courses are offered is increased, and these villages need wells dug, we recommend that the project continues with this activity. It is important to ensure that the participants in the courses also participate actively in the work with the well, and that they take responsibility for maintaining the well.*

7. The materials and the teaching methods

A. The materials:

The method in the materials which we have seen follow a common model. A sentence and a picture introduce a development theme. One of the words in the sentence is the key word of the lesson, and from this word, a new syllable and a new letter are learnt. Then a series of syllables are constructed with this new letter. When the learners have practiced reading and writing the new syllables, they construct new words with these syllables, using their chalk boards. After that, they practice reading these words.

We noted the following weaknesses:

- a. Some of the books are very badly printed. In one class, the day's lesson was illegible in most of the books.
- b. There is no text in the lessons, or very little text, except for the sentence at the beginning of the lesson. We noticed that all the facilitators ignored this sentence, and started directly with the key

word. The learners are thus only learning to read and write isolated words during the major part of the course. Only towards the end of the book, there are a few sentences for reading practise.

- c. There are no lessons in HIV/Aids or on gender issues, nor on human rights, civil rights, etc. (These themes can also be treated in supplementary texts on the higher levels)
- d. The participants are not allowed to take the books home. This makes it impossible for them to study at home, and also to show their books to others and read to them, in order to discuss and share what they have learnt.
- e. There are not enough books for all participants, since it was only budgeted that there would be 25 participants in each course.

B. The teaching :

- a. The facilitators do not read the theme sentence at the beginning of the lesson, and they do not conduct a participative discussion in the groups we visited (except in the men's group in Hallambaré, where they worked according to the method called "Text pedagogy", which the facilitator had learnt working for another NGO.
- b. There is a lot of mechanical repetition, « parrot style », in the courses, i.e. the facilitator reads or says a word or a syllable, and the learners all repeat in unison automatically. This is not a good method for teaching adults. Adults need to think before they reply. It is better to ask them to read one at a time, and to not repeat what the facilitator says.
- c. The facilitators in Filingué and Chical do not grasp the method as well as their colleagues in the south.

C. The follow up

- a. The supervision of the literacy courses by the IDENF inspectors is not done regularly. Their reports lack basic information about the participants.
- b. The role of the evangelists in the follow up is not clear. They do some follow up, but in an informal way, and without writing any reports to the project leader. They do not keep statistics or other data. They have had no training in supervision. Still it is clear that their contribution is much appreciated by the facilitators. One of the facilitators in Louloudjé says: *"We appreciate what Étienne (the evangelist) does a lot. We can discuss our problems with him. The IDENF inspectors do not go into any details, they do not make comments on our work. It's Étienne who introduced the hygiene teaching in our courses. He is always near at hand, and we can go to him to discuss our problems."*
- c. There are no written reports of the follow up visits made by the project leader. It is thus not possible to say anything about the function or usefulness of his visits.

Recommendations:

- ***If the project is to continue using the same books, they need to be supplemented with texts for each lesson, starting at lesson 15, in order to provide reading practise to the participants.***
- ***There is a need to train the facilitators on how to hold a participative discussion at the beginning of the lesson, using the theme sentences as a starting point. See Attachment III for some advice on how to conduct a participative dialogue.***
- ***The evangelists need training in supervision and their role needs to be formalised. Also, a report form needs to be created, which they can fill in and submit to the project leader. The evangelists can function as key person on location in the coordination of the activities.***
- ***It would be good to increase the training of the facilitators. The training given by IDENF is not sufficient. If possible, CELPA ought to add one or two weeks in order to increase their capacity.***

8. The gender situation and the impact of the project on the women's situation

More than half of the participants are women or young girls (122 of 225 at the first follow up in 2009).

One of the goals of the project is to offer young girls and women the opportunity to develop and to increase their capacity to participate in income generating activities, and in the life of the community: empowerment.

From the testimonies in section 5 about the effects in the life of the participants, it is clear that the women and young girls who have participated have been able to increase their capacity. Several can sell their produce at the

market at a reasonable profit, and can manage their money better thanks to their new skills in maths. Improved hygiene also helps improving the family economy when they spend less on medical care.

We asked questions on the role of men and women in most of the course we visited. One example of empowerment is the group of women who explained the difference which the literacy course will make when they will vote in the next presidential election:

“This time, we will be able to choose for ourselves which candidate to vote for, and write his name on the ballot. Last time, it was the election officer who made the choice of a candidate for us.”

Thus it is evident that the literacy courses, as well as the health teaching, have given an increased capacity to the women, making them able to participate in the life of the community and to conduct income generating activities.

However, we have also noted that the subject of equality between the genders or gender roles has not been treated during the courses. Here are some extracts from our conversations:

The men’s group in Hallambaré:

How have the relationships between men and women changed because of the project?

“The women dress better. They practise what they have learnt when they cook. During the cooperative’s meetings, the women also participate, and they sometimes speak.”

The women’s group in Louloudjé:

“Now we serve our husbands more quickly when they are hungry. We have been taught to respect our husbands, and to talk with each other.”

Between the man and the women, who has the greatest value? - 75% say the man.

Can a wife beat her husband? - All say no.

Can a husband beat his wife? - All say yes.

When the evaluator explains that the man and the woman are different, but with the same value, and that there are laws forbidding that one of them beats the other, they are very pleased.

The men’s group in Louloudjé:

During village meetings, can all talk, men and women alike?

“Those invited can talk. If the meeting concerns the women, they come, but many meetings only concern the men. The women sometimes have their own meetings.”

If the women does something wrong, can her husband beat her?

This question makes them laugh. Someone admits:

“Yes, we beat them sometimes, but they can’t beat us. »

Who gave you this right? - “God”

The women’s group in Filingué:

“The husband is the head of the family and the greatest. When God created the world, he made the man greater. The husband has the right to beat his wife when she has done something wrong, because it is he who feeds us and clothes us.”

When we want to change attitudes and practises which are rooted in the culture and in the religion, it is important to not preach or prescribe, but rather make people think and discuss. During the conversation with the women at Louloudjé, I asked the question “Can a man have children with a woman?” and “Can a woman have children without a man?” This helped them see that men and women are mutually dependent. One of them can’t function without the other. This makes them equals although they are different.

Recommendations: Introduce discussion themes on gender relations. Make research on current legislation in Niger on women’s rights; translate these in to local languages, and use for reading and discussion. When discussing gender relations, it is also good to discuss sexuality, and HIV/Aids. Does a woman have the right to say no? In which situations? etc.

9. Financial management and administration

I. Routines and procedures for financial management

Two days of the evaluation were reserved for the financial management. We discussed the routines established for payments, and especially the handling of the cash box.

PYM has elaborated a Financial Manual, which is kept at the project office. Willy and Afana are familiar with this manual. Afana is also a trained accountant, and has thus extensive knowledge in his job. Rémi Agbé, project leader, and Léonard, the cashier, are not familiar with PYM's manual. This can be explained by the fact that both of them have replaced other persons. Léonard learnt to handle the cash by working next to the previous cashier, who went to Lomé for studies. Rémi took over the position as project leader from David Lecomte, and learnt the management from him.

The following are the procedures currently used:

- Before making the annual budget, the project leader and the accountant plan the activities together.
- A plan is submitted to the management committee, which accepts it or asks for changes.
- Based on the activity plan, a budget is established. For each activity, the cost is investigated. A pro forma budget is asked from the representative of the agency responsible for each activity.
- Once the budget is established, it is submitted to the management committee.
- The budget is then sent to PYM Norway.
- After questions and adjustments, an approved budget is sent back by PYM.
- For 201, the budget is not yet approved, but a first transfer has been made, and in the meantime the budget submitted is followed.
- During the year, corrections are made to the budget. The 2009 budget was adjusted twice, and PYM accepted the modifications.
- PYM makes 4 transfers per year. The money is paid into an account reserved for the project.
- Willy and Mangalyt can sign for the account. Each cheque needs to be signed by both.
- The cashier is responsible for purchases of office materials.
- The project leader, the cashier and the accountant make estimations of the needs for the office and for the regular activities. Money is taken out from the bank once or twice per month.
- For larger purchases, a pro forma invoice is requested and presented to the management committee.
- The cash box is kept in the safe. Only the cashier has access to the safe.
- The project leader orders the expenses. The cashier gives him the money, and they sign a withdrawal slip together, which is handed to the accountant.
- The project leader takes the pad with withdrawal slips with him when he travels, and the evangelists sign such a slip when they receive the money for the facilitators.
- All the receipts and the withdrawal slips are handed to the accountant. The slips are stapled with the receipts and classified.
- The cash book is kept by the cashier in order to keep track of what goes in and out of the cash box.
- The cash box is checked periodically. The project leader does a check at the end of each month. He can also perform spot checks at any time. A list is established at each check.
- At the end of each month, the accounts are set up for the month. The software used works very well, and makes at the same time a budget follow-up. This means that the project is checked against the budget on a monthly basis. It is possible to see each month what is left in each budget post, and what has been spent.
- A report is sent to PYM Norway twice a year, at the beginning of July and at the beginning of January. The budget and the reports are made in NOK. A medium exchange rate is calculated for the whole year when making the annual report.

II. The budget

The project leadership estimate that the budget has been well made, and that it is possible to keep it. For 2009, a sum had been budgeted as income for the sale of some computer equipment which had been replaced, but until now it has not been possible to sell these items, which meant that the budget had to be adjusted accordingly. The project management decided to cancel the training for the project personnel, in order to not have to decrease spending on the activities in the villages.

When studying the budget for 2009, we notice that a large part has been used for personnel, and for the central administration. The figures do not reveal the amount which has been paid to the different government agencies, nor the costs for the different components of the project.

Use	NOK	%
Salaries and administration Niamey	231 547	32%
Personnel and help from Norway	170 000	23%
Investments (wells 80 000, grain banks 73 500, class room furniture 15 000)	168 500	23%
Supervision, training courses, books, remunerations for facilitators etc. (included here are the per diems and other expenses of the government agencies)	122 400	17%
Other (audit etc.)	34 453	5%
Total	726 900	100%

This shows that 40% of the budget for 2009 was reserved for expenses directly related to the activities in the villages. Of these expenses, half were investments in the construction of wells and the cereal banks, 153 500. This can be explained by two facts: a) the costs for literacy courses are normally very low, and b) there are only 8 courses in the project, which is less than what one would expect normally in a literacy project. This in turn can be partially explained by the desire of CELPA to have courses in villages where CELPA Niger has churches. However, it would be good to reflect over the possibility in a new phase to have more courses in more villages, in order to establish a better balance between the central costs and the direct costs for the local activities.

Here are some observations by the evaluator concerning the financial management, especially of the cash box:

A. There are good and well established routines, and a good order in the management of the funding and the accounting.

The routines described above show that there is a good system established, which normally works very well. It can be noted that the follow up of the budget is well done, and that the budget reflects well the real costs. There have not been any major deviations from the budget, and the communication between the different stake holders functions well. The following remarks are thus minor comments. Our global impression is that the financial management is sound.

B. There are often large sums in the cash box.

At several occasions, there have been several million francs in the cash box, which is not good, unless money has been taken out for a specific and immediate use.

C. There have been problems with liquidity, which have led to loans between the Mission, the School and the Project.

The quarterly transfers from PYM often arrive late, which causes problems with liquidity in the project. There are expenses planned, and there is nothing left in the bank account or in the cash box. In these situations, loans have been made from the missions and the school. The amounts have been noted in the cash book, and all have been reimbursed when the transfers from PYM have arrived. But when then mission or the school in turn have had problems with their cash flow, it was not possible to refuse to make loans to them from the project, even though this is not normally permitted with project funds. Below is a list of loans and their repayment, according to the cash book:

- 12 March 2009: loan from the mission: +500 000
- 19 March 2009: loan from the mission: +600 000
- 23 March 2009: loan from the mission: +1 000 000
- 27 March 2009: repayment, debt to the mission: -2 000 000
- 28 May 2009: loan from the school: + 500 000
- 04 June 2009: loan from the school: + 500 000
- 31 June 2009: repayment debt school: -1 000 000
- 29 Sept 2009: loan from the mission: - 1 300 000
- 30 Sept 2009: loan from the school - 300 000

15 Oct 2009: loan from the mission: - 700 000

27 Nov 2009: repayment debt mission: + 3 000 000

04 Nov 2009: repayment debt school + 300 000

D. There are some weaknesses in the procedures for the cash box and the cash book.

The cash book is well kept, and it is easy to find the verifications for the expenses noted in the cash book in the folders. However, the cashier and the project leader do not have a system which allows for having a signed verification for each movement of the cash. I.e. one slip which is signed when money is retrieved from the cash box, another which is signed when the money passes into the hands of another person, and one which shows that the money has been paid for a service or for goods, and yet another slip to show what the remaining sum was which was put back in the cash box.

Recommendations:

- a. Make a quarterly budget before the beginning of the year.**
This makes it possible to have an idea of the expenses planned for each quarter.
- b. Notify PYM well in advance of the sum needed for the following quarter, and if possible, ask that the quarterly transfer be made earlier.** If possible, the fourth transfer of the year should cover the needs until the end of January.
- c. Establish a list of expenses twice per month in order to replenish the cash box.** The project leader can establish such a list according to the planned activities, and the accountant should verify that the expenses are in accordance with the budget. The chairman of the committee signs. In this way, having too much cash in the cash box can be avoided. Preferably, there shouldn't be more than 500 000 fca in the cash box, unless a major expense is expected in the immediate future.
- d. Use the withdrawal and entry slips for the cash box correctly.** (see also p. 14 in the Manual) The normal procedure is the following: At the same time as a sum is withdrawn from the cash box, the withdrawal slip is filled in. The sum withdrawn, the objective and the date are noted, as well as the person who took the money. This person also signs the slip, as well as the cashier and the project leader. When the money has been spent, all the receipts and the change are handed to the cashier. At that point, the entry slip is filled in. On this, the amount of change handed back is noted, what the money is (change remaining after paying for X), and the slip is signed by the person who paid back the money and by the cashier. This procedure will ensure that no money ever leaves or enters the cash box without the exact information about who and how much being written down.
- e. Let the persons receiving the money sign for it.** A signed receipt must always be established by the person who is the last one to receive money. The evangelist can't sign for the facilitator. No other person can sign instead of the receptor. If the person does not know how to write, he/she should put a sign which he/she can recognize later at his/hers. A cross is not sufficient.
- f. The receipts need to have complete information.** The receipts should show clearly that the money has been paid by the CELPA project. The name CELPA (or the registration number of the vehicle for buying car fuel) needs to figure on the receipt. For a receipt where there is no specification of the goods bought, e.g. from a supermarket, an explanatory note needs to be added to the receipt, with an itemized list of what was bought. As far as possible, the store keepers should be asked to make itemized receipts.
- g. Systematize the numbering in the cash book.** On the pages in the cash book, there is a place for noting the number of the transaction. It would be good if this number is the same as the number on the verifications in the binders, to facilitate comparing the documents.
- h. Keep the cash book up to date.** As far as possible, the cash book should be kept up to date. As the cashier doesn't work Wednesdays, he cannot update the cashbook these days, nor during weekends. But during the other days of the week, the cash book should be up to date at the end of the work day. The cash box also needs to be counted more often than once per month, in order to make sure that any loss is discovered as soon as possible.
- i. Personal loans are not permitted.** According to the Manual, p 18 "Under no circumstance can private loans be granted with the funds which have been transferred to the project account. The money must be used for the objectives defined in the funding application for the project."

III. The project management.

The project management has several strong points, which are important to mention:

First, there is a good team spirit in the group. It is noticeable that the members of the team are at ease with each other, that they allow their different strengths and personalities to complement each other. There seems to be no negative gossiping about people who are not present, and the impression is that each one likes his work and makes an effort to do it well.

Secondly, each member of the group has a vision for the work. During our first work session, each one answered the question why the church should be involved in development work, and the replies showed that each one has a clear vision for holistic development through and in the church.

We have also noted that the work is carried out in an ordered way, and that everybody does their best to keep the existing documents in order and follow the routines. If there are deficiencies in the routines, this is not primarily because of negligence, but by ignorance – through lack of training.

Having said this, it is still necessary to point out some weaknesses: As mentioned above in section 3, there is no central documentation laying out all the activities of the project and keeping track of the participants and their progress, except the reports made by the different government agencies being responsible for the different components of the project. The project leader visits the sites regularly, and coordinates the activities, ensuring that the different agencies do their part. The evangelists also participate in the follow up of the activities. But this is not documented, which has as a result that the reports written to PYM are very meagre and unspecific.

As mentioned earlier, there has been a too great dependence on government agencies, which has led to that the different components of the project not being coordinated to create a synergy effect. Often it is not clear if the participants of one component are the same as those in another. This is aggravated by the fact that new participants are enrolled each year in the literacy courses.

It is worth noting that neither the project leader nor the cashier have been trained for their roles. The knowledge and understanding of the Project Manual and the Financial Manual of PYM is weak or non-existent. One cannot ask of a person to follow an instruction which is unknown to him.

This situation can be explained by historical reasons. The PYM missionary who had planned the project with CELPA interrupted his term in 2008, earlier than planned, at the moment when the project was about to start. This made the handover process fast and improvised. The current project leader was first nominated as interim leader for six months. He took a training course with IDENF as literacy facilitator, but did not get any training from PYM in project management. After some time, since another qualified project leader had not been found, the interim leader was asked to stay on, seeing that he is an honest and conscientious person. A change in personnel at PYM Norway also contributed to not yet having offered any training in the Manual. Another factor which has weakened the project management is that one of the committee members, who is also the president of CELPA Niger, Rev. Willy Myabwa, has been ill during a period, and could not give his full support of the project during that time.

Recommendations:

The project leaders need to take a more active role in coordinating and following up the project. Data on the activities and on the participants should be collected, verified and analysed by the project leader.

The role of the evangelists needs to be clarified, as well as their responsibility in writing reports.

It is important to train the project team in project management and in financial management based on the PYM manuals.

10. Recommendations by the project committee for a new phase

At the last discussion and reflection session between the evaluators and the project management and CELPA, the evaluators asked the others to divide in groups of three, and to formulate their recommendations for the next phase of the project. Below are their recommendations – proposed by the people directly involved in the project, as management team or in the role of leaders of CELPA Niger:

1. *Plan the activities in accordance with the real needs of the population.*
2. *Re-examine the components qui did not work well during the fist phase.*
3. *Manage all the activities (components) of the project in a way which creates synergy.*
4. *Not be totally dependent on IDENF, but open up for cooperation with other partners experienced in literacy. Reduce the participation of IDENF.*
5. *Strengthen the follow up and organize courses in order to strengthen the administrative capacity.*

As evaluators, we find that these recommendations express and summarize very well the results of the evaluation, and we are very happy that they were formulated by the project leaders themselves, after our reflection together.

We have already given our recommendations in the text of the report, and will not add any more recommendations here. In summary, we want to express our sincere thanks to the team for a good and fruitful cooperation, wishing that all the things we learnt together will lead to a successful second phase of the project.

Appendixes

Appendix I: Notes from the class visits

Hallambaré Women

Facilitator: Kilipua, 20 year old woman (new literate trained by the IDENF at Say in 2009)

Number of participants: 32 (the majority are 11 to 15 years)

Lesson taught:

32 (lesson on feeding sheep)

Key word: “muadi” ‘grass’

Syllable to learn: “mua”

New letters: “ua, uo”

Observations:

The learners were not present when we arrived; they were all at a marriage in the village. But they came quickly when called.

The lesson starts with a review. The facilitator asks questions on how to manage the fields and the trees. The method is question-answer rather than a participative conversation. Then a short review of the preceding lesson.

The lesson:

Questions on the drawing: “What do you see?” “A sheep.”

“What is it doing” “It’s eating.” “It has something in the manger.”

“To raise a sheep, what is necessary to do?” “You need to stock grass/hay.”

She does not read the theme sentence, but goes directly to the key word:

What did we talk about? “muadi” (grass)

She writes ‘muadi’ on the blackboard, and all read together.

Several go to the board and write the word ‘muadi’.

She isolates ‘mua’ and writes it below ‘muadi’. All read, some read one by one.

She isolates ‘ua’ and writes it below, and also writes ‘uo’ next to it. All read the two graphemes in unison.

She shows on the blackboard how ‘ua’ is composed of u+a and ‘uo’ by u+o.

Some learners are called to the blackboard to write ‘ua’ and ‘uo’.

Then all write the two graphemes in their note books.

All have note books and pens, but the majority haven’t brought any primers. The note books are well looked after.

The facilitator copies the model for the written exercise on the blackboard. She writes down a couple of sentences: “the baobab has leaves”; “the animals eat grass”.

Three new words are read: toubu ‘baobab’, buadigu ‘love’ and muadi ‘grass’.

Comments:

The lesson has a slow pace, and it seems as if the learners are a bit bored while the others write on the blackboard. The lesson is not very lively. It is possible that the facilitator is shy because of our visit.

She seems to teach the lesson in the way she has been taught to. We note the method of question-answer and repeating things in unison.

Hallambaré, men's group

Facilitator: Kampali Limba, 11 years of experience as a facilitator (has received further training by IDENF)

Number of participants: 16, all 15 to 25 years old

Lesson taught: Reading lesson in a post literacy booklet.

Observations:

The facilitator asks three questions:

- What is hygiene?
- How can we keep our environment clean?
- If we keep our environment clean, what is the result?

The replies (6 learners reply, each speaks several times, the others are silent):

Sweep, clean our plates, keep our beds clean, keep our belongings in order, purify the water, sweep the house, wash our clothes regularly, keep animals away from the family, wash our hands before eating and after the toilet, use soap.

What are the results?

If we sweep, we avoid scorpions and snakes.

If we cover our food we will be healthy.

Having clean clothes gives the person a value among others and avoids bad smell.

Clear water prevents diarrhoea and malaria.

You save money because you don't have to pay for medical care.

The facilitator: You have given good replies. He writes a few of the replies on the blackboard. He tells them to copy them in their notebooks. They write well. Then some of them come to the blackboard and read the phrases.

After that they read the text. It is about how to look after trees in the fields – how to cut branches for firewood in a way which allows the trees to continue growing, and the importance of not cutting down trees. The facilitator reads the whole text first. Then he asks 3 persons to reread the whole text, one after the other. All follow the text in their books, except two or three.

During the reading, the facilitator notes some difficult words on the blackboard, and they read these words together. He also helps the participants with words they have problems with during the reading. He explains what the parenthesis mean, when they come to them in the text.

The lesson finishes with a dictation. He encourages them to reread the text at home. There will be questions on it tomorrow.

Comments:

The facilitator has applied the method well. He shows that he has a good understanding of what he is doing. He is a good teacher, and it is noticeable that he has a long experience, and that he is using elements from other training courses which he has had. The weakness is in reading the text before the participants have read it themselves. This takes away the joy of discovering that one can read new things for oneself.

Louloudjé Women

Facilitator: Gbaba Sanna

Number of participants: 34, of which 5 are under 15, 2-3 older than 25.

Most of the learners have primers and chalk boards.

Lesson taught: lesson 25 in the Gurmanche primer.

Observations:

The facilitator has prepared the lesson on the board beforehand.

Review of the previous lesson: dictation on the chalk boards: 'ca, caano'

The learners show what they have written, and the facilitator corrects the mistakes. She circles and looks at each one's work. Then several write the same things on the blackboard, one at the time.

The lesson of the day:

Questions on the drawing, and the lesson theme (the drawing shows trees in a field, how to cut branches without cutting down the trees)

"How many trees do you see in the picture?" "Are there many trees in the bush?"

"Can we destroy the trees?" "There is a way to cut the branches without killing the tree – we must cut a few branches only."

The replies are short, and it is the facilitator who provides the information.

"What do you see in the picture" The reply is 'fuali', bush.

The facilitator writes 'fuali' on the blackboard. She reads the word, the learners repeat several times.

She writes 'fu' under 'fuali'. She reads, they repeat.

She writes 'f' under 'fu'. She pronounces it 'fe'. The learners repeat.

Without any explanation, she writes the capital F. It seems she cannot distinguish between the capital and the small letter. A learner comes to the board and writes F.

The facilitator asks the participants to compose syllables with 'f' on their chalk boards. She makes a dictation of the syllables. Then she writes all the syllables on the lines on the blackboard which she has prepared beforehand.

Some of the learners lack concentration, and do not follow.

She asks each one to write words starting with 'f' on their chalk boards. Several manage to write words. The facilitator writes their words on the board, six to seven words.

Louloudjé, men

Facilitator: Seyni Djakonto

Number of participants: 17 participants, the youngest 12 years, the majority 15 to 25.

Lesson taught: lesson 23 in the Gurmanche primer. The lesson is so badly printed that it is illegible in more than half of the books.

Observations:

The lesson starts with a review of the previous lesson. The facilitator dictates a work which the learners write on their chalk boards. Three make mistakes, only one is unable to write the word. The facilitator dictates another two words. He makes sure that all know how to write the word correctly.

The facilitator starts today's lesson by writing the key word, 'cagili' on the blackboard. He skips the theme sentence (like all the other facilitators). He writes the word on the blackboard and writes the syllable 'ca' under, and then the consonant 'c'. He repeats the syllable and the consonant several times, "parrot fashion". All write 'c' on their chalk boards. The facilitator does not show them how to form the letter.

Then the facilitator asks the learners to help him create the series of syllables beginning with 'c'. They come one at a time to the blackboard to write a syllable. All follow, and seem to be learning. They repeat the syllables several times.

Comments:

The facilitator teaches well, the participants follow and learn. However, he does not teach the theme sentence, and he does not conduct a discussion about the theme of the drawing. Like the others, he uses the 'parrot method', having the participants repeat in unison after him. This is the method favoured in the primary schools, but it is not recommended for adult education.

Filingué, Women

Facilitator: Mme Hadiza Dan Inna, 40 years old.

Number of participants:

26, all of which are 30 years or older; the oldest is around 50. At the beginning of last year, they started with 52 participants. This year, there are 35 new participants, and 15 from last year.

Lesson taught: lesson 33 in the Hausa primer.

Observations:

Starts by writing the syllable 'kya' on the blackboard. She reads the key word of the lesson, 'kyale', leave. She tells the participants to write on their chalk boards.

Write 'gya' alcohol, then 'gyada' cotton.

Individual reading at the blackboard of 'kya', 'ky'.

Then she asks the learners to read the sentence under the drawing in the primers.

She asks them to come one at a time to write 'gya', 'gyada' and 'kya' on the blackboard.

She then asks each one to compose words with the new syllables on their chalk boards.

The majority can write words on the chalk boards. Several also write correctly on the blackboard.

The can reread what they have written.

Maths lesson: They have only learnt the numbers, and simple addition with less than 100. They have not yet learnt the other operations.

Comments:

- The facilitator often tells the learners off, and does not treat them with respect, and as adults. She calls them 'children' and they call her 'aunty'. This seems to be a jargon between them, but the atmosphere was not good.
- She has not understood the order of teaching the lesson: sentence – word – syllable – grapheme. After the lesson she said that she had been doing a review lesson. But she had been asked to show a typical lesson.
- She does not follow the work of the learners, and does not control that they have understood what she asks them to do.
- Nevertheless, the level of the participants is good. They are at a level with the lesson studied.

Filingué, young girls

Facilitator: Mme Hadiza Dan Inna (same as for the women)

Number of participants: 19 present, all between 15 and 25 years old.

Lesson taught: lesson 33 in Hausa primer (same as for the women)

Observations:

The lesson starts with writing on the chalk boards: 'gya, gyada, gyara'.

Then she asks that they write the same words on the blackboard, one at a time. They write well and correctly.

Five girls read the words correctly.

She writes the word 'kyali' and reads it. They repeat, parrot fashion. Same thing with the syllable 'kya'.

Then they compose new words on the chalk boards, read them and write them on the board. The learners can write and read the words.

A dictation on the chalk boards is given; she reads it from the facilitators' manual. Two short sentences. Almost all write more or less correctly and legible, and on the lines. Half of them then go to the blackboard and write the sentences again correctly.

They are then asked to write a sentence about whatever they want. One of them writes: « You shouldn't dress up when you go to the fields ». She is asked to go to the blackboard to write the sentence and read it to the others. Then all read each others' sentences on the chalk boards.

Maths lesson: Addition of 3 000 000 with 2 000 000. They can do this, but if the numbers are complicated, they cannot add them e.g. 5 512. They cannot write down complicated numbers. They can write numbers up to 100 correctly. They have not yet learnt the other operations.

Comments:

The same comment as for the women's lesson, except that she did not treat them as children, like she did with the older women. The atmosphere was better. This may be because she realized that she had not behaved well in the morning.

Chical women's group:

Facilitator: Rakia Salifou, around 25 years old.

Number of participants: 16 enrolled, of which 10 retake the course. 10 present, 5 are younger than 15, 4 older than 40.

Lesson taught:

Lesson 22 in the Hausa primer. Nobody has a book. They had not been informed that there would be a class; they thought they were just going to talk. They were not there the evening before as planned. When the evaluation team arrived, nobody was there.

Observations:

The facilitator reads the key word in the only book.

Then she writes the letter m on the board. The learners read 'me'.

She builds the syllables 'ma, mo, me, mi...' She reads them first, the learners repeat.

She tells them to compose words with these syllables on their chalk boards. She dictates the word 'malami', Mister, 'maimuna', a person's name and 'midu' another personal name. The learners write these words well.

Maths:

Addition on the blackboard, she shows examples with tens and then hundreds. She explains several times. Then she gives examples to calculate on their chalk boards. The learners have not at all understood how to do the sums. But they can write the numbers under 100.

Comments:

The facilitator tells the learners off.

It is hard to say much about the teaching, since she was not prepared, and the learners did not have any books.

But it is clear that they are having problems with the maths.

Chical Men:

Facilitator: Moustapha Ibro

Number of participants: 8, three aged 15-25 years, 5 over 40 years.

Lesson taught: 25 from the Hausa primer.

Observations:

The facilitator starts with a review of lesson 24, dictation of words on the chalk boards. Well written. They also write and read the same words on the blackboard.

Today's lesson: the facilitator takes the primers from the cupboard and distributes them to the learners. They are collected again after each lesson.

He shows the picture (people who are discussing) and asks questions on what they see. There is no discussion about the theme.

He then writes z on the blackboard and says that the letter is read 'ze'. He asks them to read it, and then they all write the letter on their chalk boards. The older learners have difficulties with motorics.

He then writes the series of syllables, za, zo, zi, ze etc.

He asks them to read. He has not read them first. They are asked to come to the blackboard and write the syllables, one at a time.

The facilitator then reads the theme sentence. Some of the learners also read the sentence. The facilitator does not show the key word.

He asks them to write new words with the syllables learnt. They write words which they know with these syllables.

Maths: He teaches subtraction on the blackboard basing it on a practical situation. "You have 5 oranges, and you give 3 to a friend. How many are left?" Then he writes down the operation with numbers on the blackboard. He explains how to make the subtraction. Then he does the same with tens. He gives exercises to the learners to do on their chalk boards. They can't do them. The three youngest manage better than the older. They can read the numbers up to 100, and they can make additions with these numbers.

Comments:

The facilitator does not master the method. He teaches in whatever way he finds good. In general, we have noted that the facilitators in the north are weaker than those in the south when it comes to understanding the method. There seems to be a problem with their training and the supervision. They have not learnt how to do, and they have not been corrected when they forget what to do.

Appendix II. Notes from the meetings

A. The facilitators from Louloudjé and the evangelist from Hallambaré

Gbaba Soanginpali Sanna comes from Louloudjé and is member of the church in Hallambaré. As he knew how to read, he was asked by CELPA to become facilitator. Then the director explained that the village people were to choose the facilitator, but in the end he was the one chosen.

Seymi Djakonto worked for a project called PGRN, Management of Natural Resources in 1999-2000. He was trained as a literacy facilitator, and stayed with them for three years. Since 2009 he has worked for the CELPA project, when the other facilitator left to attend Bible School in Niamey.

Once per week, they have a participative discussion with the learners. It is easy to discuss, because they know us. People are motivated to change their habits, like installing a tip-tap for washing their hands, but there is a lack of money.

Before enrolling the participants, we have 2 to 3 meetings to explain what it is all about.

So far, the courses have started in January or February. It would be better to start already in November.

The evangelist Étienne: He is responsible for all the activities, including the cooperatives in Hallambaré. But the agricultural service also gives teaching to the cooperatives. There is no cooperative yet in Louloudjé, but one will be created this year.

At the beginning, Étienne also taught the women in Hallambaré. He is well informed about all that happens in the project. He says that he was not allowed to supervise the literacy courses. He used to be a trainer of facilitators and supervisor earlier. CELPA had suggested him as supervisor, but this was refused.

The missionary David Lecomte had called a meeting with all the facilitators and the project leadership, and they took the decision that IDENF should do the supervision of the courses, because, according to them, the government inspection knows best how to do the work.

The facilitators: We appreciate what Étienne does; we can discuss problems with him. The IDENF inspector does not go into details, since he does not speak the language of instruction. It's Étienne who introduced the teaching of hygiene in the groups. The IDENF inspector also comes for the evaluation. As he does not speak the language, he distributes the tests, and Étienne carries out the testing. Then the inspector takes them to Say to be corrected.

The test consists of three parts: A dictation, maths and reading a text.

Only those who have reached level 5 to 6 can read a letter from a friend and reply to it.

What is Rémi's role? He explains to us the importance of development, that it is not enough to teach reading, writing and maths, but also add the other components. He has come to talk to each of us individually once. The facilitators have not been to Niamey to receive any training.

B: Dr Bent Lindberg, missionary with PYM

Friday March 5th

The Lindberg family is in Niger from December 2008 until December 2010. Their objective is to examine if PYM could have a health project. A base line study has been carried out in Hallambaré, and the report was submitted to PYM. They have also worked on implanting the idea of holistic evangelism in the church. They have concluded that it would be hard for the church to sustain a clinic. It is better to work with health education. Bent has also been teaching health at the Bible School, and to all the pastors and evangelists. If they can find a resource person in Niamey, e.g. a nurse, this teaching could continue after the missionaries leave.

They are in the process of reflecting in whether one local church could be used as a pilot for a health project, which could then become a model for other places.

Bent went to Hallambaré once per week for the study on the public health. The method was to make people reflect around their own resources for solving their problems. The attitudes changed noticeably, from "What can you do for us?" to "What can we do?" The population decided to form a development committee for the village. Bent continued working with this committee. They meet once a week. The evangelist also works with this committee.

They are taught basic development principles. The committee members re-teach the principles to other people in the village. The committee has set up a system for sharing the information. They are starting to learn how to purify water with sunshine, without having to use firewood to boil the water. They also want to learn about family planning, since they are aware that there is not enough food for all the children being born.

Bent has only visited the literacy course once. This is because there was no teaching between September and December, which is the period when he made his visits.

They have not discussed illiteracy as a problem. But they have mentioned the problem of the young girls not having been to school. Nowadays girls go to school. The men who have been to school are now fathers, and they send their girls to school. If the women are not schooled, the children will not learn, because it is the women who take care of the children.

Several health themes could be included in literacy: diarrhoea is a big problem – latrines, water, hand washing; the tip-tap saves water by washing the hands under running water – see the photo below. Another thing to teach during literacy courses: a dish rack for drying dishes in the sun after washing them, at the same time keeping them out of the reach of animals.

There are excrements everywhere. People need to learn that this is dangerous. At the same time they could be taught how to make manure, mixing it with compost: You mix bean leaves with cow dung, then put more bean leaves on top. In the village, this can be done before the rains start. In the literacy courses, they also need to work on learning to use a calendar, to learn when it is time to prepare this natural fertilizer.

Bent has not seen a single vegetable garden with tomatoes, cabbage, onions etc. There was a project two years ago, but the gardens also only lasted two years. People are very motivated now to change their lives and to bring change to the village.

The literacy project ought to cooperate with the development committee in the village. Nearly all the members of the committee in Hallambaré are literate. They now want to expand the committee to cover all the parts of the village and all the ethnic groups present. They are going to have an election for the committee. They are presently two women and five men. One of the women is the midwife. She has a traditional training. It's because of her that the women go to the clinic to give birth.

Preventing illness, like malaria by using mosquito nets, is a matter of attitudes. The nets are distributed to the pregnant women, and they are thus considered as something for children. People do not know the cause of malaria,

or the difference between malaria and flu. It would be good teaching the use of a fever thermometer. Once people can measure their temperatures, they do not need to buy antibiotics each time they have a cold. The clinics tell people to always come to the clinic if they are ill. At the clinic they do not measure the temperature. They prescribe a lot of antibiotics.



C. Meeting with the IDENF inspectors

Monday March 15th

The inspector from Filingué, **M. Souleymane Seydou**.

The inspector from Say, **M. Issa Diebou**.

According to you, what is the motivation which the participants have to learn to read, write and calculate?

- Using cell phones (call a number, read text messages, the numbers, record contacts (name and number)).
- Read newspapers (village press) in local languages. These newspapers are created in Niamey. They are not regular, in 2009 there were two editions distributed. They are distributed free to the literacy centres.
- If people are in Niamey or other towns, there are signs at the hospital, room numbers etc. This causes practical problems.
- When the villages had grain banks, they often had to ask school boys to help them with the documentation. They were often tricked. People now feel a need to be able to manage the grain banks themselves.
- Using calculators for commerce, in the market etc.

What are the desired effects which the government and the NGOs wish to see from the literacy courses?

- Reading the village newspapers.
- Read the post literacy booklets in the village libraries.
- Read correspondence, minutes from meetings, different forms for managing activities.
- Write correspondence, minutes, fill in forms.
- Keep up a literate environment between villagers, by written invitations to marriages and baptisms and other ceremonies.
- Christians want their people to read the Bible in their languages
- Write new articles for the village press and the libraries. The central administration edits manuscripts and they are published. The authors are paid if their writing is published.
- Exchange information between villages by writing. This used to be done in Filingué by using the silk screen printing technique.
- Use maths for commerce.
- Calculate prices for reselling produce and merchandise in order to make a profit.
- Read the distance signs during travels.
- Usages of medicine (number of tablets per day etc.)
- Verify prices which are written in figures (on pharmacy prescriptions, in shops etc)
- Usage of fertilizer written on the package.
- How to mix animal food.
- How to use pesticides.

How do we reconcile the motivation of the learners with the desired effects which the organisers have in mind?

Filingué Inspector: What we want to achieve is more than the learners hope for. Before starting, we need to have a participative discussion – we need to sit down together to discuss about objectives at the beginning of the course.

Rémi: Work with the learners to elaborate an added curriculum for the facilitator. In this curriculum there should be teaching about the prevention of HIV/Aids, gender equality, writing news to add to the library, using cellular phones and the calculator, if these things are not already in the programme.

Say inspector: Ask the learners what their expectations are at the beginning of the course. The facilitator writes them down and compares them to the study programme. If they have expectations which are not in the curriculum, they need to be added. The facilitators need to know what the learners want to learn.

The results obtained.

The normal result in Niger is that around 30% of the participants reach level 5 or 6.

The levels 3 to 6 are normally reached by 50% to 55%.

The objective is that 65% reach levels 3 to 6.

Some advice and suggestions from the inspectors to improve results

- **Awareness creation :**
 - *ask for the expectations of the learners during the awareness raising meetings.*
- *The leaders should collect the expectations from all the stake holders (inspectors, project leadership, facilitators)*
- *Identify recurring problems at the village level, and seek solutions – e.g. water.*
- *The length of the courses should be increased to 6 months instead of 4.*
- *Start in October to finish in March.*
- *Supervision: should be more frequent (they do a follow-up three times per course), it should be done monthly. The project leaders should also supervise the learning. If the course is 6 months, there needs to be a visit every month by the inspection.*
- *The CELPA personnel are regular, and do a lot. Rémi is a good pedagogue. They could be given more training – especially in writing the language and in the pedagogy.*
- *At the end of the year, there should be a ceremony for distributing diplomas. So far, no diplomas have been given.*

Appendix III: The participative dialogue

Whatever materials you will be using for the literacy project, it is always possible to include a participatory dialogue in each lesson. The participatory dialogue serves several important purposes:

- ✓ *It relates the literacy lesson to a topic which is of interest to the learners;*
- ✓ *It gives participants opportunity to share experiences and knowledge with each other, thus learning new things;*
- ✓ *It lets the participants to contribute to the learning process, functioning as equals and partners to the facilitator, which helps build self confidence;*
- ✓ *It gives the learners an opportunity to practise expressing their opinions and thoughts;*
- ✓ *It improves the learners' skills in listening to others;*
- ✓ *It gives practise in thinking about one's life situation, increasing the participants' awareness of their situation, and their understanding of cause and effect;*
- ✓ *It helps participants see themselves as agents, who can do something about their situation, and move away from a role of passive victims;*
- ✓ *It encourages participants to use their literacy skills to change their living conditions.*

In spite of the usefulness of the participatory dialogue, some facilitators hurry through this part of the lesson, making it a brief question-and-answer session. This is probably due either to lack of training – the facilitator has not learnt how to conduct the dialogue; or lack of understanding – the facilitator has not understood what this part of the lesson is good for. It is very important to take time when training the facilitators to explain the purpose of the dialogue, and to practise conducting the dialogue.

But first, the project leaders need to plan the dialogues to be used in the course. For each lesson, there should be a topic or 'theme' to discuss, and a set of three questions to build the dialogue around. There could also be a theme sentence. If there is no theme sentence in the books, the facilitator can write it on the blackboard and read it to the group.

The starting point for discussing each topic is three questions, each with a specific purpose:

1. *Experience : "tell about your experience concerning this";*
2. *Analysis: "what do you think is the reason/cause for this?"*
3. *Application: "what do you suggest to do about this?"*

The facilitator asks the question. When somebody suggests an answer, she tries to make other participants contribute their thoughts. She may say "Do you all agree with that?", or "What do you others think about that?" or "Are there any more thoughts/ideas/suggestions?" There are many little questions like this which can be used to prompt the participants to go on talking about the theme.

The facilitator should not attempt to correct or to provide the right answers. During the participatory dialogue, her role is only to get the others to talk, to make sure they take turns and listen to each other, to ask people to explain more clearly what they mean or give reasons, and to generally stimulate the participants to think. When suitable she can participate in the dialogue as one of the group, but should not dominate.

It is very important that the facilitator does not judge the answers, saying things like "that is correct" or worse "that is wrong". Each experience, opinion and suggestion is valid, and should be received in a positive way. Even if a participant suggests something really wild, like curing headache by making a hole

in the skull of the patient, it is better if the facilitator turns to the other participants and asks “what do you think about that suggestion?” rather than ridiculing or condemning the participant in front of the others. She could also ask the person who made the suggestion to explain further: “do you have experience of this being helpful?”

When the dialogue is successful, the participants do not turn to the facilitator when speaking, but to the whole group. They start commenting directly on what the other person said, instead of waiting for the facilitator to ask another question. The facilitator should be more like a driver sitting behind the steering wheel, keeping the direction while the car runs along the road, just turning the wheel a little to keep going in the right direction. She should not be like a train engine, pulling all the wagons behind it.

Here are a few examples of questions around some themes:

Theme word: *water*

Theme sentence: *During dry season the women have to go far to fetch water.*

Questions:

- **experience:** *What do you do to get enough water during dry season?*
- **analysis:** *Why is it so hard to find water during dry season?*
- **application:** *What could we do to have enough water for our village during dry season?*

Theme word: *beat*

Theme sentence: *When Carlos is angry, he beats his children with a stick.*

Questions:

- **experience:** *Have you experiences of children being beaten?*
- **analysis:** *How can beating children be a problem?*
- **application:** *Can you suggest some alternative ways to correct children who misbehave?*

Theme word: *scales*

Theme sentence: *When Moru sold his cotton, he first checked that the buyers' scales were correct, by placing a 50 kg sack of cement on them.*

Questions:

- **experience:** *Have you experience of people who were cheated by scales showing the wrong weight?*
- **analysis:** *What makes it possible for the buyers to cheat farmers?*
- **application:** *What could you do to prevent the buyers from cheating you?*

The themes and the questions have to be relevant to the specific situation of the learners. This means, that the people who choose the themes/theme words and write the theme sentences and the questions need to be familiar with the daily life of the learners. Either because they come from the same place, or by making a careful study of the area.

It is good to test all the themes and the questions with a small group before printing them in a facilitators' manual.