



PAMOJA WEST AFRICA

# Strategic Plan 2011-2015

Dreaming the world we want to live in

[www.pamoja-west-africa.org](http://www.pamoja-west-africa.org)

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## *Dreaming the world we want to live in*

Youth and adult learning and education play a critical role in responding to contemporary cultural, economic, political and social challenges. Our interdependent world offers many opportunities for learning from rich and diverse cultures and we dream of a day when access to basic human rights contributes to all of the peoples of the world being able to access those opportunities and develop to their fullest potential. We dream of an end to marginalisation and exclusion through poverty and lack of participation in the processes that build effective and functioning communities. We dream that governments and development partners respond to the millions of men and women who lack basic literacy skills through the provision of effective and relevant literacy and life-skills programmes. We dream that Sub Saharan youth have opportunities to participate in their national development and thus know that they have a stake in society.

West Africa countries have some of the lowest literacy rates and the most difficult living conditions in the world. Most of these countries are in the process of decentralisation and democratisation but many people are unable to participate fully due to lack of information, literacy and learning opportunities. Through the use of the Reflect approach, advocacy, capacity building and networking Pamoja West Africa supports the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, sub regional integration and the implementation of the Belem framework for action that came out of CONFINTEA<sup>1</sup> VI in 2009.

***Reflect** is an approach to community development and social change that enables marginalised groups to understand and influence the power dynamics that affect their lives, building on what they know and developing literacy and communication skills. Reflect draws on ideas that combine Paolo Freire's concepts of adult education, PRA tools and gender analysis.*

***Literacy** is understood to be the continuing process of acquiring and using reading, writing and numeracy skills together with the critical understanding of the political, social, economic and cultural environment which contribute to personal, collective and community development.*

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<sup>1</sup> The 12-yearly International Conference for Adult Education that was attended by 144 UNESCO Member States, representatives of civil society, social partners, UN and intergovernmental agencies and the private sector.

## Situation Analysis - the wider context

**POLITICAL:** After a period characterised by conflict and political change most countries of West Africa are in the process of democratisation and decentralisation. Civil society is becoming increasingly organised and has an important role to play, from community to international levels, in encouraging, supporting and pressuring government and other decision makers to fulfil their responsibilities so that citizens can access basic human rights. Reflect networking aims to share information within and across national boundaries and encourage trends and approaches to greater participation and increasingly functional democratic institutions.

The 2008 Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report estimated 774 million non-literate adults in the world, in spite of broad recognition that adult literacy is a key strategy for income generation, fighting HIV&AIDS, reducing maternal and child mortality and improving the performance of children and young people in school. Literacy is regaining international acceptance as a key factor in reaching development goals since it enables the broad participation that is needed if development strategies are to be effectively owned by the people concerned. Some West African governments have indicated their commitment to Non Formal Education (NFE) and NFE policy documents are increasingly in evidence, but sustained efforts and a significant increase in resource allocation are required to bring about the radical changes needed to create the systems and programmes that are needed to meet the enormous literacy and training needs of youth and adults in West African.

**ECONOMIC:** Most West African countries have yet to reach the minimum allocation of 3% of the national education budget recommended as a requirement for successful literacy programmes. The ongoing effects of the global financial crisis are making it more difficult for civil society organisations to attract funding to support advocacy and networking and the increase in air fares is making sub regional events more expensive to organise.

**SOCIAL AND CULTURAL:** There are more than 65 million non-literate adults in West Africa, of whom 40 million are women. This is more than 40% of the region's adult population, and more than 50% of the female adult population. Of the 15 countries that make up the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), three (Ghana, Nigeria, Cape Verde) have populations which are at least two thirds literate. Of the rest, only Liberia has recorded literacy rates over 50%, whilst in Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea and Niger fewer than 30% of all adults, and fewer than 20% of women, can read and write<sup>2</sup>. Non literate people are effectively marginalised since they cannot fully participate in economic, social, cultural and political life.

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<sup>2</sup> "From Closed Books to Open Doors - West Africa's literacy challenge" 2009 Global Week of Action briefing paper

The demographic “bulge” created by around half of all West Africans being under 18 is at once a challenge and an opportunity. If the large numbers of young people who have not benefited from the formal education system can access the necessary skills it is foreseeable that they can contribute to driving national economies forward; if they cannot they risk becoming part of waves of migration within and beyond the sub-region in their search for survival.

The need to use three international languages to communicate across West Africa is a further challenge and there are significant cultural divides between English and French colonial legacies. There are also several common African languages spoken across large areas the sub region and the rich diversity of local languages is an important cultural heritage.

**TECHNOLOGICAL:** Increasing access to the Internet is making information more accessible and networking faster and more far reaching, even if West Africa cannot yet boast widespread rural access or very fast connections.

Overall, while the political situation is still fragile in some countries and human rights abuses remain a serious concern, democratisation and decentralisation and the ICT revolution are creating a window of opportunity for civil society to act. However there remain enormous challenges in terms of human and financial resources and in developing environments that support and encourage the literacies that will contribute to development goals and thriving communities.

### **Situation Analysis - inside the network, culture and structure**

Pamoja<sup>3</sup> West Africa brings together 12 autonomous national networks of Reflect practitioners and supporters ([National Pamojas](#)) from English, French and Portuguese speaking countries in the sub region. It is part of Pamoja, the Africa Reflect Network, and is a member of the African Platform for Adult Education and of the International Circle for Reflect-Action and Communication (CIRAC).

West African Reflect practitioners have been collaborating on networking, capacity building and advocacy activities since the year 2000 and today National Pamojas are active in Benin, Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo, with a developing network in Morocco. Pamoja West Africa was formally registered in Mali on February 18th 2009 and the secretariat is lodged with the Malian NGO Jeunesse et Développement in Bamako.

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<sup>3</sup> Pamoja means “together” in Kiswahili, one of the most widely spoken African languages

The network's governing body is the General Assembly of member networks that meets once a year. An elected Advisory Board of five supports and oversees the work of the secretariat on behalf of the General Assembly.

#### **STRENGTHS:**

Pamoja West Africa:

- Has grown steadily over ten years and national networks are coordinated by committed activists and supported by a number of different partners;
- Is accountable to its member networks, as they are accountable to their member organisations, which are in turn accountable to the communities where they work. This downward accountability is reciprocated by an upward flow of information that provides the basis for legitimate advocacy;
- Has a secretariat that coordinates the network;
- Has an Advisory Board of five elected members, which oversees and supports the work of the secretariat;
- Has initiated effective NFE Policy Analyses in member countries;
- Has organised budget advocacy and monitoring workshops to enable member networks to develop skills to work with public budgets;
- Is increasing awareness and use of the Reflect Evaluation Framework "Counting Seeds for Change";
- Has developed a participatory multi-lingual annual meeting attended by men and women representing member networks to share annual activities and identify strategic priorities;
- Has a long term partnership with dvv International and has attracted sporadic funding from a number of other international development agencies (Action Aid, ICCO, Oxfam, UNESCO-UIL, ADEA-GTENF, Finnish Refugee Council);
- Is increasingly used as a resource for Reflect related information and training within Africa.
- Has a website that shares network activities and information and documentation about Reflect and literacy;
- Has a number of member networks (Benin, Ghana, Guinea Conakry, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and the Gambia) that have partnership agreements supporting their work. Other member networks operate on a voluntary basis.

#### **WEAKNESSES**

- Lack of long term funding for institutional and activity costs. The annual renegotiation of partnerships and search for resources to implement the action plan has proved energy intensive and inefficient. It has meant that activities tend to happen in the latter half of the year and are often rushed in order to consume the money on time;

- Short term (annual) planning makes it difficult to implement coherent strategies at national and sub-regional levels;
- The secretariat does not have enough bi-lingual (French and English) personnel to fully exploit the available opportunities
- Not all National Pamojas have salaried coordinators and funding for basic activity costs.

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

- The Belem framework for action is an internationally agreed statement of what needs to be done in terms of improving youth and adult education.
- Existence of ECOWAS as a body for promoting NFE and literacy across West Africa
- National network partnerships eg. Pamoja Liberia is part of ActionAid Liberia's strategic plan, supporting Reflect initiatives implemented by member organisations and funded by ActionAid; Pamoja Sierra Leone is funded by the Finnish Refugee Council to take over support for Reflect initiatives as part of the FRCs exit strategy.
- Growing interest in establishing NFE policies in some countries, partly as a result of the Pamoja West Africa sponsored NFE policy analyses and the links developed between Ministries responsible for NFE, civil society and education researchers.
- Potential partnerships with development agencies that are working in a number of the same countries as Pamoja West Africa (for example ICCO and ActionAid).

#### **THREATS**

- Political fragility in some countries may manifest in civil unrest or insecurity making it more difficult to operate there;
- Insufficient funding to run the secretariat and wider network can result in missed opportunities.

## **PAMOJA WEST AFRICA**

### **Vision**

A world where everyone can influence decisions which affect them and actively participate in the social, economic, political and cultural life of their communities.

### **Mission**

To promote and facilitate access to quality lifelong learning for adults and young people in order to contribute to equitable and sustainable development in West Africa

## Values

- Downward accountability
- Empowerment of marginalised groups
- Transparency
- An inclusive approach to collaboration and networking
- Advocacy so that voices from the grass roots are heard
- Internal application and respect for Reflect principles

## Our Goal

Pamoja West Africa aims to promote and facilitate access to quality lifelong learning for adults and young people in order to contribute to equitable and sustainable development in West Africa. We advocate for literacy to be made a priority in all countries of the sub region and promote the use of the [Reflect](#) approach as an effective tool for empowering communities, social change, literacy and learning.

## Our priority objectives from 2011 to 2015

1. To contribute to increasing adult literacy rates in member countries
2. The establishment and monitoring of national Non Formal Education policies in member countries
3. The allocation of at least 3% of national education budgets to literacy programmes in member countries
4. To encourage the use of Reflect and shared learning from good practices
5. The establishment of effective mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the implementation of commitments to youth and adult education

## Key result areas

Pamoja West Africa aims to achieve results in three interrelated areas to contribute to the achievement of our priority objectives.

### **AREA ONE: STRENGTHENING REFLECT INITIATIVES** (contributing to Objectives 1, 2 and 4)

Effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of initiatives using the Reflect approach at community level is supported by capacity building through sub regional and national training workshops (recent examples include Reflect Training of Trainers and the roll out of the Reflect Evaluation Framework).

### **AREA TWO: ADVOCACY FOR NON FORMAL EDUCATION** (contributing to Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5)

The focus is on the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national and regional NFE policies, increased allocation of funds to literacy programmes and the use of relevant participatory approaches such as Reflect. These results require advocacy to support improved access to relevant NFE opportunities, based on follow up on the national NFE policy analyses that have taken place in member countries. Some capacity building is required to enhance advocacy and areas such as working with public budgets.

**AREA THREE: SHARED LEARNING AND GOVERNANCE** (contributing to Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5)

Shared learning and documentation of best practices in relation to Reflect, NFE policy work and networking contributes to the achievement of all our objectives. Exchange visits and workshops generate materials that are shared via the website, and summer schools enable members to improve their language skills while sharing experiences in another member country. Ensuring good governance so that the network reflects the aspirations of its members is integral to the Reflect approach.

### Activities for each result area:

#### 1. STRENGTHENING REFLECT INITIATIVES

##### Training

Pamoja West Africa offers training resources for other agencies and organises sub-regional workshops to build capacity of member networks, which National Pamojas then replicate and/or apply in their respective countries. The annual meeting in November determines priorities for the following year.

##### Monitoring and Evaluation

Pamoja West Africa keeps a data base of Reflect initiatives in the sub region and can contribute to the evaluation of Reflect projects. National Pamojas keep a data base of Reflect initiatives in their countries and contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of such projects.

#### 2. ADVOCACY FOR NON FORMAL EDUCATION

Pamoja West Africa supports and monitors the following stages of advocacy at national level:

- (i) NFE Policy analysis to provide a common understanding and to inform the development of national action plans based on the results
- (ii) The implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the action plan
- (iii) Sub-regional Budget advocacy/ tracking workshops and the development of national level initiatives

- (iv) The implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national budget related initiatives

All stages are coordinated by national teams that include representatives of civil society, government and education researchers in order to encourage broad national ownership and a range of different points of view. Collaboration with National EFA Coalitions and any other relevant national networks is strongly encouraged.

Particular emphasis is placed on common advocacy objectives in all countries such as:

- The allocation of at least 3% of national education budgets to literacy programmes in member countries
- The adoption of participatory approaches such as Reflect by government literacy programmes
- The payment of salaries and progressively improved training opportunities and certification for literacy teachers, as opposed to expecting that they will work on a voluntary basis

Pamoja West Africa intends to initiate NFE advocacy with ECOWAS and other relevant sub regional /regional bodies and develop closer ties with ANCEFA at regional level.

### **3. SHARED LEARNING AND GOVERNANCE**

Pamoja West Africa's shared learning activities include:

- Exchange visits between and within countries
- Identification and documentation of best practices
- Sharing of activities between countries at the annual meeting and other workshops
- Thematic meetings to share particular experiences between countries and develop international platforms for advocacy - currently in relation to the NFE advocacy work

Principal strategies for governance include the Annual General Meeting and meetings of the Advisory Board, the annual audit and sharing of annual financial and narrative reports.

### **What is needed for Pamoja West Africa to meet its objectives?**

For the network to function effectively and efficiently it needs:

- An assistant bi-lingual co-ordinator (French and English speaking).
- Additional partnership agreements with from 3-5 years funding. We currently have a three year agreement with dvv International.
- Bi-annual meetings of the Advisory Board and annual meetings of member networks

- Institutional support for National Pamojas to enable them to establish functional secretariats to ensure on-going monitoring, evaluation and capitalisation of Reflect activities; (such partnerships would be negotiated directly with the National Pamojas concerned).

The Secretariat is responsible for:

- Coordinating the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the strategic plan thus facilitating shared learning and regular reviews of progress
- Mobilising the resources to run the network and implement its activities
- Ensuring that advocacy takes place at regional levels
- Keeping the web site and data base up to date
- Sharing information and documentation between member networks
- Providing a Reflect resource centre
- Communication with partner agencies and organisations interested in Reflect

## Provisional annual budget for Pamoja West Africa 2012

| Description   | Quantity | Unit cost  | Amount F<br>CFA   |
|---|----------|------------|-------------------|
| <b>PERSONNEL AND OFFICE COSTS</b>                                 |          |            | <b>18,525,000</b> |
| Part time Coordinator x 12 months                                 | 12       | 600,000    | 7,200,000         |
| Assistant Coordinator x 12 months                                 | 12       | 750,000    | 9,000,000         |
| <b>Services provided by J&amp;D:</b>                              |          |            |                   |
| Rent  | 12       | 35,000     | 420,000           |
| Electricity and water   | 12       | 25,000     | 300,000           |
| Internet connection   | 1        | 75,000     | 75,000            |
| Accounting  | 12       | 50,000     | 600,000           |
| <b>Secretariat and admin costs:</b>                               |          |            |                   |
| Transport in Bamako 50lts x 12months                              | 600      | 650        | 390,000           |
| Communications  | 12       | 20,000     | 240,000           |
| Stationary materials  | 12       | 20,000     | 240,000           |
| Bank charges  | 12       | 5,000      | 60,000            |
| <b>RESULT AREA 1: STRENGTHENING REFLECT</b>                       |          |            | <b>55,350,000</b> |
| One sub regional training workshop (Reflect evaluation Framework) | 1        | 10,000,000 | 10,000,000        |
| <b>RESULT AREA 2: ADVOCACY FOR NFE</b>                            |          |            |                   |
| Support for national and regional NFE advocacy                    | 1        | 10,000,000 | 10,000,000        |
| <b>RESULT AREA 3: SHARED LEARNING &amp; GOUVERNANCE</b>           |          |            |                   |
| Annual General Meeting  | 1        | 8,500,000  | 8,500,000         |
| Advisory Board meeting  | 2        | 2,500,000  | 5,000,000         |
| Web site costs  | 1        | 150,000    | 150,000           |
| Translation of documents  | 12       | 100,000    | 1,200,000         |
| Language summer school  | 1        | 11,000,000 | 11,000,000        |
| Exchange visits   | 1        | 6,000,000  | 6,000,000         |
| Participation in other international meetings                     | 1        | 3,000,000  | 3,000,000         |
| Audit   | 1        | 500,000    | 500,000           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  |          |            | <b>73,875,000</b> |

73 875 000 F CFA is equivalent to 112,622 Euros.