

When private forces go poaching in the public orchard: Whither the "public" in Education in Burkina-Faso and the USA?

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Abstract

This paper is a critical examination of the situation of education in Burkina Faso, its shortcomings and misdevelopment in an economy almost totally dependent on "aid" from the world system and its dominant players. It is less a comparison between the U.S. and Burkina-Faso as the title might suggest. Rather, it is a thick description and analysis of a little known educational system in a landlocked 4th World "ex-colonial" society on "the periphery of the periphery". Using the United States as an instantiation of changing ideas and relations of public and private education in an industrialized country, it pries open the havoc wrought by global forces, the colonial legacy, and private actors on the educational system in Burkina.

Introduction

In the first part of this paper, I describe the "centrifugal" forces or incentives operating in education in the USA and in Burkina- Faso. The two countries, although polar opposites in terms of global power, doubtless, go through similar pains of having to negotiate, if idiosyncratically, a changing relationship between education and the state.

The second part addresses the dangers of non-governmental forces or incentives in education. In Burkina Faso, the immediate challenges are the surrender of national sovereignty; the increasing inequality in education; the falling of standards; corruption

that is eating into the fibre of education; teacher pauperisation; and the erosion of national languages and indigenous cultures.

Public education is under siege all over the world. Private incentives and nongovernmental forces are replacing the notion of "publicness" and normalizing that which is "private". Thus,

While collective responsibility is denigrated and education is reduced to a system where everyone competes for the best schools, government must still be seen as supporting education. As neo-liberal governments reduce social welfare expenditures, they must be careful to retain the legitimacy of the economic system and policies. While inequality is exacerbated and funding for education is reduced, neo-liberal governments must develop strategies that legitimate its policymaking. (Hill, 2004, p. 9)

In the United States, the gains of the 1960s civil rights' movements are seriously eroded by the exaltation of the concept of school choice with its sacrosanct ally, the vouchers. The Manichean view that generally demonises the "public" and lionises the "private" is unfortunately gaining currency. In the name of efficiency, the market metaphor is eating into the fabric of education, the public gatekeeper to social equality and cohesion. In former colonised countries, and in Burkina-Faso for that matter, the forces of neo-colonialism, globalization, and privatization have made the state irresponsible vis-à-vis education and are weakening an already fragile social system. Education is thus given over bound hand and foot to external forces with all the possible hazards. This vital and sensitive field of national sovereignty falls under donor and private clutches. The contradictions that inhere in international assistance and the indiscipline in the private sector impart on education no precise direction. It is to dread the reinforcement of dependence from external donors who give the money and tell the government how to spend it and where to spend it, with only the grassroots paying the costs when all these 'experiments' go awry as they usually do. In this sense, Nkrumah (1965) views neo-colonialism as "the worst form of imperialism. For those who practise it, it means power without responsibility and for those who suffer from it, it means exploitation without redress" (p. xi).

The private for-profit sector is introducing a two-tier educational system, one for those who can pay, and the other for the down-trodden when they are lucky enough to avail themselves of what remains of the public education.

The two educational systems of Burkina-Faso and the USA have, each in a special way, experienced the intrusion of nongovernmental forces or private incentives. If education is heavily centralized in Burkina-Faso with the European Ministry of Education, replicating the French model inherited from years of colonization, the American educational system is dominated by the State and local authorities.

But time changes. Cuban (2001) has warned us that neo-liberalism has ushered in changes blowing in gusts over educational systems worldwide. In a pithy statement, Hursh (2003) observed that the USA, "like many countries, is transforming its educational system within the context of the changing global economic system. Internationally, education increasingly focuses on those subjects and dispositions that increase citizens' economic productivity" (p. 3).

In this paper, special attention is given to the issue of parental choice, a concept strongly imbued with the market metaphor in the case of the U.S. for the purpose of a brief contrast. In the case of Burkina-Faso are explored the following: The influence of global economic and institutional forces that impact the relationship of education and the state; the colonial legacy and neo-colonialism that powerfully act at the background, disabling the emergence of a national culture; and the rise of a private sector whose promises to complement a weakling public educational provision seem to be overwrought.

The rise of non-governmental forces and incentives in education in the USA

If in America educational institutions fall under the purview of State and local control, the modus vivendi between "local" and State has been seriously challenged and eroded over the last two decades. Since the neo-liberal economic era of the mid-1980s, schools have been downsized, restructured, and outsourced (Cuban, 2001). Local communities, parents, and interest groups are exhorted and prodded by gurus of the all-out market to demand more choice and voice. There is the view propagated by right-wing think-tanks and politicians that schools in their present classic form do not serve the best interests of all, hence the urgent need of a reform.

The market model of education: The school choice movement

Friedman is one of those gurus who hold that markets should reign supreme in education. He theorized his competitive-market model to education, capitalizing on the fact that public schools in the U.S. had failed in their mission to serve the community. He has drawn up a veritable treaty of school choice that is only rehashed by different proselytes. Following this tradition, Henig (1994) found that schools are public "monopolies because most parents are impeded from exercising their option to switch to alternative, private providers by the hefty price-tag that tuition represents when added to a continued legal obligation to support public education through their taxes" (p. 59).

In this reasoning, public monopolies have serious limitations as they take away the citizens' potential to influence the school through the exit option. Moreover, with public monopolies, the relationship between price paid and service received is blurred. Being supported by tax revenues, they have nothing to lose when parents opt out. The U.S. public schools are said to be broken, lying far behind several European nations and Japan in standardized tests, which poses a threat to the economic and geopolitical ascendancy of the country.

Chubb and Moe, noted proponents and modern crusaders of the marketization of education, build upon the gloomy diagnosis of April 1983 of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk*. They mourn the fact that the American educational system has failed its constituents, posing a threat to the economic leadership of the country in the world. Unfortunately, both authors contend that "the specific kinds of democratic institutions by which the American public education has been governed for the last half century appear to be incompatible with effective schooling" (p. 2). It follows from their argument that the existing institutions are disqualified to solve the problems of schools. The scathing indictment of public schools is nothing short of a manifesto for a de-colonization of schools from the state strait-jacket. This is a clarion call for people to take over basic issues of organization and control of their schools.

In this regard, the concept of school choice comes in handy. As "the one best system", according to Chubb and Moe, public school emphasizes a "one-size-fits-all" approach

to education and thus, fails to accommodate a diversity of students' interests and needs. Chubb and Moe present an ideal breeding ground for school choice which is predicated upon the introduction of market forces in education in order to boost efficiency. Henig (2003), specifying further their thought, comments that "[s]tudents and their families would be free to shop around for the school that best meets their interests without regard to whether the school is in their neighborhood or their city, public or private" (p. 89).

Since public schools are faulted with their lack of mission and vision, advocating for more "customised" schools that would speak to the expectations of their constituents appears as a legitimate defense against public education. This point is well- taken by Apple (2000). Seeing through the skillful manoeuvre of the new Tarzans of choice, he adeptly makes the point that vouchers and parental choice are not essentially and solely prompted by such questions as effectiveness.

Most of the debate about vouchers have been conducted around one issue, whether or not they raise scores on standardized tests. There are other crucial issues that must not be ignored, however. Voucher plans, like all market-driven and privatized models, are part of a larger and quite aggressive ideological movement to change how we think about our society and our participation in it. They assume without question that public is by definition bad and private is by definition good. Instead of collectively building and rebuilding our institutions, voucher plans are part of the larger effort by conservatives to change the very meaning of citizenship. Citizenship is now to be defined as simply consumer choice. The unattached individual makes choices about her or his life, without caring what the effects are on the rest of society. The reduction of democracy to selfish individualism may in fact be un-American. I doubt that this is what we as a society want. (p. 4)

The concept of school choice in the 1950s did not find grace in the eyes of the public. But in the 1990s, the school choice movement became a robust movement, extending its scope to vouchers, charter schools, tax deductions and credit, home schooling, and open schooling. In particular, private school choice allows parents to avail of government vouchers to school their children in private institutions. A market-based solution centers on the premise that, just like in any other business, competition will

lead to a better product, in this case, better public schools. "Now, public schools have a monopoly on affordable education, and without an incentive to improve, supporters of vouchers believe they won't" (Duskin, 2000, p. 14). In 1998 the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled that the religious schools could participate in the program, a decision endorsed by the United States Supreme Court in 2002 (Tooley, et al., 2003, p. 9). As for home schooling, the concept is gaining momentum. A choice on the fringe in the 1960s, it enrolled two million students in k-12 during 2001-2002 school year, representing 3% of the school age cohort (around 53 million in the United States).

For-profit education companies

Another type of alternative providers is the for-profit education companies. They "bring the discipline of the private sector to the state education sector" (Tooley, Dixon, et al., 2003, pp. 14-15). According to Conley (2002), approximately a dozen of private businesses run schools through management contracts with a district. The profit-making business thus "restructures the school along the lines of a business organization"(p. 50). An example is Edison Schools, the largest private manager of state schools in the U.S initiated by Whittle. This company is managing more than twenty-five schools in eight states (Apple, 1993). It contracts with local education authorities to manage schools deemed to be 'failing'. It is perhaps more correct to say that they are failed schools, to put responsibility back in its proper place as the financing of schools is based on the intrinsically inequitable property tax. The introduction of "exogenous" forces, willy-nilly, is redrawing the lines between "private" and "public".

Traditionally, we make this distinction primarily by ownership; a public school is one owned and run by government, a private school is owned and run by religious orders or private entrepreneurs. The new definition would rest more heavily on purpose and ultimate accountability. Any school that serves the broad public interest and is ultimately accountable to public authorities would be labeled "public" under this definition. (Henig, 1994, p. 94).

Under the new system, Chubb and Moe (1990, p. 219) hold that providing that a school meets the minimal criteria used in the accreditation of private schools, it must

then be chartered as a public school and granted the right to accept students and public money.

Higher education

The changing ideas and relations of public and private education are not only limited to k-12 in the American educational system. It would be a serious blemish to cast the debate only in terms of k-12. Business has also extended its empire to the tertiary sector, like an octopus spreading its all-encompassing tentacles. If public education is known to be free, public universities which have always relied upon tuition money have opened up to the market. They have fallen back on non-governmental sources of revenue, such as grant searching, service to the community, tuition increase, teaching special courses on demand, etc. This can crowd out the pristine goals of the university: Teaching, research, and service to the community.

Education in Burkina- Faso: Status of the art

Burkina-Faso is a country with yet multiple nationalities-- speaking more than sixty-five different languages-- squeezed into an artificially carved state for the hegemonic needs of the former colonial master, France. The country is characterised by a high level of illiteracy and an embryonic extractive economy that undergoes the backlash of the free-wheeling deterioration of the terms of trade. In Burkina-Faso, the non-governmental forces that act upon education are the colonial past and private and global forces that cause the state to fade fast. According to Hill (2004),

The restructuring of the schooling and education systems across the world is part of the ideological and policy offensive by neo-liberal capital. The privatisation of public services, the capitalisation and commodification of humanity and global demands of the agencies of international capital ... have resulted in the near-global (if not universal) establishment of competitive markets in public services such as education. These education markets are marked by selection, exclusion and are accompanied by and situated within the rampant--indeed, exponential - growth of national and international inequalities. (p. 3)

For a full understanding of the situation, it is imperative to be cognizant of a general background of this little known peripheral country.

Burkina-Faso is a former French colony which was 'given' independence in 1960 by the metropolis, France. In the 1950s, the fermentation in the French colonial empire commended that concessions be made. Since the music of independence had been well composed by Vietnam, then interpreted by Algeria in 1954[1], France had to get in step with the new tune of independence by offering la Communauté franco-africaine in 1958, followed in 1960 by the 'gift' of independence to the exception of Guinea-Conakry.

How the country came to retain such narrow cooperation links with France can only be captured through the French assimilation policy[2] and the way the "decolonization" process have all been engineered. Nkrumah (1965) defines neo-colonialism as "a state enjoying all the outward trappings of international sovereignty"(p. ix) but whose economic and political system are directed by external powers. More important, control over government policy in the neo-colonial State may be secured by payments towards the costs of running the State, by the provision of civil servants in positions where they can dictate policy, and by monetary control over exchange through the imposition of a banking system controlled by the imperial power. (p. x)

This particularly rings true with Burkina-Faso, one of the poorest countries in the world where the human development indicators are grim. It is near the bottom end of the UNDP Human Development Report. The Human Development Index (HDI) which is an indicator of the level of life expectancy, education, and real income reached by a country, shows that Burkina- Faso occupies the 172 th position out of 175 with a GDP of \$300 per year (Nama, 2004). "The poverty is directly linked to structural underdevelopment, to a lack of activities generating income particularly in rural areas, where 85% of the population lives, and to the low income of the informal sector" (Zoungrana, 2001, p. 14). The population is around 12 million people, of which 51 % are female. It is a fast- growing population with a growth rate of 2,6 % per year.

Although illiteracy is decreasing, the net enrolment ratios are very low with 1% in the preschool, 42 % in the primary, and 9% in the secondary. There has been an explosion of enrolment in the higher education level. However, only 1% of the age cohort has access to a postsecondary education. Burkina-Faso is conducting at the moment an

aggressive campaign against adult illiteracy. This non-formal program is directed toward the rural population in order to equip them “with knowledge and practical skills in order to solve their daily problems”(Somda, 1995, p. 70).

The table hereunder is a synopsis of the situation in 2002.

Table 2: Schooling in 2001-2002.

	Boys	%	Girls	%	Total
Primary	550, 504	58.40 %	392,108	41.59 %	942,612
Secondary	130,485	60.08 %	86,691	39. 91 %	217,176
Postsecondary	11,530	74.59 %	3,946	25.40 %	15,535

Source: Kedrebeogo, G.(2002). African gender and Development Index, in Guissou (2003).

This table shows a stark imbalance in gender schooling where girls are still left behind. According to UNESCO (2002), out of the age cohort of 7year olds, 49, 2041 children comprising 198, 298 girls and 203,744 boys, more than 47% could not access education. Among the 7-12 year-olds, only 1,012,150Children out of 2,129,128 could attend school, making up 47.5%. However, Burkina-Faso has come a long way. It has made strides these last two decades from 16% in 1983 to 47% in 2002. The enrolment in the basic education is beneath the average in Sub-Saharan Africa. In 1999, the net enrolments in Burkina-Faso was 34.6% and 57% for the mean in Sub-Saharan Africa. Many reasons account for this low rate of schooling in spite of the huge part of the national budget allocated to education. As a parent testifies, school is yet out of reach of many families.

A person interviewed estimated that the average cost per annum for every child enrolled in the primary education is about 4,000FCFA (\$8.00). For several poor families, such costs are often unaffordable. Equally, the persistent requests from voluntary service from the community through financial and material contributions, or contributions in the form of labour are sometimes deemed too demanding. (MAE, Pays Bas, 2003, p. 66)[3]

Furthermore, schooling represents an important opportunity cost for an economy relying basically on human force. Children assist their parents immensely in farming and cattle breeding. School in its current state is perceived as a corrupting factor,

disruptive to the stability of the community. With regard to the importance of the latter point, a special section will be devoted to it in due course.

The secondary education is little developed with 12% of the age cohort (13-19 years) in 1994 against 52.1%, 23.9%, and 12% respectively for the world, African, and subregional rate (Nama, 2004). It remains practically an urban phenomenon. Sons and daughters of farmers and cattle breeders, who represent nearly 90% of the population, are underrepresented with less than 48% of the total of secondary students. The fact is that secondary schools are located in the headquarters of the forty-five provinces in the country. Girls form only one-third of the secondary schools' population. Unmistakably, secondary education is particularly classed, regionalised, and gendered.

The school system is also the object of an internal and external inefficiency. The performance is very low with an average of 37.5% for the general certificate, Ordinary Level, and 29.41% for the Advanced Level. The rate of repeats caps the figure of 29.41%. In effect, the success rate in the first cycle is 23.2% and 27% in the second cycle[4]. Furthermore, 80% of the second cycle graduates, the lucky few who make it through the educational pipeline, end up unemployed. The teacher-student ratio is particularly high (1:100), which causes flight to selective secondary schools that accommodate the bureaucratic elites and the wealthy businesspeople.

The secondary education supply, just as that of the basic education, remains insufficient and is marked by region and gender disparities as said earlier. According to Dipama (2003), during the academic year 2001-2002, the country boasted 496 schools. Private secondary schools constitute 49.40% of all the schools in the country. The private secondary education is very remarkable in the secondary school system as it occupies 35.64% of the classes in the general education and 31% of the student population in 1994. The technical private education accounts for 82.76% of all the technical schools and 73% of the total student population in this order. The secondary school level is also characterized by a severe lack of teachers. Dipama (2003) reports that in 2001-2002 the gap was 950 teachers and an estimate for 2003 set the figure to 1100.

Table 2: Type of education and number of schools

Type of education	Number of schools		
	General secondary education	Technical and professional secondary education	Total
Public	241	10	251
Private	187	58	245
Total	428	68	496

Source: Bila Dipama: Première Conférence sur l' Enseignement Secondaire en Afrique Subsaharienne, June 9-13, 2003, p. 3.

Higher education, yet an elitist institution catering to 1% of the age cohort, was created in 1961 by a treaty signed with France. It is in profound crisis, grappling with issues of external and internal efficiency. Somda (1995) holds that

The most obvious manifestations of the crisis ... has been the decrease in university budgets which has led to decaying infrastructure, increasing unrest on university campuses, and mostly the questionable quality as well as relevance of the training provided.(p. 1)

For-profit providers in education

There are increasing numbers of private institutions in the primary, secondary, and tertiary institution level. During the Revolution in the 1980s, the private schools were told in no uncertain terms to charge moderate tuition fees in order to allow the maximum of children to have an education. Thus, tuition fees were topped at 40,000FCFA (\$80.00) for the first cycle of the secondary education and 45, 000FCFA (\$90.00) for the second cycle irrespective of the standing of the institution. As for the private primary schools, the maximum was 20,000FCFA (\$45.00). Today, with the SAPs accompanied with deregulation, providers are pressing to set the tuition fees as they see fit in the own admission of the Permanent Secretary to Private Education, Koueta Fla (L' Hebdomadaire du Burkina, October 2003). Thus, tuition fees have soared up, generally with no proportion to the purchasing power of the average citizens. Struggling with a monthly minimum wage barely at the level of 30,000FCFA (\$60), the general run of men and women find it very hard to assure the education of their children. It is little wonder that institutions are polarised. There are those of the well- to-do such as Belemtisé, Les Oisillons, St Viateur, Universalis, Le Lycée de la

Jeunesse[5], to mention but a few, and the low quality ones left to the populace. Money now makes a very big difference in the educational trajectory of children of the nation.

The state views the for-profit providers as unavoidable partners. A "land grant" is given even to the for-profit sector so that more private institutions can be built. It tallies with the demands of the SAPs that encourage the charge of user fees in public sectors that used to be free, and privatisation altogether whenever possible.

Structural adjustments and education

In the 1990s when the Government was seeking the World Bank and the IMF assistance, it bragged that, unlike other countries, Burkina-Faso was not going to these institutions as a sick person on a stretcher, but rather on its two feet. Guenda (2003) pries open this Burkinabé[6] exception:

Burkina-Faso has suffered from the deterioration of international economic conditions, which has brought about such problems as the drop in the price of raw material, the increase of interest rates and national debt, and the subsequent devaluation of the CFA franc by 50 percent in 1994. This led the government to introduce a structural adjustment program in 1990, aimed at boosting public finances and reviving the economy. (p. 195)

The Bretton Woods Institutions were initiated since the 1980s in a very large number of African countries. Fiscal austerity, privatization, and market liberalization were the three pillars of Washington Consensus advice throughout the 1980s and 1990s (Stiglitz, 2002). With the advent of structural adjustment programs, Egulu contends that "[e]ducation and health budgets have been drastically reduced, depriving a majority of people of access to basic public services"(2001, p. 21). This state of pervasive poverty magnified by the exigencies of the SAPs has also taken its toll on higher education.

Higher education in Burkina-Faso

By way of adjustment to austerity, the World Bank recommended in 1988 two important measures: The revenue diversification to finance higher education in Africa

and cost- recovery (Ajayi, 1996). This led Stromquist to argue that external forces related to economic globalisation trends have a tremendous impact on the university. They are the

... neoliberal economic ideologies, such as the reduction in state funding and the notion that universities should become self-supporting and that students pay for the services they receive. As a result of a confluence of factors, universities throughout the world are facing new power relations and potential conflicts between public and private interests. (pp. 103-104)

Thus, tertiary education in Burkina-Faso ceased to be paid for solely by government money. Parents, students, and donors were called in to shoulder part of the cost of higher education in a bid to diversify revenue and shift the burden of the cost of education to the other stakeholders (Johnstone, 2003). The problem is that cost sharing is being implemented without any sufficient debate with the students. Moreover, the most articulate proponents of cost sharing hold that in order for it to generate revenue for higher education without damaging access and equity, it should be coupled with some measures. So, in the spirit of the policymaker, cost sharing should include a mechanism that does not exclude poor but academically strong sons and daughters of the populace: A solid student loan scheme that does what it set out to do: Open the doors of the university to all youths, irrespective of the social station they were born into and capacity to pay.

In all likelihood, the loan scheme, the "Prêt FONER", set up in 1994 under the instigation of the World Bank without taking into account the students' inputs cannot assure access to all. The yearly amount of 160,000FCFA (\$320) is too little to allow students to provide for lodging, board, and transportation. Students from modest families who have no parents in Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso are likely at risk of being ' kicked out' of higher education. According to anecdotal evidence, many such students, because of unusual hardships in the cities, have gone back to their homes. Cost sharing has made students' lives in Burkina unusually unbearable. This is not without consequences on their performance. Guenda (2003) captures this situation vividly:

The living conditions of students have some impact on their attention span and ability to understand lectures. Of course, the great majority of students face considerable hardships. Most of them do not have even the basics to feed and

take care of themselves, let alone money for buying books and other pedagogical materials. In a country like Burkina Faso, where the annual average income per capita is extremely low, families are generally unable to fund the education of their children. In these conditions, aid from the state, especially for the student scholarships, is necessary for the viability of the higher educational system. (p.202)

These conditions inform, to some extent, the strong opposition to cost sharing in higher education, an oppositional stance that paralyses pedagogic activities for many days each year. In their protests, students indulge in violent confrontations with the police riot squad. This is detrimental to social peace and a congenial learning environment.[7]

Thus, in the year 2000, following an unusually protracted student strike over a question of financial aid, the entire academic year was lost.

Structural adjustments have also negatively affected the lives of faculty at the university level. According to Guenda,

The material and social conditions of teachers in Burkina Faso have declined. When UO [the University of Ouagadougou] was created, the financial situation of university teachers was quite good, but today the university is unable to retain teachers, especially in fields facing competition with the private sector. Wages and benefits have remained stable, despite the fact that inflation and devaluation have significantly reduced the standard of living for teachers. As a result, teachers resort to private courses, consultations, and other projects, which means they are less available to fulfill their research and educational responsibilities. Teachers face tremendous difficulties obtaining teaching materials and recent publications in their specialty, which are necessary tools for research and the renewal of course content. (p. 202)

The truth of the matter is that the severe economic crisis that traverses the country has led the state to impose cost-cutting measures at the postsecondary level. The dining-room has been outsourced. It is now run by private providers. The university book shop and the University Press charge user fees for the university budget. Scholarships are now virtually non-existent. Services that used to be free are now charged fees. This is the case of the transcripts.

Before the implementation of SAPs, scholarships were given to all students under 23 who passed the Baccalauréat. The amount of 37,500FCFA (\$75) could allow the students to live relatively comfortably. Only, beginning with the academic year 1992-

1993, the government introduced a merit clause. To benefit from the scholarship a student must have at least 12.5 points at his or her Baccalauréat exam on a 0 to 20 point scale. With the unnecessarily harsh grading in the French system, very few students can meet this requirement. Moreover, this merit clause is questionable because it only gives leverage to students from well- to-do families who have a better secondary school preparation. Students from Ouagadougou and Bobo- Dioulasso are also better off. In point of fact, many 'province' schools lack teachers in crucial fields, have no laboratories for experiments, and no books. This predisposes them to come off badly at the national examinations.

The amount of the scholarship itself was cut down from 37,500CFA (\$75) to 25,000FCFA (\$50) for the first year students, increasing of 5,000CFA (\$10) each year as the student passes his or her exam. Concomitantly, an aid was introduced for the non-scholarship holder in the lump sum of 125,000CFA (\$250). As for the student loan, 'le Prêt FONER', it was set up in 1994 for students who are at least in their third year. Also, tuition was raised from 5,000CFA(\$10) to 7,000FCFA (\$14) in 1999. In 2002, another increase of 100% triggered a violent protest accompanied with unprecedented violence. Several vehicles were set on fire and public buildings smashed with stones. Student leaders, namely Bertrand Méda from the most vocal student Union, l'ANEB, and some of his peers were arraigned to court and sentenced to one month in jail. At present, rumors have it that the tuition fees are going to experience a new hike in a near future when the contentious University Special Police (PSU) is set up. Students fear that this special force that will enforce peace on campuses, according to the minister of secondary and higher education, will turn out to be an instrument of oppression and stamp out academic freedom paving the way to more unpopular measures that will damage their living conditions.

Nongovernmental forces or incentives in education: Closing the stable doors with the wolf

The proponents of other- than-governmental forces or incentives in education would have us believe that this is to the best interest of educational institutions and the improvement of children's education. On hindsight, it appears that this paradigm is not free from real dangers.

School choice and the market, or the re-enactment of the Plessy vs Ferguson syndrome in the US education

The introduction of the market metaphor in the realm of education has real consequences. Apple (1993), in *Official Knowledge*, effectively makes the point that business and education are strange bedfellows. Building his analysis on what prevails in the U.S., he explodes the whole concept of knowledge as a commodity. Our schools have become sites of competition for profit. They are made to serve Mammon, the "god" of money, by being open to the private initiative. Channel One is a case in point. "Texas has over 700 schools that are committed to Whittle" who is the owner of Edison Project (Apple,1993, p. 97). Because of the financial crisis that is plaguing many schools, they forced to accept dubious gifts from corporations such as Channel One. "The contract that is signed calls for schools to receive 'free' equipment- a satellite dish, two central VCRs, and what amounts to approximately one color television receiver for each classroom-that will enable them to receive the broadcast"(p. 97). In return, schools must make sure that 90% of the students will be watching the programs ninety percent of the time. Every day, the students are kept captive for ten minutes of news laced with two minutes of commercials. Channel One is so successful that nearly 9,000 middle schools are part of this "captive audience".

In the United States, the enforcement of choice is fraught with the danger of re-segregating school along the lines of race, ethnicity, and socio- economic status after the landmark victory of the Supreme Court decision of *Brown versus Board of Education of Topeka* in 1954. That decision defeated the bogus concept of "separate but equal" upheld by the United States Supreme Court in the case of *Plessy vs Ferguson*. Rather than resurrecting public education, voucher and choice plans are just the nail on the coffin that will bury this common weal in the name of consumer freedom.

At the higher education level, the aggressive search for revenue diversification can impair the pristine mission of the university. Soley (1995) graphically castigates the dangers of "leasing the Ivory Tower". To his mind, corporate, foundation, and tycoon money have impacted universities in deleterious ways. "The social costs of this influence have been lower-quality education, a reduction in academic freedom, and a covert transfer of resources from the public to the private sector" (p. 145). It is

regrettable that the primary beneficiaries of the increases in university R& D spending be the corporations which reap most of the benefits of research.

For-profit providers in Burkina-Faso

In Burkina-Faso, the for-profit secondary and tertiary institutions which seem to be answerable only to themselves is not likely to foster a healthy environment for learning, teaching, and knowledge production. In Burkina-Faso, anybody can invest in education[8] just in the same way as we invest in an import-export company. Many private providers are reportedly flouting the terms of reference. According to Koueta Fla, several private schools will have to close down if the terms of references were to be enforced strictly by the government (*L' Hebdomadaire*, October 3-10, 2003). Some private schools run by business people reinvest the money collected from tuition fees in other sectors. In these conditions, it is not rare that teachers go without salaries. This has a tremendous repercussion on the quality of teaching and learning.

Worse still, many indelicate owners of private institutions refrain from nothing in order to 'bloat' the results of their students for marketing purposes. It is notoriously established that during the 2002-2003 academic year exam, Mrs Drabo, the owner of le Collège Saint-Joseph and le Collège Saint- Laurent, along with another private school owner, were found guilty of 'organising' the leaking of exam scripts leading to the resumption of math and physics in the capital city (*AngolaPress*, August 3, 2005). Another example of how privatisation is destroying education is the case of le Village Scolaire (a pseudonym). In the 1990s, this private school that caters to k-12 kindled real hopes as to the possibilities that industrious private providers could command in order to bring a new lease of life to a halting educational system. Le Village Scolaire became a real attraction although the tuition was prohibitive for the majority of the city dwellers. It was finally catering to rich families. It provided transportation for the students, enforced a school uniform, and marketed to parents a disciplinarian approach to learning. With the public schools that are grappling with serious discipline problems partly because of overpopulated classes of sometimes 120 students, wealthy parents bit the bait. His "company" experienced an expansion that he was little prepared to deal with. Soon, savvy parents came to the realisation that cramming was his only pedagogic philosophy, the teachers being admonished to teach to the exam.

Yam was notorious for the treatment of his personnel. A slave driver, he was quick on firing teachers who would dare question his militaristic approach to teaching. He was well-known for bullying students, teachers, and other staff alike. He seemed to be assured of a certain impunity. He was a politician certainly with strong connections. Salaries were paid to teachers when he thought fit. As the only owner to provide a canteen to his workers, he contended that they should not be too insistent on salaries since they are "fed". Yam was also an entrepreneur, dealing in construction. He was using the tuition money to feather his construction company's nest.

Another well-known businessman in education in the capital city, let us call him Zan, played upon the feelings of middle class parents who were hankering for the days when there were boarding schools in the educational system in the country. Today, of course, boarding schools have been closed because of structural adjustments in spite of their virtues. Zan is one of the first people who opened private institutions in the country. He is recruiting beyond Burkina-Faso, namely in Ivory Coast and Niger where he conducts an aggressive publicity. In the 1990s, he opened his boarding grammar school in Liguibobo (also a pseudonym), a village at seventy miles away from Ouagadougou, hiring only 3 part-time teachers. How Zan managed to open a school without the minimum requirements reflects the collusion between private forces and some officials in education who are abusing their position for personal gains. A few months after opening, the students realised that it was all "scam", so to speak. There were no teachers in the crucial scientific fields for people who were majoring in science and biology. Life in this "boarding" school that begs another name was just a hell. The food, when it was there, was not sufficient and was of low quality. There was no running water. In February, all the students ran back to their families. Many students got their life plans disrupted as they have never been able to recover academically from this lost year.

On a different note, the teachers themselves are not beyond criticism. Many of them who are tenured in the public service sell their workforce in private institutions in what is well-known as moonlighting. Where the shoe pinches is that they take too many classes. Not only does this practice lessen their efficiency in the public schools, but they are just "baby-sitting" in these private schools. Teachers, in an effort to diversify their source of revenue, have opened up another front: Private tutoring.

Parents who can pay enlist the service of teachers to tutor their children at home. Because this is done on a large scale, it steals teachers' preparation time for their regular activities and can even subvert the official curriculum. There is the danger that some teachers, too embedded in this lucrative practice, may not give the best of themselves in their regular duties, pushing parents to enlist their extracurricular assistance.

As for the more than fourteen tertiary institutions that have opened their doors since 1994, they deliver courses in finance, general economics, accounting, banking, electronics, secretariat, management, computer science, and law. They are mainly two- year institutions that prepare students to a "Diplome Universitaire de Technologie" (DUT) delivered by the school. They can take the Brevet de Technicien Supérieur (BTS) organised by the state, too. Rigor and challenge do not seem to be the guiding principles of the training and degree granting in these institutions. In theory, the DUT is equivalent to the BTS. Generally, all the students at the end of their two- year training "automatically" pass the DUT organized within each institution. The exams are submitted by the students' instructors, graded by them, and proclaimed by them. With regard to the cut- throat competition for students that prevails, the capacity to pay is already a ticket to graduation. The owners of these universities may not want to 'scare away' students by having the reputation of not passing all of them. If generally all of the students pass the DUT, most of them fail the state exam of the BTS. It is a test organised by the state that resorts to external examiners. As students are tested on the program they were supposed to have mastered and which earned them their DUT, it can be inferred that most of these institutions are diploma mills churning out cheap graduates.

To add insult to injury, tuition fees are prohibitive there, thus promoting social inequality. Sons and daughters of low socio-economic families and rural populations do not even dream of entering these institutions. The average instruction cost amounts to the tune of 350, 000FCFA (\$700). When added the lodging, board, transportation, books, and pocket money, the total cost easily reaches \$1,500 a year, to be conservative. The fact that these institutions are so far located only in the two biggest cities of Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso, shows how exclusive they are. They may be boosting participation to tertiary education but the social base of access is in no

way broadened: They remain hopelessly an upper middle class preserve. Although they are basically diploma mills, they lead to relatively high-paying jobs in the NGOs, industry, and business as a whole, bearing in mind that the private sector in Burkina Faso generally serves better salaries. So, many students cannot pay for such institutions with regard to the low level of wages. The bad news is that they cannot attend the public universities either. Virtually all the scholarships have been cancelled with the SAPs. In the year 2000, only two hundred scholarships were granted by the Scholarship Board(DOB) against more than a thousand before the SAPs.

Table 4: Scholarship status of students at the University of Ouagadougou, 1995-2001.

Academic Year	Scholarship Holders N(%)	Non-scholarship Holders N(%)	Wage earners[9] N(%)
1995-1996	2,533(30)	5,342(63)	530(6)
1996-1997	2,167(27)	5,167(67)	634(8)
1997-1998	1,806(23)	5,522(70)	534(7)
1998-1999	1,682(19)	6,433(73)	698(8)
1999-2000	1,625(16)	7,903(76)	872(8)
2000-2001	1,765(16)	9,003(80)	509(4)
Total	11,598	39,370	3,785

Source: Guenda, 2003, p. 200.

Table 4 shows an underlying decrease in the number of scholarship holders over the years. Scholarship holders have become an endangered species. So, what happens of those students who are unfortunate enough to find the doors of the university closed to their faces? They will only have to take the primary school teachers test (IA) or other low-status positions advertised by the government that only requires the BEPC. It is to dread the intergenerational transmission of privileges. The government claims its incapacity to do otherwise and does not hide the fact that it is surviving only thanks to the good will of international assistance.

The assistance of international donors: A beautiful tyranny misnamed partnership[10]

Burkina-Faso is supported by several donors from the international community. Together, their contribution amounts to 80% of the education budget. Unfortunately,

they seem to be far more generous in the financing of primary education. The World Bank is the first donor during the last decade, providing nearly \$72 million during the last twelve years under the form of loans to the government (MAE des Pays Bas, 2003, p. 3). The European Union, as to her, has disbursed \$18 million. The World Food Program (WFP) is contributing tremendously to the development of basic education by providing food assistance to schools. This assistance is worth its weight in salt considering the precarious food situation in the country. Several other donors assisting Burkina-Faso in the field of education are UNICEF, the African Development Bank (ADB), Switzerland, Norway, Belgium, and France. France uses two channels in order to funnel her assistance: "The cooperation and cultural affairs Bureau [SCAC] and the French Development Agency (AFD). Furthermore, France provides technical assistance ... through the backing of some French NGOs and the financing of research (at the French Development Institute that promotes research in Burkina-Faso" (MAE, 2003, pp. 27-28). Nevertheless, the top three bilateral partners intervening in basic education are the Netherlands, Japan, and Canada that contributed respectively to the tune of \$36.8, \$14.4, and \$13.9 in the same period of time.

Despite the unstinting support of international donors, a cautionary note seems warranted. This is not to suggest that international assistance is unwelcome. Only, if assistance is to be genuine, it must have the potential to kill aid. The vocal former President Thomas Sankara^[11] liked to say that the Revolution that he was conducting was not antithetic with "l'aide qui nous aide à tuer l'aide."^[12] Strong incriminations are levelled against the policies of assistance promoted by international donors. These policies are often lacking in "legitimacy". They are most often developed without the full input of the national stakeholders. It is necessary to revisit a certain vision of cooperation that smacks of neocolonialism. The local people are treated with much condescension as if they could not bring the perceptions of their needs to bear upon the shaping of projects. To obviate the risk of arrogance in international assistance, donors will do well to hearken to Norbeck 's admonitions.

Those who are the subject of development or innovative efforts must feel the need for change themselves. Either the need is original or a situation must be created so that the need of change is obvious for those concerned. It has proven to be difficult or impossible to create acceptances to new ideas and change imposed from above or

from the oversight. It is only possible for new ideas to take root as a response to a need - original or createdIt is not enough for the political leadership in a country to express a need. Representatives of the groups that are directly affected, persons in the developing country who will work with the tasks in the project, must participate in the preparations at a very early stage to ensure that the need for change does not merely exist in the minds of the political elite.[13](Sundén, 2002, p. 77)

The fact is that the same international partners operate all over the world, with one-size-fits-all programs, insensitive to the specificity of countries. The multitude of actors may also be confusing as each one of them comes in with its own agenda. The outcomes of the different interventions in the education sector, mainly at the primary education level, are fragmented due to the fact that external partners prefer to work alone and, especially, to develop projects with differing objectives; their understanding of basic education is often narrow. It is mostly limited to formal primary education to the exclusion of non-formal and informal education. With the tendency of external partners to develop projects where the participation of the government or other national stakeholders in crucial positions of decision-making is absent, or limited at best, there is the risk of national disassociation with the project.[14] Donors continue "... to provide funding on the basis of priorities set in their own national capitals without reference to other donors' projects and geographical spread" (ActionAid Alliance, 2001). This form of technical assistance is not likely to favor the building of national capacities.

Perhaps a situation most regrettable is the use of conditionalities. The assistance, often, has strings attached. Faure et. al[15]. (2003) rightly remark that the conditionalities negatively impact

... the policy or the program environment of basic education or the educational system itself. They include for example the conditions that demand that the basic education reforms be linked to those of the public sector or the poverty eradication initiatives as well as the conditions stipulating that external resources be earmarked for certain specific aspects of basic education. (p. 33)

Faure et. al take to task the government who is more than ready to accept the conditionalities set by the donors, conditionalities that crowd out sovereign decision-making. Thus, external partners have exhorted the government to enlist the final

participation of communities in the building of schools. This condition was repealed because it limited the pace of the project in the face of the incapacity of parents to contribute.

The reduction of teachers' salaries has also always been part of the avowed plan of the World Bank and is one of the main aspects of the 10-Year development Plan of Basic Education (PDDEB). The World Bank is shocked beyond recognition to see that nearly 90% of the basic education budget is used to pay teachers' salaries. The General Reform of the Public Administration (RGAP) attends to this concern, much to the indignation of workers. Lo and behold, all new employees are no longer permanent workers. This is a subtle manoeuvre to make workers liable to be fired at will and keep down the wage bill.

Moreover, the PDDEB, in the long run, aims to shift the burden of teachers' salaries to communities and the regions in a bid to foster the intimations of the World Bank concerning decentralization. So, all the raucousness around decentralization in Burkina-Faso may not be so much dictated by the sheer need to bring the administration closer to the administered as to shirk financial burden from the state to localities and parents. The newly-recruited teachers have found their salaries reduced and they no longer have a career ladder. As many other newly engaged employees, they are called les "enseignants PPTÉ"[16] (SNESS, 2003), which means that they have been engaged in the framework of the HIPC's. They are, from this point of view, not civil servants and cannot go on strike, a clear sign of the precariousness of jobs.

In these conditions, it is really difficult not to see the handiwork of the World Bank who spearheads the structural adjustment programs (SAPs). The disconnect between the government and the World Bank on the one hand, and the grassroots on the other is all the neater as the government is obligated to commit itself in such development initiatives as the Strategic Framework for Poverty Reduction. Continued support to the educational sector from the World Bank and other partners comes at this price (Faure et. al, 2003). Curiously enough, certain partners, unabashedly, would press for conditionalities that baffle common sense. For example, the external Japanese support is traditionally based on the utilisation of a certain, if not of all the Japanese expertise. This includes the technical assistance and the implementation of financial support, through the use of Japanese companies, and also the use of Japanese estimates for the

building of schools. There are also more severe conditions with regard to the deadlines. (MAE des Pays Bas, 2003, p. 34). These "linked aid" conditions typify the case of a country that has surrendered its 'independence' even to the lowest bidders of donor nations and institutions. That the government continues singing mezza voce its sovereignty pertains to the formalism of diplomatic niceties.

In a case study of the education sector in Bolivia, Burkina Faso, and Tanzania, these conditionalities are termed irrelevant and counterproductive technical assistance. (ActionAid Alliance, 2001). This report also takes a dim view of the different policy guidelines, operating procedures, accounting systems and monitoring and evaluation. But as a high-ranking official in the government simplistically put it, "il faut être gentil avec quelqu' un qui vous aide." [17] Donors, thus, constitute a Babel Tower where communication and information sharing are found wanting and where red tape as a mode of management is sacralised with no value added.

Thus, the report insists on the lack of interaction of donors with the civil society which would enhance the support for the projects. The PDDEB (2000-2009), the 10-Year Development Plan, was adopted in June 1999. Unfortunately, the civil society (NGOs, trade union and parents' associations) and the beneficiaries have not seriously been involved in the project (Zoungrana, 2001). It raises the problematic of aid to poor countries in general. If aid is to mean something, it must resolutely turn away from the turnkey development tradition that has come to epitomize several western forms of assistance to less developed parts of the world. Donors have often committed the sin of overweening pride in behaving as if they were in full knowledge of what the beneficiaries wanted. It is hard not to view this kind of assistance to education as promoting a Band - Aid ideology. Aid, in order to be maximized, requires participation of the grassroots and, also, a better coordination from the government. Sadly enough the Ministry of Education has no centralised information on actual or potential aid to the sector and, no department is responsible for ensuring the coordination of aid (Zoungrana, 2001).

Something needs to be done in order to bring some order and legibility within the current Capharnaum of international donors. Real politick makes it irresponsible to advocate for the rejection of foreign aid altogether. The country faces so many competing priorities: Agriculture, schools, roads, housing, health care, etc. However,

beyond the scarcity of money and donor diktat, the government needs to re-affirm its authority in order to bring to life the recommendations of the 1994 State Generals of education. The States General of Education unpacked the shortcomings of the educational system. Among other things, it was found inappropriate, discriminatory, and uprooting to the national culture.

Language of instruction, national culture, and the burden of cultural conditionality

That education in Burkina-Faso does not further national culture sounds trite. The different reforms that have been implemented with donor money are reminiscent of new wine in old bottles. No reform has taken the language bull by the horn beyond the incantatory formulae about its virtues. The continued use of French as a medium of instruction fosters a kind of education that is one step removed from endogenous knowledge. Historian Ki- Zerbo, has condemned this approach to development, "le développement clé en tête"[18] that does not favor endogenous development. It stands to reason that the use of a language spoken by the child at home promotes learning. The use of French, seldom spoken in the majority of children's immediate environment can constitute a trauma and may account for the high wastage that litters schooling. Thiong'o (1986) captures the importance of language in the colonial project in this fashion: The language was the continuation of the subjugation of the African mind through other means than the brutal ones of the bullet and the sword. Waxing lyrical, he laments the fact that "[t]he ... night of the sword and the bullet was followed by the morning of the chalk and the blackboard ... The bullet was the means of physical subjugation. Language was the means of spiritual subjugation" (p. 9). It is hardly understandable that the African elites who eagerly stepped into the coloniser's shoes continue to use foreign languages that are so little spoken by the majority of the people. In Burkina-Faso, 85% of the population does not speak French and relies only on national languages. For Bruck-Utne (2002), this is sheer denial of justice for the masses and a threat to the concept of democracy.

The forms of knowledge being referred to here are those built on European culture and tradition and delivered in European languages. A genuine concern for social justice and democracy would lead African political leaders to work towards strengthening African languages. Donor pressure, as well as the impact of the capital-

led market economy, often called globalisation, however, work towards the retention of European languages (p. 6).

Brock- Utne pitching her argument about language at the level of social class, power, asks the rhetorical question of who the winners and losers of the status quo are. African education has to be rooted in African culture, whatever that means, and language is the vehicle of this culture. Ki-Zerbo regards imported languages as "a foreign cyst in the social body" and denounces the nefarious effects of western imported curricula (Ki-Zerbo, 1990, as cited by Bruck-Utne, 1998, p. 133). He unequivocally demands that French in francophone countries be learned "de plus en plus comme langue moderne étrangère en tenant compte du substratum des langues africaines"[19](Ki- Zerbo, 1978, p. 642). According to Brock-Utne (1998), the decision of Education For All (EFA) that came as a bolt out of the blue during the Jomtien meeting in 1990, may even exacerbate a renewed curriculum dependency. The reason is that

[a] cultural conditionality is a conditionality set up by the lender or donor which has direct implications for the content of schooling, for instance, insistence on the purchase of textbooks written and published abroad, ... adoption of 'international'(read western) standards, and the neglect of African culture, including African languages. (pp. 125-126)

It is to dread the reinforcement of cultural conditionality. Some alternatives are looming at the horizon and could make a difference if encouraged and accompanied by government and donors alike with no patronizing attitude.

Creative alternatives from below: Community versus capital

Viable alternatives better rooted in the community have seen the light of day and indicate perhaps a more sustainable direction education in Burkina-Faso could take. Communities are being increasingly involved in basic issues of their children's education perhaps out of the sense that they have been short-changed by the too cheerful but glib pronouncement that education is a right. A provision that clearly puts responsibility on the community in a bottom up approach is the Satellite School Initiative (SSI). SSI started in 1995 with a UNICEF funding. It provides outreach educational services for primary school students 7-9 years of age. These schools are located in mostly poor, rural villages without elementary schools. They must have a

class enrolment of at least 50 % of girls (Page, 2004). Satellite schools help keep girls and boys close to their homes and culture. They are reported to have a 94.9% of retention. Equipped with double-closet, gender-separated latrines, they immensely contribute to the increase of girls 'schooling in the country. They were expected to raise the boys' schooling to 60% and that of girls to 50% by 2005.

The idea of SSI is to get schools closer to the children who are often obliged to "travel" some eight miles to school on foot. Most important, satellite schools aim to integrate the school and the community responsible for its management, and bridge the gender disparities. The local language is used during the first year, the teaching of French being introduced to facilitate the communication in classic schools after the three years. At the end of three years, the students are transferred to larger schools where they are credited with doing at least as well as their peers.

In 2002, the country boasted 229 such schools enrolling boys and girls who have not been admitted to school and who are beyond the normal schooling age which is 6-7 years. According to Mrs French, the UNICEF representative in Burkina Faso, the 229 SSI schools have allowed more than 100, 000Children to attend school, raising to four points the total rate of girls' attendance in the country (Bendré, January 19th, 2003).

The necessity to meet the learners in the idiom of their daily lives has not gone unnoticed to some stakeholders in education (ADEA, 2003). In this case, language becomes the locus of this pedagogic encounter at the same time that it is the agency. Searching for alternative forms to the current educational system, l' Entraide Ouvrière Suisse (OSEO), along with its partners, has embarked upon an innovation that is worthy of consideration: The bilingual education. This innovation is receiving support from many sources. The Embassy of the Netherlands, the Catholic Church, Intermon-Oxfam, the Swiss Cooperation, and Voisins Mondiaux are instrumental in this experimentation phase, in unison with the students' parents. In order to minimize resistance to change, the institutional strategy is based on a greater role of the civil society which steers the implementation in partnership with the government. The parents are involved all along the process: Elaboration of curriculum, construction of infrastructure, and curriculum development. Thus, parents feel a sense of belonging and own this environment-friendly form of education. " Le village entre en classe et la

classe va au village, c'est un va- et-vient mutuellement enrichissant [20] (ADEA, 2003, p. 57).

The notion of horizontal community control rather than vertical imposition by the state that "... privatize[s] knowledge; reduce[s] wisdom into" knowledge stock, a commodity sold and bought by those capable of paying for it (Prakash & Esteva, 1998, p. 55) deserves to be expanded upon. This approach Prakash & Esteva call a pedagogy of localization. They explicate the function of such a pedagogy in these terms: "To cherish the wisdom of their elders, the people must remain dropouts or refuseniks of the educational system" (1998, p. 54). For people who have undergone the affront of colonisation and who have certainly lost the sense of their commons, both authors posit that this pedagogic philosophy bears the promise of the redemption of new commons, that is, the wisdom that can shield once "disenfranchised" cultures from cultural extinction. They can only capture the essence of their tradition by learning horizontally. Such a pedagogy of the grassroots is steeped in learning in freedom that "comes from belonging; from a sense of place- to which they belong and nurture; and which belongs to them, nurtures them"(p. 55). This form of education can re-connect the children to their soil culture and reconcile them with their selves.

Harking back to the theme of the bilingual schools, it is important to point out that the contribution of parents is not always financial. It also involves symbolic practices through cultural productions such as tales, proverbs, traditional music, or in kind. "This Parents are empowered to take an active role in the education of their children , the bilingual school being their school (ADEA, 2003). Interestingly enough, studies have revealed the higher efficiency level of these schools.

Table 3: Internal efficiency indicators and costs of two classic and bilingual schools of the village of Nongana.

Nature of the Indicators	Bilingual School	Classic School
Chances of passing the CEPE	72%	14%
Normal duration of the Cycle	4 school years	6 school years
Cost increase coefficient	1.47%	6.16%
Internal efficiency Rate	68%	16%
Total Annual Cost per student	77,447 FCFA or 118.06 Euros	104, 962 F CFA or 160 Euros

Source: Adapted from ADEA, 2003, p. 63.

As Table 3 shows, a graduate of a bilingual school costs CFA 455, 388 (\$900) against CFA3, 879,396 (\$7, 200) for a classic school[21]. Moreover, there is a substantial gain in time to degree completion of two years. The bilingual school is cost-effective with a cost increase coefficient of 1.47% as opposed to 6.16 % in the classic schools. The most endearing feature of the bilingual schools rests on the internal efficiency rate which is 68% against 16% in the classic schools.

At the level of the informal sector, UNICEF has also helped implement Non Formal Basic Education Centers (CEBNFs). CEBNFs are home to children aged 12-15 years. They are taught specific knowledge related to their environment.

Another varying theme of formal education is the experience of the Centers Banma Nuara[22] (CBNs), led by the Association Tin Tua. It all started with forty or so adults who took French classes in order to communicate with supervisors of the village groupings. After eight months' training, the results were commendable. Those among them who decided to take the CEPE - the primary school completion certificate - passed it. Today, these schools have a rate of graduation of 70% at least. The CBNs for the children aged 7-9 years are considered as primary schools. Because of their internal as well as external efficiency, CBNs are experimented in neighboring countries such as Niger.

Article 4 of the Education Law in Burkina-Faso stipulates that the languages of instruction are French and the national languages (Loi d' Orientation, 1996). However, in actuality, French remains the language writ large in front of which the national languages pale into insignificance. Even some other European languages have more status than the national languages: German, Spanish, and Russian to a minor extent, are taught very early on in the secondary schools. So, education is little adapted to the " ... demands of economic, technological social, and cultural evolution" (Loi d' Orientation, 1996, p. 6). The State Generals of Education held in 1994 particularly insisted on the relevance of education that unfortunately remains a replica of the French educational system. While this may not be peculiar to Burkina-Faso and rather epitomises a situation in most colonised countries in Africa, the curriculum inherited from the colonial past is alienating the youth from soil cultures (Prakash & Esteva, 1998). This is not to be read as a regressive advocacy of a backward, and in any way unworkable, cultural autarchy. However, the curriculum can be a catalyst in the

emergence of a national culture. This can go a long way towards preventing destructive conflicts that have their source in the irredentism of linguistic communities that do not feel a sense of belonging in a nation of one people. They are easily manipulated into playing into the hands of divisive foreign forces. The civil strife in Liberia, Rwanda, Burundi, and Ivory Coast, to mention just these, speak volumes to the bitter maturation of nation building in Africa.

There are many problems to the curriculum in areas pertaining to content, what is being taught, and process, how it is being taught. Grounded in western culture, this curriculum fails to address the needs of an African society and to speak to the psychology of the African child (UNESCO-IICA, 2002). The colonial curriculum was aiming to achieve specific objectives of the colonial masters. It served to provide subaltern jobs to the indigenous people, and more important, to diffuse the master's culture. "In order to improve the relevance of the educational supply, it is good then that the individual, the collectivities, be in a position to assess the effects of education in their everyday lives"(La CONFEMEN au Quotidien, 1997, p. 1). The relevance and quality of education have always ranked high in the platform of the teachers' unions. Teachers link up the relevance and quality of education to a general improvement of the material and moral conditions of teachers and teacher trainers.

The response of the labor unions

Labor unions, well aware of the historic role that is theirs, are not ready to sit down and let the authorities immolate the national education on the altar of the gods of the global capital. Their agency is constrained by the momentum gathered by globalizing forces, though. A joint message of the Secondary and Higher Education National Trade Union (SNESS) and the Basic Education Trade Union (SNEAB) during the 10th World Education Day of Teachers had this to say:

In Burkina Faso, this is the time and place to affirm that the educational system is more than ever in a predicament these last years. In the primary education, the implementation of certain policies raises thorny issues. This is for example the case of PDDEB, a plan which, instead of developing basic education, rather develops germs of intolerance and opens the doors to the negation of education in our country. An incoherent policy that breaks down our educational system into a thousand pieces for

it does not take into account the secondary and higher education which, however, together with the secondary and higher education make up the educational body. The recruitment of HIPC teachers without statutes and against all the odds is a perfect illustration of the contempt of our officials ... with regard to the career of teachers. This situation that seems well to result from the clear intention to implement a second rate training in the ENEP[23] (1 year against 2 years in the past), confirms beyond doubt that in education, the concerns of our leaders are located overseas. (SNESS, 2003, pp.1-2)

To illustrate the fact that the government is more concerned with ingratiating itself with donors, the unions evoke the fast running privatization of education that advances with a mask. The effects are alarming. Thus, in the year 2002-2003, out of 180,000 students who passed their primary leaving school certificate, only 18, 000 will move to the secondary level in the public system. What will become of the remaining 162, 000 does not seem to overly pierce the government.

The teachers' unions vehemently castigate the disengagement of the government vis-à-vis secondary education. The paucity of resources in higher education is also blamed for causing the free fall of standards. In this case, it is understandable for these university professors who take to their heels for greener pastures. In view of the bleak outlook of the educational system, the unionists insist on collegiality, solidarity, massive adhesion, and active militancy in their unions in order to foil the plans of the government 'by proxy', a government that increasingly looks like the 'errand boy' of foreign countries and international donors. It seems only to be evacuating the current affairs of the state, incapable of taking any major decision without referring to the road map drawn up by donors.

All the trade unions want is that the government act beyond its mollifying words: Improve the living conditions of teachers. At the level of statistics, it is true that teachers in the primary for example, consume 90% of the educational budget. But in real terms, they are living very miserably on what is best seen as "perdiems"[24] rather than real salaries. To envisage cutting down their salaries is not realistic. It should really be the last measure to think about. In January 1994, the currency of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) pegged to the French franc was devalued under the pressure of IMF and France. The parity of the French franc

and the CFA is now 1 to 100 instead of 1 to 50 as before. This has precipitated unprecedented poverty within the people, all the more so as Burkina-Faso has been the only country to consent an increase of just 10% against an average increase of 25% in the subregion. Why the government is being congratulated by the World Bank as a country respectful of the Bank conditionalities should be apparent by now.

Without calling a spade a spade, the Government has skilfully frozen the promotion of workers in general, and that of teachers in particular, as well as the family allowances. The glaring victimisation of the *Conseillers Pédagogiques*, the secondary school teacher advisers, is a case in point. This is a senior body in education immediately below the inspectors of secondary education. After the laureates are shortlisted and trained for one year at l' Ecole Normale Supérieure de Koudougou (ENSK), they have been unjustly refused the advantages that accrue in keeping with the statutes of the Civil Service. The World Bank is already unsatisfied with the structure of the categories in the civil service to tolerate that new categories be added. So, although the World Bank did not oppose the promotion of the *Conseillers Pédagogiques* as such, the government prefers to exercise self-censorship even if this means breaking its own rules (MFPDI, 1998). Even the inspectors are under threat of being demoted. The Minister of Secondary and Higher Education, Laya Sawadogo, seems to have an ax to grind with the teacher trainers in general. His personal determination finds a breeding ground with the government's commitment with the World Bank and the IMF. Reducing the pay bill is the order of the day. Thus, teachers are being promoted just on paper but find it very difficult to have a corresponding change in raise. They easily spend four to six years corresponding to two or three promotions without having a pay rise (SNESS, 2003). This is explained away by the succeeding ministers of Civil service as due to bureaucratic rules. Structural adjustments are 'softly' killing education. Workers in their majority are very depressed. But education workers seem particularly vulnerable. The 4th Congress of the General Confederation of Burkinabé Workers (CGTB)-- enjoined the workers to strengthen the political and organisational capacities of the CGTB and its structures in order to vindicate the rampant economic crimes and the blood impunity, the liquidation of the gains of workers, the looting of the country via the globalisation of the liberal economy (CGTB, 2001). In point of fact, many education workers regret going into the profession as the difficulty of making ends meet has brought about a low self- concept. In effect, the teaching

profession has fallen from grace. Teachers have lost their social status that was very high not long ago. Now, many of them invest themselves in self-seeking politics or 'collaboration' unionism [25]; others break loose to join NGOs, or hold petty trade when they can. This, although not only typical of teachers, is not lacking in deleterious effects with regard to the specificity of education that is not just a profession but a calling.

The unions are fighting to rehabilitate the teaching profession, although the government has no rest trying to play up their differences in a divide-and-rule policy. Thus, a schism appeared early on within the teachers' labor in the 1980s. Now, in the basic education level as well as the secondary and higher education level, two labor unions polarize the struggles of the teachers for better conditions, which erodes the pungency of their platform. They rarely have the same view on how the struggle should best be carried out. They are the SNESS and the SYNTER in the secondary and higher education, and the SNEAB and the SYNATEB in the basic education. These unions which unfortunately form binaries in the system are vilifying each other: On the one hand, we have the "scabs" or "yellow" and the "red" on the other. Whatever the part of truth in this cross-fire, the government is the one reaping the benefits.

In 1995, the two unions at the secondary and higher education level put heads together in a protracted strike that nearly shook the foundations of the 4th Republic. The bone of contention was the restoration of the lodging allowance that was slashed to the bone from 50,000cfa (around U.S.\$94) to 25, 000cfa (U.S. \$47) in the mid-80s to support the self-adjustment effort called l' Effort Populaire d' Investissement (EPI)[26]. What was supposed to be a transient measure had come to stay with the SAPs initiated with the World Bank. It was the first real move of the trade unions to reject the nefarious effect of the adjustment and stabilization measures. The government did not know which way to turn after exhausting all the threats it could avail itself of. These threats ranged from displacing teachers to other towns to firing all the strikers. The matter was brought before the Supreme Court which unsurprisingly, declared the movement illegal[27].

In fact, the teachers, exceeded by the Government's little concern for their grievances, had adopted a very original form of movement. Instead of a classic strike, it was

rather a refusal to test students. Students in Garango in the Bulgu Province decided to protest in solidarity with their teachers. During a march where they pelted the police station and the Gendarmerie[28] with stones, two students Sidiani and Zigani were killed by a gendarme (Amnesty International Amnesty International, 1997; L'Indépendant, March 19, 2003)[29].

Finally the movement collapsed. The most visible reason is that it ran out of steam after more than two months' confrontation. It is also rumored that money changed hands. It would not be judicious to brush aside this argument, Burkina-Faso shaping to be one of the most corrupt countries in Africa if nothing is done to curb the trend. The world of labor union in general is no longer the bastion of morality and the watchdog of the republican orthodoxy. Some labor leaders have been strongly suspected to be on a collusion course with the government, which makes the outcome of struggles against the behemoth of global capital acting through SAPs look very uncertain.

Corruption is not a reality only among unionists in education. Burkina-Faso means, in a combination of two words from Mooré and Djula, the two most spoken languages in the country, the House of Integrity and Dignity. That was in the 1980s with the revolutionary enthusiasm where civil servants could lose their position for accepting even less than one dollar "tip" for a good job done to a patron. Today, corruption is wanton. Dr. Bongnessan Yé, former Speaker of the first parliament of the 4th Republic, diagnosed the mortal agony of morals in Burkina-Faso in his shock formula, "la morale agonise au Faso." [30] His fall from grace is said to have something to do with this clear-sighted although embarrassing analysis. People expect 'retributions' for public service. To salve their conscience, they put forward the fact that the fish always starts rotting by the head. The government, indeed, needs to send strong signals - through preaching by the example--of good governance. Abdoul Karim Banemane corroborates this point when he argues that the current regime builds itself through buying conscience in order to flatter its ego with a popularity undeserved, and this results in the pervasive loss of values (Bendré, December 21, 2003). The get-rich-quick attitude of many leaders has now become an open secret, irradiating all the strata of social life. Corruption has become the national sports.

Abdoul Karim Banemane, in a much evocative and provocative title, *Obsèques de la morale: Le peuple abandonné*[31] repines:

... Alas! This is Burkina. The rapaciousness and cupidity devoid of scruples are seen every day. Those who still have the sense of integrity can be counted on the fingers of one hand. Thus goes the Republic, which after forty years of sovereignty has engaged a veritable race against development with complicities of all orders. (Bendré, 26 janvier 2003)[32].

The RENLAC[33] in its 2001 Report observes that corruption is on the rise in the country.. The GNR-DHD in its Human Development Report-2003 also worries that corruption is pervading education, a vital and sensitive sector. It traces the explosion of corruption in Burkina-Faso to the period corresponding to the implementation of the SAPs that have aggravated the living conditions of the people. In a sense, people have become more vulnerable to corruption.

The manifestations of corruption in education

Hitherto renowned for its integrity and moral uprightness, Burkina Faso experiences today a development of corruption that takes the shape of illicit enrichment, with the consequence of the loss of moral values. Thus, to give a bank note in exchange for a strictly public service tends to be a normal behaviour, little known by generations past. The scope of the phenomenon is such that certain observers of the Burkinabé society have argued that if certain nations are seated on identity powder kegs, Burkina- Faso is seated on a social powder keg, the fuse of which is corruption[34]. (GNR-DHD, 2003, p. 22)

In order to avoid paying the prohibitive tuition fees in the private sector, parents scramble for public schools. The public school principals are at the receiving end of many applications from parents who are all too eager to pay 'sou pour n'enfant'[35] so that their children could be enrolled (GNR-DHD, 2003).

If there are no vouchers in Burkina- Faso nor school choice, the government has authorised a semi-privatisation of public education. Having reduced its support to public education, it has instructed the school principals to recruit students who are not entitled to government seats. The government seats, expressly reduced, go to the most deserving students. In public secondary school more than two thirds of the students

have meandered their way into the system using their financial clout and other connections. These students who are academically less 'deserving' must pay an official sum of money to help the schools operate. Of the money thus collected, 25% is forwarded to the Ministry of Secondary and Higher education to complement its operating budget. But many principals have become private for-profit providers in their own right in public schools by practically selling the seats. In many instances, the shameful "sticker price" is known. The Lycée Zinda in the capital city and the Lycée Ouezzin Coulibaly of Bobo-Dioulasso have several times been the epicentre of such scandals, although they are far from being the only cases. Several headmasters have lost their position when the graft becomes too scandalous. In this case, they are just removed from the public eye, which is too mild a sanction. "Each student recruited that way 'brings in' 45,000FCFA (\$90.00) to 50,000francs CFA(\$100.00) and up to 100,000francs CFA(200.00) in the technical teaching depending upon the prestige of the school"(GNR-DHD ,2003, p. 92).

The report faults the weakness of the public provision, a phenomenon aggravated by the prohibitive tuition fees. The GNR-DHD holds then that the permission granted to principals to recruit in order to complement the enrollments is the culprit. "The administrative practice of recruiting to complement the enrollments which is not geared toward broadening access of children to school, opens the pathway to corruption"(GNR-DHD, 2003, p.93)[36].

Conclusion

This paper has dwelt at length on the impact of private and global forces on education in a poor country like Burkina-Faso, using the United States as an instantiation of what school choice and privatisation are doing in a developed country. I have made the case that choice is only a virtue for those who can choose. For the rest, it is only hot air, so to speak, a legitimizing discourse that tries to camouflage vested interests of power relations. The new discourse of power has chosen to lodge its attractions in the very hearts of the people. That is what hegemonising forces attempt to do. Like the AIDS virus, this discourse colonises peoples' deep-seated expectations, shielding itself very comfortably against the fire of critical pedagogues. This has prompted Peter Airasian (1988) to summarise the situation in a much pithy formula. He calls this symbolic validation, a sort of ruse of reason. Critical thinkers will need to deploy

creative communication strategies in order to foster the proper educational priorities in the people's psyche. In spite of the mollifying discursive scaffolding around choice, whose interest is ultimately foregrounded is that of the market. The rest is phraseology destined to mask the interest of class and global capital. The school restructuring runs the danger of undermining "the social goals of education- inculcating a common set of values and knowledge among citizens and insuring equal opportunity across groups"(Rivera-Batiz, 1994, p. 154). As Whitty et al. (1998) dread, the atomized decision-making implied in the idea of choice may weaken the scope for collective action and postpone sine die the possibility of radical reforms.

In the case of Burkina-Faso, forces impinging on education have been found to be the colonial legacy and the lingering neocolonialism, the global capital, private providers, and some donors. The paper hopes to have made it clear that the general tendency outlined by these different forces is the reinforcement of the hegemony of foreign donors, precipitating the total surrender of national sovereignty, and an unequal educational system that socialises the children to foreign values. It has largely bemoaned the fact that the curriculum is as yet French in outlook nearly half a century after the nominal independence. The government's personal task will be to re-affirm its authority in enforcing the rules of the game and eradicating rampant corruption that bodes no good for the formation of dependable youth. In the search for the rehabilitation of the educational standards and the expansion of the system, the government would be ill- advised to allow the living standards of education workers to plummet, with the devaluation of the CFA franc coupled with a rampant inflation turning them into a new breed of white collar tramps.

The horizontal mobilisation of the grassroots offered as an alternative from below reaffirms the common sense truth that they should be the primary artisans in the education of their children. The state and the external donors, in strongly accompanying the parents, the communities, and the civil society will allow the emergence of the people's *mitis*, that is, their experiences, in order to avoid the pitfall of high modernism (Scott, 1995). In the new sustainable approach to educational policy that I advocate, it cannot be overemphasised, the populations are to be the alpha and omega of the school, although the assistance of the external donors has a role to play. Yet, Zoungrana (2001) sets the conditions for success of the external

interventions. He thinks that external aid can only be productive if it is real aid, free of conditionalities and better co-ordinated. This approach assumes the overhaul of the vision of aid and development. Late President Sankara was right when in this sententious rhetoric in Addis- Abeba on 4th October, 1984 he was guarding us against donors who think that they could transmit development like a contagious disease. "Des bailleurs de fond, un terme que l'on emploie chaque jour comme s' il y avait des hommes dont le baïllement suffisait à créer le développement chez les autres.[37](p. 2)

Notes

[1] This is an allusion to the war of independence in Viet-Nam followed by the Algerian war in 1954 for the same reason. France has understood the profound aspirations of its colonies to independence. To avoid such violent upheavals, it found it better to control the pace of such aspirations by forming the Franco- African community in which the African colonies were represented by their elected members.

[2] The intention was unapologetically to produce a totally Frenchman or woman in mind and soul, only black in skin, contrarily to the British approach that applied the indirect rule. But this is not to suggest that the British colonization was better or welcome as colonisation can never be innocent.

[3] Translation from French to English is mine.

[4] The secondary education that starts after grade 6, is divided into two cycles. The first cycle covers grade 7, 8, 9, and 10. It leads to the Brevet d'Etudes Secondaires,(BEPC), the equivalent of the General Certificate , Ordinary level. The second cycle includes grade ten, eleven, and twelve where the student takes the Baccalauréat, the equivalent to the General certificate, Advanced level, opening the door to the University.

[5] All of these schools are located in the capital city, Ouagadougou.

[6] Burkinabé is the national noun and adjective of Burkina-Faso. It is invariable in gender and number.

[7] The author of this paper is well in progress in his PhD dissertation that seeks to capture the meanings that francophone students make and that can be a rationale to their staunch opposition to cost sharing.

[8] See the interview of Koueta Fla, in L' Hebdomadaire du Burkina, n0 236 from October 3 - 10, 2003.

<http://www.hebdo.bf/actualite2/hebdo236/grosplanentretient236.htm>.

[9] The fall in the percentage of wage earners to 4% can be explained among other factors by the fact that the tuition fees of these workers who return to the university were drastically increased from 7,000FCFA (\$18.00) to 25,000FCFA(\$50.00) during the academic year 2000-2001.

[10] A poem by Hassen Kaynan, 1995, entitled, "A beautiful tyranny misnamed partnership, cited in Birgit Brock-Utne, 2000, in *Whose education for all? The recolonization of the African mind*, New York: Falmer Press, in the cover page dedicated to her colleagues on the Faculty of Education, University of Dar es Salaam.

[11] Thomas Sankara, former president of Burkina Faso from August 1983 to October 1987, led an anti- imperialist revolution from August 1983 to October 1987. He wanted to set his country down the path to a sustainable development that would first rely on the country's forces. Aid was only welcome in so far as it was not likely to hold the country back in the vicious circle of aid. He was killed in October 1987 in a coup that brought the current president Blaise Compaoré to power.

[12] Aid that contributes to eradicate the future need of aid.

[13] Rolf Sundén, Adult education in Tanzania, in Albinson, Folke, Norbeck, Johan, & Sundén.(2002). *Folk development education and democracy in a development perspective: Personal accounts and reflections*. New Education Division Documents NO.11.

[14] The French Projet d'Appui à l'Education de Base, PAEB is a case in point. It illustrates the little effectiveness of a project that is conceived by a foreign organism, and worse still, hosted in the precinct of this organism.

[15] Ted Freeman and Sheila Dohoo Faure are the ones who wrote up "Solutions locales à des défis mondiaux".

13-Initiative PPTE: An Initiative launched by the World Bank and the IMF in 1996. Its aim is to alleviate the debt for the most highly indebted countries by inscribing the reduction of debt in a poverty alleviation framework. Eighteen countries benefit from this initiative. They are warned that the resources generated from this initiative must not be used to expand the current systems but to induce structural changes that will create effective systems. (ADEA, letter d' information, vol. 13, n0 2: L' initiative PPTE: Quelles chances pour l' education?, [http:// www.Adeanet.org/newsletter/fr_lates/02.html](http://www.Adeanet.org/newsletter/fr_lates/02.html), 8/2/2005, p. 1

[17] ActionAid Alliance, 2001, p. 3. "You have to be kind with somebody who is helping you"[read: Never look at a given horse in the mouth].

[18] Title of a communication made by Professor Emeritus, Joseph Ki- Zerbo from Burkina-Faso during the symposium organised by the Research Centre for Endogenous Development (CRDE) in Bamako in 1989. Published in *La natte des autres*(pour un développement endogène en Afrique), 1992, p. 3-67[Sleeping on other people' s bed (for an endogenous development of Africa)].

[19]. " ... More and more as a foreign language against the background of African langues as the substratum". Joseph Ki- Zerbo, 1978, *Histoire de l' Afrique noire*. Edition Hatier: Paris.

[20] The village enters the classroom and the classroom enters the village; it is a mutually enriching back and forth dynamic"(Translation is mine).

[21] A classic school is a school that functions as a near copy of schools in France. The language of instruction is exclusively French, the national languages being banished by a battery of punitive measures, the curriculum barely includes manual work and valorises very little indigenous knowledge. Thus, the classic school socialises the children to cultural mimetism and makes them foreigners in their own culture.

[22] Long live knowledge, a variant of Knowledge is power.

[23] (Translation from French is mine) Ecole Nationale des Enseignements du Primaire: The ENEPs are normal schools that train primary school teachers holding the BEPC obtained in Grade 10. The training lasted two years but on the recommendation of the World Bank this duration has been curtailed to one year. This raises serious issues of teacher quality.

[24] President Bongo Omar Odimba from the Republic of Gabon, replying to a journalist who wanted to know why salaries were constantly paid in poor Burkina-Faso while the natural resource- rich Gabon found it hard to pay its civil servants ironised that we cannot rightly use the term salaries in the case of Burkina-Faso but *perdiems* with regard to the insignificance of salaries.

[25] Some unions have strongly suspected to be in cahoots with the government. While running with the hare, they are hunting with the hounds. They are a real obstacle in the unitary struggle against measures that sap the moral and material interests of workers.

[26] A scheme whereby workers were made to contribute at pay point to finance the construction of social amenities such as schools, dispensaries, public housing, and the railroad

[27] The judicial system in Burkina Faso is perceived as not very fair. It is perceived to be corrupt and an instrument in the hands of the government. The newspapers frequently denounce denials of justice.

[28] A special military police force in France and ex- French colonies.

[29] Amnesty International, 1997, *Amnesty.org/ailib/aireport/ar 97/AFR60.htm*. Retrieved on August 5th, 2005 and L' Indépendant, March 19, 2003 L' Indépendant, March 19, 2003, Affaire Nébié: Disparition d' un accusé.[The Nébié Affair: A missing witness.]

[30] Morality is in the throes of death in the republic(translation is mine).

[31] Abdoul Karim Banemane, 2003, Funerals of morals: The people in the lurch (my translation from French) in Bendr , 26 janvier 2003, 3w.bendre.afria-web.org, retrieved 7/14/

[32] Abdoul Karim Banemane,2003, in Bendr , 26 janvier 2003, 3w.bendre.afria-web.org, retrieved 7/14/2005.

[33] National Network for the Eradication of Corruption, 2001, Etat de la Corruption au Burkina- Faso.

[34] Translation from French to English is mine.

[35] Literally, " this small sum of money is just for the your kids at home". A false sense of propriety used by the corrupting party to make the offer more morally acceptable. This implies that in keeping with the extended African sense of family, the children of the person who is offering the service are also the children of the corrupting party. That would absolve both parties of any sense of guilt since, in all appearances, the money was not destined to anybody but the children.

[36] My translation from French.

[37] Sponsors, a term used every day as if there could be some people whose yawning [the noun *bailleur* in "*bailleurs de fonds*" does not come from the verb *ba ler* which means to yawn. It is used here to achieve ironical effect. The subsatntive of *ba ler* is *ba llement*, the fact of yawning. It is a play on words to denounce the pretentious and ludicrous attitude of donors who think that the act of giving money is enough to ignite development in the less developed countries] was enough to create development in others.

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