

**LIVING VALUES EDUCATION / UNESCO**  
**Regional Workshop in Values Education**  
**for Street Children and Early Childhood**  
**UNESCO Regional Office, Dakar, Senegal, 2–10 April 2004**

**General Report**

**Summary**

A regional workshop in values education for street children and early childhood was hosted by UNESCO / BREDA (Regional Office for Education in Africa) in Dakar from 2 to 10 April 2004, in partnership with Living Values Education. This followed an introductory training course in November 2003 for educators of all levels. The aims of the current workshop were to further develop methods and skills for teachers, to present the Living Values programme for street children and for early childhood, and to begin the process of training future trainers. Participants included representatives from eight countries in West and Central Africa and the facilitators came from France, South Africa, Spain and Switzerland.



**Opening address from the Director of UNESCO / BREDA**

**Monsieur Benoît Sossou**, head of the department of education at BREDA, welcomed the participants and thanked them, on behalf of the Director, for having accepted BREDA's invitation. He reminded the assembly that the present workshop was being held within the context of the Dakar Framework for Action (2000), in which the international community defined six major goals for making quality education available for everyone by 2015. The first of the six goals of Education for All is "*expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children*". The demand for quality is at the heart of education. Whatever goes on in the classroom or

in other places of learning is of vital importance to the future well-being of children, youth and adults alike. Quality education must both meet the basic needs of learning from an early age as well as enhance the learners' full experience of life. Such an education – based on values – results in healthy, motivated children, well-trained teachers and appropriate teaching materials; curricula that are easily adaptable and can be taught readily in the language appropriate to the individual; clear goals and reliable evaluation of results, in terms of practical skills and values; and encourages learning within a safe and pleasant environment. For these reasons BREDA considers values education as a priority in the context of its regional strategy for the education of street children.

In order to realise these aims BREDA has decided to create a strong, dynamic partnership with Living Values Education (LVE) whose programme emphasises the following objectives:

- To inspire educators and students to think about essential values and to express their own personal, social, moral and spiritual values.
- To enable the individual to translate theoretical values into attitudes and behaviours that are practical, effective and meaningful in daily life.
- To help participants to develop and deepen their knowledge and understanding of the social and personal choices that are open to them and to apply the appropriate values according to the situation.

- To encourage educators and administrators to view values education as a means of providing children and young adults with a code of ethics and a system of behaviour that will enable them to live more happily, to integrate fully within society and to achieve their full potential in life.

The presence of a representative of the **Ministry of the Family and National Solidarity** at this opening ceremony indicated the importance given by the highest national authorities, and of Senegal in particular, to the development of the young child – tomorrow's adult. The Director thanked the Government of Senegal for its continuing efforts to achieve the goals of Education



for All and for the development of education in Africa. He also expressed his gratitude to the representatives of Living Values for their support and their continued partnership with BREDA and Africa.

Finally, the Director stated his conviction that this training would enable each participant to significantly develop his or her skills, with the view of improving the overall quality of our educational system. In today's Africa that is ravaged by armed conflict, AIDS

and poverty, values education is a powerful weapon. This is why UNESCO and its partners pledge to make every effort to help its member countries acquire the most appropriate means and tools to attain the above-mentioned goals.

**2 - 3 April 2004**

### **Follow-up of November 2003 workshop and introduction to Living Values Train-the-Trainer (TTT)**

#### **Aims of the workshop:**

- To share experiences since the training in November – to evaluate successes, and identify obstacles and needs.
- To revise and develop methodology and skills, and update knowledge of the Living Values educational programme.
- To present Living Values Activities for Street Children (LVASC) and Living Values for Early Childhood.
- To provide facilitation techniques and tools, methods and activities for future trainers.
- To plan follow-up activities and establish set up a national association for Living Values in Senegal.

Most of the participants of the training course that had been organized in November 2003 (a full report is available) were present at this workshop and shared their experiences of applying Living Values at their workplace and in their daily lives. A number of creative exercises organized by the LVE facilitators enabled them to improve their skills in values-based education.

#### **Experiences since November**

The participants shared their experiences of applying Living Values in their work. *"Living Values has become a point of reference"* (for citizenship and other subjects), *"a*

*means of recognizing my will to discover myself and to assert myself spiritually, socially and professionally."*

The participants noticed certain changes:

- **in themselves:** *"I've learned to express my feelings more easily, to listen more closely, to keep myself informed, to show more interest in others, to continue to persevere"*.
- **in the children/young adults:** the desire to share, to be more reflective, to have more humility and the awareness that they are active participants in their own learning process. The acquisition of values enables young people to better understand their relationship with the world.
- **in their professional fields:** more initiative, better management of staff, greater respect for the uniqueness of each child, rearrangement of classroom space, etc.

They also drew attention to a number of obstacles they had encountered – such as the negative influence of the media, and the negative environments in which children often find themselves – that can be countered by creating a climate of trust and improved communication among parents, teachers and children. The participants' needs included having more training sessions, the training of other educators in the field and also to have more resource materials, documents and better means of communication.

### **Tools and skills for the training of trainers**

A number of sessions were held to explore facilitation techniques, and provide tools, methods, and activities for trainers. Using these skills, some of the participants went on to assist the main facilitators in the training courses that followed.



5 - 10 April

## Training for street children educators

5 - 8 April

### Living Values for early childhood education: Train-the-trainer

These two workshops were held simultaneously and in parallel. The participants came together for common Living Values training sessions.

#### Opening ceremony

In the presence of the representative from the **Ministry of the Family and National Solidarity, the Secretary General of the National Commission for UNESCO**, representatives of UN agencies, various partners in development, directors of NGOs, inspectors, participants – including representatives from **Burundi, Cameroon, Congo DRC, Ivory Coast, Central African Republic, Rwanda, Togo and the Living Values team** – the regional strategy of BREDALVE was presented by **Monsieur Benoît Sossou** and **Madame Rokhaya Diawara**, responsible for the department of early childhood and children in difficult situations, BREDALVE.

#### Presentation of Living Values: An Educational Program (LVEP)

The programme was briefly presented by the team of Living Values facilitators. It was explained that the twelve key values of LVEP (*peace, respect, love, tolerance, happiness, responsibility, freedom, cooperation, humility, honesty, unity and simplicity*) are not a definitive list



and can be expanded or adapted according to the local culture. The methodology used in the programme is based on an experiential approach, which enables teachers, children and young adults to rediscover and express their personal values. Emphasis is placed on reflection, visualization and creative activities (mime, poetry, songs, theatre, etc.). The experience and creativity of the educator is seen as the most important resource, and his or her role as a model or example of values cannot be overestimated. In his report to UNESCO, *Learning: the Treasure Within*, Jacques Delors, president of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, states that education throughout life is based upon four pillars: learning how to know, learning how to do, learning how to be, and learning how to live together. In traditional education systems the latter two are often given low priority. Living Values aims to achieve a balance among all four.

Further information about the programme can be found at Internet site: [www.livingvalues.net](http://www.livingvalues.net) (including information in French).

#### Training workshops

Below is a summary of the main elements of the training workshops and some of the conclusions drawn by the participants.

##### *Exploration of values*

The method of reflection followed by small group discussion enabled participants to explore their personal values (they were asked to imagine being in a special place, to think about a person who had a positive influence on their lives, a song, a favourite poem which conveys a certain value, to remember a moment of deep happiness etc.). Based on this experience, each person then gave their definition of "What is a

value?" In the next exercise, the technique of visualization was used – to imagine an ideal school, street children centre or kindergarten and to wonder "What would be my attitude or behaviour towards my colleagues and the children in such an environment? What would be the quality of our exchanges?" Then, by imagining themselves as children: "What advice would I give to the adults of the world?" Lastly, participants reflected upon the types of behaviour of adults that encourage and support positive attitudes in children. Conclusion: young people learn well and thrive in a values-based atmosphere – one in which they feel loved, valued, respected, understood and safe.

### *Active listening*

Each participant was invited to reflect on the meaning of the word "listen" and to share this reflection in small groups. A number of participatory exercises illustrated the "golden rules of active listening".

### *Non-verbal communication*

The importance of non-verbal communication was demonstrated with various activities (using the language of gestures, pretending to be puppets, "the harmony dance", importance of conveying feelings through the eyes etc.). When working with very young children or with traumatized or timid youngsters it is important to find an effective way to communicate and to encourage the child to exchange his or her feelings. It is also important to know how to recognize and to acknowledge the child's innate values.

### *Discipline*

A reflection on best practices related to discipline highlighted the fact that values-based discipline facilitates the learning process. A balance of firmness with clear rules and guidelines, together with love, is essential. To be available, enthusiastic, honest, open, and able to reconcile, brings peace, unity, understanding and love. Far from an imposed discipline dominated by punishment, young people learn to accept discipline while recognizing their responsibilities.



### *Conflict resolution*

A number of methods and tools had been explored in the November workshop, but participants were reminded that many potential conflicts could be avoided if inner peace, respect and self-esteem were better developed, especially at an early age. Active listening and values-based discipline play an important role in resolving conflict.

### **Workshop on early childhood education**

Participants took part in creative exercises where they were sometimes asked to pretend to be young children, in order to better understand their needs and to realise the effect of certain values-based approaches. Practical experience of the early childhood educators in the group since November showed that Living Values is an excellent tool for maintaining enthusiasm, motivation and creativity.

Values education in early childhood was seen as especially important in the overall development of the child: to instil values at an early age when new habits are being formed. If parents and teachers are aware of this, become better role models, live their values and transmit them to the very young – the results will be a reduction in many of the problems children encounter during adolescence, and in the number of children who end up on the streets. It was agreed that participation by parents is essential and stronger links need to be developed between parents and teachers.

### **Workshop for street children educators**

Street children are in special need of education. A lack of education has serious reper-

cussions for the child and negative consequences for society as a whole. The aim of the Living Values programme for street children is to give these children the possibility of establishing relationships of trust with caring adults but also to develop social protection skills so that they can feel safe on the street. By providing a suitable learning environment children are enabled to identify their own potential and to thus increase their chance of success.

### *Living Values Activities for Street Children (LVASC)*

LVASC materials consist of three books covering the following age ranges: 3–6 years, 7–10 years and 11–14 years. They contain activities on peace, respect, love, cooperation (or solidarity) and



honesty (11–14 years), as well as a series of illustrations describing the life of a family of street children. These stories are used as the basis for discussions on topics such as violence, death, AIDS, drugs and drug-sellers, physical and sexual abuse. Other issues are addressed such as begging, being afraid at night, safety in the street, protection from unsafe adults, sexuality, and the desire to learn. Exploring the value of peace makes it possible for the child to come to terms with traumatising situations to find a degree of inner serenity. The value of respect makes it possible to appreciate differences and to live together across cultural barriers. The creative activities encourage street children to express and deal with their pain while developing positive social and emotional skills. Suggestions are included for community involvement, primary education, and vocational training.

### *Values-based atmosphere in relation to street children*

Street children have often lost their self-respect and their respect for others, and do not feel loved. They are sensitive to the negativity of others and retain unpleasant experiences in their memory. The Living Values programme emphasises the importance of creating a values-based atmosphere in which the child feels loved, secure and able to trust others.

Thus the importance of:

- Reinforcing positive aspects of the child – to praise, using a value that the child can recognise in himself or herself
- Honesty –children can sense if an adult relates to him or her from the heart and in an appropriate manner
- Encouragement that is sincere
- Avoiding negation, which destroys praise, e.g. “*What you have done is good... BUT...*” Certain children refuse praise even if they need it, thus adult needs to be perceptive and find ways of giving the child the right sort of attention.

### **Recommendations and action plans**

#### *1. Personal and collective*

By playing the game “Valeurscope”, participants identified specific values (one per month) on which they would concentrate during the following twelve months, both on a personal level, and as a group by sharing ideas and experiences.



## 2. In Senegal

The committee of the national association for Living Values in Senegal, in the process of being established, was presented by **Mr Moussa Sylla**, president of the association. A number of events and activities were proposed.

The early childhood educators group recommended that there be more exchange of ideas, experiences and materials among colleagues – it was recommended that a resource centre could be created where educators could meet together.

## 3. At the regional level

**Mr Traore Wodjo**, representative of Ivory Coast, suggested the introduction of follow-up seminars in the various countries that were represented, or by regions (West Africa, Central Africa etc). He also proposed that local events could provide opportunities to invite speakers from LVE (for example in Abidjan, where there will soon be a seminar on peace in the context of francophone Africa).

## Concluding remarks

International organizations recognize that in order to address major global issues, education is of prime importance, and more and more often the word “values” is attached to education. One of the fundamental aspects of the Living Values methodology is that the teaching of values can be integrated within any subject – it is not necessary to introduce new modules into the curriculum. What is needed is to develop a new and dynamic approach to education, improving and adapting one’s behaviour in order to positively influence children and young adults. In the eight years since the birth of the programme, nearly 80 countries have implemented Living Values and several among them have integrated LV in their national curriculum. The success of the programme in Senegal will be evaluated by observing the changes that take place in the various establishments, schools, NGOs, etc.

**Madame Diawara** closed the seminar with a few words of thanks. She wishes to have the privilege of being able to welcome participants

to future sessions and to see an increase in the number of countries represented. She also proposed that other trainings be organized according to sub-regions or groups of countries speaking the same language. A training course will take place in Oxford (in the United Kingdom) in July 2004. Another session is envisaged in Kenya, especially for participants from Burundi, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Central African Republic and Rwanda.

