“NOS PROPRES EFFORTS”:
A CASE STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS
IN AKEBOU, TOGO, WEST AFRICA

by

JAMES THEODORE GURNEY

(Under the Direction of Diane Brook Napier)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this multi-site, qualitative case study was to investigate the micro-level educational realities of school directors, teachers, and community members in Community Initiative schools in the Akebou Prefecture of Togo, West Africa in comparative perspective. In line with international efforts to improve educational access and quality, recent reforms in Togo increased enrollment and completion rates at the primary-level. The success of these reforms increased the number of students transitioning from primary to middle school. However, educational infrastructure and administrative support has not met local-level needs in middle schools, which contributed to the establishment of community-based schools. This study described grassroots responses to the demand for educational access.

I used a case study research design and qualitative methodology to examine the features of Togolese education policy, the goals and objectives of education, the general conditions and key issues in Community Initiative (CI) schools, and key curriculum and pedagogy issues. I conducted 28 interviews with school directors, teachers, and community members, facilitated five focus groups, conducted observations, collected policy and curriculum documents, and
reviewed photographs. I used the constant comparative analytical method and applied a blended theoretical approach that included global-to-local, post-colonial, critical, and human capital perspectives. I identified four thematic findings: school funding, development, curriculum, and space/context. Additionally, the overarching thematic elements of educational quality and \textit{nos propres efforts} (our own efforts) appeared in each theme. These created a detailed account of educational issues.

While the findings cannot be generalized, the study is significant because it serves as a case study example for other countries interested in improving educational experiences in community-based schools. Additionally, by interviewing a diverse group of actors, analyzing policy documents, and observing classrooms, my research offered multiple perspectives on educational issues. This provided insight into policy implementation issues, highlighted gaps between policy ideals and practical realities, and addressed how contextual factors impact educational experiences. The conclusions of the study contribute to the larger story of educational reform in Togo and add to the literature by reinforcing the importance of local-level contexts, but also challenge the perception that community-based schools can improve the relevancy of curriculum.

INDEX WORDS: Togo, Africa, Community Initiative schools, decentralization, community-based, global to local continuum, policy versus practice, curriculum
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IN AKEBOU, TOGO, WEST AFRICA  

by  

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* “Nos propres efforts” translates to “Our own efforts” and was an expression that participants commonly used to describe their educational efforts.
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IN AKEBOU, TOGO, WEST AFRICA

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May 2015
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the educators in the Akebou Prefecture. Their unyielding efforts continue to inspire.
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I would like to express my gratitude to all of the individuals who assisted me throughout the dissertation process and thank them for their guidance and contributions. Words cannot convey how grateful I am to the people of the Akebou Prefecture, the Togolese Ministry of Education, and each of the research sites. Their hard work and dedication continue to inspire me each and everyday. This dissertation would not have been possible without their acceptance, cooperation, and generosity. I would also like to acknowledge my major professor, Dr. Diane Brook Napier, who has provided me continuous support, guidance, and constructive feedback since I arrived at the University of Georgia in 2011. Her expertise has helped me achieve my professional goals, for which I am extremely appreciative. She has been an outstanding mentor throughout the dissertation process. I would like to thank Dr. William Wraga whose expertise in the field of curriculum studies was invaluable in shaping this dissertation. Drs. John Mativo and David Okech were outstanding committee members. Their comments, perspectives, and feedback helped strengthen this dissertation. Josita Ekouevi at the American Embassy in Lome was instrumental in acquiring letters of permission to conduct research in Togo. I am extremely grateful for her generosity, cooperation, and assistance. Thank you to Dr. Suzanne Majhanovich for her assistance with French language translations, which was invaluable and helped prepare me for fieldwork. I am grateful for the continuous support from Daniel, Sarah, and Elizabeth Gurney. Thank you for always being around to bounce ideas and brainstorm. Finally, I would like to extend a big thank you to all of my friends and fellow students who have provided additional support throughout this process.
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<td><em>Association des parents et des élèves</em> (Parent Teacher Associations)</td>
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<td><em>Baccalauréat I</em> (Baccalaureate I)</td>
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<td><em>Baccalauréat II</em> (Baccalaureate II)</td>
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<td>BEPC</td>
<td><em>Brevet d'étude de premier degré</em> (Examination certifying completion of middle grades education)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEG</td>
<td><em>Collège d'enseignement general</em> (Middle grades education)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEPD</td>
<td><em>Certificat d'Études du Premier Degré</em> (Examination certifying completion of primary grades education)</td>
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<td>CI</td>
<td>Community Initiative</td>
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<td>DPPE</td>
<td><em>Direction de la prospective, de la planification, de l'éducation et l'évaluation</em> (Office of Policy Planning and Educational Evaluation)</td>
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<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education For All</td>
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<td>MOE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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CHAPTER I

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to describe the micro-level experiences of educators and community members working in Community Initiative (CI) and government sponsored schools in the Akebou Prefecture of Togo, West Africa through an investigation into the goals and purposes of education, the key issues and general conditions in schools, and curriculum policies and practices in a comparative perspective. In this chapter, I introduce the research problem regarding education in the Akebou Prefecture and I address the background and context of the study. Next, I present a rationale for the study and the research questions. Lastly, I describe the contributions of my study to the field and discuss some of its limitations.

Statement of the Problem

While education has long been proposed as a means for strengthening human development, it has recently become a central focus for many international humanitarian agencies and national governments. The Education For All (EFA) declaration, signed by 154 countries in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, laid the foundation for major international intervention in educational issues (UNESCO, 2007). Additionally, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)—adopted by all member states in 2000—included goals aimed at achieving universal primary education and fostering international partnerships for development by the year 2015 (United Nations, 2013). However, despite the efforts of international agencies, universal
educational enrollment has not yet been achieved. It is an issue that continues to pose challenges for educators and development workers at global, national, regional, and local levels.

International pressures to improve access, enrollment rates, and educational quality have contributed to the development and implementation of educational reform movements around the world. While some scholars and policymakers suggested that strong national governmental control of education is the most effective means of improving educational quality (De Grauwe & Lugaz, 2007), others have proposed the decentralization of educational administration to increase community participation and improve quality (Nielsen, 2007). Diverse groups of actors engaged in international education reform employ diverse methods when implementing reform policies at local levels (Bray, 2007a). As policies are passed down from macro to meso to micro levels (international/national to regional to local), they are often reinterpreted as they are implemented into practice, which results in the indigenization/creolization/hybridization of education policies (Anderson-Levitt, 2003) Reform measures intended to decentralize education are no exception; they encompass a diverse set of ideologies, perspectives, and methods, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two.

Within the wider context of educational decentralization, grassroots and community-based educational initiatives are particularly relevant to my study. Community Initiative (CI) schools represent a distinct expression of decentralization because of their bottom-up approach and their ability to exert local control in school affairs (Bray, 2003; Hoppers, 2005). The existence of CI schools within the otherwise highly-centralized educational system of Togo illustrates the dichotomy between the creation of policy at the national level and the implementation of policy into practice at local levels (Baker & Wiseman, 2005; Gbogbotchi et al, 2000). Scholars have suggested the need for further research on the policies and practices of
CI schools (Miller-Grandvaux & Yoder, 2002; Assiah & Luisoni, 2006; Clemons, 2009). In this study, I explored Togolese education policies and practices by describing the general characteristics of CI schools and identifying the critical issues facing Togolese educators and community members. Additionally, I focused on curriculum issues given that curriculum is a foundational aspect of educational policy and practice (Marsh & Willis, 2007). Inquiry into the micro-level realities of Togolese educators highlighted aspects of the policy-practice dichotomy described by Napier (2005) and provided insight into strategies that could be used to improve educational quality for students in CI and government schools in the Akebou Prefecture of Togo.

While CI schools can be found in a variety of settings and contexts, they primarily exist in rural areas with limited access to schools operating under the auspices of the state (Bray, 2003). The limited access to government schools experienced in rural areas is, in part, a product of Togo’s colonial history (Gbogbotchi et al, 2000). Unequal geographic distribution of schools during the colonial era was compounded by unfulfilled attempts to promote educational equality in post-independence reforms due to a lack of trained professionals, inadequate funding and oversight, and political and economic turmoil (Kelly & Kelly, 2000; Knoll, 1976; Tété-Adjalogo, 2000; UNESCO 1978). Community coalitions organized to establish CI schools after unsuccessful attempts to lobby government agencies to build schools in their area (Marchand, 2000). For example, one of the CI sites in my study was established after community leaders unsuccessfully petitioned the Ministry of Education for the creation of a government school in their town (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). Gbogbotchi et al. (2000) documented that 9% of Togolese students were enrolled in CI schools and that CI schools comprised 20% of the total number of schools recognized by the Togolese government. Gbogbotchi et al’s (2000) study also found that most CI schools were located in rural areas, suggesting that rural areas had more local
control over education due to the lack of governmental infrastructure and oversight. Because CI schools exist outside of direct Ministry of Education (MOE) control, they possess the ability to implement educational policies and practices differently than state schools, which are required to abide by official policies. This has implications for a variety of school functions, including funding, teacher training/qualifications, curriculum, assessment, and school-community relationships (Assiah & Luisoni, 2006; Bray, 2003; Glassman et al, 2007; Naidoo, 2005).

Gbogbotchi et al. (2000) noted that CI schools operated with limited budgets because they do not receive financial assistance from governments or NGOs. With limited opportunities for professional development and without stable pay, teacher turnover rates in CI schools are often far greater than their state counterparts (Marchand, 2000). Additionally, because they are often located in economically disadvantaged or rural areas, many CI schools do not have access to up-to-date curriculum guidebooks, textbooks, or teaching materials (Naidoo, 2005). Finally, nationally standardized exams in the terminal grades required for obtaining an official diploma pose challenges to CI school educators as they negotiate differences between the ideal implementation of policies and the realities that they face within local contexts. Combined, these factors represent some of the critical issues in CI schools identified in the scholarly literature. My study identified the key issues facing Togolese educators in CI and government schools to develop a deeper understanding of the issues within the macro, meso, and micro contexts. By focusing on curriculum issues as a key element of the educational experience in the selected schools, my study investigated realities of official policy and local practice.

The Akebou prefecture faces peculiar educational and administrative challenges because of its distance from major metropolitan areas along the route national, poorly maintained roads, and high rates of poverty. In order to address the research problem, I first investigated the
general features of national education policy in Togo and their relevance in the context of the Akebou Prefecture to provide macro-level context. Hoppers (2005) identified three main types of CI schools: (1) Those that attempt to replicate the policies and practices of state-sponsored schools to the extent that the context allows; (2) Those that are adaptive in that the schools adapt national policies to fit local contexts; and (3) Those that are transformative in that they break from conventional practices to develop educational programs specifically tailored to meet local development needs. I explored the perceptions of CI school educators and community members within the context of national policies in an effort to better understand the critical issues faced by CI schools in their local setting. I situated my study within macro, meso, and micro contexts and in an effort to document the educational ideals and realities that existed at each level.

The specific contexts of CI and government schools were central to this study because community conditions and characteristics directly impact educational policies and practices. Assiah and Luisoni (2006) and Dhorsan and Chachuaio (2008) commented on the relationship between context and educational practices, noting that the social, political, and economic realities at the local level can dramatically affect CI school operations. In my study, I placed the voices of educators and community members at the center of data collection in order to document their perception of critical educational issues in the curriculum policies and practices of CI schools. Chapter 4 describes the realities of curriculum policy and practice in CI schools from the perspective of educators and community members.

**Background to the Problem**

The Akebou Prefecture can be considered a distinctive case using the definitions offered by Stake (2000) and Yin (2003). The colonial and post-colonial histories of Togo contributed to a common national identity shared by Togolese citizens. As a prefecture, the Akebou region has
definable borders that can be identified on a map (see Figure 1.2). The ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds of inhabitants in the area are largely homogeneous, which contributed to my study’s categorization of it as a single, bounded case. Additionally, I selected three individual schools as sites of research, which can be treated as cases in point within the larger case study.

Figure 1.1. Map of West African Countries (www.mapsoftheworld.com, 2013)

Figure 1.2. Political Map of Togo (Ezilon Maps, 2014)
**Historical Context**

Before the arrival of European colonizers, West African education was primarily a responsibility of families and communities and innumerable systems of indigenous education could be found throughout West Africa, however, as Western influence spread around the world through trade, missionaries, and colonial rule, the European style of schooling became a global model for education (Anderson-Levitt & Diallo, 2003).

In 1884, Togo became a German protectorate. The colonial government designated education to be a primary responsibility of missionary groups, which resulted in limited administrative oversight and massive variations in curriculum and instructional policies and practices (Knoll, 1976). By 1911, the government operated only two of the 315 elementary schools in the territory (Knoll, 1976). In 1919, Togo became a colony of France and governance became increasingly centralized and authoritative. In educational policy, the colonial administration implemented strict restrictions on curriculum content and language of instruction. Students who were caught speaking indigenous languages or English were severely punished (Lawarance, 2007). Kelly and Kelly (2000) reported on curriculum materials that explicitly taught European superiority and African inferiority.

**Education Challenges**

Since independence in 1960, the Togolese government faced challenges providing access to high quality education for its citizens (Bafei, 2011). National and international trends in education like the Millennium Development Goals, official development assistance, and the intervention of NGOs have improved education in Togo. However, recent statistical data from UNSECO and World Bank reports showed that many Togolese schools continue to suffer from low completion rates, underfunding, and insufficient teacher training. As a result, the Togolese
government eliminated school fees in state-sponsored primary schools in 2008 (UNICEF, 2008). This increased gross enrollment rates, which reached 140% in 2010 (UNESCO, 2012). Transition rates from \textit{école primaire} (primary school) to \textit{collège de l'enseignement général} (CEG, or middle school) were 70% in 2010 (UNESCO, 2012). However, a 41.3% gross enrollment in upper and lower secondary education in 2009 suggested that many students dropped out in the first years of secondary education (UNESCO 2011). Additionally, many state schools lack the financial resources to meet educational demands. In 2009, the Togolese government spent $111 (Purchasing Power Parity, or PPP, adjusted, 2011) per student in primary education and $158 per student in secondary education (UNESCO, 2011). Several studies on education in Togo noted underfunding as a primary concern for educators (Amevigbe et al, 2002; Assiah & Luisoni, 2006; Bafei, 2011; Gbogbotchi et al, 2000; IRIN, 2009). Finally, UNESCO (2011) documented that 15% of primary school teachers and 51% of secondary school teachers received official training in 2009. These statistics illustrated some educational challenges in Togolese schools. Rather than wait for government intervention, communities without access to education have developed local solutions to educational issues by establishing CI schools, which served to increase educational access in areas without state-sponsored, public schools. The policies and practices of these schools are distinctive because they exist outside of direct MOE control. I believe that grassroots educational initiatives are important and significant subjects of study because they are situated at the confluence of international, national, and local trends in education. Therefore, I designed a study to investigate critical issues in educational policies and practices in schools in the Akebou Prefecture.

Despite major reform measures designed to restructure the educational system to reduce inequalities and improve pedagogical practices, the Togolese government still faces challenges in
providing equitable educational access, quality, and outcomes (UNESCO, 1978; Bafei, 2011; UNESCO, 2012). In rural areas, government schools are located in the principle town of each canton (a local territorial subdivision). While cantons vary in size, they often cover the area in a 10-15 km radius from the central town. Without local access to education, students of outlying communities must either walk a considerable distance to and from school each day or rent a room in the town where the government school is located, which increases the cost of education and contributes to the establishment of CI schools (Interview, CI:1:FG1, June 3, 2014; Interview, CI:1:FG2, June 19, 2014). Additionally, De Grauwe and Lugaz (2007) noted that District Education Offices (DEO) and the Ministry of Education (MOE) often neglect to conduct site visits in rural areas. Without training or oversight, many Togolese educators are under-qualified for their positions (UNESCO, 2007). Bafei (2011) argued that these issues contributed to high rates of teacher turnover.

While issues of educational decentralization and community-based educational initiatives are widely discussed in the literature, only a few studies directly address CI school issues in Togo. Gbogbotchi et al (2000), Marchand (2000) and Assiah and Luisoni (2006) noted that critical concerns and issues facing government schools often also exist in CI schools. However, CI school face additional challenges in regards to school funding, teacher training, the provision of educational materials, and participation in national assessments. Without financial support from the national government or NGOs, the CI schools that were sites in my study were completely supported by locally determined fees, taxes, and donations. Additionally, Assiah and Luisoni (2006) observed that teachers in CI schools were less likely to receive official training and that many CI schools had limited access to curriculum guides, educational materials, and textbooks. Finally, in order to participate in the standardized exams administered after
completion of the terminal grade in each school cycle, students attending CI schools were required to travel to the nearest testing site (often the principle town of the *canton*, or territorial subdivision), which created unique challenges for educators, parents, and students (Marchand, 2000). The general issues identified that I identified in the scholarly literature helped guide the development of my research questions and data collection techniques.

There are several terms used to describe community-based educational initiatives in the literature (Arenas, 2005; Daun, 2009). Bray (2003) and Assiah and Luisoni (2006) suggested the term Community Initiative (CI) to describe grassroots (bottom-up) schools established and supported by local communities in Togo and elsewhere. Similarly, Gbogbotchi et al (2000) and Marchand (2000) used *écoles d’initiative locale* (locally initiated schools). Given that these terms emanated from research specific to the Togolese context, I selected the term Community Initiative (CI) to describe the schools I included as sites in my research. Further discussion of terminology and the characteristics of CI schools can be found in Chapter Two.

**Rationale**

The rationale for my study was rooted in the importance of understanding educational experiences at local levels by situating them within the macro and meso levels of the global-to-local continuum. Miller-Grandvaux and Yoder (2002), Assiah and Luisoni (2006), Clemons (2009) noted that there is a need for additional research on community-based educational initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa, which offered a rationale for my study. Moreover, educational research in Francophone West Africa has overwhelmingly been conducted in Senegal, Mali, and Cameroon, but failed to consider Togolese experiences. As I embarked on my study, I considered that inquiry into community-based educational initiatives in Togo provided
perspective that reflected the call for local-level research issued by Anderson-Levitt (2003), Napier (2005), and Vavrus and Bartlett (2009).

Additionally, I had a personal rationale for my study. I served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Akebou Prefecture from 2008-2010 working in the field of education and community development. My experiences living and working in Akebou communities established an interest in and concern for the perspectives of the educators and community members involved in the day-to-day operations of rural CI schools. I developed a desire to conduct research in the field of comparative and international education as a way to allow the perspectives of local-level educators in Togo to be represented in the literature by creating a deeper understanding of critical issues in CI schools in Akebou, Togo.

**Goals and Objectives**

The overall goal of my research was to provide a comprehensive investigation of the micro-level realities facing community initiative schools in the Akebou Prefecture in Togo, West Africa. In order to provide context, I situated my study within the global-to-local continuum by tracing the influence of international pressures and official Togolese policies on local-level realities experienced in rural CI schools. Through a focus on curriculum issues, I highlighted aspects of the policy-practice dichotomy within the context of Akebou schools.

In order to achieve my goals, I identified the following objectives for my study:

a. To learn about and report the conditions and characteristics of Akebou communities
b. To learn about funding sources for selected schools
c. To learn about the implementation of Togolese national curriculum and local pedagogical practices and assess the availability of educational materials
d. To learn about assessment, evaluation, and national examinations
e. To learn about teacher recruitment, training, and professional development
f. To learn about the experiences of directors, teachers, and community members in the local context
Figure 1.1 shows the multiple dimensions of my study. In my study, macro-level analysis focused on international or global trends in educational policy as well as national education policies in Togo. The regional level was the meso-level. While I did not collect data at this level, I was aware that regional administration played a role in the educational experiences at local levels. Finally, I used observations, interviews, focus groups, documents, and photos to describe the realities and experiences of local-level actors at the micro-level. These perspectives offered additional dimensions to the study, including insight into issues of policy, curriculum, funding, teacher training, educational resources, and relationships with the MOE across each of the levels.
Figure 1.3. The multiple dimensions and analytic framework of my study from global (macro) level to local (micro) level
Research Questions

I developed research questions that reflected the global-to-local continuum, the policy-practice divide, and the influence of micro-level realities on educational experiences, extending from my general objectives for the study.

I used the term ‘educator’ in my research questions to refer to personnel involved in the day-to-day functions of CI schools. Based on my experiences working in these schools as a Peace Corps Volunteer, I observed that school personnel have various roles beyond classroom instruction. For example, school directors (administrators) often also teach one or more subjects, while teachers often double as coaches, mentors, tutors, and assist in the maintenance of school facilities. Thus, the term ‘educator’ is best suited to describe participants because it captures the wide range of roles that educators have in Akebou schools.

Figure 1.4 presents my research questions, the rationale for each question, data sources, and methods for data analysis. Figure 1.5 shows my analytical framework with the various levels in the study from macro down to micro-level.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Data Sources</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What are the contemporary features of Togolese education policy?</td>
<td>- A basis for understanding macro-level context - Addresses details of centralized Togolese education system</td>
<td>- Policy documents (national, regional, and school level) - News articles/Press releases - Government/ Ministry Websites - Interviews - Field notes/memos</td>
<td>- Informal content analysis of documents and interviews - Thematic coding of documents and interviews - Constant comparative method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1A. What are the relevant features that relate to CI schools in rural areas?</td>
<td>- A basis for exploring macro influences in micro context - Important for identifying dichotomies between policy-practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. How do educators describe the goals and purposes of their schools?</td>
<td>- Provide necessary micro-level context - Perspectives of local actors on critical issues in CI school important in terms of - Motivations for establishing community schools and - Links between school and community</td>
<td>- Individual Interviews - Focus Groups - Field notes/memos</td>
<td>- Informal content analysis of interviews - Thematic coding of interviews - Constant comparative method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2A. How do community leaders describe the goals and purposes of their schools?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. What are the general conditions of and key issues in rural schools in the Akebou prefecture?</td>
<td>- Characteristics of context/setting at the micro-level - Important to understand the realities of educational experiences in Akebou and the perspectives of local actors on critical issues in CI schools</td>
<td>- Individual Interviews - Focus Groups - Observations - School level documents (curriculum materials, funding policies, attendance, exam results) - Photos - Field notes/memos - Artifacts</td>
<td>- Informal content analysis of interviews - Thematic coding of interviews - Constant comparative method - Photo analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>(including, but not limited to: funding, availability of materials, curriculum policies and pedagogy, assessments and examinations, teacher recruitment and training, and relationship with MOE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. What do educators identify as key issues for curriculum policies and practices in their schools?</td>
<td>- Provide micro-level context - Provide insight into policy-practice dichotomy - Perspectives of local actors on critical issues in CI schools and potential differences between educators and community members perceptions</td>
<td>- Individual Interviews - Focus Groups - Documents (textbooks, curriculum guides, training materials) - Field notes/memos</td>
<td>- Informal content analysis of documents and interviews - Thematic coding of documents and interviews - Constant comparative method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4A. What do community leaders identify as key issues for curriculum policies and practices in their schools?</td>
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*Figure 1.4. Matrix of Research Questions*
Significance of Study

My study was significant for three major reasons. First, my study contributed to the literature on the decentralization of education and community-based educational initiatives. As international influences increasingly impact the development of national education policies, researchers and policy-makers have paid more attention to reforms intended to decentralize educational administration in an effort to increase access to and improve educational quality. Additionally, community-based educational initiatives have recently been touted as effective responses for improving educational access and therefore have gained attention in academic, policy, and practical discourses on educational reform. My study provided a specific example of...
educational decentralization, thus contributing to the scholarly literature. Additionally, Vavrus and Bartlett (2009) advocated for vertical case study research, which situates context-specific case studies within larger international contexts. Similar to their suggestion, my study gave a voice to local-level practitioners, allowing their experiences to contribute to national and international debates on decentralization and community-based educational initiatives.

Secondly, my study provided comparative contrast to studies on CI schools in other countries. While schools in the Akebou Prefecture have distinctive characteristics based on their social, political, historical, and economic contexts, the Akebou Prefecture also shares similarities with other rural areas. I hope that my study will inform future research on community-based educational programs in rural settings by identifying general conditions and key challenges in CI schools. While did not intend to create generalizable findings, I did hope to provide a new lens for the examination of community-based schools through the eyes of Togolese educators.

Finally, Anderson-Levitt (2003) and Vavrus and Bartlett (2009) asserted that scholarly research on educational issues in the developing world should focus heavily on context. They advocated for school-level studies featuring the voices and experiences of research participants in order to accurately represent the ground-level realities of education. Moreover, Napier (2005) stressed the importance of multi-dimensional research that addressed contextual factors along the global-to-local continuum. My study fulfilled these calls for research by offering a deeper understanding of local contexts, perceptions, knowledge, and interactions, which may be useful in informing future educational policy reform. By interviewing and observing educators and community members at national and local levels, I created a multi-dimensional study that compared and contrasted issues across sites and perspectives.
Limitations

There were several limitations to my study. These included: my outsider status, language and cultural barriers, sites, logistics and funding, and the generalizability of my study’s findings.

As a white American, I was conspicuous in my research sites. Because of this status, I worked to develop trusting relationships between the community and myself. Additionally, I conducted follow-up interviews to mitigate this limitation. Outsider status will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three.

Language also posed a limitation in my research. While French is the official language of Togo and is exclusively used in school settings, most people speak the vernacular language, Akebou, in day-to-day interactions. I developed a professional working capacity in French as a Peace Corps Volunteer, which permitted me to conduct all interviews with educators in French. However, interviews with community members were conducted in Akebou with the assistance of a translator, posing translation issues. These will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three.

Access and travel logistics also limited my ability to collect data. The research sites were at least 10 kilometers apart, connected by a poorly maintained dirt road. Public cars (or taxis-brousses) did not regularly travel from site to site, which required me to organize my own transportation via motorcycle, bicycle, or foot. While the distances were relatively short, movement between sites took significant time and effort. Additionally, because I conducted my fieldwork in the late spring, students and teachers were preparing for and taking regional and national exams. This limited the availability of educators for interviews and observations.

Structure of the Dissertation

The organization of my dissertation follows the University of Georgia Graduate School guidelines. In Chapter One, I introduce the research problem, provide background to the central
issues, state the research questions, and explain the significance of the study. In Chapter Two, I provide a comprehensive literature review to situate my study in the fields of scholarship pertinent to my research. In Chapter Three, I describe the features of my methodology and considerations regarding conduct of the study, including the roles of the researcher, the selection of sites and participants, as well as data analysis and the generation of findings. In Chapter Four, I begin to discuss the findings from the case itself by presenting descriptions of the four research sites and profiles of each participant group. In Chapter Five, I present the four thematic findings and the two overarching thematic elements. In Chapter Six, I discuss my conclusions and the implications of my findings based on similar studies in the scholarly literature. I conclude by offering several directions for future research.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter, I examine the scholarly literature pertinent to my study in order to indicate how it assisted me in framing my study and how it helped develop understanding in findings. First, I examine the foundational contexts of Togo, West Africa to provide background for my study. Second, I consider research on Community Initiative (CI) schools within the larger context of the field of comparative and international education. Third, I situate CI schools within literature on educational decentralization by clarifying terminology and identifying key characteristics of CI schools. Fourth, I address literature in the field of curriculum studies relevant to my research. Finally, I review the limited literature on CI schools in Togo.

Foundational Contexts in Togo

In the field of comparative and international education the context/setting of research studies are important considerations when developing a research design, preparing for fieldwork, and conducting data analysis (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Baker & Wiseman, 2005; Bajaj, 2009; Napier, 2005; Vavrus & Bartlett, 2009). Reviewing literature on the following contexts allowed me to understand the various contexts of community-based schooling in Togo.

The Togolese Historical Context

In accordance with literature in the field of comparative and international education, I situated my research within the broad historical contexts as the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial histories of Togo continue to influence educational policies and practices. Prior to the arrival of European colonizers in Africa, education was primarily a responsibility of families,
communities, or ethnic groups (Nyerere, 1969; Lawrance, 2000). Young people learned their history, language, and culture through oral traditions, while gaining practical knowledge and skills through experiential learning. However, European interest in Africa altered pre-colonial traditions. At the Berlin Conference of 1884, the territory of Togo became a German protectorate (Knoll, 1976). Many Togolese communities resisted colonial rule, but strict laws, coercion, and violent subjugation maintained German rule (Amenumey, 1969). Like other colonial powers, the German administration used education as a tool for maintaining colonial domination by allowing a few Togolese students to learn a limited, Eurocentric curriculum (Blackshire-Belay, 1992). The German colonial government left the responsibility of education to missionaries, operating two of the 315 elementary schools in 1911 (Knoll, 1976).

After World War I, Togo fell under French colonial rule and the administration of Togo became centralized and authoritative (Lawrance, 2007). The French colonial administration outlawed the use of British currency in markets and English or indigenous languages in schools in an effort to maximize economic output in the colony (Tété-Adjalogo, 2000). Curriculum materials from French Togo explicitly taught European superiority and African inferiority (Kelly & Kelly, 2000). Remnants of the French education system can be observed in the structure and curriculum of Togolese education today (Bafei, 2011).

Togo gained independence from France in 1960 and the years following independence were politically unstable. After two coups d’état, Eyadema Gnassingbe assumed the presidency for 38 years (Economist, 2002). After his death in 2005, his son, Faure Gnassingbe, took over the presidency. Faure was reelected in 2010 and will serve until at least 2015, though he plans to run again. Freedom House (2013) considers the Togolese people to be only “partially free” due to Togo’s turbulent past, accusations of human rights violations, and political turmoil.
Prior to 2009, the Akebou region was politically classified as a sous-préfecture of the Wawa Prefecture, which extended from the town of Badou, in the southwest corner along the border with Ghana to the Anie River in the northeast. However, prior to the 2010 presidential elections, the Akebou sous-préfecture gained official recognition as a prefecture (See Figure 2.1). The largest and southernmost town, Kougnohou, was selected as the capital. While Kougnohou has benefited from increased governmental support (the construction of a Post Office, an auto-gare, and a police station), the rest of the region remained relatively untouched (Field notes, May 25, 2014). According to the 2010 Togolese census, the Akebou Prefecture has a total population of 62,245 (République Togolaise, 2010). 93% of people in the Akebou Prefecture live in rural conditions (57,692), which is significantly higher than the national rate of 62% (République Togolaise, 2011).

Figure 2.1. Sign outside of the central office of the Akebou Prefecture in Kougnohou. Note the ‘sous’ designation that was scratched off in 2010 after gaining préfecture status

The Geographic Context

Historical and post-colonial contexts in Togo continue to influence economic, social, political, and educational issues in the country. The development of transportation, administrative, and economic structures under colonial rule exacerbated regional inequalities in
Togo (Tété-Adjalogo, 2000). The borders of Togo—a product of colonialism—contributed to political and economic inequalities. Based on my personal experiences in Togo between 2008-2010, Togo’s northern most region, Savannes, suffered from a lack of political representation and isolation as farmers and business people often see their profits reduced because of the high transportation costs required to bring their products to market.

In addition to north-south inequalities, there were challenges facing communities at the eastern and western ends of the country. The route nationale—the main road in Togo—runs north and south along the centerline of the country and it is along this route that the majority of political, economic, and social interaction occurs (CIA Factbook, 2013). While even the route nationale is in various stages of disrepair, my personal experiences in Togo suggested that most roads are unpaved and rarely maintained by the national government. The Akebou prefecture, located in the northwest corner of the Plateaux region, suffered from a severe lack of transportation infrastructure (See maps in Figures 3.2 and 3.3). While Akebou is closer to Lomé than the northernmost regions, poorly maintained dirt roads, hilly terrain, and limited access to cars, vans, and trucks made political, social, and economic interaction between the Akebou prefecture and the rest of the nation a challenge. The lack of transportation infrastructure, geographic isolation, and lack of governmental oversight in the region led the Akebou people to describe themselves to me as being the “forgotten prefecture” (Interview, CI:2:T2, June 11, 2014). As such, between 2008-2010, I observed that the Akebou people took responsibility for tasks that might be considered a responsibility of the national government, including: road building, regional governance, trade unions, and education initiative.

The physical geography of the Akebou Prefecture also contributed to the lack of infrastructure in the region. The hilly landscapes and extended rainy seasons limit the longevity
of dirt roads, which had been professionally maintained only once between my arrival in Togo as a PCV in 2008 and my return as a researcher in 2014 (Field Notes, 24 May, 2014). During fieldwork, I observed that several sections of the main road (north-south) connecting ST:1 and Kougnohou had been recently maintained. More interesting, however, was the (re)construction of the east-west road running through ST:1. I was told that the project would connect ST:1 and CI:1 to the route national in the town of Nyamasila (about 50km north of Atakpamé). To the west, the road would connect into Ghana at a border crossing that previously had only a footpath (Field Notes, 29 May, 2014). Despite the efforts to improve transportation infrastructure, the poor road conditions prevented cars from regularly traveling between Akebou villages. Rather, the most commonly used method of transportation is on rented motorcycles, which are more costly and subject to the discretion of the proprietor. When traveling between research sites, it was common to observe people walking, biking, and riding motorcycles. Prior to arriving in the field, I knew that the northern Akebou Prefecture could be reached via Kougnohou, which is 5km north of Adape, a town along the paved Atakpamé-Badou route and that the dirt roads leading north from Kougnohou towards my research sites would be hilly, unmaintained, and prone to washouts during the rainy season, which was just beginning during fieldwork.

Geographical contexts played an important role in educational affairs, including the establishment of CI schools, as explained by Gbogbotchi et al (2000) and Marchand (2000). Understanding the geographic contexts of my research sites helped me to identify and analyze key features of CI schools since the context influenced the educational experiences in CI schools.

**The Sociocultural Context**

The sociocultural context of my research was an important aspect of my research design, fieldwork, and analysis because of the complex relationships between communities and schools.
Members of the local community, who shared a common language, history, identity, and culture with their students, made up the majority of CI school educators. This stands in contrast to government schools where teachers are deployed by the Ministry and often work in unfamiliar areas. Thus, sociocultural context directly impacted educational policies and practices.

Despite being a relatively small nation, there is much diversity in Togo. According to CIA (2014) data, there are over 39 distinct languages spoken among 37 different ethnic groups. French is the official administrative language and continues to be used in political and educational institutions. Ewe and Kabye are among the most commonly spoken vernacular languages and are used in economic and commercial venues (République Togolaise, 2013). Government schools use a French-only language policy that permits some use of local languages in the first years of primary school. Once students reach secondary school, however, strict rules prohibit and punish the use of vernacular language in schools. Despite official policies, it was not uncommon for Togolese teachers to allow local languages in classrooms to explain complex concepts (Interview, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). Additionally, due to the lack of professional development and training (less than 20% of primary school teachers were trained in 2009) many teachers were not adequately proficient in French and used local languages in the classroom (UNESCO, 2011). Because of the shared sociocultural identity between students and teachers in CI schools, local languages are more commonly used in CI schools (Gbogbotchi et al, 2000; Miller-Grandvaux & Yoder, 2002).

The three sites selected for my study were located in the Akebou Prefecture, which is populated primarily by people of Akebou ethnicity. With a total population of 62,225, which represented about 1% of the 6,191,155 total Togolese population as counted by the 2010 census, the relatively homogeneous sociocultural makeup of my study was not necessarily representative
of other regions in Togo (République Togolaise, 2011). People of the Akebou ethnicity make up a vast majority of residents in the Akebou Prefecture. The Ewe, Kabiye, and Kotokoli ethnicities make up the largest non-Akebou populations in the prefecture. However, these groups tend to live in isolated neighborhoods (quartiers) or in small farming collectives (fermes) well outside of village boundaries, which limits their interaction with the Akebou (Field Notes, June 24, 2014). Because the population is predominantly Akebou, the most commonly spoken language in the region is Akebou (Field Notes, May 22, 2014). While there are over 40 distinct ethnic groups in Togo, many are small and the largest three groups (Ewe, Kabiye, and Kotokoli) tend to be most often represented in political, cultural, and economical institutions. The geographic and economic isolation of the Akebou Prefecture contribute to its ethnic homogeneity and underrepresentation. The selection of this setting allowed for deeper insight into curricular adaptations that incorporated local knowledge and experiences in educational content because of shared sociocultural identities. Assiah and Luisoni (2006) described how curricular modifications made educational experiences more relevant to daily life in the community.

The Akebou Prefecture is among the least densely populated regions of Togo. Much of the landscape is densely forested with occasional breaks for areas resembling a savanna. Large villages are located along main roads and smaller villages are accessible only by footpaths. Villages range in size from around 4,000 inhabitants in Djon-Kotora to 30 in Nyeli (Field Notes, June 8, 2014). The majority of houses are constructed with mud bricks held together by cement mixed with sand or gravel. Many homes are covered with corrugated iron roofing. Kitchens are built separately from living spaces and are often covered with thatched roofing. Villages are divided into quartiers based on familial relationships or ethnicity. Apart from the central road running through a village, people walk through each other’s compounds (yards) to move around
village. Because of the relatively small size of villages in the Akebou Prefecture, most residents know community members by name, and greetings can be heard throughout the day.

The familiarity among villagers created close-knit communities that could be suspicious of outsiders. Non-Akebou teachers employed by the state explained that cultural differences impacted their relationships with community leaders (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014).

In an effort to develop rapport with participants in each of the research sites, I participated in the daily activities of villagers when I was not actively engaged in data collection. Apart from agricultural and domestic activities, community members in my research sites often congregated in public areas to spend their spare time playing board games (the most popular being *Ludo* and a variation of *Mancala*), drinking locally brewed alcohols, and discussing local news. Throughout the Akebou Prefecture, gendered divisions of labor determined how an individual spent their time. Both men and women worked in the fields, although men were often responsible for completing the heavy task of clearing and burning a field to prepare it for planting. At the home, women were responsible for most domestic duties, while men were free to visit with neighbors and friends.

There are many development related issues in the Akebou Prefecture, though the severe lack of health and sanitation facilities in each of the sites was among the most pressing. When preparing for fieldwork, I planned to find lodging in each of the research sites to live alongside research participants. However, upon my arrival to CI:2, I discovered that it would be difficult to negotiate appropriate housing in the other sites because of the lack of clean water and pit toilets. In rural areas of Togo 40.5% of the population has access to improved water sources and only 2.5% of the population has access to sanitation facilities (CIA, 2014). Over the course of my
fieldwork, several community members in each of the sites expressed concern for health and sanitation issues in the region (Field Notes, May, 27, 2014; Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014).

While literature on the sociocultural contexts of education in Togo was limited, Cleghorn (1992), Dhorsan and Chachuiao (2008), and Vavrus and Bartlett (2012) discussed similar issues in Kenya, Mozambique, and Tanzania, highlighting the importance of context in educational research. These insights provided comparative contrast to the data I collected in Togo.

The Political, Ideological, and Post-Colonial Contexts

As a formerly colonized nation, the educational context Togo is influenced by post-colonial political and ideological traditions in Africa. CI schools in particular reflect a resurgence of the self-reliant rhetoric that spread across the continent in the years following independence. It was important to consider the political and ideological contexts because they continue to impact current educational policies and practices.

After decades of systematic and institutionalized educational discrimination, the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is complex. Memmi (1965) analyzed the social, political, economic, and psychological implications of colonization for both the colonizer and the colonized by highlighting lingering inequalities in post-colonial countries. In order to combat the effects of colonization, African political leaders made it their goal to increase the availability and quality of social welfare programs (including education) in an effort to foster economic and social development. Julius Nyerere, the first president of Tanzania, advocated for Ujamaa, or African socialism, which was a philosophy based on three assumptions: the right to life, the sharing on property, and the obligation to work for the betterment of the community (Nyerere, 1968). He encouraged communities to strive for self-sufficiency and promoted local
action to solve local issues. His ideology included community-based educational projects, which were referred to as ‘education for self-reliance’.

Similarly, Awolowo (1966) espoused a plan advocating for the establishment of local self-government in Nigeria. These post-colonial ideologies reinforced the need for curriculum based on knowledge, skills, and attitudes that fostered development and self-reliance. Freire (1970) expressed similar concern over the role of education in post-colonial countries by highlighting oppressive pedagogical practices of colonial and post-colonial governments. He suggested the use of critical pedagogy to engage citizens in the struggle for social, economic, and political equality. His ideas recognized and validated expressions of local and indigenous funds of knowledge. He social change could be achieved by linking education and action. The realities I observed in CI schools reflected, to an extent, the ideas of self-reliance and grassroots action presented in the literature. Despite post-independence educational reform movements, colonial influences continue to exist in education (Zajda, 2005).

Interestingly, the literature on post-colonial studies revealed that the official Togolese educational system had borrowed many of its administrative and curricular policies from the period of French colonial rule. Bafei (2011) noted that the organizational structures of Togolese education changed little in the years following independence due to the continued assistance of “French technique advisors” (p.251). These post-colonial structures continued to influence power dynamics between government officials, local level educators, and students. Kelly and Kelly (2002) documented the use of curricular materials that explicitly promoted French (and other western) dominance and African inferiority in both pre and post-independence Togo. Lastly, Lawrance (2001) noted that France’s colonial rule established French as the national language of Togolese education. Today, French continues to be the language of instruction, despite post-
colonial reforms that attempted to incorporate local languages into the curriculum to strengthen national identity (UNESCO, 1975). These historical and post-colonial descriptions of educational administration and curriculum helped guide my interview protocol and data analysis by providing insight into the contextual realities of education in CI schools. Like other post-colonial nations, history and colonial influences continue to shape educational experiences in Togo.

While post-colonial philosophy influenced political thought in Togo after independence, the dictatorial regime of Eyadema Gnassingbe held tight control over opposition groups. Thus, when CI schools became common in rural areas in the 1980s and 1990s, the government viewed them as subversive because they deviated from national curriculum (Gbogbotchi et al, 2000). However, pressure from international agencies to increase enrollment rates and increase community participation created a more inclusive official policy that recognized CI schools. Since Faure Gnassingbe became president of Togo in 2005, the Akebou Prefecture has consistently voted in favor of the opposition party in parliamentary and presidential elections. According to some research participants, the political allegiances of the region have contributed to the lack of governmental intervention in the region and have resulted in the continued lack of support for educational initiatives (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). This allowed me to frame my understanding of the relationship between the political and educational contexts in Togo, and specifically, the Akebou Prefecture.

The Economic Context

The economic context of Togo and, more specifically, the Akebou Prefecture impacted the realities of educational experiences in the sites I explored in my study. As others have indicated, many CI school educators and community members also identified economic challenges as one of the most important key issues facing school operations. See for instance,

In Togo, economics and education are inextricably linked. With an annual GDP of $6.8 billion (USD) in 2012 and a per-capita income of $1,100, Togo ranks 217th in per-capita GDP internationally, placing it among the poorest nations in the world (CIA, 2014). Togo’s neighbors, Benin, Burkina Faso, and Ghana had per capita GDPs of $1,700, $1,400, and $3,400 respectively (CIA, 2014). The Togolese economy depends on subsistence and commercial agriculture, mining, and export tariffs collected at the Port of Lomé, which is one of the few deep-water ports in West Africa (CIA, 2013; Port Autonome, 2013). Based on my experiences working in the Akebou Prefecture from 2008-2010 as a Peace Corps Volunteer and returning as a researcher in 2014, I observed that residents of the Akebou Prefecture rely primarily on subsistence agriculture economy (Field Notes, June 4, 2014). Not only did I observe community members leaving for fields in the morning and returning in the evening, on several occasions I accompanied them to their crops to observe agricultural activities. Fields were located between 2 and 8 kilometers from the edge of village, connected only by winding and overgrown footpaths. Peanuts, corn (*maïs*), cassava (*manioc*), taro, and yams (*ignames*) were among the most common crops grown in the region. I did not observe the use of any mechanized farming or animal traction. Rather, agricultural work was done by hand using machetes and hoes with short wooden handles.

*Figure 2.2. A footpath connecting research sites, also used to reach agricultural fields*
While farming is the main source of income for many families across Togo—65% of the population works in agriculture—the relatively cool and wet climate of the Akebou region also allows for the cultivation of coffee and cocoa, which are lucrative cash crops that make up 40% of all export earnings in Togo (CIA, 2014). However, due to the lack of transportation, many coffee and cocoa farmers are forced to sell their crops to middlemen, who transport and resell the crops before exportation. This often reduces profit for the grower, which contributes to the poverty of the region. Several participants told me that the main causes for economic stagnation in the Akebou Prefecture were rooted in the lack of transportation, the limited development of non-agricultural industry, and a deliberate undervaluing of agricultural products by the Togolese government (Field Notes, May 21, 2014; June 4, 2014; June 21, 2014; Interview, CI:1:FG1, June 11, 2014). The combination of rural conditions and low population density contributes to limited access to services normally provided by the Togolese government, such as roads, health centers, agricultural depots, and schools (République Togolaise, 2010).

In 2008, Togo received $410.8 million in official development assistance, 4.5% of which ($18.4 million) was slated for educational purposes (UNESCO, 2011). The Togolese government allocated 4.6% of its GDP to education in 2009 (UNESCO, 2011). Bafei (2011) cited a lack of funding as a central issue in Togolese education. Gbogbotchi et al (2000) and Marchand (2000) documented the growth of CI schools as a response to inadequate access to government schools, which illustrated a critical link between economic and educational contexts.

While many scholars and policymakers suggested that that decentralization and community-based educational initiatives are more economically efficient, Miller-Grandvaux and Yoder (2002) found that per pupil costs in community schools in Mali and Malawi are nearly the same—if not higher—than those in government schools, which was also observed in my findings.
Additionally, local economic contexts play a crucial role in the functioning of CI schools. Bray (1999) documented the significant economic burden that CI schools place on local communities in Cambodia. He observed that many communities are only able to contribute goods and services, rather than money, to educational initiatives. He also found that community-based financing in several countries around the world exacerbated educational inequalities because poor areas could not afford to pay qualified teachers or buy new educational materials at the same rate as in wealthier areas.

Economic rationales for the decentralization of education and the transfer of school funding to community organizations provided important context for my study and helped me to interpret the experiences of participants. This provided further rationale for my case study of CI schools in rural areas. My study offered insight into the economic realities in CI schools in Togo in line with other studies and publications in the literature.

**The Educational Context**

Scholars in the field of comparative and international education have observed significant growth in Western models of education around the world, impacting schools in even the most isolated regions (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Baker & LeTendre, 2005; Baker & Wiseman, 2005).

In the years following independence, many formerly colonized nations adopted educational systems that reproduced colonial structures (Anderson-Levitt, 2003, p.2). While educational access grew, poverty, mismanaged governments, and a lack of infrastructure prevented many countries from providing equitable, high quality education for their citizens (Rodney, 1972). In the African context, many nations implemented reforms that attempted to restructure education to establish policies and practices that strengthened African identities and provided the knowledge and skills needed to address social, political, and economic issues in
local contexts. A 1978 report from UNESCO described the “New School” reform in Togo that attempted to initiate an overall systems change to revitalize antiquated policies through the introduction of student-centered pedagogy, comprehensive teacher education, gender equity, and equitable funding policies (UNESCO, 1978, p.38). However, poor management, political instability, and insufficient funding limited the effective implementation of the reform.

More recently, education in Togo has reflected trends in international education. In line with EFA goals, the Togolese government eliminated school fees in state-sponsored primary schools in 2008 (UNICEF, 2008). The reform increased gross enrollment rates in primary education, which reached 140% in 2010, though were still 65,000 out-of-school children of primary age in 2009 (UNESCO, 2011; 2012). Primary schools had a student to teacher ratio of 14.6 in 2009, while the ratio in secondary schools was 50.3 students to one teacher (UNESCO, 2011). The elimination of fees for primary school, however, also contributed to informal, localized fee structures that were used to fill gaps between the funding required to operate schools and the financial support provided by the national government (IRIN, 2009). Transition rates from primary to secondary school reached 70% in 2010, but the 41.3% gross enrollment in upper and lower secondary education in 2009 suggested that many students dropped out in the first years of secondary education (UNESCO, 2011, 2012). Additionally, only about 15% of primary school teachers had received formal training, though data for secondary schools was unavailable (UNESCO, 2011). The Togolese government spent $111 (PPP adjusted, 2011) per student in primary education and $158 per student in secondary education in 2009, compared to $1574 and $4660 respectively in Botswana the same year (UNESCO, 2011). Bafei (2011) argued that the Togolese educational system suffered from chronic underfunding and would benefit from reforms that divided educational costs between the state, NGOs, and communities (p. 254).
While these methods have been successful in Latin America (Altschuler, 2012), Botswana (Boadou, Milondzo, & Adjei, 2009), and Bangladesh (Bray, 2003), they pose concerns for equity and access. Rural areas with limited access to NGOs would be forced to fund their schools, which is problematic in poor or economically unstable areas (Gbogbotchi et al, 2000).

Considering the educational history and contemporary contexts in Akebou, Togo informed my research design, fieldwork, and analysis. The educational context of Togo allowed me to situate my local-level findings within the regional and national policy perspective.

**The Comparative and International Education Context**

The reach of globalization extends beyond economic, political, and cultural domains to extend into the field of educational policy and practice. Many scholars in the field of comparative and international education have noted the impact of global educational trends on national and local policies (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Arnove, 2007; Wiseman & Baker, 2005; Daun, 2009; Steiner-Khamsi, 2004, and others). Global influences impact schooling on a variety of levels, including the standardization of school structure, the implementation of international educational assessments such as the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), as well as through a proliferation of policies aimed at improving educational access and quality (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Baker & LeTendre, 2005; OECD, 2010; UNESCO, 2007; “CIES: Call for Papers”, 2013). The scholarly literature on global trends in policy provided important context for my understanding and analysis of critical issues in CI schools in Togo as identified by participants in my study.

In recent decades, educational issues have been recognized as a global social issue because education plays an important role in improving quality of life, economic opportunities, and the development of active citizens (Houngnikpo, 2001; Saxon et al, 2012; UN, 2013).
Additionally, educational attainment has been linked to other indicators of development, such as maternal health, government accountability, gender equality, democracy, and peace (Bloom, 2005; IIASA, 2008; Plan, 2011). George and Page (2004) suggested that global social issues be defined using the following criteria:

1. The cause of the problem should be found in global rather than national processes.
2. Such problems can spread across national borders despite the efforts of sovereign states.
3. The problem is increasingly difficult to resolve at the national level.
4. Supranational bodies have emerged in order to assist nation-states in dealing with the problems concerned (p. 2).

Using this definition, education can be considered a global social issue. Arnove (2007) and Baker and Wiseman (2005) argued that global pressures often dictate the national-level educational policy development, which satisfies George and Page’s (2004) first criterion. The second criterion can be seen in the practice of lending and borrowing of educational policies, which facilitates the spread of educational trends across national borders (Phillips, 2005; Steiner-Khamsi, 2004). The third criterion can be witnessed in the financial and technical challenges faced by national governments, which prevent them from effectively solving domestic educational issues (DeGrauwe & Lugaz, 2007). Finally, the fourth criterion can be observed in the intervention of supranational organizations such as UNESCO and the World Bank, illustrating the role that the international community plays in providing assistance to nation-states in order to promote educational development (Bray, 2007b; Jones, 2004).

As international pressures and priorities exert a growing influence over national policymaking, some scholars argue that aspects of educational experiences around the world are increasingly homogeneous (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Arnove, 2007; Baker & LeTendre, 2005; Baker & Wiseman, 2005). Similarities across educational systems have resulted from increased interaction between international agencies, private companies, national governments, and
community organizations due to technological advancements and other processes of globalization. Arno (2007) described globalization as “the intensification of worldwide social relations that link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” (p. 2). His definition highlighted the interactions between local contexts and global trends, which creates a dialectic where macro (international) policies and practices interact with meso (national) policies and practices, and again with micro (local) policies and practices. At each level the educational policies are “reshaped” (p. 2) to fit the realities extant in each individual context/setting, thereby creating a dynamic policy-making environment where a variety of actors are involved in the development of policy and its translation into practice. The conceptualization of educational policy presented as a dialectic between global, national, and local levels helped me to develop a way to understand key educational issues facing CI schools in Togo.

Wiseman and Baker (2005) asserted that the “basic institutional understandings and values about schooling” are increasingly similar across nations (p. 18). Anderson-Levitt (2003) observed that global education policy followed the European model of schooling, including the widespread use of “egg-carton schools with face-front classrooms emphasizing lecture and recitation” (p. 7), which exemplified the homogenous model of education created by globalization. As a result, Baker and LeTendre (2005) critiqued the antiquated idea that national governments developed educational policies independent of international influence. Instead, they argued that international agencies played an important role in national policy development through international declarations for educational access (EFA, MDG) and through policy stipulations attached to development funds (IMF, World Bank). Baker and LeTendre illustrated their argument by noting that—regardless of local context—an outside observer can enter a
classroom and accurately assess what is going on in the room, “even through the specifics of the lesson might be incomprehensible” (p. 7). Similar observations were also made in CI schools in Togo, which, despite local control, resembled the globally accepted model of schooling (Gbogbotchi et al, 2000; Hoppers, 2005). By placing the policies and practices of Akebou CI and government schools within larger educational and historical contexts, I framed my understanding of micro-level realities within macro and meso-level contexts.

The explanation for the homogenization of schooling around the world varies among scholars. Baker and LeTendre (2005) highlighted three major themes explaining similarities among educational systems: the success of state-sponsored mass schooling, the global institutionalization of education through the use of diploma and credentialing programs, and the slow process of institutional change (pp. 6-12). Others argued that the increasing commonalities in education have resulted from an international recognition of education as an indicator—but the sole determinant—of development (Easterly, 2001; Sachs, 2005). Without question, mass schooling is responsible for significant growth in literacy around the globe (United Nations, 2007). Thus, many national governments have responded to both international and domestic pressures to increase the access to and quality of education in their countries (Napier, 2014). Through diploma and credentialing programs, schooling became an important gateway to international labor markets (Baker & LeTendre, 2005). The ability for education to increase economic opportunities in today’s globalized world augmented the ability of international agencies to exert influence over school policies. Finally, forces of universalism and standardization in educational institutions contributed to the homogenization of educational experiences.
By addressing the institutionalization of mass schooling, Baker and LeTendre (2005) in particular helped me to frame my understanding of community members’ motivation to establish CI schools as well as their collective goals and purposes for schooling. This literature also assisted me in interpreting the importance of examination and credentialing programs such as the Brevet d'études du premier cycle (Terminal Examination for the Primary Cycle, or BEPC), the national diploma certifying completion of middle grades education, by explaining the role that standardized examinations play in international and global contexts.

**Actors in International Education**

There are a variety of actors engaged in the shaping educational policies and practices. The review of literature on relevant actors helped me identify individuals, agencies, or groups that held influence in educational policy decisions in Togo, which helped me to establish the macro-level context of my study. For instance, Bray (2007a) identified policy makers, international agencies, and academics as actors in the development of international education theories, concepts, policies, and practices. Policy makers contribute to the homogenization of educational policies and practices through “lending and borrowing” of successful educational programs from one country to another (Bray, 2007a, p. 17). Phillips and Ochs (2003) and Steiner-Khamsi (2004) discussed the lending and borrowing of educational policies in similar terms. The educational policies that are imported from—or borrowed from—more advanced countries are often accompanied by sets of professional practices that align with the larger policy. For example, the adoption of standards-based curriculum policies is often accompanied by corresponding reforms in teacher training programs, teaching methods, evaluation and assessment systems, and examination policies, so that professional practices align with the larger policy perspective. Wiseman and Baker (2005) argued that policymaking is a “limited rational
process” that is often influenced by public and private interests making “national policy making ripe for internationalizing” (p.4).

International agencies—such as UNESCO, OECD, and the World Bank—developed global-level declarations encouraging national governments to commit to educational goals set by the global community (Bray 2007b, p. 25). These agencies often provided financial assistance for national governments to assist in the implementation of educational programs that aimed to meet the stated goals. However, economic aid donated or loaned by international agencies was often accompanied by stipulations that required the adoption of specific policies and practices. Bartlett (2003) pointed to pressure exerted by the World Bank on Brazilian educational policymakers to include parent choice in reform measures (p. 185). Through these projects, international agencies contributed to the standardization of educational experiences worldwide.

Bray (2007a) argued that academics played a role in the development of international trends in education. By bridging gaps between theoretical, conceptual, and practical issues, scholars highlighted effective educational policies and programs that have since been adopted by national governments or international agencies (p. 35). He contended that the influence of academics is the least influential among the three groups. Considerations of the various actors in international education informed my sampling procedures and the interpretation of findings.

Baker and LeTendre (2005) and Phillips (2005) are among the scholars who have explained that exam data, official reports, and rankings from internationally normed exams often influence policy. Exams like the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)—which assess the level of achievement in reading, science, and mathematics among 15 year-old students in over 60 countries—have influenced national policymaking processes and encouraged the lending and borrowing of
educational programs because they are perceived as objective measures of educational achievement (Baker & LeTendre, 2005, Phillips, 2005). Kellaghan and Greaney (2004) pointed out that internationally-normed standardized tests have shifted discussion of quality education from inputs to outcomes, resulting in increased concern with student performance, rather than the considerations of larger educational context. While data gathered in studies like TIMSS and PISA is useful, the results can easily be misinterpreted and misused (Baker & LeTendre, 2005, p. 4). In addition, these studies are often considered to represent global trends despite the non-participation of many developing countries. Baker and LeTendre (2005) encouraged further research in underrepresented regions such as South America and sub-Saharan Africa (p. 6).

Levin (2009) and Napier (2009) also addressed the problematic use of standardized, cross-national assessments in educational policy making. Levin (2009) observed that variables, including family life, economics, community characteristics, and parent education influenced achievement on internationally administered exams. He suggested researchers use questionnaires to gather information about knowledge base, parsimony, clarity, and usefulness to enrich exam data, noting that they may provide insight into the local experiences and contextualize exam data. Napier (2005) argued that without site-specific information, policy recommendations developed on national or global levels might not accurately address local needs or realities.

Additionally, Napier (2009) described positive and negative aspects of participation in cross-national exams in the context of the South African schools. She noted that international reports on education often guide policymaking in South Africa in an effort to learn from educational experiences abroad (p. 36). However, South Africa’s low ranking on international exams (TIMSS, PISA) created negative perceptions of South Africa’s educational system. The widespread misunderstanding of international rankings resulted in inappropriate uses of the data.
Following Kellaghan and Greaney’s (2004) suggestion to consider larger educational contexts when interpreting data from international examinations, Napier also listed factors that impact the results of cross-national exams, including the historical legacies of Apartheid, variations in school types and locations, linguistic diversity, and teacher training. These considerations highlighted the importance of examining micro-level realities within the macro and meso contexts to develop a deeper understanding of educational issues. Her observations helped guide data collection and interpretation in my study. Napier (2009) concluded that interpretations of cross-national examination data have been problematic and have had an ambiguous impact on educational policy (p. 46). The largest benefit can be found in the “exposure of the country’s real educational needs on the international stage” (p. 47). By situating my study within the larger context of international testing and policy pressures, I developed deeper insights into the policy-making process in Togo and its impact on local-level realities in the Akebou Prefecture.

Daun (2009) distinguished between two types of global influences on national policy, the “general processes of globalization (indirect influence on education) and (the) spread of world models and borrowing, and imposition of educational features (direct influence on education)” (p. 26). This distinction highlighted differences between direct and indirect influences on education that are a result of an interconnected world. National policies reflect global influence in the adoption of borrowed policies from other nations and through international pressures resulting from supranational organizations and agencies. The analysis of global influences and local interpretations presented by Baker and LeTendre (2005), Phillips (2005), Levin (2009), Brook Napier (2005), and Daun (2009) informed my analysis of policies and practices in Togolese CI schools by providing context on international educational issues.
International Trends in Policy and Practice

Interaction between global, national, and local actors in the development and implementation of educational policy has contributed to contradictory trends in education because policies are often (re)developed and (re)interpreted at each level, which is sometimes called “creolization” (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Arnove, 2007; Napier, 2005). In some cases, scholars observed a growing centralization of education. International reports documented increased enrollment and retention rates in primary, secondary, and tertiary education around the globe in recent years (United Nations, 2007; UNESCO, 2012). These elevated enrollment rates have resulted, in part, from an expansion of public schooling supported by national governments, which centralized control of education at the national level. Anderson-Levitt (2003) identified common models of mass schooling, educational infrastructures, school values, national interest in education, bans on capital punishment, gender equity programs, and common elementary curriculum as examples of centralization in education at the global level (pp. 6-7). These policy trends resulted from international pressures that encouraged schools to adopt policies emanating from the global community.

Baker and LeTendre (2005) suggested that results from international assessments also contributed to the centralization of educational policy, noting that international rankings influenced reforms modifying curricular content. These policy changes stemmed from the idea that international rankings would improve during subsequent testing cycles when reforms narrowed curricular content to match the content tested on the exams. Morrow and Torres (2007) also showed the central role of the state in education policy development. They argued that the traditional role of the state was to “construct citizens as well as inculcate ‘an almost universally replicated set of basic skills, including literacy and numeracy’” (p. 93). Thus, not only did many
national governments hold centralized power over education policy, they also shared similar conceptions of the role that schooling should play in the development of citizens’ knowledge and skills. Within the context of my research, these findings provided a lens for me to interpret relationships of power between government agencies, regional administration, and local schools.

While centralized education systems have been criticized for administrative inefficiencies and irrelevant curriculum content (Dhorsan & Chachuaio, 2009; Hoppers, 2005; Miller-Grandvaux & Yoder, 2002), Bray (2007b) argued that national governments play a critical role in developing policy and providing financial support to ensure that policies are implemented. Bentaouet (2005, cited in Bray, 2007b) reported that a World Bank survey found 76 out of 92 countries that had eliminated school fees to achieve MDG and EFA goals continued to charge unofficial fees for primary school. Bray (2007b) concluded that centralized educational systems played an important role in educational development because they assisted in the provision of funding, teacher evaluation, and teacher training and professional development (p. 33). Literature on the centralization of education helped me to contextualize participants’ comments regarding the relationship between CI schools and the national government in Togo.

Despite trends towards the centralization of schooling, scholars have also observed a decentralization of educational administration. Nielsen (2007) asserted, “school systems around the world are moving away from the centralized model of management” (p. 82). He analyzed the impact of World Bank projects supporting educational decentralization through the provision of block grant funding to community organizations that intervene in local educational issues (p. 84). Anderson-Levitt (2003) cited site-based management, school choice, teacher autonomy, learner-centered pedagogy, cooperative learning, use of local languages, and an increased relevance of curricular content as examples of localized, decentralized educational policies. These findings
provided me insight into the local level realities experienced in the CI and government schools of my study. Anderson-Levitt’s (2003) identification of general characteristics in locally operated schools provided comparative contrast and guided my methods of data collection and analysis.

Vavrus and Bartlett (2009) and Napier (2003) noted that variations in the interpretation of national policies resulted in diverse practices at local levels. While national-level policies are designed to be carefully implemented at local levels so that they reflect the ideals of policy, in reality, they are reinterpreted at each intermittent level before being put into practice, which results in diffuse practices (Napier, 2005). Anderson-Levitt (2003) called this practice of policy reinterpretation “creolization”, which was helpful to me in understanding the realities of educational experiences at national and local levels in Togo. Nielsen (2007) echoed the idea, noting that local interpretations of macro and meso level policies can empower communities because they move “decision making to the most local level” (p. 83).

Site-based management, school choice, and community initiatives reflected general trends towards the decentralization of educational policy that were relevant in my study. Bray (2003) addressed international advocacy for community involvement in educational issues, arguing that, if implemented properly, community participation in education can help “spread the burden of resourcing educational systems” and “increase the volume, relevance and impact of schooling” (p. 31). Hoppers (2005) reiterated this point arguing for increased community participation in schooling to meet EFA goals. He asserted that community schools could increase access to education while improving quality, relevance, and reducing dropout rates (p. 117). Thus, global trends toward site-based management have increased local control of education, resulting in policies and practices that reflected local contexts. This body of research helped me to situate the local-level realities of Akebou schools within international and national trends in
educational policy. The scholarly literature on decentralization in international education helped me to contextualize participant comments on the relationship between CI schools, communities, and government agencies in Togo. Additionally, examples from other countries provided comparative contrast to the data I collected in Togo.

**Decentralization and Community Initiative Schools**

In response to national and international pressures to increase educational access, community organizations around the world have initiated locally operated schools. In this section, I review definitions of community-based schools and offer the most appropriate definition for my study.

Several research projects conducted by international agencies and academics have addressed the issue of decentralization in education (Arenas, 2005; Bray, 2003; Clemons, 2009; Daun, 2009). The goals and objectives of decentralization often appeared contradictory because decentralization can be supported from a variety of ideological, economic, and educational perspectives (Arenas, 2005; Daun, 2009). The neoliberal ideology of the IMF and World Bank permeated into education through policies that promote school choice, privatization, and market-based interventions (Arenas, 2005). Populist ideologies supported educational decentralization through the claim that popular authority, rather than government bureaucracy, should dictate local policies. From this perspective, local control of education was viewed as a form of community empowerment. Populist educational movements are “reactions against large state governments and bureaucracies that appear unresponsive to local needs” (Arenas, 2005, p. 585). Finally, the ideology of participatory democracy supported decentralization efforts due to the belief that the immediate constituents of governmental programs should “take some part in the decision-making process” (Arenas, 2005, p. 585). While these distinct ideological approaches
provided rationale for decentralization, case studies in Cambodia, Nepal, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, Nicaragua, Norway, and Greece showed that a combination of rationales often support policy decisions (Bray, 2003; Daun, 2009, p. 23). The foundational ideologies for decentralization contextualized the experiences of educators and community members of the CI schools that participated in my research.

Samoff (1999) documented that majority of educational sector analyses in the 1990s concluded that education in Africa was in crisis and that decentralization was the best answer for improving access and quality. While Samoff critiqued these studies for their lack of methodological rigor and coordination, the recommendations were accepted and implemented widely across Africa by multinational organizations and national governments. Daun (2009) affirmed the observation, describing remarkable policy reforms that increased the authority of local governments to intervene in educational issues in sub-Saharan Africa. My research explored the general characteristics and key issues in schools that are, to a degree, a product of the decentralization observed by Samoff (1999) and Daun (2009).

**Terminology of Decentralization and Community Initiative Schools**

There are a variety of terms used to describe the process of educational decentralization in the literature. Daun (2009) noted that local control of education goes by several names, including: “site-based management (SBM), shared decision-making (SDM), school-based decision-making (SBDM), school-site decision making (SSDM), and school-based curriculum development (SBCD)” (p. 30). He noted that these terms reflect a top-down approach because they resulted from mandates passed down from national governments to local communities.

In addition to top-down decentralization, there are also trends towards decentralization emanating from grassroots community organization. Bray (2003) and Assiah and Luisoni (2006)
suggested the term Community Initiative (CI) schools to describe bottom-up approaches to
educational decentralization. Similarly, Gbogbotchi et al (2000) and Marchand (2000) used
écoles d’initiative locale [locally initiated schools] (EDIL). These terms embodied a different
relationship of power between national and local agencies. For example, school-based
curriculum development limited educational decision making to curricular issues, leaving out
budgeting decisions, the hiring and firing of teachers, and community participation. Shared
decision-making implied that some decisions are made locally, while others are made at the
national level. Daun (2009) argued that the “mandate of local decision-making may vary” (p. 30)
within a single country or between countries. Thus, definitions of educational decentralization
must consider the micro, meso, and macro level contexts. In other words, definitions must
consider the local context, while giving attention to the national policy climate and being situated
within the international trends advocating for the decentralization of education. These definitions
of community-based schooling helped me interpret and analyze data by providing categories that
characterized the experiences of educators in Akebou schools.

However, defining educational decentralization within local contexts can be problematic.
Hillery (1955) illustrated the difficulty of identifying a ‘community’ by listing 94 different, yet
equally viable, definitions of community. Wolf et al (1997, cited in Bray, 2003) noted that
definitions of community change depending on time and context. Bray (2003) suggested five
important types of communities: geographic, ethnic or racial, religious, familial values-based,
and philanthropic (p. 33). Definitions of community in the scholarly literature were often
contextually specific. Therefore, I reviewed literature on West African education to develop the
best definition of community-based education for my study.
Definitions provided by Bray (2003), Gbogbotchi et al (2000), and Marchand (2000) are most germane to my study because they were specific to West Africa and included a consideration of the Togolese context. Gbogbotchi et al (2000) and Marchand (2000) referred to community-based schools as *écoles d’initiative locale* (EDIL). Prior to 1996, community schools were not recognized by the Togolese government but were rather classified as *écoles clandestines* (clandestine schools). However, in 1996 pressure from the international community to provide legal classification for community-based schools led the Togolese government to rename and reclassify these schools. Thus, the term used by Gbogbotchi et al (2000) and Marchand (2000) was derived from the official legal classifications in Togo. Gbogbotchi et al (2000) and Marchand (2000) also identified three major categories of CI schools in West Africa: those that are recognized by and receive support from the state, those that are aligned with NGOs or international agencies, and those that are supported exclusively by the local community.

Bray (2003) suggested a definition for community-based schools using similar language. His definition of Community Initiative (CI) schools included a consideration of the motives and models for engaging the community in education. He divided community involvement into two categories: those that receive governmental support and those that “are operated by communities outside the state system” (p. 34). He asserted the importance of recognizing this distinguishing factor because it often determined the autonomy of the community to develop educational policy. Schools supported by the government had less freedom to implement localized policies, while those that operated outside of the state system experienced more freedom in policy development.

**CI Schools and International Contexts**

Literature on CI schools provided interesting insight into the process of adapting macro and meso policies to meet local ends. Daun (2009) observed the process, noting, “at the school
level, outcomes are conditioned by the encounter between the world models and the national and local economic structures, cultures, and ideological orientations” (p. 36). Thus, the hybridization of global and national education policies created a diverse and diffuse set of implemented practices. Bray (2007b) argued that decentralization should not be touted as a “one size fits all” model for improving access and quality of education because realties at the level of practice often depended on context (p. 32).

International trends advocating for educational decentralization have been supported by rhetoric and research that suggested that decentralized education systems improved financial and administrative efficiency, provided relevant curricula, improved student achievement, and empowered communities to engage in development projects (Jones, 2004). While these claims have been supported by evidence from many countries, there are still significant challenges in the implementation of decentralized educational administration. This literature review situated my case study in international and national contexts. It assisted my understanding of the origins of decentralization policies and the impact they have on policies and practices at local levels. The lessons learned from the literature guided my interpretation and analysis of data.

**Critical Issues in CI Schools**

Decentralization of educational systems has increased access to education, but also created challenges for national governments and local communities. In this section I address the pertinent issues of funding, curriculum, and community involvement in community-based educational initiatives as they appeared in the scholarly literature and as pertinent to my study.

**Funding CI Schools**

A review of literature suggested that the provision of adequate and stable funding has been a significant challenge for community-based schools. Since the independence movements
of the 1960s, many African nations struggled to provide funding for social services (Rodney, 1972). Crippled by post-colonial legacies, rampant corruption, conflict, and a lack of experienced policy makers, many nations were unable to establish school systems that provided access to high quality education for students, especially those in rural areas (Clemons, 2009; Hoppers, 2005; Samoff, 1999). The inability of governments to finance education emanated from stagnant economies and low gross national products (GNPs). A report (EFA, 2007) showed that public expenditures on primary education when expressed as a percentage of GNP in North America and Western Europe were similar to those in sub-Saharan Africa. North American and Western European nations spent between 0.9% (Greece) and 2.7% (Iceland) of their GNP on primary education, while sub-Saharan African countries spend between 0.6% (Chad) and 4.0% (Lesotho) on primary education (UNESCO, 2007, pp. 369-371). However, these percentages did not reflect per capita expenditure on students. Greece spent $3203 (PPP adjusted) on each primary school student in 2005, while children in Chad received only $67 per capita the same year (UNESCO, 2007). While governments devoted similar percentages of the GNPs to education, developing countries had far fewer resources to assist needy schools. To help mitigate these inequalities, international organizations have suggested a decentralization of educational administration to spread the burden of school funding between the state and local communities (Bray, 2007a; Nielson, 2007; Glassman, Naidoo, & Wood, 2007). Based on the scholarly literature, I anticipated that school funding would be among the critical issues identified by participants and therefore included questions on funding in interview protocols. Funding became a major thematic finding in my study. Additionally, the literature provided comparative contrast to my findings and insight that was useful for interpreting and analyzing data.
Initially intended to spread the financial burden of education between communities and national governments, movements toward the decentralization of funding resulted in significant increases in the cost of education to parents, students, and community members (Arenas, 2005; Bray, 2003; Clemons, 2009; Hoppers, 2005). One common method to decentralize educational financing was the devolution of public school administration. It was implemented through continued—though reduced—financial support from national governments. Lower level authorities (regional, municipal, or local administrators) were given the responsibility to raise additional funds to ensure that schools stayed open (Arenas, 2005). In Senegal, the 1997 *Loi de la Decentralization* (Law of Decentralization) shifted “fiscal and administrative responsibility …from the state to local partner and community levels” (Clemons, 2009, p. 163). Reforms like these rarely resulted in high quality educational experiences because many states failed “to provide schools with sufficient educational funding (and) parents are being obliged to pay larger and larger sums of out of pocket to guarantee their children’s schooling” (Arenas, 2005, p.586).

By relegating a portion of educational financing to local communities, decentralization can increase rather than decrease educational inequalities (Bray, 2003). Rural and low-income communities were often unprepared to bear the financial burden of education even when the government provided some financial assistance (Bray, 1996). For example, in 1996 the Ugandan government announced it would provide free tuition, textbooks, salaries, training, and construction materials for primary schools, which left only the cost of uniforms, exercise books, and labor to the community. In practice, however, many schools did not receive adequate compensation and “schools found themselves short of resources and reverted to demands for informal payments” from the community (Bray, 2007a, p.29). Assiah and Luisoni (2006) explained that teacher salaries in community schools of the Savannah region of Togo were paid
entirely by parents (p. 169). However, in instances where parents or communities could not afford teacher salaries, parent teacher associations initiated income-generating activities to fill the financial gap (p. 170). In addition to these activities, teachers and administrators were often compensated through informal donations of labor, goods, or services (Gbogbotchi et al, 2000).

Scholarly literature identified the funding of CI schools as a challenge for local communities, regional and state governments, and international organizations. The success or failure of decentralized funding policies often depended on context, which highlighted the importance of site-specific case studies investigating issues of decentralization. The body of research on CI school funding provided me with insight into the complexities of micro-level realities for educators working in CI schools and guided the interpretation and analysis of data in my study.

**Curriculum Policies**

In addition to having the ability to increase access to schooling, community-based educational initiatives were championed for their ability to offer locally relevant curriculum, provide students with skills that met local needs, and increase academic achievement. Based on data from Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Togo, Chad, Uganda, Malawi, and Zambia, Hoppers (2005) asserted that a major reason for the increase in community schools during the 1990s was because of a “perceived irrelevance of the standard curriculum” (pp. 119-120). Similarly, Dhorsan and Chachuaio (2008) asserted that curricular content in Mozambican schools “was of no practical use to them” (p. 202). The perceived irrelevancy of curriculum resulted in low enrollments, high drop out rates, and little community participation in education (Dhorsan & Chachuaio, 2008).
To help mitigate problems associated with curricular irrelevancy, Nielsen (2007) presented findings from educational projects funded by the World Bank that illustrated the role decentralized educational decision-making could play in community empowerment. He argued that a “sense of ownership and commitment to the school” strengthened the school environment and resulted in improved learning outcomes (p. 83). Proponents of decentralization argued that it is important for parents, teachers, and community members to have power in educational policy decisions. In South Africa, Zambia, and Tanzania, Kubow (2007), Bajaj (2009), and Taylor (2012) asserted that local curriculum control allowed schools to develop policies that incorporated locally relevant content that provided students with skills and knowledge relevant to their local context, while also encouraging the application of those skills to meet local development needs. In Togo, Assiah and Luisoni (2006) noted that pedagogy in community schools was used “to help pupils assimilate their learning to take part in their village’s development and make use of the skills and abilities they have been taught in their daily activities” (p. 170). Thus, the curriculum policies of CI schools represented a balance between the traditional, nationally mandated educational standards and the input of local educators and community members. Based on these findings, I collected data that explored the relationship between national policies and local practices in Akebou schools to deepen my understanding of key issues in CI schools and contribute to the literature.

However, the extent to which community schools exert their freedom to develop and implement curriculum tailored to local experiences varied widely (Hoppers, 2005; Miller-Grandvaux & Yoder, 2002). Hoppers’ (2005) review of literature on community based educational initiatives in Africa proposed that community schools can be categorized as either “adaptive responses” or as “transformative responses” to educational issues (p. 123). Adaptive
community schools were modeled after the formal public school system and used curriculum policies aligned with national standards and examinations, although they also included a consideration of local contexts. Transformative schools, however, reconceptualized schooling so that “education can make a contribution to social change by empowering learners” to improve their social, political, and economic standing (Hoppers, 2005, p. 127). These schools—primarily located in Mali and Senegal—adapted curriculum policies to directly reflect local contexts. High levels of community participation, NGO support, religious affiliation, and strong leadership were characteristic of transformative CI schools (Hoppers, 2005). These categorizations helped inform my research by providing a means for understanding key issues of Akebou CI schools.

Hoppers (2005) noted that the involvement of local NGOs, international agencies, and community members contributed to schools’ decisions to adopt modified curriculum policies. In West Africa, only three (Burkina Faso, Mali, and Senegal) of the programs identified by Hoppers had purposefully redesigned the curriculum to meet local needs, and in each case, international agencies or NGOs contributed to the effort (p. 125). Miller-Grandvaux and Yoder (2002) observed that modified methods of teaching and learning in community schools were often associated with the intervention of international agencies, citing projects implemented by Save the Children, World Education, and ActionAid, in Malawi, Mali, Ethiopia, respectively (p. 9).

The reasons for redeveloping curriculum to reflect local conditions, however, varied depending on context. Modified curriculum was a product of political, economic, cultural, or religious motives and should be analyzed accordingly (Hoppers, 2005). Schools where “textbooks have been adapted and produced in local languages” (Miller-Grandvaux & Yoder, 2002, p. 20), provided an example of culturally motivated curricular modifications based on the assertion that
indigenous language was a valid means of instruction, as described in the Kenyan context by Wa Thiongo (1981) and Cleghorn (1992) and the South African context by Kubow (2007).

In order to increase the relevance of academic curriculum, transformative CI schools employed several common strategies, including: use of local languages in instruction, integration of academic knowledge and community action, incorporation of locally relevant skills, community projects, and restructuring school schedules to reflect local contexts (Hoppers, 2005; Miller-Grandvaux & Yoder, 2002). Gbogbotchi et al (2000) observed that many CI schools in Togo adopted curriculum policies similar to the nationally mandated program, but were also well equipped to incorporate local contexts and local issues into the curriculum. They wrote,

*Cependant, a faible taille des effectifs permet un encadrement pédagogique convenable, la forte intégration sociale des enseignants dans leur milieu, les relations de confiance et de proximité entretenues avec les parents d’élèves et les autorités assurent en général une bonne qualité de la relation pédagogique enseignant-élèves* (Nonetheless, the small student-teacher ratios permit suitable instructional support, the strong social integration of teachers in their locality, the strong and close connection between parents and school authorities assures, in general, high quality pedagogy in teacher-student relations) (Gbogbotchi et al, 2000, p.93, author’s translation)

Within the Togolese context, Gbogbotchi et al (2000) corroborated findings from other studies, which showed that schools with religious or NGO support were more likely to deviate from the national curriculum. For example, the NGO *Mouvement des enseignants innovateurs* (Movement of Innovative Teachers, or MOUVEN), worked with teachers to develop curriculum that was relevant within the local setting. Example activities included: written and oral games based on stories and tales from the local community; the construction of geometric shapes from local materials to measure volume; the establishment of a school garden; the creation of community maps to measure distance and learn directions; and visits to local environmental habitats to supplement science lessons (Gbogbotchi et al, 2000, pp.94-95). Thus, when effectively implemented, adaptive and transformative CI schools provided students the knowledge and skills
that allowed them to transfer into state schools or to enter into the workforce. These findings
guided the development of my second and fourth research questions. They also provided contrast
when comparing my findings with previous research in Togolese CI schools.

However, insufficient funding, the lack of teacher training, limited access to textbooks
and educational materials, and the rigid requirements of national certification examinations
limited the extent to which curriculum innovations could be effectively implemented in CI
schools. Without stable pay, teachers in Togo, Mali, Senegal, Tanzania, Malawi, and Burkina
Faso, were less motivated to develop new, locally relevant activities, but rather returned to the
familiar practice of rote memorization and textbook-based learning (Gbogbotchi et al, 2000;
Hoppers, 2005; Clemons 2009; Vavrus & Bartlett, 2012). The lack of educational resources also
impeded teachers’ ability to implement innovative curriculum. Forced to rely on local resources,
teachers in CI schools did not have access to libraries, copiers, or information technologies. The
inability to access educational resources discouraged teachers from putting their ideas for locally
relevant activities into practice within the Togolese educational context (Gbogbotchi et al, 2000).
These findings provided insight into the relationship between funding and curriculum practices.
The literature suggested that these challenges often arise as key issues in CI schools.
Accordingly my interview and observation protocols inquired into the topic of funding.

Finally, high stakes, standardized certification examinations limited the extent to which
teachers could make modifications to the curriculum. Students, school directors and parents
recognized the importance of passing these exams and placed considerable pressure on teachers
to prepare students for the exams, often narrowing curriculum content to only include material
likely to be tested on the exam, an experience widely documented across contexts, including the
United States, Togo, Mali, Senegal, Burkina Faso (Madaus & Kelleghan, 1992; Gbogbotchi et al,
2000, Marchand, 2000, USAID, 2010). These findings provided a way to understanding the pressure that examinations placed on educators and community members. I inquired about participant perspectives on national exams during my fieldwork in Togo.

In Mali, madrasas offered an example of the relationship between curriculum content and national exams. Madrasas (community-based, Islamic schools) not registered with the government were free to implement their own curriculum policies. However, a USAID/PHARE (2010) study reported that, “85% of directors declared that their institution followed Mali’s official program of study for madrasas” (p.22). While decentralization in education was often praised for diversifying curriculum and increasing relevance, Arenas (2005) cited research from Colombia, Nicaragua, and Latvia that showed that factors outside of the community, such as national examinations, often dictated what was taught in schools. Curriculum policies in CI schools were influenced by a multitude of contextual factors that impacted the realities of practice. The Malian example provided comparative contrast to the experiences in Akebou CI schools and assisted me in interpreting and analyzing my data.

Despite their significance, studies of curricular issues in community schools are rare. Hoppers (2005) argued that, “the paucity of current data…demonstrates that these aspects have not attracted sufficient interest on the side of sponsoring agencies and researchers” (p. 130). Other scholars suggested further research on curriculum policies in community schools in West African countries (Clemons, 2009; Gbogbotchi et al, 2000; Hoppers, 2005; Miller-Grandvuax & Yoder, 2002; Marchand, 2000; and Nielson, 2007). My study responded to this call for research by focusing on curriculum policies and practices in Togolese schools.
State Recognition and Community Participation

Relationships among community, school, and state government are critical to the functioning of CI schools. While community involvement has long been a part of education in Africa, there have been dramatic changes in the relationships between communities, schools, and state governments in the post-colonial era (Arenas, 2005). With limited governmental support for education in post-independence Africa, communities began reestablishing control over schools. In some states (Senegal, Mali), the grassroots efforts were welcomed by the government and a cooperative relationship developed between communities and governments (Clemons, 2009; Marchand, 2000). However, in other countries (Togo and Chad) CI schools were viewed as subversive and were denied governmental assistance (Gbogbotchi et al., 2000; Miller-Grandvaux, 2002). Recent pressures to achieve EFA influenced education policies on community education. As pressures grew stronger, governments of Togo and Chad formally recognized CI schools (Gbogbotchi et al., 2000; Miller-Grandvaux, 2002). These findings showed the complex relationship between CI schools and Ministries of Education, which was a central component of my study.

Bray (2007b) discussed the role of effective governance in the effort to ensure free, universal education. He recognized the success of community-based educational initiatives to increase access to schooling, but lamented the limited funding, lack of qualified teachers, and poor quality of education in CI schools. He proposed that community schools must maintain a symbiotic relationship with the state and share critical responsibilities, such as funding, teacher training, and infrastructure building. Similarly, referring to research in Senegal, Daun (2009) argued that states often provided insufficient funding subsidies for CI schools in poor and rural areas. He suggested that there was a need for governmental intervention in CI schools. These
perspectives provided a framework for me to analyze relationships between CI schools and the national government in my study.

For Senegal, Daun (2009) also proposed the need for governmental oversight to ensure accountability in community schools. He noted that in some areas, “specific bodies for steering, monitoring, and assessment have been established where such bodies did not exist before” (p.31). DeGrauwe and Lugaz (2007), however, noted that decentralization policies in Benin, Guinea, Mali, and Senegal left many community school officials with limited oversight and little accountability. They argued that the District Education Offices (DEOs), which were established as governing bodies for decentralized education programs, lacked the autonomy, professionalism, and resources to ensure the accountability of schools. They concluded that in order to implement effective decentralization there must be “a high-level balance between autonomy, professionalism, and accountability (that) will demand not simply more resources, but a process of professionalization of the DEO corps and a strengthening of actors who at the local level can exercise accountability” (p.124), which illustrated the importance of a functional relationship between national, regional, and local actors. Based on the key issues identified in these studies, my research addressed the perspectives of community members and educators on the relationship between CI schools and the national government.

In Senegal, Clemons (2009) documented the issues accompanying the implementation of decentralization policies. She noted that, while these policies were put in place as early as 1993, “no specific monitoring and coordinating body was created until 1996” (p. 164). Without measures to ensure accountability, many decentralization programs were misinterpreted by those responsible for implementation at the local level. Her study showed “an increasingly evident dichotomy between community action and state expectation for decentralized community
schooling” (p. 168). The unclear policies and lack of oversight led villagers to adopt a “do nothing” attitude (p. 169). She critiqued the ‘laissez-faire’ attitude of the government in the decentralization of education and suggested that governmental agencies commit to and oversee reforms that increase community capacity to govern educational institutions (p. 173). The Senegalese experience provided contrast to the policies identified in my study of CI schools in Togo. During an interview at the Togolese Ministry of Education, an official offered comments expressing concern for the ‘laissez-faire’ approach to CI schooling, similar to Clemons’ (2009) findings (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014).

**Curriculum**

A cautious review of scholarly literature on curriculum issues helped provide a means for me to understand and interpret the complexities of curriculum policies and practices in West African CI schools and internationally. Given that one of my four research questions specifically focused on curriculum issues, it was important for me to consider and review literature in the field of curriculum studies. However, because the majority of literature and research was rooted in American and European contexts, I relied heavily on the works of a few authors, whose ideas could be applied in West African contexts. Therefore, my review of the literature does not address the wide range of perspectives that exists in the field of curriculum studies.

**Defining Curriculum**

There has long been disagreement over the definition of curriculum. In ancient Greece, Aristotle discussed the difficulty of identifying curriculum content, writing, “mankind are no means agreed about the things to be taught” (Jowett, 1885, p.245). A review of pertinent literature helped me to identify a definition of curriculum relevant to my study.
Much of the academic literature in the field of curriculum studies is based on research in American and European contexts, thus its application to post-colonial and West African contexts requires careful consideration. Scholars constantly propose, critique, and reconstruct (or reconceptualize) definitions of curriculum (Marsh & Willis, 2007). Increases in school enrolment during the early 20th century in the US sparked a period of educational reform that streamlined educational experiences. This resulted in a definition of curriculum concerned with deconstructing common adult activities into individual, teachable lessons. Bobbitt and Charters (1918) defined curriculum as “that series of things which children and youth must do and experience by way of developing abilities to do the things well that make up the affairs of adult life” (p.42), noting that “the activities and experiences are the curriculum” (Bobbitt, 1924, p.44). This definition delineated the link between curriculum and larger social, economic, and political contexts by placing adult activities at the center of curriculum. Based on educational research in the United States, Bobbitt’s definition could not be directly applied to the West African setting. However, the link between school experiences and adult life embodied in his definition helped to interpret the goals and purposes of CI schools.

Marsh and Willis (2003) provided another, less relevant, definition of curriculum: “Curriculum is what the student constructs from working with the computer and its various networks, such as the Internet” (Marsh and Willis, 2007, p.11). Not only is this definition problematic in the United States due to its failure to consider the role of the school, teacher, or out-of-school factors, it was especially inappropriate for application in rural, West African settings where computers and access to electricity are non-existent.

Marsh and Willis (2007) presented a general and more appropriate, definition of curriculum: “All the experiences learners have under the guidance of the school” (p.11). This
definition highlighted both the role of the school and the individuality of student experiences. Furthermore, the definition included the impact of the hidden and null curriculum. Additionally, the inclusion of all educational experiences, the definition referred to both the formal and informal curriculum. It included the official curriculum presented in policy documents and content standards as well as the modifications made by teachers at local-levels. Finally, the definition encapsulated the curricular experiences of schooling in the local setting, which included the physical facilities, materials, and environment. By remaining broad and open to interpretation, this definition provided a larger conception of curriculum. Because of its broadness, this definition was more easily applied to West African settings. For the purposes of my study, I used this definition of curriculum because it encompassed issues of pedagogy, educational materials, school setting, language, student-teacher relationships, and assessment.

**Curriculum Policies**

In a globalized world, actors at international, national, and local levels influence education policy development and implementation (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Baker & Wiseman, 2005). Educational policymaking shares some similarities with public policymaking. Features of the policy process assisted my analysis of curriculum policies in West African CI schools.

Anderson (2006) defined policy as “a relatively stable, purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern” (p. 6). This definition addressed major characteristics of public policy: process, action, actor(s), and subjects (problems or matters of concern). It, however, did not recognize negative (or null) policy—when policymakers take no action on a problem or matter of concern (Dye, 1992). Negative policy was particularly relevant to my analysis of schools in West Africa. Despite efforts by community members to lobby elected officials, the lack of governmental policies addressing equitable access
to education led to the establishment of CI schools (Hoppers, 2005; Miller-Grandvaux & Yoder, 2002). Thus, a more complete definition of public policy in the context of West Africa was: the purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with public problems or matters of concern as well as the non-actions taken by the actor(s).

The implementation of policy is a complex process both in the US and internationally. Anderson (2006) wrote that, “successful implementation may require coordination and cooperation among a web of national, state, and local government and agencies” (p. 205). The coordination and cooperation among various actors are reflected in the policy-practice complexities of the global-to-local continuum (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Arnove & Torres, 2007; Napier, 2005). As policies are passed down from international to national to local levels, the interactions (or lack there of) between actors play an important role in the implementation process. Anderson’s (2006) policy-practice framework helped me describe the realities of curriculum policies and practices in CI schools in my study. Nudzor (2012) used a similar analytical device to describe gaps between the ideal and real (policy and practice) in the implementation of free basic education programs in Ghana.

General characteristics of public policy can inform analysis of curriculum policy when combined with a consideration of context. The educational policies in Togo contained the formal curriculum, which was a central component of my study. Elmore and Sykes (1992) defined curriculum policy as “the formal body of laws and regulations that pertain to what should be taught in schools” (p.186). This definition provided a narrow focus and did not adequately consider the untaught experiences that are a product of the hidden and null curriculum. In my study, curriculum policy referred to the formal and informal body of policies and practices that pertained to the educational experiences of learners under the guidance of the school. Official
educational policies represented the formal body of policy, while localized policies and teacher practices represented the informal body of policy and practice. I used this understanding to compare and contrast between curriculum policies at the national level and practices at the local level. The definition contributed to my analysis of policy documents and interview data.

Finally, literature on compliance and non-compliance in public policies documented in the literature assisted my analysis of data. Compliance can be caused by respect for authority, belief in the legitimacy of a policy, self-interest, fear of sanctions, and tradition (Anderson, 2006, pp. 241-243), while non-compliance depends on contextually specific self-interests and belief systems (p. 245). Compliance with curriculum policies in West Africa can be directly linked to the prevalence of high-stakes testing described by Madaus and Kellaghan (1992). High-stakes, nationally standardized, terminal grade exams encouraged educators to adopt national curriculum policies. While CI schools exist outside of direct MOE control and theoretically possess the power to create and implement their own curriculum, many CI schools comply with national curriculum policies in order to best prepare their students for national exams (Gbogbotchi et al, 2000; Hoppers, 2005). Even schools that used innovative curriculum still complied with national exam policies to provide students with an opportunity to earn national diplomas, which are valuable in the labor market (Assiah, 2006; Dhorsan & Chachuiao, 2008). The scholarly literature on curriculum policies provided a basis for interpreting and analyzing the curriculum materials and policy documents that I collected in my study.

**Curriculum Implementation**

Scholarly literature on curriculum implementation provided me with a means for understanding key issues and challenges in Akebou schools. Snyder, Bolin, and Zumwalt’s (1992) review of research on curriculum implementation provided insight into curriculum
practices and assisted my interpretation of data. Though there are many curriculum theorists who have presented tools for analyzing and interpreting curriculum implementation, I selected Snyder, Bolin and Zumwalt because their findings were most appropriate and applicable to my study.

Snyder, Bolin, and Zumwalt (1992) identified the “fidelity perspective” as the most prominent approach to curriculum implementation studies. The main research focus in fidelity studies is to assess the “degree to which a particular innovation is implemented as planned and identifying the factors which facilitate or hinder implementation as planned” (p. 404). This perspective implied that the teacher’s role is to simply carry out, without variation, the lessons prescribed by a curriculum program. Evaluation of curriculum programs, however, found the fidelity perspective problematic because it did not adequately consider the (re)interpretation of policies before being put into practice at local levels. Within the West African context, the fidelity perspective was useful in analyzing curriculum implementation in post-colonial contexts. Because curricular programs were authoritatively imposed on Togolese schools, many teachers adopted teaching practices that reflected the fidelity perspective (Bafei, 2011). Curriculum content in Togo was viewed as something to be transmitted to students exactly as it appeared in textbooks, with little local interpretation, which resulted in pedagogy that relied on lecture, rote memorization, and textbook learning (Amevigbe et al, 2002). National examinations at the terminal grade of schooling cycles (CEPD, BEPC, BAC I, and BAC II) further strengthened the popularity of the “fidelity perspective”—as presented by Snyder, Bolin, and Zumwalt (1992)—of curriculum implementation among Togolese teachers because loyal implementation of the national curriculum was believed to increase passing rates of students (Bafei, 2011). Though
participants did not use the specific terminology, the fidelity perspective was useful in characterizing the strategies of curriculum implementation used by teachers in my study.

The “mutual adaptation perspective” represents a midrange along the continuum of curriculum implementation in the scheme presented by Snyder, Bolin, & Zumwalt (1992). This perspective allowed for a degree of local modification to the written curriculum, which increased the importance of the role of the teacher in implementation. The mutual adaptation perspective considered a wide range of contextual characteristics impacting the curriculum, including district-level conditions, administration, school-level factors, and environment (Snyder, Bolin, & Zumwalt, 1992, pp. 416-417). Assiah (2006) and Kubow (2007) documented the intersection of micro and macro influences on curriculum and teaching in Togolese and South African contexts, which suggested that analysis of curriculum issues must include a consideration of official policies and local interpretation. Similarly, aspects of Snyder, Bolin, and Zumwalt’s (1992) mutual adaptation perspective surfaced in regards to language policies and environmental curriculum in Cameroon, Kenya, Ghana, and Israel (Chiaoh, 2011; Cleghorn, 1992; Davis & Agbenyega, 2012; Dze-Ngwa, 2009; Pizmony-Levy, 2011). The mutual adaptation perspective helped provide a basis for understanding curriculum implementation in Akebou schools.

Finally, Snyder, Bolin, and Zumwalt (1992) presented the “curriculum enactment perspective”, which asserted that, “the educational experiences (are) jointly created by student and teacher” (p. 418). This perspective centered on actual classroom experiences and viewed the role of the teacher as an ongoing knowledge creator and curriculum developer. This perspective conceptualized curriculum implementation as situationally and contextually dependent, and negotiated between students, teachers, administrators, and community members. Hoppers’ (2005) suggested that some CI schools adopt “transformative” characteristics by developing their
own curriculum programs, which are suited to meet the local developmental needs. These schools represented “a rupture with conventional educational values and practices” and might be considered to reflect the “enactment perspective” given the importance of jointly created curricular experiences in “transformative” CI schools (Hoppers, 2005, p. 127).

Despite being based on research conducted in the United States, the three models of curriculum implementation presented by Snyder, Bolin, and Zumwalt (1992) offered a framework that helped me understand curriculum policies and practices in Akebou schools. 

**Evaluation and Assessment**

In education systems around the world, evaluations and assessments influence policymaking, curriculum implementation, and classroom practices. Madaus and Kellaghan’s (1992) review of research on educational assessment helped inform my understanding of Akebou schools by providing a basis for interpreting relationships between teachers and evaluators, the dynamics of power and testing, and the impact of high-stakes evaluation on curriculum content.

Evaluation and assessment play a critical role in relationships between educators and community members. Madaus and Kellaghan (1992) described the Treviso contract of 1444 in Italy, where a schoolmaster was required (through a community contract) to ensure achievement. Student performance on assessments determined the teachers’ pay, which established a Payment by Results evaluation policy (p. 121). This historical perspective is reminiscent of contemporary relationships between community members and teachers in CI schools. Because CI schools are founded and funded by community members, measures of assessment and evaluation are of great concern for educators (Gbogbotchi et al, 2000). CI school support relies on community perceptions of student success on national exams, thus CI educators pay special attention to exam results as described by Glassman et al. (2007) in Mali and Malawi, Marchand (2000) in
Mali, Senegal, and Togo, and Hoppers (2005) in Senegal, Burkina Faso, and Togo. This literature provided historical context to analyze relationships between the community and educators in my study.

Madaus and Kellaghan (1992) also noted several techniques used to appraise educational performance across historical periods, including: oral exams, written exams, qualitative ranking, quantitative marks, essays, short answers, and multiple-choice questions (pp. 124-125). They documented the growth of standardized testing in education, which fostered a movement of “scientific” evaluation focused on quantifying educational assessment data in order to make “objective” evaluations (p. 123), concluding that in the current educational climate there is “strong evidence that testing has become more important than other curriculum issues” (p. 126).

This evaluation method can be observed internationally as the use of standardized examinations can be seen throughout the world (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Baker & LeTendre, 2005). Increasingly, standardized exams are being used to determine important life opportunities (i.e. policy decisions, college admissions, job credentialing, or pay), which qualifies them as ‘high-stakes.’ They also qualify as ‘high-stakes’ because the results from the exams were used to compare student achievement between communities, prefectures, regions, and even countries.

Madaus and Kellaghan (1992) described the negative consequences of high-stakes testing, observing that high stakes exams can narrow curriculum content when teaching becomes aligned with examination objectives (p. 144). High-stakes exams also impact pedagogy when teachers emphasize mechanical and rote learning to prepare students for tests, which is referred to as teaching-to-the-test, rather than teaching critical thinking and dialogue (Popham, 2001). Madaus and Kellaghan (1992) explained that teachers prepare students for the types of questions that appear on the exam to ensure higher student scores. This practice reduces the validity of
exams because exams then measure test preparation, rather than mastery of the subject. Madaus and Kellaghan (1992) also noted the growth of supplemental programs, which prepare students for exams. Baker and LeTendre (2005) and Bray and Kwo (2013) referred to this as “shadow education” and explained that the programs reduced the validity of high-stakes test scores because students receive specialized instruction tailored to the exam. Because the Togolese education system uses high-stakes, norm-referenced exams to distribute diplomas with important economic value, community perceptions of educational achievement are linked to passing rates of national exams (Bafei, 2011; Gbogbotchi et al, 2000). Research on the effects of high stakes exams framed my understanding in the areas of curriculum, teaching, and evaluation in Akebou schools.

Madaus & Kellaghan (1992) also noted the importance of evaluation as a “mechanism of power” (p. 137). Educational assessments are often used to inform the policymaking process. Policymakers can use exams as accountability devices when they link test results to rewards or sanctions, which increases the power of policymakers to control curricular content and instruction (Madaus & Kellaghan, 1992, p. 137). This removes educational decision-making power from the local setting and moves it into centralized bureaucracies. Without power, local schools become subject to external evaluations conducted by national or private testing organizations. The rewards and sanctions associated with these exams further increases the importance of exam results for students, teachers, and administrators. With evaluations (including the withholding of pay by community members) tied to high-stakes national examination results, CI school educators have little power to make curricular decisions. For example, in order to ensure success on national exams and to ease the transition into government schools, CI schools in “Togo and Chad essentially follow the same curriculum as public schools
for the identical number of years using the same textbooks” (Hoppers, 2005, p. 125). Madaus and Kellaghan’s (1992) analysis of power and evaluation informed my interpretation of relationships between schools and the Togolese MOE in my study. Together, the findings presented by Madaus and Kellaghan (1992) on educational assessment assisted my analysis of relationships between teachers and evaluators, dynamics of power and testing, and the impact of high-stakes evaluation on curriculum and pedagogy in my study.

**Community Initiative Schools in Akebou, Togo, West Africa**

Global, national, and local pressures to increase access to education and improve educational quality have encouraged the establishment of Community Initiative schools in Togo, West Africa. However, to date, I have found no scholarly literature that documented the experiences of school directors, teachers, and students in community schools in the Akebou Prefecture of Togo. Due to their rural location and geographic isolation, these schools represented a distinctive expression of community initiatives in education, but the insights from other research in Togo and elsewhere in Africa provided background information for my study and offered comparative contrast to my findings.

In this chapter, I reviewed the scholarly literature pertinent to several areas of my study. This body of literature served as the foundation for my study and assisted me in analysis. In the next chapter, I present the theoretical perspectives and research design that I used to conduct my study as well as the methods I used to analyze my data to obtain my findings.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

I conducted a multi-site comparative case study framed within the global-to-local perspective to answer my research questions. I used qualitative methods, including interviews, focus groups, observations, document analysis, and photographs to collect data for my study. These data sources provided me with rich information that was analyzed and synthesized using thematic coding and informal content analysis. In this chapter, I describe my research design, theoretical framework, research questions, data types, research settings, roles as a researcher, issues of reliability and trustworthiness, data collection, data analysis, and how I generated findings to construct my case.

Research Design

Historically, researchers in the field of comparative and international education have not subscribed to a single research methodology. Rather, scholars have chosen to employ research designs that most effectively answer their specific research questions (Fairbrother, 2007). Thus, the field is known for its diversity in approaches to research design (Wilson, 2009). Maxwell (2005) noted that qualitative research is best suited to develop an understanding of the meaning of phenomenon for participants, the context in which participants act, and the processes that lead to actions. In addition, Creswell (2009) wrote that case studies are most often used to provide an in-depth understanding of clearly identifiable cases. Similarly, Yin (2009) asserted that case studies are appropriate for researching a phenomenon “in-depth within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident”
Because my study aimed to provide insight into the experiences and actions of individuals in site-specific contexts, I used a multi-site, comparative case study design and I used qualitative methodology to gather data and answer my research questions. This allowed me to explore the complexity, diversity, and reality of educational experiences in Community Initiative (CI) and government schools in the Akebou Prefecture of Togo, West Africa.

Due to its geographic location and lack of transportation infrastructure, the Akebou Prefecture is relatively isolated from other regions of Togo. This isolation makes it a bounded system—as described by Yin (2009)—that has developed distinctive educational traditions that still reflected and were related to larger trends of educational decentralization and community involvement in schooling. I selected the Ministry of Education (MOE), two CI schools, and one government school (four total sites) for inclusion in the case study to create a picture of the experiences of educators and community members in the Akebou Prefecture and provide comparative contrast between national policies and practices in government and community schools. I identified the Ministry of Education as a research site to provide a national-level perspective on educational issues, specifically in CI schools. To navigate the challenges of fieldwork in rural Africa, I used a flexible, emergent research design. This allowed me to modify my design in the field to best answer my research questions, which aimed to describe the perspectives and experiences of participants in my study.

I constructed my case to consider the multiple levels of educational policies and practices. In accordance with Stake (1995), I used the multi-site design because my study addressed the experiences of a variety of groups, programs, and individuals. As displayed in Figure 1.3 (pp. 13), the macro-level of my study included a review of international policy trends in the scholarly literature as well as interviews and documents collected at the Togolese Ministry
of Education (MOE), which was the first site of my multi-site case study. The regional direction and inspection offices represented the meso-level of my study and though I did not collect data at the site itself, documents and interviews in local schools provided insight into meso-level issues. Finally, the micro-level of my study was comprised of three individual case study sites. I collected interview, focus group, document, and photograph data at one government school and two CI schools. While the educational issues addressed in my study surface in schools across Togo, Creswell (2007) suggested, “Typically, the researcher chooses no more than four or five cases” (p.76), which supported my decision to include four primary research sites, or cases. In accordance with a comparative, multi-site research design, I compared and contrasted between each of the four sites to generate findings.

**Theoretical Perspective**

For my research on the curriculum policies and practices in the CI schools of the Akebou Prefecture I drew on social constructivism, which Lincoln and Guba (1985) explained to mean that individuals subjectively interpret and understand the world around them. This worldview suggested that educators’ interpretations of curricular policies are subjective and individualized (Creswell, 2009). From this view, the individualized interpretations of educational policy by educators and policymakers at macro, meso, and micro levels can produce critical gaps between policy and practice, as the realities of practice often did not match the ideals presented in policy (Napier, 2005). Nudzor (2012) and Bajaj (2009) asserted that social settings, local contexts, and influences play an important role in the translation from policy to practice. Thus, as a constructivist researcher, I focused on the “specific contexts in which people like and work, in order to understand the historical and cultural settings of (my) participants” (Creswell, 2009, p. 8). My goal was to create an understanding of the experiences of educators within specific and
distinctive contexts. I used several theoretical perspectives to inform my data collection methods, analysis of data and discussion of findings. This aligned with Maxwell’s (2005) conceptualization of theory in qualitative research, which stated that theoretical perspectives helped to make sense of “particular pieces of data, which otherwise might seem unconnected or irrelevant” and illuminated “particular events or phenomenon” (p.43).

As Creswell (2009) recommended, while quantitative research often uses a single theoretical model to predict the outcome of interactions between variables, the use of theory in qualitative research often depends on the nature and purpose of the research study. I used a blended theoretical perspective in my study to interpret and analyze data across a variety of issues. In the next section, I describe the theories I used in my research and discuss how they shaped the research design.

Figure 3.1 illustrates how these four perspectives combine to create the single, blended theoretical perspective that I used in my study. The overarching notion that informed my study was the global-to-local continuum. Situated below the global perspective, I found post-colonial and critical perspectives helpful when interpreting historical contexts and their impact on contemporary realities, relationships of power, and grassroots responses to local issues. Finally, I drew on elements of human capital theory—within the context of the global-to-local continuum—to obtain insight into the role of education in economic, social, and personal development.
Figure 3.1. Elements of the blended theoretical perspective used in my study
The Dialectic of the Global and the Local

As the world becomes increasingly interdependent, scholars have attempted to explain the effects of globalization around the world. Within the field of comparative and international education, some scholars have argued that globalization created an increasingly homogeneous world, while others pointed to the importance of localized, idiosyncratic interpretations of global trends (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Baker & LeTendre, 2005). This illustrates the dynamic relationship between the global and the local, which is a concept with several names, including “glocalization” (Robertson, 1995) or used in slogans such as “Think locally, Act globally” (Ching-Yi & Talley, 2012). The dialectic of the global and the local suggested that new and distinct experiences are created when global ideas and trends interact with local knowledge and wisdom. The “glocalization” perspective highlighted the critical role of local interpretation in my study to help frame my understanding of the complex realities in educational practices within the context of community-based educational initiatives in the Akebou Prefecture.

The theoretical notion of the “global to local continuum” reflected the relationship between international trends in educational policies and local practices in my study (Anderson-Levitt, 2003). Anderson-Levitt’s concept offered a way to understand how and why educational policies changed as they passed between macro (global), meso (national, regional), and micro (local) levels. She noted the important role that local actors play in the interpretation and practical implementation of national or global education policies, thus proposing that research studies should focus on the lived experiences and contextual realities of the educators who actively translate policy into practice. Similarly, Arnove (2007) conceptualized globalization as a “dialectic”, where interactions between local contexts and global trends were “reshaped to local ends” and vice versa (p.2). From this perspective, I explored macro, meso, and micro policies in
Togolese schools, which helped me interpret gaps between the “ideal and real” of educational policy and practice in Togo (Napier, 2005).

I used the global-to-local continuum to analyze the impact that international trends had on educational experiences and curriculum in Togolese CI schools (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Arnowe & Torres, 2007; Baker & LeTendre, 2005). The global-to-local theoretical notion also allowed me to trace specific examples of policy as they passed from macro to meso to micro levels as they were eventually implemented (or not) into practice. The global-to-local continuum provided a conceptual framework that assisted my analysis of interview, observation, audiovisual, and document data. The global-to-local theoretical notion was strengthened through a consideration of the colonial and post-colonial contexts surrounding Togolese education.

**Post-Colonial Perspective**

Elements of post-colonial scholarship provided a complementary, but contrasting, perspective when combined with the global-to-local notion. Post-colonialism addressed the historic and contemporary dynamics of power between formerly colonized nations and nations that formerly held colonies. The field of post-colonial studies does not neatly fit into widely accepted conceptualizations of ‘theory’ in the social sciences. While a post-colonial perspective can provide a means to understand the historical and contemporary contexts of a study, it does not predict the outcome of the study. In my study, the post-colonial perspective provided an important contribution to my blended theoretical perspective because it contributed to my understanding of the social, political, and economic experiences in Togo.

A consideration of historical contexts illuminated power relationships between the colonizer and the colonized. Because colonial rule dominated virtually all aspects of life (i.e. language, religion, economics, and education), post-colonial perspectives are comprised of a
multitude of sub-issues that address specific aspects of the post-colonial experience. While post-colonial perspectives are useful in analyzing a wide range of issues—from identity, hybridity, race and ethnicity, gender, and language (Said, 1978; Said, Bhabha & Mitchell, 2004; Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2006)—I identified several post-colonial issues that were particularly relevant to my research sites and participants. These included language, ethnicity, nationalism, identity, political issues, and resistance (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2006). I used these topics to guide data collection and help analyze findings. Many of the key educational issues identified by participants during interviews and focus groups fell into these post-colonial categories.

Scholars in the field of comparative and international education use post-colonial perspectives to better understand current issues in educational systems in the context of colonial legacies (Amevigbe, 2002; Bafei, 2011; Pizmony-Levy, 2011). Post-colonial perspectives were also used to understand and analyze educational inequalities internationally and intranationally (Boyle, 1996; Napier, 1991, 1996). Finally, the post-colonial perspective provided insight into the philosophical, political, and ideological foundations of education systems in formerly colonized nations (Awolowo, 1966; Nyerere, 1968; Senghor, 1967; Nkrumah, 1963a). In my study, the post-colonial perspective was a tool that shaped my understanding of the structure of Togolese educational systems, the goals and purposes of education, the relationships and power dynamics that existed between macro, meso, and micro educational actors, and the socio-economic and environmental conditions of my research sites.

Post-colonial perspectives are directly linked with movements aimed at emancipation, empowerment, and social justice (Fanon, 1968; Achebe, 1989; Freire, 1970, and others). Through the lens provided by a post-colonial perspective, I was able to analyze issues of inequality and local responses to inequality, such as the establishment of community schools.
Critical Perspective

Much like the post-colonial perspective, a critical perspective can be applied in a wide variety of contexts to help understand a variety of issues. Because of post-colonial perspectives and critical perspectives both consider relationships of power between dominant and non-dominant groups, I considered the critical perspective in the context of the larger post-colonial perspective, which is shown in Figure 3.1 (p. 82). Critical perspectives emanated from the work of Habermas, Gramsci, and Foucault, who contributed to it through their analysis of economic and cultural phenomenon (Noddings, 2012). Creswell (2007) stated that critical theory is primarily concerned with “empowering human beings to transcend the constraints placed on them by race, class, and gender” (p. 27) and suggested that it can be used to understand social institutions, such as schooling. Critical perspectives aim to articulate the unexplained assumptions behind historical, legal, environmental, and cultural conditions that shape experiences (Noddings, 2012; Crenshaw, 2011). I incorporated a critical perspective in interviews by asking follow up questions that challenged participants to explain the assumptions behind their views (Reflective Journal, May 27, 2014; Reflective Journal, June 11, 2014).

Similar to the post-colonial perspective, I took a critical perspective to examine relationships of power in social and educational settings as recommended by Creswell (2007). It was particularly useful when interpreting relationships between educators employed by the government and enseignants volontaires (EVs), who are ‘volunteer’ teachers that have been hired by the local community to fill vacant teaching positions. The critical perspective also helped me analyze breakdowns between policy and practice by providing insight into the reasoning behind local-level educators’ mistrust of and resistance to national-level policies.
Critical perspectives are rooted in the empowerment of underrepresented and disadvantaged populations (Noddings, 2012). They have historically been used to give voice to groups that had previously been ignored—or systematically silenced—to create understanding and improve socioeconomic conditions (Giroux, 2013). Thus, the critical perspective was useful in my study of CI schools given the lack of Akebou representation in the political, economic, and social issues in Togo, as well as the general underrepresentation of Togolese issues in academic literature and media. By providing an opportunity for local-level educators to express their perspectives on educational issues in Togo, I aimed to create awareness for an underrepresented group in the scholarly literature. The critical perspective shaped my understanding and analysis of curriculum policies and practices in my study.

**Elements of Human Capital Theory**

Finally, I drew on elements of human capital theory (HCT) for my theoretical framework because it addressed the underlying motivations for community-based educational initiatives. Human capital theory suggests that an individual’s knowledge, competencies, and skills determine their ability to compete in the economic market (Schultz, 1961, 1993). Human capital theory rests on the assumption that higher levels of education and experience increase economic capital and opportunities among at both individual and national levels (Dzvimbo, 2003). Formal schooling is viewed as a key way to increase human capital, which has resulted in international and national policies that advocate open access to schooling—such as EFA or the Millennium Development Goals (Saxon et al, 2012). Oketch (2006) concluded that human capital development was a major factor in economic growth in African nations and encouraged investment in education sectors. HCT is used in international education research to interpret educational policies that emphasize the skills needed to compete in an increasingly globalized
In my research, elements of human capital theory helped explain the motivations of communities to establish CI schools in the absence of state or NGO intervention. Tikly (2005), however, criticized human capital theory for providing a limited and homogenizing view of the skill priorities within the context of globalization, noting the need for specific skills are often localized and contextually dependent. I used this critique of HCT to frame questions and analyze responses regarding local modifications (or lack thereof) to curriculum that aimed to provide students with skills applicable in the local context (Field Notes, May 27, 2014).

In my research, elements of human capital theory contributed to my understanding of the motivations that led community members and educators to establish community-based schools. It also provided a means for analyzing the types of knowledge and skills mandated by national curriculum policies and presented in official textbooks. Finally, human capital theory illuminated localized curriculum practices, which, in some cases, varied from official policies.

While these four theoretical perspectives emerged from distinct scholarly traditions, they contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the localized experiences of the participants of my study.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions guided my research study. They reflected the objectives of my study. In accordance with the qualitative tradition, my questions were designed to reflect the distinctive case of Community Initiative schools in the Akebou Prefecture (Maxwell, 2005). Throughout my research, I referred to these questions to ensure that I collected relevant information to thoroughly answer each question and develop a holistic case of the Togolese MOE and government and community-based schools in the Akebou Prefecture.
My research questions were as follows:

1. What are the contemporary features of Togolese education policy?  
   a. What are the relevant features that relate to CI schools in rural areas?

2. How do educators describe the goals and purposes of their schools?  
   a. How do community leaders describe the goals and purposes of their schools?

3. What are the general conditions of and key issues in rural schools in the Akebou Prefecture?  
   a. Including, but not limited to: finding, availability of educational materials, curriculum policies and pedagogy, assessments and examinations, teacher recruitment and training, and relationship with MOE.

4. What do educators identify as key issues for curriculum policies and practices in their schools?  
   a. What do community leaders identify as key issues for curriculum policies and practices in their schools?

As noted in Chapter One, I defined CI schools as schools established and supported by village communities without MOE or NGO contributions, financial or otherwise (Marchand, 2000). I defined curriculum as the activities and experiences that learners have under the guidance of the school (Marsh and Willis, 2003). I selected these definitions because they encompassed a broad set of processes and experiences. This was integral for maintaining a flexible research design so I was able to make adjustments in the field that allowed me to collect thick and rich data. As presented in Chapter One, the Research Matrix (Figure 1.4, pp. 15) provided a detailed explanation of my research questions, including a rationale for each question, the types of data, and the methods of analysis used to answer each question.

**Research Setting**

The setting of my research study was in the Republic of Togo, a small West African country bordering Ghana, Burkina Faso, Benin, and the Bight of Benin (CIA, 2014; See also Figure 1.1 and 1.2, pp. 6). The 54,385 square kilometers of Togo (roughly the size of West Virginia) are divided into five regions: Maritime, Plateau, Central, Kara, and Savanes (CIA,
My research was conducted in the Akebou Prefecture, which is located in the northwest corner of the Plateau region. Due to its distance from the route nationale, mountainous landscape, and lack of transportation infrastructure, the Akebou Prefecture is a bounded region with clearly definable borders. The easiest and most commonly used point of access to the Akebou region is through Kougnouhou, a market town on the southern edge of the prefecture. The three sites I identified for research, however, were located in the northern reaches of the Akebou Prefecture, which contributed to their isolation. Figures 3.2 and 3.3 illustrate the Akebou Prefecture within its national, regional, and local geographic contexts.

Figure 3.2. Site Map: Prefectures of Togo and population density (République Togolaise, 2010)
My experiences living and working in Akebou communities as a Peace Corps Volunteer from 2008 to 2010 provided background knowledge on the region. They allowed me to gain access to research settings and sites. I will discuss my experiences as a Peace Corps Volunteer and the impact they had on data collection and analysis in more depth later in a subsequent section. For a more detailed discussion of the contextual background of the Akebou Prefecture, see Foundational Contexts in Chapter Two (p.20).

**Research Sites**

The research sites I selected for my study were located in the Lome and Akebou Prefectures of Togo. I used purposeful and judgment sampling to select each of the sites to ensure that I collected an adequate amount of information-rich data to understand and answer my research questions (Creswell, 2008). Because my study compared educational experiences in government and community schools, I selected sites that gave me insight into the realities of policies and practices in both contexts. I identified four major research sites: the Togolese...
Ministry of Education, a government-sponsored school, and two Community Initiative schools.

Table 3.1 provides a list of the four sites, their acronyms, and some background information.

Table 3.1

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In order to establish the macro-level context of my research study, I identified the Togolese Ministry of Education (MOE) as a research site. Apart from the president, the MOE is the highest-level government agency responsible for education. Therefore it was a critical site for establishing an understanding of the national-level policy perspective. There was no website or contact information for the MOE available online. I contacted the American Embassy in Lomé to assist my communication with the MOE. The Exchange Program Specialist at the Embassy delivered letters of introduction to the MOE and faxed me a formal letter of permission to conduct research in Togo signed by the Director of the Cabinet at the MOE (see IRB Application, Appendix A1).

The Togolese Ministry of Education is located in the Dékon neighborhood (*quartier Dékon*) of Lomé. Most Togolese governmental agencies and ministries are located in Dékon. The neighborhood is also home to the UN, Plan International, and Care headquarters, which are scattered among Togolese governmental buildings. Figure 3.4 shows the location of the MOE.
Figure 3.4. Site Map: Lomé and the MOE. The red dot indicates the Togolese Ministry of Education (Extracted from Google Maps, 2014)

The Ministry of Education was selected as a site because it is the governmental agency responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of educational policy in Togo (See Figure 1.3, p.13). As such, it plays an important role in the provision of funding, teacher recruitment and training, curriculum development, and school construction, which were among the anticipated key issues identified prior to fieldwork. By including the Ministry of Education as a site, I could compare and contrast the realities of local educational experiences with the ideals presented in national educational policy.

Beyond the MOE, I identified three local-level school sites in the Akebou Prefecture to participate in my research. In the Plateau region, the Akebou Prefecture is known for its community-based educational initiatives (Field Notes, May 16, 2014). When I left Togo in 2010, there were four Community Initiative (CI) Collèges d'Enseignement Général (CEG) in the prefecture—one in the south, one in the east, and two in the northern area. Upon my return in 2014, a new CI CEG had been established in the southwestern edge of the prefecture, making a total of five. There are nine state-sponsored CEGs in the prefecture. My selection of the two
northern CI schools was based on my familiarity with each of the communities and logistical considerations, as other CI schools were located too far away to coordinate reliable transportation between sites. Transportation would have been too time consuming and costly because of the poor road quality and lack of transportation services. In addition to the two CI schools, I selected the closest state school as a research site to provide comparative contrast to the experiences in CI schools.

Prior to arriving in the field, I obtained authorization to conduct research in each of the three villages with the assistance of the current Peace Corps Volunteer stationed in Kougnohou and my key informant in CI:2. I was unable to communicate with other participants because there is no access to Internet or email in the Akebou Prefecture. While Kougnohou is electrified, there is not a cyber café open to the public. Thus, I relied on telephone and SMS communication to coordinate the mailing of letters of authorization. Once in the field, I quickly gathered the contact information of key participants in each of the sites to help me schedule visits, interviews, observations, and follow-ups.

To provide insight into the policies and practices in official, state-sponsored schools, I collected data in one state school in the Akebou Prefecture (code: ST:1). ST:1 is located in the largest market town of northern Akebou (See map in Figure 3.3, p. 85). With a population of approximately 1,500 inhabitants, ST:1 is the commercial and economic hub of northern Akebou. The weekly market draws business owners, farmers, and traders from the nearby villages (including CI:1 and CI:2). However, the majority of ST:1’s population relies on subsistence agriculture and coffee and cocoa cultivation as a main source of income. The state-sponsored *collège d'enseignement général* (CEG) is located on the northern end of town. Its four classrooms (one for each grade) are constructed from cement and roofed by corrugated iron. In
addition to the classrooms, there is a teacher’s lounge and director’s office constructed from the same materials. There were six educators working at the school at the time of my research—one director, three state-employed teachers, and two EVs (volunteer teachers) for a total of 190 students.

I selected this site to provide a comparative perspective on educational issues to better understand CI school experiences within the larger educational context in Togo. Because the Togolese Ministry of Education provided financial and administrative support for the CEG in ST:1, the perspectives of educators working in this site reflected—to a degree—the policy perspective. The site was also selected because I was familiar with the teachers and community members at the site during my Peace Corps service, which allowed me access to the setting.

I identified Community Initiative School Site 1 (CI:1) as a research site based on my previous knowledge of the existence of a CI school in the community from my time as a Peace Corps Volunteer. Before my arrival in the field, my key informant presented letters of introduction written by my major professor, Dr. Diane Napier, and myself to the village chief and school director. In response, the village chief and school director sent signed letters inviting me to collect data in the village (see IRB Application, Appendix A1). Thus, school personnel and community members were aware of my arrival and understood the purpose of my visit. On May 22, 2014, one day after I arrived in the Akebou Prefecture, I visited CI Site 1 to (re) introduce myself and schedule dates to return for data collection (Field Notes, May 22, 2014).

CI:1 is located in a small, rural village of nearly 500 inhabitants (See map in Figure 3.3, p. 85). The village has no access to electricity or running water. CI:1 is especially isolated due to a severe lack of transportation. It is 5km west of the local market town (ST:1), which is served by public cars once or twice a week. However, it is rare for these cars to continue to CI Site 1.
Most villagers are subsistence farmers and there is little commercial activity in the village. When I left Togo in 2010, there were five educators (one director and four teachers) serving a student body of 100. At the time of my fieldwork there were four educators for approximately 75 students. The school is constructed from local materials, consisting of *paille* (thatch) roofs supported by wood frames.

*Figure 3.5. The road to CI:1*

I selected the CI:1 site because it provided insight into the experiences of educators and community members involved in CI school activities. The location of CI:1 was relatively accessible from the other sites in my study. It provided comparative contrast to the other sites because of its small size and the relative isolation of the village. My familiarity with the village and school provided me access to the setting and background understanding of key issues.

Similarly, I identified Community Initiative School Site 2 (CI:2) as a research site because of my previous experiences working in the village as a PCV. My key informant serves as the director of the CI school at this site. He presented the letters of introduction to the village
chief and explained the purpose of my visit to community members prior to my arrival. I lived in CI:2 during the six-weeks I spent in the Akebou Prefecture for data collection.

CI:2 is located 2km from the main road connecting Kougnouhou and ST:1 (See map in Figure 3.3, p. 85). It is serviced by a vehicle once or twice a week when road conditions permit. However, I never saw a public car pick up passengers during my fieldwork. While very isolated, community members in CI:2 make frequent trips to the prefecture capital, Kougnouhou. Most villagers are farmers, although there is more commercial activity due to its proximity to economic hubs as well as its access to Village Savings and Loan Associations. There are six educators working at the school, which serves a student body of 100. Two of the four classrooms are constructed from mudbrick walls and roofed with corrugated iron while the other two are wooden frames covered with thatch roofing. Neither the school, nor the village, has access to electricity. There is a communal pump that provides access to clean water at the village center.

![Figure 3.6. A woman walks on the road to CI:2](image)

I selected this site because the experiences of educators working in this school would provide insight into the key issues facing CI schools in rural areas. I also identified it as a
research site because of my previous relationship with teachers, directors, and community members in the village, which allowed me to gain access to the setting. The nature of my previous professional relationships in CI:2 will be discussed in more depth later in the chapter. CI:2 also provided comparative contrast to the experiences of educators in CI:1 and ST:1 schools because it faced distinctive challenges in providing educational services.

The three school sites in this study were clearly identifiable systems that provided insight into curriculum policies and practices in Akebou schools. I conducted data collection in each of my anticipated sites, meaning I did not add or drop sites once I arrived in the field. Contact information for these schools was not available online and none of the schools have webpages. Much of the information I used when selecting sites was based on my experiences as a PCV. However, I maintained contact with a key informant at CI:2, which allowed me to check in on the status of each school before arriving in country. He provided updated information regarding contact information and school demographics prior to fieldwork. There were four major sites of research in my study. I discuss my selection of subjects and participants later in this chapter.

**Access to Settings, Roles of the Researcher, and Bias**

In the qualitative research tradition, the researcher is a key instrument in data collection procedures (Creswell, 2007; Maxwell, 2005). Therefore, the relationships created between the researcher, participants, and data are complex and require constant critique and reflection throughout fieldwork and analysis (Glesne, 2011; Creswell, 2007). As such, it is important for me to disclose my previous relationships with participants in the research sites in an effort to address my potential biases as a researcher.
Peace Corps

I served as a Girls’ Education and Empowerment Peace Corps Volunteer (PCV) in the Akebou region from September 2008 to November 2010. I worked with community members in each of the school sites to organize and oversee small, development-oriented projects. Specifically, I conducted a reforestation campaign, several trainings on the use of *moringa oleferia* (a tree with nutrient rich leaves), and three community-based trainings on the importance of education in CI:1. I organized and oversaw the establishment of four Village Savings and Loan Associations, secured funding and oversaw the construction of two animal husbandry facilities, taught Life Skills courses at the local *collège d'enseignement général* (CEG) school, and facilitated trainings on the importance of education with community members at CI:2. In addition to my Peace Corps projects, I developed a close friendship with the director of the CEG in CI:2. Since returning from Togo, I maintained contact with him via telephone and SMS message. He became a key informant during fieldwork and assisted in fulfilling many of my logistical needs. During my PCV service, I lived and worked in ST:1. Through daily interactions with community members and engagement in community development projects—which included organizing Village Savings and Loan associations, teaching Life Skills classes at CEG, conducting peer educator trainings, and funding the construction of rain collecting cisterns—I developed strong relationships with many village leaders. Additionally, all three sites participated in a *canton*-wide (a regional designation that included ST:1 and four surrounding villages) CEG soccer tournament.

Most village leaders still lived in each of the sites when I returned in 2014, but the majority of teachers had been replaced. Letters of introduction written by my major professor and myself helped clarify my new role as a researcher. Throughout fieldwork, I rarely had to
explain that my return to the Akebou Prefecture was to conduct research on CI schools rather than to work on development oriented projects (Reflective Journal, May 22, 2014; June 2, 2014).

Creswell (2007) warned about the risks of conducting research in a (former) workplace, or “backyard” because the collection of sensitive data can jeopardize participants’ employment and social status or impact the working relationships of researchers and coworkers (p. 122). My research did not jeopardize working relationship with participants because at the time of the fieldwork I had been a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer for five years and it was well understood that I no longer worked with participants in the capacity of an active PCV. Additionally, as a white, American, it was clear that I was an outsider. Despite not collecting any ‘risky’ data, I guarded the identities of participants in confidentiality by assigning codes to their interview data to protect their employment and social status. Because I spent a significant amount of time in the local setting, yet I was viewed as an American outsider, my roles as researcher could be classified as an outsider with some experience living in the local community (Creswell, 2007).

My experiences as a Peace Corps Volunteer gave me background knowledge and memories that had the potential to create biases during data collection. Given that I had previous working relationships with educators and community members in each of the school sites, it was possible that I could let my personal feelings towards individuals skew the data that I collected. For example, because I had worked in each of the schools as a Peace Corps Volunteer, I occasionally felt empathy for participants and their struggle to provide a quality education for students. This caused me to view their efforts in a more positive light, thereby creating potential bias in my study. In order to mitigate this bias, I remained conscious of my thoughts and feelings during interviews and observations. I recorded my thoughts and reflections in my reflective journal to help me identify and avoid potential biases.
Outsider

While my previous professional and personal relationships positively impacted my ability to gain access and approval from key participants in each of the research sites, as a white and middle-class American I was labeled as an outsider (or foreigner) in Togo. My previous two-year presence in the communities and ongoing contact with key community leaders served as a crucial point of entry into the research setting and assisted me in establishing a positive rapport with participants in my study. Upon arrival in Togo and at each of the research sites, I was warmly (re) welcomed into the communities. CI:1 and CI:2 organized village-wide welcome reception parties to celebrate my arrival and in ST:1 the chief and several families organized a small reception (Field Notes, May 20, 2014; May 22, 2014).

Qualitative, case study research requires the researcher to spend an extended period of time interacting with participants in their natural setting in order to gain access and grow accustomed to the contextual idiosyncrasies of the research site (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). My previous experiences as a PCV assisted me during my reintegration into the community. However, I also noticed that some aspects of life in the research settings had changed. In an effort to adjust to these changes, I relied on the cultural integration skills I learned as a PCV by observing the daily activities of the village and participating when appropriate. To ensure that I had sufficient time to collect a rich data set, I decided to spend seven weeks in Togo. This time helped me establish trust and build rapport with participants and community members, which is a crucial aspect of qualitative research as Glesne (2011) noted. It was also important for me to dedicate seven weeks to fieldwork because I would not have been able to schedule enough interviews and observations in a shorter time frame. I needed to take into account holidays, transportation issues, examinations, and agricultural commitments when planning meetings with
participants, which sometimes caused delays. As an outsider, it was sometimes difficult for me to know when participants would be available, thus I needed a timeframe that allowed flexibility in scheduling. I will discuss my fieldwork schedule in more detail later in the chapter.

Additionally, my outsider status had the potential to create biases during data collection and analysis. As a white, middle class, American, my worldview and values often surfaced during fieldwork and analysis. Without careful reflection and consideration, they could cause me to make unconscious judgments of Akebou cultures or customs, which would impact the reliability of my findings. For example, as an outsider I sometimes made harsh or negative judgments of gender differences in Togolese culture because of my own worldview, which could create bias in my study. In order to compensate for this potential bias, I used member-checking, reflective journals, and an audit trail. I will discuss my methods for ensuring reliability in more depth later in the chapter.

**Language**

As a former colony of France, French is the official administrative language of Togo (CIA, 2014). However, many Togolese people use vernacular language to communicate in daily life. During my Peace Corps service, I gained “professional working capacity” in French, as measured by the Language Proficiency Interview (LPI) used by Peace Corps language trainers. The LPI uses guidelines approved by the American Counsel on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and is widely accepted as a metric for determining language ability (Peace Corps, 2005). Additionally, I took a course on Francophone Literature at UGA in Fall 2012 to strengthen my language abilities. My background in French language allowed me to conduct interviews and focus groups in French without the assistance of a translator or interpreter. However, even with a strong language base, under the guidance of my major professor, I
submitted my interview protocol and informed consent templates for peer review by Dr. Suzanne Majhanovich, a former professor at the University of Western Ontario who publishes in French language journals. Her feedback clarified language and translation issues.

The preparation and planning for fieldwork allowed me to feel comfortable conducting interviews in French once in the field. However, I still acknowledged language barriers in my reflective notes. In some interviews, I had to reword questions from my interview protocol to match the language most commonly used by teachers in the Akebou Prefecture. For example, in my reflective journal, I noted that instead of asking, “Quels sont les grands problèmes pour vous dans votre travail en tant que enseignant? (What are the major problems for you in your work as a teacher?)”, as stipulated on my interview protocol, I found that teachers responded more easily to the question “Qu'est-ce que vous empêche de faire votre travail en tant que enseignant? (What prevents you from doing your work as a teacher?)” (Reflective Journal, May 27, 2014; June 3, 2014; June 11, 2014). Following the recommendations of Temple and Edwards (2002), throughout my fieldwork, I remained cognizant of language issues and the impact they could have on the collection of data. I recorded my concerns in my reflective notes so that I could limit the impact of language issues on my study’s trustworthiness.

During focus group interviews with community members (three out of twenty interviews), I used an interpreter to translate between Akebou and French. Each of these focus groups consisted of four to five participants, and in each group, there were one or two individuals who spoke French. In order to foster dialogue between participants, I opted to conduct the focus groups in Akebou to encourage participation. I asked a university student who was living in ST:1 during fieldwork, to serve as interpreter. Temple (2004) noted the importance of a trusting relationship between researcher and translator. The translator I identified was a former student
and friend who I had worked with as a Peace Corps Volunteer, thus we had a genuine relationship, which contributed to the trustworthiness of translation. He also understood the purpose of my research study and I provided him with copies of interview protocols, consent forms, and letters of introduction to familiarize him with the study. However, translation issues can invite bias in research because in the process of translation, the translator and/or researcher’s worldview can infiltrate the content of the translation. To help mitigate this, I engaged in member checking during interviews by reading back what I had written down after hearing the translation from my interpreter and asking the focus group participant(s) who understood French to confirm, correct, or add to what they heard from the interpreter and myself. These steps helped ensure that my focus group data accurately reflected the perspectives of community members.

Given the complex relationship between researcher and participant, I was especially aware of the types of data I was collecting, and was sure not to select data that would only present participants in either a positive or negative light (Maxwell, 2005). To achieve this, I carefully constructed interview and observation protocols that assisted to accurately represent the realities of the context. As noted above, I remained aware of potential biases and inclinations to focus on certain topics during data collection and analysis. This was facilitated through the use of a reflective journal that provided a space for personal reflections and reactions.

**Subjects and Participants**

In order to collect information-rich data, I identified research participants who could provide first-hand insight into the key issues in Togolese education. My sample consisted of pre-assembled groups that actively participated in educational activities. I used a combination of convenience, snowball, and contrasting-case sampling strategies to ensure that I gathered data from a variety of different perspectives (Glesne, 2011). In addition to one Ministry of Education
official, my sample consisted of directors, teachers, and members of the local association des parents d’élèves (Parent-Teacher Association, or APE) in the three Akebou school research sites. I selected participants based on employment status, role in the community, interest/motivation, and availability/accessibility (Maxwell, 2005, pp. 89-90). In accordance with my emergent design, I also made decisions about sampling in the field by adding informal interviews with a regional educational inspector, a former NGO worker, and University of Lomé students.

I decided not to interview students because I could put them at risk should a teacher or director overhear their comments on key educational issues or the curriculum and pedagogical practices of teachers in their school. The relationship between students and teachers in Togolese school system is authoritative and the inclusion of student participants might have increased the potential for risky data in my study. I did not offer monetary incentive to participants for their contributions to my study, but instead I offered reciprocity, which I discuss later in the chapter. I assigned each of the participants a codename to protect their identity. These codes are presented in Table 3.2. To clarify the selection of subjects, I will provide a profile for each participant group below.
Table 3.2

Summary of participating interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Codename</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 1</td>
<td>MN:1:O1</td>
<td>MOE Official</td>
<td>MN:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 2</td>
<td>ST:1:D1</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 3</td>
<td>ST:1:T1</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 4</td>
<td>ST:1:T2</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 5</td>
<td>ST:1:T3</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 6</td>
<td>ST:1:T4</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 7</td>
<td>ST:1:T5</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 8</td>
<td>ST:1:FG1(1)</td>
<td>Community Member</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 9</td>
<td>ST:1:FG1(2)</td>
<td>Community Member</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 10</td>
<td>ST:1:FG1(3)</td>
<td>Community Member</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 11</td>
<td>ST:1:FG1(4)</td>
<td>Community Member</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 12</td>
<td>ST:1:FG1(5)</td>
<td>Community Member</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 13</td>
<td>CI:1:D1</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>CI:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 14</td>
<td>CI:1:T1</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>CI:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 15</td>
<td>CI:1:T2</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>CI:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 16</td>
<td>CI:1:FG1(1)</td>
<td>Community Member</td>
<td>CI:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 17</td>
<td>CI:1:FG1(2)</td>
<td>Community Member</td>
<td>CI:1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Interviewee 18</td>
<td>CI:1:FG1(3)</td>
<td>Community Member</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 19</td>
<td>CI:1:FG1(4)</td>
<td>Community Member</td>
<td>CI:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 20</td>
<td>CI:2:D1</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>CI:2</td>
</tr>
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<td>Interviewee 21</td>
<td>CI:2:T1</td>
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<td>CI:2</td>
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<td>Interviewee 22</td>
<td>CI:2:T2</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>CI:2</td>
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<td>Interviewee 23</td>
<td>CI:2:T3</td>
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<td>CI:2:T4</td>
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<td>CI:2:FG2(2)</td>
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<td>CI:2</td>
</tr>
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<td>Interviewee 27</td>
<td>CI:2:FG2(3)</td>
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<td>CI:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 28</td>
<td>CI:2:FG2(4)</td>
<td>Community Member</td>
<td>CI:2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education (MOE) in Togo is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of all educational policy (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014; Précis Scolaires, 1983). Thus, it was important for me to include a representative from MOE to provide national-level insight on educational issues, specifically as they related to community-based educational initiatives in the Akebou Prefecture. My MOE sample consisted of one participant.
In order to satisfy IRB requirements regarding research permissions, I obtained a letter of invitation to conduct research in Togo signed by the Director of the Cabinet at the Togolese MOE prior to arriving in country. On May 16, 2014, I traveled to the Ministry of Education in Lomé to introduce myself and set up an interview with a representative of the MOE. After speaking with the receptionist and sharing my letter of permission, she promptly set up a time for me to meet with the Director of the Cabinet the same afternoon. This interview gave me a national-level perspective on the goals and purposes of education in Togo, educational policy development and implementation, and the official MOE stance on CI schools.

Since the late 1990s, the MOE has officially recognized CI schools, though they rarely provide administrative or financial support to CI schools in rural areas (Gbobbotchi et al, 2000). However, CI schools are encouraged to use the national curriculum to ensure that all Togolese students receive an equal education, as measured by achievement on national examinations (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). These dynamics helped frame my understanding of critical issues in CI schools and showed why it was crucial for me to conduct and interview with an official at the MOE. I used information from this interview to reword interview protocols at the local-level so as to more accurately reflect the current policy context.

**Educators (Directors and Teachers)**

It was essential to include directors and teachers in my participant sample to answer research questions on the local-level realities of educational experiences in Akebou schools. These participants shared their first-hand experiences as educators and provided insight into the practical realities of the policy-practice divide. The opinions and perspectives of directors and teachers were important to my study because they provided insight into educational issues in Togo. I selected participants based on their employment status at the school, their willingness to
participate, and their availability. Based on my experiences as a Peace Corps Volunteer, I anticipated there would be one director and 4 to 6 teachers at each of the CI schools and one director and 5 to 7 teachers at the government school. Upon completion of fieldwork, I had interviewed the directors in each of the school sites, all five teachers at ST:1, three of the four teachers at CI:1, and all four teachers at CI:2. In total, I conducted interviews with 15 educators.

To further understand the perspectives of teachers, I conducted two hour, semi-structured focus group interviews with the teachers at each school. I anticipated using information gathered during the focus groups to select 1-2 teachers for individual interviewing based on their motivation, experience, and range of opinion. However, I opted instead to interview all of the teachers in each school, with the exception of CI:1 where one of the teachers had already left the village to receive medical treatment at the time of my fieldwork (Field notes, June 2, 2014).

**Community Members**

The third sample group consisted of community members that were actively involved in the operations of their local school. I used the association des parents d'élèves (APE), which was a pre-existing group responsible for liaising between educators, students, village officials, NGOs and other community members. It was important for me to include the perspectives of community members because of the crucial role they played in maintaining and financing schools. They also provided insight into policy and local practice dichotomies.

In ST:1, the APE consisted of seven members, though only four were available to attend the focus group despite notifying them three days prior to the interview. I included the secretary to the village chief in the focus group because he had assisted me in locating APE members and shown interest in my research. His perspective shed light on the local government’s (chief)
involvement in educational affairs. In CI:1, the focus group consisted of four of the five members of the local APE. In CI:2, all four member of the APE participated in the focus group.

Prior to fieldwork, I anticipated including the president of the *comités de développement villageois* (CVD or Village Development Committee) in the focus groups, but upon arrival in each of the sites, I found that the CVD organizations were inactive and did not intervene in educational issues, which disqualified them from my participant group sample. I had also planned to include APE meetings and general community activities in relation to the schools, but found that they would not be holding meetings during my time in Togo, as each APE said they meet only once a year, which limited my participant sample.

**Informal Participants**

In addition to the formal participants described above, I also conducted informal interviews with a former regional inspector for the physical sciences in the Wawa and Akebou prefectures, two students at the University of Lomé who had attended CEG in the Akebou Prefecture, and a former NGO worker engaged in educational issues in the Akebou Prefecture. While I did not obtain informed consent for these interviews, they did provide insight into key issues in Togolese education.

In summary, I conducted one individual interview with a MOE official, three individual interviews with school directors, 11 individual interviews with teachers, two focus group interviews with a total of 9 teachers participating, and three focus group interviews with a total of 13 APE members participating. I received informed consent from a total of 28 individual subjects who participated in my research. There were also four participants who did not sign informed consent and will not be directly referenced in my dissertation. Table 3.2 shows the summary of participants, including their code, group, and site.
Logistics

I conducted my fieldwork in Togo during a seven-week period between May and July 2014. Having spent two years in Togo with the Peace Corps, this was my second trip to Togo.

Obtaining permissions was a key part of my research. I began making inquiries to obtain in-country research permission in October 2013. In November, I sent letters of request to key contacts in the research sites, which were returned to me signed and stamped in December 2014. Additionally, with the assistance of the Exchange Program Specialist at the American Embassy in Lomé, I secured a letter of permission to conduct research in Togolese schools from a representative in the Ministry of Education. These documents can be found in my IRB application in Appendix A1. I also collected publicly available policy documents, curriculum materials, and press releases using email and the Internet before arriving in Togo.

Upon arrival in Togo on May 14, 2014, I spent seven days in the capital city, Lomé, to gather official policy documents and interview a representative from the Ministry of Education. During this time, I stayed with friends who are students at the University of Lomé. They helped reorient me to life in Togo and provided and opportunity to practice speaking French. They also helped me navigate and negotiate transportation between the different neighborhoods in Lomé.

After completing my tasks in Lomé, I traveled to the Akebou Prefecture. Before fieldwork, I arranged to stay with the family of my key informant in CI:2. Not only was he a trusted friend, but his housing compound had a spare room and was equipped with an outdoor shower and latrine. Staying in CI:2, required me to travel back and forth to ST:1 and CI:1 via motorcycle, bicycle, or foot. Soon after arriving in the Akebou Prefecture, I visited the current Peace Corps Volunteer in Kougnouhou to borrow his bicycle, which reduced transportation costs.
After visiting each site to announce my arrival on May 22, 2014, I scheduled times to collect data. I spent four or five days in each of the sites to gather observation and interview data. On these days, I would ride a bicycle or take a motorcycle taxi early in the morning and spend the entire day in the site, returning to CI:2 around 6:00pm. Additionally, I visited each site several other times during fieldwork to develop a sense of the setting and context. Transportation and logistical issues posed occasional challenges during my research due to inclement weather and poor road conditions. Table 3.3 shows a timeline of my fieldwork schedule.
### Table 3.3

**Timeline of Fieldwork**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1 — May 12-18</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Weekend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depart ATL</td>
<td>Arrival in Togo</td>
<td>Arrange logistics, University Visit</td>
<td>Visit to Ministry of Education, Interview with MOE official</td>
<td>Observations in Lomé</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 2 — May 19-25</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Weekend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare for Travel to Akebou</td>
<td>Travel to Akebou, Arrange logistics, University Visit</td>
<td>Rest</td>
<td>Visit ST:1 and CI:1, Schedule data collection</td>
<td>Visit Kougnouhou</td>
<td>Rest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 3 — May 26–June 1</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Weekend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ST:1— Observation and interview</td>
<td>ST:1— Focus Groups with teachers and community members</td>
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<td>CI:2— Village and class observations</td>
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<td>CI:1— Observations and Focus Groups with community members</td>
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As noted earlier, language and translation issues posed challenges during my research. I anticipated asking my key informant in CI:2 to serve as interpreter during focus group interviews with community members. Once I arrived in the field, however, I realized that this would pose logistical difficulties because his duties as school director and village leader limited his availability. Instead, I identified a university student, to act as translator. He accompanied me to all focus group interviews. His services were voluntary and he was not monetarily compensated.

Throughout fieldwork, I spent time at the end of each day reviewing my notes. During this time I added reflective and analytical notes, which served as the first step of data analysis. It afforded me the opportunity to develop probing and follow-up questions to ask in future interviews. When I returned from the field, I maintained cell phone contact with the directors of each school site via Skype and/or calling cards. This allowed me to conduct brief follow-up interviews and engage in member checking once back in the United States.

**Data Types and Collection Procedures**

Creswell (2009) asserted that qualitative research intends to explore and understand “the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (p. 4). Creswell (2007) argued that case study research should include data collected from a variety of sources to help ensure an accurate representation of the phenomenon (p. 73). Common data collection types in qualitative research include, but are not limited to interviews, focus groups, observations, documents, and audiovisual materials (Creswell, 2009; Glesne, 2011). A variety of data types allow the researcher to explore the central focus of their study from multiple perspectives.

I used six different data types—individual interviews, focus groups, observations, documents, photographs, and my field notebook—to better understand the general conditions of and key issues in CI schools in the Akebou Prefecture, with an emphasis on curriculum policies
and practices as recommended by Creswell (2009), Fairbrother (2007), and Stake (1995). By collecting various data types from multiple groups, I was able to gather an array of perspectives on the central phenomenon in my study. In the following section, I describe the types of data I collected and the procedures I used to collect each type.

**Individual Interviews**

Interviews are commonly used in qualitative research because they allow the researcher to gain insight into participants’ beliefs, perspectives, and interpretations of phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). I used convenience, snowball, and contrasting-case sampling to ensure a variety of perspectives in individual and focus group interviews. By identifying individuals who would be able to provide rich information into the educational experiences in Akebou CI schools, I was able to build my case study.

Before I began fieldwork, I carefully constructed interview protocols that provided a flexible structure in the interview process, which ensured that the data I collected addressed my research questions (See Figure 1.4, p.15, See Appendix A(3)). During the interview with the MOE official, I asked questions that offered insight into the relationships between national-level policy and local practices in an effort to better understand the policy-practice dichotomy within the context of Togolese policy and CI schools. During interviews with educators, I asked questions about the goals and purposes of education, the conditions of and key issues in their respective schools, and shared curriculum/policy documents to gather their perspectives on gaps between the ideal and the real of policy and practice. I used interview data as a main source of data for my study because educators and community members were forthcoming and candid during interviews. The interviews offered insight into the complexities of curriculum policies and practices in Akebou CI schools from the perspective of national-level policy-makers, local-
level educators, and community members responsible for community-based educational initiatives.

In accordance with Roulston (2010), I used reflective interviewing strategies, including active listening, reflective probing, and comprehensive note taking. I did not use a recording device due to logistical issues in the field as batteries were difficult to purchase in rural areas, surprise rainstorms could ruin electronic devices, and interview settings could be disturbed by noise from surrounding areas. More importantly I decided not to use a recording device under the guidance of my major professor whose vast research experience in African settings suggested that participants might fear that the recording would be used in harmful ways that could jeopardize their career or social status, thus limiting their openness to discuss critical issues during the interview.

I conducted interviews with educators in French because it is the official language of Togolese schools, but I conducted focus groups with community members in Akebou (the vernacular language) because many villagers did not speak fluent French. During both individual and focus group interviews, I took comprehensive notes, which provided rich data for analysis (See also Field Notebook subsection, pp.120). As I introduced the informed consent form, I explained to participants that I would be taking hand written notes during the individual interview. This way, they would not be surprised when I opened my field notebook and began writing they communicated their responses. During interviews, I consciously tried to make eye contact with participants to the best of my ability to create an environment that most closely reflected a ‘normal’ conversation. My notes contained a mixture of French and English as it was sometimes easier to write down a quick translation than to write in paraphrased French (See Appendix C(1) for sample page from Field Notebook). Additionally some of my notes were
direct translations of French phrasing, which have little sense when written in English but can be quickly and easily translated back into French.

Individual interviews lasted between 45 minutes and two hours depending on the availability and interest of the participant. I conducted interviews during school hours. In each of the schools, the teachers met with me during their preparation periods under the *paillote* (outdoor lounge with thatched roofing, see Figure 4.9). In ST:1, the director met with me inside his office. I had anticipated selecting one or two teachers from each site to interview, but once in the field, I opted to interview all available teachers to get a wider range of perspectives on the realities of educational experiences in the Akebou Prefecture. In addition to the initial individual interviews, my seven-week fieldwork season was long enough to conduct follow-up interviews with each of the directors to ask clarifying questions that arose during my time in Togo, and gather information that was not available at the time of the initial interview. I was also able to conduct informal follow-ups with all three directors over the phone upon my return to the United States, though these conversations were primarily intended to thank them for participating.

As noted earlier, I did not provide compensation for interview participants. Instead, I provided reciprocity by ensuring that participants will have access to the finished work by mailing condensed versions of the final product to school directors at each site to share with other participants. Also, at the end of each interview I left time for participants to ask me questions that were of interest to them. This created a cross-cultural dialogue and allowed for the sharing of experiences as colleagues rather than as researcher-participant. Above all, I recognized that establishing a trustworthy relationship is a crucial step in my study, and reciprocity is an equally important part of that relationship.
I offered confidentiality to all participants as part of the informed consent process stipulated in the IRB application. I coded their identities and used those codes when referring to specific individuals in my dissertation. While the data I collected is not ‘risky’ because educational issues are often debated in the public sphere (see IRB application, Appendix A1), I did not wish to jeopardize participants’ positions in the unlikely event that someone took offense to their comments.

**Focus Group Interviews**

Beyond conducting individual interviews, I also conducted semi-structured focus group interviews with the teaching staff at each of the school sites. Much like Creswell (2009) suggested, the focus group interviews provided insight into the experiences of individuals with similar backgrounds. They also allowed me to collect information from several perspectives in a single setting. Each focus group interview lasted between one and a half to two hours. The focus group interviews gave teachers the opportunity to share their perspectives on the curriculum policies and practices in safe, private environments, which allowed for the collection of dense, rich data. Since multiple subjects participated at the same time in a focus group setting, they were more willing to share personal experiences because they felt comfortable discussing educational issues among their peers. I developed the interview protocols for focus group interviews to pose general questions that would open interaction among participants (See Appendix A(3)). I allowed participants to interact with each other and add to each other’s comments by guiding discussion with follow-up questions to clarify and extend participant comments. I also used focus group interviews to incorporate the critical perspective/component in my research. In many of my follow up questions, I asked why the general conditions of and key issues in Akebou schools existed and how they dealt with them. While these questions were
generally met with an initial, “c'est comme ça en Afrique” or “c'est comme ça dans l’Akebou (it’s just like that in Africa or it’s just like that in the Akebou)”, with additional follow up questioning, participants provided deeper insight into their views on why certain educational issues identified during the focus groups existed in the region.

I also held focus group interviews with community members in each site to ascertain their perspectives on educational issues and curriculum policies and practices. During the focus groups, I asked questions on the goals and purposes of education, the role the community plays in school affairs, and key issues facing the school and community. I selected focus group participants based on their membership in local APEs and on recommendations received from village leaders and key informants. After the focus groups, I planned on identifying two or three community members to conduct in-depth one-on-one interviews, but once in the field, I determined that community participation in education (particularly in terms of curriculum) was minimal and individual interviews would not significantly contribute to answering my research questions. However, by including the perspectives of community members in focus group interviews, I gained insight into the ways each participant experienced and perceived key issues in their local schools. Overall, the individual and focus group interviews contributed to building my case and answering my research questions.

As noted earlier, I conducted the focus groups in the vernacular language. I selected a university student to serve as interpreter during the community member focus groups (See also Role of Researcher for a discussion of language issues, pp. 97). The use of interpreters in interviews poses several issues in qualitative research, including accuracy of translation, selective translation, and mutual reciprocity between researcher and translator (Larkin & Schotsmans, 2007). I carefully selected my translator to ensure that I had strong rapport and
mutual respect with him. Baumgartner (2012) warned against relying on a single translator throughout a study because it can lead to omissions of data due to selective translations. To account for this, I also asked participants in focus groups who had a basic knowledge of French to verify the translations. This helped increase the reliability of translations because two translations of the same response made sure that no important information was omitted.

In accordance with IRB regulations, all interview participants who could read and write French signed waivers of informed consent before beginning the interview (See Appendix A2). I waived signed informed consent for participants who were unable to read, write, or speak French. Instead, my translator verbally translated the consent form from French into Akebou and the participants verbally acknowledged their consent to participate in the study. This process was recorded in my field notebook.

**Observations**

In addition to individual and focus group interviews, observations are a common data type in qualitative research (Creswell, 2009; Adler & Adler, 1994). Observations allow the researcher to witness phenomenon in their natural setting. However, observations also complement and contrast with interview data because participants often describe issues differently than how the issue may arise in observed setting (Denzin & Linclon, 2000; Bentz & Shapiro, 1998). This was essential to my study because I noted that it allowed me to document, not only gaps between policies and practices, but also between the concerns voiced by teachers during interviews and the realities witnessed during observations. For example, teachers in ST:1 and CI:2 identified the use of active pedagogy as a key educational practice used in Togolese classrooms during interviews, but observations of classes revealed that teachers used lecture and close ended questioning as a main teaching strategy (Field notes, May 27, 2014; May 31, 2014).
Observations also helped me identify key issues that were not mentioned during interviews. For example, during observation sessions I often heard loud noises emanating from neighboring classrooms and/or pathways/road. These noises distracted students and made it difficult to hear the instructor, but directors, teachers, and community members never mentioned the issue of noise during interviews or focus groups. Without observations, I would not have been able to identify the issue of classroom noise in my study (Field Notes, May 27, 2014; June 10, 2014).

During fieldwork, I used a non-participant observation style so I could observe schools, classrooms, and communities in their most natural setting. When conducting observations of lessons, I sat at the back of the classrooms to avoid distracting students. I did not engage in any instructional activities, nor did I interact with students when they were working on coursework. In order to establish audit trails for observations, I constructed a protocol before beginning fieldwork that allowed me to structure observation periods and notes in ways that helped answer my research questions (See Appendix A4). This protocol contained focused sets of questions to myself that allowed me to take field notes that accurately represented the realities observed in the local context.

In total, I conducted 13, one-hour sessions of classroom observation as typical class periods last one hour in the Togolese education system. These observations allowed me to understand the realities of curricular experiences in the classroom and provided comparative contrast to the data collected in interviews, focus groups, and policy documents. I originally anticipated conducting more observations, however, once in the field, I found that regional and national exams would take place during my fieldwork, which limited the amount of time I could observe classes. In ST:1, I observed three of the five teachers at the CEG teach review sessions to prepare students for exams. In CI:1, students had already been released for vacation and I was
unable to observe any classes. This limited the ability of my data to address gaps between the ideals of educational policy and the realities of educational practices in this site. However, in CI:2 I observed all four teachers and the director for two, one-hour class periods each. Thus, I was able to compare and contrast classroom observations between CI and state schools. My observations provided insight into the critical issues facing CI school educators in regards to curriculum policies and practices, including availability of materials, pedagogical practices, and physical conditions of classrooms.

In addition to classroom observations, I conducted two, one-hour observation sessions at each of the school sites outside of school hours to understand how the site was used when school was not in session. For example, I wanted to see if school sites served other community purposes during non-school hours, such as: Red Cross literacy sessions, soccer matches, community meetings, etc. This helped me to situate the role of the school in the larger community context. I also conducted observations of general community life throughout my fieldwork season. I recorded these observations in my field notebook at the end of each day and offered information on general conditions of community life. Finally, I hoped to observe APE meetings, but found that they would not be holding meetings in any of the sites during fieldwork.

Throughout observation sessions, I remained aware of the fact that my presence in the classrooms and communities could alter the behaviors of participants. Many community members were familiar with me because of the time I spent in the Akebou region as a PCV, which helped mitigate some of these issues, although, I still made a concerted effort to establish a comfortable rapport with observation participants. I helped set community members and educators at ease by participating in the daily life activities in the villages. Over time, my presence became less conspicuous and my observational skills improved, which contributed to
more natural observations and resulted in the collection of information-rich data as recommended by Janesick (2011).

**Documents**

In addition to interviews and observations, I also collected and reviewed documents to help identify aspects of the policy-practice dichotomy and answer my research questions. Yin (2009) wrote, “documentary information is likely to be relevant to every case study topic” (p. 85). I organized the collected documents into the following categories: 1) National education policy, national-level curriculum guides and standards, state-approved textbooks, and national exam questions, 2) Regional-level practical guides for pedagogy published by the regional inspection, 3) Local-level enrollment statistics, exam results, school class schedules, and school budgets, and 4) Press releases discussing educational issues published on an official Togolese governmental website.

**National-Level Documents**

As part of my fieldwork preparation, I attempted to secure national-level policy documents through online resources. Unfortunately, I was only able to locate the Togolese constitution, which meant that it was crucial to locate these documents during fieldwork. Soon after I arrived in the Akebou Prefecture, educators in ST:1 and CI:2 showed me the *Précis de Législation et Administrations Scolaires* (The Handbook of Togolese Educational Policy), which contained current educational policy and regulations in Togo. I purchased a copy of the document at a bookstore in the regional capital, Atakpamé midway through fieldwork. The national educational policies of Togo were essential to my study because they represented the ideal educational system as stipulated in policy. Without this document it would have been difficult to connect local-level realities with national policy perspectives.
Additionally, national-level curriculum policies in Togo were distributed in published form, which made them an important source of document data for my study. Prior to fieldwork, a representative from the American Embassy in Lomé helped me locate curriculum standards for middle-level (CEG) education in Togo. She scanned and emailed copies of these documents to me. These documents outlined the topics that teachers needed to cover in each subject and each grade at the CEG level in order to prepare students for national exams.

In addition to these documents, I planned to collect policy documents and textbooks from the Togolese Ministry of Education, but found that they did not have copies of educational materials for sale. Instead a representative from the MOE recommended several booksellers who sold up-to-date textbooks and other policy documents. I purchased a set of textbooks for 3ème (the terminal grade of CEG) and two books that compiled questions past BEPC exam questions and correct answers. I spent 21,000 FCFA ($45 USD) on five textbooks and two sets of exam questions. These documents allowed me to compare and contrast the curriculum and exam content with the realities of teacher experiences in local schools. They were of central importance in providing national-level context for the curriculum thematic finding.

**Regional Level Documents**

Soon after I arrived in the field, participants also showed me the *Guide Pratique pour l'Enseignement au Secondaire Général* (Practical Guide for Teaching Secondary School). I photocopied this document, which provided insight into the accepted teaching practices expected of teachers in the region, as well as the overarching curriculum goals and objectives in each subject area. The document also described regional and national examinations, content-specific standards, and practical strategies for planning lessons. I spent 3,500 FCFA ($7.5 USD) on these documents. It offered insight into the regional-level of Togolese education and contained
information on teacher training and curriculum issues. The document was crucial to my comparison of curriculum policies and practices.

**Local-Level Documents**

To situate my study within its local-level context, I collected documents that described realities in the local setting. I gathered attendance records, enrollment rates, national examination results from previous years, class schedules, and budget information. These documents helped provide context in the local setting. They were also useful in describing the general conditions in local schools and assisted me in building my case. Since there were no photocopiers available in the Akebou Prefecture, I photographed the pages of these documents, which were often handwritten.

**Internet Resources**

Finally, I used Internet resources (official Togolese government sites and media outlets, http://www.republicoftogo.com/Toutes-les-rubriques/Education) as a text-based data type for analysis. While articles published on the Internet do not qualify as documents, I included them in this section because—due to their use of the written word—I applied the same methods of analysis as I did with other text-based documents (see also Methods of Analysis, pp. 125). These resources were collected and analyzed both before and after my fieldwork season because they were accessible at anytime and were frequently updated. The press releases helped provide context for the national policy perspective and helped situate Togolese education within international contexts.

Yin (2009) wrote that documents are useful because they corroborate information gathered from other sources, help guide follow up interviews or observations, and establish the trustworthiness of data. Yin suggested allotting adequate time to retrieve important documents
from libraries, annexes, and archives. While documents are useful in gaining insight into the language and wording of official policies, Creswell (2009) and Yin (2009) warned that documents should not be uncritically accepted as objective descriptions of reality because they are often designed and edited to reflect particular agendas. In my study, documents provided important insight into the curriculum policies and practices in Akebou CI schools because much of the official curriculum was transmitted to schools through published materials. Document data provided comparative contrast between local-level interview and observation data and national and international (meso and macro) educational trends. As such, document data helped illuminate gaps between policies and practices.

**Photographs**

During fieldwork, I photographed features of the local context to provide visual documentation of the setting. Given the rural isolation of my research sites, it was important to photograph schools and village settings because without seeing it first-hand, it is difficult to grasp the realities of life in Akebou communities. I took over 250 photos of school facilities, classrooms, community centers, roads, farms, and local businesses during my seven weeks in Togo. Yin (2009) highlighted the link between collecting observational data and audiovisual data, noting that important phenomena that surface during observation sessions should be photographed to help convey the natural setting and context to the reader. In addition, Creswell (2009) explained the utility of audiovisual materials in creating visual representations of research site that can provide reminders of key events or occurrences during fieldwork. However, he noted that photographs can also be disruptive and create unnatural responses among participants.

By visually illustrating the local context through photographs, I was able to represent the realities of some local experiences, which provided insight into how and why curriculum policies
and practices in CI school develop. Visual data also illustrated physical manifestations of key issues in CI schools (resources, buildings, etc.) and allowed me to verify my observation notes during data analysis. Photographs helped remind me of the research setting once I left the field by jogging memories of specific details, events, and activities. I asked permission before taking photos at each observation site and participants were asked to sign or verbally confirm consent before being photographed as stipulated on the informed consent forms approved by the IRB for use in my study. In all my photos, I focused my photographs on the setting, rather than individuals to avoid having to edit photos where students were individually identifiable. In addition to serving as visual illustrations of local realities, I also analyzed photographs to answer research questions.

Field Notebook

Throughout fieldwork, I took systematically organized notes in my field notebook. This notebook served as a daily record of my schedule, activities, and reflections. It also represented a headquarters for all interview and observation data as well as a logbook for research procedures. In it, I documented the data collected during focus group interviews, individual interviews, and observation periods (Wolcott, 2005). I organized my notes into two major sections. On the right side of the notebook, I wrote notes directly from interviews and observations, including direct quotations from participants. These notes became raw data in my study. On the left side of the notebook, I wrote observer comments to myself, highlighted emerging themes, filled in information from data collection, and noted my personal thoughts and reflections. These pages served as the preliminary level of data analysis and in doing this, I augmented my initial notes, sometimes doubling or tripling the level of detail in total for a given interview or observation. The left pages of the notebook also became my reflective journal. While it was held in the same
physical notebook as my field notes, my reflective notes served a different purpose. The reflective journal notes helped me situate my role as researcher and reflect on my biases in the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). They helped me to remain cognizant of my natural inclinations to focus on certain issues or portray things in positive or negative ways (Janesick, 2011). By the end of my fieldwork season, I filled two, 100-page notebooks and started writing in a third notebook (See Appendix C(1) for sample page from field notebook). While I did use my field notebook to track my collection of document data, I wrote the majority of my notes about the documents themselves in the margins of the documents themselves, which constituted another aspect of my field notes.

My field notebook was an essential data source. I used it to code data in the field as well as upon return to the United States. Keeping event logs, descriptions, memos, and reflections all in one place facilitated the constant comparative method, as I could regularly write, read, reflect, and reread data in my field notebook. It also assisted me in planning, scheduling, and organizing my time in Togo because, upon rereading notes, I was able to identify missing pieces of data and develop follow-up questions to address them.

**Triangulation, Reliability, and Verification**

Creswell (2009) wrote that the validation of findings in qualitative research is a process that continues throughout the planning, fieldwork, and analytical stages of a study. Before, during, and after fieldwork, I continuously reflected on the measures I used to ensure the reliability, validity, and trustworthiness of data in my study. In accordance with Merriam (1998), I used triangulation, member checking, audit trails, and reflexivity to increase the trustworthiness of my research.
A common method to ensure the accuracy of qualitative research is triangulation, including by data type, by subject, and by site. As I analyzed data, I compared across multiple types of data collected from multiple subjects and sites to triangulate my findings (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2009, Maxwell, 2005). I selected the case study research design because it allowed me to collect a variety of data types from various participant groups across several research sites, which provided enough data sources to use triangulation as a means for establishing trustworthiness. Multiple sources of data permitted me to draw comparisons between the experiences of directors, teachers, and community members (subjects) within and across different schools and villages (sites). They also provided insight into similarities and differences between data types. For example, I compared the described realities (interviews) with the observed realities (observations) in each school. In addition, I compared and contrasted observation and interview data with document data to identify gaps between policy ideals and practical realities. Audiovisual materials provided visual evidence illustrating the contextual realities of the research sites. The variety of data sources allowed me to triangulate between diverse and representative data sets, which helped create a comprehensive understanding of curriculum policies and practices in Akebou CI schools that was reliable and trustworthy.

In addition to triangulation, I asked key informants to engage in member checking to ensure that my notes and interpretations reflected the realities that they intended to convey. Creswell (2009) suggested that this be done after the researcher has begun analytic reflection on the data and identified several sets of codes or themes in the data (p. 191). Participant commentary on research findings strengthened their voices during data analysis and in the final write up, which was an integral aspect of the purpose of my study. I considered their comments, ideas, and perspectives of participants when analyzing data in the field, which allowed them
some agency in shaping data analysis and the presentation of findings, thereby increasing the study’s reliability because it more closely reflected participant voices as opposed to purely my interpretations. Member checking also helped limit the extent to which my biases surfaced in analysis because it allowed participants to ask me why I chose to focus on certain issues (Creswell, 2009; for more information on bias, see Access, Role of Researcher, and Bias, pp. 93). Through follow-up phone calls, my key informants played important roles in ensuring the reliability and trustworthiness of data. Their experiences as school director and university student provided me with additional insights into the nuances of my data throughout the collection and analytical stages of my research.

Another important aspect in establishing trustworthiness and auditability in qualitative research is the creation of a clear trail of information back to the raw data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Auditability allows readers and other researchers to follow the methodological, collection, and analytical processes of the author. In addition to providing detailed descriptions of my research process from start to finish in Chapters Three, Four and Five, I also maintained detailed records of my research in my field notebooks. This helped me establish an easily identifiable audit trail from the raw data, through the analytical process, and into the findings. I included reflective journal entries and analytical memos in my field notebook to mitigate mistaken analysis based on my personal emotions and reactions to what I observed in the field, which is a common challenge in qualitative research (Maxwell, 2005). By recording these notes, I was able to reflect back on them in different moods, mindsets, emotions, to review them and document how my perceptions of events changes based on personal emotions and reactions. These journals helped provide integrity to the data collection and analysis by ensuring that I was aware of my own emotions, biases, and reactions. I made this information available to readers by disclosing
my biases and by providing detailed explanations of my analysis procedures, including tables and charts (for more information on bias, see Access, Role of Researcher, and Bias, pp. 93). Also, critical auditing information (such as IRB approval and letters of invitation) is included in the appendices of the study (See Appendix A1).

Finally, establishing trustworthiness and positive rapport in the community was a crucial aspect in ensuring the validity and reliability of a research study. Creswell (2009) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) highlighted the importance of spending a prolonged amount of time in the field in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. They explained that the more time a researcher spent in the community, often the more accurate the findings will be. While my fieldwork as limited by academic calendars and finances, the seven weeks I spent in Togo was the maximum time that I could afford. My previous experiences in the region enhanced the trustworthiness of myself as a researcher because I had previous knowledge of the communities that allowed me to develop rapport with research participants more quickly. Upon arrival in the Akebou Prefecture, I was warmly (re) welcomed into each of the research sites. I had cross-cultural understandings that allowed me to navigate in the field more effectively than a researcher visiting Togo for the first time. In other words, I ‘knew the ropes’ of life in the Akebou Prefecture before embarking on my field research. This meant I could gain access to important data sources earlier in my fieldwork than if I was a researcher who had never lived in the area before. French and local language skills also helped me build strong relationships with my research participants. By greeting people in the Akebou language, I showed that I was genuinely interested in their experiences in the limited amount of time that I had in the field, which set a friendly tone during interviews. Although, despite making concerted efforts to develop rapport and trust in each of the communities, it is impossible for me to know if
participants were completely honest with me, or if they chose not to share certain information because of my status as a researcher and outsider. In summary, I used triangulation, member checking, audit trials, and reflexivity to help ensure that my data and findings were reliable and trustworthy as possible. As part of the audit trail, I will discuss the specific methods of analysis I used to generate my findings in the next section.

Methods of Analysis

My research was primarily descriptive, exploratory, and analytical in nature, as I intended to describe the realities of curriculum policies and practices in CI schools in the Akebou region of Togo. I did not plan to generalize beyond my specific case. Following Creswell’s (2007) recommendation, I began analyzing by preparing and organizing data, coding, condensing codes into themes, representing the data, and presenting it in the form of sites and themes. In order to analyze and present data, I used informal content analysis and the constant comparative method (Bradley, 1993; Snyder, 2001). In Chapter One, Figures 1.3 and 1.5 (pp.13, 16) show the analytical framework and illustrate the multiple dimensions of my study, from the macro-level to the micro-level. The aim of data analysis was to identify reoccurring patterns in the coded data that signified representative themes in the study. I then described these themes in information-rich detail to build the case study and answer my research questions.

Preparing and Organizing Data

Glesne (2011) highlighted the importance of reflective research planning and data collection by asserting that analytical processes in qualitative research begin before the researcher departs for fieldwork. Similarly, Creswell (2009) posited that qualitative analysis is an ongoing process “conducted concurrently with gathering data” (p. 184). Thus, I began analyzing data early in the research. Before I entered the field, I reviewed educational trends at the national
and international levels after gathering press releases, curriculum guides, and policy documents. This helped ground my interview questions in the current educational policy landscape and gave me credibility as a researcher. I discuss the specific methods of document analysis later in the chapter. I brought these documents to the field and referred to them before, during, and after interviews, focus groups, and observations to compare and contrast interview data collected in the field with data from written sources. I reserved space in my notebook to record analytic notes comparing data collected before fieldwork with data collected in Togo. My analytic notes drew comparisons between data based on data type, site, and participant. For example, I noted inconsistencies between document data and what participants claimed to be true in their school, which was a comparison across data type. I also took note of when issues differed between sites, which offered a comparison between sites. Finally, I noted when different participant groups highlighted different issues, which was a comparison between participants or subjects. This type of analysis was consistent with the constant comparative method (Snyder, 2001). I also made summary and analytic notes about the content contained in interview, document, and observation data in my field notebooks and the documents themselves, which was consistent with informal content analysis (Bradley, 1993). The notes I recorded in my field notebooks helped organize data and streamline analysis once I returned to the United States.

In the field, I also began to analyze data by recording reflective and analytic notes in my field notebook on interview and observation notes and at the end of each day. In this section of my field notebook, I reflected on my personal experiences and began to systematically code collected interview and observation data. As noted earlier, I used the right page of each notebook to record notes directly from interviews and observations. The left page was used to write analytic notes, reflective notes, questions, observer comments, and preliminary codes. To the
best of my ability, I used different color pens to write my augmenting and analytical notes so that I could easily distinguish between the type of note once I returned from the field (See sample in Appendix C(1)). Because my notes were kept in two field notebooks, I could easily compare and contrast between notes from different research sites, different participant groups, and different data types (observation, focus group, interview). For document data, I took notes in the margins of the documents themselves. The notes were based primarily on the content of the documents, in accordance with informal content analysis. These notes were both analytic and reflective. Once back in the United States, I (re)read the documents and notes and assigned codes to the policy document data. I used these documents and notes alongside the field notebooks and photographs to analyze my full set of data. Thus, while I was still in the field, I used the constant comparative method and informal content analysis to analyze data. As I began the stocktaking and organizing of data, these notes and comments became the first level of data analysis.

Coding

I used a procedure similar to that proposed by Creswell to guide my coding and data analysis (2009, p. 185, see Figure 3.7). By following this procedure, I was able to analyze my data in a manner that helped me to systematically interpret, organize, and code raw data. After I finished organizing and stocktaking the raw data in each data set, the first step in post-fieldwork analysis was to begin developing open codes for initial key issues and ingredients that stood out in the data. These open codes became the initial codes or categories of data and provided the foundation upon which I built my case.
To begin coding, I first (re)read through my interviews, observations, documents, and analytic and reflective notes to (re)familiarize myself with the data. I used my analytic notes from the field, which included preliminary codes, to create a tentative set of codes. For many of the codes I identified while still in Togo, I used the exact wording used by participants or as it appeared in the policy documents themselves (both in French and translated into English), which is called “in vivo” coding (Given, 2008). I then reread through the data—interviews, focus groups, observations, and documents—and attached multicolored post-it notes with code abbreviations written on them to pieces of data that reflected the concept or construct represented.
by each code. The colored post-it notes represented the level (national, regional, local) being
described in the code. National level codes had blue notes, regional level codes had orange notes,
and local level codes had yellow. For example, *Nos Propres Efforts* (by our own efforts, see title
page for note) was a concept referenced by each participant group in each of the research sites,
making it a significant code. I assigned the abbreviation of NPE to this code and wrote them on
yellow (local) notes. By using NPE as a code, I was able to compare instances of the same
concept across data types, participant groups, and research sites to see how it was used
differently in different contexts. Naturally, national-level policy documents primarily pertained
to national-level issues, and therefore were all coded with blue post-it notes. By assigning codes
to concepts and constructs, I began identifying and tracing themes throughout my case study.

Maxwell (2005) offered another approach to coding data that suggested the researcher
develop organizational, theoretical, and descriptive codes. Organizational codes were broad
issues that had been established prior to data collection because they were anticipated or obvious.
For example, most scholarly literature on CI schools discussed school funding, thus, *Manque de
financement* (lack of funding, abbreviated as $) was an important organizational code in my
study. I used theoretical codes to place data into general or abstract categories consistent with my
theoretical perspective for the research. For example, my research was framed, in part, within a
post-colonial perspective. A major topic in post-colonial literature is the use of former colonial
languages in education. Similarly, the literature on CI schools in Africa discussed language as an
issue in CI schools. Thus, the code for Language (abbreviated as LANG) was an example of a
theoretical code that appeared in interview, document, and observation data. Finally, I used
substantive codes (in vivo) to describe participant beliefs. These codes were a reflection of
participant voices and I borrowed them directly from participants’ own words and the original wording found in policy documents (Maxwell, 2005, p. 97, see NPE example above).

Additionally, I used descriptive codes such as Reference to Context (abbreviated as CONTEXT) and Condition of Buildings (abbreviated as BUILD) to identify key aspects of the context/setting for participants in the study. I identified these codes in observation, interview, focus group, and document data as each data set offered insight into the context and key issues of my research. Creswell (2009) suggested using descriptive codes to present the realities of the setting/context of the case study. These codes allowed me to compare and contrast the physical conditions of schooling between sites. I also used them to compare the perspectives of different participant groups on the same physical structures/settings. Context-based codes became a central theme in the case study, as I describe in the next section.

**Codes into Themes**

The purpose of analytical coding in qualitative research is to create broad thematic findings that accurately represent key issues in the research and, when combined with other thematic findings, build a strong, holistic representation of the realities present in the case. As described above, I used organizational, theoretical, substantive (in vivo), and descriptive codes to organize data collected in interviews, focus groups, observations, and documents. The coding process was iterative (Maxwell, 2005; Creswell, 2009), meaning that I reread and recoded my data several times before organizing the codes into the final themes. For example, after initial coding, I found that some codes could be subsumed under larger concepts. The code Respect appeared twice in interview data and not at all in observation or document data, but in each instance I found it referred to the lack of respect students had for volunteer teachers and acts of defiance in the classroom. Thus, I folded the two occurrences of Respect into the larger code of
Discipline (DISCI), which occurred 24 times in interview, focus group, observation, and document data for a total of 26 occurrences. I reviewed and reanalyzed data several times looking for patterns and themes, meaning that coding and analysis was an iterative process.

The development of themes from individual codes was a bottom-up process that began with raw data, initial codes, and final codes. I then identified emerging patterns that represented broader themes in the data (Creswell, 2007). To systematically present valid and reliable findings, I counted the number of code occurrences across data sets, which, to some extent, indicated the importance of each code to the study. Tables 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6 show the list of codes and the number of occurrences by data type. Table 3.7 shows the complete list of codes and occurrences across all data types. Appendix C(3) shows a sample of the raw list of tabulated codes used during data analysis.
### Table 3.3

*Complete List of Codes by Number of Occurrences (Interviews and Focus Groups)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Nos propers efforts”</td>
<td>NPE</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Training</td>
<td>TRAIN</td>
<td>Yellow/Blue</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Curriculum</td>
<td>CURRIC</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official Programme</td>
<td>OFFIPRO</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manque de materials/documents</td>
<td>DOCS</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>COMM</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent-Teacher relationship (APE)</td>
<td>APE</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspection visits</td>
<td>VISIT</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of Education</td>
<td>IMPORT</td>
<td>Orange/Yellow</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manque de financement</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to ethnicity</td>
<td>ETH</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School fees</td>
<td>FEES</td>
<td>Yellow/Blue</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks</td>
<td>BOOKS</td>
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<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Pay</td>
<td>PAY</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>DISCI</td>
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<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant Labor</td>
<td>MIGLAB</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions of Buildings</td>
<td>BUILD</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic development (Goal)</td>
<td>ECONDEV</td>
<td>Blue/Yellow</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent-Student relationship</td>
<td>PARSTU</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National development (Goal)</td>
<td>NATDEV</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>LANG</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Exams</td>
<td>NATEX</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural isolation</td>
<td>RURISO</td>
<td>Yellow/Blue</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Education</td>
<td>ACCESS</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrelevancy</td>
<td>IRREV</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspection Fees/Tasks</td>
<td>INSPECTS</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal development (Goal)</td>
<td>PERSDEV</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional Exams</td>
<td>REGEX</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
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<td>Reference to local context</td>
<td>CONTEXT</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Quality of education</td>
<td>QUAL</td>
<td>Yellow/Blue</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director Oversight</td>
<td>DIROVR</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed for Peace/Social Stability</td>
<td>PEACE</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Evaluations</td>
<td>LOC-EVAL</td>
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<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems rooted in Primary School</td>
<td>PRISCH</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspection materials</td>
<td>INSPECDOC</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced Career</td>
<td>FRCDCAR</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to government (no role)</td>
<td>GOVT-NR</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of infrastructure (Akebou)</td>
<td>INFRA-AK</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment rates</td>
<td>ENROLL</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Success/Achievement</td>
<td>STUACHEV</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of economic opportunity</td>
<td>ECONOPP</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Apathy</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Theme</td>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Color</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to government</td>
<td>GOVT</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cahier de texte</td>
<td>TEXTE</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State recognition</td>
<td>STATEREC</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC vs. State School</td>
<td>CCvST</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Dans le cahier”</td>
<td>CAHIER</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Trop vaste”</td>
<td>VASTE</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/Sanitation</td>
<td>HEALTH</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School maintenance</td>
<td>MAINTAIN</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Reform</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Relevancy (Practical Application)</td>
<td>RELIV</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>Local Curriculum</td>
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<td>INFRA-TG</td>
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<td>Political Nepotism</td>
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<td>Education as long term</td>
<td>LGTERM</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
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<td>Short term economic goals</td>
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<td>Decentralization</td>
<td>DECENT</td>
<td>Blue/Yellow</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO Intervention</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Yellow/Blue</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to Girls Ed/Issues</td>
<td>GIRLS</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travail Manuel (TM) Policy</td>
<td>TM-POL</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travail Manuel (TM) Practice</td>
<td>TM-PRACT</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheating</td>
<td>CHEAT</td>
<td>Blue/Yellow</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water (Kabani)</td>
<td>WATER</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorcery</td>
<td>SORC</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>796</strong></td>
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Table 3.4.

*Complete List of Codes by Number of Occurrences (Observation)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>LANG</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manque de materials/documents</td>
<td>DOCS</td>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of infrastructure (Akebou)</td>
<td>INFRA-AK</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travail Manuel (TM) Practice</td>
<td>TM-PRACT</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions of Buildings</td>
<td>BUILD</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chastise Students</td>
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<td>Yellow</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise</td>
<td>NOISE</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Exams</td>
<td>REGEX</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stick to Script</td>
<td>SCRIPT</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Dans le cahier”/Banking Pedagogy</td>
<td>CAHIER</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Exams</td>
<td>NATEX</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
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<td>National Curriculum</td>
<td>CURRIC</td>
<td>Blue</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Pedagogy</td>
<td>ACTPED</td>
<td>Blue/Yellow</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks</td>
<td>BOOKS</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travail Manuel (TM) Policy</td>
<td>TM-POL</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrelevancy</td>
<td>IRREV</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Success/Achievement</td>
<td>STUACHEV</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official Programme</td>
<td>OFFIPRO</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>DISCI</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural isolation</td>
<td>RURISO</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>School maintenance</td>
<td>MAINTAIN</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of education</td>
<td>QUAL</td>
<td>Yellow/Blue</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to Girls Ed/ Issues</td>
<td>GIRLS</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/Sanitation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheating</td>
<td>CHEAT</td>
<td>Blue/Yellow</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment rates</td>
<td>ENROLL</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspection visits</td>
<td>VISIT</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Training</td>
<td>TRAIN</td>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO Intervention</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Yellow/Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 133
Table 3.5

*Complete List of Codes by Number of Occurrences (Document Data)*

<table>
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<th>Concept</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Pedagogy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Curriculum</td>
<td>CURRIC</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Objectives</td>
<td>CURRIC-OBJ</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Discipline</td>
<td>DISCI</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevancy (Practical Application)</td>
<td>RELIV</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Influence</td>
<td>INTL-IN</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Training</td>
<td>TRAIN</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Structure</td>
<td>ADMIN</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents Provided by Government</td>
<td>DOCS-GOVT</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Evaluations</td>
<td>LOC-EVAL</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal development (Goal)</td>
<td>PERSDEV</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cahier de texte</td>
<td>TEXTE</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions of Buildings</td>
<td>BUILD</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Reform</td>
<td>REFORM</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official Programme</td>
<td>OFFIPRO</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Exams</td>
<td>TRAIN-EX</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing of School (Govt)</td>
<td>$-GOVT</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrelevancy</td>
<td>IRREV</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>LANG</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National development (Goal)</td>
<td>NATDEV</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC vs. State School</td>
<td>CCvST</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>COMM</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic development (Goal)</td>
<td>ECONDEV</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment rates</td>
<td>ENROLL</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/Sanitation</td>
<td>HEALTH</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspection Fees/Tasks</td>
<td>INSPECTS</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Training</td>
<td>TRAIN-LACK</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manque de materials/documents</td>
<td>DOCS</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Exams</td>
<td>NATEX</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent-Teacher relationship (APE)</td>
<td>APE</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Exams</td>
<td>REGEX</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School fees</td>
<td>FEES</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Morality</td>
<td>TEACH-MOR</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Pay</td>
<td>PAY</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travail Manuel (TM) Policy</td>
<td>TM-POL</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 99
Table 3.6

Complete List of Codes by Number of Occurrences (Total Across Data Sets)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Curriculum</td>
<td>CURRIC</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Training</td>
<td>TRAIN</td>
<td>Yellow/Blue</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manque de materials/documents</td>
<td>DOCS</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Nos propers efforts”</td>
<td>NPE</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official Programme</td>
<td>OFFIPRO</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>COMM</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>DISCI</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions of Buildings</td>
<td>BUILD</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>LANG</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent-Teacher relationship (APE)</td>
<td>APE</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspection visits</td>
<td>VISIT</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks</td>
<td>BOOKS</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of Education</td>
<td>IMPORT</td>
<td>Orange/Yellow</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manque de financement</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Exams</td>
<td>NATEX</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School fees</td>
<td>FEES</td>
<td>Yellow/Blue</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrelevancy</td>
<td>IRREV</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Exams</td>
<td>REGEX</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to ethnicity</td>
<td>ETH</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Pay</td>
<td>PAY</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of infrastructure (Akebou)</td>
<td>INFRA-AK</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National development (Goal)</td>
<td>NATDEV</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural isolation</td>
<td>RURISO</td>
<td>Yellow/Blue</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant Labor</td>
<td>MIGLAB</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic development (Goal)</td>
<td>ECONDEV</td>
<td>Blue/Yellow</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal development (Goal)</td>
<td>PERSDEV</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of education</td>
<td>QUAL</td>
<td>Yellow/Blue</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent-Student relationship</td>
<td>PARSTU</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspection Fees/Tasks</td>
<td>INSPECT</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Evaluations</td>
<td>LOC-EVAL</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Education</td>
<td>ACCESS</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Success/Achievement</td>
<td>STUACHEV</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Pedagogy</td>
<td>ACTPED</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to local context</td>
<td>CONTEXT</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director Oversight</td>
<td>DIOVR</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed for Peace/Social Stability</td>
<td>PEACE</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Dans le cahier”</td>
<td>CAHIER</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevancy (Practical Application)</td>
<td>RELIV</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travail Manuel (TM) Practice</td>
<td>TM-PRACT</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment rates</td>
<td>ENROLL</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems rooted in Primary School</td>
<td>PRISCH</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspection materials</td>
<td>INSPECD</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I used the constant comparative method to organize codes into themes (Glaser, 1965; Snyder, 2001). I compared instances of the same code across different data types (interviews, observations, and documents) to analyze and compare the context that it was discussed during interviews, in documents, or in my observation notes. This also provided insight to differences between written policies at the national-level and the realities of practice at local-levels. I also compared codes as they surfaced in the context of different sites (MOE, ST:1, CI:1, and CI:2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forced Career</td>
<td>FRCDCAR</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cahier de texte</td>
<td>TEXTE</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to government (no role)</td>
<td>GOVT-NR</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of economic opportunity</td>
<td>ECONOPP</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Reform</td>
<td>REFORM</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Apathy</td>
<td>COMMAP</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to government</td>
<td>GOVT</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC vs. State School</td>
<td>CCvST</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/Sanitation</td>
<td>HEALTH</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School maintenance</td>
<td>MAINTAIN</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travail Manuel (TM) Policy</td>
<td>TM-POL</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chastise Students</td>
<td>CHAST</td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State recognition</td>
<td>STATEREC</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Objectives</td>
<td>CURRIC-OBJ</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise</td>
<td>NOISE</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Trop vaste”</td>
<td>VASTE</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Curriculum</td>
<td>CURRIC-LC</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to Girls Ed/Issues</td>
<td>GIRLS</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stick to Script</td>
<td>SCRIPT</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of infrastructure (National)</td>
<td>INFRA-TG</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Nepotism</td>
<td>NEPO</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Influence</td>
<td>INTL-IN</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education as long term</td>
<td>LGTERM</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short term economic goals</td>
<td>SHRTTERM</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decentralization</td>
<td>DECENT</td>
<td>Blue/Yellow</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO Intervention</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Yellow/Blue</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Structure</td>
<td>ADMIN</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents Provided by Government</td>
<td>DOCS-GOVT</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Exams</td>
<td>TRAIN-EX</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing of School (Govt)</td>
<td>$-GOVT</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Training</td>
<td>TRAIN-LACK</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Morality</td>
<td>TEACH-MOR</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO Intervention</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Yellow/Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** | **1028**
Finally, I used the constant comparative method to compare codes between participant groups, finding that in some instances, community members discussed the same topic differently than educator participants. Once I coded the data, I compared sets of coded data with other codes to determine if they could be categorized under the same thematic heading. As noted earlier, this was an iterative process. From the coded data, I began to identify emerging themes that represented the central phenomenon of the case study and responded to my research questions. I used the complete list of codes to develop themes based on their number of occurrences. For example, *Official Program* (OFFIPRO) and *National Curriculum* (CURRIC) occurred a combined 59 times in the data. These codes both referred to curriculum policies and practices in Togo, which was the focus of Research Question Four. Thus, it was logical to create the thematic finding *curriculum* in my study. I then used the complete list of codes to identify other codes that also represented concepts related to curriculum policies and practices. Codes for exams (national, regional, and local), lack of curriculum materials/textbooks, irrelevancy of content, regional oversight, and others were included under the general theme of *curriculum*. Using the same process, I identified *school funding*, *development*, and *space/context* as themes in my study.

According to Mason (2010), saturation of data occurs when new data begins repeating itself and providing no new insights into the themes, threads, and codes of the study. While I initially found pieces of data that did not neatly fit into themes or codes, after additional analysis, I placed these pieces of data in appropriate themes or situated them in the description of the sites in which they occurred. To ensure that I reached data saturation, I continued to reread documents and field notes while comparing and contrasting the codes and themes until I found no new insights. Even codes that rarely appeared in the data were included in the findings to ensure a rich and detailed representation of the case.
Following Creswell’s (2007) suggestion, I created four major themes that encompassed the majority of codes in the data. However, I found several codes that could not be easily classified under thematic headings because they were either specific to an individual site, or did not fit under one individual theme. These codes, however, were significant in the case study and will be discussed in the context of that particular site in Chapter Four. Table 3.8 shows each theme and its related codes.

Table 3.8

*Major Themes and Related Codes (Number of occurrences across all data sets in parenthesis)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Corresponding Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Funding (21)</td>
<td>Related Codes: Fees (20), Teacher Salary (18), Quality (16), Government Role (9), Enrollment Rates (11), Travail Manuel (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Teacher Training (37), Importance of Education (22), Economic (16), National (17), Personal (16), Peace (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum (43)</td>
<td>Official Program (35), Lack of Materials (37), Inspection Visits (23), Textbooks (23), Discipline (26), Irrelevancy of Material (20), National Exams (21), Inspection Tasks (15), Regional Exams (20), Local Exams (15), Inspection Documents (10), Cahier de Texte (10), Local Modification (6), Relevancy (12), Dans le Cahier (12), Too Vast (6), Cheating (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space/Context (12)</td>
<td>Community Action (26), Parent-Teacher Relationships (23), Ethnicity (19), Parent-Student Relationships (15), Buildings (26), Access (14), Rural Isolation (17), Language (26), Infrastructure (18), Maintenance (8), Health/Sanitation (8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis of Textbooks

My methods of analysis for textbooks differed from the methods I used for interview, focus group, observation, and policy document data. I used informal content analysis and the constant comparative method to analyze the textbooks that I purchased during fieldwork (Bradley, 1993; Snyder, 2001). After coding policy documents and curriculum standards, I used the Tables of Contents and Indexes in each of the textbooks to identify the chapters or subsections that presented information relevant to the standards that I selected as case-in-point examples. I then compared and contrasted between the content of the textbooks and the content of the curriculum standards to identify gaps between the two. I reproduced several scanned images of textbook pages to provide evidence for my analysis. It was beyond the scope of this dissertation to include a complex analysis of textbooks for each of the subject areas. Instead, they served as illustrative examples within the curriculum thematic finding.

I elected not to code the textbooks because I would likely have needed to create new codes to represent the diverse content included in the textbooks. This would have skewed the overall frequency/occurrence count throughout my study. Additionally, since I only referred to the textbooks in one of the four themes, it was unnecessary to engage in methods of analysis more complex than informal content analysis and the constant comparative method.

Representing Data

After identifying the four major themes across the data sets and the codes that comprised them, I created data displays that represented my findings clearly and concisely. These figures are presented in Chapter Five in my discussion of thematic findings. They illustrate how the individual codes were organized to create larger central themes while also showing how each theme answered the research questions. The creation of graphic data displays required constant
comparison between codes and themes to ensure that the codes accurately reflected nuances in the thematic findings. The creation of data displays also allowed me to reflect on the interrelation between themes. For example, the code *lack of materials* was included under the theme of *Curriculum* because teaching materials, textbooks, and curriculum guides make up the national curriculum. However, the lack of materials described by teachers in Akebou schools was also related to the *School Funding* theme because schools could afford to purchase the required materials. Thus, the constant comparison between codes and themes during analysis and the creation of data displays played an important role in generating and presenting my findings. As mentioned earlier, I reached saturation when my data displays and themes began repeating themselves and provided no new insight into the realities of education in the Akebou Prefecture (Mason, 2010).

Following Creswell’s (2007) recommendation, I decided to represent my data in thematic form. However, it was important for me to ensure that I answered each of my research questions. To do this, I organized and summarized all of my findings by data type and research question (See Appendix C(4)). I used informal content analysis during this process. I (re)read through each data set and electronically reproduced the content of each data type as relevant to the four research questions. This summary allowed me to see side-by-side comparisons between data types, participants, and research questions. This permitted me to view the similarities and differences between interviews, focus groups, observations, and photographs. The summary sheet was also a data display that allowed me to check that the findings presented as themes accurately and adequately responded to the research questions. In addition to the data displays in Chapter Five, Appendix C(4) was another tool used to constantly compare data across sets.
Generating Findings

The codes and themes derived from interview, focus group, observation, document, and photograph data became the findings of my case study. In accordance with my research design, these four themes responded to and answered my research questions. The themes Curriculum, Funding, and Development each addressed the first research question because they contained data (interview, focus group, observation, document) describing national-level policies on curriculum standards, school funding, and the role education plays in the context of national development. I answered the second research question in the Space/Context and Development themes as they addressed the goals and purposes of CI schools from the perspectives of educators and community members. The Curriculum, Space/Context, and Funding themes answered the third research question because they highlighted the general conditions and key issues in Akebou schools. Finally, because the fourth research question specifically asked about curriculum issues in Akebou schools, the Curriculum theme responded to this question. To create a wide representation of views on the same topic, the findings in each theme drew from a variety of data types and participant perspectives. These themes will be discussed in detail in Chapters Four and Five.

Gaps in Data

It was difficult to anticipate gaps in data prior to fieldwork. While I predicted that the most difficult aspect of the data collection process would be the retrieval of national-level policy documents, I returned from Togo with copies of the key documents I had identified in the prospectus as well as several others. I also anticipated that the (relatively) short amount of time I planned to spend in Togo would limit my ability to schedule interviews and observations. I was able to conduct interviews with all of my planned participants, although I was unable to conduct
classroom observations at CI:1 because the students had already been released for vacation before my arrival at the site. Additionally, the classroom observations I conducted at ST:1 and CI:2 were during review sessions to prepare students for upcoming regional/national exams, and were therefore not ‘typical’ classes. At CI:2 I also observed classes where teachers covered the correct answers to examination questions after student exams had been graded. Thus, I was unable to observe a ‘typical’ class period. Additionally, I was unable to conduct observations with every teacher at ST:1, which limited my ability to draw comparisons between interview and observation data within this site.

In addition to the inability to observe ‘typical classes, it was also difficult to collect budget information in CI:1 and CI:2. Participants described the budget to me during interviews, but when I asked to see the hard-copy version, they could not produce the document. In CI:2, the director and the APE informed me that they kept a written version of the budget for the first two years of operation, but since have used verbal budget agreements and trust the director to manage money without written records or documents. Thus, data on teacher salaries, school fees, and budgeting in CI:1 and CI:2 were based only on what directors, teachers, and community members shared with me during interviews. CI:1 also did not have complete records of student enrollment and exam results. The notebook used to record this information was missing entries for entire school years. The director explained that previous directors did not keep complete records nor did they pass along records to him when he assumed his role a director. Additionally, the notebook where current records were kept was missing pages, which reduced the amount of information I could collect. This limited my ability to draw comparisons between sites.

In Chapter Three, I presented the details of the research design and methodology used to answer my research question. Individual interviews, focus groups, observations, documents, and
photographs provided the data I used to construct a case study of the curriculum policies and practices in Akebou schools. In Chapters Four and Five, I describe each of the research sites and present the thematic findings of my study.
CHAPTER 4
DESCRIPTION OF SITES IN THE STUDY

In this chapter, I describe the research sites and participants in my case study by providing a profile of each site and each participant group. In these descriptions, I illustrate the context and setting of the study, which begins to answer my first and third research questions. I also provide insight into the multiple dimensions of my study by describing the features of educational policies and practices from the national-level down to the realities of schools at local-levels. I draw from interview, focus group, observation, document, and photograph data in my descriptions of sites and participants.

Overview of Project Sites and Participants

As described in Chapter Three, my study investigated educational policies and practices in Akebou, Togo within the context of the global-to-local continuum and the policy-practice divide. Like many developing countries, national educational policies in Togo are influenced by international trends in educational policies and practices, which placed international and national policies at the macro-level of my study. The meso-level of my study considered the role that regional educational offices play in the implementation, oversight, and evaluation of national policy. Finally, the realities and experiences in Akebou schools comprised the micro-level of my study. In order to construct an information-rich case study, I visited four key research sites that provided insight into the realities of educational policies and practices in Togo. Consistent with
the analytical framework (See Figure 1.3, p. 13), this Chapter provides site descriptions that reflect each level of my study.

**Research Site 1: Ministry of Education (MN:1)**

As the analytic framework in Figure 1.3 (pp. 13) shows, the Togolese Ministry of Education (MOE, coded MN:1) was the top level of my study in the context of Togo. The MOE controls and oversees the implementation of educational policy and national examinations. As such, the MOE plays a crucial role in determining the features of educational policy, which made it a crucial site for data collection so that I could answer my first research question. The MOE and the policy perspective also allowed me to compare and contrast between the ideals presented in policies and the realities experienced at the level of practice.

To better understand macro-level perspectives in my study, I visited the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Lomé, Togo to observe the physical plant and interview the Director of the Cabinet. The visit allowed me to better understand how educational issues were viewed in the national policy context. During the interview, I asked questions about the goals and purposes of education in Togo, the development of curriculum and content standards, the role of the MOE in educational policy-making and implementation, key issues in Togolese education, and the role of community-based educational initiatives in the larger context of international development. I discuss the details of the interview as they relate to the thematic findings later in Chapter Five. I also included information from policy documents in the site description because they offer insight into the official policy perspective.
Overarching Goals and Purposes of Togolese Education

Before arriving at the Ministry, I read and took analytic notes in several documents that I had collected prior to fieldwork to familiarize myself with educational policy in Togo. The Togolese constitution guarantees the right to education for all citizens in article 35, which reads:

Art. 35 : L’Etat reconnaît le droit à l’éducation des enfants et crée les conditions favorables à cette fin. L’école est obligatoire pour les enfants des deux sexes jusqu’à l’âge de quinze (15) ans. L’Etat assure progressivement la gratuité de l’enseignement public
(The State recognizes the right of education for all children and will create favorable conditions to achieve this goal. Schooling is obligatory for students of both sexes to the age of fifteen (15) years. The State shall progressively provide free public education) (Togolese Constitution, 2002).

The inclusion of education as a constitutionally protected right showed the importance of education at the national (macro) level, as education clearly played a key role in the general plan for national development. One of the central roles of the Togolese Ministry of Education was to ensure that this right was appropriately implemented and that all citizens were afforded the opportunity to access schooling (Précis Scolaires, 1983; Interview, MN:1:O1, May 26, 2014).

The Précis de Législation et Administrations Scolaires (The Handbook of Togolese Educational Policy)—which I purchased during fieldwork—further outlined the key goals of education as expressed in policy ideals. The seven principles and objectives of Togolese education are: democratization, compulsory schooling, neutrality, free education, diversity, workforce preparation, and the revitalization of the national culture. The Handbook offered detailed descriptions of the educational goals and objectives:

La démocratisation : Eduquer les jeunes, quels qu’ils soient, en tant que personnes et membres d’une société par le moyen de l’école et selon l’inspiration des valeurs issues de la dignité de l’homme, valeurs qui sont garanties par la Déclaration universelle des droits de l’homme. En donnant a chacun une égalité de chance, tendre a créer une société nationale solidaire, fraternelle et pacifique. Il s’agit de l’Egalité des chances pour tous dans l’accès aux libertés ainsi qu’aux responsabilités individuelles et
collectives. La justice en tant qu’elle est ordonnée au respect et à la promotion de la dignité humaine est, dans ses réalisations concrètes, la condition de la paix.

Par conséquent, dans le concret, permettre par les moyens, administratifs, matériels et financiers mis en œuvre, et par l’orientation, à tous les enfants des deux sexes de poursuivre leurs études indépendamment de leurs conditions sociales.

(Democratization: To educate all young people through schooling as individuals and as members of society to respect the dignity of humanity, values that are protected by the Declaration of Human Rights. In giving each student equal opportunity, try to create a national society that is solid, brotherly, and peaceful. The equality of chance is important for all to access the freedom of individual and collective responsibility. Justice is required for the respect and promotion of human dignity and can concretely achieve conditions of peace. Consequently, by providing the administrative, material, and financial needs of all children of both sexes the state ensures they can continue their education regardless of social conditions.)

L’obligation scolaire : Pour ce faire, la Reforme a rendu obligatoire l’école pour tous les enfants de 2 ans révolus a 15 ans. L’intention du législateur est d’éléver le niveau culturel de nos contemporains. A un monde domine par la technique et l’administration, l’homme doit s’adapter par des études toujours plus poussées en durée et contenu. Il faut savoir apprendre, juger, communiquer, s’adapter. Ainsi en généralisant la fréquentation des écoles, on en attend, surtout pour les milieux défavorisés, une égalisation de chances. Il faudra une Égalité de chances dans la vie et éviter la course aux obstacles scolaires, tel que les diplômes considèrent comme une fin en soi.

(Obligatory Schooling: To achieve the above goal, the reform has made schooling obligatory for all students from ages 2 to 15 years. The intention of this legislation is to raise the cultural level of our next generation. In a world dominated by the technical and the administrative, man must adapt evermore advanced studies, both in duration and content. One must know how to learn, judge, communicate, and adapt. Thus, increasing school attendance, we hope to improve the equality of opportunity, particularly for underprivileged areas. It will take equal educational opportunity in life to avoid the current scholarly obstacles, such as viewing diplomas as an end in themselves.)

La neutralité : L’Etat garant de la paix et de la promotion des individus et des groupes dans la société, reconnaît le pluralisme : son institution scolaire pratique la tolérance et ne prend pas parti entre les individus, groupes ou thèses, mais dans le respect des idéologies et des conviction religieuses, exerce une neutralité positive.

(Neutrality: The state guarantees peace and the promotion of individuals and groups in society, recognizes pluralism: educational institutions practice tolerance and do not take sides between individuals, groups or theses, but in respect of ideologies and religious belief, has a positive neutrality.)

La gratuite : L’enseignement est en principe gratuit. L’Etat vient ainsi au devant des familles pour soulager de leurs charges scolaire. C’est la seule condition pour mettre en œuvre vraiment la démocratisation, et l’obligation de l’école. C’est pourquoi l’Etat prend en charge le traitement de tout le personnel enseignant, technique, et administratif de tous les degrés d’enseignement ainsi que le financement de la construction et de
l’équipement des locaux. Les collectivités secondaires et les populations apportent leurs contributions en nature ou en main-d’œuvre.

(Free Schooling: Schooling is in principle free. The state thus helps families to relieve their school expenses. This is the only condition to truly put in practice the democratization of the country, and the obligation of school. It is why the state takes total charge of the salaries and financial needs of teachers, technical workers, and administrators at all levels of education as well as funding for the construction and provision of materials for local schools. Secondary collectives and local populations bring their contributions in-kind or in labor.)

La mixité : La mixité est appliquée depuis le jardin d’enfants jusqu’à l’université. Il s’agit la plus exactement d’une coéducation de sexes. Cette coéducation des sexes doit être intégrée dans un system général d’attentive et complète formation morale.

(Diversity: Diversity is applied from kindergarten through the university. It occurs, more precisely, through the coeducation of sexes. This coeducation of sexes must be integrated in the general system for careful and complete formation of student morals.)

La rentabilité : Faire en sorte que la système accuse moins de déperdition et qu’il vise une éducation intégrée préparant davantage pour la vie, voilà pourquoi entre autres choses il faut veiller a la qualification professionnelle du personnel enseignant et d’encadrement forme en nombre suffisant ; a la production de matériel didactique appropri et adapte. Ajoutez a cela de nouveaux rapports maitre-élève conçus dans l’esprit des méthodes actives. Une vraie éducation intégrée suppose également que la dichotomie entre enseignement général et enseignement technique soit supprimée, c’est-a-dire que dans l’un comme dans l’autre la théorie soit soutenue par la pratique et vice versa.

(Workforce Preparation: To organize education in a way that reduces dropouts and prepares more students for life, that's why among other things it is important to focus on the professional qualifications of teachers and make sure they exist in sufficient number; the production of appropriate and well-adapted curriculum material is important. Add reformed relationships between student-teacher in the spirit of active pedagogy. A true integrated education also assumes that the dichotomy between general education and technical education is removed, that is to say, theory is supported by practice and vice versa.)

La revalorisation : La formation intégrale de l’homme togolais commande un revalorisation de la culture nationale, et un développement de l’enseignement des langues nationales qui préservent les éléments culturels, partie intégrante de notre personnalité.

(Revitalize: The formation of the Togolese man requires a revitalization of the national culture, and the development of teaching national languages that preserves cultural elements that are integral parts of our personality) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, pp. 9-10)

These seven central principles and objectives of Togolese education offer the official policy perspective on the importance of education and situate education within larger plans for national,
economic, and personal development. They begin to answer my first research question by illustrating key features of Togolese education policy as they relate to CEG-level education.

Based on these policy statements, it is clear that Togolese education aims to be free, universal, democratic, and is designed to promote a strong national identity. The policy statements also show a clear influence from international trends in education, as is evidenced by the reference to the United Nation’s Declaration of Human Rights in the first principle (See above, Democratization, Précis Scolaires, 1983, pp. 9). I return to these seven principles in my discussion of the development theme in Chapter Five.

The above policy ideals also indicated that the Togolese MOE would provide financial support for education at all levels to reduce the costs for parents. The ‘La gratuité’ ideal enumerates that financial support includes teacher salaries, curriculum materials, and the cost of school construction (See above, Précis Scolaires, 1983, p. 9). Later in the policy document, the issue of financial support is addressed more directly:


(Financial support for education is assured by the state, secondary and local collectives, national organization, and parental contributions. The state ensures entire financial support for the functioning of the school; it also intervenes in the investment budget. For teachers at primary and secondary levels, the state participates in the construction of schools and the provision of materials. It provides total financial support for the construction of buildings for schooling at third and forth degrees. At all levels of public
education, the state takes complete charge of all teaching personnel and administrative personnel. It provides each teacher with individual materials for work and to the extent possible, the teaching materials. Building maintenance is the responsibility of the State. On their side, the municipalities and prefectures invest a portion of their budget to the teaching of first and second degrees in their respective territories. Parents are involved in the construction and repair of school facilities. They make a contribution in kind and volunteer labor.) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, pp. 42-43)

This policy clearly stated that the official Togolese MOE policy perspective claimed to provide complete financial support for all schools at all levels of education (from the primary-level through university). This policy ideal offered insight into the contemporary features of Togolese educational policy and provided comparative contrast to the realities experienced by educators working in both state-sponsored and CI schools at the local level. I will discuss the role of financial support for education in more detail in the school funding thematic finding, using these policies as the foundation for those discussions.

Additionally policy documents also stipulated the requirements for school buildings and teacher qualifications. The Handbook of Togolese Education Policy stated that all classrooms must have a “Longueur: 8 a 9m, Largeur : 6,50 a 7,50m, Hauteur : 3,5 a 4m (Length: 8 to 9 meters, Width: 6.50 to 7.50 meters, Height: 4.5 to 4 meters)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.17). It further stated that school grounds were to include:

Des salles de classe, un bureau de Directeur, un magasin, un bibliothèque, un atelier, un jardin ou un champ scolaire, des sanitaires, un complexe de sport
(Classrooms, a Director’s office, a storage room, a library, a workshop, a school garden or agricultural fields, restrooms, and a sports complex) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.16).

A 2011 policy document published by the Togolese Ministry of Education expanded on the requirements for school grounds, stating:

Sur les normes et standards de qualité, élaboré par le rapporteur spécial du Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies aux Droits de l’Homme (HCDH)...Composition du Paquet Minimum : Salles de classes accessibles et équipées en mobilier, matériel didactique et manuels scolaires ; Aire de jeux (taille minimum : surface d’un terrain de
foot) ; Cour boisée ; Point d’eau ; Latrines : Bloc administratif (Bureau de la direction, Bureau du personnel d’appui et Salles de professeurs ; Magasin

(Based on the norms and standards of quality elaborated by the special report from the United Nations High Commission of Human Rights (UNHCHR)…Composition of a Basic School: Accessible classrooms equipped with furniture; teaching materials and textbooks; playground (minimum size: area of a soccer field); shaded courtyard; water source; toilets; administrative block (director’s office, office for support staff, teachers lounge); storage space) (MEPSA, 2011, p.3)

While these requirements conformed with internationally accepted norms for school construction (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; MEPSA, 2011), the realities at local levels provided insight into the reality of practical experiences, given that none of the three school sites met these minimum requirements presented in these policy documents. These policies lay the foundation for my discussion of buildings in the space/context thematic finding in Chapter Five.

The documents also provided evidence that the Ministry of Education set the minimum qualification requirements for teacher training programs. The 2011 policy document stipulated that teachers at the CEG-level must have “License et/ou CAP-CEG (Bachelor degree or CAP-CEG, the teacher training exam for the CEG-level)” (MEPSA, 2011). This minimum requirement included in a policy document provided me information to compare and contrast with my findings at local-levels, which was a central component of the analytical framework of my study (See Figure 1.3, p. 13).

Ministry Site and Participant

The MOE is located in a two-story building the Dekon neighborhood of Lomé, near several other ministries responsible for finance, agriculture, and human resources (See location map, Figure 3.4, p.87). The building houses offices for officials who oversee all sectors of primary and secondary education, including curriculum development, examinations, and teacher training. However, The Ministry of Human Resources, located a few city blocks from the MOE,
is responsible for managing salaries, placements, and promotions for teachers and other government employees. The Dekon neighborhood is home to headquarters for several international NGOs and embassies, including the United States, making it a center for administrative and development related activities.

*Figure 4.1. Entrance to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in Lomé (Site MN:1)*
While the president of Togo holds the power to approve or reject policies at the highest level, the MOE is the highest governing-body in the Togolese educational system and is responsible for the development, implementation, and evaluation of educational policies and projects. These duties fulfill the MOE’s central goal of:

_Eduquer les jeunes, quels qu’ils soient, en tant que personnes et membres d’une société, par le moyen de l’école et selon l’inspiration des valeurs issues de la dignité de l’homme, valeurs qui sont garanties par la déclaration universelle des droits de l’homme_ (Educating all young people through schooling as individuals and as members of society to respect the dignity of man, values that are protected by the declaration of human rights) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.9).

Thus, the MOE oversees all levels of schooling, from pre-primary through high school, and worked to prepare students for life in Togolese society and a globalized world. However, the _Ministère de l’Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche_ (Ministry of Higher Education and
Research) is responsible for governing educational policy at the university level and beyond (“Gouvernement: République du Togo”, 2014).

While in Lomé, I visited the Ministry of Education to conduct an interview with the Director of the Cabinet, who is responsible for “donner aux directions centrales…des directives conformes a la politique générale de l’éducation définie par le ministre (transmitting to regional offices…. polices that conform with the general policies defined by the Minister)”, according to the Handbook of Togolese Education Policy (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.44). After scheduling a meeting with his receptionist, I waited in a large, air-conditioned conference room with several other individuals who identified themselves as NGO workers, regional inspectors, and representatives from various religious groups. While waiting, I was able to discuss educational issues with a regional inspector who had overseen Sciences de la vie et de la terre (Life Science or SVT) education in the Akebou Prefecture. This informal conversation provided regional-level insight into the setting and context of my study. The inspector informed me that he was at the MOE to solicit funding for car repairs so his team of inspectors could visit schools to evaluate teacher performance and ensure that national-policies were being implemented appropriately to fulfill the his duty as regional inspector (Field notes, May 16, 2014). His comments supported the MOE’s policy statement on its role in the support and oversight of regional direction and regional inspection offices, which stated

“(The MOE is) tache de donner aux directions centrales et aux services extérieurs des directives conformes a la politique générale de l’éducation définie par le ministre dans la ligne arrêtée par le gouvernement

(The MOE is tasked with giving the central regional offices and exterior services the directives that conform to the general policy defined by the ministry in line with the governmental role) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.44).

The regional inspector’s comments also situated the MOE and regional inspections within the hierarchy of Togolese educational administration.
The Director of the Cabinet’s office was located in a large, private room. Photographs of president Faure Gnassingbe, along with other national symbols, were prominently displayed on the wall behind his desk. The office was not equipped with access to a computer or the Internet, which was indicative of a larger issue relating to the lack of access to technology throughout Togo (Field notes, May 16, 2014).

In response to my interview questions (see Appendix A(3)), the Director of the Cabinet told me that he was born and raised in the Sotouboua Prefecture in the Central Region of Togo and was ethnically Kabye. He finished CEG and Lycee in the Central Region before moving to Lomé to attend university. After completing a master’s degree at the University of Abidjan in Cote d'Ivoire, he traveled to France to pursue a doctorate in botanical sciences. He spoke at length about his dissertation research, which addressed the medicinal value of plants used in traditional African medicine. Upon completing his PhD, he worked as a botanical researcher, traveling between France and West Africa. He left this line of work, however, when he received a call from high-ranking government official who asked him to serve as Director of the Cabinet (Interview, MN:1:O1, May, 16, 2014). Thus, without experience working as an educator in Togo, he assumed one of the highest positions within the hierarchy of educational administration and policy-making.

**Administration Structure**

The Director of the Cabinet informed me that the Ministry of Education is responsible for the development of educational policies and for the transmission of policies to regional inspection offices (see policy cited above, Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.44). Regional offices then train and support school directors and teachers to ensure that policies are implemented appropriately. He described the administrative hierarchy of the Togolese educational system,
which was verified by the Handbook of Togolese Educational Policy (Précis Scolaires, 1983, pp. 43-48) and is shown in Figure 4.3.

![Diagram of the administrative hierarchy of the Togolese education system.]

Figure 4.3. Administrative hierarchy of the Togolese education system (Précis Scolaires, 1983, pp. 43-48; Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014; Photograph, June 27, 2014)

According to the Handbook of Togolese Education Policy, the MOE was:

Nomme par décret du Président de la République... et (le ministère) participe a la conduite de la politique éducationnelle du pays, selon l’article 22 de la constitution adoptée par le référendum du 30 Décembre 1979.

(Created by the decree of the President of the Republic… and the MOE participates in the development of education policy for the country, following article 22 of the Togolese constitution adopted on 30 December 1979) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.43).
Situated at the top level of the administrative hierarchy, the Ministry of Education reports only to the president on issues related to education. Below the MOE, the Direction de la prospective, de la planification, de l'éducation et l'évaluation (Office of Policy Planning and Educational Evaluation or DPPE) is responsible for collecting data on current educational practices and conducting evaluations on the effectiveness of educational policies (Précis Scolaires, 1983). DPPE reports are read by higher-ranking MOE officials and used to inform the development of new policies and reforms. The DPPE is charged with administering nationally normed, terminal grade examinations and diplomas, including the Certificat d'Études du Premier Degré (CEPD) for primary school, the Brevet d'études du premier cycle (BEPC) for CEG, and the Baccalaureate I (BAC I) and Baccalaureate II (BAC II) for Lycee. The next organization below the DPPE on the hierarchy of Togolese educational administration is the Direction Régionale de l'éducation (Regional Direction of Education or DRE) (Précis Scolaires, 1983). This agency oversees directors and teachers by conducting school visits, organizing teacher trainings, and developing regional examinations for les classes des passages (the non-terminal grades of schooling cycles). For example, CEG-level education is comprised of four grades (sixième, cinquième, quatrième, troisième). Students in troisième (the terminal grade) take the national BEPC examination, while students in sixième, cinquième, and quatrième (les classes des passages) take regional examinations. I will discuss the details of examinations and their impact on local-level educational realities in more detail in Chapter Five.

Under the regional directors, there are regional inspectors (a territorial subdivision of the entire region) at each level of schooling (Primary, CEG, and Lycee). Like the regional directors, inspectors also conduct school visits and organize teacher trainings. The role of the inspectors is mainly to expand the reach of the regional direction by increasing the amount of school visits
that can be conducted during the school year since the regional direction alone cannot visit all of the schools in their jurisdiction. Additionally, inspectors at the CEG and Lycee level specialize in one subject matter, which allows them to provided specific instructional feedback to the teachers in their discipline (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). The centralized system of educational administration in Togo showed a clear line of hierarchy, with each level implementing policies that had been passed down from those at higher levels. While it did not surface in policy documents or interviews, Bafei (2011) noted that the centralized educational structure was inherited from French colonial rule, illustrating the importance of a post-colonial perspective.

Interviews with school directors at local-levels also indicated the importance of reporting back to high levels after policies had been implemented. Thus there was a two-way flow of information: policies flowed down the chain of command, while reports flowed back up (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014; Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014).

The Ministry official also described the policy-making process during the interview. His comments were corroborated by a photograph of a graphic in policy documents collected in CI:2 (See Figure 4.4). When pressures from national or international sources require educational reform, the MOE selects a committee comprised of educational specialists (school directors, regional inspectors, and MOE officials) to develop new educational policies. Once the policy is developed in writing, it is then piloted and implemented via the system shown in Figure 4.5, which is a reproduction of the photograph of the policy document to enhance clarity. Before a policy can be implemented, the MOE must present findings from needs assessments and pilot programs before gaining Presidential approval, given that the President holds executive power over all governmental policies. The Ministry official mentioned that major educational reforms must be approved by parliament before being passed to the executive, while minor reforms can
be implemented without parliamentary approval. When asked to specify differences between major and minor educational reforms, he said that there was no specific measure to differentiate them (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014).

Figure 4.4. The policy-making and implementation process

Figure 4.5. The policy-making and implementation process reproduced for clarity (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014; Photograph, June 27, 2014)
In addition to overseeing the DPPE and Regional Director Offices, the Ministry of Education enforces the implementation of national educational policies by sanctioning schools that violate regulations. For example, in an effort to increase enrollment rates for female students, the MOE implemented a policy that required schools to offer reduced tuition fees for girls, though I could not find a specific policy document describing the reform, given that the Handbook of Togolese Education Policy was most recently updated in 1983. Schools that violated the policy received a warning from the MOE and, if found in violation again, faced repercussions (Interview, MN:1:O1, May, 16, 2014). Additionally, the MOE is responsible for enforcing the professional code of conduct for teachers. The Handbook of Togolese Educational Policy stipulated that “On voudrait qu’il (l’enseignant) lui même un modèle, un prototype et donc sans reproche (The teacher must be a model, a prototype without reproach)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.88). As part of being a model for students, the MOE official stated that teachers must refrain from inappropriate relations with female students. Policy stated “A cet égard, il lui est rappelé que des relations coupables avec des élèves de l’autre sexe sont rigoureusement interdites (Also, the teacher is reminded that relationships with students of the other sex are rigorously banned) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.86). As part of internationally motivated reforms to increase female enrollment, the Togolese government implemented strict punishments for teachers who have impregnated or solicited sexual relations with students. The MOE is responsible for residing over cases of sexual abuse in schools and delivering punishments to teachers found in violation of policy (Interview, MN:1:O1, May, 16, 2014).

**International Assistance and the Ministry of Education**

Additionally, the Ministry of Education plays a key role in the solicitation and distribution of funding from international organizations slated for educational purposes. The
The MOE was responsible for planning, overseeing, and evaluating how World Bank funding was used for this infrastructure development project. The MOE official mentioned some of the challenges of the project by telling story about two villages that disagreed over the rights to benefit from the project, which forced the Ministry to intervene and develop a resolution that was acceptable to both parties. He noted that the vast majority of international funding slated for educational purposes focus on primary education while middle and high school education receive significantly less international assistance (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). In a village between ST:1 and CI:2, I observed the construction of a primary school that was part of the World Bank project cited in the press release and the interview, which confirmed that the project was creating tangible improvements to the educational infrastructure in Togo at the primary
school level. I observed no international assistance at the CEG-level in any of the research sites.

Figure 4.6 shows the sign announcing the construction of a new primary school.

![Image of construction sign]

*Figure 4.6. The construction of primary school classrooms between ST:1 and CI:2 with funding from the World Bank*

**Curriculum and Standards**

In addition to managing international development assistance, the Ministry of Education determines the curriculum goals, objectives, and standards in primary and secondary education (Précis Scolaires, 1983; Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). Prior to the 1975 New School reform, Togolese schools used textbooks, curriculum standards, and learning objectives inherited from French colonial rule, which illustrated the importance of the post-colonial perspective (Bafei, 2011; Kelly & Kelly, 2002; UNESCO, 1975, Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). The Eurocentric curriculum, however, was replaced with curriculum standards and textbooks written...
and developed by African educators and policy-makers as part of a reform intended to make schooling reflect the lived experiences of students (UNESCO, 1975). The New School reform also aimed to instill a sense of national identity among students by including the history of African people and their contributions to global society. A UNESCO (1975) report on the New School reform explained that:

Each discipline will be seen as part of the fight against underdevelopment. In geography, for example, stress will be placed on the knowledge of the country’s resources and real potential. History will be that of Africa, seen with the eyes of Africans. In natural sciences, the main concern will be to know the environment and the possibilities of exploitation, which it offers. Economic activities at the school will have an important place: fields and school gardens, small-scale livestock breeding, craftsmanship, etc…At the secondary level of education, the pupil in the south, in addition to Ewe, will learn Kabye as a second language while the pupil in the north will, in addition to Kabye, learn Ewe as a second language (p.43)

This sentiment was restated in the Handbook of Togolese Education Policy as one of the principles and objectives of Togolese education. As previously noted, revalorization was considered an important objective of education in order to “préservent les éléments culturels, partie intégrante de notre personnalité (preserve cultural elements that are integral parts of our personality)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.10). From the national policy perspective, the MOE official explained that contemporary curriculum reflected local culture and had practical applications in daily life, stating “Dans le programme actuel, il y a des leçons qui tiennent compte des réalités des communautés locales (In the current curriculum standards, there are lessons that take into account the realities in local communities)” (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). Thus, the comparison of primary policy documents, educational report documents, and individual interview data revealed similarity in the goals and purposes of curriculum content and standards at the national-level in Togo.
However, a review of the curriculum standards themselves revealed only some direct connections to the local community. While it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to cite and analyze each curriculum standard, of which there are over 700, I will provide several examples that serve as case-in-point examples of standards that are applicable in local contexts and those that are not. For example, within the curriculum standards for French language classes, students in cinquième (the second year of CEG schooling, abbreviated as 5eme) are required to read D.T. Niane’s translation of Sundiata in the first trimester of the academic year (Français, n.d). As an African novel that discusses the intersection of historical and modern traditions, Sundiata seems an appropriate choice of literature for students due to its relevance to life experiences at local levels. However, the two other required readings for the trimester are from the French and American authors, Alphonse Daudet and Jack London (Français, n.d). Despite providing examples of literary devices that are important to the development of language skills, these selections do not reflect the realities of the local setting in the Akebou Prefecture. For example, Call of the Wild takes place in the Yukon with snow as one of the central images, which is a foreign and abstract construct in the equatorial heat of Togo. These examples illustrated both the relevancy and irrelevancy of curriculum.

Similarly, curriculum content standards for Sciences de la vie et la terre (Life Sciences, or SVT) require students to learn about “l’Alimentation des herbivores: le bœuf et de chèvre (Nutritional habits of herbivores: Cows and goats)”, which has practical applications in communities that rely on subsistence agriculture and small-scale animal husbandry (Sciences de la vie et la terre, n.d). However, SVT standards also require students to learn about “Volcanisme (Volcanic activity)” (Sciences de la vie et la terre, n.d), which teachers at local-levels noted was purely abstract and of little use to students (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). Thus, the case-
in-point examples of French and SVT curriculum standards shows that the implementation of “des leçons qui tiennent compte des réalités des communautés locales (lessons that take into account the realities in local communities)” (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014) were only partially reflected in curriculum standards and the realities of practice. I discuss the issue of curriculum standards and educational objectives in more depth in the curriculum theme in Chapter Five by tracing the national policy perspective down to practice at local levels.

Additionally, the publication of state-approved textbooks also highlighted the importance of post-colonial perspectives. Despite the Ministry’s efforts to make curriculum more relevant in local settings, the official mentioned that most textbooks—which are written by African authors—are published in France, which was confirmed by my review of five state-approved textbooks collected during fieldwork. This was due to the lack of economic infrastructure and underdevelopment in Togo. With no publishing company large enough to produce enough textbooks to meet the needs of Togolese schools, the MOE was forced to buy textbooks from France, which increased cost and pulled money out of the Togolese economy (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). The Director of the Cabinet expressed a desire to create Togolese-owned and operated textbook publishing companies to reduce costs, facilitate the distribution of books to schools, and increase incentives for Togolese educators to write textbooks tailored to Togolese contexts.

I discuss curriculum issues in more detail in Chapter Five, but the policies and background presented in this section lay the foundation for my investigation into gaps between policies and practices. The MOE played an important role in determining the curriculum content while also offering insight into how it should be taught by teachers at the local level. National and regional examinations contributed to MOE control over schooling in the Akebou Prefecture.
Examinations

Finally, the Ministry of Education, along with the DPPE, is responsible for developing, administering, and evaluating nationally normed, terminal grade examinations (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). Though none of the policy documents specifically addressed the issue of examinations, interviews at the MOE and local-level school sites revealed that regional and national examinations were a responsibility of the MOE and their administrative hierarchy. It is important to note, however, that policy information drawn from documents did not corroborate their information, thus the majority of my information on examinations is pulled from interview data. Interestingly, I was able to obtain books that contained the prompts and accepted responses for BEPC examinations from 1980 to 2013. Though these documents did not contain educational policy, they offered insight into the realities of examination experiences and the curriculum content that was tested on past examinations.

Each year, committees comprised of regional directors and inspectors write questions for the national exams (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). Naturally, the questions must reflect the content covered in the curriculum standards. Again, analyzing and linking each exam question with its corresponding curriculum standards for each BEPC examination from 1980 to 2013 is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Instead, I will provide a case-in-point example here and several others in the curriculum thematic finding. For example, the BEPC exam in 2009 asked “La conférence de Berlin fut le signal pour le partage de l’Afrique. Où et quand cette conférence a eu lieu? (The Berlin conference began the scramble for Africa. Where and when did this conference take place?)” (BEPC au Togo, 2013). This exam question directly corresponded to curriculum standard 2.2 in the History-Geography standards, which required students to learn “L’Afrique et la conquête colonial: les explorations, la conférence de Berlin, les résistances de
quelques souverains (African and colonial conquest: explorations, the Berlin conference, and the resistance of several sovereign groups)” (Histoire-Géographie, n.d). This analysis of policy and exam documents illustrated the connection between curriculum standards and examination questions. Educators at local-levels also expressed their faith that examination questions would only draw from content included in the official curriculum, which required them to closely follow the content standards and official textbooks (Interview, ST:1:T2, May 28, 2014; Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014).

The exams are administered and graded by teachers, school directors, and regional inspectors. Results are then reported to the Ministry of Education and used as a measure of educational quality. The MOE official explained “On utilise le CEPD, BEPC, et le BAC pour juger de la qualité de l'éducation et d'assurer que tous les élèves reçoivent la même éducation (We use the CEPD, BEPC, and the BAC to judge the quality of education and to assure that all students receive the same education)” (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). This statement reflected the concern for educational equality as expressed in both the constitution and the Handbook of Togolese Educational Policy, which identified one prime objective of education, to ensure “L’Egalite de chances pour tous dans l’accès aux libertés ainsi qu’aux responsabilités individuelles et collectives (that all individuals have equal access to liberties and the ability to engage in personal and collective responsibilities)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.9). In addition, policy indicated that all schools—state, religious, private, and CI—must follow MOE curriculum standards, stating “Des sanctions peuvent être prises…pour le non respect des programmes et plans d’études en vigueur (Sanctions may be taken…for the non-respect of rigorous curriculum standards and programs of study)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.15). Thus, from the national policy perspective, examinations were an important tool to ensure that all students received the same
education, regardless of it they attended school in the north or the south or if they attended public, private, or community-operated schools. Interestingly, for the most part, educators at local-levels shared the national policy perspective on examinations. I will discuss the role of examinations in more detail in the *curriculum* thematic finding.

I included the Ministry of Education as a research site in my study because it provided national-level insight into the curriculum policies and practices in Togo. The observations, interviews, and documents that I collected at the Ministry helped to answer the first research question by addressing the contemporary features of Togolese educational policy. Without the key interview and the policy documents that contained contemporary educational policy, it would have been impossible for me to compare and contrast the realities experienced by educators and community members at the local level with the educational ideals presented in national policies. In the following section, I provide descriptions of the three local-level sites selected for participation in my research study. These sites offered insight into the local-level realities of educational experiences in the Akebou Prefecture as shown in my analytic framework in Chapter One (see Figure 1.3, p.16).

**Overview of Akebou Sites: School Site Profiles and Village Contexts**

In the following sections, I begin to address the first and third research questions by describing the sites and participants in the context of the Akebou Prefecture. In the descriptions I provide insight into the key issues and general conditions of the schools in my study obtained during data collection and fieldwork. In each section, I begin with a description of the physical conditions and local history of the school site, followed by a description of the general conditions of the village, and culminate with a portrait of interview participants. In Table 4.1, I summarize
comparative data across the three school sites. I provided location maps for each of the sites in Figure 3.3 in Chapter Three (p. 85).

Table 4.1

*Comparative summary of three participating school sites*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Site 2 (ST:1)</th>
<th>Site 3 (CI:1)</th>
<th>Site 4 (CI:2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>34km north of Kougnohou, market town, population 2,000 (approx.)</td>
<td>37km northeast of Kougnohou, no market, population 750 (approx.)</td>
<td>28km north of Kougnohou, no market, population 1,000 (approx.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Funding</td>
<td>Togolese MOE and local fees</td>
<td>Local fees and community contributions. No MOE financial support</td>
<td>Local fees and community contributions. No MOE financial support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of educators</td>
<td>1 State director 1 State teachers 2 EVs</td>
<td>4 EVs</td>
<td>5 EVs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of students</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Togolese Official Curriculum</td>
<td>Togolese Official Curriculum</td>
<td>Togolese Official Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniforms</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>Northern edge of village, 3 acre campus</td>
<td>Eastern edge of village, 2 acre campus</td>
<td>Eastern edge of village, 2 acre campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classrooms and physical plant</td>
<td>4 classrooms, 2 testing classrooms (disrepair), Director office, Teacher lounge, Storage room, Teacher paillote</td>
<td>4 Classrooms, Teacher paillote</td>
<td>4 classrooms, Teacher paillote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of attendance (Measured in Francs of the Communauté Financière d’Afrique, or FCFA, the currency of Togo)</td>
<td>3,600 FCFA (boys) 2,800 FCFA (girls) Parallel funds 3,000 FCFA (all) Total Cost: 6,600 (boys) or 5,800 (girls)</td>
<td>7,000 FCFA (all) 6,500 FCFA (boys) 6,100 FCFA (girls)</td>
<td>1 mud brick classrooms with corrugated iron roofing; 2 classrooms with thatch roof, open air</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanency of construction</td>
<td>Cement block, corrugated iron roofing</td>
<td>Thatch roof, open air</td>
<td>2 mud brick classrooms with corrugated iron roofing; 2 classrooms with thatch roof, open air</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside space</td>
<td>Courtyard, Soccer field</td>
<td>Courtyard</td>
<td>Courtyard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitation facilities</td>
<td>Rain collecting cistern (broken), Pit toilets (full)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>For purchase from local vendors during recreation</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 BEPC Results</td>
<td>45 candidates; 15 passed; 33.3% passing rate</td>
<td>9 candidates; 0 passed; 0% passing rate</td>
<td>12 candidates; 5 passed; 41.6% passing rate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Site 2: State School (ST:1)

In order to understand the key issues and general conditions of Akebou schools, I conducted interviews, observations, collected document data, and took photographs at the government-sponsored school at the ST:1 site. This provided comparative contrast to the national policy perspective by illustrating the ground level realities in a government school. Additionally, the inclusion of ST:1 in my study allowed me to compare and contrast educational issues between a government school and Community Initiative (CI) schools in the Akebou Prefecture.

The Collège d'Enseignement Général (CEG) in ST:1 is located on the northern edge of the village. It is separated from the nearest houses by a pathway, a small teak wood forest, and a soccer field. I noticed that the separation reduced ambient noise from village activities and resulted in a quiet campus environment. The physical layout of the school consists of four classrooms, an office for the director, a teachers’ lounge, and a covered storage space (Figures 4.7 and 4.8). Each grade level—sixième (6eme), cinquième (5eme), quatrième (4eme), and troisième (3eme)—is assigned a single classroom. Teachers move between classrooms throughout the school day, while students stay in the same room. Sixième students are taught in the easternmost classroom (on the left of the photo) and students in troisième are taught in the westernmost classroom. All school buildings have concrete walls, hard-packed dirt floors, and are covered with corrugated iron roofing. Noise from neighboring classrooms could be heard through open spaces between walls and the roof. In addition to the main buildings, there is also a small, circular thatch-roofed structure (paillote) built from local materials. The paillote serves as a place for teachers to meet between classes, but is also used to hold meetings between teachers, community members, and students (Figure 4.9). The paillote was more popular than the indoor teachers’ lounge because it had better lighting and more airflow. There are also two separate mud
brick classrooms with corrugated iron roofing that were used to administer the BEPC examination when there were too many students to fit into the four classrooms. These buildings have fallen into disrepair because enrollment rates dropped in recent years due to the growing popularity of migrant laborer, therefore eliminating the need for the additional classrooms (Figure 4.10).

There is a large, shaded courtyard between the buildings. Portions of the courtyard are covered by grass and others are hard packed dirt. During school hours, a Togolese flag flies on a pole located in the center of the campus. Students sweep the classrooms and courtyard daily to remove trash and prevent dust from building up. There are two latrines available for students located behind the director’s office. However, these facilities are unsanitary; the pit toilets are nearly full and the walls providing privacy are falling down. I observed most students chose instead to relieve themselves in forested areas nearby (Field notes, May 28, 2014). During interviews and focus groups, teachers lamented the condition of sanitation facilities at the school. In 2008, I funded and oversaw the construction of rain collecting cisterns to provide clean water for schools (visible in Figure 4.8). The cistern at ST:1 has since fallen into disrepair and is no longer functional. Instead, female students are required to bring water from the river each day to provide water for their classmates and the teaching staff (Field notes, May 22, 2014).
Figure 4.7. The four classrooms of ST:1

Figure 4.8. The director’s office, teachers’ lounge, storage space, and non-functional cistern
Figure 4.9. The *paillote* is a meeting place for educators, community members, and students

Figure 4.10. Community-built classrooms for BEPC examinations, now in disrepair
All of the classrooms are equipped with wooden desks. Each desk seats two students and provides a simple writing surface for students to take notes. The classrooms hold between 25 and 30 desks to seat the 40 to 60 students enrolled in each grade. While teachers mentioned that overcrowding of classrooms had been a problem in the past, there are now a sufficient number of desks due to decreased enrollment rates and school-based efforts to build and repair desks (Field notes, May 26, 2014; Interview, ST:1:T1, May 27, 2014). The troisième classroom has chalkboards in the front and rear of the room. There is a title table with a sink at the front of the classroom that was presumably designed to conduct experiments, however, without running water or the materials needed for experiments, the table acts primarily as a podium (Field notes, May 28, 2014). The three other classrooms have chalkboards painted on the front wall of the classroom and no other visible teaching materials. The chalkboards in all four classrooms are faded from years of use without being resurfaced, which created low contrast between the white chalk and the grey background and made it difficult to see the teacher’s writing from the back of the classroom (Field notes, May 26, 2014).

While there are no decorations or examples of student work on the walls, the 5ème and 6ème classrooms have the words “Dieu (God)” and “Merci (Thank you)” written on the walls in what appeared to be charcoal. Since there is no electricity in the community, lighting in the classrooms is provided by windows. Some windows had wooden shutters attached to them, but most were broken or in disrepair. Additionally, three of the four classrooms did not have a functioning door, making it impossible to close and lock the classroom outside of school hours (Field notes, May 23, 2014). The issue of school security and the ability to lock classrooms arose during the focus group interview with teachers who informed me that during the previous year the teachers once arrived on a Monday morning to find human feces in one of the classrooms.
After the incident, teachers asked community members to fix the windows and doors, but their request was not met (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014).

Administratively, a director, three teachers, two volunteer teachers, and a part-time physical education specialist staffed the CEG in ST:1 at the time of fieldwork. The director and three teachers were employed by the MOE and their salaries were paid by the Togolese government. Locally collected school fees called, *cotisations parallèles* (parallel contributions) were used to pay the salaries of the two volunteer teachers and the part-time PE instructor. Each teacher was responsible for teaching one or two subjects at each grade level. Two teachers divided teaching duties for History-Geography and French classes, three teachers covered Math, Life Sciences (SVT), and the Physical Sciences, and one teacher specialized in teaching English as a second language. Additionally, four of the teachers were assigned to be *titulaire* (leader) of each grade and were responsible for overseeing discipline, *travail manuel* (manual labor or TM), and report cards for that grade. While there were instructors for each of the subjects, teachers mentioned that their subject area specialties were not considered for their placement in ST:1. For example, both of the History-Geography and French teachers specialized in French and held a secondary specialization in History-Geography, whereas official policies for placing teachers required one specialist in French and one in History-Geography to provide a more even balance of instructor qualifications (Interview, ST:1:T4, May 28, 2014). All of the teachers in ST:1 were men between the ages of 30 and 45. I provide a more detailed description of teachers below.

The CEG in ST:1 follows the daily schedule presented in official policy. A typical day begins at 6:30am once students arrived at school. A whistle blows at 6:45 and students gather in the courtyard to sing the national anthem and raise the Togolese flag. Classes then begin at 7:00am. Each class lasts 55 minutes, allowing teachers five minutes to move between classes. A
total of five classes are taught in each grade each day. There is a short recess between 9:45 and 10:10 am for students to buy snacks (bananas, roasted peanuts, and flour cakes) from local vendors that come to the CEG campus. Figure 4.11 shows the teaching schedule for troisième. I took this photograph to document the scheduling of subjects in each grade, which allowed me to draw comparisons between recommended schedules stipulated in national curriculum policy and local practices. The school day ends at 12:00 pm and students go home for lunch (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014; Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.22). However, if needed, teachers can call students back in the afternoon for review sessions or extra classes should they fall behind in the official program. Afternoon sessions run from 2:30 or 3:00 pm to 4:30. Afternoons can be reserved for soccer matches between grades at the director’s discretion.

Figure 4.11. The teaching schedule for troisième in CEG ST:1.
At the time of my fieldwork, there were 190 students (138 boys and 52 girls) enrolled at the CEG in ST:1. Table 4.2 shows enrollment rates and BEPC exam results from 2001 to 2014. Students in CEG have completed six years of primary education, thus most students are between the ages of 11 and 18. However, there were some students in *quatrième* and *troisième* in ST:1 that were in their early twenties. The wide range of ages within the CEG schooling cycle classroom is a product of students starting primary school later than the age recommended by the MOE. Age variation is compounded by the practice of retaining students in the same grade when they fail regional or national examinations. The majority of students in ST:1 were from immediate locality, although the school also drew students from four nearby villages and several small farming communities. As recommended by national policy, all students were required to wear school uniforms each day. For boys, the uniforms consist of khaki pants and a button down khaki shirt, while girls were expected to wear a khaki skirt and a white blouse (Field notes, May 27, 2014).

Table 4.2

*Enrollment rates and BEPC exam results for CEG ST:1 from 2001 to 2014*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEPC Year</th>
<th>Boys Presented</th>
<th>Girls Presented</th>
<th>Enroll Total</th>
<th>Presented Boys</th>
<th>Presented Girls</th>
<th>Passed Boys</th>
<th>Passed Girls</th>
<th>Passed Total</th>
<th>% Passing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>60.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>58.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>90.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Enrollment data clearly shows the reduction in students in ST:1 between 2003 and 2004 caused by the establishment of CI schools in sites CI:1 and CI:2. Over 100 students left ST:1 to attend school in their own home communities, which illustrated the importance of educational access and the additional burden on students who are required to travel five to seven kilometers each day to attend school. The data also shows the passing percentage for the BEPC examinations. The range of success rates varies dramatically between years, which a high of 100% of students passing in 2004 to a low of just over 12% in 2010. I compare and contrast passing rates on the BEPC examination in the curriculum thematic finding in Chapter Five.

During classroom observations, I noticed that most students did not have access to textbooks. While I noticed large stacks of textbooks in the director’s office and school storage room, I was informed that many of the books were out of date and no longer reflected current curriculum standards. Though they were few, the director distributed copies of current editions to students. Depending on the subject, students would either share a textbook in groups of three or four students or they would simply use blank notebooks to copy information that had been written on the board by the teacher. These notebooks were then used as surrogate textbooks as they contained the information students needed to pass regional and national exams. It was from this practice that I developed the code “Dans le cahier (In your notebook or CAHIER)”. Several times during observations, I noticed that when students did not respond to questions, the teacher scolded them with phrases like: “vous n'étudiez pas, mais tout cela, c'est dans vos cahiers (You do not study, but all of this, it is in your notebooks)” (Field notes, May 26, 2014). These practices showed, that even without textbooks, teachers made use of all available materials.

In addition to the lack of textbooks, ST:1 also did not have sufficient access to curriculum guides, teaching materials, or supplementary resources. In the several classes I observed, I did
not see the use of any teaching materials apart from the chalkboard. I discuss the lack of materials in more depth in the *curriculum* thematic finding.

The Togolese Ministry of Education established the CEG in ST:1 in 1976. In the first year of operation, the school only offered *sixième*, the lowest grade in the CEG schooling cycle. In subsequent years, the school added classes to reach the full four grades of CEG—*sixième* (6eme), *cinquième* (5eme), *quatrième* (4eme), and *troisième* (3eme). In 1980, the first group of students took the nationally normed BEPC exam; 30 students took the exam, but only five passed for a passing rate of 16.6% (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014). The school’s history was recorded in a notebook that was filled out by the school director each year. It included information on teachers and subjects, the number of students enrolled in each grade, the number of students taking the BEPC, the BEPC passing rate, and logs of important events that occurred during the school year. The document was used to maintain continuity when new directors or teachers were sent by the state to the locality. As a state sponsored school, ST:1 receives funding from the MOE to cover teacher salaries and some of the general operations of the school. Figure 4.12 shows the first entry in the “History of ST:1” document, which described the establishment of the school.
Figure 4.12. The first entry in the “History of ST:1” notebook

Site 1 (ST:1) Village Description

In order to situate the school site within the context of the larger village community, I conducted general observations of village life. This allowed me to compare and contrast some of the issues that arose during interviews. The ST:1 village has a population of approximately 1,500 residents, although specific statistics on population size were unavailable. Most residents are ethnically Akebou and speak Akebou as their primary language. The village spans nearly two and a half square kilometers of mud-brick homes covered with corrugated iron roofing. Most homes are built as compounds, consisting of two to three large rectangular buildings with three to four rooms in each building. Kitchens are constructed as stand alone structures and are not
connected to the main house. They are often covered with thatched roofing stained black by smoke residues from the open wood fires used for cooking.

The village in ST:1 is one of two major market towns in the northern Akebou Prefecture (See location map in Figure 3.3, p. 85). As such, it is larger than many of the surrounding villages and is a center for economic and governmental activities. While ST:1 is an economic hub in northern Akebou, the majority of residents are commercial and subsistence farmers. Nearly all families grow the majority of their food and sell excess crops for profit. Coffee and cocoa are common cash crops grown in the region and sold between 1,500 and 3,500 FCFA per kilogram at the time of fieldwork. A village-operated growers’ association regulates the sale of coffee and cocoa products from a building that serves as an office and warehouse space. Beyond agricultural activities, several small general stores in the community offer basic goods including, pasta, rice, tomato paste, and onions (Field notes, May 30, 2014).

The geographic location of ST:1 contributed to the social and economic isolation described by educators and community members (Focus Group, ST:1:FG1, May 27, 2014; Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014). ST:1 is 34 kilometers north of Kougnohou and nearly 100 kilometers from the regional capital, Atakpamé (See location map in Figure 3.3, p. 85). The unpaved, unmaintained dirt roads that traverse the hilly terrain in between ST:1 and Kougnohou make transportation difficult. Not only do the poor roads limit personal transportation, but they also have economic implications. On several occasions during fieldwork, I observed that fruit vendors had to dispose of over-ripened fruit because they could not find transportation to bring the products to market. However, the international community and the Togolese government are addressing the issue of underdeveloped transportation infrastructure. At the time of my fieldwork, construction crews were widening and resurfacing the dirt road running from
Nymasila (50 kilometers north of Atakpamé along the national road) through CI:1 and ST:1. I was told that this was part of an internationally funded project designed to increase economic activity in West African nations. When finished, the project will connect Benin, Togo and Ghana (Field notes, May 30, 2014).

There are two primary schools in ST:1—one state-sponsored and public and the other private and Catholic. While I did not collect data in any of the primary schools, it is important to note that they were present in the community. In 2013, the Catholic school received funding from a private Italian donor to build three new classrooms and a director’s office to reduce overcrowding in the existing three classrooms. The public primary school classrooms are located in an open-air structure with a corrugated iron roof supported by a wooden frame (Field notes, May 29, 2014). Both schools are staffed by a director and between five and seven teachers. All of the primary school teachers are from the Akebou Prefecture and speak Akebou, which contrasts with the CEG, where most teachers are from other regions. Both primary schools rely on volunteer teachers to fill vacant positions, not covered by the state or Catholic educational organizations. Again, neither of the primary schools were sites in my research, but they were part of the community context.

The major health and sanitation facility in ST:1 is a small medical center (dispensaire) staffed by one nurse and supported by members of the local Red Cross association. The health center is used primarily for childbirth and treatment of malaria related illnesses. There are several privately owned latrines throughout the village, although the majority of residents openly defecate within and around the village. There are four broken water pumps and one dry well. However, a fifth pump was recently repaired and residents can purchase 50 liters of clean water.
for 25 FCFA (≈0.08). The cistern project I managed in 2008 included nine privately operated
cisterns that are still functional and provide clean water (Field notes, May 29, 2014).

**ST:1 Participants**

As described in Chapter Three, I conducted interviews and focus groups with school
directors, teachers, and members of the Parent-Teacher Association (APE). Tables 4.3 and 4.4
provide demographic information about the participants I interviewed in my study.

Table 4.3

*Educator participants at the CEG in ST:1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Years Teaching</th>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Highest Degree Earned and Qualifications</th>
<th>Classes Taught</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Director</td>
<td>ST:1:D1</td>
<td>Lomé, Togo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Employed by state</td>
<td>Bachelor Degree, Economics from University of Lomé, BAC II, some university</td>
<td>Math and Physical Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>ST:1:T1</td>
<td>Djon-Adape, Akebou</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Volunteer teacher</td>
<td>Masters Degree in Sociology</td>
<td>Math and Physical Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>ST:1:T2</td>
<td>Niamtougou, Northern Togo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Employed by state</td>
<td>BAC II and CAP-CEG qualification</td>
<td>History-Geography and French SVT, Physical Science, and Soccer coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>ST:1:T3</td>
<td>Atakpamé-Agbonou, Togo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Employed by state</td>
<td>History-Geography and French</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>ST:1:T4</td>
<td>Conakry, Guinea</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Employed by state</td>
<td>Bachelor Degree in Contemporary Literature and CAP-CEG, BAC II, some university</td>
<td>History-Geography and French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>ST:1:T5</td>
<td>Notse, Togo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Volunteer teacher</td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participant profile of educators at ST:1, for the most part, reflected the required
characteristics and qualifications of teachers as described in educational policy. All of the
teachers employed by the state had completed the required training to become a teacher in the
CEG level (the CAP-CEG) or had obtained the required level of education (bachelors degree). Additionally, in line with the policy, these teachers worked in a region of Togo that is ethnically and linguistically different from their hometown. This policy was designed to ensure that teachers used French in the classroom and did not rely on local language to explain difficult concepts. In theory, it also intended to reduce conflict between teachers, students, and community members by reducing the possibility that teachers would become involved in longstanding disputes between families in the village (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014).

Another interesting characteristic in the participant profile of educators in ST:1 was career choice. Those with the lowest and highest levels of educational achievement all expressed frustration with their current position and the desire to change professions, while those with the required levels of qualification were content with their careers and only expressed frustration with their current placement in the Akebou Prefecture. The issue of career choice will be discussed in greater detail in the development thematic finding.

Members of the APE organization represented a variety of backgrounds, which I discuss below. Table 4.4 presents the demographic information of community member participants.

Table 4.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children in school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secretary to the chief</td>
<td>ST:1:FG1 (1)</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Village leader and Farmer Farmer</td>
<td>One student at CEG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APE Advisor</td>
<td>ST:1:FG1 (2)</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>One student at CEG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APE President</td>
<td>ST:1:FG1 (3)</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>One student at CEG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APE Treasurer</td>
<td>ST:1:FG1 (4)</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Mason</td>
<td>No students at CEG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APE Vice President</td>
<td>ST:1:FG1 (5)</td>
<td>ST:1</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Tradeswomen/Market vendor</td>
<td>One student at CEG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As noted in Chapter Three, I included the Secretary to the Chief in the focus group in ST:1 to replace a member of the APE who was indisposed during the scheduled interview time. His contributions provided valuable insight as a representative of the local government. It is also important to note that the only female interview participant was a member of the APE in ST:1. While I made an effort to select a diverse sample of interview participants, all of the educators in each of the three school sites were men, which is reflective of the larger Togolese context where the majority of CEG-level educators are men. Additionally, based on personal communications with the Peace Corps Volunteer who I replaced in ST:1 in 2008, I knew that the female community member participant was appointed the position of vice-president of the APE due to his recommendation to diversity the committee by including a female perspective. Thus, had it not been for the intervention of a Peace Corps Volunteer in 2007, it is likely that my study would not have had a female participant.

In my description of the ST:1 site and research participants, I addressed the first research question by identifying aspects of Togolese educational policy that were relevant in the context of Akebou schools. I also also began to answer the third research question by identifying general conditions of and key in school sites and village contexts. Subsequent descriptions of CI:1 and CI:2 research sites follow the same general outline.

**Research Site 3: Community Initiative Site 1 (CI:1)**

In addition to ST:1, I conducted interviews and observations as well as collected documents and took photographs at the community initiative school in the CI:1 site to provide comparative contrast to the national policy perspective (MOE) by illustrating the ground level realities in community schools. Additionally, the inclusion of CI:1 in my study allowed me to compare and contrast educational issues between the government school (ST:1) and the two
Community Initiative (CI) schools in my study (See Figure 1.3, p. 16 for Analytic Framework, and Figure 3.3, p. 85 for Location Map).

The Community Initiative CEG in CI:1 is located on the eastern edge of the village on a two-acre campus. It is separated from the nearest houses by nearly 100 yards of teak wood forest, which prevented village noise from disrupting classes. However, the school is located along the road connecting Nyamasila and ST:1 (see also map Figure 3.3, p. 85). Motorcycle, bicycle, and foot traffic can be heard from each of the classrooms. The recent internationally-funded project resurfacing the road was disruptive to classes when construction used heavy machinery (Field notes, June 2, 2014). The physical plant of the school consists of four classrooms and a teachers’ paillote (Figure 4.13). The classrooms are located in the four corners of the campus area at a distance of approximately 60 meters. Large spaces between classrooms reduce disruptive noise from neighboring classes. All of the school buildings are constructed from local materials. Classes are held in open-air structures covered by thatched roofs and supported by frames built from wood and bamboo. Classroom roofs extend to about two feet above the ground to protect students from outdoor elements. While this prevents rain from entering the classroom, it also reduces the amount of light that can enter the structure. Thatched roofing is prone to leaking and needs to be replaced once every two to three years. Two of the classrooms needed repairs as some sections of the roof were exposed to the sky. The teachers’ paillote was similar to that in ST:1, though smaller (Figure 4.14). When I entered the paillote in CI:1 for the first time, teachers warned me to be careful because they believed that termites had compromised the strength of the wooden stakes holding the structure and that it may fall unexpectedly, which illustrated the challenges associated with using local materials for construction.
Figure 4.13. Teachers’ paillote and three of the four classrooms of CI:1 (fourth classroom is out of frame to the right)

Figure 4.14. Teachers’ paillote in CI:1
Apart from the classrooms and teacher *paillote*, there are no other facilities on campus. There is no storage space at CI:1 for textbooks, teaching materials, student work, or records. Thus, educators brought all the documents they needed to teach back and forth from their homes each day. There are no sanitation facilities available for students or teachers of campus. Instead, students enter the tall grass surrounding the school to relieve themselves. This negatively impacted student safety by increasing the risk of sickness and snakebites. There is no access to clean water on campus. Female students are required to bring basins of river water to campus before school each day so that teachers and students can have water during school hours (Field notes, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014).

Between the four classrooms there is a large, shaded courtyard covered in ankle-high grass. Small dirt pathways connect the classrooms (Figure 4.15). In accordance with educational policy on regulations for school facilities, a flagpole flies the Togolese flag during school hours at the center of the campus. Students are responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of campus and cut the grass with machetes as part of *travail manuel* (manual labor, or TM) responsibilities (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014).
As discussed previously, at the time of my fieldwork, students in CI:1 had already been dismissed for vacation, which prevented me from observing classroom instruction. Additionally, when I arrived in CI:1, students and community members had already removed desks in three of the four classrooms for storage during the vacation months. Thus, I was unable to conduct observations of the whole school grounds as it would have appeared during the academic year. However, I was told during interviews that the remaining classroom was typical, and it had the same resources as the classrooms that had already been packed away for vacation. Figure 4.16 shows the typical layout of a classroom in CI:1. The desks used in CI:1 use the same design as those in ST:1. Each classroom holds between 10 to 15 desks to seat the 20 to 30 students enrolled in each grade. Overcrowded classrooms have not been an issue in CI:1 because the school serves a small village and does not draw many students from nearby farming communities or villages. Each classroom is equipped with a freestanding chalkboard and has no additional

Figure 4.15. Classroom and pathway illustrating the courtyard between classrooms
teaching materials. The chalkboards in all of the classrooms appeared worn from exposure to sun, wind, and rain in addition to being white washed from daily use. Combined with the low levels of light in classrooms, the whitewashed boards made it difficult to see what was written on the chalkboard from anywhere in the classroom. Figure 4.17 shows a chalkboard in CI:1.

Figure 4.16. A typical layout of a classroom in CI:1, though I was told some desks had already been placed in storage
Since there are no walls, doors, or windows in any of the classrooms, there are no decorations or examples of student work on display. Additionally, classrooms cannot be closed or locked during non-school hours, which leaves them open to use (or misuse) by students and community members. On several occasions, I observed children congregating in classrooms during their free time (Field notes, May 22, 2014, June 2, 2014; June 3, 2014). Educators at CI:1 explained that community members were responsible for maintaining the school buildings, so damages caused by inclement weather or vandalism did not impact the school budget (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014).

Administratively, a director and three teachers staffed the CEG in CI:1. At the time of fieldwork, one of the teachers had already left the village to receive medical treatment. Thus, I was only able to interview three of the four educators at the site. All educators in CI:1 were
classified as *enseignants volontaires* (volunteer teachers or EVs) because they were not employed by the state, but instead received salaries collected exclusively from school fees and community contributions. The director taught Physical Sciences in two grades and *Sciences de la vie et la terre* (Life Sciences, or SVT) in all four grades. Another teacher covered Physical Sciences in the other two grades and Math in all four. A third teacher was responsible for French and English in all four grades. Finally, the fourth teacher taught History-Geography in all four grades (CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). Similar to ST:1, teachers are each assigned to be *titulaire* (leader) of each grade and are responsible for overseeing the discipline, TM, and report cards for that grade. While I do not have a photograph or document depicting the schedule of classes, during interviews, teachers in CI:1 explained that they taught more classes per day than teachers in state-sponsored schools. While there are fewer students attending the CEG in CI:1 than the school in ST:1, with fewer teachers, the staff at CI:1 had to teach more hours per week to cover the same classes (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). All of the teachers in CI:1 were men between the ages of 20 and 50. I offer a more detailed description of the staff later in this section.

Much like the state-sponsored CEG in ST:1, the school in CI:1 follows the daily schedule presented in official policy. Students arrive at 6:30am, the Togolese flag is raised at 6:45, and classes start at 7:00. A typical school day is broken up into five class periods lasting 55 minutes each. Classrooms are assigned by grade and teachers move between classrooms each period while students remain in the same room throughout the day. Students are given a 25-minute break between 9:45 and 10:10 to purchase snacks and use the restroom. Because the village is small, students have time to return to their homes during the break. School ends at 12:00pm and students go home for lunch (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014; Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.22). I
was unable to photograph the daily schedule of classes because they were not posted publicly. Without walls or sufficiently large chalkboards, there was no space to write the daily schedule in classrooms.

The afternoons in CI:1, however, are used differently than in ST:1. Students in troisième are expected to come back to school at 3:00pm to review a different subject each day. Additionally, Friday afternoons are designated for travail manuel (TM) for all students. CI:1 uses TM to generate additional money for the school. For example, students are told to work in agricultural fields owned by teachers to supplement teacher salaries (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). These uses of student labor for TM purposes are explicitly outlawed in educational policy. I discuss the TM policy-practice divide in detail in the funding thematic finding.

At the time of my fieldwork, there were approximately 75 students attending the CEG in CI:1. Like ST:1, there was a wide age range among students. During an interview, a teacher identified age as an key issue because younger students sometimes felt intimidated in classroom settings (Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). In fact, community members stated that one of the factors that encouraged the establishment the school was because they wanted to provide educational access to young adults who had been out of school for several years (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1, June 3, 2014). This established a tradition of older, non-traditional students attending the school in CI:1.

As noted earlier, it was difficult to gather specific statistics on enrollment numbers in CI:1 because the notebook for record keeping was disorganized and in poor condition. However, I was able to obtain results from the 2014 BEPC exam because they were disseminated to schools near the end of my fieldwork season. While I was unable to observe classes, I was informed by the director and teachers that all students are required to wear the standard Togolese
school uniform described in educational policy. Table 4.5 shows the available enrollment rate information and BEPC exam results for CI:1.

Table 4.5

*Enrollment rate and BEPC exam results in CI:1 (Data unavailable in empty cells)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEPC Year</th>
<th>Boy Enrolled</th>
<th>Girls Enrolled</th>
<th>Total Enrolled</th>
<th>Presented Boys</th>
<th>Presented Girls</th>
<th>Presented Total</th>
<th>Passed Boys</th>
<th>Passed Girls</th>
<th>Passed Total</th>
<th>Passing %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>78</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
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<td>2008</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>41.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to note that no students in CI:1 passed the BEPC in 2014, which had never happened since the CEG was established in 2003. During interviews conducted before exam results were released to the public, educators and community members mentioned that they were proud of their school because they had never had a 0% passing rate, while some of the state-sponsored CEGs in the region often had 0% results (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1, June 3, 2014). The 2014 results, however, may have changed this perception. Because they were announced near the end of my fieldwork, I was unable to conduct follow-up interviews to ascertain the perspective of teachers and community members on the exam results (Field notes, June 29, 2014).

While I was unable to conduct classroom observations, general school site observations indicated there was a lack of curriculum materials in CI:1. Teachers confirmed during interviews that students did not have access to textbooks (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014; Focus Group, CI:1:FG1, June 3, 2014). Even teachers in CI:1 did not have access to books, but instead they used locally produced textbooks that were essentially
photocopied versions of official textbooks. Figure 4.18 shows an example local textbook used by
the math teacher in CI:1. During interviews and observations, I noticed a sense of dedication and
self-reliance surrounding teachers’ efforts to obtain textbooks. This contributed to the
development of the code “Nos propres efforts” (Our own efforts or NPE), which surfaced across
sites and themes.

Figure 4.18. A typical locally produced textbook for teachers in CI:1

In addition to the limited availability of textbooks in CI:1, teaching materials also
appeared difficult to procure. Without financial assistance from the Togolese government, the
CEG in CI:1 purchased materials with money collected from school fees and community
contributions. I will discuss the lack of curriculum materials in CI:1 in greater depth as part of
the *curriculum* thematic finding.

The Community Initiative (CI) school in CI:1 opened in 2003 with classes for 6ème and
5ème grades. Two years later, in 2005, students in CI:1 took the BEPC for the first time. Located
five kilometers from the nearest state-sponsored CEG in ST:1, the school in CI:1 was created to provide easier and more cost effective access to education beyond primary school. Concerned residents petitioned local authorities (village chief, committee for village development, and the Red Cross association) to establish a locally operated CEG. After identifying a director and three teachers, a committee comprised of village leaders and educators traveled to the regional direction in Atakpamé to notify authorities that they planned to open a CI school. The committee had to prove that they could employ qualified teachers, and the community was committed to financing the school without any support from the government before gaining approval from the state. Since 2003, the school in CI:1 has received no financial or material support from the MOE, but continues to offer CEG education from 6eme through 3eme.

Much like the CEG in ST:1, the school in CI:1 keeps a notebook that documents the history of the school. The notebook included lists of teachers, enrollment rates, student names, grades, and BEPC exam results. It also contained short descriptions of key events that occurred during the course of the year. However, at the time of my research, the notebook was tattered and missing several pages. Thus, the information I collected in CI:1 regarding enrollment and exam results was incomplete. The current director of CI:1 explained that previous directors had not kept complete records of school data nor did they pass records to their successors (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). Figure 4.19 shows an example page from the notebook.
Site 3 (CI:1) Village Description

I conducted general observations of village life in CI:1 to situate the school site within the context of the larger village community as I did in each of the other research sites. It was important to consider village contexts when comparing and contrasting the key issues in curriculum policies and practices across school sites. The village of CI:1 has a population of nearly 600 residents. It is significantly smaller and more geographically isolated than both ST:1 and CI:2, making it a distinctive case in my multisite comparative case study. The vast majority of residents in CI:1 are Akebou and the predominant language in the village is Akebou. The village is approximately one square kilometer in size (See location map in Figure 3.3). Homes are constructed in similar fashion to ST:1. However, in CI:1 fewer homes are constructed with
cement bricks and more are covered with thatched roofs (Field notes, May 22, 2014; June 2, 2014; June 3, 2014).

Unlike ST:1, CI:1 does not have a weekly market. This means that village residents either travel 5 kilometers east to ST:1 or 10 kilometers west to another large market town in the northern Akebou Prefecture to sell agricultural goods. Most residents in CI:1 are subsistence farmers. Commercial crops, such as coffee and cacao, are more difficult to grow in the farmland surrounding CI:1. Instead, villagers rely on corn, cassava, beans, and peanut crops to feed themselves while selling excess harvest for a profit. There are two general stores in CI:1, but apart from those stores, there is little economic activity (Field notes, May 22, 2014).

Of the three sites, CI:1 is located the furthest from Kougnouhou, the prefecture capital and largest market town, making travel both difficult and expensive (See location map in Figure 3.3, p. 85). However, when completed, the recent road resurfacing project may allow villagers in CI:1 more direct access to Nyamasila and the national road, which could open up economic activity in the region by providing a means for agricultural products, such as fruits, to reach market before they spoil. CI:1 is located at the base of a mountain and at the edge of a small valley with ST:1 to the east and another market town to the west. As such, the immediate areas surrounding CI:1 are relatively flat, making transportation comparatively easy. However, traveling larger distances requires leaving the valley and traversing hilly terrain on poorly maintained roads (Field notes, June 3, 2014).

Due to its size and geographic location, CI:1 has limited access to governmental services. There is one public primary school in the village, which is staffed by a state-employed director and four volunteer teachers. The primary school has three classrooms with cement brick walls and is covered by a rusted corrugated iron roof (Field notes, June 24, 2014). All of the teachers
in the primary school are ethnically Akebou and three of the five staff members have participated in state-sponsored teacher training programs (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1, June 3, 2014).

CI:1 suffers from a lack of health and sanitation facilities. There is no health center in the village. Residents must travel to ST:1 or further to receive medical treatment. During focus groups with educators and community members, participants solemnly discussed the lack of medical services in the village, citing specific instances when people passed away from easily treatable illnesses (Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014; Focus Group, CI:1:FG1, June 3, 2014). There is no access to clean water in the village. Women and children carry basins of water from the river each day to drink, cook, bathe, and do laundry. Community members informed me that during harmattan (dry season between December and February) the river nearest to village dries, forcing women to walk upwards of 6 kilometers to find water (CI:1:FG1, June 3, 2014).

**Description of Participants in CI:1**

In CI:1, I conducted individual interviews and focus groups with the school director, teachers, members of the Parent-Teacher Association (APE). I also collected documents at the site, though documents were not considered as participants in my study and will not be discussed in my description of participants. Tables 4.6 and 4.7 show demographic information for each participant interviewed in my study.
Table 4.6

*Educator participants in CI:1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Years Teaching</th>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Highest Degree Earned and Qualifications</th>
<th>Classes Taught</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>CI:1:D</td>
<td>CI:1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Volunteer Teacher</td>
<td>BAC II</td>
<td>Physical Sciences and Life Sciences Math and Physical Sciences French and English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>CI:1:T</td>
<td>Dakan, Akebou</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Volunteer Teacher</td>
<td>BAC I</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>CI:1:T</td>
<td>Tchakpali, Akebou</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Volunteer Teacher</td>
<td>BAC II and one semester of university French and English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher, non-</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Volunteer Teacher</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>History and Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participant profile of CI:1 was distinctive compared to ST:1 and CI:2. The teaching staff here was remarkably young and inexperienced by comparison. While the director was in his early 50s at the time of fieldwork, both of the teachers that participated in the study were in their mid to late 20s. None of the participating educators in CI:1 had completed the qualifications required to teach at the CEG level. Additionally, the two teachers had limited experience working in educational settings. Both informed me that they began their careers in their hometowns but decided to move to a different village because students in their hometown viewed them as peers and did not give them sufficient respect (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). All three of the teachers in CI:1 are ethnically Akebou and speak the local language. At one point during an interview, the teachers used Akebou, rather than French, to speak to several students who interrupted the session, which contrasted with the French used by teachers in SI1 who were not ethnically Akebou (Field notes, May 29, 2014;
Field notes, June 2, 2014). This example illustrated how dynamics between teachers and students varied depending on language and ethnicity.

Teachers in CI:1 viewed their careers as a product of circumstance rather than a conscious choice (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). They both explained that if they had the financial resources, they would have continued their studies at university in hopes of pursuing higher paying jobs. This was a sentiment also expressed by volunteer teachers in ST:1 (Interview, ST:1:T1, May 28, 2014). In contrast, the director of CI:1 informed me that he left Côte-d'Ivoire, where he was working at the time, to come back to teach in his hometown when he found out village leaders were starting a CEG (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). This illustrated his commitment to education and the development of his village. I discuss the issue of career choice in greater detail in the development thematic finding.

Members of the APE organization had a variety of backgrounds, which I discuss below. Table 4.7 presents the demographic information of community member participants.

Table 4.7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children in school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APE President</td>
<td>CI:1:FG1(1)</td>
<td>CI:1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Driver/Farmer</td>
<td>One student at CEG and one already graduated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APE Secretary</td>
<td>CI:1:FG1(2)</td>
<td>CI:1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Teacher at primary school</td>
<td>One student at CEG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APE Treasurer</td>
<td>CI:1:FG1(3)</td>
<td>CI:1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Representative for village chief</td>
<td>Two students at CEG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APE Advisor</td>
<td>CI:1:FG1(4)</td>
<td>CI:1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>One student at CEG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the focus group, I was informed that there was a fifth member of the APE who was unable to attend the interview because she was ill. Had she been able to attend, she would have been the second female participant in my study. Again, while I aimed to include as many
diverse voices as possible, it was difficult to find female participants engaged in educational affairs because in Togo education is a male dominated field. It is also important to note that the APE members in CI:1 had more students currently enrolled in the school than the APE members in ST:1 or CI:2. The community in CI:1 was more involved in educational affairs when compared with other sites. While I will discuss this in more depth in the Space/Context thematic finding in Chapter Five, the number of children of APE members attending the school may have influenced the degree of APE involvement in local education.

In these descriptions of the CI:1 research site and participants I addressed the first research question by identifying aspects of Togolese educational policy that were relevant in the context of Akebou schools. I also answered the third research question by identifying the general conditions of and key in school sites and village contexts.

**Research Site 4: Community Initiative Site 2 (CI:2)**

Interviews, focus groups, observations, and documents collected at the CI school in CI:2 helped me create an information-rich description of the site. This provided additional comparative contrast to the national policy perspective by offering insight into the day-to-day experiences of educators in another CI school. The inclusion of CI:2 in my study allowed me to compare and contrast key issues in CI:1 with those in ST:1 and CI:1 in an effort to gain a better understanding of education in the Akebou Prefecture.

The CEG in CI:2 is located along a small road that connects the village of CI:2 with the main road between ST:1 and Kougnouhou. It is approximately 600 meters from the nearest homes, separated by a forested area and a small creek. The CEG and the primary school are located on opposite sides of the road about 50 meters apart. Noise from the primary school can be heard during school hours. Additionally, motorcycle, bicycle, and foot traffic along the road
can disturb the otherwise quiet atmosphere on campus. The physical plant of the school consists of four classrooms and a teachers’ *paillote*. Each grade level is assigned a single classroom. Teachers move between classrooms, while students stay in the same room. *Sixième* and *troisième* classrooms are located in the permanent building constructed from mud brick walls and covered with a rusted corrugated iron roof. The *quatrième* and *cinquième* grades are located in open-air classrooms attached to the permanent building. These rooms are much like to those found in CI:1, with an angled thatch roof held up by a wooden and bamboo frame (Figure 4.20). In addition to the main buildings, there is also a small, circular thatch roofed *paillote* that serves as a place for teachers to meet between classes (Figure 4.21). The buildings are in good condition and there are no apparent leaks in any of the classrooms. Apart from the classrooms and *paillote*, there are no additional facilities on campus.

*Figure 4.20. The school grounds in CI:2*
Figure 4.21. The teachers’ paillote in CI:2

The school grounds in CI:2 are smaller than the other sites. Ankle high grass covers the ground between the paillote and classrooms. A few trees provide shade for students during recess. During school hours, a Togolese flag flies on a pole located in front of the four classrooms. Students are required to sweep the classrooms before and after school to maintain cleanliness. There are no restroom facilities on campus. Rather, students and teachers walk to a nearby teakwood forest to relieve themselves during school hours. Further, there access to clean water is unavailable at the school. Female students bring basins of water from a nearby creek each day to provide drinking water for teachers and their classmates. Teachers mentioned the lack of facilities on school grounds as a key issue impacting educational experiences during focus groups (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). They expressed a desire for more permanent classrooms, a storage facility for educational materials, and restrooms. There is no
electricity in the CI:2 site, which limits access to information technology such as computers, Internet, and cell phones.

As mentioned in Chapter Three, I lived in the compound of my key informant in CI:2 during fieldwork. This allowed me to conduct classroom observations before, during, and after regional and national exams. Additionally, living in the research site offered me deeper insight into the realities of TM practices outside of traditional school hours. Of the three sites, the observation data I collected in CI:2 was the most detailed.

Despite arriving in Togo around the time that end-of-year exams were being administered, I observed each of the teachers in CI:2 conduct at least one 55-minute class. Figure 4.22 shows a typical layout of the classrooms in the permanent structure in CI:2 and Figure 4.23 shows the layout of classrooms in the attached paillotes. The two indoor classrooms held 12 to 15 desks to seat the 20 to 30 students enrolled in both 3eme and 6eme. Students sat two to a desk and overcrowding was not an issue in either classroom. Similar to ST:1 and CI:1, the chalkboards in the indoor classrooms were whitewashed and difficult read from the rear of the classroom. However, the large, windows without shutters and a doorway without a door let in sufficient light to illuminate the room (Field notes, June 10, 2014). The open-air paillote classrooms were equipped with 15 to 20 desks to seat 20 to 35 students enrolled in 4eme and 5eme. The chalkboards in these classrooms are painted on the outside wall of the permanent structure. Like the others, they are whitewashed from years of use and, combined with low levels of light in the rooms, are difficult to see from the rear of the class. Additionally, there was evidence of water damage along the edges of the chalkboard and on some of the desks, which was likely caused by small gaps between the thatched roofing and the wall (Field notes, June 10, 2014). A close up of the chalkboard in the 5eme classroom can be seen in Figure 4.24. During
interviews, teachers in CI:2 mentioned the lack of adequate buildings as a key issue that limits student learning and reduces educational quality (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1, June 11, 2014).

Figure 4.22. Indoor classroom in CI:2, note the condition of the chalkboard

Figure 4.23. Open-air classroom in CI:2, note the condition of the chalkboard
Figure 4.24. Close up of chalkboard in 5eme classroom in CI:2

As seen in figures 4.22 and 4.23, there are no decorations or examples of student work on display in the classrooms, nor are there any additional teaching materials apart from the chalkboard and desks. This suggested that the school was underfunded and did not have the resources required to provide students with the necessary educational materials, an observation that was confirmed during a focus group with teachers (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). Additionally, the lack of student work on the walls was typical of Togolese classrooms and, when compared to the state-sponsored school in ST:1, showed no difference or deviation from normally accepted practices. None of the four classrooms can be closed or locked outside of school hours. When strong rainstorms occur during school hours, students are forced to gather near the center of the classroom to avoid rain blowing in through the windows, which disrupts classes. As noted earlier, there is no storage facility for teaching materials on school grounds, which requires teachers to store materials at their home and bring them back and forth to school
each day. This posed a problem during the regional exams when there was a miscommunication between teachers regarding who would store the copies of exam questions for an afternoon testing session. To resolve the issue, the director asked to borrow a student’s motorcycle to drive back to his house to pick up the packet of exam questions (Field notes, May 24, 2014). While the exams arrived before the prescribed start time, the situation highlighted the importance of having a storage facility on school grounds to store teaching materials.

During classroom observations, I noticed a lack of curriculum and teaching materials. Students did not have access to textbooks in any subject and instead used handwritten notebooks copied from the board as the main source of information for each class, much like students in ST:1 and CI:1. Teachers planned their lessons using curriculum guides and textbooks that they shared among themselves. In my observations and interviews I established that the geographic isolation and limited access to information technology in CI:2 reduced teachers’ ability to obtain up-to-date educational materials (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). I discuss issues related to curriculum and materials in more detail as part of the curriculum and funding thematic findings.

Administratively, there were a total of five educators at the CEG in CI:2, one director and four teachers at the time of fieldwork. I conducted individual interviews with all five educators and a focus group with the four teachers during fieldwork. The educators at CI:2 are technically classified as enseignants volontaires (EVs) because they are not employed by the state. Instead, they receive salaries collected from locally determined school fees. Despite this classification, the director of CI:2 has the qualifications required to teach in state-sponsored schools. Like the other sites, the teachers in CI:2 shared teaching responsibilities across subjects. Two teachers covered French and History-Geography, two covered Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, and Math, and one taught English (Field notes, June 11, 2014). Teachers are also required to be
titulaire (leader) for an assigned grade, with duties are similar to those described in ST:1 and CI:2. During interviews, the educators expressed frustration that they had the same course load as teachers in state-sponsored schools, but received significantly lower salaries for the same work. They hoped that the state would recognize the high success rates of students on BEPC examinations and take over control of the school (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). All of the teachers in CI:1 were men between the ages of 20 and 50.

The CEG in CI:2 follows the daily schedule stipulated in official policy. After raising the Togolese flag at 6:45am, students begin classes at 7:00. Throughout the morning, five, 55-minute classes are taught and students are released at noon. There is a 25-minute break between 9:45 and 10:10 to purchase snacks. Daily schedules were not posted publicly in the classrooms. Classrooms are assigned by grade and teachers move between rooms each period while students remain in the same room. Similar to ST:1 and CI:1, teachers can use afternoon sessions to catch up in the official program or to hold review sessions for difficult lessons. Educators in CI:2 also use afternoons for TM, which requires students to complete agricultural tasks for teachers. During fieldwork, I observed students completing their TM duties on several occasions. Their tasks ranged from working in fields to degraining corn to collecting paille (straw) that would be sold for thatched roofing (Field notes, May 30, 2014; June, 10, 2014; June 17, 2014). These TM activities are explicitly outlawed in educational policy. However, the director informed me that regional inspectors often turn a blind eye to TM practices in CI schools as long as they do not interfere with school hours because the inspectors recognized the financial realities in community-supported schools. I discuss the policy-practice divide on TM in more detail under the thematic finding of funding.
At the time of my fieldwork, there were 100 students enrolled at the CEG in CI:2. All students were required to wear the khaki uniform recommended by official policy. In the classes I observed, most students wore the complete uniform, though some wore garments over their khaki shirts. The majority of students attending the CEG were from CI:2, though the school also drew from four communities within a three to four kilometer radius. Students from these communities walked back and fourth to school each day. If there were not a CI school in CI:2, these students would have to commute upwards of 12 kilometers to the CEG in ST:1. Like the other sites, there was a wide range of ages represented in each of the grades as a result of students beginning primary school at various times as well as the widespread practice of grade retention. The records kept by the director of CI:2 were more complete than those in CI:1. Table 4.8 shows enrollment rates and BEPC exam results in CI:2.

Table 4.8

*Enrollment rates and BEPC exam results in CI:2*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEPC Year</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total Enrolled</th>
<th>Presented Boys</th>
<th>Presented Girls</th>
<th>Presented Total</th>
<th>Passed Boys</th>
<th>Passed Girls</th>
<th>Passed Total</th>
<th>Passing %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>151</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>72.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>51.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>66.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>41.66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The enrollment rates at CI:2 are smaller than ST:1, but larger than CI:1. There was a notable decline in enrollment from 2010 to 2014. During interviews and informal conversations with community members, I was informed that this was due to a recent trend among Akebou youth to travel to Nigeria or Ghana to work as a migrant laborer for periods of three to six
months. Not only did this reduce enrollment rates, but it also reduced the amount of funding that could be collected from school fees, which were used to pay teacher salaries. Educators in CI:2 disapproved of this trend because they believed it resulted in a largely uneducated population that didn’t understand the importance of schooling and could result in the closing of the school (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014; Focus Group, CI:2:FG2, June 15, 2014; Focus Group, CI:2:FG2, June 11, 2014).

The establishment of a community school in CI:2 was proposed in 2002 when community leaders decided that the cost of sending students to attend CEG in ST:1 was beyond their means. At a village-wide meeting, the community selected the initial teaching staff of the school. The current director and the current math teacher were part of the initial teaching staff and held detailed knowledge of the history of the school. After selecting a staff, a committee of educators and village officials wrote a letter to the Regional Direction in Atakpamé informing them of the creation of the CI CEG in CI:2. The committee then negotiated a donation from the community that included a derelict building and the surrounding parcel of land that became the school site (Interview, CI:1:T3, June 11, 2014). The director collected financial contributions from the community to buy books and other teaching materials for the school. Before gaining approval from the MOE, the director traveled to Atakpamé to present evidence that the community was willing to assume complete responsibility for funding, staffing, and maintaining the school. As a CI school, CI:2 does not receive any financial or material support from the Togolese government (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 17, 2014).

In 2003, the school opened with 6eme and 5eme classes and in subsequent years, the remaining CEG-level grades were added to the school (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 17, 2014). In 2005, students in 3eme took the BEPC for the first time. Similar to schools in ST:1 and CI:2, the
official records of the CEG in CI:2 were kept in a notebook. These records documented teaching staff, enrollment rates, BEPC passing rates, and important events that occurred during the school year. Figure 4.25 shows the notebooks used to document the historical records in CI:2.

Figure 4.25. Notebooks used to keep record of educational activities in CI:2

Site 4 (CI:2) Village Description

I conducted general observations of village life in CI:2 to situate my findings at the school site within the context of the larger village community as I did with the other research sites. It was important to consider village contexts when comparing and contrasting the key issues in curriculum policies and practices across various sites in my study. The village of CI:2 has a population of approximately 1,000, although, specific statistics were not available. The village is geographically isolated but it is larger than CI:1 (See location map in Figure 3.3, p. 85). Additionally, there are several smaller villages and farming communities within a short distance of CI:2, whose residents often walk back and forth to CI:2 on a daily basis. Like the two other sites, the vast majority of residents in CI:2 are Akebou and Akebou is the predominant language spoken in the village. The village covers approximately two square kilometers. Most homes and businesses are built in the compound style from cement and mud bricks and iron and thatched
roofing, similar to those in CI:1 and ST:1 (Field notes, May 21, 2014; June 10, 2014; June 26, 2014; See also Figure 4.26).

*Figure 4.26. Typical home construction style in CI:2*

While the village in research site CI:2 technically has a weekly market on Thursdays, the market does not attract merchants from neighboring village and rarely has more than three or four vendors. During the dry season, a large truck services CI:2 on Thursdays to transport fruit and other agricultural products to the market in Kougnohou on Friday. However, due to poor road conditions in the rainy season, the driver refuses to pick up products in CI:2. The driver never came to CI:2 during the seven weeks of my fieldwork trip, which were at the onset of the rainy season. Most residents of CI:2 are subsistence and commercial farmers. The climate and soil conditions of CI:2 are similar to those in ST:1, which allows farmers to grow profitable cash crops such as coffee and cacao (Field notes, June 24, 2014). Like ST:1, there is a warehouse and office for the local coffee and cacao growers association in CI:2. Farmers also grow corn,
cassava, beans, and peanut crops to feed themselves. Additionally, palm trees grow in abundance in the forest surrounding CI:2. Some farmers extract the sap from these trees to sell the alcoholic beverage as palm wine, while others distill the sap into a local moonshine called *sodabe*. The production of alcoholic beverages plays an important role in the local economy. There are three general stores in CI:2 that offer the same basic goods that can be found in CI:1 and ST:1 (Field notes, June 9, 2014).

While CI:2 is the closest to Kougnouhou, travel between the two villages is difficult due to poor road conditions and hilly terrain. Additionally, CI:2 will not benefit from the road-resurfacing project in ST:1 and CI:1. The lack of transportation infrastructure in CI:2 contributes to its isolation. Participants noted that because many students have not had the opportunity to visit Lomé, Atakpamé, or even Kougnouhou due to the high cost of transportation, they have not seen people with careers that require advanced degrees and therefore do not understand the importance of education (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014; Focus Group, CI:2:FG2, June 19, 2014).

Like CI:1, CI:2 has limited access to many services provided by the government in larger, less isolated regions of the country. There is one public primary school in the village, which receives financial and material support from the MOE. I was informed that the school was the first government-recognized primary school in the Akebou Prefecture and that it originally drew students from ST:1 and CI:1 before those villages established their own schools (Interview, CI:2:T3, June 11, 2014; Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). The primary school in CI:2 has three concrete classrooms covered with corrugated iron roofing and three additional classrooms built from local materials. Seven educators worked at the primary school at the time of fieldwork. Only the director and one teacher—both of whom were ethnically Ewe—had received
formal training from the MOE. The remaining teachers were ethnically Akebou and were natives of CI:2 or neighboring villages (Field notes, June 11, 2014). According to the CEG director, the primary school has high enrollment rates and average exam results when compared to other primary schools in the region (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014).

Apart from the primary school and coffee/cocoa grower association building, there is little evidence of governmental services. While there is no health center in CI:2 currently, the Peace Corps Volunteer that served in ST:1 between 2006-2008 recently raised money to build a small medical dispensary for the village. Construction began in February 2014 and was underway during fieldwork. The projected completion date for this project is unknown because the proposed budget exceeded the amount of funding. Interview participants expressed hope that this facility would help reduce common illnesses (Focus Group, CI:2:FG2, June 19, 2014). There is a water pump located at the center of village that provides clean water to residents, though it was in disrepair during my seven weeks of fieldwork. Residents also use nearby creeks and springs to gather water for drinking, cooking, bathing, and laundry. As a result, water borne illnesses, especially among children, are common in CI:2 (Field notes, May 26, 2014).

**Description of Participants in CI:2**

I conducted individual interviews and focus groups with the school director, teachers, members of the Parent-Teacher Association (APE), and members of the general community in CI:2. Tables 4.9 and 4.10 provide demographic information for each of the participants I interviewed in my study.
### Table 4.9

**Educator participants in CI:2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Years Teaching</th>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Highest Degree Earned and Qualifications</th>
<th>Classes Taught</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>CI:2:D</td>
<td>Cl:2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Volunteer Teacher</td>
<td>Bachelor Degree and CAP-CEG</td>
<td>French and History-Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>CI:2:T</td>
<td>Cl:2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Volunteer Teacher</td>
<td>BAC II</td>
<td>Physical Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>CI:2:T</td>
<td>Djon-Kotora, Akebou</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Volunteer Teacher</td>
<td>BAC II completed in Ghana</td>
<td>Life Sciences English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>CI:2:T</td>
<td>Cl:2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Volunteer Teacher</td>
<td>BAC I</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>CI:2:T</td>
<td>Cl:2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Volunteer Teacher</td>
<td>BAC II</td>
<td>French and History-Geography</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compared to teaching staffs in ST:1 and CI:1, the educators in CI:2 represent a wider variety of qualification levels and years of teaching experience. As mentioned earlier, the director has the qualifications and degrees to work in a state-sponsored lycee (lycee teachers receive a higher salary than CEG-level), but instead chooses to serve as director of the CEG in his home community. This illustrated his commitment to village development, which could also be observed in his involvement in microfinance organizations and animal husbandry projects. The director and two of the teachers (T2 and T3) were in their mid-40s or above, while the other two teachers were in their late 20s (Field notes, June 10, 2014). In interviews, all four of the teachers explained that they did not choose the profession, but rather became teachers after dropping out of university because of a lack of financial support. I discuss the issue of career choice in greater detail in the *development* thematic finding.
Finally, three of the five educators are from CI:2 and explained that their status as insiders in the village helps them liaise with community members to meet the needs of the school (CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). All five of the educators are ethnically Akebou and speak the local language. They said that they occasionally use local language in the classroom to explain difficult concepts or to mentor students by giving personal advice (CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014; CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). This contrasted with the experience of educators in ST:1 who were sent by the state and did not speak the local language. In their case, they claimed the community was unwilling to support the needs of the school (ST:1:T3, May 17, 2014).

Members of the APE organization in CI:2 had comparatively less diverse backgrounds than other sites. Table 4.10 presents the demographic information of community member participants.

Table 4.10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Children in school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APE President</td>
<td>CI:2:FG2 (1)</td>
<td>CI:2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>One student at CEG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APE Secretary</td>
<td>CI:2:FG2 (2)</td>
<td>CI:2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>No students at CEG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APE Advisor</td>
<td>CI:2:FG2 (3)</td>
<td>CI:2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>No students at CEG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APE Advisor</td>
<td>CI:2:FG2 (4)</td>
<td>CI:2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Mason</td>
<td>Four students at CEG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the APE members was unable to attend the focus group because his was working as a mason at the dispensary construction site at the time of the interview. There were no female members of the APE in CI:2. Of those interviewed, two of the four had children enrolled at the CEG at the time of the interview, though they all had sent children to the school within the last five years. Additionally, the same five members had served on the APE board since the school opened in 2003. Members explained that, while they were active in the three years following the establishment of the school, they recently turned over total control of educational affairs to the
school director. The APE no longer oversees school budgets, the collection of school fees, or the hiring and firing of teachers. Rather they intervene only when there is a problem between students and teachers, or parents and teachers (CI:2:FG2, July 19, 2014). This suggested that APE’s involvement in school affairs was limited and that the committee existed primarily in name. I discuss the role of the community and the relationships between educators and community members in more detail in the Space/Context thematic finding.

In this chapter, I provided descriptions of each of the research sites by identifying the general conditions of the site and highlighting key issues in each site. I began the chapter with a description of the Togolese Ministry of Education because it offered insight into the policy perspective at the national-level. Specifically, I obtained information in the interview with the official at the Togolese Ministry of Education, the informal discussion with another official, and in official policy documents for a macro-level perspective for this case. I then described individual school sites to illustrate the local-level contexts and provide insight into the realities of practice. Interviews, focus groups, observations, documents, and photographs at each of the school and village sites provided micro-level data on the realities of education in three Akebou schools. The four sites offered distinctive perspectives on curriculum policies and practices in Togolese schools at macro and micro levels. In the next chapter, I present the thematic findings in my case as they relate to the four research questions and as they surface at and across each/all of my four sites.
CHAPTER FIVE
THEMATIC FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

In order to create a rich and detailed case study documenting the distinctive policies and practices in CI schools in the Akebou Prefecture of Togo, I organized my data into four major themes. These themes presented a multi-dimensional description that addressed the features of educational policy in Togo (Research Question One), the goals and purposes of education (Research Question Two), the general conditions of Akebou schools (Research Question Three), and the key issues in curriculum policies and practices (Research Question Four). The four major themes that emerged in the data were: school funding, development, curriculum, and space/context. I also describe two overarching thematic elements that surfaced across each of the four themes and four sites. In each of the themes, I trace educational policies from the national-level (macro) to local-levels (micro) to help illustrate the complex and distinctive translations of policy ideals into local practices.

After the collection and analysis of all of my data, my analysis produced four major themes and two overarching thematic elements. Following Creswell’s (2009) model for data analysis, I constructed themes by identifying interrelated codes that could be grouped together to describe larger issues that surfaced across sites and participants. I used the information presented in Tables 3.4 to 3.7 in Chapter Three (pp.132-136) to inform the construction of thematic findings because they provided a complete list of codes and number of occurrences in interview, focus group, observation, and document data. While I attempted to create codes that reflected
specific concepts, ideas, or actions, I found that some codes appeared in multiple contexts. In particular, *Nos Propres Efforts* (NPE) and *Quality* (QUAL) appeared throughout the data, surfacing in the context of each of the four major themes. Educators, for example, discussed how they relied on their own efforts (NPE) to raise money for the school (funding theme), engage in professional development (development theme), maintain the school grounds (space/context theme), and obtain and/or develop curriculum materials (curriculum theme). *Nos Propres Efforts* and *Quality* did not neatly fit into a single theme and therefore became overarching threads that will be discussed in the context of each theme. The NPE and QUAL codes combined for a total of 52 occurrences in the data, representing 5% of the total 1028 occurrences in the study.

Apart from NPE and QUAL, other codes were easier to categorize as they related to one dominant theme despite having some overlap into secondary themes. For example, in some instances the code *Parent-Teacher Relationship* (APE), which occurred a total of 23 times in the data, related to school funding because policy stipulates that the APE is responsible for collecting community contributions and raising money for the school. However, the realities of APE roles varied between sites and were more directly related to the social relationships within the specific site, indicating that it more naturally fit in the *Space/Context* theme. Table 5.1 shows the primary and secondary relevancy of codes to major themes. The capital X indicates primary relevancy of a code to a theme and the capital O indicates secondary relevancy.
Table 5.1

*Focused codes related to major themes (Occurrences include interview, focus group, observation, and document data sets)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Occurr.</th>
<th>Relevancy to Theme</th>
<th>School Funding</th>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Space/Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>O</td>
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<td>ECONDEV</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>QUAL</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>PARSTU</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>INSPECTS</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>ACCESS</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>O</td>
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<td>CONTEXT</td>
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<td>GOVT-NR</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: X = Primary relevancy  
O = Secondary relevancy

The thematic findings discussed in this chapter represent the ideas, perspectives, and beliefs most commonly discussed and observed during my fieldwork in policy documents, an interview at the Ministry of Education, local-level schools, and communities in Akebou, Togo.

The four major themes identified and discussed in this chapter are: 1) School funding, 2)
Development, 3) Curriculum, and 4) Space/Context. I chose to present my data as thematic findings because it offered insight into my research questions from a variety of perspectives and dimensions. The thematic approach allowed me to place the voices of participants at the center of my study by using the issues that the *participants themselves* most commonly discussed during interviews, but also with reference to my research question and my interview protocols (See Research Matrix, Figure 1.4, p.15 and Interview Protocol, Appendix A(3)).

However, it was also important that thematic findings responded to my research questions. I answered Research Question One, not only in the policy and findings in the site descriptions presented previously, but also in the thematic findings of *Curriculum, Development, and Funding*. I answered Research Question Two in the themes of *Space/Context* and *Development*, which both addressed the goals and purposes of schooling from the perspective of educators and community members involved in the operations of Akebou CI schools. Like Research Question One, I addressed Research Question Three in the site descriptions, which identified the general conditions of and key issues in Akebou schools as relative to policy. I also answered it in my discussion of the *Funding, Curriculum, and Space/Context* thematic findings. Finally, I answered Research Question Four, which specifically addressed key issues in curriculum policies and practices in Akebou schools relative to MOE policy, in the *Curriculum* thematic finding. Figure 5.1 shows the four themes and their corresponding research questions. It also illustrates the interconnectedness of the overarching threads (NPE and QUAL) and the four themes.
Figure 5.1. The “NPE” and “QUAL” overarching thread and the four major themes.

School Funding: Thematic Finding and Overarching Threads

The first major theme of my findings addressed Research Questions One and Three by comparing the contemporary features of school funding as it appeared in national policy documents with the local level realities of underfunding as discussed by educators and community members. Given that I conducted my research in a prefecture with limited economic activity and high poverty, it was not surprising that one of the major themes in my study addressed the issue of funding. Additionally, because educational issues are often interrelated, there were some connections between the school funding theme and the other thematic findings.
in the study. For example, the amount of funding a school received, in part, determined the quantity and quality of curriculum materials available at that school, an issue that was addressed in the curriculum thematic finding. School funding also impacted the condition of the physical plant of each school, which illustrated the interconnectedness of school funding and space/context themes. Figure 5.1 showed the interrelationships between each of the four themes.

The issue of school funding was coded as Manque de financement (lack of funding or $) and appeared 21 times in the data, including interviews, focus groups, observations, and documents. There were also five additional codes that directly related to funding. They included:

1. School Fees (FEES), 20 occurrences
2. Teacher Salary (PAY), 18 occurrences
3. (No) Role of Government (GOVT, GOVT-NR, $-GOVT, DOCS-GOVT), 25 occurrences
4. Enrollment Rates (ENROLL), 11 occurrences
5. Travail Manuel Policy and Practice (TM-PRACT, TM-POL), 20 occurrences

Figure 5.2 shows how these five codes combined to create the central thematic finding of school funding. First, as noted in the MOE site description, Togolese educational policy stipulated that the national government would provide financial resources to support normal operations of schooling in Togo. Across the three school sites, however, educators identified insufficient funding as a key issue that limited their ability to provide quality instruction and meet the curriculum standards required by educational policy. Participant comments provided insight into the policy-practice divide as it related to school funding, which will be discussed in the corresponding subsection. To respond to the lack of funding, schools relied on high enrollment rates (ENROLL), which in turn generated more revenue from school fees (FEES) collected in the locality. Educators also explained—and observations confirmed—that the manual labor provided from students as Travail Manuel (TM) was used to supplement teacher salaries (PAY). Finally, educators in ST:1 described the governmental role in providing financial
support for the CEG, while educators in CI:1 and CI:2 described a distinct lack of governmental intervention in their schools, but maintained hope that the MOE would eventually notice their efforts and begin providing funding for the school (GOVT). Thus, manque de financement ($) and the corresponding codes interlocked to create the school funding thematic finding presented in this section. The theme contained six codes that occurred a total of 115 times in the data (interview, focus group, observation, and document), representing 11.2% of the total 1028 code occurrences in this study.

Figure 5.2. Construction of the School Funding theme.

Manque de Financement

The code Manque de financement ($) appeared 21 times in interviews with directors, teachers, and community members across the three school sites. Not surprisingly, the code did
not surface in policy documents, as it would be unlikely for policy to specifically address a lack of funding in schools. However, I address the governmental role in funding later in the theme (See also MOE Site Description, pp.149 for MOE policy on school funding). While there were nuances in the code due to differences in setting, participants in each site expressed frustration with a lack of financial resources in their schools. In this section, I explore the contexts surrounding the lack of funding to create a deeper understanding of the issue.

In ST:1, the director explained that, despite receiving financial support from the Togolese government, the school did not have enough money in the state-approved budget to pay the volunteer teachers (EVs) who played an integral role in school operations (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014), despite the promise in official policy, which stated that:

*L’Etat assure entièrement le financement du fonctionnement ; il intervient en outre par le budget d’investissement. Au niveau de l’enseignement des premier et deuxième degrés, l’état participe aux constructions scolaires en fournissant les matériaux.*

The state ensures entire financial support for the functioning of the school; it also intervenes in the investment budget. For education at primary and secondary levels, the state participates in the construction of schools and the provision of materials (Précis Scolaires, 1983, pp. 42)

The gap in funding left by unfulfilled policy reduced the salary of volunteer teachers in ST:1, which made it difficult to recruit potential teachers (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014). Without a competitive salary, the most qualified and dynamic teachers refused to teach in rural or isolated schools like SI1, which decreased the quality of education received by students in the school.

To illustrate the issue of funding, Figure 5.3 shows a budget for the CEG in ST:1 signed by the director and two members of the Parent-Teacher Association (APE). The director explained that the budget had been approved by the regional inspection (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014).
Figure 5.3. State-approved budget documents for the CEG in ST:1

The budget showed the total amount of money allocated for expenses (excluding teacher salaries) at the school. The approved budget had a total of 385,400 FCFA (approximately $735 USD) of available funding for the 2013-14 academic year. The itemized expense list totaled 383,100 FCFA, leaving a surplus of 2,340 FCFA (approximately $5 USD). Among other things, the budget included one calculator, one rubber stamp, 12 packets of report cards, 30 packets of white chalk, 10 packets of colored chalk, programs of study for French and English, and a soccer ball for interclass competitions. The single most expensive item on the budget was cell phone credit at 50,000 FCFA ($100 USD). This was used to maintain communication between the director and the regional inspection and to organize the BEPC examination, which drew students from several nearby schools. It is also important to note that the budget reserved 43,000 FCFA ($86 USD) to cover the cost of registration and the travel expenses of teachers invited to attend
pedagogical trainings held by the regional inspection. This contrasted with the experiences of educators in CI schools who had to pay out of pocket if they decided to attend teacher trainings because their school budgets could not afford to dedicate funds for trainings. I discuss the issue of teacher training in the development theme.

Despite a small surplus in the budget in ST:1, the itemized list of expenses did not accurately reflect the needs of the school. For example, during interviews, science teachers mentioned that they were unable to conduct experiments for students because the school could not afford the required materials (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014; Interview, ST:1:T1, May 28, 2014; Interview, ST:1:T3, May 28, 2014). This practical reality contrasted with the policy, which stated that “l’état participe aux constructions scolaires en fournissant les matériaux (the state participates in the construction of schools and the provision of materials)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, pp. 42). Participant comments at the local-level were supported by an analysis of the school budget since there was no mention of science materials in the document. Additionally, while there were provisions for repairing broken desks, there was no mention of general repairs or maintenance of the physical plant. Educators pointed out the poor condition of the corrugated iron roofing covering the 5eme and 6eme classrooms and explained that there was not enough money in the budget to fix them (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014; Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014). The lack of funding was an important issue in the CEG in ST:1 despite the fact that they received some financial support from the Togolese government. Even in the state school, the reality of school funding did not reflect the ideals of national policy cited in my MOE Site Description in Chapter Four (pp.146). The issue, however, was more severe in CI schools.

My analysis of policy documents did not reveal a clear national policy on the funding of CI schools. However, the Togolese MOE did not recognize CI schools as legitimate educational
initiatives until 1994, when they were reclassified as *écoles de l'initiatives locales* (locally initiated schools, or EDIL) and were allowed to participate in national examinations (Gbogbotchi et al, 2000). Therefore, the Handbook of Togolese Education Policy, which was published in 1983, did not contain policies that directly addressed CI schools. Interestingly, according to MEPSA (2011), the Togolese MOE was actively converting CI schools into state-sponsored schools. In 2011, there was a “transformation de 437 établissements communautaires en établissements publics (transformation of 437 community-based schools into public schools)” (p.9). While I could not find the specific policy that addressed the issue of CI school conversion, this statistic shows that the Togolese MOE aimed to incorporate CI schools within the public system. State-recognition would include some financial support, which was clearly needed in the CI schools that participated in my study.

From the moment I arrived in CI:1, the lack of funding surfaced as a key issue. In a welcoming speech, the educators claimed: “Depuis la création de notre établissement en 2002, nous n'avons pas reçu aucune franc de la part du gouvernement togolais (Since the creation of the school in 2002, we have not received a single franc from the Togolese government)” (CI:1 Welcome Speech, 2014, pp.1, See Appendix B(5)). Observations confirmed that the school suffered from a serious lack of funding. The classroom buildings were constructed of local material, chalkboards were white washed and water damaged, and there was no evidence of teaching materials apart from notebooks and a few photocopied textbooks purchased by the teachers themselves (Field notes, May 24, 2014; June 2, 2014; June 3, 2104). Educators explained that these conditions, which were a product of limited funding, impacted the quality of education (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014).
Ironically, the school in CI:1 was established because the cost of education (school fees, rent, and food) prevented parents from sending their children to the state-sponsored CEG in ST:1. The school in CI:1 was established “de réduire les frais scolaire pour les parents (to reduce costs of schooling for parents)” (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). Without state funding, the community implemented a local fee structure and community contribution system that chronically underfunded the school, but at the same time, made education more affordable for parents. When asked about the key issues in his school, the director identified the lack of funding as the third most important issue, after the condition of buildings and unqualified teachers (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). He noted the amount of funding varied from year to year, which limited his ability to plan for the future. At the end of the interview, I asked him to offer concluding thoughts. He responded by stating, “c'est le moyen qui nous manque (It is the means that we lack)” (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). The word ‘moyen’ translates directly to ‘means’ and can refer to a variety of objects or issues, including material resources or training, though it is most often used in the context of finances. This showed the pressing reality of limited financial resources in CI schools.

Similarly, the director of the CEG in CI:2 expressed concern for the lack of financial resources in his school. When asked to identify the key issues impacting educational experiences, his first response was “les problèmes financiers (the financial problems)” (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). Like CI:1, his school was entirely supported by funding raised in the community. Given the economic challenges in the village, it was difficult for community members to provide adequate funding, leaving the school severely underfunded. While CI:2 did not keep up-to-date budget records, the director informed me that each year the financial needs of the school surpassed the sum that he collected from school fees and
community contributions. Observations showed the consequences of limited financial resources in the school. The physical condition of classrooms suggested that the school could not afford to resurface chalkboards or repair roof leaks (Field notes, June 23, 2014).

Not surprisingly, lack of funding was also one of the first issues mentioned by teachers in both CI sites. One teacher put only the (un)availability of educational materials before funding, while another mentioned the condition of the buildings and lack of infrastructure in the region as the most pressing issues (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). Both teachers explained that the lack of financial resources impacted all aspects of education, from the inability to buy textbooks, to limited opportunities for professional development, to unstable salaries.

Teachers in CI:2 expressed similar frustration with the lack of funding. When asked about the key challenges in their school, three of the four teachers mentioned financial resources as one of the top two issues. During the focus group, teachers explained that because the school depends solely on local fees and contributions to pay salaries, purchase materials, and maintain the school grounds, it was difficult to compete on national exams with the CEG in ST:1, which received some funding from the MOE to pay state-employed teacher salaries, as noted earlier (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). Teachers stated that, much like the school in CI:1, the community was unable to adequately support the school because they faced their own economic and financial challenges. However, teachers in CI:2 identified a “manque de volonté (lack of good will)” among community members (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). When asked to elaborate on the manque de volonté, teachers explained that even when community members have enough money to pay school fees or contribute to fundraising efforts, they willfully refuse under the pretense that because they do not have a student in the school, they do not need to
support education (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). Thus, the manque de volonté limited the amount of money the school could collect and negatively impacted educational experiences. I discuss the issue of parent-teacher relationships in greater detail in the space/context theme.

Naturally, community members described the manque de financement (lack of funding) in different terms. CI:1:FG1(2) (See Table 3.2, p.104 for more information on coding of participants) explained that all of the costs associated with education fell on the parents, “on dispense pour les cahiers, les bics, des craies et les uniformes. Mais nous devons aussi payer les enseignants. Nous n'avons pas assez d'argent (We spend money on notebooks, pens, chalk, and uniforms for our children. But we also have to pay the teachers. We do not have enough money)” (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1(2), June 3, 2014). From the perspective of community members, the school’s lack of funding was important, but was beyond their control because they claimed to already be providing funding to the best of their ability. With 100% of the financial responsibility falling on parents, some opted to remove their children from school. One community member said, “Les frais de scolarité sont trop, et certains abandonnent (The cost of schooling is too much, and some abandon school)” (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1(2), June 3, 2014). In CI:2, participants expressed similar frustrations with the financial burden, explaining that the school had been established with intention of making education more affordable by eliminating the costs associated with sending a student to neighboring villages to attend CEG. However, with no government or NGO intervention, the entire operating costs of the school had become their responsibility. Due to the economic instability of the agricultural economy, community members said they often “manque les moyens de soutenir l'école (lacked the means to support the school)” (Focus Group, CI:2:FG2(1), June 19, 2014). Thus, for community members the manque de financement code included a consideration of the larger economic context of the research setting.
Not only did the school suffer from under funding, the community members lacked the financial means to support themselves.

The *manque de financement* (lack of funding) code appeared 21 times across interview, focus group, observation, and document data, placing it among the top 15 most frequently appearing codes in my study. I situated it at the center of the *school funding* thematic finding because the underfunding of Akebou schools was one of the most common issues identified by participants in my study. The following sections and their associated codes further contribute to the issue of school funding.

(No) Role of Government

I created four codes to reference the role of the government in Akebou schools based on the context of participant comments. The first code *reference to government* (GOVT) was used when participants mentioned governmental actions or efforts that supported their school financially or otherwise. The code *reference to government—no role* (GOVT-NR) was used when participants described the absence of governmental intervention in educational affairs. GOVT appeared eight times in the data, while GOVT-NR appeared nine times. Appearing only in policy documents, the remaining two codes referred to governmental intervention in the provision of educational materials (DOCS-GOV), which appeared two times in the data and financial support ($-GOVT), which appeared four times.

The Togolese constitution includes a provision stating that education is the responsibility of the state and is obligatory for all children up to the age of fifteen. The Handbook of Education Policy described the legislation and policies that regulate educational administration. The document explicitly explained that:
Le financement de l'enseignement est assuré par l'Etat... L'Etat assure entièrement le financement du fonctionnement... L'Etat participe aux constructions scolaires et fournissant les matériaux
(School funding is to be provided by the state... The state assures complete financial support for the normal operations of schools... The state participates in the construction of school buildings and the provision of materials) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.42).

Thus, as part of the national plan for development, educational policy mandated that school funding was a responsibility of the Togolese government. This aligned with one of the seven principles of schooling, which stated that “L’enseignement est en principe gratuit (In principle, education is free)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, pp.10). In order for education to be free for students and parents, the government would need to take full responsibility for building and maintaining schools and for paying teacher salaries. Yet, even in state-sponsored schools, educators relied on locally collected fees to pay the salaries of the volunteer teachers who held positions that were not filled by state trained and employed teachers (Interview, ST:1:D1, May, 26, 2014).

When asked about the role that the Ministry of Education played in achieving the ideals stated in educational policy (See Chapter Four, pp.146-148), the MOE official responded by describing the 2008 reform that eliminated fees for students in primary schools. He explained that the MOE planed to extend the elimination of fees to the CEG-level, but lacked sufficient funding at the national-level, which prevented them from implementing the reform. He mentioned that, if implemented, the government would be unable to fill the loss of revenue from school fees, which would leave CEGs even more underfunded, thereby reducing the quality of education (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). He also described a recent policy that increased the governmental role in education. Beginning in 2013, EVs at the primary-level who had been teaching for over 10 years were offered the opportunity to pass a qualification exam before being reclassified as governmental employees (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). I observed the effects of this policy in ST:1 and CI:2, where informal conversations with primary school
teachers who had passed the qualification exam were now on the governmental payroll, although they had not yet received their first paycheck despite having nearly completed an entire academic year at the time of fieldwork (Field notes, May 23, 2014; June 19, 2014). It is important to note that all of the examples provided by the Ministry official regarding the MOE’s role in policy implementation described projects at the primary school level rather than the CEG-level, which was the focus of my study.

When asked about the role of the Ministry of Education in supporting education at the CEG level, particularly in the context of CI schools, the official said that local communities must first prove that they are committed to supporting education before the MOE will intervene in local affairs. For example, he cited a national project that provided educational materials and teacher training to under-resourced schools. However, he said that the selection process for beneficiaries required that schools already be built by the community and must meet national construction standards (cement walls and iron roof). This requirement eliminated both CI schools in my study because neither had a physical plant that met the standards (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). These comments reflected a practical example of the ideal collaboration between “l’Etat, les collectivités secondaires et locales, les organismes nationaux et la contribution des parents (the state, local and regional governments, national organizations, and parent contributions)” as proposed in national educational policy (Précis Scolaires, 1983, pp.42).

Immediately following his statements on the role of communities in the implementation of educational policy, the official stated “petit à petit on peut décentraliser l’éducation pour que les parents puissent gérer leur écoles (little by little we can decentralize education so that parents can manage their schools)” (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). These comments reflected larger trends in international education that aim to reduce centralized control of educational
administration by increasing the role of parents and communities, particularly in regards to the financial support of teachers and the maintenance of the physical plant (Clemons, 2009; Daun, 2009). The official linked the MOE’s push towards decentralization with the overarching goal of democratization, stating “le début de la démocratie est à l'école et avec la gestion de l'école (democracy begins with education and with school management)” (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). Thus, despite the guarantee of governmental support for education in policy (see MOE Site Description in Chapter Four, pp.146-148), current MOE policy perspectives include trends towards decentralization that increase the role of parents and communities in education at the local level, particularly in regards to funding and construction.

Educators in ST:1 offered insight into the active role of government in their schools and the gaps left by governmental non-action. As a state-sponsored school, the construction of the physical plant was paid for and managed by the government in 1976 (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014). Since then, the government played an active role in supporting educational operations in ST:1. The director said that regional inspectors visit the school once or twice a year to ensure that the administration is appropriately implementing national policies. For example, a recent policy intended to increase female enrollment in CEGs required schools to reduce fees for girls. Each year, the budget sent to the regional direction must show that fees for girls are less than those for boys. Regional officials reprimand schools that do not comply (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014).

The most commonly occurring instances of the GOVT code in ST:1 referred to the government’s role in paying salaries and deploying teachers to their posts. The Handbook of Togolese Education Policy noted that “le mouvement général du personnel de l'enseignement se fait par décision ministérielle (job placements are made by the Ministry of Education)” (Précis
Scolaires, 1983, p.63). As noted earlier, the state employed four of the six educators in ST:1. After providing details on his personal history, one teacher expressed pride in being a state employee, stating “et c'est comme ça que je suis devenu un petit fonctionnaire de l'Etat togolais (and it is like that that I became a civil servant of Togo)” (Interview, ST:1: T3, May 28, 2014). Another teacher described the placement process explaining that, as an employee of the state, he was required to work where the MOE decided to deploy him. He expressed frustration with the process, saying, “nous pouvons choisir trois postes, mais ceux qui sont les plus agréables sont déjà prises. Aucune personne demande (ST:1) (we can choose three posts, but the best posts are already taken. No one asks for posts like ST:1)” (Interview, ST:1: T2, May 28, 2014). Thus, interview data on the role of the government in ST:1 was limited to issues of human resource management.

Teachers in ST:1 also expressed frustration with what they perceived as the government not fulfilling its promises to provide financial support for education (Précis Scolaires, 1983, pp. 42, See also Chapter Four, p.149). A volunteer teacher, said “l'Etat ne joue aucun rôle ici (the state does not play a single role here)” while a state employee, expressed a similar sentiment saying “il est très rare de les voir ici (it is very rare to see them (the state) here)” (Interview, ST:1: T1, May 28, 2014; Interview, ST:1: T2, May 28, 2014). Despite the role of the state in controlling the job placements of teachers (see above), many teachers felt that the state did not sufficiently support instructional operations in the school. They cited the lack of textbooks, teaching materials, science equipment, and curriculum guides as evidence that “l'Etat ne met plus la main dans l'éducation (the state no longer puts their hand in education)” (Interview, ST:1: T4, May 28, 2014). This teacher also discussed trends towards decentralization and community-supported education in state-sponsored schools, saying “Ils veulent mettre la responsabilité de
l'éducation sur la communauté. L'Etat veut désolidariser l'école (They want to put the responsibility of education on the community. The state wants to detach themselves from education)” (Interview, ST:1:T4, May 28, 2014). Thus, while the CEG in ST:1 was officially recognized and supported by the Togolese government, educators expressed frustration with what they perceived as the government not fulfilling its duties in regards to education.

In CI schools, which do not receive any support from the government, comments on the limited role of government in education were more common and more critical. As noted earlier, official policy documents did not contain specific policies regarding financial support for CI schools. Instead they were viewed as the responsibility of the community until the MOE decided to intervene and assume responsibility for the school (MEPSA, 2011, p.9). For example, the school in CI:1 had not received any financial or human resource support from the government since its establishment in 2002 (CI:1 Welcome Speech, 2014, pp.1, See Appendix B(5)). The director reinforced this point in an interview, stating “on ne nous donne rien (they give us nothing) (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). I asked what efforts school officials had made to solicit resources from the state and he responded “nous-mêmes, nous réclamons ça chaque année (we ask for that every year)” (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). Teachers expressed frustration that the government had ignored their demands for support. When asked about the role of government a teacher said, “normalement l'Etat doit nous aider. Mais ils n'interviennent pas (normally, the state should support us. But they do not intervene at all)” (CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014).

Educators in CI:2 expressed similar concern over the gaps between policy promises and practical realities. Though Togolese education policy did not specifically address CI schools, it did present a general promise to “assure entièrement le financement du fonctionnement (ensure entire financial support for the functioning of the school)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, pp. 42). After
presenting relevant passages from policy documents describing funding responsibilities, teachers said “l’Etat ne donne rien ici (the state gives us nothing here)” (Interview, CI:2:T2, June 11, 2014) and “l'Etat ne joue aucune rôle au nouveau du financement (the state plays no role in financial support)” (Interview, CI:2:T4, June 11, 2014) in reference to teacher salaries, building construction and maintenance, and teaching materials. In total, all eight CI educators acknowledged a contradiction between the government’s role in schooling presented in the constitution and in educational policies with the realities of their experiences in the Akebou Prefecture. However, some educators remained hopeful that the government would take control of their school, saying “un jour l’Etat pourrait nous prendre en charge, mais jusqu'à aujourd'hui c’est pas réalisé (one day the state may take over, but as of now that has not happened)” (Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). This optimism showed continued confidence in the government, despite recent reform trends that reduced governmental intervention in schools by placing more responsibility on parents and communities.

While the official at the MOE touted decentralization as a way to democratized education (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014), educators in all three schools were apprehensive of policy trends leading to the decentralization of educational costs because they recognized that communities were already struggling to pay EV salaries and maintain school buildings. Educators hoped that the government would play a larger role in their school, particularly through support of financial, material, and professional development initiatives, all of which were enumerated as responsibilities of the state in educational policy documents (Précis Scolaires, 1983, See also Chapter Four, p.149). Thus, there was an observable breakdown between the roles and responsibilities of the state as presented in national policy and the realities at the level of local practice. In an effort to decentralize and democratize educational decision-
making, recent trends in educational policy placed greater responsibility on parents and community members. These policies were met with criticism from teachers in rural communities because without government support, schools were forced to rely on locally collected fees that did not sufficiently cover costs.

**Fees and Enrollment Rates**

Decentralization and limited state support for CEG-level education in Togo put pressure on schools to increase local fees while maintaining high rates of enrollment. Information collected from policy documents and an interview at the Ministry of Education showed concern for increasing access to and the affordability of education in Togo. These efforts were comprised of enrollment campaigns and reform efforts that reduced the cost of primary and secondary education, including the elimination of primary school fees in 2008 (UNICEF, 2008). However, realities at the local-level showed educators struggling to balance the affordability of education with the need to collect fees used to pay teacher salaries and purchase educational materials.

Along with other UN member states, Togo has made efforts to achieve benchmarks associated with the Educational For All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDG). In a 1995 cross-sector report on governmental ministries in Togo, the minister of education stated that his department had set the goal of achieving “l'éducation pour tous en l’an 2005 (education for all by the year 2005)” (Rapport Sectoriel des Ministères de Togo, 1995, p.293, see also Figure 5.4). Though Togo had not achieved this goal in 2008, the elimination of school fees at the primary level was designed to increase enrollment in primary education (UNICEF, 2008). Similarly, when I interviewed a ministry official, he stressed the importance of achieving universal enrollment in primary education because education was important to national development. Since 2001, Togo has nearly doubled the number of students enrolled in secondary
education (CEG and Lycee) from 288,347 students in 2001 to 545,861 in 2011 (World Bank, 2014). However, the majority of policy reforms designed to increase enrollment rates in Togo focused on the primary level, which indirectly increased enrollment in secondary education, as students were more likely to transition from primary into secondary education. When asked about increasing enrollments in CEGs, the official stated that he hoped by 2016 Togo would be able to eliminate fees for CEG students. However, they must first ensure that current levels of funding can be sustained so as to not reduce the quality of education received by students (Interview, MN:1:01, May 16, 2014). Given that this policy was in development and had not yet been implemented at the time of fieldwork, I am unable to produce document data to illustrate its existence.

![Image](image.png)

*Figure 5.4. Interview with Minister of Education in 1995 outlining national goals to achieve education for all.*
As mentioned earlier, the MOE has recently attempted to increase female enrollment at the CEG level through the reduction of fees. While I was unable to collect specific documents describing this policy given that it was recently implemented, the MOE official discussed his role in ensuring that the policy was appropriately implemented in practice by describing the punitive measures taken against non-compliant schools, “Nous appliquons les lois éducatives. Les lois sont là pour une raison. Si l'éducation est malade, le pays est malade (We enforce educational policies and laws. They are there for a reason. If education is sick, the country is sick)” (Interview, MN:1:O1, June 2, 2014). Local-level observations and interviews confirmed that the policy requiring reduced fees for female students were largely respected in Akebou schools. ST:1 charged 3,600 FCFA per student for boys and 2,800 FCFA for girls per year (plus a 3,000 FCFA contribution for both genders), while CI:2 charged 6,500 FCFA for boys and 6,100 FCFA for girls. Only CI:1 charged a flat rate of 7,000 FCFA for both boys and girls. When asked why the school did not have reduced fees for girls, the director informed me that they would like to implement the policy to stimulate female enrolment, but because the school was severely underfunded, they needed to maximize the revenue from fees. He said that there had been no repercussions from the regional inspection or the Ministry for their policy, speculating that perhaps it was because they were a CI school and received less oversight from authorities (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). Additionally, the director of CI:2 mentioned that, ideally, he would like to provide lower fees for female students, but because the school relied on fees to pay teacher salaries, he could not afford to further reduce the fees.

As noted in the previous section, educational policy stipulated that the Togolese government should meet the financial needs of schools, including construction materials, teaching materials, teacher trainings, and teacher salaries (See MOE Site Description in Chapter
Four, p.149). However, the same policy also describes parental contributions in supporting schools: “les parents participent à la construction et à la réfection des installations scolaires. Ils apportent leur contribution en nature et en main-d’œuvre bénévole (parents must participate in the construction and maintenance of school buildings. Their contributions can be in-kind or as voluntary labor)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.43). In the passage, educational policy presented the ideal relationship between governmental and communal responsibilities for education.

However, local-level realities of the government-community relationship highlighted a breakdown between policy and practice. In ST:1, school officials and representatives from the APE established a system of locally collected school fees to offset funding gaps from the government. The 3,600 FCFA fee for boys and the 2,800 FCFA fee for girls reflected the fee structure mandated by policy. Nonetheless, parents had to pay an additional 3,000 FCFA fee for both boys and girls before their children could attend the school. The fee (referred to as a contribution parallèle or parallel contribution) was used to pay EVs and cover the costs of the school maintenance. This practice extended the role of parents and community members beyond what was stipulated in policy, as parents were required to contribute financially rather than through in-kind donations or manual labor.

A similar fee structure existed in CI:1. In addition to the required fee of 7,000 FCFA per student per year, the entire community was asked to offer a community contribution of 2,000 FCFA for men and 1,000 FCFA for women to help support the school and pay salaries (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014; Focus Group, CI:1:FG1, June 3, 2014). Not only did this illustrate a disconnect between national policy and local practice—given that the practice clearly extended the role of the community beyond what was required in policy—it also showed an example of a divide between policy and practice within the local-level. Despite being a local
policy, teachers at the school mentioned that the community contributions were rarely collected, but on the occasional instances when they were, they failed to sufficiently cover the needs of the school. One teacher said “nous ne sommes pas payés dans les délais prévu quand à la contribution de la communauté n’est pas collecté (we are not paid on time when the community contribution is not collected)” (Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). Even local fee structures, such as the contribution parallèle, went uncollected, causing the school to suffer from a lack of funding.

CI:2 did not have a standardized localize fee structure for community members apart from the fees paid by parents of students. However, teachers mentioned that school officials occasionally “lancent l'appel du financement (send a call for funding)” to the community to purchase textbooks, teaching materials, and cover the cost of maintaining the school grounds (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1, June 11, 2014). Only once in the school’s history had a village organization provided a significant financial contribution in response to a call for funding. In 2007, the Association of Coffee and Cocoa farmers offered 50,000 FCFA to cover school expenses during a year when the director was unsuccessful in collecting enough school fees to pay teacher salaries (Interview, CI:1:T3, June 11, 2014). Thus, the CEG in CI:2 relied on school fees and occasional contributions from community organizations to finance educational, a stark difference from the funding promises presented in policy.

Finally, educators and community members in CI sites discussed the relationship between enrollment rates and fees. They described the difficulties faced when creating fee structures. They needed to balance the affordability of education—which stimulated enrollment rates—while making the fees high enough to cover the cost of education—which could discourage parents from enrolling their children in school. A teacher in CI:2 said that one of the most
common reasons causing dropouts was the cost of education, “les élèves veulent gagner de l'argent, donc qu'ils quittent l'école quand on leur demande de payer les frais scolaires (students are more concerned with making money, so when we ask them to pay their school fees, they leave the school)” (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014). As more students dropped out, the school collected less money from fees, leaving it increasingly underfunded. While data on enrollment rates in CI:1 were incomplete, the number of students who took the BEPC exam served as a proxy for enrollment trends. Between 2010 and 2014 there was a 40% drop in the number of students taking the BEPC exam. Fewer students meant less funding in CI:1.

Similarly teachers in CI:2 discussed the importance of maintaining low fees, not only to “pour aider les enfants de le milieu (to help the children of the locality)”, but also to increase enrollment rates and boost school funding (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 11, 2014). During an interview, the director said that each year he travels to neighboring villages to meet parents and recruit students to attend his school. He did this because he believed in the importance of education, but also because he needed students to keep the school from closing (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). Enrollment rates in CI:2 peaked in 2008 with 166 students and have steadily declined since, dropping to only 100 in 2014, which was the lowest total enrollment since the school opened in 2002-2003. As enrollment rates declined, the budget in CI:1 tightened. Teacher salaries decreased and became less reliable, which negatively impacted educational experiences.

**Teacher Salary**

Not surprisingly, the issue of teacher salary (PAY) surfaced 18 times across interview, focus group, observation, and document data, making it the fourth most common code in the *school funding* theme. Teachers in all three schools expressed concern for salaries and methods
of payment. Teachers felt that salaries did not adequately compensate them for their work in the isolated Akebou schools.

The Handbook of Togolese Education Policy did not provide specific information on salary ranges, though if it did, they would be outdated given that the document was published in 1983. It did, however, assure that teacher salaries would be paid by the Togolese government on a monthly basis and would reflect their role as professionals. Specifically, it stated, “l’Etat prend totalement en charge le traitement de tout le personnel enseignant et administratif (the state takes complete charge of all teaching personnel and administrative personnel)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.43), and “tout enseignant en position d'activité à droit à une rémunération comportant la solde soumis a retenue pour pension (all active teachers have the right to be paid for their service, including an amount to be held for their pension)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.61).

For teachers employed by the state, the policy ideals accurately represented their experiences. While salaries varied depending on years of experience and qualification levels, teachers in ST:1 informed me that their monthly pay was between 40,000 FCFA to 60,000 FCFA per month, while EVs were paid 20,000 FCFA per month (Interviews, ST:1:T1, ST:1:T2; ST:1:T4, May 28, 2014). These salaries allowed state employed teachers to live a comfortable life, especially in a rural area like the Akebou Prefecture. However, variations in the cost of living between regions were not reflected in teacher salaries. During the focus group one teacher stated that “tous les enseignants au Togo sont payés des salaires comparables même dans les villages et dans les villes, mais nous devons quitter ST:1 pour aller jusqu'au Atakpamé pour toucher. Après le frais de voyage, la moitié est terminé (all teachers are paid similar salaries, the same in cities and villages, but we have to leave ST:1 to travel all the way to Atakpamé to collect our salary. After the cost of travel, half of it is gone)” (Interview, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014). He
suggested that the Ministry of Human Resources develop a pay scale that considered the
geographic realities of the placement and the costs of transportation to collect salary payments.

Another state-employed teacher at ST:1 expressed frustration with the slow bureaucratic
process that delayed processing his request for a pay scale change. At the time of fieldwork,
ST:1:T2 held a Master’s degree from the University of Lomé, but was unable to find work in the
field of international development, which was his original intention. Additionally, because his
degree was in sociology—a subject not covered in Togolese secondary schools—he was not
qualified to teach at the secondary level. Instead, he found a job at a primary school near
Atakpamé. One year later, he earned his CAP-CEG qualification and began teaching in a CEG.
However, because he entered the human resources system as a primary school teacher, he
continued to receive the salary of a primary school teacher. He said that he sent his paperwork
for reclassification during his first year of teaching CEG, but three years later it has not been
processed. When I asked him why, he responded, “c'est parce que je ne connais personne au
ministère. Tu doit connaître quelqu'un avant que quelque chose s’est fait (it is because I don't
know anyone in the ministry. You must know someone before anything gets done)” (Interview,
ST:1:T2, May 28, 2014). His perspective reflected a key concern expressed by teachers across
the three sites that the Togolese educational administration was overly bureaucratic and that to
get forms or applications processed one must rely on nepotism or favoritism.

In addition to the salary concerns expressed by state-employed teachers, the EVs in ST:1
also described their frustrations with pay. Both EVs in ST:1 were paid a salary of 20,000 FCFA
per month for the school year, a figure significantly lower than that of teachers employed by the
state (Interview, ST:1:T1, May 28, 2014). At 20,000 FCFA a month, EVs were unable to afford
the same lifestyle as their counterparts in the school. All four of the state teachers purchased
motorcycles (which cost approximately 125,000 FCFA new or 75,000 FCFA used) soon after placement in ST:1 (Field notes, May 30, 2014; Interview, ST:1:T2, May 28, 2014). However, neither of the EVs could afford to purchase a motorcycle and thus relied on public transportation to travel. It is also important to note the symbolic value of a motorcycle in Togolese culture. In a region with limited access to transportation and poor road conditions, traveling in and out of the Akebou Prefecture is a luxury that many residents are unable to afford (Field notes, June 6, 2014). Thus, the purchase of a motorcycle is viewed as a sign of independence, freedom, and importance. Without motorcycles, EVs were not given the same respect as their state-employed counterparts.

One volunteer teacher explained that since he began working at the CEG in ST:1 in 2008, he received one pay raise, from an initial salary of 13,000 FCFA per month to his current salary of 20,000 (Interview, ST:1:T1, May 28, 2014). Unlike state-employed teachers, EV salaries were paid from the locally collected *contributions parallèles*. The director of the school managed these funds and paid EVs at each month. While ST:1:T1 expressed the desire to become a state teacher to receive a pay raise, he did not mention any problems with the current system. He informed me that the director was strict in his collection of *contributions parallèles* and honest in his management of the money. He explained that his monthly salary has never been late nor has it gone unpaid (Interview, ST:1:T1, May 28, 2014). Teachers working in Community Initiatives schools, however, did not share this confidence in local salary systems.

The director of CI:1 informed me that local policy set teacher salaries at 20,000 FCFA per month for the 10-month school year. However, in a village suffering from economic instability, school funding varied dramatically from year to year, which impacted the stability of teacher salaries. The director explained, “il y a des temps quand les enseignants ne sont pas
payés (there are times that the teachers are not paid)” (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014).

Variations in pay occur both year-to-year and month-to-month. Community members and parents were often able to pay school fees around Christmas and New Years, which fall at the end of harvest season for maize, peanuts, coffee, and cocoa. Despite waiting until the middle of the school year, many parents paid school fees in January or February. Prior to this influx of funding, teacher salaries were not paid, but rather were calculated into ‘back pay’ that would be reimbursed once parents had paid. The director explained that sometimes the money collected during this period was not sufficient to cover both ‘back pay’ and salaries through the end of the school year in July. When the funding runs out “c'est fini (it’s finished)” and teachers work without pay for the remainder of the year, which means “certains enseignants quittent avant la fin de l'année (some teachers leave before the end of the year)” (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). Community members also acknowledged the issue of teacher pay stating, “de temps en temps, la communauté est endetté aux enseignants (from time to time the community owes money to teachers)” (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1(1), June 3, 2014). This negatively impacted educational experiences and reflected a breakdown between policy ideals and practical realities.

The teachers in CI:1 expressed similar concerns on the issue of teacher pay. When asked about salary stability, one teacher said “le village ne peut pas nous payer chaque mois (the village cannot pay us every month)” and another added “nous tenons le travail avec confiance que le village nous paiera (we keep working with the hope that the village will pay us eventually)” (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). Despite the inability of the village to guarantee stable pay for educators, the two teachers in CI:1 continued to work each day. Given the history of the school, this dedication would be temporary. Among the sites, CI:1 had the highest rate of teacher turnover. With the exception of the director (who is
a CI:1 native), no teacher had stayed in the site for more than four years (Field notes, June 3, 2014). While the high rate of teacher turnover can be explained by a variety of factors, including rural isolation, village size, and lack of economic opportunity, the instability of teacher salary was perhaps the most significant factor.

Educators in CI:2 also highlighted the issue of instability in teacher pay. In CI:2, local actors (school director and the APE) determined the pay scale for teachers, offering a monthly salary of 15,000 FCFA. Like CI:1, teacher salaries were paid with funds collected from fees, though one teacher noted that these funds also covered teaching materials, maintenance, and travel costs to the regional direction (Interview, CI:2:T3, June 11, 2014). Another teacher explained that, in reality, teachers only received their salary for four or five months of the year as school fees and community contributions could not cover the full ten-month school year, which created problems in school operations (Interview, CI:2:T1, June 11, 2014). When asked about the issues facing his school, the director first mentioned the problem of funding and teacher pay, explaining that on several occasions teachers went on strike to protest salary instability, saying

*Quand les enseignants ne sont pas payés, ils font la grève. C'est moi qui doit aller à l'école chaque jour pour assurer que les élèves vont à l'école. En plus, c'est moi qui doit négocier avec la communauté de payer pour leurs enfants* (When the teachers are not paid, they go on strike. I have to go to the school each day to make sure students keep attending classes. What’s more, it is me that has to negotiate with the community to pay for their children) (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014)

Thus, the issue of teacher salary impacted more than just teachers. Unstable pay also halted school operations, which made it harder for students to cover all the material required by regional and national examinations.

Interestingly, the issue of teacher strikes was not limited to CI schools. At the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year, state-employed teachers across Togo organized strikes and walkouts to protest inadequate and unstable pay. Two separate strikes lasting between two and
three weeks disrupted the school year and, in some areas, ended violently. A Togo press release described the opening salvo of the conflict:

*L’Union des syndicats de l’éducation du Togo (USET) a appelé à une nouvelle grève lundi, mardi et mercredi prochains pour réclamer le retour à un système complexe de primes*

(The Teacher Union of Togo called for a new strike next Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday to demand a reform of salary and benefit policies) (Togo News, October 31, 2013).

Five days later, the government released another press release stating:

*Les établissements scolaires sont fermés jusqu’à nouvel ordre. Une décision prise lundi soir par le gouvernement pour préserver la sécurité des élèves*

(Schools are closed until further notice. The decision was made by the government on Monday evening to ensure the security of students) (Togo News, November 5, 2013).

Ultimately the strike resulted in approximately three weeks of missed classes across Togo, making the issue of teacher strikes both a national-level as well as a local-level issue. In the northernmost region of the country, a student died after an altercation with police forces during a student-organized protest supporting a teachers union. The teacher strikes and governmental response illustrated the omnipresence of the teacher pay (PAY) code and school funding thematic finding in the Akebou Prefecture and throughout the country.

As the fourth most common code in the school funding theme, teacher salary was clearly important to educators and community members in each site. While MOE policy stated that teachers would be compensated for their work, the practical reality at local-levels revealed that teachers that were not employed by the state went without pay for months, while teachers that were employed by the state expressed frustration with salaries that did not adequately compensate them given their rural post. In each case, I documented gaps between policy ideals and practical realities. In order to mitigate the challenge of unstable and insufficient pay, educators used travail manuel (or TM) to supplement their income.
Travail Manuel

The code for travail manuel (manual labor, or TM) appeared in interview, focus group, observation, and documents data a total of 20 times. Despite asking specific questions about TM policies and practices, educators in both CI and state-sponsored schools avoided the topic by offering vague or incomplete answers. In some cases, the information collected in interview data directly contradicted data from observation periods or informal interviews. This suggested that TM is a sensitive issue due to the explicit prohibition of TM in education policy. Given the complexities, the issue of TM was considered within the context and setting of each site.

The practice of travail manuel was initially designed to offer students the opportunity to develop practical skills that would benefit students when they entered the workforce. The Handbook of Togolese Education Policy outlined the original intention of TM in the context of school-based organizations dedicated to individual and community development, stating,

(TM est un) œuvre éminemment formatrice dans laquelle l'élevé acquiert par l'exemple et par la pratique: l'esprit d'équipe, le sens de la vie communautaire, de la responsabilité et de la solidarité, se débarrassant ainsi de son égocentrisme
(TM is a formative work in which students acquire through examples and practice: team spirit, a sense of community, of responsibility and solidarity, in order to rid the student of their selfishness) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.38).

This illustrated that the overarching goals and aims of TM policy were not solely to cover school expenses such as teacher salary, but to serve as an educational opportunity for teachers to engage students in personal and community development. The policy offered several examples of appropriate TM activities. These included, but were not limited to, the production of handmade goods, the creation of school gardens, the organization of after-school clubs, and participation in community work, such as fixing fences, clearing foot paths of overhanging weeds, or clearing the village of refuse and waste (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.39). While schools did participate in some of these activities, the majority of TM assignments that I observed during fieldwork served
the personal needs of teachers, rather than those of the students or the community (Field notes, June 18, 2014; June 21, 2014).

My observations, however, did not always coincide with the information I gathered during interviews. When I asked teachers in ST:1 how they used TM, they unanimously responded that students use TM to complete income generating activities to raise money that is stored in a lockbox in the director’s office and at the end of the year, students (with the help of their respective titulaire) use the money to throw a large party for their class. One teacher explained that students were asked to gather bushels of firewood or thatched roofing twice a week. These products were sold to “les bonnes dames (women who operate food stalls)” and proceeds were stored for the end of the year party. He also explained that students are occasionally asked to gather wood, water, or thatch for the personal use of teachers (Interview, ST:1:T1, May 28, 2014). The stated intention of these activities somewhat corresponded with the ideals presented in policy, though the specific activities did not match with the suggested activities included in the policy document.

Another teacher in ST:1 offered a similar description of TM practices in the CEG, although he accused the local primary school of abusing the practice for personal gain, saying, “Ils utilisent les élèves pour travailler dans leurs champs. Mais c'est pas TM, c’est est une activité clandestine (They use students as manual laborers in their fields. But it isn’t TM, it is a clandestine practice)” (Interview, ST:1:T4, May 28, 2014). Here, he distinguished between CEG and primary school practices, while also differentiating between activities included in officially sanctioned TM policies from unofficial, clandestine practices. However, his distinction was not reflected in observations and interviews with other educators where the term TM was applied to
all manual labor activities that students were required to complete outside of school hours (Field notes, May 30, 2014; June 16, 2014; June 20, 2014).

Additionally, during an informal conversation with a student enrolled in ST:1, I was told that students in 6eme, 5eme, and 4eme were regularly sent to work in the fields of the EVs and state-employed teachers at the CEG to fulfill their TM duties, which stood in contrast to what teachers said in interviews (Field notes, June 20, 2014). The unwillingness to discuss the issue of TM suggested that teachers in ST:1 were aware that their use of TM was explicitly prohibited in Togolese educational policy, which I cite in the following paragraph.

While the TM practices described by ST:1 teachers coincided with the policy requirements, the realities of practice observed during fieldwork did not. Under the section on appropriate professional conduct, Togolese educational policy stipulated:

*L’éducateur ne doit pas considérer ses élèves comme une main-d’œuvre gratuite mis a sa disposition et qu’il peut exploiter a satisfaire ses intérêts personnels (corvée de bois et d’eau, travaux dans les champs personnels, etc.). Il ne doit pas perdre de vue qu’il est paye pour les services qu’il rend* (Teachers must not consider their students as a source of free labor placed at their disposition that they can exploit to satisfy their personal interests (collecting wood and water, working in their personal fields, etc.). Teachers must not lose sight of the fact that they are paid for the services that they provide) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.86)

Viewed in the larger context of the document, this statement created some ambiguity in official policies on TM when compared to policies on school organizations and the associated activities. The document cited several of the same activities in both sections (the collection of wood, water, and thatch), prohibiting them in one, while sanctioning them in another (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.38, p.86). Schools were allowed to use student labor to supplement funding if it was organized through the *Mutuelle Scolaire* (school-based organization for development). However, student labor could not be used to satisfy personal interests. This distinction created an overlapping set of regulations regarding TM in the context of state-sponsored Akebou schools where local,
informal fees were used to pay EVs and maintain school buildings. EVs were paid a lower salary than their state-employed counterparts, which created a perception among community members that they were less qualified to teach at the CEG level (Focus Group, ST:1:FG1(2), May 27, 2014). By supplementing their salaries through the sale of agricultural products cultivated through the use of (free) student labor, EVs could achieve a degree of financial stability that allowed them to afford material goods that gave them the social standing expected of a teacher (see motorcycle example above). This use of TM could be justified under the pretext that it allowed EVs to maintain a level of social respect that reflected their social status as teachers and therefore was beneficial to the school and community as a whole. However, this practice of TM was easily corrupted to serve personal financial ends, as reports from students and observations confirmed that students were required to complete their TM duties in the field of both EVs and state-employed teachers.

In CI:1 and CI:2, educators and community members discussed TM policies and practices much more openly than in ST:1. During an informal conversation, the director of CI:2 informed me that, while the MOE had formally banned the practice of sending students to work in teacher fields, regional inspectors often turned a blind eye to the practice in CI schools because they understood the financial realities of the schools. Additionally, he mentioned that there are several NGOs in Togo actively combating abuses of TM through hotlines that students can call to anonymously report violations of the policy. However, according to him, even these organizations understand that “dans les collèges communautaires, c’est autres choses. Les lois ne appliquent pas tout le temps (in CI schools, it is different. The laws do not always apply)” (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 10, 2014). This illustrated discrepancies between policy implementation and enforcement in state-sponsored and community-based schools.
Knowing that they received no financial or material support from the Togolese government, educators in CI schools felt justified in their use of student labor to support educational operations. When asked about TM in his school, the director of the CEG in CI:1 stated that students are required to complete income generating activities “pour faire les besoins de l'établissement (to meet the needs of the school)” on Friday afternoons (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). These activities included, but were not limited to gathering wood, thatch, or water to be sold, transporting sand for construction, or making mud bricks that would be sold to community members. On days when there was no demand for these activities, students were required to work in the agricultural fields of their teachers (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). This was particularly important in the context of the site because teachers did not receive a stable salary due to economic instability and informal fee structures. Community members also felt that the local TM practices were justified. During the focus group interview I asked them to identify key issues facing their school and they did not mention abuses of TM. When I pressed further on the topic of TM, they accepted that it was a reality in their community and without it, the school would not be able to support itself and students would not have access to education (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1(1), June 3, 2014; Focus Group, CI:1:FG1(3), June 3, 2014).

In CI:2 the code for TM did not surface in interviews or focus groups with educators or community members nor in the documents that I collected at the site. However, because I spent six weeks of fieldwork living in the site, I observed some of the realities of TM practices. On several occasions, I witnessed students from both the primary school and the CEG completing the TM duties. On Friday mornings (during normal school hours), primary school students from the highest three grades (CE2, CM1, CM2) were sent either to work in the fields of their teachers or to collect thatch roofing to be sold at a later date (Field notes, June 6, 2014). Figure 5.5 shows...
primary school students depositing their bundles of straw at the home of the purchaser after teachers checked them off for completing the task.

Figure 5.5. Students complete TM duties by collecting thatched roofing materials.

In the three weeks following the completion of the regional examinations, I observed 6eme, 5eme, and 4eme students completing TM duties for their teachers during school hours each day (Field notes, June 17; June 18; June 19; June 20, 2014). During these TM sessions, students were assigned a variety of tasks to complete. On June 17, 2014, I observed two groups of 20 students preparing to work in the personal fields of two teachers, while another group of ten students spent the morning degraining corn in the housing compound of the director (Field notes, June 17, 2014). The following day, I observed an interaction between CI:2 educators where one asked another if he was required to provide a mid-day meal for students that were completing their TM duties in his fields from 8:00am to 3:00pm after students reported that they were hungry and that other teachers provided meals (Field notes, June 18, 2014). Interestingly,
members of the APE did not comment on nor object to TM practices during focus group interviews. Rather they accepted it as a necessary inconvenience of the educational reality in the local context and maintained hope that the government would eventually recognize the school so that community members and students were no longer required to support school operations (Focus Group, CI:2:FG2(3), June 19, 2014). While TM was clearly a crucial component of school funding in CI:2, without any oversight from governmental or community officials, it had the potential to be misused by teachers. Additionally, policies regarding the Mutuelle Scolaire gave the impression that activities normally associated with TM were acceptable uses of student labor if they benefited the school and/or community, which held true in the case of CI schools. However, policies on educational professionalism clearly prohibited the use of student labor for personal profit, which ultimately made TM in CI schools a violation of policy as revenue derived from TM was used to supplement salaries.

It is important to note that the issue of TM was not limited to the Akebou Prefecture, but can be observed throughout Togo and in neighboring countries. During my fieldwork, I observed students in a community along the road between Atakpamé and Kougnouhou congregating at the school grounds waiting to receive their TM assignments and duties. They were wearing clothing suited for agricultural work rather than their school uniforms and each student held a machete (Field notes, June 16, 2014). Additionally, while in Lomé I watched a short television broadcast documenting the (mis)use of student labor in Cameroon, where students were required to make mud bricks that would then be sold to generate funding for the school (Field notes, June 28, 2014). This indicated that the issue of TM surfaced at local, regional, national, and even international levels, which highlighted the importance of the global-to-local continuum and its impact on educational policies and practices within and between countries.
Nos Propres Efforts, Quality, and School Funding

In addition to the six main code groups that comprised the school funding thematic finding, the overarching threads of the study also offered nuanced insight into the local-level realities of financing schools in the Akebou Prefecture. Educators and community members in each of the three sites expressed the impact that funding had on the quality of education and the measures they have taken to meet the needs of their schools.

During the interview at the MOE in Lomé, the official expressed concern for the quality of education in community-based schools in Togo. As cited in Chapter Four (pg. 146), the educational goal of “Democracy” in national policy documents stated that,

*Par conséquent, dans le concret, permettre par les moyens, administratifs, matériels et financiers mis en œuvre, et par l’orientation, à tous les enfants des deux sexes de poursuivre leurs études indépendamment de leurs conditions sociales* (Consequently, by providing the administrative, material, and financial needs of all children of both sexes the state ensures they can continue their education regardless of social conditions) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, pp. 9)

Thus, the provision of quality education for all students was one of the central responsibilities of the MOE according to national policy documents. The MOE official explained that one of the roles of the MOE was to ensure that trained, qualified teachers staffed each school, and they were able to provide a high quality education to students. He cited examples from northern Togo where the MOE was forced to close two lycees because neither the director nor the teachers had received their BAC II diploma (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). He explained:

*C'est un gaspillage d'argent pour les parents et la communauté. Ils dépensent de l'argent et des efforts pour l'école et une éducation de mauvaise qualité. L'école se ferme, et voilà, aucun diplôme est remis aux étudiants* (It is a waste of money for parents and community members. They spend money and effort to create a school that offers poor quality education. The school gets closed, and students do not receive their diplomas) (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014).
He suggested that the chronic lack of funding in CI schools limited their ability to attract qualified teachers, which in turn reduced the quality of education and led to MOE interventions to shut down non-compliant schools.

Educators and community members also expressed concerns connecting the lack of funding and poor educational quality at the local-level in the Akebou Prefecture. Community members in ST:1 stated that insufficient funding from the Togolese government necessitated the hiring of EVs who did not have the required qualifications to teach at the CEG level. One participant said “Nous payons les enseignants volontaires sans qualifications. Ils ne savent pas comment enseigner. Les étudiants échouent au cause de leurs enseignants (We hire volunteer teachers that are not qualified. They don’t know how to teach. Our students fail because of their teachers)” (Focus Group, ST:1:FG1(2), May 27, 2014). From the perspective of community members, EVs without proper training reduced the quality of education. Additionally, community members mentioned that the lack of funding negatively impacted the quality of education because students were forced to work after school and on weekends to pay the contributions parallèle, which limited the amount of time they could dedicate to their studies (Focus Group, ST:1:FG1(4), May 27, 2014). Thus, community members in ST:1 connected the overarching thread of quality with school funding.

Similarly, educators in CI:1 and CI:2 discussed the impact that limited financial support had on educational quality. In addition to mentioning that unstable pay sometimes caused teachers to abandon their post in CI:1, the director also noted that the lack of funding and poor conditions of classrooms made it difficult to recruit teachers (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). Compounding the problem of recruiting qualified teachers was the impact that unstable salaries had on the teachers that did agree to work in CI schools. During an interview, one teacher in CI:2
explained that because he was not paid regularly, “Je n'ai pas assez d'argent. Je dois donner du temps aux autres activités génératrices de revenus pour payer mes besoins et je ne peux pas utiliser temps d’arranger les cours ou corriger des épreuves (I do not have enough money. I have to use my time to generate other income to pay for my needs and I do not have enough time to prepare my classes or grade student work)” (Interview, CI:2:T4, June 11, 2014). These examples showed the intersection of teacher salary, school funding, and educational quality.

Additionally, the director of CI:2 connected teacher pay with educational quality when he described strikes, stating “Quand il ya une grève, les étudiants n'apprennent pas. C’est quelle type d'éducation ça? (When there is a strike, the students do not have the opportunity to learn. What type of education is that?)” (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). With teachers on strike, students did not have the opportunity to learn content required by regional and national examinations. The director’s comments illustrated local-level frustrations with unstable funding and its impact on educational quality. In regards to the issue of educational decentralization discussed in Chapter Two, these findings showed that the implementation of grassroots community-based schooling as a means for increasing educational enrollment can exacerbate inequalities through the lack of funding and inability to pay teacher salaries, which Bray (2003) documented in several African countries, including Togo.

Beyond the concern for educational quality in document and interview data, the perspectives of educators and community members also reflected the overarching thread of Nos Propres Efforts (NPE). Participants expressed pride in their ability to create educational access with no governmental support. Not surprisingly, there was no mention of the NPE code during my interview at the MOE given that a central responsibility of the MOE was to meet the financial and material needs of schools. The code also did not specifically surface in policy
documents, although there were occasional references to the role of the community in educational affairs. For example, policy stipulated that, “Les parents participent à la construction et à la réfection des installations scolaires. Ils apportent leur contribution en nature et en main-d’œuvre bénévole (Parents are involved in the construction and repair of school facilities. They make a contribution in kind and volunteer labor)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, pp. 43). However, educators in ST:1 mentioned NPE in the context of financial contributions—not in-kind contributions—to their state-sponsored school. While I chose to code participant comments on the contributions parallèle in ST:1 as FEES, in each instance it also reflected the concept of Nos Propres Efforts as local fees represented micro-level responses to the governmental inability to provide sufficient financial and human resources to the school. By hiring and paying EVs, local-level actors relied on their own efforts to ensure that students had access to education.

The code NPE appeared in the context of school funding more often in CI schools than ST:1. Again, given that all financial resources for education in CI:1 and CI:2 emanated from locally collected fees or contributions, any and all codes referring to school funding reflected the self-sufficient characteristic of the Nos Propres Efforts code. However, on several occasions, participant comments directly linked school funding with their own efforts to achieve educational goals. For example, after identifying some of the key issues facing his school and his work as a teacher, a teacher in CI:1 explained that “nous vivons sur nous-mêmes. Malgré toutes ces problèmes, le travail passe normalement (We live off our own backs. Despite all these problems, the work continues as normal)” (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014). This quote showed he, his colleagues, and the community relied on their own efforts to provide financial support for education in their local setting.
In CI:2, educators expressed similar sentiments regarding local efforts to support education. When describing his frustration with the lack of stable pay, one teacher said that during periods when school funding has been exhausted, “c'est un sacrifice que nous faisons ici (it is a sacrifice that we make here)” (Interview, CI:2:T2, June 11, 2014). Another offered a complementary comment saying, “de temps en temps, on travaille sans salaire. C'est à partir de nos propres cœurs que nous décidons d’aller au service (sometimes we work without pay. It is from our own hearts that we decide to go to work each day)” (Interview, CI:2:T4, June 11, 2014). These two quotes offered insight into the dedication that educators working in CI schools had for their students and their community. They also spoke to the perceived value of education within the Akebou context. Educators and community members believed so deeply in the power of education that they were willing to establish, support, and maintain locally operated schools.

In the following thematic finding, I will address the goals and purposes of education in Togo from the perspective of research participants. I will situate educational goals within the larger (national and international) development context through an analysis of educational policies and practices.

In summary, the thematic finding of school funding addressed the lack of financial support provided to educators working in Akebou schools, the role (or lack thereof) of the Togolese government in educational affairs, the complex relationship between school fees and enrollment rates, the issue of teacher salary, and the policies and practices of travail manuel. In the discussion of these topics, I addressed dichotomies between policies and practices, which answered my first research question. Additionally, I addressed my third research question, which aimed to identify the general conditions of and key issues in Akebou schools. When asked about key issues in their schools, educators and community members across the four research sites...
explained that funding and the associated codes were among the most important issues. However, it is important to note that my interview with an official from the MOE is not necessary reflective of the entire policy perspective, but rather the perspective of one individual in the larger government agency. Aspects of school funding also surface in subsequent discussions thematic findings given the interconnected nature of educational issues.

**Development: Thematic Finding and Overarching Threads**

The second major thematic finding in my study addressed issues of development in national, local, and personal contexts. Given that the case study was conducted in a developing country, it was not surprising that issues related to development surfaced during interviews, observations, and in policy documents. Development is a large and nebulous concept, and as such, this theme includes issues ranging from the development of Togo as nation to personal and profession development to the importance of education in peaceful and democratic societies. As such, there were connections between the theme of *development* and other thematic findings. For example, the issue of teacher training (TRAIN) can be linked to the *space/context* theme because the rural isolation of the Akebou Prefecture limited teachers’ ability to attend trainings and conferences. I opted, however, to include it in the development finding because training was viewed as an important issue for personal and professional development across the data.

The concept of development itself was divided into three major codes that appeared a total of 49 times in interview, focus group, observation, and document data. However, there were four additional codes that were directly linked to the issue of development. The *development* theme included the following codes:

1. National Development (NATDEV), 17 occurrences
2. Economic Development (ECONDEV), 16 occurrences
3. Personal Development (PERSDEV), 16 occurrences
4. Teacher Training/Training Exams (TRAIN/TRAIN-EX), 40 occurrences
5. Importance of Education (IMPORT), 22 occurrences
6. Migrant Labor (MIGLAB), 16 occurrences
7. Peace (PEACE), 12 occurrences

Figure 5.6 shows how these codes created the central thematic finding of development.

First, I centered the three major codes directly related to development—national, economic, and personal—around the central theme because they represented three different levels of development, though participants discussed each code in distinctive contexts. The issue of teacher training was the single most commonly occurring code across all of the data sets in the development thematic finding. It is related to overall educational development because participants and documents described it as a key issue in Togolese education. Additionally, teacher training was connected to personal development because teachers discussed training in the context of professional development and individual growth. I linked codes for national and economic development because the two codes often appeared together in the data. The issue of migrant labor was a product of the (lack of) economic development in Togo, which was in turn connected to national development. Finally, the codes reflecting the importance of education (IMPORT) and peace (PEACE) contributed to the overall theme of development because participants and documents described both codes within the context of improving (developing) the quality of life in their communities and nation. The two codes were connected because of the belief that an educated population was more likely to create a peaceful society. Thus, the interrelated codes combined to form the development thematic finding.

In the thematic finding of development, I address my first and second research questions. Issues of teacher training, national development, importance of education, and peace surfaced in educational policy documents, and thereby provided insight into the contemporary features of educational policy. Additionally, the codes for peace, national, economic, and personal
development provided insight into the goals and purposes of education in Togo as described by participants, which answered my second research question.

The seven codes included in this theme occurred a total of 139 times throughout the data, representing 13.5% of the total 1028 occurrences in the entire study.

![Figure 5.6. Construction of the development theme](image)

**Importance of Education and Peace**

As cited in Chapter Four, Article 35 of the Togolese constitution guaranteed the right to education for all children up to the age of fifteen (Togolese Constitution, 2002). By including education as a fundamental right, the Togolese government situated education as an issue of national importance. Togolese educational policy documents presented the importance of
Not only did the inclusion of the UN Declaration of Rights reflect the influence of international organizations on national policy, but it also connected governmental responsibility in the creation of a culture or climate that valued the importance of education so as to create a society comprised of active, educated, and engaged citizens. From the global-to-local perspective, I observed that educational policy in Togo reflected the norms and standards for education set by the international community and helped me view national issues within a larger context.

The Handbook of Togolese Education Policy further explained the importance of education in a chapter outlining the roles and responsibilities of teachers and administrators. The section on titled “Importance de la mission (Importance of the mission)” opened with the adage “Tant vaut l’école, tant vaut la nation! (As schools are, the nation is)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.82). While I coded this statement as national development (NATDEV), it also spoke to the role that education plays in the development of intelligent and engaged citizens. When asked about the goals, purposes, and objectives of education, a Ministry official reiterated the importance of education, stating, “l’éducation est nécessaire de former des citoyens autonomes. Il nous permet de se défendre dans la vie et dans la société (Education is important in the formation of
autonomous citizens. It allows us to get by in life and in society)” (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). These comments further illustrated his policy perspective on the role of education. His descriptions of schooling as an issue fundamental to all aspects of development, from personal to national suggested that the Togolese government had a vested interest in education.

In addition to stressing the importance of education, the official policy perspective also highlighted the connection between schooling and peace. Three of the seven primary principles and objectives of schooling presented in The Handbook of Togolese Education Policy specifically addressed the role that education plays in the development of a peaceful society (the entire section is cited in Chapter Four, pp.146). The first fundamental principle of education was the creation of a democratic society. It read:

Eduquer les jeunes, quels qu'ils soient, en tant que personnes et membres d'une société, par le moyen de l'école et selon l'inspiration des valeurs issues de la dignité de l'homme...en donnant a chacun une égalité de chance, tendre a créer une société nationale solidaire, fraternelle et pacifique

(To educate the youth, one and all, so that they become both individuals and members of society, through a system of schooling that values the dignity of humanity...by giving each individual equal opportunity the creation of a strong, fraternal, and peaceful nation is possible)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.9)

Similarly, the third principle of education was titled “la neutralité (neutrality)”, which described the importance of creating a peaceful citizenry through education, stating, “l'etat garant de la paix et de la promotion des individus et des groups dans la société, reconnaît le pluralisme...dans les institutions scolaires (the state, as a guarantor of peace and promotion of individuals and groups in society, recognizes pluralism...in its educational institutions)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.9).

Interestingly, the section referenced the concept of “positive neutrality”, which was a fundamental tenant of Kwame Nkruma’s political philosophy for pan-African development, which highlighted the influence of post-colonial thought on education (Nkruma, 1963a). Finally, the seventh principle of education further reinforced the important role education plays in the
development of a peaceful society, stating, “la formation intégrale de l'homme togolais commande une revalorisation de la culture nationale.... qui préservent les éléments culturels, partie intégrante de notre personnalité (A key factor in the education of Togolese youth is the revitalization of the national culture…which preserves cultural elements that are an integral part of our national identity)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.10). These three examples of educational policies illustrated the connection between development, importance of education, and the creation of a peaceful society. They also provided insight into the goals and purposes of education in Togo from the policy perspective, which offered comparative contrast to participant comments on the same topic and helped answer my second research question.

The interview with an official at the MOE provided an additional policy perspective on peace and education. When asked about the objectives of education, the official replied that education was crucial for developing a peaceful society. He offered the example, “Quelqu'un qui a gagné leur diplôme de maîtrise ne va pas voler dans la nuit. Une population éduquée n'aura pas des groupes comme Boko Haram (someone who has their masters degree will not go steal in the night. An educated population will not have groups like Boko Haram)” (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). By citing recent events in Nigeria, he emphasized the crucial role that education can play in the promotion of peace, particularly in the volatile West African region, which has a history of political, religious, and economic violence. To sum up his perspective on peace and education, he said, “si l'éducation est malade, le pays est malade (if education is sick, the country is sick)”, a statement that reflected the mission of education in policy documents (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014; The entire mission of education is included in the MOE Site Description in Chapter Four, see pp.146-148).
Based on the data I collected from policy documents and an interview with at the MOE, it was clear that the Togolese government viewed education as an important tool for social development. However, at local-levels, educators and community members discussed the importance of education and its role in promoting peace differently. Their perspectives allowed me to compare and contrast national-level policy ideals with practices at the local level.

In ST:1, educators referred to the importance of education (IMPORT) most often in the context of the lack of importance that students and parents assigned to educational goals and objectives. For example, when asked about the key issues he faced in his school, the school director mentioned that “Les étudiants n'étudient pas. Ils ne comprennent pas l'importance de l'éducation. Ils veulent gagner de l'argent vite-vite plus que ce qu'ils veulent apprendre (Students do not study. They do not understand the importance of education. They want to make quick money more than they want to learn)” (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014). This showed a disconnect between the efforts of the Togolese government to create policies that fostered a culture that valued the importance of education and the reality experienced at local-levels where, according to educators, students and parents did not value education.

Teachers corroborated the director’s comments on the importance of education during interviews and focus groups. One teacher stated that students were not interested in learning and chose to travel to neighboring countries to work as migrant laborers and make quick money rather than pursuing education (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014). Another teacher implicated parents and the community at large in the lack of interest in education, stating,

Les parents ne prennent pas en charge l'éducation de leurs enfants. Les élèves refusent d'étudier à la maison, et à leurs parents les laissent d'aller au balle pour danser. Parce ils ne sont pas éduqués eux même, ils ne comprennent pas l'importance de l'éducation (Parents do not look after their children’s education. Students refuse to study at home, but parents leave them to dance at night. Because parents themselves are not educated, they do not understand the importance of education) (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014).
This perspective represented the common perception among non-Akebou fonctionnaires (state-employed professionals) that Akebou students and community members were not motivated to work towards their own development, educationally or otherwise. During my first visit to ST:1, I briefly spoke with the Catholic priest who had been stationed in ST:1 since 2007. He has engaged in community development since his arrival in ST:1 in 2006. His projects included the construction of three primary school classrooms and the (unsuccessful) drilling a well for clean water. Despite his efforts, he expressed frustration with the locality, stating, “Le Akebou est bon. Il y a tout ici, mais c’est les hommes qui sont mauvais (The Akebou is good. It is rich in resources, but it is the people that are don’t care)” (Field notes, May 22, 2014). While some of the educators in CI schools shared this perspective, outsiders and fonctionnaires (civil servants) expressed the sentiment more often and more explicitly. Educators in ST:1 cited rural isolation and a limited understanding of life outside of the region as the main reasons causing the lack of interest in education among Akebou students and community members (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014; Interview, ST:1:T3, May 28, 2014; Interview, ST:1:T4, May 28, 2014).

Not surprisingly, the perspectives offered by educators working in CI:1 and CI:2 on the importance of education in the Akebou Prefecture differed from those working in ST:1 given that they worked in schools created and supported by the community for the sole purpose of increasing access to education in their villages. When asked to describe the value of education, a teacher in CI:1 said that the community was very involved in supporting education, citing the funding that they provided for the school as well as the hospitality they offered teachers recruited from other areas of the prefecture. He went on to say that the community “s’en charge du discipline des élèves, les conseils des étudiants, et l’évaluation des enseignants (oversees student discipline, advising students, and the evaluation of teachers)” (Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014).
Similarly, another teacher stated “ils ne laissent pas tomber l’éducation dans le village (they do not undervalue education in the village)” (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014). Each of these quotes stood in contrast to the perspectives offered by educators in ST:1. When I asked why these differences existed, I received a variety of answers. The most common explanation from educators in CI:1 was that because community members in CI:1 created and funded the school, they felt more ownership over the educational experiences and therefore worked harder to ensure positive outcomes. Interestingly, document data showed that CI:1 was the lowest performing school (as measured by BEPC exam results) when compared with other schools in my study, with an average passing rate of 18.2% compared to 38% in CI:1 and 43% in ST:1 (See Tables 4.2, p.177; 4.5, p.194; and 4.8, p.211). This suggested that while students and community members may value education, there were other factors impeding educational achievement in the local context, which I will discuss in other thematic findings.

Educators and community members in CI:2 offered mixed perspectives on the issue of educational importance and peace. The first two years following the establishment of the school, students, teachers, and community members actively participated in educational affairs, which illustrated their belief in the importance of education in local development. However, both the school director and members of the APE noted a reduction in community participation at the school three to four years after its establishment (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014; Focus Group, CI:2:FG2, June 19, 2014). In interviews, teachers suggested that this was caused by their diminishing hope that the government would take over the school and relieve the community from financially and materially supporting the school. One teacher gave voice to community concerns, stating “Nous sommes là depuis 10 ans, mais l'État ne nous a pas pris en charge, la communauté est fatigué de regarder cette école (We have been here for 10 years, but the state has
not taken control, the community is tired of supporting the school)” (Interview, CI:2:T4, June 10, 2014). These comments showed a waning interest in education in CI:2 due to governmental inaction, which contrasted with policy recommendations that described the importance of education and its role in development.

The local-level realities in both state and CI schools were often disconnected from national policies. National policies aimed to promote the importance of education for the purposes of creating an informed, active, and peaceful society, while local realities showed educators’ frustration with the lack of interest for education shown by community members. The misunderstanding of educational importance among students and community members was, in part, caused by the disconnect between perspectives on national and economic development at the policy level and the realities of poverty and isolation at the local level.

**National Development, Economic Development, and Migrant Labor**

Research Question Two focused on the goals and purposes of education as described by educators and community members in the Akebou Prefecture. My codes for national development (NATDEV), economic development (ECONDEV), and migrant labor (MIGLAB) provided insight into educational goals and purposes at national and local levels. It was important to situate local level views within the larger context of educational policy at the national level, which, in turn, addressed Research Question One.

The second section of The Handbook of Togolese Education Policy described the role of education as a part of larger goals for national development. The entire mission of education is included in the MOE Site Description in Chapter Four (see pp. 146-148). Additionally, the document presented five key purposes of education in national development, including the importance of education in the establishment of a national language and culture and the value of
creating universal knowledge shared and understood by students in all regions of the country. It stated the role of schooling was to:

*Donner un enseignement dans la langue officielle...donner une éducation conforme aux idéaux culturels, sociaux, politiques, et économique de la Nation...les donner à un groupe d'enfants en commun* (Give an education in the official language...give an education that is consistent with the cultural, social, political, and economic norms of the nation...give diverse students a common education) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.11).

These educational goals aimed to promote national development through the creation of a unified, engaged, and educated citizenry. Similarly, the Ministry official described the role that education played in national development saying, “l'école est à la base du développement (schooling is at the base of development)” (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). He went on to explain that the most developed nations tend to have the most educated populations and in order for Togo to develop, the country must focus on improving educational access and quality. Finally, when asked about the goals of education, he responded that education teaches students to see long term goals, which will allow them to “d'arranger le pays pour ceux qui viendront après nous (fix the country for those who come after us)” (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). These key quotations from national policy documents and the perspective of one MOE official described the intended role for education in larger plans for national development. In addition to policy documents and interviews, I also observed billboards and murals promoting the importance of education, national unity, and development in several villages in the Maritime and Plateau regions of Togo (Field notes, May 20, 2014; June 12, 2014). This data offered insight into the national policy perspective on education and national development, while also providing the foundation to investigate differences between ideals represented in national policy and realities expressed by educators and community members at local levels.
In ST:1, educators and community members expressed similar perspectives on the role of education in national development. When asked about the main goal of education in Togo, the director responded that schooling served to create active and informed citizens that can be “utile pour soit-mêmes et pour la société (functional as an individual and in society)”, a perspective shared by several of the teachers working in ST:1 (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014; Focus Group, ST:1:FG2(3), May 27, 2014; Interview, ST:1:T2, May 28, 2014). Participant comments connecting the individual and society illustrated how education, while ultimately an individual endeavor, can play a crucial role in the development of a functional, unified national society. The raising of the flag and the singing of the national anthem each morning before school in ST:1 further illustrated the importance of instilling a sense of national identify among students in educational contexts (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014; Field notes, May 28, 2014). These practices showed the symbolic value of images and practices associated with national identity. Observations of students saluting the flag and singing the national anthem—which included the lyric “Dans l'unité nous voulons te (Togo) servir (in unity we wish to serve you (Togo)”—provided evidence at the level of practice that the role of education was to develop a national identity (Field notes, May 26, 2014). Through the post-colonial perspective, the importance of using schooling as a means to create a national identity reflects a common preoccupation in nations that have formally been colonized and stripped of national, ethnic, or linguistic pride.

Community members in ST:1 shared similar views on the role of education in national development as those expressed in policy documents and by educators (see citations from policy documents above and in Chapter Four, pp.146-148). To open the focus group, I asked participants to explain the purposes of education in Togo. One participant responded that the purpose of education was to prepare future leaders who can help Togo grow and develop to
provide a better life for future generations, while another offered the common expression “l'école est la base du développement (school is the base of development)” (Focus Group, ST:1:FG1(3); May, 27, 2014). Interview and focus group data from ST:1 showed little difference among perceptions of the purpose of education between community members, educators and policy documents. Instead, data from each of these sources pointed to a link between education and national development as a key purpose for education. I will discuss the extent to which this goal was reflected in curriculum content in greater detail in the curriculum theme.

As a state-sponsored school staffed by state-employed teachers, only one of the six educators in ST:1 was ethnically Akebou. The national policy of teacher placement created a sense of national unity by allowing increased interaction between the various ethnicities and linguistic groups in Togo. The policy also limited the ability for teachers to communicate with students in local language in educational settings, which forced students to use French for all communications with their teachers. The role that national languages play in the development of national identity is widely discussed and debated in post-colonial scholarly literature. While some argue that the use of former colonial languages as national languages can be used to share African experiences with wider audiences, others argue that the use of colonial languages as national language can be detrimental to the development of personal identity, which serves only to strengthen neo-colonial influence in the post-colonial world (Achebe, 1989; Wa Thiong’o, 1981). Within the context of my research in the Akebou Prefecture, it was clear that the government placed significant importance on the use of French in educational settings to instill a sense of national identity, but also to prepare students to communicate across ethnic boundaries.

As a Peace Corps Volunteer working in the CEG in ST:1 between 2008 and 2010, I rarely heard students speaking local languages during school hours on school grounds. However,
during fieldwork in 2014, I often heard Akebou spoken between students at school (Field notes, May 26, 2014; May 27, 2014; May 28, 2014). In an interview, ST:1:T1 (who was a teacher in ST:1 during my Peace Corps service) informed me of changes in local policies on language use that were responsible for the differences in student behavior. In 2012, the Togolese government sent the current director to the CEG in ST:1, replacing the former director who had served since 2007. Soon after the shift in administration, students refused to participate in the previous director’s practice of assigning a signal (a large conch shell worn as a necklace and a 50 FCFA fine) to students who were caught speaking Akebou on school grounds. The signal policy, while effective in eliminating the use of local language, was largely unpopular among students.

ST:1:T1 informed me that it was now common for students to speak Akebou in class, which was not only disruptive, but also “peut limiter leur capacité à apprendre (can limit their ability to learn)” because they had limited proficiency in French and did not understand what the teacher was saying and did not have the language skills to formulate questions (Interview, ST:1:T1, May, 28, 2014).

This example illustrated both how local level policies can be established to meet national goals and how local opposition can change or challenge both local and national policies to suit the realities of the setting. The example also provided insight into the complexities of implementing practices at the local level that reflected the national policy of “donner un enseignement dans la langue officielle et dans toutes autres langues admises par l'état (offering an education in the official language of the country and all other national languages),” which was the first purpose of education described in the Handbook of Togolese Educational Policy and a key aspect of the educational goal of national development (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.10). Again, the implementation of French as a national language reflected the colonial history of Togo.
Interview and focus group data showed little difference between educator and community member perspectives on educational goals and national development in state and CI schools. The director of the CEG in CI:1 echoed the policy described in the Togolese constitution when asked about the goal of education, saying “tous les enfants doivent être scolarisés (all of the youth need to be enrolled in school)” (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). Similarly, when asked about the goals of education, a CI:1 teacher discussed the importance of learning skills that could be used to develop the village and the country, while another said education should allow students to “aider dans le développement de leur pays (help in the development of their country)” (June 2, 2014). During focus groups, community members offered similar perspectives on education and national development (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1(1); Focus Group, CI:1:FG1(3), June 3, 2014).

In CI:2, educators and community members described the link between education and national development in similar terms. One teacher stated that education played an important role in national development because it was used to train future state-employees (fonctionnaires) who will oversee the development of the country (Interview, CI:2:T3, June 11, 2014). During a focus group, one of the APE members offered his perspective that schooling played an important role in national development because “un état éduqué est un état éclairé (an educated state is an illuminated state)” (Focus Group, CI:2:FG2(4), June 19, 2014), a statement that reflected the perspectives outlined in policy documents and expressed by the MOE official (cited above).

The code NATDEV appeared 17 times in interview, focus group, observation, and document data across the four research sites. In each instance the data showed a similar perspective on the connection between educational and national development goals. This finding was significant in my study because it offered insight into the policy-practice divide. The rhetoric of national unity and national development in the national-level policy were reflected in
perspectives of educators and community member actors at local levels. For state and CI schools alike, schooling had an important role in the development of Togo as a nation.

In addition to national development, economic development also surfaced across the data as a key goal of education. The economic development (ECONDEV) code occurred 16 times across data sets. Interestingly, apart from its description of the *mutuelles scolaires* (school-based organizations for development, see Funding theme for more detail, p.258), the Handbook of Togolese Educational Policy did not directly address the role if education in the economic development. The document outlined four educational paths offered to students, in theory, at the CEG level: general education (CEG), technical education (CET), agricultural education (CEA), and artistic education (CEAA) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.13). While the policy document did not provide any insight into the details of these options, they presumably provided students with an education that allowed them to enter the workforce in technical, agricultural, or artistic fields. While these options existed in policy, there were not included in my research because there were none in the Akebou Prefecture, nor did I observe any during my travels to Kougnohou, Atakpamé, or Lomé. While these schools may exist in other areas of the country, they are not widely available to Togolese students. Finally, during an interview at the MOE, the official tangentially addressed the connection between education and economic development, stating that education can help “éviter la misère et échapper la pauvreté (avoid misery and escape poverty)” (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). Neither national policy documents nor MOE interviews directly explained the role that education played in preparing Togolese citizens to engage in economic development.

Similarly, the national news source for Togolese education rarely published articles linking education with economic development since I began monitoring the webpage in 2011. As
I described in Chapter Three (p.130), data collected from these media outlets are not technically documents, though I analyzed them using the same methods as policy documents given that they were also a text-based data source. A 2013 article announced an examination to recruit state-employees, stating “Les épreuves au concours d’entrée à l’Ecole nationale d’administration (ENA), ont débuté mardi. Les candidats sont en grande majorité des fonctionnaires (The entrance examinations for the National School of Administration began Tuesday. The candidates will become civil servants)” (Togo News, July 9, 2013). These positions would likely be filled by candidates who had achieved high levels of education in Togo, thereby linking the importance of education with economic opportunities.

As previously explained, direct connections between of economic development and education were rare in national policy documents and press releases. However, educators and community members at the local level were quick to connect education with economic opportunity, even in the face of a mass exodus of school dropouts who traveled to Nigeria or Ghana to work as migrant laborers, which was a short-term career path that was more lucrative than jobs available after the completion of CEG or even lycee level education. Despite the realities of migrant labor and skyrocketing dropout rates, community members in particular viewed education as the best means to secure a high paying job. In ST:1, an APE member explained that the reason he sent his children to school was so that they could find a job, avoid unemployment, contribute to the economic development of the village, and provide for him when he could no longer farm (Focus Group, ST:1:FG1(3), May 27, 2014). In CI:1, community members discussed the types of jobs they would like for their children after finishing lycee or university. These jobs included teacher, soldier, nurse, or engineer (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1, June 3, 2014). Finally, community members in CI:2 explained that the main reason they created a CI
school in the community was to ensure that their children would be able to receive their BEPC diploma and continue their education so that one day they would “être engagé par l'état et revenir d’améliorer le développement de la communauté (be employed by the state and come back to help develop the community)” (Focus Group, CI:2:FG2(3), June 19, 2014). Thus, based focus groups with APEs, it was clear that economic goals were important at the local level despite the noticeable absence of economic goals in national policy.

Educators in each of the school sites offered similar perspectives to community members. During a focus group in ST:1, teachers explained that schooling offered students knowledge that was important to employers and that without education, students would be unable to find work outside of agricultural and manual labor (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2(2), May 27, 2014). Similarly, the director of CI:2 described the importance of education in economic contexts, stating “quelqu'un avec une éducation peut trouver un boulot dans les secteurs formel et informel (someone with an education can find work in formal and informal sectors)” (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). Finally, comments from a teacher in CI:2 summed up a common link between education and economic goals, saying “de gagner un diplôme est de gagner la vie financièrement (to obtain a diploma is to ensure financial stability in life)” (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 11, 2014).

Across the three school sites, educators and community members stressed the importance of education as preparation for the workforce and economic life, a link corroborated by Hoppers’ (2005) discussion of CI schools as local responses to economic instability or stagnation and Assiah and Luisoni’s (2006) investigation into CI schools in northern Togo as a means for providing students with marketable skills. However, despite the rhetorical connection between education and economic development, a large number of students in the Akebou Prefecture were
dropping out to work as migrant laborers in neighboring countries rather than choosing to pursue education in hopes of finding “un boulot (a job)” in Togo.

As a Peace Corps Volunteer, I rarely observed Togolese youth traveling to work in neighboring countries, though child trafficking and migrant labor were issues covered in the “Life-Skills” curriculum. However, upon my return to Togo for fieldwork in 2014, I observed a dramatic increase in the number of young men and women leaving Togo for periods of three to eight months to work as agricultural laborers, construction workers, domestics, and prostitutes in Nigeria, Ghana, and Burkina Faso. These short-term work opportunities, while high risk, also had high financial returns. On several occasions during fieldwork, I was informed that migrant laborers had returned with 300,000 to 400,000 FCFA after working abroad for three months (Field notes, May 29, 2014; June 2, 2014; June 19, 2014). These salaries significantly surpassed those of state-employed teachers, let alone the salaries of volunteer teachers who made between 15,000 and 20,000 FCFA per month (Interview, ST:1:T1, May 28, 2014). The phenomenon was brought to my attention in conversation with university students immediately upon my arrival in Lomé. I was therefore alerted to the issue before beginning data collection and was able to modify interview and observation protocols to include a consideration of migrant labor.

Enrollment rates in ST:1 declined from a high of 286 students in 2005 to 190 in 2014, illustrating the effect that migrant labor had on education in the region (See Table 4.2, p.177). Classrooms that had once been filled during BEPC examinations in ST:1 were empty in 2014 showing that the decline in student enrollment was not limited to ST:1, but could also be observed across the seven schools that feed into the ST:1 BEPC examination site (Field notes, June 6, 2014). I heard stories during fieldwork that claimed the exodus of Akebou youth was so severe that after a death in a neighboring village, the family of the deceased could not find
enough able bodied men to bury the body (Field notes, May 29, 2014). The second hand stories and document data was confirmed by data from interviews, focus groups, and observations in each of the three research sites.

In ST:1, the issue of migrant labor first surfaced during a focus group interview with members of the APE. I posted a question regarding the issue of migrant labor towards the end of the focus group because the issue had not surfaced in response to my initial questions. Participants gave animated responses that addressed both the necessity of migrant labor given the economic realities as well as the negative consequences of the practice. One member stated that students see their older brothers and sisters struggle to finish lycee and continue on to university, only to drop out due to limited financial resources. He went on to say that students with BAC II diplomas and university-level experience were still unable to obtain lucrative jobs in Togo and often were forced into low-paying careers as volunteer teachers or farmers (Focus Group, ST:1:FG1(2), May 27, 2014). For most students, these options did not encourage them to continue schooling and instead pushed them towards migrant labor. Another APE member added that CEG students see their peers return from neighboring countries with enough money to purchase items that volunteer teachers could not afford, such as motorcycles, materials for home construction, and fancy clothing, which further encouraged students to drop out of school (Focus Group, ST:1:FG1(4), May 27, 2014). Thus, the combination of limited economic opportunity and lucrative migrant labor led many students to leave school before obtaining the BEPC diploma. From a human capital perspective, this suggested to me that the knowledge and skills taught in Togolese schools did not align with economic opportunities in the country. Instead, students viewed their agricultural skills as more lucrative than their academic skills. I will discuss curriculum relevancy in more detail in the curriculum theme.
While enrollment data in CI:1 was incomplete, there was a decline from 15 students in 3eme in 2010 to 9 in 2014 (See Table 4.5, p.194). Migrant labor was a key issue identified by educators and community members in CI:1, though the code only appeared four times in interview and focus group data. For example, educators identified migrant labor as a key issue, explaining that students have been dropping out of school to work in Nigeria and other neighboring countries (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 17, 2014; Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). A teacher said that migrant labor made teaching easier because “les étudiants qui ne sont pas sérieux sont ceux qui quittent donc ceux qui restent à apprendre plus rapidement (the worst students are the ones who leave and those who stay are the best learners)” (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014). In CI:1, migrant labor was viewed as an issue that impacted education, but it was not discussed with the same severity as it was in ST:1 and CI:2.

Educators and community members in CI:2 viewed high drop out rates and migrant labor as a major issue facing the development of their village. Enrollment rates at the CEG in CI:2 reached a high of 166 in 2008, but by 2014 the number of students had dropped to 100, which represents nearly a 40% reduction in the student body (See Table 4.8, p.211). Throughout my fieldwork, I had several informal conversations with community members who expressed their concern over Akebou youth traveling to neighboring countries to work, describing a variety of fears, including: the lack of education from high drop out rates, safety and security issues, disease, violence, language issues, and the limited long-term impact that quick money would have on village development. Based on these informal conversations, I tailored my interview protocol to obtain deeper insight into participant perspectives on migrant labor.

The director of the CEG in CI:2 connected the phenomenon of migrant labor with the issue of school funding, explaining that as more students dropped out, the school was unable to
collect enough money from school fees to pay teachers (Interview, CI:1:D1, May 24, 2014). As such, he feared that migrant labor dropouts would reduce enrollment rates to the point where the money collected from school fees would be insufficient to operate the school. The school would then have to be closed, meaning that no students in CI:2 could benefit from increased access to education. Beyond the issue of school fees, the director was concerned that growing trend of migrant labor could result in an uneducated village population that would be unable to attract business investments, economic opportunities, or infrastructure development projects, resulting in the continued underdevelopment of the region. He noted that those who returned to the village after completing their migrant labor service rarely used their money for long-lasting, development-oriented projects like opening a business, building a home, or continuing their education. Rather, the young migrant laborers would spend their money on motorcycles, clothing, televisions and gas-powered generators, or extravagant parties. The money earned from three to five months of working abroad rarely lasted one or two months in village, and at the end of their stay, many migrant laborers had few long term investments to show for their work (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). The director’s comments illustrated his belief in the long-term value of education as well as his fear of the short-term benefits of risky migrant labor work.

However, the director also expressed some understanding of why some students would decide to drop out to pursue migrant labor opportunities. When asked for his perspective on the popularity of migrant labor, he responded, “Ceux qui ont fréquenté ne trouvent pas du travail (au Togo). Les élèves d'aujourd'hui veulent l'argent à court terme, et l'école est considérée comme un travail à long terme (even those who are educated cannot find work (in Togo). Today’s students want quick money, and school is seen as a long-term objective)” (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 11, 2014). He went on to say that the popularity of migrant labor was caused by limited economic
opportunities in Togo. Without clear career paths that required BEPC or BAC diplomas, many students did not understand the value of an education and chose instead to drop out. While he understood the temptation of such lucrative career options, the long-term consequences of migrant labor concerned the director in CI:2. His colleagues shared many of his fears.

During individual interviews, teachers also expressed frustration with the growing popularity of migrant labor. One participant reiterated the temptation of migrant labor because of its short-term financial benefits, noting that students were not interested in achieving long-term educational goals (Interview, CI:2:T4, June 11, 2014). Another teacher explained how migrant labor was an unsustainable practice because of the physical demands of the work, “qu'est-ce qu'ils vont faire quand ils sont âgés? Leur argent sera terminé, mais ils n'ont pas de l'éducation ou de compétences (what will they do when they are older? They will be out of money and without any education or skills)” (Interview, CI:2:T2, July 11, 2014). During the focus group with teachers, each of the four participants expressed fear that the school might close if too many students travel abroad to work as laborers (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). Thus, migrant labor was a clearly identifiable key issue impacting educational experiences in CI:2.

Across each of the sites, participants connected the importance of education with national development, economic development, and the issue of migrant labor. From the perspective of educators and community members alike, schooling played an important role in developing active and engaged citizens who could work together to improve Togo. Economic development was an equally important educational goal in each site, as participants cited job opportunities, career choices, and increased income as the main goals and purposes of education. Finally, participant comments on the role of education in economic development contrasted with the realities of migrant labor in the Akebou Prefecture, which illustrated the interconnected
economic relationships between countries in a globalized era. Despite believing in the power of education to increase economic opportunity, participants in each of the sites were witnessing significant spikes in drop out rates among students who traveled abroad to work as migrant laborers because of the limited economic opportunities and career paths available in Togo. Educators and community members feared the increase in migrant labor. Without an education, many Akebou youth did not benefit from the personal development offered by schooling, which provided the knowledge and skills required to be a productive member of Togolese society.

**Personal Development and Teacher Training**

The remaining two codes that comprised the theme of development were personal development (PERS-DEV) and teacher training (TRAIN). The personal development code referred to the third most common goal and purpose of education as described by participants (following national and economic development) and served to answer my second research question. Additionally, the issue of teacher training was linked to the concept of personal development because teachers expressed the importance of pre-service and in-service trainings as a part of their personal and professional development. Participants’ discussion of teacher training offered insight into my first and third research questions by addressing teacher qualifications as stipulated in contemporary educational policy as well as identifying the (lack of) teacher qualification as a key educational issue in the Akebou Prefecture (See participant descriptions in Chapter Four for information on teacher qualifications).

Togolese educational policy presented personal development as one of the central goals and objectives of education (See MOE Site Description in Chapter Four for goals and objective, p.146). With policies rooted in the UN Declaration of Children’s Rights, the Handbook of Togolese Education Policy upheld internationally accepted values stating that the role of
education was to permit students to develop their abilities, individual judgment, and sense of moral and social responsibility (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.7; UN, 2014). Furthermore, Togolese policy outlined the role of schooling in personal development in the “Scholarly Obligation” objective for education, which stated “(le but de l'école est) il faut savoir apprendre, juger, de communiquer et de s'adapter (the objectives of education are to learn how to learn, how to judge, how to communicate, and how to adapt)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.9). As such, education played an important role in the personal growth and development of students in Togo by providing the tools and skills needed to become educated and engaged citizens.

Interview data from the Ministry of Education confirmed the importance of personal development as one of the goals of education. From his perspective, an MOE official explained that, apart from teaching basic literacy and numeracy, the main purpose of primary and lower-secondary education was to expose students to a variety of subjects so that they would be able to discover their personal interests and select a educational or career path that reflected their personality. By teaching students to “se respecter et respecter le milieu (to respect themselves and their locality)”, education could foster personal development (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). These comments were similar to ideas presented in the scholarly literature on human capital theory that discussed the importance of personal and professional development as a key goal for educational programs around the globe (Tikly, 2005). In the context of my research, education served as means, not only for national and economic development, but also for the pursuit of personal goals.

Educators in each of the Akebou school sites mentioned the importance of personal development as a goal for schooling. In ST:1, the director informed me that school taught students how to control of their own lives by developing interests, knowledge, and skills. He
went on to say that “sans éducation, on n'est rien (without an education, one is nothing)” (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014). Similarly during a focus group with teachers in ST:1, a participant stated that schooling “enseigne comment vivre. C'est pour leur propre émancipation (teaches someone how to live. It is for their (students) own emancipation)” (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014). Interview data showed a clear connection between the goals and purposes of education described in policy documents and the local level perspectives of participants in my study.

In each of the CI sites, educators identified personal development as one of the three major goals of education. In CI:1, teachers noted that education can “améliorer leur conscience et mentalité; (l'école) les aidant à devenir des intellectuels (ameliorate their consciousness and mentality; (schooling) helps them to become intellectuals)” (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014). Another teacher expanded upon the idea explaining that education helped students make better decisions about money, health, and social relationships, which, in turn, made them productive members of society (Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). Teachers in CI:2 demonstrated the link between education and personal development by arguing that schooling provided fundamental knowledge that allowed students to understand the complexities of social, economic, and political life (Interview, CI:2:T4, June 11, 2014). The director of CI:2 mentioned that education was necessary to “former l'individu, d’avoir une conscience, pour permettre de savoir lire et écrire, et de savoir s'informer (form the individual, to develop a consciousness, to teach students to read and write, and to know how to stay informed)” (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). Much like their state-employed counterparts in ST:1, educators in CI:1 and CI:2 expressed perspectives on the importance of personal development that reflected policy perspectives at the national level. In many instances, the educational goal of personal development was linked to the
types of knowledge and behaviors taught in Togolese schools (i.e. reading, writing, mathematics, history, critical thinking, inquiry, peace, democracy, etc.). I will discuss these types of knowledge in greater detail in the *curriculum* thematic finding.

I linked the issue of teacher training to personal development because educators and community members overwhelmingly identified professional development (or lack thereof) as an issue facing education in the Akebou Prefecture. The code for teacher training (TRAIN) appeared 37 times in interview, focus group, observation, and document data, making it the second most commonly occurring code in my study. However, it is important to note that in each interview, I specifically asked the participant to describe the training (or lack thereof) that they had received prior to becoming a teacher. Their responses were coded as TRAIN, which created 14 instances of the code that may not have appeared in interviews had I not explicitly asked participants about their training. Therefore, participants mentioned teacher training 17 times of their own volition (unprompted by specific questions) during interviews and focus groups, placing the code for teacher training in the top twenty most commonly occurring codes. The code appeared five times in document data and once in observation data.

Educational policy in Togo specified that all teachers complete a state-sponsored training program at the national teacher development center near Notse, Togo, stating “le personnel enseignant reçoit sa formation essentiellement dans les Ecoles Normales et a l’institut national des sciences de l’éducation (teachers will receive their training at Colleges of Education and at the National Institute of Educational Sciences)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.60). Because the Handbook of Togolese Educational Policy was published over 30 years ago, I asked questions about current teacher training programs during my interview at the Ministry of Education. The MOE official informed me that the Togolese government trained 1,800 new teachers in 2013
because “des enseignants de qualité égale l’éducation de qualité (quality teachers mean quality education)” (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). He also informed me that once, during a school visit, he observed a teacher writing incorrect information on the chalkboard for students to copy into their notebooks. This, he said, stressed the importance of adequate teacher training. Recent educational policies reformed the teacher training process by reducing the number of years teachers spent in *formation initiale* (initial training) and increased the frequency of in-service trainings. Instead of spending two to three years in training schools, teachers now spent nine-months in the training school before being deployed to the field. They then completed the remainder of their training programs during the vacation months from July through September (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). These reforms aimed to streamline teacher training and help get qualified teachers into understaffed schools.

While I was unable to collect policy documents specifying the details of the recent change in teacher training policy, the MOE official informed me that the reformed training program included observations of model classrooms, group discussions, educational theory, facilitation techniques, subject specific instruction, and a practical component that placed teachers in simulated classroom settings. According to the MOE official the new teacher-training program covered the required material and prepared educators for the realities of teaching in Togolese classrooms (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). However, before admittance into the training program, prospective teachers must have earned diplomas in their respective fields. According to a document published by the Togolese Ministry of Education in 2011 that described ideal school conditions, prospective teachers needed a BAC II diploma to be admitted into the primary school teaching program, a bachelor degree for the CEG program, and a masters degree in order to train to become a teacher at the lycee level (MEPSA, 2011, p.5, See full
citation in MOE Site Description in Chapter Four, p.151). The degree requirements described in the document were explicitly linked to recommendations for teacher qualifications “élaboré par un rapport spécial du Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les droits de l'homme (elaborated in a report from the UN High Commission for Human Rights)”, which illustrated the connection between national policies and international influences (MEPSA, 2014, p.1). Despite a lack of qualified teachers, the Togolese government implemented a policy that conformed to internationally accepted standards for teacher qualifications, as specified by the UN High Commission for Human Rights. The ideals presented in policy, however, did not necessarily correspond to the realities experienced by educators at local levels.

In ST:1, three of the four educations employed by the state had completed the degree requirements, while the fourth had taken an alternative route by obtaining his CAP-CEG certification with a BAC II diploma, which was a qualification stipulated in policy document, which stated “qualification académique/professionnelle: CAP-CEG (academic/professional qualification: CAP:CEG)” (MESPSA, 2011, p.5; Field notes, May 28, 2014). However, due to the lack of qualified, state-employed teachers, the CEG in ST:1 was required to hire volunteer teachers to fulfill teaching duties that could not be filled by state teachers. While both volunteer teachers in ST:1 had several years of teaching experience, neither had obtained a degree above the BAC II nor had they completed the CAP-CEG examination, meaning they did not meet the educational or training requirements stipulated in policy. During interviews, both teachers expressed the desire to take (and pass) the CAP-CEG so they could become employees of the state. However, they explained that rural isolation of the Akebou Prefecture prevented them from taking the required classes and obtaining the materials needed to prepare for the exam (Interview, ST:1:T1, May 28, 2014; Interview, ST:1:T5, May 28, 2014). The presence of
unqualified volunteer teachers in a government-sponsored school offered a case-in-point example of the key issue of (lack of) teacher qualification as identified by educators and community members in the three research sites.

In both of the Community Initiative sites, the issue of teacher qualification and teacher training was more apparent. The policy document, *Guide Pratique pour l'Enseignement au Secondaire Général* (Practical Guide for Teaching in Secondary Schools), noted that the Wawa and Akebou Prefectures “compte le plus grand nombre d’Enseignants Volontaires bien sûr dépourvu de toute formation initiale (have the largest number of volunteer teachers without any pre-service training)” (Guide Pratique, 2012, p.1). In CI:1, none of the three educators that participated in my study had earned the required degrees or qualifications to teach at the CEG level and in CI:2 only the director had a bachelor degree and CAP-CEG qualification, while the remaining four educators had not earned diplomas beyond the BAC II (Field notes, June 2, 2014; June 11, 2014). The lack of qualified teachers observed in Akebou CI schools corroborated concerns expressed by the MOE official that community-based schools offered a poor quality education because they lacked teachers who had the required training and qualifications (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). Observations from the field also reflected findings from Gbogbotchi et al (2000) and Marchand (2000) whose studies identified teacher qualification as a significant issue impacting the quality of education in community schools.

While educators in CI schools lacked the credentials required by Togolese educational policy, they expressed a strong desire to pursue professional development opportunities in the form of in-service trainings in an effort to become better teachers. One of the teachers in CI:1 had traveled to the regional inspection in Badu to attend a teacher training conference for Math educators earlier in 2014. During the training he observed model lessons, received instructional
advice, and learned about maintaining discipline in class. He said that the training was helpful to him and that he was able to apply what he learned in the local context after the training (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014). All three educators in CI:1, however, believed that the trainings were held too infrequently and were too costly for CI school teachers, who did not receive compensation for travel, lodging, or food to attend the trainings (Interviews, CI:1:D1; CI:1:T1; CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). Without sufficient professional development opportunities provided by the state, teachers in CI:1 discussed informal trainings organized at the local level. One teacher explained that when he traveled back to his home village, which was located near a state sponsored CEG, he met with the educators there to “jette un coup d'oeil (take a look)” at the curriculum standards, lesson plans, textbooks, and evaluation methods used in the state school (Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). These friendly, informal relationships between teachers proved to be the main source for professional development and training for volunteer teachers in CI:1 due to the infrequency and cost of trainings organized by the regional inspection.

Educators in CI:2 offered similar perspectives on teacher training and in-service professional development. While none of the teachers had received training prior to beginning their work in Togolese schools, all four had participated in at least one in-service training organized by the regional inspection in Badu or Kougnouhou (Field notes, June 11, 2014; June 17, 2014). These trainings were organized once per year and generally lasted between two to four days. According to participants, the trainings were organized by subject matter (math, science, history-geography, etc.), so no two teachers ever attended the same training conference, which limited their ability to put what they learned into practice because they did not have the support or understanding of their fellow teachers (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 11, 2014). However, much like teachers in CI:1, all four of the teachers in CI:2 expressed a desire to attend more training
sessions, especially if they could be reimbursed for their travel and accommodation expenses (Interviews, CI:2:T1; CI:2:T2; CI:2:T3; CI:2:T4, June 11, 2014). Hoppers (2005) and Miller-Grandvaux and Yoder (2002) documented the need for in-service teacher training in community-based schools, which was also a key issue identified by participants in my study.

Interestingly, during a focus group interview, teachers discussed their frustrations with the stereotypical perception that EVs in CI schools were unqualified and therefore unable to provide a quality education to students. One teacher said, “Il faut regarder nos compétences; je travaillais en tant que enseignant depuis des années (One must look at our experience; I’ve been working as a teacher for years)”, while another said “La plupart du temps, nos résultats du BEPC sont mieux plus que les écoles de l'Etat mais on nous dis que nous ne sommes pas qualifiés (Often times, our BEPC exam results are better than state schools, but they tell us that we are not qualified)” (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). This perspective, combined with their desire to attend teacher trainings, illustrated the pride and dedication of EVs in CI schools.

By linking codes for personal development and teacher training, I investigated the goals and purposes of education in Togo as well as the key issue of (the lack of) teacher training in the context of Akebou schools, which helped to answer my first and third research questions.

**Nos Propres Efforts, Quality, and Development**

In addition to the main codes that comprised the thematic finding of development, the overarching themes in the study also offered insight into development issues in Togo. Educators and community members in each site explained the role that their own efforts (NPE) played in the development of their country and their locality, while also acknowledging that the underdevelopment of the region has impacted the quality of education. As noted earlier, official policy documents only occasionally alluded to the NPE code and never specifically mentioned it.
As such, the following section draws primarily from interview and focus group data collected at the local-level.

Comments from community members in ST:1 summed up the relationship between development and educational quality, stating that “Il y a des enseignants volontaires qui ne sont pas qualifiés, l'école n'a pas les moyens de payer des enseignants qualifiés, et nous sommes dans une région reculé. Comment on peut améliorer? (There are unqualified volunteer teachers, we cannot afford to pay more qualified teachers, and we are in an isolated region. How can we improve?)” (Interview, ST:1:FG1, May 27, 2014). Without sufficient support from the national government or a local economy strong enough to pay (qualified) teachers, even members of the local APE, whose students attended a state-sponsored school, expressed frustration with the quality of education in their community. In turn, poor educational quality and the limited utility of diplomas in the Togolese economy were cited as key reasons for increasing dropout rates among students choosing migrant labor over schooling.

The concept of *Nos Propres Efforts* surfaced in the context of teacher trainings as teachers in both state and CI schools described their personal efforts to improve their teaching through informal professional development. A teacher in ST:1 explained that, apart from attending trainings organized by the regional inspection once a year, his personal relationship with a regional inspector in his hometown allowed him to gain supplemental training in his field. He informed me that his lesson plans were developed with the personal assistance of his regional inspector friend, which represented an opportunity for professional development created by his own efforts. Additionally, educators in both CI schools discussed their collaboration with teachers in state-sponsored schools. These informal relationships, organized and implemented through the efforts of local-level teachers, proved to be the most frequent and most useful
trainings cited by Akebou CI schoolteachers. Finally, directors in each of the school sites described their role in overseeing and training new or inexperienced teachers, which represented an informal opportunity for teacher training at the local level.

In summary, the development thematic finding addressed the importance of education and its role in the development of a peaceful society, the role of education in national and economic development, the issue of migrant labor and dropout rates, and the issue of personal development and teacher training. The discussion of the theme and its corresponding codes illustrated connections and dichotomies between educational ideas presented in policies describing the goals and purposes of education and the realities of educational experiences implemented in practice at local-levels. In the thematic finding, I also presented the goals and purposes of education as expressed from the perspectives of educators and community members, which responded to my second research question. Finally, participants identified the issues of teacher training, migrant labor, and economic development as key issues in rural schools in the Akebou Prefecture, thereby providing insight into my third research question. I will address issues of curriculum and pedagogy in the next thematic finding.

Curriculum: Thematic Finding and Overarching Threads

I addressed issues related to curriculum policies and practices in Akebou schools in the third major thematic finding in my study, which responded to Research Questions One, Three, and Four. Given the goals and purposes of my research study (see Chapter One), it was not surprising that the issue of curriculum surfaced as a thematic finding. However, some of the findings extend beyond the anticipated key issues identified prior to fieldwork in the scholarly literature, which illustrated the distinctiveness of my case. For the purpose of this study, curriculum was defined as the “experiences learners have under the guidance of the school”
(Marsh & Willis, 2007, p.11). The use of this broad definition allowed for a curriculum thematic finding that included diverse issues, ranging from national examinations to oversight tasks assigned to directors by the regional inspection. Additionally, given the broad definition of curriculum, there were connections between the curriculum thematic finding and other themes in the study. For example, the key issue of textbook availability was included in the curriculum theme, thought it was also connected to school funding because the amount of funding a school received dictated, in part, the number of textbooks that could be purchased for students. Additionally, issues of curriculum (ir)relevancy and local modification had clear connections with the space/context surrounding the school.

I identified 18 distinct codes that could be traced across interviews, focus groups, observations, and document data collected in each of the four sites when constructing the curriculum theme. The most commonly occurring code in the theme was curriculum (CURRIC), which appeared 43 times across all of the data sets, making it the most common code in my study. Figure 5.7 illustrates how these 18 codes were organized to construct the curriculum thematic finding.
First, across the four research sites and document data, the national curriculum (CURRIC) and the “programme officiel (official program, content standards, or syllabi, coded as OFFIPRO)” appeared as key issues impacting educational experiences, which lead to the placement of those codes at the top and center of the theme. From there, I identified five subthemes or threads within the theme: 1) Exams; 2) Lack of materials; 3) (ir)Relevancy and local modification; 4) Inspection visits; and 5) Discipline. I then identified codes that could be associated with the central concept or issue of the subtheme. For example, codes describing examinations could be classified by the level at which they were organized (national, regional, or local). The (ir)relevancy and local modification subtheme included codes that described the disconnect between curriculum standards and local realities as well as the efforts educators made to modify curriculum to make it relevant in the local context, which I will discuss in the
corresponding subsection below (see also MOE Site Description in Chapter Four for case-in-point examples, p.164). I made an effort to structure the graphic representation so that codes appeared in descending order based on their number of occurrences across the data sets (interviews, focus groups, observations, and documents).

The curriculum theme contained 18 distinct codes that occurred a total of 337 times in the data, representing 33% of the total 1028 code occurrences in the entire study. Because this theme responded to three of the four research questions and because the interview protocol contained specific questions about curriculum issues, it was not surprising that this theme comprised the largest percentage of codes in the study.

**Curriculum: Policies and Practices**

While the Handbook of Togolese Educational Policy did not offer specific information on curriculum content or standards, it did indicate the general knowledge and skills that students should have at the end of each schooling cycle. It situated the goals and purposes of education at the national-level within larger, internationally accepted educational goals. The document suggested, “dans le monde moderne ... L'éducation s'adresse la formation de l’individu dans toutes ses dimensions, le développement des facultés mentales, et son progrès intellectuel (In the modern world…education should address the training of an individual in all fields, the development of mental capacity, and their intellectual progress)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.84). As noted earlier, the document clarified that curriculum should provide the knowledge and skills required to develop an active and informed citizenry. Finally, Togolese educational policy stipulated that, in order to prepare future citizens, curriculum content “doit être soumis aux exigences de la morale universelle (must be subject to the requirements of universal morality)” thereby connecting educational experiences in the Togolese context with universal or
international norms (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.84). The Handbook of Togolese Education Policy did not offer specific curriculum standards, but instead described the overarching goals that curriculum standards were required to achieve. Figure 5.8 shows the intended scope of Togolese curriculum and illustrates the overall scheme from the national-level policy perspective. Figure 5.9 shows a translated reproduction of Figure 5.8.

**Figure 5.8.** Overall scope, goals, and scheme of the Togolese national curriculum (Précis Scolaires, 1983, pp. 82-84)
Data collected during an interview at the Ministry of Education corroborated the policy perspective in document data (shown above), as the interviewee explained that curriculum policies intended to develop the basic mental faculties of students to prepare them to live in a democratic society and globalized world. Interestingly, the Ministry official also highlighted the importance of developing a “la connaissance de la localité (knowledge of the local setting)” within the national curriculum policies and objectives (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). His
statement reflected a common dilemma in curriculum decision-making between centering educational experiences in the local context or linking them to larger, more abstract, global standards (Tikly, 2009). The policy cited above showed both a consideration of the individual (“formation de l'individu”) and the global/international (“soumis aux exigences de la morale universelle”), which illustrated the curricular balance between individual and global contexts.

While it was unsurprising that the MOE official’s perspective on curriculum was similar to those found in policy documents, the diverse set of perspectives offered by educators and community members in the Akebou Prefecture shed light on differences between national-level policies and local-level realities.

The Practical Guide for Teaching offered insight into the policy perspective explaining the practices educators should use to achieve the overarching goals of education. Drawing from Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, and Krathwohl’s (1956) taxonomy of objectives, the policy document suggested that educators use cognitive, affective, and psychomotor objectives to guide their teaching practices. Bloom’s taxonomy is based in the educational principles of Ralph Tyler (1949/2003), thus illustrating the importance of international influences in education. “Bloom’s taxonomy”, as it came to be known, focused on the cognitive domain, and subsequently taxonomies were developed for the affective domain (see Krathwohl, Bloom and Masia, 1964) and for the psychomotor domain (see Simpson, 1966; Harrow, 1972). Interestingly, the Togolese policy documents attributed all of these domains to Bloom, illustrating how imported educational policies and practices are often reinterpreted (and sometimes misinterpreted) at national, regional, and local levels. My analysis of these documents reflected the Togolese interpretation of Bloom’s taxonomy as it was expressed in policy documents and local-level practices in teaching. Additionally, Tyler (1949/2003) did not advocate for standards-based education, but
rather suggested that curriculum be tailored to meet the needs and interests of students and that objectives and other generic ingredients of any quality curriculum and instruction program should also reflect the practical realities of the local context. The Togolese application of standards-based curriculum reflected the adoption of globally accepted norms for educational policy and practice such as in Tyler’s famous rationale of four principles or fundamental questions for developing any curriculum and plan of instruction (purposes, educational experiences, organization of educational experiences, determination of attainment of the educational experiences). These reflected attempts by the Togolese MOE to adopt ideas from international systems and apply them to develop a quality education. Even if their adoption was rather partial or incomplete, it still represented a sincere effort on their part to upgrade their programs to reflect internationally known policies and practices.

The three domains (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor) can be seen in each of the three objectives presented in Tables 5.2 and 5.3 and in the three goals of Togolese education in Figures 5.8 and 5.9. Cognitive objectives satisfied the development of mental faculties goal while affective objectives met the volition/citizenship education goals and psychomotor objectives responded to the physical and manual training goal (See Figure 5.9 above). This showed a clear progression in policy documents from educational goals to educational objectives. I will discuss the translation of objectives into content standards and educational practices in the next section of this chapter. In order to clarify the Togolese interpretation of the taxonomies of Bloom and others, the Practical Guide offered the following information to inform teachers of the educational policy:
Table 5.2

*The domains and definitions of pedagogical objectives (French) (Guide Pratique, 2012, p.4)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Les Domaines de Définition des objectifs pédagogiques (selon Bloom)</th>
<th>Les descriptions et les exemples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domaine cognitif</strong></td>
<td>Les objectifs d’acquisition de connaissances (savoir) ou de développent d’habiletés intellectuelles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exemple : Etre capable de réciter, de décrire, de citer, d’identifier, de localiser, de compléter, de différencier, de décomposer, de diviser, d’examiner, d’extraire, de former, d’apprécier, d’évaluer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domaine affectif</strong></td>
<td>Ce sont des objectifs relevant du savoir-être c’est-a-dire des attitudes, des valeurs et des intérêts. Ils sont formules à l’aide de verbes socio-affectifs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exemple : Etre capable de choisir, d’opter, de juger, de protester, de débattre, de discuter, d’accepter, de différencier, de compare, de changer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domaine psychomoteur</strong></td>
<td>Il concerne les objectifs relevant du savoir-faire et se rapporte a l’habileté musculaire ou motrice, a la manipulation d’objet quelconque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exemple : Etre capable de fabriquer, de construire, de manipuler, de courir, de sauter, de grimper, de se courber, d’esquisser, d’attraper, d’exécuter des mouvements, de dessiner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3

*The domains and definitions of pedagogical objectives (English) (Guide Pratique, 2012, p.4)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The domain of definition of educational objectives (according to Bloom)</th>
<th>Descriptions and examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cognitive domain</strong></td>
<td>Objectives for the acquisition of knowledge (savoir is the verb to know) or the development of intellectual skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example: Being able to recite, to describe, to cite, to identify, to locate, to complete, to differentiate, to analyze, to divide, to examine, to extract, to train, to evaluate, to assess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affective domain</strong></td>
<td>These are objectives relevant to knowing and being, that is to say, attitudes, values and interests. They are formulated with socio-affective verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example: Being able to choose, to opt, to judge, to protest, to debate, to discuss, to agree, to differentiate, to compare, to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychomotor domain</strong></td>
<td>It concerns the objectives relevant to knowing, making, and doing, and refers to the muscle or motor skills, and the handling of objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example: Being able to make, construct, manipulate, running, jumping, to climb, to bend, to sketch, to catch, run movements, to draw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Following these policy recommendations, teachers were encouraged to design lessons that incorporated each of the three domains of pedagogical objectives. Additionally, the curriculum content standards (as I will discuss in the following section) were designed to reflect the three educational objectives cited above (Guide Pratique, 2012). It is interesting to note that the central pedagogical policies for the national curriculum in Togo were rooted in Bloom’s (1984) taxonomy of learning, which was based on research conducted in the United States and reflected the curriculum principles proposed by Tyler (1970). This finding was indicative of the process of educational lending and borrowing documented by Phillips and Ochs (2003) and showed that power that international trends in education have over educational policies in nations around the world. The inclusion of Bloom’s taxonomy indicated that the Togolese education system had bought into global educational ideologies and begun to incorporate elements of international trends into their national policy perspective. Even at local-levels, directors and teachers employed the Bloom’s (1984) language and terminology when discussing the national curriculum (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014; Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). Unsurprisingly, however, some aspects of national-policy were clearly reflected at local-levels while others were (re)interpreted and creolized to meet local ends, which illustrated the complexities of policy and practice in the global-to-local continuum.

Educators at the CEG in ST:1, a state-sponsored school, offered perspectives on curriculum that both confirmed and contrasted with the official curriculum policies cited above. The director explained that curriculum must develop an “esprit ouvert (open, inquisitive mind)” (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014) among students, which was similar to the policy statement that stated that curriculum must develop “facultés mentales (mental faculties)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.84, see above). However, he also distinguished between different types of knowledge
within in the official curriculum, arguing that current policy focus on cognitive, affective, and psychomotor objectives did not adequately reflect the differences between “des connaissances nouvelles et des connaissances vieilles (new types of knowledge and old types of knowledge)” (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014). New knowledge, according to the director, included information on technology, modern science, and modern international relations, while old knowledge referred to basic education, literacy, simple science and math, and general history. These topics, he said, laid the foundations for more complex learning. He critiqued current curriculum policy perspectives (see above), arguing that they did not sufficiently consider the realities of student experiences or use those experiences as departure points for lessons. He explained that students knew how to use cell phones and small electronic devices, but they did not understand how the devices work, and rather than incorporating new technology into the curriculum, educational policies required students to learn electric principles as abstract or theoretical concepts, which discouraged their willingness to learn (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014). These statements illustrated a breakdown between the curriculum goals in educational policies and the realities experiences at local levels. While policy stressed the importance of implementing a curriculum that stimulated intellectual progress, volition/citizenship education, and physical training, the director in ST:1 explained that from his local-level perspective, in reality, curriculum content left students uninterested and unengaged because it did not respond to their interests or intellectual curiosity.

Educators in CI schools also offered perspectives on curriculum that confirmed and contrasted with the official curriculum policies cited above. Because CI schools did not receive funding from the Togolese government and rarely received oversight visits from the regional inspection, they had more freedom to develop localized curriculum policies. However, interview
and observation data suggested that CI schools, for the most part, implemented the same curriculum policies as their state-sponsored counterparts. For example, the director of the CEG in CI:1 said that, while the government did not assist the school financially, they did sell curriculum documents (including syllabi, content standards, and modified textbooks) to CI schools (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). This allowed community-based schools to ostensibly meet educational goals and objectives set by national policy (see above). The director in CI:2 verified the lack of financial support from the government and also acknowledged the government’s role in selling curriculum materials to CI schools. Additionally, his perspective on curriculum reflected the wording of national policies. He identified “lire, écrire, s'exprimer, de développer un esprit de jugement, s'informer et partager les connaissances (reading, writing, verbal expression, developing a critical mind, informing opinions, and sharing knowledge)” as the main goals of curriculum and central purpose of education (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014), which was nearly the same as the wording from the policy perspective found in Table 5.3 (p.305). From the global-to-local perspective, this showed how international influences—such as “Bloom’s taxonomy” and Tyler (1949/2003)—reached the professional practices of educators at local-levels, even in rural areas like the Akebou Prefecture. The Togolese MOE’s adoption of globally accepted norms for education—such as a standards-based curriculum—resulted in the adoption of professional practices suggested by American educational researchers in an attempt to meet the policy ideas. These practices, however, did not always accurately reflect the original intentions of the professional practices given that the Togolese educators had limited—if not non-existent—exposure to the original documents, but rather relied on the interpretations of regional inspectors and MOE officials. This offered an example of the creolization of educational policies and professional practices that were reinterpreted at macro, meso, and micro levels.
While comments from CI school directors mirrored the wording of national policy, they also showed that the realities of working in rural and underfunded schools limited the ability to effectively implement the national curriculum goals and objectives stipulated above. When asked how he obtained official curriculum policies and documents, the director in CI:2 said that he traveled to the regional inspection in Badu (approximately 90km from CI:2) to purchase photocopied versions of the textbooks and content standards that inspectors had made into informal packets. Original copies of these same documents, however, were provided to state-sponsored schools, an observation confirmed by interview data with educators in ST:1 (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 28, 2014; Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). Despite claims from the official at the Ministry of Education that all schools—state, private, and community-supported—provided the same education and same standardized curriculum standards (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014), it was clear that community schools faced additional challenges in procuring the curriculum documents that allowed them to achieve their educational goals.

Teachers in both CI school sites explained that national policy on curriculum and pedagogy (See Figures 5.8, 5.9, pp.302-3; Tables 5.2, 5.3, p.305) dictated how and what they taught. However, they also noted that access to updated policy documents and educational materials limited their ability to teach effectively. Teachers in CI:1 said that they did not have access to curriculum policies documents, but rather used chapters in locally produced textbooks to guide lesson planning (Interview, CI:1:T1; Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). As noted in the thematic finding on development, teachers in CI:1 relied on relationships with teachers in state-sponsored schools for professional development and teacher training tips. These same informal relationships were cited as a main conduit through which official curriculum policies were passed down to CI school. Anderson-Levitt’s (2003) framework for understanding how
Educational policies become creolized as they pass between international, national, regional, and local levels was useful in interpreting policy implementation in Akebou schools. Ultimately, the passage of updated policy documents and educational materials between teachers in state-sponsored and CI schools comprised an additional level in the global-to-local continuum. In Akebou schools, policies were passed between two tiers of education at the local level, which resulted in additional modification or misinterpretation of policies that impacted student experiences in educational settings.

Interestingly, community members in all three school sites informed me that they were not aware of the most current curriculum policies and did not participate in the curriculum decision-making process. From the perspective of community member, the national policies cited above were abstract and, when posed questions about curriculum, many participants were unfamiliar with the policies. Members of the APE in ST:1 said that it was not the responsibility of their organization to intervene in the curriculum taught at the school. They believed, instead, that it was the director’s responsibility to follow national curriculum policies to ensure that students were able to pass regional and national exams, which I will discuss in more detail in a subsequent section. Similarly, when asked about their role in curriculum decision-making, the APE in CI:2 explained that all issues related to teaching and learning were left to the director and teachers. However, when posed probing questions that addressed their opinions on curriculum policies, participants explained that they valued educational experiences that could be applied in the local context to improve the quality of life or lessons that prepared students for lucrative careers, although they showed no knowledge or awareness of the current curriculum policies cited above (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1, June 3, 2014). Community members were vague in their responses to questions about policy because they did not intervene in curriculum issues.
Likewise, the APE in CI:2 was not involved in any curriculum decision-making processes. However, several members offered a rational for their lack of involvement in curriculum matters, explaining that “nous ne sommes pas allés à l'école nous même. Nous n'avons pas les connaissances nécessaires pour dire au directeur ce qu'il faut enseigner (We ourselves have not attended school. We do not have the necessary knowledge to tell the director what he should teach)” (Focus Group, CI:2:FG2(4), June 19, 2014). These comments illustrated the unquestioning respect that local-level actors had for curriculum policies developed at the national-level. The perspectives of community members contrasted with findings offered by Hoppers (2005) and Miller-Grandvaux and Yoder (2002) that documented strong community participation in CI schools in several West and East African countries. However, Gbogbotchi et al’s (2000) study indicated that CI schools in Togo largely followed the policies and practiced recommended in the national curriculum, a finding that more accurately reflected the realities I documented in Akebou schools, where community members deferred to educators on issues of curriculum while educators discussed curriculum in the context of national policies.

In summary, the Handbook of Togolese Education offered little information on specific curriculum standards, but instead presented general goals and objectives for the types of knowledge and skills that should be taught in Togolese schools. Similarly, comments from interview participants at national and local levels that I coded as curriculum (CURRIC) reflected the language and wording of policy documents, although participants often expressed frustration with the limited availability of current curriculum policy documents in their schools. In the following section, I discuss specific references to curriculum content standards and teaching methods were coded as official program (OFFIPRO) and referenced information in subject-

**Official Program and Curriculum (Ir)relevance**

Beyond the general descriptions of the knowledge and skills presented in the Handbook of Togolese Education, policy documents and participants described the “programme officiel (official program)” as the main resource for determining curriculum content and planning lessons. The documents associated with the *in vivo* official program (OFFIPRO) code included: syllabi and content standards for each class, textbooks, and practical pedagogy guides. The Ministry of Education and the Regional Education Offices sold these documents to both state and CI schools in the Akebou Prefecture and other regions of Togo.

When asked about the curriculum taught in their schools, educators in all three of the sites informed me that they followed the “programme officiel” set by the Ministry of Education and overseen by regional inspection offices (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 27, 2014; Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). By showing me the documents that contained outlines of the content standards, teaching methods, required textbooks, and assessment types that were included in the national policy, participants clarified what was meant by the otherwise abstract term “programme official”. The Practical Guide for Teaching CEG (Guide Pratique, 2012) presented the educational policies and curriculum objectives for each of the six subjects of CEG-level education. These overarching, subject-specific objectives described the scope and sequence of Togolese education system. Unfortunately, however, I was unable to procure similar documents for the primary and high school levels, which limited my ability to situate CEG learning in the larger context of education. Tables 5.4 and 5.5 show the overarching curricular objectives for each of the subject areas in CEG education in French and English.
### Table 5.4

**Overarching curricular objectives by subject matter—French (Guide Pratique, 2012, pp. 18-45)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectif</th>
<th>Histoire-Geographie</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Sciences de la vie et la terre</th>
<th>Sciences Physiques</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fournir des connaissances de base, procurer la maîtrise de la langue spécifique et faire acquérir le maniement de source d’information qui sont les textes, les photographies, les cartes, de diagrammes, etc.</td>
<td>Donner à tous les élèves la maîtrise de l’expression orale et écrite de la langue utilisée de nos jours, et leur permettre ainsi de communiquer c’est-a-dire d’écouter, de parler, de lire, et d’écrire</td>
<td>La consolidation des acquisitions de la formation de base reçue à l’école primaire</td>
<td>Faire acquérir à l’apprenant les méthodes propres à la démarche scientifique et technologique</td>
<td>Avoir acquis : des attitudes scientifiques (objectivité, esprit de rigueur, esprit de critique, de curiosité, d’initiative, de créativité, de précision)</td>
<td>Give students the opportunities to communicate in this language. To communicate implies the effective use of language functions, vocabulary, grammar and language skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Développer des aptitudes : observer, localiser, décrire, expliquer, comparer</td>
<td>Leur faire acquérir des techniques d’origine pratique de la vie journalière (savoir rédiger une lettre, un compte-rendu, utiliser un ouvrage de référence)</td>
<td>Le développement progressif et l’éducation des qualités intellectuelles : esprit d’observation, capacité d’analyse, raisonnement déductif et inductif</td>
<td>Développer chez l’enfant l’objectivité, la curiosité, le sens de la preuve.</td>
<td>Avoir acquis : le principe de raisonnement déductif</td>
<td>English should be taught as a means to get international culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Développer des aptitudes : réagir intelligemment en face d’un flot d’informations apportées par les mass-médias ; c’est a dire les critiquer</td>
<td>Les former à la recherche et au maniement raisonné d’informations puissées des ouvrages de bibliothèque entendues à la radio ou recueillies auprès des personnes sollicitées</td>
<td>Le développement du sens pratique et l’habileté manuelle</td>
<td>L’acquisition du savoir scientifique, du savoir-faire technique, d’une démarche scientifique et le développement du goût de la recherche</td>
<td>Avoir acquis : de techniques spécifiques à savoir : décrire un phénomène, formuler un raisonnement, comprendre et communiquer un résultat sous forme orale, écrit, ou graphique, lire un instrument de mesure</td>
<td>The aim of English language teaching is to effectively enable students to understand, speak, read, and write the language in day-to-day communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.5

*Overarching curricular objectives by Subject Matter—English (Guide Pratique, 2012, pp. 18-45)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>History-Geography</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Life Sciences</th>
<th>Physical Sciences</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1</td>
<td>Provide basic knowledge, create the mastery of specific historical language and to learn how to handle all sources of information, including text, photographs, maps, diagrams, etc.</td>
<td>Give all students the ability to master oral and written language in use today, and enable them to communicate; that is to say, listen, speak, read, and write</td>
<td>To consolidate all of the basic training and knowledge students have acquired in primary school</td>
<td>To develop in the learner the proper scientific method and technological approaches to inquiry</td>
<td>Have acquired: scientific attitudes (objectivity, rigorous spirit, spirit of criticism, curiosity, initiative, creativity, precision)</td>
<td>Give students the opportunities to communicate in this language. To communicate implies the effective use of language functions, vocabulary, grammar and language skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 2</td>
<td>Develop the skills of: observing, locating, describing, explaining, comparing</td>
<td>Make them acquire practical skills for daily living (ie writing a letter, a report, using a reference book)</td>
<td>The progressive development and education of intellectual qualities: sense of observation, analytical skills, deductive and inductive reasoning</td>
<td>Develop in the child objectivity, curiosity, sense of the evidence.</td>
<td>Have acquired: the principle of deductive reasoning</td>
<td>English should be taught as a means to get international culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3</td>
<td>Develop the skills of: reacting intelligently in the face of a flood of information provided by the mass media; that is to say, critically examine media</td>
<td>To train them how to search and handle information drawn from library books, heard on the radio, or heard from people of authority</td>
<td>The encouragement of practical and manual skills</td>
<td>The acquisition of scientific knowledge, technical know-how, a scientific approach, and the development of a taste for research</td>
<td>Have acquired: The specific techniques of knowing: describe a phenomenon, to formulate an argument, understand and communicate the result in oral, written, or graphic, read a measuring instrument</td>
<td>The aim of English language teaching is to effectively enable students to understand, speak, read, and write the language in day-to-day communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interestingly, the Practical Guide for Teaching CEG presented the objectives of each of the six subject areas in a slightly different format, as can be seen in the variation of wording and phrasing used across the subjects in the table above. This suggested that content-area specialists were asked to elaborate the overarching curriculum objectives of their subject with little concern for uniformity across the curriculum. At the same time, however, the curriculum objectives contain the standardized language of global, standards-based education (Phillips & Ochs, 2003). As mentioned in the previous section, the Togolese MOE used their (mis)interpretation of Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, Krathwohl’s (1956) taxonomy as their basis for developing and elaborating curriculum standards and classroom lessons. Similarly, the overarching curricular objectives reflected the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains as evidenced by “l’acquisition du savoir scientifique, du savoir-faire technique, d’une démarche scientifique (the acquisition of scientific knowledge, technical know-how, a scientific approach)” as an example of the cognitive domain, “développer chez l’enfant l’objectivité, la curiosité, le sens de la preuve (develop in the child objectivity, curiosity, sense of the evidence)” as an example of the “affective” domain, and finally, “le développement du sens pratique et l’habileté manuelle (the encouragement of practical and manual skills)” as an example of the psychomotor domain (Guide Pratique, 2012, p. 37, p.43). These examples illustrate the influence of international trends in educational policy-making at national levels. Additionally, they reflect the concept of educational policy lending and borrowing described by Phillips and Ochs (2003), which is a critical component of the global-to-local continuum.

Interview participants at national and local levels informed me that the overarching curriculum objectives (cited above) were further clarified in subject-specific content standards for each grade (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014, Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014). Prior to
fieldwork, I had gathered the subject-specific standards and subject syllabi with the assistance of Josita Ekouevi, the Exchange Program Specialist at the American Embassy in Lomé (presented below). Once in the field, I compared the documents I had collected prior to fieldwork with the documents used by educators in the Akebou Prefecture and found that they contained the same content, which verified the authenticity of the documents. In fact, one educator informed me that “le programme officiel n'a pas changé depuis que j'ai commencé à enseigner (curriculum standards had not changed since I began working as a teacher)” (Interview, ST:1:T1, May 28, 2014) and several others confirmed that adjustments to the official program were rare (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:1:T2, June 11, 2014). The relative stability of curriculum content reduced potential educational inequalities between state and CI schools by limiting the extent to which schools would need new and updated documents to cover the required material. The unchanging curriculum, however, also posed issues regarding the relevancy and applicability of schooling experiences within modern, local contexts.

The policy documents enumerating the curriculum standards contained 766 individual content standards across the six subjects and four grades of CEG education. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to reproduce or cite each of the 766 individual standards. Instead, I present an overview of the curriculum standards showing the number of standards per subject in each of the four CEG-level grades in Table 5.6 It is important to note that some of the curriculum standards in the Togolese policy documents could be more accurately described as curriculum topics, as they differed from the commonly accepted definition of curriculum standard used in American educational research and scholarly literature.
This table shows the sequence of Togolese education. In each grade the number of content standards increases each year as students progress through the schooling cycle, starting with a total of 172 content standards in 6eme and finishing with a total of 220 content standards in 3eme, the terminal grade of CEG. It is not uncommon to observe increasingly complex and detailed curriculum standards as students move through the schooling cycle, which illustrated a connection between Togolese education and larger international trends in curriculum policy. It is also important to note that, much like the overarching curricular objectives cited earlier, the content standards themselves were formatted differently for each subject area, which suggested little interaction or collaboration between subject-matter specialists. For example, the numbering of the History-Geography standards followed a numeric organization system while those for French used a letter-based organization system. Finally, it is important to mention that the English and Life Science curriculum standards were organized using the tables of contents of state-approved textbooks and did not reflect a general set of knowledge as much as they did the prescribed set of information contained within the book.

Much like the overarching curriculum objectives, these findings indicated that the Togolese education system adopted curriculum policies in line with larger, international trends of standards-based education. They also showed that Togolese curriculum policy-makers relied on
the content of textbooks published in France when elaborating the curriculum standards for subject matter that would be used in schools across Togo. Not only does this illustrate the standardization of curriculum content at the international level, it also reflects a post-colonial reliance on intellectual and technological support of the former colonial powers, since Togo did not have the technological capability to produce their own textbooks (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). Finally, the use of standards-based education and foreign published textbooks limited the agency of teachers to modify curriculum content and limited the relevancy of curriculum content in local settings, since many of the standards and textbook examples did not consider Togolese, let alone Akebou, contexts. I present several case-in-point examples below.

Togolese educational policy specified that schooling should prepare students for life in the modern world, as evidenced by the statement: “Donner à tous les élèves la maitrise de l’expression…utilisée de nos jours (Give all students mastery of expression…used in today’s world)” (French Syllabus, n.d, see also Tables 5.4, 5.5). However, an analysis of several specific curriculum content standards showed few direct connections between classroom learning and practical applications of knowledge in local contexts. Additionally, a review of textbooks using informal content analysis showed that the majority of content was published prior to the mid-1990s, and did not reflect the modern world (L’Afrique et le monde 3eme, 1995; Science Physiques 3eme, 1996). Furthermore, educators in each site complained of the irrelevancy and outdatedness of educational material. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to trace each of the 766 standards from policy to practice. Instead, I have selected four illustrative examples to serve as case-in-point examples of some of the common issues facing educators in the Akebou Prefecture. I discuss these examples below.
For example, the Practical Guide for Teaching CEG offered “aptitudes à réagir intelligemment en face d'un flot d’information apportée par les mass-médias (the development of the ability to react intelligently to the flood of information presented by mass media)” as one of the key general curriculum objectives of the History-Geography curriculum, illustrating a clear link between the ideal curriculum content and modern, practical contexts (Guide Pratique, 2012, p.18, see also Tables 5.4, 5.5). However, a review of curriculum content standards in the History-Geography syllabus showed that it did not specifically mention contemporary mass media nor did it mention any event more recent than the decolonization of African nations in the 1960s and 1970s (History-Geography Syllabus, n.d, see also Table 5.6). The standard that most closely reflected the goal mentioned above was found in a section called “Commentaire du programme d’histoire de la classe de troisième (Commentary on the History content standards for 3eme)” and stated, “les causes de la décolonisation doivent être étudiés de façon profonde… le professeur analysera et commentera avec les élèves des textes authentiques (the causes of decolonization must be studied in depth…the instructor will analyze and discuss authentic texts with students)” (Histo-Geo Syllabus, n.d, p.52; see full scanned page in Appendix B(4)). However, the use of primary texts—which would likely include news media—from the era of decolonization did not constitute as interaction with contemporary mass media. Furthermore, my review of a state-approved textbook commonly used in 3eme History-Geography classrooms showed few references to mass media and no discussion of strategies for interpreting or analyzing information presented by the media outlets (L’Afrique et le monde 3eme, 1995).

Without a clearly specified standard or significant discussion in the state-approved textbook, I was not surprised that I never observed teachers addressing issues of mass media during observations of History-Geography classes in ST:1 and CI:2. Finally, the objective also
did not reflect nor consider the realities of student life experiences in rural settings. Within the context of my study, teachers faced additional difficulties when procuring mass media resources because of the nearly non-existent access to print media as well as the lack of electricity, cell phone reception and radio reception in the Akebou Prefecture (Field notes, May 22, 2014; May 30, 2014; Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 28, 2014). By following the path of an educational policy objective through overarching curriculum objectives (Table 5.4), specific content standards (Table 5.6), textbooks (L’Afrique et le monde 3eme, 1995), and classroom practices (Field Notes), I was able to observe gaps between policies and practices in schools in the Akebou Prefecture. This example showed an educational objective that was not supported by specific standards in the curriculum/syllabus, textbook content, or teacher practices. While this examples showed a gap between policy and practice, others examples easier to trace through standards, textbooks, and classroom practices.

Alongside the mass media objective, curriculum policy documents also presented the following objective: “de développer des aptitudes ... à décrire, d'expliquer et de comparer des événements historiques (to develop abilities…to describe, to explain, and to compare historical events)” (Guide Pratique, 2012, p.18, see also Tables 5.4, 5.5). Not unlike many educational objectives in the social studies, this broad objective required students to engage in analytical and critical thought, which were both cited as key goals for Togolese schooling in the Handbook of Educational Policy (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.82, see also Figure 5.9). My informal content analysis of curriculum content standards in the History-Geography syllabus revealed several standards that met the overarching objective. For example, a content standard numbered 3.3 required students to describe, explain, and compare the “les deux guerres mondiales (the two World Wars)” through an analysis of the “causes, les conséquences: en Europe, en Afrique, au
Togo, et de la société des nations (causes and consequences: in Europe, Africa, Togo, and the League of Nations)” (Histo-Geo Syllabus, n.d, p.51; see full scanned page in Appendix B(4)). Additionally, a review of a state-approved textbook revealed that two chapters described the geopolitical contexts prior to WWI and WWII (causes), two chapters described the wars themselves, and two chapters investigated the aftermath and geopolitical implications of each war (consequences) (L’Afrique et le monde 3eme, 1995). Figures 5.10 and 5.11 show excerpts from the textbook that explained the causes and consequences of World War I in Europe and Africa.

Figure 5.10. Excerpt from History-Geography textbook on World War I (L’Afrique et le monde 3eme, 1995)
Classroom observations in CI:2 confirmed that teachers were following curriculum policies (Field notes, May 30, 2014). Observations of History-Geography classroom lessons suggested that educators in CI:2 had, to a degree, worked towards achieving the overarching goal of describing, explaining, and comparing historical events. During a 3eme class period dedicated to reviewing key course content to prepare students for the BEPC examination, the teacher covered the causes and consequences of the World Wars. In a prior (unobserved) class he had handed out short answer exam questions from previous versions of the BEPC for students to complete as homework (see example questions in Appendix B(4)). Several times during the review session, the teacher said “C’est dans vos cahiers. Vous avez appris ces choses déjà. Il faut fouiller dans vos cahiers (It is in your notebooks. You’ve already learned these things. You must find it in your notebooks)”, which suggested that the material had been covered during the school year, though direct observations could not validate this (Field notes, May 30, 2014). The majority of students received grades between 8 and 12 out of the 20 total possible points (the
moyenne, or lowest possible passing grade, is 10 out of 20), which showed that the students were adequately able to describe, explain, and compare historical events (Field notes, May 30, 2014). I will discuss the relationship between curriculum content and national examinations in more depth later in this section.

Finally, the History-Geography teachers in all three of the school sites connected the importance of learning about historical conflicts with the educational goal of promoting peace in local contexts. They argued that understanding World Wars I and II was crucial in the development of a national, Togolese identity because it helped promote peace and showed the importance of conflict resolution, thereby illustrating the relevance of the curriculum standard within the Togolese national context (Interview, ST:1:T2, May 28, 2014; Interview, CI:2:T4, June 11, 2014). Figure 5.12 traces educational objectives from policy down to practice, highlighting gaps between levels of implementation.
Figure 5.12. This graphic traces History-Geography objectives through curriculum documents, classroom practices, and applications in local contexts

My constant comparative and informal content analysis of objectives, standards, textbooks, and classroom practices in the physical sciences showed similar issues with policies and practices. For example, the general curricular objectives for physical sciences the Practical Guide for Teaching CEG stated,

*Faire acquérir à l'apprenant les méthodes propres à la démarche scientifique et technologique et de développer chez l'enfant l'objectivité, la curiosité, le sens de la preuve*
(To have students acquire their own sense of the scientific method, technological approaches, and to develop objectivity, curiosity, and a sense of evidence in the child) (Guide Pratique, 2012, p.37, see also Tables 5.4, 5.5).

My informal content analysis of curriculum content standards revealed that one of the 34 total curriculum standards for Physical Sciences at the 3ème level met this overarching curriculum objective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective: Respond Intelligently to Mass Media</th>
<th>Objective: Describe, Explain, Compare Historical Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard: None</td>
<td>Standard: 3.3: WWI and WWII – Describe causes and consequences in Europe, Africa, and on the UN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook: No mention (L’Afrique et le monde 3ème, 1995)</td>
<td>Textbook: Chapters 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 (L’Afrique et le monde 3ème, 1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Observation: None</td>
<td>Classroom Observation: Field notes, May 30, 2014; June 10, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection to Context: None (Limited access to mass media outlets)</td>
<td>Connection to Context: Understand Togo’s colonial history, resolve conflict, promote peace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
objective (See Table 5.6). The standard required students to “comprendre, tester et identifier les caractéristiques d'acidité et de basicité (understand, test, and identify the characteristics of acids and bases)” (Sciences Physique Syllabus, n.d., p.4; See Appendix B(4)). According to science teachers in each of the three schools, all of the curriculum content standards had corresponding chapters or sub-chapters in the state-approved textbook (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May, 27, 2014; Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:2:T1, June 11, 2014). My informal content analysis of the state-approved textbook I purchased in the field confirmed their statements as Chapter 5 of Science Physiques—3ème (1996), published by EDICEF and approved by the Togolese MOE, contained information describing acids and bases and even presented an explanation of how to conduct a pH test. These lessons, if implemented, would ostensibly meet the curriculum standard and help achieve the overall goal of familiarizing students with scientific methods, experimentation, and the use of evidence. Figure 5.13 shows an excerpt from the textbook that presented information of acidic and basic solutions.

Figure 5.13 Excerpt from physical science textbook on acidic and basic solutions (Science Physiques 3ème, 1996).
I was unable to conduct observations of physical science classes at the 3eme level during fieldwork, which limited my ability to analyze curriculum implementation at the level of practice. However, I asked science teachers to describe curriculum policies and practices during interviews in order to deepen my understanding of the key issues in curriculum and pedagogy in Akebou schools. Invariably, teachers mentioned that the lack of curriculum materials limited their ability to conduct experiments with or for students (Interview, ST:1:T1, May 28, 2014; Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:2:T1, June 11, 2014). Without appropriate teaching materials, teachers were reduced to drawing diagrams of what the experiments would look like on the board. One teacher said he used colored chalk to denote different chemicals and compounds to illustrate various chemical reactions (Interview, ST:1:T1, May 28, 2014). This example illustrated the key issue of abstract education and curriculum irrelevance. Science teachers explained that the combination of the lack of educational materials and curriculum standards that were detached from local realities limited the ability for students to gather a deep, holistic understanding of the curriculum, particularly in the sciences (Interview, CI:2:T1, June 11, 2014). Despite questions inquiring into the relevance of curriculum content, there were no comments in interview or focus group data that connected the importance of understanding the characteristics of acids and bases to practical realities in the village setting. This finding contrasted with the assertion that some community-based schools modified their curriculum to meet the realities and needs within the local context, which Hoppers (2005) called “transformative” community schools (p.127). However, the example confirmed Marchand’s (2000) observation that CI schools in Togo modeled curriculum after their state-sponsored counterparts in order to prepare students for national examinations.
A similar analysis of a second case-in-point example showed connections between overarching curricular objectives, content-specific standards, state-approved textbook content, and classroom practices. Although in this case, the science teachers offered clearer connections between the curriculum content and practical applications at the local level during interviews. Using the same overarching curricular objective cited above (and in Tables 5.4 and 5.5), I reviewed the curriculum content standards for additional examples of standards that met this objective. The Sciences Physiques Syllabus contained a curriculum standard, which stipulated that students should “être capable de comprendre les principes de l'électricité. En particulier, le fonctionnement des moteurs électriques à courant continu (be capable to understand the principles of electricity. In particular, the principles of DC electric motors)” (Sciences Physique Syllabus, n.d, p.4; see also Appendix B(4)), a standard that supported the general objective of familiarizing students with scientific methods, experimentation, and the use of evidence mentioned above (Guide Pratique, 2012, p.37, quoted in the preceding example as well as in Table 5.6). Information on the standard was easily found in the state-approved textbook for the physical sciences, as Chapters 8 through 14 contained a unit on electricity. In particular, Chapter 10 focused on the principles of DC electricity and small electric motors. Figure 5.14 shows an excerpt from Chapter 10. Interestingly, the appliance used as an example of DC motors was an electric coffee grinder, which, in an isolated region without electricity, was of little local relevance. Additionally, although coffee was one of the primary agricultural exports of the Akebou Prefecture, local residents did not commonly consume the product. In fact, the only available coffee-based product was NesCafe, or instant coffee, which does not require the use of a grinder. As such, not only did the topic fail to consider the local realities of non-existent access to electricity, it used an example that was abstract and unfamiliar to students.
Figure 5.14. An excerpt on electric motors from the physical science textbook. Note the use of a coffee grinder as an example to illustrate an otherwise abstract concept.

As noted above, I was unable to observe physical science classes at the 3eme level during fieldwork. However, interview and focus group data provided insight into the classroom realities at the local level. While the majority of educator comments spoke to the difficulties associated with a lack of educational materials, the director of CI:1, who also taught life and physical sciences, offered examples of how he modified the curriculum to reflect local experiences. He explained that “connaissances sur les courants électriques permet les élèves de manipuler les torches et certains d’autres appareils à piles (an understanding of electric currents allows students to modify flashlights and other battery-powered devices)” (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014).

While the textbook did not specifically mention battery-powered devices, they do qualify as systems of DC electrical current, and as such, represented a local modification to curriculum intended to make educational experiences more relevant to the lives of students. Though not specifically referencing curriculum standards on electricity, a science teacher in ST:1 explained
that he used materials gathered from the local environment to illustrate concepts in the curriculum, stating “l'environnement naturel est le premier outil de l'enseignement. Les enseignants doivent faire une étude du milieu (the natural environment is the first tool of teaching. Teachers must conduct a study of the milieu)” (Interview, ST:1:T3, May 28, 2014). Science teachers in CI:2 did not connect curriculum content with practical applications in local contexts in interview or focus group data.

These two examples illustrated that some teachers made modifications to otherwise abstract or impractical curriculum standards in an effort to connect educational experiences to the local context. Dhorsan and Chachuio (2008) documented similar curricular modifications in Mozambican community schools aimed at increasing the relevancy of educational experiences. However, their study suggested that community-based schools were established as a response to and remedy for the irrelevance of nationally sanctioned curriculum standards while interview and focus group data in my study suggested that curricular modifications in Akebou Schools were made in response to a lack of access to educational materials rather than as a response to the irrelevance of the material itself. Figure 5.15 traces educational objectives from policy down to practice, highlighting breakdowns between levels of implementation.
Figure 5.15. This graphic traces Physical Science objectives through curriculum documents, classroom practices, and applications in local contexts.

These four case-in-point examples illustrated the general patterns of how overarching curricular objectives were translated into content-specific standards, state-approved textbook chapters, classroom practices, and connected to local contexts. While some objectives could be clearly connected through the entire process, gaps most commonly occurred between objectives and standards or between classroom observation and connections to local contexts. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to trace every objective in each subject area from policy into practice. However, these four illustrative examples provided insight into the differences between policy and practice and contributed to my understanding of the key curriculum issues facing educators and community members in the Akebou Prefecture, thereby responding to my first, third, and fourth research questions.
While the code for the relevancy of curriculum (RELIV) appeared 12 times across interview, focus group, document, and observation data, the code for irrelevancy (IRREV) appeared 20 times. Participants discussed the issue of curricular irrelevancy in detail, which can be also observed in the previous examples of mass media in History-Geography and acids/bases in the Physical Sciences. Not surprisingly, the official at the Ministry of Education did not discuss the irrelevancy of curriculum, however, my interview with the director of the CEG in ST:1 revealed that curriculum materials were outdated and did not reflect the realities of contemporary society. The director informed me that “les livres sont trop vieux. Ils ne contiennent plus de nouvelles connaissances donc, ils ne sont pas pertinents. Les enseignants sont obligés de trouver du nouveau matériel et des mises à jour (the books are too old. They no longer contain new and relevant knowledge. Thus, teachers are required to find updated materials)” (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014), which also illustrated the concept of *nos propres efforts*, as teachers relied on their own efforts to update materials, rather than the MOE. His comments were also supported by my informal content analysis of curriculum documents and textbooks, which found that the most recent materials were published in the late 1990s.

Teachers in ST:1 expressed similar frustration with the irrelevance of curriculum content. During a focus group interview, both History-Geography teachers complained that students did not learn about African history or Togolese history until 3eme, which I confirmed through my informal content analysis of curriculum content standards (History-Geography Syllabus, n.d.; see example scanned pages in Appendix B(4)). One teacher compared the History-Geography curriculum in Togo with curriculum in Benin and Cote d’Ivoire, arguing that Ministries of Education in those countries provided step-by-step lesson plans for teachers that considered the everyday realities of student life experiences, while the MOE in Togo did not (Focus Group,
Teachers also argued that even when the curriculum specifically addressed Togolese history, there was no mention of the Akebou ethnicity or the Akebou Prefecture, leaving educational experiences further disconnected from local realities as students did not see their life experiences in school settings (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014). Furthermore, educators in both CI schools said that they followed curriculum policies set by the MOE, used state-approved textbooks (when available), and participated in regional and national examinations (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014; Interview, CI:2:FG1, June 2, 2014). These examples suggested that CI schools in the Akebou Prefecture could not be categorized as “transformative” schools because the curriculum rarely reflected local realities (Hoppers, 2005). Instead, education served to replicate—to the best of their ability—the same educational experiences received by students in state-sponsored schools, much like Gbogbotchi et al (2000) observed. While Baker and LeTendre (2005) did not include Togo in their analysis of curriculum decision-making, my findings suggested that curriculum decisions were primarily made at the national level in the Togolese educational system and offered little room for local interpretation or modification.

To ensure that teachers followed the overarching curricular objectives and content-specific standards outlined in national policy, directors in all three school sites required teachers to fill out daily entries in the “cahier de texte (lesson logbook)”. The Handbook of Togolese Educational Policy described the elements of an entry in the logbook: “Il renferme les activités journalières de la semaine. Il indique le titre exact des leçons, donne les références précises de fiches de préparations...et soumis au visa du directeur (It contains the daily activities of the week. It shows the exact title of the lessons, give precise references preparations sheets ... and submitted to the Director of the visa)” (Précis Scolaire, 1983, p.35). Examples of the “cahier de
texte” collected at local-levels showed entries that contained the specific curriculum standard addressed in class, a brief description of the lesson, the identification of corresponding chapters in the textbook, and the assigned homework activities (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014; Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). This allowed the directors to know when teachers covered specific curriculum standards (see Appendix B(4) for sample curriculum standards). Directors in each of the schools periodically reviewed these notebooks, leaving comments for teachers indicating their progress through the official curriculum program. Figure 5.16 shows an example lesson logbook entry.

Figure 5.16. An example entry from a lesson logbook in CI:2. Note the director’s stamp and comments regarding teacher progress in red ink.

The above example shows an entry from a February 4, 2014 History-Geography lesson on Saudi Arabia titled “Une économie basée sur l'or noir (An economy based on black gold)”. The lesson included information on the geographical location, physical characteristics, population demographics, and economic developments in industry and agriculture. Additionally,
comments from the school director can be seen in red ink in the upper right hand corner, which read “Doit se rattraper dans le programme (must catch up in the program)” accompanied by the official stamp (seal) of the school. Teachers in all three schools cited the “cahier de texte” as the primary means through which the director oversaw their progress throughout the year. As one of the most important tools used to ensure that students received a complete education, teachers were presented information on how to fill out entries during trainings organized by the regional inspectors. One teacher explained that during a training he had attended earlier in the year, “on nous a parlé de l’importance de le cahier de texte pour nos directeurs et ils nous ont appris comment les remplir bien (they talked to us about the importance of the lesson logbook for our directors and they taught us how to write them well)” (Interview, CI:2:T3, June 11, 2014).

The lesson logbook represented an example of centralized curriculum control and the hierarchy of educational oversight. Many of the comments left by directors referred to the official curriculum standards (see Table 5.4; 5.4; 5.6; and Appendix B(4)), often informing teachers that they were behind and telling them to catch up by holding after school “sessions de rattrapage (remedial sessions)”. It became clear during focus groups that concerns about falling behind in the official program were based on pressures emanating from regional and national examinations (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). Both directors and teachers were concerned that if they did not cover all of the required material, their students would not be able to pass the standardized exams at the end of the year. These findings reflected some of the concerns expressed by Madaus and Kelleghan (1992) regarding the impact that high-stakes, standardized examinations have on curriculum and pedagogy. Finally, educators mentioned that regional inspectors often reviewed the “cahier de texte” during site visits rather than observing
classes, further illustrating the importance of the document. Inspection visits will be discussed in
detail later in this section.

Additionally, when asked about the official curriculum standards and the “cahier de
texte”, teachers explained that from their local-level, practitioner perspective, the program was
too vast, covered too much information, and that it was unrealistic to expect them to cover it
during the academic year. In ST:1, the History-Geography and French teachers said that they
were expected to cover more material than was possible, given the lack of materials in the
school. They explained that difficult concepts took more time to explain when they did not have
images, films, sounds/songs, or workbooks for students to use (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27,
2014). Additionally, when asked to identify the key issues facing his school, the director of CI:1
mentioned that the content standards presented in official policy documents were “trop vaste (too
vast)” in general, but the issue was particularly important this year because the year had been
shorted by teacher strikes in October and November (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014; Togo
News, 2014). Finally, the SVT and physical sciences teacher in CI:2 said that the curriculum
standards are “très grand (very large)”, making it difficult for the teacher to cover all the required
material before the end of year exams (Interview, CI:2:T1, June 11, 2014). These findings
reflected both Baker and LeTendre’s (2005) observation that in some countries curriculum
decision-making is centralized at national levels as well as Madaus and Kelleghan’s (1992)
observation that high stakes examinations impact teacher agency in the curriculum decision-
making process.

Interestingly, interview data from English teachers in all three sites did not contain the
code VASTE. The code did not appear in document data, as it would be unlikely that the policy
document itself would claim to be too vast to complete during an academic year. Instead, it
appeared that English teachers were able to cover the required content during the academic year. As noted earlier, in ST:1, the English teacher explained that curriculum standards were all directly linked to the state-approved English textbook, making it easier to develop lesson plans that effectively conveyed the material to students. He explained he used “écouter et répéter (listen and repeat)” activities most often in his classes because students rarely participated on their own volition (Interview, ST:1:T5, May, 28, 2014). The English teacher in CI:2 described his lesson planning process and teaching methods using similar language (Interview, CI:2:T2, June 11, 204). Additionally, my informal content analysis of the curriculum content standards and state-approved textbook showed a direct, chapter-by-chapter connection between the standards and textbook.

The findings in this section provided insight into the overarching curricular objectives and curriculum standards presented in official policy documents by investigating the translation of policies into practices at the local-level. Educators offered their perspectives on the relevancy and irrelevancy of curriculum content in the local context, often highlighting gaps between educational experiences and the realities of daily life in a rural, isolated region. Finally, the section addressed methods for curricular oversight used by the directors and regional inspection offices. As such this section responded to my first, third, and fourth research questions.

**Lack of Materials**

Educators and community members identified a lack of teaching materials and textbooks as a key issue facing schools in the Akebou Prefecture during interviews and focus groups. While limited access to educational materials was also a product of underfunding, it was more directly related to the curriculum theme because educators more often discussed the lack of materials in the context of the “programme officiel (official program)” and preparing students for
examinations. The codes referencing textbooks (BOOKS) and dans le cahier (in your notebooks or CAHIER) in interview, focus group, observation, and document data were included in the subtheme because they offered insight into an explanation for the lack of materials in Akebou schools and its implications for educational practices.

Not surprisingly, there were differences between the policies describing the distribution of educational materials in Togolese schools and the realities of practice at local levels. The Handbook of Togolese Education Policy stated that:

*l'Etat prend totalement en charge le traitement de tout le personnel enseignant et administratif. Il fournit a chaque enseignant, le matériel individuel de travail autant que possible en plus du matériel d'enseignement*

(The state takes complete responsibility the salaries of all teachers and administrators. It provides personal work materials for teach teacher to the extent possible, in addition to educational materials) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.43)

While this policy statement did not guarantee the provision of adequate educational materials by including the “autant que possible (to the extent possible)” clause, it did suggest that the state would play a significant role in schools by assisting in the provision of educational materials, including curriculum guides, textbooks, and supplementary materials. Similarly, during an interview at the Ministry of Education, I learned that one of the key roles of the MOE was to provide textbooks to schools. School directors were asked to fill out a request form indicating the specific names and numbers of textbooks their school required at the beginning of the year. The form would then be to be mailed to the MOE. In principle, the MOE filled these requests with new textbooks from French publishing companies and sent the books to the regional inspections for distribution into local schools. The entire process could take between three and six months, which required directors to plan their textbook requests using projections of their needs for the following year (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). Interestingly, the Ministry official did not
identify a lack of educational materials as a key issue in Togolese education, but instead discussed the problems of limited access to education and poorly trained teachers.

The lack of educational materials (DOCS) was among the most commonly discussed issues in Akebou schools, appearing 37 times in interview, focus group, observation, and document data. Additionally, the code for textbooks (BOOKS) appeared 23 times across the data. During an interview at the state-sponsored CEG in ST:1, the director confirmed the MOE official’s description of the textbook ordering process by explaining the information he included on the form and how he determined the books that needed to be ordered. His comments, however, also offered insight into the practical realities of textbook requests noting that he rarely received the number of textbooks his school needed to give each student a copy of the textbook. For example, in 2013 he requested a new class set of Math and Physical Science textbooks for 3ème (45 students in the class, two subjects, a total of 90 textbooks). Despite submitting his request before the deadline, the director said he only received ten new books from the state (five for each subject), which left the majority of students in 3ème to share the old textbooks in groups of three or four while only five groups of students were able to share the new edition (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 27, 2014). This example illustrated the ambiguity between written policies, policy perspectives, and the realities of practice regarding the provision of curriculum materials.

Although the MOE official claimed to provide sufficient curriculum materials for state schools, the written policy—which stipulated that the MOE provide materials “to the extent possible”—more accurately described the realities experienced at local levels, where schools did not have enough books for students to use individually. Furthermore, observation data confirmed that students did not have individual access to books, but instead shared them with their peers or relied on their handwritten notebooks (Field notes, May 27, 2014; May 28, 2014).
All five of the teachers in ST:1 identified the lack of curriculum materials and documents as a key issue in their school. History-Geography and French teachers explained that without the required textbooks and readers, they had to write assigned readings and/or excerpts from primary documents on the board for students to copy into their notebooks. Additionally, without sufficient materials they were forced to draw maps and pictures on the board or hold up the textbook as they walked around the classroom for students to see the images (Interview, ST:1:T2, May 28, 2014; Interview, ST:1:T4, May 28, 2014). Science and math teachers were also concerned that the lack of materials limited their ability to teach. One participant explained that he did not have a personal copy of the state standards for mathematics, but instead had to ask the director to borrow the document each time he planned lessons (Interview, ST:1:T1, May 28, 2014). Another teacher offered a short list of the educational materials that were available to use in the classroom, but also said that the SVT (Life Science) textbooks were outdated and no longer reflected current curriculum standards (Interview, ST:1:T3, May 28, 2014). Without enough textbooks or adequate access to lab materials, the science and math teachers were also forced to draw diagrams on the chalkboard to convey abstract concepts to students. Teachers understood that this negatively impacted the quality of education. During the focus group, one teacher stated that the government did not sufficiently support education, arguing that “l'Etat doit revoir le système éducatif (the state must reform the educational system)” (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014), which drew approval from the other participants.

The lack of educational materials was more noticeable in CI schools. Policy documents and interview data from the MOE offered no indication that the Togolese government supported community-based schools by providing educational materials (Précis Scolaire, 1983, Interview, MN1:O1, May 16, 2014). Educators in both sites confirmed the lack of governmental support
Similar to ST:1, the directors and teachers in the CI sites identified the lack of materials as a key issue in their schools. Teachers in CI:1 explained that, not only did they not have any textbooks for students, the teachers themselves sometimes had difficulty procuring current editions of textbooks. One teacher showed me the locally produced textbook he used to plan mathematics lessons, which was a document comprised of photocopied chapters from several different textbooks (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014; Field notes, June 2, 2014). Likewise, another teacher used packets of photocopied readings compiled from the state approved French textbook to plan lessons (Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2013; Field notes, June 2, 2014). Students, however, did not have access to these documents because the school budget could not afford to purchase textbooks. Furthermore, students could not afford to purchase the books on their own (Field notes, June 2, 2014; June 3, 2014). These comments and observations confirmed the larger trend of limited access to curriculum and educational materials in the scholarly literature (Assiah & Luisoni, 2006; Clemons, 2009; Gbogbotchi et al, 2000; Marchand, 2000).

Compared to CI:1, educators in CI:2 had more access to curriculum materials and textbooks, though students rarely had access to books in either site. The director of CI:2 informed me that in the two years following the establishment of the school, the community helped pay for textbooks in addition to contributing the normal fees. Many of these books have since been lost, fallen apart, or become outdated, making it impossible to distribute them for student use (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 17, 2014). The director said that he used three separate textbooks and several photocopied documents to plan his History-Geography lessons because he did not have the current version of the textbook, which contained information that corresponded with standards.
Three of the four teachers in CI:2 explained that they would prefer to work in a state-sponsored school because they believed state schools did not face the same challenges in the procurement of curriculum documents and textbooks. One teacher said, “Par rapport au CC (collège communautaire or CI), les écoles de l'Etat sont meilleure. Ils ont des tubes à essai, des globes, des cartes, et des livres (Compared to the CI schools, state-sponsored schools are better. They have test tubes, globes, maps, and books)” (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). While this statement did not accurately reflect the realities of teachers in state schools—who also identified a lack of materials as a key issue—it did highlight differences in educational policy regarding the provision of materials and textbooks for state and community-based schools.

Finally, community members in ST:1 and CI:1 described the impact that limited access to educational materials had on the education of their children. A member of the APE in ST:1 explained that the school did not provide students with textbooks to bring home and use to complete assignments outside of school hours. Another added that the village did not have a library or cultural center where students could conduct research on topics presented in the classroom (Focus Group, ST:1:FG1(1), May 27, 2014; Focus Group, ST:1:FG1(3), May 27, 2014). When asked who should provide these services, all five participants agreed that the MOE should ensure all students have access to textbooks and libraries. Similarly, the APE in CI:1 cited that lack of educational materials as a primary factor contributing to educational underdevelopment in the region. Towards the end of the focus group, one member asked about strategies to get the attention of the MOE and become a state-sponsored school (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1(4), June 3, 2014). This indicated that community members in CI:1 believed that the state should provide educational materials to all schools.
Community members in CI:2, however, offered a different perspective, highlighting the role that they played in procuring documents and textbooks after the school was established in 2002. One member explained that, not only did they raise funding from a community wide contribution effort, but the APE also collaborated with a non-governmental organization (NGO) that was active in the region at the time to secure funding for educational materials (Focus Group, CI:2:FG2(2), June 19, 2014). Unfortunately, this relationship ended when the NGO closed several years later. Since then, the APE has not been involved in the procurement of textbooks and instead left the responsibility of textbook acquisition on educators and their already stressed budget, which contributed to the current lack of curriculum and educational materials in the school.

The final code associated with the subtheme of lack of materials was dans le cahier (CAHIER), an in vivo code that described the use of handwritten notebooks as surrogate textbooks. When asked how they responded to the issue of limited access to curriculum materials and textbooks, educators in all three sites explained that they required students to copy content from textbooks into notebooks, including maps, charts, timelines, and experimental procedures. One teacher complained that this forced him to work additional hours, stating “Je dois venir à l'école les soirs soit le dimanche pour dessiner les cartes ou écrire des passages au le tableau (I have to come to the school in the evenings or on Sundays to draw complex maps or write passages on the board)” (Interview, ST:1:T4, May 28, 2014). The director of CI:2 explained that the practice was problematic because students had limited time to copy information before the next teacher erased the board and because students sometimes copied notes incorrectly. He shared a strategy to avoid the issue: “quand les élèves prennent des notes, je dois circuler dans la classe pour assurer qu’ils ont bien écrit (when the students are taking notes, I walk around the
class to make sure that they have written them down correctly)” (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). The use of handwritten notebooks represented a local response to the larger issue of limited access to educational materials, which emanated from oversights in educational policy as well as the inability of the government to meet the needs of schools. Educators showcased their ability to adapt to meet local constraints while also showing their commitment to offering the highest quality education possible given the material realities in their schools.

**National, Regional, and Local Examinations**

Educational assessments and examinations were another common issue identified by educators and community members in interviews and focus groups. The code for examinations and assessments (EXAM) appeared a total of 56 times throughout interview, focus group, observation, and document data. In order to better reflect the nuances of the concept, I created three subcodes to represent the three levels at which examinations are developed: local, regional, and national (LOC-EVAL, REGEX, and NATEX). I included the subtheme of examinations in the larger theme of curriculum because participants described exams as an important factor that contributed to curriculum decision-making and pedagogical practices.

The Handbook of Togolese Education Policy offered limited descriptions of the exam structure in Togolese education, though it did indicate that at the end of each schooling cycle, students are required to pass a national examination before being awarded their diploma and being permitted to continue the next level of schooling (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.13, see also Table 5.7). Table 5.7 shows the four national exams that signify the completion of the three general education cycles. Interestingly, the exams used in Togo mirror those in the French education system, which highlighted the role of international and post-colonial influences in educational policy-making.
Table 5.7

*Education cycles and national examinations (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.13)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schooling Cycle</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Examination</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Cours Moyen 2 (CM2)</td>
<td>Certificat d'Étude du Premier Degré</td>
<td>CEPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>Troisième (3eme)</td>
<td>Brevet d'études du premier cycle</td>
<td>BEPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School 1</td>
<td>Première</td>
<td>Baccalauréat I</td>
<td>BAC I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School 2</td>
<td>Terminale</td>
<td>Baccalauréat II</td>
<td>BAC II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During my interview at the Ministry of Education, the official explained that the central purpose of the examinations was to ensure that all students received “la même éducation (the same education)” regardless of whether they attended school in the north or south, urban or rural settings, or private or public (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). His comments clearly showed that national exams were used as a device to control curriculum in Togolese schools. Teachers were required to cover the material included in the “official program” (see previous section, Tables 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6 and Appendix B(4)) to prepare students to pass nationally standardized examinations, meaning that students in all regions of the country took the same test. Interview data collected at national and local-levels indicated that the four nationally standardized examinations covered curriculum content in each of the subject areas (History-Geography, French, Sciences, etc) (Interview, MN:1:O1, 16, May 2014; Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014). While I was unable to collect data on examinations at the primary or lycee-levels, I did conduct observations of regional and national BEPC examinations and purchased booklets containing sample questions pulled from past BEPC examinations (BEPC au Togo, 2013). These findings confirmed participant comments by showing that the same exams were administered in schools across the nation and that they covered content in all of the six subject areas.
Because the nationally standardized exams were an important indicator of educational equality, the MOE treated exams with extreme care. They ensured that the committees responsible for writing exam questions used curriculum standards and state-approved textbooks while preparing questions. Additionally, the MOE took protective measures to ensure that questions were not leaked to educators, community members, or students. While educators and Ministry officials had been accused of stealing and selling exam questions to students and schools in the past, my interview participant at the MOE told me that the punitive measures enforced by the MOE had been effective in reducing academic dishonesty on nationally normed examinations (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). The issue of discipline and cheating will be discussed in greater detail later in this section.

Classroom observations at the local level indicated the significant role of national examinations in Togolese educational experiences. The BEPC examination was administered during my fieldwork, which afforded me the opportunity to observe students preparing for and taking the exam. I also observed the proclamation of BEPC results several weeks later. During observations in CI:2, I witnessed a teacher cover practice questions from past examinations to prepare students for the format of the BEPC (see Appendix B(3) for example questions). Throughout the sessions, he referred to the notebooks of students, explaining that they contained the information needed to pass the national exam (Field notes, May 30, 2014). This implied that throughout the school year, curriculum and instruction had been designed to prepare students for the BEPC exam. It illustrated the influence that high stakes examinations have on curriculum content, which Madaus and Kelleghan (1992) documented in their review of research on examinations and evaluations.
During focus groups and individual interviews, educators explained the impact that the BEPC examination had on curriculum decision-making and pedagogical practices. In ST:1, teachers said that they felt pressure to cover all of the material included in the official program because it may appear on the exam. This limited their ability to make local modifications to the curriculum that would increase its relevancy to student life experiences (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014). One teacher explained the message that high stakes exams sent to students,

"L'examen peut décourager les élèves. On ne peut pas couvrir tout le programme au cours de l'année, mais quelque chose peut arriver à l'examen et les élèves échouent parce qu'ils ne le comprennent pas (The exam can discourage students. We cannot cover all the material during the school year, but any topic can show up on the exam and the students will fail because they do not understand it) (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014)

The significance assigned to these high-stakes exams not only limited the agency of teachers to design and implement locally relevant curriculum, but also limited students’ freedom to explore topics of interest because they needed to move quickly through the curriculum in order to cover all potential exam topics.

In addition to observing classes dedicated to reviewing material to prepare students for national exams, I also gathered documents that contained questions from past BEPC exams on History-Geography and Life Sciences (SVT) (see Appendix B(3)). My informal content analysis of these materials showed that curriculum standards were closely tied to exam questions. For example, the History-Geography standard mentioned above (Standard: 3.3: WWI and WWII–Describe causes and consequences in Europe, Africa, and on the UN) and information contained in the corresponding sections of the state-approved textbook were required to correctly answer BEPC exam questions. For example, the 1998 BEPC exam asked:

4. Après la première guerre mondiale, une institution Internationale a été créée pour garantir la paix mondiale. Quelle est cette institution? A-t-elle atteint son objectif? Justifie ta réponse
(4. After the WWI, an international institution was established to guarantee world peace. What was this institution? Did it reach its goals? Justify your response) (BEPC au Togo, 2013, p.9).

Similarly the BEPC in 2013 asked:


(3. How did Africa support Europe during the Second World War? 4. Give the name of the organization for world peace created after the Second World War. In your opinion, is the organization still effective today? Justify your response) (BEPC au Togo, 2013, p.20).

These questions directly addressed topics identified in national curriculum standards (see example content standard in previous paragraph, Table 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, and Appendix B(4)) and reflected content in state-approved textbooks. In order to respond correctly to these prompts, students would need to have an understanding of the causes and consequences of WWI and WWII. Sample answers—provided in the appendix of the sample exam question document—contained information (names, dates, events, etc.) that could be found in the textbook (BEPC au Togo, 2013, p.37, 62). The past exam questions confirmed comments from educators describing the pressure they felt to cover all of the content standards included in the “official program” in order to prepare students for the exam. My informal content analysis of exam questions also illustrated the wide variety of potential topics that could be included on the BEPC, which suggested that teachers were limited in their ability to make modifications to or deviations from the national curriculum over the course of the school year to make educational experiences more relevant in the realities in the local context.

Additionally, community members described national examinations as an important indicator of educational quality. Exam results showed that ST:1 had the highest BEPC passing rates of the three schools, though in 2006, 2011, and 2014, CI:2 outperformed ST:1. The
comparison of BEPC passing rates, however, must be interpreted carefully given that the number of students taking the exam varied dramatically between schools (45 students in ST:1 versus 9 in CI:1 in 2014). Additionally, exam records in CI:1 could only be collected as far back as 2010 and national averages could only be found for 2013 and 2014, which further limited the ability to compare schools. Figure 5.17 shows the BEPC passing percentages in each school.

![BEPC passing rates chart](chart.png)

*Figure 5.17. BEPC passing rates in the three sites and national averages from 2013 and 2014.*

Regardless of the need for caution when comparing passing rates between sites, during interviews both educators and community members said that they viewed passing rates as a reflection of educational quality. APE members in CI:1 and CI:2 indicated that they used exam results as means of educational accountability in their community. When students did not perform well on the exams, the APE said that they would call a meeting with the teachers to investigate the reasons for the low passing rates in an effort to improve educational experiences and exam results for future students. Community members also noted that they used exam results when making decisions about staffing and funding the schools. In some instances, they used student performance on national exams as an indicator of the effectiveness of teachers (Focus
One member of the APE in CI:2 said that in some cases students were at fault for low scores. In these cases, members of the APE organized community interventions with students and their parents to stress the importance of education (Focus Group, CI:2:FG2(4), June 19, 2014). These examples illustrated the important role that national examinations played—not only for teachers—but also for students and community members. The BEPC examination was high stakes for students from a human capital perspective because it was a gatekeeper for educational and economic opportunities. However, because community members used the exam as a means for teacher accountability, the results had high stakes for educators as well.

While the BEPC exam assessed students at the end of the CEG cycle, end of year exams organized at the regional level assessed students in the les classes des passages (passing classes, 6eme through 4eme). Educators in CI:2 explained the history of these exams during a focus group interview. Prior to the 1990s regional inspections were responsible for developing and administering regional exams for the les classes des passages, however, in the mid-1990s the policy changed and individual schools were given the authority to develop end-of-year exams for 6eme through 4eme. This lasted until the 2010-2011 school year, when the MOE reassigned regional examinations to the regional inspections. One teacher informed me that this was because “c certains enseignants ont enseigné seulement une ou deux chapitre par année et les élèves qui ne comprenaient rien, ils réussiraient (some teachers only covered one or two chapters per year and students who knew nothing, they would pass the class) (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1(5), June 11, 2014). I was unable to procure any document that described this change in policy.

Observations in ST:1 and CI:2 confirmed regional control over the development and administration of end of year examinations in les classes des passages. In ST:1, I observed
teachers holding review sessions with students the week prior to the regional exams. Similar to my observations in CI:2 prior to the BEPC, teachers in ST:1 referred to student notebooks as important study tools given that students did not have access to textbooks. The notebooks contained the information needed to pass the exam, which suggested that teachers had closely followed the curriculum guidelines presented in state standards and state-approved textbooks (Field notes, May 27, 2014). Regional Educational Offices provided photocopies of examination questions to ST:1, while CI schools had to pay a small fee to purchase the exams (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). The regional exams took place between May 27 and May 30, 2014. Figure 5.18 shows the examination schedule for the students in 6eme in ST:1, which ran from Tuesday to Friday and included examinations in two or three subjects per day.

![Figure 5.18. Regional exam schedule in SI1.](image)

Educators and community members viewed the regional examinations as an important indicator of student achievement and educational quality, though they were less concerned with
the results of regional exams than the BEPC. Educators explained that the regional exams were an important tool in ensuring quality education across both CI and state-sponsored schools because they required teachers to abide by the same set of curriculum standards (see Tables 5.5, Table 5.6) (Interview, CI:1:2, June 2, 2014). The regional examinations resulted in curriculum standardization across the region because all students were required to take the same tests, which covered the same material and students were required to pass them to get into the next grade of the schooling cycle. The standardization of these exams at the regional-level decreased teacher agency to modify curriculum because they were required to cover the material included on the exam to ensure that students would pass. The exams also showed that the curriculum decision-making process was centralized at both national and regional levels, with little meaningful agency for local-level actors to create examinations. From the global-to-local perspective, it appeared to me that the use of standardized examinations was a reflection of international trends towards rigorous testing and the standardization of educational assessments.

Interestingly, local teachers were responsible for grading regional exams. One teacher informed me that the regional inspection would conduct surprise site visits to oversee teacher grading in an effort to ensure that all exams were being held to the same set of standards and accountability. Alternatively, the regional inspection would collect graded exams from local schools to review in their offices in Badu. Proudly, a teacher in CI:1 told me that “on n'a pas rejeté une correction jusqu'à aujourd'hui (they have not rejected a graded exam to date)” (Interview, CI:1:2, June 2, 2014).

The Handbook of Togolese Education Policy made brief mention of national and regional examinations, but did not discuss of local level examination policies (Précis Scolaires, 1983). The Practical Guide for Teaching, however, explained that evaluations at the local-level were
necessary for “l’amélioration des performances de l’apprenti (improving the academic performance of learners)” (Guide Pratique, 2012, p.6). As such, educators were able to decide how to assess students at local levels. However, during interviews and focus groups, educators informed me that they followed the format and style of exam questions used on regional and national exams to conduct assessments of student learning. They said this was practical because it prepared students for the types of questions they were likely to receive on high(er) stakes exams. Teachers from all three schools said that they reused exam questions from previous regional (or national) exams as local evaluations. For example, one teacher said, “Je donne de petites interrogations à la fin de la classe, mais un ou deux fois par semestre, on fait un devoir formel, c’est comme un examen (I give small quizzes at the end of each class, but once or twice a semester the whole school holds formal homework, which is like a practice exam)” (Interview, ST:1:T4, May 28, 2014). Another teacher explained why they rarely conducted local assessments, “Il y a trop des élèves. La correction prend trop de temps (There are too many students. It takes too long to grade)” (Interview, ST:1:T3, May 28, 2014). These comments made it clear that teachers did not regularly use local evaluations, but instead relied on the regionally and nationally standardized exams to measure student achievement. This suggested that the majority of decisions regarding student evaluation and assessment were made at national and regional levels, rather than local levels.

In summary, educators at local levels had little control over the testing process, which was one of the characteristics of standardized, high stakes exams identified by Madaus and Kelleghan (1992). National and regional level documents and interviews and observations from the Akebou Prefecture confirmed that CI schools in Togo followed examination policies and
practices set by the MOE, a key characteristic documented by Gbogbotchi et al (2000) and Marchand (2000).

**Oversight from the Regional Inspection**

Oversight from regional inspectors surfaced as an important factor that impacted educational experiences in the Akebou Prefecture. Educators described their perspectives on inspector visits to school sites, tasks assigned to directors by the regional inspections, and documents provided to local schools by the regional inspection. I drew these findings from three codes that emerged in interview, focus group, document, and observation data: inspection visits (VISIT), inspection tasks (INSPECT-$*$), and inspection documents (INSPECT-DOC). Educators in all three of the schools identified the regional inspection as their immediate superior in the hierarchy of Togolese education and an important actor in transmitting curriculum policies to local schools. As such, the relationship between local level educators and regional inspectors was of key importance to my study and appeared a total of 48 times in the data.

According to Togolese educational policy, regional inspections were created to ensure that local schools were implementing MOE policies appropriately while also providing a quality education to Togolese students. Policy stipulated that each of the regional inspections should be assigned four or five inspectors, one for each of the subject areas (Math, Physical and Life Sciences, French, History-Geography, and English), stating:

\[
\text{les inspecteurs de l'enseignement des deuxième et troisième degrés dont les attributions dans le domaine pédagogique, administrative, et social}
\]

(the inspectors for CEG and Lycee are to intervene in the pedagogical, administrative, and social domains) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.47).

One of the important tasks assigned to the regional inspections was to conduct site visits in local schools to observe classes and provide pedagogical advice. The Handbook of Togolese Education Policy outlined three common activities of the regional inspection:
1. Visit and observe teachers in their classes and give them pedagogical advice. 2. Organize pedagogical conferences and trainings for teachers. 3. Lead and supervise retraining and development (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.47).

An official at the MOE expanded on the purposes of these visits stating “sans visites de sites, les directeurs peuvent faire ce qu'ils veulent (without site visits, directors will do what they want)” (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). He also explained that the MOE had recently redrawn the areas of jurisdiction for regional inspections in an attempt to make it easier for inspectors to conduct site visits. While policy documents did not specify a precise number of visits per year (see above), a former inspector informed me during an informal conversation that, in order to achieve their overarching goal of ensuring a quality education, an inspector from each subject matter would need to conduct at least one site visit per year to each of the schools in the region (Field notes, May 16, 2014). However, despite policy obligations, it was difficult for inspectors to achieve their goal because of the poor condition of road and poorly maintained vehicles.

At the local level, educators in Akebou schools identified a gap between the policies and practices of regional inspections. Interviews indicated that the regional inspection did not regularly conduct site visits in the Akebou Prefecture. Educators at the ST:1 claimed that it was rare to get more than a single visit per year from one subject matter specialist at the regional inspection. However, one teacher informed me that they had not received any visits from the inspection in 2014 (Interview, ST:1:T1, May 28, 2014). Another teacher compared his experiences working as a teacher near Kpalimé (100km northwest of Lomé) and in the Akebou Prefecture, stating, “Il y a une grande différence entre Kpalimé et ici. Auparavant, on avait deux ou trois visites par an (There is a big difference between Kpalimé and here. Before, we had two or three visits per year)” (Interview, ST:1:T3, May 28, 2014). Similarly, teachers in CI schools
complained that inspection visits were too rare. In CI:1 the director explained that his last interaction with a regional inspector did not include any classroom observation, but rather required the director to travel to ST:1 with the cahiers des textes so the inspector could review the notebooks and ensure that teachers were following the official program. This, he said, did not meet the goals and purposes of the regional inspection as presented in policy documents (see policy quoted above) (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). Finally, during a focus group interview in CI:2, teachers confirmed that inspection visits were “trop rare (too rare)” and said that they would like to receive more pedagogical advice in the future (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). Thus, data collected from interviews at the local level illustrated a breakdown between policies and practices in regards to regional inspection visits.

Educational policy stipulated that, in addition to providing pedagogical oversight, the regional inspection was required to fulfill administrative duties (see quote above), as well as “la création et la construction d’écoles publique et a l’ouverture d’écoles privées (the construction of public schools and the regulation of private and community-based schools)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.48). In order to fulfill these duties, the regional inspection required CI schools to complete paper work and pay fees to be acknowledged (though not supported) by the state. The forms included lists of the names and contact information for all school personnel and community officials as well as enrollment lists with student information. The director of CI:1 complained that these forms were confusing and overly complicated. He expressed frustration with the policy, stating, “Je les remplir chaque année d’être reconnu par l’Etat. On sait comment nous souffrons, mais ils ne font rien pour nous aider (I fill them (the forms) out each year to be acknowledged by the state. They know how we suffer, but they do nothing to help)” (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). This comment illustrated the dichotomy between policies and practices
regarding the role of regional inspectors. The regional inspection was fulfilling the duties required in educational policy by collecting these forms from CI schools. However, educators at local levels were unaware of the purpose of these forms, thereby showing poor communication between regional and local levels on the purposes of particular policies or tasks.

Furthermore, educational policy required regional inspections to “préside les commissions d’examens de son ressort (preside over examinations)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.48), which gave them responsibility to collect fees from CI schools to cover the costs of paperwork processing, exam question distribution, and grading. However, educators at the local level resented the fees because CI school budgets strained to pay teacher salaries. Educators in CI:2 claimed that they paid the regional inspection 15,000 FCFA per year to participate in regional and national exams. One teacher said, “Nous donnons de l'argent à l'État, mais normalement c'est l'état qui doit nous donner de l'argent (We send money to the state, but normally, it should be the state that sends us money)” (Interview, CI:2:T2, June 11, 2014).

Again, this illustrated a disconnect between the purpose of educational policies and local level interpretations of those policies.

Finally, while policy dictated that the MOE would provide educational materials to the best of their ability (see previous subsection on Lack of Materials), an analysis of policies and practices showed that regional inspections played an important role in providing curriculum documents to local schools. The Practical Guide for Teaching—which in and of itself was a document published and provided by the regional inspection—identified a lack of educational materials as a key issue in the Akebou and Wawa Prefectures. The guide indicated that the regional inspection was a potential source for procuring low-cost, locally produced educational documents, stating “en cas de difficulté, solliciter l'aide de personnes ressources (in case of
difficulty, solicit the aid of resource personnel)” (Guide Pratique, 2012, p. 39). Interviews and observations confirmed that Akebou schools used documents provided by the regional inspection. The French and English teacher in CI:1 used photocopied readers that included key passages from the state-approved textbook because they were more affordable and available than textbooks. Figure 5.19 shows an example of a locally produced textbook.

![Figure 5.19. Textbooks produced by the regional inspection and sold to teachers in CI:1.](image)

Thus, the regional inspection played an important role in the educational experiences of Akebou schools. While teachers expressed frustration with fees, they valued the site visits, pedagogical advice, and educational documents provided by their regional inspectors.

**Discipline and Cheating**

Finally, I included codes that represented participant comments on discipline and cheating in the curriculum theme because they constituted an important component of the “experiences learners have under the guidance of the school” (Marsh & Willis, 2007, p.11). As noted earlier, the code for discipline (DISCI) was constructed from codes referring to both discipline and respect for teachers and appeared 26 times across the four major data types. While
the code for cheating (CHEAT) appeared only three times in the data, I separated it from the larger code for discipline because participants addressed it as a nation-wide issue rather than as an issue specific to Akebou schools.

The issue of discipline surfaced in both policy documents and interview data. The Handbook of Togolese Education Policy offered several suggested rules and regulations for maintaining discipline in school setting, including “les entrées ou sorties…sans bruit ni bousculade (quiet transitions between classes)”, “respect et obéissance non seulement a son maître mais a tout le personnel de l’établissement (respect and obedience for teachers and fellow classmates)”, a “aucun objet pointu ou tranchant (strict ban on sharp objects in the classroom)”, and several other school rules common in international educational practices (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.20). The policy also contained suggested punishments for inappropriate student behavior, which included “la réprimande (verbal reprimands)”, “la retenue après la classe sous la surveillance du maître (after school detention), “les mauvais points (subtraction of points)”, and “l’exclusion temporaire (suspensions)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.31). Interestingly, the document did not specifically sanction nor prohibit corporal punishment; an ambiguity in policy that caused confusion among educators in interviews and diverse patterns in practices observed during fieldwork.

At local levels, both educators and community members identified student discipline as a key factor in education. While the director of ST:1 claimed that there were no major discipline issues in his school, during a focus group with teachers, several participants identified student discipline and the lack of respect for teachers as a main issue in their school (ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014; ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014). As mentioned in the subsection on national development in development thematic finding, the context surrounding the signal arose as a discipline issue when
teachers described how the students refused to wear the conch necklace and failed to pay the fee after being caught speaking local language on school grounds. During an interview, the director expressed concern for ineffective discipline policies. He explained that students did not respect the new forms of punishment that have been implemented after the banning of corporal punishment (i.e. hitting students on the hand or buttocks with wooden sticks, which was common practice during my Peace Corps service from 2008-2010). According to the director in CI:2, the Togolese government has recently attempted to reduce corporal punishment in schools, which was common despite the clear ban on the practice, which stated “le châtiment corporel est interdit (corporal punishment is prohibited)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.23). A teacher in CI:2 explained that he attended a teacher training that included sessions on “les types de punitions à donner aux élèves (the types of punishments to give to students)” (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 11, 2014). Movements towards alternative forms of punishment reflected Anderson-Levitt’s (2003) observation that the homogenization of educational policies can be seen in the increasing similarity of discipline policies and practices across international contexts.

However, as these recent reforms were translated from policy into practice, localized interpretations of policy occurred at the school sites. For example, in ST:1 I observed two male students being punished for leaving school grounds without permission during the 25 minutes recess between 9:45 and 10:10am. The director had the boys kneel with their knees on exposed rocks in a sunny area of the courtyard for the duration of the recess (Field notes, May 26, 2014). While this practice did not violate the nation-wide ban on hitting students (see policy quote in preceding paragraph), it was clearly a form of corporal punishment intended to inflict physical pain on the students. It represented a local modification to national policy designed to address the concern that non-corporal punishment techniques were ineffective because students had been
conditioned to expect physical forms of punishment. While I was unable to gather observation data on discipline practices in CI:1, I observed that teachers in CI:2 used TM hours as a form of punishment and students who disrupted class were assigned to work additional hours of TM (Field notes, June 10, 2015; June 17, 2014). This was an example of what Anderson-Levitt (2003) called creolization of educational policy as national level policies are translated into practices that reflected the realities of the local context.

Community members in all three of the school sites identified student discipline as an important educational issue. One key role of APE organizations was to facilitate and mitigate problems between students, parents, and teachers. The APE in ST:1 informed me discipline issues and punishment practices were among the most common causes for problems between the community and the school (ST:1:FG1, May 27, 2014). Surprisingly, however, many of the parent complaints regarding discipline suggested that teachers were too lenient with their children. The APE in CI:2 explained that, rather than discipline their children themselves, many parents relied on the school to instill values of hard work, determination, and discipline. Then, when students acted out in the home, parents blamed the school for not being strict enough with students. One member of the APE offered his explanation for this confusion of roles, stating “C’est parce que les parents ils ne sont pas fréquentés l’école non, ils ne comprennent pas le rôle de l’éducation (it is because parents are uneducated themselves that they do not understand the role of education)” (Focus Group, CI:1:FG2(4), June 19, 2014). This example illustrated a gap in policies and practices as well as a misunderstanding of the role of schooling in society. While the Togolese government attempted to reform discipline policies to meet international norms by banning corporal punishment, educators at local levels were forced to make modifications that could effectively maintain discipline among students habituated with corporal punishment, while also
meeting the new national policy banning corporal punishment. Simultaneously, educators received backlash from the community for not being strict enough with students. As such, educators were forced to implement non-uniform, localized disciplinary practices.

While it was related to discipline, participants described the issue of cheating (CHEAT) as a more widespread issue, facing schools across the nation, rather than describing it as an issue specific to the local context of the Akebou Prefecture. National concern for the issue of cheating first arose during an interview at the Ministry of Education. Though I was unable to locate specific policies describing the MOE’s role in instances of cheating, the official explained that the MOE was responsible for the development and enforcement of academic honesty and anti-cheating policies to ensure that students received a fair and equal education (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). He recounted several stories of individuals—some of whom had ties to the Ministry of Education—that had been caught helping “les élèves à tricher aux examens (students cheat on exams)” (Interview, MN:1:O1, May 16, 2014). Cheating, he explained, was taken very seriously and those convicted of providing students questions or answers during national exams were sentenced to prison. He acknowledged that cheating was a ubiquitous issue in education, citing historical and international examples of cheating, including the alleged cheating scandal in Atlanta Public Schools in 2011. His comments on American education illustrated the increasing interconnectedness of educational policies and practices resulting from improved access to communication technologies, mass media, and larger trends of globalization (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Wiseman & Baker, 2005).

Educators at the local level identified the issue of cheating as a key factor in their schools. During individual interviews in ST:1, one teacher mentioned that cheating was one of the causes for low passing rates on BEPC examinations. Instead of learning material, some
students copied answers from classmates to pass local and regional exams. However, stricter oversight from exam proctors during national examinations prevented them from cheating on the BEPC, thus resulting in inflated failure rates at the terminal grade (Interview, ST:1:T1, May 28, 2014). Interestingly, during a focus group with teachers, one participant suggested that widespread cheating was a product of an overly compressed curriculum. As mentioned above (code: VASTE), with too many curriculum standards to cover in an academic year, many teachers were unable it to cover the required material. Students who had not completed the required topics, he explained, were more likely to cheat on exams to make up for the missed content, sometimes with the assistance of their teacher (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May, 27, 2014). These comments illustrated the connection between international and local contexts because cheating is an issue that surfaces in educational programs around the globe. It also indicated that there is a relationship between curriculum content and student behavior. Overly ambitious curriculum programs and high stakes examinations contributed to the practice of cheating on examinations. The coded findings reflect, to a degree, warnings against the widespread use of high stakes testing issued by Poppham (2001), who connected testing with deviant behaviors like cheating.

In summary, in this section I described and analyzed the 18 codes that comprised the curriculum thematic finding, which was the largest finding in my study. Through an investigation into the five subthemes of (ir)relevancy and local modification, lack of materials, exams and discipline, the thematic finding of curriculum provided insight into my first, third, and fourth research questions.
**Space/Context: Thematic Finding and Overarching Threads**

I addressed Research Questions Two and Three in the fourth and final major theme of my findings by offering insight into the impact that setting and context had on educational goals and objectives while also connecting environmental/spatial contexts with key educational issues in Akebou schools. Like the other themes, I used interview, focus group, observation, and some document data collected at national and local-levels to construct the theme and report on the findings. The theme addressed both the physical environment surrounding education (rural isolation, lack of infrastructure, school buildings) as well as the personal relationships that formed the social context of education (parent-teacher relationships, community action/apathy, ethnic solidarity). It was not surprising that the physical and social environments surrounding schooling would surface as a theme in my study given the rural isolation and ethnic homogeneity of the Akebou Prefecture. While my previous descriptions of each site addressed issues of space and context, they drew primarily from observation data. This section will address how participants described the realities of local setting and the impact that environmental contexts (both physical and social) had on educational experiences. Additionally, there were some connections between the space/context theme and other thematic findings of my study. For example, the amount of funding that schools received often impacted the quality of construction materials used to build and maintain school facilities. Space/context also influenced the (ir)relevancy of curriculum content, which was addressed in the *curriculum* thematic finding.

I constructed the space/context thematic finding from 13 individual codes that referred specifically to the physical and social environments of the Akebou Prefecture. In addition to the code for references to space/context, which appeared 12 times across the interview, focus group,
observation, and document data, there were seven code groupings that directly related to the theme. They included:

1. Language (26) and Ethnicity (19)
2. Rural isolation (17), (Lack of) Infrastructure (18)
3. Access to Education (14)
4. Community Action (26), Community Apathy (8)
5. Parent-Student Relationships (15), Parent-Teacher Relationships (23)
6. Buildings (26), Maintenance (8)
7. Health and Sanitation (8)

Figure 5.20 shows how these seven code groupings contributed to the central theme. Codes were grouped together based on interrelationship despite representing distinct concepts. For example, while language and ethnicity are linked because most members of a particular ethnic group often speak the same language, participants and documents presented the two issues as distinctive factors impacting education, which explained my decision to assign a different code to each topic. Similarly, educators cited the relationships between parents and students as a key issue that impacted students’ motivation. The relationships between parents and teachers were directly related to student-parent relationships, though educators and community members described them in different terms, which resulted in the creation of a separate code. Finally, codes were grouped also by the level at which they occurred. Issues of language, ethnicity, rural isolation, infrastructure, and access were all characteristics of the larger regional-level, including the Akebou and Wawa Prefectures. Community action, apathy, and social relationships were centered at the community level. Codes related to buildings, maintenance, and health issues, however, were most directly related to the school-level context. As such, the code groupings were then organized into regional, community, and school level categories.
This theme contained 13 codes that occurred a total of 208 times throughout the data, representing 20% of the total 1028 code occurrences in the data.

**Space/Context**

The space/context code (CONTEXT)—which referred specifically to the setting/context of the Akebou Prefecture—appeared 12 times in the interview and focus group data, while document data did not directly reference the Akebou context. The code included references to the local context that could not be categorized in the other codes included in the theme (i.e. Rural isolation, language, ethnicity, etc.). As such, data coded as space/context included a diverse range of topics, ranging from the history of the school to the personal backgrounds of teacher to
the socioeconomic and political climate surrounding education. In this section, I will explore general expressions of the context of education in the Akebou Prefecture.

As presented in the MOE site description and curriculum thematic finding (see p.146, and p.300), policy documents discussed the importance of curriculum standards and educational experiences that strengthened the national identity of Togolese citizens while also providing them with the knowledge and skills needed to participate in democratic society (Précis Scolaires, 1983, See also p.146). However, as I showed in the curriculum thematic finding, curriculum standards and textbooks did not mention Akebou issues and only occasionally offered information on issues specific to the Togolese context (L’Afrique et le monde 3eme, 1995; Science Physiques 3eme, 1996; Histo-Geo Syllabus, n.d, p.51; Sciences Physique Syllabus, n.d.). As such, a major finding from my analysis of data collected from policy documents suggested that the policy perspective offered little consideration of the local context or setting in the curriculum given that the code for CONTEXT did not appear in the data set. Additionally, policy documents did not differentiate between educational policies and practices in the north and south (cultural differences) or in rural and urban schools (physical differences), but rather implemented universal policies across Togo. However, participants at the local-level described the realities of working in the Akebou context in detailed and nuanced language.

The code for context first appeared when educators and community members described the history of their local school. By providing information on the historical context, participants offered insight into their perspectives on the goals and purposes of education. For example, when the director of CI:1 listed the names and dates of past directors of the school, he described the dedication of community members who helped to recruit new directors and teachers to fill vacant positions and assisted to ensure a degree of continuity as school records were passed from one
set of administrators to another (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). While the documents I collected in CI:1 (enrollment records, budgets, curriculum materials, and BEPC passing rates) were incomplete and unorganized, it is important to note the self-reliant efforts made by community members to meet the educational needs of their children (Field notes, June 3, 2014). Furthermore, teachers in CI:1 and CI:2 explained that prior to the establishment of the school, there were no opportunities for educational advancement in the village (Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). As discussed earlier, the goals and purposes of education—which included national, economic, and personal development—were rooted in considerations of the local setting (See MOE Site Description, pp.146-148; and Development Theme, p.267). Community members established CI schools to create opportunities for development in a context/setting where those opportunities did not previously exist (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1, June 3, 2014; Focus Group, CI:2:FG2, June 19, 2014).

The code for context/setting also surfaced when educators described their personal histories, which played an important role in their professional lives. For example, one of the science teachers in ST:1 explained that his decision to become a teacher was influenced by the contextual factors surrounding his own education and career trajectory. Without money to continue his studies at the University of Lomé, he traveled back to his home village in the Akebou Prefecture to reduce the cost of living and work as a farmer. However, he informed me that soon after his arrival, he was contacted by the APE in ST:1 and asked to be a teacher. Had it not been for the economic and social factors influenced his decision to return to the Akebou Prefecture, he “ne devrait pas devenir un enseignant (would never have become a teacher)” (Interview, ST:1:T1, May 28, 2014). Likewise, teachers in CI:1 and CI:2 who had dropped out of
college due to a lack of financial support explained the influence of contextual factors on their decision to become teachers, telling similar stories (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014).

The third and final major expression of the space/context code appeared when participants described the socioeconomic and sociopolitical contexts surrounding education at national and international levels. During focus group interviews with teachers in ST:1 and CI:2, participants connected economic stagnation in Togo and the increasing popularity of migrant labor with curricular irrelevancy and limited job opportunities in the Akebou Prefecture. While these comments reflected the individual codes of economic development (ECON-DEV), migrant labor (MIGLAB), and irrelevancy (IRREV), when participants discussed these codes as a single issue impacting education, the data was coded as CONTEXT. For example, the English teacher in ST:1 explained that students were showing more interest in his class because of the socioeconomic conditions surrounding schooling in the Akebou Prefecture. Students’ interest in English education grew as they observed increasing numbers of young Akebou migrant laborers return from English speaking countries (Nigeria and Ghana) with motorcycles, televisions, construction materials, and other items with strong symbolic value. This interest was, in part, sparked by the stories of former migrant laborers who explained that the proprietors that hired them often tricked or mislead workers who did not understand the English language, thus stressing the importance of English classes (Interview, ST:1:T5, May 28, 2014; Field notes, June 6, 2014). Ultimately, the socioeconomic contexts in Togo and the larger West African region impacted the behaviors and interests of students in Akebou schools. In this instance, unfortunately, student interest in English education was based on short term economic goals that necessitated dropping out of school altogether, rather than long term goals of continuing
education through lycee and university, which often seemed out of reach to Togolese students due to economic contexts and the limited availability of job opportunities.

Furthermore, teachers in CI:2 explained how economic and political contexts impacted their work as educators in the Akebou Prefecture. During a focus group interview, one teacher argued that the Togolese government did not sufficiently value agricultural work or other forms of manual labor. Without governmentally sponsored programs or subsidies to strengthen economic prospects in manual labor markets, young workers were inclined to travel to neighboring countries where they could earn a salary five or six times higher than was possible in Togo, which contributed to the spike in dropout rates in Akebou schools. The teacher added that the same phenomenon could be observed on a smaller scale within Togolese borders. People living in the northern regions of Togo, he explained, had less access to arable land and therefore could not rely on subsistence farming. Without farming to fall back on, students in the north found other ways to “gagner leur vie (make a living)” be it through education, migration, or other methods (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). However, students in the Akebou Prefecture had the ability “de trouver la vie chez son papa (make a living on one’s father’s land)”, which made the consequences of dropping out of school appear less severe (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2104). These comments illustrated how the economic context at international and national-levels impacted educational experiences in the Akebou Prefecture and influenced the behaviors of students. In a globalized economy, the temptation of migrant labor was strong enough to pull some students away from education and into the international labor market. Through the lens of human capital theory, these findings illustrated to me the importance of connecting educational and economic contexts to facilitate the transition from schooling into the workforce (Dzvimbo, 2003). Oketch (2006) argued that human capital development was linked
to economic growth in many African countries, though in the case of Togo it was clear that the appeal of migrant labor was reducing interest in education and increasing dropout rates, thereby limiting the ability to strengthen human capital and develop a strong economy.

The space/context code appeared 12 times in interview and focus group data and did not appear in document data. While it contained concepts also present in other codes in the study, it reflected distinctive combinations of those concepts, which ultimately described both the larger (inter)national contexts of education and the impact that personal history had on educational experiences in the Akebou Prefecture.

**Regional Level Contexts**

Codes representing educational contexts at the regional level included issues of language (LANG), ethnicity (ETH), rural isolation, (RURISO), infrastructure (INFRA), and access to schooling (ACCESS). These codes, which appeared in all four data sets, combined to illustrate how regional issues affected educational experiences in Akebou schools.

As mentioned earlier, French is the official administrative language of Togo and is therefore the official language of instruction in Togolese schools. The Handbook of Togolese Education identified national language proficiency as one of the central goals of education (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.9, See MOE Site Description in Chapter Four, p.148). In order to achieve this goal, the Practical Guide for Teaching (2012) suggested pedagogical strategies and disciplinary policies that could be used to ensure that students learned French and refrained from speaking in local languages. One such teaching strategy involved the implementation of “un pédagogie de la découverte (a pedagogy of discovery)” through the use of “un rapport de dialogue (dialogical learning)” (Guide Pratique, 2012, p.27). By recommending practices designed to create educational settings that encouraged students to engage in critical dialogue,
policies hoped to strengthen language skills while forming active and engaged citizens. Interestingly, these recommendations appropriated critical pedagogy strategies reminiscent of those proposed by Freire (1970), which illustrated the interconnectedness of educational policies and professional practices that are lent and borrowed across international borders (Phillips & Ochs, 2003). However, my observations revealed traditional classroom structures, where teachers were the gatekeepers of knowledge and information flowed unidirectionally from teacher to student with little room for dialogue, which provided an example of how policy ideals and professional practices set at the national level are not always reflected in local practices (Field notes, May 27, 2014; May 30, 2014; June 10, 2014).

Another policy used to enforce French language in schools was the placement of state-employed teachers in settings where they did not speak or understand the local language, thereby forcing the to communicate with students (and parents) in the national language. The Handbook of Togolese Policy stated, “le mouvement général du personnel de l'enseignement se fait par décision ministérielle (job placements are made by the Ministry of Education)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.63). Given the ethnic and linguistic diversity of Togo (CIA, 2014), teachers were rarely placed in a locality of their own ethnicity. I discuss language and ethnicity together in this section because they are closely related in West African contexts. Issues of language and ethnicity surfaced in educational policy documents in the context of developing a unified national identity and encouraging participation in democracy (See MOE Site Description in Chapter Four, p.146, and Development Thematic Finding in Chapter Five, p.267). Data collected during observations and interviews at the local level, however, presented language issues in a different context. Educators in SI1 viewed differences in language and ethnicity as a barrier,
while educators in CI:1 and CI:2 viewed their membership in Akebou ethnic and linguistic groups as beneficial to their work as teachers.

Educators in ST:1 described issues related to language and ethnicity as problematic. As discussed earlier (Discipline subtheme of Curriculum p.358), students rebelled against discipline policies aimed to outlaw the use of local languages in school settings, thereby undermining the authority of teachers and challenging the perception that French should be the primary language used in education. Additionally, during a focus group interview, educators explained that one of the primary reasons that students performed poorly in school was because they did not have the language skills needed to understand complex or abstract concepts (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014). CEG teachers blamed the poor language skills on lax language policies in primary schools. The educators at the two primary schools in ST:1 were ethnically Akebou, which allowed them to communicate with students in their native language. One CEG teacher explained that primary school teachers did adequately prepare students for CEG. Another asserted that students cheated on the CEPD exam because they lacked the language skills to understand the questions. He concluded, “l'enseignement maintenant n’est plus comme avant (teaching is no longer what it used to be)” (Interview, ST:1:T2, May 28, 2014). These perspectives highlighted a conflict between non-Akebou educators at the CEG level and Akebou educators at the primary level based on issues of language, which illustrated the connection between language and ethnicity. The findings from ST:1 illuminated the importance of language and ethnicity in relationships between students and teachers as well as between teachers and community members. Data from CI:1 and CI:2 provided contrasting perspectives on the issue.

In CI:1 and CI:2, educators viewed their ethnic and linguistic connections to students as an educative tool that they used to their advantage, though those connections sometimes created
the perception among students that teachers were unprofessional. The director in CI:1 explained that because he was from the village and therefore maintained out-of-school relationships with students and their families, students sometimes viewed him as an extended family member rather than an educational authority figure (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). He mentioned that teachers who were from villages outside of the immediate setting or ethnic group tended to be given a more respect by students, which resulted in students paying more attention in class, while “quand on est natif du village, les élèves ne s’intéressent pas (when one is a village native, the students are not as interested)” (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). Similarly, teachers in CI:2 noted that their ethnic identity sometimes undermined their authority as teachers (Interview, CI:2:T2, June 11, 2014; Interview, CI:2:T3, June 11, 2014). These findings resounded with conclusions from other studies of community-based schools that ethnic and linguistic identities of teachers reduced perceptions of professionalism in school settings (Gbogbotchi et al, 2000; Assiah & Luisoni, 2006).

While the shared ethnic and linguistic identities of teachers and students had some negative consequences, educators in CI:1 and CI:2 more often described issues of ethnicity and language in positive terms. In CI:1, participants explained that French was the primary language of instruction in their classes, but they occasionally used Akebou to explain complex concepts or to connect academic content to local contexts. The director in CI:1 said he used his knowledge of local history to connect classroom learning with local issues in order to make schooling more interesting to students. Naturally, he attributed his knowledge of local history to his ethnic identity and being a native of CI:1 (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). Similarly, during a focus group interview with teachers in CI:2, participants said that relationships between educators and community members were easier because of the shared ethnic and linguistic backgrounds (Focus
Finally, the director of CI:2 said that, while he taught primarily in French, he sometimes used Akebou to give encouragement or advice that could not easily be translated into French to students (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). These examples illustrated the ability for teachers to connect with students of the same ethnicity that was also observed by Miller-Grandvaux and Yoder (2002), Hoppers (2005), and Gbogbotchi et al (2000). Thus, I placed the issues of language and ethnicity at the regional level context. State-employed educators sent to the Akebou Prefecture often struggled with miscommunications and dysfunctional relationships with students and community members, while educators in CI schools—who were ethnically Akebou—enjoyed more symbiotic relationships with students and community members.

I also identified rural isolation and (lack of) infrastructure as regional level issues impacting the educational experiences of students and teachers. Educators and community members in all three sites shared similar perspectives on the issue of rural isolation. In ST:1 History-Geography teachers complained that the rural setting prevented them from obtaining up-to-date global news, which limited their ability to connect curriculum content with current affairs (Interview, ST:1:T2, May 28, 2014; Interview, ST:1:T4, May 28, 2014). Additionally, teachers in CI:1 and CI:2 cited isolation as a major reason why regional inspection offices did not conduct regular site visits to their schools (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014; Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). Finally, according the educators rural isolation impacted perceptions of the importance of education among students and community members. Because it was difficult to travel outside of the Akebou Prefecture, many people living in ST:1, CI:1, and CI:2 had not visited major cities like Atakpamé or Lomé. The lack of exposure to urban environments contributed to a misunderstanding of the importance of education. One teacher said, “ils ne
comprennent pas le but de l'éducation parce qu'ils ne comprennent pas ce qu'il peut faire pour les élèves dans la vie (they do not understand the goal of education because they do not know what education can do in life)” (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014). While rural isolation is not unique to the Akebou Prefecture, some in the scholarly literature suggested that community-based schools are more likely to be found in rural settings, which was reflected in the findings of my case study. (Bray, 2003; Marchand, 2000; Hoppers, 2005). Furthermore, some findings from the scholarly literature indicated that rural isolation and limited access to state-sponsored education were often the main reasons that communities established CI schools (Miller-Grandvaux & Yoder, 2002). Once CI schools were established, their isolation limited the ability of the government to oversee school operations and resulted in the continued classification of many schools as CI (Gbogbotchi et al, 2000). The rural setting of the CI schools in my study contributed to the lack of access to mass media, limited the frequency of visits from regional inspection officers, and limited access to information that promoted the importance of education.

I also identified the lack of infrastructure in the Akebou Prefecture as a key contextual issue impacting education. Teachers in CI:1 explained that the lack of transportation infrastructure in the Akebou Prefecture increased travel costs, which prevented them from attending workshops and teacher trainings held in Kougnohou or Badu (Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). Community members in CI:1 and CI:2 cited the lack of medical services available in village as an infrastructure factor that reduced the quality of life in the area (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1, June 3, 2014; Focus Group, CI:2:FG2, June 19, 2014). Finally, educators in SI1 claimed that limited access to technological infrastructure in the Akebou Prefecture—including internet, cell phone reception, radio, television, and electricity—reduced their ability to stay connected with educational administration offices, media outlets, or their families living in other
regions, which contributed to their frustrations with their assignment to live and work in the
region, thereby reducing the quality of their teaching. One teacher said, “quand on vous envoie
dans l’Akebou, c’est comme la prison (when you get sent to the Akebou, it's like prison)” (Focus
Group, ST:1:FG1, May 27, 2014). These comments illustrated the profound impact that
infrastructure conditions had on educational experiences. Beyond isolating teachers, students,
and community members from current affairs, the lack of infrastructure reduced opportunities for
professional development, created health concerns, and impacted the motivation of teachers. As
such, the findings of my study suggested that it is important to consider contextual factors when
developing educational policies for rural or isolated regions, an idea that was also supported by
some of the scholarly literature (Bajaj, 2009; Vavrus & Bartlett, 2009).

Finally, the issue of access to education surfaced as a region-wide factor in educational
policies and practices. The preface to the Practical Guide for Teaching noted that the Akebou and
Wawa Prefectures suffered from insufficient access to state-sponsored schools, stating, “est l'une
des inspections qui compte le plus grand nombre d'enseignants volontaires bien sur dépourvus de
toute formation initiale (is one of the inspection zones that has the largest number of volunteer
teachers, who are of course without any formal training)” (Guide Pratique, 2012, p.1). This piece
of information indicated that CI schools often had untrained teachers, which was confirmed by
interviews with practitioners at the local level (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014; Interview,
CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). When asked where the majority of students who attend their schools
lived, teachers in all three participating schools listed between five and seven smaller villages
within a six-kilometer radius of their site (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014; Interview,
CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). This showed that even with the
establishment of two CI schools within seven kilometers of ST:1, the region still did not provide
adequate access to education as many students had to walk long distances to attend school each
day. Bafei (2011) identified limited access to education as a major issue facing the Togolese
government, an observation that was confirmed by the findings of my case study.

**Community Level Contexts**

In addition to the national and regional level contexts, participants identified the village
setting and community relationships as key issues in Akebou education. The community level
context appeared in codes that addressed issues of community action (COMM), community
apathy (COMMAP), parent-student relationships (PAR-STU), and parent-teacher relationships
(APE). These codes illustrated how community contexts impacted education in Akebou schools.

Relationships between educators and community members were crucial in maintaining
school operations. When asked about the role that communities played in educational affairs,
participants offered detailed descriptions of actions that the community had taken to assist the
school as well as the apathy among community members towards schooling and the well being
of educators. Perspectives varied between participant groups (educators and community
members) and school sites (state and community-based).

In ST:1 educators admitted that they did not fully understand the historic role that the
community played in school operations given that the longest tenured teacher at the school had
However, the school director did provide information describing the current relationship between
the school and the community, which was “de soutenir l'importance de l'éducation dans la
communauté et d’aider dans la recherche pour les ONG qui peuvent aider l'école (to support the
importance of education in the village and help locate NGOs who can support)” (Interview,
ST:1:D1, June 26, 2014). During a focus group with members of the APE organization,
participants offered a similar description of their roles and responsibilities (Focus Group, ST:1:FG1, May 27, 2014). However, when asked how often they held formal meetings with the school director, one APE member explained “normalement, on doit réunir une fois chaque trois mois, mais maintenant nous avons des réunions quand il est nécessaire, peut-être une fois par an (normally, we should meet once every three months, but not we hold meetings only when it is needed, maybe once a year)” (Focus Group, ST:1:FG1(3), May 27, 2014). This suggested that community members were rarely involved in schooling. Instead of taking an active role in educational affairs, community members adopted a reactive approach, responding only when issues were brought to them. Interviews with teachers in ST:1 confirmed that educators viewed community as being insufficiently involved in the schooling of their children.

Educators in ST:1 criticized the APE and the community for not being sufficiently involved in education. During a focus group teachers confirmed the director’s description of the ideal roles of the APE, though one teacher continued saying, “mais en réalité, les parents ne participent pas, pas du tout (but in reality, parents do not participate, not at all)”, a comment that was met with agreement from each of the other participants (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014). Teachers then listed several grievances with community involvement, which included the refusal to participate in school maintenance, not checking in with teachers regarding student achievement, the refusal to support the discipline policies of the school, and not assisting teachers from outside the village in their integration into the locality (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014). Educators perceived these actions (or lack there of) as examples of community apathy towards education.

In CI:1 and CI:2, participants described a richer history of community involvement in education, but identified the same issues of community apathy. Both community member and
educator participants in the CI sites acknowledged the actions of the community in the establishment of the schools. While participants in CI:1 indicated that the community continued to play an active role in school operations, educators in CI:2 claimed that apathetic attitudes among community members discouraged educational growth (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:2:T2, June 11, 2014). Teachers in CI:2 explained that the community was initially very involved in educational affairs, but that they have recently become less interested and now leave “toutes les décisions au directeur, qui doit faire tout le travail (all the decisions to the director, who does all the work)” (Interview, CI:2:T2, June 11, 2014). The director confirmed this, explaining that it had been approximately six years since the community ceased to be actively involved in education (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). These findings provided a case-in-point example of a larger critique of reforms advocating for the decentralization of education by increasing community control over schooling. In Senegal, Daun (2009) and Clemons (2009) warned that giving community organizations a larger portion of educational responsibilities could perpetuate inequalities because impoverished areas would be unable to provide adequate support for their schools and, because community members often do not have backgrounds in educational administration, the potential for miscommunication, mismanagement, and lack of motivation could increase significantly. Cross-national comparisons like this suggested that some of the issues that surfaced in my study were universal and not limited to the distinctive context of Akebou, Togo.

Participant comments on community action and apathy were closely related to codes for the social relationships surrounding schooling. While community members did not directly address the issue of parent-student relationships, educators in all three of the school sites cited it as a major reason for the poor academic performance of their students. In ST:1 and CI:2 teachers
complained that parents did not support education at the home, but instead allowed students to stay out late and “va au bal (attend locally-organized dances)” (Interview, ST:1:T5, May 28, 2014; Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). One teacher accused parents of supporting and even encouraging students’ decisions to drop out of school to work as migrant laborers, while another believed that the majority of parents did not ask to see the reports cards of their children (Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014; Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014). For the most part, educators explained that the lack of educational support from parents was due to their own lack of education. Many parents in the Akebou Prefecture did not have access to education as children and did not continue education beyond primary school. APE members in ST:1 and CI:2 confirmed that they rarely intervened in educational affairs because they had not attended school themselves (Focus Group, ST:1:FG1, May 27, 2014; Focus Group, CI:2:FG2, June 19, 2014). Bray (2003) shared this concern, arguing that community members were often unprepared to assume complete responsibility of educational administration because they lacked the necessary degrees and training. Furthermore, observation data confirmed limited community involvement in schooling. In fact, organizing interviews with the APE proved difficult in ST:1 because village and school officials could not remember the names of each of the committee members, suggesting that they rarely held meetings (Field notes, May 27, 2014).

Relationships between parents and teachers also surfaced as a key community-level factor that impacted educational experiences. The Handbook of Togolese Education Policy stipulated that teachers should foster positive, mutually beneficial relationships with the parents of their students by holding participatory discussions on school issues, respecting local culture, and conducting home visits. Specifically, it stated,
La collaboration entre l'école et la famille est impérative... il s'établit ainsi entre eux une coopération qui favorise et développe une meilleure connaissance du caractère de l'enfant

(The collaboration between school and family is imperative ... it establishes a cooperation among parents and teachers that promotes and develops a better understanding of the child's character) (Précis Scolaires, 1983, pp.86-87)

Interestingly, however, data collected at the local level showed that parent and teacher relationships were characterized by miscommunication and misunderstanding. Teachers expressed a desire for parents to be more involved in educational affairs by following-up with students on assignments at home and providing discipline outside of school contexts (Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May, 27, 2014; Focus Group, CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). While teachers described dysfunctional relationships between educators and parents, APE members expressed hope for creating positive rapport, alluding to the APE responsibility to facilitate functional relationships. However, some parents viewed teachers as unprofessional, self-interested, and overly harsh when doling out punishments (Focus Group, ST:1:FG1, May 27, 2014; Focus Group, CI:2:FG2, June 19, 2014). These clashing expectations were rooted in community contexts and reflected local behaviors. Participant perspectives showed a clear miscommunication between the ideal relationships envisioned educational policy and the realities of dysfunctional parent-teacher relationships.

In summary, a consideration of community-level contexts was crucial for my understanding of the realities of educational experiences in Akebou schools. According to participants, community involvement and the relationships between parents, students, and teachers played a significant role in determining educational outcomes. However, participants also identified school level differences as key issues in education.
School Level Contexts

The site descriptions presented earlier offered in-depth insight into the contextual realities of education in the Akebou Prefecture. The information used to construct the site descriptions was rooted primarily in observation and photograph data. As such, those descriptions did not directly address participant perspectives on the impact of school settings on educational experiences. The codes for participant comments on the condition of buildings (BUILD), the maintenance of school grounds (MAINTAIN), and health and sanitation facilities (HEALTH) offered insight into how the physical setting affected educational experiences in Akebou schools.

While none of the participating school sites met the building code requirements outlined in the Handbook of Togolese Education or UN guidelines (See MOE Site Description in Chapter Four, p.150), the school buildings in ST:1 were similar to those found in other regions of the country, including both rural and urban settings (Field notes, May 24, 2014; June 16, 2014; See Photographs in Site Descriptions in Chapter Four). As such, I was not surprised that educators and community members in ST:1 did not identify building conditions as a key issue in their school. The code for buildings appeared only three times in interview data, each time in reference to the history of the buildings and the role of the government in the construction of the school (Interview, ST:1:D1, May 26, 2014). However, educators and community members in ST:1 provided a more critical perspective on the issue of school maintenance. During individual interviews and focus groups, educators expressed frustration with the community’s alleged refusal to participate in the maintenance of school buildings and school grounds. One teacher explained that the burden of maintenance fell on students, “si il y a quelque chose à faire, ce sont les élèves qui le font (if there is something that needs to be done, it is the students that do it)”
(Focus Group, ST:1:FG2, May 27, 2014). Other teachers offered the example of reroofing as an important maintenance issue that was managed by teachers, while students provided labor.

When asked about school maintenance, APE members explained that it was their responsibility to transmit maintenance requests from the director to the community, coordinate community efforts, and ensure that the work was completed. Further questioning about the specific reroofing case was met with vague responses referring to community oversight of the project (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1, May 27, 2014). One member stated that the APE was willing to work with educators, but sometimes breakdowns in communication led to misunderstanding. These contrasting perspectives illustrated the disconnect between the expectations of educators in state-sponsored schools and those held by community members in local settings.

Participants in CI:1 and CI:2 offered strong opinions on the impact that school buildings, maintenance, and health and sanitation facilities had on educational experiences (See Photographs in Site Descriptions in Chapter Four). Educators in CI:1 identified the APE as the organization responsible for building and maintaining school buildings. Participant comments indicated a more symbiotic relationship between educators and community members in CI:1 than SI1 or even CI:2. For example, one teacher said that “la population participe beaucoup à l’école (the community often participates in school affairs)” while a community member said “c'est nous qui regardons l'école (it is us who look after the school)” (Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014; Focus Group, CI:1:FG1(4), June 2, 2014). However, both groups identified the condition of school buildings as a key factor that negatively impacted educational experiences. The descriptions provided earlier showed clear evidence that the school facilities in CI:1 did not meet the minimum requirements specified in educational policy documents (Précis Scolaires, 1983; MEPSA, 2014, See MOE Site Description in Chapter Four, p.150). Additionally, according to
educators and community members, the condition of school buildings impacted student learning. Classes could not be held during rainstorms because the thatched roofs leaked, which disrupted students’ ability to take notes. While the community assisted in the maintenance of the thatch-roofed coverings, no amount of maintenance could sufficiently protect students during rainstorms (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014; Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). The inadequacy of CI school buildings was well documented in the scholarly literature, thus it was not surprising that it surfaced as a key issue. Marchand (2000) documented poorly constructed CI schools throughout several West African countries, including Mali and Chad. This showed that the issue of quality school facilities and maintenance was not limited to the Akebou Prefecture or Togo.

Interestingly, in addition to the practical realities described above, the physical construction of school buildings also held social value. The director and community members stressed that it was difficult to recruit teachers because the school buildings sent a message of unprofessionalism and unstable pay to prospective teachers (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). Additionally, teachers explained that the lack of permanent buildings sent a message to students that education was not important and that the government did not value their education (Interview, CI:1:T2, June 2, 2014). The comments illustrated how the local setting influenced the educational experiences of students. While the issue of school construction and maintenance could easily be limited to the physical experiences that students and teachers have in the classroom, they also held social value and sent implicit messages regarding the quality and importance of education to both teachers and students.

Participants in CI:1, more than other sites, highlighted health and sanitation as an issue impacting education and village life. Without access to a reliable water source, women and girls had to walk upwards of 10 kilometers during dry season to gather water for cooking, drinking,
bathing, and laundry. Teachers explained that these chores prevented students (particularly female students) from having a sufficient amount of time to study for classes (Interview, CI:1:D1, June 2, 2014). Additionally, because they were required to gather water before the school day began at 6:45am, many students arrived in class exhausted and hungry, which limited their ability to focus and participate in class (Interview, CI:1:T1, June 2, 2014). Community members corroborated these statements, arguing that the issue of access to clean water was the most pressing development need in the village (Focus Group, CI:1:FG1(1), June 3, 2014). This highlighted the impact that site-specific settings and contexts can have on teaching experiences and illustrated why vertical case studies that consider realities at local levels are crucial in creating a deep understanding of educational issues to shape policy development (Vavrus & Bartlett, 2009).

Educators and community members in CI:2 also connected the quality of school construction, maintenance, and health and sanitation facilities with student learning (See Photographs in Site Descriptions in Chapter Four). While the permanent buildings in CI:2 had been constructed before the establishment of the school, the thatch-roofed buildings were built and maintained by the teaching staff and students (Interview, CI:2:D1, June 17, 2014). Apart from their participation in the initial construction of the structures, community members did not claim to have a role in maintaining school grounds (Focus Group, CI:2:FG2(2), June 19, 2014). Similar to CI:1, educators in CI:2 complained that the thatch-roofed classrooms were leaky and unstable, which forced them to cancel classes in rain and high winds (Interview, CI:2:D1; June 17, 2014). Thus, the condition of the buildings reduced the amount of time for teachers to cover the required content before regional or national exams at the end of the year, which impacted the quality of education.
Not surprisingly, educators and community members in CI:1 and CI:2 were aware of the Togolese government’s commitment to provide the construction materials required to build a school and viewed the lack of permanent buildings in their community as a failure of the government to provide adequate infrastructure and services to its citizens (Focus Group, CI:2:FG2(1), June 19, 2014). Togolese educational policy unequivocally stated, “l'état prend totalement en charge la construction et équipement de l'enseignement (the state takes total charge the construction and provision of materials for schooling)” (Précis Scolaires, 1983, p.42). When asked for their perspective on the ideal role of the state in education, nearly all participants responded with the construction and maintenance of school buildings. Additional questioning rooted in the critical perspective, revealed that educators in CI:2 believed that the state intentionally denied infrastructure projects and social services to the Akebou Prefecture because the region had historically been home to vocal members of the opposition party and had overwhelmingly voted for the opposition in recent elections (CI:2:FG1, June 11, 2014). These comments connected larger sociopolitical contexts with the realities of education in local settings. As I described in Chapter Two, Togo has a long history of single party rule, which has led to political instability and occasional outbreaks of violence after elections. This history, combined with participant perspectives, illustrated how political ideologies and partisan politics impacted the implementation of education policy at local levels.

The issue of buildings, maintenance, and health and sanitation facilities surfaced across the three school sites, though they were often discussed in different contexts. While the construction, maintenance, and health facilities in ST:1 were average when compared to other state-sponsored schools in Togo, interviews revealed miscommunications and misunderstandings between educators and community members regarding the responsibilities of maintaining
schools buildings and facilities (see policy on school construction cited in preceding paragraph). Findings from CI:1 revealed a functional relationship between educators and community members, but the reality of school buildings negatively impacted educational quality and social perceptions of education. Finally, in CI:2 participants offered insight into the political overtones of educational policy implementation. The findings showed that local level settings and contexts impacted the educational experiences in each school.

In summary in the thematic finding of space/context, I addressed the role that social, political, and economic contexts at international, national, regional, community, and school levels played in the educational experiences of students. The discussion of these topics included a comparison between official policies and local practices, which identified differences between educational ideals and the realities of schooling in the Akebou Prefecture. As such, I addressed my second and third research questions in this section, while also reiterating policy features relevant to the Akebou Prefecture, thereby responding to my first research question.

In this chapter, I presented the findings of my case study research on educational policies and practices in Community Initiative and State-sponsored schools in the Akebou Prefecture of Togo, West Africa. I provided a discussion of the four major themes and the codes that comprised them as well as investigating the two overarching threads that emerged throughout my data and pertained to my four research questions. In the following chapter, I will discuss the implications and conclusions of my study.
CHAPTER SIX
DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

In the previous two chapters, I examined the findings in my case, comparing the contemporary features of educational policy in Togo, the goals and purposes of schooling, and the general conditions and key issues in Akebou schools through an analysis of interview, focus group, observation, document, and photograph data. In Chapter Four, I presented my findings in comprehensive descriptions of each of the research sites to illustrate the setting, describe participants, and examine the multiple levels and sites of my study. In Chapter Five, I presented the four major themes and two overarching threads that answered the four central research questions of my study. In this chapter, I offer a summary of the major findings of the case and discuss the implications of my research. To present the implications, I discuss the transition of educational policy ideals from international and national levels down to the realities of local-level practices. It was important for me to investigate educational practices in Akebou schools because my case contributes to larger discussions of international educational reform, decentralization, self-reliance, and standardized examinations. Following my discussion of the implications of my findings, I address the professional, personal, and methodological lessons learned from the study. Finally, I suggest directions for future research.

Implications of the Study

There were four major themes and two overarching threads that emerged in my case study. The thematic findings of school funding, development, curriculum, and space/context
contained a discussion of general, universal (international) issues as well as issues that were distinctive to the case itself. Similarly, the overarching thematic elements, *Nos Propres Efforts* and Quality, also contained some aspects that were both universal and distinctive. Because my case contained general educational issues, it reflected many of the topics identified in the scholarly literature, as my findings were, for the most part, similar to those that other researchers reported in their studies of CI schools. However, some of my findings were not reflected in the scholarly literature that I reviewed for this study, which suggested to me the distinctiveness of my case study of state-sponsored and CI schools in the Akebou Prefecture of Togo. In the following section, I discuss the implications of my findings by considering dichotomies between (inter)national-level policies and local-level practices.

In each of the thematic findings, I found that the policies described in official documents did not always reflect the realities implemented or experienced by educators at local-levels. Scholarly literature in the field of comparative and international education provided insight into the critical relationship between policies and practices in international education. Anderson-Levitt (2003) explained that gaps between policies and practices commonly occur in educational systems around the world as part of the global-to-local continuum. She discussed the agency that local actors have in the interpretation of policy and its implementation it into practice, referring to the process as creolization or indigenization. Similarly, Napier (2005) documented that the successes or failures of educational policies are determined by a variety of factors at international, national, regional, and local levels. She suggested that in order to better understand educational policies and practices, scholars must investigate educational experiences through “implementation-focused research” describing how “realities on the ground” impact the translation of policy into practice (p.88). My case study on the policies and practices in Akebou
schools directly addressed and offered explanations for gaps between policies and practices. In other words, I will interpret the implications of my findings by investigating the policy ideals codified in educational policy documents and comparing them with the realities experienced by educators and community members at local-levels.

**The Global-to-Local Continuum**

Each of the thematic findings reflected the realities in the global-to-local continuum and the “dialectic” between agencies, organizations, and individuals at international, national, regional, and local levels (Arnove, 2007; Anderson-Levitt, 2003). As presented in Chapters Four and Five, virtually all of the participants connected local educational experiences with policy trends at regional, national, and even global levels. Similarly, policy documents referred to the importance of administrative coordination at each level to ensure that policies could be properly implemented to provide quality education.

As discussed in Chapter Two, international influences are increasingly important in the development and implementation of educational policies worldwide. My case study provided insight into some international educational trends as they appeared in the context of Togolese educational policies and practices. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Educational For All (EFA) set the stage for educational reform efforts designed to expand access to schooling, improve the quality of education, and encourage gender equity (UN, 2007; UNESCO, 2012). Policy documents and an interview at the Ministry of Education (MOE) showed that educational policies in Togo reflected these international trends and influences. In line with MDG and EFA recommendations, the Togolese constitution made education obligatory up to the age of fifteen (Togolese Constitution, 2002; See MOE site description in Chapter Four). In order to support this obligation, policy mandated that the Togolese government would provide
financial support to build and staff schools around the country. Though the publication of these documents predated the establishment of MDG and EFA as global trends, Togolese policies were updated to reflect international pressures. In 2008, the Togolese government eliminated school fees for primary education to increase affordability, access, and enrollment rates in primary schools. Shortly after the implementation of the policy, UNICEF (2008) reported “Togo is in a good position to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education by 2015”, showing the connection between national policies and international influence (p.1; See also Chapter Five, Funding Theme, subsection on Fees and Enrollment Rates). Furthermore, an interview at the MOE suggested that the Togolese government intended to abolish fees at the CEG level within the next two to three years or once they could establish a reliable means to fill the funding gap left by uncollected fees. The implication of these findings, which I reported on in Chapters Four and Five, illustrated the influence of multinational organizations in the internationalization of educational policies documented by Anderson-Levitt (2003) and Wiseman and Baker (2005). From a critical perspective, when ground level educational realities were compared with the ideals presented in policies and reforms, it appeared that the Togolese government was engaging in “national legitimacy-seeking efforts” to appease international organizations, while failing to provide adequate educational experiences in rural, underserved regions (Wiseman & Baker, 2005, p.7).

Within the context of international reforms and the global-to-local continuum, another important thematic finding addressed the goals and purposes of education. Within the literature, scholars indicated that in countries around the world the goals, structures, and content of education converging so that educational experiences reflect the general skills required to develop competitive workers for international labor markets (Baker & LeTendre, 2005; Wiseman
& Baker, 2005; Tikly, 2005). Interestingly, as discussed in Chapter Five, community members described their motivations for organizing and establishing CI schools using nearly the same terminology as international organizations advocating for EFA goals, which showed the interconnected and multidirectional influences within the global-to-local continuum. From a human capital perspective, increased educational access and enrollment is crucial to the development of a trained and skilled labor force. Oketch (2006) linked educational access, human capital development, and economic growth across Africa. Although his work was rooted in quantitative data collected in 47 African countries, comments from interview participants at national and local levels in Togo echoed his conclusions and recommendations. As discussed in the development theme, participants viewed education as one of the most important tools for fostering national and economic development. From a critical perspective, however, it appeared to me that the underserved communities of the Akebou Prefecture were systematically denied educational opportunity through limited state involvement in the construction, staffing, and funding of schools. Instead, communities organized themselves to create CI schools in an effort to develop human capital in their locality and contribute to economic development.

The issue of setting/context also surfaced when I interpreted my findings through the lens of the global-to-local continuum. Scholars across the field of comparative and international education stressed the importance of considering local settings and contexts during the development, implementation, and evaluation of educational policies (Assiah & Luisoni, 2006; Bajaj, 2009; Crossley, 2009). Given that my study focused on the distinctive case of education in the Akebou Prefecture—a contextually specific setting—it was natural that setting/context emerged as a major thematic finding. Crossley (2009) argued that the consideration of context was crucial in a globalized era where educational policies have been uncritically “lent and
borrowed” across national borders. Through a consideration of context, he argued, policy makers can avoid the inappropriate implementation of policies unsuited for the local setting. Apart from the use of Bloom’s (1984) taxonomy in the development of curriculum objectives, I did not find any direct borrowing of specific educational policies that specifically cited a country or educational researcher, although international and regional influences in curriculum and examination policies were readily observable, including the adoption of terminal grade examinations, standards-based curriculum, reduced school fees for girls, discipline policies, and goals/purposes for education based in international norms set by organizations like the United Nations (See Chapters Four and Five).

From a historical and post-colonial perspective, the human resource policy of sending state-employed teachers to work in regions where they are ethnically and linguistically isolated to establish the dominance of French as an official and administrative language reflected the “borrowing” of colonial era policies that systematically degraded and devalued the use of indigenous languages in formal settings (See Chapter Five, Development Theme, Personal Development subsection). Similarly, many of the state-approved curriculum standards and textbooks were written to reflect West African contexts as a whole, and were not specifically tailored to the distinctive historical, sociopolitical, and socioeconomic contexts of Togo (See Chapter Five, Curriculum Theme, Materials subsection). Therefore, participants often said that the curriculum content in schools did not reflect the realities of life in the local setting. My findings suggested that future educational policies should more accurately reflect contexts and settings at the local level of the global-to-local continuum, rather than exist purely as products of international trends or pressures.
Finally, as Bray (2007b) described, there are a variety of actors—including international agencies, national governments, and academics—that hold influence over the development, implementation, and evaluation of educational policy. As discussed previously, international agencies and the Togolese national government had a clear role in educational policymaking (See UN influences in MOE Site Description in Chapter Four and Development Theme in Chapter Five). However, the findings of my study suggested that local level actors—including directors, teachers, and community members—also played a critical role in the development, implementation, and evaluation of educational policies (See Funding and Curriculum Themes in Chapter Five). While the voices of local-level CI school actors have rarely been represented in the scholarly literature, informal collaboration among local-level educators often determined how policies were implemented into practice. The phenomenon was particularly noticeable in CI schools, where educators and community members regularly reviewed the policies and practices of state-sponsored schools to inform the policies and practices in their local schools (Assiah & Luisoni, 2006). From a critical perspective, it was important to place participant perspectives at the center of my research—relative to the policy perspective—to give a voice to educational actors in a region that has been underrepresented in the scholarly literature.

Additionally, as discussed in the literature in Chapter Two and in my findings in Chapter Five, the regional inspection held significant influence over local level educational experiences. DeGrauwe and Lugaz (2007) argued that District Education Offices (Regional Inspections) in French-speaking West Africa should be given additional autonomy to develop and oversee the implementation of educational policies. However, they noticed that many regional inspections lacked sufficient professionalism and were rarely held accountable for their actions. While their research was conducted in Mali, Senegal, Benin, and Guinea, it provided comparative contrast to
the realities in Togo, where teachers in both state and CI schools welcomed pedagogical and policy oversight from regional inspectors because they viewed the regional inspectors as experienced professionals dedicated to quality education (See Regional Inspection subsection in Curriculum theme in Chapter Five). Through the lens of the global-to-local, regional inspections had an intermediary role in both policies and practices in local schools. Though I did not collect interview data at this level, I did procure the Practical Guide for Teaching CEG (Guide Pratique, 2012), which was published by the inspection (See Appendix B(2)). Additionally, interviews with educators at the local level offered insight into regional level issues. From a decentralization perspective, increased autonomy of regional inspections would represent a devolution of educational authority (Arenas, 2005). While I did not find a formal policy that increased regional autonomy beyond what was stipulated in the Handbook of Togolese Education Policy (Précis Scolaire, 1983, see Regional Inspection subsection in Curriculum theme in Chapter Five), participants made it clear that regional inspections held varying degrees of influence over the types of policies implemented in local schools based in the location and available resources in the school, which represented a gap between policy and practice since policy stipulated specific roles for the regional inspection.

Overall, the process of translating national and international level policy ideals into local-level practices was one of the major implications of my study. The case of community schools in Akebou, Togo offered a case-in-point example of the global-to-local continuum that contained both distinctive and universal characteristics.

**Decentralization: “Petit à petit on va décentraliser l’éducation”**

International trends promoting the decentralization of educational administration are widely discussed and critiqued in scholarly literature (Arenas, 2005; Clemons, 2009; Daun,
When compared with findings in the literature, my study provided insight into the policy-practice dichotomy during the translation of decentralization ideals into practical realities. The implications of my findings directly related to: the role of the state and the role of the community in education, funding, and curriculum.

As discussed in Chapter Two, Arenas (2005) explained that in general there are several ideological perspectives that support decentralization policies, which result in myriad interpretations of what decentralization is and how it should be implemented. Community-based educational initiatives—like those in my study—are a form of grassroots educational decentralization, as opposed to the top-down, governmentally mandated decentralization described by Altschuler (2012) and Nielsen (2007) in Honduras and Guatemala. Governmental intervention in educational decentralization addresses state control and steering, state subsidies for school finances, and school-choice arrangements (Daun, 2009). However, in the context of my study, the Togolese government rarely directly intervened in the decentralization of educational administration at the policy level, though an interview at the MOE instead indicated that the state informally and indirectly encouraged community participation in school funding. From a post-colonial and critical perspective, this was indicative of the centralized educational system inherited from French colonial rule that I discuss in Chapter Two and Chapter Five. It also illustrated how current educational policies maintain a hierarchical educational power structure. Thus, in the case of CI schools in Togo, the decentralization of education was a community led, grassroots effort rather than a governmentally sanctioned policy reform.

In an effort to understand the complexities of decentralization Daun (2009) and Naidoo (2005) provided analysis of the community’s role in education from a variety of perspectives on decentralization. Naidoo’s (2005) description of “new community schools” (p. 111) most aptly
characterized the relationship between the national government, school, and community in the villages that participated in my study, though there was virtually no support from NGOs in any of the sites (See Appendix B(5)). Similarly Daun’s (2009) discussion of “pure community-self help” schools provided insight into the realities experienced by educators and community members at local levels. Both categories were characterized by the acknowledgement that educators and community members assumed complete responsibility for the construction, funding, staffing, provision of materials, and maintenance of the school, which was representative of the schools in my study (See Appendix B(5), See also Chapter Five, Space/Context Theme). Interestingly, however, participants in all three sites expressed the desire for increased governmental intervention in funding, professional development, and provision of educational materials, suggesting that decentralization was not popular among educators or community members at local levels. My findings challenged the perception that decentralization and increased community participation foster empowerment and self-reliance (Nielsen, 2007), which illustrated one of the distinctive aspects of my study.

The majority of decentralization reforms include a consideration of educational funding policies. Bray (2003) explained that decentralization and community participation can “spread the burden of resourcing educational systems”, though he also warned that reliance on community contributions can perpetuate educational inequalities (p.31). Grassroots decentralization in the Akebou Prefecture increased access to education in areas that had previously been underserved and therefore spread the “burden of resourcing” between the state and local communities. However, my observations in CI:1 and CI:2 clearly indicated vast education inequalities in funding, access to materials, and school buildings, between state-sponsored and community-supported schools (Field notes, May 22, 2014; See also Chapter Four...
and Chapter Five). From a critical perspective, the decentralization of education in context of Akebou CI schools ran contradictory to the stated goal of establishing a benevolent sharing of responsibility, but rather was a systematic denial of infrastructure development in a region that traditionally voted for the opposition party and was home to vocal critics of the current government. The findings of my case study suggested that decentralization policies are rife with complexities and require a careful consideration of context before implementation not only in Togo, but also in educational systems around the world.

To counteract educational inequalities perpetuated by the decentralization of funding, Bray (2007a) suggested that national governments provide financial support for community-based educational initiatives, while offering local level actors increased agency in administrative and curricular decisions. In principle, the increased agency among local-level educators to implement policies and practices could result in community empowerment, increase relevancy of curriculum content, and improve educational access (Nielsen, 2007). However, the realities documented in my case study findings showed that Bray’s (2007a) recommendations were not implemented in practice. Instead, as I discussed in Chapters Four and Five, communities were burdened with the complete responsibility to fund their local school, which resulted in low, unstable teacher salaries, a lack of educational materials, and poorly constructed school buildings (See Chapters Four and Five). Even in ST:1, a school that received financial support from the MOE, the community paid localized school fees in addition to the state mandated fee for CEG education to cover the salaries of volunteer teachers. From a critical perspective, the decentralization of education in Togo maintained administrative and curricular control at the national level, while burdening local communities with the financial responsibility of local schools. This perpetuated existing power structures in educational decision-making, but
alleviated the centralized government of their responsibility to provide financial assistance to students. My findings challenged perceptions that decentralization improves educational quality through local decision-making and community involvement that some scholars suggested in the literature (Jones, 2004; Nielsen, 2007).

Finally, advocates of educational decentralization argue that local control of schooling can increase the relevancy of curriculum in the local community (Dhorsan & Chachuaio, 2008; Hoppers, 2005; Miller-Grandvaux & Yoder, 2002). Dhorsan and Chachuaio (2008) investigated community schools in Mozambique that, in response to the perceived irrelevance of national curriculum, implemented locally designed curriculum intended to develop the knowledge and skills needed to improve the quality of life in communities surrounding the schools. In essence, the community-schools in Mozambique represented “adaptive” schools, though they contained some characteristics of “transformative” schools given their focus on social justice and community development (Hoppers, 2005). Interestingly, the schools that participated in my study showed no signs of decentralization in curriculum development or decision-making. Educators claimed to follow the same curriculum standards used in state-sponsored schools, despite having limited access to curriculum guides and textbooks. Additionally, as discussed in Chapter Five community members were not involved in curricular decisions in any of the three sites. Again, from a critical perspective, this suggests to me that the power to determine what knowledge and skills are included in the curriculum was centralized at the national level. From a human capital perspective, it suggests to me that, despite clear evidence that the information taught in schools did not directly translate into marketable skills in the Togolese economy (i.e. students dropping out for migrant labor, subsistence farming), educators and community members declined to take advantage of the ability to modify or restructure curriculum to better respond to local needs.
Overall, my study offered insight into the complexities of educational decentralization by highlighting some universal issues as well as identifying issues that were distinctive to Togo.

**Self-Reliance: “Nos Propres Efforts”**

The effort made by local actors to create quality educational experiences was prevalent in my study. At each of the four sites—MOE, CI and state schools—educators and community members went to great lengths to provide educational access for their students and children. This effort was represented by the *Nos Propres Efforts* code, which surfaced across all four major thematic findings. As such, it was the most commonly occurring code in the interview data and the fourth most common overall (interview, focus groups, documents, observations), making it the largest overarching thematic element of my study. For me, the implications of *Nos Propres Efforts* included a consideration of post-colonial contexts, comparative key issues, and localized problem solving.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the theme of self-reliance surfaced across a variety of scholarly articles on post-colonial philosophies and ideologies in Africa. After completing my study, I was able to draw stronger connections between the realities of education in Togo and the post-colonial perspective. Beginning with Nyerere’s (1968) discussion of “Education for Self-Reliance” and the localization of educational initiatives, I drew connections between the findings of my study in Togo and larger pan-African philosophic traditions. Nyerere asserted that, “Our people in the rural areas, as well as their government, must organize themselves co-operatively and work for themselves through working for the community of which they are members” (p.526). In response to the glaring inequalities left behind by colonial rule, Nyerere mobilized communities to fulfill their own development needs with assistance from the government when possible. The perspectives of community members in my study—who had worked to establish
locally funded and operated schools in their communities in the absence of governmental intervention—echoed Nyerere’s ideas and philosophies. Several participants offered a nuanced understanding of the inequalities in infrastructure development and social services due to colonial legacies and governmental corruption, mismanagement, and corruption. During my informal conversations with community members, they explained to me that arbitrary divisions of national borders by colonial rulers caused a division in the Akebou ethnicity between English-speaking Ghana and French-speaking Togo, and had they been part of Ghana, they would not face the same underdevelopment in infrastructure because Ghana is more developed than Togo (Field notes, June 19, 2014; see Space/Context theme in Chapter Five). Furthermore, educators discussed how colonial legacies contributed to the rampant corruption during the Eyadema dictatorship, which caused lasting inequalities in social and economic sectors (see Chapter Two). Participants drew strength from the self-reliant mentality, and instead of waiting for governmental intervention, they mobilized to establish CI schools in their local communities. The expression of Nos Propres Efforts harkened back to the post-colonial philosophies and ideologies of self-reliance, which showed the importance of the post-colonial perspective in my theoretical framework as it provided insight into the impact that historical contexts continue to have in contemporary society.

Secondly, Nos Propres Efforts and other self-reliant concepts could be traced across scholarly research on community-based education in several countries. As mentioned in Chapter Two, community-based educational initiatives have been widely discussed in the literature, which allowed me to identify general issues and key concerns in CI schools prior to fieldwork. While all schools have distinctive characteristics, community-based efforts (Nos Propres Efforts) were required to ensure access to funding, curriculum materials, the condition of buildings, and
Although I was unable to find specific research on CEG-level CI schools in Togo, these findings offered comparative contrast to the findings of my study. For example, educators in state and CI schools explained that they relied on their own efforts to develop, implement, and collect localized fees to meet the financial needs of the school.

Similarly, Miller-Grandvaux & Yoder (2002) documented self-reliant funding policies—like the ones I reported on in Chapter Five—in their report on CI schools in Mali, Zambia, Chad, Ethiopia, and Senegal, which illustrated the cross-national connections of self-reliance and Nos Propres Efforts. While some of the findings within the Nos Propres Efforts code were distinctive to the case itself, others reflected more universal trends and issues.

As discussed in Chapters Two and Five, teaching training and qualifications were also identified as key issues in the scholarly literature and in my findings. In both cases, self-reliance surfaced as an underlying motivator in the professional development of teachers in CI schools, many of who had received little or no formal pre-service training. Although Gbogbotchi et al (2000) focused primarily on community-based primary schools, he found that the majority of teachers did not have the required qualification to teach. A UNESCO (2011) report confirmed that only 14.6% of primary school teachers in Togo had been trained in 2009. To counter under-qualification, Assiah and Luisoni (2006) documented localized, informal efforts among teachers to share ideas and promote professional development. While my study focused on CEG-level schooling, I noticed similar issues (see Development theme in Chapter Five). Only one of the eight CI school educators that participated in my study had earned the qualification required by the state to teach CEG, whereas in SI1, four of the six educators possessed the necessary qualification. In response to the issue of under-qualification, educators capitalized on informal
relationships to share curriculum materials and discuss pedagogical strategies. This form of informal professional development represented an expression of self-reliance and *Nos Propres Efforts* and reflected the post-colonial philosophies and ideologies of African leaders. It also highlighted that the teacher training issues identified in CEG-level schools also surfaced at the primary-level both in Togo and other countries around the world.

Finally, self-reliance and *Nos Propres Efforts* surfaced in local solutions for local issues. Once CI schools were established in local communities, they continued to face difficulties and challenges in administrative, maintenance, and financial affairs. Without state support, local actors responded in distinctive and innovative ways. Across the scholarly literature, research documented the lack of funding in CI schools (Assiah & Luisoni, 2006; Hoppers, 2005; Marchand, 2000). However, articles rarely discussed localized responses to underfunding (Miller-Grandvaux & Yoder, 2002). As presented in Chapter Five, state and CI schools alike used informal, local fees and *travail manuel* to fill funding gaps and to ensure that the schools stayed open. These practices were in clear violation of official policy, although they received virtually no complaints from community members or students. While participants in all three school sites expressed a desire for increased governmental support in education, they recognized that in order to have access to education in their community, they would need to be self-reliant, even if it caused additional costs, be it financial, material, or labor. From the global-to-local perspective, this illustrates to me a gap between policies and practices because the Togolese MOE was unable to provide enough oversight to ensure that its policies were appropriately implemented and respected in local schools. Additionally, from a critical perspective, it suggests to me that policy development must include a consideration of the everyday realities of rural or disadvantaged populations. Clearly, policy promises to provide financial support for all schools
and all students in Togo were unrealistic given the economic instability of Togo. At the same time, enforcing the ban on travail manuel would reduce teacher salaries in CI schools to the point that they would likely close, thereby denying educational access to underserved regions. Instead, policy makers should consider contextual realities to create realistic policies, rather than present unattainable or unrealistic ideals. My findings indicated to me that my case study in Togo, while it had distinctive characteristics, was not entirely ‘unique’. Instead, the issues I documented in Togo also exist in other West African counties and around the globe.

**National Exams, Local Control**

The relationship between national examinations and the curriculum content in state and CI schools was an important aspect in my findings. While CI schools technically operated outside of MOE control, they implemented a nearly identical curriculum as their state-sponsored counterparts. Observations and interview data provided interesting insights into similarities and differences between the educational experiences in Akebou CI schools and those documented in scholarly literature on curriculum and testing around the world.

Baker and LeTendre (2005) discussed how global influences—often rooted in data derived from international examination results—impact curriculum policies at national and local levels. While the majority of their analysis did not specifically address education in West Africa because most West African countries do not participate in internationally normed exams (i.e. TIMSS, PISA), their findings on curriculum control offered me comparative contrast when analyzing curriculum in Togolese schools. Baker and LeTendre observed that curriculum control was centralized, though trending towards decentralization, in the majority of countries in their study, with the exception of the United States, where curriculum was decentralized, but trending toward centralization. As presented in Chapter Five, the findings of my study indicated that
curriculum decision-making in Togo is controlled at the national level, with little room for local interpretation or modification, which reflected a trend observed by Baker and LeTendre and offered insight into international comparisons. However, Adamson and Morris (2007) argued that cross-national comparisons of curricula must be approached with careful consideration of the local context. In order to create holistic understandings of curricula, they posited that researchers conduct field visits, observations, interviews, and text/document analysis. By following their approach, my study contributes to the scholarly literature in the field of comparative and international education because it offers a complex understanding of the distinctive case of curriculum policies and practices in the Akebou Prefecture.

I interpreted the dynamics of curriculum decision-making and implication in my study using Baker and LeTendre’s (2005) curriculum control model and Anderson’s (2006) analysis of public policy implementation. As noted in Chapter Two, Anderson (2006) explained that compliance with policy is a product of respect for authority, fear of sanctions, and tradition. Each of these three characteristics could be identified in my findings. Educators in both CI and state schools expressed respect for officials in the regional inspection and MOE, which contributed to their compliance with national and regional policies on curriculum and evaluation. Additionally, as noted in Chapter Five, educators and community members explained that poor performance on national examinations reflected poorly on the school and could result in a loss of confidence among community members, who ultimately provided the financial support for the school. In essence, community members and educators used examinations as one of main the indicators of educational quality in Akebou schools, which was a reflection of larger, global trends in the pursuit of quality education addressed by Napier (2014). Therefore, educators felt pressure to conform to the national curriculum to best prepare students to pass the exams in order to avoid
financial sanctions from the community based on student performance. Finally, there is a long
tradition of a testing culture in Togolese schools. The CEPD, BEPC, BAC I, and BAC II
exams—which mirror exams in the French education system—have long held significant social
and economic value in Togo and therefore created a tradition of teaching to the test. These exams
require educators to comply with national curriculum policies. From a critical perspective, this
offered me insight into the power dynamics of the centralized educational hierarchy, where
national and regional agencies had strong control over teaching practices in local schools. From
the global-to-local and post-colonial perspective, I identified the influence of post-colonial and
international influences in the structure of schooling and examinations, which were modeled
after French systems and contained characteristics that conformed with international norms.

Another body of research shows the impact that high-stakes, standardized examinations
have on curriculum control (Madaus & Kelleghan, 1992). Across the school sites, participants
indicated the importance of the BEPC examination as a determining factor in curriculum
decision-making in schools and its role in ensuring compliance with curriculum policies.
Analysis of BEPC examination questions in the “Exam” subsection in the curriculum theme in
Chapter Five (see also Appendix B(3)) revealed the use of short answer essay examinations,
however, an analysis of sample answers showed a narrow conception of the types of answers that
were acceptable, which indicated that students were not free to provide their own interpretations,
even when questions used phrases such as “Pense-tu que… (Do you think that...)” or “Que
proposes-tu… (What do you propose…)” (BEPC au Togo, 2013, p.17, See quotes in Chapter
Five and excerpts in Appendix B(3)). The open ended prompts with close-ended responses
suggested that BEPC examinations were designed to test students’ ability to recite content that
they had learned in class, rather than engage in critical, innovative thought. As such, I suggest
that the BEPC became a mechanism of power because it required students to master (or at least be familiar with) a specific set of knowledge before being granted a diploma that held important social and economic value (Madaus & Kelleghan, 1992).

One of the major implications of my analysis of field notes from classroom observations and my analysis of examination questions was that the teaching strategies used by educators in my research sites closely reflected the “fidelity approach” of curriculum implementation proposed by Snyder, Bolin, and Zumwalt (1992) (See also Chapters Two and Five). As discussed in Chapters Four and Five, interviews indicated that teachers followed, to the best of their ability, the curriculum standards set by the MOE and included in state-approved textbooks. Any deviations from this prescribed curriculum was due to a lack of resources, rather than a willful effort to create transformative learning experiences. From a critical perspective, I viewed this as an illustration of power structures within the Togolese educational system. Examinations designed by the MOE contributed to national level control over local level teachers. The power of examinations in Togolese schools also impacted the translation of policy into practice. Using the global-to-local perspective in Chapter Five, I traced educational policies and practices relating to goals and purposes, funding, construction, materials and documents, curriculum, evaluation, language, and community relations. Among those policies, I found the fewest gaps between policy and practice in curriculum and examination. To me, this showed importance of examinations and the power that they held over teaching practices. However, the national curriculum (see Curriculum theme in Chapter Five) did not always reflect local realities. Therefore, educators, community members, and apparently students, did not always perceive curriculum content as being useful in local contexts.
Given the centralized power of the MOE over the design of the BEPC examination, it was not surprising that curriculum rarely reflected the realities of the local context. The scholarly literature documented post-colonial influences in curriculum policy. As discussed in Chapter Two and mentioned in Chapter Four, Kelly and Kelly (2000) addressed the continued use of Eurocentric curriculum after Togolese independence from France. While reform measures in the 1970s attempted to ‘Africanize’ curriculum, even the revised textbooks and standards did not directly address distinctive Togolese issues, let alone issues directly relevant in the Akebou Prefecture (UNESCO, 1978; Field notes, May 30, 2014). While some studies of curriculum in CI schools suggested that educators used their autonomy from the MOE to modify curriculum so that it more accurately responded to local experiences (Assiah & Luisoni, 2006; Dhorsan & Chachuaiiou, 2008), my findings showed to me that educators in Akebou state and CI schools followed the national curriculum (see Chapter Five), despite acknowledging that the content was often overly irrelevant, theoretical, and abstract to be of use or interest to students. A major implication of this finding for curriculum developers and policy-makers was to consider local realities and include the perspectives and voices of local level actors in curriculum development so that it better responds to village-level realities and meets the developmental needs of the locality. As discussed in Chapters Two, Four, and Five, the post-colonial perspective helped me to draw comparisons between historical and contemporary curriculum practices. From a critical perspective, the irrelevancy of curriculum in local contexts showed how the underdevelopment of Togo and the lack of publishing facilities forced the Togolese MOE to purchase textbooks designed for general education in Francophone West African countries from France, rather than using books specifically tailored to Togolese contexts written by qualified textbook authors.
living and working in Togo (See MOE Site Description in Chapter Four and Curriculum Theme in Chapter Five).

Finally, the disconnect between curriculum content, educational experiences, and the economic realities of the local labor market had important implications for policy-making and curriculum development. A massive exodus of Akebou youth sparked by the growing popularity of migrant labor was perhaps the most surprising finding in my study. Prior to fieldwork, I had gathered no indication of migrant labor as an issue in my review of scholarly literature or my surveillance of online Togolese news outlets. However, having collected data in the field, my findings suggested that the primary reason that dropouts pursued migrant labor opportunities was because they were discouraged by the prospects of finding a job once they graduated from CEG, Lycee, or even university. My observations of economic activity in the locality confirmed their fears given that the most promising career path for individuals with BAC II or university experience was to become a volunteer teacher, which paid only 15,000 or 20,000 FCFA per month, if they were paid at all. Across the three sites, participants expressed worries about migrant labor, fearing that it would leave villages with uneducated and uninformed populations, which would perpetuate the underdevelopment of the region. These comments showed the pressing importance of creating educational experiences that responded to the economic realities of Togo. From a human capital perspective, my findings suggested to me that Togolese government invest in educational reforms that worked to develop human capital skills that could be used in Togo for developmental purposes, much like Oketch (2006) advocated for elsewhere in Africa. However, similar to Tikly’s (2005) recommendation, these reforms would need to include careful consideration of the distinctive characteristics of localized economies in Togo, rather than simply propose a generic, globalized curriculum for human capital development.
In summary, in my research study I constructed an in-depth comparative case study investigating the policies and practices of schooling in the Akebou Prefecture. My case contained many features and issues identified in the scholarly literature, however, the findings also illustrated the distinctive characteristics of the Akebou Prefecture, particularly those regarding Nos Propres Efforts, funding, migrant labor, teacher training, travail manuel, and community-school relations. My case also highlighted universal issues that addressed some of the common challenges for education in post-colonial countries as well as issues that are characteristic of education in developing countries. This suggested to me that research in the field of comparative and international education must simultaneously consider the impact of international influences, while also addressing the distinctive contexts and settings of the locality. Throughout the research process, I learned valuable lessons, which I discuss in the following section.

**Lessons Learned**

The experience of collecting data in the Akebou Prefecture was both challenging and rewarding. It ultimately taught me a great deal about the research process. From preparing for fieldwork to analyzing data and generating findings, my time in the Akebou Prefecture offered me the opportunity to learn and grow as a person, as a professional, and as a researcher. In this section I address the lessons that I learned throughout the dissertation process.

Professionally, I learned the importance of being familiar with the research setting and developing rapport with research participants. Prior to fieldwork, I was concerned that my familiarity with the region and relationships with participants would be outdated or lost because it had been several years since my Peace Corps service had ended. I hoped that my previous experiences would allow me “to know the ropes” and help me adjust to living in the research sites. I also worried that I would be unable to gather the required letters of permission to conduct
research. However, with the assistance of my major professor, I was able to get back in touch with key participants, gather the required documents, and reestablish connections that ultimately facilitated the data collection process. The process of preparation instilled in me the importance of organization, foresight, and planning when preparing to conduct research in the field. Thanks to previous experiences and these crucial pre-fieldwork planning steps, when I arrived in Togo, I felt confident, prepared, and ready to begin collecting my data. I realized that the planning and timing was particularly important when the Ebola outbreak reached critical levels shortly after I returned from Togo.

I also learned the importance of language in research. Because Togo is a French-speaking country, I knew that I would need to conduct my interviews in French. Thankfully, because of my Peace Corps experience, I was proficient in Togolese French. However, I was initially worried that my language skills would in need of practice. When I arrived in country, two university students, with whom I had worked as a volunteer, greeted me at the airport. I spent the first few days of fieldwork with them, reacquainting myself with life in Togo and the French language. They helped me pick up on some of the linguistic idiosyncrasies of Togolese French, which proved useful during interviews, focus groups, and the general process of developing rapport in research sites because the language, dialect, and accent I used was similar to the language style of participants. As I discussed in Chapter Three, language and translation issues posed challenges in my research, though I was able to mitigate them through my own proficiency in French—the official language of Togolese schooling—and the use of trusted translators. While I did not speak the vernacular language, it surfaced only occasionally as an issue in schooling, as I discussed in Chapter Five. Finally, I learned the importance of including participant voices as a central component of my study. During the collection and analysis of data,
I constantly read and reread my field notebooks to familiarize myself with participant perspectives. As I did this, it became clear to me that I needed to center my dissertation on their voices, while also considering policy documents and policy perspectives. This realization led to my decision to use the in vivo code of *Nos Propres Efforts* in the title of my dissertation.

Given my previous experiences living and working in the Akebou Prefecture, I learned several personal lessons throughout the dissertation process. Despite having left Togo in November of 2010, I was surprised by how quickly I reintegrated into the research sites. The letters of introduction written by my major professor and myself clarified my new role as a researcher, rather than a Peace Corps Volunteer, in the communities. This impressed upon me the power of lasting friendships and personal connections. After only a few days, I felt very comfortable with key informants and often participated in discussions on personal, political, philosophical, and religious topics. The fieldwork experience left me confident in knowing that I will return to Togo again in the future to visit my friends. On a personal level, I also learned to appreciate the journey that my doctoral program provided to help prepare me to complete my dissertation. Both during and after fieldwork, it became clear to me how all of my experiences—coursework, comprehensive exams, prospectus work, IRB approval, and pre-fieldwork planning—combined to provide me the tools I needed to complete my dissertation. My major professor played an important role in developing a program of study for me that accurately reflected my research interests and therefore helped root my work within relevant academic fields. In particular, courses on international education and development (EFND 7010, EFND 8450, EFND 7311, and SOWK 7397) provided me an understanding of the global-to-local continuum, the politics of international development, and the role that historical influences have in modern society. Courses in the field of curriculum studies (EDAP 8010, EDAP 9015, EDAP
7070) gave me a framework for interpreting and understanding curriculum issues in Akebou schools. Overall, the entire three and a half years I have been a student at the University of Georgia were a preparation for collecting data during fieldwork and writing my dissertation. I learned to appreciate the journey and each step I took along the way.

Regarding my findings and the research process, I learned the importance of spending a significant amount of time in the research setting to gain a deep understanding of the complexities in a given locality. I also learned that the research process never ends. As I organized, analyzed, and wrote up my data, I continually wondered what the realities of education would be like in six months, one year, five years, and beyond. This impressed upon me the idea that my research provided only a snapshot of what education was like in the Akebou Prefecture at a particular time and would need to be updated in the future. My findings would likely be different if I had the opportunity to conduct another season of fieldwork in Togo. Additionally, upon reflection during and after data analysis, I began to question the sustainability of CI schools. The pressure placed on educators and community members to provide compete support for education was abundantly clear during my fieldwork. It was obvious that the schools in my study just barely had enough funding to operate and that any economic, political, social, or health issue could threaten the continued operation of the school. While my consideration of these issues began during fieldwork and can be found in my reflective notes, it became of particular interest to me after the Ebola outbreak reached critical levels. If Ebola reached Togo, the Togolese health infrastructure would be woefully underprepared to deal with the disease, which would wreak havoc on economic, political, and social institutions, and likely result in the closure of Akebou CI schools. It was fortuitous that there were never any reported cases of Ebola in Togo in 2014. While I hope that CI schools can continue to provide educational opportunity to
Akebou students, I fear that without governmental or NGO intervention they could one day cease to operate.

Finally, I feel that the research methodology and theoretical perspectives I selected for my study allowed me to create and present a holistic representation of the case. By using qualitative methods, I was able to gain relatively deep insight into the perspectives of participants and include their voices in my final write up. The interview and focus group data were especially rich and I do not believe that I would have been able to collect such insightful data had I used a written survey. Additionally, the majority of community member participants could not speak, read, or write in French, and therefore would have been excluded from participating in written surveys unless they were read and translated to them, which would invite significant issues in regards to the accuracy and interpretation of translations. Furthermore, educational issues are most commonly discussed in verbal forums in Togo. Interviews and focus groups most closely reflected natural discussions on education in the locality. Therefore, the use of a written survey would have been less culturally appropriate and would no doubt have caused confusion among participants.

Additionally, I believe that the qualitative methods of data collection allowed me to better gather honest responses from participants. During interviews, I was able to rely on my familiarity with participants and the region to ask probing questions or challenge comments that seemed to reflect the ‘party line’ on educational issues. Had I collected survey data, it would have been more difficult to sort through responses that reflected popular, idealistic perspectives rather than the realities of educational experiences. The document data I collected offered interesting contrast to the perspectives of participants. By comparing the policy perspective codified in documents to the practical realities described during interviews, I was able to gain insight into
the features of education in Togo. Without the policy documents and interview at the MOE, I would have been unable to draw comparisons between policies and practices, thereby reducing the quality of my dissertation.

The blended theoretical perspective—which included a consideration of the global-to-local continuum, post-colonial perspectives, critical theory, and human capital theory—was useful because it allowed me to view issues through a variety of perspectives to better understand the complexities of educational experiences as I discussed in Chapters Four and Five. Overall, there is little that I would change about my research methods and theoretical perspective. Though, if I had the opportunity, I would have liked to spend more time in the field to observe more ‘typical’ classes and included more school sites in my study. I discuss directions for future research in the following section.

**Directions for Future Research**

My investigation of educational policies and practices in the Akebou Prefecture left me considering several interesting directions for future research. As discussed earlier, it became clear to me that the realities of educational experiences in Akebou, Togo were constantly changing and would need to be expanded and updated to better reflect current situations. The three major directions for further research stood out to me were: studying CI schools in other regions of Togo, studying CI schools in other West African nations, and inquiring into the (lack of) NGO support for schools in Togo. While it would be interesting to return to the same sites, I would also like to observe educational experiences in other schools.

In my research in the Akebou Prefecture, I noticed that many of the key issues identified by participants were specific to the local and regional context. The trend was so pronounced that I developed the *space/context* theme to address issues that were directly related to regional,
community, and school contexts. By exploring the realities of CI schools in other regions of Togo (Maritime, Central, Kara, and/or Savanes), I would be able to compare and contrast the findings. I do not doubt that there some data would overlap, but I am sure that there are distinctive issues facing educators and community members in each of the regions. While Assiah and Luisoni (2006) and Gbogbotchi et al (2000) provided insight into the educational realities in other regions of Togo, differences in methodologies, focus, and time made it difficult to draw direct comparisons between studies. Given the opportunity, I would like to investigate the policies and practices of CI schools in other regions of Togo.

Secondly, it would be interesting to conduct a similar study in another Francophone West African country to provide a comparative perspective to my findings in Togo. This would expand the scope of the research and allow for the types of cross-national comparisons that are common in the field of comparative and international education. It would especially be interesting to observe and compare policy-practice dichotomies between countries with different models of policy implementation. I would also like to investigate the lending and borrowing of educational and curriculum policies across national borders, given that many of the textbooks used in Togo were designed for all Francophone West African countries. It would be interesting to compare and contrast curriculum materials and pedagogical strategies between countries. The scholarly literature indicated that Mali, Chad, and Senegal each had rich traditions of community involvement in education initiatives, making them ideal candidates for further research.

A third direction for further research would be to inquire into the issue of (lack of) NGO support for education in the Akebou Prefecture and Togo as a whole. As a Peace Corps Volunteer and as a researcher, I was surprised by the lack of NGO presence in the region. Personal experience and interview data indicated that there has virtually been no NGO activity in
the field of education in the Akebou Prefecture since at least 2008. Additionally, the scholarly literature offered few indications or explanations for the lack of NGOs. It would be interesting to collect policy document data from both international and local NGOs active in other regions of Togo to investigate their work. Furthermore, interview data could provide insight into their perspectives on development and project implementation frameworks. Finally, observation data could be used to compare and contrast the policies and practices of NGOs in Togo.

Conclusion

In closing, I conducted this study as a multi-site case study of the policies and practices of Community Initiative schools in the Akebou Prefecture of Togo, West Africa. I documented and described the educational realities experienced by school directors, teachers, and community members at local levels by collecting policy documents, conducting interviews, focus groups, and observations, and by taking photographs. My inclusion of the MOE, a state-sponsored school, and two CI schools, allowed me to compare and contrast key issues across different sites and investigate policies and practices across levels. The study produced four thematic findings and two overarching threads that appeared in each theme and represented both universal and distinctive issues. The threads of *Nos Propres Efforts* and *Educational Quality* are issues widely discussed in the scholarly literature and they surface in many countries around the world, illustrating the universal aspects of my study. However, participants in the Akebou Prefecture described these issues in contextually specific terms, which indicated the distinctiveness of my case study and provided insight into the diversity of educational issues internationally. Only through fieldwork at the micro-level was I able to learn about the realities of education in Akebou, Togo. While the role that community-based educational initiatives play in the achievement of education for all and larger discussion of international development will continue
to be a topic for debate, my study shows the distinctive role that community-based educational initiatives fill in the Togolese education system and in the Akebou Prefecture.
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APPENDIX A—IRB DOCUMENTS

APPENDIX A (1)

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

The University of Georgia

APPROVAL OF PROTOCOL

April 29, 2014

Dear Diane NAPIER:

On 4/29/2014, the IRB reviewed the following submission:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Review:</th>
<th>Initial Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title of Study:</td>
<td>On Nous Demande (‘They Ask of Us’): A Case Study of Community Initiative Schools in Akebou, Togo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigator:</td>
<td>Diane NAPIER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRB ID:</td>
<td>STUDY00000382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding:</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant ID:</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The IRB approved the protocol from 4/29/2014.

To document consent, use the consent documents that were approved and stamped by the IRB. Go to the Documents tab to download them.

In conducting this study, you are required to follow the requirements listed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

Larry Nackerud, Ph.D.
University of Georgia
Institutional Review Board Chairperson
I am asking you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. This form is designed to give you the information about the study so you can decide whether to be in the study or not. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called “informed consent.” A copy of this form will be given to you.

**Principle Investigator:** Dr. Diane Brook Napier, Social Foundations of Education, The University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602, dnapier@uga.edu, +001 706 202 8509

**Purpose of the Study:** This study will investigate critical educational issues facing directors, teachers, community members, and Ministry of Education officials in Togo. These include—but are not limited to—funding, availability of educational materials, curriculum policies, teacher training, community participation, and the use of national policies. This study will address differences between official policies and what happens in practice in Togolese education by comparing policy ideals with realities at the level of practice. I am asking for your participation in this study because your involvement in Togolese education will help me to understand key issues in your country. Your perspectives are a valuable contribution to this study.

**Study Procedures:** If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in one or more of the following activities with a translator present, if needed: a focus group interview lasting one to two (1-2) hours, an individual interview lasting one to two (1-2) hours, and/or observation periods of three or four (3-4) hours. Additionally, you may be asked to participate in a follow-up interview lasting one to two (1-2) hours. The researcher will highlight the activities you will be asked to participate in on this form*. During the interviews, you will be asked questions on the following topics: your experiences relating to Togolese education; your beliefs on the purposes of education; important issues at local schools; your perceptions of curriculum polices and practices; and the role of communities in school affairs. Finally, you may be asked to have your photograph taken. You may decline should you choose.

Please provide initials below if you agree to be photographed or not. You may still participate in this study even if you are not willing to be photographed.

______ I do not give permission to be photographed.

______ I give permission to be photographed.

**Risks and discomforts:** There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this study.

**Benefits:** The results from this study may help inform future curriculum policies and practices. Participation in this study will allow you to share your perspectives and opinions on critical issues, which may help strengthen educational practices.

**Incentives for Participation:** There will be no monetary or non-monetary incentives for participation.
**Audio/Video Recording:** The researcher will not use audio or video recording devices.

**Privacy/Confidentiality:** If you agree to participate in this study, the researcher will protect the confidentiality of your information by assigning you a codename. Even though the investigator will emphasize to all participants that comments made during the focus group session should be kept confidential, it is possible that participants may repeat comments outside of the group, which the researchers have no control of. The researchers will keep a code key, which can link your codename to your real name. This code key will be kept for 2 years after all data collection has been completed and then it will be destroyed. Identifiable data will be stored in the field notebook and on a password-protected computer stored in a secure location. Only the researcher will access the raw data.

**Voluntary Participation:** Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate before the study begins and you are free to discontinue at any time, with no penalty or loss of benefits which you would otherwise be entitled. If you decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as yours will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless you make a request to remove, return, or destroy the information.

**Questions:** The main researcher conducting this study is James T Gurney, a graduate student at the University of Georgia. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Dr. Diane Brook Napier at dnapier@uga.edu or +001 706 202 8509. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at +001 706 542 3199 or irb@uga.edu.

**Research Subject’s Consent to Participate in Research:** To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must sign on the line below or verbally consent to participate in the research. Your signature below indicates that you have read or had read to you this entire consent form and have had all of your questions answered.

---

Name of Researcher __________________________ Signature __________________________ Date __________

Name of Participant __________________________ Signature __________________________ Date __________

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

---

* Prior to providing the consent form to participants, the researcher will highlight the activities asked of participants based on their role in the research. Participants will only be asked to participate in activities that are included on the consent form.
Université de Géorgie- Consentement de participation à une recherché
On nous demande : Une étude de cas des écoles d'initiative locale dans la Préfecture Akebou, Togo

Je vous demande de participer à une étude de recherche. Avant de décider de participer, il est important que vous compreniez l'importance de la recherche et ce que cela impliquera. Ce formulaire est écrit pour vous montrer les buts d'étude, pour que vous puissiez décider si vous voulez participer ou non. Prenez le temps de lire attentivement les détails suivants. Vous pouvez poser des questions s'il y a quelque chose qui n'est pas clair ou si vous avez besoin d'autres informations. Quand on a répondu à toutes vos questions, vous pouvez décider si vous voulez participer ou pas. Ce processus est appelé «consentement éclairé». On va vous donner une copie de ce formulaire.

Investigatrice Principale : Dr. Diane Brook Napier, Département des fondements sociaux de l'éducation, Université de Géorgie, Athens, GA 30602, dnapier@uga.edu, +001 706 202 8509

But de l'étude : Cette étude examinera les questions importantes concernant l’éducation qui font face aux directeurs, aux enseignants, aux membres de la communauté, et aux fonctionnaires qui travaillent au ministère de l'éducation. Ces questions incluent—mais ne sont pas limitées à—le financement, la disponibilité du matériel éducatif, les politiques et les pratiques pédagogiques, la formation des enseignants, la participation communautaire, et la mise en œuvre des objectifs nationaux du développement de l'éducation. Cette étude examinera les différences entre les politiques officielles et les réalités au niveau des pratiques de l'éducation togolaise. Je vous invite de participer à cette étude parce que votre service dans le domaine de l’éducation va m'aider à comprendre les questions clés dans le domaine de l’éducation dans votre pays. Vos perspectives sont très importantes.

Les procédures de l'étude : Si vous acceptez de participer à cette étude, on vous invitera à participer aux activités suivantes avec un traducteur, si il est nécessaire : une entrevue en groupe qui durera une ou deux (1-2) heures, une entrevue individuelle qui durera d'une ou deux (1-2) heures, et/ou des périodes d'observation de trois ou quatre (3-4) heures. En outre, il est possible que vous soyez invité à participer à une entrevue de suivi qui durera une ou deux (1-2) heures. Le chercheur soulignera les activités que vous serez invité à participer à ce formulaire*. Au cours des entrevues, on vous posera des questions sur les thèmes suivants : vos expériences en tant qu'éducateur, membre de la communauté, ou fonctionnaire togolaise; vos idées sur les objectifs de l'éducation; questions importantes dans les écoles locales; vos perceptions des programme d'études; et le rôle des communautés dans le domaine scolaire. Il est possible qu’on vous invite à être photographié. Vous pouvez refuser si vous voulez.

S'il vous plaît, signez ci-dessous si vous acceptez d'être photographié ou non. Vous pouvez participer à cette étude si vous ne voulez pas être photographié.

_________ Je ne donne pas ma permission d’être photographié.
_________ Je donne ma permission d’être photographié.

Les risques prévisibles et les contraintes : Il n'y a pas de risques ni de contraintes connus associés à cette étude.

Bénéfices de la recherche : Les résultats de cette étude peuvent aider à améliorer les programmes d'études et la pédagogie dans l'avenir. La participation à cette étude vous permettra de partager vos points de vue et opinions sur des questions importantes, qui peuvent aider à renforcer les pratiques pédagogiques dans votre communauté.

Récompenses pour la participation : Il n'y aura pas de récompenses monétaires ou non-monétaires.
L'enregistrement audio ou vidéo : Le chercheur ne va pas utiliser l’enregistrement d’audio ni de vidéo.

Confidentialité: Le chercheur va vous donner un nom de code pour protéger la confidentialité de vos renseignements. Même si le chercheur soulignera à tous les participants que les observations au cours de l'entrevue de groupe doivent être gardées confidentiels, il est possible que les participants peuvent répéter observations en dehors du groupe, que les chercheurs n'ont pas de contrôle. Les chercheurs vont garder une clé de code, qui peut lier votre nom de code de votre vrai nom. Cette clé de code sera gardée pour 2 ans après tout la collecte des données a été effectuée, et après, il sera détruit. L'information qui est identifiable sera gardée dans un carnet et dans un ordinateur protégé par un mot de passe et gardé dans un endroit sécurisé.

Participation volontaire : Votre participation à cette étude est volontaire. Vous pouvez refuser de participer et vous êtes libre de vous retirer de l’étude à tout moment, sans pénalité ou la perte d'avantages qui vous aurait autrement droit. Si vous décidez de cesser de participer, votre information sera utilisée dans le rapport, sauf si vous faites une demande d'effacer les informations.

Questions : Le chercheur principal de cette étude est James T. Gurney, étudiant de troisième cycle à l'Université de Géorgie. Si vous avez des questions, vous pouvez les poser. Si vous avez des questions plus tard, vous pouvez contacter Dr. Diane Brook Napier à dnapier@uga.edu ou +001 706 202 8509. Si vous avez des questions concernant vos droits en tant que participant à la recherche, vous pouvez contacter le responsable du comité d’éthique à +001 706 542 3199 ou irb@uga.edu.

Consentement du sujet de recherche à participer : Pour accepter de participer à cette étude, vous devrez signier sur la ligne ci-dessus ou consentir à la recherche verbalement. Votre signature indique que vous avez lu tout le formulaire de consentement et vous avez reçu des réponses à toutes vos questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nom de chercheur</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nom du participant</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

S'il vous plaît, signez les deux copies, gardez-en-une et retournez l'autre au chercheur.

* Avant de fournir le formulaire de consentement aux participants, le chercheur soulignera les activités posées aux participants en fonction de leur rôle dans la recherche. Les participants seront invités seulement de participer à les activités qui sont inclus dans le formulaire de consentement et pas d'autres.
APPENDIX A (3)

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL—ENGLISH AND FRENCH

Interview Protocol 1 (Individual, semi-structured, used with Ministry of Education Official)
Hello, My name is James Gurney. I am working on my dissertation in Social Foundations of Education at the University of Georgia. I have asked you to sign the consent form to document your agreement to participate in this interview. I will begin by asking general questions about education in Togo. I will then ask more specific questions about your experiences working at the Ministry of Education. If at any time you feel uncomfortable answering a question, feel free to stop. Feel free to ask me any questions that you have during the interview.

Participant information: Name (to be changed), job description, number of years working at the Ministry of Education, and gender

| Demographics and Personal History | 1. Where were you born? Raised? Where did you attend school?  
2. What influenced your decision to work in the field of education? |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Purposes and Goals of Schooling  | 1. What are the main purposes of schooling/education?  
2. What types of knowledge are most relevant for Togolese students?  
3. What do CEG students need to know? Why?  
4. What role does the MOE play in ensuring these goals are met? |
| Key Issues                      | 1. What are the key issues in education in Togo?  
2. How is the MOE organized? What are the different departments? What are their responsibilities?  
3. How are national educational policies and curriculum guides created?  
4. How does the Ministry oversee the implementation of national policies?  
5. What types of curriculum materials are supplied by the government?  
6. Where are curriculum materials written and published? How are they disseminated and distributed to local schools?  
7. What types of training and support does the MOE provide for teachers?  
8. How is student learning assessed at the national level?  
9. How are communities involved in educational affairs? |
| Key Issues in Curriculum Policies and Practices | 1. Who is responsible for developing the national curriculum standards?  
2. What modifications does the MOE allow teachers to make to the national curriculum, if any?  
   • How much freedom do teachers have as they teach the national curriculum in their subject?  
   • Can they choose examples or cases to teach a concept or topic?  
3. Share relevant curriculum/policy document with participant (i.e. UNHRC classroom standards for Togo, National Development Plan, curriculum guide, textbook, etc.)  
   • Ask about the participant’s perspective on document  
   • Ask for their reflections on policy/practice, ideal/real  
   • Ask any follow-up questions based on their responses  
4. What issues impact implementation of national curriculum at local levels?  
5. How does the MOE or regional inspection supervise the performance of directors and teachers? |
| Follow-up Questions             | 1. (Ask any additional questions based on participant responses)  
2. Do you have any additional comments that you would like to share with me?  
3. Thank participant very much for the interview, mention that I may have follow up questions and ask if he/she would mind if I contacted him/her to ask if there is a clarification or further comments? |
Interview Protocol 2 (Individual, semi-structured, used with school directors)

Hello, My name is James Gurney. I am working on my dissertation in Social Foundations of Education at the University of Georgia. I have asked you to sign the consent form to document your agreement to participate in this interview. I will begin by asking general questions about education in Togo. I will then ask more specific questions about your experiences working in community schools. If at any time you feel uncomfortable answering a question, feel free to stop. Feel free to ask me any questions that you have during the interview.

Participant information: Name (to be changed), job description, number of years at this school, gender

| Personal History | 1. Where were you born? Raised? Where did you attend school?  
|                 | 2. Please describe a typical workday for you at your school.  
|                 | 3. What are your roles/titles/duties?  
|                 | 4. Why did you decide to become a school director?  
|                 | 5. What types of training have you received? Where did you receive your training?  
|                 | 6. Where do most of the students who attend your school live?  |
| Purposes and Goals of Schooling | 1. Why did the community establish your school? What were their goals?  
|                               | 2. What was your role in establishing the school?  
|                               | 3. What are the main purposes of schooling/education?  
|                               | 4. What types of knowledge are most important in your village? What do students need to know? Why?  |
| Key Issues | 1. What are the key issues facing you in your work as a director?  
|             | 2. What are key issues facing your school?  
|             | 3. How are school fees determined? Who participates in making this decision?  
|             | 4. How are teachers paid? How often?  
|             | 5. Who built the school? Who maintains it?  
|             | 6. What curriculum materials does the school provide for the teachers? Which are most available? Where do you get them? From the MOE?  
|             | 7. How often do you observe teachers? How do you oversee class content?  
|             | 8. How do students in the school participate in national exams? When? Where?  
|             | 9. How is the community involved in school affairs? What role do they play?  
|             | 10. What are some of the common concerns of teachers at your school?  
|             | 11. What are some of the common concerns of students in your classes?  |
| Key Issues in Curriculum Policies and Practices | 1. How do you use national curriculum in your school? How are teachers supposed to use it?  
|                                                          | 2. Share relevant curriculum/policy document with participant (i.e. UNHRC classroom standards for Togo, curriculum guide, textbook, etc.)  
|                                                          | • Ask about the participant’s perspective on document  
|                                                          | • Ask for their reflections on policy/practice, ideal/real  
|                                                          | • Ask any follow-up questions based on their responses  
|                                                          | 3. What key issues impact the implementation of national curriculum in your school?  
|                                                          | 4. How often do you or people at your school communicate with the Ministry?  
|                                                          | 5. Is your school recognized by the state?  |
| Follow-up | 1. (Ask any additional questions based on participant responses)  
|           | 2. Do you have any additional comments that you would like to share?  
|           | 3. Thank participant very much for the interview, mention that I may have follow up questions and ask if he/she would mind if I contacted him/her to ask if there is a clarification or further comments? |
Interview Protocol 3 (Individual, semi-structured, used with school teachers)

Hello, My name is James Gurney. I am working on my dissertation in Social Foundations of Education at the University of Georgia. I have asked you to sign the consent form to document your agreement to participate in this interview. I will begin by asking general questions about education in Togo. I will then ask more specific questions about your experiences working in community schools. If at any time you feel uncomfortable answering a question, feel free to stop. Feel free to ask me any questions that you have during the interview.

Participant information: Name (to be changed), job description, number of years working at this school, and gender

---

**Demographics and Personal History**
1. Where were you born? Raised? Where did you attend school?
2. Why did you decide to become a teacher?
3. Please describe a typical workday for you at your school.
4. Where do most of the students who attend your school live?
5. What types of teacher training have you received? Where did you receive your training? Lomé or elsewhere?

**Purposes and Goals of Schooling**
1. Why did the community establish your school? What were their goals?
2. What are the main purposes of schooling/education?
3. What types of knowledge are most important in your village? What do students need to know? Why?

**General Conditions and Key Issues**
1. What are the key issues facing you in your work as a teacher?
2. What are key issues facing your school?
3. How are school fees determined? Who participates in this decision?
4. How are teachers paid? How often?
5. Who built the school? Who maintains it?
6. What curriculum materials do you use most often? Which are most available? Where do you get them? From the MOE?
7. How do you assess student learning? Do they participate in national exams?
8. How is the community involved in school affairs?
9. Is your school recognized by the state?
10. What are some of the common concerns of students in your classes?

**Key Issues in Curriculum Policies and Practices**
1. How do you use the national curriculum in your classroom?
2. Share relevant curriculum/policy document with participant (i.e. UNHRC classroom standards for Togo, curriculum guide, textbook, etc.)
   - Ask about the participant’s perspective on document
   - Ask for their reflections on policy/practice, ideal/real
   - Ask any follow-up questions based on their responses
3. What changes do you make to the national curriculum, if any?
   - Do you use national curriculum in your subject area?
   - Are you allowed to choose your own examples to teach material to students?
4. What key issues impact the implementation of national curriculum? Why?
5. How do national policies influence what you do in your classroom?
6. How often do you or your school communicate with the Ministry?

**Follow-up Questions**
1. (Ask any additional questions based on participant responses)
2. Do you have any additional comments that you would like to share?
3. Thank participant very much for the interview, mention that I may have follow up questions and ask if he/she would mind if I contacted him/her to ask if there is a clarification or further comments?
Interview Protocol 4 (Individual, semi-structured, used with community members)

Hello, My name is James Gurney. I am working on my dissertation in Social Foundations of Education at the University of Georgia. I have asked you to sign the consent form to document your agreement to participate in this interview. I will begin by asking general questions about education in Togo. I will then ask more specific questions about your experiences living in the community. If at any time you feel uncomfortable answering a question, feel free to stop. Feel free to ask me any questions that you have during the interview.

Participant information: Name (to be changed), occupation, number of years involved with this school, and gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics and Personal History</th>
<th>1. Where were you born? Raised? Did you attend school in the Akebou?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Did you or your children attend this school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Where do most of the students who attend your school live?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purposes and Goals of Schooling</td>
<td>1. Why did the community establish the school? What were your goals?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. What role did you play in the establishment of the school?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. How have you been involved in school affairs?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. What types of knowledge are most important to learn in your village? What do students need to know? Why?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. What about education is most important to you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Issues</td>
<td>1. What are the main issues facing the school? The community?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. What are the major educational concerns in your community?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. What types of support does the community provide for the school?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. What degree of involvement does the community have in school affairs?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. How do you view the success of the school?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. How do you decide if the students are doing well in their studies?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Issues in Curriculum Policies and Practices</td>
<td>1. How does the school use the national curriculum?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Does the community participate in curriculum development? If so, how?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Share relevant curriculum/policy document with participant (i.e. UNHRC classroom standards for Togo, curriculum guide, textbook, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ask about the participant’s perspective on document</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ask for their reflections on policy/practice, ideal/real</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Ask any follow-up questions based on their responses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Who decides what content is taught in the school? The director? Teachers?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. How do you participate in determining school policies/practices?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. How often is the community involved in educational issues?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up Questions</td>
<td>1. (Ask any additional questions based on participant responses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Do you have any additional comments that you would like to share?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Thank participant very much for the interview, mention that I may have follow up questions and ask if he/she would mind if I contacted him/her to ask if there is a clarification or further comments?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Interview Protocol 5 (Focus group, semi-structured, used with school teachers)

Hello, My name is James Gurney. I am working on my dissertation in Social Foundations of Education at the University of Georgia. I have asked you to sign the consent form to document your agreement to participate in this interview. I will begin by asking general questions about education in Togo. I will then ask more specific questions about your experiences working at the local school. If at any time you feel uncomfortable answering a question, feel free to stop. Feel free to ask me any questions that you have during the interview.

Participant information: Names (to be changed), job descriptions, number of years working at this school, and gender

| Demographics and Personal History | 1. Please describe a typical workday at your school.  
| | 2. Where do the majority of students who attend your school live?  
| | 3. Why did you decide to become a teacher?  
| | 4. What types of teacher training have you received?  
| Purposes and Goals of Schooling | 1. Why did the community establish your school? What were their goals?  
| | 2. What are the main purposes of schooling/education?  
| | 3. What types of knowledge are most relevant in your village? What do students need to know? Why?  
| Key Issues | 1. What are the key issues facing you in your work as a teacher?  
| | • Ask follow up questions based on participant responses  
| | 2. What are key issues facing your school?  
| | • Ask follow up questions based on participant responses  
| | 3. How do you deal/cope with these issues?  
| | 4. How is the community involved in school affairs?  
| | 5. What are some of the common worries students have?  
| | • What curriculum materials do you use most often? Which are most available? Where do you get them?  
| | 2. How do you use the national curriculum in your classroom?  
| | 3. Share relevant curriculum/policy document with participants (i.e. UNHRC classroom standards for Togo, subject-specific curriculum guide, étude du milieu, textbook, etc.)  
| | • Ask about the participant's perspective on document  
| | • Ask for their reflections on policy/practice, ideal/real  
| | • Ask any follow-up questions based on their responses  
| | 4. What changes do you make to the national curriculum, if any?  
| | • Do you use national curriculum in your subject area?  
| | • Are you allowed to choose your own examples to teach material to students?  
| | 5. How do you decide what content to include in a lesson?  
| | • Describe similarities and differences between the curriculum content taught in your school and the standards established by the MOE  
| | 6. What oversight do you receive from the school director? What is his/her role in the school?  
| Follow-up Questions | 1. (Ask any additional questions based on participant responses)  
| | 2. Do you have any additional comments that you would like to share with me?  
| | 3. Thank participants very much for the interview, mention that I may have follow up questions and ask if they would mind if I contacted them to ask if there is a clarification or further comments? |
Interview Protocol 6 (Focus group, semi-structured, used with community members)

Hello, My name is James Gurney. I am working on my dissertation in Social Foundations of Education at the University of Georgia. I have asked you to sign the consent form to document your agreement to participate in this interview. I will begin by asking general questions about education in Togo. I will then ask more specific questions about your experiences living in the community. If at any time you feel uncomfortable answering a question, feel free to stop. Feel free to ask me any questions that you have during the interview.

Participant information: Names (to be changed), occupations, number of years involved with this school, and gender

| Logistics | 1. Where were you born? Raised? Did you attend school in the Akebou?  
| Purpose and Goals of Schooling | 2. Did you or your children attend this school?  
| Key Issues | 1. Why did the community establish the school? What were the goals?  
| | 2. What are the main purposes of schooling/education?  
| | 3. What types of knowledge are most relevant in your village? What do students need to know? Why?  
| | 4. What about education is most important to the community?  
| Key Issues in Curriculum Policies and Practices | 1. What are the main issues facing the school?  
| | • Ask follow up questions based on participant responses  
| | 2. What are some key development issues facing the village (water, sanitation, health, transportation, etc.)?  
| | • Ask follow up questions based on participant responses  
| | • What are the major educational concerns in your community?  
| | 3. Who pays for the school?  
| | 4. How are school fees determined? Who participates in this process?  
| | 5. How are teachers paid? How often? (From MOE? Community? Cash? In-kind?)  
| Key Issues in Curriculum Policies and Practices | 6. What curriculum materials do students use most often? Which are most available?  
| | • Where do you get them? How much do they cost?  
| | • Present/share relevant documents and ask for the thoughts of participants  
| | 7. How is the community involved in school affairs?  
| | • Please describe your involvement  
| | • Ask follow up questions based on their responses  
| Follow-up Questions | 1. Do you have local curriculum policies? If so, what are they?  
| | 2. Does the community participate in determining school policies/practices? How?  
| | 3. Who has the authority to develop curriculum content for the school? The MOE? The director? Teachers? Community members?  
| | 4. Share relevant curriculum/policy document with participants (i.e. UNHRC classroom standards for Togo, curriculum guides, textbook, etc.)  
| | • Ask about the participant’s perspective on document  
| | • Ask for their reflections on policy/practice, ideal/real  
| | • Ask any follow-up questions based on their responses  
| | 5. Where are the teachers and directors from? The Akebou Prefecture? Elsewhere?  
| | • How does it affect student-teacher relationships? Teacher-community relationships?  
| Follow-up Questions | 1. (Ask any additional questions based on participant responses)  
| | 2. Do you have any additional comments that you would like to share?  
| | 3. Thank participants very much for the interview, mention that I may have follow up questions and ask if they would mind if I contacted them to ask if there is a clarification or further comments?  

Le Protocole d'entrevue 1 (Individuelle, semi-structurés, utilisée avec un responsable du ministère)

Bonjour, Je m’appelle James Gurney. Je suis étudiant de 3ème cycle à l’Université de Géorgie aux Etats-Unis. Je vous ai prié de signer le formulaire de consentement pour documenter votre accord pour participer à cette entrevue. Je vais commencer en posant des questions générales sur le thème de l'éducation au Togo. Après, je vais poser des questions plus précises sur vos expériences de travail dans les écoles locales. Si vous sentez mal à l'aise en répondant à une question, nous pouvons sauter la question. Vous pouvez me poser toutes les questions que vous avez au cours d’entrevue.

Détails personnels : Nom (sera changé), titre d'emploi, années de travail sur le site, sexe

| Histoire personnelle | 1. Où êtes-vous né? Où avez-vous passé votre enfance? Où êtes-vous allé à l'école?  
2. Pourquoi avez-vous décidé de travailler dans le domaine de l'éducation? |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Buts et objectifs de scolarisation | 1. Selon vous, quels sont les principaux objectifs de la scolarité /de l’éducation?  
2. Quels types de connaissances sont les plus pertinentes pour les étudiants togolais?  
3. Les élèves du CEG doivent savoir/comprendre/connaître quelles connaissances? Pourquoi?  
4. Le ministère joue quel rôle pour assurer que ces objectifs sont atteints? |
| Questions clés | 1. Quelles sont les questions clés pour l'éducation au Togo?  
2. Le ministère est organisé dans quelle façon? Quels sont les départements différents? Quelles sont leurs responsabilités?  
3. Comment créer des politiques nationales d'éducation et de programmes d'études?  
4. Comment le ministère supervise-t-il la mise en œuvre des politiques nationales ?  
5. Quels types de documents pédagogiques sont fournis par le gouvernement?  
6. Où sont matériels pédagogiques écrits et publiés? Comment sont-ils diffusés et distribués dans les écoles locales?  
7. Quels sont les types de formation et de soutien que le Ministère de l'éducation fournit aux enseignants?  
8. Comment évaluer les étudiants au niveau national?  
9. Les communautés participent aux affaires éducatives de quelle manière? |
| Questions clés dans les politiques et pratiques curriculaires | 1. Qui est responsable pour l'élaboration des normes pédagogiques nationales?  
2. Le ministère permet aux enseignants de faire quels types des modifications au programme d'études national?  
• Les enseignants sont libres à enseigner comme ils voudraient?  
• Peuvent-les choisir des exemples pour enseigner un concept ou une matière?  
3. Partager un document (programme / politique) pertinente avec le participant (i.e. Droits humains des ONU, matériel éducatif, programme d'études, des manuels, etc.)  
• Se renseigner sur le point de vue du participant sur le document  
• Se renseigner sur leurs réflexions sur la politique / pratique, idéal / réel  
• Posez toutes les questions de suivi  
4. Quels types des questions changent la mise en œuvre des programmes au niveau local?  
5. Comment le ministère ou l'inspection régionale supervise-t-il le travail des administrateurs et des enseignants? |
| Suivi | 1. Posez les questions supplémentaires basées sur les réponses de participant  
2. Avez-vous des commentaires supplémentaires que vous voulez partager?  
3. Remercier le participant pour l'interview, mentionner qu’il est possible que je puisse avoir des questions de suivi et demander si je peux le/la contacter pour demander des éclaircissements ou pour autres commentaires. |
Le Protocole d'entrevue 2 (Individuelle, semi-structurés, utilisée pour les directeurs d'école)

Bonjour, Je m'appelle James Gurney. Je suis étudiant de 3me cycle à l'Université de Géorgie aux Etats-Unis. Je vous ai prié de signer le formulaire de consentement pour documenter votre accord pour participer à cette entrevue. Je vais commencer en posant des questions générales sur le thème de l'éducation au Togo. Après, je vais poser des questions plus précises sur vos expériences de travail dans les écoles locales. Si vous sentez mal à l'aise en répondant à une question, nous pouvons sauter la question. Vous pouvez me poser toutes les questions que vous avez au cours d'entrevue.

Détails personnels : Nom (sera changé), titre d'emploi, années de travail sur le site, sexe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Histoire personnelle</th>
<th>1. Où êtes-vous né? Où avez-vous passé votre enfance? Où êtes-vous allé à l'école?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Décrivez une journée de travail typique pour vous dans votre école.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Quels sont vos rôles / titres/ fonctions à l'école?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Pourquoi avez-vous décidé de devenir un directeur d'école?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Quel genre de formation avez-vous reçu? Où avez-vous reçu cette formation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. La plupart des étudiants vivent dans quel village?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buts et objectifs de scolarisation</th>
<th>1. La communauté a établi l'école pour quelles raisons? Quels étaient leurs objectifs?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Quel rôle avez-vous joué dans l'établissement de l'école?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Quels sont les buts et objectifs principaux de l'enseignement / scolarisation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Quels types de connaissances sont les plus importants dans votre village?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>De quoi les élèves ont-ils besoin de savoir/comprendre/connaître? Pourquoi?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions clés</th>
<th>1. Quels sont les grands problèmes pour vous dans votre travail en tant que directeur?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Quels sont les grands problèmes/questions clés dans votre école?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Comment déterminez-vous les frais scolaires? Qui participe à la prise de cette décision?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Comment les enseignants reçoivent-ils leur salaire? Combien de fois (par mois, année)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Qui a construit l'école? Qui l'entretient?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Vous observez les enseignants à quelle fréquence? Comment supervisiez-vous les classes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. La communauté participe dans les affaires scolaires en quelles capacités? Quel rôle jouent-ils?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Quelles sont les préoccupations communes chez les enseignants de votre école?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. Quelles sont les préoccupations communes chez les élèves de votre école?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions clés dans les politiques et pratiques curriculaires</th>
<th>1. Comment utilisez-vous le programme national dans votre école? Les enseignants sont chargés de utiliser le programme comment?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Partager un document (programme / politique) pertinente avec le participant (i.e. Droits humains des ONU, matériel éducatif, programme d'études, des manuels, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Se renseigner sur le point de vue du participant sur le document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Se renseigner sur leurs réflexions sur la politique / pratique, idéal / réel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Posez toutes les questions de suivi à propos de leurs réponses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Quels sont les facteurs qui changent la mise en œuvre de programmes nationaux dans votre école?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. À quelle fréquence pouvez-vous (ou quelqu'un d'autre) communiquer avec le ministère?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Votre école, est-elle reconnue par l'état? Est-ce que l'état finance/ aide votre école?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suivi

| 1. Poser des questions supplémentaires basées sur les réponses de participant |
| 2. Avez-vous des commentaires supplémentaires que vous voulez partager?     |
| 3. Remercier le participant pour l'interview, mentionner qu'il est possible que je puisse avoir des questions de suivi et demander si je peux le/la contacter pour demander des éclaircissements ou pour autres commentaires. |
Le Protocole d'entrevue 3 (Individuelle, semi-structurés, utilisée avec les enseignants)

Bonjour, Je m'appelle James Gurney. Je suis étudiant de 3me cycle à l'Université de Géorgie aux Etats-Unis. Je vous ai prié de signer le formulaire de consentement pour documenter votre accord pour participer à cette entrevue. Je vais commencer en posant des questions générales sur le thème de l'éducation au Togo. Après, je vais poser des questions plus précises sur vos expériences de travail dans les écoles locales. Si vous sentez mal à l'aise en répondant à une question, nous pouvons sauter la question. Vous pouvez me poser toutes les questions que vous avez au cours d'entrevue.

Détails personnels : Nom (sera changé), titre d'emploi, années de travail sur le site, sexe

| Histoire personnelle | 1. Où êtes-vous né? Où avez-vous passé votre enfance? Où êtes-vous allé à l'école?  
| 2. Pourquoi avez-vous décidé de devenir enseignant?  
| 3. Décrivez une journée de travail typique pour vous dans votre école.  
| 4. La plupart des étudiants vivent dans quel village?  
| 5. Quel genre de formation avez-vous reçue? Où avez-vous reçu cette formation? |

| Buts et objectifs de scolarisation | 1. La communauté a établi l'école pour quelles raisons? Quels étaient leurs objectifs?  
| 2. Quels sont les buts et objectifs principaux de l'enseignement / éducation?  
| 3. Quels types de connaissances sont les plus importants dans votre village? De quoi les élèves ont-ils besoin de savoir/comprendre/connaître? Pourquoi? |

| Questions clés | 1. Quels sont les grands problèmes pour vous dans votre travail en tant que enseignant?  
| 2. Quels sont les grands problèmes/questions clés dans votre école?  
| 3. Comment déterminez-vous les frais scolaires? Qui participe à la prise de cette décision?  
| 4. Comment les enseignants reçoivent-ils leur salaire? Combien de fois (par mois, année)?  
| 5. Qui a construit l'école? Qui l'entretient?  
| 7. Comment évaluez-vous les étudiants? Est-ce que les élèves participent aux examens nationaux?  
| 8. La communauté participe dans les affaires scolaires en quelles capacités?  
| 9. Est-ce que l'état finance/Aide / reconnaître votre école?  
| 10. Quelles sont les préoccupations communes chez les élèves de votre école? |

| Questions clés dans les politiques et pratiques curriculaires | 1. Comment utilisez-vous le programme scolaire national dans votre classe?  
| 2. Partager un document (programme / politique) pertinent avec le participant (i.e. Droits humains des ONU, matériel éducatif, programme d'études, des manuels, etc.)  
| • Se renseigner sur le point de vue du participant sur le document  
| • Se renseigner sur leurs réflexions sur la politique / pratique, idéal / réel  
| • Posez toutes les questions de suivi à propos de leurs réponses  
| 3. Vous faites quels changements au programme scolaire national ?  
| • Utilisez-vous des programmes nationaux dans votre discipline?  
| • Étes-vous autorisé à choisir les exemples pour enseigner la matière aux élèves?  
| 4. Quels sont les facteurs qui changent la mise en œuvre de programmes nationaux dans votre école?  
| 5. Les politiques nationales influencent-elles vos pratiques en classe? En quelles façons?  
| 6. À quelle fréquence pouvez-vous (ou quelqu'un d'autre) communiquer avec le ministère? |

| Suivi | 1. Posez les questions supplémentaires basées sur les réponses de participant  
| 2. Avez-vous des commentaires supplémentaires que vous voulez partager?  
| 3. Remercier le participant pour l'interview, mentionner qu'il est possible que je puisse avoir des questions de suivi et demander si je peux le/la contacter pour demander des éclaircissements ou pour autres commentaires. |
Le Protocole d'entrevue 4 (Individuelle, semi-structurés, utilisée avec les leaders de la communauté)

Bonjour, Je m'appelle James Gurney. Je suis étudiant de 3me cycle à l'Université de Géorgie aux Etats-Unis. Je vous ai prié de signer le formulaire de consentement pour documenter votre accord pour participer à cette entrevue. Je vais commencer en posant des questions générales sur le thème de l'éducation au Togo. Après, je vais poser des questions plus précises sur vos expériences de travail dans les écoles locales. Si vous sentez mal à l'aise en répondant à une question, nous pouvons sauter la question. Vous pouvez me poser toutes les questions que vous avez au cours d’entrevue.

Détails personnels : Nom (sera changé), titre d'emploi, années de travail sur le site, sexe

|                      | 2. Avez-vous fréquenté cette école? Vos enfants fréquentent-ils cette école?
|                      | 3. La plupart des étudiants à cette école vivent dans quel village ?

| Buts et objectifs de scolarisation | 1. La communauté a établi l'école pour quelles raisons? Quels étaient vos objectifs?
|                                   | 2. Vous avez joué quels rôles dans l'établissement de l'école?
|                                   | 3. Comment avez-vous participé dans les affaires de l'école?
|                                   | 4. Quels types de connaissances sont les plus importants dans votre village? De quoi les élèves ont-ils besoin de savoir/comprendre/connaître? Pourquoi?
|                                   | 5. Quels types d'éducation sont le plus important pour vous?

| Questions clés | 1. Quels sont les grands problèmes/questions clés dans l'école? Dans la communauté ?
|                | 2. Quelles sont les préoccupations principales dans votre communauté au niveau de l'éducation?
|                | 3. La communauté soutient / fournit / aide l'école de quelle manière?
|                | 4. Comment la communauté participe-t-elle dans les affaires scolaires?
|                | 5. Comment voyez-vous le succès de l'école?
|                | 6. Comment décidez-vous si les élèves réussissent bien dans leurs études?

| Questions clés dans les politiques et pratiques curriculaires | 1. L'école utilise le programme scolaire national de quelle manière?
|                                                               | 2. Est-ce que les membres de la communauté participent dans le développement des programmes scolaires? Si oui, comment?
|                                                               | 3. Partager un document (programme / politique) pertinente avec le participant (i.e. Droits humains des ONU, matériel éducatif, programme d'études, des manuels, etc.)
|                                                               | • Se renseigner sur le point de vue du participant sur le document
|                                                               | • Se renseigner sur leurs réflexions sur la politique / pratique, idéal / réel
|                                                               | • Posez toutes les questions de suivi à propos de leurs réponses
|                                                               | 4. Qui est chargé de décider la matière enseignée? Le directeur? Les enseignants?
|                                                               | 5. Comment participez-vous aux politiques / pratiques scolaires?
|                                                               | 6. La communauté participe au pris de décision de questions d'éducation à quelle fréquence? De quelles façons?

| Suivi | 1. Posez les questions supplémentaires basées sur les réponses de participant
|       | 2. Avez-vous des commentaires supplémentaires que vous voulez partager?
|       | 3. Remercier le participant pour l'interview, mentionner qu'il est possible que je puisse avoir des questions de suivi et demander si je peux le/la contacter pour demander des éclaircissements ou pour autres commentaires.
Le Protocole d'entrevue 5 (Entrevue en groupe, semi-structurée, utilisée avec les enseignants)

Bonjour, Je m’appelle James Gurney. Je suis étudiant de 3me cycle à l’Université de Géorgie aux Etats-Unis. Je vous ai prié de signer le formulaire de consentement pour documenter votre accord pour participer à cette entrevue. Je vais commencer en posant des questions générales sur le thème de l'éducation au Togo. Après, je vais poser des questions plus précises sur vos expériences de travail dans les écoles locales. Si vous sentez mal à l'aise en répondant à une question, nous pouvons sauter la question. Vous pouvez me poser toutes les questions que vous avez au cours d’entrevue.

Détails personnels : Nom (sera changé), titre d'emploi, années de travail sur le site, sexe

| Histoire personnelle | 1. Décrit une journée de travail typique pour vous dans votre école.  
2. D'où vient la plupart des étudiants qui fréquentent votre école?  
3. Pourquoi avez-vous décidé de devenir enseignant?  
4. Quel genre de formation avez-vous reçu? Où avez-vous reçu cette formation? |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Buts et objectifs de scolarisation | 1. La communauté a établi l'école pour quelles raisons? Quels étaient leurs objectifs?  
2. Quels sont les buts et objectifs principaux de l'enseignement / éducation?  
3. Quels types de connaissances sont les plus importants dans votre village? De quoi les élèves ont-ils besoin de savoir/comprendre/connaître? Pourquoi? |
| Questions clés | 1. Quels sont les grands problèmes pour vous dans votre travail en tant que enseignant?  
   • Poser des questions de suivi basées sur les réponses des participants  
2. Quels sont les grands problèmes/questions clés dans votre école?  
   • Poser des questions de suivi basées sur les réponses des participants  
3. Comment répondez-vous à ses problèmes/questions?  
4. La communauté participe-telle dans les affaires scolaires en quelles capacités?  
5. Quelles sont les préoccupations communes chez les élèves de votre école? |
| Questions clés dans les politiques et pratiques curriculaires | 1. Comment trouvez-vous / obtenez-vous des matériaux du programme national?  
   • Vous utilisez quels types des matériels pédagogiques le plus souvent? Lesquels sont les plus disponibles?  
2. Comment utilisez-vous le programme scolaire national dans votre classe?  
3. Partager un document (programme / politique) pertinente avec le participant (i.e. Droits humains des ONU, matériel éducatif, programme d'études, des manuels, etc.)  
   • Se renseigner sur le point de vue du participant sur le document  
   • Se renseigner sur leurs réflexions sur la politique / pratique, idéal / réel  
   • Posez toutes les questions de suivi  
4. Vous faites quels changements au programme scolaire national?  
   • Utilisez-vous des programmes nationaux dans votre discipline?  
   • Êtes-vous autorisé à choisir les exemples pour enseigner la matière aux élèves?  
5. Comment décidez-vous quel matériel éducatif à inclure dans une leçon / séance?  
   • Décrivez les similitudes et les différences entre le programme enseigné dans votre école et les normes établies par le Ministère  
6. Comment le directeur surveille-t-il les activités des enseignants? Quel est le rôle du directeur? |
| Suivi | 1. Posez les questions supplémentaires basées sur les réponses des participants  
2. Avez-vous des commentaires supplémentaires que vous voulez partager?  
3. Remercier les participants pour l'interview, mentionner qu'il est possible que je puisse avoir des questions de suivi et demander si je peux les contacter pour demander des éclaircissements ou pour autres commentaires? |
Le Protocole d'entrevue 6 (Entrevue en group, semi-structurée, utilisée avec les leaders de communauté)

Bonjour, Je m’appelle James Gurney. Je suis étudiant de 3me cycle à l'Université de Géorgie aux États-Unis. Je vous ai prié de signer le formulaire de consentement pour documenter votre accord pour participer à cette entrevue. Je vais commencer en posant des questions générales sur le thème de l'éducation au Togo. Après, je vais poser des questions plus précises sur vos expériences de travail dans les écoles locales. Si vous sentez mal à l'aise en répondant à une question, nous pouvons sauter la question. Vous pouvez me poser toutes les questions que vous avez au cours d'entrevue.

Détails personnels : Nom (sera changé), titre d'emploi, années de travail sur le site, sexe

|                      | 2. Avez-vous fréquenté cette école ? Vos enfants fréquentent-ils cette école ? |

| Buts et objectifs de scolarisation | 1. La communauté a établi l'école pour quelles raisons ? Quels étaient vos objectifs ?
|                                   | 2. Quels sont les objectifs principaux de la scolarité / éducation ?
|                                   | 3. Quels types de connaissances sont les plus importants dans votre village ? De quoi les élèves ont-ils besoin de savoir/comprendre/connaître ? Pourquoi ?
|                                   | 4. Quels sont les facteurs de l’éducation les plus importants selon la communauté ? Quels types d'éducation sont le plus important pour la communauté ? |

| Questions clés | 1. Quels sont les grands problèmes/questions clés dans votre école ?
|                | • Poser des questions de suivi basées sur les réponses des participants
|                | 2. Quels sont les problèmes principaux de développement dans votre village (l'eau propre, paludisme, santé, transport, etc) ?
|                | • Poser des questions de suivi basées sur les réponses des participants
|                | • Quels sont les problèmes principaux de l'éducation dans votre communauté ?
|                | 3. Qui finance l'école ?
|                | 4. Comment déterminez-vous les frais scolaires ? Qui participe à la prise de cette décision ?
|                | 5. Comment les enseignants reçoivent-ils leur salaire ? À quelle fréquence ? (Ministère, la communauté, don en nature ?)
|                | 6. Les élèves utilisent-ils quels types de matériels pédagogiques le plus souvent ? Lesquels sont les plus disponibles ?
|                | • Où achetez-vous le matériel pédagogique ? Les livres / matériaux coûtent combien ?
|                | • Partager un document programme / politique pertinente avec le participant
|                | • Se renseigner sur leurs idées et opinions
|                | 7. Comment la communauté participe-t-elle dans les affaires de l'école ? Par quels moyens ?
|                | • Décrivez votre implication / engagement
|                | • Poser des questions de suivi basées sur les réponses des participants

|                                                              | 2. Est-ce que les membres de la communauté participent dans le développement curriculaire ? Si oui, comment ?
|                                                              | 3. Qui est autorisé de créer ou développer du matériel pédagogique pour l'école? (le ministère ? les directeurs ? les enseignants ? les membres de la communauté ?)
|                                                              | 4. Partager un document (programme / politique) pertinente avec le participant (i.e. Droits humains des ONU, matériel éducatif, programme d'études, des manuels, etc.)
|                                                              | • Se renseigner sur le point de vue du participant sur le document
|                                                              | • Se renseigner sur leurs réflexions sur la politique / pratique, idéal / réel
|                                                              | • Posez toutes les questions de suivi
|                                                              | 5. D'où viennent les enseignants et le directeur ? La préfecture Akebou ? Quelque part d'autre ?
|                                                              | • Comment est-ce que cela change les relations entre les élèves et les enseignants ? Relations enseignants-communautaires ?

| Suivi | 1. Posez les questions supplémentaires basées sur les réponses des participants
|       | 2. Avez-vous des commentaires supplémentaires que vous voulez partager ?
|       | 3. Remercier les participants pour l'interview, mentionner qu’il est possible que je puisse avoir des questions de suivi et demander si je peux les contacter pour demander des éclaircissements ou pour autres commentaires.
APPENDIX A (4)

OBSERVATION GUIDE

School Sites
1. Where is the school located?
2. How is the school constructed (materials, roofing, etc.)?
3. How many classrooms does the school have?
4. What other facilities are present (toilets, water, windows, desks, grounds, soccer fields, teacher lounge, etc.)?
5. Is there evidence of regular maintenance? If so, what?
6. What languages are spoken outside of classrooms? Listen for languages to compare the stated language policies (from policy documents and interviews) and the realities of practice.
7. Are community members (non-teachers) present? If so, what are they doing?
8. Describe details and sketch/photograph the setting.

Classroom Observations
Classroom setup
1. How many students are in the classroom?
2. What is the gender breakdown? How many girls and boys?
3. Do the students wear uniforms? Complete or partial?
4. How many desks? How many students per desk?
5. What are the physical conditions (hot, bright, dark, loud, etc.)?
6. How many classes are taught at once? How many teachers are in each classroom?
7. Is there any audiovisual equipment? (TV, projector, etc)
8. What is the condition of the chalkboard?
9. Describe the details and sketch/photograph the setting.

Teaching/Curriculum Materials
1. Any signs of a formal curriculum being used by the teacher? What are they?
2. What is the availability of textbooks? How many are present? How many students per book?
3. What materials does the teacher use while teaching? What materials are available in the classroom?
4. Are there any additional materials present (posters, maps, examples of student work, boards, slates, books, etc.)?
5. What types of assessments are used/available for use?
6. Describe details of teaching/curriculum materials
7. What do students bring to school? (bookbags, slates, pens, pencils, paper, etc.)

Operations
1. What is the language of instruction? (Vernacular? French? Codeswitching?)
3. What happens during a class period? Log the events of each class period.
4. What types of teaching strategies does the teacher use?
5. What are students doing in the lesson (copying notes off board? Listening, etc.)?
6. Describe the class and record the events that occur during the observation period.
7. Describe any interactions between community members and educators during school hours.
Government Hard Copy Documents
- Handbook of Togolese Education Policy
- Practical Guide for Teaching CEG Education
- Ministry of Education—Minimum Requirements for Schooling
- Curriculum Standards by Subject
  - History Geography
  - French
  - Life Sciences
  - Physical Sciences
  - Mathematics
  - English

Textbooks

BEPC Examination Questions and Answers

Online Education Press Releases
- Togo News- “Revolution in Education” (6/21/13)
- Togo News- “Germany Aid to Education” (3/21/13)
- Togo News- “France Sends Kit to Schools” (4/3/14)
- Togo News- “Teacher Strike” (10/31/14)
- Togo News- “Forced Vacation for 2 million Students” (11/5/14)
- Togo News- “1,000 New Classrooms Operational” (5/5/14)
- Togo News- “Start of End of Year Exams” (5/18/14)
- Togo News- “Free and Quality Education” (6/15/14)
- Togo News- “BEPC passing rates 2014” (6/25/14)
Hard Copy—From Sites
- Welcome Speech in CI:1

Photographed Documents (by site)
- MN:1—Interview with Former Minister
- ST:1—Enrollment Rates and BEPC Passing Rates
- ST:1—Class Schedules
- ST:1—Budget Documents for 2013-2014
- CI:1—Enrollment Rates and BEPC Passing Rates
- CI:1—Algebra Textbook
- CI:1—French Readers
- CI:1—English Textbook
- CI:2—Enrollment Rates and BEPC Passing Rates
- CI:2—History Geography Textbook
- CI:2—Cahier de Texte
- CI:2—Educational Administration Training Packet
- CI:2—Educational Statistics Training Packet
APPENDIX B (2)

SAMPLE PAGE FROM HANDBOOK OF TOGOLESE EDUCATION POLICY

III. Un Comité de gestion composé
   - du Président
   - du Vice-président
   - du Trésorier
   - d'un Trésorier Adjoint
   - d'un Secrétaire
   - d'un Secrétaire Adjoint
   - d'un Conseiller dont deux parents d'élèves
   - d'un commissaire aux comptes dont un parent d'élève

IV. Une commission de contrôle formée de deux commissaires aux comptes
   Les pouvoirs de la commission se composent de :
   - des cotisations perçues au titre de l'école
   - des intérêts de fonds placés
   - des emprunts
   - des dons et legs

Les cotisations sont perçues sous la responsabilité du Directeur d'école qui, seul, répondra des irrégularités éventuelles constatées au niveau de son école. Il tient à cet effet un registre des cotisations perçues et passe les soumissions des mêmes délivrés aux parents.

Il existe trois établissements de l'Etat à la charge d'une classe d'âge donnée, l'administration et la gestion sont dispensées dans les mêmes.

E. LE FINANCEMENT DE L'ÉCOLE

Le financement de l'école est assuré par l'Etat, les collectivités territoriales et locales, les organismes nationaux et la contribution des parents.

L'Etat assure l'entretien du financement de fonctionnement, il intervient en outre par le budget d'investissement.

Au niveau de l'enseignement des Premiers et Deuxièmes DEUG, l'Etat participe aux cotisations scolaires en fournissant les matières.

Il prend entièrement en charge la construction de l'équipement des locaux de l'unité latérale administrative des Troisième et Quatrième DEUG.
THEME 2 : LES EVALUATIONS.

Animateur: M. Kossi KWAMITSE.

« L'objectif de l'enseignement c'est la réussite de tous les élèves ou du moins du plus grand nombre de ses apprenants ».

L'évaluation des connaissances des apprenants est un champ très vaste (toute une semaine ne nous permettra pas d'épuiser les thèmes relatifs à l'évaluation).

Au cours de la présente rencontre, nous allons nous consacrer à une petite parcelle de ce vaste champ : les différents modes d'évaluation, leurs objectifs, leur durée et leur périodicité, ceci en vue d'harmoniser nos points de vue sur ce sujet.

QUEST-CE QU'ÉVALUER ?

Etymologiquement, ÉVALUER vient du latin « ex-valuer » c'est-à-dire « Extraire la valeur », « Faire ressortir la valeur de ». Ceci attire d'embâlée notre attention sur le fait qu'une finalité de l'évaluation peut être de valoriser ce que l'élève produit de positif ! On est le plus souvent, dans les pratiques courantes d'évaluation en milieu scolaire, très éloigné de cette perspective.

Au sens général du terme, « ÉVALUER », c'est déterminer le prix d'un objet. Dans le domaine scolaire, il s'agit d'attribuer une valeur, probablement une note, à la production de l'élève dans chaque discipline évaluée. Dans cette perspective, c'est aussi l'élève lui-même qui est évalué lorsqu'il s'agit de prendre une décision concernant la base de sa note : le passage en classe supérieure, le succès ou l'échec à un examen, l'orientation, l'aptitude ou non à poursuivre des études supérieures, etc. Dans cette optique, évaluation rime avec sanction.

Parmi les définitions qui ont été données de l'évaluation, celle de DE KETELE reste la plus opérationnelle et la plus complète, à savoir que « ÉVALUER » signifie :

- Recueillir un ensemble d'informations suffisamment pertinentes, valides et fiables.
- Examinier le degré d'adéquation entre cet ensemble d'informations et un ensemble de critères conformes aux objectifs fixés au départ ou ajustés en cours de route en vue de prendre une décision.

« ÉVALUER » signifie noter, juger, récompenser, ... ou bien former. Dans la pratique, quand on évalue, le moins qu'on puisse faire, c'est de vérifier si les objectifs que l'on s'est donné sont atteints.

DEMARCHE ÉVALUATIVE

1-Qu'évalue-t-on ?

On peut évaluer les élèves, un enseignant, les programmes, les méthodes, un projet, un système éducatif, un procédé d'évaluation, un manuel, etc.

Dans tout acte de formation ou d'apprentissage, on mesure et apprécie le progrès réalisé par l'apprenti.

2-Pourquoi entreprendre une évaluation ? La réponse à cette question fait appel aux objectifs, aux fonctions et aux formes d'évaluation (formatif et summative).

Est-ce pour :

- m'assurer de la participation des élèves ?
- décider des techniques et méthodes d'apprentissage de mon enseignement
- informer les autorités administratives ?
- Les objectifs de l'évaluation sont multiples (types d'évaluation) :
  - faire passer l'élève d'une classe à une autre ;
  - procéder à un recrutement ;
  - savoir si l'élève a assimilé telle ou telle étape de sa formation.
- Comment vais-je m'y prendre ? (Les modes et les instruments d'évaluation)

Vais-je :
APPENDIX B (4)

SAMPLE BEPC EXAMINATION QUESTION AND ANSWER

Questions

Answers
APPENDIX B (5)

SAMPLE CURRICULUM STANDARDS

History-Geography

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme d'Histoire de la Classe de Troisième</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. L'Europe technicienne (10 séquences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Les découvertes scientifiques et les applications techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Les transformations dans l'agriculture et dans l'industrie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Le capitalisme : définition et moyens d'action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Les transformations sociales et idéologiques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 L'impérialisme : définition, causes, moyens d'action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. L'Afrique au XIXe siècle (16 séquences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Tableau général de l'Afrique à la veille de la conquête coloniale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 L'Afrique et la conquête coloniale :</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- les explorations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- la conférence de Berlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- les résistances de quelques souverains : Samory, Béhanzin, Ménélik II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Les résistances au Togo (Togo Allemand)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- La carte politique de l'Afrique à la fin de la conquête coloniale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- L'organisation politique et économique des colonies (systèmes coloniaux et exploitation économique)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Le Togo allemand : organisation politique, économique et sociale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Les deux grandes guerres mondiales (14 séquences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 La Première Guerre mondiale :</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Causes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Conséquences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- En Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- En Afrique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Au Togo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- La S. D. N.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 La crise économique de 1929 :</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Origines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Développement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Effets dans le monde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Solutions de la crise (exemple Américain, le New Deal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Les manifestations de la crise au Togo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 La Deuxième Guerre mondiale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Causes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Conséquences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I - AFFIRMATION DES COMPÉTENCES GRAMMATICALES

**PRÉMIER TRIMESTRE (12 séances)**

1. Situation de communication
2. Réseaux de boucle
3. Trames destinées de l'oral et de l'écrit

**IV - Le discours et la phrase**
1. Enonciation énoncé : Discours (divers sens du terme) et phrase
2. Distinction entre discours et récit
3. Emploi du discours direct, indirex, indirect libre
4. Phrase et propositions : phrase simple et phrase complexe
5. La phrase et ses constituants
6. La phrase et les groupes fonctionnels
7. juxtaposition, coordination, juxtaposition : édité grammaticale et stylistique
8. Expressions de l'ordre de la différence : interscience, partielle, directe, indirecte
9. Expression de la négation : négation totale, partielle, coordination dans la négation, la double négation, la négation lacunaire
10. Mise en relation : par modification de l'ordre familial des mots, par pronomainisation

**Fh - L'expression poétique**
1. La valeur de suggestion
2. Performances
3. Souvenirs : utilisation et insertion, mèmes (nature, agencement, qualité)

**DEUXIÈME TRIMESTRE (18 séances)**

**II - Le groupe nominal**
1. Les noms et ce qui le complète : reconnaissance et mention de divers types de groupes nominatifs
2. Les traits lexicaux (nommement commun et nommement propre, nommement réel et non réel)
3. Maitrise de l'emploi des pronoms relatifs

**C - Le groupe verbal (1er & 2e)**
1. Le verbe et ce qui le complète : reconnaissance de divers types de groupes verbaux
2. Les formes verbales : temps et modes, emplois et valeurs des modes et des temps, utilisation des pronoms relatifs

**IF - L'expression poétique (1er trimestre)**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LESSONS</th>
<th>UNITS</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>GRAMMAR STRUCTURES</th>
<th>VOCABULARY</th>
<th>SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>55' x 6</td>
<td>Major: Each other / One another Past Conditional Passive Minor so...that Start talking / Without knowing Hurily Interrogative form To know how to ... Any more / any longer</td>
<td>to challenge, a stroke, a task, a brain, a magic-maker, a charm, a witchcraft, a sorcery, understandable, a team, to beat hollow, to complain, a goalmouth, to search, a referee, to burry, an opponent, to confluence, to defeat, strange, a cry / to cry, to excel oneself, a nickname / to nickname, a centre-half (positions of players on a football field), a short, terrify, to join the army / a club, a war, to be over, a cook / to cook.</td>
<td>- Dialogue between two student watched a match - Writing: e.g.: a football match - Drills - Picture description - Debate: Can charms help to win matches or get a girl? - Reading comprehension - Listening comprehension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>55' x 6</td>
<td>To make someone do something Future Conditional (1st Conditional) Simultaneous actions in the past: e.g.: As we talked, our teeth chattered.</td>
<td>to be at one’s worst / best, to shiver, a gust of cold, to chatter, a machine-gun, to lower, for a while, to spring up, overhead, to pour down, to bowl, to disturb, at random, thatch, queer, to frown, a flash of lightening, to split, a thunder, to growl, to grumble, to roar, to grip, a fright, indoors.</td>
<td>- Writing: Seasons of your region - Reading comprehension - Prepared dictation - Drills on structures - Reading aloud</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>55' x 5</td>
<td>The habitual form: used to / would The use of: Instead of - ing-form Reported speech: Questions Review of tenses</td>
<td>at sunset / at dawn, towards, the earth, to burst into flames / tears / laughter, a witch / a wizard, to fall in love with, to snatch, to be restless, a fork, to suck, a soul, a spirit, an assembly, to be shocked, to wail, a crowd / crowded, to slip, to be alive, to shine, to gaze at / a gaze, thoughtful / thoughtfully, jealous / jealousy.</td>
<td>- Drills on structures - Speaking: Story telling: Some who died of witchcraft. - Writing: - Letter writing: Personal letter (Informal letter) - Picture description - Reading comp. - Reading: Skimming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mot de bienvenue à M. le volontaire de Corpo de la paix des États-Unis d’Amérique au Togo.

M. le volontaire de Corpo de la paix des États-Unis d’Amérique au Togo, la population du canton de Kpalaave-Kabagni et le Corpo enchaînant vous souhaitant la bienvenue.

Dès la réception de votre lettre relative à votre visite, impatiente est notre attente. M. s’apprête bien comme chez vous. Nous profitons de cette occasion pour vous remercier de l’importance que vous attachez à notre école embryonnaire. Que le Dieu tout puissant vous Comble de toutes ses grâces.

Depuis la création de notre Collège Communautaire en 2002-2003, c’est la communauté villageoise qui est chargée de l’équipement des frais et des infrastructures pour le fonctionnement de cette école. En effet notre école n’a bénéficié d’aucune subvention, ni de l’État, ni d’un autre organisme.

M. nous vous demandons la faveur de nous aider sur le plan scolaire, sanitaire et économique.

M. le Volontaire. Comme vous êtes parmi nous, nous vous demandons d’être notre parrain. Pour ne pas perdre le temps nous déclarons ouvertes les activités de votre mission.

Je vous en remercie.
APPENDIX C

DATA ANALYSIS

APPENDIX C (1)

SAMPLE INTERVIEW NOTES AND CODING FROM FIELD NOTEBOOK
APPENDIX C(2)

SAMPLE INTERVIEW NOTES AND CODING FROM FIELD NOTEBOOK—TYPED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-Reflection Notes</th>
<th>Reflective Notes</th>
<th>Interview Notes</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Goals of education are linked more to personal development according to him</td>
<td>Objectives of Ed</td>
<td>PERSDEV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Although he alludes to the national goals in the book like other teachers</td>
<td>-For his own emancipation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Curriculum teaching materials</td>
<td>-l’émancipation personnelle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Lacks some basic science tools</td>
<td>-savoir faire, savoir être</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-But makes do with what he has and the chalkboard</td>
<td>-All within the personnalités humaines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Links with local context</td>
<td>Curriculum Materials</td>
<td>DOCS/MAT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Local environment as teaching tool</td>
<td>-Some small science tools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Find the science in the environment</td>
<td>-Ruler, volt meter, scale, mass marque, reporter, compass</td>
<td>CURRIC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-For 6ème he shows them national biological examples of what they learn in the text</td>
<td>-These are essential elements for many sciences (classes)</td>
<td>CURRIC-LC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Links theory w/practice</td>
<td>-For comparing things in the locality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Tries to make science real concept, but limited by tools/books</td>
<td>-In 6ème use nature to explain key concepts which aligned with the program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Lack of books</td>
<td>-La nature est le premier outil de travail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Outdated</td>
<td>-étude de milieu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Left to teacher to find and use new book (NPE)</td>
<td>-This allows the teacher to put in place things that students recognize</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Cahier as textbook for students</td>
<td>Not enough books</td>
<td>BOOKS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Copied from board</td>
<td>-6ème → 3ème the SVT books are too old to use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-6ème, 5ème no books for sciences physiques</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment rates</td>
<td>ENROLL</td>
<td>Blue</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Success/Achievement</td>
<td>STUACHEV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of economic opportunity</td>
<td>ECONOPP</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Apathy</td>
<td>COMMAP</td>
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<td>Reference to government</td>
<td>GOVT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cahier de texte</td>
<td>TEXTE</td>
<td>Blue</td>
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<tr>
<td>State recognition</td>
<td>STATEREC</td>
<td>Blue</td>
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<tr>
<td>CC vs. State School</td>
<td>CCvST</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Dans le cahier”</td>
<td>CAHIER</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Trop vaste”</td>
<td>VASTE</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/Sanitation</td>
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<td>Blue</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>School maintenance</td>
<td>MAINTAIN</td>
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<td>Education Reform</td>
<td>REFORM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevancy (Practical Application)</td>
<td>RELIV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Curriculum</td>
<td>CURRIC-LC</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of infrastructure (National)</td>
<td>INFRA-TG</td>
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<td>Lack of training</td>
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## ORGANIZATION OF DATA AND MAJOR FINDINGS BY RESEARCH QUESTION

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Major Findings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What are the contemporary features of Togolese education policy?</td>
<td>Features:</td>
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<tr>
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<td>• Documents</td>
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<td>    o <em>Togolese handbook of Education Legislation and Administration</em>—Rooted in international goals; UN Rights of Child; UN Human Rights; Objectives of education—democracy, obligatory schooling, neutrality, EFA, gender equality, appropriate, relevant, and high quality education, preservation of local culture; Organization of levels of schooling (Pre-primary and Primary, CEG, Lycee, University); Requirements/regulations for school buildings; School rules—Conditions of inscription, uniform and materials; Discipline and classroom behavior with rewards and punishments; Daily schedule/Emploi de Temps; Administrative correspondence; Safety and security of students at school; Financing schools (42); Hierarchy of education administration from Ministry down to counsel of teachers; Requirements (age, health, education, etc.) for becoming a teacher; recruitment of teachers; Teacher training (pre-service and in-service); Compensation for state teachers; Conditions for promotion; Vacations and breaks; Layoff policies; Discipline policies for teachers; National exams; Teacher certification exams; Retirement pension policies; Professional Morals—justice, self-respect, self-reflection, language and behavior, desire for perfection; Importance of teaching; Ongoing personal/professional development; Instruction vs. Education; Physical education; Teacher-Student relationship (includes TM official policy, p.86); Teacher-Teacher relationship; Teacher-parent relationship; Teacher-authority relationship; Personal life of teachers; Public education policy on religion in schools</td>
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<td>    o <em>Practical Guide for Secondary Teaching</em>—EVs need extra training; <strong>Definition of objectives</strong>: Importance of objectives in pedagogy; criteria of definitions of objectives; Learner centered pedagogy; 3 domains of objectives—cognitive, affective, and psychomotor; Advantages of using objectives; <strong>Evaluations</strong>—why evaluate, how to evaluate, methods, grading; Importance of evaluation; Importance of feedback; Functions of evaluation in schooling (formative, summative, and diagnostic); Student evaluation as a tool for teacher self-evaluation; <strong>Preparing a Lesson Plan</strong>: Long-term preparation and ongoing learning as a teacher; Short-term preparation and locating/reading materials; Immediate preparation and writing a lesson plan; La fiche pedagogique; Required sections of a lesson plan (specific objectives, documents, materials, methods, previous lesson review, motivation, lesson of the day, review, homework/quiz); <strong>Leading a class</strong>: Motivating students; Structuring a class/lesson; Student-Teacher interactions/relationship; Effective teaching strategies; Maintaining discipline; Section II- Teaching by Subject; <strong>History and Geography</strong>: Goals, objectives, and official program (hours per week); Principles, methods, procedures, and technique; Determining base-knowledge of students; Commentary on Official Curriculum by class; Developing critical thinkers; Avoid encyclopedic knowledge; Make history relevant; Link with student life and current events; Use of local environment for Geography lessons; <strong>French</strong>: Profile of Citizen; Goals, General Objectives, and Principles of French language instruction; Official schedule for classes (hours per week by topic); Methods, Techniques, and Procedures for teaching; Evaluation; <strong>English</strong>: Objectives of English in Togo; Writing a Lesson Plan; Example of lesson plan; Activities for Listening Comprehension; Activities for Reading Comprehension; Speaking Activities; Writing Activities; Vocabulary Activities; Grammar Activities; <strong>Physical Science</strong>: Definition of field (physics and chemistry); Objectives of class; Knowledge, behaviors, and actions as goals; Learning how to learn; Activite Pratique (TP); Inductive learning; Deductive learning; Scientific method; Preparation of lesson plan; Official schedule for class (hours per week); Officially sanctioned textbooks; Common difficulties faced by teachers—access to materials, conducting experiments, self-confidence, security measures; Advice to overcome these challenges; <strong>Math</strong>: Based on 1975 Reform; Making math concrete and relevant;</td>
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</table>
General objectives; Pedagogical practices; Role of teacher; Methodological recommendations; Make math more active, lively, and practical; SVT; General objectives; Required knowledge and how to achieve it for each class (linked to official curriculum standards); Necessity of experimentation; Evaluation based on specific objectives

- **Plan Sectoriel de l’Education (PSE) 2010**—Norms for school buildings; “Minimum Packet”; For primary school; For CEG—Classrooms, instructional materials and textbooks, football field, clean water source, latrines, administrative buildings (director office and teacher lounge), storage room, library, and laboratories; Size of classrooms and student teacher ratios; Required teacher qualifications; Working conditions for teachers; Professional development for teachers; Policies for teacher promotion; Official program of study; School management and community input; Recent reforms to improve quality of education—Inclusion of civic and health education in CEG curriculum as electives, recruitment and training of teachers, Formation Initiale de Rattrapage (FIR), training EVs to pass CAP, building and rebuilding EDILs

- Curriculum Guides by Subject—See guides for specific standards to be addressed

- Press Releases from Togo News—“Revolution in Education” including severe crisis and need for participatory solutions (6/21/13); “German NGO Builds School” and international aid for Togo school construction (3/21/13); “French Aid Sends Kits to Schools” audiovisual materials, computers, and touch screen tablets to be sent to pilot schools (4/3/13); “New Strike for Teachers” second strike of the school year following strike in August (10/31/13); “Forced Vacation for Students (Strike)” official government position on striking teachers (11/5/13); “1,000 New Classrooms” World Bank finances the construction of primary schools around Togo, including school in Brada (5/5/14); “Beginning of end of year exams” numbers of students registered to take exams and states that strikes didn’t affect the exam questions or official program (5/18/14); “Quality and Free” article discussing Togo’s recent efforts to enroll students in schools in commemoration of Day of the African Child (6/15/14); “BEPC Exam Results” national and regional data on passing rates for BEPC (6/25/14)

- **Interviews:**

  - **State School:**
    - Director (**ST:D1**): Bachelors degree; typical day—6:45 flag raising and national anthem, 7:00 classes start, 5, 55-minute classes each day with 15 min recreation to buy food; teaches math and physical science in addition to director duties; responsible for mail between school, regional inspection, and ministry of education, must attend meetings regarding national exams, State built school in 1976, CEG curriculum provides basic knowledge that all should know; School fees set at 3.600 for boys and 2.800 for girls, reflecting a national policy to increase access for girls by reducing cost of education; Parallel funds to pay EVs is set at 3.000 for all students; Participatory decision-making to set parallel funds with parents; Maximum amount allowed for community contribution by state policy; State pays 4 of 6 school employees; State does not intervene in the maintenance of the school; School pays for and provides labor for its new roof; Budget is sent to inspection each year; State sends books at beginning of year (this year 5 books); Requests more than he receives; Not enough books for all students; Director first in line to train/oversee new teachers; Inspection visits once per year; BEPC testing center for 7 CEGs; Director is in charge of overseeing entire operation; Exam questions sent by government; APE exists to resolve problems, raise money, set fees, and support importance of education in community; 180 total students attend school

  - Teachers: **ST:T1**: EV; BAC II; No formal training; Failed CAP-CEG twice; Teaches physical science and math for 18 hrs/week; Uses state standards and state textbooks to plan his lessons; National curriculum hasn’t changed since he started teaching, reuses lessons from past years; Salary comes from school fees, not state; Students pay for regional exam questions; Not enough chalk is worked into the school’s budget; Wants more visits from regional inspection; Reform banning corporal punishment has made it hard to punish students and maintain discipline; **ST:T2**: Paid by state; Masters in sociology; Received FIR training; Degree alone does not quality him to teach because it is in sociology, not a subject taught in CEG; Has copy of Handbook of Ed Policy; Teaches French and Histo-Geo for 20 hrs/week; Uses national curriculum standards to prepare his lessons; Uses devior to
1A. What are the relevant features that relate to CI schools in rural areas?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relevant features relating to CI schools</th>
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<tr>
<td>Documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Togolese handbook of Education Legislation and Administration*—Conditions for opening and closing a school; Document required for inspection visits and govt. oversight, including Cahier de Texte; Inventory of curriculum and pedagogy documents; Health and Hygiene on school grounds; Mutual Cooperative for extra financing; process for collecting school fees; Financing schools (42); Discipline policies for teachers; National exams; Professional Morals—justice, self-respect, self-reflection, language and behavior, desire for perfection; Importance of teaching; On-going personal/professional development; Instruction vs. Education; Physical education; Teacher-Student relationship (includes TM official policy, p.86); Teacher-Teacher relationship; Teacher-parent relationship; Teacher-authority relationship; Personal life of teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Practical Guide for Secondary Teaching*—All sections described above are also relevant for CI schools because the document explains how official policies should be implemented at the local level in schools staffed with EVs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Plan Sectoriel de l’Education (PSE) 2010*—Again, this entire document is relevant for CI schools because it explains how official policies should be implemented at the local level in schools staffed with EVs.</td>
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to CI school, see above entry
- Curriculum Guides by Subject
- Press Releases from Togo News—“Revolution in Education”; “1,000 New Classrooms”; “Quality and Free”; “BEPC Exam Results”

• Interviews
  - State School: (See above)
  - CI School 1: CI:1:D1: BAC II in Series D; No university degree; Teaches Physical Science and SVT; 6:45 flag raising and national anthem, 7:00 classes start, 5, 55-minute classes each day with 15 min recreation to buy food; Expenses of school paid for with fees and community contribution; Collects and submits enrollment and grade data to inspection; Sets Emploi de Temps; Sets school-level objectives (including passing rates for BEPC); Oversees teachers and provides feedback on instruction; Implements regional exams; Attends meetings for directors in Badu, but has to pay his own way; Recognizes that schools with enrollment and CEG more likely to get state recognition for projects; Inspection gave 4 books when school opened, after that nothing; State sends national curriculum standards during meeting at beginning of year; State requires demographic survey, but director doesn’t understand importance; When curriculum program doesn’t change, reuse last year’s lessons; Follow textbooks chapter by chapter when planning lessons; Same curriculum as state schools; Student’s take BEPC at state school; BEPC serves as qualification to teach primary school; BEPC prepares students to be primary school teachers; School fees cheaper for girls than boys (6.100 and 6.500) following national policy, used to be more difference between boys and girls, but they didn’t have enough money to pay teachers; State has not sent any books; Inspection sends photocopies of official curriculum guides sent to school; Too much to cover; Books aligned with curriculum; No difference in curriculum policies between state and CI; CI:1:T1: BAC II; Less than 1 semester university studies; Teaches Math and Physical Science; No CAP; No formal training; Director responsible for overseeing their work; BEPC serves as qualification to teach primary school; Teacher’s main job is exam preparation; State fails to pay teachers/materials at school; Use past exams and their own notebooks as teaching materials and curriculum guides; Community schools rely on state schools for updates on current policy landscape; Inspection sends official program to director, but teachers have to make their own photocopies if they want to know the policy; Poor communication of policy; Textbooks policies not followed; Exam corrections (regional) are done locally, but double checked by state official; Once per year visiting policy for CC schools;
  - CI School 2: CI:2:D1: Bachelors degree in Modern History; Passed CAP-CEG; Received in-service training; Traveled to inspection to bring documents required to open school (ID, Proof of location, teachers, # of students, community agreement to pay); Follows inspections instructions for opening school class by class; BEPC should prepare students to be primary school teachers; School fees cheaper for girls than boys (6.100 and 6.500) following national policy, used to be more difference between boys and girls, but they didn’t have enough money to pay teachers; State has not sent any books; Inspection sends photocopies of official curriculum standards, 1 per school per subject; Active pedagogy part of instruction policy, but hard to implement with untrained teachers; Cahier de texte used to make sure teachers follow official program; Asserts that other CCs get state books and teachers, but not in his school because of political ties; Inspection visits rare, wants more; CI:2:T1: BAC II; Teaches SVT and Physical Science 19 hrs/week; 4 in-service trainings in Kougnohou; New documents/books not sent by state; Official curriculum guides sent to school; Too much to cover; Books aligned with curriculum; No difference in curriculum policies between state and CI; CI:2:T2: BAC in Ghana; No CAP; EV in Djon, displaced when state sent a English teacher; English 20 hrs/week; Attends trainings at inspection less than one per year; “l’état ne donne rien”; School has high enrollment, building and success on BEPC but state refuses to take responsibility; Rare inspection visits; State does not send books;
Official curriculum/standards sent and followed; Curriculum corresponds with textbook; School must pay inspection before receiving exams; Director oversight most important policy role; CI:2:T3: Failed BAC I; No CAP; Teaches Math and SVT for 19 hrs/week; Received in-service trainings less than once a year; State does not send books; Inspection visits rare; Uses official curriculum which follows the book chapter by chapter; Curriculum standards determine lesson plan; Exams align with national curriculum; CI:2:T4: BAC II; No CAP; Teaches French and Histo-Geo 16 hrs/week; No pre-service training; Director oversight is only training; State does not send books; Follows state curriculum; Shares set of standards with director, who teaches same subjects; Lesson plans always based on national standards; Program too vast; Exams aligned with national curriculum, limits teacher flexibility and pushes them through material; No state financing; Rare visits from inspection;

- Focus Groups
  - CI:1:FG1:COMM: Pay all the costs of school without state recognition; Parallel fees set democratically with APE; APE does not intervene in curriculum/pedagogy; Exams used as measure of success;
  - CI:2:FG1:TEACH: Requirements to become a teacher too stringent and pay too low; State schools receive more attention from government; Inspection visits rare in CC and ST; Decentralization of school finances as new policy push; Regional exams to improve quality of ed with oversight; Policies for taking over CCs are political, not performance-based;
  - CI:2:FG2:COMM: APE exists to provide in-kind donations to school; Aligns with NGOs to get documents; Unaware of curriculum guidelines/standards, no intervention; State policies unmet in locality; Results from national exams used to judge performance of teachers; Hold irregular meetings, only when an issue comes up

- Observations
  - CI 1: Classrooms do not meet regulations in policy; Regional and national exams administered; School grounds maintained by students;
  - CI 2: Classrooms do not meet regulations in policy; Official curriculum followed during observed classes; Teachers use textbooks approved by state; Students do not have access to textbooks; Regional and national exams administered; School grounds maintained by students; Uniforms present;

- Photos: School sites with classrooms not meeting code
  - Policy documents from CI:2; Curriculum documents from CI:1 and 2

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<th>2. How do educators describe the goals and purposes of their schools?</th>
<th>Educators:</th>
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<td><strong>Documents</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Letter of welcome from CI Site 1; BEPC passing rates (mentioned as a goals in interviews, substantiate with actual passing rates); Compare with goals and purpose of education elaborated in Policy Docs</td>
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<td><strong>Interviews</strong></td>
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<td>- ST:D1: Goals of Education—form citizen, become useful member of society; Be useful to oneself and society; Without education, one is nothing; Education for basic knowledge; To develop an open and inquisitive mentality (esprit ouvert); Able to adapt to new environments; New vs. Old knowledge; Being able to succeed in old theory, but also new situations (technology, cell phones); Education sets foundation, from their students can develop their interests; Passing exams as goal; ST:T1: Refers to other teacher’s list of goals and objectives; Mentions the Handbook of Togo Education; ST:T2: Brings copy of Handbook and refers to it for education goals and objectives; ST:T3: Education for personal emancipation; Savoir faire; Savoir etre; Personal development; Learning how to be a good human; ST:T4: French class, to be able to speak and communicate effectively; French as a tool of the trade (util de travail); Make sure everyone has same education throughout the country; ST:T5: To develop knowledge of how to become a active citizen; Live in society; Master basic knowledge; Make judgments; Learn a ‘good way of living’</td>
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<td>- CI:1:D1: Passing national and regional exams as priority and goal for school; School established to reduce costs of education for parents; Sending students to other villages for education is costly; Inspired, in part, by NGO intervention regarding importance of education; School as obligatory; Important to develop educated populace that can read and write; Economic goals of education, developing an intelligent and capable workforce; Education necessary to avoid sicknesses and</td>
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disease in the locality and nation; Uneducated populations have problems in ‘toutes les domaines’; Pass on knowledge relevant at local level, example: farmers manage crops, electricity to fix flashlights and generators, chemistry to know how to mix pesticides/fertilizers, history to ‘reduce violence in society’; Improve local conditions through education; CI:1:T1: Important for personal development; Key to national development; To become an intellectual and example for the village; To find a high-paying job and come back to help village with projects; Learn how to learn; Learn how to judge/make decisions; Live effectively in society; Make career decisions; Economic—prepared to work in commerce; Political—prepared to participate in democracy; Trade/Occupation—Prepared to enter workforce; Increase continuity between primary and secondary school; 6ème too young to live alone; Students would go 3-4 months without seeing their parents when attending school in other communities; Hope that state would take control of school and provide buildings, books, and teachers; Idea initially comes from resortisants in Lomé; Have students continue studies in Lycee and University; CI:1:T2: To become a dynamic, observant, and is best for the future; Allows a student to determine their own future; Personal development/agency; Economic goals and ability to support himself and his family; To understand the importance of health in society; To improve development in village; Become an elite; Qualified to teach in primary school; Help parents; Become a positive role model in cultural, economic, and social domains; Improve access to education; Provide parental oversight for students; Prevent girls from getting pregnant in neighboring village; 6ème is too young to live alone; Reduce costs for parents; Too far to walk to state school; 

O CI:1:D1: School created by villagers to bring education to locality; Facilitate access to school; Reduce costs of education (rent, food); Reduce distance travelled; Ministry sets goals of education and the teacher defines objectives; Refers to handbook of policy; To form the individual; to have knowledge that permits one to read and write; To know and be able to learn; As the school goes, the nation goes; National development based in education; Train workers; Understand general culture; develop ability to judge; Prepare primary school teachers; CI:1:T1: To have knowledge; To learn how to live in society; To have financial security and a job; To be known by others; Literacy as key; SVT objective is to cover each chapter; CI:1:T2: School opened to help students; Parents are too poor to send children to neighboring villages; Had they not opened the school, many kids would not be enrolled in any school; Personal development; Not good to be uneducated; Diplomas find work; To get a good job and come back to village for development projects; Development of locality; CI:2:T3: To reduce cost of education (rent, travel, food); Costs were too high for most parents; Students didn’t have enough oversight from parents when attending neighboring schools; To learn and know for a better future; To prepare future generations of professionals; To improve quality of life (even farmers benefit from education); To learn how to live in society; Follow book chapter by chapter to ensure most important knowledge (Math); CI:1:T4: School is at base of all development (personal and national); Foundation of life; When one has studied, they can quickly understand things; All occupations benefit from education; Without education communities cannot develop; Show students links between individual development and national development to spark interest in school; Try to cover all objectives in program so students pass exams; Try to be recognized by the state; Education as long term goal, students lose sight;

Focus Groups

O ST:1:FG1:TEACH: School is obligatory; Base of development; For personal development; To learn how to live in society; To become independent; Inculcate students with knowledge; To teach two types of knowledge (school vs. home); Cognitive, psychomotor, and affective objectives need to be taught/learned; Learn to manipulate knowledge and integrate it into the local environment; Behavior change; Self-determination for future success; Passing regional and national exams;

O CI:1:FG1:TEACH: School is a long term commerce; To find work, but work is hard to find; Objectives are set to prepare students to work in the economy and engage in social/civil life; Cognitive, psychomotor, affective; Goal of school is to be taken over by the state

Observations: In each site, enrollment rates dropping as result of migrant labor (education as long term, goals and purposes not matching economic realities); Lack of jobs for people with BEPC and/or BAC;
2A. How do community leaders describe the goals and purposes of their schools?

Community Members
- **Documents**
  - Budget for ST site, including community contribution to pay teachers; Very little document data addresses community perspectives on goals and purposes of education; Community role described in policy documents, but in practice there is little written documentation

- **Interviews**
- **Focus Groups**
  - **ST:1:FG1:COMM**: To become leaders for the future; The world is changing and students must be prepared to live in society; School is key for finding a job; Allows for communication between people; School is base of development; Find a job and work in society; To avoid unemployment; To avoid exploitation; For personal development; To become a leader in the community and promote community development;
  - **CI:1:FG1:COMM**: Increase security of students, especially girls; Young girls attending schools in other villages get pregnant because they don’t have enough parent oversight; 6eme too young to live alone; Boys would dropout because they couldn’t afford fees and had to work; Reduce costs to parents (rent, food, transport); Parents benefit by having kids around to work in fields; Promote development of students and of village infrastructure; Create sense of pride and culture; Allow parents to watch over children; Reduce suffering of students; Reduce dropout rates due to lack of support; Accidents, problems, even deaths in neighboring villages became problematic; Education as key to development; Previous generations didn't know importance, now they do because they’ve seen education improve quality of life; Education emancipates students and allows personal development; Education trains leaders in the community to transform village; Education develops language skills and allows students to communicate with outside world, can bring development projects to village; Basic literacy skills; Becoming leader; Take care of health; Career preparation; High BEPC passing rates important goal; No regrets
  - **CI:2:FG1:COMM**: Reduce costs for parents; Too expensive to send students to neighboring village; Don't have money to rent rooms and send food; Bring students closer to parents; Reduce dropout rates because of lack of means; Acquire knowledge that will allow them to become state employees; Create self-sufficient members of society; Have students become leaders’ grand personalities’ of tomorrow; Get jobs and come back to help village develop; Without resoritisants, village won’t benefit from projects/outside resources because of political nepotism; Need representation in Lomé; Students will be future of village and bring development; Personal development, emancipation from ignorance; Educated people work better/more efficiently; Goals not met because of sorcery; Uneducated citizens leads to violence/theft/social problems; To see if goals are met: look for projects in village and BEPC passing rates; Learning language for communication

3. What are the general conditions of- and key issues in rural schools in the Akebou prefecture?

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<th><strong>General Conditions</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Documents</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Practical Guide for Secondary Teaching: More EVs in this region than any other; Lack of materials for teachers to use with students; No means for conducting science experiments;</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Observations</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- <strong>ST Site</strong>: 4 classrooms with wooden desks; Windows with broken shutters; No doors; Chalkboards at front and back of class are whitewashed; 3eme with title table in front for experiments; Students wear khaki uniforms; None of the classes are at capacity; Noise from neighboring classrooms can be heard; Directors office and teachers lounge; but teachers sit under paillote; Sanitation facilities in disrepair; 5eme (Science)—4 rows of desks, 6 deep; 50 students present (51 enrolled); Noise from neighboring classrooms; 17 girls, 32 boys; Teacher uses chalkboard to write</td>
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example problems and notes (10 minutes); No books; Notebooks as textbooks; Difficult to hear/see from back of class; Students passively take notes or talk amongst themselves; 5eme (French)—Student erases science notes from board; Calls on students to read sentences written on board; Changing conjugation/ tenses of verbs; Students called on for participation; Students who answer incorrectly remain standing; Teaching sequence: Write, explain, example, ask, pose question, next topic; Incorrect answers get laughs from other students; Board with notes erased at end of class; Students clean campus to prepare for BEPC as part of TM;

- **CI Site 1**: No solid buildings; 4 locally constructed paillotes and teachers lounge (paillote); Grass between classrooms; Few trees; Flag pole; 1 white washed chalkboard per class; Small class sizes (10-25); Most wear uniforms; No textbooks; No sanitation facilities; BEPC starts and classes end; Students free for summer; One of the 4 teachers has already left; Personnel not invited to assist BEPC; One classroom’s chalkboard has fallen; Some desks already stored for the summer;

- **CI Site 2**: Two mud brick classrooms, 2 paillote classrooms; White washed chalkboards; Chalkboards covered in writing, not enough space to cover all material; Dark in some paillotes; Difficult to see board; Noise from other classes/road; Students in uniforms; Classrooms not over crowded (2 per desk); No sanitation facilities; Teacher paillote locally constructed;

**Brada**: Primary school construction

- **Photos**
  - Photos of each of the school sites and buildings; CI vs. ST; Chalkboards; Roofing; At-home office in CI site 2; Photos throughout villages, including water sources, roads, farms,

**Key Issues**

- **Documents**
  - Practical Guide for Secondary Teaching: Lack of training for EVs in region; EVs do not understand the importance of creating/using learning objectives; Lack of materials/books for students and teachers to use in class; Evaluations are misused by teachers; Lessons are not planned properly/in enough detail;

- **Interviews**
  - **Former SVT Inspector**: Not enough students, Schools are there, but lacking qualified teachers, students, and community support; Lycee in Brounfou and Aka as examples; Not enough inspectors to visit each of the schools/teachers; Lack of oversight; Teachers can go 5 (even 10) years without a visit; Logistical and infrastructure issues prevent inspectors from reaching schools in bush; Road quality, cars break down (visiting ministry to solicit fund for new car); He rarely visited deep in Akebou when he was inspector in region because of distance/road; Short window when roads are good (January and February)

- **MIN1**: Holding students back/redoubling; Exam oversight and results as indicator of quality; Problem of access, demand more than supply; 1975 reforms not met because of economic crisis; Buildings insufficiently constructed/maintained; Quality of education/teachers; EVs untrained, poor quality and provide wrong information; Need to increase oversight from inspection; Engage parents in children’s education; Decentralize education for more local control/responsibility; Democracy of educational management; Textbooks published/ printed in France not Togo; EDILs are low quality, waste of parent’s money when staffed by untrained teachers; cheating on exams

- **ST:1:D1**: Director role in addition to teaching is over charged; Not too many problems at school (contrast with teacher perspective); Students don’t study enough; Migrant labor more interesting than school; Dropout rates rising; Not enough books for each student; Inspection visits less than the minimum requirement; Rural isolation leads to less oversight; Director is in charge of overseeing BEPC exam for 7 schools; **ST:1:T1**: Forced into teaching career after not being able to continue studies for lack of money; No formal training; Lack of materials for science experiments; No pedagogical guide for math; Books/Documents have to be photocopied, but many are missing; In 4eme and 3eme 3 students share 1 book; Salary paid from parallel funds (20.000F/month); State doesn’t play a role; Inspection visits rare; TM used to raise money for school maintenance and end-of-year party; Students lack French skills; Discipline and abolishment of ‘signal’; Primary school doesn’t prepare students for CEG; Cheating/faking through passage
classes, fail in 3eme; Corporal punishment now banned, students are undisciplined;  
**ST:1:T2:** Did not want to be teacher; Wants to put masters degree to use in private sector or NGO; Not enough documents/textbooks for students; For French class 1 book per desk (2 students); Histo-Geo in 4eme no books for students, 6eme 1 book for 3 students; No teaching materials (maps, globes, pictures); Education/knowledge as abstract; Rare to see state intervention in region; French/Histo-Geo programs too vast; Curriculum not adapted to locality; Rural isolation; Lack of communication infrastructure isolates teachers from information; Slow administration prevents quick affectionation and pay grade changes (still paid a primary school salary, but working at CEG); Political nepotism prevents equitable treatment of teachers; Students don’t have strong base from primary school; Teacher trainings are too rare; TM used for end-of-year party;  
**ST:1:T3:** Became teacher after running out of money as university student; Has some of the basic science teaching materials, but not enough; Uses local environment to make curriculum relevant; Textbooks for SVT are too old to use; 6eme and 5eme has physical science books for each student, 4eme and 3eme 10 books for whole class; Developed lesson plans with help of inspector in Kpalime, now inspection visits are too rare to be of use; Limited by rural isolation in region; Students don’t want to go to school; Short term economic goals more interesting; Parents don’t support education; Akebou region discourages student learning; Primary school leaves students unprepared for CEG;  
**ST:1:T4:** Has bachelors degree in classic literature; Books and documents are old and irrelevant; Teacher must modify textbooks to reflect today’s reality; Lacks maps, globes, pictures to make Histo-Geo lessons concrete; 2-3 students share French textbooks; Exercises in French must be written on board because students can’t afford exercise books; Teachers forced to teach to test; ‘Back to wall’; Rural isolation makes it hard to teach; Lack of technology, no current news/ information; Community uninterested in education; New state policies look to decentralize educational finances, burdening communities and teachers; State does not build or maintain schools; Primary school leaves students with weak base; Primary school students used for TM—clandestine practice facilitated by rural isolation and lack of oversight (although he implicated inspectors in this activity);  
**ST:1:T5:** Started teaching after dropping out of university for lack of money; Akebou infrastructure and rural isolation make life and teaching difficult; Lacks teaching materials (headphones for listening); No English club for students; Students refuse to learn; Forced to resort to hitting students for discipline (tu est oblige de prendre le baton jusqu’a 3eme); Sexuality among students prevents them from learning; Children don’t obey their parents; Refuse to come to review sessions after class; Migrant labor to Ghana/Nigeria finally making students interested in English; Quotes Prefect ‘School is dead in Akebou’

- **CI:1:D1:** Qualifications to teach unclear; School follows official schedule of classes, 5 hrs per day; Friday afternoons used for TM (including bringing sand to sell, working in teacher fields, and making bricks) to make up for missing teacher payments and raise money for school; Director fills administrative duties and teaches, overworked; Sets class schedule and teaching responsibilities; Recruits students and teachers; Teacher strikes this year prevent full coverage of program; Insufficient training opportunities; Inspection forms/reports unclear and difficult to fill out; Lack of teaching materials to make content concrete rather than abstract; Lack of buildings (rain and wind limits teaching); Lack of qualified teachers; Lack of funding (7,000 per student); Teacher pay unstable, causing local strikes and high turnover rates; No health/sanitation services for students; No office or library to store school supplies/hold meetings; Students not focused on learning, but on making money; Materials, again; Teacher salary, again; Cahier de texte only inspection oversight; One visit in last 3 years; Rules/policies of state are not easily understandable; State and inspection don’t meet their duties;  
**CI:1:T1:** No training; Lack of buildings; No library; No teaching guides; Not enough funding and unstable salary; No water or latrines; Food can be hard to get without his own farm; No health center; No VS&L; High dropout rates; Not enough role models (people with degrees and jobs); No library to prepare lesson plans; More inspection visits  
**CI:1:T2:** No training; Poorly constructed buildings; No documents/materials to teach with; Teacher pay irregular; Lack of funding; Population can’t meet housing and food needs of teachers; No water in dry season; Lack of buildings reduces student’s interest in education; No sports; Community participates in education;
Teaching materials must be borrowed and photocopied from state schools; Even curriculum standards must be photocopied; Students can’t afford books and state doesn’t send them; Forced to buy locally made books without full content; More inspection visits

- **CI:2:D2:** Books aren’t sufficient, not sent to CC; Books are outdated, no new material; Trainings are too rare and CC has to pay their own way; Migrant labor; Pregnancy and dropouts (All from notebook 1, p.23-4); Bachelors in Modern History; CAP-CEG; Financial problems, funds never last a full school year; Teachers strike when not paid; High turnover rate for teachers; Teacher insubordination, they can leave when they are not paid, no threat of withholding money; Salary unstable; Students don’t learn; Discipline issues inside and outside school; Parents don’t support education, the biggest problem; Parents don’t pay school fees; Lack of documents and materials; Not enough books even for teachers; Docs don’t reflect reality/present day; Have to rely on photocopies; Students learn as theory with no materials to interact with; Lack language skills to understand; Lack of proper classrooms; Lack of community support for maintenance; School fees don’t cover expenses; 80% of parents pay; Community support for education waning; Students use Cahiers as textbooks; Director responsibilities plus teaching is overworked; More inspection visits; **CI:2:T1:** No pre-service training; Not enough in-service trainings; Students don’t understand importance of education; Abandon school; Lack of financial support; Student’s don’t learn/study; Lack of teaching materials and textbooks; No lab for science classes; Education remains abstract to students; Parents don’t follow up with students at home or support education; Migrant labor, parents complicit; Level of student intelligence has diminished; All money comes from fees, community contribution is non-existent; Teacher salary is unstable; Books for teachers only; Inspection visits rare and comments/ critique of lessons are basic; Wants to improve parent involvement in education; **CI:2:T2:** No pre-service training; Displaced by state teacher in Djon; Students didn't respect him in Egbene; Parents refuse to send their kids to school; Migrant labor instead; Director responsible for everything relating to administration, overworked; Teachers have to play role of parents because parents haven’t attended school, can’t help kids at home; Villagers refuse to contribute money to school; Teacher salary (15.000) is unstable; The state send no books, no money; Lack of documents 5 English books for 5eme, 1 for 4eme, has to write texts/readings on the board; Community refused to buy books; School can’t afford to buy books and pay teacher salaries with only school fees; School pays inspection to take part in national/regional exams; Community doesn’t respect work of teachers, not even symbolic gifts to thank teachers at the end of the year; Teaching as a sacrifice; Parents don’t fulfill their role; **CI:2:T3:** No BAC I; No pre-service training; In-service training insufficient; Lack of documents, not enough books; Pay is insufficient and unstable; Students are not polite, don’t do HW or learn at home, limit themselves to passing, don’t go above or beyond; Parents don’t contribute to school; Parent interest wanes after year 1; Only teacher has access to books, copies on board for student to put in cahier; Teaching materials bought with school fees, used to pay salary; State plays no role except to invite teachers to trainings they have to pay for; Community should contribute to school (overall development of village), but don’t; Only paid 4 months this year; Without director, school would close; Finding quality teachers is difficult because of pay and conditions of classrooms; If he left, no one would fill his shoes; **CI:2:T4:** No pre-service training; Not enough training offered to EVs; Lack of documents, those that exist are too old; Students lack a strong base, starts in primary school; Parents don’t watch kids closely enough at home, don’t do HW, goof off; No stable salary, not paid enough; Teachers have to buy textbooks and curriculum documents; Rely on photocopies from state schools; Lacking documents creates problems in French and History; Curriculum standards and program too vast for school year; Test driven teaching; No state intervention; School has been around for 10 years, state has not recognized it, community is discouragement and tired of helping; Teachers work without pay; Migrant labor and dropping out; Lack of economic opportunity; EVs are bad examples for students, low pay, but has diplomas; Lacking infrastructure in rural areas keeps students isolated from information;

- Focus Groups
  - **ST:1:FG1:COMM:** Lack of teachers; Lack of materials; Lack of trained teachers makes them take on extra classes, which diminished quality of education;
Overworked teachers; EVs don’t have the qualifications or training to be good teachers; Lack of infrastructure isolates region; No library or cultural center with books; Rural isolation limits student experiences, don’t know importance of education/can’t see benefits; No electricity, have to study by flashlight; Parent responsible for paying EVs through parallel funds; If parents can afford fees, students forced to pay/work themselves; Community intervention in curriculum/pedagogy; State teachers higher quality, more respect from community and students; Only hold meetings when necessary; Migrant labor discourages students from wanting to continue school, fast money

ST:1:FG2:TEACH: None of the teachers received formal pre-service training, though some are qualified to teach after passing CAP/Bachelors; In-service trainings once a year; Teachers share materials and train each other; Curriculum too vast and not linked to student experiences (expanded in RQ 4); No materials for science experiments, drawn on board/abstract; Lack of materials/books; Students/Parents don’t understand importance of education; Migrant labor and fast cash; Sexuality; Pedagogical strategies don’t work with students because they refuse to participate; Rural isolation cuts teachers off from information; Parents don’t supervise their children; Primary school fails to prepare students for CEG; Migrant labor again; Lack of economic opportunity discourages students, university diploma, but no job; Parents don’t participate in learning, maintenance, or support (with emphasis, example of covering 2 classrooms); Being sent to work in Akebou is like a prison/punishment; Hard to be affected out; No room for curriculum adaption (expanded in RQ4); Too many students to perform local evaluations (too many papers to grade); Lack of respect/discipline (ex. student defecating in classroom); Education does not meet realities of student life; State does not encourage education; Exams discourage students; Cheating as issue; Urban and rural differences too hard to overcome with same curriculum; Lack of technology; No health/sanitation services at school; Primary school teachers don’t prepare students; French language is weak because students speak Akebou in primary school; Discipline as issue; CEG students outlaw ‘signal’ and speak Akebou at school; Students refuse to speak French outside of school; Without French, cannot learn other subjects;

CI:1:FG1:COMM: Parents don’t understand the importance of education; Problem of water; Dry season students/women have to wake up at midnight to get water, too tired to learn; Lack of finances; Community has to pay all school costs, no state intervention; High cost of education leads some students to dropout; Lack of solid buildings; When EVs are recruited the best ones refuse because they don’t want to work in a locally constructed school; Limits instruction time to good weather; Physical and social implications of construction; Lack of materials; Not enough documents, books, or teaching guides; When students study without books they are forced to rely only on teacher, reduces quality of education; Teachers responsible for tracking down/buying materials; Director collects school fees, CVD collects community contribution; Community indebted to school/teachers

CI:1:FG1:TEACH: Migrant labor; School as long term goal; Too much unemployment; EVs are bad example for students (diploma, but bad job/low pay); Lack of respect for EVs; Lack of economic opportunity, because jobs are politicized; State does not value manual labor; Max salaries in Togo are min salaries in Ghana; Lack of materials because state refuses to recognize school and community can’t afford to buy textbooks (3,000-6,000F each); Community doesn’t have money or willingness to help school; Community members without students in school claim it is not their responsibility; Trainings are rare and costly; Inspection visits too rare to be effective; Students have to pay for exams, inspector car; Parents don’t understand importance of education; Students can make a living farming with no education in the region, so they are not interested in learning; Regional exams keep teachers on track; State refuses to recognize school for political reasons, any other reasons are lies; Student performance and enrollment warrant the state to take over; Ministry prejudice against EVs and CCs; Akebou ethnicity helps facilitate school-community relations; Akebou used to explain abstract concepts

CI:1:FG2:COMM: Community interest/ involvement in school; Parents that don’t want to help out; Students don’t understand importance of education; Sorcery prevents students from wanting to succeed; Sorcery prevents students with degrees and jobs from coming back and building in village; People put up fetishes in school that prevent students from succeeding on exams; Unemployment + diplomas
4. What do educators identify as key issues for curriculum policies and practices in their schools?

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<th>Educator Key Curriculum Issues Policy</th>
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<td><strong>Documents</strong></td>
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<td>- National curriculum standards by subject (vast); French textbook; English textbook; Physical Science textbook; History textbook; Math textbook; Exam questions SVT; Exam questions Histo-Geo;</td>
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<td><strong>Interviews:</strong></td>
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| - MIN1: CEG curriculum still basic knowledge; Learn how to read, write, think, and figure out what students want to specialize in for lycée; Textbooks need to be published in Togo, not France to localize money and intellectual content; Curriculum reflects local culture; Used to be based on French standards; Now locally created; ST:1:D1: CEG teaches basic knowledge; New vs. Old knowledge conflict in school curriculum and community life; Must learn theory before practice; National exams cover national curriculum; ST:1:T1: Standards/curriculum guide and textbooks materials used for preparing lessons; Standards do not change between years, same lessons since he arrived in 2007; ST:1:T2: Rare to see the state; Exam policies only measure of curriculum oversight; Cahier de Texte must be filled out to ensure covering of standards; No changes to national curriculum; Too vast; ST:1:T3: Teachers have to buy/photocopy the official program in case the school doesn't have a copy; Follows program directly, sometimes adds enrichment; ST:1:T4: Be able to speak French; Policies don’t correspond to local realities; Objectives measured by local assessments to prepare for national exams; National objectives/exams ensure all students receive the same education; Textbooks don't include all the information that is tested; ST:1:T5: Discusses types of activities found in Practical Guide; Curriculum organized by theme, corresponds to textbook; Sent by state; Does not make modifications to curriculum; Program is not too big; CI:1:D1: Sets objectives for school (passing rate); Regional exams administered by director; State doesn’t send books or curriculum materials; Follow program of state; Divided by month, with how much to cover; Follows textbook chapter by chapter; Same curriculum as state school; National exam tests student achievement/learning in curriculum; CI:1:T1: Curriculum teaches basic knowledge across subjects; Past year exam questions provide best curriculum guides; Objectives set by state are presented directly to students; Exams ensure quality of education; CI:1:T2: Curriculum basic and across subjects; Use curriculum guides from previous years because policies rarely change; Policies tell teachers what to teach and how long to spend on each topic; Regional exams corrected locally, but double checked by state; CI:2:D1: State sends no books when school opened; Ministry sets goals, teacher elaborates lessons; Must teach chapter by chapter from official program; Borrow curriculum documents and learn about new texts from state schools; Official program sent by inspection, 1 per school per subject, shared by teachers; Set by chapter with specific objectives; Has to use several textbooks to find info for each objective; Active pedagogy prescribed in policy; Director oversees teachers with Cahier de Texte; Regional exams sold to schools; CI:2:T1: Follow official program sent by inspection; Borrow state sanctioned books from state school; Program is too vast; No difference between curriculum policies of state and CC; Community is not involved in curriculum development/policy; CI:2:T2: No books sent to CCs; Official program set at national level, corresponds to textbook; Teacher required to cover all topics; Memorization of key texts/phrases to conform with policy/official curriculum; State sends no money or support; CI:2:T3: Teachers required to create lesson plan following policy guidelines, reviewed in Cahier de Texte; No books sent to school; Inspector visits to tell teachers to follow program objective by objective, linked to chapters in the textbook; Exams aligned with official curriculum; Inspection visits mandated; CI:2:T4: Trainings used to learn
how to write a lesson plan to meet national standards; No books sent by state; Program and objectives defined by state; All exam questions pulled from standards; Program too large; Inspection visits less often than mandated;

- Focus Groups: **ST:1:FG2:TEACH:** Curriculum policies shared among teachers; Direct communication of policy sometimes rare or confusing; Three types of objectives (cognitive…); Curriculum set pass certain knowledge/behaviors to students; French program too vast; History too vast; Program not focused enough on student realities; 5eme all about France; Science curriculum policy requires experimentation; No mention of Togo until 3eme in Histo-geo; Requires teachers to use active pedagogy; Grade reports to be sent to parents; **CI:2:FG1:TEACH:** Objectives are selected to make sure all students are prepared to work/participate in society; Three type of objectives; State does not send books;

- Observations
  - ST Site: Use of national standards in review for regional exams in Physical science and French; Policies for BEPC preparation; Reception for neighboring CEGs;
  - CI Site 1: No Classroom observation
  - CI Site 2: Use of national curriculum/standards during review sessions for BEPC Histo-Geo; Revisions of regional exams in each subject

- Photos: Ministry of education; Official textbooks; Curriculum guide for Histo-Geo at CI:2;

**Educator Key Curriculum Issues Practice**

- Documents
  - Locally photocopied textbook replacements (livrets) in CI:1, Lack of official standards handouts for French in CI:2;

- Interviews: **ST:1:D1:** State send books each year, but not sufficient to give to students; New editions have new information, teachers are responsible for finding out what is included in the new books even if the state doesn’t send it; **ST:1:T1:** No materials for science experiments; Not enough books for students; **ST:1:T2:** Some books, but not enough for all students; Lack of materials to meet curriculum standards/official program; Not adapted to the locality; Regional inspection send a calendar to follow that breaks down lessons week by week; Students’ French skills are low, making teaching difficult; **ST:1:T3:** Has some teaching materials; Tries to use the local environment as much as possible; Not enough books for each student; Difficult to contact inspector for help elaborating lesson plans; Materials shared between teachers; **ST:1:T4:** Make modifications to textbooks to include recent information; Lacks maps, pictures to make lessons concrete; French texts must be handwritten on board; Use photocopied documents sold cheaply by inspection; **ST:1:T5:** Can prepare a lesson, but have to modify it during class; Finds/writes songs and poems to use with students; Finds local examples of item to teach vocabulary; Uses read and repeat teaching; No English club; Students interested in English b/c of migrant labor; CI:1:D1: Strikes at beginning of year prevent full coverage of curriculum; Important knowledge must be linked to local experiences; Physical science—knowledge of electricity to fix flashlights, chemistry helps mix water and pesticides to improve crops; Math—understand VS&L groups and tontins; History—Understand global conflict to resolve/avoid local conflict; Not enough books; Teachers can’t stay up to date on news/advancements in field; Follow same lesson plans as last year if curriculum doesn’t change; Cahier de texte to supervise teachers; Try not to use Akebou in class; **CI:1:T1:** Curriculum should address economics, politics, and social issues; Not enough books/materials to effectively teach; No library or resources for lesson planning help; Teacher cooperation as source of information on curriculum/policy; **CI:1:T2:** Not enough books/materials; Uses last year’s lesson plans; Learns about curricular innovations from state school teachers of same subject; Borrow documents from state school to make photocopies; Students can’t afford books, neither can teachers; Cahier as textbook; **CI:2:D1:** Community contributes 2.000 for men and 1.000 for women each to buy books the first year; In practice, CEG curriculum should train students to teach primary school; Documents are now outdated, don’t reflect modern reality; Disconnect from student experiences; No books for students; Slows student French skills; Students learn in theory/abstract rather than practical/real; Money for books pulled from school fees that would otherwise pay teacher salary; Teachers use active pedagogy to make sure students are copying down information correctly because they don’t have books; State promises support for education, has ability to send teachers, in other areas CCs get state teachers, local politics prevent; **CI:2:T1:** Lack of materials; Can’t perform experiments required by the curriculum in class, forced to draw them on board; Missing new documents, learn about changes to program from state school and borrow their documents; Uses standards/chapter headings to set up lesson plans, up to him how to teach them; Makes changes to program if book doesn’t include particular topic; Regional exams require teachers
4A. What do community leaders identify as key issues for curriculum policies and practices in their schools?

- **Documents**: No document data supports community member perspectives on curriculum policies.
- **Interviews**: No individual interviews with community members.
- **Focus Groups**: ST:1: FG1:COMM: Poorly trained EVs can’t cover program as effectively as state teachers; Not enough curriculum materials for students; Teachers follow official program and community/APE does not make any changes/modifications; Not their responsibility; Pedagogy and curriculum left exclusively to teachers; No intervention; CI:1:FG1:COMM: Language skills an important part of curriculum; Curriculum should focus on health issues; Can’t afford books/materials to enhance curriculum; Teachers are responsible for locating books/materials; Often photocopied or borrowed from state schools; Teaching/curriculum left to teachers, no significant community intervention; CI:2:FG1:COMM: Community isn’t familiar with the official program, did not attend school themselves; Simply send students to school to be taught; Unable to provide curriculum advice/support because uneducated themselves; Send children with hopes that they will learn, get degree, find paying job and support parents/village; Language as important part of education.
- **Observations**: Community members in both CI and ST sites did not intervene in curriculum policy making in any observable way; Community member contributions to purchasing textbooks in CI site 2; APE collecting funding from community members to support school, including (rare) purchase of materials/books (shown guides/books bought with that funding).
- **Photos**: See above.