

## Implementation of values-based education in West and Central Africa *Preliminary exploratory visits to potential host countries 2004-2005 – report*

Following the success of a number of training workshops in values-based education held in Senegal in 2003 / 2004, the Swiss Association for Living Values (SALV), in collaboration with the Association for Living Values International (ALIVE) and UNESCO–BREDA (Regional Office for Education in Africa), made plans to organise a series of similar workshops for educators from other countries in West and Central Africa. These countries have been divided into the following clusters according to geographical location or language.

1. The Great Lakes area, to include Burundi, Congo RDC and Rwanda.
2. French-speaking countries in West Africa, to include Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea (Conakry), Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal and Togo
3. English-speaking countries in West Africa, to include the Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.
4. French-speaking countries in Central Africa, to include Cameroon (noting that Cameroon is essentially bi-lingual), Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Equatorial Guinea and Gabon.

Teams of two or three Living Values Education (LVE) representatives recently visited the following host countries: Burundi, Rwanda, Burkina Faso, Togo and Ghana. A number of organizations and individuals, already involved in LVE, helped to organise these exploratory visits and have offered to coordinate the administration of future trainings, in collaboration with LVE and BREDA with the support of local UNESCO offices and National Commissions



*National LVE coordinators  
Wangui Kangethe (Kenya)  
Mélance Kirura (Burundi)  
Helen Sayers (Switzerland)  
AndeloTabu (Congo RDC – not in photo)  
visited Burundi and Rwanda in December 2004*

*Coordinator of the local organising committee in Burkina Faso, M. Abdoulaye Ouedraogo, presents Mme Awa Gueye, secretary of the National Association for Living Values in Senegal, with a statue of Yennenga, the national heroine, in appreciation of her dynamic presentations of the Living Values Education Programme and for sharing her advice and experiences in Senegal*



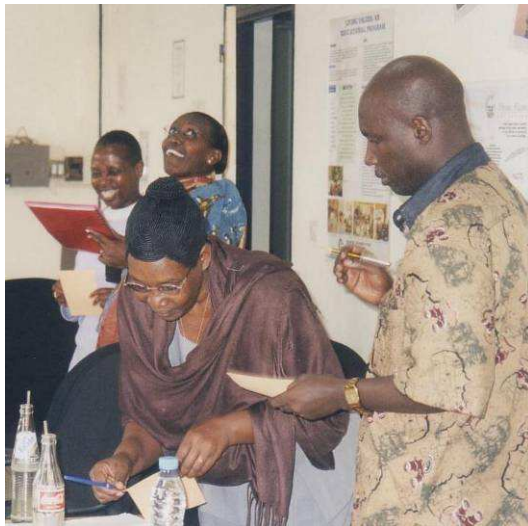
### Objectives of the exploratory visits:

- to identify local partners, develop sustaining relationships and initiate the formation of a local organizing committee (or give support where such a committee already exists) with which to liaise in the planning, organization and implementation of future training workshops;
- to ensure that appropriate arrangements can be made for the training workshops (selecting and inviting participants, choice of venue, provision of materials, equipment, etc);
- to meet with key people in the community in the areas of education, administration, politics, culture and religion with whom to exchange views and experiences regarding education and values, with particular reference to local contexts, culture and traditions. These meetings were organized wherever possible in partnership with the local UNESCO office or the UNESCO National Commission;
- to develop greater awareness of and sensitivity to local circumstances and conditions so as to be able to ensure that the Living Values Education Programme is compatible with prevailing needs and contexts, and to tailor educational activities and materials to suit them.

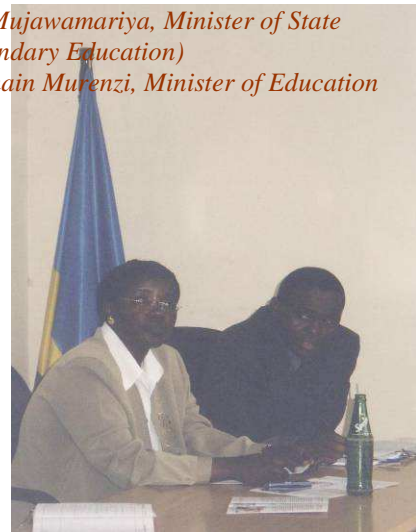
Detailed reports of each visit are available on request. A few main points from each country:

### Rwanda (4-7 December 2004)

•Jean-Damascène Gasanabo, national coordinator for Rwanda and currently living in Switzerland, has been involved with Living Values Education for a number of years and attended training workshops in Senegal as well as the international LVE train-the-trainer seminar in Oxford in 2003. He was unable to participate in the preliminary visit to Rwanda but helped considerably in the planning of meetings and by contacting high-level delegates.



*Dr Jeanne D'Arc Mujawamariya, Minister of State (Primary and Secondary Education) and Professor Romain Murenzi, Minister of Education*



*Participants at a meeting at organised by the National Commission of UNESCO at the Ministry of Education, enjoy exchanging business cards on which they write values they have observed in each other. Dr Rose Gasibirege, Vice President of the National Commission is second from left (smiling).*

- The Minister of Education suggested that an ambitious vision is needed and called for the commitment of all sectors of society to implement values-based education in the country
- In her presentation of the work of LVE in Kenya since 1998, National Coordinator Mrs Wangui Kangethe, echoed the importance of cooperation and partnerships. UNICEF has played a major role in supporting the programme in Kenya. She gave the example of two warring tribes in northern Kenya: children had learnt about conflict resolution through doing Living Values activities and had inspired their parents to bring about greater tolerance and unity in their villages.
- During a discussion on values in Rwanda one person felt that the 1994 genocide was the result of a “genocide of values”. Rwanda had come a long way in the process of reconciliation and restoring stability, but in order to prevent a repeat of history, values need to be re-integrated into the fabric of society. For this, values-based education was essential from an early age

### Burundi (1-4 December 2004)

- National coordinator, Mélance Kiruru, had brought together an organising committee of local young people dedicated to sustaining positive cultural values in Burundi society.
- Values such as “Ubuntu” (humane-ness / generosity / sharing), Ibanga (fidelity / keeping one’s promises) and “Ubupfasoni” (honesty / having a noble heart / discretion / dignity) are still strongly adhered to especially in rural areas. To achieve the status of “Ubushingantahe” (a highly respected sage / wise man or woman / complete with all virtues / worthy to be a ruler) is the lifetime’s aspiration of many in Burundi – including young people.
- M Bernard Barandereka, former Minister for Energy, proposed that Living Values could contribute to the promotion of peace, solidarity and reconciliation in the region of the Great Lakes by inviting participants from neighbouring countries to each of the training workshops.
- The national coordinator commented from his own experience, that the radio is an effective way of sharing ideas on values with the local population and could be an invaluable tool for transmitting values from one generation to the next through traditional story-telling - a custom seems to be rapidly dying out.

### Burkina Faso (December 28 2004 – Jan 1 2005)

- Five educators, inspired by the enthusiasm of SALV member Marie-Josée Ducharme during an educational visit to the country in 2004, had already created a local organising committee, which arranged several meetings both in Ouagadougou and in the second city of Ouahigouya.

*The organising committee for LVE in Burkina Faso, and members of LVE from Switzerland and Senegal meet Dr Mathieu Ouedraogo and M. Pierre Kouraog (3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> from left) at the Ministry of Education, in Ouagadougou*



- Minister of Education, Dr Mathieu Ouedraogo had previously met members of SALV in Geneva at the International Conference on Education organised by UNESCO’s International Bureau of Education. Expressing his support of the programme he invited the LVE delegation to meet M. Pierre Kouraog, Director General for the Centre of Research, Educational Initiatives and Training, and M. Moussa Bourgou, Director General of Primary Education.



*LVE delegation meets Mme Mariam Lamizana, Minister of Social Action and National Solidarity, Burkina Faso (2<sup>nd</sup> from right). A champion of women’s rights in her country, she highlighted the importance of empowering women and girls*



- Mme Awa Gueye, secretary of the National Association for Living Values in Senegal described how Living Values had been successfully implemented in Senegal. She emphasised that LVE seeks not to *impose* but to *propose* a method of putting values into daily practice, and that in Senegal the programme has been adapted to highlight the main national values of “terranga” (hospitality), solidarity and dignity, and that work is continuing to translate materials into the local language, Wolof.



*Mr. Bernard Yonli, Secretary General, National Commission for UNESCO, (2<sup>nd</sup> from right) explained that Burkina Faso means “maison des hommes intègres” or “home of men of integrity”. If the country is to live up to its name, people need to “live their values” - values don’t need to be reinvented as they exist naturally within every person – they just need to be reawakened*

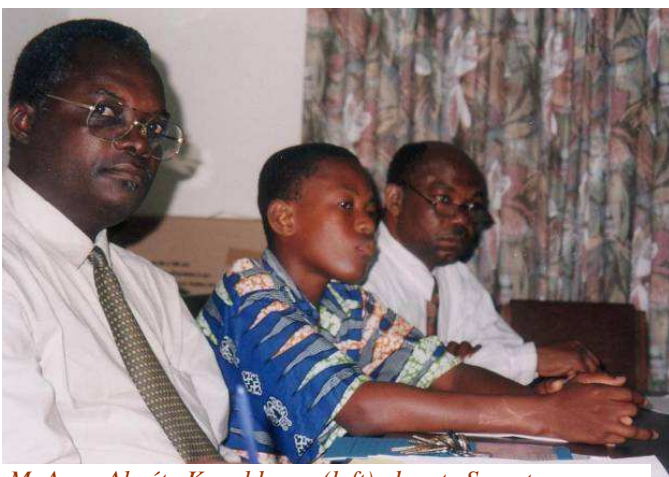
### **Togo (Jan 2 – 4 2005)**

- A meeting of interested people in the field of education was organised at the National Commission for UNESCO in Lome, with the cooperation of Mr Koffi Diabo, former Secretary General of UNDP in Togo. The group immediately took it upon themselves to create a coordinating committee.

- It was agreed that the people of Togo are peace-loving and deeply spiritual, and that these qualities should be preserved at all costs. LVE teaching methods include silent reflection, visualization, critical thinking and creative expression, which all help to develop inner peace.

- The group agreed that education of the girl child is of high priority in the country. If all girls attended school at least at primary level and if universal values were integrated into all areas of the school curriculum, then the future for girls would be much brighter.

- Mr Rene Alemawo, National Coordinator for LVE in Togo stressed the importance of educators as role models for children. Currently living in Senegal as a sculptor, he works voluntarily with street children, helping them to learn a trade and teaching them values at the same time using the LVE activities and methodology. He said that values cannot be taught in a formal way with such children: one needs to create a trusting, dynamic, happy environment where they can develop their self-esteem, creativity and a sense of purpose in life.



*M. Ayao Akoéte Kougblenou (left), deputy Secretary General, UNESCO National Commission for Togo, next to Denis Adetou, representing the younger generation of Togo, and M. Kuma Afeto, coordinator of the local organising committee*



*The children are our future! Children of Lomé, Togo with national coordinator René Alemawo (2<sup>nd</sup> from right)*



*Mina Bhen and Ayub Bhai, Brahma Kumaris, Ghana, M. Kofi Adetou ,reporter, LVE organising committee, Togo Helen Sayers, LVE Switzerland M. Ayao Akoéte Kougblenou, Deputy Secretary General National Commission for UNESCO, Togo René Alemawo, LVE national coordianteur for Togo Jean Adjete LVE organising committee Togo*

#### **Ghana (4-6 January 2005)**

- Mrs Charity Amamo, representative of the local National Commission of UNESCO, gave her guarantee of support for the future development of Living Values in Ghana
- At an interactive workshop and presentation of LVE in Accra, the participants concluded that one of the main values of Ghanaians is that they remain cheerful and positive in all situations. This has helped people to overcome many hardships and to enhance the quality of life. This “richness” of spirit is something that Africa has to show the world.
- A local organising committee was created from within the group.



*Living Values workshop with local organising committee, Accra, Ghana*



*Meeting Mrs Amamo of the National Commission for UNESCO, Ghana*

**Living Values Education** is coordinated by the Association for Living Values Education International (ALIVE), a non-profit association of educators from around the world. It is supported by UNESCO, sponsored by a wide variety of organizations, institutions and individuals, and being implemented in all continents of the world. LVEP is part of the global movement for a culture of peace in the framework of the United Nations Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World.

[www.livingvalues.net](http://www.livingvalues.net)