

Teaching of French Gets a Boost...



From right to left : HE M Jean-Michel DUMOND, Hajia Jibril DUKKU, Minister of State for Education, Dr Aja NWACHUKWU, Minister of Education, Dr Jerry AGADA, Minister of State for Education, Dr SUFI, Permanent Secretary of Education

HE M. Jean-Michel DUMOND, Ambassador of France to Nigeria, and Honourable Igwe AJA-NWACHUKWU, Federal Minister of Education, signed the agreement on June 19, 2008.



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This agreement, worth 310 million Nairas to be spent over a 3-year period, is to come into force at the expiration of a similar project (240 million Nairas between 2002 and 2007), which focused on the training of 900 teachers and assistance to 170 secondary pilot schools as well as 24 tertiary pilot institutions. Pilot schools and institutions received teaching aid materials and textbooks.

The new project, based on this network of national and regional partnerships earlier put in place, is aimed at the transfer of skills to Educational institutions in the following areas: in-service training for teachers, provision of

teaching aid materials, setting up of a specific database related to the teaching of French, reform of examinations, and activities targeted at the last three years of Secondary education through support to the pilot schools.



Facing, from right to left : Mrs Mabel OZUMBO, acting Director for basic and secondary education, Christine ZORZUTTI, in charge of the project at the Ministry of Education, Claude BARON, Attache for Education Co-operation, Jean-Pierre GAY, Cultural and Co-operation Counsellor at the French Embassy, the French Ambassador, Hajia Jibril DUKKU, Minister of State for Education

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Both the Nigerian Minister...



...and the French Ambassador, in their respective address, emphasized the excellent co-operation between the two countries in the field of education and most particularly on the necessity to provide answers of quality to the high demand of French teaching.



Address by His Excellency Jean-Michel DUMOND

Ambassador of France to Nigeria

June 19, 2008 - Federal Ministry of Education

Honourable Minister of Education... All protocols observed,

I am particularly happy that this ceremony is taking place in the wake of President Yar'Adua's visit to France's President Nicolas Sarkozy.

On that occasion, both presidents underlined the emphasis that will be placed on the promotion of French teaching in Nigeria, regarded as a top priority within the framework of our cultural co-operation.

Therefore, it is with great pleasure that we shall sign the Funding Agreement for the execution of Project 2006-89 entitled "Support to the Development of the Teaching of the French Language in the Nigerian Education System", on behalf of our respective governments.

First of all, I would like to acknowledge with gratitude the enthusiasm, strength of purpose and determination of all those who, behind the scenes, have contributed to the drawing up of a new project in the area of French language teaching and learning in your great country.

I would also like to emphasize the major role of the Honourable Minister in speeding up the examination and signing process of this Funding Agreement of a project for which over 310 million Naira (1,700,000 euros) have been allocated and that will extend until 2011.

This agreement, in keeping with Nigeria's Educational Policy in the field of language teaching, is a reflection of the true spirit of partnership that has always been a prominent feature of the relationships between our two countries in all domains, notably that of education.

It sets out the main objectives and guidelines for our assistance over the next three years. It provides a common road map for all the stakeholders, among whom the Nigeria French Language Project, in the promotion of the French language in secondary schools and tertiary education institutions, namely Colleges of Education and Universities. It finally defines its implementation mechanisms.

As you know, the project focuses on four main sectors:

- ▶ The Nigerian French Language Project (NFLP), by providing support for data collection and analysis and examination harmonization ;
- ▶ Tertiary Education, through the setting up of training the trainers programmes, the organisation of workshops aimed at transferring skills to the pilot Colleges of Education ;

- ▶ Secondary Education, through the provision of equipment and teaching materials, and in-service training sessions for the teachers ;
- ▶ Support to the Nigeria French Language Village, in order to enhance its invaluable role in implementing the “year abroad programme” and developing a Master’s degree in French as a Foreign Language.

A permanent exercise of programming, planning and monitoring will be critical in the coming three years if the project is to be implemented smoothly and its objectives achieved. I am confident that the existing successful partnerships will develop and answer Nigeria’s growing need to communicate with Francophone countries.

I am satisfied that enhancing the language skills of young Nigerians will be an invaluable asset for their future - socially, culturally and economically. History and geography have made French what a distinguished linguist from Kano has aptly named a “familiar” rather than “foreign” language. In this era of increasing exchanges in a fast moving environment, the need for closer co-operation will require better communication tools, among which international languages.



As a conclusion,

May I point out that an increased knowledge of French will allow more Nigerians to get to know French culture, as well as the Francophone cultures of neighbouring countries and of Africa and the world at large.

Demand for French is increasing, both in the educational and professional sectors.

The agreement we are about to sign today will be of mutual interest. You can rest assured that this is my strongest wish.

Allow me to convey to you all the esteem and friendship of France for your country, which is the basis of her commitment on your side in the educational sector, among others.

I thank you for your attention.





Honourable Minister of State for Education, Hajia Jibril DUKKU, addresses the French delegation in French



Claude BARON, Education co-operation Attache, Constance UZOR, In charge of the Nigeria-French Language Project (NFLP), Christine ZORZUTTI, project Manager