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**INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF MOVEMENTS FOR
MODERN EDUCATION.
FREINET PEDAGOGY**

*“If we can't control the wind,
we can constantly
improve the control of our sails”*

(anonymous)

INFOR 69

After a few months into my term in office as Chair, I would like to make a short assessment of a two-year-period spent within FIMEM and put forward a few guidelines for the future in this end of year celebration of the 50th anniversary of Freinet's death.

What happened in the last two years ?

In the world

I won't remind you of all that we already know through day-to-day regular news bulletins. Of course, I'm thinking of the huge natural disasters which hit head-on several of our colleagues (some of them more than once) and also of the political, economic and social problems which should spur our militancy.

We live in a world with more controls but less security, more religions but fewer practising people, more anti-poverty speeches but less fairness between rich and poor, more opinions and less information, more xenophobia and less tolerance, more corruption and less justice, more powerlessness and fewer claims...

How do our member movements take into account these stakes in classes, schools, cities and internal meetings ?

In schools

Teacher burn-out is a major reason for young colleagues'early leaving the job...often in less than 5 years' time, which means : **what could be set up to lighten the burden of the new recruits and incite them to stay longer in the job ?** School drop-out begins as early as kindergarten and statistically boys are more concerned.

Do we lack male models at primary level ?

All that is presented here comes from my own observation and experience. I know of no other. Just like you, for that matter.

In Quebec, recent statistics are alarming : 53 % of the population are functional illiterates.

What about your country ?

Free access to the Internet and social networks are an incredible opportunity in terms of quality, variety, simultaneity and democratisation of information but it is also a breeding ground for cyber-bullying, pornography, on-line predators...

How can we prevent, track down and stop these intrusions into privacy, too often trivialized and unfortunately often leading to suicide ?

What about parents ?

The breaking up of major institutions, the family included, has resulted in a loss of bearings, models to be imitated or challenged in order to build one's own personality.

A different family pattern (monoparental, blended or split families where both spouses work in most cases) requires new forms of parenting : absentee parents, parents as mere dispensers of presents or on the contrary omnipresent parents totally dedicated to their children, God's gift to mankind, according to them.

Despite a drop in parents' available time for their children (after time spent in transport, there is not much left for teaching how people can live together), parents' demands and expectations from school keep rising. The same is true for society which often puts a premium on a rag-bag of a school to the detriment of its main and only role : educating, socializing and providing skills to the children they are entrusted with .

In FIMEM and the Board

The huge amount of time devoted to accompanying and supervising the people in charge of the Ridef 2016 in Dogbo (plus time spent individually with some participants by Sylviane and Giancarlo) has slowed down the processing of files specific to Fimem on the Board's work and my role as Treasurer from 2014 to 2016. The information available to this day suggests fewer needs in terms of supervision and support the 2018 Ridef. I'm glad of it !

During the Ridef in Dogbo 2016

First, I would like to congratulate Benin's organizing committee, who against all expectations, delivered a satisfactory Ridef according to the majority of the 150 participants. Moreover, I want to stress Luc Herbreteau's long-term investment as well as the spontaneous and fantastic efficiency of a group of Ridef participants in charge of organizing the reception (Katrien especially). Without them the results wouldn't have been as positive. I thank you all for your help !

Although most of my time in Dogbo was spent working within the Board (helping to organize the Ridef, preparing the General Meeting, finalizing files) I had the privilege to attend the round table on « neocolonialism ». A new understanding of the outrageous exploitation of natural resources hampering development in several countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Thanks for such a relevant theme and the first-rate quality of the contributor !

After Dogbo

It was a great idea to hold the first meeting with the new Board right after the Ridef. On top of the financial advantage (we were all on-site) the working sessions spread over 3 days allowed us to get to know each other better, to reinforce team spirit and to distribute the roles and responsibilities according to the interests and skills of each one of us. Congratulations and welcome to the 3 new elected members.

The General Meeting gathered in Dogbo clearly expressed a wish for Movements to identify, each one in its environment, reliable and committed contact-persons to build close relationships with frequent and efficient communication between them, the various Movements and with FIMEM. You have recently been transmitted an explicit demand called « **looking for contact-persons** ». Except for one person who proposes her contribution as translator (many thanks to her) this invitation to bid has gone unheeded so far. Come on all of you, off to your keyboards !

We expect to hear from you.

A general motion signed by FIMEM asserts that « only education can save the world ». For this statement to be true, each one of us must commit themselves personally and collectively to defending a quality school and children's rights, to denouncing and trying to change the political choices each time they go in an opposite direction from ours. Our actions must be a testimony to our convictions, not only in our literature however relevant it may be. While carrying on our work on pedagogy and field research, we must urgently put the publishing function and citizens' mobilization back on top of the agenda in the different authorities of our respective environments.

As a picture is worth a thousand words, I suggest two inspiring ones epitomizing the meaning of our action. They are the cement that links and rallies the driving forces and sets the tone to all the above remarks.

Picture 1. The iceberg metaphor



The part of the iceberg under the water is the most important... but often invisible at first sight. There lie the foundations, the values, the beliefs, the unalterable principles... in short all that has not changed for over a century now and which is still currently true. It is the hard drive of Freinet pedagogy. It is what makes it possible that **without knowing each other , we recognize each other personally and in groups at each Ridef.**

The tip of the iceberg is the part which changes, expands, varies according to situations, needs, difficulties, people, groups and countries confronted over the years. This is where each one of us contributes with their activities, tools, techniques, institutions as well as with their own initiatives and brainwaves.

Picture 2. TABONUCO forest in Puerto Rico



I often compare the Freinet community (and its microcosm the Ridef members) to a TABONUCO forest. They are the only trees which can resist hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes (both literally and figuratively) because **they are all linked by their roots.** It is a precious legacy indeed in this year of natural disasters which occurred in several of our friends' countries.

However it is not yet reality in 2016 ! But if everybody acknowledges the importance of individual, collective and group involvement we will slowly be like these TABONUCO trees : unique and vulnerable in the visible part but strong and invincible in the invisible part.

Proposal for 5 collective challenges by 2018

- Transfer the skills developed in Dogbo by increasing the opportunities for circulation of information and training ;
- Pick one or more reliable and committed persons in your environment to have them circulate all the relevant information and who would get involved in various projects supported by the Movements or by FIMEM ;
- List, collect, categorize and prioritize problems (local, national or international) you have power over and wish to mobilize on ;

- Devise and implement a plan of action to influence the problems identified previously ;
- Carry out annual assessments and prospects from « lessons learnt » and communicate them to all the members.(site, Ridef2018...)
- And any other you will give yourselves as a gift.

Conclusion

« Building democracy through education is our only hope. The Freinet Movement clearly asserts that it is only by educating children and young people to participatory democracy, commitment, common responsibility that this situation can be reversed and that a more human world can be built ». *(From the general motion « for those who believe that education can change the world. »)*

Of course this statement from the Freinet Movement also applies to all the « neuron developers » namely teachers, educators, parents, contributors.



Mariel Ducharme, Chair
for the FIMEM Board

INFOR 69

**FIRST MEETING OF THE NEW FIMEM BOARD 2016/2017 (FROM
THE 28th TO THE 30th OF JULY), JUST AFTER THE RIDEF IN
DOGBO, BENIN.**

VENUE AND ACCOMODATION : AUBERGE LE KAPOKIER IN DOGBO

PRESENT MEMBERS

Chair : Mariel DUCHARME (Quebec)

Secretary : Edouard DOHOU (Benin)

Treasurer : Sylviane AMIET (Switzerland)

Administrator : Annunziata MALDERA (Italy)

Administrator : Antoinette MENGUE ABESSO (Cameroon)

DATES

From the 28th to the 30th of July after the RIDEF in Dogbo (Benin) which took place from the 18th to the 27th of July 2016.

Contents :

1. Assessment of the former Board's work .
2. Meeting of members.
3. Visa procedures for African members.
4. FIMEM's statutes and regulations.
5. Motion on Mexico.
6. Distribution by countries between the FIMEM Board 's members.
7. Roles (Ro) and Tasks (Ta) of the Board's members.
8. Drafting a project for Congo.
9. CAMEM convention
10. Drafting a general motion on education.
11. Structuring FIMEM's Board.
12. Distribution of tasks by September-October.
13. Information.
14. Assessment of the meeting.

DAY 1 : 07/28/2016

1. Assessment of the former Board's work

1.1 Problems and difficulties

The former members of FIMEM's Board explain to the newly elected members the various resignations from FIMEM's Board and the inadequacies of its activity during its two years in office. After the elections in Reggio, the Board had just a half-day to get to know each other and distribute the roles to each member. The members hardly knew each other. Those few hours were not sufficient for each member to give evidence of their abilities.

Barely a month later the Board was notified of WALTER's resignation. As the German movement had no substitute member to put forward, Sylviane Amiet, from Switzerland, agreed to accept our proposal as a substitute (2014).

In 2015 Mia VAVARE, Chairwoman, resigned too.

The Board then agreed not to coopt a substitute and to carry on with 5 members

instead of 6 until the end of its term. Sadikh, the then Vice-Chairman became the interim Chair up to the end of the two-year period.

1.2. The setting of a rule within FIMEM's Board

In order to enable efficient work, the former Board unanimously voted for the following rule : **when a member does not fulfil their obligations, the Board can call for their resignation should no change occur despite three prior summons.**

2. Meeting of members

2.1. Meeting date and venue

Following a discussion with the two newly elected members Antoinette MENGUE and Nuccia MALDERA, the meeting will take place in July 2017 in Nantes. The date will be set later in September.

Nantes is favoured because :

- ⑩ of its central position allowing Africans to come as well as Swedes possibly
- ⑩ visa procedures are usually easier
- ⑩ FIMEM's bank account is in Nantes
- ⑩ FIMEM's Board will benefit from François Perdrial's advice.

3. Visa procedures for Africans

Getting a visa is often difficult for Africans. In this respect the Board recommends :

- FIMEM's Board will write a letter to be addressed to all African consulates and European countries' ministries of Foreign Affairs to facilitate the issuing of visas ;
- contacting François Perdrial and Nicoletta (contact persons) to know the proper way to approach African consulates ;
- writing a letter of invitation with all due information ;
- submitting all applications three months in advance.

4. Statutes and regulations

FIMEM's statutes and regulations are read to allow new members to get acquainted with them and fully grasp their meaning. The two documents raise a few questions :

- How to make sure that FIMEM movements abide by FIMEM's statutes and

- regulations ?
- How can we make sure that the movements abide by their own statutes and regulations ?

These questions show that it will be difficult to monitor the functioning of the movements because the Board cannot impose its decisions on them. It can only provide advice and recommendations.

DAY 2 : 07/29/2016

5. Motion on Mexico

Here is the first draft of the motion :

FIMEM's motion of support to Mexico's teachers victims of mistreatment

Every single person in the world is aware of the historic struggles that paved the way to human rights, one of whose characteristics is full recognition of the human being.

What happened in Mexico is utterly intolerable.

That is why FIMEM expresses its indignation at the bloody repression our colleagues were subjected to.

It demands :

a. An immediate dialogue between the authorities and the teachers to come together through political, social and educational negotiations in order to respond to the educational demands of the country.

b. A transparent judicial process and an investigation concerning the events which will lead to fair sanctions and reparation of damage caused to all the teachers and people present during the events.

c. The immediate release of all the prisoners arrested in Nochixtlan.

d. The restoration of rule of law.

Nuccia MALDERA has been appointed to send this first draft to Teresita in order to collect further information and write the final draft . In this respect she is going to require to be notified about the pending administrative reform in Mexico, the role of the Government's Secretary General, the three main items the motion will discuss, the kind of assessment currently carried out in Mexico's education

system, the reasons for the delays concerning the teachers' salaries, what really happened in Nochixtlan and what kind of pressure the motion can bring to bear. The drafted motion will be published through institutions and international organizations and in Mexico too. Nuccia will contact Jean Le Gal to collect the addresses of the international institutions and organizations.

All the movements will receive a copy of this document to be widely circulated among their respective authorities.

6. Distribution by countries between the FIMEM Board's members

After listing the countries they have been distributed according to the choice and possibility of each member. The distribution is as follows :

Nuccia : Senegal, Palestine, Spain, Italy, Mexico, Columbia, Chile, Red-America, Panama, Brazil and Portugal.

Edouard : Benin, Togo, Nigeria, Ghana, Niger, Haiti, Ivory Coast.

Antoinette : Cameroon, Congo, Algeria, Tunisia, Mali, Morocco, CAMEM, Burkina Faso.

Sylviane : Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, France, Switzerland, Poland, Romania, Greece, Georgia, Russia, Uruguay, Hungary, Estonia, Belgium.

Mariel : Quebec, Canada, Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, The United States.

7. Roles (Ro) and tasks (Ta) of the Board's members

In order to inform and put the new members in the picture the former members, namely Mariel DUCHARME, Sylviane AMIET and Edouard DOHOU each described the roles they played and the tasks they carried out for the former Board. Giancarlo CAVINATO's and Sadikh DIAW's roles and tasks were also mentioned. By reading and explaining the working document on the Board's roles and tasks the new members were able to get a clear picture of the work to be done and to choose with full knowledge the contributions they will be able to make to the Board and FIMEM.

Roles (Ro) and tasks (Ta) of the Board's members, *with help, substitute or special collaboration.*

A reminder to be regularly updated : *adding, removing, completing, referring to*

somebody else.

TASKS FOR EACH MEMBER OF THE BOARD	
Ta	Follows international news...
Ta	Promotes FIMEM in all the authorities it sits in whether internally or externally
Ta	Answers all the e-mails he/she is in charge of within 3 days
Ta	Each member in charge of projects signs the official documents with the Chair
Ta	Puts different overview syntheses to the Board
Ta	Looks for contact persons and supervises their work
Ta	Visits the site every week
Ta	Looks for sponsors

PRESIDENCY : MARIEL	
Ro	Represents FIMEM and is the Board's spokesperson
Ro	Drafts the inception and end of term letters as well as the Chair's letter for Infors
Ro	Drafts the moral report to be presented to the Board

Ro	<p>Makes sure the members of the Board carry out the RT they are in charge of according to the General Meeting's orientations and the Board's decisions and account for their actions to the relevant authorities.</p> <p>Reinforces the cohesion of the members of the Board on a regular, collective and transparent basis.</p> <p>Supervises the general organization and the follow up work concerning the decisions made during the Board's meetings</p>
Ro	Is in charge of the official correspondence (contacts with institutions)
Ro	Initiates resignation procedures
Ro	Makes sure each Board member promotes FIMEM in all the authorities it is part of whether internally or externally
Ta	Sends invitations for arrivals with visas
Ta	Specifies the roles of our contact persons or delegates
Ta	Is in charge of contacts with the following movements or countries : Canada, China, Korea, Denmark, Finland, Japan, Norway, Quebec, Sweden, Taiwan, USA,...
Ta	<p>Keeps in touch on a personal basis with the movements she is in charge of</p> <p>Supervises relations and communication and keeps the Board informed about the course of exchanges</p> <p>Tables proposals of reactions or motions about events which require our sympathy and our support</p>

SECRETARIAT : EDOUARD

Ro	Takes the minutes of meetings:General Meetings, annual and virtual meetings
Ro	Updates the various documents (statutes, orientations, categories, policies and procedures...)
Ro	Prepares documents for the General Meetings Sets up the list of delegates and organizes the voting process
Ro	Supervises the correspondence, the classifying of files, the minutes of all the documents that are the Board's memory
Ro	Sends to the movements : proxies for the delegates, the form requiring the data of each movement, the application form for candidacy to the Board, notifications for the General Meeting, the annual report of each member movement and files the replies:proxies, applications etc.
Ta	Classifies e-mails
Ta	Sends letters to all the movements to be used for : newsletter, new rules
Ta	Publishes the FIMEM brochure
Ta	Looks for translators
Ta	Is in charge of contacts with the following movements or countries:Benin, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Niger, Nigeria, Haiti, Togo,... Keeps in touch on a personal basis with the movements he is in charge of Supervises relations, communication and informs the Board about the course of exchanges Tables proposals of reactions or motions about events which require our sympathy and our support

ACCOUNTS : SYLVIANE

Ro	Keeps accounts up to date and checks operations if necessary
Ro	Makes follow up calls and makes up for missing fees +10 %: 2014-2015/2016-2017 (3rd reminder in September and last opportunity on the spot at the Ridef
Ro	Gives regular information to the Board on the financial situation
Ro	Drafts the financial report and the projected budget to be presented to the Ridef
Ro	Is in charge of the Board's day-to-day financial management : cheques, banking transactions, conciliation procedures, preparation of reports for the different authorities
Ro	Assesses the financial costs of the Board's decisions and budgets the necessary funds
Ro	Prepares the balance sheets to be presented at the General Meeting in collaboration with 2 external auditors appointed by the General Meeting
Ta	Is in charge of beneficiaries of a solidarity allowance
Ta	Initiates our virtual meetings
Ta	Is in charge of the FIMEM's multimedia library together with ICEM and ADF
Ta	Is in charge of contacts with the following movements and countries : Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, France,...
Ta	Keeps in touch on a personal basis with the movements she is in charge of Supervises relations, communication and keeps the Board informed

	<p>about the course of exchanges</p> <p>Tables proposals of reactions or motions about events which require our sympathy and our support</p>
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ADMINISTRATION : NUCCIA	
Ta	Is in charge of FIMEM's publishing projects to enhance the movements' contributions and help them to be recognized by FIMEM's members
Ta	Is in charge of Dropbox and lists
Ta	Manages requests for help and research projects
Ta	Supervises contacts with international organizations
Ta	Is in charge of contacts with the following movements or countries: Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Spain, Italy, Mexico, Palestine, Panama, Portugal, Red America, Senegal,...
Ta	<p>Keeps in touch on a personal basis with the movements she is in charge of</p> <p>Supervises relations, communication and keeps the Board informed about the course of exchanges</p> <p>Tables proposals of reactions or motions about events which require our sympathy and our support</p>

ADMINISTRATION : ANTOINETTE	
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Ta	Is in charge of the philosophical space Gives pedagogical advice and ideas
Ta	Puts forward classifying modifications Manages the site with Claude's help Examines the possibility of a platform...
Ta	Is in charge of contacts with the following movements or countries : Algeria, Burkina Faso, CAMEM, Cameroon, Congo, Mali, Morocco, Tunisia,...
Ta	Keeps in touch on a personal basis with the movements she is in charge of Supervises relations, communication and keeps the Board informed about the course of exchanges Tables proposals of reactions or motions about events which require our sympathy and our support

DAY 3:07/30/2016

8. Drafting a project for Congo

Thaddée, the Chair of the Congolese movement initiates a project on the training of teacher trainers and requires Antoinette's help for the drafting of a project. Mariel and Antoinette quickly review the project which is sent back to Congo to be finalized.

9. CAMEM convention

CAMEM's Chair has proposed a partnership convention to FIMEM. After contacts with a few contact persons like Jean Le Gal, François Perdrial, Michel Mulat, Teresita... the convention will be examined. A letter will be sent to CAMEM's Chair to inform him that FIMEM's Board will give an answer by late October. Antoinette will write the letter. CAMEM's and Red America's statutes will be read and compared by FIMEM's Board. The Board thinks that CAMEM has all that it takes to become a strong political movement which could take a

stand on several events occurring in Africa more particularly.

10. Drafting a general motion on education

The first draft of this motion written by the Latin languages group is read to all members. Sylviane will finalize it for it to be discussed and circulated by the Board.

11. Structuring FIMEM's Board

After the third working session the members of the Board have now had time to get to know each other. Structuring the Board is easier and more objective. It is as follows :

Mariel DURCHAME (Quebec) : Chair
Edouard DOHOU (Benin) : Secretary
Sylviane AMIET (Switzerland) : Treasurer
Nuccia MALDERA (Italy)
Antoinette MENGUE (Cameroon)

12. Distribution of tasks by September-October

Partnership convention CAMEM/FIMEM

Antoinette

accepts the request's of CAMEM's Chair about a possible partnership convention CAMEM-FIMEM

Sylviane, Nuccia, Mariel

will consult key people to enlighten the Board as to the following up of this request

Edouard

writes infors 68 and 69 ;

produces by October at the latest all RIDEF documentation ; sends the FIMEM logo to Antoinette ;

Updates the new addresses and requires of movements to fill in the biennial (2016-2018) membership cards if necessary.

Maribel

Drafts the Chair's letters which will be added to infors 68 and 69.

Nuccia

Finalizes the motion on Mexico by September 15

13. Information

The Board decides to give 15 euros (maybe less) to any one who hosts a Board member during meetings.

A first virtual meeting is scheduled on September, Saturday 10 or Sunday 11 at 7 p.m. (French time).

Special attention must be paid to our e-mails : check the titles, the addresses before sending them.

14. Assessment of the meeting

At the end of the three-day working session, each one of us is satisfied with the working atmosphere and suggests a few recommendations to reinforce the pleasant working atmosphere in the future.