

## **Discussion and comments**

**On which language is best for learning maths/science:** Basic science and math concepts are learned from birth (ie concepts like big, small, weather, measurements, shapes, nature). In pre-primary and primary education, the learner will learn concepts best in the language he/she already understands. As they progress they can transfer to using additional languages to express same concepts they've already learned in first language.

**On how to link national policies and desires for education with mother tongue-based approaches:** There is some analysis of this in Save the Children's 'Missing Link' report. Link the national agenda with local priorities. Provide evidence--SC evaluations show that there is much more listening when you do so. Approaches should be about tapping into the anxieties of people in power and investing a lot in those and focusing on evidence that makes a difference to them. It's also about tapping into decision-making processes and opportunities. Use indicators the government is accountable for and interested in.

**On curriculum design strategy for MTBMLE:** Those involved in curriculum design should examine links between what is in the curriculum and what is in learners' experience. Ensure there is a sequential, progressive element to curriculum design.

**On policies on English language teaching:** Many politicians are not thinking about linguistic issues; they say they will teach children English starting in grade 1. But if you do that, you will put children off for life. The result of that is often semi-lingual children who are fluent in neither language.

**On choices regarding scripts and writing systems:** Community voices are key in the decision-making process. There has been a tendency for choices to be made on linguistic and political rather than socio-linguistic decisions.