



Rutu Foundation Annual Report

2016



Children do not learn better in their mother tongue. They learn.

Message from the Executive Director

Five years ago, the Rutu Foundation started from the premise that education should be in a language that the child understands: you can't learn if you don't understand. Right?



Not for these children who were forced to wear a [sack](#) for their 'crime' of using their home language in the classroom. This does not only happen in Uganda. Everywhere in the world children are punished for speaking their mother tongues. For example, in

Belgium, teachers were known to tape off the mouths of 5 year-olds or make kids [stand](#) in a corner. In Suriname, a teenager told me she used to be spanked for speaking her home language in class. In schools in India, kids have been barred from [lunch](#) and forced to wear [a card board](#) with the text: "I do not speak language X". Similar practices were reported in [Haiti](#), while in the Netherlands, a school recently [expelled](#) a pupil for speaking Turkish on the school ground (Le Pichon-Vorstman & Kambel 2017).

These practices stand in stark contrast to the [research findings](#) from every corner in the world, that children learn better (and faster) when they are taught in a language they are already familiar with, that they stay in school longer and even that they earn more money, potentially breaking the cycle of poverty that has trapped their families for generations. Most importantly: they learn. And isn't that what schools are for?

But if we know this, **how come schools still punish kids for using their home language?** The reasons vary. It's not because teachers don't want the children to learn. Quite the opposite: there is a deeply held (but mistaken) belief that the best way for children to learn a new language is to

make them forget their first language. Young children who are just starting to learn to read and write need to build confidence in acquiring these new skills and adapting to the new school environment. Punishment will do exactly the opposite and cause them to lose motivation and even impacts their learning, as new findings by Orhan Agirdag (2017) show.

Another reason frequently mentioned for banning home languages from the classroom is that it would **hinder nation building and social cohesion**: if we all speak the same language, no one will be excluded. The reality is of course that this benefits those who master the chosen language and puts those who don't at a disadvantage. Why not invest in bilingual or multilingual education so we can all participate? For example by using [translanguaging](#), a pedagogic strategy that can be used in multilingual classrooms and also benefits monolingual native pupils.

Finally, we should not underestimate the **impact of prejudice and racism** against children belonging to indigenous communities and linguistic minorities, including children with Muslim backgrounds. This is a topic I have started to [speak about](#) more often last year.

Opportunities

The truth is that **children have no influence over the language or languages they are born into** and how those languages might be perceived in the wider world. If your mother tongue or even your accent is perceived as being linked to terrorist attacks, or – less dramatic but equally damaging – to backwardness, poverty or low status, this will impact your educational achievements and eventually your employment opportunities.

Considering the recent elections in the United States and the surge of extreme right movements across Europe, we should not be naïve about the roadblocks that are in place and which are likely to increase in size and number.

Where are the opportunities?

(1) The recent **influx of refugee children in Europe** has heightened awareness among policy makers of the needs of children who don't speak the school language. In the **Netherlands**, for example, a concerted lobby, supported by our Advisory Board member Emmanuelle Le Pichon-Vorstman, led to a one year extension of [school support for newly arrived migrant children](#) by the Ministry of Education. Exactly how this money should be spent is not yet clear.

The publication of a [new report](#) by the Ministry of Education recommending primary schools to use the mother tongues of newcomers for learning, point to new directions.

2) At the **regional level**, the European Commission actively promotes professional development for teachers in cultural diversity and multilingualism. While EU education policies are not binding for member states, a powerful network is being built of like-minded researchers, professionals and policy makers who together, can make considerable changes at the school level. I am very happy to report that the Rutu Foundation was one of the recipients this year of an [Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership funded by the EU \(AVIOR\)](#) which will make bilingual materials available to benefit migrant children, teachers and parents across Europe.

Learning from Multilingual Youth

Where I think we need much more investment, is in **giving multilingual minority youths a voice**. In education we tend to focus on the teachers, emphasizing the difficulties and complexity they face in providing a quality education to culturally

and linguistically different children. While this is indeed a great challenge, we also need to listen to the students. What is it like for them? What are they experiencing every day in school? How can we learn from them to make our education systems more inclusive and of better quality for all learners? In February 2016, Rutu started this [conversation](#) at the Lloyd Hotel in Amsterdam and we plan to continue this endeavour in 2017.

Looking back at the past five years, we have made some significant steps forwards. In 2016 we directly reached over 500 teachers, policy makers and academics through our workshops, presentations and other events. Clearly, we still have a lot of work ahead of us to make mother tongue education standard practice globally, but together there is much we can achieve.

For those new to the Rutu Foundation, I welcome your interest and collaboration. For those who have supported us in the past, we are extremely grateful and look forward to working with you in the future.

Ellen-Rose Kambel - director/founder Rutu Foundation

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Vision and Mission

We envision that Mother Tongue Education is the standard practice globally.

Our immediate mission is to significantly increase the size and significance of the mother tongue education domain within five years, while cultivating the circumstances required for a sustainable future for mother tongue education.

Activities & Results 2016

Our Top 6 Moments of 2016

Suriname: Teacher Training

*AVIOR: Multilingual Learning
Materials in Europe*

*Empowering Indigenous Youth &
Their Languages*

- *Mobile Forest School
Philippines*
 - *Revitalizing Indigenous
Languages in Suriname*
-

Events:

- *Lloyd Hotel Panel Discussion
Language Discrimination in
Dutch Education*
 - *Workshops & presentations*
-

Publications

Suriname: Teacher Training

Strengthening Teacher Competence in Multilingualism and Cultural Diversity in Suriname



Christelijk Pedagogisch
Instituut Paramaribo



Universiteit Utrecht

Towards a new Multilingual Intercultural Curriculum for Teacher Training Institutes

In December 2016, we concluded the collaboration with the University of Utrecht of a year long training of instructors at the Christian Pedagogical Institute in Paramaribo (CPI) in Suriname. The CPI is responsible for the education of primary school teachers and requested Rutu to provide support in adapting their new curriculum to include multilingual and culturally appropriate education.



A group of teacher trainers followed four intensive modules, including school visits and completed a portfolio. They were also responsible for organizing a well attended symposium to present what they had learned. In her closing speech, the Director of the Ministry of Education underlined the importance of multilingual education for a multilingual and culturally diverse student population, an important step forwards for Suriname where Dutch continues to be the only language of instruction.



Above: trainer and project coordinator Maggie Schmeitz. Left: interviews with school leaders and school visits in the Interior of the country were part of the training.

The project was funded by the Twinning Facility (UTSN) of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, aimed at stimulating collaboration between civil society organizations in the Netherlands and Suriname.

Multilingual Learning Materials for Migrant Children in Europe

AVIOR: A new European Strategic Partnership



Together with partner-organisations from 6 different European countries, Rutu was granted an Erasmus+ subsidy from the EU. The 3-year project, named AVIOR, is aimed at improving the basic numeracy and literacy skills of migrant children and thereby reducing the achievement gap between native and non-native pupils in Europe.

By collaborating and sharing best practices at European level, we can reduce the costs of producing bilingual materials, improve teacher professional competence and enhance migrant parental involvement in the learning process of their children. This is achieved using a three way approach:

- 1) Translating and adapting exiting bilingual materials;
- 2) Building teacher competences
- 3) Creating teacher/ parent collaborative networks.

AVIOR will run from December 2016 to August 2019.

The Partnership is named **AVIOR**: after one of the brightest stars in the night sky. The star is invisible from the Northern hemisphere, as are the multitude of language skills that migrant children bring to the classrooms but that often remain hidden to their teachers.

Target group: primary school children between 4-8 years with migrant backgrounds who speak a different language at home than the school language.

Partners:

Risbo, the Netherlands (Project Leader), Rutu Foundation, the Netherlands, European Forum for Migration Studies (efms), Germany, Network of Education Policy Centers (NEPC), Croatia, University of Western Macedonia (UWM), Greece, Praxis, Estonia and Terremondo società cooperativa, Italy.

For more information: please visit our [website](#).

Empowering Indigenous Youth and their Languages

Mobile Forest School Philippines

As part of our effort to support indigenous communities to transmit their knowledge to the next generation, we partnered with **Sentrong Pagpapalakas ng Negritong Kultura at Kalikasan (SPNKK)**, the umbrella organisation of Negrito peoples of the Philippines.

The Negrito belong to the oldest civilization of the Philippines, going back at least 45,000 years in time. They are unsurpassed in forest-based skills and knowledge, yet belong to the most marginalized groups of the country.



Despite legislation protecting indigenous peoples' rights to their ancestral lands and traditional knowledge, the Negrito territory is under severe threat from mining, logging and large scale cultivation.

The **Mobile Forest school is an innovative initiative** that builds on the strength of the Negritos' traditional knowledge and skills and familiarity of the forest environment, while offering an alternative and culturally appropriate secondary education for Negrito youth.

The MFS is a school without a school building. It is a **year long training programme** combining traditional knowledge, e.g. sustainable forest management and healing, with 21st century skills such as ICT and new media.

With a small grant from the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation (OSSTF), preparatory meetings with elders and parents were held in 2016.

The MFS is expected to benefit 20.000 Negritos.

Empowering Indigenous Youth and their Languages (cont'd)

Language Revitalization with Indigenous Communities in Suriname

A community-based language survey we performed back in 2012, was finally analyzed this year with the help of Dr. Emmanuelle Le Pichon-Vorstman of the University of Utrecht.

The study, which was carried out in 6 indigenous communities in Suriname among 515 persons (20% of total population), confirmed what was generally known: that the status of the Kari'na (Carib) and Lokono (Arowak) is cause for concern.



Above: fluent speakers of Kari'na and Lokono discussed ways to revitalize these endangered languages with the Association of Indigenous Village Leaders and the Rutu Foundation (Paramaribo, April 26, 2016).

Below: presenting results of a community based language survey to the village council, parents and teachers of Galibi, the only coastal village where the mother tongue (Kari'na) is still spoken by all generations.

Especially the Lokono language is under pressure and may disappear if no measures are taken to reverse this. Our findings confirm the UNESCO classification of both languages as 'severely endangered'.

Fortunately, there is hope as both languages are still present in the communities (with the except of one) and as Kari'na is still spoken widely in Galibi. The results of the survey were discussed with community members and the final report with recommendations will be published in 2017.



Events

*Multilingual Youth Speak Out!
Panel Discussion Language
Discrimination in Dutch Education
25.02.2016 Lloyd Hotel -
Amsterdam*



Top from l to r: Suheyyla Yalcin and Hélène Christelle Mungayende; Dr. Jamiu Busari. Bottom: Simion Blom (Green Left Party Amsterdam) and Tanja Jadnanansing (former MP for the Labour Party) who kindly hosted the panel (l); spoken word artist Malique Mohamud (r)

*Below: Kutlay Yagmur, Professor of
Language, Identity and Education,
Tilburg University*



We asked high school and university students, recent graduates and a medical doctor/father of bilingual children to share their experiences with language based exclusion in the Dutch education system.

Their stories deeply moved the audience, which included policy makers, parents, researchers and students.

The stories will be part of our book **Multilingualism and Education** (forthcoming, September 2017).

A [video](#) of the event was produced with generous support of Minutes on Career.

Events

Workshops and presentations



Left: Rutu director Ellen-Rose Kambel at an expert meeting on multilingual education in Brussels.

In 2016, Rutu was present at conferences and expert meetings and we also hosted our first webinar. A selection:

Translanguaging for Multilingual Classrooms – Presentation at the study day for teachers of Dutch as a second language, organised by Boom publishers. (Amsterdam, 13 January)

Conference on language education policies; Rutu hosted a panel presentation on translanguaging in Suriname (Ellen-Rose Kambel), the Netherlands (Emmanuelle Le Pichon-Vorstman) and Mexico (Cynthia Groff). We had also time to catch up with Rutu advisory board member Dr. Carol Benson (Jyväskylä, Finland, 20-22 June)

See our [event calendar](#) for a complete overview.

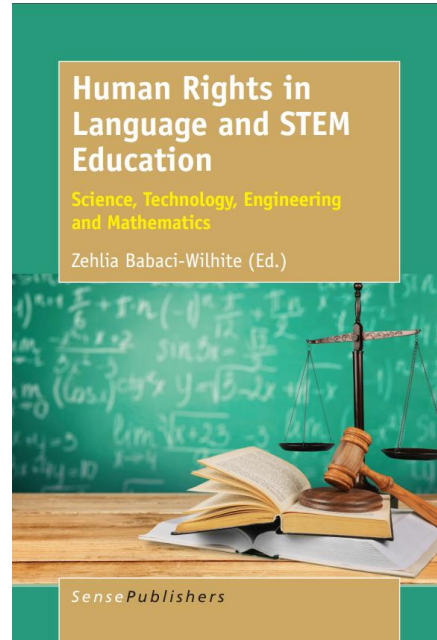
Keynote presentations for expert meetings on multilingual education organized by the European Commission Unit on Multilingualism and Ecorys, UK by Ellen-Rose Kambel and Emmanuelle Le Pichon (Brussels, 12 July and 26 Sept and 8 November).

Introduction to Bilingual Education Workshops for pedagogy students at Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, with international multilingual education expert and consultant Eowyn Crisfield (Amsterdam, 15 and 18 November)

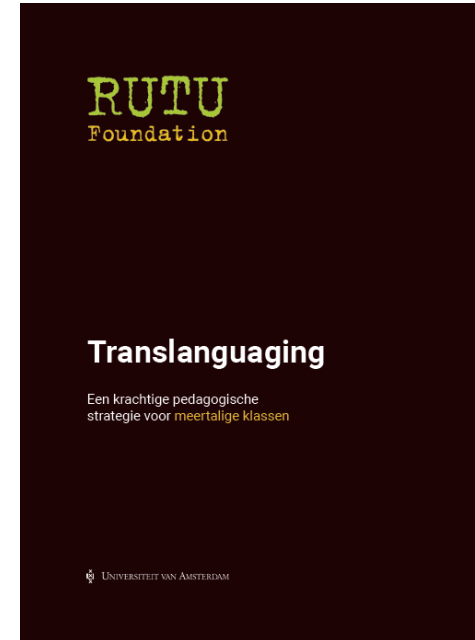
Below: Teachers of Dutch as a second language actively participating during the Rutu workshop on Translanguaging at the Boom Study Day.



Publications



Emmanuelle Le Pichon-Vorstman and Ellen-Rose Kambel (2016), Challenges Of Math Education In A Multilingual Post-Colonial Context: The Case Of Suriname. Chapter in Zehlia Babaci-Wilhite (ed.), *Human Rights in Language and STEM Education*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.



Brochure on Translanguaging (in Dutch only). Online version available [here](#).

Outlook for 2017

In addition to building the Global Platform by continuing to organize events, expand our network and build our library, we will continue our other projects, mostly existing projects or project ideas that were initiated in 2016 or earlier:

- **AVIOR (EU project).** For 2017, a Transnational Partner Meeting is planned to take place in Amsterdam that will be hosted by Rutu and Risbo. Together with our partners we will select and translate 10 bilingual materials.
- **Translanguaging Amsterdam:** in partnership with the University of Amsterdam we developed a pilot project to build professional capacity of primary school teachers in translanguaging (using children's

mother tongues to encourage learning). Several schools have expressed interest, so if funding comes through we will hopefully start up the project in 2017.

- **Mobile Forest School Philippines:** we will continue to raise funds for this important initiative in 2017 and are planning a visit to the Philippines at the end of the year.
- With our partners in **Suriname**, we will develop follow up activities either to continue professional development for teacher trainers and /or around revitalizing indigenous languages and empowering indigenous youth.

Finances

Financial Statement

Donors

Financial Statement 2016

In 2016, Rutu Foundation continued to be managed largely on a voluntary basis. The grants received from funders (in 2016 this was mainly the Twinning project Suriname) were allocated directly to the projects.

To secure institutional funding for salaries, travel, fundraising and communications, we organized for the first time a fundraising evening generously hosted by the Drake family in Wassenaar and co-sponsored by Pereira Tax Consultants and the Deutsche Bank.

Our annual financial statement 2016 is published as a separate document and is available on our [website](#).

Our Donors 2016



Organization

The Rutu Foundation was established in 2011 and is registered with the Dutch Chamber of Commerce.

Rutu is recognized as a Dutch charity (a 'stichting' with ANBI status).

Management

Supervisory Board

International Advisors

Partners



Management

Rutu is governed by a supervisory board (Raad van Toezicht) of three members who appoint the board and the executive director. The board/executive director is responsible for the overall management of the organization. An international advisory board gives advice to the executive director and supervisory board.

The salary of the executive director is conform the [Good Governance Code for Charities](#) (Commissie Wijffels).

In 2016, the team working for Rutu on a voluntary or project basis consisted of:

Dr. Ellen-Rose Kambel
executive director

Sietske de Haan
business manager

Isabel Sheridan
Communications/events

Andrew Munn
Student intern

*Mother tongue & multilingual education
advisory committee:*

Dr. Emmanuelle LePichon

Dr. Eowyn Crisfield

Dr. Cynthia Groff

Supervisory Board

The three members of the Supervisory Board are appointed for four years and can be reappointed twice. They may be suspended or dismissed by the Supervisory Board. Members of the Supervisory Board are not employed by the foundation and do not receive any remuneration. A member of the Board/ Executive Director cannot be part of the Supervisory Board.

As of 1 January 2017, Carrie van der Kroon will join the Supervisory Board.

Members 2016:

Paul Wolvekamp (Chair)

Paul is co-director of Both Ends. He is vice chair of the NFTP Exchange Programme, chair of the Forest Peoples Programme en coordinator of the Dispute Settlement Facility working group of the Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil. He is also member of the Supervisory Board of IUCN Nederlands Comité and a member of the Commissie Duurzaamheidsvraagstukken Biomassa ('Commissie Corbey').

Tswi Rodrigues Pereira

Tswi Rodrigues Pereira is a founding partner at Pereira Tax Consultants in The Hague, the Netherlands.

Dr. Salim Vally

Salim is the director of the Centre for Education Rights and Transformation and an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Education, University of Johannesburg. He is also the coordinator of the Education Rights Project. He has been a visiting lecturer at the Universities of Virginia, Columbia and York. He is a visiting professor at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

International Advisory Board

Jenne de Beer, Philippines

Jenne is an award winning anthropologist, the founder and former executive director of the Non-Timber Forest Product Exchange Programme for South and South East Asia. Jenne is based in Manila, The Philippines and among others coordinates the Mobile Forest School.

Prof. Carol Benson, USA

Carol is an international consultant on language issues in education currently teaching at Teachers College Columbia University, USA after many years at Stockholm University in Sweden. She has guided the development curriculum by national professionals, trained teachers and researchers in mother tongue-based multilingual education and provided technical assistance to educational reform programs that emphasize learner-centered pedagogy and democratic participation. Her work experience spans the globe and she has published extensively.

Prof. Carol Anne M. Spreen, USA

Carol Anne is Professor of Education at New York University. Her research centers on political and socio-cultural studies of educational change, particularly the influences of globalization on teaching and learning. Internationally, she has worked with many educational development and planning organizations, and assisted numerous schools, districts and educational Ministries with various reform innovations.

Prof. Deena Hurwitz, USA

Deena is Professor of Law, International Human Rights Law Clinic at the Washington College of Law, American University, USA. She and her students have prepared training modules on the rights of indigenous peoples to education.

Dr. Martha Many Grey Horses, Canada

Martha is member of the Kainai First Nation, Blackfoot Confederacy, Alberta (Canada) and a fluent speaker of the Blackfoot language. Her doctoral thesis

International Advisory Board (cont'd)

focused on the reading performance of American Indian children in secondary public schools in the USA. Martha is currently Director of the First Nations Métis and Inuit Centre, University of Lethbridge, Canada.

Prof. Sabine Severiens, the Netherlands

Sabine is Professor of Education at the Erasmus University Rotterdam, with a special focus on diversity.

She has devoted most of her research to diversity and inequality in education. She was managing director of the Risbo Institute in Rotterdam, an independent research institute at the Erasmus University Rotterdam.

Dr. Emmanuelle Le Pichon-Vorstman, the Netherlands

Emmanuelle is assistant professor at the department of Modern languages at Utrecht University. She has been involved in the European Comenius project Transitions and multilingualism.

The goal of this project was to provide preschool and primary school teachers with skills that would allow them to better support children with different ethnic backgrounds and mother tongues. She is the author of several scientific papers on plurilingualism and at present divides her time between linguistic research and teaching.

Partners

The Rutu Network is growing, with partners from around the globe

Asia:

Keystone Foundation (India)

Non-Timber Forest Product Exchange Programme (Philippines)

Sentrong Pagpapalakas ng Negritong Kultura at Kalikasan (Philippines)

Europe:

Both Ends (Netherlands)

Risbo/Erasmus University (Netherlands)

Utrecht University (Netherlands)

Sirius European Policy Network for Education of Migrant Children (Belgium)

Forest Peoples Programme (UK)

European Forum for Migration Studies (Germany)

Network of Education Policy Centers (Croatia)

University of Western Macedonia (Greece)

Praxis (Estonia)

Terremondo società cooperativa (Italy)

South-America

Apitikatxi (Brazil)

Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname

Foundation for Intercultural Bilingual Education in Suriname

Christelijk Pedagogisch Instituut Paramaribo (CPI) Suriname

The Autonomous University of Querétaro (Mexico)

Thank you

Every year we are fortunate to have so many people supporting our work. We cannot name them all, but this year a special word of thanks (in alphabetical order) goes to:

Alexander Rinnooy Kan

Anouk Ticheloven

Astrid Janssen

Carmen Stella

Cynthia Groff

Dimitri Tjin

Ellen-Petra Kestra

Emmanuelle Le Pichon-Vorstman

Eowyn Crisfield

Eun Hyung Kim

Gerard Essed

Gert-Jan van der Worp

Ineke Bendter-Adams

Jenne de Beer

Kutlay Yagmur

Loreen Jubitana

Maggie Schmeitz

Malique Mohamud

Marco Essed

Maria Sperling

Mirjam van Weerden

Mr. and Mrs. Drake

Nigaio Wijnen

Pamela Mercera

Piet Boogert

Sheila Kort

Sjoerd Simons

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Tom Tudjman

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