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Cover photo: Anne Kielland

The cover picture shows a school in Say. The boy in the front is living with Down syndrome. He comes to the school every day to observe, but is not invited into the classroom—a situation still typical for many children living with disabilities in Niger.

Contents

Abbreviations

AFD	*Agence française de développement*
AfDB	African Development Bank
BID	*Banque Islamique de Développement*
CI	*Cours d'Initiation* or initiation class (first grade)
CP	*Cours Préparatoire* or preparatory class (second grade)
CE1	*Cours Élémentaire 1* or elementary class 1 (third grade)
CE2	*Cours Élémentaire 2* or elementary class 2 (fourth grade)
CFEPD	diploma for completion of primary school
CEPE/FA	diploma for completion of primary school, in a *Franco-Arab* school
CM1	*Cours Moyen 1* or middle class 1 (fifth grade)
CM2	*Cours Moyen 2* or middle class 2 (sixth grade)
DG DEVCO	EU's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development
DREP	*Direction Régionale de l'Enseignement Primaire* (regional education department)
ENI	*Ecole Normale des Instituteurs* (teacher training institute)
ENS	*Ecole Normale Supérieur* (education supervision institute)
EU	European Union
GIZ	German Cooperation
GNI	gross national income
GDI	gross domestic income
GINI	general inequality indices
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GPI	gender parity index
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IESFA	Franco-Arab schools
ICT	information and communication technology
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
KLI	Niger grant under the REACH trust fund
LEG	local education group
LOSEN	*Loi d'Orientation du Système Educatif Nigérien*
LuxDev	Development Agency of Luxembourg
MAP	multi-annual program
MEP	*Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, de l'Alphabétisation, de la Promotion des Langues Nationales et de l'Education Civique* (Minister of Primary Education)
MEPT	*Ministère des Enseignements Professionnels et Techniques*
MES	*Ministère des Enseignements Secondaires* (Ministry of Secondary Education)
MESRI	*Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche et de l'Innovation*
MFA	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MIGA	Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (World Bank Group)
NGO	nongovernmental organization
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NORHED	Norwegian Program for Capacity Development in Higher Education and Research for Development
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
PAD	project appraisal document
PAEQ	*Programme d'Appui à l'Education de Qualité*
PAQUE	*Programme d'Appui à la Qualité de l'Education*
PASEC	*Programme D'Analyse Des Systèmes Educatifs de la CONFEMEN*

PDDE	*Programme Décennal de Développement de l'Education* (ten-year program for education development)
PDES	*Plan de Développement Economique et Social*
PPP	purchase power partity
PSEF	*Programme Sectoriel de l'Education et de la Formation* (2014-2024)
RESEN	*Rapport d'Etat sur le System Educatif National du Niger*
SDRP	Niger's previous poverty reduction strategy
SNAFS	*Stratégie Nationale pour accélérer la scolarisation des filles*
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States dollars
WB	World Bank
WDI	World Development Indcators
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Introduction

This report was commissioned by Norad to provide a brief overview of the education sector and situation in Niger 2015. It was written to inform Norwegian policy makers and program developers on the context for potential education investments in the country. It therefore aims to clarify options as well as challenges related to implementing education initiatives in one of the world's poorest and most vulnerable economies. The report also presents an overview of important donors/partners in the Niger education sector. The perspectives presented in the concluding section are linked up to some core principles promoted in the Norwegian MFA White Paper 25 on Education for Development.[1]

The report is a rapidly written summary of the most striking issues of relevance. The content is provided partly in the form of knowledge nuggets, a form that facilitates the presentation of key facts in an easy-to-access manner. Time constraints did not allow a deeper qualitative analysis of the empirical situation. The data presented were gathered from the program documents of key stakeholders, notably the Government of Niger, UNICEF and the World Bank.

A mission to Niger was made in week 46, 2015. The mission met with the Minister of Primary Education (MEP); the cabinet secretary of the Ministry of Secondary Education (MES); division chiefs for inclusive education, Franco-Arab education, curriculum reform, statistical compilation and external communication within the MEP; and the regional education department in Dosso (DREP). On the donor side, the mission met with the Swiss Cooperation, LuxDev AFD, GIZ, USAID, UNICEF and the World Bank. The NGOs met were Save the Children, Strømme Foundation and Handicap International. In academia, the mission met representatives from the Institute of Law and Economics at the University of Niamey, representatives from the teacher-training institute (ENI) in the region of Dosso and the head of the education supervision institute (ENS) at the University of Niamey. The mission visited three schools, two rural and one urban, including one school with speed-school classes. Two of the schools had preschool units.

The report begins with a section briefly presenting some general issues, with the aim of linking each to the education situation and its prospects. It presents elementary points related to the country's economy, demography and risk situation, alongside gender and health issues. The second section provides an overview of the education sector in Niger, its schools, teachers and equipment, strategies and sector governance, as well as financing matters. It concludes by providing some central numbers and statistics. The third section presents the stakeholder community and the ODA involvement in basic education in Niger since 2000, including some previous Norwegian experiences. A donor matrix presents ongoing initiatives, while a more comprehensive overview of basic education projects since 2000 are provided in Annexes I and II. The fourths and final section introduces parameters of importance for defining further Norwegian investments and concludes with some preliminary recommendations.

1. Stortingsmelding 25, 2013-2014.

1. Contextual Factors Relevant to the Education Sector

1.1. Economy

In 2013, Niger had a GDI of USD 7.1 billion, producing a GNI/cap of only USD 400 (Atlas method). The per/cap GNI PPP is USD 890. Economic growth rates are fluctuating, but the average economic growth rate has been similar to the population growth rate, at around 4 per cent per year, which means that per capita GNP remains almost unchanged. In 2013, economic growth was of 4.1 per cent. Poverty is widespread, and opportunities for increased taxation limited. Any immediate increase in education spending per child must therefore, in the short run, be taken from other sectors or come from either external resources or innovative financing.

1.2. Poverty

In 2011, 41 per cent of the population lived below USD 1.25 per day, and 76 per cent below USD 2.00 per day.[2] The country's GINI coefficient is of 31.2, indicating moderate but not grave economic inequalities. Yet, the relationship between the poverty quintile and educational obtainment seems linear and stark, underscoring the importance of even minor wealth variations. Niger ranks very low, number 151, on the Gender Inequality Index. Corruption levels are moderate. Niger is ranked number 103 among 175 countries on the Corruption Perception Index. In 2014, Niger had the lowest ranking of 187 countries on UNDP's Human Development Index.

1.3. Population

Niger has a population of 19 million inhabitants, and an annual population growth of 3.9 per cent per year.[3] While part of the population growth in most countries is due to higher life expectancy, Niger has growth in the 0- to 4-year-old population of more than the national population growth rate, at 4 per cent.[4] With this rate continued, the population will double in 20 years, and education sector strategies and initiatives must be developed with this in mind. Moreover, with an average fertility rate per woman of 7.6 children, often in polygamous families, children cannot count on much support with their homework.

1.4. Vulnerability

Niger's economy depends heavily on rain-fed agriculture. Droughts are common, with detrimental effects on both economy and welfare. This and other vulnerabilities strongly influence growth rates, which fluctuated between -1 and 11 per cent per year only in the past five years. Famines have triggered substantial, but irregular, humanitarian support. Some of this support was given to education initiatives, but generally in the form of short-term interventions. Education investments are vulnerable when not accompanied by strengthened risk-management interventions. The evaluation of the country's former poverty reduction strategy (SDRP) concluded that, indeed, all risks envisioned in planning the strategy had occurred.[5]

2. All numbers from World Bank, 2015, WDI.
3. World Bank, 2015, WDI.
4. UNESCO, 2015, GMR.
5. Ministère du Plan, 2012, PDES.

1.5. Security

The southeastern region of Diffa experiences serious security and humanitarian challenges related to the activities of Boko Haram. Neighboring Zinder also experiences an influx of refugees from the conflict in Nigeria. Refuges from the conflict in Mali have settled in the Western departments of Tillaberi and Tahoua. The total refugee population of concern in August 2015 was estimated at almost 203,000 people, half from Nigeria, approximately 50,000 from Mali and around 50,000 internally displaced Nigerians.[6] Al Quaeda is active in the country, there are national rebel groups in the north, and there is increased drug and human smuggling throughout the Sahara. Such security concerns affect the delivery, cost and risks of education investments in some areas, but also increase the importance of such investments, possibly embedded in emergency programs.

1.6. Geography

Three-quarters of Niger is desert with disbursed populations, some nomadic. Population density is only 14 people per square kilometer, which is low when taking into account its large, uninhabited areas. Only 20 per cent of the population lives in urban areas. Providing education to nomadic and sparsely populated populations represent particular challenges to education service delivery. Certain ethnic groups face special obstacles accessing education and other services because of local traditional and social practices. There are at least eight indigenous languages, and maternal language education is promoted for five of these.

1.7. Religion

Niger is an overwhelmingly Muslim country. All Muslim children are required to learn the Quran, and so an intricate system of informal Quranic schools throughout the country primarily targets preschoolers. The Madrasah de Say is the historic origin of the religious ideology in Niger and marks itself by conflicting far less with French rule than the Timbuktu school in Mali. The Say school has no strong religious authorities resembling the brotherhoods in Senegal and the Marabout families in Mali, which no doubt facilitated collaboration between the secular state and the religious schools. The religious headquarters since the 1990s has been Niger's second largest city, Maradi. During the past few decades, Maradi has been strongly influenced by orthodox Sunnis through close social and economic bonds with Northern Nigeria, especially the cities of Kano and Katsina where Sharia Law is practiced. In conjunction with this process, the confessional *Islamiyya* school model entered, developed and spread throughout Niger. The Islamiyya school model later influenced the development of public, formalized Franco-Arab schools, while the pure confessional school model also exists within the private sector.

1.8. Girls

Girls suffer social and economic discrimination. Early marriage and childbirth are very common. More than one-third of girls are married at 15 years of age, and three-fourths by the age of 18 years. The average marriage age of 17.6 years is the lowest in the world. By age 7 years old, many girls are already engaged in their own income-generating activities with the aim of preparing their *trousseau*, or bridal chest, which evidently interferes with their schooling.[7] Of every 1,000 newborns, 205 have teenaged mothers,[8] and one-in-ten girls already had their first child by age 15.

6. UNHCR, 2015
7. Government of Niger, 2014, SNAFS.
8. UNFPA, 2013. The average in West and Central Africa is 129.

1.9. Boys

Some boys are vulnerable to a different social practice: so-called *talibes* are young boys placed with a Quranic tutor, often working and begging for both his own and the tutor's subsistence. This practice is common throughout the region and seen as a variation of all Muslim children's commitment to memorize the Quran. While most local Quranic tutors stay and teach in the communities where the children live, others are iterant and bring the children with them to more urbanized areas during dry seasons, Eid, or more permanently. It is important to distinguish between the often informal Quranic schools and formalized *Franco-Arab* schools. Quranic tutoring is supposed to precede formal schooling, but for some boys entrusted to a Quranic tutor, the practice may delay school start or stand in the way of schooling altogether. Unlike in neighboring countries where this phenomenon is well studied, little is known about the young boys living with and begging for Quranic tutors, although they are highly visible in the streets of major towns and cities.[9]

1.10. Disability

Children living with disabilities probably have heightened mortality rates and are at times hidden away. Few reliable numbers are available. The WHO has suggested an incidence of 13 per cent and the SDRP II suggested 78 per cent of children with disabilities are without education.[10] The government, in collaboration with Handicap International, is in the process of developing an action plan based on the needs of these children. In 2013, only four special schools were registered in Niger, mainly for children with visual and auditory impairments and only 343 children were registered as attending. Since 2000, five localities piloted inclusive education. In practice, they established special classes for the first three grades, aimed at including special needs children in regular classes by Grade 4. Twenty-one such classes exist. The national strategy aims to sensitize local communities, identify children from 3 to 12 years of age, facilitate medical consultation and treatment, promote school inclusion relative to disability, train teachers in braille and sign and provide special didactic material and follow-up services for children once integrated in school.[11] The ministry is not involved with children with intellectual disabilities; it refers to the NGO Pelican in this field.

1.11. Other Vulnerable Groups

Hard-to-reach children in Niger include children from nomadic families. Social class and caste may also be a concern. Tuareg society is hierarchically organized based on caste, and the practice of slavery has only recently been dealt with in Niger society. Slaveholders have traditionally been Tuareg, but also include Peuhl and Hausa, whereas the enslaved where ethnic groups with darker skin color. The Tuareg practice a caste system, wherein descendants of slaves are at the bottom of the social hierarchy. They may identify as Tuareg, although they may have other ethnic origins. The practice of *wahaya* is of special concern to girl's education, because very young girls are effectively sold as unofficial "fifth wives" to better-off men.

1.12. Nutrition and Health

The nutritional situation of the pre-primary child population is of serious concern: three-in-four children less than 5 years of age are anemic, 38 per cent are malnourished; 43 per cent are stunted and 19 per cent wasting. Intestinal parasites fatigue many children, and also malaria, airway infections and diarrhea are widespread. Very low household consumption of iodized salt (18 per cent

9. *Recensement des Ecoles Coraniques dans les regions de Marad, Tillabery, Diffa and Zinder*, 2015.
10. Referred to in UNICEF, 2015.
11. Information provided by head of division for inclusive education, MEP.

of households) in a Sahelian country predisposes for widespread thyroid problems. All this affects the child's school preparedness and ability to learn, and makes school-health issues a prominent concern. The relatively late enrollment age of 7 years is probably a sound arrangement under the current conditions, notably in the absence of adequate preschools.

2. Sector Overview

Niger has seen rapid development in the education sector since the new millennium. In 1999, only one-in-four children enrolled in primary school, whereas today, two-in-three children do. That is, out of 2.9 million primary-school-aged children, almost 2 million are in school; nearly 1 million are not. In spite of the rapidly growing student mass, school progression has remained relatively unchanged. About 70 per cent of children make it to the sixth grade. High drop-out and repetition rates leave an average school life of 6.1 years for boys and 4.8 years for girls.[12] Access to lower-secondary is a main challenge, especially for girls.

2.1. The Education Law

The education sector of Niger is regulated by the *Loi d'Orientation du Système Educatif Nigérien* of 1998, (LOSEN). Although the state of Niger is secular, the education law is not; which opened for public management religious education institutions, the so-called Franco-Arab schools. After adoption of the LOSEN, Niger between 2003 and 2013 implemented a three-phase *Decennial Program for Education Development* (PDDE). Almost universal access to primary school was ensured in that decade, in spite of frequent political and economic shocks, and in a country with disbursed populations, many in hard-to-reach places.

2.2. The Schools

Four types of schools are formally recognized: so-called traditional schools based on the French school model, private schools, community schools and *Franco-Arab schools*. Private schools follow national curriculums, and the Franco-Arab schools are generally under the public system in Niger. Community schools are often initiated by NGOs and run in rural or nomadic areas. While the government generally recognizes the community schools, it does not recognize some confessional schools, unless they are willing to formalize towards the national curriculum and become Franco-Arab schools.[13]

The Niger education model comprises three years of pre-primary education, although barely 6 per cent of children currently attend even one year. Basic education starts by the age 7 and lasts 10 years when intended progression is followed—something that is often not the case. Basic education is comprised by six years of primary (cycle de base 1) and four years of lower secondary school (cycle de base 2). Higher secondary is three years.[14] Upon completion, pupils are awarded a diploma certifying completion of first-level studies. In Niger, this diploma is referred to as CFEPD and/or CEPE/FA, the latter if the child attended a Franco-Arab school.

In school year of 2013/14, there were **2,083 preschools** in Niger, with 3,452 classrooms. Less than half the preschools were public, but the public preschools were larger and covered two-thirds of the classrooms. Further, 925 were community run. More than half the preschools were located in rural

12. UNESCO, 2015, GMR.
13. Villalon, Idrissa and Boudian, 2012, p 13.
14. Most people refer to each of the six primary school years with the references: CI (Cours d'Initiation or Initiation Class); CP (Cours Préparatoire or Preparatory Class); CE1 (Cours Élémentaire 1 or Elementary Class 1); CE2 (Cours Élémentaire 2 or Elementary Class 2); CM1 (Cours Moyen 1 or Middle Class 1) and CM2 (Cours Moyen 2 or Middle Class 2).

areas and most operated in a hut made of branches and straw (*en paillote*). Only one-in-four preschools had a latrine.[15]

Also in school year of 2013/14, there were almost **16,000 primary schools**, with 55,388 classrooms. Primary schools in Niger are overwhelmingly public, including 1,902 establishments are registered Franco-Arab schools.[16] Almost 41,000 classrooms were in rural areas, implying that 74 per cent were in the areas where at least 82 per cent of the primary school children live. Around half the classrooms are *en paillote*. Slightly more than one-in-four primary schools have functioning latrines, and less than one-in-five have access to potable water.

In 2015/2016, there are an estimated **1,221 public secondary establishments**, among them only 25 *Lycées*, or higher-secondary schools.[17] In school year 2013/14, 28 per cent of the 6,957 classrooms were made *en paillote*.[18] Admission rates to lower-secondary schools were 36 per cent (30 per cent for girls), while gross schooling rates were 26 per cent and net rates 20 per cent. For higher secondary, admission was only 7 per cent (4 per cent for girls). The regions of Dosso, Maradi and Tahoua seem particularly gender unequal.[19] The long distance to a secondary school is the main obstacle for most children, and girls are less likely than boys are to be left to rent a room near the school. For lower secondary, more than one-in-three classrooms are made *en paillote*, and only slightly more than half have quality brick walls.

2.3. Religious Schools

Plain, traditional Quranic schools in Niger cater primarily to preschool-aged children and focus on memorizing the Quran. Since all Muslim children are required to learn the Quran, many such schools simply result from communities calling upon the most religiously knowledgeable community member to tutor their children—who is religiously obliged to succumb to the request. The Quranic schools are officially placed under Ministry of Interior control but receive little public attention. Quality varies greatly. Many are extremely poor since, also for religious reasons, the tutor has no legitimate right to ask for support from the parents. The establishments can be someone's yard or simply a piece of the sidewalk.

Although, in principle, Quranic schools should complement public schools, in some of their forms they interfere with public school enrollment. Importantly, it is a practice to entrust children with the tutor; a request the tutor, for religion reasons, cannot decline. The responsibility this practice imposes drives many tutors to the point of destitution. When they can no longer feed the confided pupils, referred to as *talibe*, tutors many times travel with the children. Iterant tutors may take their confided children to urban areas during Eid, when begging is rewarding, and during hungry seasons out of necessity. Iterant tutors can also commute, on a more regular schedule, between a rural and a more urban community. The latter have institutionalized the practice of child begging, often far past the official enrollment age for children in Niger. The begging appears religiously legitimized with reference to the *zakat system*, and is portrayed as a spiritual lesson in humility for the children. Child rights activists ,however, increasingly label the practice exploitative.[20]

15. MEP, 2015, *Quantitatifs*, 2013-2014.
16. MEP, 2015, *Quantitatifs*, 2013-2014.
17. MES, 2015, *Statistiques*, Updated annex 2013-2014.
18. MES, 2015, *Statistiques*.
19. MES, 2015, *Statistiques*, Tables 1.2.
20. It is difficult to document the state of the phenomenon today, although child beggars from the Quranic schools are very visual throughout the urban centers. A 10-year-old study from Caritas estimates around 40,000 such *talibes* under 18 years old in Maradi, Agadez and Niamey.

Among the more organized *medersa* schools, the *Islamiyya school* model developed in Niger during the 1970s is purely confessional. The *Franco-Arab schools,* on the other hand, share the curriculum of the traditional school, simply adding Arabic language and Islamic cultural studies. The Franco-Arab schools fall under the MEP and the MES, whereas private Islamiyya schools organize under the Ministry of Interior alongside Quranic schools.[21] Unlike in Senegal and Mali, the government establishes and runs most Franco-Arab schools in Niger, which may seem paradoxical because the Niger Government is secular (laic). However, unlike for instance in Senegal and Mali, the *education system* is not laic. The LOSEN does not require schools, curriculums or staff to be secular.[22] Efforts to formalize the sector had three implications. First, it upgraded religious schools, where the study of Arabic and Islamic culture became publicly formalized. Second, it pushed some previously Islamiyya schools to adopt a broader national curriculum. Third, it aimed to turn some traditional Quranic schools more into a type of kindergarten institutions.[23]

In Niger, *medersa* schools were established not only in response to parental resistance to the country's general secular French schooling system. They also responded to the generally low quality of and poor access to traditional schools. Finally, the Franco-Arab school is seen as a means of skills diversification: if the children cannot obtain formal sector jobs, their knowledge of Arabic could be another marketable skill. Elsewhere in the region, the choice of Quranic schools is explained as an expression of general political opposition. However, by co-opting the *medersas*, the Niger Government effectively responded to popular discontent with the French education system.[24] Increased demand for primary education is a likely consequence, and girls especially seem more likely to attend a Franco-Arab school.

In 2000, there were 290 Franco-Arab primary schools in Niger, with 41,000 students and 826 teachers. By 2005, the numbers more than doubled.[25] The numbers increased steadily since and quite proportional to the country's increased school enrollment. In school year o 2013/14, 1,902 of 16,000 primary schools in Niger were registered under the *medersa sector*. This is also a considerable increase from 2012/13, when 1,844 such schools were registered. That year, the structures covered 6,416 classrooms, employed 8,474 educators (*maitres*) and catered to 255,000 children.[26] This represented 12 per cent of schools, classrooms and schoolchildren in the country. In Diffa, more than one-in-five children attend a Franco-Arab school—a share almost as high in Niamey. Counting classrooms in secondary school, 524 public and private classrooms in lower secondary are registered as Franco-Arab (IESFA).[27]

2.4. Non-formal Education

The relatively large population of overaged, out-of-school children is as a special target group for non-formal education initiatives. There are two main forms of non-formal education in Niger: the first is accelerated learning programs (speed schools) and the second the so-called "alternative education." Both organize under the government strategy for non-formal education and literacy.[28]

The most common accelerated learning program, **Speed School 1** (*écoles de 2ème chance*) targets children between 8 and 12 years of age who have never been to school or who dropped out during

21. Quranic schools are schools for the masses, primarily targeting the preschool population.
22. Government of Niger, 1998, LOSEN.
23. Villalon, Idrissa and Bodian, 2012.
24. Villalon, Idrissa and Bodian, 2012.
25. Villalon, Idrissa and Bodian, 2012, p. 36.
26. MEP, 2014, *Statistiques*.
27. MES, 2015, *Statistiques*.
28. *Programme de l'éradication de l'alphabétisme au Niger au Horizon 2023, Plan d'Action Triennal, 2015-2017, de l'accélération de l'alphabétisation et de l'éducation non-formelle*.

the first two grades. Speed-school courses teach the first three years of primary school condensed into nine months and aim to reintegrate the children into regular schools relative to their individual achievements.

For the group 13 to 14 years of age, a recently developed concept is the so-called **Speed School 2**. Speed School 2 aims to teach the full six-year primary curriculum in two years, leading towards regular national graduation exams that qualify children for entry into lower-secondary schools. The program targets out-of-school girls at heightened risk for early marriage and pregnancy and, to some degree, out-of-school boys at risk of becoming radicalized.

Speed School 3 targets children 15 to 18 years of age. It recruits out-of-school adolescents to so-called gateway centres that integrate basic literacy skills with vocational training and apprenticeships. During the first year, the students follow the Speed School program to learn to write, read and calculate in their mother tongue as well as in French. During the second year, learners will take part in vocational training of their choice. Vocational skills taught are agriculture and fish farming and small-stock management, alongside cellphone and solar panel maintenance. The ultimate aim is job creation for the participants.

Niger has also tested so called **remedial programs** to help improve study progress in primary school. The programs focus on basic literacy and numeracy, and are typically short modules added after regular schooling hours. Alternatively, the regular curriculum can be postponed while basic literacy and numeracy skills are repeated. Among programs tested in Niger are the *Systematic Method for Reading Success*, *Response to Intervention Approach* and *Language and Mathematics Initiative for Early Grades*.[29]

2.5. Teachers

Among the 63,688 **primary school** teachers in the country in 2013/14, a little less than 41,000 or 65 per cent work in rural areas. Almost half the teachers are female. The student-teacher ratio has been slowly declining in spite of the rapid increase in the number of schoolchildren, and is now of around 40:1. In rural areas, the student-teacher ratio averages 39:1 with large variations from area to area.

The number of teachers actively teaching ("chalk-in-hand" teachers) in **secondary schools** in 2013/14 was 14,285. Among them, 4,542 were so-called *titulares*, specifically educated to teach secondary classes.[30] The total teaching staff was 17,393 and only 21 per cent of them female.[31]

Most teachers are not regularly employed, nor do they have full teacher qualifications. Non-civil servant teachers are referred to as contractual teachers (*contractuels*), a system introduced to handle the cost of the sector's rapid expansion with scarce resources. In school year 2012/13, more than four-in-five teachers were so-called contractual teachers. The intended temporary strategy is seemingly becoming permanent.

Even teachers trained at teacher institutes (ENIs) in the different regions have limited skills, caused generally by the schooling system's low quality in the years prior to university level. Consequently, the quality of teacher students suffers. The steadily high demand for new teachers that results from the continuously growing child population forces teacher-training colleges to accept students with

29. Swarts, 2012.
30. MEP-provided handout.
31. MES, 2015, *Statistiques*.

low grades.[32] The social status of teachers is low, and does not improve when skills continue to be restricted.

The 12,684 teaching students (so called *normales or normaliens*) in 2013/14 were divided among eight regional institutions. The rapid increase in the number of teachers in training caused the number to double since 2009/10. Since that same school year, female teaching students have been in the majority; they now by far outnumber male students.[33] The national objective is to educate between 2,500 and 4,000 teachers each year to reach the goal of full teacher coverage.

The fact that female students are about to become a majority is, in many ways, positive. However, it also complicates the already difficult employment situation. That is, it is already difficult to find new teachers who will accept assignments in remote communities. For a female teacher, such an assignment can end her career, because she cannot easily ask her husband to abandon his job and move with her. Further, in many areas it would be unthinkable for a married woman to split from her family to work elsewhere.

2.6. Learning

The schooling sector suffers from serious challenges already touched upon, such as the lack of qualifications of both regular and contractual teachers, and pending curriculum reform, weak pedagogics, outdated learning methods and, often, very difficult learning environments. As additional challenges come the pupils' poor health and nutritional states, parental lack of ability to follow-up their academic work, often considerable workloads, and the lack of prospects for formal sector employment for most children, especially girls. Schools are also often poorly administered and affected by teacher absenteeism, strikes and academic corruption.[34]

The ministry previously called the Ministry of National Education has assessed, at infrequent intervals, basic French and Mathematics skills for Grades 2, 4 and 6. Comparing scores from 2011 to those of 2005, French scores seemingly declined for both 2nd and 6th grade, with no change for 4th grade. In Mathematics, improvements were seen in 2nd grade, but declined in the other two grades. Scores measured in 2007 were equally grim. However, the 2011 figures improved for all grades and in both subjects since then. It is important to recognize that the growth in the number of school children between 2005 and 2011 led to a comparison between two quite different child populations; notably, the 2011 population comprised more girls, more rural children and more poor and marginalized.

The situation, however, remains critical, and the challenges to the schoolchildren seem to accumulate by grade, even though it should be assumed the weakest students increasingly drop out. In 2nd grade, around half the children score below a minimum learning threshold in French. This figure increases to two-in-three children in 4th grade, and then to almost three-in-four children in 6th grade. In Mathematics, one-in-three second graders score below the minimum threshold. This figure increases to two-in-three 4th graders and to almost three-in-four 6th graders.

In late 2014, Niger participated in the nationally representative PASEC assessment, but the data are not yet publically available. The PASEC data will make possible, for the first time, meaningfully comparison of Niger with its neighboring countries and with the rest of the world. In Fall, 2015, the World Bank will carry out a service-delivery indicator survey that includes a test of student learning in the 4th grade. However, the results are not expected until 2016.

32. It was claimed that among 4,000 applicants, only 18 had grades past 10 points (the French scale is 0-20), and taking in 3,000 teachers meant accepting a group with an average score of 4.
33. Ibid.
34. Villalon, Idrissa and Boudian, 2012, p. 41.

2.7. Mother Tongue

The very poor learning scores for children underscore the need for basic education in maternal languages. This education has been piloted in around 500 schools for the five major national languages where basic literacy is taught by phonetically spelling local language words. Although most schools use Latin letters in this basic literacy training, a pilot in the Eastern region of Diffa also uses Arabic letters to spell local words phonetically. Two challenges relate to mother tongue education. The first is matching teachers with local language skills in relevant schools. The second is teaching classes with children of different language groups.

2.8. Schooling Material

In spite of the increasing number of schools, the ratio of children to chairs or desks has also increased. In 2013, there was only one chair or desk per 3.4 children in urban areas and 5.3 children in rural areas. The ratio of children to schoolbooks declined, then raised again over the past 3 to 4 years. Although the situation is better in the first grade, 1.8 children in CM2 share a schoolbook. Considerable regional variation should also be expected. The situation is similar in language and mathematics classes, with an average over the six years of 1.4 to 1.5 children per book. Thus, production and distribution of schoolbooks do not seem to keep pace with the growing number of schools or the increasing child population.[35]

2.9. Piloting ICT

The Orange Foundation and AFD have since March 2013 piloted a program distributing computer tablets to third grade schoolchildren, including repeaters. The tablets are equipped with dictionaries, grammar and numeric programs. The grant could not cover the planned internet connections, limiting the project's opportunities considerably. Solar panels installed in the children's households, to allow recharging, accompanied the tables. The cost included $120 per tablet plus solar panels, program adaptation and staff education was clearly very high in a context like Niger. That the average tablet also seemed to have a shorter lifespan than the suggested five years financially challenged the programs. However, the tablets were very popular among the children, and the project report suggests commercializing electricity sales for charging household devices with the distributed solar panels could potentially bring in EUR 150 to 200 per household in five years.

2.10. Sector Governance

Governance of the education sector is divided between a number of ministries, and even other ministries have intersecting mandates. The two main ministries for investments in basic education are the *Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, de l'Alphabétisation, de la Promotion des Langues Nationales et de l'Education Civique* (MEP/A/PLN/EC) for primary education, referred to as the MEP, and the *Ministère des Enseignements Secondaires* (MES) for secondary. There are ministries for superior education, research and innovation, and for professional and technical education (*Ministère des Enseignements Professionnels et Techniques*, MEPT) and *Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche et de l'Innovation* (MESRI).) In addition, the ministries of culture, art and leisure and of youth and sports have stakes in the education sector (*Ministère de la Culture, de Arts et des Loisirs*, and *Ministère de la Jeunesse et des Sports*). At the administrative level, both the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Plan and Community Development are relevant partners; the latter especially related to decentralized components of the education strategy. A main bottleneck in program

35. MEP, 2014, *Statistiques*.

implementation is reportedly coordination challenges at practically all government levels, affecting reforms requiring coordination among ministries or among departments within ministries.[36]

2.11. Strategy Documents

The key strategy document in the education sector is referred to as the PSEF: the *Programme Sectoriel de l'Education et de la Formation* (2014-2024). The strategy was developed within the framework of the country's economic and social development plan—the PDES, *Plan de Developpement Economique et Social* (2012-2015). The PSEF followed the previous ten-year plan, the PDDE, *Plan Décennal de Développement de l'Education*, but took point of departure in a sector diagnostic published in 2010 called the RESEN, *Rapport d'Etat sur le System Educatif National du Niger* and the origin of many of the most quoted figures on education in Niger. In addition, individual strategies developed or under development for several sub-sectors, not all yet ratified. These are on girls' education (2014), accelerated learning, alphabetization, teacher training, remote education and children living with a disability (under development). A strategy for education in conflict-affected areas has been requested, as the absence of such a strategy currently paralyzes and prevents interventions in the eastern regions.

Table 1. The PDES' six programs tailored to achieve eight education outcomes[37]:

Programs	Results
Development of basic education	1.Development of basic education is expanding to a 10-year cycle of free, compulsory education, up to 16 years of age.
Development of literacy and nonformal education	1. The offering of functional literacy programs is increased and diversified; 2. Nonformal education programs are developed.
Development of secondary education	1.Secondary education is expanded to cover the entire country and its quality is improved.
Development of higher education and research	1. Access to and the quality of higher education are improved; 2. Education programs are oriented more towards technical and scientific disciplines, in line with the needs of the economy.
Development of vocational and technical training	1. The offering of vocational and technical training programs is developed.
Improvement in management of the education system	1. The institutions in the sector function efficiently and effectively.

The PSEF emerges from the fifth pillar of the PDES, on the theme social development. Both strategies are broad in defining development objectives, as the country no doubt needs considerable investments across the sector. The PDES stresses that, besides supply and quality problems, there are gender-based inequalities at all levels of instruction. In addition to strengthening the supply side, the document stresses the need to stimulate the demand for education among vulnerable groups. Concerning both vocational and higher education, the document underscores the need to adopt training to the needs of the labor market. There is no real policy strategy in the area of science, technology and innovation. There is moreover a "*mismatch between research and the needs of development, inadequate human resources management, an inadequate institutional framework for research, under-financing of research, not enough research equipment, and the lack of private sector involvement*." The stated objective concerning education under the fifth pillar of PDES, is consequently to *"qualitatively and quantitatively develop the supply of education, to adapt training to labor market demand, and to promote the use of results from scientific research and technological innovation."*

[36] According to stakeholders met during the mission of November 2015.
[37] The PDES explains these six programs in subsection 3.6.2., and this presentation is attached in Annex III of this report.

2.12. Financing

According to UNESCO, Niger in 2012 spent 4.2 per cent of its GNP on education, constituting 22 per cent of public expenditures. Within the education budget, 57 per cent of running costs went to primary schools.[38] That year, Niger spent on average of 130 2011-US dollars per primary school student. Because the budget size is relatively fixed despite many more children entering the schools, this represents a decline over 10 years of USD 207 per pupil. In secondary school, the cost per child was 310 2011-US dollars, which is high in the regional context. Total education support to Niger in 2012 was USD 54 million, of which USD 29 million went towards primary schools.[39]

Primary school budgets allegedly increased from CFA 141 billion to 167 billion in school year 2013/14, implying a relative increase of 18 per cent.[40] With today's exchange rate, this constitutes around USD 286 million. Although this is an increase in absolute numbers, it is a decline in relative terms. It constitutes around 10 per cent of public budgets, compared with around 15 per cent in the years 2008 to 2010. Costs estimates for the new education strategy is set to USD 486 million for 2015 and USD 506 million for 2016. Of this, preschool in 2016 is estimated at USD 8 million, primary school at USD 275 million, and lower secondary at USD 70 million.[41] It should be stressed that the numbers are difficult to verify and actual disbursement rates remain obscure.

The majority of the budget is spent on teacher salaries and allowances. Employing more skilled teachers therefore becomes difficult given their current salary level. A teacher today makes the equivalent of ten times the GNI/cap.[42] Thus, a temporary solution that seems to have become permanent has been to employ so-called voluntary teachers without required qualifications, but who earn only one-third of a regular teacher's salary.

While average economic growth and population growth are parallel in Niger, GDI/cap stays unchanged, as does GDI/child due to high birth rates. Freeing more public funding for education will be difficult in the short run, given the continued high population growth. Moreover, due to the strained security situation in several neighboring countries, Niger is now forced to increase the share of the national budget going to defense.

2.13. Aid Dependency

According to a cost estimate for quality inclusive basic education, Niger will remain highly dependent on foreign aid beyond 2030.[43] Taking a point of departure from the Wils (2015) and Kielland (2015) estimates, in 2015 Niger will have an external financial gap in basic education of 65 per cent of the real costs, given that it spends at least 5.4 per cent of BNP on basic education.[44] In 2020, this gap will be of around USD 757 million, or 55 per cent. Wils assumed investments in a set of education sector general quality improvements towards 2030. Importantly, the improvements include lowering the student-teacher ratio; improving salaries, school material and buildings; and special support to include vulnerable children. Also, according to Wils, the number of children in Niger preschools will have to be twenty times that of today; that is, the number of children in primary school must be triple and the number in lower-secondary eight times higher than today. In Niger, investments per child must double towards 2030. However, based on IMF projections for economic development,

38. The PSEF states this number to be 25-30% of GDP BNP.
39. UNESCO, 2015, GMR.
40. MEP, 2015, *Quantitatifs*, 2013-2014.
41. Government of Niger, 2013, PSEF.
42. Government of Niger, 2013, PSEF. UNESCO recommends teacher salaries of 4 times the GDP/cap.
43. For model and estimation, see Wils, 2015; UNESCO, 2015, Policy Paper 18.
44. Kielland, 2015 for MFA; Wils, 2015 for UNESCO.

Niger is one of the four low-income countries in the world that, even in 2030, will need external support of more than 8 per cent of BNP to achieve inclusive quality basic education for all. In 2030, this will correspond to 40 per cent of costs for basic education in the country, or USD 900 million.[45]

2.14. Basic Education Statistics

According to the Direction of Statistics in Niger, gross enrollment in **preschools** has been relatively constant at 6.6 per cent in the past few years. A decline of 0.8 percentage points registered between school year 2012/13 and schoolyear 2013/14. Yet, the decline represented an increase in absolute numbers from 67,000 to 73,000 children, again underscoring the challenges related to rapid population growth.

A total of 2,227,021 children were registered in **primary school** in 2013/14; 46 per cent of them girls. While 82 per cent of the Niger population lives in a rural area, only 73 per cent of primary school children were rural. Similarly, the admission rate was 83 per cent and gross attendance rate was 71 per cent, 65 per for girls. While these figures represent a relative decline since the previous school year, primary school completion rates increased from 56 per cent to 62 per cent (54 per cent for girls). Among the 510,207 new school entrants in school year 2013/14, 45 per cent were girls. Primary school completion rates neared 62 per cent, but only 54 per cent for girls.

Girls, however, seem to drop out more frequently in the lower grades (CI, CP, CE1 and CE2). Survival rates in 5th grade are reported as 66 per cent for girls and 63 per cent for boys; and for 6th grade, 67 per cent for girls and 64 per cent for boys. [46] The repetition rate was 4.1 per cent in 2011, and the dropout rate 10.5 per cent,[47] and girls had slightly higher repetition and dropout rates than did boys. The highest repetition rates were found in Agadez—almost 10 per cent, as well as in Niamey. The highest dropout rates were found in Tillaberi—14 per cent. With the rapidly expanding student mass, learning quality deteriorated. In 2002, 52 per cent of children passed the monitoring test for French in CM2, and 43 per cent passed the math test. Both figures dropped to 34 per cent in 2012. In sciences, test scores remained relatively stable at around 49 per cent.[48]

Transfer to **lower secondary school** is very low; 54 per cent in 2011.[49] Although the relevant school-aged population was 2.4 million children, only 389,000 (16 per cent) enrolled in secondary schools and only 40 per cent of the enrolled were girls. While 22 per cent enrolled in lower secondary, only 4 per cent of girls and 7 per cent of boys complete lower secondary education. Geographical differences are strong: only 1 per cent in rural areas compared with 18 per cent in urban areas complete.[50]

Data on grade promotion are discouraging. Repetition rates in 2010 were almost 20 per cent, and the estimate for 2014 is 14 per cent.[51] The project *Amélioration de l'enseignement des mathématiques et sciences au Niger, au secondaire*, SMASSE-Niger, tested secondary school children in math and sciences in 2010. It found 86 per cent of students did not meet even the medium score in either subject. Even worse, in French language tests only 1.4 per cent obtained a score of 50 out of 100.

45. For more detail, see Kielland, 2015.
46. MEP, 2014, *Statistiques*.
47. Examen National, 2015; UNESCO, 2014.
48. Ibid.
49. UNESCO, 2015, GMR.
50. UNESCO, 2015, GMR.
51. Government of Niger, 2013, PSEF.

The youth literacy rate is only 24 per cent among 15- to -24-year olds. [52] Among 20- to 24-year olds, 75 per cent have less than two years of schooling.

2.15. Inequalities in Education

Wealth, gender and geography explain many inequalities in the primary school statistics. Importantly, two-thirds of non-attending children can be found in the lowest wealth quintile. Also, while 90 per cent of urban children completed primary school in 2012, only half the children in rural areas did.[53] In 2010, over 70 per cent of the poorest girls never attended primary school, compared with less than 20 per cent of the richest boys.[54]

Schooling rates vary greatly across regions. Niamey has good coverage, followed by Dosso, Agadez, Maradi and Tillaberi. Only Tahoua, Zinder and Diffa have a gross enrollment rate of between 50 per cent and 60 per cent. The greatest gender inequalities are found in Maradi, Tahoua and Dosso, whereas gender parity is reached in Diffa, Niamey and, almost, in Agadez. Although only 2 per cent of children in Tahoua complete lower-secondary education, 23 per cent of children in Niamey do. Among the poorest, the completion rate is zero while among the richest it is 16 per cent.

Looking at youth (15- to 24-year olds) in 2012, 30 per cent of male and 15 per cent of females completed primary school. Whereas half the youth in urban areas completed primary, only 12 per cent of rural youth had. The lowest completion rates among youth were in Tahoua (11 per cent), while the highest were in Niamey (53 per cent). Only 5 per cent of youth 15 to 24 years of age in the poorest wealth quintile completed primary school, although 46 per cent of youth in the wealthiest quintile did.[55]

In the young adult population (20 to 24 years of age), four-in-five women and three-in-five men have less than two years of education. In rural areas, 83 per cent of these young adults have less than two years schooling; 87 per cent have less than four years. Among the regions, 9 out of eleven have more than three-of-four young adults with less than 2 years of primary school. In Agadez, the number is 56 per cent and in Niamey, 31 per cent. Wealth plays an important role in educational attainment, but it is worth note that also 46 per cent of young adults in the highest wealth quintile has less than four years of schooling.

2.16. Niger Education Numbers Compared with the Sub Saharan African Region

As this report has stressed, the numbers on the education sector in Niger are uncertain and vary a great deal among sources. The numbers presented in this table were gathered from the 2015 Global Monitoring Report (GMR). Further referencing therefore corresponds to the selection procedures for the GMR sources. The table compares Niger statistical values to mean values of the Sub Saharan African region, giving a stark picture of the urgency of the situation.

52. DHS, 2012.
53. World Bank, 2015, WDI.
54. UNESCO, 2015, GMR.
55. DHS, 2012.

Table 2. ***Economic, Demographic and Schooling Data for Niger and Sub-Saharan African countries (SSA)***

	Niger	SSA
Annual population growth	3.9	2.4
Annual growth rate age 0-4 population	4.0	2.0
GNP/cap	390	770
GNP/cap PPP	760	1590
Population below USD 1.25 PPP a day	43.6	47.3
Adult literacy rate male, projected 2015	27	71
Adult literacy rate female, projected 2015	11	55
Youth literacy rate (15-24) male, projected 2015	36	77
Youth literacy rate (15-24) female, projected 2015	17	69
IMR, projected 2015	49	65
U5MR, projected 2015	116	103
Share of infants with low birth weight	27	13
Stunting, children under 5	44	33
Gross enrollment preprimary	6	20
Gross intake rate, primary	89	123
• **Gender parity index (GPI)**	0.9	0.92
Net intake rate, primary	62	58
• **Gender parity index (GPI)**	0.88	0.96
School life expectancy, male (years)	6.1	10
School life expectancy, female (years)	4.8	8.8
Gross enrollment ratio, primary	71	80
• **Gender parity index (GPI)**	0.84	0.85
Primary adjusted net enrollment ratio	64	79
Repeaters, all grades, primary	3.5	8.8
Repeaters, all grades, primary, female	3.5	8.7
Survival rate to last grade	69	58
Survival rate to last grade, female	67	58
Primary cohort completion rate	32.6	
Primary cohort completion rate	30.7	
Transition from primary to lower secondary	54	70
• **Transition from primary to lower secondary, female**	52	68
Gross enrollment lower secondary	22	50
• **Gender parity index (GPI)**	0.67	0.86
Gross enrollment upper secondary	7	32
• **Gender parity index (GPI)**	0.63	0.80

Source: **UNESCO**, 2015, GMR.

3. Stakeholders in Niger's Education Sector

3.1. Donor History

Political and constitutional turbulence around 2009 and 2010 weakened the donor community's commitment to Niger. This primarily affected the country's ability to implement the previous poverty reduction strategy (SDRP) and the previous education program, the PDDE, 2003-2013. The country is now considered stable and has a received positive response on recent efforts to improve transparency and fight corruption. Niger became a MIGA member and a candidate for Global Compact in 2012. In the new poverty reduction strategy, *the Plan de Developpement Economique et Social* (PDES) 2012-2015, the first priority is to ensure efficiency and provide credibility to public institutions.[56] The PDES is also the parent document for the country's education strategy, PSEF, the main framework for international support to the sector.

3.2. Norway's Involvement in the Education Sector

Niger is a relatively new country in the Norwegian aid portfolio, especially on basic education. Before 2009, Norad supported some initiatives for basic life skills and literacy training, primarily targeting youth and adults in literacy centers in Niamey. Norwegian support to formal and non-formal basic education was registered from 2009 on, totaling a little less than USD 1 million in the years 2009 to 2013 (see full table in Annex I).[57] Between 2009 and 2014, Norad supported **Strømme Foundation's** education programs with NOK 6.8 million. Further support between 2015 and 2018 is expected to NOK 10.7 million. In addition to organizing and financing speed schools for disadvantaged children, Strømme and its local partners also run savings and credit groups to help sustain families' livelihoods—in many instances, a necessary precondition for sending children to school. Their additional budget for the latter type of activities is approximately half the education budget. **Redd Barna's** (SCN) new program on Quality Learning Environments (QLE) in Niger covers the region of Zinder, an area also touched by the conflicts in neighboring countries and involving children of refugees. The goal of SCN education program is to help children live in a protective environment and have access to good quality basic education throughout the year – especially the excluded and marginalized. The SCN program is an integrated project aiming to improve attendance, enrollment and learning outcomes in primary education, protection in and around the schools, support to attendance as part of drought Early Warning systems, and has a Child Rights Governance components that will lift issues up to key stakeholders in the government and civil society. SCN receives 11 million annually, 60% of that is education. In total NOK 44,1 million for the 2015-18 period. Their program focuses especially on marginalized and excluded children.

Norway contributes to the Swiss-led, partly LuxDev implemented program for quality in education, the **PAQUE**, in the regions of Dosso, Maradi, Zinder and Diffa. The Norwegian contribution of NOK 60 million between 2014 and 2018 constitutes approximately one-third of the funding. The most important indirect Norwegian contribution to education in Niger remains the funding channeled through the Global Partnership for Education (**GPE**) and administered by the World Bank. Norway is a major contributor to GPE, and GPE contributes USD 84.2 million to the Support to Quality Education Program, **PAEQ**, for primary and secondary education in Niger.

As set forth in Whitepaper 25, Norway also finances a trust fund for developing experience with results-based financing in the World Bank, the **REACH trust fund**. In 2015, an initiative in Niger received a grant under the REACH. The KLI grant enables the Government of Niger, in collaboration

56. Ministère du Plan, 2012, PDES.
57. Open Aid Data, 2015. http://www.openaiddata.org/purpose/260/112/8/

with the World Bank, to establish a sustainable monitoring and evaluation system for the education sector in Niger. This will lay the foundation for future results-based financing operations in education in Niger, using more effective indicators and best-available data sources.

In December 2015, Norad made a two-year agreement with **Unicef** Niamey for the period 2015-2017. The Right to Education for Children in Niger project is budgeted to NOK 40 million, and aims to reduce disparities in access and retention, targeting vulnerable groups like girls, children living with a disability and children of refugee populations. The project also aims to provide in-service teacher training to improve learning outcomes. Finally, there is a research component, including a cost-benefit analysis.

From 2016, Niger is also eligible for the Norwegian Program for Capacity Development in Higher Education and Research for Development (**NORHED**), financed by Norad. The 2015 call is for projects related to the Education for Development strategy, and has a particular focus on quality in basic education.

Table 3. Planned Norwegian support to education in Niger, through partners 2015-2018

Implementing body	Project	Period	Budget
Redd Barna (SCN)	QLE	2015-2018	NOK 44,1 million
Strømme Foundation	Speed-schools	2015-2018	NOK 10,7 million
Swiss Cooperation	PAQUE	2014-2018	NOK 60 million
REACH/World Bank	M&E and Results	2016	USD 200 000
Unicef	Education Rights	2015-2017	NOK 40 million
GPE	PAEQ	2014-2018	*

*Norway is a main contributor to GPE, and GPE the main donor to the PAEQ, with a total grant of USD 84,2 million.

3.3. Major Donors to the Education Sector since 2000

Between 2000 and 2013, Niger received USD 183 million for basic education from the donor community.[58] Development partner countries in Niger have included Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the UK, Canada, the USA, Japan and Switzerland. The grants, until recently, have been divided among a range of different operations, the largest ones financed by Japan, France, Germany, Luxemburg, Belgium, Canada, Spain, Ireland and Switzerland. The World Bank has been a major donor to several initiatives. Other multinational organizations such as the EU, WFP and UNICEF have also been involved (see full table of ODA grants to primary education 2000-2013 in Annex II). This report referred to the importance of the Franco-Arab schools in mobilizing children for primary education. The Islamic Development Bank (BID) has been supportive of this development.[59] Their lending records for Niger shows loans totaling USD 46.6 million for the education sector in the years from 1999 to 2006. A USD 9.2 million loan for education was also registered in 2010.[60] Apart from reforming the Franco-Arab schools, BID financing has also been dedicated to renovate Quranic schools and turning them into preschools.

58. Open Aid Data, 2015. http://www.openaiddata.org/purpose/260/112/top/

59. Villalon, Idrissa and Boudian, 2012, p. 3 .

60. Five projects were developed with IDB financing after the initial project in 1998 (PAEFAN): Two *Projet de Développement de l'Enseignement Franco-Arab qui comprend deux volets* (PRODEFA I and PRODEFA II); *Projet de Promotion de la Formation Professionnelle et Technique en Ajami* (PPFP/T/A); *Projet d'Accélération de*

In 2012, Niger received USD 54 million for education sector investments from the international donor community. Of these funds, USD 29 million went to basic education; USD 10 million to pre-primary, USD 14 million to primary and USD 4 million to secondary education.[61] In 2014, two large projects were adding to the education portfolio: the PAEQ, committing USD 100 million over five years, and the PAQUE, with a budget of around USD 25 million over the same period.

3.4. Development Partner Coordination

Donors coordinate their activities in the education sector in Niger through a local education group (LEG), now led by AFD. The objective is to ensure each donor's activities contribute to the sector's larger strategic priorities, avoid duplication and enhance synergies. The Secretary Generals of the Ministries in charge of education participate at the LEG meetings. Donors also agreed on a common progress report format and indicator matrix. The World Bank lists the following actors as currently the most important in the education sector: The European Union (EU), UNICEF; United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the World Food Programme (WFP); the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA); the German Cooperation (KfW, GIZ); the African Development Bank, (AfDB); the Luxemburg Cooperation (LuxDev); and several international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as Plan International, World Vision, SCN and Oxfam. In addition, the Arab Bank for Economic Development, BADEA is involved in the sector.[62]

l'Alphabétisation en Caractères Arabes (PAA/CA) and *Projet d'Appui à la Rénovation des Ecoles Coraniques* (PAREC).

61. UNESCO, 2015, GMR.

62. AfDB, 2013.

3.5. Donor Matrix – table 3.

Structure	Project	Niger Partner	About	Budget	Period
World Bank	PAEQ Primary Secondary	MEP MES	improve access to schooling, retention of students in school, and the quality of the teaching and learning environment at the basic education level	Global Partnership for Education (GPE) (84.2 mill), AFD (15.8) and Swiss Cooperation	2014-2018
World Bank	Skills Development for Growth Project / Projet de Developpement des Compétences pour la Croissance (PRODEC)	MEPT	improve the effectiveness of formal technical and vocational training, short term skills development and apprenticeship programs in priority sectors	USD 30 million (IDA)	2013-2019
World Bank	Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend Project (SWEDD)	Ministry of Population and technical ministries	increase women and adolescent girls' empowerment and their access to quality reproductive, child and maternal health services in selected areas of the participating countries, and to improve regional knowledge generation and sharing as well as regional capacity and coordination	USD 18 million (IDA) for life skills training, economic empowerment and secondary education of girls and women in Niger (total project is 172.2 million USD)	2015-2018
World Bank	Public Sector Capacity and Performance for Service Delivery	Ministry of Economy and Finance and technical ministries	strengthen public sector performance in selected ministries/sectors. These include: planning, finance, civil service, agriculture, hydraulic, health, education, mining and energy, interior, and Prime Minister's office	USD 40 million (IDA)	2014-2018
AFD	PAEQ	MEP/MES	See World Bank on PAEQ	15.8 million	2014-2018
Coopération Suisse	PAQUE	MEP/DREP	Quality of Education Support Programme for the Regions of Dosso, Maradi, Zinder and Diffa	CHF 18,500,000	2014-2018
Norad	PAQUE	MEP/DRES	Quality of Education Support Programme for the Regions of Dosso, Maradi, Zinder and Diffa	Committed NOK 60 million	2014-2018
LuxDev	PAQUE	MEP/DRES	Quality of Education Support Programme for the Regions of Dosso, Zinder and Diffa http://www.lux-development.lu/en/activities/project/NIG/702	Project implementation	2014-2018
LuxDev		MEP/DREP	Support for implementing the 10-Year Education Development Plan in the Dosso Region http://www.lux-development.lu/en/activities/project/NIG/019	EUR 15,200,000	2011-2016
LuxDev			Support for the National Programme for Technical and Vocational Training and Access to Employment for School Leavers http://www.lux-development.lu/en/activities/project/NIG/017	EUR 22,500,000	2011-2016
JICA	Project for construction of elementary school classrooms in Maradi and Zinder		Community-development approach: local construction companies build low-cost-design school buildings based on local standards. Improving learning environment with better sanitary conditions: 177 toilets constructed for 284 classrooms. Technical guidance to maintain and manage school facilities to ensure classrooms and educational equipment are utilized well. "School for All": The project on support to educational development through community participation /2012.5-2016.5 http://www.jica.go.jp/niger/english/activities/activity01.html	Information not available	

KfW, GIZ	Basic Education Programme		Objectives: To improve the individual, organizational and institutional capacities for management of the basic education sector. https://www.giz.de/projektdaten/index.action?request_locale=en_EN#?region=3&countries=NE	EUR 5,247,637	
UNICEF HQ	Education Global	MEP, MES NGOs	Girls Education; minimum standards to measure Equity and Quality; Community kindergartens; Nomadic; inclusive education and bridge classes; improving statical data collection	USD 5 926 000	Jan 2014 - Dec 2016
UNICEF HQ	Education quality	MEP, MES Swiss, LuxDev	Capacity Building of Ministry of Education civil servant at central, regional levels for Planning, budgeting and organization to improve education system; teachers training	USD 1 586 054	Jan 2014 - Dec 2017
UNICEF HQ	Global Thematic Humanitarian Response	MEP, MES NGOs	Education in Emergencies for Malian & Nigerian refugees + IDPs	USD 574 471	Jan 2014 - Dec 2017
German Committee for UNICEF	Better quality education Niger	MEP, MES NGOs	Teachers training; minimum standards to measure Equity and Quality; girls education, Inclusive and nomadic Education	USD 509 682	Jan 2014 - June 2015
SIDA-SWEDEN	Sweden Humanitarian appeal 2014-2016 Niger	MEP, MES NGOs	Education in Emergencies for Malian refugees.	USD 232 121	June 2014 - June 2015
CANADA	Niger Education in Emergencies and Child Protection 2015	MEP, MES NGOs	Education in Emergencies for Malian & Nigerian refugees + IDPs	USD 386 311	Jan 2015 - March 2016
WFP	School meals		School meals and related programs such as school vegetable gardens and local milling and processing initiatives		
EU/DV DEVCO	Budget support, including to the social sectors	Government	http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/niger/documents/press_corner/news/2014-2020_national-indicative-programme_niger_fr.pdf	EUR 212 million, where the poverty component is one of four programs.	2014-2020
Plan International		Plan Niger	Support for community and student groups, infrastructure, equipment, supplies, training, policy improvement, resource mobilization and children w/disabilities	Information not available	
Redd Barna			Works in the Zinder, basic education	NOK 17 million	2015 - 2018
Handicap International			Regional project. Inclusion of children with disabilities in the education system. Education that meets special needs. Target: parents, teachers and advocates for inclusive educational policy. Beneficiaries: 3,300 children with disabilities, 300 teachers, school heads and teaching supervisors in 530 schools, and 120 members of disabled people's organizations	Information not available	
Strømme Foundation	Speed schools		Second-chance schools for children who never started school on time or dropped out. Transfers children into regular schools.	NOK 10.7 million	2015 - 2018
AfDB			At the time of the review, four education projects were about to be cancelled due to "prolonged non-disbursement periods and project completion". The first case concerns resources of the loan component for the Vocational and Technical Education Development Support Project approved in 2011, amounting to UA 7.87 million, from which no disbursements have been made.	UA 25 million 1 UA=1 SDR (International Monetary Fund Special Drawing Rights).	

Note: Requests submitted to the African Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, GIZ, WFP, JICA, Plan and the EU were not answered.

4. What to Do: Issues and Recommendations

Two main factors threaten economic development in Niger and both are closely linked to education. The first is the world's most rapid population growth, maintained by very low marriage and childbearing ages. The second is instability. Conflicts in neighboring countries increasingly affect Niger, and there is a very real risk that out-of-school children with poor prospects may become radicalized. The meager primary school survival rate and the limited access to lower-secondary school place children at risk for both early childbearing and radicalization. Providing quality basic education is therefore an obvious economic priority and perhaps the most important risk management tool available to the country.

From a rights perspective, the current education system systematically discriminates against children who are rural, poor, girls, living with disabilities, nomadic or belong to minorities. The discrimination is not intended but a consequence of access problems, especially related to lower-secondary school; the problem of convincing good teachers to accept positions in remote and deprived areas; language problems; and lack of special education that could make teachers capable of including children with disabilities in their classrooms.

Further Norwegian investments in the education sector in Niger should be guided by four concerns:

1. Principles and priorities set forth in central government white papers, notably Whitepaper 25,[63] on Education for Development and Whitepaper 10 on human rights.[64]
2. Nationally identified needs, as described in the PSEF and communicated in dialogue with relevant ministries during the Norwegian mission to Niger in November 2015.
3. Information about what other actors are currently doing or about to do.
4. Available disbursement and implementation capacity.

4.1. Government Whitepapers 10 and 25

Whitepaper 25 on Education for Development promotes a range of important principles and priorities, including education as a human right and as an economic investment. The goals are non-discrimination, quality basic learning and an education that meets the labor market demand and thus contributes to poverty alleviation and future economic growth. The whitepaper lifts up groups of children often suffering discrimination, notably girls, children living with a disability, minority children and children affected by conflict.

Whitepaper 10 on Human Rights in Norway's Foreign Policy and Development Cooperation highlights one of the most important principles promoted in Whitepaper 25: While stressing economic, social and cultural rights must be achieved progressively, depending on available resources, the principle of non-discrimination is stated to be immediate and absolute. That is, Norwegian investments in basic educations must be inclusive. Norwegian support must be based on knowledge and experience, and if possible, also reward results.

Whitepaper 25 stresses Norway's willingness to support capacity development in the field of data collection and analysis. Efficiency assessments of various interventions are a priority. A recent evaluation of Norwegian support to the education initiatives of UNICEF and GPE also stresses the

63. Stortingsmelding 25, 2013-2014.
64. Stortingsmelding 10, 2014-2015.

need to collect and analyze data on marginalized groups to understand better which interventions are needed to promote inclusion.[65]

Importantly, Whitepaper 25 acknowledges the need to take risks, an important principle in any future investment in fragile countries such as Niger.

4.2. PDES and PSEF Priorities

The core strategy documents in Niger stresses that, besides supply and quality problems, there are gender-based inequalities at all levels of instruction. In addition to strengthening the supply side, the document stresses the need to stimulate the demand for education among vulnerable groups. As a response, the larger sector program, the PAEQ, mainly finances school construction, teachers training and strengthening the sector management at the central, regional and local level. Also the PAQUE has a strong emphasis on teacher training.

Similar to the Norwegian whitepapers, the PSEF highlights three main disadvantaged groups: first, girls, especially from poor families and living in rural areas; second, children in the nomadic areas; and third, children living with disabilities. The PAEQ documents appears to take into account both a focus on the special support needs of girls and delivery of education services to nomadic populations. The inclusion of children living with disabilities, however, seems to be a less prominent concern in currently running, major projects.

There are important information gaps on the situation of children with disabilities in Niger. The PSEF makes systematic reference to the concept of inclusive education. It points to the need to facilitate school access; work on attitudes of parents, teachers and school administrators; and improve teacher training, including on screening and needs identification. It seems mainly to focus on children with motoric disabilities. The PSEF also requests more special schools for children with auditory and visual disabilities.

The World Bank stresses that the strategies generally need to better connect to the labor market demand for skills, and encourages collaboration with the private sector.[66] The two main sector challenges highlighted in PSEF, with reference to RESEN, are the sector's intense pressure on a very limited national budget stemming from high fertility rates and high costs of paying enough qualified teachers.

4.3. What Others Do and Don't

The sector has grown rapidly in the past 10 to 15 years. Current programs have three main areas: construct more schools, educate more and better teachers and strengthen management capacity in the sector. With the new large projects, capacity is strained at all levels. Disbursement figures are difficult to obtain for the ongoing activities. Unless new infrastructure and personnel is provided, incentive systems to include vulnerable children can in some places end up crowding out other vulnerable children or lead to poorer learning in even more overcrowded classes. Infrastructure and teacher training are thus at the forefront of the major projects currently operating in the country. Providing schools and teachers to disbursed and nomadic populations are also prioritized.

65. Evaluation of Norwegian Multilateral Support to Basic Education, Development Portfolio Management Group, 2015.
66. Ministère du Plan, 2012, PDES. World Bank comments to the PDES, 2013.

Some other key areas for the Norwegian Whitepaper 25 seem to be overlooked or less prominently featured in the main project documents:

Disability: Rather than systematically addressing disability as a crosscutting issue, major programs and processes seem to largely ignore the topic altogether. Main donors neither seem to require any specific progress reporting for children living with disabilities, leaving few incentives for implementing agencies to fulfil their rights. The PAEQ does not make much mentioning of inclusion, apart from requiring ramps in new school construction projects. The MEP division for inclusive education reports they were not invited to take part in the PAEQ process. The ministry's PAEQ representative referred to the fact that inclusive education has no real part in the project documents. The leading actor on inclusion issues in the country is Handicap International, which collaborates closely with UNICEF, AFD, the regional education directors and the Niger Federation for People living with Disabilities. Yet, left out of the mainstream national education programs, their scope is limited by the funding situation.

Out-of-school children: More than a million school-aged children either did not start school or dropped out. It is not too late to catch these children and reinsert them into school. A coalition of actors, including government and private actors like the Strømme Foundation, run second chance, accelerated classes to help out-of-school children catch up and allow them to reenter school. A special feature of the second-chance classes is that they recruit capable local educators without official teacher training. They therefore do not compete with regular classes over scarce teacher resources. Also, because local communities provide classrooms, generally *en paillote*, the program also does not compete for construction capacity.

Conflict areas: Delivering education services to regions affected by the conflicts in the neighboring countries is increasingly challenging due to a deteriorating security situation. Protection of schools in conflict areas is a critical question, but working in regions such as Diffa is currently very challenging. The government has failed to devise the emergency strategy for education in conflict-affected areas requested by donors. Resources are allocated to the education sector in Diffa, but without a public strategy, they cannot be employed.

Franco-Arab schools: Project documents for the main education sector programs do not refer to the Franco-Arab schools. The availability of a hybrid curriculum within the public schooling system may attract groups of children that would otherwise not go to school, such as children from families that find spiritual development important and **girls** from more conservative families. The fact that the Niger Government included a standardized curriculum for Arabic and Muslim culture studies in the Franco-Arab schools reduces demand for purely confessional schools outside public control. The existence of such schools may not only help attract more children—especially girls—to come to school, but also contribute to preventing **radicalization**.

Early Childhood Development. The PSEF aims to make at least one year of preschool part of the bascic education cycle. Unicef works on preschools, but pre-primary do not seem to be part of the larger education programs in the country.

4.4. Implementation Capacity

Several sources informally stress that there are serious constraints on implementation capacity in Niger. The MEP and the MES seem especially occupied with the large and complex programs they are already managing. It proved difficult to obtain data on budgets and disbursement in the two core ministries, both with regards to total budgets allocated to the sector (suggestions varied between 13

per cent and 25 per cent of the national budgets) and on repartition of the budget on salaries, allowances, material and capital investment.

Several stakeholders pointed out another factor—the challenge of coordinating complex operations among ministries and within ministry divisions. Attempts to access disbursement numbers for budgeted investments in construction, teacher training and capacity building rendered no useful results. The World Bank, by mail, reported a disbursement rate of 7 per cent for the PAEQ. The PAEQ is, at the time this is written, near halfway through what was intended to be the second project year (FY2016). It is important to note, that the calendar year of 2015 mainly had to be used to for preparing the project implementation in the coming years; that is, to establish the infrastructure and procedures needed to implement and disburse. Whether the project has succeeded with that is still unclear, but more data will be available within the next six months.

4.5. System Inefficiencies

The Government of Niger suggests increasing education spending for primary school, but also points to potential savings related to sector inefficiencies. Although the spending-per-child in primary education may seem low in absolute terms, it is equivalent to 21 per cent of the per-capita GDP—high compared with the rest of the region. Because GDP per capita is very low, this also indicates inefficient use of resources.[67]

Notably, the high repetition rates are costly. The government has the ambition to eradicate the problem of class repetitions to exploit existing funding better.[68] However, automatic class promotion does not solve the problems of poor education quality and low test scores. Only improved learning can effectively help reduce costs while ensuring quality.

The valuable time of trained teachers is also underexploited, both in smaller schools in rural areas and in larger urban schools. Small rural schools have followed a staffing model intended for larger schools, with the direct consequence that teachers who specialize in certain subjects have few teaching hours per day.[69] Schools do not pay teachers directly. Therefore, accountability relationships are vague and teacher absenteeism a major problem. On the quality side, there should be a substantial investment potential for improving teacher training and teaching methods. Better access to textbooks should also have synergetic effects on learning outcomes.[70]

The system is also affected by academic corruption in more than one respect. Teacher absenteeism is a considerable problem, not helped by the fact that teachers in certain remote schools have to walk for days to the regional capitals to collect their monthly paychecks. In addition, public records of who actually works in the sector are hopelessly outdated, leading to considerable leakage of salaries.

The hardships for teachers in remote schools create fierce competition for urban positions. Irregularities have resulted in urban schools often being overstaffed with both teachers and administrative personnel such as librarians. The fact that many more teachers in training are women will only aggravate this problem, because female teachers in many cases will not be allowed to leave their husbands to take up jobs far from home.

67. World Bank, 2014, PAD.
68. Government of Niger, 2013, PSEF.
69. Ibid.
70. World Bank, 2014, PAD.

4.6. Recent Norwegian NGO Experience in Niger

Redd Barna recently started an education program in Niger. It operates locally through the Save the Children Alliance and may therefore benefit from their networks and sector experience. Save the Children notably works in some of the poorest and most conflict-affected areas, and may be a relevant partner for further investment in education services delivery to conflict-affected and refugee populations.

Strømme Foundation has been involved in a regional speed-school program that also includes Niger since 2007. Strømme has developed a network of local partners that can be broadened and enforced by a potential program expansion. Strømme also works on credit and savings groups, an important complementary activity to stimulate the demand side for education services.

Care Norway has been involved in Niger since the 1980s and mainly engages in promoting the rights of women and girls. Although not involved in the delivery of education services, they invest directly on the demand side. Especially, Care works on savings and credit groups for women and couples this activity with sensitization work to promote girls' rights to education. The work is financed through Care Norway's annual grant of around NOK 9 million. Care is active across the country through the structures of Care International.

Plan International is strongly involved in girls education in Niger, for example through USAID-supported IMAGINE program. Plan works with school construction, awareness, school management training and transport for children with disabilities. Plan importantly works to promote education in refugee camps in the country. Plan Norway is not directly involved, but could potentially constitute a Norwegian link into a more experienced NGO structure in Niger.

4.7. Preliminary Recommendations

In principle, support to the education sector should support the development of public systems in the partner country. Yet, as Whitepaper 25 points out, this is not always the best route due to capacity constraints or other challenges in the public sector. However, any support initiated should be wanted by the government and align with national priorities set forth in the national sector strategy. In the case of Niger, support to several non-governmental structures would be in line with national policy—especially when they carry out activities in close dialogue with the relevant government bodies without further straining their coordination capacity. New initiatives should thus be requested and understood by government and complement ongoing processes in the public sector without competing for resources.

As argued, teacher training is accelerating, but public funding to pay the running costs of salaries for more and better-qualified teachers is not in place. As a focus for larger ongoing projects, new school construction for now seems to strain infrastructure and implementation capacity. Additional effort in these two central domains should preferably happen through current programs, notably the PAEQ and the PAQUE. Other areas, however, could also be relevant for possible bilateral support.

Speed schools should not be a permanent part of any education system, However, in the transition towards inclusive quality public education for all, they help to pick up vulnerable children who dropped-out or failed to learn basic skills at their local school. Currently more than one million primary-school-aged children are out of school in Niger. Ignoring this group also means foregoing an important investment in future human capital. Speed schools in Niger complement public-sector schools. Often run by NGOs, speed schools are not an extra burden on a system fully occupied by transitioning into a regular basic education system for all. By recruiting and training local animators, the speed schools in Niger do not compete with regular schools for scarce teacher resources. Speed schools have low capital costs and do not require classroom construction because local communities provide classrooms *en paillote*. By increasing the support to the Strømme Foundation's speed

schools, Norway would comply with a range of principles and objectives of Whitepaper 25. The support would target the most vulnerable—girls in particular—without competing for public resources or placing additional administrative burden on an already overburdened public sector. Expanding support to cover the new Speed-School 2 model for integrating older dropouts into the first lower-secondary grade would furthermore target girls at high risk of early pregnancy and boys at an age vulnerable for radicalization.

Girls' disadvantaged situation seems locked by circumstances other than the school supply. Early marriage and high fertility seem to serve as the only available social protection for poor and vulnerable families. As long as social protection is missing, girls will not be freed up for schooling after reaching reproductive age. A particular bottleneck appears to be the transition of girls from primary to secondary school. Targeted stipends or conditional cash-transfer interventions for their families may help relieve this situation and would align with the method proposed in Chapter 4 of Whitepaper 25—results-based financing. UNICEF has some experience with this type of projects. Delaying marriage and prolonging girls' school life is also an investment in lowering fertility rates, while education simultaneously reduces girls' economic dependence on having many children. Further piloting with economic incentives for girls' transfer to secondary school can be made through the forthcoming collaboration between Norad and UNICEF Niger.

In Niger, the **Franco-Arab schools** offer an alternative to parents who may be skeptical of sending their children to traditional schools. Government initiated and run, they offer a combined formal and religious curriculum and represent an important third alternative to the fully confessional religious schools. However, the sector is yet often neglected in general sector programs. The Franco-Arab schools allow more girls to study, and their formalized, government-developed curriculum on religious studies should be an important contribution to prevent radicalization through unregulated religious schools run by unlicensed teachers. For now, there is little good documentation on the sector, but financing the development of such documentation could be the basis for engaging with the Franco-Arab schools.

Inclusion of children with disabilities ranks high on the Norwegian education agenda. This is perhaps one of the areas where doors still need to be knocked open on the international education arena. Special Norwegian knowledge or competency should be sought in deciding priorities for bilateral engagement, and Norway is globally in the forefront in the case of inclusive education. Whereas most countries and international actors on paper agree that children living with disabilities should have equal rights to learn, in practice, efforts tend to boil down to providing ramps to classroom—as seems the case with the PAEQ. Norway has, through its own experience, developed an understanding of issues, challenges and possibilities of particular value in the dialogue and cooperation with partner countries. Although necessarily placing an extra burden on strained public-sector actors, such initiatives would potentially also employ high-functioning people with disabilities and thus exploit quality human resources not considered by others. The division for inclusive education in the MEP works closely with both UNICEF and Handicap International, and support could be provided through expanding the forthcoming Norwegian cooperation with UNICEF Niger.

Whitepaper 25 stresses the need to **build capacity in the field of data collection and analysis** in partner countries, and Norway's commitment to help doing so. Better data and better trained local statisticians would enhance local capacity to monitor the development in the sector and use data as a tool for more effective sector governance. University structures may be an underutilized and alternative public institution to channel funding through, while building the capacity of both higher education institutions and future professionals. As pointed out in the recent evaluation of Norwegian Support to GPE and UNICEF in the education sector: better data on marginalized groups of children, importantly children living with a disability, is badly needed. More knowledge on the attraction of the Franco-Arab schools was also requested.

Annex I: Norwegian ODA to Primary Education, Niger, 2000–2013

Project	Donor	Organization	Year	Amount USD
Strengthening Basic Education, formal and non-formal	Norway	Norad	2013	215,720
Strengthening Basic Education, formal and non-formal	Norway	Norad	2012	197,584
Strengthening Basic Education, formal and non-formal	Norway	Norad	2011	173,251
Strengthening Basic Education, formal and non-formal	Norway	Norad	2010	167,921
Strengthening Basic Education, formal and non-formal	Norway	Norad	2009	167,718

Source: Open Aid Data, 2015. http://www.openaiddata.org/purpose/260/112/8/

Annex II: ODA Top Grants to Primary Education, Niger 2000–2013

Project	Donor	Organization	Year	Amount ($)
Le projet de construction de salles de classe	Japan	MOFA	2007	8,641,766
Rural and Social Sector Policy Reform Credit 1	IDA	IDA	2007	5,226,716
Rural and Social Sector Policy Reform Credit 1	IDA	IDA	2006	5,172,429
Education De Base Au Niger	France	AFD	2008	4,923,586
Rural & Social Policy DPL II	IDA	IDA	2008	4,829,942
Rural & Social Policy DPL II	IDA	IDA	2007	4,556,112
Basic Education Project	IDA	IDA	2007	4,394,303
Basic Education Project	IDA	IDA	2006	4,235,248
Ex-FSP Education Pour Tous Niger	France	AFD	2012	4,145,230
Basic Education Project	IDA		2005	3,704,792
Project for Construction of Primary Schools in Dosso and Tahoua	Japan	MOFA	2005	3,560,400
Basic Education Project	IDA	IDA	2008	3,473,180
Education De Base Au Niger	France	AFD	2006	3,306,898
	Germany	KFW	2005	3,283,060
Basic Education Sector Project (Hybrid)	IDA		2000	3,143,776
Project for Construction of Primary Schools in Dosso and Tahoua	Japan	MOFA	2004	2,893,895
Mandat Remunere DFID	France	AFD	2009	2,806,931
Project for Construction of Primary Schools in the Regions of Dosso and Tahoua	Japan	MOFA	2005	2,697,548
	Luxembourg	MFA	2008	2,627,921
Réalisation des projets et programmes de 2007	Luxembourg	MFA	2007	2,513,958
Plan Decennal de lL'education De Base	Belgium	DGCD	2005	2,485,707
Basic Education Project	IDA		2004	2,447,270
Basic Education Sector Project (Hybrid)	IDA		2001	2,396,798
Education De Base Au Niger	France	AFD	2007	2,353,303
Renforcement. qualité de l éducation	Switzerland	SDC	2013	2,331,463
Basic Education Project	IDA	IDA	2009	2,062,708
Ex-FSP Education Pour Tous Niger	France	AFD	2009	1,859,893
Ex-FSP Education Pour Tous Niger	France	AFD	2008	1,816,245
1.2. Gestion Participative Des Écoles	UNICEF	UNICEF	2013	1,787,220
	Japan	JICA	2006	1,738,273
Ex-FSP Education Pour Tous Niger	France	AFD	2013	1,732,184
Education De Base Au Niger	France	AFD	2009	1,694,586
Contributions to the FTI	Spain	MFA	2008	1,618,375
Lux-Development: Enveloppe Projets 2006	Luxembourg	MFA	2006	1,599,918

TC Aggregated Activities	Japan	JICA	2009	1,537,752
Basic Education Project	IDA		2005	1,527,018
	Japan	JICA	2007	1,462,003
	Luxembourg	MFA	2004	1,443,111
	Japan	JICA	2005	1,377,421
Renforcement. qualité de l'éducation	Switzerland	SDC	2012	1,360,000
TC Aggregated Activities	Japan	JICA	2010	1,352,737
Education Primaire II	Germany	KFW	2006	1,328,620
Plan Décennal de Développement de l'Education de Base (PDDE)	Belgium	DGCD	2006	1,255,178
MAPS: Support to NGOs-Irish – MAPS: GENERAL-Support to education admi	Ireland	DFA	2008	1,203,288
TC Aggregated Activities	Japan	JICA	2013	1,162,197
Fonds De Lutte Contre La Pauvreté	Canada	CIDA	2007	1,145,862
	Japan	JICA	2004	1,138,298
PENF Programme d'éducation non formelle	Switzerland	SDC	2012	1,120,000
TC Aggregated Activities	Japan	JICA	2011	1,104,197
PRADEB	Luxembourg	MFA	2009	1,088,466
Basic Education Project	IDA		2003	1,075,360
	Japan	JICA	2003	1,043,054
Development	WFP	WFP	2010	1,034,218
Enseignement primaire dans les établissements de l'AEFE	France	MAE	2009	1,025,891
APPUI Ã L'EDUCATION NON-FORMEL	Canada	CIDA	2003	1,009,214
	Japan	JICA	2008	994,493
	France	MAE	2005	973,577
Primary Education II	Germany	KFW	2004	966,580
Child-friendly Schools including Safety in schools	UNICEF		2011	948,740
TC Aggregated Activities	Japan	JICA	2012	941,732
Appui progr. éduc.de base UNICEF-Niger	Canada	CIDA	2007	930,839
Enseignement primaire dans les Etablissements de l'AEFE	France	MAE	2010	929,357
Scolarisation Des Filles	Canada	CIDA	2004	929,214
APPUI Ã L'EDUCATION NON-FORMEL	Canada	CIDA	2002	928,662
Appui a la Mise en Oeuvre du Programme Developpement de l'Education, Region de Dosso	Luxembourg	MFA	2013	866,730
Basic Education for Everyone in Niger: Promotion of Parity for Girls	Spain	MFA	2008	865,426
27522. Teacher training and support for basic education	UNICEF		2010	801,410
Basic Education Project	IDA	IDA	2007	761,679

Child-friendly Schools including Safety in schools	UNICEF	UNICEF	2012	751,730
Enseignement dans les Etablissements de l'AEFE	France	MAE	2011	747,205
Primary Education / Basic Education	UNICEF		2004	744,108
MAPS: Support to NGOs-International. MAPS: General-Illela Education	Ireland	DFA	2010	737,910
Renforcement. qualité de l éducation	Switzerland	SDC	2013	735,585
Basic Education Project	IDA	IDA	2006	734,110
Development	WFP	WFP	2013	725,908
Enseignement primaire dans les établissements de l'AEFE	France	MAE	2008	708,185
Enseignement primaire	France	MAE	2006	706,869
Enseignement primaire	France	MAE	2007	705,912
Basic Education for Everyonei Niger: Promotion of Parity for Girls	Spain	MFA	2009	696,282
Basic Education	Germany	BMZ	2013	692,149
PENF Programme d'Education non formelle	Switzerland	SDC	2011	676,285
Scolarisation Des Filles	Canada	CIDA	2003	674,952
Programme decennal de Developpement de l'Education dans la Region de Dosso	Luxembourg	MFA	2013	651,474
Basic Education Project	IDA		2005	642,164
MAPS: Support to NGOs-Irish. MAPS: General-Support to education administration	Ireland	DFA	2007	630,206
Enseignement primaire dans les établissements de l'AEFE	France	MAE	2013	609,509
Enseignement primaire dans les établissements de l'AEFE	France	MAE	2012	608,008
Basic Education Project	IDA	IDA	2008	602,018
27417. Girls basic education	UNICEF	UNICEF	2009	590,870
MAPS: Support to NGOs-Irish. MAPS: General-Support to education administration	Ireland	DFA	2009	590,724
MAPS: Governance-Support to Irish-based NGOS. MAPS: GENERAL-Illela Education-Primary education1GOV-Governance-GEN-Gender	Ireland	DFA	2011	589,821
Fonds De Lutte Contre La Pauvretã‰	Canada	CIDA	2004	584,890
Primary Education	UNICEF		2005	583,812
Child-friendly schools infrastructure and services	UNICEF	UNICEF	2009	581,370
	EU	EDF	2002	580,530
Fonds De Lutte Contre La Pauvrete	Canada	CIDA	2003	579,959
Scolarisation Des Filles	Canada	CIDA	2002	577,707
Basic Education: Promotion of Parity for Girls	Spain	MFA	2008	576,951
Teacher training and support for basic education	UNICEF		2011	576,888
Education De Base Au Niger	France	AFD	2005	570,470

Source: Open Aid Data, 2015. http://www.openaiddata.org/purpose/260/112/top/

Annex III: PDES' Six programs for the education sector

Program for development of basic education

This includes a series of measures to develop preschool and primary education.

For preschool education, priority is assigned to three actions: i) reducing the length of the cycle, from three to two years, to cover a larger number of children with the same volume of resources; ii) hiring and training community leaders and organizers; and iii) opening a program for preschool teachers in teacher training colleges (EN) to build their capacity.

For basic education, the objective is to increase access to free and compulsory basic education up to16 years of age. Priority actions include: i) hiring new, qualified government teachers from amongst contractual teachers, with a view to eliminating hiring on a contract basis by 2020; ii) development of school infrastructure by replacing all classrooms under thatched roofs and building 2,500 new classrooms a year in permanent materials; iii) building and equipping all basic cycle 2 establishments with laboratories to promote teaching of the sciences and technology; and iv) optimum use of basic cycle 2 classrooms by using a rotation system. Specific measures will also be adopted to correct inequality and discrimination in access, especially for children in rural areas or children with disabilities, and to promote schooling of girls and make the school environment more attractive, in terms of health, hygiene, and cleanliness.

Other activities will be geared to improving the quality of basic education. They will focus on the following, among other things: i) effectively implementing reform of the curriculum for this education cycle; ii) increasing the capacity of teacher training colleges; iii) adopting and implementing a strategy to increasingly spread bilingual education (national languages and French); iv) revision of the mechanism for initial training in the EN, IFAENF, and ENS, and for continuing education courses for teachers; and v) introduction and development of Information and Communication Technology for Education (TICE) in the schools. Other measures are also contemplated to create flexible school schedules, systematically organize teacher training in several disciplines, and reform the student evaluation mechanism.

Finally, creation of a specialized school for children with disabilities will make it possible to prepare these future citizens for full participation in society.

Program to develop literacy and nonformal education

This includes measures to strengthen literacy and training for adults. The focus is on i) improving and diversifying functional literacy education, in conjunction with the 3N Initiative; ii) diversification of the programs offered by taking into account certain specific groups (teaching mothers, students' parents, women's groups, etc.); iii) increasing the length of the baseline literacy program (basic literacy and consolidation) from 6 to 12 months; iv) renovating the strategies for implementing adult education and literacy programs; and v) maintaining the knowledge gained from literacy programs by building and equipping permanent education centers. In the area of nonformal education, emphasis will be placed on developing nonformal education programs for unschooled children and early child drop-outs, and on integration of graduates of nonformal education structures into trades.

Program for development of middle-level education

It comprises measures to improve access to and the quality of this level of education. The priorities on access are: i) gradual improvement of the coverage throughout the country by building ten general education schools per year; ii) raising the level for hiring teachers and management staff (inspectors and teaching councilors); and iii) hiring 500 teachers a year for these schools from the civil service. Construction and equipping of laboratories and installation of infrastructures for access of disabled persons are also planned.

Among measures for improving quality, importance is given to: i) revision of teaching programs and supports for middle-level education; ii) strengthening the mechanism for distribution and management of textbooks; iii) revision of programs for training professors, and setting up mechanisms for initial and continuing education of teachers (using the TICE); iv) implementation of the 18-hour work week for each teacher; and v) overhaul of the evaluation system.

Program for development of higher education

This initiative also targets simultaneous improvement in access and quality. Priorities for improving access include: i) strengthening infrastructure, equipment and personnel, including teachers, researchers, and administrators; ii) regulation of private institutions of higher education; iii) increase in the number of students in scientific and technical programs; and iv) special support for applied research, by targeting development of new and renewable energy sources and industrial processing of agricultural and livestock products.

Quality improvement will rely especially on: i) developing the capacity of human resources in structures in charge of scientific and technological research; ii) continuing licence-masters--doctorate (LMD) reform to train qualified human resources; iii) reorienting the programs of the grandes écoles [universities] and their faculties to respond to the needs of the economy; and iv) supporting the publication and dissemination of the results of research as part of a national research policy.

Program to develop vocational and technical education and training

This program is designed to offer both targeted vocational training or technical education to a proportion of students in the basic cycle, as well short-term courses to the public outside the school system. The principal measures planned for implementation by 2020 include the following: i) expansion of options by building and equipping eight vocational and technical education centers, four vocational and technical high schools (in Agadez, Tera, Tahoua, and Zinder), and two technical high schools in Diffa and Doutchi; ii) construction and outfitting of a Community Development Training Center (CFDC) responsible for rural vocational training in every commune (a total of 267); iii) diversification and development of training courses for highly skilled technicians, apprentices, and skilled workers to meet the needs of the formal and informal economy; iv) effective implementation of curricular reform and training of trainers and supervisors for EFPT [Vocational and Technical Education and Training]; v) development of a mechanism for integration into a trade; vi)

strengthening the mechanism for coordination and financing of EFPT: and vii) promotion of girls and women in technical and industrial sectors or branches.

Vocational and technical training will also develop a special offering of courses in two important vocational categories: artisans and farmers. In fact, in view of the size of the artisanal and agricultural-forest-livestock sectors, it appears critical to provide for their modernization through education. Thus vocational training will make it possible to introduce new production techniques and to use more modern and efficient machinery and tools, and ultimately production processes, that will increase the productivity of these two sectors.

Program for improving the guidance and management of the education system

This program comprises more than 20 measures, including the following ones: i) revision of Law 98-12 of June 1, 1998 on Nigerien Education System Guidelines (LOSEN); ii) creation of regional academies; iii) implementation of a school textbook policy; iv) reform of evaluation methods; v) continuing the “deconcentration” of education (non specialization); vi) implementation of a mechanism for accreditation of institutions and certification of qualifications and skills in the principal trades; vii) adoption and implementation of a national policy for schooling and training girls, and revision of the literacy and nonformal education policy; viii) implementation of a national fund for financing education and an independent system for management of EFPT centers and establishments; and ix) support for the private education and training sector.

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