



Niger - GPE - Support to Quality Education Project (P132405)

AFRICA | Niger | Education Global Practice |
 Recipient Executed Activities | Investment Project Financing | FY 2015 | Seq No: 7 | ARCHIVED on 29-Nov-2017 | ISR28764 |

Implementing Agencies: Ministry of Primary Education, Literacy, Promotion of National Languages and Civic Education, Ministry of Secondary Education, Republic of Niger

Key Dates

Key Project Dates

Bank Approval Date:07-Jul-2014

Effectiveness Date:19-Dec-2014

Planned Mid Term Review Date:24-Jul-2017

Actual Mid-Term Review Date:24-Jul-2017

Original Closing Date:30-Sep-2018

Revised Closing Date:30-Sep-2018

Project Development Objectives

Project Development Objective (from Project Appraisal Document)

The objective of the Project is to improve access to schooling, retention of students in school, and the quality of the teaching and learning environment at the basic education level, in the Republic of Niger.

Has the Project Development Objective been changed since Board Approval of the Project Objective?

No

Components

Name

Expanding equitable access to schooling and retention of students in school:(Cost \$55.00 M)

Improving the quality of teaching and learning:(Cost \$23.00 M)

Strengthening management capacity:(Cost \$18.00 M)

Contingencies:(Cost \$4.00 M)

Overall Ratings

Name	Previous Rating	Current Rating
Progress towards achievement of PDO	● Satisfactory	● Satisfactory
Overall Implementation Progress (IP)	● Moderately Satisfactory	● Moderately Satisfactory
Overall Risk Rating	● Substantial	● Substantial



Implementation Status and Key Decisions

On the backdrop of the poor results for Niger on the PASEC regional student learning assessment for which results became available in 2016, the Minister for Primary Education shared during the mission in December 2016 the government's comprehensive plan for improving learning outcomes in primary schools, which includes both short-term, medium-term, and long-term measures. This ambitious plan provides a renewed sense of urgency to work seriously on the quality of service delivery in primary schools, to roll out the national languages curriculum reform, and to improve all aspects of teacher management. The medium and long-term reforms all fall well within the existing scope of Niger's education sector plan and of the project. Some of the ministry's new short-term stop-gap measures have been included in the project's action plan for 2017, with the intention of providing a stronger immediate response to the learning crisis in schools and to reach more of the children who are currently enrolled in school.

The overall context is however still quite difficult in Niger, where the security environment is still impacted by many security threats spilling over from neighboring countries, the displacement of people, and pressure on the government budget for higher security spending. Moreover, there have been repeated teacher strikes as well as strikes among students. This has considerably reduced instructional time, which is critical for improving learning outcomes.

Overall progress towards the achievement of the PDO:

Overall, the PDO indicators show considerable progress towards attaining the Project Development Objective. The 3 PDO indicators related to access and retention of students in school are met and the target was even exceeded. It should be noted that these three indicators measure outcomes to which all financing, including that of government and other development partners, contribute. The indicator related to the adoption of adequate reading materials is considered as achieved, given the progress in developing new materials for the early grades of primary education. These materials are to be delivered either as part of the new curriculum or through a community-led remediation program, PMAQ, that is organized by the school committees. Since May 2017, considerable progress has been observed on the indicators related to the system of national learning assessment. In addition to the delivery of the national PASEC report in 2016, several learning assessments have been conducted in 2017. This includes the delivery of 2 new reports: the assessment of learning outcomes in Grade 1 in the pilot schools of the national languages curriculum reform, and the assessment of learning outcomes in Mathematics and French in lower secondary schools prepared by MES. Moreover, the Government of Niger has requested a technical assistance from PASEC, with project support, to study and come up with some options for establishing a more comprehensive and sustainable national assessment system.

Overall implementation progress:

Implementation is moving forward for both ministries and across all components, as seen in the considerable progress on most of the intermediate results indicators since the last ISR. The number of direct beneficiaries has increased, now reaching 1,985,425 in total. The positive trend in the disbursement rate (from 35% in May, to 44% in July, to 51% in November 2017) is expected to continue due to the increasing volume of activities that are under implementation and contracts that are either signed, about to be signed, or at an advanced stage of procurement. There have been considerable delays, in particular related to procurement, but no major technical difficulties under any component. The Implementation Support Agency has been in place since August 2016 with three resident international experts on procurement, Financial Management and M&E, and one non-resident expert on human resource management. The consulting engineering TA that is supporting the implementation of the construction activities through two resident experts has been in place since early May 2016. There are still capacity constraints in the two ministries, including some that are related to the shortage of staff in key ministry departments, in particular for functions such as procurement and construction. Some additional recruitments of short-term consultants have been made with project funds while the Ministry of Primary Education (MEP) take the necessary steps to adequately staff its procurement unit. At this point, the two ministries perform equally well on most aspects of project management. With all the resident experts now in place, improvements begin to be visible and it is hoped that this situation will continue to improve. The main risk is now the absorption of the TA in the way it was intended without leading to substitution (experts doing the work rather than supporting the ministries in doing it), particularly given the staffing shortages, the two ministries' many other activities and projects, and structural issues around incentives.

The following provides an overview of progress made under each of the project's components:

Component 1: Expanding equitable access to schooling and retention of students in school

Ministry of Primary Education: 570 primary school classrooms have now been completed and construction has started for 330 classrooms with a current stage of completion of 25%. The construction of 345 additional classrooms is planned to start in April 2018. In terms of support to girls' education, the MEP has conducted campaigns to sensitize communities to the importance of girls' schooling with a total of 192,232 beneficiaries of which 57% female. Other awareness-building activities were conducted including roundtables, workshops and locally-based outreach campaigns. 200 functional literacy centers opened across 32 selected priority areas and literacy training is being provided to 11,136 women by the 14 selected NGOs. The 200 centers are expected to complete the training by December 2017.

Under the contract with the World Food Programme (WFP), canteens opened in 559 schools at the beginning of school year 2016/17 will continue



operating in the current school year, 2017/18. They benefit 47,592 children this year, including 21,116 girls. A SABER school feeding diagnostic study has been delivered with a suggested action plan and 2,102 school directors and CGDES members were trained in school canteen management. In relation with school health promotion and use of latrines, awareness activities have been conducted for 3,861 beneficiaries. 2,006 focal points from the DREP, DDP, IEB and teachers were trained on water, hygiene and sanitation, and use of latrines. 189 inspectors were trained in hygiene standards and promotion.

Ministry of Secondary Education: As reported in ISRs, the launch of construction of lower secondary school classrooms has been delayed due to difficulties recruiting the Delegated Contracting Agencies (DCA) to manage it, but the process is now completed and contracts signed with the two DCAs which are also managing some construction for the MEP. Construction has started for 166 classrooms, and preparation for the remainder is progressing as planned. The sub-component for providing grants to 700 girls in 39 lower secondary schools is progressing quite well although some girls were not promoted to the next grade due to poor grades at the end of the first year and second year. To date, at the beginning of the 2017/18 school year -- the third year of this program, the number of girls has dropped to 596. It is however believed that the intervention has improved retention in school (85% instead of 76% for non-recipient girls) and no early marriage was reported among them. Outreach and awareness-building activities conducted by MES to promote education for girls have reached 29,646 beneficiaries, of which 56% female.

Component 2 : Improving the quality of teaching and learning

Ministry of Primary Education: The key activities which have been carried to date are: (i) the development of the grade 2 and grade 3 curricula, including the development of textbooks and teacher guides for those grades in five national languages while simultaneously testing the new national language curriculum in 500 classes across Niger; (ii) the revision of the curriculum for pre-service teacher training in line with the reform with the support of an international specialist; (iii) other training activities aimed at improving teaching quality (undertaken by the teacher training directorate); and (iv) progressive development of the national student learning assessment system.

To date, in-service training was provided to a total of 4,500 contract-teachers, including 48% of women, and to 3316 teacher trainers, inspectors and academic advisors, including 13% of women. Part of the training was conducted through the IFADEM distance learning program.

In addition, the Project funded training to support the curriculum reform for 450 pedagogical advisors, 400 advisors in the teacher training colleges (ENI), 600 regional trainers, 500 Grade 1 and 500 Grade 2 teachers and 500 school directors.

The Project has financed the construction of three teacher training colleges that are now completed.

Among activities experiencing delays, several of the contracts for printing of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials have been confronted with some difficulties regarding procurement, requiring the re-launch of bidding based on revised bidding documents for several contracts that did not receive sufficient bids from qualified firms.

Ministry of Secondary Education: The Ministry has trained a total of 2,660 contractual teachers without pre-service training, including 14.7% of women, and a total of 2,130 teacher trainers, inspectors and academic advisors, including 15% of women. To date, the project has financed the acquisition of 242,970 textbooks and 12,000 teacher guides in French, mathematics and sciences for the two first grades of lower secondary schools, and these were delivered to 646 rural lower secondary schools. The Project has also financed the ministry's participation in the regional mathematics and science initiative MS4SSA, for which Niger has been competitively selected as one of the regional nodes. On student assessment, the MES produced a report assessing learning outcomes in Mathematics and French for students in Grades 7-10.

Component 3 : Strengthening management capacity

In relation to school grants, 1,760 primary schools received a school grant and 16,618 stakeholders were trained in 2016/2017. At the secondary school level, 1,677 school directors and stakeholders were trained. A total of 5,901 school committees were strengthened, including 5519 in primary schools and 382 in lower secondary schools.

The two ministries are moving quickly towards having actual human resource management strategies and capacity building plans in place. Trainings for a considerable number of staff at the central and regional levels has been carried out, including 489 MEP officials and 733 MES officials. The Implementation Support Agency and the consulting engineering TA are contributing to building MEP and MES capacities in daily project management and implementation. There are still capacity constraints in the two ministries but the Mid-Term Review has acknowledged the improvement in administrative and technical skills among MEP and MES teams while also alerting on the high staff turnover which may undermine long-term capacity building.

Over the past year, a comprehensive reform program has taken shape to put in place a teacher/human resources data base in the education sector and beyond, including also the ministries of finance and civil service. This program will be financed by several development partners through projects or budget support, including the IDA-financed Public Sector Capacity and Performance for Service Delivery Project (P145261), GIZ, the European Union, and this project. Moreover, the implementation support missions have been able to bring all the stakeholders together to exchange information and move towards a coordinated approach. This initiative could greatly improve human resources and payroll management in the education sector. This collaboration has also been supported by a grant from the World Bank REACH Trust Fund.

Links with other World Bank-financed projects

A World Bank/national team has completed the analysis and draft report for the Service Delivery Indicator (SDI) survey for health and education (also



supported by P145261). The results have been disseminated to the Government and the international partners. The report contributes much-needed knowledge about the service delivery challenges that contribute to the weak learning outcomes in Niger. For example, the survey, which included the testing of teachers, confirms that teacher competencies are weak in comparison with most (but not all) other SSA countries, in which a SDI survey has been conducted. The regional World Bank-financed Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographics Project (P150080) is begun implementation on the ground in Niger. It provides additional financing for the education of adolescent girls, including secondary education, and for impact evaluation. The Skills Development for Growth Project (P126049) provides additional literacy training for adults in Niger – a priority area for the Government of Niger. A new project for refugees in under preparation and will include financing for basic services, including education.

Implementation support and partnership

The Project's Mid-Term Review was conducted in July 2017. A joint implementation support mission visited the MEP and MES in Niamey in November 2017 and undertook a field visit related to the functional literacy programs and classroom construction in the region of Dosso. The team participated in a meeting of the Development Partners to discuss the next Education sector review planned for the last week of January 2018.

Risks

Systematic Operations Risk-rating Tool

Risk Category	Rating at Approval	Previous Rating	Current Rating
Political and Governance	--	● Substantial	● Substantial
Macroeconomic	--	● Moderate	● Moderate
Sector Strategies and Policies	--	● Moderate	● Moderate
Technical Design of Project or Program	--	● Moderate	● Moderate
Institutional Capacity for Implementation and Sustainability	--	● Substantial	● Substantial
Fiduciary	--	● Substantial	● Substantial
Environment and Social	--	● Low	● Moderate
Stakeholders	--	● Moderate	● Moderate
Other	--	--	--
Overall	--	● Substantial	● Substantial

Results

Project Development Objective Indicators

► Primary completion rate (Percentage, Custom)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	51.20	78.30	83.00	58.60
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018



Comments

The value reported here is for 2017. The source is government reports based on the annual school census and official population data. The rapid increase in this indicator is not well understood, but the on-going Country Status Report (financed by the Project) will look into this.

► Increase in primary education gender parity index in areas targeted by the project (average) (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	0.02	0.03	0.03
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

► Increase in lower secondary education gender parity index in areas targeted by the project (average) (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	0.04	0.04	0.03
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

► System for learning assessment at the primary level (Yes/No, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	N	N	N	Y
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2017	01-Jun-2018

Comments

Following the December 2016 mission, the Ministry of Primary Education requested the support of PASEC for the design and implementation of the national system for learning assessment at the primary level. As a result, a first PASEC mission visited Niger in June 2017 to discuss design options, which resulted in a technical note. Since June, an agreement between PASEC and the Government of Niger is under preparation to support some aspects of implementation of the plan. It will be financed by the Project. The main threat to success in this indicator is the constant staffing changes in the ministry. Learning assessment is a technical discipline that requires specialized staff.

In addition, Niger has decided to participate in the PASEC 2019 assessment. The Project will finance this assessment fully under the 2018 Annual Action Plan.

Meanwhile, several specific learning assessments have been conducted with project financing under the leadership of both ministries,



including the test of students in Grade 1 in the pilot schools of the national languages curriculum reform, and the report prepared by MES assessing learning outcomes in Mathematics and French in lower secondary schools.

The sub-indicator regarding the utility of the learning assessment system has yet to be measured. The recent mission discussed the possibility of the Ministry of Primary Education carrying out an Auto-Diagnostic to inform and track this indicator.

► Utility of the learning assessment system (Number, Custom Supplement)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	2.00	--	3.00

► Appropriate tools and materials for improving reading in the early grades are adopted by MEP (Yes/No, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	N	Y	Y	Y
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2017	01-Jun-2018

► Direct project beneficiaries (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	929,016.00	1,985,425.00	2,100,000.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Apr-2017	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

Comments

The target for the number of direct beneficiaries has been attained. Despite having improved, the share of female beneficiaries is lower than expected. This has to do with the fact that most students, teachers, school directors, inspectors, etc., are male.

► Female beneficiaries (Percentage, Custom Supplement)



	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	45.00	41.30	44.60	47.00

Overall Comments

Intermediate Results Indicators

- Number of additional classrooms built or rehabilitated at the primary level resulting from project interventions. (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	440.00	570.00	1,245.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Apr-2017	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

- Number of classrooms built at the lower secondary level resulting from project interventions (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	0.00	0.00	330.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

Comments

Construction is launched on about half the sites, and procurement is on-going for the remainder. Progress will be recorded in the next ISR.



► Total enrollments in primary education (all schools) (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	2,166,268.00	2,611,352.00	2,773,348.00	2,400,000.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

► Girls, boys, parents and teachers reached through subcomponent 1(B) on promoting girls' education (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	119,027.00	221,878.00	100,000.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Apr-2017	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

► Students reached through school feeding programs (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	43,345.00	47,592.00	90,000.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

► Curriculum review for first cycle of primary school completed (Yes/No, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	N	Y	Y	Y
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018



► Contract teachers trained as a result of the project (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	2,642.00	7,160.00	3,500.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Apr-2017	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

▲ Primary (Number, Custom Breakdown)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	1,327.00	4,500.00	2,500.00
Date	01-Apr-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

▲ Lower secondary (Number, Custom Breakdown)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	1,142.00	2,660.00	1,000.00
Date	01-Apr-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

► Share of grade 1-3 teachers trained for teaching early grade reading and simple classroom assessment (Percentage, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	0.00	0.00	75.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2015	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

Comments

In terms of teacher training, the focus has been on : (i) teacher training for the experimentation of the national languages curriculum reform; (ii) the emergency teacher training in September 2017 following the testing of all public primary school teachers revealing deep gaps in many teachers' competencies in all subject matters ; (iii) IFADEM training of 3000 teachers.



► Teacher trainers, inspectors and pedagogical advisors trained through the project (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	3,128.00	5,446.00	800.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Apr-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

► Assessment of reading fluency conducted for grade 2 and 3 and results shared widely (Yes/No, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	N	N	Y	Y
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

► Human resource management strategy developed and implemented (Yes/No, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	N	Y	Y	Y
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

► Number of school management committees (CGDES) strengthened through the project (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	4,576.00	5,901.00	2,800.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018



▶ Primary (Number, Custom Breakdown)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	4,501.00	5,519.00	2,761.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

▶ Lower secondary (Number, Custom Breakdown)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	75.00	382.00	39.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

▶ MES organizational review completed (Yes/No, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	N	N	N	Y
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

Comments

The organization review is scheduled to begin in December 2017 with the support of a team of consultants financed by the Project.

▶ Regular education sector reviews held during project implementation (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	2.00	2.00	4.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Apr-2017	01-Nov-2017	01-Jun-2018

Comments

The next education sector review is planned for January 2018. It will be recorded in the next ISR.



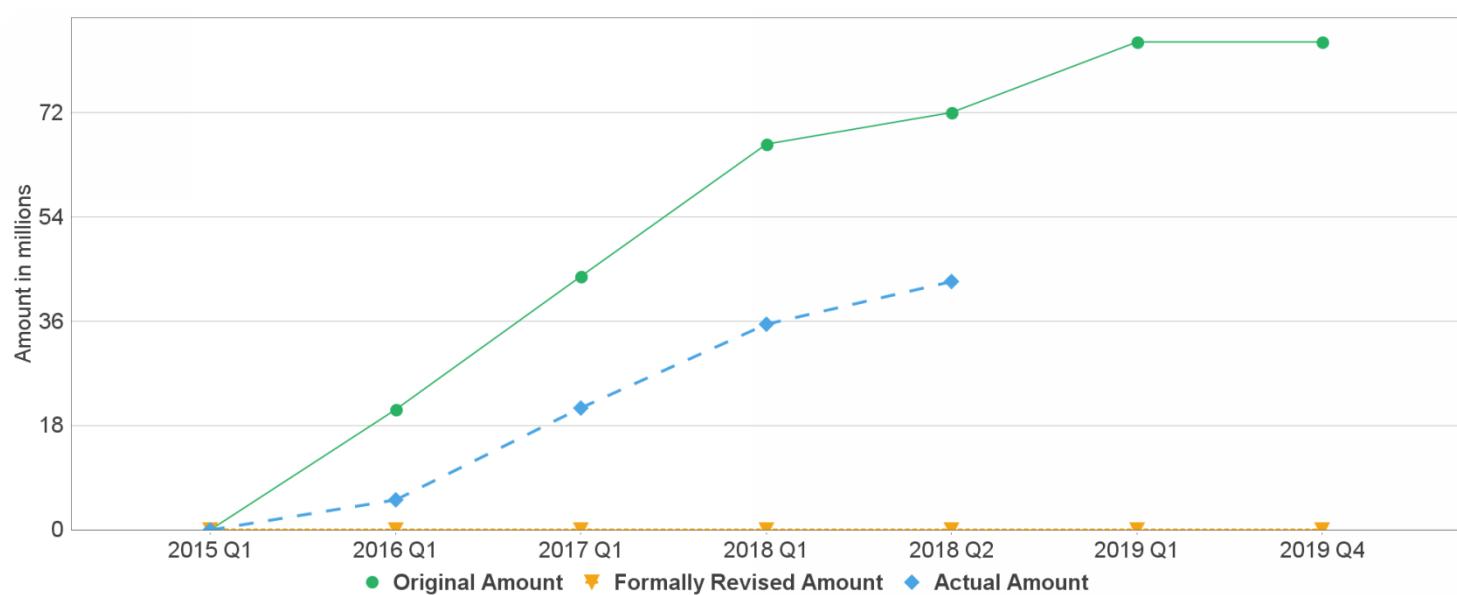
Overall Comments**Data on Financial Performance****Disbursements (by loan)**

Project	Loan/Credit/TF	Status	Currency	Original	Revised	Cancelled	Disbursed	Undisbursed	Disbursed
P132405	TF-16565	Effective	USD	84.20	84.20	0.00	42.87	41.33	<div style="width: 51%; background-color: #2e7131;"></div> 51%

Key Dates (by loan)

Project	Loan/Credit/TF	Status	Approval Date	Signing Date	Effectiveness Date	Orig. Closing Date	Rev. Closing Date
P132405	TF-16565	Effective	19-Jul-2014	19-Jul-2014	19-Dec-2014	30-Sep-2018	30-Sep-2018

Cumulative Disbursements



Restructuring History

There has been no restructuring to date.

Related Project(s)

There are no related projects.