



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

AFRICA | Niger | Education Global Practice |

Recipient Executed Activities | Investment Project Financing | FY 2015 | Seq No: 5 | ARCHIVED on 27-Dec-2016 | ISR24723 |

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

## Key Dates

## Key Project Dates

Bank Approval Date:07-Jul-2014

Effectiveness Date:19-Dec-2014

Planned Mid Term Review Date:01-Mar-2017

Actual Mid-Term Review Date:--

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, the recently appointed Minister for Primary Education shared during the recent mission in December 2016 the government's comprehensive plan for improving learning outcomes, 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 now also 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, the displacement of people, and pressure on the government budget for higher security spending. Moreover, since the beginning of this school year, there have been repeated teacher strikes as well as strikes among students. This has considerably reduced instruction 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 four PDO indicators related to access and retention of students in school, and gender equity, are all either met or on track to be met. The indicator related to the adoption of adequate reading materials can now be 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 that is organized by the school committees. These materials are now under production and awaiting delivery in schools. There has been less progress on the indicators related to the system of national learning assessment. However, the product agreed for 2016 was delivered although in the end without financing from the project (completion of the national PASEC report) and new assessment activities are under preparation for 2017. Moreover, a study will be launched to suggest some options for establishing a more comprehensive 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 by over 300,000 since the last ISR, now reaching 750,000 in total. Over the past year, the disbursement rate has increased from 7% to 28%, and this positive trend 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. By the end of 2016, almost half of the funds will be either executed or committed. There have been 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 four resident international experts 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. 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. It has been agreed during the recent mission to make some additional recruitments with project funds, but that at the same time, the Ministry of Primary Education will take the necessary steps to adequately staff its procurement unit.

The Ministry of Secondary Education (MES) continues to perform well on most aspects of project management, while the Ministry of Primary Education still suffers from some project management issues, and an overall lower quality of documents related to implementation. With all the resident experts now in place, improvements begin to be visible and it is hoped that this situation will improve over the next six months. 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.

It is expected that the annual action plans for 2017 will be ready for both ministries in January 2017. Preliminary versions were reviewed and discussed during the mission. The quality of the action plans have visibly improved since the beginning of the project.

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:** 282 classrooms have now been completed, and another 250 classrooms are nearly completed. The contract for 50 classrooms in Diffa are at signature stage, and bidding for another 330 classrooms will be launched soon. A draft manual for a new more decentralized construction management modality has been developed in line with the ongoing decentralization. In terms of support to girls' education, the study to explore factors driving low school enrollment among girls has been completed and information campaign tools and materials directed at increasing girls' school participation have been developed. A campaign to sensitize communities to the importance of girls' schooling will be launched in all regions in December. Preparations are very advanced to launch literacy training for 12,000 women based on revised training modules. Under the contract with the World Food Programme (WFP), canteens were opened in 567 schools at the beginning of this school year (2016/17) benefitting over 43,000 children, including over 10,000 children in Diffa.

**Ministry of Secondary Education:** As reported in previous 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, as very few qualified DCAs bid for these contracts, but the process is now completed and contracts signed with the two DCAs which are also managing some construction for the MEP. The technical studies and plans are completed, and bidding for the first classrooms will be launched within weeks. 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. As per the nigerien school system, these girls are now either repeating the year or have been asked to leave the school (thereby dropping out of the grant program). This pattern a consequence of the very weak learning outcomes throughout the education system. Grants are being paid girls and host families, although with some delays, and training/sensitization and supervision missions have been carried out. An independent technical audit of this activity was conducted which found some minor irregularities in the selection of girls, but confirmed that funds are being managed properly. This activity



is expected to improve retention of selected girls in lower secondary schools, and results are being monitored. The MES has worked with a communication firm to prepare audio-visual campaign tools that advocate for keeping girls in school, and these are already being used as part of sensitization campaigns held in schools and communities.

#### **Component 2: Improving the quality of teaching and learning**

**Ministry of Primary Education:** The key activities which have been carried during the first year of the project are: (i) the revision of the grade 2 curriculum, including the development of textbooks for that grade in five national languages while simultaneously testing the new national language curriculum for grade 1 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; and (iii) other decentralized activities aimed at improving teaching quality (undertaken by the teacher training directorate). The project is also financing the construction of three teacher training colleges (ongoing, with some delay) and the production of lexicons and dictionaries in national languages. In terms of evaluation and assessment activities, the project has reserved funds for the dissemination of the national PASEC report and preparations are underway to launch a learning assessment in the schools of the curriculum reform. The project will also fund distance pre-service teacher training for 3000 teachers and the scale-up of several initiatives aimed at improving foundational skills of primary school pupils not yet included in the curriculum reform. 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 for several contracts that did not receive sufficient bids from qualified firms. This has led to the reformation of bidding documents, and in some cases, the revision of the procurement method.

**Ministry of Secondary Education:** The Ministry has trained 1,120 contractual teachers without pre-service training in two sessions of 2 weeks each. Moreover, the project has financed the acquisition of textbooks and teacher guides in French, mathematics and sciences for the two first grades of lower secondary schools, and these were delivered to schools in April 2016. Acquisition of library books is underway as per the government's new policy that all lower secondary schools should have a library. With these three activities, the original envelope allocated to MES for component 2 was used up, but given the additional funds from the Swiss cooperation and substantial exchange rate gains due to the rise in the value of the \$, new activities have been planned under this component for 2017.

#### **Component 3: Strengthening management capacity**

##### **Ministry of Primary Education:**

In relation to school grants, school management committees and school directors of 1,000 primary schools were trained, and grants were finally transferred after some initial delay, which was caused by the shortage of financial institutions in many places and delays in recruiting the regional accountants. During 2017, this activity will be continued and further scaled up to 2,000 schools. This activity is expected to improve the quality of the learning environment in the participating schools as well as contributing to the decentralization of resources.

Over the past 12 months, 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 World Bank-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 REACH Trust Fund.

In addition, 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 of the MEP in tertiary institutions in Niger is underway.

**Ministry of Secondary Education:** The project financed most of the expenditures related to the school census 2014/15, for which the statistical yearbook has recently been released. A series of institutional strengthening and training activities have been also carried out, including training of hundreds of staff at central and decentralized levels and the provision of equipment to the Ministry.

#### **Links with other World Bank-financed projects**

Data collection has been completed for the Service Delivery Indicator (SDI) survey for health and education (also supported by P145261) and data cleaning and analysis is ongoing with results expected in early 2017. This activity will contribute much-needed knowledge of the service delivery challenges that contribute to the weak learning outcomes in Niger. The regional World Bank-financed Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographics Project (P150080) will provide additional financing for the education of adolescent girls, including secondary education, and for impact evaluation.

#### **Implementation support and partnership**

A joint implementation support mission visited Niger in December 2016 and undertook field visits related to the national languages curriculum reform, school grants, canteens and school construction. The contribution to the pooled fund by the Swiss Cooperation is now effective. The finance agreement is signed and the first tranche disbursed into the project designated accounts.

## 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	● Low
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	73.80	78.30	58.60
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

#### Comments

The target is met. The latest value, 78.30, is for school year 2015/16 based on the school census.

#### ► 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	0.01	0.02	0.03
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

#### Comments

This indicator is on track. Most recently, the gender parity index has improved from 0.848 in school year 2014/15 to 0.86 in school year 2015/16. The total improvement in the gender parity index compared with the baseline value of 0.836 in 2012/13 is 0.024.

#### ► 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	0.00	0.04	0.03
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

#### Comments

The indicator is currently on track. Most recently, the gender parity index has improved from 0.70 in school year 2014/15 to 0.73 in school year 2015/16. The total improvement in the gender parity index compared with the baseline of 0.69 in 2013/14 is therefore 0.04.

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

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

#### Comments

Progress on this indicator has been slow due to capacity constraints and lack of a clear strategy. However, a strategy to achieve the objective of improving the system for learning assessment at the primary level is now emerging. The first activity agreed in the 2016 action plan--the completion of the national PASEC report--has been achieved, although in the end without any financing from the project (a budget had been reserved but was not needed). Preparations are underway for carrying out an assessment in 2017 related to the pilot of the curriculum reform in 500 schools and to strengthen the capacity of the ministry in the area of student orientation (both with project financing). Additional activities are envisaged and will take shape over the coming months, including the possibility of carrying out a study to propose options for establishing a more comprehensive and sustainable national assessment system, and a possible national assessment in 2017 (the last national assessment dating from 2011).

#### ▲ Utility of the learning assessment system (Number, Core Supplement)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	2.00	2.00	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	N	Y	Y



Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018
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**Comments**

There has been good progress on the development of a new curriculum for grades 1, 2 and 3, and the gradual generalisation of the curriculum reform will move forward as of 2017/18 (with project financing). Additional tools and materials are also under development in support of reading and mathematics with complete ownership by the ministry, but taking advantage of what has been developed under various pilots funded by other development partners. Procurement is ongoing for the production, and it is expected that these will soon begin to be placed in schools.

**► Direct project beneficiaries (Number, Core)**

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	444,951.00	757,335.00	2,100,000.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Jun-2016	16-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

**▲ Female beneficiaries (Percentage, Core Supplement)**

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	45.00	37.00	39.00	47.00

**Overall Comments**

Overall, the PDO indicators show considerable progress towards attaining the Project Development Objective. The four PDO indicators related to access and retention of students in school, and gender equity, are all either met or on track to be met. The indicator related to the adoption of adequate reading materials can now be 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 that is organized by the school committees. These materials are now under production and awaiting delivery in schools. There has been less progress on the indicators related to the system of national learning assessment. However, the product agreed for 2016 was delivered although in the end without financing from the project (completion of the national PASEC report) and new assessment activities are under preparation for 2017. Moreover, a study will be launched to suggest some options for establishing a more comprehensive national assessment system.

**Intermediate Results Indicators**



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

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	20.00	282.00	1,245.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

Comments

In addition, another 238 classrooms are very advanced.

► 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-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

Comments

Preparatory activities are now completed and construction will be launched over the next few months.

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

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	2,166,268.00	2,444,979.00	2,611,352.00	2,400,000.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

Comments

The source is the school census for school year 2015/16.



► 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	11,506.00	18,578.00	100,000.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

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

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

Comments

School canteens were opened in 567 schools as of the beginning of the 2016/17 school year. The enrollment figures are preliminary and will likely increase due to the school feeding, which attracts additional children to these schools. The project is on target to achieve the target next school year.

► 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-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

Comments

The new materials are developed and are being tested in 500 schools.



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

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	1,620.00	2,469.00	3,500.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

▲ Primary (Number, Custom Breakdown)

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

▲ Lower secondary (Number, Custom Breakdown)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	1,120.00	1,142.00	1,000.00
Date	01-Apr-2016	01-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	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-Dec-2015	01-Jun-2018



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

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	1,219.00	1,857.00	800.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2015	01-Dec-2015	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	N	Y
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

Comments

Several learning assessments have been conducted or are underway. Once the results of at least two surveys have been disseminated widely, this indicator will be considered as met. The expectation is that this indicator will be met in 12 months.

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

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

Comments

A comprehensive human resource reform has been adopted which will be funded across several projects and programs, including this project. In the context of the joint missions, the extended World Bank team of P132405 and P145261 has been organizing regular meetings and exchanges to promote a good coordination of the reform. The reform includes the institutional strengthening of the ministries charged with basic education, training, the establishment of a data base of teachers, and measures to improve HR management in the sector. All these parts are currently ongoing.



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

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	1,039.00	4,576.00	2,800.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

Comments

The target has been met.

About 3500 (primary) school committees in Tillaberi have been trained in relation to the implementation of the PMAQ program (after school tutoring in mathematics). 1000 (primary) school committees are receiving school grants, and 75 lower secondary school committees have been reached by the girls education activities of the Ministry of Secondary Education.

▲ Primary (Number, Custom Breakdown)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	1,000.00	4,501.00	2,761.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

▲ Lower secondary (Number, Custom Breakdown)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	39.00	75.00	39.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	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-2015	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

Comments

The organizational review had been budgeted on the national budget for 2016, but the funds did not materialize. Instead, the review will be financed under the project during 2017. The target is expected to be achieved within the next 6 - 12 months.



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

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	1.00	1.00	4.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Jun-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

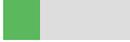
Comments

The next education sector review will take place in January 2017 and will be recorded in the next ISR.

Overall Comments

## Data on Financial Performance

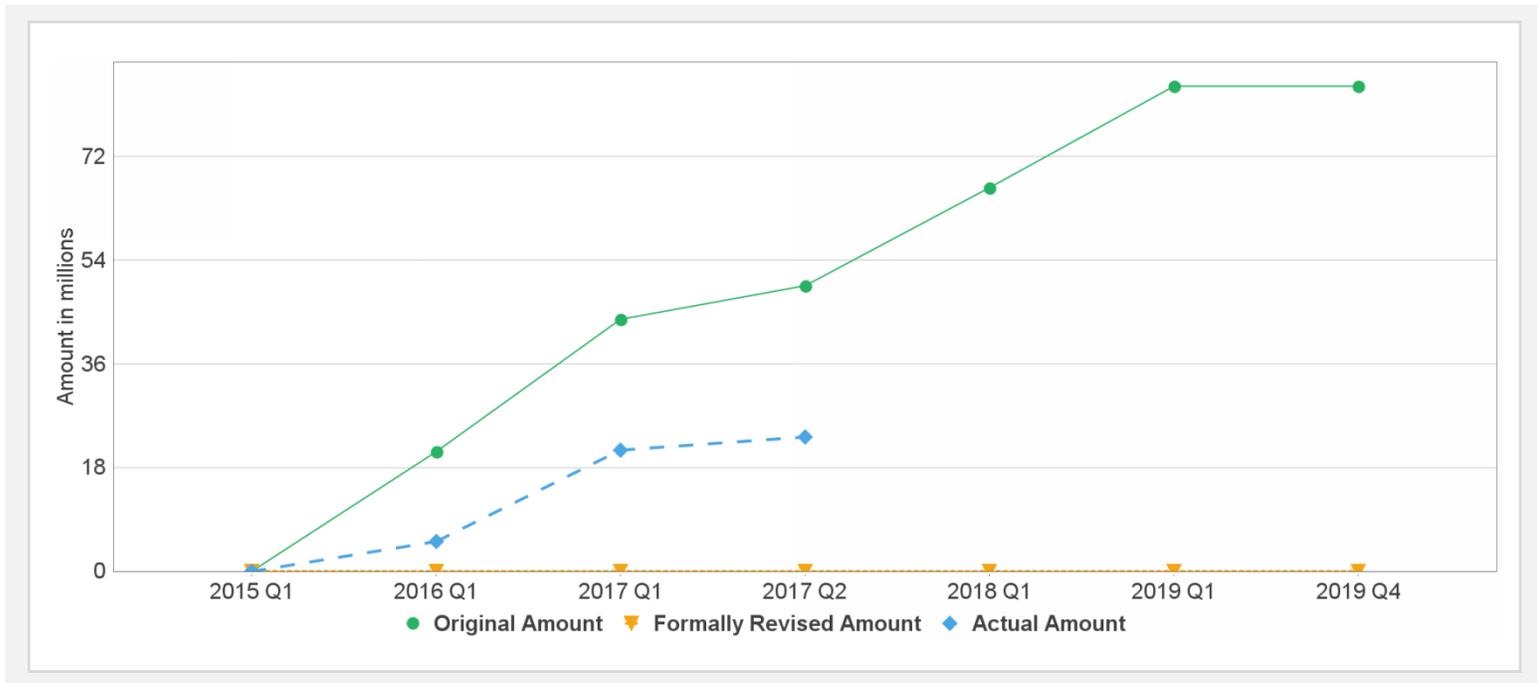
### Disbursements (by loan)

Project	Loan/Credit/TF	Status	Currency	Original	Revised	Cancelled	Disbursed	Undisbursed	Disbursed
P132405	TF-16565	Effective	USD	84.20	84.20	0.00	23.25	60.95	 28%

### 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.