



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

AFRICA | Niger | Education Global Practice |  
 Recipient Executed Activities | Investment Project Financing | FY 2015 | Seq No: 6 | ARCHIVED on 30-May-2017 | ISR27114 |

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:--

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 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 spilling over from neighboring countries, 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 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 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. Up until December 2016, there had been less progress on the indicators related to the system of national learning assessment. However, the completion of the national PASEC report was delivered in 2016 and several learning assessments are currently underway. 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 929,000 in total. The positive trend in the disbursement rate 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 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.

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:** 440 primary school classrooms have now been completed, and contracts are signed for another 380 classrooms. 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 was launched in all regions in December. Literacy training for 12,000 women is ongoing by the selected NGOs 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 the Diffa region. WFP will also carry out a SABER school feeding diagnostic study and provide capacity building of the ministry's unit for school feeding.

**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 completed. 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 is a consequence of the very weak learning outcomes throughout the education system. Grants are being paid to 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 (nearly completed) and the production of lexicons and dictionaries in national languages. In terms of evaluation and assessment activities, a learning assessment in the schools of the curriculum reform is underway. 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 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 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 (equivalent to an increase in total financing of 5%) and substantial exchange rate gains (in the order of 20% of total financing) due to the rise in the value of the US\$, several new activities have been planned under this component for 2017. 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, which means that Niger is one of the early implementers and that the country will host and deliver some of the training for other participating countries.

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

#### Ministry of Primary Education:

In relation to school grants, school management committees and school directors of 2,000 primary schools have now been trained, and most of these have received their grants after some initial implementation 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 3,000 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 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.

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.

A contract has recently been signed with UNESCO-IIEP/Pole de Dakar to support Niger with the preparation of a Country Status Report on education, which will be ready in 2018.

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 also been 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**



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 will be disseminated in the coming months. The report contributes much-needed knowledge of 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.

#### 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, school canteens and school construction. The contribution to the pooled fund by the Swiss Cooperation is now effective. The financing agreement is signed and the first tranche disbursed into the project designated accounts.

The Project's Mid-Term Review is planned for July 2017.

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

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

▲ Utility of the learning assessment system (Number, Custom 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	Y	Y	Y
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

► Direct project beneficiaries (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	757,335.00	929,016.00	2,100,000.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	16-Dec-2016	01-Apr-2017	01-Jun-2018

▲ Female beneficiaries (Percentage, Custom Supplement)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	45.00	39.00	41.30	47.00

**Overall Comments**

The results framework will be updated during the next mission. However, certain indicators have been updated: the number of beneficiaries has increased to 929,016, and the share of female beneficiaries has increased to 41,3%.

**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	282.00	440.00	1,245.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Apr-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-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

► 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	2,611,352.00	2,400,000.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Dec-2016	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	18,578.00	119,027.00	100,000.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Apr-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	43,345.00	90,000.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Dec-2016	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-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

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

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	2,469.00	2,642.00	3,500.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Apr-2017	01-Jun-2018

▲ Primary (Number, Custom Breakdown)

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



▲ Lower secondary (Number, Custom Breakdown)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	1,142.00	1,142.00	1,000.00
Date	01-Apr-2016	01-Dec-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	1,857.00	3,128.00	800.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2015	01-Apr-2016	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-Dec-2016	01-Dec-2016	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-Dec-2016	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	4,576.00	2,800.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Dec-2016	01-Jun-2018

▲ Primary (Number, Custom Breakdown)

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

▲ Lower secondary (Number, Custom Breakdown)

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

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

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	1.00	2.00	4.00
Date	01-Apr-2014	01-Dec-2016	01-Apr-2017	01-Jun-2018

## Overall Comments

Over the past few months, there has been progress on several of the Intermediate Results Indicators, in particular related to classroom construction and teacher training. Also, an education sector review was held in January 2017.

## Data on Financial Performance

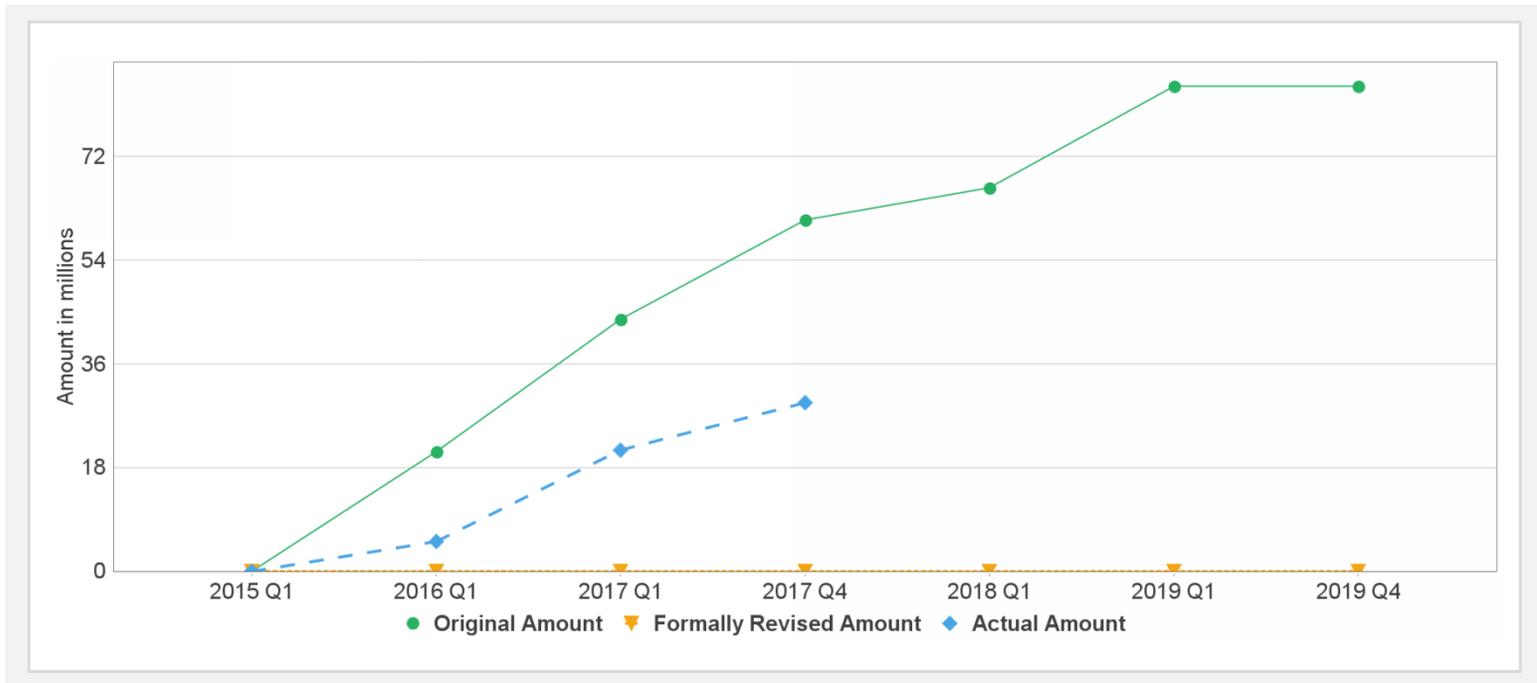
## Disbursements (by loan)

Project	Loan/Credit/TF	Status	Currency	Original	Revised	Cancelled	Disbursed	Undisbursed	Disbursed
P132405	TF-16565	Effective	USD	84.20	84.20	0.00	29.18	55.02	 35%

## 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.