

Document of
The World Bank

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Report No: PAD444

PROJECT APPRAISAL DOCUMENT

ON A

PROPOSED GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION FUND GRANT
IN THE AMOUNT OF US\$84.2 MILLION

TO THE

REPUBLIC OF NIGER

FOR A

SUPPORT TO QUALITY EDUCATION PROJECT

July 2, 2014

Education Sector Unit West and Central Africa
Country Department West Africa 3
Africa Region



CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(Exchange Rate Effective May 31, 2014)

Currency Unit	=	FCFA
FCFA 481.9	=	US\$ 1
EUR 1	=	US\$ 1.36115

FISCAL YEAR

January 1 – December 31

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAP	Annual Action Plan
AFD	<i>Agence Française de Développement</i> (French Development Agency)
AfDB	African Development Bank
CC	Coordination Committee
CDD	Community-Driven Development
CGDES	School Management Committee (<i>Comité de Gestion Décentralisée de Etablissement Scolaire</i>)
CPS	Country Partnership Strategy
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DA	Designated Account
DAF	Department of Administration and Finance
DCA	Delegated Contracting Agency
DCIP	<i>Direction des Curricula et des Innovations Pédagogiques</i>
DEB I	<i>Direction Education de Base I</i>
DEP	<i>Direction des Etudes et de la Programmation</i>
DFIC	<i>Direction de la Formation Initiale et Continue</i>
DGFC	<i>Direction Générale de la Formation et des Curricula</i>
DIES	<i>Direction des Infrastructures et Equipements Scolaires</i>
DMP	<i>Direction des Marchés Publics</i>
DP	Development Partner
DPL	Development Policy Letter
DPSF	<i>Direction de la Promotion de la Scolarisation des Filles</i>
DREP	Regional Directorates of Primary Education
DRES	Regional Directorates of Secondary Education
DRFM	<i>Direction des Ressources Financières et Matérielles</i>
DS	<i>Direction de la Statistique</i>
EFA	Education for All
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
ELAN	<i>École et Langues Nationales en Afrique</i>
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ENI	Ecole Normale d'Instituteur (Primary Teacher Training School)

ERA	<i>Ecoles Rurales Alternatives</i>
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework (<i>Cadre de Gestion Environnementale et Sociale - CGES</i>)
EU	European Union
FCFA	West African CFA Franc
FM	Financial Management
FMR	Financial Management Report
FMS	Financial Management Specialist
FMU	Financial Management Unit
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrollment Rate
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HDI	Human Development Index
ICR	Implementation Completion and Results Report
IDA	International Development Association
IFR	Interim Financial Report
INSET	In-service Training
IPF	Investment Project Financing
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LE	<i>Lettre d'Entente</i>
LEG	Local Education Group
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEN	<i>Ministère de l'Education Nationale, de l'Alphabétisation et de la Promotion des Langues Nationales</i> (Ministry of National Education)
MEP	<i>Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, de l'Alphabétisation, de la Promotion des Langues Nationales, et de l'Education Civique</i> (Ministry of Primary Education)
MEPT	<i>Ministère des Enseignements Professionnels et Techniques</i> (Ministry of Professional and Technical Education)
MES	<i>Ministère des Enseignements Secondaires</i> (Ministry of Secondary Education)
MESRI	<i>Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche et de l'Innovation</i> (Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation)
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIGETIP	<i>Agence Nigérienne d'Exécution des Travaux Intérêt Public</i>
NOO	No Objection Opinion
ORAF	Operational Risk Assessment Framework
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PADEB	<i>Projet d'Appui au Développement de l'Education de Base</i> - Basic Education Project (P061209) (approved in 2003, closed in 2009)
PAEB	<i>Projet d'Appui à l'Education de Base</i> - Basic Education Support Project (P115436) (approved in 2009, closed in 2012)
PASEC	<i>Programme d'Analyse des Systèmes Educatifs de la CONFEMEN</i>
PCN	Project Concept Note

PDDE	<i>Programme Décennal de Développement de l'Education</i> (Ten-Year Education Sector Development Program)
PDES	<i>Plan de Développement Economique et Social</i> (Economic and Social Development Plan)
PDO	Project Development Objective
PER	Public Expenditure Review
PIM	Project Implementation Manual
PP	Procurement Plan
PRESET	Pre-service Training
PSEF	Education and Training Sector Program/Plan
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RESEN	<i>Rapport d'Etat du Système Educatif Nigérien</i> (Niger Country Status Report)
RPF	Resettlement Policy Framework (<i>Cadre de Politique de Réinstallation des Populations - CPRP</i>)
SC	Steering Committee
SE	Supervising Entity
SG	Secretary General
SIG	School Improvement Grant
SOE	Statement of Expenses
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SWAP	Sector Wide Approach
TA	Technical Assistance
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Regional Vice President:	Makhtar Diop
Country Director:	Paul Noumba Um
Sector Director:	Tawhid Nawaz
Sector Manager:	Peter N. Materu
Task Team Leader:	Kirsten Majgaard

NIGER
Support to Quality Education Project

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PAD DATA SHEET

Niger

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

PROJECT APPRAISAL DOCUMENT

AFRICA

AFTEW

Report No.: PAD444

Basic Information			
Project ID P132405	EA Category B - Partial Assessment	Team Leader Kirsten Majgaard	
Lending Instrument Investment Project Financing	Fragile and/or Capacity Constraints []		
	Financial Intermediaries []		
	Series of Projects []		
Project Implementation Start Date 03-Jul-2014	Project Implementation End Date 30-Sep-2018		
Expected Effectiveness Date 05-Sep-2014	Expected Closing Date 30-Sep-2018		
Joint IFC No			
Sector Manager Peter Nicolas Materu	Sector Director Tawhid Nawaz	Country Director Paul Noumba Um	Regional Vice President Makhtar Diop
Borrower/Recipient: Republic of Niger			
Responsible Agency: Ministry of Primary Education, Literacy, Promotion of National Languages and Civic Education			
Contact: Telephone No.:	Dr. Abouzeidi Dan Maza 22720722677	Title: Email:	Secretary General, MEP abouzeidi@yahoo.fr
Responsible Agency: Ministry of Secondary Education			
Contact: Telephone No.:	Elhadji BOUBE Mamane 22720722555	Title: Email:	Secretary General, MES
Approval Authority			
Approval Authority RVP Decision			

please explain

This is a grant from the Global Partnership for Education which is approved by the Vice-President of the Africa Region.

Project Financing Data(in USD Million)									
<input type="checkbox"/>	Loan	<input type="checkbox"/>	IDA Grant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guarantee				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Credit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Grant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other				
Total Project Cost:		100.00			Total Bank Financing:		0.00		
Financing Gap:		0.00							
Financing Source					Amount				
Borrower/Recipient					0.00				
FRANCE French Agency for Development					15.80				
EFA-FTI Education Program Development Fund					84.20				
Total					100.00				
Expected Disbursements (in USD Million)									
Fiscal Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019				
Annual	15.00	23.00	23.00	22.00	1.20				
Cumulative	15.00	38.00	61.00	83.00	84.20				
Proposed Development Objective(s)									
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.									
Components									
Component Name					Cost (USD Millions)				
Expanding equitable access to schooling and retention of students in school					55.00				
Improving the quality of teaching and learning					23.00				
Strengthening management capacity					18.00				
Contingencies					4.00				
Institutional Data									
Sector Board									
Education									
Sectors / Climate Change									
Sector (Maximum 5 and total % must equal 100)									

Major Sector	Sector	%	Adaptation Co-benefits %	Mitigation Co-benefits %
Education	Primary education	80		
Education	Secondary education	20		
Total		100		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I certify that there is no Adaptation and Mitigation Climate Change Co-benefits information applicable to this project.				
Themes				
Theme (Maximum 5 and total % must equal 100)				
Major theme	Theme	%		
Social dev/gender/inclusion	Gender	7		
Human development	Education for all	85		
Human development	Nutrition and food security	8		
Total		100		
Compliance				
Policy				
Does the project depart from the CAS in content or in other significant respects?			Yes []	No [X]
Does the project require any waivers of Bank policies?			Yes []	No [X]
Have these been approved by Bank management?			Yes []	No []
Is approval for any policy waiver sought from the Board?			Yes []	No [X]
Does the project meet the Regional criteria for readiness for implementation?			Yes [X]	No []
Safeguard Policies Triggered by the Project			Yes	No
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01			X	
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04				X
Forests OP/BP 4.36				X
Pest Management OP 4.09				X
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11				X
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10				X
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12			X	
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37				X
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50				X
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60				X

Legal Covenants			
Name	Recurrent	Due Date	Frequency
Accounting Software		05-Dec-2014	
Description of Covenant			
The Recipient shall ensure that no later than three (3) months after the Effective Date, the MEP has purchased a “multi-projects” and “multi-sites” accounting software acceptable to the World Bank.			
Name	Recurrent	Due Date	Frequency
External Auditor		05-Jan-2015	
Description of Covenant			
The Recipient shall ensure that no later than four (4) months after the Effective Date, the MEP has recruited an independent external auditor for the purpose of carrying out the audit, under terms of reference, and with qualifications and experience satisfactory to the World Bank.			
Name	Recurrent	Due Date	Frequency
Implementation Support Agency		05-Jan-2015	
Description of Covenant			
The Recipient shall recruit, not later than four (4) months after the Effective Date, and thereafter maintain, an Implementation Support Agency to provide longer term support to project implementation, including fiduciary aspects and capacity building under the leadership of the MEP and the MES.			
Name	Recurrent	Due Date	Frequency
Annual Action Plan and Budget for the First Year		05-Oct-2014	
Description of Covenant			
The Recipient shall furnish to the World Bank no later than one (1) month after the Effective Date the annual action plan and budget for the Project for the first year of Project implementation.			
Name	Recurrent	Due Date	Frequency
MEP Regional Project Team		05-Oct-2014	
Description of Covenant			
At the regional level, the Recipient shall: (i) coordinate the MEP Project activities through the regional directorates of MEP and regional Project teams under the leadership of the Regional Director; (ii) appoint, not later than one (1) month after the Effective Date, within the regional Project team: (A) the girls’ education focal point; and (B) the CGDES focal point.			
Name	Recurrent	Due Date	Frequency
MEP Regional Accountants, Procurement Officers, and Civil Works Specialists		05-Dec-2014	
Description of Covenant			
At the regional level, the Recipient shall appoint or recruit within the regional Project team, when it is needed for the Project and as agreed with the World Bank, not later than three (3) months after the Effective Date: (A) one accountant; (B) one procurement officer; and (C) one civil works specialist, all under terms of reference satisfactory to the World Bank.			

Name	Recurrent	Due Date	Frequency
Grant Regulations		05-Dec-2014	
Description of Covenant			
No later than three (3) months after the Effective Date, the Recipient shall adopt regulations in form and substance satisfactory to the World Bank readily applicable to each School Improvement Grant (the “School Improvement Grant Regulations”) and regulations in form and substance satisfactory to the World Bank readily applicable to each Education Grant (the “Education Grant Regulations”).			
Name	Recurrent	Due Date	Frequency
Coordination Committees		05-Oct-2014	
Description of Covenant			
The Recipient shall establish not later than one (1) month after Effective Date and maintain afterwards, during Project implementation, two Coordination Committees, within the MEP and the MES, respectively, each with composition and terms of reference satisfactory to the World Bank.			
Name	Recurrent	Due Date	Frequency
Technical Auditor for the Education Grant		05-Mar-2015	
Description of Covenant			
The Recipient shall ensure that no later than six (6) months after the Effective Date, the MES has recruited, in accordance with the provisions of the Grant Agreement and on the basis of terms of reference acceptable to the World Bank, auditors for the technical audit required for Part 1.2(b)(ii) of the Project.			
Name	Recurrent	Due Date	Frequency
MES Fiduciary Team		05-Nov-2014	
Description of Covenant			
No later than two (2) months after the Effective Date, the MES shall recruit a financial management specialist and a procurement specialist for the MES Fiduciary Team, each on the basis of terms of reference, qualification and experience satisfactory to the World Bank and in accordance with the provisions of the Grant Agreement.			
Name	Recurrent	Due Date	Frequency
MES Coordinator		05-Nov-2014	
Description of Covenant			
The Recipient shall recruit or appoint no later than two (2) months after the Effective Date and thereafter maintain, during the Project implementation, a Project coordinator for MES activities, on the basis of terms of reference, qualification and experience satisfactory to the World Bank.			
Conditions			
Source Of Fund	Name	Type	
FTIE	Memorandum of Understanding	Effectiveness	
Description of Condition			
The MoU has been executed and delivered by all parties, in form and substance acceptable to the World			

Bank.		
Source Of Fund	Name	Type
FTIE	Steering Committee	Effectiveness
Description of Condition		
The Project's Steering Committee has been established in accordance with Section I.A.1 of Schedule 2 to the Grant Agreement.		
Source Of Fund	Name	Type
FTIE	Project Manuals	Effectiveness
Description of Condition		
The Recipient, through MEP and MES, has adopted the Project Manuals in form and substance acceptable to the World Bank.		
Source Of Fund	Name	Type
FTIE	MEP Project Coordinator, Financial Management Specialist, and Procurement Specialist	Effectiveness
Description of Condition		
The Recipient, through MEP, has: (i) recruited a Project coordinator for the MEP activities; and (ii) recruited a Project financial management specialist, and a procurement specialist for the MEP short-term fiduciary team (the MEP Fiduciary Team), in accordance with Section I.A.2(a) of Schedule 2 to the Grant Agreement and the Consultant Guidelines.		
Source Of Fund	Name	Type
FTIE	MES Project Coordinator, FMS, and Procurement Specialist	Disbursement
Description of Condition		
No withdrawal shall be made under Category (2) until the World Bank has received documentary evidence in form and substance satisfactory to the World Bank, establishing that MES has recruited a MES Project coordinator as well as a financial management specialist and a procurement specialist in accordance with the provisions of the Grant Agreement.		
Source Of Fund	Name	Type
FTIE	Delegated Contracting Agreement	Disbursement
Description of Condition		
No withdrawal shall be made under Category (4) until the World Bank has received documentary evidence in form and substance satisfactory to the World Bank, establishing that the Recipient has entered into a Delegated Contracting Agreement in accordance with the provisions of Section I.C.1 of Schedule 2 to the Grant Agreement.		
Source Of Fund	Name	Type
FTIE	School Improvement Grant Regulations	Disbursement
Description of Condition		
No withdrawal shall be made under Category (5) until the World Bank has received documentary evidence in form and substance satisfactory to the World Bank, establishing that the Recipient, through MEP, has prepared and adopted the School Improvement Grant Regulations, in accordance with the		

provisions of Section I.C.3 of Schedule 2 to this Agreement.

Source Of Fund	Name	Type
FTIE	Education Grant Regulations	Disbursement

Description of Condition

No withdrawal shall be made under Category (6) until the World Bank has received documentary evidence in form and substance satisfactory to the World Bank, establishing that the Recipient, through MES, has prepared and adopted the Education Grant Regulations, in accordance with the provisions of Section I.C.3 of Schedule 2 to this Agreement.

Team Composition

Bank Staff

Name	Title	Specialization	Unit
Irajen Appasamy	Senior Operations Officer	Operations	AFTEW
Begnadehi Claude Bationo	Senior Operations Officer	Operations	AFMBF
Helene Bertaud	Senior Counsel	Legal	LEGAM
Wolfgang M. T. Chadab	Senior Finance Officer	Disbursement	CTRLA
Boubou Cisse	Senior Human Development Economist	Former Task Team Leader (TTL)	AFTEW
Ruxandra Costache	Counsel	Legal	LEGAM
Emanuela Di Gropello	Sector Leader	Education	AFTHD
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Pierre Joseph Kamano	Senior Education Specialist	Education	AFTEW
Jean Charles Amon Kra	Senior Financial Management Specialist	Sr Financial Management Specialist	AFTMW
Melissa C. Landes	Operations Officer	Operations	AFTSG
Kirsten Majgaard	Education Economist	Task Team Leader (TTL)	AFTEW
Beth Wanjeri Mwangi	Resource Management Analyst	Financial Management	SDNRM
Koyalta Ndordji	Information Analyst	Information Analyst	AFRIT
Celestin Adjalou Niamien	Senior Financial Management Specialist	Financial Management	AFTMW
Serigne Bassirou Niang	Consultant	Infrastructure	AFTEW
Ibrahim Salaou Barmou	E T Temporary	Program Support	AFMNE
Ibrah Rahamane Sanoussi	Senior Procurement Specialist	Procurement	AFTPW

Leopold Remi Sarr	Senior Economist	Education	SASED		
Juliana C. Victor-Ahuchogu	Senior Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist	Monitoring & Evaluation	AFTDE		
Souleymane Zerbo	Consultant	Infrastructure	AFTEW		
Andre Zombre	E T Consultant	Procurement	AFTPW		
Non Bank Staff					
Name		Title	City		
Christiane Alzouma Mamosso		Consultant safeguards	Niamey		
Quentin Lebegue		Agence Française de Développement	Paris		
Cynthia Mela		Agence Française de Développement	Niamey		
Claire Galante		Agence Française de Développement	Paris		
Locations					
Country	First Administrative Division	Location	Planned	Actual	Comments
Niger	Zinder	Zinder	X		
Niger	Tahoua	Tahoua	X		
Niger	Maradi	Maradi	X		
Niger	Dosso	Dosso Region	X		
Niger	Diffa	Diffa	X		
Niger	Agadez	Agadez	X		
Niger	Tillaberi	Tillaberi Region	X		
Niger	Niamey	Niamey	X		

I. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

A. Country Context

1. **Niger is a large landlocked country with more than three-quarters of its territory covered by desert.** Situated in the West-Central part of Africa, Niger shares borders with Mali, Algeria, Libya, Chad, Nigeria, Benin and Burkina Faso. The country has a population of about 17.2 million, which is growing rapidly at 3.9 percent per annum (2012). Child mortality in Niger has started to decline, but the fertility rate is still very high. The majority of the population is concentrated on a third of the territory, mainly in the southern and western regions of the country. The majority of the population lives in rural areas (82 percent) and as much as one half of the population is under the age of 15. The young population and rapid population growth will put a significant pressure on the education system in the coming years.
2. **Niger is a poor country with a limited natural and human resource base.** It ranks 186 out of 187 countries on the 2012 UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) with a per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US\$769 in Purchasing Power Parity terms in 2012 – one of the lowest in the world. The country remains relatively fragile and continues to be affected by severe adverse weather conditions and other factors, which represent real obstacles to its harmonious development (48.5 percent of its population lives below the poverty line): (a) adverse weather conditions lead to recurrent drought in the northwestern and western areas where for several years there have been successive famines and an increase in vulnerability. This insecurity affects both the supply and demand for schooling and limits potential learning achievements; (b) instability in countries of the sub-region and in the Sudano-Sahelian strip affects the border areas (exposure to violent incidents: conflicts and terrorism) and undermines the Government's development efforts. Nonetheless, the exploitation of Niger's significant mineral and oil resources could provide important economic opportunities, if well managed.
3. **Economic growth is highly volatile due to the dependence on rain fed agriculture.** Agriculture and livestock, which contribute to about 28 percent and 11 percent of GDP, respectively, provide a livelihood for the majority of the population. The high dependence on agriculture contributes to fluctuations in Niger's economic growth. Between 2008 and 2012, GDP growth fluctuated between -1 percent in 2009 and 11 percent in 2012, with an annual average growth of 6.5 percent. While overall macro-economic management is sound, Niger's economy remains highly vulnerable to climate variability and weather-related shocks to agriculture and livestock and to changes in global demand for its exports of uranium. In 2013, economic growth decelerated to 3.6 percent on account of poor rains, following an exceptional agricultural harvest and the inception of oil production in 2012. Outlook for 2014 foresees a rebound in GDP growth to long-term trends, fiscal revenues and exports, and continued containment in overall fiscal deficit. Despite overall growth in GDP per capita, the effect on poverty reduction is small due to the inequitable distribution of income, as the majority of the population relies on the agricultural sector, which has experienced more modest growth. Mining activities and services continued to expand in 2013. Uranium is Niger's main export and accounted for 43 percent of exports in 2012. The country also has sizable reserves of oil, and the production, refining, and exports of oil are expected to grow and can support more stable economic development. Today, oil contributes to about 5 percent of GDP and mining around 3 percent.

4. **At present, short-term economic development efforts may be hampered by external shocks.** Conflicts in the neighboring countries lead to economic, security, and humanitarian challenges for Niger, and expose the country to significant macro-economic risks. The country is facing increased security concerns on its borders from various external threats including insecurity in Libya and spillover from the Mali crisis, which are diverting attention and resources, lead to large inflows of returning migrant workers and refugees, as well as disrupted trade and investment. Furthermore, the crisis in Mali is contributing to raising levels of insecurity due to the proliferation of heavy weapons in the sub region. This further augments existing threats from Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, an expanding drug trade through the Sahara, and recurrent insurgencies by rebel groups in the north.

5. **Government expenditure has increased from about 20 percent of GDP in 2005 to an estimated 24.9 percent of GDP in 2012.** However, the level of expenditure remains modest compared to other developing countries, and the country's low income level results in low government expenditure per capita limiting the Government's ability to provide funding for development and poverty reduction. The Government has adopted a Plan for Economic and Social Development 2012-2015 (PDES) which outlines an ambitious public expenditure program to foster sustainable inclusive growth and to improve public service delivery. Out of these, spending in education, and in particular primary education, constituted a significant part. Taking into account the shocks that have hit Niger, the economy has been well managed overall.

6. **Development aid in the form of grants and concessional credits contributes to about 30 percent of Niger's budget.** The aid flow to Niger is similar to that of other developing countries when measured as share of GDP, but the level of aid is relatively low at US\$30 when measured per capita. In years of food crisis, aid has peaked reflecting inflows of humanitarian and other crisis related assistance. Over the last years, foreign aid flows have been marked by a decline during the period of political turmoil, but following the political stabilization and with the new government in place, aid flows to returned to pre-crisis level. The main budget support donors are the International Development Association (IDA), the European Union (EU), the French Development Agency (*Agence Française de Développement – AFD*), and the African Development Bank (AfDB).

B. Sectoral and Institutional Context

7. **The formal education system in Niger consists of three years of pre-primary school, six years of primary education, four years of lower secondary education, and three years of upper secondary education.** The Government considers primary and lower secondary education as basic education (*Base I & Base II*). The goal is to provide universal access to these levels and ensure that graduates from basic education have the skills needed to function as productive members of society. Currently, only primary education is mandatory, and the official school enrollment age is seven years. The majority of the students enrolled in the formal education system attend primary school, accounting for about 80 percent of enrolled students. Around 5 percent are enrolled in pre-school; 11 percent in lower secondary education; and just 4 percent in either upper secondary education, technical education, or higher education.

8. **Basic education is, for the most part, provided by the public sector.** The public sector provides most of the education in Niger. Only 3.8 percent of primary enrollment was in private

schools in 2011, while the number was higher for secondary education at 18 percent. The Ministry of Primary Education (*Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, de l'Alphabétisation, de la Promotion des Langues Nationales, et de l'Education Civique – MEP*) is responsible for preschool, primary education (public and private), and literacy and non-formal education (literacy, Koranic schools), the Ministry of Secondary Education (*Ministère des Enseignements Secondaires – MES*) manages general secondary education while the Ministry of Professional and Technical Education (*Ministère des Enseignements Professionnels et Techniques – MEPT*) manages technical and vocational education (public and private), and the Ministry of Higher Education (*Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche et de l'Innovation – MESRI*) manages tertiary education, research and innovation. Each ministry has a regional departmental headquarter located in each of the eight regions of the country managing issues related to the sector under their jurisdiction.

9. **The Niger education system faces a number of challenges.** A high population growth rate, low initial enrollment rates, and lack of retention are among the factors preventing Niger from achieving universal primary education coverage and completion. In particular, Niger faces challenges to increase access and completion among vulnerable groups including girls in rural areas, children in nomadic areas, and children with disabilities. Other key related issues are the poor quality of learning and management of the education system. In addition to these structural issues, the country's vulnerability to frequent weather shocks has impacts on the education sector. Floods in August 2012 adversely affected more than 500,000 people, of which at least 176,000 were rendered homeless, causing serious disruptions of education services and damage to educational infrastructure.

10. **Despite significant increase in enrollment rates, gross enrollment in primary education in Niger is still low when compared to other Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries.** Implementation of the ten year strategy, the *Programme Décennal de Développement du Secteur de l'Education* (PDDE), covering 2003-2013, has resulted in increased enrollment at all levels of education. Over the last decade, the gross enrollment rate (GER) for primary education more than doubled from 36 percent in 2001 to 76 percent in 2011. This significant growth has been supported by increased budget priority to primary education, the expansion of the school network and recruitment of teachers. However, despite the massive enhancement, enrollment rates are still quite low compared to other countries in the region, due to a combination of low initial access for vulnerable populations, pointing to important inequities in the system, and low overall retention.

11. **Access to schooling is still very inequitable in Niger, symptomatic of demand- and supply-side constraints.** Enrollment of children from poor households in primary education has increased rapidly over the last decade, but disparities are still quite pronounced in primary education. Enrollment is in general lower in rural areas compared to urban areas, and an analysis based on household surveys¹ shows that longer distance to the nearest school has a significant negative impact on children's school access in rural areas. This finding suggests that supply (too few schools) may explain part of the low enrollment in rural areas. However, the analysis also

¹ The RESEN 2010 is a Country Status Report for the education sector, prepared by the Government of Niger with support from the World Bank, formed the basis for the preparation of the new national Education Sector Plan (PSEF). The data provided in this document are largely from the RESEN 2010.

highlights that demand-side factors play a part in explaining low enrollment, particularly for girls and for children from poor households. The expansion of the primary education system and significant improvement in enrollment has resulted in higher enrollment of girls in primary education. However, disparities still exist, and in 2011 the ratio of girls-to-boys enrollment in primary education was 83.7 percent and dropout rates were higher for girls. Gender inequality in access to education is more pronounced in rural areas than in urban areas, and the problem is particularly serious among poor girls living in rural areas.

12. Retention rates are also relatively low in Niger indicating a lack of efficiency in the system, overall and more particularly for vulnerable groups. The *Rapport d'Etat du Système Educatif Nigérien* (RESEN 2010) estimates the retention rate for primary education to be 66.8 percent in 2008/2009 based on the pseudo-longitudinal method.² Thus, at the current state of system performance, only around seven out of ten children entering primary education complete the cycle. The high number of repeaters and dropouts in primary education leads to a significant waste of resources. The RESEN (2010) calculates an efficiency of 78.8 percent for primary education in Niger, which means that 21.2 percent of the resources allocated are wasted. There are very strong differences between children from rural and urban areas as well as those from low and high income families in relation to retention rates, which are significantly lower for pupils in rural areas and for those from lower income families, pointing to the relevance of both supply and demand-side constraints in explaining retention. On the supply-side, the longer distance for students to travel to reach schools in rural areas, incomplete schools and the higher ratio of pupils per teacher in rural areas, affecting quality of education, make it more difficult to retain children in primary education in rural areas compared to urban areas. Niger has one of the lowest primary completion rates in all of SSA.

13. Low retention is accompanied by low quality of learning outcomes further suggesting a need for enhancing cost-effectiveness in the primary education system. Learning outcomes in Niger's primary education system are weak, even compared to other countries in the region. Based on the most recent scores from the *Programme d'Analyse des Systèmes Educatifs de la CONFEMEN* (PASEC) test, Niger ranks lowest in the region measured on combined student test scores for French and mathematics. At the same time, unit costs for primary education in Niger are fairly high (21 percent of GPD per capita in 2010), which confirms low efficiency in the use of resources. Clearly, the situation is not likely to improve solely by allocating further resources but requires that the overall internal efficiency and quality of the primary education system be improved.

14. Low quality of education has many causes. Access to learning materials and textbooks is a problem in many primary schools. The availability of appropriate teaching and learning materials is key to improving learning outcomes. In Niger, almost 20 percent of the primary schools have no access to textbooks, and 30 percent lack access to mathematics textbooks. In general, there is also high variation in the availability and quality of learning materials across schools, suggesting that the issue of textbook availability is not only about overall availability but also about inequitable distribution of textbooks among schools.

² The pseudo-longitudinal method evaluates the progress of a given school cohort through the education system by reconstructing (hypothetical) a flow diagram of a cohort retention in the system. It compares the actual non-repeaters in a given class at time t to the number of non-repeaters in the previous class at time t-1.

15. Quality of education is also affected by uneven distribution of teachers across schools and limited teaching time. There is a large variation in pupil-teacher ratios across primary schools. The average number of pupils per teacher was 39 in 2011, but the large variation means that many schools are well above this average. Thus, although Niger has one of the lowest average student-teacher ratios in the region, the favorable ratio may be having little effect and a more even teacher allocation across schools could possibly improve the quality of learning without increasing overall costs. Furthermore, there is a need for better management of classroom teachers in Niger in terms of adherence to the school calendar, control of absences, and better use of school time. The quantity of schooling time is challenged by high rates of absenteeism among teachers, which is more than 18 days during a school year for almost a third of the teachers (RESEN 2010). Both issues point to the need for more efficient teacher deployment and stronger accountability of teachers to schools and communities. Adding to the shortage of textbooks and teachers in many schools, the majority of primary schools in Niger also lack basic amenities such as sanitary facilities, access to portable water, and electricity, which further reduces the quality and equity of education.

16. Most importantly, poor quality of education is further exacerbated by poor teaching methods. The current curriculum in Niger puts too much emphasis on content and rote learning in relation to the skills acquisition expected of learners, such as reading, mathematics and problem solving skills, etc. This problem is further exacerbated by the limited subject knowledge of many teachers (in particular contractual teachers) and often by their lack of competency in teaching methods.

17. Many of the access, internal efficiency and quality issues point to management inefficiencies. Management efficiency needs to be improved to increase quality of education and to reach higher internal efficiency and equity in the education system. The large variation in the availability of human and material resources across schools suggests that there is a lack of instruments and systems to handle the allocation of resources. The variability in the distribution of teachers has increased between 2000 and 2010 resulting in greater dispersion in the number of pupils per teacher. Under the current system, schools do not pay the teachers' salaries, and therefore have an incentive to report an undersupply of teachers and little incentive to use teacher resources efficiently. Teachers are generally not held highly accountable by school directors, inspectors and communities, explaining the high rate absenteeism among teachers. Overall, the low share of regional education spending (as a share of total education spending) suggests a high degree of centralization in the delivery of education, which results in regions and schools having little influence on key education sector decisions.

18. Secondary education is characterized by low access and efficiency. Despite growth in gross enrollment in secondary education, in 2011, the GER in secondary education was 14.4 percent placing Niger well below the average for the SSA region of 40.4 percent. Demand for secondary education is expected to grow over the next several years as primary enrollment and completion are projected to improve further putting increasing pressure on accommodating new students. The low retention rate of 33.7 percent in the lower secondary education cycle limits the country's ability to produce secondary education graduates. However, for those students completing lower secondary education and enrolling in upper secondary education, chances of

graduating are significantly higher with retention rates at 73.4 percent in 2010. Also because of the high repetition rates for lower secondary education, the efficiency of this cycle is quite low in Niger. The RESEN (2010) calculates an efficiency index of 49.5 percent for lower secondary education in 2009. The performance is better for upper secondary education with an efficiency index of 73.3 percent in 2009. Low access to and retention in lower secondary education is due to a combination of supply and demand-side constraints. Interregional disparities are large in Niger, and young people from Niamey and Agadez have much higher chances of attending secondary education than young people from Tahoua or Tillabéri. Gender inequality becomes particularly pronounced in secondary education.

Financing and Institutional Context

19. **Overall spending on education has been increasing and is comparable to that observed in other countries in the region.** Education is primarily financed with the Government's own resources, and over the past decade, spending on education has increased both in absolute terms as well as relative to the overall public expenditure. In 2011, public spending on education was estimated at 3.2 percent of GDP and 23 percent of total public expenditure, which places Niger above the median compared to other countries in the region. Because the level of spending on education is already relatively high, little fiscal space remains to increase the allocation to the sector, and therefore increasing efficiency should be a priority in order to create room for significant further investments in the sector. One way in which efficiency can be improved is through a reduction of repetition and dropout rates, by redeploying teachers assigned to administrative duties to active teaching, and by increasing effective weekly teaching loads to align them with other countries (including decreases in teacher absenteeism).

20. **The greater part of Niger's education budget goes to primary education.** In 2010, out of the total public spending on education, 60 percent went to primary education, 25 percent to secondary education, and 12 percent to tertiary education, whereas non-formal education received the remaining 3 percent. Indeed, Niger ranks among one of the countries with the largest share of the education budget going to primary education. At all levels of education, salaries account for the greater part of the education budget, crowding out other recurrent spending needs such as for learning materials, training, and pedagogical support. The number of employees in the primary education sub-sector more than doubled over the period from 2006 to 2010 to accommodate the increase in school-age population and in enrollment rates.

21. **Lack of efficiency is symptomatic of Niger's weak institutional capacity and incentives to perform.** As illustrated by the lack of efficiency in the allocation and use of human resources, the system has a limited capacity for personnel planning and management, supervision of teachers, as well as monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Furthermore, roles, functions, and responsibilities are not very well balanced among the central, regional, and local levels. Further, the sector lacks high-level managerial and technical capacity to provide clear strategic and operational guidance. Very few incentives are in place to motivate employees and the composition of human resources in the sector and the deployment of skills at different sector levels need to be improved in order to enhance efficiency. Finally, there is a serious lack of physical resources ranging from buildings and facilities to furniture, office equipment, and communications equipment.

22. **A key institutional challenge and opportunity is the move towards a higher degree of decentralization.** The success of this change will depend critically on the ability of government, with support of partners, to strengthen capacity at all levels of management. Furthermore, it will be crucial to define a clear and functional division of labor among central, regional, local authorities, and schools, and to establish procedures which ensure good performance and accountability at all levels. A key focus of the reform agenda is thus to ensure proper deployment of human resources, efficient allocation of resources to schools, an enhanced budgetary process to ensure strong links between resources and objectives, and improved M&E.

23. **An additional institutional challenge is the recent division of the Ministry of National Education.** Effective in August 2013 the lower secondary education cycle was separated from the primary education cycle and put under the responsibility of a new ministry of secondary education (MES). While the two ministries, MEP and MES, continue to pursue the transition towards a basic education cycle, this separation creates an institutional segmentation that needs to be taken into account in the implementation of interventions which cover both primary and lower secondary cycles.

Government Strategy

24. In his inauguration speech in April 2011, the President highlighted the importance of investing in access to education and committed to allocating 25 percent of the government budget to education for the five years which followed and to expand access to post-primary education. In line with these priorities and based on the findings of the Country Status Report (RESEN 2010) and the recent study on skills for growth³, the Government has just finalized and endorsed a new, comprehensive education and sector plan for 2014-2024 – called the Sector Program for Education and Training (*Programme Sectoriel de l'Education et de la Formation – PSEF*) as a follow up to the 10-year PDDE covering 2003-2013. The PSEF lays out the Government's objectives for primary education. They include: (1) improving access to basic education through increased supply of educational services yielding greater geographic coverage of educational services, (2) improving quality of teaching, and (3) improving sub-sector governance. At the same time, the Government aims to make as much progress as possible in achieving universal completion by 2024, which will require both an increase in access to education and an improvement of the retention of students. In contrast to the previous sector plan, the PSEF does not only include basic education (pre-school, primary and non-formal education) but also all levels of post-primary education (secondary, TVET/skills development, and higher education). The World Bank, as part of the Local Education Group (LEG), led by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), has been supporting this process.

25. The Government has launched and is planning to undertake a number of other major reforms in various education sub-sectors through the plans and strategies mentioned above, notably: (i) introduction of the basic education cycle comprising six years of primary education and four years of lower secondary education; (ii) introduction of alternative lower secondary schools in remote rural areas (*collèges rurales*); (iii) teacher management reforms in primary and secondary education; and (iv) re-adjustment of the curriculum and teaching methodology in

³ World Bank (2012): Improving Education and Developing Skills for Economic Growth in Niger.

secondary schools taking into account the new basic education structure. Teacher management reforms include changes in teacher status. The recruitment of contractual teachers has been maintained, but the share of civil servant teachers has been increased – and is expected to reach 36 percent by 2020 (it is currently 11 percent). It is expected that this will improve career perspectives and incentives for teachers. On the basis of a recent diagnostic exercise, the Government also plans to implement measures to make teacher allocation more transparent and equitable. The teaching load will increase from 16.5 hours/week to 21 hour/week in lower secondary education and from 13.5 hours to 18 hours in upper secondary education to improve instructional time and ultimately enhance learning. Further, the Government aims to reduce the share of non-teacher salary out of the total salary expenditure to 25 percent by 2020 (from 44 percent in 2010).

Donor Collaboration

26. In support of the Government's efforts, Niger's education system has received considerable assistance from a number of development partners (DPs). Based on the lessons learned from the implementation of the PDDE and the advent of the PSEF, a number of operations have been proposed to better coordinate assistance, avoid duplication, and enhance synergies in investment in the sector. While operating within this general program framework, each DP targets those aspects that fit its strategic priorities. The LEG is led by the Swiss Cooperation (since October 2013) and meets regularly, with key DPs meeting at least once and often twice a month to discuss issues of interest or to share information on ongoing programs. As of 2011, the Secretary Generals of the Ministries in charge of Education are invited to participate in these donor meetings, and have done so quite regularly. Donors also participate in joint supervision and review missions, including field visits, and have now agreed on a common progress reporting format (an internal program execution report as well as an external economic and financial analysis conducted every year) as well as a common indicator matrix. The main DPs active in the sector are the French Development Agency (AFD); European Union (EU); UNICEF; United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the World Food Programme (WFP); the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA); the Swiss Cooperation; the German Cooperation (KfW, GIZ); the African Development Bank (AfDB); the Luxemburg Cooperation (LuxDev); the World Bank and several international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Plan International, World Vision, and OXFAM. Most of the DPs provide support to basic education, but some smaller donor-supported projects exist in secondary education, tertiary education, and technical and vocational education and training (TVET). The World Bank is currently financing a project on TVET/skills development which was approved by the Bank's Board of Executive Directors in 2013.

Preparation and Endorsement of the Government Sector Plan

27. The Government has prepared an Education Development Policy Letter (DPL) which was endorsed by the DPs and ratified by the Government during a cabinet meeting on June 1, 2012. Based on that DPL, the Government launched the preparation of a comprehensive strategic development plan of the education sector for the period 2014-2024 and a short term implementation plan (2014-2016) for each sub-sector supported by a medium-term expenditure

framework (MTEF) that is based on a simulation model and the costing of the action plans. All of these documents have been drafted, assessed and endorsed.

28. During project preparation, the Project Concept Note (PCN) and the draft project appraisal document (PAD) were discussed extensively with all partners. They were also discussed at three special LEG meetings held on June 26, 2012 (for the PCN), April 26, 2013 and June 28, 2013. The meetings endorsed the orientation and approach of the project. Some of the DPs which endorsed the project include UNICEF (lead in-country donor until October 2013) and the AFD, with contributions from the UN Funds and Programmes and several non-governmental institutions, as well as civil society organizations (CSOs)

29. A Partnership Framework (*Cadre Partenarial*) between the Government and the DPs was validated and signed on July 19, 2013. The Framework includes the organization of annual joint sector reviews and the goal of converging towards a common supervision and resources management system in line with Global Partnership for Education (GPE) guidelines and World Bank rules.

Rationale for the GPE Grant Request and for the World Bank's Involvement

30. The request to GPE for support from the GPE Fund to co-finance the proposed program is based on the PSEF. As described above, the Plan sets out short-term priorities to be addressed in order to improve the education system in Niger. It is driven by the Government's objective to achieve the millennium development goals (MDGs), particularly those relating to universal primary completion. It is also founded on the need to increase Government capacity for sector governance and to help cover the financing gap that requires complementary external resources beyond those already mobilized by the DPs. The GPE Fund will thereby complement current resources provided through different channels to bridge the existing financing gap over the next four years.

31. This is a first request for funds that will address urgent short-term needs. The estimated financing needs for the implementation of the PSEF during the period 2014-2017 is about US\$1,631 million and the financing gap for the same period for primary education is estimated at US\$168 million. The US\$84.2 million grant from the GPE and about US\$15.8 million from AFD, of which 80 percent will benefit primary education, will cover approximately half of the financing gap at the primary education level. Estimated contributions from other donors over the same period stand at around US\$45 million. The Government is working with all DPs to continue efforts to mobilize additional resources to fund the PSEF. The Government has also committed to raising the education expenditures share of the budget from the current 21.7 percent to 28 percent by 2016, by taking advantage of the expected revenue increase from the extractive industries sector.

32. The Government and the LEG have decided that the World Bank would be the Supervising Entity (SE) of the GPE Fund. This decision has been made on the basis of the LEG and the Government's recognition of its past experience in the education sector in Niger and, more broadly, of its experience in supporting EFA FTI programs in many countries, whose lessons may be useful for Niger. In that role, the World Bank has worked closely with the

Government, the LEG and other stakeholders during project preparation, and will continue to ensure close collaboration with all partners during implementation, under the leadership of the Lead Donor (Swiss Cooperation).

33. The World Bank has a long tradition of policy dialogue and support to the education sector in Niger. The Bank has supported education projects and has conducted, in collaboration with the Government, a range of analytical work to inform policy dialogue in the sector.

C. Higher Level Objectives to which the Project Contributes

34. The project contributes to promoting shared prosperity and reducing extreme poverty in Niger by directly contributing to the achievement of two MDGs: the achievement of universal primary education and the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. It supports the country's new Poverty Reduction Strategy – the Plan for Economic and Social Development (PDES, 2012-2015) – which identifies development of human resources and access to basic social services as major priorities and emphasizes the increased involvement of civil society in addressing social sector issues. It also supports the implementation of the first phase (2014-2016) of the PSEF (2014-2024) endorsed by the LEG with the following objectives: (a) increasing access to education; (b) improving learning outcomes; and (c) improving system management.

35. Moreover, the project is consistent with the objectives and approach of the ongoing World Bank's CPS (2013-2016) that supports Niger's PDES, with a strong emphasis on reducing vulnerability (CPS Pillar 2), and is also aligned with the objective of the Bank's Education Strategy 2020 by striking a balance between the provision of essential inputs (school buildings, textbooks and trained teachers) and activities that contribute to strengthening accountability within the education system.

36. Finally, the proposed operation responds to all three strategic directions of the GPE (i.e., Girls' Education, Education Quality and Learning Outcomes, and Fragile States) with interventions that emphasize quality education and support girls' education. In addition, the element of "fragility" is dominant among the criteria used for the selection of areas where interventions will take place.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

A. PDO

37. 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.

Project Beneficiaries

38. The direct project beneficiaries are Niger's primary and lower secondary education students and teachers, staff of the MEP and MES at central and decentralized levels, and parents. Most of these beneficiaries are located in the poorest regions/districts of the country, in line with Government policy to target support and resources towards reducing poverty. The project's

targeted areas for the various components and interventions will be agreed on during implementation based on the use of objective criteria and taking into consideration the evolving security situation and the areas of intervention of other DPs. Different components of the project may target different geographical areas, but all will have a pro-poor, primarily rural focus.

39. First, the project is expected to benefit about 65 percent of the schools and approximately 2.1 million students (of which about 85 percent attend primary schools and 15 percent attend lower secondary schools). Hence, the primary beneficiary group of the project is primary and lower secondary school students who, under the project, would receive increased access to a classroom nearer to their home, improved school facilities, new textbooks, more qualified teachers, and increased hours of teaching. These improvements in the quality of education delivered have the potential of increasing the future earnings of student and influence positively on their social conditions, particularly for girls, as it will also help protect them from social ills associated with abuse and exposure to risky health behaviors. Educating girls will also likely lead to improvements in socio-economic outcomes for their children and will likely reduce incentives for having large families (in turn, resulting in a decrease in fertility rates).

40. Secondly, primary and lower secondary school teachers (40 percent of whom are female) are expected to benefit through better training, and an improved learning environment. Teachers and other pedagogical and administrative officials will benefit from higher levels of training, an improved working environment and higher levels of income and employment security. Finally, parents and communities will benefit from lower out-of-pocket costs of education through the increased provision of free textbooks, and for primary education: grants supporting the running costs of schools, and school feeding.

PDO Level Results Indicators

41. The proposed operation will use the specific indicators mentioned below to track the achievement of the PDO (the complete Results Framework is included in Annex 1).

Objective	Indicator
Improve access to schooling and retention of students in school at the basic education level	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Primary completion rate 2. Increase in primary education gender parity index in areas targeted by the project 3. Increase in lower secondary education gender parity index in areas targeted by the project
Improve quality of the teaching and learning environment at the basic education level	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. System for learning assessment at the primary level 5. Utility of the learning assessment system 6. Appropriate tools and materials for improving reading in the early grades are adopted by MEP
All	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Direct project beneficiaries, of which female

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

42. The proposed project is based on the recently completed education sector plan (PSEF 2014-2024), and informed by the 2010 Niger Country Status Report (RESEN 2010), along with the July 2012 National Education Sector Joint Annual Review and the lessons learned from the EFA/FTI Basic Education Project which closed on May 31, 2012. It is being developed as part of a larger program of donor support to the education sector in Niger

43. The project will support an ambitious reform program centered around three main pillars: i) Expanding access to and retention in basic education in an equitable way, with particular focus on education infrastructure, girls' education and school feeding; ii) Improving the quality of teaching and learning, through more and better pedagogical inputs and teacher/teaching skills with more emphasis on learning outcomes; and iii) Strengthening management capacity, with focus on improving institutional capacity and incentives at the ministry, system and school level.

44. Specifically, the project will support the first phase (2014-2016) of Niger's PSEF (2014-2024). Therefore, the following paragraphs do not present the entire PSEF, but only the activities directly financed by the pooled fund (GPE grant, comprised of US\$84.2 million, and AFD grant of around US\$15.8 million). By the same token, the description below does not detail all of the various strategies adopted by the Government for the implementation of the PSEF activities, which can be found in the DPL, as mentioned above, and which were evaluated during the process of Niger's endorsement to the GPE. It also does not detail the technical evaluation of the PSEF activities, which could be made available upon request. The project design has been developed around the following three components. Costs reported below are base costs which means that they exclude contingency funds (US\$4.0 million).

A. Project Components

Component 1: Expanding equitable access to schooling and retention of students in school (estimated base cost: US\$55.0 million)

45. The main objective of this component is to increase equitable access to and retention in basic education by tackling supply and demand-side constraints to enrollment. It will involve replacing unsuitable classrooms, building related facilities and stimulating demand in areas most prone to food insecurity, with a focus on areas which have GERs below the national average. Special attention will be paid to gender issues. In particular, the project will finance: (i) the construction and equipment of about 1,600 classrooms and other important school infrastructure (i.e. latrines, water points, construction of wells etc.), where possible; (ii) incentive schemes to promote girls' education in both primary and lower secondary education; and (iii) stimulate demand and enhance students nutritional status and health through school feeding and hygiene programs. The Component is divided into three sub-components: 1.1: Education infrastructure; 1.2: Girls' access to education; and 1.3: School feeding and student health. The Government is seeking other funding to construct additional new classrooms, bringing the total number of new classrooms up to 2,000.

46. **Sub-component 1.1: Education infrastructure (US\$40.0 million)**. This sub-component aims to extend basic education to about 75,000 additional children of which at least 70 percent

will come from the rural areas, within which 20 to 30 percent will come from the districts with the lowest enrollment rates. It will involve: (a) (i) building about 1,245 primary school classrooms equipped with student benches and teacher desks, latrines and water supply points, where possible, and (ii) the construction and equipment of about 330 lower secondary school classrooms including latrines; and (b) strengthening the Government's capacity for supervision of school construction. These buildings will be provided for primary schools (Base I) and lower secondary schools (Base II) with priority given to schools with no permanent structures, for students to be accommodated during seasons when straw huts (temporary structures) cannot be used. Areas with the poorest access indicators will be given priority. The emphasis will be on priority areas identified by the Government and agreed with DPs. The selection of localities will be based on both need and demand. The classrooms will be disability-friendly to provide education access to children with disabilities and other special needs, and they will be complemented with latrines. Out of the about 1,600 classrooms, at least 150 classrooms will be built as Alternative Rural Schools (smaller multigrade facilities better adapted to the most remote areas). The project may also finance the construction of latrines in existing schools that do not already have latrines or that do not have a sufficient number of them. Through this measure, it is expected that enrollment/retention in schools will increase, particularly among girls.

47. **Sub-component 1.2: Girls' access to education (US\$6.0 million)**. This sub-component aims at reducing gender disparities in access to education by supporting incentives to promote girls' enrollment in both primary and lower secondary education in targeted areas, including awareness activities, a girls' tutoring program and Girls' Education Grants. The project would provide funding to continue activities which were successful under the previous World Bank managed project, focusing on areas where there is more resistance to female schooling and very low enrollment rates. It is anticipated that 51,500 girls will benefit from this sub-component and that access and retention for girls will improve in the targeted areas.

48. To complement the promotion of girls' enrollment through the construction of classrooms and latrines, supported by the infrastructure sub-component, this sub-component will: (a) at the primary level: continue the information campaign to sensitize and increase awareness of the population on the benefits of girls' education, supported by decentralized units of the MEP, CGDES (Decentralized School Management Committees), and NGOs; (ii) organize training for mothers of young and adolescent girls, mostly in functional literacy and financial literacy, in order to sensitize these to the importance of educating their daughters while also improving their income generating potential, thereby reducing the need for their daughters' labor at home. The target group will be mobilized through the educational mothers associations ("*mères éducatrices*"); (iii) design and implement tutoring programs for poorly performing students in selected schools in targeted areas with the aim of improving retention rates and reducing dropouts; (iv) provide awards to promising students at the regional level through "girls' graduation ceremonies" rewarding girls with the highest final exam score during a public ceremony with a small non-monetary incentive (a "*prix d'encouragement*", consisting of school supplies of other items needed for school, costing about US\$20/girl);

49. Moreover, the sub-component will: (b) at the lower secondary level: (i) finance information campaigns and other sensitization activities to raise awareness of the importance of lower secondary education for girls; and (ii) finance education grants for eligible girls attending

lower secondary school in order to incentivize school attendance and retention for girls. The project will also: (iii) support an impact evaluation of the different approaches to assess their relative cost-effectiveness.

50. **Sub-component 1.3: School feeding and student health (US\$9.0 million)**. This sub-component aims at stimulating demand for and retention in school, reducing the prevalence of nutritional deficiencies and support student health by promoting good nutrition practices and school hygiene and providing food, in primary schools. Priority will be given to areas where: (i) the enrollment rates are the lowest (mainly in the poorest regions and in rural areas, which coincides with those areas where girls' attendance is the lowest); and (ii) schools buildings are incomplete and/or destroyed.

51. The sanitary situation for children following recurrent droughts and flooding has deteriorated drastically, especially in the affected areas. To address these issues, the sub-component proposes to: (i) support the extension of school feeding programs (canteens) in areas suffering from acute food shortage and/or prone to natural disasters or with consequences arising from certain crises (conflicts); (ii) support to school health and hygiene activities, including school-based deworming where relevant; and (iii) the organization of training/sensitization for teachers and key school administrative staff on health, hygiene, nutrition-related issues, and on the development of a nutrition policy at the school level. In addition to the likely positive impact of these interventions on the health status of children, it is expected that school attendance and learning capacity will improve, leading to reductions in grade repetition and dropouts.

Component 2: Improving the quality of teaching and learning (estimated base cost: US\$23.0 million)

52. The main objective of this component is to improve the quality of teaching and learning by supporting: (a) increased provision of teaching and learning materials and support to a curriculum review; (b) pre-service and in-service teacher training; and (c) better tools for the measurement and improvement of learning outcomes. Component 2 is divided into three sub-components: 2.1: Pedagogical inputs; 2.2: Teacher training; and 2.3: Learning outcomes.

53. **Sub-component 2.1: Pedagogical inputs (US\$8.0 million)**. This sub-component will support higher quality of teaching and learning through the provision of teaching and learning materials for primary and lower secondary education and support to a curriculum and textbook review for primary education. The textbooks program should provide student textbooks and teacher's guides in core subjects (mathematics, reading, sciences) to primary and lower secondary schools. Since the financing is insufficient to cover all grades, complementarities will be sought with textbook deliveries funded from other sources, including a recent textbook provision funded by AFD.

54. Key activities supported by this sub-component include (a) for primary education: (i) the re-printing or acquisition of textbooks and teacher's guides; (ii) the provision of selected pedagogical materials; (iii) support to the on-going curriculum and textbook review of the first cycle of primary education; (iv) printing of materials for the early grade reading interventions described under subcomponent 2.3; and (b) for lower secondary education: (i) the re-printing or

acquisition of textbooks and teacher's guides; and (ii) the provision of selected pedagogical materials. Pedagogical materials will largely include teachers' guides and students' learning materials to support better teaching and learning in core subjects. The assistance envisaged for textbooks is two-fold: i) acquisition and distribution, from the inception of the project, of textbooks using the current editions to make up for the shortages in schools; and ii) designing of new textbooks aligned with the new curricula being finalized with national copyrights for subsequent printing. These new books may first be printed in limited numbers to test the new curriculum.

55. Project financing for the curriculum review will focus on developing better programs and teaching methodologies for math and language (reading and writing) and the development of transversal skills (problem solving, cognitive skills, communication skills, etc.). The curriculum and textbook review will build on some of the early lessons from the early grade reading interventions under subcomponent 2.3, which focus on appropriate practices for teaching early grade reading in local languages, and draws on the experiences, materials and tools developed under other reading pilots in and outside the country. The curriculum review will be carried out grade by grade over a ten-year period, with new editions of textbooks printed following each grade revision. During this process, existing textbooks will be reprinted and distributed to ensure teaching/learning continues while the review is being undertaken.

56. **Sub-component 2.2: Teacher training (US\$11.0 million)**. This sub-component will support higher quality of teaching and learning through more and better teacher pre-service and in-service training so as to increase the number of actual trained contractual teachers in the project target areas and help all teachers acquire the fundamental teaching skills and practices, with particular focus on subject knowledge and more practical teaching methods. About 3,500 contractual teachers will benefit from in-service training supported by the project and 800 teacher trainers will be trained.

57. The sub-component will support (a) at the primary level: (i) the expansion of the capacity of teacher training schools through the construction and equipment of three new primary teacher training schools (Ecoles Normales d'Instituteurs - ENIs) in Tessaoua (Region of Maradi), Douthi (Region of Dosso), and Magaria (Region of Zinder); (ii) higher quality training of teachers through the training of trainers at the three new ENIs and other selected training institutions; (iii) the provision of in-service training for contractual teachers; (iv) the development or adaptation of training modules and teacher guides for trainers and teachers on how to teach reading in the early grades of primary school, as part of the early grade reading interventions described under sub-component 2.3; (v) studies on teacher competencies, teacher training, and teacher management; and (b) at lower secondary education: (i) training for contractual teachers. In terms of the training of trainers, focus will be put for both pre-service (PRESET) and in-service trainers (INSET) on improving their capacity for hands on, practical and class oriented teacher training to help them transfer well-defined basic skills and practices in all teaching domains, starting from early reading and early math.

58. **Sub-component 2.3: Learning outcomes (US\$4.0 million)**. This sub-component will support higher quality of teaching and learning through better tools for the measurement and improvement of learning outcomes, with focus on literacy, and thus on primary education.

Support to numeracy may be included, but literacy is initially the primary focus. It will include support to: (i) improvements to the national student learning assessment system for better monitoring and evaluation of learning outcomes in primary education; and (ii) the development and implementation of early grade reading interventions in grades 1, 2 and 3.

Component 3: Strengthening management capacity (estimated base cost: US\$18.0 million)

59. Component 3 will support more efficient use of resources for improved access and quality through the development of management and institutional capacity and better incentives at the central, district, school and project levels in several critical areas. Component 3 is divided into three sub-components: 3.1: Capacity enhancement of the ministries in charge of basic education; 3.2: Central and decentralized education system management; and 3.3: Project management and coordination.

60. **Sub-component 3.1: Capacity enhancement of the ministries in charge of basic education (US\$6.0 million)**. This sub-component will enhance the capacity of the MEP and MES to manage and coordinate the two levels of basic education more effectively by supporting a set of institutional strengthening activities. Synergies will be developed among the programs financed by various partners that support improvements of the pedagogical and administrative management of the two ministries to ensure progressive and sustainable capacity building.

61. MEP has completed a comprehensive organizational review in 2013 (complementing institutional analyses carried out during preparation of the PSEF), and will receive comprehensive support derived from this review to strengthen its institutional capacity and performance. MES' capacity will also be strengthened, and the project will additionally finance an organizational review of MES during the first year of implementation.

62. The sub-component will support, for MEP: (i) the provision of technical assistance (TA) for strengthening the institutional capacity; (ii) the development and implementation to the extent possible of a professional development program for relevant MEP personnel, based on the results of the organizational review; (iii) the development and application of a human resource management and ministry development strategy by the end of the first year of the project, to be implemented starting in the second year; and (iv) upgrading and rehabilitating selected MEP offices and equipment; and for MES: (i) an organizational review and the improvement of its capacity to carry out its activities; and (ii) the provision of equipment.

63. **Sub-component 3.2: Central and decentralized education system management (US\$10.0 million)**. This sub-component will support the Government's initiatives to strengthen the planning, management, and monitoring capacity and the incentives to perform of the central administration, the deconcentrated agencies, the schools and the communities to implement system-wide primary and lower secondary education programs effectively and efficiently.

64. More specifically, the sub-component will support capacity development for (a) primary education, through supporting: (i) education sector planning and management; (ii) school planning and management, including staff and CGDES training; (iii) school financing, including through supporting an institutional framework for School Improvement Grants (SIGs); (iv) introducing such grants in a limited set of eligible schools to be managed by the CGDES; (v)

support to the Education Management Information System (EMIS), including data collection and school surveys; and (vi) studies related to education system planning, management, and financing; and (b) for lower secondary education, through supporting: (i) education sector planning and management, including studies; (ii) school planning and management, including CGDES training; and (iii) support to the EMIS, including data collection and school surveys.

65. Sector planning will include support to more effective teacher deployment policies. Capacity development for school planning, management and financing will target schools and communities, both critical for effective education service delivery. Better school planning and management will entail establishing capacities and procedures to measure and improve effectiveness and performance at the school level. The sub-component will help set up a system of school level planning and monitoring of quality, attendance and attainment. All schools will be eligible to participate and will be required to carry out self-evaluations and school development plans, as well as participating in school surveys; staff will be trained to use these new instruments and to function effectively in a decentralized environment. Better school management will also entail strengthening of the CGDES which will have an important role in managing school feeding programs.

66. As far as school financing is concerned, the focus will be on setting up a sustainable institutional framework for a competitive scheme of SIGs to provide incentives for quality of learning, teaching performance, attendance and/or attainment. Further, the SIGs may also help invest into non-recurrent expenditure categories, including supporting in-service training to teachers and staff. The activity will develop approval, monitoring and evaluation processes for the SIGs, and set up and train regional education boards and the CGDES. The management of the SIGs will be monitored on a sample basis with the help of NGOs or other independent agents.

67. **Sub-component 3.3: Project management and coordination (US\$2.0 million).** This sub-component will support project coordination and M&E, in order to facilitate project implementation. It will aim at ensuring effective implementation of the proposed project through efficient coordination mechanisms, proper FM and procurement practices, and effective M&E of project outcomes at the national and sub-national levels. Specifically, support will be given to project management and coordination, through provision of consultants' services, operating costs, equipment, and training, including for (a) in the case of MEP: (i) the meetings of the project's Steering Committee and the annual sector reviews; (ii) technical and financial audits; (iii) the recruitment of project staff, as needed, including for project coordination, FM and procurement; (iv) training of stakeholders involved in implementation, including on procurement and M&E; and (v) operating costs; and (b) in the case of MES: (i) technical and financial audits; (ii) the recruitment of project staff, as needed, including for project coordination, finance and procurement; and (iii) training of project stakeholders involved in implementation.

Contingencies (US\$4.0 million). Contingency funds across the three components are US\$4.0 million.

B. Project Financing

Lending Instrument

68. The project financing instrument is a grant from the GPE provided as Investment Project Financing (IPF). With the continued high country risk as identified by both the financial and procurement assessments, the team considers the IPF to be the appropriate vehicle for this operation because the country situation and proposed interventions require dedicated funding and hands-on support and supervision.

69. The GPE grant will be combined in a pooled fund with a grant from AFD to finance the activities described in this project document. The rationale behind this decision was that it would improve the efficiency of the contributors' support for the PSEF, while also reducing transaction costs for Government, in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005. The operation described above captures the entirety of the activities financed by the pooled fund, hereafter referred to as "the project".

70. A move to a sectoral budget support or a Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) was considered, but does not seem appropriate at this stage because there are significant concerns about governance and fiduciary arrangements in the sector; and there are too few donors in the education sector in Niger to justify the SWAP. Additionally, the depth of knowledge and analytical work to underpin the development of a sector-wide program are not yet in place for secondary and tertiary education. Given the significant positive externalities associated with basic education, the Government and donors decided to proceed first with the development of a basic education project/pooled fund and then, during its implementation, do the analyses for the secondary and tertiary education work program.

Project Cost and Financing

71. The total cost of the activities described in this project document, and to be financed by the pooled fund (*fonds commun*), is US\$100 million, with the cost by component provided in the following table. The financing includes a US\$84.2 million grant from the GPE and a grant of approximately US\$15.8 million from AFD (up to a maximum of EUR 12 million). The GPE grant, administered by the World Bank, will finance 84.2 percent of the project activities. If other partners join the pooled fund over the project period, the scope of activities would be expanded corresponding to the additional funding made available.

Project Components	Project Costs/Financing (US\$ million)	GPE grant financing (US\$ million)	AFD grant financing (US\$ million)	% GPE in total financing
1. Expanding equitable access to schooling and retention of students in school	55.0	84.2	15.8	84.2%
2. Improving the quality of teaching and learning	23.0			
3. Strengthening management capacity	18.0			
Contingencies	4.0			
Total Costs	100.0			

C. Lessons Learned and Reflected in the Project Design

72. Experience and lessons learned from the first EFA FTI program and from past IDA projects (Niger Basic Education Project, 2004; Niger Social and Policy Reform 1, 2006) are reflected in the project design and include the following:

- Pay attention to the sustainability of interventions. A significant number of activities financed under the first round of support from FTI have now been incorporated into the Government budget and strategy, including teacher allowances, pre and in-service teacher training activities, operations and maintenance including a significant share of vehicle costs, among others. This has ensured that the successful pilots under the first FTI round and other donor programs have been able to benefit directly from the increased budget allocation to education.
- Rather than trying to solely increase the number of pre-service places to fill teacher shortages, the quality of teacher training programs needs to be given sustained attention. The project will focus not only on the caliber of recruits but also provide support to teachers in their classrooms to ensure they translate their training into better practice. Any intervention to be successful in Niger should include measures to help the Government address the issue of recruitment, deployment, management and payment of teacher salaries. Experience has shown that providing education inputs such as new classrooms, textbooks and teachers does not suffice to improve the level of teaching in the classrooms, requiring focus on career development and teacher incentives.
- Interventions to improve the attendance of girls require a package that addresses social constraints as well as basic infrastructure. The design has taken into consideration the social and physical constraints in access to girls' education through women's groups and training in use of new facilities.
- Effective donor coordination is essential to provide the Government with complementary assistance programs, ensure a coherent and systemic approach to reform and to maintain a focus on the need to strengthen education outcomes. To promote donor coordination, the project has been jointly designed by the Government and DPs. Agreement will also be reached by the Government and all contributors to the pooled fund on the relevant

fiduciary management arrangements to avoid a recurrence of disagreements and disruption of implementation of the PDDE and PAEB.

- Mainstreaming project implementation arrangements in government structures strengthens the capacity of the executing ministries, builds stronger ownership of the reforms and is more likely to contribute to sustainable results. The project will be implemented by the MEP supported by TA integrated in the ministry to meet short-term skill needs. While capacity for fiduciary management is being strengthened, the pooled fund will not flow through government accounts.
- An innovative approach needs to be taken in order to build schools in hard-to-reach and rural areas as it became apparent during the last FTI implementation that it is extremely difficult to get contractors to bid on projects located in remote communities.
- Communities need extensive training and coaching to be able to implement self-managed projects and communication between the Government and communities needs to be good for such systems to work fully. The project design takes into account the need for detailed guidelines on how the various modes of construction management would be carried out and includes the preparation of manuals for each approach, training of central and local government staff as well as communities in their use.
- The procurement and distribution of textbooks needs to be planned in detail. During the implementation of the previous pooled fund, the procurement of textbooks was delayed with storage of textbooks in warehouses for an extended period. The most recent procurement and distribution in 2013 of 3.5 million textbooks with AFD funding, was concluded successfully despite the massive logistical exercise requiring over one hundred truckloads of materials, some travelling to the most remote parts of the country. UNICEF procured and distributed the AFD-financed textbooks, setting up distribution hubs across the country to receive the materials, which were then delivered locally to each and every school.
- Given the short duration of the project of four years, *output* rather than *outcome indicators* will be used to measure implementation success. These will then be judged by the extent to which they contribute to reaching the agreed sector program goals.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

73. In alignment with the new institutional landscape, the MEP and the MES will be the government institutions responsible for the implementation, MEP for the activities related to primary education (Base I), and MES for the activities related to lower secondary education (Base II). Implementation will be carried out by the relevant technical units of MEP and MES at the central and decentralized levels. An Implementation Support Agency (ISA) and other TA will be recruited to support the ministries with certain tasks. For both MEP and MES, part of the school construction will be delegated to competitively selected Delegated Contracting Agencies (DCAs).

A. Partnership Arrangements

74. The LEG in Niger is led by a Lead Donor, recently transitioned from UNICEF to the Swiss Cooperation, who acts as the focal point for the group. The Partnership Framework signed July 2013 commits them to working to coordinate their support for the PSEF. This contributes to

eliminating duplication of efforts and rationalizing donor activities to make them as cost effective as possible. Additionally, in order to move toward further harmonization, AFD has proposed to combine its financing with that of the GPE grant in a pooled fund, managed by the Government. The pooled fund will be open to all partners wishing to use this financing mode. Unlike under the PDDE pooled fund, the pooled account will be managed as a designated project account and hence more secure. World Bank procurement and financial management procedures will apply to the pooled fund. In the meantime, the donors will continue to improve Niger's public financial management system and national procedures, so that future contributions of the GPE and/or of other partners would be more closely aligned with country system and national procedures (in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness). The key elements of the implementation arrangements are described below.

75. Its mode of operation will be specified in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU or *lettre d'entente*) between the contributors to the fund and the Government of Niger. It will provide for semi-annual progress reports, joint annual reviews with Government, independent audits (financial, technical, and procurement) covering the entirety of the pooled fund financing, and with consideration for the jointly agreed procurement and FM and institutional arrangements. The operating principles of the proposed pooled fund are described in Annex 7.

B. Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

76. The MEP and MES will be responsible for the implementation of their respective parts of the project, including fiduciary tasks, through their different directorates and services at central and decentralized levels. The MEP and MES will coordinate all activities carried out by their respective departments or through delegated contracting agencies. In this regard, the MEP and MES will recruit and assess service providers (companies, suppliers, consultants, etc.) and will sign all agreements with co-executing agencies (DCAs) as well as supervise their activities. The SG and his/her team will ensure the coordination and consistency of activities and liaise with the partners.

77. The oversight of the program will be ensured by the project's Steering Committee (SC), composed, at a minimum, of representatives of the Ministry of Planning, MEP, MES, and the lead donor in the education sector. The SC will provide project oversight, strategic guidance to project implementation and ensure coordination with other existing or proposed overlapping activities and programs; (ii) oversee project implementation and approve Annual Action Plans and Budgets; (iii) review and approve project progress reports; and (iv) assess project achievements. The SC will need to be in place prior to effectiveness.

78. At the technical level, (i) two full-time Project Coordinators will be appointed or recruited, by MEP and MES respectively, and, under the direct supervision of the Secretary Generals of MEP and MES, carry out the day-to-day project coordination and administration and facilitate communication and articulation between the various participants in project implementation; (ii) two short term fiduciary teams, consisting of, initially, senior experts in financial management and procurement, to be joined later by an accountant, will be recruited to support respectively the MEP and MES' DRFM and DMP in handling the fiduciary aspects during the launch of the project; and (iii) a technical assistance in the form of an Implementation Support Agency will be contracted to provide long term support/TA to project implementation

and key reforms, including to support the fiduciary functions related to management of the grant for the duration of the project under the leadership of the MEP and MES, replacing the short term fiduciary teams once a proper hand-over has been completed.

79. Furthermore, a Coordination Committee (CC) will be established in each ministry to technically coordinate and oversee the implementation of the AAP and provide advice and recommendations to the Steering Committee. Their main role will be to technically coordinate and oversee the implementation of the AAP and provide advice and recommendations to the Steering Committee (SC). They will be responsible, among other things to: (i) ensure consolidation of the different work plans into a budgeted Annual Action Plan to be submitted for the approval of the SC, (ii) ensuring the AAP's consistency with the education sector plan (PSEF); (iii) validate the terms of reference for studies, consultancies, etc., ensuring their compliance with the objectives of the project; and (iv) oversee implementation of the AAP, monitoring compliance with the planned, programmed and implemented activities. The CCs will comprise the Secretary General, Director of Studies and Programming, Director of Financial and Material Resources, Director of Public Procurement, Director of Statistics of MEP, the Project Coordinator, directors of key implementing units, and other representatives as the ministers of MEP and MES may determine.

80. The implementation of part of the construction program will be delegated to DCAs. The construction and rehabilitation works in urban areas, and the construction of lower secondary school classrooms, may be most suitable for delegation to DCA. Other parts of the school construction will be managed either directly by MEP or MES, by district "*collectivites territoriales*", or by communities or local councils on a pilot basis. The DEPs, in coordination with the DIES and other units as relevant, will be responsible for the overall planning and programming of activities under this sub-component through: (i) preparing and updating the construction program; (ii) establishing a database with updated information on needs, enrollment, unit costs, and space requirement; and (iii) establishing requirements and criteria for site selection. The implementation of the quality component activities will be mostly assured by the ministries directly through their various departments. The division in charge of training and curricula, in particular MEP's *Direction de la Formation Initiale et Continue* (DFIC), will be responsible for coordinating and managing teacher training activities, curriculum review and development of training modules. DFIC has experience in managing large scale teacher training activities and is currently implementing teacher training programs funded by UNICEF and Swiss Cooperation. The project will finance TA to reinforce the capacity of DFIC in the management of teacher training activities. Two project manuals are needed prior to effectiveness: an Administrative, Accounting, and Financial Manual of Procedures and a Project Implementation Manual (PIM), which will be prepared by the Government and approved by the Bank. Specific Grant Regulations for the two types of grants must be prepared and approved by the Bank no later than three months after effectiveness.

81. In line with his/her normal mandate, the SG of the MEP or MES would ensure the overall technical coordination of the implementation of the project/pooled fund. In each ministry, a light coordination team composed of the Project Coordinator and two to three high level staff would assist them in this job, which will consist of the regular monitoring of the implementation of the agreed-upon plans of activities, the provision of technical guidance to various technical units as

necessary, the effective liaison with the sector DPs, and the periodic reporting of implementation progress. The ISA can also support these tasks.

82. At the regional level, the MEP will: (i) coordinate the project through the regional directorates of MEP and regional project teams under the leadership of the regional director; (ii) appoint, not later than one month after effectiveness, within this team, inter alia: (a) the girls' education focal point; (b) the CGDES focal point; and (c) other specialists as needed and as agreed with the World Bank; and (iii) recruit or appoint within the regional project team, as needed for the project and as agreed with the World Bank, not later than three months after effectiveness: (a) one accountant; (b) one procurement officer; and (c) one civil works specialist, all with terms of reference (TORs) satisfactory to the World Bank. This team will be the point of contact for project implementation in their respective region. At the regional level, the MES will coordinate their part of project activities in a manner acceptable to the World Bank and described in the PIM.

C. Results Monitoring and Evaluation

83. The development of M&E systems and processes will be supported by the project/pooled fund in close collaboration with the main education sector DPs. Under the leadership of the Secretary Generals of the MEP and MES, the M&E activities will be the shared responsibility of the core technical departments of the MEP and MES (under the leadership of the DEPs and their divisions of statistics) with the Regional Directors of Education feeding the process with necessary information and data from the field. A progress report will be prepared biannually to provide information on the status of program implementation and outcomes as well as updated data on performance indicators. Impact evaluations, incidence analysis and service delivery survey work will be carried out periodically to better measure program impact on beneficiaries, service delivery efficiency, and effectiveness. Joint implementation support missions with the main partners will be carried out as much as possible.

84. The project's activities will be monitored and reported on in the National Education Sector Annual Review. Independent evaluation, jointly supported by donors, will become a routine part of the preparation for the proposed annual review. The LEG will continue to play a key role to ensure coordination and collaboration.

85. MEP and MES will continue to improve the existing M&E system in order to address the M&E requirements. The project will take steps, under component 3, to develop the capacity both at central, regional and local (school) levels to fulfill key monitoring functions. The indicators for this project will be tracked regularly, with the Departments of Planning and Statistics ensuring their accuracy, security, and timeliness. Any necessary policy actions will be taken by senior management to address any worrisome trends captured in the data collection. A mid-term review (MTR) will be conducted to assess overall progress in project implementation, update the results framework, review allocations across components, re-assess the risks and propose corrective measures for the achievement of the PDOs.

D. Sustainability

86. Sustainability of the project is ensured by its strong link with the Education Sector Plan, PSEF, and thus with the policies of the education sector, a demonstrated commitment by the Government towards poverty reduction and achievement of the education MDGs, and government ownership of the GPE process. The Government is implementing the project with its own staff and rightly perceives the GPE as part and parcel of its own activities. Finally, the project has been prepared on a strong technical basis, including a financial framework prepared and endorsed by the Government and the local donors group.

V. KEY RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

87. The proposed project is conceived with awareness of the capacity constraints prevalent on the ground as well as the political atmosphere. Project implementation uses existing mechanisms to the extent possible and building capacity where necessary to reduce risks that might hamper successful project completion. The security situation has warranted a flexible design in terms of the targeting of investments to specific areas of Niger's territory. The potential benefits of the operation outweigh the risks and warrant GPE assistance for implementing critical activities in coordination with other DPs, while supporting risk mitigation measures to maximize the project implementation in a timely manner. The Table below summarizes the critical risks and the risk rating. The full risk evaluation (Operational Risk Assessment Framework - ORAF) can be found in Annex 4.

A. Risk Ratings Summary Table

Risk Category	Rating
Stakeholder Risk	Moderate
Implementing Agency Risk	
- Capacity	Substantial
- Governance	Substantial
Project Risk	
- Design	Moderate
- Social and Environmental	Low
- Program and Donor	Moderate
- Delivery Monitoring and Sustainability	Substantial
Overall Implementation Risk	Substantial

B. Overall Risk Rating Explanation

88. The Operational Risk Assessment rates the risk at implementation as Substantial. The project could face some risks to timely implementation, sustainability or impact on intended beneficiaries. However, the identified risks are manageable and mitigation measures have been put in place.

89. The main risk is associated with Implementing Agency Risks, which could lead to slow implementation. The ORAF finds that weak management and implementation capacity of MEP and MES, including with regards to fiduciary aspects, M&E, and project management constitute a potential risk for project implementation. Further, some reforms envisioned by PSEF (which the project could support) remain relatively complex given the context. In order to mitigate these risks, a technical assistance firm will be recruited to build implementation capacity, and two Project Coordinators will be recruited to further strengthen the coordination capacity. Further, specific TA will be provided to support the school construction activities.

VI. APPRAISAL SUMMARY

A. Economic and Financial Analyses

90. An economic and financial analysis of the project was undertaken and a brief summary can be found in Annex 6. Where possible, costs and benefits were assessed from a quantitative perspective generating a range of net present values (NPV) and internal rates of return (IRRs) reported in Table 1 below. Costs include investment, recurrent and opportunity costs, as applicable. Benefits are measured in terms of increased access and improved quality. Both base and alternative scenarios were envisaged trying in all cases to be conservative. The interventions have many other expected benefits that could not be quantified and are reported in Annex 6.

91. Table 1 shows the NPV of component 1 under different scenarios. Beyond the impact on access, the improvement in quality of learning resulting from the construction of classrooms is likely to result in higher completion rates and subsequently possibly also higher productivity and earnings of the students graduating, which were modeled by a 5 percent increase in real wages and a 5 to 10 percent increase in completion rates. The NPV of the different scenarios ranges from US\$46.8 million to US\$241.4 million, and the IRR ranges from 11 percent to 12 percent showing a consistent positive payoff from investment in all scenarios.

Table 1: NPV of project dependent on completion rate and wage (million US\$ 2012-prices)

Completion rate Wage scenarios	5% discount rate			8% discount rate		
	Actual	+ 5%	+ 10%	Actual	+ 5%	+ 10%
5 % wage decrease	177.7	192.4	207.2	46.8	53.6	60.4
Actual	193.2	208.7	224.3	54.0	61.1	68.2
5% wage increase	208.7	225.0	241.4	61.1	68.6	76.0

Note: Actual refers to parameters based on most recent data, which are used in the base scenario.

Source: Author's calculations.

92. While it is very difficult to quantify the overall gains of the project related to improved learning outcomes, also because of the different target groups, small further improvements of the order of 5 to 10 percent in completion rates and subsequently productivity and earnings were modeled and compared to the overall cost of sub-components 1.1, 1.2, 2.1 and 2.2 leading to an overall IRR of between 10 and 12 percent.

93. Total spending under the project is US\$100 million (pooled fund). The fiscal impact amounts to between 9.4 percent and 14.8 percent of the total public expenditure on education during the project years and around 2.3 percent after project implementation. Compared to the overall budget for education the fiscal impact is limited after project implementation. The primary fiscal impact after project implementation stems from the costs associated with the expansion of the primary and lower secondary education system, i.e. the recurrent costs associated with the additional number of students accommodated as well as maintenance costs of the institutions. The fiscal impact directly attributable to the project only relates to costs of the program as far as they are additional to the recurrent expenditure that would have been made without the project. The other access-related sub-components such as school feeding, girls' education, and school grants do not have a direct fiscal effect, as the Government can choose to cease these programs. Finally, the fiscal impact of the components on teaching and learning and system management strengthening is minimal.

B. Technical

94. The project is designed to support the Government of Niger in implementing the first phase (and beyond) of its new Education Sector Plan (PSEF) to be funded by both Government and donors. The PSEF has been appraised by a group of independent experts who found it to be technically sound and well-prepared. The activities of the PSEF are related to the findings from a comprehensive sector study (Country Status Report prepared in 2010) which highlighted the main strengths and weaknesses of the education system. The priority issues identified include limited and inequitable access to primary education resulting mostly from supply constraints, poor quality and low internal efficiency (high repetition and dropout rates), lack of resource allocation to school level, and low institutional capacity for consistency in teacher deployment.

95. In view of the country's heavy poverty reduction agenda and limited implementation capacity, the project will focus on essential issues while establishing strong synergy with other donor support. It will address the issue of access, equity and education quality with a view to creating a foundation for accelerated improvements in the future. It will also focus on capacity needs in the hope of creating conditions for an effective participation of the sector in a possible budget support process. The design of the innovative activities (for example the rural school model, the tutorial program for girls and the early grade reading pilot) was based on analytical work and best practices in the region. Their implementation along with other components will be implemented in accordance with acceptable standards and monitoring indicators.

96. The following main principles guided the technical design of the project: (i) consultative alignment and co-financing of government strategy including development partner harmonization; (ii) targeted (deprived districts) support to address equity challenges; (iii) support for decentralized education levels – by bringing resources closer to beneficiaries; and (iv) strengthening the MEP's management capacity to ensure quality service delivery.

C. Financial Management

97. The Fiduciary Departments (DRFM) of the MEP and MES will be responsible for the FM of the project. An Implementation Support Agency will be recruited to support the DRFMs in

handling fiduciary tasks and building capacities within the two ministries. Part of the construction of education infrastructure will be executed by competitively selected DCAs. Delegated management contracts will be signed between MEP or MES, as the case may be, and the selected agencies. The contracts will clarify roles and responsibilities, describe FM and disbursements arrangements, detail actions plans and budgets covering outputs and outcomes to be achieved in a four-year period. The school nutrition activities will be implemented through a joint effort of the DREP and communities. Specific arrangements will be described in the PIM to ensure adequate service delivery of school feeding and student health programs.

98. The FM performance of the MEP's DRFM in the implementation of the last education project (PAEB, P115436) was rated moderately satisfactory. The audit opinions for the last three financial audits were qualified due to weaknesses in the internal control environment and low capacity. However, the project's Implementation Completion and Results Report found that the Ministry overall performed satisfactorily in carrying out fiduciary management procedures. The MES is a new institution with little experience in managing external financing.

99. As a result of the FM capacity constraints and in order to avoid delaying the implementation of activities, the following action plan has been agreed: by effectiveness: (i) MEP will appoint a qualified and experienced FM specialist to be fully dedicated to this project and support FM tasks, and (ii) MEP and MES will jointly update the administrative, accounting and financial procedures manual to incorporate activities under the proposed funding arrangements and clarifying roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders. As dated covenants, the DRFMs will (i) within two months after effectiveness and prior to disbursement for MES, appoint an experienced FM specialist for MES; (ii) within three months after effectiveness, purchase a "multi-projects" and "multi-sites" accounting software to be installed in both ministries to ensure timely recording of financial information as well as timely production of quarterly and annual financial statements including a mechanism of tracking project expenditures for each donor; (iii) within four months after effectiveness, appoint an implementation support agency to support project coordination, handle fiduciary activities and implement mechanisms of transfers to the decentralized units; (iv) no later than four months after effectiveness, appoint an external auditor; and (v) within six months after effectiveness, appoint a technical auditor for the education grants. More details are provided in Annex 3.

100. Project activities will be funded in a joint co-financing arrangement in which funds will be disbursed in agreed proportions with each funding partner beforehand. Before the transfer of funds to DCAs, the MEP/MES should conclude the delegated management contracts with the DCAs. For the school nutrition activities, before transferring funds, the MEP should set up formal arrangements with DREP and communities for their implementation.

Anti-corruption measures

101. Corruption is acknowledged as an issue in the public sector in Niger and more specifically with decentralized operations. The following measures are incorporated into the Project design to minimize the above risk:

- *Internal control*: the Implementation Support Agency will support the DRFMs to strengthen their internal control environment and build their capacity through training on

preparing work programs based on risk assessment and the adoption of risk based approach to perform regular ex-post audits;

- *Operational review*: Regular technical audits will be required of the education grants to ensure that they are being implemented effectively and in accordance with the Grant Regulations. A technical audit of school construction and equipment will be carried out at mid-term to supplement the annual financial audit;
- *Information dissemination*: To increase transparency with regard to information dissemination, the number of books to be received by each school will be advertised in local newspapers and radio and displayed publicly in schools to ensure service delivery; and
- *Physical verifications*: Field visits will be conducted regularly to collect information and monitor implementation progress of various components.

102. The overall FM risk for the project is rated Substantial. It is considered that the project's financial management will satisfy the Bank's minimum requirements under OP/BP 10.00 once the mitigation measures have been implemented.

D. Procurement

103. The pooled fund donors have agreed that procurement of civil works, goods, and consultant services for the project be undertaken in accordance with the "Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits" dated January 2011; Guidelines: "Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Recipients", dated January 2011; and the provisions stipulated in the Grant Agreement. World Bank's Standard Bidding documents and evaluation forms will be used where applicable. Procedures and other details related to procurement activities will be included in the project manuals and the MOU. Further details are provided in Annex 3

104. All procuring entities, as well as bidders, suppliers and contractors shall observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of contracts financed under the project in accordance with the 'World Bank Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants' known as the '2006 Anti-Corruption Guidelines', and updated in 2011.

105. Procurement activities will be carried out by: The MEP and MES, for their respective parts of the project, through their dedicated central and regional bodies under the general coordination of the Secretary General (SG), notably:

- a) The Procurement Directorate (*Direction des Marchés Publics* – DMP) at the Central Level;
- b) The Regional Directorates of Primary Education (DREP) and the Regional Directorates of Secondary Education (DRES), as the case may be, at Regional Levels; and
- c) Community Participation in Procurement through associations such as the CGDES and PTAs for activities involving communities' participation in compliance with

the provisions of paragraph 3.19 of the Procurement Guidelines and detailed in the PIM. Community participation in Procurement will be supervised by the DREP/DRES;

106. The DMP, DREP, and DRES will be supported as appropriate by the procurement committees in compliance with World Bank procedures.

107. The DMP, DREP, and DRES under the overall coordination of the SG of MEP or MES, as relevant, will be responsible for all procurement related to the project and will carry out the following activities in close collaboration with the respective beneficiaries: (i) preparation of the bidding documents, draft requests for proposals (RFPs), evaluation reports, contracts in compliance with World Bank procedures, and (ii) seeking and obtaining approval of national entities and then IDA on procurement documents as required.

108. In addition, the DMPs will have the responsibility for procurement oversight in collaboration with all the beneficiaries, these activities will include: i) preparation and updating of the procurement plan, ii) monitoring the implementation of procurement activities, and iii) development of procurement reports.

109. All procurement requests will be sent by the MEP or MES coordination team, as relevant, to all contributors to the pooled fund. The World Bank will review procurement documents and provide the no objection opinion on behalf of all pooled fund donors.

110. The recruitment of the Implementing Agency will be under the responsibility of the MEP with involvement of representatives of the MES in all the process notably the evaluation and award committee, with possibility of signing two separate contracts with each ministry.

111. On the procurement plan and the recruitment of the ISA, the World Bank will only issue a no objection opinion upon reaching a joint decision with the other pooled fund donors.

112. An assessment of the capacity of the implementing agencies to implement procurement activities of the Project was carried out during project preparation and finalized during appraisal. The assessment reviewed the organizational structure for implementing the Project, the procurement capacities of the agencies (past procurement experience, staff in charge of procurement, tools including manuals, procurement reporting, filing, use of software, etc.) and the interactions between the different agencies involved in the Project.

113. The assessment revealed the following:

- The MEP through the central and regional levels have implemented in the past World Bank managed projects notably the PAEB (P115436) and PADEB (P061209) that closed respectively in 2012 and 2009, but the mobility of the staff, and the insufficient competency transfer from consultants to the permanent staff have limited building appropriate procurement capacity at the central and regional levels. The procurement filing is not appropriate. Acceptable tools (manuals, tracking software) used during the former projects exist although they need to be updated.

- The MES is a young structure derived from other ministries. It has been created less than one year ago with beginning experience with financial partners although it includes staff who have past experiences in similar activities to be financed by the project, at different positions of the Government's administration;
- The MEP and MES comprise various technical directorates, a Financial resources and Material directorate (DRFM), and a procurement Directorate DMP; the technical directorates possess staff with acceptable know how to provide technical inputs in procurement documents, except for civil engineering constructions. The Procurement Directorate staff in the two Ministries have limited qualifications in procurement generally, and limited experience with World Bank procedures; and
- The MES does not have adequate procurement filing and tools (manual, tracking software).

114. The overall Project Risk for procurement is rated Substantial, based on the weak capacities of the implementing agencies. The key risk identified is that staff responsible for procurement may not have sufficient experience with Bank procedures. This could cause misprocurement and/or rigidity in the interpretation of Bank procedures, leading to slowness in procurement decisions, reputational risks to the Bank and the Project, and delays towards attaining the PDO.

115. Risk mitigations measures have been discussed and agreed with the agencies. These measures include:

- As a result of the procurement capacity constraints and in order to avoid delaying the implementation of procurement activities, the project will recruit two qualified and experienced Procurement specialists to support the DMPs of the two ministries as part of the short term fiduciary team (MEP by effectiveness and MES not later than two months after effectiveness). The Procurement specialists are to be fully dedicated to this project and support the DMPs on handling all the project's procurement activities.
- The MEP will recruit no longer than 4 months after effectiveness an Implementation Support Agency to support procurement activities at the Central and regional levels for both Ministries (MEP and MES).
- Delegated Executing Agencies will be competitively selected as needed to implement activities related to Infrastructure, including procurement, in the case of both ministries.
- An international consulting engineering firm will be recruited to, inter alia, support the central and regional levels with engineering designs and procurement for civil works for both MEP and MES.
- A manual of administrative, financial and accounting procedures will be prepared to clarify the role of each team member involved in the procurement process of the

project, the maximum delay for each procurement stage, specifically with regards to the review, approval system and signature of contracts.

- A Project Implementation Manual (PIM) detailing the simplified procedures through Community participation in Procurement will be developed and approved by the Bank.
- A workshop will be organized at the beginning of the Project to train all key stakeholders involved in procurement on World Bank procurement procedures and policies.
- An adequate filing system would be set up for the project records at the MEP and MES. The project will finance appropriate equipment and the ISA firm will support these entities to ensure compliance with WB procurement filing manual.

116. The residual risk is assessed as Moderate.

E. Social (including Safeguards)

117. The project context is highly favorable as it is being designed within the context of Niger's PSEF and in partnership with the DPs. Project preparation was participatory and was based on feedback and cooperation from a comprehensive set of stakeholders, including the targeted communities and deprived areas. Field visits conducted during preparation gave strong indications that all the proposed interventions have strong support not only at the level of regional and local education authorities but, most importantly, among school directors, teachers, students and parents who are the direct beneficiaries of the project.

118. The project highlights the importance of reducing gender disparities in access to basic education and contributing to the expansion of access in remote and rural areas. A combination of cultural, economic, social, and infrastructure factors influence the decision of families to pull children out, or for girls, to drop out of the education system. These include the pressure to marry daughters early, poverty and the lack of girl-friendly facilities, transportation to schools and female teachers. The project will contribute to addressing these constraints through: (i) financing expansion of access (schools rehabilitation and new classrooms); (ii) training, certification and recruitment of additional female basic education teachers; and (iii) providing capacity building support in the targeted regional and district offices. Site selection and improving the school environment will be supported through a community participatory approach.

119. The strengthening of school management committees is a concrete and important effort to give voice and empower parents and should contribute to a more efficient and effective use of resources at school-level, including of school grants financed under the project.

120. As the locations of the sites of future education facilities are not all known at this time, a Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) has been prepared and disclosed in Niger and at the Bank's Infoshop on October 1, 2013. It will be further disseminated during implementation. The RPF outlines the principles, policies and procedures to be followed in the event that investments

involve land acquisition which could lead to a loss of livelihood among affected persons. In this case, a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) will need to be prepared and implemented. It includes a definition of reinstallation mechanisms, as well as procedures for identification of affected persons, consultations, and conflict/complaint management, and a monitoring and evaluation plan containing pertinent indicators whose goal is to ensure that all those affected are compensated, moved, and reinstated as appropriate.

F. Environment (including Safeguards)

121. Also due to the school construction and the fact that the locations of the sites of future education facilities are not all known at this time, an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) have been prepared to address potential adverse environmental and social impacts. The ESMF has been disclosed in Niger and at the Bank's Infoshop on October 1, 2013, and will be further disseminated to stakeholders during implementation. All activities will take place within the context of Niger's political and legal framework regarding environmental management. This includes the 2000 *Plan National de l'Environnement pour un Développement Durable* (PNEDD), as well as the December 29, 1998 Environmental Code, which constitutes the legal framework for environmental management.

122. The ESMF outlines an environmental and social screening process for future investments, including institutional responsibilities for screening, review and clearance, and implementation of mitigation and monitoring measures. This screening process consist of: (i) an environmental and social screening form to determine potential adverse environmental and social impacts and record the outcome of consultations; (ii) an environmental and social checklist with generic mitigation measures to be adapted to the specific investment; (iii) a summary of the Bank's safeguard policies; (iv) an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), including environmental monitoring indicators and capacity building activities; (v) Environmental Guidelines for Contractors; and (vi) generic Environmental and Social Assessment (ESA) terms of reference.

123. The potential risks associated with the construction include: (i) potential displacement of economic activity; (ii) hygiene and sanitation issues linked with the construction of latrines; (iii) waste disposal of construction materials; (iv) loss of natural sites and biodiversity; and (v) nonfunctional equipment or construction defects leading to safety issues for users.

124. The impact is likely to be minor, since: (i) most facilities to be built are small with land identified by communities; (ii) the project builds on the experience of the Community-Driven Development (CDD) project PACII for which an environmental and social risk framework for school construction was developed; (iii) technical specifications and government standards for school construction already exist. Further, (iv) the Department for School Infrastructure and Equipment (DIES), which will play a large role in ensuring compliance with the ESMF and the RFP, will be reinforced at the central and regional levels through the recruitment of TA and capacity-building as needed, the hiring and deployment of civil engineers for works supervision in the regions, and training.

Annex 1: Results Framework and Monitoring

Country: Niger

Project Name: Support to Quality Education Project (P132405)

Results Framework

Project Development Objectives

PDO Statement

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.

These results are at | Project Level

Project Development Objective Indicators

Indicator Name	Core	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Cumulative Target Values					Frequency	Data Source/ Methodology	Responsibility for Data Collection
				YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	End Target			
Primary completion rate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Percentage	54.60	55.60	56.60	57.60	58.60	58.60	Annual	Annual statistics of MEP	Directorate of Statistics of MEP
Increase in primary education gender parity index in areas targeted by the project (average)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.03	Annual	Annual statistics of MEP	Directorate of Statistics of MEP
Increase in lower secondary education gender parity index in areas targeted by	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.03	Annual	Annual statistics of MES	Directorate of Statistics of MES

the project (average)											
System for learning assessment at the primary level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes/No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Annual	Project Progress Reports	Department in charge of Evaluation and Monitoring of Academic Quality (DESA) of MEP
Utility of the learning assessment system	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Number Sub-Type Supplemental	2	2	2	3	3	3	Annual	Project Progress Reports	Department in charge of Evaluation and Monitoring of Academic Quality (DESA) of MEP
Appropriate tools and materials for improving reading in the early grades are adopted by MEP	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes/No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Annual	Project Progress Reports and Independent Evaluation Report	Directorate General in charge of Training Curricula of MEP
Direct project beneficiaries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Number	0	450,000	1,000,000	1,550,000	2,100,000	2,100,000	Twice a year	Project Progress Reports and annual statistics of MEP and MES	Directorates of Statistics of MEP and MES, Directorate General in charge of Training Curricula (DGFIC), Human Resources Management Directorate, CP/CGDES

Female beneficiaries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Percentage Sub-Type Supplemental	45	45	46	47	47	47	Twice a year	Same as above	Same as above
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Intermediate Results Indicators

Indicator Name	Core	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Cumulative Target Values					Frequency	Data Source/ Methodology	Responsibility for Data Collection
				YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	End Target			
Number of additional classrooms built or rehabilitated at the primary level resulting from project interventions.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Number	0	250	850	1,000	1,245	1,245	Twice a year	Project Progress Reports	Directorate of Infrastructure and Educational Equipment (DIES) of MEP
Number of classrooms built at the lower secondary level resulting from project interventions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	0	50	165	250	330	330	Twice a year	Project Progress Reports	MES
Total enrollments in primary education (all schools)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	2,050,656	2,100,000	2,200,000	2,300,000	2,400,000	2,400,000	Annual	Annual statistics of MEP	Directorate of Statistics of MEP
Girls, boys, parents and teachers reached through sub-component 1.2 on promoting girls'	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	0	10,000	30,000	70,000	100,000	100,000	Twice a year	Project Progress Reports	Directorates in charge of Girls Schooling Promotion in MEP and MES

education											
Students reached through school feeding programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	0.00	30,000	50,000	70,000	90,000	90,000	Twice a year	Project Progress Reports	Directorate in charge of Financial and Material Resources (DRFM)
Curriculum review for first cycle of primary school completed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes/No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Annual	Project Progress Report	Directorate General in charge of training curricula (DGFIC)
Contract teachers trained as a result of the project	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	0	800	1,600	2,500	3,500	3,500	Twice a year	Project Progress Report	DGFIC/DGFEC (MEP and MES)
Share of grade 1-3 teachers trained for teaching early grade reading and simple classroom assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Percentage	0	5	25	50	75	75	Twice a year	Project Progress Reports	DGFIC/DIFC
Teacher trainers, inspectors and pedagogical advisors trained through the project	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	0	200	400	600	800	800	Twice a year	Project Progress Report	DGFC / DIFC and the Directorate for National Languages Teaching (DFLN) / General Directorate for the Promotion of National Languages (DGPLN)

Assessment of reading fluency conducted for grade 2 and 3 and results shared widely	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes/No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Once	Assessment report, project progress reports	Directorate General in charge of Monitoring and Evaluation of Academic Quality (DEMQ)
Human resource management strategy developed and implemented	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes/No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Annually	Independent Evaluation Report	Directorate in charge of Human Resources Management (DRH) of MEP
Number of school management committees (CGDES) strengthened through the project	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	0	1,000	2,000	2,800	2,800	2,800	Annual	Project Progress Reports	CP/CGDES of the MEP and MES
MES organizational review completed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes/No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Once	Project Progress Report	MES
Regular education sector reviews held during project implementation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	0	1	2	3	4	4	Annual	Project Progress Reports	Secretariat General and Directorate of Studies and Programming of MEP

Project Development Objective Indicators	
Indicator Name	Description (indicator definition etc.)
Primary completion rate	Enrollments in the last grade (grade 6) of primary education net of repeaters divided by the population of relevant age for that grade (age 11) – based on population data revised after 2012 census.
Increase in primary education gender parity index in areas targeted by the project (average)	Ratio of the female to male values of the gross enrollment rate in primary education in the areas targeted by the girls' education interventions financed by the project.
Increase in lower secondary education gender parity index in areas targeted by the project (average)	Ratio of the female to male values of the gross enrollment rate in lower secondary education in the areas targeted by the girls' education interventions financed by the project.
System for learning assessment at the primary level	TTLs should provide information on this indicator even if their project is not funding assessment work. This indicator measures whether the basic elements of a learning assessment system exist at the primary level, and the degree to which that assessment is able to provide useful information for education policy and practice. To calculate the Core Indicator Value and the Supplemental Value for this indicator, please refer to the Guidance.
Utility of the learning assessment system	Please read the guidance note for this indicator to determine the utility of the assessment system.
Appropriate tools and materials for improving reading in the early grades are adopted by MEP	National reading improvement tools using national languages developed for grade 1 (basic reading), grade 2 (consolidation of reading skills), and grade 3 (comprehensive reading) and validated through pilot implementation in schools and teacher training.
Direct project beneficiaries	Direct beneficiaries are people or groups who directly derive benefits from an intervention (i.e., children who benefit from an immunization program; families that have a new piped water connection). Please note that this indicator requires supplemental information. Supplemental Value: Female beneficiaries (percentage). Based on the assessment and definition of direct project beneficiaries, specify what proportion of the direct project beneficiaries are female. This indicator is calculated as a percentage.
Female beneficiaries	Based on the assessment and definition of direct project beneficiaries, specify what percentage of the beneficiaries are female.
Intermediate Results Indicators	
Indicator Name	Description (indicator definition etc.)

Number of additional classrooms built or rehabilitated at the primary level resulting from project interventions.	This indicator measures the number of additional classrooms constructed or rehabilitated at the primary level through the Bank-funded program. In most cases, it is expected that the baseline value for this indicator will be zero ('0'). The baseline might not be zero, for example, for an additional financing IL operation. This indicator will be used to calculate the "decline in shortfall of classrooms at the primary level". TTLs should report on the progress of this indicator only if it is relevant to the project, that is, if the project aims to reduce the shortfall of classrooms at the primary level. Please visit the EdStats database to view the shortfall of classrooms at the primary level by country.
Number of classrooms built at the lower secondary level resulting from project interventions	Number of classrooms built for the lower secondary level.
Total enrollments in primary education (all schools)	Total enrollments based on annual statistics data, public and private.
Girls, boys, parents and teachers reached through sub-component 1.2 on promoting girls' education	Number of beneficiaries of sub-component 1.2.
Students reached through school feeding programs	Number of students who benefit from the school feeding programs with the support of the project.
Curriculum review for first cycle of primary school completed	Track progress regarding the curriculum review process.
Contract teachers trained as a result of the project	The number of contract teachers given a comprehensive training (in-service) with the support of the project.
Share of grade 1-3 teachers trained for teaching early grade reading and simple classroom assessment	Number of teachers trained divided by total number of eligible teachers, public schools only.
Teacher trainers, inspectors and pedagogical advisors trained through the project	Number of teacher trainers, inspectors, and school pedagogical advisers trained with the support of the project.
Assessment of reading fluency conducted for grade 2 and 3 and results shared widely	Measures whether a national assessment of reading fluency was conducted.
Human resource management strategy developed and implemented	Indicate whether the human resource management strategy is developed and implemented.
Number of school management committees (CGDES) strengthened through the project	Number of CGDES having benefited from capacity building support and/or school grants.
Regular education sector reviews held during project implementation	Measures whether education sector reviews are held regularly over the course of the project (with or without financing from the project).

Annex 2: Detailed Project Description

1. The proposed project is based on the recently completed education sector plan (PSEF 2014-2024), and informed by the 2010 Niger Country Status Report “*Le Système Éducatif Nigérien*” (RESEN 2010), along with the July 2012 National Education Sector Joint Annual Review and the lessons learned from the EFA/FTI Basic Education Project (P115436) which closed on May 31, 2012. It is being developed as part of a larger program of donor support to the education sector in Niger. As a source of financing, the project supports areas that complement government expenditures as well as other sources of financing to the sector. Despite the large education budget, investments are inadequate and inefficient for sustaining a dynamic and equitable quality education system. Salary expenditures, for instance, crowd out investment in learning materials, infrastructure and pedagogical support. At the same time there is still insufficient emphasis on factors which are critical to improve the equity, quality and efficiency of the system such as girls’ access to education, student health, learning outcomes, as well as teacher and school management. The project will address these constraints by supporting an ambitious reform program centered around three main pillars: 1) Expanding access to and retention in basic education in an equitable way, with particular focus on education infrastructure, girls’ education, and school feeding; 2) Improving the quality of teaching and learning, through more and better pedagogical inputs and teacher/teaching skills with more emphasis on learning outcomes; and 3) Strengthening management capacity, with focus on improving institutional capacity and incentives at the ministry, system and school level.

2. Specifically, the project will support the first phase (2014-2016) of Niger’s PSEF (2014-2024). Therefore, the following paragraphs do not present the entire PSEF, but only the activities directly financed by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) grant and French Development Agency (AFD) funds (pooled fund). By the same token, the description below does not detail of all the various strategies adopted by the Government for the implementation of the PSEF activities, which can be found in the DPL, and which were evaluated during the process of Niger’s endorsement to the GPE. It also does not detail the technical evaluation of the PSEF activities, which could be made available upon request.

3. The project design has been developed around the following three components. Costs reported below are base costs which means that they exclude contingency funds (US\$4.0 million).

Component 1: Expanding equitable access to schooling and retention of students in school (estimated base cost: US\$55.0 million)

4. **Context:** Access to and retention in basic education is constrained by supply and demand factors. On the supply-side, the insufficient number of classrooms and the poor quality of classrooms stand out. This situation has a negative impact on enrollment in rural areas, urban slums and especially for girls. Approximately one-fifth (21 percent) of primary schools are not able to offer six grades of schooling due to lack of classrooms; 46 percent of the classrooms are provisional shelters⁴; and 34 percent of classrooms in urban areas have a class size over 60

⁴ Made of straw or built in mud and need to be reconstructed every year.

students. Also, numerous schools lack basic furniture as well as basic facilities (latrines and water): only 15 percent of the schools are equipped with latrines. Action is needed to increase both the quantity and quality of classrooms. Replacing shelters with standard classrooms, for instance, will not only increase their capacity to welcome students but also increase their durability during the rainy season, which will have a substantial impact on time at school and therefore, on learning outcomes.

5. In addition, there are still demand side constraints related to repetitive drought and famine in certain areas, and to opportunity costs that are particularly high for girls. On this second point, specific constraints often work against girls' schooling – long distances between the family home and the school, absence of school monitoring, affirmation of program and textbook stereotypes as well as teachers' attitudes and behaviors usually detrimental to girls, preference given to boys in schooling material, etc. Most of these constraints are detrimental to girls' attendance by decreasing household demand for their schooling, and therefore need to be addressed.

6. **Objectives:** The main objective of this component is to increase equitable access to basic education by tackling supply and demand-side constraints to enrollment. It will involve replacing unsuitable classrooms, building related facilities and stimulating demand in areas most prone to food insecurity, with a focus on areas which have GERs below the national average. Special attention will be paid to gender issues. In particular, the project will support: (i) the construction and equipment of about⁵ 1,600 classrooms and other important school infrastructure (i.e., latrines, water points, construction of wells, etc.), where possible; (ii) incentive schemes to promote girls' education in both primary and lower secondary education; and (iii) school canteens and student health programs aimed at stimulating demand and enhancing students' nutritional status and health. The Component is divided into three sub-components: 1.1: Education infrastructure; 1.2: Girls' access to education; and 1.3: School feeding and student health programs. The Government is seeking other funding to construct additional new classrooms over the project period, bringing the total number of new classrooms up to 2,000.

7. **Sub-component 1.1: Education infrastructure (US\$40.0 million).** This sub-component aims to extend basic education to about 75,000 additional children of which at least 70 percent will come from the rural areas, within which 20 to 30 percent will come from the districts with the lowest enrollment rates. It will involve: (a) (i) building about 1,245 primary school classrooms equipped with student benches and teacher desks, latrines and water supply points, where possible⁶, and (ii) the construction and equipment of about 330 lower secondary school classrooms including latrines; and (b) strengthening the Government's capacity for supervision of school construction. These buildings will be provided for primary schools (Base I) and lower secondary schools (Base II) with priority given to schools with no permanent structures, for students to be accommodated during seasons when straw huts (temporary structures) cannot be

⁵ A detailed infrastructure costing carried out shortly before negotiations showed that the project can finance about 1,575 classrooms, at current prices and US\$:CFA exchange rate, and taking into account inflation over the project period.

⁶ Providing a water supply point in a school, regardless of the type thereof (well, connection to a public tap or water distribution system, etc.) will not exceed 10% of the building project cost. For latrines, the standard retained will be a block of three latrines for a block of three classrooms.

used. Areas with the poorest access indicators will be given priority. The emphasis will be on priority areas identified by the Government and agreed with DPs. The selection of localities will be based on both need and demand. The classrooms will be disability-friendly to provide education access to children with disabilities and other special needs, and they will be complemented with gender-friendly latrines. Out of the about 1,600 classrooms, at least 150 classrooms will be built as Alternative Rural Schools (smaller multigrade facilities better adapted to the most remote areas). The allocation of financing is US\$28.5 million for primary education and US\$10.5 million for lower secondary education.

8. The project may also finance the construction of latrines in existing schools that do not already have latrines or that do not have a sufficient number of them. Through this measure, it is expected that enrollment/retention in schools will increase, particularly among girls.

9. **Implementation:** The sub-component will cover the country's eight regions. To facilitate the implementation of this massive construction program, it will be divided into two phases broken down as follows: around 1,000 classrooms to be built in a first phase of about 18-24 months, and around 650 classrooms to be built in a second phase that will focus more on experimentation around construction management approaches. This approach will also strengthen momentum from the outset and provide for any delays that may arise. To ease implementation, it was recommended that in spreading out construction works in the two phases, the works for each year should be concentrated in one region for proper supervision and monitoring purposes (identify zones of 10 to 15 geographically close sites). The lessons learned from the implementation of the construction program under the PAEB project are built in this new project. The construction program will use the existing norms for standard construction, designs and specifications for classrooms. To ensure the effective execution of the primary school construction program, the Government has decided to use a combination of different approaches, including direct supervision by the MEP, DCAs (competitively selected), NGOs through specific tenders, District "*collectivites territoriales*", and community-based and local council based approaches on a pilot basis⁷. Some of the benefits of using community-based and district approaches are to help develop local capacity, promote ownership of schools, and inject additional resources at local level.

10. For the construction of primary school classrooms, the MEP's present framework may be used if enhanced. In this framework, tenders and supervision will be directly managed by the DREPs (Regional Directorates of Primary Education) that are presently equipped with a senior civil engineer and 3 junior civil engineers. Field supervision (at least 2 site visits per week) will be provided by engineering firms. Considering the size of the construction program and the implementation difficulties observed in the past years, one or more DCAs will also be mobilized to avoid overstretching the resources of the education ministries (which will simultaneously be implementing the construction program financed with the national budget), and mobilizing all technical resources available. In the first phase of school construction, MES will recruit a DCA for the construction of all lower secondary school classrooms.

11. Project Contracting Agreements will be signed between the MEP or MES, as the case may be, and one or several DCAs specifying the duties of each party. The DCAs will be given

⁷ According to the PSEF, this latter approach is likely to be adopted extensively in the years ahead.

sufficient authority to implement their activity program properly (for instance, by providing them with installment payment plans). The MEP and MES, through their respective Educational Infrastructure and Equipment Department will supervise all works, and will be responsible for ensuring quality. In addition, local engineering firms will be recruited to prepare bid evaluations and assess construction progress, providing technical support as needed. NIGETIP is the only agency presently recognized in Niger for such services, but the project will encourage participation from other national or regional private entities through calls for tenders⁸.

12. Considering the estimated capacities, the breakdown amongst the different approaches may be: 40 percent of direct project contracting by the MEP (through the DREPs), 40 percent of private delegated project contracting, 15 percent of NGO-delegated project contracting and 5 percent local or community project contracting. In the first year, priority will be given to simple and well-known solutions (MEP direct project contracting, delegated project contracting for MEP and MES) for a quick launch of the program. More innovative approaches (local and community constructions) will be implemented in target areas and limited quantities as from Year 2 following preparatory works in Year 1 for MEP school construction.

13. The project may also finance studies on construction blueprints and methods with a view to streamlining the approaches and reduce cost, thereby enabling the country to meet the major challenges of the PSEF in terms of school construction (achieve a target of 6,000 classrooms yearly). The project will prepare a detailed Community-Driven Development (CDD) construction implementation manual that spells out the implementation arrangements and responsibilities at the local, regional as well as national level, and for which the necessary technical expertise will be hired. This approach will be based on successful experiences from interventions by NGOs present in Niger. One option for the development of the implementation manual prior to launching project activities could be to use funds from the local donors group. To guarantee overall coordination and implementation of school construction activities, qualified technical experts (architects and/or engineers) and firms for supervision and control will be recruited to work closely with the unit in charge of school construction within MEP. The project will promote the use of traditional construction technologies in these areas with improvements to enhance durability of the buildings. To ensure success of the CDD approach, communities will receive extensive training and support including manuals covering the required building standards and the management and accountability in the use of resources. Community resources/expertise will be integrated into the construction teams providing support to promote an optimum combination of traditional and improved methods.

14. Although the targets for construction seem ambitious compared to past experience, they are achievable because of various measures included in the project design. The overhead costs for managing the construction program have been reduced through more efficient measures for oversight in contrast to those used by some agencies which have a large foot print on sites and the use of small and medium sized enterprises with low overheads. The period of construction

⁸ A decree on the supervision of public projects contracting may soon be signed by the Head of State, which should recognize and govern the use of Delegated Project Contracting, thereby encouraging the development of a market for DCAs. This decree will substantially facilitate the use of DCAs, and hence, the implementation of the PSEF as a whole. The signing of this decree will be included in the specific commitments of the AFD assistance. Meanwhile, the use of DCAs is allowed under WB procurement guidelines, so the signing is not a pre-requisite for this project.

will also be reduced by preparing the procurement documents that will be used for the four years at once at the start of the project to avoid annual repetition. Supervision by the DIES in collaboration with deconcentrated/decentralized structures and firms of consulting engineers would improve the pace and quality of construction compared to past experiences.

15. An international engineering firm will be hired upon launching of the project to assist the MEP and MES in its project contracting role in the overall supervision of the building program (assistance to work supervision by direct project contracting, assistance to monitoring to DCA), building the capacities of all stakeholders of the sector and preparing new implementation approaches (plan and operating procedure).

16. The DEP⁹, in coordination with DIES¹⁰ and DEBI¹¹ will be responsible for the overall planning and programming of activities under this sub-component through: (i) preparing and updating the construction program; (ii) establishing a database with updated information on needs, enrollment, unit costs, and space requirement; and (iii) establishing requirements and criteria for site selection.

17. Based on the difficulties encountered in using previous project resources for implementation of the construction program, MEP and MES will ensure that central and local government agencies as well as contracted firms and individuals have the required staff and equipment for successful implementation. The costs of these would be controlled by focusing sequentially on specific regions and included in project financing.

18. ***Sub-component 1.2: Girls' access to education (US\$6.0 million).*** This sub-component aims at reducing gender disparities in access to education by supporting incentives to promote girls' enrollment in both primary and lower secondary education in targeted areas, including awareness activities, a girls' tutoring program and Girls' Education Grants. The project would provide funding to continue activities which were successful under the previous World Bank-managed project, focusing on areas where there is more resistance to female schooling and very low enrollment rates. It is anticipated that 51,500 girls will benefit from this sub-component and that access and retention for girls will improve in the targeted areas.

19. To complement the promotion of girls' enrollment through the construction of classrooms and latrines, supported by the infrastructure sub-component, this sub-component will: (a) at the primary level: (i) continue the information campaign to sensitize and increase awareness of the population on the benefits of girls' education, supported by decentralized units of the MEP, CGDES (Decentralized School Management Committees), and NGOs; (ii) organize training for mothers of young and adolescent girls, mostly in functional literacy and financial literacy, in order to sensitize these to the importance of educating their daughters while also improving their income generating potential, thereby reducing the need for their daughters' labor at home. The target group will be mobilized through the educational mothers associations ("mères éducatrices"); (iii) design and implement tutoring programs for poorly performing students in selected schools in targeted areas with the aim of improving retention rates and reducing

⁹ Direction des Etudes et de la Programmation.

¹⁰ Direction des Infrastructures et Equipements Scolaires.

¹¹ Direction de l'Education de Base I.

dropouts; (iv) provide awards to promising students at the regional level through “girls’ graduation ceremonies” rewarding girls with the highest final exam score during a public ceremony with a small non-monetary incentive (a “prix d’encouragement”, consisting of school supplies of other items needed for school, costing about US\$20/girl).

20. Moreover, the sub-component will: (b) at the lower secondary level: (i) finance information campaigns and other sensitization activities to raise awareness of the importance of lower secondary education for girls; and (ii) finance education grants for eligible girls attending lower secondary school in order to incentivize school attendance and retention for girls. The project will also: (iii) support an impact evaluation of the different approaches to assess their relative cost-effectiveness. The allocation of financing across the two levels is US\$4.2 million for primary education and US\$1.8 million for lower secondary education.

21. **Implementation:** These activities will require sound political commitment at central level, but will mainly be implemented by local stakeholders (parents, teachers, CGDES, decentralized services, NGOs). Implementation of these activities would be coordinated by the Direction de la Promotion de la Scolarisation des Filles (Girls education unit/DPSF) of the MEP along with the girls’ education unit in the MES as relevant, but would take place primarily at the regional level. Support would be provided to DPSF to strengthen its capacity to effectively fulfill its oversight role of program execution and evaluation. Such support would be in the form of training (IEC, M&E, financial management) and the development of a database. The tutoring program will be implemented under teachers' guidance and community support, to encourage the best-performing students to assist those girls in need with a particular focus on mathematics and reading skills. The following three approaches are considered: (i) the establishment of a peer tutoring program, under teacher supervision, where the best-performing students will help schoolmates in need; (ii) the provision by teachers of individual class sessions for students with specific needs; and (iii) the provision of remedial courses during holiday periods. Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) would be formed to help manage the tutorial programs. Involved PTA members would be taught reading and writing and then trained in the organization and management of the program, including the management of income-generating activities. These PTAs would monitor student participation through regular house visits at which time they would transmit messages on the validity of girls’ education. At the same time, these mothers would enjoy access to income-generating activities funded within the framework of the project. Girls’ Education Grants for girls in lower secondary school will be handled by the CGDES of participating schools, which will be strengthened through Component 3. Specific grant regulations will be prepared for each of the two types of grants to be financed under the Project, that will include among other things the criteria of eligibility of beneficiaries. The CGDES will manage and account for the funds in accordance with the grant regulations and the school financing framework supported in Component 3. Technical audits will need to be carried out twice a year, targeting a subset of CGDES, to verify that education grants are being implemented effectively and in accordance with the Grant Regulations.

22. ***Sub-component 1.3: School feeding and student health (US\$9.0 million).*** This sub-component aims at stimulating demand for and retention in school, reducing the prevalence of nutritional deficiencies and support student health by promoting good nutrition practices and school hygiene and providing food, in primary schools. The program will target the districts

affected by severe and recurrent droughts, and consequently food crisis, and by the recent flood damage. Priority will be given to areas where: (i) the enrollment rates are the lowest (mainly in the poorest regions and in rural areas, which coincides with those areas where girls' attendance is the lowest); and (ii) school buildings are incomplete and/or destroyed.

23. The sanitary situation for children following recurrent droughts and flooding has deteriorated drastically, especially in the affected areas. To address these issues, the sub-component proposes to: (i) support the extension of school feeding programs (canteens) in areas suffering from acute food shortage and/or prone to natural disasters or with consequences arising from certain crises (conflicts). Canteens are a major school enrollment factor, especially amongst populations with the lowest schooling rates (girls, people living in remote areas, nomadic peoples, etc.). The operation will complement the school feeding activities that WFP has been carrying out for several years now with a view to reaching out to approximately 240,000 children over a 4-year period (cumulative number); and (ii) support to school health and hygiene activities, including school-based deworming where relevant; and (iii) the organization of training/sensitization for teachers and key school administrative staff on health, hygiene, nutrition-related issues, and on the development of a nutrition policy at the school level. In addition to the likely positive impact of these interventions on the health status of children, it is expected that school attendance and learning capacity will improve, leading to reductions in grade repetition and dropouts.

24. **Implementation:** The school nutrition activities will be implemented through a joint effort of the MEP and communities. Cereal and other inputs will be procured locally by the DREPs and distributed to participating schools/communities. The program will target children in the different communes that are not being covered by the other partners, including WFP and Plan Niger. About 30,000 children will be covered in 2014, 50,000 in 2015, 70,000 in 2016 and 90,000 in 2017. Project financing will cover all the costs associated with the nutrition program, including purchase and transportation of food to the different locations, construction and equipment of food stores and kitchens and operational costs for the program. To promote ownership and reduce costs to the public sector, the program will be run largely with the support of communities which will also make contributions in kind. School-based deworming may be relevant in areas not covered under other deworming programs.

Component 2: Improving the quality of teaching and learning (estimated base cost: US\$23.0 million)

25. **Context:** The education system in general and the basic education sub-sector in particular suffer from certain weaknesses, principally: (i) a lack of focus on the skills acquisition expected of learners; (ii) inadequate programs, combined with the shortage of textbooks and teaching aids; and (iii) limited subject knowledge and poor teaching methods used by teachers. This component will aim at addressing some of these constraints to help improve the quality of teaching and learning outcomes in Niger.

26. **Objectives:** The main objective of this component is to improve the quality of teaching and learning by supporting: (a) increased provision of teaching and learning materials and support to a curriculum review; (b) pre-service and in-service teacher training; and (c) better

tools for the measurement and improvement of learning outcomes. Component 2 is divided into three sub-components: 2.1: Pedagogical inputs; 2.2: Teacher training; and 2.3: Learning outcomes.

27. **Sub-component 2.1: Pedagogical inputs (US\$8.0 million).** This sub-component will support higher quality of teaching and learning through the provision of teaching and learning materials for primary and lower secondary education and the support to a curriculum and textbook review for primary education. The textbooks program should provide student textbooks and teacher's guides in core subjects (mathematics, reading, sciences) to primary and lower secondary schools. Since the financing is insufficient to cover all grades, complementarities will be sought with textbook deliveries funded from other sources, including a recent textbook provision funded by AFD.

28. Key activities supported by this sub-component include (a) for primary education: (i) the re-printing or acquisition of textbooks and teacher's guides; (ii) the provision of selected pedagogical materials; (iii) support to the on-going curriculum and textbook review of the first cycle of primary education; (iv) printing of materials for the early grade reading interventions described under subcomponent 2.3; and (b) for lower secondary education: (i) the re-printing or acquisition of textbooks and teacher's guides; and (ii) the provision of selected pedagogical materials. Pedagogical materials will largely include teachers' guides and students' learning materials to support better teaching and learning in core subjects. The assistance envisaged for textbooks is two-fold: i) acquisition and distribution, from the inception of the project, of textbooks using the current editions to make up for the shortages in schools; and ii) designing of new textbooks aligned with the new curricula being finalized with national copyrights for subsequent printing. These new books may first be printed in limited numbers to test the new curriculum. The allocation of financing across the two levels is US\$5.5 million for primary education and US\$2.5 million for lower secondary education.

29. Project financing for the curriculum review will focus on developing better programs and teaching methodologies for math and language (reading and writing) and the development of transversal skills (problem solving, thinking skills, communication skills, etc). The curriculum and textbook review will build on some of the early lessons from the early grade reading interventions developed under sub-component 2.3, which focus on appropriate practices for teaching early grade reading in local languages, and draws on the experiences, materials and tools developed under other reading pilots in and outside the country. The aim of the curriculum review will be to improve and enrich the existing curriculum in the areas mentioned previously. It will be carried out grade by grade over a ten-year period, with new editions of textbooks printed following each grade revision. During this process, existing textbooks will be reprinted and distributed to ensure teaching/learning continues while the review is being undertaken. On the basis of the roadmap presented to partners by the Government it is expected that the implementation of curriculum reform will likely materialize only during the second phase of the PSEF, 2016-2020 (i.e. after the proposed project closes).

30. **Implementation:** This sub-component will be executed by the Department of Curricula and Pedagogical Innovations (*Direction des Curricula et des Innovations Pédagogiques* - DCIP) of MEP in coordination with the Direction Administrative et Financière (DAF) (in particular for

preparing the bidding documents), and the unit responsible for textbooks of MES (for decisions and preparation of bidding documents relative to the lower secondary school textbooks, teaching and learning materials). Textbooks for the primary cycle already exist and can be easily re-printed at a fairly low cost, while textbooks for lower secondary school are more costly. The DCIP will be responsible for the selection of teaching and learning materials for primary education from an approved list of eligible items (or developed under sub-component 2.B for teacher guides in early reading in primary education). The DAF would be responsible for the procurement of textbooks and materials that need to be purchased and delivery arrangements. To help address distribution issues, all materials would be packaged for the individual school and would be delivered to the schools. The number of textbooks to be delivered to each school will be calculated by the DCIP, in collaboration with the DEP. The number of books to be received by each school will be advertised in local newspapers and radio and displayed publicly in schools. The operator in charge of the delivery to the schools will be selected through competitive bidding. The CGDES will accept book delivery for each school. To ascertain whether the learning materials purchased and actually reaching the schools are being effectively used in classrooms, a technical audit will be done at the start of the project, and again at the end of the second year of implementation. Poor areas and schools will be prioritized in the distribution. The sub-component will also support the preparation of new primary education textbooks and their pilot testing as part of the curriculum review. The specific activities related to the development of the new textbooks are listed in the Education Sector Plan and in the action plan for the preparation of the new curricula.

31. ***Sub-component 2.2: Teacher training (US\$11.0 million).*** This sub-component will support higher quality of teaching and learning through more and better teacher pre-service and in-service training so as to increase the number of actual trained contractual teachers in the project target areas and help all teachers acquire the fundamental teaching skills and practices, with particular focus on subject knowledge and more practical teaching methods. About 3,500 contractual teachers will benefit from in-service training supported by the project and 800 teacher trainers will be trained.

32. The sub-component will support (a) at the primary level: (i) the expansion of the capacity of teacher training schools through the construction and equipment of three new primary teacher training schools (ENIs) in Tessaoua (Region of Maradi), Doutchi (Region of Dosso), and Magaria (Region of Zinder); (ii) higher quality training of teachers through the training of trainers at the three new ENIs and other selected training institutions; (iii) the provision of in-service training for contractual teachers; (iv) the development or adaptation of training modules and teacher guides for trainers and teachers on how to teach reading in the early grades of primary school, as part of the early grade reading interventions described under sub-component 2.3; (v) studies on teacher competencies, teacher training, and teacher management; and (b) at lower secondary education: (i) training for contractual teachers. In terms of the training of trainers, focus will be put for both pre-service (PRESET) and in-service trainers (INSET) on improving their capacity for hands on, practical and class oriented teacher training to help them transfer well-defined basic skills and practices in all teaching domains, starting from early reading and early math. The allocation for teacher training is US\$10.2 million for primary education and US\$0.8 million for lower secondary education.

33. **Implementation:** Details concerning the implementation measures for this sub-component will be included in the PIM. Overall, training responsibilities should be shared as follows: (i) the DGFC (Direction Generale de la Formation et des Curricula), through its Training Department (i.e., DFIC and DCIP), will have the responsibility for setting norms and monitoring their application, will propose criteria for accreditation of training activities, develop training programs and evaluate results and implementation; and (ii) the DRH and DRFM will have the responsibility for determining training needs, for planning and organizing training delivery strategies and for contracting training service delivery from the various institutions involved. It is envisaged that teacher trainers will be assessed and their capacity improved through an international technical assistance. In addition to the provision of the other skills, the capacity of INSET trainers to monitor and support teachers in the classrooms will be improved by making use of the country's coaching system. Training modules for PRESET and INSET trainers on how to teach reading in both national languages and in French will be developed or adapted, as part of the early grade reading interventions described under Component 2.C and other reading pilots in and outside the country. Contractual teachers will be trained with a combination of in and out of school sessions with the delivery of a training on teaching early reading, math and oral French in selected geographic areas using a combination of existing and new modules, teaching guides, and teacher lesson plans (printed, procured and/or distributed through sub-component 2.1, also building to the extent possible on the lessons from the early grade reading interventions. In-service training for teachers under the project will be coordinated with the other partners of the sector (namely UNICEF, Swiss Cooperation, LuxDev, UNESCO, OIF and AUF), with the aim of: (i) implementing longer-term refresher and remedial training courses for the most challenged teachers; and (ii) building teachers' training capacities.

34. **Sub-component 2.3: Learning outcomes (US\$4.0 million).** This sub-component will support higher quality of teaching and learning through better tools for the measurement and improvement of learning outcomes, with focus on literacy, and thus on primary education. Support to numeracy may be included, but literacy is initially the primary focus. It will include support to: (i) improvements to the national student learning assessment system for better monitoring and evaluation of learning outcomes in primary education; and (ii) the development and implementation of early grade reading interventions in grades 1, 2 and 3.

35. **Learning outcomes assessment:** A unit within the MEP called the *Direction de l'Evaluation et du Suivi de la Qualité* (DESQ) is responsible for organizing national tests and competitive examinations and a unit responsible for assessing learning. The Office of the Director of tests and competitive examinations manages the examination administration and monitoring process at national level and conducts few test results analysis that are used to improve the efficiency of the system. The unit responsible for assessing educational achievement has limited human and financial resources that prevent it from conducting sustained assessments. This means that there is no assessment of student educational achievement and currently Niger uses episodic international comparative assessments such as those conducted by the PASEC that help strengthen national capacities although discontinuously. It is therefore urgent that the country adopt a national system with adequate structure, mechanisms and staff to continuously carry out student achievement assessments and that the results of these assessments be used effectively to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the education system (improving

teaching methods and contents, teacher training, achievement assessment, system management, etc.).

36. This first activity aims to provide the sector with an achievement assessment system through strengthening the existing structure and establishing a permanent student learning assessment in basic education to provide decision-makers and technicians with relevant and reliable information on the students' level that will be useful to: (i) develop teacher training programs with more adapted contents, (ii) improve the contents of curricula and teaching methods, and (iii) better identify changes necessary to improve student achievement. The students' learning assessment evaluation and monitoring system will systematically measure the quality of learning by administering internationally comparable and national curriculum-based numeracy and literacy testing on a sample basis, representative at a national level. This includes assessment focused on monitoring early grade reading capabilities of students. By the end of the project, the MEP will conduct one national learning assessment at the CP, CE and CM levels (training on different aspects: item development and creation of an items bank, testing and sampling, coding, data entry and processing, analysis and publication / dissemination, etc.).

37. Early grade reading interventions: Related to the above and in alignment with the deployment of bilingualism as proposed by the PSEF and the ELAN initiative taken by the PME and OIF with assistance from the AFD, the project will finance the development and implementation of a set of interventions focused on teaching children to read over the first three years of primary school. The aim is for grade 3 children to be able to read properly and understand simple texts. This will be based on modifications in the curriculum, new teaching materials and training of teachers to use new teaching methods, i.e. will be implemented through all of sub-components 2.1-2.3. More clarifications are expected on this activity from the MEP and the ELAN/GRA initiative. It will be important to make sure these are aligned with the curricula reforms underway, while also further informing this reform.¹² The interventions on reading (fluency and comprehension) will target grades 1, 2 and 3, because by grade 3 students should read with fluency and comprehension based on the clearly defined methodology for bilingual teaching in the first three grades of primary education. In the first three years, the national language will be the medium of instruction and a subject in the timetable. In parallel, French will be introduced orally in the first grade while writing in French will be added in the second grade and continue to the third grade. From grade four, the medium of instruction will be both in the national language and French and both will be subjects in the timetable. The targets are: (i) for grade 1 students to learn the basic decoding mechanisms (by the end of grade 1, 80 percent of students should spell out the letter sounds and decode simple words); (ii) for grade 2 students to consolidate reading skills (read around 45 words per minute from a given small text, to check fluency); (iii) and for grade 3 students to be able to read with fluency and understand small texts. Eighty percent of students should achieve the agreed minimum reading standards. The above targets will be achieved through preparation of teaching-learning materials, training of trainers and teachers and coaching of teachers, periodical assessments delivered by teachers in their classes and clear shared targets. Results will be evaluated with a view to further scaling up the new approach (which would feed into the curriculum reform and the national learning outcomes assessment system).

¹² This reform will equally be underpinned by the support to new curricula experimentation in the first years of primary school and preparation of the deployment thereof.

38. More specifically, key activities of the early grade reading interventions may include: (i) Development/adaptation of the basic teaching-learning approach for reading in French and National Languages (grades 1, 2, 3); (ii) Development of a course on teaching oral French language; (iii) Train a sample of INSET and PRESET trainers and teachers on the basic teaching reading methodology and oral French (for grade 1) and support them through a coaching system; (iv) Development of additional reading materials for grades 1 and 2 including the evidence based instructional methodologies on teaching reading; (v) Development of materials for teachers (detailed simplified lessons plans (what to do in the class step by step, around 6 steps in one didactic hour)) for grades 1 and 2 and design of practical teacher training modules for teaching reading fluency and comprehension; (vi) Provision of early reading training in selected schools (the exact number still has to be defined); (vii) Simplified assessment tools for internal and external assessment, notably through quick periodical assessments delivered by teachers in their classes (once per month) and a simple external evaluation of reading skills acquisitions starting end of grade 1¹³. Similar activities as for reading could also be developed in early math.

39. **Implementation:** The Department of Student Assessment in MEP will coordinate the learning outcomes assessment. The unit will be strengthened during the implementation of the project, through training, equipment and operational financing to ensure the smooth implementation of this activity. The creation of the system will take into account the experience within MEP and the existing capacity and ensure that such capacity is built through the establishment of a partnership with a structure with international experience in supporting the implementation of evaluation systems and the conduct of education assessments. The early grade reading interventions will be coordinated by the *Direction Générale de la Promotion des Langues Nationales* (DGPLN) and the Unit of Student Assessment, and will take stock of the lessons from evaluated pilots and programs on teaching reading in national languages, both government and NGO-supported, as well as build on the tools embedded in the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA).¹⁴ The tests on national languages will start with five of the ten national languages on which extensive pilots have been conducted. The determination on where the national languages will be used will be based on an agreed language map of the country. Implementation of the program will be based on a package of interventions including the availability of qualified teachers, textbooks and teaching materials and other support mechanisms. Emphasis will be put on building the capacity of a team at the MEP to manage the teaching reading intervention.

Component 3: Strengthening management capacity (estimated base cost: US\$18.0 million)

40. **Context:** While unit costs for primary education in Niger align broadly with other countries in the region, learning outcomes, attainment and retention results rank among the lowest pointing to important inefficiencies in the use and allocation of financial and human resources. These inefficiencies are symptomatic of lack of a high-level managerial and technical

¹³ Teachers will have very simple forms (1 page) to assess students' progress periodically (once a month) and provide additional support to those lagging behind. The same form can be used at the end of grade 1 to track progress (ex-post assessment).

¹⁴ EGRA has in recent years been applied in several neighboring countries, including in languages that are also spoken in Niger.

capacity to provide a clear strategic and operational direction for the sector; a limited capacity for personnel planning, management and supervision, as well as overall monitoring and evaluation; and limited school management and planning capacity. These factors are made worse by the lack of linkages between resources and outcomes (lack of incentives to perform). The program, through its third component, will strive to address some of these constraints. Sustained by national organizations (both at central and regional levels), the project will help to build their capacities. The project contracting assistance that will be provided will have the twofold aim of supporting project implementation and building the capacities of the stakeholders.

41. **Objectives:** Component 3 will support more efficient use of resources for improved access and quality through the development of management and institutional capacity and better incentives at the central, district, school and project levels in several critical areas. Component 3 is divided into three sub-components: 3.1: Capacity enhancement of the ministries in charge of basic education; 3.2: Central and decentralized education system management; and 3.3: Project management and coordination.

42. ***Sub-component 3.1: Capacity enhancement of the ministries in charge of basic education (US\$6.0 million).*** This sub-component will enhance the capacity of the MEP and MES to manage and coordinate the two levels of basic education more effectively by supporting a set of institutional strengthening activities. It will build the organizational capacities of the MEP and MES at both central and decentralized levels by implementing new tools, changing the division of tasks, providing equipment and/or organizing training sessions. Synergies will be developed among the programs financed by various partners that support improvements of the pedagogical and administrative management of the two ministries to ensure progressive and sustainable capacity building.

43. MEP has completed a comprehensive organizational review in 2013 (complementing institutional analyses carried out during preparation of the PSEF), and will receive comprehensive support derived from this review to strengthen its institutional capacity and performance. Among the tasks carried out by the review, were: (a) analysis of the functions of existing divisions/units and re-definition of their roles, and assessment of resource needs (e.g. skills, budget, training and physical facilities); (b) evaluation of the need to upgrade some units to divisional level (e.g. the Educational Management Information System (EMIS) and the Financial Management Unit (FMU)) and/or evaluation of the need to establish new units; (c) review and ways to strengthen the M&E Division of DPE, working with EMIS; (d) review of the structure of the Training Division of DPE and how to give greater responsibility and leadership to this division in implementing head teacher training, teacher education, and teacher professional development, including Primary Teacher Instructors; and (e) definition of the functions and activities that would be devolved/decentralized to local levels. MES' capacity will also be strengthened, and the project will additionally finance an organizational review of MES during the first year of implementation.

44. The sub-component will support, for MEP: (i) the provision of TA for strengthening the institutional capacity; (ii) the development and implementation to the extent possible of a professional development program for relevant MEP personnel, based on the results of the organizational review; (iii) the development and application of a human resource management

and ministry development strategy by the end of the first year of the project, to be implemented starting in the second year; and (iv) upgrading and rehabilitating selected MEP offices and equipment; and for MES: (i) an organizational review and the improvement of its capacity to carry out its activities; and (ii) the provision of equipment. The allocation under this sub-component is US\$4.8 million for MEP and US\$1.2 million for MES.

45. **Implementation:** The responsibility for implementation of this sub-component will be directly by the ministries' central management structures led by the SGs. The capacity enhancement will to a large extent take place through the recruitment of an Implementation Support Agency that will strengthen the capacity of the ministries in charge of basic education and support the implementation of the project, including the reforms envisaged in Component 3. Other specialized TA and studies may be financed, as well as training and equipment, etc.

46. **Sub-component 3.2: Central and decentralized education system management (US\$10.0 million).** This sub-component will support the Government's initiatives to strengthen the planning, management, and monitoring capacity and the incentives to perform of the central administration, the deconcentrated agencies, the schools and the communities to implement system-wide primary and secondary education programs effectively and efficiently.

47. More specifically, the sub-component will support capacity development for (a) primary education, through supporting: (i) education sector planning and management; (ii) school planning and management, including staff and CGDES training; (iii) school financing, including through supporting an institutional framework for School Improvement Grants (SIGs); (iv) introducing such grants in a limited set of eligible schools to be managed by the CGDES; (v) support to the EMIS, including data collection and school surveys; and (vi) studies related to education system planning, management, and financing; and (b) for lower secondary education, through supporting: (i) education sector planning and management, including studies; (ii) school planning and management, including CGDES training, and (iii) support to the EMIS, including data collection and school surveys. The allocation under this sub-component is US\$7.8 million for primary education and US\$2.2 million for lower secondary education.

48. Sector planning will include support to more effective teacher deployment policies. Capacity development for school planning, management and financing will target schools and communities, both critical for effective education service delivery. Better school planning and management will entail establishing capacities and procedures to measure and improve effectiveness and performance at the school level. The sub-component will help set up a system of school level planning and monitoring of quality, attendance and attainment. All schools will be eligible to participate and will be required to carry out self-evaluations and school development plans, as well as participating in school surveys; staff will be trained to use these new instruments and to function effectively in a decentralized environment. Better school management will also entail strengthening of the CGDES which will have an important role in managing school feeding programs.

49. As far as school financing is concerned, the focus will be on setting up a sustainable institutional framework for a competitive scheme of SIGs to provide incentives for quality of learning, teaching performance, attendance and/or attainment. Further, the SIGs may also help

invest into non-recurrent expenditure categories, including supporting in-service training to teachers and staff. The activity will develop approval, monitoring and evaluation processes for the SIGs, and set up and train regional education boards and the CGDES. The management of the SIGs will be monitored on a sample basis with the help of NGOs or other independent agents.

50. **Implementation:** This sub-component will be coordinated by DEP (Direction des Etudes et de la Programmation). The SIGs will build on the experience of some schools' grants pilots, including the pilot undertaken by JICA which showed good results in terms of using school grants to foster teacher attendance. Grants will be made directly from the project account to local School Committees. School Committees exist in most of the public primary schools and include representatives from local authorities, the parents' association, the teachers' association, and the head of school. To benefit from the Grants, local School Committees need to submit to the Regional Directorates of Primary Education (DREP) a request including a budgeted action plan to address specific issues at school level. The action plan will be focused on clear objectives and results. Criteria will be established and published for the selection of the beneficiaries signing the Grant Agreement with the MEP. Guidelines and procedures will be developed in specific grant regulations for the SIG. To enable the School Committees to prepare action plans and to manage the Grants, local NGOs will be recruited to train and assist them.

51. **Sub-component 3.3: Project management and coordination (US\$2.0 million).** This sub-component will support project coordination and M&E, in order to facilitate project implementation. It will aim at ensuring effective implementation of the proposed project through efficient coordination mechanisms, proper FM and procurement practices, and effective M&E of project outcomes at the national and sub-national levels. Specifically, support will be given to project management and coordination, through provision of consultants' services, operating costs, equipment, and training, including for (a) in the case of MEP: (i) the meetings of the project's Steering Committee and the annual sector reviews; (ii) technical and financial audits; (iii) the recruitment of project staff, as needed, including for project coordination, FM and procurement; (iv) training of stakeholders involved in implementation, including on procurement and M&E; and (v) operating costs; and (b) in the case of MES: (i) technical and financial audits; (ii) the recruitment of project staff, as needed, including for project coordination, finance and procurement; and (iii) training of project stakeholders involved in implementation. The allocation under this sub-component is US\$1.4 million for MEP and US\$0.6 million for MES.

Contingencies (US\$4.0 million). Contingency funds across the three components are US\$4.0 million (US\$3.3 million for MEP and US\$0.7 million for MES).

Annex 3: Implementation Arrangements

1. **Recipient and Executing Agencies.** The Recipient is the Republic of Niger, represented by the Ministry of Planning as the responsible agency for financial and legal obligations of the Government of Niger. The Ministry of Primary Education (MEP) and the Ministry of Secondary Education (MES) will be the government institutions responsible for the overall implementation of the project, including the coordination of activities, financial management and procurement, and reporting, monitoring and evaluation. The MEP will implement the activities related to primary education (Base I), and the MES will implement the activities related to lower secondary education (Base II). A joint budgeted Annual Action Plan (AAP) with all project activities to be implemented over the year will be adopted before the end of the preceding year. The different directorates and services of the MEP and MES at central and decentralized levels will directly participate in the implementation of activities related to their respective functions. The oversight of the program will be ensured by a Steering Committee (SC). In addition there will be two Coordination Committees (CCs), two Project Coordinators (for MEP and MES), and an Implementation Support Agency (ISA), as described below.

2. **Project Implementation Responsibilities.** Project implementation arrangements are based on existing government systems to the extent possible, although some of these existing systems will be strengthened through the project to improve their effectiveness. Detailed project implementation mechanisms will be provided in the Project Implementation Manual (PIM) which will be completed by effectiveness. The responsibility for the construction will be partially delegated to the competitively selected DCAs which will be responsible for: (i) indicating their interest in participating in the civil works activities, (ii) signing agreements with MEP or MES in which they commit to build school infrastructure in compliance with standards, plans and specifications, and (iii) submitting payment requests to MEP/MES for the construction costs. Under the signed agreements, MEP/MES will commit to financing 100 percent of the construction cost, provided that the projects are carried out in accordance with the plans and specifications of the PIM.

3. **Local Education Group (LEG).** The project is supported by the DPs operating in the Niger education sector (LEG), including UNICEF, JICA, USAID, World Bank, EU, GIZ, KFW, WFP and NGOs and CSOs. The LEG will provide external oversight on behalf of the GPE. The LEG will also be responsible for harmonizing other existing DP-financed activities with those of the project implementation. The DP group worked collaboratively to prepare the application to the GPE, solicit the World Bank to act as supervising entity and to harmonize planned commitments and projects around the proposed operation. UNICEF was the lead donor agency responsible for representing all of the contributing donors and leading the policy dialogue with the MEN (the name of the basic education ministry before the reconfiguration) up to October 2013. The LEG, now with the Swiss Cooperation taking over as lead, will continue to play a key role in the oversight of project implementation through joint missions, regular monthly meetings and specific responsibilities as detailed in an MOU.

4. **The MEP and to some extent the MES** have a mandate to formulate and implement education sector policy related to the goal of education for all. Both ministries will provide technical and fiduciary oversight for the project and will assure that the key sector policy,

planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation processes are harmonized with the project/operation design.

5. **Project Manuals.** Two project manuals, notably the Administrative, Accounting, and Financial Manual of Procedures and a PIM will need to be ready and deemed satisfactory by the Bank prior to effectiveness. The manuals set forth all the operational and procedural steps for project implementation including detailed descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of implementing units, review and approval of district annual plans, flow of funds and operational and financial reporting arrangements, procurement and disbursement processes, standard formats for quarterly and annual reporting and amendment procedures.

6. **Grant Regulations.** Specific grant regulations will be prepared for the two types of grants to be financed, the School Improvement Grants and the Education Grants. These need to be ready no later than three months after effectiveness and are also disbursement conditions of the respective disbursement categories.

7. **Project Oversight.** An inter-governmental Steering Committee (SC) will provide project oversight, comprising, at a minimum, representatives of the Ministry of Planning, MEP, MES, and the lead donor in the education sector (*chef de file des PTF*). The Steering Committee will need to be in place prior to effectiveness. This SC will provide: (i) oversight and strategic guidance to project implementation and ensure coordination with other existing or proposed overlapping activities and programs; (ii) oversee project implementation and approve Annual Action Plans and Budgets; (iii) review and approve project progress reports; and (iv) assess project achievements. The functions and composition of the SC will be established by government decree. At local levels, the implementation of the school grants and other school based activities will be overseen by the relevant CGDES, or PTA in case the CGDES is not functional.

8. **A Coordination Committee (CC)** will also be set up in each ministry. The CCs will comprise the Secretary General, Director of Studies and Programming, the DRFM, Director of Public Procurement, Director of Statistics, the Project Coordinator, directors of key implementing units, and other representatives as the ministers of MEP and MES may determine.¹⁵ The CCs will serve as the project's technical secretariats in relation to the Steering Committee. Their main role will be to technically coordinate and oversee the implementation of the AAP and provide advice and recommendations to the Steering Committee. They will be responsible, among other things to: (i) ensure consolidation of the different work plans into a budgeted Annual Action Plan to be submitted for the approval of the SC, (ii) ensuring the AAP's consistency with the education sector plan (PSEF); (iii) validate the terms of reference for studies, consultancies, etc., ensuring their compliance with the objectives of the project; and (iv) oversee implementation of the AAP, monitoring compliance with the planned, programmed and implemented activities. A consolidated AAP will be prepared prior to the beginning of every calendar year, except for the first year of project implementation, when the AAP should be ready no later than one month after effectiveness.

¹⁵ For PSEF oversight, each ministry will have a coordination committee comprised of the Secretary General, the DEP, DRFM and Director of Statistics, so the project CCs are an expanded version of the PSEF CCs.

9. At the technical level, (i) two full-time Project Coordinators will be appointed or recruited by the MEP and MES no later than by effectiveness for MEP and within two months of effectiveness for MES, and, under the direct supervision of the Secretary Generals, carry out the day-to-day project coordination and administration and facilitate communication and articulation between the various participants in project implementation; (ii) a short term fiduciary team, consisting of, initially, experienced consultants in FM and procurement, to be joined by an accountant, will be recruited to support the MEP and MES' DRFM and DMP in handling the fiduciary aspects during the launch of the project; and (iii) a technical assistance in the form of an Implementation Support Agency (ISA) will be contracted to provide long term support/technical assistance to project implementation and key reforms for the duration of the project under the leadership of the MEP and MES, replacing the short term fiduciary team once a proper hand-over has been completed.

10. The MEP and MES will, before or soon after effectiveness appoint a few Senior Staff / Directors to also partake in a light project coordination team, comprising also the Project Coordinator, that will support the SG of each ministry in the overall management and coordination of the project. The MEP and MES will further establish formally before or soon after effectiveness the CCs, with the composition described earlier. The MEP and MES project coordination teams will work closely with the SG of the MEP and MES, and the project's CCs, and jointly report on the project's implementation to the World Bank.

11. At the regional level, the MEP will: (i) coordinate the MEP project activities through the regional directorates of MEP and regional Project teams under the leadership of the Regional Director; (ii) appoint, not later than one (1) month after the Effective Date, within the regional Project team: (A) the girls' education focal point; and (B) the CGDES focal point; and (iii) appoint or recruit within the regional Project team, when it is needed for the Project and as agreed with the World Bank, not later than three (3) months after the Effective Date: (A) one accountant; (B) one procurement officer; and (C) one civil works specialist, all under terms of reference satisfactory to the World Bank. This team will be the point of contact for project implementation in their respective region. At the regional level, the MES will coordinate the MEP project activities in a manner acceptable to the World Bank and described in the Project Implementation Manual.

12. The Implementation Support Agency (ISA) will have the dual objectives of supporting project implementation and building the capacities of the MEP and MES. This modality was selected given the limited capacity of the MEP and MES to implement all aspects of this large program including fiduciary aspects. To achieve this, the ISA will be integrated into the MEP and MES' present organizations, focus on several key functions and support the General Secretariats in implementing the project. Additionally, the ISA will support the MEP and MES in scoping and implementing the structural reforms provided for under the PSEF. Draft terms of reference for the ISA were prepared under the institutional study funded by the EU published in August 2013, and will be refined. The ISA will specifically work on: (i) support to project coordination; (ii) support to financial management and procurement; (iii) support to budgeting, planning, programming and reporting; (iv) support to monitoring and evaluation; and (iv) technical advisory activities related to the human resource management reforms and potentially other activities supported by the project, in particular activities supported under Component 3. It

will not cover TA in civil engineering (support to the school construction program), as this will be addressed in a special framework as proposed in Sub-component 1.1, considering the specific skills required. The use of a single firm, with two separate contracts for the two ministries, for providing this support is expected to increase the consistency and coordination amongst the different experts. The use of a ISA does not exclude the use of other experts in different formats during the project to meet specific needs arising from the project goals in particular and the PSEF in general. The main challenge in managing the ISA will be to avoid substitution and sidelining or duplication. To mitigate this risk the ISA will work under the leadership of the MEP and MES in a strictly support and/or advisory role; help with project implementation and capacity-building will take place through a pool of experts integrated within the ministries' organization, including the DRFM, in support of existing staff; and emphasis will be put on training regular government staff to take over all responsibilities by project end. The MEP and MES should also frequently assess the ISA based on a follow-up mechanism developed with the ISA after three to six months of service. This period will allow for a first appraisal and a specification of the ISA's key focus areas. Based on the discussions held during project appraisal, the launch of the recruitment process for the ISA will begin in early 2014, before the signing or effectiveness of the grant. Additionally, the MEP and MES have been requested to set up a board to assess the technical proposals. The recruitment of the ISA is due no later than four months after effectiveness (dated covenant).

13. Annual sector reviews involving all education sector DPs and relevant government agencies will be organized by the Government in accordance with the Partnership Framework. During the annual review, one of the items discussed will be the implementation status of the project's activities. Annual reports will be presented to spell out achievements, challenges, lessons learned and the way forward, including any recommendations on modifications.

14. The implementation arrangements for each sub-component are detailed in Annex 2 above. Given the large scope of the school construction program, and the limited capacity of the MEP and MES to implement all aspects of this program, the implementation of parts of the program will be delegated to DCAs. These will be accountable to the MEP and MES and will produce implementation reports on a regular basis. They will also be subject to annual auditing in the context of the annual auditing of the project. The DIES will be reinforced through TA from an international consulting engineering firm with experience in the planning, management, and monitoring of school construction programs. The DIES, with the support of the firm, will provide technical support and advice to the MEP and MES relating to all programs of school construction.

15. The implementation of the quality component activities will be mostly assured by the MEP and MES through their various technical departments. Training activities will be managed centrally by the DGFCs and locally by the DREP/DRES, supported by the inspection services. The DGFC of MEP has experience in managing large scale teacher training activities and is currently implementing teacher training programs funded by UNICEF and UNESCO. The project will finance TA to reinforce the capacity of the DGFCs in the management of teacher training activities.

Financial Management, Disbursement and Procurement

Financial Management Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

16. The Fiduciary Departments (DRFM) of the MEP and MES will have the financial management responsibility of the overall project implementation. An Implementation Support Agency will be recruited to support the DRFMs in handling fiduciary tasks and building capacities within the two ministries. The activities of the sub-component related to Education infrastructure will be executed by construction agencies competitively selected and acting with delegation of the implementation responsibility. Delegated management contracts will be signed between MEP or MES, as the case may be, and construction agencies in order to clarify roles and responsibilities, describe financial management and disbursements arrangements, detail actions plans and budgets covering outputs and outcomes to be achieved in a three-year period. The school nutrition activities will be implemented through a joint effort of the DREP and communities. Specific arrangements will be described in the PIM to ensure adequate service delivery of school feeding and student health programs.

Financial Management arrangements

17. **Budgeting:** The budget process will be clearly stipulated in the updated administrative, financial and accounting procedures manual. Activities to be financed will be clearly identified and included in the AAP for the project prepared and consolidated by MEP and MES at the central level with inputs from regional entities and approved by the SC before the beginning of the year. Changes in the AAP will also need to be approved by the SC and receive a Bank no objection.

18. **Accounting:** The administrative, financial and accounting procedures manual will be updated and will detail and document the project accounting, policies and procedures at the MEP and the MES as well as the responsibilities of all stakeholders involved. A “multi-projects” and “multi-sites” accounting software which will be installed in each ministry, will be purchased and configured to facilitate processing of financial information and to prepare interim quarterly financial statements as well as annual financial statements. FM staff will also be trained to ensure optimal use of the software application. Detailed FM documentation will be maintained in the Project files for the implementing entities.

19. **Staffing arrangements:** Under the oversight of the Director of Financial and Material Resources of the MEP and MES, the FM team assigned to the project in each ministry will be comprised of (i) a senior FM Officer (ii) an Accountant; (iii) a Financial Controller; and (iv) in the case of MEP: Regional Accountants in each of the eight regions. The ISA may provide some experts to fulfill some of these roles in close coordination with regular staff, while other roles may be directly fulfilled by regular government or recruited staff. The ISA will train government FM staff within the DRFMs in order to build adequate capacity at mid-term so as to transfer progressively all responsibilities to the DRFM teams in the two ministries. Before effectiveness and until the ISA is on board, a short-term fiduciary team will be recruited by MEP and MES with project funds to reinforce the capacity at the central level so that initial project activities can be launched, including the contract awards for the two large TA contracts (Implementation Support Agency and International Consulting Engineering Firm). The FM teams at the central

and regional levels will be responsible for collecting and controlling the invoices, maintaining the books of account, processing financial data, making payments to suppliers and service providers. The FM teams of MEP and MES at the Central level will be responsible for monitoring the approved budget and preparing the quarterly IFRs and annual financial reports for the annual audits.

20. **Internal controls and Internal Audit:** The project's Steering Committee to be put in place will ensure that staffing arrangements at the MEP and MES are in place and are sufficient to ensure adequate internal controls, preparation, approval and recording of transactions as well as segregation of duties. Internal control procedures will be detailed in the procedures' manual and strengthened by the Implementation Support Agency.

21. To complement the FM system and in the context of the use of country system, reliance will be placed on the Financial Controller assigned by the Ministry of Finance. He will carry out the ex-ante control over transactions at the central level. The team in the Directorate of Financial Inspection in the Ministry of Finance will be trained on risk based approach on internal auditing and will carry out the internal audit function of the project. They will carry out ex-post reviews and issue a bi-yearly audit reports.

22. **Financial reporting:** The MEP and MES will be responsible for the overall reporting on the implementation of the project activities under their responsibility related to the project. The reporting format will be documented in the administrative, financial and accounting procedures manual. The quarterly Interim Financial Reports will be furnished by the entities to the Bank no later than 45 days after the end of the quarter. Annual financial statements will be prepared by the FM team in each ministry, approved by the project's Steering Committee, and will be subject to annual external audits. The interim financial report will include the following FM aspects:

- (i) Sources and uses of funds by funding source;
- (ii) Uses of funds by project activity/components showing comparison with budgets for the reporting period and cumulative for the project life;
- (iii) Projected expenditure and cash forecast for the next semester;
- (iv) Bank reconciliation statements for the Designated Account;
- (v) Bank reconciliation for the transaction accounts showing the cash balances available at the end of the quarter under review.

A Note to the IFRs providing reasons for the variances and any information on procurement status will be also attached to the IFRs.

23. **Funds Flow and disbursement arrangements:** The project activities will be funded in a joint co-financing arrangements with other donors (initially only AFD) in which funds will be disbursed in agreed proportions with each funding partner beforehand. Two Designated Accounts (DA A and DA B) into which funds will be deposited by respective donors will be opened at a commercial Bank acceptable to the Bank and AFD in Niamey, Niger. The DA A will be managed by the MEP and the DA B will be under the responsibility of the MES. The terms and conditions of these DA will be communicated to the Bank on request and any revenues on idling funds on these DA will be reflected in the projects IFRs and annual accounts. These DA

will be operated according to the disbursement procedures described in the disbursement letter and pooled fund arrangements. Documentation for all transactions shall be retained by the implementing entities and shall be made available for audits and to the Bank and its representatives, if requested. Detailed disbursement procedures will also be stipulated in the updated administrative, financial and accounting procedures manual.

24. Project sub-accounts may be opened at regional level under terms and conditions acceptable to IDA. The mechanisms for transfers and providing support to the decentralized units, for monitoring the utilization of the funds by the latter, will be specified in guidelines and outlined in the project procedures manual. Specifically, replenishment of each sub-account opened at regional level will be made on the basis of two documents: (i) a statement of expenses depicting the expenditures made and classified by category or component of the financing (SOEs) and (ii) a summary report showing the total amount received, the expenditures made classified by category and project components and the forecast for the next three (3) months. The balance between the next three months forecast and the closing cash balance of the bank account will constitute the amount to be transferred to the sub-account opened at regional level.

25. DCAs will open bank accounts in order to manage separately funds received from the project. The accounts will be managed according to the disbursement procedures described in the Administrative, Accounting and Financial Manual and fiduciary arrangements included in agreed delegated management contracts.

26. **Disbursement Methods:** Based on the risk assessment especially regarding weakness in FM capacity, the project will use at least during the first 18 months the transactions-based disbursement procedures i.e. statements of expenses (SOEs). Thereafter, the option to disburse against submission of quarterly unaudited Interim Financial Report (also known as the Report-based disbursements) could be considered, as soon as the project meets the criteria including (the quality and timeliness of the IFRs submitted to the Bank and the overall financial management performance). The process for elaboration of the IFR will be set out in the manual of procedures.

27. The first allocation of the Designated Account will cover approximately four months of expenditures. Subsequent disbursements into the DAs will be based on SOEs accompanied by Withdrawal Applications, bank statements and bank reconciliations. The supporting documentation for requests for direct payment should include records which provide evidence of eligible expenditures (copies of receipt, supplier's invoices).

28. The minimum value of direct payment and special commitment is 20 percent of outstanding advance made to the DAs.

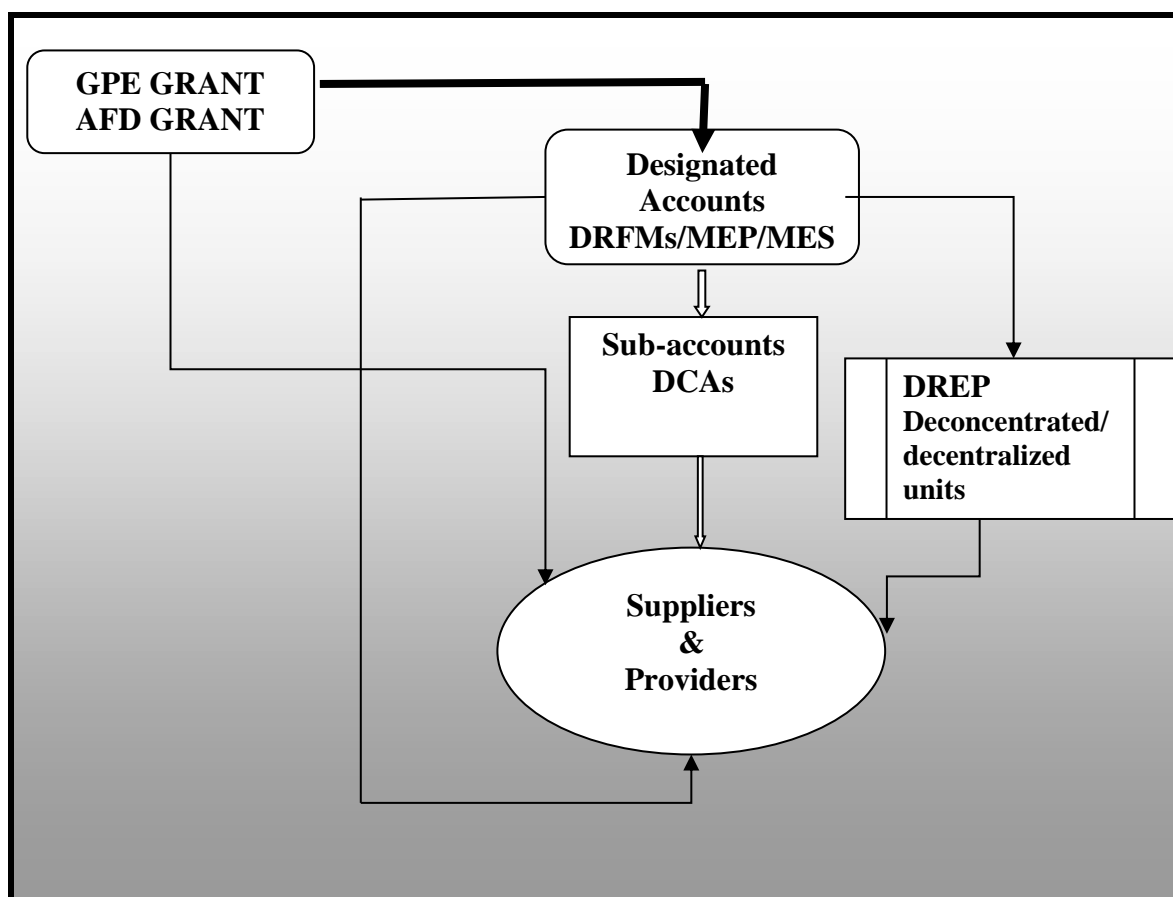


Figure 1: Flow of funds for the pooled fund.

29. The table below specifies the categories of eligible expenditures that may be financed out of the grant from the GPE, the allocations of the amounts of financing to each category, and the percentage of expenditures to be financed in each category.

Category	Amount of the Grant Allocated (expressed in USD)	Percentage of Expenditures to be Financed (inclusive of Taxes)
(1) Goods, works, non-consulting services, and consultants' services, Training and Operating Costs under the following Parts of the Project: 1.1(b), 1.2(a), 1.3, 2.1(a), 2.2(a), 2.3, 3.1(a), 3.2(a) (but excluding Part 3.2(a)(iv)) and 3.3(a)	39,700,000	100% in the first Fiscal Year, and after that, such percentage of the Annual Action Plans and Budgets expenditures as the World Bank may determine for each Fiscal Year
(2) Goods, works, non-consulting services, and consultants' services, Training and Operating Costs under the following Parts of the Project: 1.2(b) (but excluding Part 1.2(b)(ii)), 2.1(b), 2.2(b), 3.1(b), 3.2(b) and 3.3(b)	6,900,000	100% in the first Fiscal Year, and after that, such percentage of the Annual Action Plans and Budgets expenditures as the World Bank may determine for each Fiscal Year

(3) Works, goods, non-consulting services and consultants' services under Part 1.1(a)(i) of the Project	25,400,000	100% in the first Fiscal Year, and after that, such percentage of the Annual Action Plans and Budgets expenditures as the World Bank may determine for each Fiscal Year
(4) Works, goods, non-consulting services and consultants' services under Part 1.1(a)(ii) of the Project	9,200,000	100% in the first Fiscal Year, and after that, such percentage of the Annual Action Plans and Budgets expenditures as the World Bank may determine for each Fiscal Year
(5) School Improvement Grants under Part 3.2(a)(iv) of the Project	2,000,000	100% in the first Fiscal Year, and after that, such percentage of the Annual Action Plans and Budgets expenditures as the World Bank may determine for each Fiscal Year
(6) Education Grants under Part 1.2(b)(ii) of the Project	1,000,000	100% in the first Fiscal Year, and after that, such percentage of the Annual Action Plans and Budgets expenditures as the World Bank may determine for each Fiscal Year
TOTAL AMOUNT	84,200,000	

30. The table below specifies the disbursement conditions applicable to the categories of disbursement listed above.

Category of disbursement	Implementing agency	Disbursement condition
(2)	MES	MES has recruited a MES Project coordinator as well as a financial management specialist and a procurement specialist
(4)	MES	The Recipient has entered into a Delegated Contracting Agreement
(5)	MEP	The Recipient, through MEP, has prepared and adopted the School Improvement Grant Regulations
(6)	MES	The Recipient, through MES, has prepared and adopted the Education Grant Regulations

31. **External audits:** The annual financial statements of the project prepared by the two ministries as well as the system of internal controls at the central and regional levels will be subject to an annual audit by a reputable, competent and independent auditing firm. The auditors will provide a separate opinion on the financial statements of the project prepared by the

implementing entities (MEP and MES) as per auditing standards acceptable to the Bank. The audit reports will be submitted to the Bank not later than six months after the end of each financial year. The auditors will also provide a management letter detailing the status of the internal control systems of the central and regional levels of the MEP and MES. In line with the Bank access to information policy, the audit reports will be made available to public access.

FM Action Plan

	Action	Date due by	Responsible
1	Appoint an experienced FM specialist for the short-term fiduciary team to be fully dedicated to the project (in each ministry)	By effectiveness for MEP (effectiveness condition) and no later than 2 months after effectiveness and before disbursement for MES (disbursement condition)	DRFM /MEP+MES
2	Update and adopt the FM manual including internal controls, budget process, assets safeguards, and roles and responsibilities of stakeholders	By effectiveness (effectiveness condition)	DRFM/MEP+MES
3	Appoint an accountant for the short-term fiduciary teams to be fully dedicated to the project (in each ministry)	As needed for the project	DRFM/MEP+MES
4	Purchase a “multi-projects” and “multi-sites” accounting software to be installed in the two ministries	Not later than three months after effectiveness (dated covenant)	DRFM/MEP
5	Appoint an Implementation Support Agency	Not later than four months after effectiveness (dated covenant)	MEP+MES
6	Appointment of an external auditor (to audit the accounts of MEP and MES)	Not later than four months after effectiveness (dated covenant)	DRFM/MEP

Financial Covenants

32. The Recipient shall establish and maintain a financial management system including records, accounts and preparation of related financial statements in accordance with accounting standards acceptable to the Bank. The Financial Statements will be audited in accordance with international auditing standards. The Audited Financial Statements for each period shall be furnished to the Association not later than six (6) months after the end of the government fiscal year. The Recipient shall prepare and furnish to the Association not later than 45 days after the end of each calendar quarter, interim un-audited financial reports for the Project, in form and

substance satisfactory to the Association. The Recipient will be compliant with all the rules and procedures required for withdrawals from the Designated Accounts of the project.

Implementation Support Plan

33. Based on the outcome of the FM risk assessment, the following implementation support plan is proposed. The objective of the implementation support plan is to ensure the project maintains a satisfactory financial management system throughout the project's life.

FM Activity	Frequency
Desk reviews	
Interim financial reports review	Quarterly
Audit report review of the project	Annually
Review of other relevant information such as interim internal control systems reports.	Continuous as they become available
On site visits	
Review of overall operation of the FM system	Semi-annual for MEP+MES (Implementation Support Mission)
Monitoring of actions taken on issues highlighted in audit reports, auditors' management letters, internal audit and other reports	As needed

Conclusion of the assessment

34. The conclusion of the assessment is that the financial management arrangements will meet the Bank's minimum requirements under OP/BP10.00 once the mitigation measures have been implemented. The overall residual risk rating is Substantial.

Procurement

Procurement Arrangements

35. The pooled fund donors have agreed that procurement of civil works, goods, and consultant services for the project be undertaken in accordance with the "Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits" dated January 2011; Guidelines: "Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Recipients", dated January 2011; and the provisions stipulated in the Grant Agreement. World Bank's Standard Bidding documents and evaluation forms will be used where applicable. Procedures and other details related to procurement activities will be included in the project manuals and the MOU.

36. All procuring entities, as well as bidders, suppliers and contractors shall observe the

highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of contracts financed under the project in accordance with the 'World Bank Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants' known as the '2006 Anti-Corruption Guidelines', and updated in 2011.

37. Procurement of Works: Works procured under this project will include but are not limited to: construction and rehabilitation of classrooms, latrines.

38. Procurement of Goods: Goods procured under this project would include but are not limited to: vehicles, computer equipment and office equipment, apprentice materials, textbooks.

39. Selection of Consultants: Consultants' service procured under this project would include but are not limited to the following: implementation support agency, delegated contracting agencies for civil works, supervision of civil works, financial audit, individual consultants for specific studies.

40. Short list of Consultant services estimated to cost less than US\$200,000 for civil works supervision and less than US\$100,000 for other consulting assignment would be used in accordance with the provisions of the Procurement Guidelines, with IDA's prior non objection.

41. Requirements for National Competitive Bidding. Works, goods and non-consulting services contracts will use NCB procurement methods in accordance with national procedures using Standard Bidding Document acceptable to IDA and subject to the additional requirements:

- In accordance with paragraph 1.16 (e) of the Procurement Guidelines, each bidding document and contract financed out of the proceeds of the Financing shall provide that (a) the bidders, suppliers, contractors and their subcontractors, agents, personnel, consultants, service providers, or suppliers shall permit the Association, at its request, to inspect all accounts, records and other documents relating to the submission of bids and contract performance, and to have said accounts and records audited by auditors appointed by the Association; and (b) the deliberate and material violation of such provision may amount to an obstructive practice as defined in paragraph 1.16 (a)(v) of the Procurement Guidelines:
- Invitations to bid shall be advertised in national newspapers with wide circulation.
- The bid evaluation, qualification of bidders and contract award criteria shall be clearly indicated in the bidding documents.
- Bidders shall be given adequate response time (at least four weeks) to submit bids from the date of the invitation to bid or the date of availability of bidding documents, whichever is later.
- Eligible bidders, including foreign bidders, shall be allowed to participate.

- No domestic preference shall be given to domestic contractors and to domestically manufactured goods.
- Bids are awarded to the lowest evaluated bidder proven this bidder is qualified.
- Fees charged for the bidding documents shall be reasonable and reflect only the cost of their printing and delivery to prospective bidders, and shall not be so high as to discourage qualified bidders.

42. Advertising: A comprehensive General Procurement Notice will be prepared by the Recipient and published in the United Nations Development Business online (UNDB online) following Board Approval, to announce major consulting assignments and any international competitive bidding (ICB). The General Procurement Notice shall include all ICB for works, goods, and non-consulting services contracts and all large consulting contracts (i.e., those estimated to cost US\$200,000 or more). In addition, a specific procurement notice is required for all works and goods to be procured under ICB in UNDB online. Requests for Expressions of Interest (EOI) for consulting services expected to cost more than US\$200,000 shall be advertised in UNDB online. An EOI is required in the national gazette, a national newspaper, or an electronic portal of free access for all consulting firm services regardless of the contract amount. In the case of NCB, a specific procurement notice will be published in the national gazette, a national newspaper, or an electronic portal of free access. Contract awards will also be published in UNDB, in accordance with the Bank's Procurement Guidelines (para. 2.60) and Consultants Guidelines (para. 2.28).

Procurement responsibilities and accountabilities

43. Procurement activities will be carried out by MEP and MES, for their respective parts, through their dedicated central and regional bodies under the general coordination of the Secretary General, notably:

- d) The Procurement Directorate (*Direction des Marchés Publics* – DMP) at the Central Level;
- e) The Regional Directorates of Primary Education (DREP) and the Regional Directorates of Secondary Education (DRES), as the case may be, at Regional Levels; and
- f) Community Participation in Procurement through associations such as the CGDES and PTAs for activities involving communities' participation in compliance with the provisions of paragraph 3.19 of the Procurement Guidelines and detailed in the PIM. Community participation in Procurement will be supervised by the DREP/DRES.

44. The DMP, DREP, and DRES will be supported as appropriate by the procurement committees in compliance with World Bank procedures.

45. The DMP, DREP, and DRES under the overall coordination of the SG of MEP or MES, as relevant, will be responsible for all procurement related to the project and will carry out the

following activities in close collaboration with the respective beneficiaries: (i) preparation of the bidding documents, draft requests for proposals (RFPs), evaluation reports, contracts in compliance with World Bank procedures, and (iv) seeking and obtaining approval of national entities and then IDA on procurement documents as required.

46. In addition, the DMPs will have the responsibility for procurement oversight in collaboration with all the beneficiaries, these activities will include: i) preparation and updating of the procurement plan, ii) monitoring the implementation of procurement activities, and iii) development of procurement reports.

47. All procurement requests will be sent by the MEP or MES coordination team, as relevant, to all contributors to the pooled fund. The World Bank will review procurement documents and provide the no objection opinion on behalf of all pooled fund donors.

48. The recruitment of the Implementing Agency will be under the responsibility of the MEP with involvement of representatives of the MES in all the process notably the evaluation and award committee, with possibility of signing two separate contracts with each ministry.

49. On the procurement plan and the recruitment of the ISA, the World Bank will only issue a no objection opinion upon reaching a joint decision with the other pooled fund donors.

Capacity Assessment and Remedial Actions

50. An assessment of the capacity of the implementing agencies to implement procurement activities of the Project was carried out during project preparation and finalized during appraisal. The assessment reviewed the organizational structure for implementing the Project, the procurement capacities of the agencies (past procurement experience, staff in charge of procurement, tools including manuals, procurement reporting, filing, use of software, etc.) and the interactions between the different agencies involved in the Project.

51. The assessment revealed the following:

- The MEP through the central and regional levels have implemented in the past World Bank managed projects notably the PAEB and PADEB that closed respectively in 2012 and 2009, but the mobility of the staff, and the insufficient competency transfer from consultants to the permanent staff have limited building appropriate procurement capacity at the central and regional levels. The procurement filing is not appropriate. Acceptable tools (manuals, tracking software) used during the former projects exist although they need to be updated.
- The MES is a young structure derived from other ministries. It has been created less than one year ago with beginning experience with financial partners although it includes staff who have past experiences in similar activities to be financed by the project, at different positions of the Government's administration;
- The MEP and MES comprise various technical directorates, a Financial resources and Material directorate (DRFM), and a procurement Directorate DMP; the technical directorates possess staff with acceptable know how to provide technical inputs in

procurement documents, except for civil engineering constructions. The Procurement Directorate staff in the two Ministries have limited qualifications in procurement generally, and limited experience with World Bank procedures; and

- The MES does not have adequate procurement filing and tools (manual, tracking software).

52. The overall Project Risk for procurement is rated Substantial, based on the weak capacities of the implementing agencies. The key risk identified is that staff responsible for procurement may not have sufficient experience with Bank procedures. This could cause misprocurement and/or rigidity in the interpretation of Bank procedures, leading to slowness in procurement decisions, reputational risks to the Bank and the Project, and delays towards attaining the PDO.

53. Risk mitigations measures have been discussed and agreed with the agencies. These measures include:

- As a result of the procurement capacity constraints and in order to avoid delaying the implementation of procurement activities, the project will recruit two qualified and experienced Procurement specialists to support the DMPs of the two ministries as part of the short term fiduciary team (MEP by effectiveness and MES not later than two months after effectiveness). The Procurement specialists are to be fully dedicated to this project and support the DMPs on handling all the project's procurement activities.
- The MEP will recruit no longer than 4 months after effectiveness an Implementation Support Agency to support procurement activities at the Central and regional levels for both Ministries (MEP and MES).
- Delegated Executing Agencies will be competitively selected as needed to implement activities related to Infrastructure, including procurement, in the case of both ministries.
- An international consulting engineering firm will be recruited to, inter alia, support the central and regional levels with engineering designs and procurement for civil works for both MEP and MES.
- A manual of administrative, financial and accounting procedures will be prepared to clarify the role of each team member involved in the procurement process of the project, the maximum delay for each procurement stage, specifically with regards to the review, approval system and signature of contracts.
- A Project Implementation Manual (PIM) detailing the simplified procedures through Community participation in Procurement will be developed and approved by the Bank.

- A workshop will be organized at the beginning of the Project to train all key stakeholders involved in procurement on World Bank procurement procedures and policies.
- An adequate filing system would be set up for the project records at the MEP and MES. The project will finance appropriate equipment and the ISA firm will support these entities to ensure compliance with WB procurement filing manual.

54. The residual risk is assessed as Moderate.

Procurement prior review thresholds

55. For Niger, International Competitive Bidding (ICB) thresholds have been set at US\$5 million for works and US\$500,000 for goods. Contracts estimated to cost above these ICB thresholds for works and goods will be subject to prior review by IDA.

56. Consultancy services for firms estimated at the equivalent value of US\$200,000 and above per contract, consultant services for individual consultants at the equivalent of US\$100,000 and above, and all single-source selection of consultants with firms and individuals will be subject to prior review by IDA.

57. Further, since the overall procurement risk has been rated substantial, it was agreed on the following additional mitigation measures:

- a) At least once a year, the Bank and the Government will agree on a procurement plan which will detail the procurement methods to be used and specific contracts to be reviewed by the Bank;
- b) The Bank will perform prior review of selected NCB contracts which will be identified and mentioned in the procurement plan; and;
- c) All amendments of contracts raising the initial contract value by more than 15 percent of original amount or above the prior review thresholds will be subject to prior review by the Bank as determined mandatory in Paragraphs 2 and 3 of Annex 1 of the Bank's Procurement Guidelines.
- d) Post Review: for each contract for goods and public works not submitted to prior review, the procurement documents will be submitted to IDA post review in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 4 of Annex 1 of the Bank's procurement Guidelines. The post review will be based on a ratio of at least 1 to 5 contracts.

Revision

58. The prior review thresholds and other measures to be taken to mitigate the procurement risk should be re-evaluated once a year with a view of adjusting them to reflect changes in the procurement risk that may have taken place in the meantime and to adapt them to specific situations. In case of failure to comply with the agreed mitigation measures or Bank guidelines, a re-evaluation measure of both types of thresholds, ICB and prior review, may be required by IDA.

Procurement Plan

59. A procurement plan (PP) for the first 18 months of project implementation has been approved during negotiations. During implementation, the procurement plan will be updated in agreement with the project team as required—at least annually—to reflect actual project implementation needs and improvements in institutional capacity. It will be available in the project's database and a summary will be disclosed on the Bank's external website once the project is approved by the World Bank.

Implementation support

60. In addition to prior reviews to be carried out from IDA offices, the capacity assessment recommended two field implementation support missions and at least one procurement post review per year. The Procurement Specialist team in the Niamey Country office will provide continuous support to implementing agencies. Independent procurement reviews will be carried out if necessary.

Annex 4: Operational Risk Assessment Framework (ORAF)

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

Project Stakeholder Risks						
Stakeholder Risk	Rating	Moderate				
<p>Risk Description:</p> <p>The achievement of the project objectives hinges on the maintenance of, or increase in, current funding levels of education by the government. There is a risk that the government will not be able to maintain the announced levels of funding of education in the face of exogenous shocks.</p> <p>Given the size and nature of the project, lack of effective coordination across the relevant ministries and their regional structures, and with the partners supporting education, presents a risk to the effective implementation of the project.</p>	<p>Risk Management:</p> <p>Government and maintenance of sector funding: both the transition government and the current government have been relatively successful in maintaining macro-economic stability in the face of significant external shocks. There is no indication that the government will not be able to continue this prudent management of the economy and master shocks. The current government places a high priority on education as indicated by the inauguration speech of the new president. Thus, it appears likely that sector funding will at least be maintained at current levels.</p>					
	Resp: Client	Status:	Stage: Implementation	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency: Yearly
	<p>Risk Management:</p> <p>During all stages of project identification and preparation and supervision, extensive stakeholder consultations took and will take place. The project implementation arrangements foresee a project steering committee to provide policy guidance, ensure stakeholder dialogue and buy-in, determine priorities and oversee project implementation.</p>					
	Resp: Both	Status:	Stage: Both	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency: CONTINUOUS
Implementing Agency (IA) Risks (including Fiduciary Risks)						
Capacity	Rating	Substantial				
Risk Description:	Risk Management:					

Overall lack of adequate management capacity, leadership and accountability structures with regards to fiduciary aspects, M&E, project management constitute a potential risk for project implementation.	A financial management and procurement capacity assessment of the key implementing agency will be conducted to evaluate their capacity, identify risks and propose mitigation measures. Based on this assessment appropriate technical assistance, follow up mechanisms and other capacity building measures will be provided to the implementing agency to ensure effective implementation of the activities, and establishment/improvement of solid M&E systems etc.					
	Resp: Both	Status:	Stage: Implementation	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency: CONTINUOUS
Governance	Rating	Substantial				
Risk Description: There is a risk of political interference in the selection of contracts and beneficiaries to be funded.	Risk Management:					
	Appropriate and transparent criteria will be established for any activities requiring a selection process of beneficiaries/beneficiary organizations, based on best practices.					
	The project implementation manual will also include mechanisms for addressing grievances, complaints and disputes.					
	Resp: Client	Status:	Stage: Implementation	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency: CONTINUOUS
	Risk Management:					
	Procurement: Regular Project supervision missions, post-procurement audits and a capacity building program will help alleviate this risk. The undertaking of these will be facilitated by the procurement specialist being based in the country.					
	Financial Management: A financial management assessment will be carried out to assess the capacity of the project implementing institution. A manual of financial, administrative and accounting procedures will be developed. Regular project supervision missions involving desk and field reviews among others will be carried out to mitigate the risk of funds not being used for the purposes intended. The implementing Ministry staff will be trained in Bank procedures relating to FM aspects of the project.					

	In addition, financial audits using the risk based approach will be carried out on annual basis.					
	Resp: Both	Status:	Stage: Implementation	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency: CONTINUOUS
Project Risks						
Design	Rating	Moderate				
Risk Description: The project design will involve different ministries and other stakeholders working together. Along with the Ministry weak capacity, this may make coordination and implementation challenging.	Risk Management: Extensive consultations with all key stakeholders throughout the design and implementation of the project. Comprehensive and consistent sector strategy. Project management structure and Project Steering Committee to ensure regular coordination and promote sector dialogue.					
	Resp: Both	Status:	Stage: Both	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency: CONTINUOUS
Social and Environmental	Rating	Low				
Risk Description: The project is classified as Environmental Category B since potential adverse environmental and social impacts associated with the construction of classrooms are generally less adverse, small-scale and site specific; thus, manageable to an accepted level. Based on the proposed construction activities, i.e. classroom construction, the proposed project triggers two of the Bank’s safeguard policies OP 4.01 on Environmental Assessment and OP 4.12 on Involuntary Resettlement.	Risk Management: An Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) have been prepared and disclosed on October 1, 2013 to guide the management of environmental and social aspects of the relevant interventions during implementation. An Environmental and Social Management Plan and Resettlement Action Plan will be prepared when/if necessary.					
	Resp: Client	Status:	Stage: Implementation	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency: CONTINUOUS
Program and Donor	Rating	Moderate				

<p>Risk Description:</p> <p>Weak government capacity for coordinating the projects of the development partners will lead to inefficiencies in project implementation and substantial transaction costs.</p>	<p>Risk Management:</p> <p>The project will finance technical assistance to the implementing ministry to strengthen the capacity for planning and implementation.</p> <p>The Project Steering Committee will be the same as the steering committee for the education sector plan PSEF.</p> <p>A pooled fund will be established for pooling resources for basic education, thereby reducing the transaction costs, once the fund is up and running.</p>					
	<p>Resp:</p> <p>Both</p>	<p>Status:</p>	<p>Stage:</p> <p>Implementation</p>	<p>Recurrent:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Due Date:</p>	<p>Frequency:</p> <p>CONTINUOUS</p>
<p>Delivery Monitoring and Sustainability</p>	<p>Rating</p>	<p>Substantial</p>				
<p>Risk Description:</p> <p>There is a risk of weak monitoring and evaluation due to low capacity and the multitude of stakeholders involved.</p>	<p>Risk Management:</p> <p>A comprehensive M&E system will be established in the implementing ministry with project financing.</p>					
	<p>Resp:</p> <p>Client</p>	<p>Status:</p>	<p>Stage:</p> <p>Implementation</p>	<p>Recurrent:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Due Date:</p>	<p>Frequency:</p> <p>CONTINUOUS</p>
<p>Overall Risk</p>						
<p>Overall Implementation Risk:</p>	<p>Rating</p>	<p>Substantial</p>				
<p>Risk Description:</p> <p>Weak management and implementation capacity, including with regards to fiduciary aspects, M&E, and project management constitute a potential risk for project implementation.</p>						

Annex 5: Implementation Support Plan

1. **Strategy and Approach for Implementation Support:** The strategy for implementation support takes into account the weak capacity of the Implementing Agencies and other participants in project implementation, the nature of the supported activities and the risk profile of the project as described in the ORAF. It aims at providing the right mix of technical, fiduciary and safeguards implementation support in a responsive manner with the aim to implement the identified risk mitigation measures efficiently, while maintaining the flexibility to be able to respond quickly to an evolving operational environment and client needs.

2. The Bank, together with the Implementing Agencies and other donors contributing to the pooled fund, will formally review project implementation semi-annually. More frequent visits are expected in the first year of implementation to provide support to the launch of activities. The joint review missions will be complemented by: (i) regular visits from the Bank's Country Office staff; (ii) support from locally based technical consultants; and (iii) continuous communication and follow-up between missions.

3. In addition to the joint review missions, several technical missions will be carried out throughout the project period. During the technical missions, extensive field visits will be undertaken to determine reform outcomes, and to take corrective actions for improvement at the provincial and institutional levels. The Bank team will also hold regular consultations with relevant stakeholders.

4. If the security situation deteriorates to the extent that joint review missions are not possible or the scope of supervision during these missions has to be limited, the following measures are proposed to maintain continuity in the extent and quality of supervision: (i) use of audio and video conferences as well as continuous communication via email; and (ii) expansion of the monitoring work performed by third parties, including additional field visits by firms hired to provide third party validation support; and (iii) use of firms to provide technical support on the ground.

5. **Implementation Support Plan:** Most of the Bank team members will be based in the Niger Country Office and other country offices in the region to ensure timely, efficient and effective implementation support to the client. Formal supervision and field visits will be carried out semi-annually, with more frequent technical implementation support missions during the first year of implementation. Detailed inputs from the Bank team are outlined below:

- **Technical inputs.** Technical inputs are required to review the preparation of the proposals and bids to ensure fair competition through proper technical specifications and fair assessment of the technical aspects for both components. The team's architect/civil engineering specialist will conduct site visits on a semi-annual basis throughout project implementation.
- **M&E Specialist.** Strengthening the IAs' monitoring capacities is crucial for the successful implementation as well as sustainability of project activities and outcomes. An M&E Specialist will provide focused support throughout the Project period to ensure that

this function is performed satisfactorily and that obligations to provide information are met efficiently and reliably.

- ***Fiduciary requirements and inputs.*** Training will be provided by the Bank's FM specialist and procurement specialist before the start of project implementation. The Bank Procurement Specialist will be based in the country office and provide timely support. Intensive FM supervision will be required in the initial year of implementation given the challenges and the capacity of the sector's financial management staffing. Supervision of FM will be carried out semi-annually. During Project implementation, the Bank will review: (a) the Project IFRs and audited financial statements, including the budget execution report, together with the management letters; and (b) the Projects financial management and disbursement' arrangements to ensure compliance with the agreed requirements. With the implementation of the sound financial management and monitoring system by the professional staff proposed for the MEP implementation team, the Bank's normal implementation review procedures will suffice;
- A procurement specialist will participate in all Bank implementation support missions, including the Joint Review Missions every six months. In addition to the prior review, Bank supervision missions would carry out post review of procurement actions.

6. For both procurement and financial management, the team will follow-up on the progress on the identified capacity building needs to strengthen FM capacity and to improve procurement management efficiency.

7. **Safeguards:** Regular Bank implementation support missions will include environmental and social development staff. Missions will include field visits which will ensure that Component 1 civil works activities are adhering to the ESMF and ESMP and that civil works do not have adverse environmental and/or social impacts.

8. The main focus of implementation support is summarized below.

<i>Time</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Skills Needed</i>	<i>Resource Estimate</i>	<i>Partner Role</i>
<i>First twelve months</i>	Technical Review/Support	Senior Education Specialist	4 SWs	N/A
		M&E Specialist	3 SWs	
	FM training and supervision	FM Specialist	4 SWs	
	Institutional arrangement and project supervision coordination	Operations Officer	6 SWs	
	Team leadership	TTL	6 SWs	

	Technical Review/Support	Senior Education Specialist	6 SWs	
		M&E Specialist	6SWs	
12-48 months	Financial management	FM Specialist	6 SWs	N/A
	disbursement and reporting	Operations Officer	12 SWs	
	Procurement management	Procurement Specialist	4 SWs	N/A
	Team leadership	TTL	12 SWs	N/A
Other				

Note: SW- Staff Week

Skills Mix Required

<i>Skills Needed</i>	<i>Number of Staff Weeks (SW)</i>	<i>Number of Trips</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Operations Officer	12 SWs	Annually Field trips as required.	HQ based staff
Education Specialist	6 SWs	Annually Field trips as required.	International Expert
Procurement Specialist	4 SWs	Annually Field trips as required.	Country office based staff
M&E Specialist	6 SWs	Annually Field trips as required.	HQ based staff
Financial Management Specialist	6 SWs	Annually Field trips as required.	Country office based staff
Task Team Leader	12 SWs annually	Four (annually)	Country Office

Partners

9. Although the other donors (with the exception of AFD) are not co-financing the proposed project, they will provide significant parallel funding for support to basic education. Initial commitments indicate substantial support for TA from Lux Dev, UNICEF, Swiss Cooperation, GIZ, and JICA to support infrastructure of public training institutions and to provide support to the teacher training.

<i>Institution/Country</i>	<i>Role</i>
<i>Lux Dev</i>	<i>Development Partner</i>
<i>UNICEF</i>	<i>Development Partner</i>
<i>Swiss Cooperation</i>	<i>Development Partner</i>
<i>GIZ</i>	<i>Development Partner</i>
<i>JICA</i>	<i>Development Partner</i>

Annex 6: Economic and Financial Analysis

1. The project supports Niger in addressing central challenges towards achieving universal primary education. The current large youth population and high population growth puts a substantial pressure on the country's education system and imposes a need for investment to increase capacity of the system. To limit the current shortage in capacity, the project constructs primary and lower secondary classrooms and is thus expected to offset some of the household demand-side pressure on the education system stemming from the fast growing young population.

2. In addition to increasing access to education, the project is also expected to improve quality of learning and thereby the qualifications of those graduating. Today, a large part of the population lacks basic skills such as the ability to read and do simple math, and the lack of skilled manpower is one of the major constraints on economic development in Niger affecting all sectors of the economy.¹⁶ Thus, enhancing learning outcomes is expected to positively affect economic development of the country in the medium to longer run. Furthermore, a higher quality of learning is likely to improve retention and thereby support a higher completion rate.

3. The project includes elements specifically targeted at improving education for more vulnerable groups such as children from poor families, children in rural areas, and for girls. The project will specifically promote girls' access to education in deprived areas, where gender inequality in access to education is more pronounced. More broadly, children will benefit from shorter distance to school from their home, which is expected to positively affect access.

4. The main beneficiaries from the project are primary and lower secondary school students, who will benefit from increased access and better quality of education. Furthermore, teachers are expected to benefit from better training and improved working environment. In general, it is difficult to precisely quantify the benefits from improved quality of education as the effects on social resources, productivity of manpower, employability, and income are difficult to quantify. The following paragraphs discuss more qualitatively the benefits expected to accrue from the project components, while including quantitative assessments where possible.

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

Sub-Component 1.1: Education infrastructure

5. The focus of this sub-component is to improve access to primary and lower secondary education by reducing the shortage of classrooms in targeted districts. The component supports construction, rehabilitation, and furnishing of classrooms as well as provision of latrines, expected to increase both the quantity and quality of primary and lower secondary education in Niger.

6. The sub-component will build (or re-build) around 2,000 primary and lower secondary school classrooms. Given the current shortage of classrooms in the country, the construction and

¹⁶ The World Bank, "Improving education and developing skills for economic growth in Niger", July 2012, p. XVI.

rehabilitation of schools is expected to be fully utilized and lead to an additional enrollment of about 100,000 students. In addition to the increase in access, the quality improvements and decrease in overcrowded classrooms are expected to raise the learning outcomes of more than 200,000 students (new and existing students)

7. Due to the current pressure on the education system, the increase in capacity will provide an overall higher level of education in the country, which will result in both private gains and public gains. However, especially for basic education, the direct private economic benefits for the students graduating may seem smaller compared to the overall social benefits prevailing from a general higher level education in the country. The expansion of the basic education system lays the foundation for secondary and higher education and provides important social benefits. The social effects may include dimensions such as mortality, health, population growth, and civic life (more educated individuals are better able to participate in an organized community life and to make informed policy choices). Social benefits are especially high for the achievement of primary education compared to other levels of education, as primary education helps reduce adult illiteracy and the risk of poverty, as well as increase health of mothers and children. However, in general these benefits are difficult to quantify in monetary terms, and the calculated return from increased education does therefore not take these factors into account.

8. The direct economic effect from the increased access to primary education is quantified based on expected wage benefit for those graduating. Across professional categories, the level of education is the factor that influences the level of income most, and the differences in wages are particular high going from secondary to TVET education and from TVET to higher education. There is also a clear wage gain from completing primary education compared to the average income for people without education, cf Table 1.¹⁷

Table 1: Income levels (hourly FCFA) dependent on education and professional category

	Total	Employed	Self-employed, non-agricultural
No schooling	32	72	107
Primary	43	153	161
Secondary	69	277	127
TVET	390	417	264
Higher education	669	669	162

Source: The World Bank, “Improving education and developing skills for economic growth in Niger”, July 2010

9. The benefit from the increased access to primary and lower secondary education depends on how many of the students enrolled will graduate and subsequently become employed or self-employed. In 2008, the completion rate for primary education was 66.8 percent corresponding to a little less than seven out of ten children accessing primary school completing the cycle, whereas the completion rate was only 34 percent for lower secondary school. When calculating the economic benefit from construction of classrooms, the base scenario conservatively assumes

¹⁷ The World Bank, “Improving education and developing skills for economic growth in Niger”, July 2012 p. 10.

that completion rates stay at this level, although completion is expected to improve based on higher retention due to quality improvement.

10. Although, some of the children finalizing primary and lower school will continue with further secondary and higher education, the direct economic benefit of increased access is based only on the achievement of the respective level of education. Access to secondary and higher education is still limited in Niger and investments are necessary to increase access to higher levels of education. Thus, assessment of direct economic benefit includes only future income based on achieved education level.

11. Unemployment rates differ across education levels, and in general unemployment is higher for the younger population. For the 25-34 years old, the unemployment rate was just below 10 percent in 2006 for people with primary education, whereas the unemployment rate was around 3 percent for those aged 35-55. For lower secondary education the numbers were around 17 percent and 4 percent respectively for the two age groups.¹⁸ In the base scenario of the economic analysis, the likelihood of employment for the students graduating corresponds to observed employment rates depending on age and education level. For those not graduating, income is unchanged compared to the alternative scenario of no education. It is assumed that there is no opportunity cost of the income forgone because of education for students enrolled in primary education, whereas an opportunity cost corresponding to the average income for people with primary education is assumed for those enrolled in lower secondary education.

12. The total cost of the sub-component amounts to about US\$50 million and includes construction of classrooms, furniture, and latrines. The constructions are assumed to last for 20 years with a yearly cost of maintenance and replacement of equipment amounting to US\$4.5 million (equivalent to about 10 percent of total costs). In addition to project costs, recurrent costs of enrolling the additional students are included.¹⁹ In Niger, unit costs for primary education are broadly comparable to those of other countries in the region, but costs increase relatively more in Niger compared to the other countries when moving to the higher levels of education.

13. The NPV of the base scenario is US\$193.2 million (FCFA 98.7 billion)²⁰ and the IRR is 11 percent. Thus, the analysis of direct economic benefits shows a reasonable positive payoff from investment from the school construction based on actual completion, employment, and wage rates. As already mentioned a number of benefits from education, such as social effects, are more difficult to quantify and are not included in the calculated NPV. Taking this into account, this project sub-component is expected to provide a significant positive return from investment.

14. Naturally these results depend on the assumptions made, and a sensitivity analysis is made based on various employment and wage scenarios as well as different discount rates. The construction and replacement of classrooms is expected to increase quality of learning by reducing the number of overcrowded classrooms, improving the teaching environment, and providing drinking water and latrines. The improvement in quality of learning is likely to result

¹⁸ RESEN 2010, p. 146. Numbers read from the graph.

¹⁹ In 2008, yearly unit costs for students in primary education was US\$75 (FCFA 38,159) and for students in lower secondary US\$154 (FCFA 78,655).

²⁰ Based on a discount factor of 5% (corresponds to the average GDP growth in Niger between 2003-2012).

in higher completion rates and subsequently possibly also higher productivity and earnings of the students graduating. This is modeled by a 5 percent increase in real wages and a 5 to 10 percent increase in completion rates. However, to include the possibility of adverse economic development a scenario with a corresponding wage decrease is also included.

15. Table 2 shows the NPV of this project sub-component under different scenarios. The NPV of the different scenarios ranges from US\$46.8 million to US\$241.4 million, and the IRR ranges from 11 to 12 percent showing a consistent positive payoff from investment in all scenarios.

Table 2: NPV of project dependent on completion rate and wage (million US\$ 2012-prices)

Completion rate Wage scenarios	5% discount rate			8% discount rate		
	Actual	+ 5%	+ 10%	Actual	+ 5%	+ 10%
5 % wage decrease	177.7	192.4	207.2	46.8	53.6	60.4
Actual	193.2	208.7	224.3	54.0	61.1	68.2
5% wage increase	208.7	225.0	241.4	61.1	68.6	76.0

Note: Actual refers to parameters based on most recent data, which are used in the base scenario.

Source: Author's calculations.

16. These benefits will be enhanced by additional project interventions on school feeding and girl's education.

Sub-components 1.2: Girls' access to education

17. Gender disparity in education still exists in Niger with lower enrollment and higher dropout rates for girls than for boys. The gender inequality in access to education is more pronounced in rural areas than in urban areas, and the problem is particularly serious among poor girls living in rural areas. Sub-component 1.2 focuses on reducing gender disparities by encouraging girls' schooling in areas where girls are underrepresented, including through awareness activities, payment of teachers' overtime for girls' tutoring and Girls' Education Grants. In addition to improved access and retention of girls in primary education, the project is expected to lead to positive social benefits for the girls e.g. in terms of improved health measures related to maternity as analysis has shown that education has a particular strong effect on girls in terms of these social benefits (RESEN 2010). Girls' education has also shown to be positively correlated with health outcomes and to contribute to decreasing population growth, notably by delaying the age to marriage.

Sub-component 1.3: School feeding and student health

18. This sub-component aims at reducing nutrition deficiencies as well as improving access and retention in primary education by supporting school feeding. Niger has been experiencing periods of severe draughts leading to successive famines and increased vulnerability. This sub-component aims at reducing the resulting nutritional deficiencies in selected districts by offering

at least one meal per day to about 40, 000 students yearly over a three year period. The project will support school canteens. The provision of food is expected to help maintain a larger number of students in the system, as the guarantee of a daily meal is a source of motivation for students. Furthermore, learning capability is expected to improve as nutritional deficiencies are reduced, which is further likely to reduce repetition and dropouts and thus positively affect internal efficiency of the education system. A survey from parents' associations undertaken in relation to a school project in Burkina Faso showed that the establishment of school canteens provided significant support for reducing repetition and dropout.²¹ In addition to enhanced enrollment and retention rates, school feeding is likely to improve the health and the quality of life for the students.

Component 2: Improving the quality of teaching and learning

Sub-component 2.1: Pedagogical inputs

19. The focus of this sub-component is to increase the quality and relevance of primary and lower secondary education by providing learning materials. The availability of textbooks and other learning materials has shown to have strong positive impact on learning outcomes, and the investment in learning materials is therefore important for improving the quality of learning.²² The project is expected to provide around 7 million textbooks and manuals and benefit up to 2 million children. Furthermore, the project will provide about 125,000 teachers' guides.

20. By improving the availability of learning material, the quality of learning will be positively affected, which will lead to enhanced skills of students and higher internal efficiency of the system. Furthermore, the textbooks will be provided free of costs for students, which is likely to positively affect enrollment of students from poor families.

Sub-component 2.2: Teacher training

21. The objective of this sub-component is to improve the quality of education by improving teaching practices. The project will support pre-service and in-service training for primary and lower secondary school teachers. About 3,500 contractual teachers will benefit from in-service training in the areas targeted by the project and 375 teacher trainers will be trained. In terms of the training of trainers, focus will be put for both pre-service (PRESET) and in-service trainers (INSET) on improving their capacity for hands on, practical and class oriented teacher training to help them transfer well defined basic skills and practices in all teaching domains, starting from early reading and early math.

22. Teacher training has shown to have a strong positive impact on learning outcomes, and the recent Public Expenditure Review on the Niger Education sector strongly recommends investing in teachers' training to improve the quality of the education.

²¹ ICR (IDA-41960), Burkina Faso Second Post-Primary Education Project, 2013.

²² World Bank, "Republic of Niger, 2012 Public Expenditure Review (PER)", May 2013, p. 76

23. The positive effects of pedagogical inputs and teacher training on learning outcomes will be further enhanced by the incipient curriculum reform and implementation of the early reading pilot.

24. While it is very difficult to quantify the overall gains related to improved learning outcomes from sub-components 1.2, 2.1 and 2.2, also because of the different target groups, small further improvements, of the order of 5 to 10 percent, in completion rates and subsequently productivity and earnings were modeled and compared to the overall cost of sub-components 1.1, 1.2, 2.1 and 2.2 leading to an overall IRR of between 10 and 12 percent.

Component 3: Strengthening management capacity

25. Finally, the third component focuses on improving the management and governance of the education system. The component is designed to enhance the capacity at the central and decentralized levels of the MEP including support to better define functions and roles, providing training for key education staff at different levels, and improving the monitoring and evaluation. The project will strengthen the administrative and financial functions as well as human resource management. Today, Niger struggles with inefficiencies in education management, which need to be addressed to increase the quality of education and to reach higher efficiency. The measures under this component should further support improvements in the internal efficiency of the education system.

Financial analysis

26. The education and training system in Niger is funded 89 percent by the national budget (including support and debt cancellation repayments under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) program). The remaining 11 percent comes from external support in form of projects.²³ According to a review of the public expenditure in the education sector in Niger, the resource allocation to the education sector is estimated to account for 4.4 percent of GDP and 21.6 percent of government expenditure in 2011 (Table 3).²⁴

Table 3: Total public expenditure on education (Net of debt and special accounts)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
% of GDP	3.6	4.0	4.3	3.9	4.4
% of total government expenditure	10.7	21.6	21.9	27.2	21.6

Source: Niger – A Review of Public Expenditure in the Education Sector table 2.

27. There is a strong government commitment to universal education in Niger with the goal of providing free basic education to all and with a commitment to expand access to post-basic education. Out of the total public spending on education, 60 percent went to primary education in 2010, 25 percent to secondary education, and 12 percent to tertiary education, whereas non-formal education received the remaining 3 percent. The high budgetary focus on primary

²³ World Bank, “Improving education and developing skills for economic growth in Niger”, July 2010, p. XIV.

²⁴ World Bank, “Republic of Niger, 2012 Public Expenditure Review (PER)”, May 2013.

education places Niger among the countries with the largest share of the education budget going to primary education. Likewise, most external funding has gone to basic education especially with emphasis on infrastructure building.

28. Inefficiencies in the use and allocation of resources across all education levels and high unit costs for secondary, TVET and tertiary education point to the possibility of creating fiscal space by increasing internal efficiency in the system and better targeting budget allocations. Among other things, higher efficiency can be achieved through a reduction of the repetition and dropout rates, by redeploying teachers assigned to administrative duties to active teaching, and by increasing effective weekly teaching loads to align them with other countries (including decreases in teacher absenteeism).

29. Total program spending is US\$100 million (pooled fund), which will be spent over a three year period from 2014 to 2016. The fiscal impact from the project amounts to between 9.4 percent and 14.8 percent of the total public expenditure on education during the three project years and around 2.3 percent after project implementation, as indicated in the Table 4 below.

Table 4: Fiscal impact

Project cost (inv. and recurrent)	2014	2015	2016	2017- 2035
- Pct. of total public spending on education	9.4	14.8	13.5	2.3
- Pct. of recurrent public spending on education	10.3	16.3	14.9	2.6

Source: World Bank, "Republic of Niger, 2012 Public Expenditure Review (PER)", May 2013, and author's calculations.

30. Compared to the overall budget for education the fiscal impact is limited after project implementation. The primary fiscal impact after project implementation stems from the costs associated with the expansion of the primary and lower secondary education system, i.e. the recurrent costs associated with the additional number of students accommodated as well as maintenance costs of the institutions. The fiscal impact directly attributable to the project only relates to costs of the program as far as they are additional to the recurrent expenditure that would have been made without the project. The other project access related sub-components such as school feeding, the activities targeted to girls education, and block grants to schools do not have a direct fiscal effect, as the Government can choose to cease these programs. Finally, the fiscal impact of the components on the improvement of teaching and learning and system management strengthening is minimal to non-existing.

Annex 7: Sector and Partnership Issues

1. The Local Education Group (LEG) in Niger is led by a Lead Donor, recently transitioned from UNICEF to the Swiss Cooperation, who acts as the focal point for the group. The Partnership Framework signed July 2013 commits them to working to coordinate their support for the PSEF. This contributes to eliminating duplication of efforts and rationalizing donor activities to make them as cost effective as possible. Additionally, in order to move toward further harmonization, AFD has proposed to combine its financing with that of the GPE grant in a pooled fund, managed by the Government. The pooled fund will be open to all partners wishing to use this financing mode. Unlike under the PDDE pooled fund, the pooled account will be managed as a designated project account and hence more secure. World Bank procurement and financial management procedures will apply to the pooled fund. In the meantime, the donors will continue to improve Niger's public financial management system and national procedures, so that future contributions of the GPE and/or of other partners would be more closely aligned with country system and national procedures (in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness). The key elements of the implementation arrangements are described below.

2. Its mode of operation will be specified in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (or *lettre d'entente*) between the contributors to the fund and the Government of Niger. It will provide for semi-annual progress reports, joint annual reviews with Government, independent audits (financial, technical, and procurement) covering the entirety of the pooled fund financing, and with consideration for the jointly agreed procurement and FM and institutional arrangements. The operating principles of the proposed pooled fund (especially in fiduciary matters) will be as follows:

- Every year, the MEP and MES will prepare a draft annual action plan and budget that will include all activities, training, and operating costs to be financed during the subsequent year of project implementation. The Government will submit this plan to the World Bank as well as other pooled fund donors. The MoU and project manuals will provide more details on its contents and on the dates and process for preparation, discussion, and amendment of the plan. Specifically, the draft plan for the following year will be discussed between the Government and donors during the November joint mission. The annual action plan and budget shall subsequently be submitted to the Steering Committee and then to the World Bank for approval. During the first year of project implementation, the AAP should be ready no later than one month after effectiveness.
- The Fund will be managed in project format with the designated accounts domiciled in a commercial bank. The funds will not go through the national treasury. Contributions to the fund will be recorded under Chapter 5 of the State budget. The MEP and MES will open their accounts in a commercial bank acceptable to AFD and World Bank, and will appoint representatives authorized to perform transactions on the accounts. All expenses will be made from these accounts or through direct payments by the pooled fund donors.

- Project sub-accounts may be opened at regional level. The mechanisms for transfers and providing support to the decentralized units, for monitoring the utilization of the funds by the latter, will be specified in guidelines and outlined in the project procedures manual.
- Payments to the DCAs will be made in advanced installments paid into designated accounts (Das) opened by the DCAs for them to independently manage the payment of the sub-contractors they would have hired. This would streamline the payment system and ease the implementation of activities.
- All of the accounts (MEP, MES, and DCAs) will be frequently audited (half-yearly or yearly audits).
- On certain strategic or decision point documents specified from the outset, once all pooled fund donors have agreed on their contents, the World Bank will issue the no objection opinion (NOO) on behalf of all donors. These are: the recruitment of the Implementation Support Agency, project manuals, Project Procurement Plan (PP), AAPs, project progress reports, financial reports, and audits. Further, it is expected that the various contributors will ex-ante agree on the areas in which their teams can contribute to the technical review of the requests for NOOs, according to their comparative advantage and areas of specific interest, so as to use all resources in the most efficient way.

3. On procurement, the following principles have been retained:

- The IDA directives regarding procurement will apply to MEP, MES, and all the DCAs.
- The thresholds above which a NOO will be needed are listed in Annex 3 as prior review thresholds. These will be incorporated into the procedures manual and the procurement plan.
- Notwithstanding these thresholds, the PP may mention specific contracts which will need a NOO.
- The World Bank will manage the procurement NOOs and issue (or not) NOOs on behalf of all the pooled fund contributors.
- All contributors to the pooled fund will be notified of requests for NOOs, and they will be copied on all communications relating to the NOOs.
- The DCAs will be competitively selected.

4. The World Bank is the SE and together with the MEP and MES will report on the progress made on the implementation of the project. The Lead Donor will continue to work with the Ministry of Education and other partners to ensure an adequate coordination in the implementation, monitoring & evaluation of the PSEF as a whole.

Map

