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PROJECT PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT REPORT

NIGER

**FIRST EDUCATION PROJECT (CREDIT 1151-NIR)
PRIMARY EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (CREDIT 1740-NIR)
BASIC EDUCATION SECTOR PROJECT (HYBRID) – (CREDIT 2618 - NIR)**

February 15,2005

*Sector, Thematic, and Global Evaluation Group
Operations Evaluation Department*

Currency Equivalents (annual averages)

1996	US\$1 00 =	CFA franc 516
	US\$1 00 =	SDR 69
	SDR 1 =	US\$ 1.44
2001	US\$ 0 0126 =	1 00 CFA
	CFA 794 =	US\$1 00

Abbreviations and Acronyms

CAPED	Cellule d'Animation Pédagogique
ECE	Ecole des Cadres de l'Élevage
EFA	Education for All
FTI	Fast-Track Initiative to achieve Education for All
GDP	Gross domestic product
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Technische Zusammenarbeit
HIPC	Highly indebted poor countries
ICR	Implementation Completion Report
IDA	International Development Association
INDRAP	Institut National de Documentation, de Recherche et d'Animation Pédagogique
IPDR	Institut Pratique pour le Développement Rural
AfDB	African Development Association
LIL	Learning and Innovation Lending
KfW	Kreditanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau (German Credit Institute for Reconstruction)
MIS	Management information system
MLA	Monitoring Learning Achievement
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
OED	Operations Evaluation Department
PEAC	Public Expenditure Adjustment Credit
PPAR	Project Performance Assessment Report
PRODEP	Projet de Développement de l'Éducation Primaire
PROSEF	Projet Sectoriel d'Enseignement Fondamental
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
MEBA	Ministère de l'Éducation de Base et d'Alphabétisation
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
QAG	Quality Assurance Group
SAR	Staff Appraisal Report
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

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OED Mission: Enhancing development effectiveness through excellence and independence in evaluation.

About this Report

The Operations Evaluation Department assesses the programs and activities of the World Bank for two purposes: first, to ensure the integrity of the Bank's self-evaluation process and to verify that the Bank's work is producing the expected results, and second, to help develop improved directions, policies, and procedures through the dissemination of lessons drawn from experience. As part of this work, OED annually assesses about 25 percent of the Bank's lending operations. In selecting operations for assessment, preference is given to those that are innovative, large, or complex; those that are relevant to upcoming studies or country evaluations; those for which Executive Directors or Bank management have requested assessments; and those that are likely to generate important lessons. The projects, topics, and analytical approaches selected for assessment support larger evaluation studies.

A Project Performance Assessment Report (PPAR) is based on a review of the Implementation Completion Report (a self-evaluation by the responsible Bank department) and fieldwork conducted by OED. To prepare PPARs, OED staff examine project files and other documents, interview operational staff, and in most cases visit the borrowing country for onsite discussions with project staff and beneficiaries. The PPAR thereby seeks to validate and augment the information provided in the ICR, as well as examine issues of special interest to broader OED studies.

Each PPAR is subject to a peer review process and OED management approval. Once cleared internally, the PPAR is reviewed by the responsible Bank department and amended as necessary. The completed PPAR is then sent to the borrower for review; the borrowers' comments are attached to the document that is sent to the Bank's Board of Executive Directors. After an assessment report has been sent to the Board, it is disclosed to the public.

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The time-tested evaluation methods used by OED are suited to the broad range of the World Bank's work. The methods offer both rigor and a necessary level of flexibility to adapt to lending instrument, project design, or sectoral approach. OED evaluators all apply the same basic method to arrive at their project ratings. Following is the definition and rating scale used for each evaluation criterion (more information is available on the OED website: <http://worldbank.org/oed/eta-mainpage.html>).

Relevance of Objectives: The extent to which the project's objectives are consistent with the country's current development priorities and with current Bank country and sectoral assistance strategies and corporate goals (expressed in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, Country Assistance Strategies, Sector Strategy Papers, Operational Policies). Possible ratings: High, Substantial, Modest, Negligible.

Efficacy: The extent to which the project's objectives were achieved, or expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance. Possible ratings: High, Substantial, Modest, Negligible.

Efficiency: The extent to which the project achieved, or is expected to achieve, a return higher than the opportunity cost of capital and benefits at least cost compared to alternatives. Possible ratings: High, Substantial, Modest, Negligible. This rating is not generally applied to adjustment operations.

Sustainability: The resilience to risk of net benefits flows over time. Possible ratings: Highly Likely, Likely, Unlikely, Highly Unlikely, Not Evaluable.

Institutional Development Impact: The extent to which a project improves the ability of a country or region to make more efficient, equitable and sustainable use of its human, financial, and natural resources through: (a) better definition, stability, transparency, enforceability, and predictability of institutional arrangements and/or (b) better alignment of the mission and capacity of an organization with its mandate, which derives from these institutional arrangements. Institutional Development Impact includes both intended and unintended effects of a project. Possible ratings: High, Substantial, Modest, Negligible.

Outcome: The extent to which the project's major relevant objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, efficiently. Possible ratings: Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Moderately Satisfactory, Moderately Unsatisfactory, Unsatisfactory, Highly Unsatisfactory.

Bank Performance: The extent to which services provided by the Bank ensured quality at entry and supported implementation through appropriate supervision (including ensuring adequate transition arrangements for regular operation of the project). Possible ratings: Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory, Highly Unsatisfactory.

Borrower Performance: The extent to which the borrower assumed ownership and responsibility to ensure quality of preparation and implementation, and complied with covenants and agreements, towards the achievement of development objectives and sustainability. Possible ratings: Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory, Highly Unsatisfactory.

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Principal Ratings

	ICR*	ICR Review*	PPAR
First Education Project (Credit 1151-NIR)			
Outcome	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory
Institutional Development Impact	Modest	Modest	Modest
Sustainability	Likely	Likely	Likely
Bank Performance	Not rated	Not rated	Satisfactory
Borrower Performance	Not rated	Not rated	Satisfactory
Primary Education Development Project (Credit 1740-NIR)			
Outcome	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
institutional Development Impact	Modest	Modest	Modest
Sustainability	Likely	Likely	Likely
Bank Performance	Highly Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Borrower Performance	Not rated	Not rated	Satisfactory
Basic Education Sector Project (Hybrid) – (Credit 2618-NIR)			
Outcome	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Institutional Development Impact	Modest	Modest	Modest
Sustainability	Likely	Likely	Non-evaluable
Bank Performance	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Borrower Performance	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory

* The Implementation Completion Report (ICR) is a self-evaluation by the responsible operational division of the Bank. The ICR Review is an intermediate OED product that seeks to independently verify the findings of the ICR.

Key Staff Responsible

	Task Manager/ Leader	Division Chief/ Sector Director	Country Director
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Completion	Makha Ndao	Florent Agueh	Katherine Marshall
Basic Education Sector Project (Hybrid) – (Credit 2618-NIR)			
Appraisal	Makha Ndao	Birger Fredriksen	Katherine Marshall
Completion	Rachidi Radji	Alexandre Abrantes	Antoinette Sayeh

Preface

Attached is a Project Performance Assessment Report (PPAR) on three education projects in Niger.

The **First Education Project** (Cr. 1151-NIR) was approved for a US\$21.5 million equivalent credit in May 1981. The credit closed on June 30, 1990, after extensions totaling 30 months; US\$3.43 million was canceled. UNDP provided US\$4.85 million in cofinancing.

The **Primary Education Development Project** (Cr. 1740-NIR) was approved for a credit of US\$20.8 million equivalent in November 1986. The credit closed on December 31, 1995, after extensions totaling 18 months; US\$0.36 million was canceled. Norway and Germany provided parallel financing of US\$4.7 million and US\$1.7 million respectively.

The **Basic Education Sector Project (Hybrid)** (Cr. 2618-NIR) was approved for a credit of US\$41.48 million equivalent in November 1994. The credit closed on December 31, 2001, after extensions totaling 10 months; US\$0.57 million was canceled. Parallel financing was provided by Germany (KfW US\$10 million), Norway (US\$4.8 million), and Belgium (US\$2.6 million).

The projects in Niger were selected for assessment in order to study the effectiveness of Bank strategy in a very poor country that has been declared ready for the Fast-Track Initiative in order to achieve Education for All by 2015. The assessment contributes to background work for an ongoing Operations Evaluation Department (OED) study of the Bank's assistance to basic education.

The PPAR is based on the following sources: Project and Implementation Completion Reports (ICRs), Staff Appraisal Reports (SARs), Loan Agreements for the projects, and project files, particularly the supervision reports. An OED mission visited Niger in May 2004 to interview officials and beneficiaries, observe instruction in schools, and collect other pertinent information. Field visits took place at the Institut Pratique pour le Développement Rural, three district education offices, one teacher training college, and 14 schools of areas that had benefited from the projects. The author thanks the government officials who received the mission for their extensive cooperation.

Following standard OED procedures, copies of the draft PPAR were sent to the relevant government officials and agencies for their review and comments. The Borrower comments are attached as Annex E.

Summary

In the 1970s, Niger had an educational system aimed mainly at a small middle class. But droughts and financial difficulties reduced the already low enrollment ratio from 27 percent in 1980 to 25 percent in 1984 (of which 36 percent were girls). If the financing policies remained unchanged, the gross primary school enrollment ratio was projected to decrease to 14 percent in 2000. To increase access to education as fast as possible (particularly for girls) the Bank recommended a policy framework focused on doing “more with less”: reducing building costs, salaries (employment of cheaper and less well trained teachers), and instructional time (through multigrade instruction and splitting shifts) while providing textbooks and teacher training. That framework shaped the activities of the Primary Education Development Project (Cr. 1740-NIR) and its follow-on Basic Education Sector Project-Hybrid (Cr. 2618-NIR). (Education I, Cr. 1151-NIR, also provided inputs.) Besides project funds, the primary education budget was infused with cash transfers from adjustment lending and debt relief.

The Bank’s projects contributed to increased enrollments (from about 25 percent in 1986 to 45.4 percent in 2003.) However, only half the primary-school graduates of a survey in 2000 reported that they could read easily. Classroom visits by the OED mission provided additional evidence of limited learning outcomes, suggesting that the Bank’s strategy has not been very effective in achieving the country’s goal of improving human capital.

All three assessed projects aimed at increasing access to education, improving quality, training teachers, and making educational management more efficient. Most planned activities were carried out, but the two primary education projects did not focus sufficiently on improving the quality of teaching to achieve the objective of improving the quality of primary education. Despite financial difficulties during implementation, the **First Education Project** ultimately fulfilled its main objective of establishing agricultural technician training that would meet labor market needs. The **Primary Education Development Project** and the **Basic Education Sector Project** carried out most of their scheduled activities, succeeded in reducing unit costs and increasing government expenditures on education, and greatly expanded access to primary schools, but fell short in providing basic skills to all students who attended primary schools. In particular, the last project in the series failed to take measures to protect educational quality, in spite of the issues raised during the earlier projects. It was also affected by extensive mismanagement and theft of textbooks.

The outcome of the **First Education Project** is rated *satisfactory* because its access and quality objectives were achieved. Institutional development impact is rated *modest*. Sustainability is rated *likely* because the agricultural training college financed by the project has since 1986 been producing technicians who are in demand by the private sector. Bank and borrower performance are rated *satisfactory*. The outcome of the **Primary Education Development Project** is rated *satisfactory*, and institutional development impact is rated *modest*. Sustainability is rated *likely*, while Bank and borrower performance are rated *satisfactory*. The outcome of the **Basic Education Sector Project** is rated *moderately unsatisfactory* because, despite the large enrollment increases, it did not sufficiently help students acquire basic skills and did not improve

management sufficiently. Institutional development impact is rated *modest*. Sustainability is rated *non-evaluable* because the enrollment increases may not be maintained if basic skills are not acquired. Bank performance is rated *unsatisfactory* because of the limited attention given to quality and management issues. Because of serious financial management lapses, borrower performance for the sector project is also rated *unsatisfactory*.

The policy framework promoted by the Bank has evolved into a 10-year multidonor program (2002-2012) through the ongoing Basic Education Project (Cr. Q336; FY03). Niger is now among the first countries to receive support under the Bank-led Fast-Track Initiative that is expected to accelerate progress towards universal primary school completion by 2015. But to ensure that those enrolled actually learn basic skills, consideration should be given to address issues regarding national language instruction, textbooks, instructional time use in schools, and teacher training focused teaching the poorest.

Experience with the assessed projects confirms a number of OED lessons:

- *A policy framework focused on costs and access is insufficient.* The two primary education projects emphasized cost savings over instruction on basic skills. Policy dialogue and project activities need to focus on student acquisition and knowledge of basic skills. Providing mass education under clearly inadequate instructional conditions may graduate functional illiterates and benefit only those who are the brightest or better-off.
- *Access-related indicators may be relatively easy to obtain but may not be closely related to learning achievements.* Monitoring indicators for the two primary education projects showcased enrollment increases and improvements in student flows but not whether students had acquired basic knowledge and skills. But the administration of achievement tests is laborious and difficult to carry out regularly in low-income countries. Innovative and rapid means must be sought to gauge students' likely achievement (such as the proportion of students able to read fluently a simple text.)
- Textbooks are crucial contributors to student learning; if they are unavailable or if students cannot study from them sufficiently, the rest of the educational investments lose their effectiveness. *Procurement methods and plans must aim at making large numbers of textbooks available to students free, but also available for sale at the market.* Textbook management is most effective if it takes into account the printing strengths of the local private sector and the community school associations.

- Though in other countries enrollments in agricultural schools tend to be low and labor linkages weak, in Niger there is a demand for the skills provided. Bank *investments of earlier decades in agricultural education may continue to provide skills relevant to the economy* if policy dialogue is focused toward modernizing courses, generating income to schools, and catering to the populations likely to be interested in agricultural training.

Gregory K. Ingram
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1. Background

1.1 With a per capita income of US\$170,¹ Niger is possibly the poorest country among those that have not faced recent conflict. Most of its area is sparsely inhabited desert; the population of 11.5 million is 88 percent rural, is concentrated in the southwest, and grows at 3.4 percent per year. More than half the citizens are below age 15, and 40 percent of all children are malnourished. Five main languages are spoken, but French is the official language and the language of instruction in schools.² Illiteracy (age 15+) is estimated at 83 percent though an unknown percentage reads the national languages in the Arabic script (learned in Koranic schools) and in the Tifanagh script of the Tuareg.

1.2 Low population density makes the supply and monitoring of education difficult and expensive in many areas. So, gross primary education enrollment is about 45 percent, up from about 27 percent in 1981. Private primary education accounts only for 4.3 percent of enrollments. Average repetition rate in grades 1-5 is 12 percent; only 60 percent of the students starting in grade 1 reach grade 6, and of them only 47 percent passed the grade 6 examinations in 2003. About 27 percent of teachers are untrained, but the training and support capacities are limited. There is an inspector for every 516 teachers and a pedagogical advisor for every 287.³

1.3 Niger faced bright prospects of development in the 1960s, given its wealth in uranium ore. However, droughts in the mid 1970s decimated livestock and put food security at risk. The climate improved in the late 1970s, and Niger temporarily experienced a boom due to the high price and volume of uranium sales. By the early 1980s, however, the world prices of uranium fell precipitously, and a long-lasting financial crisis began. The country became dependent on external borrowing, accumulated arrears in the 1990s and could not repay its debts. It is thus remarkable that Niger is one of the first countries to receive support under the Bank-led Fast-Track Initiative that is expected to accelerate progress towards universal primary school completion by 2015 and attainment of the Education for All (EFA).

Bank Sector Strategy

1.4 In the 1970s, the country had an educational system aimed mainly at the small middle class. Since few educated persons existed in the country, teachers received

1. Atlas method, 2002; average per capita income for Sub-Saharan Africa is about US\$450. World Bank: Country at a Glance.

2. There are 39 schools that teach grades 1-3 in local languages with 5,354 students in 2002-2003. There are also 420 schools that divide the time between French and Arabic that had 29,684 students in 2002-2003.

3. Ministère de l'Éducation de Base et d'Alphabétisation. 2002.

salaries equivalent to about 8.8 times the per capita income.⁴ However, the droughts and financial difficulties reduced the already low enrollment ratio from 27 percent in 1980 to 25 percent in 1984 (of which 36 percent were girls). It was projected that if the financing policies remained unchanged, the gross primary school enrollment ratio would decrease to 14 percent in 2000, even if the budget grew by 2 percent annually.

1.5 Structural adjustment in Niger started in February 1986 with a credit of US\$60 million aimed at increasing the efficiency of resource use and improving the balance of payments. To protect the education sector, the Bank advised the government to initiate a long-term education strategy designed to: (a) prevent tight financial constraints from causing further decline to the enrollment ratio and (b) develop trained human resources for the medium and long term in line with the expected resource availability and labor market conditions. To do so within the country's budgetary limitations, country dialogue and three IDA credits focused on policies aimed at doing 'more with less', that is *cutting costs while increasing access to education as fast as possible, particularly for girls*. The policy framework put in place aimed at:

- *Reducing primary-education recurrent costs* through (i) multigrade teaching and (ii) decreasing teacher salaries from 8.8 times to 3.5 times the per capita income by recruiting contract teachers. Starting in 1986, full "instituteurs" were to be reduced to 14 percent of the teaching force, and "volunteer" teachers with short-term contracts and no benefits were to be recruited to staff about 85 percent of the classes.
- *Reducing secondary and higher education student subsidies*. The nominal higher education scholarship budget was to be reduced by 3.7 percent annually from FY88 through FY91 without other compensating subsidies and then maintained at these levels.
- *Reducing capital costs*. Solid school buildings cost five times more than the baked mud "banco" constructions that tend to be less durable. Several experiments have been made over the years to achieve sustainable but affordable buildings at 30-50 percent lower costs.
- *Enabling more students to enter school* through (i) increasing class size from 36 to 45 students per teacher (in 1986) and later to 40 students per teacher; (ii) instituting multigrade teaching in rural areas; and (iii) *splitting shifts* to accommodate more students in grades 1-3, a feature that reduced instruction by 40 percent (referred to as double shift in Bank documents).⁵

4. More than half of the country's civil service employees were in the Ministry of Education and accounted for about 21 percent of the government's recurrent budget. Teachers had 10 years of education followed by 2-year teacher training at the upper secondary level.

5. In many countries, schools have two or even three independent cohorts of students and teachers coming to school at different times. But in hot areas that also lack electricity there are not enough hours to sustain two independent shifts. The split-shift concept was conceived because in some western European countries children in younger grades have fewer class hours. The Bank advised poor countries with large classes to 'time-share' the teachers and classrooms (e.g., Niger, Senegal, Guinea). Classes of 70 students or more may be split into two pupil groups, each going to school half of the regular time and on Saturdays, resulting in a reduction of 40 percent of time. Teachers are paid extra for teaching on Saturdays. The large reduction in instructional time has produced poor outcomes in other countries, such as Guinea

- *Improving quality* through textbooks and teacher training.
- *Enabling more students to graduate* by reducing repetition rates (14 percent average in 1986) and increasing pass rates at the primary school leaving examination (20 percent in 1986). *More automatic promotion policies* were instituted to lower the rate, repetition capped at 15 percent for grade 6.

1.6 These policies formed the focus of the Primary Education Development Project (Cr. 1740-NIR) and its follow-on Basic Education Sector Project-Hybrid (Cr. 2618-NIR). Since 2000, sector policy has evolved along the same principles into a 10-year program (2002-2012) financed with multidonor participation through the *Basic Education Project* (Cr. Q336; FY03) that is currently under implementation.⁶ Its goal is to reach 290,000 additional rural children and 106,000 youth and adults (62 percent female) and to “offer them an acceptable level of knowledge and skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and health education.” Specific policy reform goals are related to (a) costs and (b) institutional strengthening (details in Annex A).

1.7 To facilitate the execution of the 10-year program, two public expenditure projects have supported educational recurrent expenditures (Table 1). *Public Expenditure Adjustment Credit Project I* (PEAC; Cr. 3576-NIR for US\$70 million; FY01) devoted 22 percent of the proceeds for education (Annex A). Fund releases enabled the Ministry of Primary and Basic Education to spend 90 percent of its budget during 2000-2002. The *Public Expenditure Adjustment Credit Project II* (Cr. 3827-NIR for US\$65 million; FY03) is continuing budget support for education and will be closely coordinated with other external assistance under the Fast Track Initiative. Objectives include reforming the cash budgeting system of social sector ministries that results in erratic allocations and hurts services to the poor and monitoring allocations (Annex A).

and Senegal (e.g., Guinea. Project Performance Assessment Report. 20 Years of IDA Assistance. 2004, Report No. 26245).

6. No formal sector studies were found in the archives or Bank publications until 1999. The 1999 report “Constraints and Degrees of Freedom for the Development of Quantity and Quality of Education in Niger” formed the basis for the 10-year program. An update of this study with detailed analyses of costs and access indicators was in draft form, and its data are used in this document. (Mingat, Alain and Ramahatra Rakotomalala. 2004.) With the development of the EFA Fast-Track Initiative the expenditure and access indicators of Niger have been compared with those of other countries in various documents. (Mingat, 2002).

7. World Bank. 2003a. The acceptable student achievement level is not defined, but is to be achieved through privatized textbook distribution, multigrade classes in rural areas, and a pilot low-cost peer tutoring scheme.

Table 1. Education Lending in Niger

Completed Projects	Project ID	Approval FY	Closing	Credit Amt. US\$m	Project Cost US\$m	Canceled US\$m
Education Project (Cr. 1151-NIR)	P001952	1981	6/30/1990	21.5	27	\$3.43
Primary Education Development Project (Cr. 1740-NIR)– PRODEP)	P001964	1987	12/31/1995	18.4	26.2	0.36
Basic Education Sector Project (Hybrid; Cr. 2618-NIR) – PROSEF	P001980	1994	12/31/2001	41.4	75.80	0.57
Public Expenditure Adjustment Credit Project I (Cr. 3576) (22% of US\$70 million)	P069569	2001	12/31/2003	15.4	15.4	0
Total lending – completed projects				96.7	144.5	4.36
Ongoing Projects						
Basic Education Project	P061209	2003	12/31/2007	30*	300.5	
Public Expenditure Adjustment Credit Project II (Cr. 3827) (20% of US\$65 million)	P069570	2003	12/31/2004	12.2	12.2	
Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative for Primary Education (2001-2003) grant	P073076	2000		US10.4 (approx)		
Total outlays – completed projects, adjustment lending, grants				119.3	356.7	4.36

*Note: Credit Q336 consists of US\$5.62 million, grant US\$24.38 million

1.8 Funds for education have also come from another source. The IMF approved a \$73 million poverty reduction and growth facility for Niger in 2000 and announced \$115 million in debt relief under the *Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative*. Since 2001, the funding has been channeled into the Special Program of the President of the Republic. Plans for the 2003 phase call for 1,000 classrooms, 1,000 health units, and 1,000 wells, the construction of which requires the participation of local residents. The Second Public Expenditure Adjustment Credit will increase the share of HIPC resources earmarked for primary education from 20 percent to 40 percent and seek the contributions of other donors. In 2001-2003, resources amounted to about US\$10.4 million.'

1.9 Because of its importance to poverty alleviation, education has received considerable attention in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP).⁹ The 2003 progress report welcomes the formal adoption of the 10-year development plan. It asserts that the country's good macroeconomic results have been driven by measures to improve the quality of education and stimulate demand for schooling. Noting that gross enrollment rates increased from 37.3 percent in 2000/01 to 41.7 percent in 2001/02, with

8. The amounts in CFA were 1.7billion in 2001, 1.9 billion in 2002, and 1.6billion in 2003 Niger. (World Bank, 2003b.)

9. World Bank, 2003b.

a notably strong increase in rural areas, *the report states that major outcome targets were surpassed in 2002*. The government targets have been aligned with the Millennium Development Goal of universal completion of primary education by 2015.

1.10 How effective has the Bank policy framework been 25 years after its inception in improving the trained human capital of Niger and alleviating poverty? How likely is Niger to achieve Education for All in 2015? Are student learning gains likely to accompany increasing enrollments? This document presents evidence regarding these questions.

Objectives of the Assessed Projects

1.11 World Bank lending for education in Niger started in 1981. The three projects under review focused on improving access to education while managing sectoral costs. As the sectoral strategy developed and evolved, it was reflected in the objectives, components, and policies of the projects. (Project objectives are integrated in the implementation discussion of each project, see below.)

2. Implementation of the Assessed Projects

Education Project (Cr. 1151-NIR; FY8 1-90; known as Education I)

2.1 **Objectives:** (a) *Upgrading the quality of mid-level technicians and extension workers in agriculture and animal production;* (b) *improving educational planning and preparing future projects;* and (c) *formulating policies and programs for upgrading key civil service personnel.*

2.2 This credit of US\$21.5 million became effective in 1981, at a period when the Bank supported manpower planning and extensive training in vocational and agricultural education. Though its main objective was to increase the availability of mid-level agricultural technicians (about 92 percent of expenditures), the project also aimed to prepare the ground for future lending in primary education (6 percent of expenditures) and to formulate civil service training policies (2 percent of expenditures).

2.3 The project financed training of mid-level technicians in *agriculture and animal husbandry*. The students, who enter the school after 10 years of formal education, would staff the Ministry of Agriculture extension programs at a time when human resources in the country were very scarce. To achieve this, the project provided for: (i) the expansion and upgrading of the Rural Development Training Institute (IPDR) at Kolo (40 km from Niamey) and (ii) relocation of an animal production training institute (Ecole des Cadres d'Élevage) from its downtown Niamey location to a new Animal Production Training School at Kolo, next to IPDR.

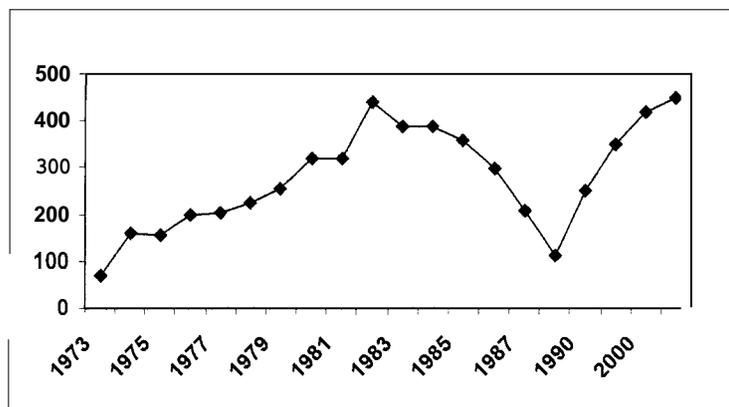
2.4 The execution of civil works was well managed and completed ahead of schedule, (largely through foreign contractors) and the schools began operating in their new facilities in early 1985. About 20 staff members received fellowships for advanced

studies abroad (though only 2-3 returned to IPDR)," and foreign technical assistance was provided to draft updated curricula (Annex Table B-1). (UNDP provided \$4.87 million for training activities.) Syllabi and loose-leaf textbooks were printed with the printing facilities provided by the project. However, the macroeconomic deterioration of the country created severe constraints in the government's ability to recruit all trainees for public sector employment. Following IDA advice, the government reduced training capacity at the two institutions by about 50 percent (to about 450 students and 150 graduates) to match the effective demand for graduates, it introduced less specialized pre-employment training programs to increase graduates' employability, and in 1988 merged the two schools to reduce recurrent expenditures by about 35 percent. The OED review of the Implementation Completion Report (ICR) rated the project unsatisfactory because at that time the school could not afford to serve the number of students expected, and skills demand was in doubt.

2.5 *Mission visit to IPDR.*

About 15 years after project completion, IPDR has 449 students in two-year programs, of which 37 percent are female (Figure 1). Unlike the decline that agricultural colleges have faced worldwide, there is a demand in Niger for a technician-level institution. The institution admitted two fee-paying students in 1986 and had 38 by 1989. Fee-

Figure 1. Agricultural Technician Enrollments



paying students, who accounted for 57 percent of enrollments in 2004, may pay up to 200,000 CFA (US\$400) per year to attend, and they get jobs in various NGOs or in the private sector. (The government hires 40 graduates per year). Loosely bound textbooks continue to be produced with the printing press provided in the 1980s, so students have structured material they can study." Mission interviews with five faculty members, four students on campus, and researchers at the International Crops Research for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) who receive students as interns suggest that students are well trained and effective in carrying out extension activities. Thus, in the long run, this IDA investment in agricultural education has been relevant, efficacious, and sustainable.

2.6 *Planning for primary education.* The project financed training for two Nigérien educational planners who returned to the country and worked at the Ministry of

10. Most fellowship recipients returned to Niger but sought jobs in the Ministry of Agriculture and in the NGOs that had agricultural activities. The Ministry did not enforce its rules to oblige public service for a number of years. Thus, IPDR has had to rely on temporary professors and has not been able to develop inservice training for agricultural staff as it had planned.

11. The printing presses given by early Bank projects (e.g., in Guinea) are often still functional 20 years later. They constitute a very useful investment.

Education until retirement. During implementation, the project was also amended to include the construction of 60 primary classrooms as pilots to test low-cost construction methods that would be used to build 750 classrooms through the follow-on project. Due to delays the construction started only in 1989, but experience was useful and resulted in a unit cost reduction of about 50 percent (see implementation of follow-on projects).

Primary Education Development Project (Cr. 1740; FY87-95; known as PRODEP)”

2.7 **Objectives:** (a) *reducing recurrent unit costs and improving quality and relevance of primary education;* (b) *reducing capital unit costs and increasing access to primary education;* and (c) *promoting cost-effective use of existing education resources.*

2.8 This project constituted the first large-scale effort to support primary education. Norway and Germany (through KfW) provided cofinancing for US\$4.7 million and US\$1.7 million respectively. (See Annex Table B-2 for project components, targets, and activities). The project tried to lay the foundation for future development as seen from a macroeconomic perspective and focused primarily on containing costs and reaching as many students as possible, albeit with more limited instruction.

2.9 The project engaged in large-scale classroom construction, textbook development and printing, and teacher training. Without consulting teachers and parents, however, it promulgated the cost-cutting policies that proved controversial: *building a workforce of less qualified teachers at approximately 40 percent the cost of regular teachers, introducing multigrade teaching, and reducing class time by 40 percent through double shift schooling in urban areas.*¹³ Teachers’ unions resisted the measures and went on strikes that continued off and on for several years. Reports in the files indicate that the double shift concept was implemented in 1988-90, was temporarily abandoned due to social and performance issues, and was restarted at Bank insistence. Parents were displeased that their children spent so little time in school, and one report referred to this method as a “poison imposed by the World Bank.”¹⁴ Extracurricular activities had been expected for children sitting outside classes, but there were no funds to carry them out, and the only feasible activity proved to be Koranic education. However, most went home and did not come on Saturdays as expected. Logistics problems were also linked to delays in starting classes. The reading performance of these students was reported in project files as “worrisome.”

2.10 The Bank informally explored the possibility of instruction in national languages and was interested in expanding an experimental program with very promising outcomes that was supported by GTZ in the 1980s and again in 2002. Project documents mention an evaluation study (Annex Table B-2), but the government had been reluctant to adopt

12. PRODEP - Projet de Développement de l' Education Primaire

13. Teachers who taught split shifts received a bonus of 20,000 CFA. The Bank requested in 1988 an experiment with a rigorous evaluation. Though 12,000 students participated, evaluation was delayed and in fact was never completed. Though the experiment stopped in 1991, 209 double-shift classrooms opened in urban areas in 1993 and then continued to increase to about 892 by the end of PROSEF.

14. Experience des Classes: Double Vacation au Niger. 1988-89, date and author unknown (report in project files).

national language instruction in the 1980s, and the evaluation was not completed until 1999 (Annex A). Its positive outcomes, however, did not convince the government to promote literacy in national languages in later projects.

2.11 The project faced other problems as well. Pressure from university students forced the government to raise the value of scholarships in university education after 1991, threatening primary education budgets. The maintenance component and studies were unfinished. Eventually, most project activities were carried out after extensions totaling 18 months. For the most part, execution of this project and disbursement were on schedule throughout the life of the project and covenants were in compliance. Audits showed no major irregularities.

Basic Education Sector Project (Hybrid) (Cr. 2618; FY94-01; known as PROSEF)¹⁵

Objectives (a) Improving access to and quality of primary education; (b) Strengthening sector managerial and planning capacities.

2.12 Though PRODEP helped increase enrollments, coverage in 1993 was only marginally higher than in 1980 due to the high population growth.¹⁶ The government established an Emergency Education Rehabilitation Plan, designed to continue the policies of PRODEP of reducing costs to increase access. The target was to increase the primary school enrollment ratio from 29 to 35 percent between 1994 and 1999. The project received parallel financing by Norway (US\$4.8 million), Germany (US\$10.2 million), Belgium (US\$2.6 million), France, UNICEF, and UNDP. Because of continuing macroeconomic instability, the project included a US\$20 million sector reform program; conditions included the introduction of double shifts on a large scale in urban schools, and restrictions on secondary and higher education scholarships,¹⁷ and employment of 85 percent contract teachers. Thus, about 7,381 new teachers could be recruited over six years while the salary burden to the national budget was minimized. This component accounts for the ‘hybrid’ name of the project.

2.13 Despite political risk, policy reforms were introduced and sustained. However, implementation faced considerable problems. There were eight Ministers of Basic Education over eight years, complicating country dialogue. Though the project coordination unit (PIU) was located within the ministry, it was perceived as a separate unit and did not receive full collaboration from other departments. In the later stages, considerable problems arose, such as the *unchecked theft of textbooks*. The PIU failed to

15. PROSEF - Projet Sectoriel d'Enseignement Fondamental

16. The Bank executed a population project (Cr. 2630-NIR, FY97), whose outcome was rated unsatisfactory; planned activities were partially carried out and benefits were not sustainable in the long term.

17. Conditions included recruitment of least 520 additional primary school teachers (85 percent contractuels), introducing double-shift classes to at least 440 primary schools, admitting at least 720 trainees to the teacher training colleges, appointing three regional coordinators for construction, signing a contract with UNICEF to deliver micronutrients to students, redeploying 32 teacher training college instructors to secondary education. A cap on higher education scholarships was placed at 4.8 billion CFA, 1.6 billion CFA for secondary schools. A teaching materials budget was reserved for primary schools and increased from 360 million to 439 million CFA.

coordinate donor efforts, was assigned low-performing staff, and auditors noted many financial irregularities. Audits were qualified because in the auditors' opinion project management weaknesses did not permit thorough examination. Questions were raised in particular regarding the split-shift premiums that were to be paid to teachers.*Teacher payments backed up over three months and contributed to unrest resulting from contract teacher conditions. The strikes ultimately resulted in two lost school years (1993-95). Nevertheless, most project activities were carried out after a 10-month extension of the closing date. (See project components, targets, and activities in Annex Table B-3).

2.14 The projects (particularly PRODEP and PROSEF) had some common components and implementation problems, which are described in Annex B along with achievement of specific targets where applicable.

Mission Observations

2.15 The OED mission visited 14 schools unannounced, 9 in rural areas and 6 in semi-urban areas (including the periphery of Niamey but not in the center of the city).¹⁹ The schools were about one kilometer from a highway and might therefore have been of **better** quality than more remote schools. The visits took place about three weeks before the end of the school year. The mission carried out the following observations: (a) instructional activities taking place in class at the moment of OED mission entry (Table 2); (b) the number of students registered according to the teachers versus the number present in classes on that day; (c) how well 3-4 students chosen at random could read and answer simple comprehension questions; (d) teacher interviews if class time permitted. Observations were as follows:

- Substantial numbers of enrolled students were not in school on the days the OED mission visited. In urban schools about 15 percent of the students were absent, but in rural schools over 50 percent were absent. Teachers cited reasons such as illnesses, visiting relatives, work.²⁰
- There were few textbooks in the schools; some classes had just one book, others one textbook per 3-6 students. In the “experimental” schools textbooks in national languages were unavailable for grades 1 and 2.

18. Fiduciaire Conseil et Audit, 1997

19. The schools visited were: Ecole centre ville de Kollo, Ccole experimentale de Kollo, ecole franco-arabe de Kollo, ecole d' application de Tilaberi, ecole communautaire Gorebio, ecole Jambalé, ecole Daiberi, Ccole Kohé Garante, ecole Dakimana, Ccole Say, ecole Lugabanda, ecole Sidi Bewara, ecole experimendale in Peul, Ccole Ballaren (Niamey periphery). The schools were located about one hour ride from Niamey near main roads. Through field visits, OED collects qualitative information, which is integrated with quantitative data where available. Missions have a limited time in the field, and travel to very remote areas is often not possible.

20. The government response to this document mentioned that in May many students leave school for agricultural work. (Annex E).

- In modestly efficient schools of other countries, students should read relatively fluently by the end of grade 1.²¹ However, Nigerien children in grades 1-2 knew mainly individual letters and could merely recite items which the better students had read on the board, but when asked to identify specific letters or the same words written elsewhere, they could not. About half of those present in grades 5 and 6 could decode slowly and with difficulty. None could answer reading comprehension questions satisfactorily; the better students mainly repeated verbatim parts of the text they had read earlier. Only one of the approximately 60 students interviewed (in the periphery of Niamey) could read fluently.
- Most students in the classes visited were unoccupied at the moment of mission entry (Table 2). The most common activity was a single student working on the blackboard or reading from the seat. The pedagogical advisor accompanying the mission clarified **that teachers are trained to ask students to practice one by one only** rather than repeat all together. This way the teachers control the class and can correct individual mistakes. They are **also instructed to ask the better students to read**, so that other children can model after them. Teachers were consistently observed to **work with the few better students and ignore the rest**. Repeatedly the mission asked a student to read, and a teacher intervened saying that that particular student could not, but another one could.
- Teachers of all grades who were asked how many of their students could read typically reported that most could not. However, they seemed unconcerned with their students' limited skills. Three of those interviewed by the OED mission said that it is normal for some students not to learn reading. When asked what they should do to help the non-reading students teachers made general statements. Contract and permanent teachers exhibited the same behaviors. Teachers invariably indicated that supervisors rarely visit.
- Students in small towns and rural areas displayed minimal understanding of French, even at the end of grade 6. Students in lower grades mainly repeated what they were told, unable to construct their own sentences. The mission observed only one instance where French was actively taught to students. However, the textbooks seem written for native French speakers. They include uncommon French words early on, and no glossaries exist in local languages.
- For advanced subjects such as geometry, a few students could draw designs on the blackboard and recite statements whose meaning they did not know, such as "an isosceles triangle has two axes of symmetry." Only two students in a 6th grade class could form the simple past tense of French, as the curriculum described. Most students whose teachers asked them to solve written problems or write paragraphs on a topic merely copied down the texts, unable to deal with them.

21. Harris and Hatano (eds), 1999.p. 25. Barr et al 2002. p. 76. Silent reading norms are: Second grade 60-100 words per minute, third grade 90-120, fourth grade 110-140, fifth grade 140-170, and six grade 160-190 words per minute.

- The mission visited the teacher training center of Dosso. The students in that institution (and reportedly in the four others) had themselves no textbooks or even copies of class notes. The instructors dictated the texts to the students word for word. Teacher training colleges had not even received library books. Given this instructional model it is not surprising that students did not interact more with their own students.
- School constructions seemed to be of adequate quality. These included semi-permanent buildings with metal structures and mud walls.

2.16 The mission also interviewed government officials and donor staff involved with the projects assessed in this report and obtained opinions about actions and outcomes (see Annex C and sections on Bank and borrower performance).

Table 2. Class Activities Carried Out at the Moment of OED Mission Entry

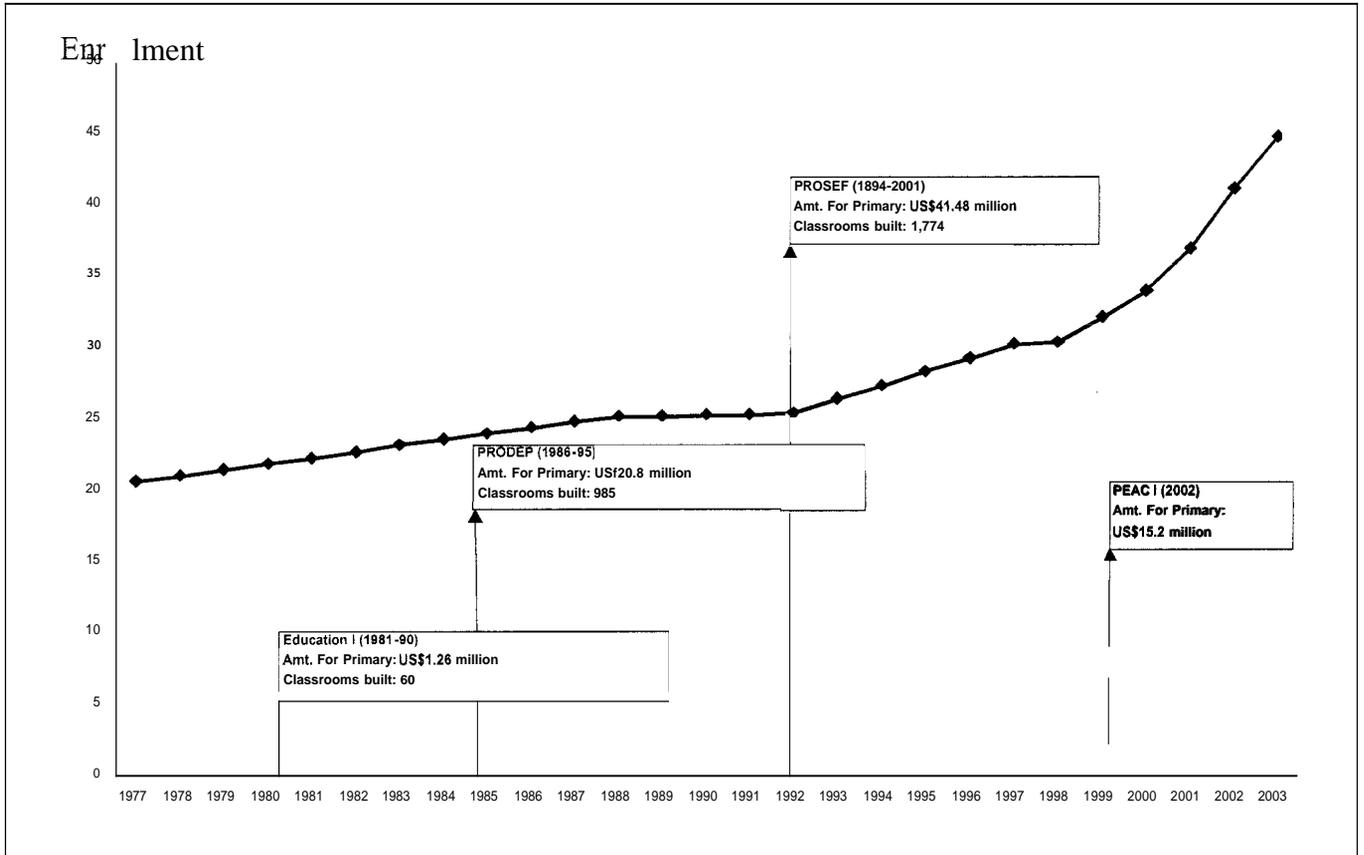
<i>Number of classes engaged in activity</i>	<i>Niamey periurban Tilabery, Dosso, Kolo N=24</i>	<i>Rural areas N=12</i>	<i>Total N=36</i>
Copying	1		1
Composition		1	1
Students take turns reading	1	2	3
No activity	6	3	9
One student on blackboard	6	4	10
Teacher teaching whole class (math)	3	1	4
Art and Play	0	1	1
Exams	4	0	4
N ^o of classes	24	12	36
No of schools	6	2	14
Apparently instructional activities	3	1	4

Note The mission did not see any classes where students were grouped to do different activities, therefore the activities listed are mutually exclusive.

3. Results

3.1 Since the 1980s, the Bank, and the donor community, has financed the expansion of Niger's education system not only with investment projects but with large-scale cash outlays as well. A series of conditions to reduce student unit costs shaped the expansion of the system. How effective has this strategy been in increasing the availability of trained human resources in the country?

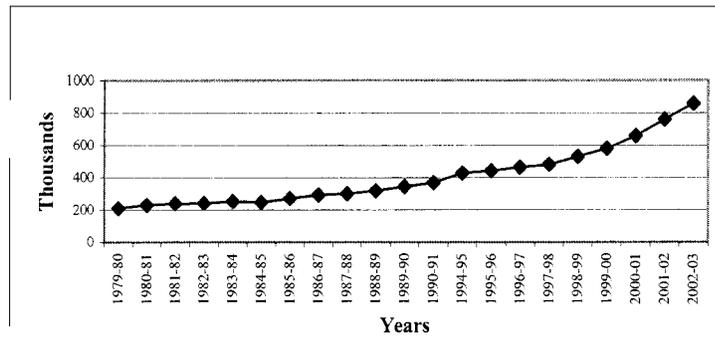
Figure 2. Enrollment rates and projects financing the education sector over time



3.2 *Enrollments.* The strategy has been clearly effective in increasing the number of students reported as enrolled in schools (Figures 2 and 3) and reducing unit costs of recurrent and capital expenditures. With its own budget and relatively small-scale donor support, Niger could only afford enrollment rates of about 25 percent in the 1980s. Given an annual population increase of about 3.1 percent at that time, the system had to expand by this amount to continue coverage at the same level. Bank support enabled the system to expand up from the 25 percent baseline.

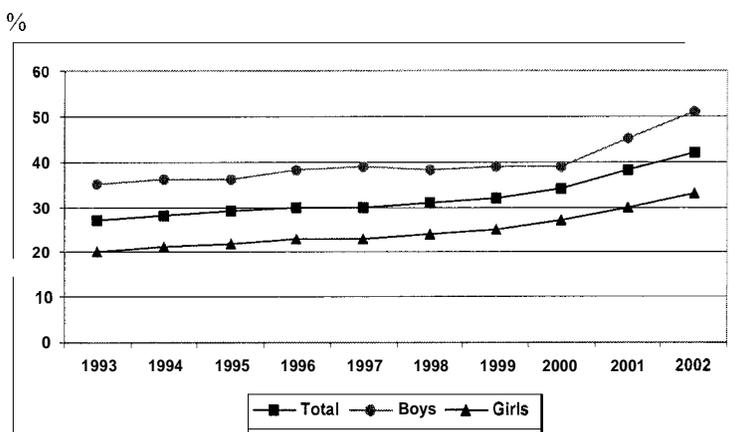
3.3 Numerically, enrollment increases are impressive. During PRODEP primary-school students increased from 251,000 in 1988 to 445,500 in 1994, a 77 percent increase, and during PROSEF, the increase was accelerated (Figure 3). Between 1993 and 1997, the gross enrollment rate

Figure 3. Numbers of Primary Education Students, 1979-2003



increased from 27.8 to 30.1 percent, 0.5 a percentage point annually. **Between 1998 and 2002, the rate increased from 30.4 to 41.7 percent**, an annual increase of 2.8 percentage points – the rate of increase was multiplied fivefold. Thus, in 2002-03, the system had about 825,708²² students (71 percent rural) officially enrolled. In 2003, the gross enrollment rate was estimated at 45.4 percent (38 percent in rural and 51 percent in urban areas; Figure 2).

Figure 4. Gross Enrollment Rates, 1993-2002



3.4 *Girls' participation in education.* Girls' enrollment followed a similar rate of increase (Figure 4).²³ Though slower than expected, girls' enrollment increased from 23.6 percent in 1990-91 to 29.6 percent in 2000-2001. In 2003, 36.5 percent of the girls were enrolled compared to 54.2 percent for boys.²⁴

22. Annuaire Statistique p. 154, 2003.

23. Ministère de l'Éducation de Base et d'Alphabétisation. 2002. Also Mingat and Rakotomalala, 2004.

24. Annuaire Statistique, p. 24, 2003.

3.5 The hiring of contract teachers was an important reason for enrollment increases. This mode of employment acquired momentum in 1998 thanks to financing by PEAC I and II. Since 1999 large numbers have been hired, surpassing targets (8,019 instead of 2,080). Similarly, the **number of schools has more than doubled in 20 years**. In 2003, there were 6,770 (5,994 or 88 percent rural), up from about 3,850 in 1994 (Annex Tables B-3, B-4), though more than half the villages of Niger still lack a school.

3.6 Though these figures are encouraging, mission observations raise concerns regarding actual attendance and participation, particularly in rural areas. Students are counted on December 15 of every year, and the limited supervision of schools makes it hard to monitor absenteeism. Project files make repeated references to difficulties in establishing the institutional strength necessary for school mapping and statistical data collection. It is possible that principals of rural schools have incentives to overstate enrollments in rural areas in order to qualify, for example, for school feeding programs. Given the difficulty in verifying attendance, the large enrollment increases reported in the last 20 years should be regarded with caution.

3.7 Official student dropout and repetition rates have also been lowered, partly at least as a result of automatic promotion policies that stipulate a 15 percent ceiling in repetition (Table 3). However, repetition of grade 6 remains high (about 29.3 percent) because of the high failure rate in the leaving examinations (53 percent in 2003). The rate may be high because automatically promoted students may lack the knowledge to pass the examinations. Nevertheless, transition to secondary increased from 23 percent in the 1980s to about 65 percent in 2002.²⁵ In 2004, it was 48.8 percent (Annex E).

Table 3. Repetition Rates in 1992-2003

	1992-93	1997-98	2002-03
Primary Education			
Grade 1	5.7	1.6	0.8
Grade 2	10.5	7.8	4.4
Grade 3	12.9	10.0	6.6
Grade 4	12.8	11.4	7.3
Grade 5	14.9	13.5	9.4
Grade 6	48.0	36.3	29.3
Total	17.6	12.7	7.3
Lower Secondary Education			
6 ^{ème}	23.3	24.7	18.6
5 ^{ème}	15.5	25.9	13.9
4 ^{ème}	22.4	24.4	16.7
3 ^{ème}	24.9	39.4	38.4
Total	21.5	28.0	20.9
Upper Secondary Education			
2 ^{nde}	13.4	8.4	7.7
1 ^{ère}	16.4	12.7	12.1
Terminale	27.4	35.3	40.8
Total	19.5	18.0	22.0

25. Mingat and Rakotomalala, 2004.

3.8 However, gains in enrollments may only be temporary. Despite repeated efforts, the Bank has made limited inroads in convincing the government to adopt family planning and reduce the high rate of population increase. Thus, the need for ever more schools remains unabated.

Expenditures and Unit Cost Reductions

3.9 The share of education in the government budget decreased from 42.1 percent in 1990 to 24.1 percent in 2002 (Annex E). However, the share of primary education in the education budget has steadily increased over the years from 40 percent in 1986 to 45 percent in 1994 and to over 60.3 percent in 2002 (Figure 5; Annex Tables B-5 and B-6). At the same time, secondary and higher education costs have been held relatively constant. However, the system is strained and, in real terms, overall less and less is invested in education (Figure 6). Also, it is unclear how effectively the funds have been used to produce student learning. Studies elsewhere have shown repeatedly that expenditures per student are not a good predictor of school performance.²⁶

Figure 5. Percentage of Expenditures by Education Level

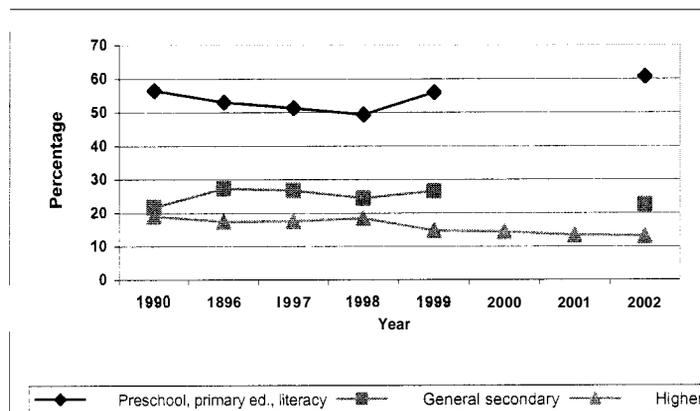
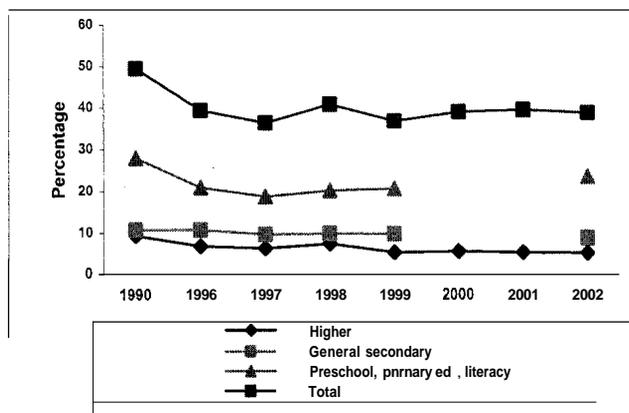


Figure 6. Government Investment in Education, 1990-2002



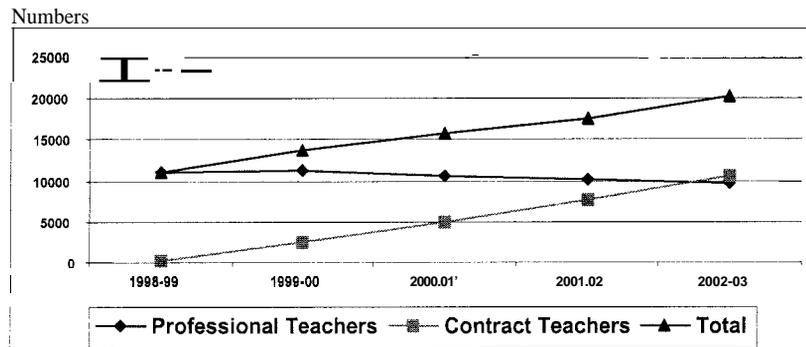
3.10 Class size increased and teacher salaries were reduced. The student-teacher ratio changed from 41 in 1980 to 36 in 1984, 40 in 1994, and increased to 43 in 2001-2002 (Annex Table B-7). **Teacher salaries were reduced from 8.8 times to about 3.5 times the per capita income** by recruiting contract teachers. In 2004, contract teachers' salaries start at 40,000 CFA per month (about US\$80) and are approximately 40 percent of the full teachers' salaries. Gradually, contract teachers have

26. Hanushek, 1986 and 1994.

become the majority (Figure 7; Annex Table B-8); in 2002-2003, there were 10,228 and constituted 52 percent of all teachers (19,746). In rural areas, they constitute 58 percent of all teachers (7,972 out of 13,787).²⁷

3.11 *Construction unit costs decreased in the 1980s and have remained stable.* Following experimentation in Education I, unit costs (during PRODEP estimated at US\$5400) were lowered by about 30 percent between 1984 and 1994 and have remained low. The government has changed technology to semi-solid buildings with metallic structures for rural areas that continue to keep costs lower.

Figure 7. Rapid Growth in Contract Teachers



3.12 *Were student unit costs decreased?* Unit cost estimates were mentioned in project documents as US\$60 in 1981 (Education I), and US\$77 in 1986 (PRODEP). The efficiency gains implemented under PRODEP were instrumental in reducing the unit recurrent cost per primary school student from US\$77 to US\$62. As a result of interventions and exchange rate changes, unit costs were estimated at about US\$53 (26,819 CFA) in 2002.²⁸ When attendance and skills are considered, the real unit costs of primary education may be substantially underestimated. If, as mission observations suggest, over half the rural students attend only occasionally or have in effect dropped out for the year, real unit costs are proportionately higher (US\$77 if half the students attend regularly enough to benefit from education). Furthermore, only 65 percent of all children are estimated to reach grade 6,²⁹ of whom only 53 percent may read fluently. Thus, the unit cost of one literate graduate may really be about US\$154 (US\$181 in rural areas, where 55 percent reach grade 6) rather than US\$53 (26,819 CFA).

Institutional Development and Management

3.13 The main benefit of the institutional development efforts has been the ministry's sustained ability to conduct annual statistical surveys and report results punctually. Public expenditure reviews have also been conducted. Staff trained through the projects who

27. Ministère de l'Éducation de Base et d'Alphabétisation. 2002-03.

28. Mingat and Rakotomalala, 2004.

29. *Ibid.*

made a career at the ministry also strengthened the institution. Nevertheless, the benefit of all the workshops given under PRODEP and PROSEF is unclear.

3.14 *Monitoring and evaluation*, an important tool of institutional development, have been relatively weak. PRODEP had few activities and did not monitor student learning. The outcomes of the controversial double-shift schools were not evaluated. PROSEF was able to carry out repeated assessment activities, including the development of an achievement test and the administration of the UNESCO-UNICEF Monitoring Learning Achievement tests (MLA; see below) in 1999. This is a considerable accomplishment, since achievement tests are time-consuming and difficult to construct, particularly in low-income countries. To show improvements, different tests must be made statistically equivalent. However, the two tests given in Niger may not score performance the same way, and they were administered only once.

3.15 After implementing a policy framework over 15 years, it would have been useful to administer one of the tests again in 2003 and study project impact on the set of schools assessed in 1999 and a sample of newly opened schools. However, this was not done, and it is not possible to report on student performance changes over time.

Quality of Education – Very Few Students Learning Basic Skills

3.16 The Staff Appraisal Reports (SARs) of the projects promoting cost-cutting policies gave little information about baseline learning achievement and no specifics or evidence about the quality of education they were instituting. Despite specific targets for enrollments and costs, there were no specific learning targets. The documents do not even mention that French was the exclusive language of instruction. The PRODEP Staff Appraisal Report (p. 6) merely expressed the belief that quality would improve through cost-cutting measures.

3.17 Information to help evaluate achievement changes since the 1980s is indirect and inadequate because no test scores were available until 1999. The primary-school pass rate was reported in Band documents at 20 percent in 1985; it increased to 25 percent in 1989, to 33 percent in 1994 and to 47.2 percent in 2003. However, the increase reflects the achievement of effort to increase system efficiency by enabling more students to graduate. Partly automatic promotion was used to lower the repetition rates (14 percent average in 1986), so it is unknown how well students met graduation standards in 1985 and in 2003.

3.18 A locally developed test measured the percentage of students attaining minimum achievement (50 percent) or meeting a mastery criterion (70 percent) in French, math, and science in 1999. About 1,387 students were assessed in grades 2, 4, and 6 of public and private schools, half of which were urban; 14 students per class chosen at random from those in attendance. As is shown in Tables 4 and 5, scores were very low. *On average, students failed to meet minimum criteria; only 10-14 percent of students met French writing mastery criteria.* In particular, the items measuring reading and French

writing in grade 2 were correctly answered by only 30.5 and 47.9 percent of the students.³⁰

Table 4. Student Achievement in 1999 (Test Developed Through PROSEF)

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage of students attaining criterion (70%)</i>	<i>Percent of items answered correctly</i>	<i>Percentage of students attaining criterion (70%)</i>	<i>Percent of items answered correctly</i>	<i>Percentage of students attaining criterion (70%)</i>
	French	French writing	Math	Math	Science
2	9.9%	43.8	33.1	53.3	
4	14.3%	36.2	7.2	37.2	49.2
6	12.9%	42.6	11	52.4	

Source: SEDEP/Cellule d'Evaluation, 2000.

3.19 The UNESCO-UNICEF Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) measuring literacy, numeracy, and life skills were also administered in 1999, in a sample of public schools, 58 percent rural.³¹ The results raised even more cause for concern. The average score in Niger was 40.8 percent, and the international mean was 50.8 percent. *Only 3.6 percent of the students exceeded the literacy criterion of the MLA test.*³² This test has been given to other countries, and Niger was found to be the third lowest-scoring country (Annex Table B-9; Figures 8 and 9).

3.20 As low as they are, outcomes may still overestimate achievement. Both tests oversampled urban schools (constituting just 12 percent of all schools in 2003) and had to test only students who were present. None of the documents discusses the absenteeism rate and choice of students for testing. It is possible that teachers put forth the better students for testing, as they did when the OED mission asked students to read. Future surveys should be attentive to this effect.³³

30. SEDEP, 2000. In principle, all students should show mastery of criteria

31. UNICEF-UNESCO. 2000. For secondary schools, achievement tests also showed low scores UNESCO: UNESCO. 2003. The test was given to 85 public schools: **55** rural, 30 urban, 33 single shift, 31 double shift, and **21** multigrade.

32. Chinapah, 2003; and Chinapah, et al. 2000a. The PASEC test was given in 2002-03, but this mission did not have results available.

33. For example, it may be worth studying and double-checking independently which students took the PASEC tests in 2003. Perhaps the non-readers were excluded. Also, the MEBA team is preparing a new survey and care should be taken that these non-reading students are not excluded from the new survey.

Table 5. Percentage of Grade 4 Pupils who Attained Minimum Mastery Criteria

Country	Combined		Literacy		Numeracy		Life Skills	
	MML	DML	MML	DML	MML	DML	MML	DML
Bostwana	57.8	8.7	46.2	6.0	55.4	5.4	71.8	14.9
Madagascar	66.1	11.7	56.9	20.6	34.4	5.6	97.3	60.3
Malawi	54.9	3.0	15.3	1.4	30.7	1.4	95.4	69.4
Mali	54.4	7.3	50.4	13.1	37.9	6.2	69.8	23.7
Mauritius	70.3	24.1	77.6	35.4	70.3	26.4	71.6	32.4
Niger	25.6	2.0	39.3	3.6	15.3	5.7	44.9	7.0
Senegal	31.2	2.0	45.6	6.7	22.9	3.0	36.3	7.0
Uganda	54.4	14.4	64.3	23.3	41.9	10.2	78.8	51.1
Zambia	31.9	5.6	37.8	7.3	19.9	4.4	49.0	26.1

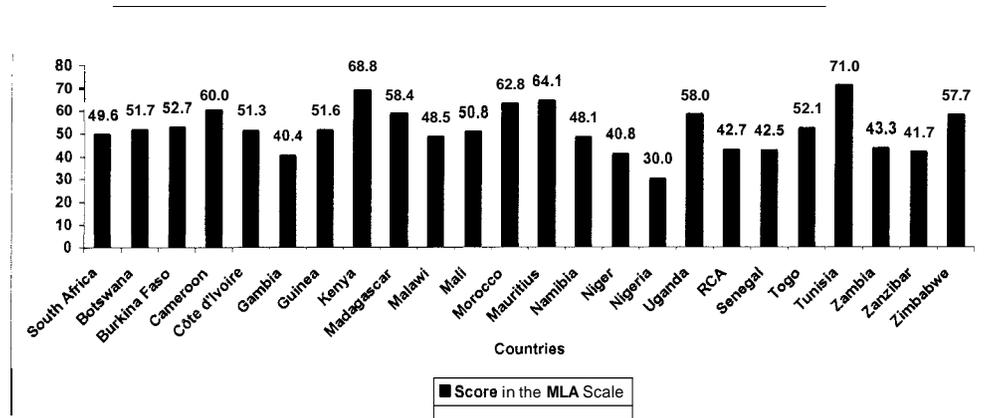
Source: Chinapah et al, 2000a, p.20. MML is minimal level, DML is desirable level.

3.21 The tests shed some light on the effects of policies on learning. *Multigrade students performed poorly*. They scored 37.8 percent in MLA tests as compared to 40.7 percent of regular classes and had the lowest probability of passing primary-school leaving examination. The *student-teacher ratio* was also negatively related to achievement. Data analyses by class size, teacher experience, and shift (the cost-cutting measures of the Bank's policy) also show a negative relationship with achievement. However, the condition of school buildings, for which there was much investment in Niger, is not related to student achievement.³⁴

3.22 *Double-shift classes* show a mixed picture in comparison with regular classes, because they are in crowded urban areas, where students may get more parental support. Thus, the MLA scores were 44.6 for double shift schools vs. a country average of 40.7 percent. However, students learn little in rural multigrade and urban double-shift classes.³⁵ Because they have not been accepted well, by 2003, they accounted for just 5 percent of student enrollments.

34. Mingat and Rakotomalala, 2004.

35. Mingat and Rakotomalala, 2004. Students in double-shift schools of Senegal were also found to be very weak. In Guinea, the double shift was found to reduce scores by 3.6 percentage points in French, 3.4 points in expression, and 5.6 points in math in comparison to average performance. (Barrier Emilie, Sekou Fernandez, Jeannot Saa Tinguiano, Gonon Traore. 1998. Evaluation du Systeme Educatif Guineen. Centre International d' Etudes Pedagogiques – Sèvre et Cellule Nationale de Coordination de l'Evaluation du Systeme Educatif – Conakry). It is unclear what the enrollment and pass rates would be if unschooled students instead attended double-shift classes.

Figure 8. Average scores of MLA tests in various countries

Source: Chinapah, 2003

3.23 *About half the graduates able to read.* The Multiple Index Cluster Survey was administered in 2000 to a number of countries. Participants were asked about their level of schooling and whether they could read easily. Only about 53.6 percent of primary school graduates in Niger stated that they could read easily (Figures 8 and 9).³⁶

Table 6. Percentage of Adults Age 22-24 Who Reportedly Could Read Easily According to their Level of Studies

Country	No School	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years	5 Years	6 Years
Burundi	7.5	29.4	48.1	67.2	83.1	91.1
Cameroon	8.5	23.7	36.2	50.9	65.5	77.7
Côte d'Ivoire	6.5	22.4	35.5	51.2	66.6	79.2
Guinea-Bissau	6.6	18.5	28.8	42.4	56.6	70.3
Niger	1.1	5.0	10.2	19.7	34.8	53.6
Nigeria	16.7	37.9	51.5	65.0	76.4	84.9
Central Africa Republic	0.5	6.5	13.0	25.0	48.0	64.0
Rwanda	6.3	34.7	59.9	80.6	92.0	97.0
Senegal	12.1	25.9	35.8	46.9	58.5	69.1
Sierra Leone	3.8	10.4	16.6	25.5	37.1	50.3
Chad	0.5	2.8	6.3	13.6	27.1	46.6
Togo	2.4	12.0	24.0	43.0	64.0	81.0
Mean	6.0	19.1	30.5	44.3	59.1	72.1

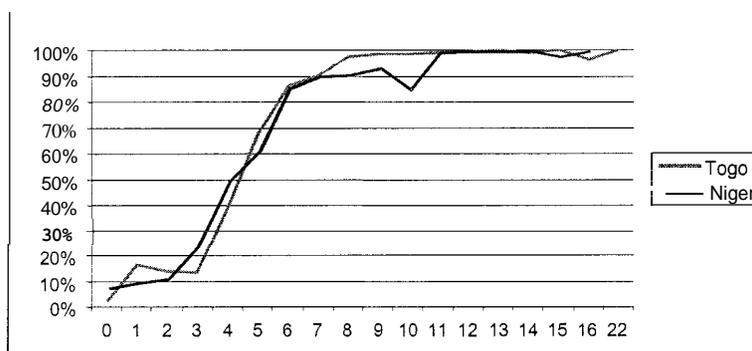
Source: Multiple Index Cluster Survey 2000; Mingat 2003.

3.24 The percentage of graduates able to read easily approximates the 50 percent estimate given to the OED mission by grade 6 teachers. Those sampled by the Multiple Index Cluster Survey were in primary school while PRODEP was being implemented. Thus, there appears to be no improvement in basic skills since the 1980s. There are not enough data in Niger to estimate the relationship between enrollments and achievement over time. It is possible, however, that in 2003 students were learning less than they did

36. Mingat, 2003.

earlier and that the proportion of students made literate has decreased since 1999. During the 1999 MLA tests, half the teachers had over 10 years of teaching experience; by 2004, half the teachers were new and on a “volunteer” contract. Furthermore, textbooks in schools may be fewer than during the PROSEF years. Deteriorating quality may be one explanation for the limited demand for schooling; only 43.5 percent of the children are enrolled even in areas where there is a school.

Figure 9. Proportion of Students Able to Read and Write Easily in Niger by Highest Grade Attained.



Source. Multiple Index Cluster Survey 2000, highest grade is doctorate

Poverty Alleviation and Development of Trained Human Resources

3.25 Both PRODEP and PROSEF aimed at increasing the availability of schooling in hopes of obtaining trained human resources for sustained economic growth and poverty alleviation. Strictly speaking, the outcome was schooling; learning was merely implied. Was the learning provided likely to alleviate students’ poverty?

3.26 In the recent sector study³⁷ students who have enrolled in school are considered “schooled” (scolarises) regardless of performance. However, if they fail to become literate, the goals for which the projects were implemented are not fulfilled. Furthermore, one must question why the donor community and government should spend so much money to send them to school. This is a particularly poignant question for the HIPC initiative, whose funds have been reserved for poverty alleviation. If students graduate functionally illiterate, they may have lost the opportunity to earn or to learn their parents’ professions.³⁸ Accordingly, the Nigerien press has criticized the country’s schools as suitable only for the most intelligent or financially better off. (See article in Annex A.)³⁹

3.27 Research suggests that instructional time available in the schools of Niger is insufficient to acquire basic skills, particularly given the exclusive use of a non-native language, lack of instructional materials, and parents’ inability to provide private coaching or other compensatory activities for their children (see Section 5). Reduced repetition rates

37. Mingat and Rakotomalala. 2004.

38. European Union, 2004.

39. Bizo, 2003.

through automatic promotion signify that some students attend higher grades without knowing the prerequisite material. However, Bank project documents showed little or no appreciation of these inherent risks. Instructional issues were rarely brought up in the documents of PRODEP and PROSEF, and supervision reports do not include classroom observations that could have brought out the problem. Risks associated with poor learning outcomes appear to have been downplayed by the Bank. Even in the appraisal document of the ongoing project, the discussion of risks is limited to management and financial issues. Despite test evidence, the failure of the policy framework to achieve the development goal of providing basic skills was not identified as a risk. Similarly, the 2003 PRSP progress report relies on enrollment indicators to suggest that targets are being achieved, without questioning the accuracy or implications of the data. No reference is made to the very low test scores of 1999 or the self-reports of illiterate graduates in 2000. In sum, analysis and evidence included in Bank documents appear to imply that poverty alleviation depends on mere enrollments rather than student learning.

4. Ratings

Project Outcomes

4.1 The objectives of Education I were substantially *relevant* to the human capital development needs of the country. Though efficiency was modest shortly after the project end, long-term goals regarding the availability and quality of trained technicians were achieved. The project also helped improve educational planning in primary education. Thus the outcome of Education I is rated *satisfactory*.

4.2 In the two most recent projects, quality of education is not stated as an independent objective; it is linked with access or with cost reductions into one objective. OED considers an objective achieved when all parts are achieved. The PRODEP objectives of improving the decreasing enrollment rates and promoting cost-effective use of financial resources were *highly relevant* to Niger, particularly at a time of economic crisis. The project met the access objectives despite enormous challenges and succeeded in making the system more affordable. However, it failed to improve the quality of education while reducing unit costs, and its efficiency was modest. Overall, the outcome of PRODEP is rated *satisfactory*.

4.3 PROSEF was implemented at a time when it should have been possible to assess the effects of educational quality provided in Niger given the policies implemented during PRODEP. It did not. Though its interventions greatly improved access, the cost cuts hampered improvements in the quality of primary education, so the combined objective was not achieved. Similarly, planning capacity was strengthened, but managerial capacity was not. Since the relevance and efficiency of PROSEF were also at best modest, outcome is rated *moderately unsatisfactory*.

Institutional Development Impact

4.4 The institutional development impact of all three projects is rated *modest*. In the case of Education I, trained teachers left for non-teaching positions, while in PRODEP and PROSEF many training activities did not have a clear outcome. Overall, however, some institutional units were put in place that have shown continuity and the ability to carry out their basic functions.

Sustainability

4.5 The sustainability of Education I is rated *likely*. The training appeals to paying students and responds to a labor market need. The sustainability of PRODEP is also rated *likely*. Cost-cutting measures were instituted along with policies that have been maintained until 2004. The sustainability of PROSEF is uncertain. It is unknown whether contract teachers will continue working at low salaries in the long term and whether they will provide acceptable skill levels to students. No research is available to assess long-term benefits to students who acquire few if any skills. Those who graduate functionally illiterate are at risk of forgetting what little reading they know and lapsing back into complete illiteracy.⁴⁰ Also, the large-scale enrollment expansion that this project brought about is sustainable only with large-scale donor financing. For these reasons, the sustainability of PROSEF is rated *non-evaluable*.

Bank Performance

4.6 Bank performance in Education I is rated *satisfactory*. The Bank was flexible and gave sound advice to the government regarding the future of the agricultural technician school. It was also right in including funds in the project to improve planning for primary education. In PRODEP, Bank performance is also rated *satisfactory*. The Bank proposed important measures to reform the system and helped the government bring them about. However, in PROSEF Bank performance is rated *unsatisfactory*. Despite considerable concerns regarding the quality of education, the Bank did not adapt its policy advice accordingly.

4.7 There seems to have been no established rationale for the effectiveness of the Bank's 'more with less' policy. While it promoted cost reductions, the Bank may have underestimated the impact on the provision of actual education. The ICR for PROSEF outlines extensively the savings achieved from the various instructional reduction measures. In contrast, the ICR expressed little concern regarding the consequences that some of the savings would have later, either in private rates of return of those who graduate illiterate, in reduced health outcomes, or in the much costlier adult literacy programs.

4.8 It appears that the Bank vastly overestimated poor students' ability to learn a non-native language and basic skills through severely reduced timeframes and means. It is

40. For example, Hartley and Swanson, 1986.

unclear how the Bank concluded that it was possible to cut provision of education without affecting poor students' skills, while going against the findings of published research on the subject. Seminal studies had already been done on instructional time and its close relationship to achievement.⁴¹ Similarly, extensive research was being carried out on bilingual education conditions and outcomes. Indeed, the government did not evaluate student outcomes at the end of PRODEP or PROSEF.

4.9 The OED mission heard several critical comments about the neglect of learning in the Bank's strategy (see details in Annex C). Criticism was particularly strong with respect to the recruitment of untrained and less educated teachers who teach only until they find something better to do and who seem unable to manage classes. Concerns were also raised about the Bank's excessive focus on the financial aspects of education and disregard of learning issues. Some donor staff criticized lending and debt accumulation on the basis of controversial policies.

4.10 The Bank was willing to make lending conditional on other highly unpopular policies, like contract teacher recruitment and double shifts, but it did not try to bring expertise and present a strong case to the government in favor of local-language instruction, even after a clear opportunity came in 2001, when education in local languages was legislated. Country dialogue has also not included the issues associated with the government-financed Franco-Arab schools that split the limited instructional time between the French and Arabic languages, resulting in particularly low learning outcomes.⁴² (In other countries, Arabic and Koranic instruction are extracurricular.)

Borrower Performance

4.11 The government showed great willingness to implement the projects. Despite difficulties and limited human resources with which to carry out the work, most activities specified in project documents were carried out. For Education I and PRODEP borrower performance is rated *satisfactory*.

4.12 Borrower performance deteriorated during PROSEF. Particularly during the second half of the project, financial management was weak, and the staff assigned were less well qualified. Financial reports indicated a lack of accountability, and efforts to resolve discrepancies were limited. The government took no clear action with respect to the extensive theft of textbooks, which severely limited schools' ability to educate students. No thieves were ever caught, and it is unclear how diligently the police investigated these events. Many officials who were interviewed by the mission believed that the textbooks were stolen from regional warehouses, while others believed that fewer textbooks had been delivered through high-level complicity. No clear allegations could be produced to lead to an investigation. Because of the serious financial management lapses, borrower performance for PROSEF is rated *unsatisfactory*.

41. Stallings, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1986 and Stallings et al, 1979

42. In Guinea, Franco-Arab schools had significantly lower scores in comparison to average performance: -7.9 percentage points in French, -14.1 points in written expression, and -9.7 in math. (Barrier et al. 1998; detailed evaluation report, p. 74-75).

4.13 Some of the officials interviewed were of the opinion that the Bank policies were at least partly responsible for the limited performance in Nigérien schools. Nevertheless, they were generally optimistic and reported satisfaction with the progress in expanding enrollments and the work that had been done. They affirmed their commitment to improving and expanding education and reassured the mission that obstacles will be overcome.

4.14 Few of the officials interviewed had spent time observing classroom procedures or assessing student performance; some had not visited schools in over 10 years. Nevertheless, some repeatedly reassured the mission that teachers were in fact operating in class as instructed, that is that teachers should speak little and support children, they should create conditions so that children will learn, they should come half an hour earlier to write on the board before children come, and that they cover material fast in the beginning of the year. The decisionmakers' limited contact with classroom processes may constrain future efforts to improve classroom instruction and basic skills acquisition.

5. Issues for Future Consideration

Is it Possible to Achieve EFA by 2015?

5.1 Because of good policy performance, Niger received accelerated external financial support through the Fast-Track Initiative. The country has agreed to meet annual targets for progress against the indicative framework numerical targets and monitoring of key outcomes (Annex A for details). How likely is it that it will reach its goal of universal primary completion by 2015?

5.2 Despite many difficulties, Niger has a record of meeting policy objectives and numerical targets. However, the targets of the indicative framework (Annex Table A-1) may not be achievable by 2015. The government has a viable strategy for building semi-finished schools on metallic structures, but government officials informally state that about 1500 such structures per year is more likely than 3,000. Lack of a school map and clear choice criteria may leave construction vulnerable to political abuse and favoritism. Hiring and training teachers will also present a challenge; the country plans to hire 2500 new teachers per year, while about 27,000 will be needed by 2015 (excluding replacements of those retiring and leaving the profession; Table 7). Yet, in 2004, Niger already had 6,500 untrained teachers, and the government was hard pressed to find enough secondary school graduates willing to work in rural areas for the amounts offered. And there may not be sufficient supply or demand for secondary education to fill the posts. One would expect students currently in the system to become teachers in a few years, but many did not learn to read in school, so they may be unsuitable even if promotion policies allow them to enter secondary schools.

Table 7. Principal Indicators for EFA Achievement in Niger

	2001	2005	2015
Grade 1 intake	40%	57%	100%
Completion rate	23,7%	38%	100%
Gross enrollment rate	37,3%	57%	105%
Number of students (thousands)	657	1 151	3 052
Teachers	15 500	27 500	74 800
Classrooms	14500	26200	71200

Source: Ministry of Basic Education (FTI request 2002)

5.3 Supply-side enrollment projections predict that 350,000 students will reach grade 6 by 2015.⁴³ In principle, all children could spend some time in school by that date. But if most drop out and about half the grade 6 graduates continue to be unable to read well, the government and the donors may abandon EFA. Thus, there is considerable doubt as to whether EFA can be achieved by 2015. The doubt is also echoed in Bank documents (PAD p. 9).

5.4 *Quality improvement problems persist.* The current project plans curricular and teacher training reforms, but in the past these did not by themselves improve quality of education. These quality improvement elements are reflected neither in the objectives nor in the indicators. There is no plan to make the French textbooks more readable. The peer-teaching component included to improve performance is a pilot difficult to finance or undertake. The better students (to the extent that they can be found) are expected to tutor those falling behind under the guidance of mothers for no remuneration other than prizes. This activity, which has not yet started, will only be implemented in three provinces and needed funds will come from income-generation projects. By contrast, activities to increase institutional capacity will be financed directly from grant funds.

5.5 How can learning outcomes improve within the country's financial and human resource limitations? The following options could be explored.

Increasing the Class Time Spent on Instruction

5.6 Information requires classroom time for transmission and consolidation. To benefit from donor funding, students must be engaged in activities aimed at teaching or practicing the curricular contents. Efficient use of classroom time may enable many poor rural students to master math, French grammar, fluent reading in French, and information through that language.

5.7 The government may consider carrying out extensive training to increase the amount of time students are engaged in learning activities in class and at home (through homework). The strategy would partly include feedback to teachers and consciousness raising of the wastage, which according to research is effective in improving use of

43. Mingat and Rakotomalala, 2004.

time.⁴⁴ Teachers must also be instructed to change technique and group students to allow simultaneous practice rather than interact with them individually, as is currently done. In-service training groups could support each other in organizing classes so that time is used better. The improved performance that students may exhibit after better time use may be also have a reinforcing value for teachers in Niger.⁴⁵

5.8 It may also be important to consider an incentive structure for teachers who spend more time teaching their students.

Using Local Languages for Basic Children's Literacy

5.9 To learn a new language, young children may require over 600 hours of interactive engagement reflecting grammatical change patterns and syntax.⁴⁶ Given the limitations on instructional time, feedback, and teachers' knowledge, children clearly do not process enough data in French to reproduce the grammatical patterns. Since teachers are the only French speakers in rural areas and may not interact with them, most students simply do not learn enough language to then learn reading or the required subjects in it.

5.10 The disappointing learning outcomes of French-mediated instruction and encouraging experiments in Niger and elsewhere suggest that to make the majority of students literate, early reading and basic information must be taught in local languages. For political reasons, local languages have been considered problematic in many countries. However, now that a law exists, Government officials state that there are no political obstacles to their use at this time. The challenges are to teach teachers themselves how to read and write in the languages they know and to make sure that students have sufficient numbers of textbooks in local languages.⁴⁷

5.11 Another challenge is to convince parents. In Niger and other area countries parents desire to see their children schooled in a way that will increase their social status. Illiterate parents who have not been exposed to the difficulties of school sometimes say that their children already know the local language, and are being sent to school to learn French. It is important, therefore, to sensitize the population to the rationale for local-language instruction.

5.12 The government might consider adopting the goal **of making all students fluent readers by the end of grade 2**, at least in their local language. Extensive research suggests that once they become fluent readers, students will be able to read on their own

44. Stallings et al, 1979. How to change the process of teaching basic skills in secondary schools: Phase II and III. (Final Report for National Institute of Educational.) Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

45. In response to this document, the government intends to take appropriate measures for better use of instructional time (Annex E).

46. For example, Krashen, 1981. In second-language acquisition, a college student taking immersion class in a foreign language for three hours a week would require about four years or about 600 hours of instruction and reading to gain performance in the new language. To a child encountering a native language, 600 hours of direct-method language listening could pass in less than one year. Even so, after four years of learning, children often have a smaller vocabulary compared to any mature student and make grammatical mistakes. (Putnam, H. 1975).

47. Thomas and Collier, 1997.

the materials necessary for study in multigrade schools and to learn French faster. Automatic readers normally do not lapse back into illiteracy.⁴⁸ So, if students drop out, they will be able to decode messages later on and expand skills on their own.

Implementing a Sustainable Textbook Strategy

5.13 EFA depends on children's ability to read fluently early on. To use classroom time efficiently and bring about reading fluency, textbooks (and if possible other materials) are needed. They must exist in sufficient quantities and in constant supply so that students can take them home during the school year, do homework with them, and obtain enough reading practice.

5.14 Textbooks in class are necessary but not sufficient for learning basic reading. During the OED mission, young children frequently seemed to be reading words in pages they had seen before but they could not recognize them on another page or format. Because of the scarce materials and brief textbooks, they had memorized the words and were reproducing them based on superficial cues, such as page layout. Clearly, textbooks are needed for home study and supplemental books are needed to provide more combinations of words and practice. Also students need dictionaries that explain in local languages and through illustrations the meaning of every French words encountered. Textbooks and supplementary materials in local languages have been developed, but they must be printed in sufficient numbers for lower grade students and distributed. Current calls for bids are for French materials only.

5.15 The government has deliberated extensively on strategies to avert textbook theft. There are plans to send books directly to schools rather than regional warehouses, and private schools will also receive free books (Annex E). However, books will continue to be printed overseas and imported, and printing books for sale is seen only as a separate activity. The size of the task involved in supplying all schools with books from abroad means that the textbooks will continue to be used in class only and that students will not have them available for homework. In fact *only one book is planned for every two students in geography, history, and grammar, exactly those subjects for which homework is typically considered necessary.* The large-scale thefts and bookstore sales suggest that there is a market of parents who can afford them. To avoid further thefts, meet market needs, and help educate students who can afford to buy books, the government might consider selling textbooks to local bookstores at affordable prices as well as making them free to all students.

5.16 For the textbooks to be sustained in schools, local publishing and printing might be encouraged alongside with imports. Thus, the current shortages of overseas prints can be avoided. However, Niger imposes taxes on imports of paper and ink. *A strategy to support local publishers might include tax abeyance for the materials needed to printed low-cost books.*

48. For a review see Abadzi, 2003.

5.17 Compared to the other budget items involved in achieving EFA, the amounts for textbooks and instructional materials are relatively low, 5-9 percent of annual startup costs;⁴⁹ they could be potentially increased to provide an abundance of the basic tool needed for education.

Implementing an Effective Teacher Support System

5.18 Teachers are loosely connected to local in-service networks, where they are expected to learn from their peers. The extent to which peers know more is unclear. The government has limited communication with these networks due to distances and a lack of trained supervisors. To make instruction more efficient, sustained, and effective means of communication are needed.

5.19 One approach is to increase the accountability of school directors. Many do not teach and have time in principle to supervise teachers, but the OED mission found them consistently uninvolved. Incentives, including awards, could be given for improved performance or showing sustained improvement in student performance. The lessons from experience with such experiments in other countries (such as Kenya⁵⁰) could be studied and improved. Champions of change could be identified among administrators who can convince the others to perform better.

5.20 The donor community might consider the provision of telecommunication equipment to remote inspectorate offices. VHF (very high frequency) radio or satellite antenna (or the most recent feasible technology) could link regional and offices and use solar power where there is no electricity. (This option was used successfully in Guinea.)

6. Lessons

6.1 Experience with the assessed projects confirms a number of OED lessons from the education sector:

- *A policy framework focused on costs and access is insufficient.* PRODEP and PROSEF emphasized cost savings over instruction on basic skills. Policy dialogue and project activities need to focus on imparting information to students and teaching them basic skills. Providing mass education under clearly inadequate instructional conditions may graduate functional illiterates and benefit only those who are the brightest or better-off.
- *Access-related indicators may be relatively easy to obtain but may not be closely related to learning achievements.* Monitoring indicators for the two primary education projects showcased enrollment increases and improvements in student

49. The application for the Fast-Track Initiative estimates the cost of an initial stock of textbooks at about US\$1.5 million and annual additional needs at US\$1 million.

50. Glewwe et al, 2003

flows but not whether students had acquired basic knowledge and skills. But the administration of achievement tests is laborious and difficult to carry out regularly in low-income countries. Innovative and rapid means must be sought to gauge students' likely achievement (such as the proportion of students able to read fluently a simple text.)

- Textbooks are crucial contributors to student learning; if they are unavailable or if students cannot study from them sufficiently, the rest of the educational investments lose their effectiveness. *Procurement methods and plans must aim at making large numbers of textbooks available to students free, but also available for sale at the market.* Textbook management is most effective if it takes into account the printing strengths of the local private sector and the community school associations.
- Though in other countries enrollments in agricultural schools tend to be low and labor linkages weak, in Niger there is a demand for the skills provided. *Bank investments of earlier decades in agricultural education may continue to provide skills relevant to the economy* if policy dialogue is focused toward modernizing courses, generating income to schools, and catering to the populations likely to be interested in agricultural training.

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Annex A. Sectoral Information and the Ten-Year Plan

Donor Involvement in the Education Sector of Niger

1. Niger continues to be highly dependent on foreign grants and loans, which have on average been roughly equal to domestic fiscal revenues between 1999 and 2002. The donor community has coordinated efforts to expand education in Niger for the past 20 years, particularly in financing school construction, education for girls, bilingual education, and school feeding programs. There are about 25 donors and include the African Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank, OPEP, France, Germany, Belgium, Norway, Japan, Luxemburg, Canada and UN agencies.

2. According to persons interviewed by the OED mission, the donor community supports the same objectives, collaborates well, and meets frequently under the leadership of Canada. The Bank regularly and extensively consults with the donors. At a forum in June 2003, the donor community endorsed the Bank-supported Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper as the basis for its assistance, supported a gradual transition from project to program financing, and agreed on the need to further strengthen coordination and harmonization of donor policies and procedures. A group of donors has agreed to finance the budget necessary for the Fast-Track Initiative (FTI), which started in 2003. Norway and Netherlands have committed grants of US\$1 million and US\$5 million respectively to be held in trust by IDA.

3. *Public Expenditure Adjustment Credit Project I* (Cr. 3576-NIR for US\$70 million; FY2001-2003) devoted 22 percent of the proceeds for education. The project executed the budget for the first quarter of FY 2002, in particular for the items listed in paragraphs 59 through 64 of the Program, as evidenced by a joint report from the Ministries of Finance, National Education and Public Health. Specifically, it covered at 2001 budget levels the following: (a) Recruitment and training costs of new contract teachers; (b) Salaries of all existing contract teachers; (c) Subsistence costs of students attending the reformed teacher's colleges; (d) Costs linked to the expansion of double-shift teaching in urban areas; and (e) Costs of monitoring and evaluation of the program, including the collection and compilation of statistical data, the continuous undertaking of public expenditure reviews, as well as of an expenditure tracking survey." Project outcome was rated satisfactory, sustainability as likely, institutional development impact as modest, and the Bank and Borrower performance as satisfactory.

4. The *Public Expenditure Adjustment Credit Project II* (Cr. 3827-NIR for US\$65 million) has neared completion. As of June 2003, the education and health ministries had received cash releases amounting to only 33 percent and 18.5 percent, respectively of their total voted budget for 2003, though more was subsequently received. In the case of education, these cash releases were largely used to pay salaries, leaving little for other recurrent expenditures. As a result, some school cafeterias did not receive funding and

could no longer feed students, with the result that many children stopped attending school.⁵²

Experimental Schools in National Languages

5. This experiment has been carried out since 1982. The schools are currently supported by the European Union. There are 39 of them with about 5354 students, and have been teaching grades 1-3 in local languages since 1982. Parents are under the impression that their children should be studying in French, and these schools seem to get little attention.

6. An evaluation has shown that children in bilingual schools learn to read in national language fast. At grade 4 they read French better than students in traditional schools, where half the children in grade 4 of traditional schools do not know how to read at all. The difference between the two groups disappears at grade 6. Nevertheless quality of education in national language classes is as low as that of traditional classes, and 4th graders score only 60% in reading.⁵³

The Role of the EFA-FTI Catalytic Fund

7. FTI financing under EFA will support the country's 10-year program, which largely coincides with EFA timeframe. Program highlights are:

- a. *Access:* Increasing primary-school gross enrollment rates to 74 percent in 2012 (70 percent for girls and for rural areas). To achieve these, 2,500 new contractual teachers will be hired every year and a similar number of classrooms will be built.
- b. *Quality:* Reducing repetition rate from 13 percent in 2001 to 5 percent in 2012 in grades 1-5 and from 37 percent to 10 percent in grade 6; increase primary-school completion rate to 79 percent by 2012. To achieve these goals, curricula will be revised, a new textbook policy will be implemented, and teachers will be trained.
- c. *Management:* Improve planning and evaluation capacity, decentralize management, and involve communities in school management.

8. FTI involves an initial three-year pledge of support that is extendable to 2015.⁵⁴ In May 2004, when the OED mission took place, the FTI activities had not yet started. An

52 World Bank. 2003.

53. Herbert et al 1999.

54. To implement the Fast-Track Initiative, donors commit to sustained and predictable financing for countries committed to EFA indicative framework (Table A-1). The government's request estimates that the total amount needed the years 2003-2005 is 178.91 billion CFA, i.e., about US\$357 million. National resources are only about 35 percent of the amount, 64.86 billion CFA (US\$129 million). External aid already available is 48.6 billion CFA (about US\$97.2). Thus, the gap estimated by the government for just three years is 65.4 billion CFA, or about \$131 million, US\$56

Administration Agreement had been signed for the allocation of 2003. It is a single-donor grant arrangement for budget support (with a negative list) that had not yet disbursed, pending various agreements between the donors and the government and among donors as well as a proposal from the government regarding the 2004 allocation. Amounts committed by that date included a Norwegian grant of US\$1 million and a Netherlands grant of US\$5 million. The funds are held in trust by the World Bank. A considerable financing gap still exists.

9. The EFA-FTI Catalytic Fund provides two to three year transitional financing to developing countries to scale up programs to achieve a complete primary education for all children, and leverage additional and longer term financing to enable them to sustain the effort. Donors include Netherlands, Norway, Italy, and Belgium. Niger is scheduled to receive US\$5 million for calendar year 2003, US\$8 million for 2004, and US\$8 for 2005.

10. The conditions are: (a) The existence of an Endorsed Education Sector Plan in the country; (b) Demonstrated strong commitment on the part of the country's government; (c) Strong performance by the country's government towards achievement of the goal of universal primary school completion for girls and boys by 2015; (d) Capacity to implement the endorsed Education Sector Plan; and (e) Exceptional limitations in the external donor funding available for the country's primary education program.

11. Indicative framework parameters include: (a) Tax effort at least 14-18 % of GDP; (b) Education spending about 20% of total recurrent budget; (c) Primary education at least 50% of total recurrent budget; (d) Average teacher salaries about 3.5 times per capita GDP; (e) Non salary spending (books, materials, teacher training, supervision, targeted subsidies to HIV/AIDS orphans, etc.) at about 33% of recurrent spending; (f) Pupil: teacher ratio about 40; (g) Repetition no more than 10%; (h) class time of at least 950 hours per year.

12. The objectives of the 10-year program and Basic Education Project are:

- a. **Cost-related:** (i) Institutionalization of contractual teacher recruitment; (ii) - Restructuring and enhancement of inservice training centers (CAPED); (iii) Re-organizing primary education into three sub-cycles along with an automatic promotion policy within each sub-cycle; limiting repetition in grade 6 to 15 %; (iv) Privatizing textbook distribution and shifting responsibility of textbook management to local leaders and school management committees. (v) Training teachers to teach at least two subjects in lower secondary schools. (vi) Implementing a rolling three-year program budget and a results-based budgeting and execution. (vii) Allocating at least 50% of the education budget to primary education.

million per year. Just teacher training and construction supervision costs amount to about US\$1.2 million per year. The government will devote each year 28 percent of recurrent expenditures (aside from debt) to education in general; 50 percent of education expenditures to primary education, and 40 percent of debt relief funds for universal primary education.

- b. **Institutional strengthening.** (i) Restructuring the MOE through the adoption of a new charter and the timely appointment of staff to key positions. (ii) Partly decentralizing the MOE recurrent budget decisions to the regional level. (iii) Strengthening fiduciary management and oversight of deconcentrated financial personnel. (iv) Empowering local entities and communities to manage schools (project component to be financed entirely through an IDA grant)

13. In terms of quality, the 10-year plan and associated project include the following activities to improve access and student performance:

- Expansion of one-teacher (multigrade) schools as an alternative education model for remote areas;
- Peer-tutoring programs for underperforming students, overseen by community mothers; tutoring students will receive awards financed by local income-generating activities through small grants provided by the project (to be implemented in three regions);
- Program evaluation.

Access indicators include:

- i Increasing access to grade 1 from 40 percent in 2001 to 74 percent in 2012 and in rural areas from 39 to 72.5 percent ;
- ii Increasing gross enrollment rates in primary school from 37 percent in 2001 to 74 percent in 2012 and for girls from 29,6 to 70 percent ;
- iii Increasing primary gross enrollment rates in rural areas from 32 percent in 2001 to 70 percent in 2012 ;

14. Attaining these objectives will require the recruitment of 27,323 new teachers for primary schools and the construction of 25,448 classrooms to place 1,926,495 students.

Quality indicators include:

- i Reducing the mean repetition rate in primary school from 13 percent in 2001 to 5 percent in 2012;
- ii Reducing the mean repetition rate in grade 6 from 37 percent in 2001 to 10 percent in 2012;
- iii Raising primary-school completion rate from 23.7 percent in 2001 to 79 percent in 2012.

15. To achieve the qualitative objectives of the program, there will be a curricular reform for greater relevance and the preservice and inservice training will also be

reformed. Students will receive more textbooks and instructional materials in sufficient quantity and quality, and methods will be installed to evaluate students.

Policy measures will include:

- resource allocation to education of 28 percent of the recurrent budget (aside from debt) ; 40 percent of the amount provided for the HIPC debt relief, and (iii) at least 50 percent of the education budget dedicated to primary education.
 1. improved resource allocation to maintain the student-teacher ratio at 40 :1 ; (b) recruitment of 2500 contractual teachers per year, and (c) school construction at reduced costs, (74% of them in durable materials and 26% in local materials) ;
 2. training to prevent HIV/AIDS through integrating health concepts in schools and involving school committees;
 3. improved distribution of textbooks so that they will be available for the students;
 4. stimulation of private education, particularly in secondary education; rental and sale of schools, formulation of incentives, etc.
 5. development of measures to educate the handicapped and the girls.

Table A-I National Plan for EFA-Fast Track Initiative in Relation to the Indicative Framework

Indicator	Value in 2001	Indicative values in 2015	Target	
			Value	Date
Resource Mobilization				
National resources as % of GDP	9,2	14	14	2015
Education recurrent expenditures as % of discretionary recurrent expenditures	28	20	20	2015
% of recurrent expenditures for primary education in relation to total recurrent expenditures of education	49	50	50	2015
Indicators of student flows				
% of cohort entering in grade 1	40	100	100	2015
% of cohort attaining grade 6	23,7	100	100	2015
% of repeaters among students	13	10	5	2015
Indicators of educational services production				
Student-teacher ratio in primary schools	41	40:1	40	2015
Mean leave average remuneration level for teachers as % of per capita GDP				2015
Newly hired teachers remuneration	3,1		3,9	2015
% of recurrent non-salary expenditures as a proportion of the total recurrent expenditure budget in primary education	28	33	33	2009
Number of instructional hours annually in primary public schools	960	1000	960	2015
% of students attending private schools	4,3	10	2	2015
Unit cost of a classroom built and equipped	US\$ 6300	US\$ 8000	US\$ 8000	2015

Article by Bizo, Boubakar. Une école pour surdoués et fils à papa. Nation, August 7, 2003

The author suggests that Nigerian schools are so difficult, students must be either extremely smart or have enough means to afford private tutoring.

Opinion

Une école pour surdoués et fils à papa

On ne l'a que trop dit : l'école nigérienne est ma iade ; plus, elle est victime d'un dérèglement tel que tout le système éducatif est mis en branle, de la base au sommet. Des rentes scolaires utopiques, des programmes inadaptés et exécutés au 113, des enseignants insuffisants et de mauvaise qualité, des infrastructures scolaires vétustes et insuffisantes, le lot est bien fourni de tous les malheurs qui assaillent l'école nigérienne. Dans un tel contexte, cette institution devient de plus en plus sélective en diable. En effet, au moment où tous les programmes de développement riment en faveur de la lutte contre la pauvreté, l'école au Niger se démarque de ce

combat pour ne servir que les nantis et quelques rares chanceux sous la faveur de Dieu – lui-même ! Car pour réussir à l'école au Niger, il faut obligatoirement faire partie de ces deux groupes précités. Pour les fils à papa, la réussite à l'école est synonyme de garantie. Trois grandes facilités leur sont gracieusement offertes : les établissements scolaires privés qui sont à l'abri des perturbations, les cours de maison avec des répétiteurs chevronnés, les écoles de l'étranger. L'accès à ces voies de recours nécessite des frais et pas des moindres que les petits budgets des familles démunies ne sauraient dispenser. La quatrième et l'ultime

facilité pour les fils à papa, est cette voie de recours peu orthodoxe que le Nigérien contemporain a empruntée à je ne sais quelle culture : la fraude ! Cette pratique récente – ignorée encore jusque dans les années 80 – est aujourd'hui érigée en cheval de bataille par le commun des Nigériens. Et tous les maillons de la chaîne sont contaminés : les examinateurs, les élèves et les parents. « Les épreuves, on en trouve jusqu'à Katakò », a-t-on coutume d'entendre, comme pour narguer les officiels qui poussent le zèle à réactualiser chaque fois les textes condamnant la fraude. Outre son caractère peu orthodoxe, la fraude démotive les élè-

ves. Les premiers pour la certitude qu'ils ont déréussi contre vents et marées et les seconds à cause de l'injustice flagrante dont ils sont victimes. C'est le cas de cet excellent élève que le sort a fait passer à l'oral hypothéquant son orientation alors que les diables de l'examen ont fait passer le dernier de sa classe à l'écrit ; une orientation donc garantie, peut-être même vers une école professionnelle ! Pourquoi pas ? Dieu est grand, mais l'argent n'est pas petit ! Pour l'enfant du pauvre – le pauvre – il n'y a plus qu'une alternative : qu'il soit surdoué ! Sa volonté ? Non ! Pour gigantesque que soit la force de sa volonté, elle ne saura faire face à tous les facteurs de

démotivation qu'il vit dans sa tête et dans sa chair. Ils sont nombreux les cas d'abandon enregistrés au cours des années scolaires. Souvent, de bons élèves préfèrent prendre la rue que de céder au ridicule et à l'abrutissement dans lesquels l'école veut les confiner. Pour l'enfant issu d'une famille démunie, il n'a qu'à prier Dieu pour qu'il le dote de dispositions intellectuelles exceptionnelles. Un surdoué ne sauraitechouer à un examen. Sauf si on attribue sa réussite à une tierce personne ; comme on a coutume d'entendre certains parents digérer mal l'échec de leurs enfants.

Bizo Boubacar

Étranger

Table A-2: Evolution of access indicators in primary school in 1993-2002

<i>Indicators</i>		<i>1993-1997</i>			<i>1998-2002</i>		
		<i>1993</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>Variation</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>Variation</i>
Gross enrollment rate	Total	27.8%	30.1%	23%	30.4%	41.7%	11.3%
	Boys	34.4%	38.7%	4.3%	37.4%	50.1%	12.7%
	Girls	21%	22.2%	1.2%	23.4%	33.3%	9.9%
	Urban	34.9%	38.7%	3.8%	51.4%	51.5%	0.1%
	Rural	20.7%	22.5%	1.8%	22.8%	38.1%	15.3%
Enrollment to grade 1	Total	23.7%	27.1%	3.4%	26.2%	49.8%	23.6%
	Boys	28.9%	31.5%	2.6%	30.4%	58%	27.6%
	Girls	18.2%	22.4%	4.2%	21.7%	41.3%	19.6%
	Urban	48.2%	60.3%	12.1%	69.4%	79.3%	72.3%
	Rural	16.2%	20.3%	4.1%	17.7%	44.2%	26.5%
Primary school completion	Total	NA	21.6%	NA	23.7%	24.2%	17%
	Boys	NA	27.1%	NA	28.1%	29.6%	1.5%
	Girls	NA	16.2%	NA	17%	18.6%	1.6%
	Urban	NA	26.8%	NA	30.3%	30.7%	0.4%
	Rural	NA	15.8%	NA	16.8%	20.5%	3.7%

Source: Ministry of Basic Education, Fast Track Initiative request

Table A-3. Global financing to be sought (in US\$ millions)

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>Total</i>
Expansion					
	Recurrent	7.5	9.5	11.9	28.9
	Civil works	9.0	10.8	12.8	32.6
	Total	16.4	20.3	24.7	61.4
Upgrading over four years					
	Investments	10.7	10.7	10.7	32.1
Executing the program activities					
		1.3	0.62	0.55	2.48
Total					
	Recurrent	7.5	9.5	11.9	28.9
	Investment	19.83	22.12	24.05	67.18
	Total	28.5	31.62	35.95	96.8

Source: EFA-FTI application, 2002.

Table A-4: Financing needs for the expansion of the system (In millions CFA)

	2003		2004		2005		TOTAL
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	
Classroom construction	2,691	14,800	2,920	16,060	3,163	17,398	48,258
Teaching personnel	21,085	17,190	24,151	18,741	27,473	20,494	56,425
Support personnel		2,969		3,080		3,174	9,223
Textbooks and school equipment		2,271		2,973		3,362	8,606
In-service training (CAPED)		410		470		534	1,414
Examinations		298		414		544	1,256
Student teacher subsidies	3000	540	3000	540	3000	540	1,620
Support services		874		930		1,000	2,804
Targeted recurrent expenditures		2,942		2,942		2,942	8,826
Total expansion needs		42,294		46,150		49,988	138,432

Source: National Plan for EFA-Fast Track Initiative, 2003.

Annex B. Project Activities

The projects (particularly PRODEP and PROSEF) had some common activities and implementation problems, which are described in this Annex along with achievement of specific targets where applicable.

Civil works. The projects built schools, surpassing construction targets. Education I succeeded in lowering costs through experimentation to about US\$5000 each and built 60 classrooms. Initially schools were built by the Ministry of Public Works, but the task was reassigned to the School Construction Bureau, which used low-cost designs. Without school mapping, determination of school placement depended on the recommendations of the inspectorates, but most villages lacked schools, so many locations were reasonable. Thus, PRODEP built about 985 classrooms and PROSEF another 1,770. Altogether, 2,815 classrooms were built, expanding access to about 125,000 new students (15-25 percent of the 2003 enrollments). However, efforts to make communities build schools or contribute toward construction were not successful because of poverty. Some communities, however, built reed huts without floors, where instruction takes place. Also, school refurbishing activities fell below target as more schools were built. Some of the construction during PROSEF was unprogrammed and the decision criteria unclear. PRODEP also financed buildings for the development and storage of textbooks and five inspectors' offices (Tables B-2 and B-3). *Overall this component was satisfactory for both projects.*

Textbook production and distribution. PRODEP supported the development of the National Institute for Pedagogical Documentation, Research, and Promotion and tried to develop the skills of authors who were employees. Curricula were to become more relevant, textbooks were to support the knowledge base. After long delays, only 30 of the 44 textbooks were produced; starting in 1992, these were printed in over one million copies, one for every two students.⁵⁵ It is unclear how extensively this lot of books was used in schools. They are no longer found in classes, so they may have been worn out, but officials also do not recall reports of theft. PROSEF worked with private-sector writers, but fewer titles were produced than expected, and only about half the target number of books were delivered to the government. A large number of these were stolen from the warehouses and sold in the private market. (Table B-3) Despite the extensive evidence that could help trace the thieves, no one was arrested. Thus, students were in schools with few if any textbooks and remain so to this day. *The textbook component is moderately satisfactory for PRODEP and unsatisfactory for PROSEF.*

Teacher recruitment and pre-service training. Both PRODEP and PROSEF emphasized the recruitment of less expensive teachers who had undergone less training. The four-year duration of teacher training colleges (attended by students after 10 years of education) was reduced to three, two, and during PROSEF to one-year training. Hiring of contract teachers accelerated after 1998 with a new framework law governing teacher training – and the Public Expenditure Adjustment Credit I, budget support was given under the

55. The Staff Appraisal Report states that books would be “loaned free of charge,” but does not explain how two students were to share them.

condition that untrained teachers⁵⁶ would receive 30 days of training and be visited by inspectors four times a year. The follow-on project also stipulated a pilot program of decentralized block grants at the school level for training.⁵⁷ The extent to which these measures have been taken could not be ascertained during the mission. However, three of the contract teachers interviewed by the mission stated that they had received training for six days.

In-service training. Many of the contract teachers hired during PRODEP and PROSEF were untrained, and in-service training became important to help them deliver the curriculum. Many training activities took place. PRODEP provided training for 420 unqualified assistant teachers, 1,757 teachers, 1,206 directors, and 298 pedagogical advisors (Table B-2 and B-3). The cost-effective solution devised during PRODEP and expanded during PROSEF was the formation of teacher groups studying in closely located schools. Thus, it was expected that newer contract teachers would learn from trained teachers what they needed to know. Pedagogical advisors could not easily reach the field due to limited roads and vehicle availability. The government relies on this model (CAPED-Cellule d'Animation Pédagogique) for in-service training, but the projects never evaluated what teachers learned through it or even how often they met. The limited evidence of training effectiveness is discouraging; during OED field visits, no evidence was seen of child-centered methodology, despite training (Annex Table B-3). To the contrary, teachers had been instructed to work only with the few more competent students. (See section on OED observations para. 2.15). Overall, teacher training components were *not rateable*.

Planning and management strengthening. Activities to increase institutional capacity in the Ministry of Basic Education included staff training and technical assistance (Tables B-1, B-2, B-3). The activities were carried out but with considerable delays and bore limited results. During PROSEF, for example, many pedagogical advisors retired from service soon after receiving training in planning. Thus, despite technical assistance, a school map could only be established for one region, and school construction decisions are still made on the basis of village-level requests and local recommendations rather than demographic criteria. Statistical data were produced until the school year 1991-92, but could not be collected in 1994 and 1995 due to teacher strikes. (Enrollment data for these years presented in this report were interpolated.) An evaluation unit was established under PROSEF that carried out a sample-based learning assessment in 1999 (see more detail in section 3 of the main report), but the findings were not used to improve instruction. *The institutional strengthening component of PRODEP is moderately satisfactory and of PROSEF is unsatisfactory.*

56. Untrained teachers often do not provide continuity in instructional objectives or evaluate students. Nevertheless, many studies have not shown a clear benefit for extensive in-service education.

57. World Bank. 2003 and 2003c.

Table B-1. First Education Project (Cr. 1151-NIR; 1981-1990)

<i>Components/ subcomponents</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Targets to be achieved</i>	<i>outputs</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
Educational planning and project preparation (US\$1.41 million)	Specialist services	60 staff months (planner, architect)	Planning exercise partly completed	Completed during the next project
	Fellowships	15 staff months	Education planner School mapping specialist trained	Recipients trained and worked at the Ministry of Education until retirement
	Course materials for educational planning		Syllabus developed	Course materials have not been used
	Low-cost models for primary education classrooms	60	60	Experience helped reduce subsequent costs by more than 50%
	Computer equipment for MEBA		Delivered as planned	Functioned until replaced, some monitors still exist
Public administration and labor (US\$0.05 million)	Specialist services to establish a training directorate	6 months staff Consultant appointed after 5-year delay	Civil service training study completed in 1988	No follow-up; a vocational training component of a proposed project was dropped
Agricultural and animal production technician training (US\$20.5 million)	70% of mid-level technician needs projected over 10 years IPDR and ECE, merged in 1988;	Initially 650 students and 225 graduates, reduced to 450 students	Government needs reduced due to costs, institution had about 200 at project closing	Training in demand in 2004; 449 students, 37% female. 57% private students, paying 200,000 CFA per year; graduates get NGO jobs.
	Civil works for both schools side by side in Kollo	Classrooms, dormitories for 160 students (40 girls) 24 staff houses	Completed in 1985 ahead of schedule	Buildings operational, fully used, and in good condition
	Equipment, vehicles		Delivered as planned	Printing equipment is still used in 2004
	Curricular technical assistance	312 staff months	FAO recruited experts	The curricula developed are used to this date
	Fellowships for future teaching staff	18 staff years	About 20 staff were trained	Most did not return to the institute, worked in Ministry or private sector; training capacity remained weak

Source: Project documents and information obtained during the assessment mission

Table B-2. Primary Education Development Project - PRODEP (Cr. 1740-NIR; 1986-1995)

<i>Components/ subcomponents</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Targets to be achieved</i>	<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
Recurrent unit cost reduction...			Reduced from US\$77 to US\$62	Unit costs remain stable
	Limiting high-cost instituteurs	to 14% of teaching staff	14% until 1989. increased to 19% thereafter; exact numbers unknown	Eventually system staffed with 50% contract teachers
	Reduce higher education scholarship budget	by 3.7% annually, 1988-1991	Reduced for one year, then increased in 1989-91.	Scholarship budget has remained stable.
	4-year preservice training reduced	2 years for assistant teachers 3 years for instituteurs	Training reduced as planned; during PROSEF further reduced to one year, then 30 days	The efficacy of short training is doubted by many
	Inservice training	420 1800 teachers 1250 directors	420 unqualified teachers upgraded 1757 assistant teachers 1206 directors 298 pedagogical advisors	500 teacher groups formed; training of unknown quality and effectiveness, results unknown
		No target	8 workshops for 465 staff of ecoles normales	Training of unknown quality and effectiveness, results unknown
	Expanding multigrade teaching in rural areas	No clear targets	implemented, numbers of classrooms unknown	Little information available for PRODEP
	Introducing double-shift schooling	Initially 40 schools	In 1989 139 double-shift classes 1993 194 207 classes 1995 196 680 classes, enrollment 69,596 students 40% reduction in class time	Evaluation was delayed and not completed. Loss of 40% class time caused complaints and is being phased out in 2004.
	Textbook production	1,000,000 textbooks	1,049,839 textbooks 1 book per 2 students: reading gr. 2-4 math gr. 3 social sciences gr. 3-4 math workbook gr. 1-2	Expected life 3 years. Unclear how much they were used; teachers and INDRAP staff do not recall thefts
	Acquisition of adaptation rights or co-publishing arrangements	12,000 teacher guides		
	Specialist services to prepare textbooks	44 textbooks in 5 subjects	Produced and distributed 30 titles	Using Ministry staff to write books cost a lot and caused delays
Training authors, editors in Niger and abroad	53 staff	53 staff National textbook committee created	Some authors later wrote national-language books	
Civil works for the production and storage of textbooks	-INDRAP building extension -warehouses in the Financial Affairs Directorate	Buildings constructed and equipped as expected Vehicle still in use	Buildings remain functional and in good condition	
Reducing unit building costs... ...and improving access	Costs were US\$10,000 per solid building in 1984	Pilot low-cost construction designs tested (see Cr. 1151-NIR)	Costs reduced to about US\$5000 Costs lower by 35-50%	Costs remained stable and further reduced with semi-solid structures
	Build classrooms	750 for 34,000 students	835+150 constructed and furnished	Classes functional
	Renovate classrooms	3000	1913	Classes functional
	Community-based maintenance		Maintenance manuals written for schools 2300 kits distributed to schools	Little community-based maintenance taking place

<i>Components/ subcomponents</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Targets to be achieved</i>	<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
Cost-effective resource use	Construct inspectorate offices, educational workshops	16 offices 7 workshops	7 offices constructed 5 workshops	Offices used, many workshops converted to other uses
	Vehicles to the inspectorate offices	8	8	Some still operational
	MOE management capacity	Strengthen monitoring capacity (no clear targets)	33 staff months for training abroad 89 staff months seminars 52 staff months specialist services	Training delivered after delays, was of unknown quality and effectiveness Impact unknown
	Project preparation capacity	Build schools without help from Ministry of Public Works	A project coordination bureau established	It managed a successful school building program
Studies	Comparison between experimental and control schools	National language instruction (GTZ support)	About 2000 students, motivated teachers; graduation 70% vs. 40% with French. No formal evaluation by 1995.	30 schools remain, government did not want to scale up the program; 1999 evaluation – clear advantage for native languages
	School map		Few activities took place	School map incomplete
	Textbook distribution policy		Policies enunciated	Policy had no effect on textbook outcomes
	How to accelerate school demand and community participation		Completed in 1994 No follow up, though a workshop was scheduled	No follow-up

Source: Project documents and information obtained during the assessment mission

Table B-3 Primary Education Development Project – PROSEF (Cr. 2816; 1994-2001)

<i>Components/ subcomponents</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Targets to be achieved</i>	<i>outputs</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>	
(a) sector reform (US\$20.0 million),	US\$10 released when training and cost conditions were met		US\$10 million was released on effectiveness	The long-term effects of this component are not clear	
	increasing public expenditures on primary education	teaching materials budget reserved for primary schools, increase from 360 to 439 million CFA.		Budgets increased but expenditures constrained in real terms	
	Lowering repetition in primary from 16%	To 10%	12.5% in 2000-2001	Promotion is largely automatic, students may be promoted without any skills	
	Increasing girls enrollment rate from 29%	To 35%	37%	Girls' enrollments slowly increasing	
	Recruiting 85% contractual staff		At least 520 teachers were recruited	Turnover and performance unknown	
	Containing student subsidies in secondary and higher education; and management	4.8 billion CFA for higher education, 1.6 billion CFA for secondary	3.5 billion in 2000-2001, down from 5.5 billion Secondary ed. 0.89 billion, down from 1.6 billion	Subsidy budget stable in the long run	
	(b) improving access and quality (US\$51.2 million)	School construction	About 1770 classrooms	1774 (84% in rural areas) 1500 rehabilitated 290 financed by IDA, others by other donors	First-grade enrollment increased from 85,000 in 1998 to 152,190 in 2000.
		Community construction and maintenance	120 schools using national and community resources	120 schools built Communities could not afford the 10% participation	School maintenance was neither budgeted nor done.
		Extending the use of double-shift teaching in primary education,	690 classes (1 380 pupil groups)	892 classes (1 850 pupil groups)	Negative comments continued regarding this system; will be phased out
		Using teachers more efficiently	Training about 2295 teachers in double-shifting	About 2295 teachers received training	Outcomes unknown
Gender stereotyping and girls' education in madrasas		41	41 trained teachers were studied, and a teachers' guide was produced.	Outcomes unknown	
Training in textbook use		260 teachers	260	Numbers were small for the magnitude of the task	
Restructuring and consolidating training of primary school teachers		-Admitting at least 720 student teachers to one-year training courses -Redeploying 32 teacher training college instructors to secondary education	One-year training instituted	Inservice teacher training was hampered by lack of vehicles and financial support.	
Primary inservice training through peer support (CAPED)			Expanded throughout the country 712 inservice sessions in 1999-2000	Uncertain what peers can teach No evaluation has been done	
	Consolidating training of secondary school t		Few chose the teaching stream of the already limited number of university graduates	Attempt to attract university graduates did not succeed	

<i>Components/ subcomponents</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Targets to be achieved</i>	<i>outputs</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
(c) Strengthening Ministry of Education managerial and planning capacities (US\$4.8million)	Textbook purchase and distribution	1.6 million textbooks 1.2 million workbooks 30,000 teacher guides	Purchased 840,000 textbooks 353,000 math workbooks 62,000 teacher guides	An undetermined but large number of textbooks were stolen during storage and distribution and sold commercially.
	National language textbooks	75,000	35 manuscripts in process; 75,000 copies	Delivered as expected, and most experimental classes have them
	Introduce active, student-centered pedagogy		Teachers received training in student-centered pedagogy	No training effects could be observed during OED mission visits
	Training pedagogical advisors in school mapping to improve information gathering		Many pedagogical advisors retired from service soon after training.	Capacity to monitor school mapping data has remained low
	Improving students' nutritional status (contract with UNICEF a condition of effectiveness)		26 million micronutrient pills were distributed to 165,000 students in 3 regions	Program not expanded nationwide because funds were needed to pay contract teachers (later discontinued)
	preparing a development strategy for higher education.		A five-volume sector study developed in 1999;	Not achieved; not formally used for a national debate
	strengthening capacity to manage education resources, sector planning	Training i data collection, school mapping, personnell management	Producing a useful statistical directory School mapping for one region	Fell short of expectations. Decentralized capacity low in basic statistics analysis
	Evaluating education improvement programs		Evaluation unit set up; conducted an achievement study Limited outcomes and activities	Half the tested students in lower primary grades scored 35% mathematics; only 4% reached a 70% criterion score.
	Improving financial management			Unsatisfactory Project unit performance declined over time

mission

Table B-4. Number and conditions of schools in Niger in 2003

	<i>Rural Schools</i>	<i>Urban Schools</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>Number(%)</i>	<i>Number (%)</i>	<i>Number (%)</i>
Total number of schools	5 994 (88.5)	776 (11.5)	6 770 (100.0)
Public	5 909 (87.3)	644 (9.5)	6 553 (96.8)
Private	85 (1.3)	132 (1.9)	217 (3.2)
Schools by type	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)
Experimental public (national lang.)	10 (0.2)	29 (3.7)	39 (0.6)
Public schools	5 654 (94.3)	514 (66.2)	6 168 (91.1)
Public Franco-Arab schools (Medersa)	245 (4.1)	101 (13.0)	346 (5.1)
Private schools	79 (1.3)	66 (8.5)	145 (2.1)
Private Medersa privees	6 (0.1)	66 (8.5)	72 (1.1)
School cantine			
No cantine	5 675 (94.7)	764 (98.5)	6 439 (95.1)
With cantine	319 (5.3)	12 (1.5)	331 (4.9)
Double shift classes			
No double shift	5 978 (99.7)	651 (83.9)	6 629 (97.9)
With double flux	16 (0.3)	125 (16.1)	141 (2.1)
Multigrades classes			
No multigrade classes	4 676 (78.0)	661 (85.2)	5 337 (78.8)
Less than 40% multigrade classes	375 (6.3)	34 (4.4)	409 (6.0)
More than 40% multigrade classes	943 (15.7)	81 (10.4)	1 204 (17.8)

Source: Mingat 2004 (draft), Ministry of Basic Education

Table B-5. Evolution of the number of classes

<i>Year</i>	<i>Kindergartens</i>	<i>Primary School Classes</i>	<i>Secondary School Classes</i>		
			<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>	<i>Total</i>
1994-1995	310	10 677	1 307	366	1 673
1995-1996	367	10 826	1 685	312	1 997
1996-1997	403	11 637	1 996	487	2 483
1997-1998	430	11 304	1 772	448	2 220
1998-1999	440	12 359	1 776	502	2 278
1999-2000	460	13 460	1 591	717	2 308
2000-2001	475	15 065			
2001-2002	505	17 498			
2002-2003	547	18 778			

Source: MOE web site

Table B-6. Evolution of expenditures at different levels of instruction, 1990-2002

Fiscal year	1990	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Recurrent	29,116	32,504	30,960	36,694	32,881	36,352	38,297	38,632
Regular teachers-primary and literacy	16,458	17,233	15,879	17,603	17,332	nd	nd	19,648
Contractual teachers - primary	0	0	0	0	1,065	2,282	3,262	3,769
Total teachers - primary and literacy	16,458	17,233	15,879	17,603	18,397	nd	nd	23,417
Secondary regular teachers	6,326	8,881	8,251	8,714	8,531	nd	nd	8,011
Lower secondary contractual teachers	0	0	0	0	0,213	0,428	0,749	0,689
Total Secondary teachers	6,326	8,881	8,251	8,714	8,744	nd	nd	8,700
Higher education	5,545	5,672	5,451	6,559	4,854	5,223	5,114	5,058
Vocational-technical education	0,787	0,718	1,379	2,818	0,886	1,931	1,729	1,457
Investment	3,700	3,033	3,590	3,216	7,238	4,486	2,590	7,715
National resources	0,968	1,051	0,633	0,673	0,716	0,014	1,430	1,322
External resources	2,732	1,982	2,957	2,543	6,522	4,472	1,160	6,393
Total	32,816	35,537	34,550	38,910	40,119	40,838	40,887	46,347
National resources	30,084	33,555	31,593	36,017	32,532	34,084	36,465	39,954
External resources	2,732	1,982	2,957	2,893	7,587	6,754	4,422	6,393
% of recurrent expenditures								
Preschool, primary ed., literacy	56,5	53,0	51,3	49,3	55,9			60,6
General secondary	21,7	27,3	26,7	24,4	26,6			22,5
Higher	19,0	17,5	17,6	18,4	14,8	14,4	13,4	13,1
Recurrent expenditures, constant 2002 values (CFA billions)								
Total	49,5	39,4	36,4	40,8	36,8	38,9	39,4	38,6
Preschool, primary ed., literacy	28,0	20,9	18,7	20,1	20,6			23,4
General secondary	10,8	10,8	9,7	9,9	9,8			8,7
Higher	9,4	6,9	6,4	7,5	5,4	5,6	5,3	5,1

Source: Mingat, 2004 (draft)

Table B-7. Evolution of the Education Budget

Year	Education Budget	National Budget	% education/ national budget
1990	17 916	115 176	15,56
1991	20 354	109 610	18,57
1992	25 075	125 900	19,92
1993	17 851	121 600	14,68
1994	24 376	166 800	14,61
1995	26 776	163 718	16,35
1996	26 387	173 942	15,17
1997	24 848	194 405	12,78
1998	25 037	204 131	12,27
1999	25 756	205 909	12,51
2000	26 435	217 782	12,2
2001	28 044	212 625	13,2
2002	23 582	240 178	9,8
2003	34 986		
2004			

Source MOE web site

Table B-8. Student teacher ratios

Year	Students/Teacher	Students/Class
94-95	39	40
95-96	39	41
96-97	38	39
97-98	39	39
98-99	38	40
99-00	38	40
00-01	41	43
01-02	41	43

Source: MOE web site ; Annuaire 2002-2003. Direction des Etudes et de la Planification, Division des Statistiques

Table B-9. Public School Staffing Patterns 1998-2003

	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01*	2001-02	2002-03
Professional Teachers	10 943	11 226	10 657	10 086	9 730
Instituteurs	3 377	3 677	3 566	3 454	3 393
Instituteurs-adjoints	7 157	7 152	6 772	6 392	6 030
Moniteurs	409	397	319	240	307
Contract Teachers	198	2 468	5 025	7 570	10 574
Instituteurs	0	343	384	425	721
Instituteurs-adjoints	0	1 767	2 035	2 302	3 960
Autres**	198	358	2 606	4 843	5 893
Total	11 142	13 694	15 682	17 656	20 304

Source Ministry of Basic Education (year 2000-01 estimated)

Table B-10. Achievement Levels of Nigerian Students in the MLA Test

Country	MLA Score	country	MLA Score
South Africa	49,6	Mauritius	64,1
Botswana	51,7	Namibia	48,1
Burkina Faso	52,7	Niger	40,8
Cameroon	60,0	Nigeria	30,0
Côte-d'Ivoire	51,3	Uganda	58,0
Gambia	40,4	RCA	42,7
Guinea	51,6	Senegal	42,5
Kenya	68,8	Togo	52,1
Madagascar	58,4	Tunisia	71,0
Malawi	48,5	Zambia	43,3
Mali	50,8	Zanzibar	41,7
Morocco	62,8	Zimbabwe	57,7
Mean = 50,8			

Source UNICEF-UNESCO 2000

Annex C. Statements and Issues Raised in Mission Interviews

Interviews took place individually or in small groups as the circumstances dictated. The persons interviewed included:

- teachers, principals, inspectors, regional directors in the institutions of areas visited;
- government officials in the ministries of Agriculture and Education;
- staff of donor agencies residing in Niamey.

The table below reflects the number of respondents who indicated a view on each question; persons could raise one or more issues. Not all staff had opinions about all questions and sometimes only one person in a group expressed opinions, so reply statistics are approximate. Teachers were only asked questions regarding inputs and effectiveness, since most did not know who had paid for the inputs they had received. The questions posed to respondents were:

What were the benefits of the project in your school, geographic or sectoral area?

- What problems did you face in implementing the project? What were its disadvantages?
- Which components worked best in bringing about results, which did not? (some persons interviewed were asked about specific components, as appropriate).
- How effective were the Bank staff or consultants who worked on the project?
- What training did you receive through the project? Did it teach you what it was supposed to?
- The project had some qualified audits. What financial irregularities were there in your area of jurisdiction?
- What would be different in the education sector if the project had not existed?
- Other issues and observations.

Table C-1

Issue	Frequency of response		
	Education I	Rural Primary Education	Basic Education
Project benefits			
There was a visible improvement in primary education provision in rural areas		1	
Project reached deeply in rural areas and provided schools where it was not thought possible		1	1
Project very effective in establishing agricultural technician training			
The project was best in classroom construction		3	4
The project was effective in procuring textbooks		1	2
Quality of education was the weakest link			
The project succeeded in bringing girls to schools	1	2	3
Project trained technicians effectively	4		
Project foisted untrained teachers on the poor		2	3
Effectiveness of Bank staff, Bank policies			
The Bank offered many possibilities but also put severe constraints	1	1	3
Bank staff mainly talked about costs	2	3	3
The Bank forced the country to hire unqualified teachers against the Ministry's best judgment	1	1	3
The Bank forced the country to open double shift schools against educators' best judgment		2	2
The Bank did not pay attention to quality	2	4	3
The Bank did not push hard enough to bring culprits to justice or stop the textbook abuse			2
Though it received debt relief Niger is again accumulating debt for education on shaky policy advice that leaves most students illiterate			1
Qualified audits, mismanagement			
Textbook thefts had high-level collusion, not merely warehouse staff			1
Counterfactual — if project had not existed			
Another donor would have done what Bank has done, no problem	1	3	3
There would be fewer students but learning more		1	1
The projects were invaluable, education would not be the same		1	1
Issues and observations			
Earlier the education system had better performance		1	1
There are difficulties in generalizing project effects, but it is expected they will be overcome		2	2
Curricula are not well adapted to student needs, instructional methods antiquated		3	3
Schools have been opened, but now the country must concentrate on quality			4
Agricultural technicians are well motivated and trained	3		
Agricultural technicians receive good jobs	4		
No decision-making use of monitoring and evaluation		1	1
Decentralization needed for textbooks, salaries, hiring			3
Total number of comments received	19	33	50

Annex D. Basic Data Sheet

FIRST EDUCATION PROJECT (CREDIT 1151-NIR)

Key Project Data (amounts in US\$ million)

	Appraisal estimate	Actual or current estimate	Actual as % of appraisal estimate
Original commitment	21.5	16.65	86.43
Cancellation		3.10	
Total project cost	27.0	22.59	83.6

Project Dates

	Original	Actual
Identification		July 1978
Preparation		October 11, 1978
Appraisal Mission		November 12, 1979
Post appraisal		March 1980
Credit negotiations	September 1980	November 1980
Board approval	December 1980	May 1981
Credit signature		June 1981
Credit effectiveness*	September 1981	July 1982
Project completion	June 1987	October 1990
Closing date	December 1987	June 1990

Note: Credit effectiveness was postponed primarily due to delays in the Government's adoption of decrees relating to the establishment of ECE and the reorganization of IPDR.

Staff Inputs (staff weeks)

FY	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92
Ident./Prep	1.5	0.1	1.1	0.2	0.0	0.6	0.8	16.6	8.8												
Appraisal								36.2	10.2												
Negotiations									18.9												
Supervision									2.4	9.6	9.6	12.4	8.6	4.0	12.8	12.1	10.4	3.6	0.1		
PCR																				11.0	0.2
Total	1.5	0.1	1.1	0.2	0.0	0.6	0.8	16.6	45.0	31.5	9.6	9.6	12.4	8.6	4.0	12.8	12.1	10.4	3.6	11.1	0.2

Mission Data

	<i>Date (month/year)</i>	<i>No. of persons</i>	<i>Specializations represented^a</i>	<i>Staff weeks in field</i>	<i>Performance status^b</i>	<i>Types of problems^c</i>
Identification	07/78	1	Joint IDA/UNESCO mission	1-3 approx.	1	N/a
Preparation	10-11/78			3		
Pre-review missions	3/8002/79- 09/79			3 approx.		
Appraisal						
Total				30		
Supervision 1	11/81	1	EC	0.5		
Supervision 2	6/82	1	AE	1	1	T
Supervision 3	10/83	1	AE	1	1	O
Supervision 4	3/84	1	AE	2	1	M,F,T
Supervision 5	11/84	1	ED	1.5	1	M,F,T
Supervision 6	4/86	3	EP, AR(C), EC(C)	6	2	M,F,T
Supervision 7	11/86	3	EP, AE(c), LS	3	3	M,T
Supervision 8	2/87	2	EP, AR	1.5	3	M,F
Supervision 9	8/87	2	EP, AE(c)	1	N/a (d)	
Supervision 10	11-12/87	2	EP, AR	6	3	M,F
Supervision 11	5/88	2	EP, AE(c)	3.5	2	M,F
Supervision 12	9/88	3	EP, AE(c), Is(C)	3	N/a ^d	
Supervision 13	1-2/89	2	EP/ AR(c)	6	2	M, F
Supervision 14	7/89	2	EP/ AR(c)	2	2	M, F
Total				38		

a. AE = Agricultural Educator; AR = Architect; ED = Educator; EC = Economist; EP = Education Planner; (C) = Consultant

b. 1 = Problem-free or minor problems; 2 = Moderate problems; 3 = Major problems

c. F = Financial; M = Managerial; T = Technical; O = Other

PRIMARY EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (CREDIT 1740-NIR)

Key Project Data (amounts in US\$ million)

	<i>Appraisal estimate</i>	<i>Actual or current estimate</i>	<i>Actual as % of appraisal estimate</i>
Original commitment	15.3	15.01	99.9
Total cancellation		291.05	
Total project cost	26.2	29.6	90

Project Dates

	<i>Original</i>	<i>Actual</i>
Appraisal	November – December 1985	November – December 1985
Negotiations	September 9, 1986	September 9, 1986
Board presentation	November 18, 1986	November 18, 1986
Signing	December 15, 1986	December 15, 1986
Effectiveness	May 11, 1987	May 11, 1987
Project completion	June 30, 1994	December 31, 1995
Loan closing	December 31, 1995	December 31, 1995

Staff Inputs (staff weeks)

	<i>Revised Weeks</i>	<i>Actual Weeks</i>
Through appraisal	91.6	91.6
Appraisal – Board	40.6	40.6
Board – effectiveness	7.5	8.7
Supervision	51.8	115.4
Completion	14.6	3.1
Total	206.1	259.4

Mission Data

	Date (month/year)	No. of persons	Staff days in field	Specializations represented	Performance rating		Types of problems
					Implement, status**	Development objectives**	
Through appraisal	2/83	1	5	E			
	5/83	3	12	E, GE (2)			
	7/83	1	3	E			
	10-11/83	2	11	E, GE			
	3/84	4	10	GE, A, TE, TX			
	9-10/84	2	9	GE, A			
	11-84	2	8	GE, E			
	2-3/85	5	12	GE, EP, A/C, TWC (2)			
7/85	2	6	GE, EP				
Appraisal through Board approval	11-12/85	4	18	GE, EP, A/C, E/C			
	4/86	3	11	EP, A, EIC			
Board approval through effectiveness	2/87	2	8	A, EP			
	4/87	2	3	EP, TE/C			
Supervisions	7-8/87	1	4	EP	2	2	M, O
	12/87	6	12	EP, A, E/C (2), S/C, GE	2	2	M, O
	5-6/88	4	9	EP, GE (2), GE/C	2	2	M, O
	9/88	3	16	EP, TE, E/C	N ^o 590	N ^o 590	--
	1-2/89	5	13	EP, GE, TWC, A/C, GE/C	2	2	M, O
	7/89	3	19	EP/TXC, A/C	2	2	O
	12/90	3	13	EP, GE/C, GE, TX/C, A	--	2	O
	2/91	1	15	A/C	2	2	O
	11/91	1	6	GE, PO/M	2	2	O
	7/92	3	14	EP, DC, TT	2	2	O
	2/93	1	7	EP, PO/M	2	2	O
	6/93	2	10	EP, DC, PO/M	2	2	O
	7/93	1	6	GE, POIM	2	2	O
	12/93	3	18	EP, DC, PO/M	2	2	O
	8/94	1	7	EP	S	S	O
1/95	3	15	EP, PO/M, PNM	S	S	O	
Completion	12/95	3	15	EP (2), PA	S	S	

* A = Architect, DC = Division Chief, E = Economist; EP = Education Planner, GE = General Educator; OO = Operations Officer; PA = Projects Assistant; PO = Program Officer; TE = Technical Educator; TT = Teacher Trainer; TX = Textbook Specialist, /C Consultant; /M = Resident Mission Staff

** Key to status as shown on Supervision Form 590 from 1 (highest) to 4 (lowest)

*** Key to problems as shown on Supervision Form 590. F = Financial, M = Managerial, O = Other; T = Technical

BASIC EDUCATION SECTOR PROJECT (CREDIT 2618-NIR)

Key Project Data (amounts in US\$ million)

	<i>Appraisal estimate</i>	<i>Actual or current estimate</i>	<i>Actual as % of appraisal estimate</i>
Original commitment	41,4	40,75	99,2%
Cancellation		0,651	
Total project cost	41,48	40,91	99,2%

Project Dates

	<i>Original</i>	<i>Actual</i>
Appraisal		June 12, 1989
Approval		May 31, 1994
Signing		July 11, 1994
Effectiveness	November 8, 1994	September 26, 1995
Closing date	December 31, 2000	December 31, 2001

Staff Inputs (staff weeks)

	<i>Actual/Latest Estimate</i>	
	<i>N° Staff weeks</i>	<i>US\$</i>
Identification/Preparation	NA	192,326.00
Appraisal/Negotiations	NA	192,326.00
Supervision	NA	477,825.19
ICR	NA	40,000.00
Total	NA	902,477.19

Mission Data

	<i>Date (month/year)</i>	<i>No. of persons</i>	<i>Specializations represented"</i>	<i>Staff weeks in field</i>	<i>Performance status^b</i>	<i>Types of problems^c</i>
Identification/ Preparation	05/10/88	3	ECON, EDU, ASST			
	09/14/88	3	EDU, ECON (2)			
	02/10/89	8	EDU (2), ECON (2), PED MAT, ARCH, PLAN, ASST.			
Appraisal/Negotiation	07/12/89	8	EDU (2), ECON (2), VOC, PED MAT, ARCH, PLAN			
	07/30/93					
	04/89/94	1	EDU			
Supervision		4	EDU, GIRLS, NUT, HR			
	10/31/95	3	ED SPEC (2), ASST		5	5
	4/19/96	3	ED SPEC, PROG OFF, ASST		5	5
	10/08/96	2	ED SPEC, PROG OFF		5	5
	03/12/97	4	ED SPEC (2), PROG OFF, ARCH		5	5
	10/14/97	2	ED SPEC, PROG OFF		5	5
	04/30/98	2	ED SPEC, PROG OFF		5	5
	10/13/98	5	ED SPEC PROG OFF (2) ASST (2)		5	5
	05/10/99	1	ED SPEC		5	5
	07/11/99	2	ED SPEC, PROG OFF		5	5
	05/22/00	2	ED SPEC (2)		5	5
	10/08/00	1	FIN ANAL		5	5
	12/06/00	2	EDU SPEC, ECON		5	5
	04/11/01	2	ECON, HLTH SPEC		5	5
	10/10/01	3	ECON, FIN MGT, PROC		5	5
ICR	04/16/02	6	ECON, OPER, GIRLS, TXTBKS, ARCH, EDUC		5	5

S=Satisfactory

Annex E. Borrower Comments

Republic of Niger

Niamey, January 14, 2005

Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy

General Secretariat

No. 0034/MEBA/SG

From: THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

To: Mr. Alain Barbu
 World Bank
 Fax: (202) 522-3123

Subject: Niger – Education project 1 (Credit 1151-NIR)
 Primary education development project (Credit 1740-NIR)
 Basic education sector project – hybrid – (Credit 2618-NIR)

Ref. Your letter dated December 9, 2004

We have received the project performance assessment for the three education projects implemented in Niger between 1998 and 2001. The findings are highly relevant and could help Niger to fine-tune its strategy in the context of the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. However, without questioning the assumptions made in the assessment, certain clarifications are required in order to give an objective picture of the situation.

(i) Absence of students during Ms. Helen Abadzi's mission

The mission took place in the last week of May 2004, which marked the beginning of the rainy season and the sowing time in Niger. During this period, parents in rural areas usually take their children out of school to provide temporary help on the farm.

The assessment of school performance conducted by the *Service de Développement et d'Évaluation de Programmes de Formation* (SEDEP) [Service for the Development of Training Programs] of Liège University in the context of the Basic Education Sector Project (PROSEF) showed the impact of the length of the school year on children's learning. In particular, it noted that "students in Niger lose one whole school year over the six years of the cycle, because of late starting and early ending of the school year."

In light of the recommendations made in this assessment and in the context of the implementation of the Ten-Year Development Plan for Education (PDDE), the Ministry has adopted new measures to increase the number of hours of instruction. These include:

- A better organized start to the school year: assignment and arrival of teaching and supervisory staff two weeks before the official starting date; delivery of supplies and textbooks to schools within the same time frame.
- Rescheduling of school examinations: organization of year-end evaluations for classes not having examinations at the end of June and of leaving examinations at the beginning of July.
- Involvement of School Management Committees (COGES) in the management of teaching staff: payment of salaries, performance monitoring, etc.

In addition to these measures, teaching methods are suggested to ensure that the allotted school time is in fact used for real school work.

(ii) Management of textbooks purchased under the Basic Education Sector Project (PROSEF)

Under PROSEF, about 1,100,000 textbooks were purchased for students in basic cycle 1 (primary). In 2001, as a result of the latest purchase, each student should have an average of 1.6 textbooks for all subjects. In 2004, when Ms. Helen Abadzi's mission took place, this figure should have been about 1.1 textbooks per student for all subjects with the increase in enrollment. This explains why the mission saw very few textbooks.

During this entire period, textbooks were of course purchased using the national budget, but the allocations were only just enough to meet the needs of the new students. However, losses were noted in the textbook distribution chain, which led the Ministry to adopt the following strategy for textbook distribution: suppliers are responsible for textbook distribution. The textbooks are packed separately for each school, inspectorate and Regional Directorate for Basic Education (DREBA). They are delivered directly to schools. The COGES receive the textbooks in schools.

(iii) Initial training of teachers

The assessment mentions shortcomings in the initial training of teachers for basic cycle 1. Until 2000, teacher training was provided by inspectors, pedagogical advisers and disciplinary specialists. After 2001, following implementation of the retirement of civil servants with 30 years of actual service, the staffing of teacher training colleges deteriorated considerably. Over 80 percent of the instructors at such colleges are primary school teachers or persons performing national civic service, who do not have the qualifications to train trainers.

As part of the current reform, training was started in 2004 for forty (40) inspectors and pedagogical advisers and forty-five (45) educators to replace these primary school teachers. This measure, together with curriculum reform in the Ecole Normale Supérieure and other teacher training colleges, will help to upgrade the initial training of teachers.

(iv) Actual primary school enrollment

The assessment report states “It is possible that principals of rural schools have incentives to overstate enrollments in rural areas in order to qualify, for example, for school feeding programs.” It should be noted that the enrollments recorded in mid-December were cross-checked with the figures given in the year-end reports submitted to the Ministry by each inspectorate. In addition, beneficiaries of school feeding programs (40,000 students) in 2004 represented only 4 percent of enrollments. The increase in the number of beneficiaries is the result of strict programming by the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Ministry.

(v) Rate of transition from primary to secondary school

The transition rate undoubtedly improved considerably between 1980 and 2002. In 2004, however, it would have been about 48.8 percent. Under the Fast-Track Initiative, Niger is committed to reducing this transition rate to about 40 percent by 2010. Arrangements have therefore been made for students who cannot move on to general secondary schools to receive vocational training, particularly at community development training centers (CFDC).

(vi) Expenditure and reduction of unit costs

Contrary to what is stated in the assessment (page 16), the share of education in the national budget has declined steadily, from 42.1 to 24.1 percent of national budget revenue between 1990 and 2002. With regard to the high unit costs, the situation is as follows: (i) a sharp decrease in unit cost in basic cycle 2 (from 102,000 CFA francs in 1998 to 66,300 CFA francs in 2002) and a significant increase in unit cost in general secondary education (111,200 CFA francs in 1998 and 214,000 CFA francs in 2002). This increase is due mainly to the decline in secondary school (lycée) enrollment.

(vii) Classroom construction

With regard to the establishment of school infrastructures, contrary to what “government officials informally state ...,” current production capacities of the building and public works sector in Niger are about 1,500 classrooms a year. Measures are being taken to increase these capacities, in particular by making sufficient qualified staff available to this sector and by improving capacities for execution and monitoring of work.

We hope that you will take these comments into account in the final version of the report.

Very truly yours,
[Signature illegible]
[Official stamp]

Copies:

- Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy, for the record.
- World Bank Resident Mission, for information.