

Joint Education and Child Protection Needs Assessment



Niger

Background

This assessment was conducted as part of a Global Education Cluster (GEC) and Child Protection Area of Responsibility (GCPAoR) project funded by the Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs (BHA) to strengthen joint needs assessments. The project aims to improve the availability of data and evidence to support strategic planning, response, and preparedness at country level for both education in emergencies (EiE) and Child Protection (CP) actors. This is critical as EiE interventions contribute to protection outcomes by providing access to lifesaving services through schools and learning spaces (school feeding, nutrition, health, mental health and psychosocial services). The classroom is also an important space to convey life-saving messages, raise awareness and promote behavioral changes. Moreover, classroom and learning settings offer a space to identify protection needs and mitigate risks.

REACH An Initiative of
IMPACT Initiatives,
ACTED & UNOSAT



The Joint Education and Child Protection Needs Assessment in Niger was implemented in the 36 schools selected as “centres de regroupement”¹ by the Ministry of Education in the regions of Diffa, Maradi, Tahoua and Tillabéri, and the corresponding communities². The sample is purposive and representative of the targeted schools. It should be noted that there has not been an exhaustive assessment of educational needs in these areas for several years.

The assessment consisted of two distinct but complementary parts, which took place in the same schools: primary data collection through interviews with key informants on education and child protection needs in schools and communities (two types of questionnaires), and primary data collection through focus group discussions with children in the same schools. Although this methodology was initially envisaged as complementing quantitative (adult key informants) and qualitative (child focus group discussions) data, it also proved useful in validating the information provided by the two groups for several indicators common to both data collection methods. A total of 71 adult key informants were interviewed. 363 children took part in focus group discussions.

The findings will be disseminated widely at both country and global levels and will inform the humanitarian response as well as cluster and AOR strategies and resource mobilization efforts.

The full report can be accessed [here](#).

Key findings

Enrolment and dropout

- The assessment found that a total of 22,869 learners were enrolled in the 36 schools for the 2021-2022 school year, including 5,556 displaced children (30% of displaced learners in the 30 schools hosting displaced children) and 4,005 refugee children (29% of refugee learners in the 19 schools hosting refugee children).
- The number of learners drastically decreases as schooling advances, according to the population group to which they belong. For all learners, there is a decrease of 57% from CI-CP to CM1-CM2 (low to upper primary levels). Between the same level (CI-CP to CM1-CM2), the decrease proportion goes up 70.5% for displaced children and 85% for refugee children.
- 6% of the learners enrolled during 2021-2022 school year dropped out. The main reasons why learners left were primarily economic and cultural: for 55% of the female learners and 48% of the male learners, the reason most frequently reported to explain dropping out of school was that they were needed at home to support the family. The second most frequently reported type of response was economical for girls (“the child is needed to contribute to the household income”) but cultural for boys (“education is not considered important”). The third most frequently reported type of response is still economical for boys

¹ “Centres de regroupement” are villages with schools used to host and provide services to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees coming from conflict-affected areas by the Ministry of Education in areas considered safe in the four regions of Diffa, Maradi, Tahoua and Tillabéri.

(“the child is needed to contribute to the household income”) and cultural for girls (“education is not considered important”).

- These findings are validated by the focus groups conducted with children: the need to work, either in the home, or in the fields or in petty trade, is the main reason cited by children for dropping out of school.

Teachers

- The average student/teacher ratio is 38 in the schools covered by this survey (based on a population of 22,869 children), with extreme values of 98 learners/teacher and 17 learners/teacher depending on the school.
- The status, grade, and degree of teachers in these schools are very similar to the characteristics of primary school teachers throughout Niger. Key informants reported high numbers and percentages of teachers trained in psychosocial support, emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction, child protection, and inclusive education.
- The most common problem for teachers reported by key informants was lack of training. Lack of salary came as the third most common problem reported for teachers, after the distance between home and school.

Infrastructure

- In relation to the total number of learners in the 36 schools, the average student/classroom ratio is 49. While this number is high, it is still overall lower than in other contexts affected by humanitarian crises. Key informants estimated that an average of 10 benches in good condition are available per classroom. With a ratio of 49 learners per classroom and with three learners per bench, this means that an average of 20 learners are not sitting properly.
- 67% of the key informants indicated that their schools have functional handwashing facilities. According to them, only 31% of all assessed schools are both functional and have soap.
- Only 31% of the schools evaluated have a school canteen, but 100% of them are considered functional.

Risks in and outside the schools

- 47% (for girls) and 49% (for boys) of the responses most frequently reported by key informants in the education questionnaire indicate that there are no risks in schools.
- 25% (for girls) and 23% (for boys) of responses indicate that the second type of risk they face is unsafe infrastructure (school roofs and walls, school furniture). Disasters or natural hazards came third (girls) and fourth (boys) in the most frequently reported responses.
- Results from child focus group discussions confirm findings of Education and CP KIs: a large majority of children feel safe at school, namely 66% of displaced, refugee and host community girls and boys at CM 1-2 levels.

- A minority of learners, namely 34% of girls and boys at CM 1-2 levels, do not feel safe at school. The dangers that children reported included infrastructure problems and lack of physical security (no fencing, poor building conditions, environmental hazards) and risks of attacks.
- Outside schools/centres de regroupement, the type of risks identified by key informants differed, depending on whether they were girls or boys, or on the type of key informant. Key informants reported that outside schools/centres de regroupement, girls are more exposed to sexual or gender-based violence/abuse, while boys are more exposed to physical intimidation or discrimination.

Public health and epidemics

- The most frequently reported responses regarding epidemics refer primarily to measles (68%), cholera (60%) and other epidemics (52%, with some references to malaria and chickenpox). It should be noted that the respondents were not health specialists, so these responses do not necessarily reflect the reality of epidemics and diseases in these areas.

Methodology

Following a global, remote training on joint needs assessments in March 2022, the Education Cluster and Child Protection Area of Responsibility in Niger worked with the Global Education Cluster to develop a joint analysis framework and collect existing secondary data. This was followed by deployments of a Needs Assessment Specialist and a Child Safeguarding and Accountability Specialist between May and June 2022 to finalize the assessment framework, define the scope, train partners in data collection and, finally, coordinate the data collection. Primary data collection was conducted in June 2022.

The analysis of findings was done collectively between the Education Cluster and CPAoR in country, and their members, with support from the Global Education Cluster and Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility. The report has been extensively consulted with partners and validated by the Ministry of Education.

Front cover photo: © UNICEF/UN0535981/Dejong



To learn more about the project visit:
<https://www.educationcluster.net/eiecpneedsassessments>