



FINAL EVALUATION OF IMAGINE PROJECT



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Niamey, August 2010



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Acronyms and abbreviation

AME:	Educational Mothers Association
APS:	Students Parents Association
APP:	Practical and Productive Activities
CAPED:	PEdAgogical Animation Unit
CI:	Initiation Class
COGES:	School Management Committees
DREN:	Regional Direction of the Ministry of the National Education
DSPR:	Development Strategy of Poverty Reduction
IEB:	Inspectorate of Education at first level
IEC:	Information - Education - Communication
IGP:	Income Generating Projects
IMAGINE:	IMprove the educAtion of GIrls in NigEr
JICA:	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
MCC:	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MDG:	Millennium Development Goals
MWP:	Modern Water Points
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
OVI:	Objectively Verifiable Indicator
PAL:	Local Action Plans
PDDE:	Education Decennial Development Program
PMP:	Performance Management Plan
PRODOC:	Project Document
SCOFI:	Girls' Schooling
ToR:	Terms of References
UNICEF:	United Nations Children's Fund
USA:	United States of America
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development
VIE:	Volunteer for Educational Integration

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

The IMAGINE Project – “IMprove the educAtion of GIrls in NigEr” – originated from the girls’ education component of the threshold program initiated by the U.S. government through the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC).

The implementation of the IMAGINE Project has gone through several steps:

- October 2008¹: Signing of the Cooperative Agreement between USAID and Plan International USA
- November 2008: Extension of the intervention zone – initially planned for two regions (Tillabéry and Zinder), the project coverage expanded to five additional regions with the same initial budget
- February 2009: Budget revision and final selection of the villages where the infrastructure was to be constructed
- March 2009: Official launching of the IMAGINE Project for three years, from the date of signature
- August 2009: Prohibition of signing of new contracts by USAID
- April 2010: Termination of project construction activities due to the country’s political situation
- September 30, 2010: Final closure of the project.

After only 13 months of activities interrupted by political crisis, Plan Niger, leader of the IMAGINE consortium, commissioned a final evaluation to assess the performance, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and innovations of the project.

Globally, the project fully met the five criteria of the evaluation:

- **Relevance** of the project is demonstrated by the fact that it fits within the objectives of the country’s 10-Year Education Development Plan (PDDE) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and it also accounts for the real needs of the beneficiaries: classrooms constructed in permanent material; water; latrines; training of teachers and community based structures; and adult literacy. Regarding financial relevance, it should be noted that the project has placed more priority on investment (90%) than on operating expenses (10%).
- **Effectiveness** of the project is demonstrated by the completion rate of the construction component (103.33% for the classrooms and 88.33% for the modern water points),² particularly considering the short period of time allowed for actual implementation. At the same time, there were mixed achievement results for the soft components, especially with regard to support to communities. This imbalance reflects a strategic choice that consisted of focusing on construction activities in light of the potential threat (which finally materialized) of premature closure of the project.
- **Efficiency** of the project is demonstrated by the fact that the resources used enabled the project to effectively achieve the expected results. The “access” component was by far the most efficient: with 61.4% of the planned budget, the realization rate reached 103.33% for

¹ While the CA was signed in October 2008, funds obligated for program expenditure were available in September 2008 through a pre-award letter allowing us to begin project activities.

² The project’s initial proposal included 67 schools. This number was increased to 68 during the first budget revision. By August 2009, upon instruction by the donors, the project revised its objectives to 60 schools, to account for eight complexes that would not be constructed. Among the latter, two were subsequently built through Plan’s financial contribution to the project.

the classrooms, 88.33% for the water points, and approximately 97% for the other types of infrastructure (day care centers, teachers' lodging, and latrines). Even if these results derived from a strategic choice of carrying out mostly construction activities during the first year of the project, they nevertheless demonstrate the project's efficiency.

- **Impact** is a challenge to measure, given the duration of the project has been far shorter than expected (13 months instead of the 36 planned months). However, in terms of effect, it can be noted that there has been a marked improvement in the level of recruitment at the schools visited. The recruitment indicators are very encouraging, as the parity index at the time of pre-recruitment has substantially increased in one year and has even exceeded the targeted average of 1. The number of rural female teachers has exponentially increased. The female/male teachers parity index in the IMAGINE project areas is superior to 1, while it is below 0.6 at the national level.
- **Sustainability** is shown by the degree of ownership of the project investments exercised by the communities through the School Management Committee (COGES). This ownership was reflected in the functioning of the COGES of the IMAGINE schools and, to a lesser degree, the school government.

In terms of **innovation**, the project design is a considerable improvement in the education sector as the school complexes comprise complementary and integrated structures, including three classrooms separated by two multi-purpose halls, three teachers' lodgings, three latrine blocks, a day care center, and a water point. In addition, school materials and furniture, as well as take-home rations have been distributed to some schools.

Innovative activities are also related to the involvement of leadership institutions (academic and local authorities), commitment to adult literacy of the COGES members so they can fulfill their mission, the coordination of local actors (COGES, APS and EMA), and the development of Local Action Plans, which establish the program of activities for the school structures.

In summary, the **advantages** generated by the IMAGINE project are remarkable. The following specific examples must be cited:

- Replacement of straw classrooms with permanent materials
- Increase in the student enrollment rate, especially for girls
- Higher levels of recruitment of female teachers in the rural areas
- Greater participation of and management by local communities with regard to their schools

The **insufficiencies** are challenging to discuss in the context of the IMAGINE project, given the changes that occurred over the past year. The few insufficiencies noted are related to:

- **The design** of the project resulted in the decision to reproduce the same complexes at every site, without considering the real needs of each school and the orientation of the school map set by the Government.
- **The approach of the program** gave more priority to the NGO partners at the expense of the school administration, at both the strategic and operational levels.
- **The budget limitations and the sudden halt to the project** did not allow the classroom teachers to be trained, or the community members to be sufficiently sensitized in the up-keeping and/or maintenance of the infrastructures.

Globally, the IMAGINE project has been successful on all counts. It achieved a level of performance not reached before in the implementation of development projects in Niger over the

last ten years. This is why we recommend the consortium members (Plan Niger, Aide et Action, Counterpart and VIE) mobilize additional resources for the continuation of these beneficial activities to support the development of schools in Niger.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Context of the evaluation

With the lowest rate of education attainment in the Sahel region and despite the Government of Niger's efforts to improve the situation, many challenges still prevent the guarantee of a quality primary education for all children, especially girls, by 2015, in conformity with national and international commitments, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

In order to assist Niger to meet these challenges, the U.S. government, through the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), invited the country to participate in its Threshold Program, which aims to eradicate corruption and improve the business environment in Niger, as well as support enhancements in the education sector, particularly to the benefit of girls.

The consortium of Plan Niger, Aide et Action Niger, VIE and Counterpart was selected to carry out the girls' education component of the Threshold Program through the IMAGINE project, which has since undergone several changes during its implementation. The first step was the signing of the Cooperative Agreement between USAID and Plan International in October 2008.

After only 13 months of activities interrupted by political crisis, the closure of the IMAGINE project was set for September 30, 2010, and Plan Niger (as the leader of the consortium) commissioned this final evaluation to assess the extent to which the project's objectives have been achieved.

B. Objectives of the evaluation

According to the Terms of References (ToR), the general objective of this evaluation is "to assess the results of the project (achieved results, efficiency, effectiveness, project management) and formulate some recommendations for future projects."

Specifically, the evaluation's goal is to "determine the results of each component of the project" in conformity with the Performance Management Plan (PMP) as agreed with USAID:

- Assess the design of the project (evaluation of the design quality, complementarities with other project components, sustainability, viability, innovations)
- Assess the effective implementation of program activities (outcome of the activities, implementation analysis)
- Assess the quality of the hydraulic infrastructures and civil engineering works realized by the project (safety and security of the building components)
- Determine the effectiveness of the program (the achieved results and analysis of the gaps)
- Determine the efficiency of the program (the resources and costs, analysis of the consortium members' management performance)
- Determine the effects and impacts of the program implementation

C. Methodology of the evaluation

The evaluation was very participatory and involved all relevant stakeholders. As such, all categories of actors involved in the project implementation [project management staff and consortium members, community-based organizations (COGES, APS and AME), teachers, students, heads of education services (DREN), heads of statistic services, pedagogical inspectors and counselors] were surveyed through targeted interviews.

The evaluation process followed the below sequence:

- Documentary analysis that enabled the team to develop the data collection tools and proceed to the sampling and preparation of the field phase;
- Meeting on the framing of the study with IMAGINE workgroup to validate the methodology proposed in the technical offer, the data collection tools and the field study calendar;
- Selection of a sample of school complexes based on standard criteria defined and agreed to with the project team³. A representative sample of 21 complexes (or 34% of the constructed complexes) was selected for review and assessment of being “safe and secure”;
- Field study⁴ devoted to:
 - o Discussion with the DREN and the pedagogic directors, as well as a workshop with the heads of the statistic services;
 - o Discussion with community-based organizations (COGES, APS, AME), along with students and teachers;
 - o Site visits and photos taken related to the quality of the structures;
 - o Development and submission of each phase report to the workgroup for consideration.
- Discussion with the consortium members and project team; and
- Development and submission of the draft report for validation.

³ The agreed selection criteria was that school visited would include: 1) complexes realized by each partner; 2) complexes completed before the work stoppage in December 2009; and 3) complexes done during the 9 week period after authorization in January 2010 to resume construction work.

⁴ See Annex for list of people interviewed.

II. PRESENTATION OF THE IMAGINE PROJECT

A. Technical elaboration of the project

Primary education in Niger is at a crossroads, according to the 2006 – 2007 schooling statistics published by the Ministry of Education. The average rate of completion for primary education was 43% (33% for girls and 53% for boys).

In order to assist Niger increasing its completion rate of girls' education while improving the internal performance of the Education Decennial Development Program (PDDE), the U.S. government, through the MCC, invited the country to participate in the Threshold Program, which aims to eradicate corruption and improve the business environment in Niger, as well as support enhancements in the education sector, particularly to the benefit of girls.

The consortium of Plan Niger, Aide et Action Niger, VIE and Counterpart, was selected to carry out the girls' education component of this Threshold Program under the name of the IMAGINE project. The IMAGINE (“**IM**prove the educ**At**ion of **GI**rls in **NigEr**”) project was developed on the basis of a unified approach, comprising three components: i) increase access to education through the construction of school infrastructures; ii) improve teaching quality through capacity building; and iii) increase community-based participation through social mobilization in order to enhance the engagement of communities in their children's education, with a particular focus on girls' education. The cluster approach, dividing implementation areas among the consortium NGOs, was selected in order to effectively reach the 200 targeted communities targeted by the project.

The division of tasks among the consortium members guaranteed better collaboration and use of each member's expertise in the implementation of the different components of the project, and a representative of each consortium member was part of the project coordination unit. The initial areas of intervention of each consortium member were considered in order to better divide the work to be performed, and each member was given full responsibility for component implementation. Once the project was finalized, agreements were signed with each of the partners, clarifying the collaboration's modalities and limiting by the same way any disagreement.

It must be noted that good collaboration with the Ministry of National Education was crucial in the quality of the project development, even if the slowness in the production of some information caused some delays. In November 2008, the project coverage was extended per the government's request to greater contribute to improvement of children's schooling in the whole country. Initially planned to cover two regions (Tillabéry and Zinder), the project was then expanded to five other regions with the same initial budget. The negotiation of the expanded coverage without a budget increase caused some delays to project implementation, increased operating costs, and decreased the expected impacts of the project. In order to accommodate these new realities, the project went through a budget revision in February 2009.

In March 2009, the IMAGINE project was officially launched for three years, starting from the date of signing the Cooperative Agreement between USAID and Plan International USA. In August 2009, in reaction to the deterioration of the political climate caused by a government referendum on constitutional reform, USAID mandated that no more new contracts be signed. This instruction negatively impacted the implementation of project activities, in particular those related

to the quality of teaching and social mobilization components, which have thus only operated for six out of the 13 months of effective implementation period of the project.

In January 2010, the consortium was informed of the lifting of the suspension imposed in December 2009 and was given nine weeks (until April 2, 2010) to complete all construction work started before the suspension. On April 2, 2010, all construction activities were effectively stopped, and four complexes remain incomplete.

B. Relevance of the IMAGINE project

The IMAGINE project seeks to alleviate all the constraints associated with children's schooling in Niger, and those of Nigerien girls in particular. These constraints include:

- Lack of appropriate infrastructures (classrooms constructed of permanent material, latrines, and modern water points) necessary for conducive learning environments for students and teachers;
- Low capacity levels and lack of professional training opportunities for students and teachers;
- Constant absence of female teachers in rural areas;
- Low social awareness of and mobilization around the importance of girls' schooling; and
- Lack of capacity building for community-based organizations responsible for school management.

Additionally, the three components of the IMAGINE project are in line with the Government's Education Decennial Development Program (PDDE), especially with regard to its objectives related to:

- Improving access to education and stimulating demand in order to reduce inter-regional disparities between rural and urban zones;
- Improving the quality of education and reducing the dropout and repeat rates; and
- Increasing the adult literacy rate and reinforcing professional trainings.

The project's objectives also complement the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly Objective 2: To ensure primary education for all. MDG Objective 2 aims to achieve by 2015 the completion of a full cycle of primary studies for all the boys and girls everywhere in the world.

Thus, the project performance indicators consider the following specific actions defined in the Development Strategy of Poverty Reduction (DSPR) and PDDE documents:

- Increase in the proportion of girls going to school from 41% in 2006 to 47% in 2012;
- Increase in the proportion of the population successfully completing the entire cycle of adult literacy from 63 % in 2006 to 80 % in 2012, and disaggregated by gender; and
- Increase the national coverage of water supply needs in rural areas from 61% in 2006 to 80% in 2015.

No contradiction has been observed concerning this project's objectives with respect to the Government of Niger's policies and strategic orientations. On the contrary, the school authorities unanimously noted the good collaboration of the project with government services and the

contribution of the project to increasing access to schooling and improving the quality of education.

C. Project Funding Arrangements

At the time of signature of the Cooperative Agreement in October 2008, the IMAGINE project funding was as follows:

MCC funding:	US \$18,000,000
Cost Share:	US \$ 2,718,394
Total:	US \$20,718,394⁵

This part of the analysis is intended to review the allocation of the budget, to determine the cost of each activity as part of the overall cost of the project, and to assess the relevance in terms resources used in order to achieve the initially agreed-upon objectives.

Table n°1: Distribution of the budget (in US \$)⁶ :

Designation	Budgetary allocation	Percentage
Construction of classrooms and furniture	16,516,220	79.72%
Community mobilization	98,668	0.48%
Improvement of the quality of teachings and students' performance	96,615	0.47%
Income Generating Activities	123,476	0.60%
Alphabetization	328,272	1.58%
Monitoring Evaluation	95,667	0.46%
Equipment, office automation and functioning	3,459,476	16.69%
Total	20,718,394	100.0%

Source: IMAGINE project – Budget amended and approved in June 2009

The analysis of the table demonstrates that the IMAGINE project is exclusively oriented toward investment, with more than 80% of the funds designated toward direct project implementation, particularly the construction component, which single-handedly represents 79.72% of the overall budget. The other components (quality of teaching, social mobilization, and monitoring and evaluation) receive 3.59% of the budget allocation.

This disproportion may be justified by the fact that the construction of a building with permanent materials requires more money than sensitization of the local populations. However, while awareness-raising and training is less expensive than construction, those activities are very efficient in mobilizing communities around the promotion of girls' education. It must be noted that the respective budget amounts allocated to these components were a bit underestimated compared

⁵ This amount includes an allocation of 20.24% of indirect costs per Plan International USA's pre-negotiated NICRA rate with USAID.

⁶ The indirect costs are proportionally allocated to each different section.

to the construction, especially the allocation toward monitoring and evaluation, which is essential to measure the project's effectiveness and impact. In the end, there was also insufficient time to implement these "soft" activities due to the sudden end of the project and the fact that some activities were scheduled only in year two of the project.

Given the suspension and subsequent changes to the project, the initial budget was subject to two modifications: one approved in July 2009 and another one started in June 2010. These modifications served, in the first case, to account for the prevailing price realities in the local market at the start of project implementation and, on the second occasion, to make adjustments for the reduced project duration from 36 to 24 months, during which the period of effective field activities was actually less than 13 months (March 2009 to beginning of April 2010).

Up to July 31, 2010, the budget expenditure rate was about 57.3% (see table below). This burn rate shows considerable performance of the IMAGINE project, as the majority of development projects implemented in the country typically do not reach this rate even in five years of implementation. The fact that the most expensive activity (construction) was planned in the first year of the project was a positive strategic choice that led to impressive results. The analysis of the IMAGINE project's efficiency focused on the examination of the human, material and financial resources available to the project and the results achieved. Globally, it was demonstrated that the mobilized resources enabled the project to achieve the expected results at lower costs.

The secret of this success is the relevance of the "out sourcing" strategy adopted by the project, which consisted in the execution of essential activities by service providers. This arrangement allocated a big part of the funds to the investment component and a lesser portion to project coordination and administrative costs.

Table n°2 : Budget Execution by June 30, 2010 (in US \$)

Designation	Budgetary allocation	Expenses as of 06/30/2010			Balance	Execution rate
		USAID	COST SHARE	Total		
Construction of classrooms and furniture	16,516,220	9,939,627	203,636	10,143,263	6,372,957	61.4%
Community mobilization	98,668	50,414		50,414	48,254	51.1%
Improvement of the quality of teaching and students' performance	96,615	156,456		156,456	-59,841	161.9%
Income Generating Activities	123,476	601		601	122,875	0.5%
Adult Literacy	328,272	103,475		103,475	224,797	31.5%
Monitoring and evaluation	95,667	56,506		56,506	39,161	59.1%
Equipment, office automation and functioning	3,459,476	1,135,450	226,454	1,361,904	2,097,572	39.4%
TOTAL	20,718,394	11,442,529	430,090	11,872,619	8,845,775	57.3%

Specifically, it must be noted that the “access” component was by far the most efficient. With only 61.4% of the budget, the project has constructed more classrooms than initially planned during the budget revision of August 2009⁷; 88.33% of water points; and approximately 97% of the other types of infrastructures (day care centers, female teachers’ quarters, and latrines).

Although the entire budget for component n°2 was spent, it must be clarified that some activities in that component did not take place, thus mitigating the achievement of “improving the quality of teaching.” Concerning the third component, half of the funds have been used, primarily due to the fact that these activities were executed for only six months and some were not supposed to have been implemented at the time of the project stoppage.

III. PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS AND EFFECTIVENESS

A. Increase access to education, particularly for girls

1) The realizations of component n°1

For project implementation, the consortium of partners composed of Plan Niger, Aide et Action, Counterpart and VIE used a unified approach of clustering communities, which formed the basis of the project start up.

Each constructed school was linked to two other schools from adjacent villages, thus benefiting from the same support in terms of capacity building and social mobilization. This results in a total of 200 schools supported over the totality of the project.

With regard to construction, 62 school complexes were built according to the same scheme, each of them composed of:

- One building of three classrooms with an office/store and two multi-purpose halls;
- Two blocks of three cabin latrines, each equipped each with a hand-washing facility;
- One day care center;
- One building of three houses for female teachers, along with one block of two cabin latrines; and
- One modern water point.

In order to coordinate construction procedures, ensure quality control, and facilitate monitoring, IMAGINE adopted the “out sourcing” strategy. This consists of outsourcing the construction of the infrastructures to contractors under the control of private control bureaus, governmental technical departments and community members. The following table presents the construction achievements:

⁷ Two additional complexes of six classrooms funded by cost share were realized after the lifting of January 2010 suspensions.

Table n°3: School complex construction achievements as of April 2, 2010⁸

Planned Activities	Quantities planned	Quantities realized	Realization rate
Construction of classrooms	180	186	103.33%
Realization of water points (MWP)	60	53 (4 negative)	88.33%
Construction of latrines blocks with three cabins	120	118	98.33%
Construction of teachers' quarters	180	186	103.33%
Construction of day care centers	60	62	103.33%

Source : IMAGINE Project/Work Plan

*“The school complex is a visible impact of the IMAGINE project because the project has offered a brand new school in the villages where there are only straw made classrooms. This is why we are disappointed by the project’s stoppage.”
A school manager of Aguié (Maradi)*

As of April 2, 2010, the IMAGINE project had realized 62 functional schools in the seven project intervention regions. This is a never-achieved performance in the implementation of development projects in Niger over the past ten years. Several factors can account for these remarkable results.

Firstly, establishment of a workgroup responsible for implementation and monitoring of the work plan, reinforced with support from Plan USA, enabled the acceleration of decision making, which was vital during the nine-week “fast-track” period for the construction work.

The other success factor was the daily monitoring of actions in the field and regular feedback to all stakeholders. This consistent monitoring enabled the work group to know in real time the progress at each site and take corrective measures when necessary. The supply of the school furniture – particularly the tables-benches – was delayed for failure of the supplier in meeting his commitments. To this delay should be added the suspension of funding, which prevented the provision of tables-benches to the other classrooms.

With an 88.33% realization rate for the water points, we can certify that the implementation of this component of the project is as remarkable as that of the school building construction component. The prohibition to sign new contracts which occurred in December 2009 did not allow the project to start work on the nine remaining water points (eight in Tahoua region and one at Agadez).

2) Effectiveness in the achievement of the objectives

Given the data in Table n°3, we can conclude that Objective 1 has been widely achieved because it enabled an increase in access to education by school-aged children. The investment allocated to the construction of quality infrastructure has permitted some areas to have a school, which many communities have wanted and needed in the past. The children who did not have access to school in their own villages were not going to other villages. The presence of a school in their own village

⁸ The initial project document has 67 schools planned. This number was changed to 68 following the first budget revision. Since August 2009, upon instruction by USAID, the project reduced its objectives to 60 schools in order to account for eight schools that will not be constructed. Among those eight, two have been built with the cost share portion of overall funding.

increases awareness of the benefits of education and registration of children for school. Additionally, the infrastructures have been built with half of the allocated budget, which is very efficient.

Except for one latrine building, no other construction has a critical defect that affects the structural integrity of the buildings. The best strategy for regular maintenance of the infrastructures and particularly of the classrooms is to involve the beneficiary population so that they will feel fully engaged with the issue. They must assume ownership of the school as their community's responsibility.

*“IMAGINE has realized in one year what other projects could not realize in ten years.”
A director of the education service, Tessaoua (Maradi)*

The beneficiaries are aware that these infrastructures represent an invaluable physical asset.

B. Improve the quality of teaching and children's performance

1) The realizations of component n°2

The quality of teaching and performance of students are two closely linked factors, as poor teaching quality limits students' performance. Also, a combination of teachers not properly trained and insufficient or lack of school kits, negatively affects the quality of teaching.

To improve the quality of teaching and performance of children, the strategy selected by the IMAGINE project consisted of: a) design and dissemination of training modules for teachers; b) supplying the schools with stationery kits, students' manuals and guidebook for teachers; c) promoting extra curricular activities (school government, APP); and d) encouraging good performance of teachers and schools through incentive awards.

The project relies on the existing institutional framework for implementation of these activities, through the systematic collaboration of the DREN and IEB, as well as the active engagement of the students. The following table represents the status of the realized activities.

Table n°4 : Status of the realizations in the field of training of teachers

Planned activities	Realized activities	Realization rate/ Comments
Elaborate, validate and disseminate new training modules and didactic materials.	An integrated module and a spelling and writing module are elaborated and validated through a workshop.	Partly realized
Train 100 pedagogical inspectors and counselors in gender, spelling, active learning, the evaluation of the students' performance.	52 pedagogical inspectors and counselors are trained.	52%
Train at least 1800 teachers on gender, spelling, active learning, evaluation of students' performance, tutoring by the pedagogical inspectors and counselors.	96 teachers are trained ⁹ by the MNE pedagogical supervisors, of which 57 teachers	5.33%
Organize 2 regional training workshops on the	2 workshops organized	100%

⁹The teachers trained were school directors.

module.		
Equip each of the 68 hard schools of the project (initially planned) with seven teacher's guidebooks, for a total of 476 guidebooks.	476 teacher's guidebooks have been distributed in 68 schools.	100%

Source: IMAGINE Project/Work Plan

Regarding the development of the training module, the project facilitated the elaboration of an integrated module and a module for spelling and writing. Once the training modules and tools have been finalized, two workshops were organized to share them with the managers of the education services (DREN, IEB).

In addition, to facilitate the teaching of spelling and mathematics in the primary school's first three classes (CI, CP, CE1) and natural sciences in CE1, the project provided pedagogical guidebooks to the teachers at the same time that school manuals were distributed to the students. The choice of these subjects is justified by a report of an evaluation of learning carried out by the Ministry of Education that pointed out difficulties of assimilation of these three subjects by students.

In the context of the training of teachers, it must be noted that this activity was carried out only at the strategic level (pedagogical inspectors and counselors), without reaching the classroom teachers.

Table n°5 : Status of the realizations in the field of spelling and writing

Planned activities	Realized activities	Realization rate/ Comments
Training of 110 teachers in spelling and writing.	96 teachers (school managers) are trained.	87.72%

Source : IMAGINE Project/Work Plan

This training has reinforced the capacities of some school managers in spelling and writing so that teachers may provide appropriate instruction to their students. Unfortunately, this activity was not extended to the other schools due to the project stoppage.

Table n°6 : Status of the activities realized toward the incentive measures

Planned activities	Realized activities	Realization rate/ Comments
Rewards for 22 teachers and 11 schools	Not realized	0%
180 houses available for female teachers	132 houses attributed	73.33%

Source : IMAGINE Project/Work plan

In order to improve the quality of teaching in the IMAGINE schools, the project planned to organize supply kits to reward the best teachers, particularly female teachers. Unfortunately, these activities were not realized because the proposition was rejected in the budget revision.

Table n°7 : Balance of the activities realized toward student performance

Planned activities	Realized activities	Realization rate/ Comments
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Introduction of tutoring	Not realized	0%
APP in the 198 targeted schools	78 schools	39.39%
Teaching of hygiene and sanitation	Not realized	0%
Establishment of school governments	135 schools	68.18%
Provision of school stationery kits to the 200 targeted schools	200 kits distributed	100%
Provision of school manuals to 68 schools	68 schools received 350 school manuals each	100%

Source : IMAGINE Project/Work Plan

Thanks to a profitable partnership with the UNICEF, all the targeted schools benefited from provision of school stationery kits for the students and didactic materials for the teachers on the first day of school.

The Practical and Productive Activities (APP) – such as school gardens and art work – have been introduced in the Plan intervention schools. However, this activity was not realized in the other zones due to either inappropriate planning and/or the suspension of the project. This resulted in a low rate of realization of the APP.

The rate of establishment of school governments can be considered good at 68.18%, although in most cases the governments are not really functional due to a lack of sensitization on the operation mode of these structures.

2) Effectiveness in the achievement of the objectives

To achieve these objectives, the project chose an integrated approach, based on the training of teachers, the improvement of teaching, and the improvement of learning environment and conditions.

Concerning the training of teachers, two training modules were elaborated and 96 pedagogical/school managers were trained out of a total of 1800 teachers planned. At the conception as well as the implementation of the project, the elaboration of the teachers' training module was deemed very relevant, as the teaching of spelling/writing is the starting point of school knowledge acquisition. However, the teachers "craie en main"¹⁰ did not benefit from training as this activity was not budgeted by the project.

*"Considering the importance of the modules, the themes related to spelling and gender were inserted in the pedagogical sectors of the CAPED sessions of the department not concerned by the project."
A manager of the Education services of Magaria (Zinder)*

It was planned that these modules should be institutionalized through the CAPED during their monthly continuing education sessions. But no resources were allocated for the CAPED to undertake such a role, thereby limiting the effectiveness of this strategy. However, some inspectors (particularly at Aguié and Magaria), motivated by the relevance and quality of these modules, disseminated them

¹⁰ The expression "craie en main" is used to distinguish the teachers actually working in the classrooms from the other teachers working at supervisory levels such as the pedagogical counselors and inspectors, the regional directors, etc.

through the CAPED sessions they organized. Under such conditions, it is difficult to declare that the project has obviously improved teaching quality, as we know that the “craie en main” teachers have not benefited much from the capacity building opportunity.

In relation to the improvement of school performance, 135 schools out of 198 are equipped with school governments. Even if the school governments are not fully functional, they deserve the credit of reinforcing the concepts of civic responsibility and democracy within the schools, as they are established through democratic election procedures. However, although the teachers and pedagogical supervisors may understand the school governments’ purpose and spirit, most of the students and their parents do not yet comprehend the ins and outs of this innovation in the primary school.

The provision of school stationery kits and manuals for the students in 200 targeted schools of the project was a big solution to the problem of insufficient materials. The students spent the school year without any supply problems, as all 200 targeted schools of the project received the kits (stationeries) at the start of the school year in sufficient quantity, enabling them to spend a school year during which learning was capitalized.

Considering all the issues, objective 2 has largely not been achieved due to the following reasons:

- The key actors – teachers in the classrooms – could not be trained as the activity was not budgeted but rather based on a strategy relying on the CAPED, which did not succeed as anticipated; and
- The modules elaborated were used only in one of the seven intervention regions of the project.

C. Enhance the participation of the communities in their support to girls’ education

1) The realizations of component n°3

The implementation strategy of this component consisted of the development of the partnership with community-based structures. This partnership is based on COGES capacity building and advocacy for the change of mentality in relation to girls’ education (SCOFI). The following tables present the situation of the realized activities:

Table n°8 : Status of the realizations in the field of the mobilization of public opinion about girls’ education

Planned activities	Realization/Comments
Formulation of a vision of girls’ education at the national level.	Not realized
Adoption of a communication strategy to advocate for	Document elaborated and validated but not implemented.

girls' education.	
Organization of a national advocacy day each year (for 3 years) on girls' education.	Process suspended at the internal ToR ¹¹ validation phase.
Organization of a regional advocacy day each year (for 3 years) on girls' education.	Process suspended at the internal ToR ¹² validation phase.
Mobilization of financial and material means for the implementation of the communication strategy.	IEC materials not conceived and not disseminated; process interrupted due to USAID's decision not to sign new contracts.

Source : IMAGINE Project/Work Plan

In the area of mobilization of public opinion on girls' education based on sensitization and advocacy, several activities were not completed due to the suspension of the project.

However, the project has produced a strategy document outlining the benefits of sending girls to school. This strategy was developed around a consensus on the importance of girls' education and advocacy actions organized on this basis. Unfortunately, this strategy was not implemented, given USAID's decision not to allow the signing of new contracts, other than those for ongoing construction activities.

Table n°9 : Status of the realizations in the field of capacity building of the COGES

Planned activities	Realized activities	Realization rate/ Comments
Organization of a national meeting on the COGES, APS, AME capacity building.	Realized	100%
Development and dissemination of the training modules on social mobilization.	Modules and didactic support have been developed	100%
Elaboration of 198 Local Action Plans (PALs).	155 PAL have been elaborated	78.28%
Implementation of 155 PALs.	155 PALs have been implemented	100%
Training of regional and departmental education officials (198) on monitoring of the COGES activities.	Partly realized, with 80 regional and departmental education officers trained on monitoring of the COGES activities	Approximately 40.40%
Implementation of a subsidy program to support communities in the implementation of their PALs.	Not realized	Not budgeted

Source : IMAGINE Project/Work Plan

In order to support the community actors to better assume their roles and responsibilities, the project initiated a set of relevant trainings: girls' education, associative life, planning/monitoring-evaluation, and management of school assets. These trainings have enabled the COGES to elaborate their annual plans of actions, which for the most part have been implemented. The adopted dynamic gave priority to those plans that placed additional emphasis on the social

¹¹ The process was suspended following the USAID decision of not signing new contracts.

¹² The process was suspended following the USAID decision of not signing new contracts.

mobilization aspect. However, it will be more appropriate for the project to take into account the costs of the most relevant actions to supplement the communities' efforts.

Regarding the COGES functionality, surveys showed that the members of different committees have mastered their organization's by-laws. The meetings seemed to be organized occasionally but not with a specific frequency. The members seemed to have a clear understanding of responsibilities and rules that ensure democratic procedures. The renewal of the COGES boards is another democratic rule which is generally respected. However, in some villages (Bandio), the change of leadership is not respected due to the nomination process based on a kind of tacit consensus. In such cases, the renewal of the members will signify a rejection of those who have been nominated, even if in most cases, the members thought that the management committee was competent.

Table n°10 : Status of the realizations in the field of adult literacy and IGP

Planned activities	Realized activities	Realization rate/ Comments
Training of at least 6000 women in IGP practices.	Activity not realized	0%
Literacy of 3000 members of COGES, APS, AME	Validation of the animators' training manuals 35 animators and focal points participated in the initial training 1002 learners, of which 711 are women, started the literacy classes in 34 centers	Partly realized 35% have started the activities

Source : IMAGINE Project/Work Plan

Concerning this section, three main activities were supposed to take place the first year: the elaboration of an IGP strategy, followed by the identification and training of local NGO partners. During the second year, these NGO partners would in turn train the women's groups and assist them in the establishment and monitoring of their IGP activities.

With Plan Niger's Microfinance Advisor's support, the IGP strategy was developed based on the Village Savings and Credits Association approach, which is being implemented by Plan in its program area. Unfortunately, the implementation of the strategy was unable to start before the project suspension, due to the absence of a permanent resource at the project level to coordinate the IGP activities.

The literacy program proposed by the project was conceived to develop basic functional techniques that may be used by children and adults. Unfortunately, this ambitious program has only been partly realized due to the project suspension. In some villages visited (Boudoum, Kellakam, Arnadi, and Kouroua), the literacy activities had not yet started. However, the access to literacy activities for rural women would undoubtedly have had positive effects on the improvement of their own status and their children's living conditions in general, along with that of girls in particular.

The community mobilization component was weakly realized because the PALs were not implemented. The removal of the budget initially allocated to the funding of the PALs implementation may be cited as the main cause.

2) Efficiency in the achievement of the objectives

To achieve the main objective of the IMAGINE project – improving the access to and performance of girls in school – a number of activities to mobilize the surrounding populations were included:

- Sensitization activities in order to promote the education of girls at the national, regional and local levels;
- Dissemination of IEC materials supporting the advocacy strategy;
- Capacity building of the COGES, APS, and AME on gender, school management, data collection, maintenance of the school infrastructures, planning, democratic governance and monitoring of the activities;
- Local planning of activities to help communities elaborate and execute their plans of actions (PALs); and
- Small subsidy program to support the communities during the implementation of their plans of actions (PALs).

However, it must be noted that these activities functioned in reality for only six months out of the 13 months of project activities. This failure should be contextualized since a number of activities were implemented during the short time of operation.

Considering the weak capacity of the schools' management structures, particularly the APS and AME, the option of reinforcing all the structures (beyond the COGES) was a particularly unique aspect of the project, in addition to the efficiency of the approach of unified training (for the COGES, AME, APS, pedagogical team, village leaders, and school governments). The literacy courses for the COGES members were of great help, as the acquisition is useful for them in the execution of their mission. Not only was the literacy program articulated with the social mobilization interventions, school kits were made available to teachers and learners. This approach of allowing a better repartition of the roles and responsibilities at the community level, in conformity with the regulatory statutes, permitted:

- Limiting of conflicts among the different structures and the members;
- Federation of the structures and coordination of all actions toward school improvement, particularly girls' education.

Despite the drastic reduction of the initial budget, the component's activities have been re-evaluated and adapted with new approaches such as:

- The number of the committee members to be trained and the duration of the training have been reduced;
- The lack of subsidies did not allow the coverage of some priority expenses. However, this prompted the communities to mobilize their own resources for the implementation of some activities (set up of endogenous school canteens, funding of PALs). The sensitization sessions were rights-based (systematic census of right holders and duty bearers) and involved social dialogue. The approach gave a sense of responsibility and was less expensive.

These effective readjustments were done without compromising the efficiency of the component. On the contrary, they allowed for:

- Increased recruitment of children for enrollment, with the sensitization campaign playing a big role;
- Functionality of all the community based structures, as the capacity-building enabled the community-based structures' members to better assume their roles and responsibilities in the field of girls' education, associative life, planning, monitoring and evaluation, and school management;
- Establishing girls' education (SCOFI) as a priority at the community level. The national day as well as the regional days and communal advocacy fora were not realized due to the delay in the elaboration of advocacy strategy and production of IEC materials. However, on the basis of the training module on the promotion of girls' education elaborated by the project, advocacy/IEC campaigns were held in all the intervention villages (except Agadez region) on subjects such as registration of girls at school, the implication of the communities in the promotion of education, particularly the education of girls, and the fight against the factors impeding girls' education (early marriage, small trade, housework).

IV. BENEFITS AND POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

A. Improve access to education, particularly for girls

1) The strengths

The IMAGINE project initiated a prototype of school complexes composed of:

- One building of three classrooms with an office/store and two multi-purpose halls;
- Two blocks of three cabin latrines, each equipped each with a hand-washing facility;
- One day care center;
- One building of three houses for female teachers, along with one block of two cabin latrines; and
- One modern water point.

According to the project designers, the architecture selected for the classroom building is justified by the fact that the three classrooms could hold six different grade levels using the multi-grade approach where two levels share the same classroom. This model presents some advantages, particularly in the durability and convenience (improvement of the ventilation system that creates better conditions for the students). In addition, the working and learning conditions for the teachers and students were much improved through the construction of additional infrastructures such as latrines, water points, storage units, houses, and directors' offices.

The IMAGINE school complexes also have an attractive effect on girls' education by familiarizing youngsters (3 – 6 years) with the school environment through the day care center, located next to the primary school classes. The multi-purpose halls (used for adult literacy training) enable the parents to meet at the school at the same time as their children without any inconvenience. This is a new approach in terms of school construction in rural areas in Niger.

On the academic front, the approach of the IMAGINE project presents another innovation as it considers both formal and non-formal education (schooling of the children and adult literacy). This approach has already created an inducement effect with other organizations (NGOs); for example, based on information gathered in Dolbel, JICA proposed to replicate the same model of classrooms.

“It is less hot in the classrooms without ceiling than in the ones with ceiling. At the beginning, when they explained that to us, we did not believe them; we had to stay in the classrooms to notice that it was true.”
Director of the school of Teguèye (Tillaberi)

The advantages of the school building model without ceiling are the durability and convenience. This model is well conceived to meet the climatic conditions in Niger. This explains the fact that the model has the following characteristics:

- Slight lift up of the lower side of the ceiling to improve thermal conditions;
- Covering of the roof with zinc aluminum sheets (63/100 thickness);
- Widening of the attic by adding the number of beams to increase its vertical height; and
- Application of a layer of paint on the edge of the roof.

The logic sought by the IMAGINE project through the combination of infrastructures (classrooms, houses, day care, water points, and latrines) is to increase the recruitment rate, and the completed infrastructures did facilitate increased recruitment of girls at schools. For example, at Bandio, the registration in first grade (CI) has remarkably evolved: in 2008-2009, out of 60 registered there were 20 girls; in 2009-2010, out of 120 registered, there were 72 girls. These remarkable improvements have been noticed in almost all the visited villages.

With the convenience offered by the permanent classrooms, the learning conditions were improved as these classrooms have a positive influence on teachers' performance and students' attendance (no lateness, no stoppage of lectures due to the rains before the end of the school year, etc.). For example, the attendance rate of children is 95% at Bolbol Goumnadey (Dosso) in 2009-2010. Other indicators have also improved, such as the ratio of students to teachers, which is respectively 33 students for one teacher at Thirobidey and 42 at Bolbol¹³. At Maiguijé Kafi¹⁴, the attendance rate is 98.05%; the student/teacher ratio is 49 students for one teacher for the same year. The success rate is respectively 67% and 52.38% for Damama and Gomba¹⁵.

In order to promote girls' access to school, some material conditions have been created (housing) to attract, recruit, and retain female teachers in the rural areas. In all the villages, 90% of the teaching staff is composed of women. For example at Lamané (Konni), the teaching staff is composed of women only. At Tégouèye, out of 10 teachers, 8 are women. The proportion of women is 4/5 at Banizoumbou I and Dargol Quartier.

2) Areas for improvement

Some questions can be raised about the creation of the infrastructures without consideration for the school maps. The project involved building three classrooms and three houses in each area, with no regard to the demographical weight and size of the student and teacher populations.

¹³ Source : Statistic service DREN Dosso

¹⁴ Source : Statistic service IEB Tessaoua

¹⁵ These results would be more interesting if the performances could be compared to the national or departmental averages or values before the project intervention, which is unfortunately not possible due to the absence of statistical data.

The day care centers are unfortunately too often exposed to bad weather, which is not good for children under six, a vulnerable population. The ideal change would be to switch the day care center with a covered classroom.

Some infrastructures were still not realized in conformity with all the requirements. To assess the quality of the completed infrastructures, three types of risks were considered by the project management team. For each type, a seriousness level was determined (high, average and low). The first two levels have no effect on the quality of the infrastructures, although the second risk may represent a potential danger for the users. The following risks were identified:

- Aesthetic risks;
- Risks for users;
- Risks to the physical integrity of the building, which determined the quality of the infrastructure.

Out of the 22 complexes visited, only one building presents a risk for the physical integrity of the building with a high seriousness level. The Arnadi (Gouré-Zinder) teachers' latrine building has a large crack that may cause it to collapse if not repaired. Three (Maiguijé Kafi, Arlit Carré SNTN and Maitalakia) present a level three risk but with lower seriousness, as the edge of the ridge tile is detached due to the violent winds. The other noticed risks are minor and do not affect the quality of the infrastructure; for example, the open septic tank at Boudoum represents a risk for the users but does not threaten the physical integrity of the structure.

Overall, the complexes visited are of good quality in general as they do not represent any risks for the communities. There were no collapsed walls nor blown off roofs found. The conditions of the carpentry, blackboards, and floors are good in general. The good functioning as well as the good flow and quality of water was noted at the level of the water points. Some common insufficiencies that do not call into question the quality of the infrastructures are noted in the Annexes.

It must be noted that these insufficiencies have been observed in majority at the level of the open spaces (multi-purpose halls, day care centers), accessible to children in the villages where the COGES is not functioning well.

B. Improve the quality of teaching and children's performance

1) The strengths

The improvement of the quality of teaching depends on the capacity of the inspectorates to lead the training of teachers, the organizations of rewards, the motivation of teachers, and the introduction of extracurricular activities (APP) to attract students, particularly girls.

Regarding the teachers' training, two training modules were developed by the IMAGINE project: the integrated module and the spelling and writing module. The integrated module was very much appreciated by the education officials met in the field. The success of this module is explained by the fact that it emphasized gender, teaching methods, active pedagogy, evaluation method of learning tutoring and school government.

The establishment of school governments is a success as it enabled the involvement of students in school management. In so doing, a number of Plans of Action (PALs) were elaborated to address issues affecting the schools such as health, hygiene, attendance and recruitment.

2) Areas for improvement

Unfortunately, these training modules were not disseminated during the CAPED sessions. One of the main causes explaining the weak execution of the project training activities is the lack of financial resources for teacher training and pedagogical supervisors' monitoring missions. In addition, the instruction of the donor (MCC/USAID) to concentrate on the construction at the expense of the quality component left little space for soft activities. It is unfortunate that the teachers were unable to take advantage of such an opportunity that could have improved their performances.

C. Enhance the participation of the communities in their support to girls' education

1) The strengths

In order to enable the community actors to better assume their roles and responsibilities, the project identified a set of relevant trainings for the community-based organizations (COGES, APE, AME, leaders), focusing especially on girls' education, associative life, (democratic process of structures' establishment), monitoring and evaluation planning, and management (the school properties and structures). Using the existing training modules as reference, the project decided to adapt and/or enrich the validated modules already elaborated on the basis of the EPT/JICA and ONEN field experiences with the support of the Ministry of Education at the national level. This is a demonstration of how the project had drawn on existing experiences to save time on design and implementation of some activities.

2) Areas for improvement

Despite the training received, some COGES are not functioning well and thus not fulfilling the mission of assisting government in the material, moral, and financial management of the schools. Some COGES could not develop their own Plans of Action without external assistance. They remained in a wait-and-see attitude for external funds even though they are able to realize and function by themselves. The training should support the better management of this type of organization. At Kellakam and Boudoum (Mainé – Diffa), for example, the COGES are not able to take care of minor repairs for the infrastructure

D. The partnership

1) The strengths

The consortium members worked in partnership and synergy since the conception of the IMAGINE project. This spirit guided the repartition of the interventions, at both geographical and technical levels:

- Plan Niger, leader of the consortium was responsible for the project implementation in six departments of Tillabéry, Dosso, Tahoua, and Agadez regions. Plan also led the infrastructures component, the IGP section and the monitoring and evaluation.
- Aide et Action implemented activities in four departments of Maradi and Zinder regions, as a leader in the social mobilization field and the implementation of the other components of the project.
- Counterpart was responsible for the implementation of the project in two departments of Zinder and Diffa regions.
- VIE was in charge of the implementation of the literacy sub-component in all seven regions, either directly in Plan zones, or through local operators in the other areas.

The partnership has undoubtedly led to good collaboration, especially through the establishment of a steering committee bringing together representatives from each of the four organizations. At the regional level, there were plans to establish some steering committees composed of technical services (education, rural engineering, hydraulic) conducted by the DREN. However, these committees were only established in Maradi and Zinder. Even in regions where the steering committees were not established, the technical services competencies (education, rural engineering, hydraulic) have been used by the project to their general satisfaction.

“I have never seen such a big implication of personalities (chef de canton, Mayor, Prefect) in the implementation of a project.”
An outgoing counselor of Gorouol Commune (Tillabéri)

The collaboration contributed to the success of the project, establishing the strategic alliance of the administration, the technical services and the commune leaders. The project occupied an important place in the national institutional environment.

Another particularity of the partnership is the fact that each member of the consortium was represented at the project coordination unit: the manager of the social mobilization component was from Aide et Action, the manager of the literacy component was from VIE, and the other managers from Plan Niger.

2) Areas for improvement

Toward the end of the project and given the time pressure in winding down activities, the partnership suffered some lapses. Plan Niger, the leader of the consortium, was obliged to take decisions without always involving the other partners, who were sometimes relegated to simple service providers. At the level of project coordination, the good dynamics faltered following the announcement of the suspension of the project. The fluidity in the circulation and sharing of information, which was the project’s strength, disappeared as rumors and a psychosis situation became prevalent, leading to resignations of several project staff.

V. IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROJECT

The IMAGINE project used a monitoring and evaluation system that aims to provide precisely all the necessary elements for its implementation and effective measures for the monitoring and evaluation activity. Indeed, it defined the used concepts; specified the objectives, the mandate and the monitoring and evaluation activity’s expected results; and determined the approach to establish

by describing the indicators, actors, tools and procedures. A detailed performance management plan (PMP) covering all the indicators was elaborated. This plan indicates the appropriate data for each indicator, the source of the data, the frequency of the collection, the collection tools and data analysis.

A set of impact indicators were selected in the indicators chart (PMP) to measure the changes to be monitored from the start of the project implementation. However, the impact indicators selected were not informed, as the reference situation of the indicators is not known. To solve this difficulty, the evaluation team collected data on the evolution of the students' enrollment in first grade (CI) as a proxy to the impact indicators selected in the chart of indicators (PMP).

A. Impacts according to the indicators selected by the project (PMP)

1) Increase by 5% each year the number of registered girls in primary school

*"Thanks to the project sensitization, the villagers are interested in school. If they notice a teacher's incompetency, they reported him to us. Further to a complaint, some transfers arose after a verification mission from a pedagogical counselor."
An education manager at Gothèye (Tillabéri)*

The necessity of sending girls to school seemed to be accepted and applied by the parents.

Through the AME, the mothers sensitized and pre-recruited in order to facilitate the registration in the CI. In the 22 villages

visited, the girls are going to the primary schools as much as the boys. The parity index of girls/boys in these schools vary from 0.5 to 2.33¹⁶. A remarkable evolution is noted in the villages visited. The recruitment indicators are encouraging because the parity index in relation with recruitment has substantially increased in one year and has even exceeded the targeted average of 1.

Although we observe an improvement of the girls/boys parity index during the year 2009-2010, reduction in gender disparity is still a major concern, especially at Kannia and Arnadi where the parity indexes are respectively 0.48 and 0.33. This means that less girls than boys are going to the primary school in these two villages. Indeed, due to high opportunity costs, the parents of the rural zones hesitate or refuse to register their children in school. And as they often say, "the school is only producing jobless people or those who are difficult to employ." For some years, the employment market has shrunk, as the employment security offered by the government disappeared or gave rise to short contract employments, and the under-educated youth returned to the farms.

Another danger is still threatening the achievements. As the number of registered children increase, the number of children leaving school will also rise correspondingly. At Maiguigé Kafi, 16 CI students of a total of 51 left the school because of famine this year. At Bandio, 15 students left school to start a small trade.

2) Reduce by 10% by 2011 the disparity between girls and boys enrollment

Increasing the access to preschool education for children aged two to six would necessarily require the creation/proliferation of the preschool infrastructures, in particular in the rural area where the

¹⁶ See in annex the recruitment evolution before and during the project of some visited schools.

potential demand is huge. The option retained in this field is to promote the expansion of public kindergarten in rural and semi-urban areas. This is why the project included day care centers in the school complexes. In the schools visited, the parity index in the pre-registration is superior to 1, except at Kanna where it is 0.48¹⁷ (pre-registration chart in Annex).

Other obstacles to pre-registration and retention of girls in school have been identified. It is particularly the parents' illiteracy that is the cause of the limited importance given to the education. According to local perception, the school is seen as a threat to the girl and her family's moral integrity. It is considered that educated girls will grow away from the family, society and community, and contradict by this way a number of the values and behaviors defined by the socio-cultural stereotypes (Boudoum).

At the economic level, increased poverty results in girls working to support families (housework, small trade) in the agricultural zone, and boys working as shepherds in the nomad zone.

Respectively, in one or another case, the populations prefer to use the girls or the boys, without being aware of the school advantages. The large majority of girls excluded from school are rural women. However, rural women's access to adult literacy activities should undoubtedly have some positive results on the improvement of their status, and on their children's conditions in general and those of girls in particular.

3) Increase the number of female teachers in rural areas

*"Equipped with the houses, the IMAGINE schools are very much solicited by the female teachers who are victims of high pressures obliging them to be stable and rigorous at work."
An education services manager of Mainé (Diffa)*

In all the schools visited the number of female teachers has exponentially increased (see Annex). The women/men parity index is superior to 1 while it was below 0.6¹⁸ at the national level. The increased presence of female teachers in the schools is explained by

the existence of the teachers' quarters, which has resulted in single teachers being systematically transferred.

Overall, it should be noted that the impact of the IMAGINE project is placed in a long-term context. For now, it has started and should be strengthened. It should also be stated that the impact could not be exactly measured because the period of the implementation has been relatively short (13 months of activities), and the developed measurement tools were not sufficiently informed.

B. Sustainability and Ownership

The sustainability and ownership issue brings out the challenge of project handover to the beneficiaries. In other words, what has the project planned to ensure follow up and an acceptable continuation of the good practices and actions initiated?

Sustainability and ownership constitute a set of dispositions, procedures and mechanisms destined to ensure the conditions of a concerted and successful closure as well as the sustainability of the project activities, the transfer of necessary capacities to the actors, and the continuation and

¹⁷ See in annex the pre-registration chart in the visited schools.

¹⁸ See in annex the chart of the men/women parity index in the visited villages.

reproduction of good practices. Concerning the IMAGINE project, the project closure is not consensual and no practical disposition was elaborated to ensure a satisfactory end to the project.

However, sustainability and ownership can be assessed through the implementation of some activities:

- The communities' participation and engagement in the realization and management of the works;
- The Government technical services' involvement in the project's approaches;
- The nature of the completed works; and
- The organization and elimination of conflicts within the COGES.

During its implementation, the IMAGINE project has involved many of the local communities through the establishment of COGES, APS and AME. The COGES even developed Plans of Action for their institutional development. In all the schools visited, the heads of the COGES have played the role of foreman during the classrooms' construction. The COGES achieved a certain level of maturity and awareness. The presidents are friendly with the teachers in the well-functioning schools and the teachers' adversaries in the opposite cases. In some schools (Arnadi for example), the COGES has even repaired the damaged classroom terraces.

In the areas where the water points have been constructed, some management committees are established under the supervision of the COGES. But no artisan repairer has been trained or identified in these villages. The only noticed weakness at this level is the insufficiency of training of their members.

The quality of the works realized by the project is by itself a sustainability criteria. However, the sudden decision of the project closure was an opportunity for some contractors to take shortcuts on the work (for example, in Boudoum village where the contractor did not even close the toilet pit).

In conclusion, we may directly say that the IMAGINE project has planned in its elaboration some activities which may lead to the sustainability and ownership by local communities. But the very short delay and the pressure on the project's actors did not allow for implementation of these activities, so as to adequately prepare for the progressive disengagement of the project team and ensure the sustainability of the interests of the project.

C. Innovations, replication and scaling-up

The innovation of the IMAGINE project in Niger is in its design of an integrated and complementary model: three classrooms, three social houses, three latrine blocks, a multi-purpose hall, a day care center, a modern water point, school manuals and supplies and even a take-home ration in some schools. This approach is a very innovative in the education sector, and no project, even public, has been developed this way. The IMAGINE schools constitute a reference in Niger, and students, teachers, parents of students and trainers are proud of these interventions. In terms of replication, it is worth noting the interest raised by this project among other development partners such as JICA.

The combination of formal and non-formal education is another innovation implemented by the IMAGINE project. The adult literacy classes taking place at the same time that the children are in school allows the youngsters to become more familiar with the school system while the mothers

are also gaining knowledge. This process brings together all the age groups present in the village. In addition, these group dynamics have produced a positive impact in the project's intervention in the promotion of girls' education.

The school government may also be listed as well in this chapter of innovation. Initially introduced by Plan Niger, this notion of school government was above all popularized and disseminated at large scale by the IMAGINE project. It is a process of institutional involvement at all levels. Also, at Mainé, all the schools will be equipped with a school government in 2010 - 2011 with JICA support.

The literacy training for the COGES, with a focus on their mission in synergy with social mobilization efforts, reinforce their sensitization concerning girls' education. The federation of the local actors (COGES, SPA, EMA) allowed for coordination of activities and the appeasement of conflicts, while leading to the creation of unified Plans of Action (PALs), which is a first in Niger. Indeed, the multitude of Plans of Action limits their execution, while a consolidated Plan of Action brings cohesion and is conducive to collaboration.

Regarding scaling up, it may be envisaged if the practical dispositions have been taken to build on the initial work of IMAGINE. But no actor has yet developed a concrete project that envisages to continue the work of the IMAGINE project even if VIE remains active.

D. Lessons learned

1) **Improve access to education, particularly for girls**

The community-based mobilization approach, as well as the involvement of the Government's technical services working with the contractors, permitted the realization of quality work in record time with little risks to the communities. The "out sourcing" strategy was very efficient in the achievement of objectives as it had an effect on the reduction of overhead and administrative costs. With the construction of the classrooms in permanent materials, the school year could start rapidly, and several communities saved money by not having to construct classrooms out of straw.

The teachers' quarter is the motivation source for female teachers to work in rural areas. Also, the presence of female teachers in rural schools constitutes a model for young girls and serves as a source of inspiration for parents who are then motivated to register their daughters in school.

With the modern water point, the school becomes the center of interest, as in many villages there is no other modern water point.

With the latrines, the hygiene conditions are now improved within the schools. It is the same for the girls' regularity at school who, because of prudishness, used to go far in the bush for long minutes to ease themselves, away from indiscreet eyes.

2) **Improve the quality of teaching and children's performance**

The hypothesis that the CAPEDs would proceed with the dissemination of the training modules without putting in place the required supporting measures for their functioning constituted a limiting factor for the training of teachers. The project should have assessed the risks related to its deployment strategy and better planned supporting measures for the CAPED. However, the

government takes ownership of these measures, whose essential innovations have been considered in the ongoing reflection within the Ministry of Education.

The famine had a negative impact on school attendance this year: at Maiguigé Kafi, 16 CI students out of 51 left school during the year for famine reasons. However, thanks to the take-home rations in some schools, children remained in school during the lean season. It is an incentive measure that has not been established in all the schools but deserves to be generalized considering its success.

The sensitization campaigns coupled with the census of school-aged children for the two next years has strongly contributed to the increase of children's registration, especially for girls.

3) Enhance the participation of the communities in their support to girls' education

The implication of the communities, the local and administrative authorities in the implementation of project activities enables local actors to take pride and ownership of project achievements.

The suspension of the support and assistance to the school management structures constitutes a limitation in the management and maintenance of project impacts.

The COGES members seem to have a clear sharing of their responsibilities and rules ensuring democratic functioning and procedures that apply to all members in the same way. The training in associative life is an essential step to ensure continued democratic functioning of the school management structures. The renewal of the COGES boards constitutes another democratic rule, respected in a general way.

The creation of unified Plans of Action allow the management committee, AME and APS to have a real influence on school decisions and to be, by the same occasion, more responsible with regard to the running of the school and children's education in general.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Global assessment

The IMAGINE project, funded by MCC, has been carried out by a consortium of three international NGOs (Plan, Aide et Action, and Counterpart International) and a national NGO (VIE KANDE NI BEYRA), under the supervision of the Niger government.

Upon the signing of the Cooperative Agreement in October 2008, the project started its field activities in March 2009. After only 13 months of implementation, the project has recorded substantial results, with a very satisfying efficiency level despite the expansion of its intervention zones, which was done without an increase in financial resources.

The lessons learned from the implementation of the project constitute a source of inspiration for the stakeholders and eventually for other development partners intervening in the same sector.

The principal lessons learned concern:

- The project design, which consists of building each IMAGINE school in a complex of three classrooms (required minimum in a rural area), teachers' quarters (an innovation), a modern water point (a necessity in the rural area), and three latrine blocks (a sanitary complement);
- The project approach, which consists of developing actions aimed at improving girls' schooling (housing for female teachers, food rations), and the combination of formal and non-formal education;
- The implication of the local community through the establishment of the COGES, APS, AME, their training and their engagement in the resolution of problems related to the schools.

However, some insufficiencies must also be pointed out:

- The fact that the CAPEDs were not allocated financial resources constitutes a limiting factor for the dissemination of the modules developed by IMAGINE;
- The positive discrimination to the benefit of the girls must be carefully considered so as not to harm the boys, especially in the nomadic areas where the parents prefer sending girls to school rather than boys who are used as shepherds.

B. Recommendations

Component 1: Improve access to education, particularly for girls

Regarding access:

- Although the parity index in recruitment has substantially increased in one year and has even exceeded the expected average of 1 at the level of the IMAGINE schools, the drop out factor remains the principal danger threatening these achievements, as many children also leave school. This is why the evaluation mission recommends that USAID and consortium members strengthen these achievements by initiating the relevant actions to maintain attendance levels at school, especially among girls.

Regarding the infrastructures:

- Although the complexes visited are overall of good quality as they do not present risks to the communities, the evaluation mission recommends that the consortium members correct the defects noticed in the open spaces (multi-purpose halls and day care centers) prior to the final reception of the works.
- Considering that the day care centers are too much exposed to bad weather, the evaluation mission recommends that the consortium members or other partners ensure that children attending the preschool are in more appropriate learning conditions by equipping the day care centers with furniture and equipment (toys, decorations).
- Considering that the school governments did not receive training on the use of modern latrines, the evaluation mission recommends that the consortium members train the school government members on the positive use of modern school latrines, as the module already exists.
- Considering that the constructed classrooms are not all equipped with school furniture, the evaluation mission recommends that Plan Niger complete the actions started, particularly the provision of tables-benches in the schools.

Component 2: Improve the quality of teaching and children's performance

Regarding the training modules:

Considering that the teachers in the field have a real need for capacity building since most of them have not received adequate basic initial training; considering the relevance of the elaborated modules to reinforce the teachers' capacities in teaching; and considering the problems and difficulties encountered in the implementation of the teachers' training process, the evaluation mission recommends that the consortium members continue the capacity building process through the following actions:

- Multiplication and dissemination of the modules
- Training of the supervisors/teachers
- Monitoring and evaluation of the learning
- Transfer of the modules to the Ministry of Education

Component 3: Enhance the participation of the communities in their support to girls' education

Regarding the COGES :

- Considering that some COGES are not able to maintain the infrastructures realized at high cost, the evaluation mission recommends that the consortium members manage the infrastructures together with the COGES members until the proper training is provided.

Regarding the implementation of the PALs:

- As the absence of subsidies did not allow the covering of some priority expenses, the situation has motivated some communities to mobilize their own resources (draft of the endogenous school restaurants, PALs entirely funded by the communities' self raised funds). Unfortunately, this dynamic stopped in some villages where the government provided a subvention to the COGES. This is why the evaluation mission recommends to

the government to keep in mind the coherence towards the different approaches, related to PALs implementation.

With regard to innovations:

- Considering that the literacy courses given to the COGES members has been unique in helping members in the implementation of their mission (social mobilization), the evaluation mission recommends capitalizing on all the innovations in terms of community mobilization and literacy.

Other recommendations

Regarding the involvement of local populations in the elaboration of future projects:

- Considering the weak engagement of the communities during the project conception related to the call for proposals, the evaluation mission recommends that the consortium members involve the communities in the definition of the needs and consider the existing communal development plans in the elaboration of future projects.

Regarding the partnership:

- Considering that the failure of the partnership with the NGOs CARE and Mercy Corps delayed the start of project activities in Tahoua and Agadez regions, the evaluation mission recommends Plan Niger conduct some institutional analysis prior to the establishment of a partnership with any local or international NGO.

Regarding the continuation of the IMAGINE project:

- Considering the IMAGINE project's substantial results to date, the mission recommends that:
 - o USAID mobilize more funding to continue the activities started by the project;
 - o Members of the consortium mobilize more resources by diversifying their partners in order to continue and complete the "salvage actions" of the IMAGINE project.

ANNEX 1 – Statistics of the IMAGINE Schools Visited

Table N°1 : Evolution of recruitment before and after the project in some schools visited

Schools	Number of students 2008-2009 (CI)			Parity index	Number of students 2009-2010 (CI)			Parity index
	T	M	F		T	M	F	
Bandio	60	40	20	0.50	120	48	72	1.5
Dargol sector	50	15	35	2.33	50	15	35	2.33
Teguèye	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dolbel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fantio (test school Téra)	78	44	34	0.77	29	15	14	0.93
Banizoumbou 1	52	27	25	0.92	50	25	25	1
Kannia	48	26	22	0.84	77	52	25	0.48
Gorou	62	30	32	1.06	66	27	39	1.44
Izagagadan (test school Filingué zone)	33	20	13	0.65	41	24	17	0.70
Tchirobidey	Pas de CI	0	0	0	53	27	26	0.96
Bolbol Goumandey	69	39	30	0.76	110	62	48	0.77
Hamka Seyni (test school Dosso zone)	Pas de CI	0	0	0	55	40	15	0.37
Lamamé	52	31	21	0.63	53	26	27	1.03
Guidan Dagna					63	29	34	1.17
Damama	50	30	20	0.66	86	50	36	0.72
Maignigé Kafi	56	27	29	1.07	42	20	22	1.1
Gomba	Pas de CI	0	0	0	51	25	26	1.04
Doungoul	43	18	25	1.38	77	40	37	0.92
Timkim (école témoin zone Magaria)	51	33	18		24	13	11	0.84
Arnadi	-	-	-	-	32	24	8	0.33
Kouroua					31	17	14	0.82
Kellakam	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boudoum	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Arlit (carré SNTN)					114	61	54	0.88
Arlit (Boukoki nord)	109	53	56	1.05	144	69	78	1.13

Table N°2 : Parity of Pre-registration in CI (2010 – 2011)

Schools	2010-2011 (Pre registration)		
	M	F	Total
Bandio	30	30	60
Dargol	20	30	50
Dolbel	-	-	-
Teguèye	-	-	-
Kannia	52	25	77
Baizoumbou 1	-	-	-
Gorou	27	39	66
Tchirobidey	30	30	60
Bolbol	35	37	72
Lamamé	-	-	-
Guidan Dagna	-	-	-
Damama	25	25	50
Maiguigé Kafi	0	0	0

Table N°3 : Female/Male Teachers Parity Index in the schools visited

Schools	Teaching staff			
	Total	M	F	Parity index
Dolbel				
Teguèye	10	2	8	4
Dargol Quartier	6	1	5	5
Bandio	11	2	9	4.5
Banizoumbou 1	5	1	4	4
Kannia	-	-	-	-
Gorou	-	-	-	-
Maitalazia	5	1	4	4
Tchirobidey	-	-	-	-
Bolbol Goumandey	8	1	7	7
Lamamé	3	0	3	
Guidan Dagna	4	2	2	1
Damama	7	4	3	0.75
Maiguizé Kafi	4	1	3	3
Gomba	4	1	3	3
Doungoul	-	-	-	-
Arnadi	-	-	-	-
Kouroua	-	-	-	-
Kellakam	-	-	-	-
Boudoum	6	1	5	5
Arlit (carré SNTN)	13	1	12	12
Arlit (Boukoki north)	15	2	13	

ANNEX 2 – Charts of the strong and weak points of the project

- **Component 1 : Improve access to education, particularly for girls**

Complexes	Main observations	
	Strengths	Weak points
Buildings of classrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Metallic carpentry: 19 in good conditions and 3 in reasonable condition. ✓ Condition of the board: 13 in good conditions 8 in reasonable condition and 1 in bad condition. ✓ Condition of the roof: 13 in good conditions, 8 in reasonable condition and 1 in bad condition. ✓ Condition of the floor: 13 in good conditions and 9 in reasonable condition. 	<p>Waterproofness problems :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dargol ✓ Dolbel ✓ Banizoumboul ✓ Maitalakia <p>Unsticking of the waterproofness :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gomba : lack of hooks ✓ Guidan Dagna : lack of hooks <p>Bad conditions of the surface of some boards :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Bandio : proportions ✓ Dargol quartier ✓ Maitalakia : lacing ✓ Gomba : lacing ✓ Guidan Dagna : whole ✓ Gorou : Fail lacing ✓ Arnadi : Fail lacing ✓ Boukoki1 : coating, ✓ Carré SNTN : coating ✓ Kellekam : coating <p>Deterioration of the cement floor :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Doungoul : terrace, handrail ✓ Dargol : terrace ✓ Dolbel : multi purpose halls ✓ Gomba : multi purpose halls ✓ Gorou : stairs ✓ Chirobidey : classrooms ✓ Kouroua : classrooms' doors ✓ Damama : multi purpose halls ✓ Arnadi : terrace ✓ Boudoum : multi purpose halls ✓ Kellekam : terrace, handrails ✓ Boukoki : terrace ✓ Carré Sntn : classrooms' doors, handrails ✓ Guidan Dagna : multi purpose halls ✓ Splits on the internal coating of the classrooms (Maiguijé) ✓ Detachment of the coating at Kouroua ✓ Classrooms non equipped in all the schools ✓ Lack of anti termite treatment at Doungoul, Arnadi ✓ Whole in the wall at Boudoum

<p>Houses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Metallic carpentry: 17 in good conditions and 5 in reasonable condition. ✓ Condition of the roof: 21 in good conditions and 1 in reasonable condition ✓ Condition of the floor: 20 in good conditions and 2 in reasonable condition. 	<p>Malfunctioning of the locks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dougoul ✓ Kellekam ✓ Carré SNTN <p>Lack of padlocks :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dargol Quartier ✓ Guidan Dagna <p>Splits :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Carré SNTN ✓ Gomba : external coating ✓ Damama : external coating <p>Waterproofness :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Damama <p>Condition of the coating :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 18 in good condition and 4 in reasonable condition.
<p>Day care center</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Metallic carpentry: 14 in good conditions, 4 in reasonable condition and 4 in bad conditions. ✓ Condition of the board: 16 in good conditions, 5 in reasonable condition and 1 in bad condition. ✓ Condition of the roof: 16 in good conditions, 3 in reasonable condition and 3 in bad condition. ✓ Condition of the floor: 17 in good conditions, 4 in reasonable conditions and 1 in bad condition. 	<p>Bad condition of the blackboards' surface:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Bandio ✓ Dargol Quartier ✓ Kouroua ✓ Guidan Dagna ✓ Maitalakja : Slate layer ✓ Dargolquartier : Slate layer <p>Cracks :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Guidan Dagna : many fissures prejudicial at all levels leading to the waterproofness detachment. ✓ Arnadi <p>Waterproofness :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Maitalakia ✓ Carré SNTN ✓ Maiguigé Kafi <p>Metallic carpentry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Guidan Dagna : the window is fixed upside down. ✓ Guidan Dagna : The bar is not fixed as the dimension is bigger. ✓ Lack of the anti termite treatment at the Guidan Dagna kindergarden <p>Detachment of the doors :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dolbel ✓ Carré sntn ✓ Gomba ✓ Detachment of the windows at Maitalakia ✓ Lack of coating at the door of Kouroua's day care center ✓ The gate material is wrong. <p>Condition of the coating:</p> <p>14 in good conditions, 16 in reasonable conditions and 2 in bad condition.</p>
<p>Water points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Functioning: Over 14 installed water points, 12 have a good functioning, 1 have a reasonable functioning and 1 a bad functioning. ✓ Flow: Over 14 installed water points, 12 have a good flow, 1 have a reasonable flow and 1 a bad flow. ✓ Water quality: The water quality is good at all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Breakdown of the MWP of Tchirobidey for two months ✓ Non existence of modern water points in the schools in Tahoua region.

	<p>the water points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Surface construction: 12 are in good condition and 2 in reasonable condition. 	
Latrines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Metallic carpentry: 17 in good conditions, 4 in reasonable condition and 1 in bad conditions. ✓ Ventilation: Good airing in all the latrines. 	<p>Doors :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Guidan Dagna : Put upside down ✓ Damama : not properly fixed ✓ Dargol : not properly fixed ✓ Maitalakia : not properly fixed ✓ Gomba : damaged paint <p>Cracks :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Arnadi <p>Deterioration of the flagstone :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Banizoumboul ✓ Maitalakia ✓ Kellekam ✓ Gomba ✓ Arnadi <p>Trapdoor is not fixed :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Guidan Dangna ✓ Boudoum ✓ Boukoki ✓ Carré sntn ✓ Lack of coating on the door of the shower room of the teachers and students' latrines at Dargol. ✓ Latrines holes not properly made at Gomba, Guidan Dagna ✓ Malfunctioning of the locks and lack of padlocks at Dargol. <p>Coating condition: 16 in good conditions, 5 in reasonable condition and 1 in bad conditions</p> <p>Latrines holes: 19 in good condition and 3 very small.</p> <p>Condition of the trapdoors: 11 in good conditions, 3 in reasonable condition and 8 in bad conditions.</p>

• **Component 2 : Improve the quality of teaching and children's performance**

Component	Main observations	
	Strengths	Weak Points
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Existence of school governments in 19 schools ✓ Good ratio parity/gender : the parity index has exceeded the average of 1 ✓ The disparity between girls and boys in relation with the registration is reduced ✓ The number of female teachers increased exponentially: the parity women/men is superior to 1 while it is below 0.6 at the national level ✓ Availability of school kits in the schools ✓ Insertion of modules related to the teaching of writing, gender and monitoring/evaluation in the pedagogical sectors of the CAPED sessions not concerned by the project ✓ Improvement of the working conditions of the teachers and students ✓ Reduction of the construction of the straw 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Non-existence of school government at Diffa (Kellakam, Boudoum) and Maiguigé Kafi ✓ Weak parity index at Kannia (0.48) ✓ Stigmatization due to the SCOFI' obsession in relation with male gender, some children are not registered in respect to the parity (Dolbel) ✓ The training of the pedagogical supervisors stopped at the strategic level before reaching the operational level (craie en main teacher) ✓ Non implication of some managers (Magaria) in the distribution of kits in the schools ✓ The elaborated modules were not used

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ made classrooms expenses ✓ Rapid beginning of the courses ✓ The take home ration has contributed a lot to the recruitment, attendance and maintaining of students in school in the Plan zones ✓ The accommodation was a motivation source for the parents to send their girls to school as each parent wanted his daughter to live in a “villa” ✓ The accommodation gives a better visibility of the female teacher (improvement of the gender image) ✓ The multi purpose halls used as an alpha center led the parent to be aware of the benefits of the school ✓ The COGES meetings are convened in the multi purpose halls without disturbing the courses ✓ The existence of the kindergarten facilitated the registration of the student in the IC ✓ With the MWP, the children have access to a water of quality ✓ The existence of latrines permitted to girls to gain time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The houses were overcrowded : for example, 2 teachers per house at Téguyèye and 3 at Bolbol ✓ The houses are not occupied at Dargol and Arlit carré SNTN where the director has occupied the two houses ✓ Some teachers are frustrated by the fact that the houses are exclusively attributed to the single female teachers
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• **Component 3: Enhance the participation of the communities in their support to girls’ education**

Component	Main observations	
	Strengths	Weak Points
Community based Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The COGES have relatively reached an operational level in 19 visited schools: elaboration and implementation of action plans ✓ Designation of a woman as the COGES president at Bolbol ✓ The COGES member of the Plan zones are trained in various fields (associative life, monitoring of the COGES, administration in the school heritage management) ✓ The sensitization has played a big role in the increasing of the admission rate of the students in the IC ✓ Implication of the customary and administrative authorities ✓ Big mobilization of the COGES ✓ The COGES petty cash is supplied by the parents’ contributions : at Maiguijé for example, an amount of 100 000 F is available in their petty cash ✓ Training of the COGES members in the monitoring of the execution of the works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ COGES non active in three schools : Gomba, Bandio and Kellakam ✓ Weak implication of the community facilitators in the monitoring of the activities of the COGES ✓ The alpha courses did not start at Maradi, Zinder and Diffa ✓ Lack of capacity building of some COGES (Gomba, Kouroua) ✓ Inefficiency of some COGES, composed of only a president (Gomba and Bandio) ✓ Weak implication of the students and school government in some issues related to the school

- **Project approach**

Project approach	Main observations	
	Strengths	Weak points
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The IMAGINE class prototype bring closer the child and his environment. This approach had a duplicate effect at the level of some NGOs: JICA got some information at Dolbel and planning to do the same classroom prototype. ✓ The IMAGINE approach is original because it considers the formal and informal education at the same time ✓ The IMAGINE approach is very appreciated by some managers (IEB, DREN) because they have been implicated in the selection process of the schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The approach has not been participative because the choice of the schools brought a lot of problems: some retained sites are contradictory (Filingué, Goroual). ✓ The project has decided to build three classrooms everywhere, three houses without considering the school demographic weight and size ✓ In the villages where there are other schools as well as IMAGINE schools, the latter tend to reduce the registration level of the first schools

ANNEX 3 – List of the People Interviewed

Tillabéry Region

N°	Last and First Names	Functions	Localities	Contact Numbers
1.	Issaka Amoukou	DREN Adjoint	Tillabéry	
2.	Halidou Tawey	Inspecteur/ IEB	Gothèye	96 52 54 78
Commune Gourouel, département de Téra				
3.	Siddo Aboubacar	Inspecteur	Bankilaré	
4.	Garba Harouna Ali	Conseiller pédagogique	Dolbel	
5.	Nouhou Morou	Responsable statistique IEB	Gothèye	
6.	Djibril Mossi	Directeur école Dolbel quartier	Dolbel	96 76 67 17
7.	Mme Harouna Sahiatou Tankari	Enseignante	Dolbel	
8.	Mme Yahaya Yétèye Ousseini	Enseignante	Dolbel	
9.		Présidente AME		
10.	Aziz Mamane	Président COGES	Dolbel	
11.	Ayouba Sidiki	Membre COGES	Dolbel	
12.	Héguey Beidari	Membre COGES	Dolbel	
13.	Ali Berdji	Président COGES	Téguèye	
14.	Seydou Halidou	Dircteur école	Téguèye	96 13 80 01
15.	Zakari Yaou Amadou	Enseignant	Téguèye	
16.		Enseignante	Téguèye	
17.		Enseignante	Téguèye	
Commune rurale de Dargol, département de Téra				
18.	Hassoumi souley	Président COGES	Bandio	
19.	Boureima Tafada	Membre COGES	Bandio	
20.	Niandou Zibo	Président APE	Bandio	
21.		Directeur école	Bandio	
22.		Enseignant	Bandio	
23.	Larabou Daouda	Directeur école quartier	Dargol	
24.	Adamou Almine	Trésorier COGES	Dargol	
25.	Fouré Issifi	Elève (CI)	Dargol	
26.	Nafissa Abdoulaye	Elève (CI)	Dargol	
27.	Razak Mahamadou	Député (CM2)	Dargol	
28.	Issaka Kadri	Ministre de la Santé (CM2)	Dargol	
29.	Habiboulaye Mahamadou	Ministre de l'Education (CM2)	Dargol	
30.	Karimou Mahamdou	Député (CM2)	Dargol	
31.	Amina Abdoulaye	Député (CM2)	Dargol	
32.	Hassia Issifi	Député (CM2)	Dargol	
33.	Kadijatou Soumana	Elève (CE1)	Dargol	
34.	Ramatou HALidou	Elève (CE1)	Dargol	
Commune Rurale de Baleyara, département de Filingué				
35.	Chipkaou Ousamane	Inspecteur	Baleyara	
36.	Amadou Moumouni	Conseiller pédagogique IEB	Balayara	
37.	Moukaila Abdourahamane	Chargé de statitique IEB	Balayara	

38.	Ibrahim Moussa	Président FCC	Balayara	
39.	Sayadi Allassane	Chef de village	Banizoumbou I	
40.	Haoua Karaji	Présidente AME	Banizoumbou I	
41.	Hassia Allassane	Vice Présidente	Banizoumbou I	
42.	Hama Abdou	Elève (CM2)	Banizoumbou I	
43.	Adoum Abdou	Elève (CM2)	Banizoumbou I	
44.	Hassan Abdou	Elève (CM2)	Banizoumbou I	
Commune Urbaine de Filingué, département de Filingué				
45.	Madame Oumarou Fati	Inspectrice/IEB	Filingué	
46.	Zakari Sina	Directeur école	Maitalakina,	
47.	Saadou Amadou	Trésorier COGES	Gorou	
48.	Kimba Mochi	APE	Gorou	
49.	Salifou Dabougui		Gorou	
50.	Moussa Oumarou	Président COGES	Gorou	
51.	Boubacar Sani	APE	Gorou	
52.	Sani Douka	APE	Gorou	
53.	Hamissou Idrissa	Elève, président du Gouvernement scolaire	Gorou	
54.	Mme Ladi Kourma	AME	Gorou	
55.	Ibrahim Maidabo	Membre COGES	Gorou	
56.	Attahirou Abdou	Directeur école	Gorou	96362096
57.	Idrissa Mabeye	Président COGES	Kania	
58.	Mme Maria Hamadou	Vice trésorière COGES	Kania	

Dosso Region

N°	Last and First Names	Functions	Localities	Contact Numbers
1.	Sidi Mohamed Issoufou	Directeur /DREN	Dosso	
2.	Goumay Saadou	Statisticien /DREN	Dosso	
3.	Ousseni Tahirou	Observateur relais COGES /IEB	Dosso	
Commune rurale de Mokko, Département de Dosso				
4.	Ousman Danrani	Staticien Inspection	Mokko	
5.	Abdoul Kadri Seyni	APE	Tchirobidey	
6.	Yayé Souley	APE	Tchirobidey	
7.	Oumarou Souley	APE	Tchirobidey	
8.	Djibo Amadou	APE	Tchirobidey	
9.	Amadou Saley	Vice président COGES	Tchirobidey	
10.	Abdoulkadri Adamou	Présidente COGES	Tchirobidey	
11.	Saley Hassane	APE	Tchirobidey	
12.	Ehadj Aboubacar Djibo	APE, liman	Tchirobidey	
13.	Fatouma Djaouga	AME	Tchirobidey	
14.	Kadi Yacouba	AME	Tchirobidey	
15.	Fatouma Seydou	AME	Tchirobidey	
16.	Bibata Hamani	AME	Tchirobidey	
17.	Balkissa Garba	AME	Tchirobidey	
18.	Rabi Hammadou	AME	Tchirobidey	
19.	Maria Moussa	AME	Tchirobidey	
20.	Mintou Djaouga	AME	Tchirobidey	

21.	Fatouma Kimba	AME	Tchirobidey	
Commune rurale de Kargui Bangou, Département de Dosso				
22.	Mme Rakia Adamou	Présidente COGES	Bolbol Goumadaye	
23.	Madougou Bizo	Chef de village	Bolbol Goumadaye	
24.	Adamou Boureima	Directeur école	Bolbol Goumadaye	
25.	Adamou Alou	Trésorier COGES	Bolbol Goumadaye	
26.	Igué Barmou	Présidente AME	Bolbol Goumadaye	
27.	Hamidou Chamsou	Membre COGES	Bolbol Goumadaye	

Tahoua Region

N°	Last and First Names	Functions	Localities	Contact Numbers
1.	Boubacar Almou	Statisticien/IEB	Konni	
2.				
Commune rurale de Alléla, Département de Konni				
3.	Attiné Alio	Président COGES	Lamamé	
4.	Boubacar Alio	APE	Lamamé	
5.	Abdou Hammadou	APE	Lamamé	
6.	Hammadou Alio	APE	Lamamé	
7.	Abdou Alio	APE	Lamamé	
Commune rurale de Bangui, Département de Madaoua				
8.	Mahamadou LimanAdmou	Enseignant	Guidan Dagna	
9.	Garba Bako	APE	Guidan Dagna	
10.	Ali Salissou	APE	Guidan Dagna	
11.	Allassane Bako	APE	Guidan Dagna	
12.	Aminou Allassane	APE	Guidan Dagna	
13.	Assoumane MAidadji	APE	Guidan Dagna	
14.	Rabé Salissou	APE	Guidan Dagna	
15.	Yacouba Hachimi	APE	Guidan Dagna	
16.	Moutari Sani	APE	Guidan Dagna	
17.	Mamane Salissou	APE	Guidan Dagna	
18.	Boubé Tchiari	APE	Guidan Dagna	
19.	Issaka Mato	APE	Guidan Dagna	
20.	Souley Samaila	APE	Guidan Dagna	
21.	Rabiou Ango	APE	Guidan Dagna	
22.	Mansour Marwa	Elève	Guidan Dagna	

Maradi Region

N°	Last and First Names	Functions	Localities	Contact Numbers
1.	Maman Gado Chaweye	DEP/DREN	Maradi	
2.	Ibrahim Salissou	Statisticien/DREN	Maradi	

Commune urbaine de Aguié, Département de Aguié				
3.	Bouzou Issa	Chef de village Damama1	Damama	
4.	Dan Walké	Chef de village Damama 2	Damama	
5.	Aboubacar Yacouba	Liman	Damama	
6.	Hamissou Mamane	APE	Damama	
7.	Mamane Wagé	Directeur école	Damama	
8.	Rabé Neino	Enseignant	Damama	
9.	Oumaraou Léko	APE	Damama	
10.	Idi Abdou	Conseiller APE	Damama	
11.	Abdou Bako	APE	Damama	
12.	Iro Bako	APE	Damama	
13.	Abdou Léko	APE	Damama	
14.	Mamane Moussa	APE	Damama	
15.	Tanimoune Mahamane	APE	Damama	
16.	Illiassou Léko	APE	Damama	
17.	Mati Sani	Conseiller COGES	Damama	
18.	Mamane Nomao	Membre COGES	Damama	
19.	Halilou Garba	Membre COGES	Damama	
20.	Mahamane Abdou	Membre COGES	Damama	
21.	Souley Mati	Président COGES	Damama	
22.	Awal Mahamane	Ministre environnement , GS	Damama	
23.	Lamine Chaibou	PPG scolaire	Damama	
24.	Zaneidou Kokari	CM1, élève	Damama	
25.	Nafiou Harou	CM1, élève	Damama	
26.	Alil Harou	CM1, élève	Damama	
27.	Mohamed Moussa	Inspecteur/ IEPD	Aguié	
Commune urbaine de Tessoua, Département de Tessoua				
28.	Mme Idi Abou	Enseignante	Maigujié Kafi	
29.	Tari Lasseini	Chef de village	Maigujié Kafi	
30.	Yacouba Issa	Président APE	Maigujié Kafi	
31.	Harouna Saïdou	APE	Maigujié Kafi	
32.	Mamane Daré	APE	Maigujié Kafi	
33.	Abdou Wagé	APE	Maigujié Kafi	
34.	Salissou Mati	APE	Maigujié Kafi	
35.	Hali Laseini	APE	Maigujié Kafi	
36.	Salissou Dan Amou	APE	Maigujié Kafi	
37.	Kassou Laseini	APE	Maigujié Kafi	
38.	Abdou Issa	APE	Maigujié Kafi	
39.	Sani Issoufou	APE	Maigujié Kafi	
40.	Illia Hassane	APE	Maigujié Kafi	
41.	Chaibou Elhadj Abdou	APE	Maigujié Kafi	
42.	Harouna Abdou	APE	Maigujié Kafi	
43.	Idi Tari	APE	Maigujié Kafi	
44.	Bahari Harouna	Elèves CP	Maigujié Kafi	
45.	Abdoul Nasser Idi Amadou	Elèves CP	Maigujié Kafi	
46.	Ibrah Lawaly	Elèves CP	Maigujié Kafi	
47.	Chapiou Ibrahim	Elèves CP	Maigujié Kafi	
48.	Ichaou Ayouba	Elèves CP	Maigujié Kafi	
49.	Moubarak Illia	Elèves CP	Maigujié Kafi	
50.	Aminou Ado	Elèves CP	Maigujié Kafi	

Zinder Region

N°	Last and First Names	Functions	Localities	Contact Numbers
1.	Abdou Djibo	Chef Division Etudes et Programmation/ DREN	Zinder	
2.	Maman Moussa Mani	Inspecteur IEB	Magaria	
Commune urbaine de Magaria, Département de Magaria				
3.	Sani Mato	Chef de village	Doungoul	
4.	Salifou Sani	APE	Doungoul	
5.	Amadou Issa	Membre COGES	Doungoul	
6.	Inoussa Sani	APE	Doungoul	
7.	SAminou Ado	Membre COGES	Doungoul	
8.	Moutari Hamza	APE	Doungoul	
9.	Oumarou Abdou	APE	Doungoul	
10.	Laoui Bouhari	Elève, CM2	Doungoul	
11.	Harouna Issa	Elève CM1	Doungoul	
12.	Rachida Samadou	Elève CP	Doungoul	
13.	Lawali Amadou	Elève CM1	Doungoul	
14.	Sani Saminou	Elève CE2	Doungoul	
Commune rurale de Bandé, Département de Magaria				
15.	Issa Samuel	Directeur école	Gomba	96 89 01 16
16.	Mountaka Majira	APE	Gomba	
17.	Hamissou Majira	APE	Gomba	
18.	Soufouyanou Moutari	APE	Gomba	
19.	Kollé Moussa	APE	Gomba	
20.	Chioudi Mamane	APE	Gomba	
21.	Mamane Bachir Abdourahamane	APE	Gomba	
22.	Pararou Yahouza	APE	Gomba	
Commune rurale de Guidiguir, Département de Gouré				
23.	Mamane Madou	Chef de village	Arnadi	
24.	Harouna Malam Adji	Président COGES	Arnadi	
25.	Moussa Madou	APE	Arnadi	
26.	Hassane Idi	Trésorier COGES	Arnadi	
27.	Chaibou Maï Siro	SCOFI	Arnadi	
28.	Boucar Elh Madou	SG information COGES	Arnadi	
29.	Tallata Doulla Ibrahim	Inspecteur /IEPD	Gouré	
30.	Boukar Adam	Président COGES	Kouroua	
31.	Tela Maï Moussa	Trésorier COGES	Kouroua	
32.	Djibrilou Boukar	Président APE	Kouroua	
33.	Ousmane Maï	APE	Kouroua	
34.	Mamadou Adam	Chef de village	Kouroua	
35.	Barma Boukar	APE	Kouroua	
36.	Tchiloum Boulama	APE	Kouroua	

Diffa Region

N°	Last and First Names	Functions	Localities	Contact Numbers
1.	Abba Béitou	Directeur/DREN	Diffa	

2.	Maina Akar	Chef Division Administration et ressources humaines /DREN	Diffa	
3.	Abdoulaye Ibrah Haoui	Inspecteur/IEB	Mainé Soroa	
4.	Commune rurale de Kilakam, Département de Mainé Soroa			
5.	Maï Boucar Kaigama	Chef de village	Kilakam	
6.	Melle Aichatou Hamed Abdou	Enseignante	Kilakam	
7.	Boulama Zarami	APE	Kilakam	
8.	Mari Boulama	COGES	Boudoum	
9.	Arifa Maina	COGES	Boudoum	
10.	Boukar Gonimi	APE	Boudoum	
11.	Agi Madou	APE	Boudoum	
12.	Ousmane Mamane	APE	Boudoum	

Agadez Region

N°	Last and First Names	Functions	Localities	Contact Numbers
Commune Urbaine d'Arlit, Département d'Arlit				
1.	Ibrahim Abdou	Directeur Ecole, Boukoki Nord	Arlit	
2.	Idi Haydo	Président COGES Ecole Boukoki Nord	Arlit	
3.	Issa Oumarou	Directeur Ecole, Carré SNTN	Arlit	
4.	Issa Mamane	COGES	Arlit	
5.	Ahmed Moussa	COGES	Arlit	
6.	Algabit Sidi	COGES	Arlit	

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