

Portfolio Review

Supporting Civil Society in Education 2017-2021

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Portfolio Review: Supporting Civil Society in Education 2017-2021

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS2

LIST OF ACRONYMS.....3

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY6

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND CONTEXT.....8

 1.1 Introduction8

 1.2 Research Parameters, Methodology, Data Availability and Limitations10

 1.3 Central Sahel Region Context.....11

SECTION 2: REVIEW OF PORTFOLIO15

 2.1 Acting for Life.....15

 2.2 Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Norway17

 2.3 Groupe de Recherche et d’Echanges Technologiques (GRET).....20

 2.4 Humanity & Inclusion22

 2.5 Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)24

 2.6 Right to Play.....26

 2.7 Strømme Foundation.....28

 2.8 Woord en Daad30

SECTION 3: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS33

 3.1 Summary Findings and Lessons Learned from Across the Portfolio.....33

 3.2 Recommendations for a Possible New Period of Norad Funding35

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AE	Academie d'Enseignement
AEAD	Association Evangélique d'Appui au Développement
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
AFL	Acting for Life
AJA-MALI	Association Jeunesse Action Mali
ALP	Accelerated Learning Program ^(SEP)
AMs	Apprenticeship Masters
AME	Association de mère d'élèves
AMSS	Association Malienne pour la Survie au Sahel
ANCEFA	Africa Network Campaign on Education for All
ANFP	Agence pour la Formation Professionnelle (Burkina Faso)
ANPE	Agence Nationale Pour l'Emploi (Burkina Faso)
APEJ	National Agency for Youth Employment (Mali)
ATT	Association Tin Tua ^(SEP)
CAP	Centre d'Appui Pedagogique
CEMEAU	Centre des Métiers de l'Eau (Burkina Faso)
CN-EPT	Coalition Nationale pour l'Education Pour Tous (Burkina Faso)
COFIP	Commission de L'Orientation et de la Formation pour l'Insertion Professionnelle (Burkina Faso)
CONFEMEN	Conférence des Ministres de l'Education des Etats et Gouvernements de la Francophonie
CQP	Certificat de Qualification Professionnel (vocational training) ^(SEP)
CREDO	Christian Relief and Development Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CWD	Children Living with Disabilities
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DGFMOR	Direction Générale du Foncier, de la Formation et de l'Organization du Monde Rural (Burkina Faso)
DNEF	Direction Nationale de l'Education Fondamentale (Mali)
DNEN	Direction Nationale de l'Education Normal (Mali)
DPO	Disabled Persons' Organization
DREP	Direction Régionale de l'Education Primaire (Niger)
EU	European Union
FCFA	Franc Coopération Financière en Afrique centrale
FMAPH	Fédération Malienne des Associations des personnes Handicapées (Mali)
FNPH	Fédération Nigérienne des Personnes Handicapées (Niger)
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
GARDL	Groupe Action Recherche pour le Développement
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GRET	Groupe de Recherche et d'Echanges Technologiques
HI	Humanity & Inclusion
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGA	Income Generation Activity
IMYETA	Improve rural Malian Youth Employability through Tutorial Apprenticeship

JBBF	Job Booster Burkina Faso
KII	Key Informant Interview
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEFP	Ministry of Employment and Professional Training
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning ^{[1][2]}
MEN	Ministère de l'Education Nationale (Mali)
MENAPLN	Ministère de l'Education Nationale et de l'Alphabétisation et de la Promotion des Langues Nationales (Burkina Faso) ^{[1][2]}
MEP/A/OLM/EC	Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, de l'Alphabétisation, de la Promotion des Langues Nationales et de l'Education Civique (Niger)
MFSNF	Ministère de la Femme, de la Solidarité Nationale, et de la Famille (Burkina Faso)
MINEFID	Ministère de l'Economie, des Finances, et du Développement (Burkina Faso)
MJPEJ	Ministère de la Jeunesse et de la Promotion de l'Entrepreneuriat des Jeunes (Burkina Faso)
MoE	Ministry of Education
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NDNFE-NL	National Directorate of Non-Formal Education and National Languages (Mali)
NDVT	National Directorate of Vocational Training (Mali)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization ^{[1][2]}
NIVTE	National Institute of Vocational Training Engineering (Mali)
NMVT	National Ministry of Vocational Training (Mali)
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation ^{[1][2]}
NOK	Norwegian Krone ^{[1][2]}
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCADES	Organization Catholique pour le Développement et la Solidarité (Burkina Faso)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ONEA	Office National de l'Eau et de l'Assainissement
ONG	Organisation Non-Gouvernementale
OOSC	Out-of-School Children ^{[1][2]}
PAQE II	Play for the Advancement of Quality of Education
PASEC	Programme d'Analyse des Systèmes Educatifs
PDES	Plan de Développement Economique et Social (Niger)
PSEF	Programme Sectorial de l'Education et de la Formation (Niger)
PNDES	Plan National de Développement Economique et Social (Burkina Faso)
PRODEC 2	Program Decennale de l'Education 2019-2028 ^{[1][2]} (Mali)
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PTSEF	Plan de Transition du Secteur de L'Education et de la Formation (Niger)
QMS	Quality Management System
RDCP	Réseau des Caisses Populaires (Burkina Faso)
RDEVT	Regional Directorate of Employment and Vocational Training
READY	Raising Employment Access and Development for Youth (Burkina Faso)
RTP	Right to Play
S3A	Accelerated Apprenticeship for Adolescents
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEAQE	Strengthening Equity, Access and Quality in Education
SF	Strømme Foundation
SMC	School Management Committee

SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SNDEI	Stratégie Nationale de Développement de l'Education Inclusive (Burkina Faso)
SOFIGIB	Société Financière de Garantie Interbancaire du Burkina Faso
SONABEL	Société Nationale d'Electricité du Burkina Faso
SOSUCO	Société Sucrière de la Comoé (Burkina Faso)
SPONG	Secrétariat Permanent des ONGs du Burkina Faso
SSAP	Stratégie de Scolarisation Accélérée Passerelle
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund <small>(UNICEF)</small>
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VCSYA	Village Committee Supporting Young Apprenticeships (Mali)
WAFOD	West African Federation of the Disabled
YEP	Youth Education Pack
YWD	Youth Living with Disabilities

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This review assesses to what extent eight implementing partner organizations funded under the Norad portfolio *Supporting Civil Society in Education 2017-2021* have been able to contribute to greater equity and quality of education for children and youth. Grants have covered programs from early childhood care and education to secondary education, as well as technical and vocational education and training, and have included civil society capacity strengthening and other support in the Sahel region. In support of Norway's commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 4 and its overarching global goal for education, Norad awarded 491.3m NOK for civil society support for education in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, of which 390.4m NOK is the focus of this review. The review comprises a desk study of key implementing partner organizational documents, virtual interviews with all eight implementing organizations, two field missions that include face-to-face and phone interviews held in Mali and Niger, and phone interviews with key informants in Burkina Faso. A total of 58 semi-structured interviews were conducted. The review took place during global COVID-19 restrictions, and rising insecurity in Mali and Niger, yet still afforded triangulation of data points for each organization despite these limitations. An additional limitation was the result of the timing of the review in light of 2020 data reporting due mid-2021. As such, most data analysis is based on results from 2019. Additional notes are provided when 2020 data could be verified with partners.

The Central Sahel region, specifically Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, has experienced multiple crises in the last few years. Access to and retention in quality education and skills training remains a regional challenge. To address vulnerable children and youth in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, Acting for Life, Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Groupe de Recherche et d'Echanges Technologiques, Humanity and Inclusion, Norwegian Refugee Council, Right to Play, Strømme Foundation and Woord en Daad have designed and implemented multi-year programming to reinforce the capacity of civil society organizations (or, strengthen the mobilization of civil society) in support of education and skills training. In studying initial program designs, results frameworks, risk assessments, baseline studies, and annual and mid-term reporting, the portfolio review utilizes the criteria of *relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability*, as laid out in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance. In addition, strategic approaches to risk mitigation and cross-cutting issues that affect impact and sustainability of interventions are analyzed.

We have outlined key lessons learned and recommendations for further consideration. However, the most critical overall recommendation is that Norad **continue funding a hybrid of education and skills training projects across the Sahel with a critical focus on access and retention for adolescent girls in particular and children and youth living with disabilities**. This 2017-2021 investment has produced important preliminary results in extremely challenging contexts and, in some cases, has leveraged additional investment from other donors. Further, continued investment aligns with Norad's new global strategy towards 2030.

In summary, all implementing partners should meet or exceed most outcome targets, despite COVID-19 setbacks and other challenges in the field, thus demonstrating *efficiency*. In large part, this is due to the fact that implementing partners through a history of development efforts in the region, strong central and local level government relationships, and/or as a result of baseline assessments and risk analyses conducted at the start of interventions, anchored their programmatic designs in *relevance* to the specific needs not just of the country's strategic development and education priorities, but also to specific community needs and gaps.

The greatest missed opportunities are at the level of the portfolio itself and pertain to *effectiveness, impact* and *sustainability*. Few implementing partners in the portfolio have worked together to share resources and connect programming objectives. This should be explicit for all grantees given that such partnership would leverage not only more unified and stronger advocacy and policy at central government level, but also reach more children and youth to achieve greater outcomes related to access and retention.

Further recommendations deliberately framed to align to Norad's new strategic priorities and further discussed in Section 3: Conclusions and Recommendations include:

Recommendation 1: Develop a knowledge and resource sharing collaboration space for all grantees as part of the civil society portfolio support for education.

Recommendation 2: Ensure budgets and results are clearly presented at outcome level and disaggregated by beneficiary groups so that progress can be measured more easily.

Recommendation 3: Encourage grantees to design a proof of concept intervention under the project that manages risk but also allows for new approaches to existing challenges.

Recommendation 4: Require grantees to demonstrate explicit plans and budget allocation for technical and operational capacity strengthening of local civil society organizations under this portfolio.

Recommendation 5: For youth-focused interventions, strengthen accompaniment so that transition into new or better employment, or support for entrepreneurship ventures includes mentorship, access to finance and start-up resources, as well as connections to supply and value chains.

Recommendation 6: Engage the Norwegian Embassy in Bamako as part of a more systematic management approach to support and track Recommendations 1 – 4 at country/regional level, strengthening relationships with implementing partners, knowledge sharing, cost-effectiveness, risk management and innovations to existing challenges.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND CONTEXT

1.1 Introduction

Purpose and Scope of Review. The purpose of the Norad portfolio review: *Supporting Civil Society in Education 2017-2021* is to assess and document the performance and the results achieved by eight organizations funded under Norad’s 2017-2021 call for proposals – *Supporting Civil Society in Education – in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger*. The analysis and recommendations will inform future Norad funding and support.

Norway contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 4 and its overarching global goal for education.¹ As outlined in various Norwegian policy documents² and as prioritized in Norway’s Sahel strategy for 2018-2020,³ support to education in fragile states and contexts is of critical importance. One of the three primary objectives of the Sahel strategy is to build resilience and lay the foundation for inclusive economic, social and political development (Goal 3). As part of this objective, Norway outlines its ambition to ensure that more children, specifically girls, complete basic education, including technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

In 2017, Norad launched a call for proposals to support civil society in education in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. The main priority of the call was on equity and quality of education for children and youth from early childhood care and education to secondary education, including technical and vocational education and training. Further, it aimed to strengthen civil society through cooperation between civil society partners and well as with private and public education providers and local/national authorities. Eight organizations were awarded funding totaling NOK 491.3 million over the contract period (see **Table 1**). Contracts were given either as separate agreements or as addenda to existing agreements with Norad.

Table 1: Norad-funded Implementing Partners

Partner	Funding amount	Grant reference	Country
Acting for Life	25.4m NOK	HVO-17/0001	Burkina Faso
ADRA Norway	38.1m NOK 41.9m NOK	GLO-3768 RAF-17/0046	Mali Niger
GRET	30.7m NOK	MLI-17/0002	Mali
Humanity & Inclusion	55.3m NOK	RAF-17/0036	Burkina Faso Mali Niger
Norwegian Refugee Council	87.5m NOK [60m NOK; 7.5m NOK Addendum 1; 20m NOK Addendum 2]*	QZA-0697 QZA-17/0277	Mali
Right to Play	35m NOK including 15.1m transferred to new agreement for continuation	QZA-15/0469 plus continuation included as one element under QZA-19/0253	Mali

¹ “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”

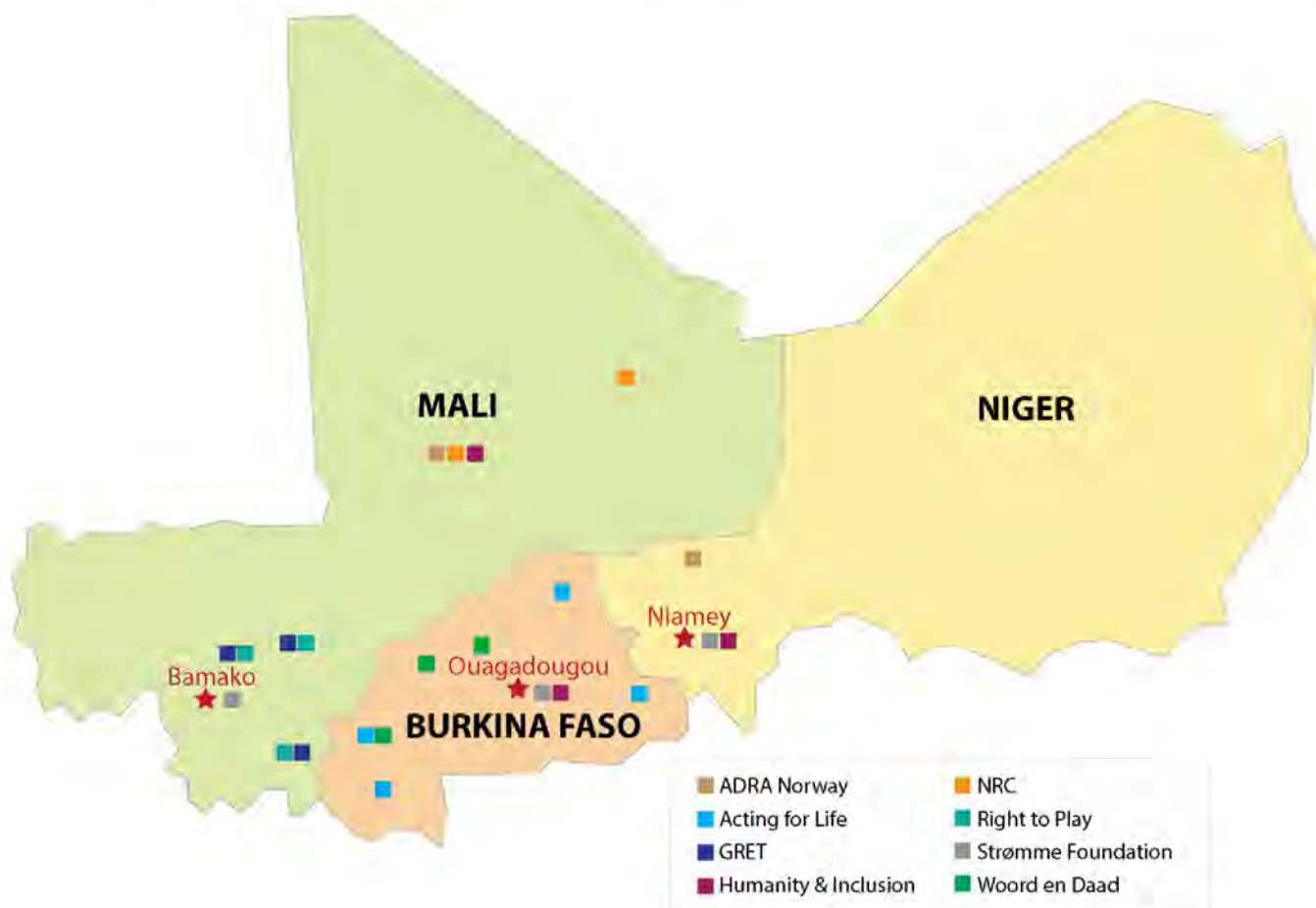
² Strategisk rammeverk for norsk innsats i sårbare stater og regioner, 2017 (Strategic Framework for Norwegian Engagement in Fragile States and Regions), Norway’s Humanitarian Strategy, 2018.

³ A new strategy for the Sahel for 2021 onwards is under development.

	of program during 2020 and 2021		
Strømme Foundation	43.3m NOK (original grant) subsumed into new grant of 116.6m NOK (runs to 2023 and equates to 33.8m NOK (Burkina Faso) 42m NOK (Mali) and 40.9m NOK (Niger)**	GLO-0640 RAF 15-0040 and first two years of QZA-18/0355	Burkina Faso Mali Niger
Woord en Daad	60.7m NOK	HVO-0004 HVO-17/0001	Burkina Faso
Total	491.3m NOK of which 390.4m NOK are the focus of this review	8 grants	4 in Burkina Faso 6 in Mali 3 in Niger

*Note that the only program reviewed is expenditure and results of the original agreement of 60m NOK, not the COVID-19 Addendum 1 or the March 2021 approved Addendum 2 to run until the end of 2021.

**Note that this program now runs through 2023, so this review will only look at expenditure and results achieved to end 2020. This equates to the original grant of 43.3m NOK which was rolled up into the larger new grant.



1.2 Research Parameters, Methodology, Data Availability and Limitations

The criteria of *relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability*, as laid out in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee’s (DAC) Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance has been adapted for this portfolio review.

Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review to what extent the programs aligned with national plans and coordinated with other actors; and Provide an overview of whether and to what extent the implementing organizations have focused on gender equality and girls’ education, as well as access to education for children living with disabilities.
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the achievement of results vis-à-vis the goals identified in the original call for proposals and approved proposals, and to what extent the results have been achieved according to plan; and Measure if the interventions have resulted in any unintended effects.
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine whether there is a reasonable relationship between the funding provided and the results achieved, given the contextual challenges and processes necessary for safe and responsive implementation.
Impact & Sustainability (cross-cutting issues)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review available risk assessments and mitigation plans that form part of the projects, and the impact of strategies deployed to reduce risk; and Analyze approaches integrated into programming that are meant to avoid or mitigate any unintended effects related to contextual or other factors and that may address human rights, women’s rights and gender equality, environment and climate change, conflict sensitivity, Do No Harm, and anti-corruption.

In addition, to address **sustainability** even further, we identify lessons learned from the implementation of the entirety of the portfolio, for Norad’s use in assessing the need for a new round of funding. Further, we provide:

- Recommendations for a possible new period of funding, and any need for adjustments; and
- Recommendations to Norad regarding its management of the portfolio and engagement with the Norwegian Embassy in Bamako.

Methodology. This review comprised a desk study of relevant documents, virtual interviews with all eight implementing organizations, an overview provided by Norad, an interview with representative Embassy staff, and face-to-face and phone interviews held in Mali and Niger. Phone interviews were conducted with partners, government officials and community leaders or affiliates in Burkina Faso. Comprehensive reviews by organization are found in **Annex 1**. Protocols for all interviews held are in **Annex 2** and the accompanying General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) form is in **Annex 3**.

The desk review involved documentary analysis against the OECD DAC criteria for the following referenced materials listed under Source Documents:

- Grant agreements including results frameworks;
- Strategies (Norad, implementing organizations and government (where applicable));
- Program documentation from implementing organizations;
- Results from implementing organizations;
- Expenditure data from implementing organizations;
- Relevant reviews or evaluations already completed linked to grants; and
- Country/regional census or survey data to provide a general overview of socio-economic and educational status.

Triangulation of data. External program reviews or audits, contingency plans in light of COVID-19 and other emergencies, and any relevant external communications, audits or mid-term reviews (MTRs) were requested of each implementing organization. More than one data source was reviewed for each organization. In addition to program documentation, there were at least two interviews with staff managing project deliverables, one or two interviews with government officials with whom the project coordinates, and one or two interviews with local civil society representatives, community partners or leaders supporting project outcomes. We have reviewed available quantitative and qualitative data sources. EDC followed all GDPR protocols for the protection of those interviewed and collected consent forms from each person.

Data Availability and Limitations. Face-to-face interviews in Burkina Faso were not possible given time, budget, and security constraints. Some face-to-face interviews in Mali and Niger were also not possible given the limitations of time and budget for data collection at field level and the deteriorating security situations in both countries which limited movement in and around Bamako and Niamey. As such, a thorough investigation of field activities for each organization and interviews with program participants were not possible. When in-person meetings were not possible, phone interviews were conducted. Also, in light of COVID-19 and country-level emergencies in all three countries implicated under this portfolio review, 2020 results have seen reporting delays. Quantitative data, in particular and in some cases, from 2020 project activities have faced challenges in terms of collection or verification. Furthermore, this review is out of sync with the Norad reporting cycle for progress reports (from the previous year), financial reports, and audit reports due in June/July each year. As such, most reporting data reflects output level data and some progress towards outcomes prior to COVID-19 (end of 2019).

1.3 Central Sahel Region Context

The Central Sahel region which includes Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, has experienced a significant deterioration of security over recent years. Weak governance, ineffective security forces at the local level and porous borders between the countries add to the difficulties that humanitarian and development actors face. Armed attacks on schools caused a six-fold increase in closures in the three countries between the beginning of 2017 and the end of 2019, even before nation-wide school closures due to the global COVID-19 pandemic.⁴ Insecurity in the region is coupled with a growing humanitarian crisis in Burkina Faso and Mali, as well as in parts of Niger. According to UN OCHA data from December 2020, more than 13.4 million people need humanitarian assistance and more than 1.6 million people are internally displaced.⁵ Climate change is having a detrimental impact on the poorest and most vulnerable in the Sahel. Recent flooding in late 2020 caused by heavy rains has particularly impacted refugees and host populations in Niger, and resulted in the need for emergency shelter for affected communities in Burkina Faso.⁶ In addition to conflict insecurity, there have been social and political tensions as well, including a coup d'état in Mali in July 2020, and presidential elections in Burkina Faso (November 2020) and Niger (December 2020); these, accompanied by widespread demonstrations, deadly attacks in some cases, and ongoing insurgencies and instability.⁷

A lack of local accountability, weakened education systems and limited livelihoods opportunities, including relevant skills training, facilitates recruitment by radical insurgents and extremist groups. An estimated 58.2% of

⁴ UNICEF (2020)

⁵ <https://reliefweb.int/report/burkina-faso/wfp-central-sahel-situation-report-4-december-2020>

⁶ UNHCR (2020)

⁷ <https://www.wfrrtv.com/news/international/niger-voters-return-to-polls-in-second-round-for-president/>

the population in Niger⁸ and nearly 50% of the population in Mali⁹ are under the age of 15, with an average population increase in the region of 3-5% annually. This demographic growth continues to strain resources and cause tensions at regional and community levels often exploited by armed groups. Across the three countries, between 42% and 49% of children are engaged in child labor, including domestic servitude, mining, and dangerous agricultural activities.¹⁰ Youth unemployment varies from Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, with available statistics unreliable.¹¹ The COVID-19 global health emergency coupled with limited access to clean water and sanitation facilities creates an additional burden on already weak health systems.¹² An estimated 5.5 million people are suffering from severe food insecurity and 7.4 million additional people may become food insecure due to COVID-19.¹³ All schools in the region were shut for several months in 2020. In Burkina Faso and Niger, they reopened in the last quarter of the year.¹⁴ In Mali, they did not reopen until January 2021.¹⁵

Access to and retention in quality education and skills training remains a regional challenge. Recent estimates from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics reveal that prior to COVID-19, the number of out-of-school children (OOSC), adolescents and youth of primary and secondary school ages were 2.5 million, 3 million and 3.6 million in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger respectively.¹⁶ Girls and children with disabilities (CWD), children displaced by the conflict or humanitarian situation, and those in rural areas are particularly marginalized in education access.¹⁷ Two thirds of girls in Niger and more than 50% of girls in Mali were out-of-school with more than 90% of out-of-school girls never likely to enter school.¹⁸ In Burkina Faso, a recent study showed that 85% of people with disabilities had received no education; while only a tiny proportion of CWD in Niger and Mali were able to access any form of education.¹⁹ An estimated 65.8% of primary school age children in Burkina Faso did not have the expected basic skills in literacy and 38.9% of them did not have the expected basic skills in numeracy.²⁰ For Niger, the respective figures were slightly lower at 55.7% and 32.9%. When comparing between PASEC 2014 and PASEC 2019 data, school readiness has improved considerably for Niger (+76.9 points in language and +89.2 points in mathematics) but from a lower baseline. However, in Burkina Faso, school readiness has regressed (-20.3 points in language and -7.1 points in mathematics). For those children finishing primary school, data shows that 33.3% of children in Burkina Faso left school without having reached the required minimum level in reading and 37.6% for mathematics.²¹ For Niger, these figures are much worse at 69.9% of children in reading and 77.5% in

⁸ <https://www.unicef.org/niger/children-niger>

⁹ <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/mali-population/>

¹⁰ <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/burkina-faso;>

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/mali;> <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/niger>

¹¹ Interview with Advisor to Niger, Embassy of Norway, states that existing youth unemployment data does not reflect the current crisis which may be near or over 50% in the Sahel. Phone interview, April 30, 2021.

¹² UNICEF (2020)

¹³ <https://reliefweb.int/report/burkina-faso/wfp-central-sahel-situation-report-4-december-2020>

¹⁴ UNHCR (2020)

¹⁵ [https://www.africanews.com/2021/01/25/mali-s-newly-reopened-schools-struggle-to-keep-students-covid-19-free//](https://www.africanews.com/2021/01/25/mali-s-newly-reopened-schools-struggle-to-keep-students-covid-19-free/)

¹⁶ <http://data.uis.unesco.org>

¹⁷ <https://www.education-inequalities.org>

¹⁸ <http://uis.unesco.org/apps/visualisations/oosci-data-tool/index-fr.html#en/NER/in-out-school/girls-boys>

¹⁹ https://www.hi-us.org/burkina_faso/; <https://www.hi-us.org/mali/>; and <https://www.hi-us.org/niger>

²⁰ PASEC (2019). PASEC is the Program d'analyse des systèmes éducatifs de la CONFEMEN.

²¹ PASEC (2019). *Qualité des Systèmes Educatifs en Afrique Subsaharienne Francophone: Performances et Environnement de l'Enseignement-Apprentissage au Primaire*. Conférence des Ministres de l'Éducation des États et Gouvernements de la Francophonie http://www.pasec.confemen.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/RapportPasec2019_sitePasec.pdf

mathematics.²² When comparing between 2014 and 2019 PASEC data at the end of primary school, the average language and mathematics performance has improved considerably for Niger (+67.5 points in reading and +56 points in mathematics). In Burkina Faso, the difference between the two cycles was not as significant (19.8 points in reading and 7.7 points in mathematics).²³ High prevalence of child marriages (52% of all girls in Burkina Faso and Mali, and 76% in Niger), early childbearing and gender-based violence act as barriers to education for girls.²⁴ For children in school, dropout rates are high and learning outcomes low;²⁵ losses that will be further exacerbated by COVID-19.

Burkina Faso. Burkina Faso's overall national development strategy is outlined in the *National Plan for Economic and Social Development (PNDES), 2016-2020* with a 2021-2025 plan under development. The 2016 plan calls for strong, sustainable and inclusive economic growth and national development along three strategic axes, namely modernizing the administration, developing human capital, and accelerating economic growth. With 66% of the growing population of Burkina Faso under the age of 25 and the majority of population living in rural areas, helping young people develop the skills and competencies that they need to find decent work is a critical priority.²⁶ Developed by the Ministry of National Education and Literacy and the Promotion of National Languages (MENAPLN), the most recent education sector plan includes a comprehensive framework for basic education and expands to secondary and higher education. The new education sector plan aims to (i) ensure a harmonious, equitable, and inclusive early childhood development, (ii) ensure a universal completion of primary cycle and establish equitable and quality basic education for all, (iii) address the lack of trainers in technical and vocational high schools, (iv) extend TVET and adjust it to the needs of the economy, (v) adjust higher education to the needs of the economy, and (vi) foster governance in the management of the sector for an efficient conversion of resources into results.²⁷

Mali. Key Government planning documents include the *Strategic Framework for Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development*, which underscores the necessity for skills development; and the *10-year Second Generation Program for the Development of Education and Vocational Training (2019-2028, PRODEC 2)* that was adopted on June 5, 2019. Under PRODEC 2, the government seeks to implement reforms to improve quality and strengthen the decentralized management of basic education. A national strategy to reinsert 1 million OOSC into the formal system by 2020 has been developed. The Ministry of National Education (MEN) identifies five priority areas to orient strategic education policy and implementation support: (i) improving internal and external efficiencies; (ii) improving teacher training and management; (iii) promoting equitable and inclusive access to quality basic education for all which includes bilingual curriculum, as well as the promotion of inclusive education and the integration of Koranic schools into the formal system; (iv) strengthening good governance within the education sector; and, (v) strengthening resilience within the education sector which includes vocational education and non-formal education opportunities.

Niger. The Government of Niger faces strong demographic pressure, limited capacity and resources, and immense gaps between urban and rural public service delivery. Two key Government national planning documents include

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid; Note that Mali did not participate in PASEC 2019.

²⁴ <https://www.girlsnotbrides.es/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Child-marriage-in-the-Sahel.pdf>

²⁵ https://www.confemen.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Resume_Pasec2019_Web.pdf

²⁶ SPONG and Job Booster (2020).

²⁷ Education Sector Plan, Burkina Faso, Plan Sectoriel de l'Éducation et de la Formation (PSEF) 2017-2030.

the *Economic and Social Development Plan (PDES)* and the *Education Sector Education and Training Program (PSEF)*, the latter which covers the education sector planning and strategy from 2014-2024. Teacher training across the entire basic education system is prioritized and, in particular, strengthening in-service training for the continuous recruitment, professionalization and deployment of contract teachers to rural areas.²⁸ Further priorities include increasing equity among learners with regard to gender, disability or geographic location, improving the quality of education through mother tongue instruction in early grades, developing incentive programs for girls' enrollment and retention, extending preschool coverage through community schools in rural and nomadic zones, strengthening the quality of classroom materials and teaching and learning resources, expanding non-formal education and literacy programs for adults and older youth who have never attended school or dropout. The government highlights the need to reinforce positive messages and awareness campaigns in rural and remote areas related to the value of education as part of social and economic development. Niger has also developed a *Transitional Education Sector and Training Plan (PTSEF)* for the period 2020-22 which is the point of departure for education policy and programming support.²⁹

²⁸ République du Niger Program Sectoriel de l'Éducation et de la Formation (2014-2024), Document de stratégie, Juin 2013.

²⁹ République du Niger, Plan de Transition du Secteur de l'Éducation et de la Formation 2020-2022, Octobre 2019.

SECTION 2: REVIEW OF PORTFOLIO

2.1 Acting for Life

Acting for Life (AFL) is a French non-governmental organization (NGO) with the slogan “Life, not survival” that has existed for nearly 50 years. In Burkina Faso, AFL is implementing TVET programs funded by Norad and by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD). With Norad grant funding, AFL is implementing the Raising Employment Access and Development for Youth (READY) program for youth ages 16 to 25, working through two local partners: Association Tin Tua (ATT) in the Est and Sahel regions, and Organization Catholique pour le Développement et la Solidarité (OCADES) in the Cascades and Hauts-Bassins regions. AFL does not have a country office; its head office in France is responsible for financial, administrative and technical coordination of the project. AFL’s two local partners – ATT and OCADES – are responsible for implementation at country level.

Program and relevance. READY works with eight local training centers (four public, four private) in three subject areas – plumbing, electricity and agriculture – selected as a result of a labor market needs assessment. READY offers a two-year training course to youth, and, depending on available opportunities works with young people to place them in practical work experiences for anywhere from one week to one month. Students are provided with a start-up toolkit so that they can support the family business and/or obtain small jobs to help support themselves and gain practical experience. This was highlighted as a critical part of the program by government representatives.³⁰ In addition, youth also participate in site visits organized by the program in partnership with local companies so they can experience the world of work and make connections to what they are learning from their coursework. READY offers modular agricultural training courses for communities living next to the two agricultural training centers. In addition, the program offers short training in ICT, entrepreneurship and soft skills (including a focus on gender and climate change). READY is working with government institutions such as the Agency for Vocational Training (ANFP) and the Agency for Job Promotion (ANPE) as well as the private sector at central and regional levels. An estimated 28% of READY’s beneficiaries are women (against an original target of at least 20% in recognition that the three courses are traditionally male dominated) and most of these women are following the modular training in agriculture. READY does not reach those living with disabilities, and has struggled with out-of-school youth.³¹

Efficiency.

Outcomes	Results to date ³²	Overall impact
Outcome 1: Access to quality training in 3 key areas (plumbing, solar-powered electricity and agriculture) is facilitated for 1,300 young people in 4 regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Total = 1,127 youth (28% female) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 812 youth (17% female) in 2-year training ○ 315 youth (53% female) through modular training courses 	On target to be met
Outcome 2: Quality of training is improved by reinforcing TVET institutions, trainers, and curricula, in order to adapt them to market reality and needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 51 trainers/supervisors trained in range of technical skills ▪ Partnership mechanism in place for the development of agricultural training centers that includes GIZ and the General Directorate of Land, Training and Rural Affairs (DGFOMR), a department in the Ministry of Agriculture 	Met

³⁰ Key informant interview (KII), Burkina Faso, March 2021.

³¹ READY – Rapport Année 3.

³² All quantitative data in this section has been taken from READY – Rapport Année 3 unless otherwise specified.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New partnership in place with the Ministry of Water and Sanitation’s Center for Water Trade (ONEA-CEMEAU) 	
Outcome 3: Links between training and professional work are reinforced, facilitating the employability and integration of young people into jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cohort 1 (111 students completed 2-year training): 81% employed ▪ 27 youth were able to access 3-month internships with government agencies and private sector companies 	Met

Effectiveness. READY has kept its costs down by working through established local partners on the ground, who receive over 80% of the program’s budget, meaning that AFL has not had to set up and run a country project office. That said, strengthening capacity for monitoring and evaluation is an area that needs more support and could result in greater effectiveness in the future.³³ Aligned to the outcomes, around 53% of the budget is allocated to training and employability related costs.³⁴ Starter kits have been an effective program approach, and all students who were enrolled in a 2-year training were equipped at the beginning of their first year.³⁵ However, a lack of available resources has not permitted starter kits and materials to be extended to all courses and all students.³⁶ The provision of modular training alongside the longer training courses has made it possible to reach a larger number of beneficiaries at a lower cost – just under €18 per person for 5 days of training.

Impact. AFL has existing anti-corruption policies and financial monitoring in place. However, there is no evidence to indicate that AFL has developed a safeguarding, conflict sensitivity or do no harm approach or integrated this into its risk management. AFL’s READY program signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Woord en Daad’s Job Booster program creating synergy between the two Norad-funded programs. In May 2020, due to worsening security, one of the agricultural training centers in Doubiti (CAPE), on the border with Niger, closed. The second and third intake of students were transferred to a teacher training center near Fada N’Gourma and have not been able to return to CAPE due to on-going insecurity.

Scale or Sustainability of Efforts. AFL has sought out partnerships with other stakeholders to build local capacity for two civil society organizations (CSOs) and support field schools. READY’s field school element has been particularly important in facilitating students to network with employers, increase their visibility, demonstrate their skills and negotiate work. Costs for field schools (transport and food) are low, as many companies who engage with the program cover these costs. The challenge is that training centers need to engage more with companies and negotiate these commitments. READY is paying for food, lodging and health insurance for youth in training centers, which is a cost the government is not able to cover, implying the need for on-going external assistance.³⁷ READY also offers post-training support, through travel, equipment and materials for the life of the program. Some youth have submitted business plans to government or to NGOs to access start-up funding for their businesses after graduating the program. These efforts have seen mixed results, with the lack of funds available to help finance business plans identified as a challenge.³⁸ One of the key achievements of the collaboration between READY and Job Booster is the establishment of a Committee for Training in Employability (COFIP) in each region by stakeholders from local authorities, companies, professional associations, and international cooperation with the aim of facilitating employability of the young people trained. The COFIP in the

³³ KII, Burkina Faso, March 2021.

³⁴ Calculations based on original budget categories.

³⁵ KII, Burkina Faso, March 2021.

³⁶ KII, Burkina Faso, March 2021.

³⁷ KII, Burkina Faso, March 2021.

³⁸ KIIs, Burkina Faso, March 2021.

Hauts-Bassins region is the most promising of all those established and should be considered in future programming design.³⁹

Recommendations for follow-on programming:

- Conduct gender-sensitive local labor market assessments so as to develop course offerings that target potential female employment opportunities in women-dominated sectors, traditional male-dominated sectors, entrepreneurship, and emerging green economies.
- Ensure starter kits and access to material or equipment resources are offered to all course participants.
- Develop stronger access to finance through partnerships with local banks, microfinance institutions and local companies who could provide credit, reduced loans, or seed funding to start-ups.
- Strengthen local CSO capacity in monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

2.2 Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Norway

ADRA Norway is part of a global network of 120 country level faith-based organizations, each of which is considered an independent partner and funded by different donor governments or private funds. For Norad, ADRA Norway implements the Strengthening Equity, Access and Quality in Education (SEAQE) program in Mali and Niger (2017-2021) through two locally registered implementing partners, ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger.

Program and relevance. SEAQE’s overarching development goal is for 15,000 marginalized children to start and complete basic education and skills training in 43 primary schools and 2 secondary schools across Mali and Niger. In particular, the focus of SEAQE has been on addressing a combination of supply and demand side constraints that underlie the large numbers of OOSC/youth, including girls, CWDs, refugees and displaced children, and children living in extreme poverty. ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger coordinate with central and decentralized government authorities and strengthen support to schools, parent-teacher associations (PTAs), school management committees (SMCs) and mother-child associations (AMEs).

Efficiency.

Outcomes	Results to date ⁴⁰	Overall impact
Key indicator 1: Number and % of earners who complete primary education by gender (target: 60% learner completion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initial results reflect a 56% completion rate for program target schools in Mali, with 55% boys and 56% girls’ achieving completion⁴¹ ▪ In Niger, data indicates that 53% of learners completed primary education in ADRA-supported schools, with 53% boys and 53% girls⁴² 	Under target
Key indicator 2: Number and percentage of ADRA schools supported against set benchmarks of good quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In 2019 in Mali, 1 school fulfilled all 9 benchmarks defined by the ETLE, and 19/20 schools reached 4 of 9 benchmarks; ▪ In 2019 in Niger, 12/19 schools reached 5 benchmarks and 18/19 schools reached 4 benchmarks⁴³ 	Under target

³⁹ KII, Burkina Faso, March 2021.

⁴⁰ Updated SEAQE Sahel Results Framework with 2017-2020 Data unless otherwise noted.

⁴¹ These numbers are reversed in the 2020 Draft Progress Report. ADRA note to review team, April 30, 2021: the numbers in the text here have been quality controlled and will be reflected in the forthcoming annual report on 2020 data.

⁴² ADRA note to review team, April 30, 2021: the numbers in the text here have been quality controlled and will be reflected in the forthcoming annual report on 2020 data.

⁴³ ADRA note to review team, April 30, 2021.

learning as per ADRA's Effective Teaching and Learning Environment Tool (ETLE Tool)		
Outcome 1: More marginalized children in targeted communities are accessing basic education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 15,801 children enrolled in all SEAQE supported schools in Mali and Niger including⁴⁴ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3,932 girls in Mali ○ 3,880 girls in Niger ○ 125 CWD (of these 68 girls) in Mali⁴⁵ ○ 279 CWD (of these 110 girls) in Niger ○ 332 OOSC in Mali ○ 1,511 OOSC in Niger (542 from Strømme Speed Schools) 	Met
Outcome 2: More children are accessing safe, protective and inclusive schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 59 classrooms rehabilitated including with solar energy or improved clean energy sources in Mali ▪ 97 classrooms rehabilitated including with solar energy or improved clean energy sources in Niger ▪ 2 computer labs built in Mali ▪ 8 e-learning labs built in Niger with the Ministry 	Exceeded
Outcome 3: Education policies and plans promote equality and inclusion	<p>In SEAQE Sahel supported schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 91% of head teachers in Mali trained on inclusive and child-friendly codes of conduct ▪ 68% of head teachers in Niger trained on inclusive and child-friendly codes of conduct ▪ No data on education policies at central or regional level 	Met at school level
Outcome 4: Schools provide quality relevant education to marginalized learners (40% mastery of grade-appropriate reading and math skills)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 36% of learners achieving minimum proficiency (of these 35% girls) in Niger (data collection has not been possible in Mali to date) ▪ 340 learners (126 girls) trained in computer literacy in Mali ▪ 4,723 learners (2,369 boys and 2,354 girls) using elearning labs in Niger twice weekly supported by a designated facilitator 	Under target

Effectiveness. In Outcome 1, there is underspending and little data on the development progress of local CSOs, which is reflected in community leaders in both Niger and Mali stating that support to schools has been stronger than strengthening CSO support to schools.⁴⁶ Perhaps this is due, as ADRA Norway admits, to a need for the further capacity development of ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger so that these entities can strengthen local CSOs.⁴⁷ In addition, there seems to be underspending and an absence of planning on how to integrate e-learning and computer labs and resources into classroom activities or teacher professional development so that more than one designated facilitator, for example, is charged with e-learning activities. That said, for both Outcome 1 and 2, ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger have shown effectiveness in working with communities to identify and enroll marginalized children and strengthen the safe learning environments in program supported schools. Outcome 3 has very few resources budgeted towards policy outcomes and the largest underspending challenge. This also is reflected in the results

⁴⁴ Updated SEAQE Sahel Results Framework with 2017-2020 Data. ADRA note to review team, April 30, 2021 confirms that 15,801 children were enrolled in all SEAQE supported schools in Mali and Niger at the end of year three. It is not clear the percentage increase in enrollment that can be attributed to ADRA efforts..

⁴⁵ SEAQE Sahel Results Framework with 2020 Data. The Updated SEAQE Sahel Results Framework with 2017-2020 Data does not have current numbers for CWD in Mali.

⁴⁶ KII, Niger and Mali, March 2021.

⁴⁷ KII ADRA Norway, March 2021. As well, ADRA Niger notes that the meeting held in Cote d'Ivoire with the ADRA Mali team was beneficial to capacity building and learning from each other in terms of how to work through different challenges, March 2021.

framework indicating a lack of new education policies and plans that promote equality and inclusion to date.⁴⁸ There have been some cost savings related to greater ownership of monitoring by inspectors.⁴⁹ Further, during COVID-19, ADRA Mali adapted and worked with radio stations to provide teacher training supports for out-of-school learning which positively affected results for Outcome 4.⁵⁰

Impact. ADRA Norway has developed a detailed external risk assessment for operations in Mali and Niger. There has been a mixed understanding and no category for ‘do no harm’ or evidence of safeguarding analysis with regard to risks to children engaged in program-supported activities. This is updated in the forthcoming annual report to reflect measures implemented in 2020 to address this.⁵¹ There is little conflict sensitivity embedded into program design.⁵² ADRA Mali has little to no engagement on education policy advocacy. ADRA Niger is formally part of education, protection and water, sanitation and hygiene clusters advocating at national level. ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger state that they are sharing learnings with government partners who then may pass it on to communities.⁵³

Sustainability or Scale. Physical infrastructure improvements are key sustainable program elements.⁵⁴ However, material resources needed for schools and classrooms to accommodate and support the ongoing learning of CWD are lacking. In both Mali and Niger, there are obstacles to the retention of marginalized children in school where there are no school feeding programs.⁵⁵ In Mali, there are no government plans to absorb and support any of the 30 teachers hired through ADRA programming due to the lack of teachers and high enrollment rates in ADRA-supported schools. Where the program has provided school supplies and livelihoods supports to retain girls in schools, there will be limits to sustainability after the program life. Further, there is concern of unintended negative consequences from an emphasis on inclusion and increased enrollment when government education authorities have not committed to an increase in teacher recruitment and assignment of these teachers to communities in which ADRA is working.

Recommendations for follow-on programming:

⁴⁸ ADRA note to review team, April 30, 2021: Some targets have been given reduced emphasis as cuts were made because of exchange rate losses from a weakened NOK. This led to the deprioritizing areas where ADRA was experiencing slow progress to date. One of these areas in Mali was an output intended to strengthen CSO advocacy for improved education services for marginalized children. In Niger, less attention will be given to networks, forums, and capacity assessments of CSOs to advocate for inclusive education. Life skills training for learners will also not be prioritized. PTAs and SMCs will not receive additional training either. Further, ADRA will not focus on reaching all 9 benchmarks defined for “good quality schools” in either country as ADRA states these benchmarks have been too ambitious.

⁴⁹ KII, Niger, March 2021: Informants state that additional support beyond 2 inspectorates needs to be provided as this will have stronger impact and sustainability of what is happening within schools.

⁵⁰ ADRA note to review team, April 30, 2021: A total of 3,085 students received lessons via radio, mp3 or flash disks distributed to teachers and with support of the PTA.

⁵¹ ADRA note to review team, April 30, 2021 provides language from the draft 2020 report: “The SEAQE Sahel programme prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all participants and maintains a ‘do-no-harm’ approach. Measures to mitigate safeguarding and protection risks are mainstreamed across the programme activities to improve the capacity of schools to ensure not only that education is safe for learners, but that they are proactively protecting and supporting the most vulnerable.”

⁵² ADRA note to review team, April 30, 2021: At the moment ADRA is developing a conflict sensitivity strategy and approach in partnership with all partners to be ready by June 2021.

⁵³ KII, Mali and Niger, March 2021.

⁵⁴ KII, Mali and Niger, March 2021.

⁵⁵ ADRA note to review team, April 30, 2021: The World Food Programme provides school feeding programs, but not in all ADRA supported schools. School feeding was not part of Norad-funded programming design.

- Identify CSO partnerships and develop programming to strengthen CSO support to target schools and education policy advocacy efforts at regional and central levels to mitigate unintended negative consequences from increased enrollment efforts.
- Advocate with regional or central level authorities to support the 30 program teachers whose absence from those schools may affect enrollment and learning outcomes after the life of the program.
- Develop a sustainable plan for inclusion that focuses beyond enrollment of CWD to teacher professional development and materials and resources that support learning outcomes for CWD.

2.3 Groupe de Recherche et d’Echanges Technologiques (GRET)

For more than 40 years, the France-based Group for Research and Technology Exchanges (GRET) has worked to provide sustainable, innovative development responses to the challenges of poverty and inequality in an estimated 26 countries in Africa and South-East Asia.

Project and relevance: GRET’s project, Improve rural Malian Youth Employability through Tutorial Apprenticeship (IMYETA), 2017–2022, operates in three regions in Mali: Koulikoro, Sikasso and Segou. IMYETA’s overarching development goal is to improve the quality of technical skills and pedagogical training of young rural Malians aged 15 to 30 years old through a validated process of tutorial apprenticeships and employment insertion. GRET holds a strong relationship with the Ministry of Employment and Professional Training (MEFP) and IMYETA mobilizes local authorities and communities with the help of local CSO partner, Youth Action Association (AJA MALI). GRET TVET and workforce experts support the field team an estimated four days per month and with two site visits per year (prior to COVID-19 restrictions). The 10% project contribution is provided through AFD which supports two regional training centers in Segou and Sikasso, and will build a third under the current GRET-led ACEFOR project. With AFD funding, IMYETA will set up a Mobile Training Unit in 2021.⁵⁶ GRET has tracked data by gender. That said, there is no analysis of growth trades by gender, design of interventions or methodologies that in particular will increase women’s employment or employment opportunities for youth living with disabilities (YWD). Further, there is no analysis available on young women entering traditionally male-dominated trades or support for this. Informally, GRET headquarters reports that 30-35% of enrolled program participants are adolescent girls and young women.⁵⁷ The country office reports that 13% of YWD have participated in the project.⁵⁸

Efficiency.

Outcomes	Results to date	Overall impact
Outcome 1: Apprenticeship Masters (AMs) possess training capacities to train apprentices in para-agricultural jobs (target: pedagogical and technical capacities of 200 AMs are strengthened)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 337 AMs (49 women) trained to support 11 different growth trades identified across 57 villages 	Exceeded
Outcome 2: Youth employability in buoyant sectors of the rural Malian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Total = 3,248 youth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1,372 youth have completed apprenticeships 	Will exceed

⁵⁶ Of note, one key informant in Mali expressed that mobile units are not sustainable, are costly, and that these can be affected by the security situation. GRET notes to review team, April 30, 2021 states that the investment in the mobile training unit is limited (and thus, not costly), allows the project to provide local training at a reasonable cost, and can ultimately be transferred to the MEFP or any other relevant actor to sustain this approach and reach local communities.

⁵⁷ KII GRET, March 2021

⁵⁸ KII, Mali, March 2021.

economy has improved (target: 2,600 rural youth targeted)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 876 youth are in the process of being trained ○ 1,000 youth are selected for 2021 training ▪ 35% female participation ▪ 197 youth found salaried jobs (post-apprenticeship) and 647 were self-employed (post-apprenticeship) 	
Outcome 3: Malian authorities and civil society are engaged in the implementation of modernizing the apprenticeship framework for tutorial apprenticeship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 7 of 22 signed collaborations with Mali supervisory authorities at national/regional level ▪ Plans to train 15 staff of NDVT and Regional Council on pedagogy 	Under target

Effectiveness. GRET has developed an apprenticeship selection and training system that is fully transparent and engages a diverse set of community members, including parents and community associations as well as through chambers of agriculture or trades and handicraft and professional organizations. There is a missed opportunity in building the capacity of AJA Mali or leveraging its expertise in entrepreneurship.^{59,60} In the budget, AJA Mali receives less than 2% of the overall budget. In an adjusted budget, GRET has allocated 66% of its program costs to Outcome 1, 30% to Outcome 2 and went from a 0 to 4% budget allocation for Outcome 3. Given the number of youth to be trained and the desire to create wage or self-employment and insert youth into local job markets, the difference between Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 seems large, though that said, the project has worked with the National Agency for Youth Employment (APEJ) to support 60% to GRET’s 40% of youth training costs. In rural and resource-poor settings, transition into entrepreneurship or wage employment of any kind requires start-up funding support and efforts to increase both access to financing and engagement with value and supply chain private sector supports.⁶¹ The budget should reflect more investment towards these supports. Add to this, 52% of Outcome 1 costs are stipends to AMs which is not sustainable. That said, the initial investment shows results in that AMs state that they will continue to support and work with youth even after the life of the project.⁶²

Impact. GRET has a detailed COVID-19 contingency plan and a conflict sensitive informed security plan for Mali. GRET’s approach to community mobilization has limited corruption, promoted a conflict sensitive and do no harm approach, and reduced conflicts between AMs, youth and community members. GRET notes that harmful practices and traditional barriers are very slow to change. However, more deliberate design of programming to support young women and YWD engage in non-traditional trades, find employment in micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and be supported to launch entrepreneurial ventures is critical to equity and inclusion.

Sustainability or Scale. As part of Outcome 3, GRET planned for the institutionalization of the apprenticeship process at both local level and regional level. It has involved education and training authorities and solicited buy-in on literacy curricula and other training modules. However, the amount spent on AM stipends and the imbalance of technical support, training, equipment supports and funds for youth insertion (Outcome 2) and entrepreneurship will hamper both scale and sustainability.⁶³ In addition, while a focus on agro-processing has been important for attracting more young women, a more targeted approach beyond tracking indicators

⁵⁹ KII, Mali, March 2021.

⁶⁰ GRET note to review team, April 30, 2021: GRET is in planning meetings with AJA Mali related to coaching of entrepreneurs and are awaiting a final proposal for this effort.

⁶¹ KII, Mali, March 2021.

⁶² GRET note to review team, April 30, 2021

⁶³ KII, Mali, March 2021.

specifically focused on vocational training and business supports for adolescent girls and young women is warranted.⁶⁴

Recommendations for follow-on programming:

- Create partnerships with the Malian Association of the Blind and other Disabled Persons’ Organizations (DPOs) to reach more YWD.⁶⁵
- Conduct an analysis of growth trades by gender and opportunities for YWD so as to design apprenticeship models and methodologies to increase vulnerable youth employment in rural areas.
- Strengthen institutionalization of apprenticeship model and the necessary supports to fund AMs.
- Increase budget allocation towards youth insertion in wage or self-employment and the necessary linkages to rural value or supply chains (as part of a private sector engagement strategy).

2.4 Humanity & Inclusion

Humanity & Inclusion (HI – formerly known as Handicap International) is an international NGO working in over 50 countries for more than 38 years, to support people with disabilities and other vulnerabilities in situations of poverty and exclusion, conflict and disaster.

Project and relevance: Norad provides funding for two HI projects: Inclusive education for marginalized girls and boys in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger (Project A) and Supporting the promotion and implementation of inclusive education in Timbuktu (Project B).⁶⁶ Project A reinforces child-friendly and inclusive learning environments at local, national and sub-regional levels to ensure enrollment and quality education outcomes for marginalized girls and boys aged 6 to 16, among them CWD. HI adopts a multi-stakeholder approach to support inclusive education at the policy, service and community levels through advocacy, capacity building and technical support. Project A is implemented in close collaboration with key partners (CSOs and ministries of education in each country). HI tracks outcomes and impact by gender and disability.

Efficiency.

Outcomes	Results to date ⁶⁷	Overall impact
Outcome 1: An increased number of CWD and refugee children are enrolled in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1,856 people sensitized against a target of 1,369 (2019) ▪ 8,855 out-of-school CWD and refugee children identified (nearly double the 2019 target) 	Exceeded
Outcome 2: Schools are physically accessible to all children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accessibility audits were carried out in some schools and 59 schools were rehabilitated ▪ There were delays in getting authorization to undertake building and rehabilitation works in schools 	Under target
Outcome 3: The education policies and plans of Burkina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HI supported the drafting and adoption of the National Strategy for the Development of Inclusive Education (SNDEI) in Burkina 	Met

⁶⁴ KII, Mali, March 2021.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Project B concerned a small add-on project of NOK 2M for the period September 2017 until May 2018 only. As such, this review primarily covers Project A.

⁶⁷ All quantitative data in this section is taken from Progress Report 2019. Data was only available for 2019 and it was difficult to work out cumulative data to cross-check progress against the overall results framework. The progress report 2020 and a mid-term review report is currently underway and is in the process of finalizing progress data for 2020.

<p>Faso, Mali and Niger become increasingly inclusive</p>	<p>Faso in 2018 and advocacy efforts have resulted in an increase in the state budget for inclusive education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In Niger, advocacy efforts have resulted in data on CWD now being collected and included in the Ministry of Primary Education, Literacy and Promotion of National Languages and Civic Education's (MEP/A/OLM/EC) yearbooks of education statistics as well as inclusive education being included in the Transitional Education and Training Sector Plan 2020-2022⁶⁸ ▪ In Mali, inclusive education action plans were drafted for 16 central services of the MEN 	
<p>Outcome 4: The quality of service delivery is strengthened, and the teaching methods become more inclusive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The project supported MEN in Mali to revise and validate the inclusive education training module and guide and provided training for 275 education staff ▪ 98% of staff (71% female) were trained in inclusive pedagogies in 2019 ▪ 72% of target of integrating children with severe disabilities into mainstream schools was met in 2019⁶⁹ 	Exceeded

Ensuring synergies with other NGOs implementing complementary projects has enabled HI to maximize outputs, results and impact with the resources from Norad. There was significant underspend in the first three years of the project with some costs being overbudgeted indicating a need for more accurate budget forecasting. Across the project outcomes, the bulk of spending was on Outcome 4 (42%) followed by Outcome 1 (27%) which are reaching the largest number of beneficiaries.

Effectiveness. Overall, HI has helped make schools more physically accessible. The project has worked closely at regional level with the West Africa Federation of the Disabled (WAFOD) and the Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA) to develop a capacity building and advocacy plan to promote inclusive education in West Africa including through national federations of DPOs and national coalitions on Education for All in each country. In Burkina Faso, HI's financial support for the National Coalition for Education for All (CN-EPT) is limited to advocacy at the central level, and this has not allowed for sufficient advocacy and community awareness activities at the local level.⁷⁰ The Regional Department for Primary Education (DREP) in Niamey appreciated HI's support to implement an inclusive education strategy. However, the department representatives felt that HI provided too little training (in Braille and sign language) too late in the school year (April).⁷¹ Further, research was conducted in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger in 2019 that contributed significantly to advocacy efforts and operational implementation of gender-sensitive inclusive education interventions across the three countries. That said, reinforcing in-service training and teaching resources, accessibility to learning at school level, and supporting girls living with disabilities as part of the SNDEI is critical work that needs attention.⁷²

Impact. HI has a detailed policy and accompanying mechanism for the prevention of corruption, as well as a robust risk analysis based on conflict sensitivity and do no harm approaches to mitigate and address risk. The project has

⁶⁸ KII, Mali, March 2021.

⁶⁹ In Niger, this target was only met at 50% as some children were enrolled in special schools because teachers in mainstream schools did not have the capacity to care for them.

⁷⁰ KII, Burkina Faso, March 2021.

⁷¹ KII, Niger, March 2021.

⁷² KII, Burkina Faso, March 2021.

faced interruptions and delays in implementation in all three countries. In Mali, there were delays in the advocacy work due to leadership challenges within the Education for All Coalition. In Niger, due to non-availability of staff at the MEP/A/OLM/EC, there were delays in monitoring teacher training institutions, undertaking school accessibility audits and training service providers and construction staff. Teachers' strikes disrupted the school calendar in Burkina Faso and Mali impacting the quality of learners but had no tangible impact on project results. Security issues, especially in Burkina Faso, also hampered progress including access to schools. COVID-19 impacted project activities with school closures and cancellation of events. The project adapted its work and also produced a report on inclusive education in a post-COVID world.

Scale or Sustainability of Efforts. Achievements from the Norad-funded project are being scaled up and supported with funding from AFD and the European Union. Knowledge sharing takes place between the countries through on-line communities of practice. The project has worked in partnership with the ministries of education and local authorities in each country, e.g. with the government providing training space. HI project efforts have strengthened the equity and inclusion capacity of the education system and its partners.⁷³

Recommendations for follow-on programming:

- Continue to work bottom-up at school level and top-down at policy level through advocacy.
- Ensure budget and activities to support DPOs' advocacy efforts are not concentrated only at central level but also at regional level; that budget forecasting becomes more accurate; and spending on training maximises impact by happening early in the school year.

2.5 Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) assists individuals and communities affected by conflict and displacement in more than 30 countries.

Project and relevance: The overarching goal of the Norad-funded project⁷⁴ Improve Quality of and Access to Education and its Governance in Kidal and Timbuktu, is to improve equality of and access to education and vocational skills training in the two regions for children and youth aged 7 to 24 years old. NRC works in partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and three local implementing partners: (i) The Association Malienne pour la Survie au Sahel (AMSS) to deliver programming for education, livelihoods, local governance and protection in Timbuktu; (ii) Groupe Action Recherche pour le Développement Local (GARDL) to deliver education and child protection activities (though GARDL left Kidal in 2018 for security reasons); and, (iii) SOLIDA and ASSEDEC which replaced GARDL and were subcontracted to work with IRC in Kidal. NRC, in partnership with IRC, is actively engaged in the main humanitarian coordination platforms in Mali. Both NRC and IRC are European Commission partners in the north for education and have extensive experience implementing accelerated learning programs (ALPs) and providing education and youth entrepreneurship supports. NRC works in close collaboration with the

⁷³ KII, Mali, March 2021.

⁷⁴ Of critical note, NRC has finished implementation of the initial 60M NOK Norad-funded project, QZA-0697 QZA-17/0277, as of November 2020. Norad provided funds for an additional 7.5M NOK to cover COVID-19 specific activities only. Addendum 1 activities will finish by April 2021, spending down the COVID-related funding to improve sanitation infrastructure and hygiene-related activities at NRC-supported schools. As of May 2021, an additional 20M NOK (Addendum 2 for QZA-0697 QZA-17/0277) will continue activities against the 3 key outcome areas defined by QZA-0697 QZA-17/0277. Norad has approved retroactive funding under Addendum 2 (approved in March 2021) for all expenditures related to ongoing activities that expanded on QZA-0697 QZA-17/0277 from December 2020 that if left unfunded would have been detrimental to ongoing education and training needs in the existing state of emergency. As such, NRC will be reimbursed for what it has spent towards these efforts from December 2020 to April 2021. Addendum 1 and Addendum 2 were not part of this review.

MEN and local authorities, as well as mayors and centers of pedagogy; and in its country strategy, NRC is fully aligned with government priorities at centralized and decentralized levels.⁷⁵ The project tracks data by gender and its initiatives contribute to addressing harmful practices and barriers to girls' education. The project does not currently track those living with disabilities.

Efficiency.

Outcomes	Results to date	Overall impact
Outcome 1: Increased number of children start and complete basic education (targets: 80% completion of ALPs for in-school children; 70% attendance after reintegration of OOSC from ALPs to formal school system)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 95% completion of in-school children supported through ALPs (563 of 591 learners with 230 being girls) ▪ 92% attendance for OOSC reintegrated into the formal system (88% attendance of girls; 93% of boys; 96% of learners remained in school the following year) 	Exceeded
Outcome 2: Increased number of children and young people learn basic skills and are equipped to tackle adult life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% learners achieve minimum proficiency in literacy and numeracy against a target of 75%⁷⁶ • 92% of students at primary level passed the final exam in Kidal and 49% of students in Timbuktu • 78% of supported secondary school students passed the final exam (100% in Kidal, 69% in Timbuktu) against a target of 65% 	Met overall
Outcome 3: Increased numbers of youth with enhanced livelihoods opportunities as a result of vocational trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 youth (of these, 29 girls) developed income generation activities (IGAs) but only 35 continued with these after a year in Kidal • 241 youth enrolled in two Youth Education Pack (YEP) centers for vocational training in Timbuktu • 50 boys were enrolled in vocational training programs in Kidal • 71% of NMVT facilitators understood key curriculum concepts from professional development training (80% target) 	Under target

Note: NRC was unable to share end of project results from QZA-0697 QZA-17/0277. Addendum 1 was strictly related to COVID-19 efforts and results tracking will not be available until reporting in July 2021. As such, this brief analysis of outcomes is based solely on QZA-0697 QZA-17/0277 results from 2019.⁷⁷ Addendum 2 starts outside of the scope of this review.

Effectiveness. Due to the teacher's strike in 2019, there was no MTR for NRC activities in Mali. NRC, IRC and the local partners have an established presence across northern Mali, allowing the project to share resources with other projects and leverage existing systems and resources pre-established and developed for other projects. NRC provides financial and program reviews on a regular basis and ensures all projects include indicators on three components of value for money – timeliness, cost, and quality. Outcome 3 is afforded less than 3% of the program budget and this seems to reflect the least amount of sustainability design thinking and intervention efforts.

⁷⁵ KII, Mali, March 2021.

⁷⁶ These figures are for 2018/19 as the 2019/20 figures were not available due to teacher strikes.

⁷⁷ All outcome results are from the 2019 Results Report with comparison against initial numbers being verified in a final Results Framework, clean version date 23/3/2021. Final results are not cumulative yet at outcome level.

Impact. NRC has a comprehensive risk management approach with accompanying mitigation plans. NRC has a zero-tolerance policy on corruption and applies several preventative measures across the organization at every level. Anti-corruption trainings are mandatory on an annual basis and there are identifiable channels for whistleblowing. NRC has a robust safeguarding policy. For the purposes of this work, NRC and its country partner, IRC, conducted a baseline assessment which highlighted serious challenges to achieving outcomes. As relevant, when community needs surpassed the scope of the project, NRC and IRC operationalized their organizational approaches to conflict sensitivity and do no harm and developed appropriate responses and referrals to local health services.⁷⁸

Sustainability or Scale. The project has committed to skills transfer as part of its close collaboration with the MEN and education authorities. The capacity strengthening of SMCs and AMEs has contributed to increased enrollment and retention rates in supported schools. SMCs and AMEs in support areas have been revitalized under these project activities.⁷⁹ The high rates of achievement of learners in moving from ALPs to formal schools shows promise for scale within Mali. As part of an integrated approach, the project has addressed several barriers to retention of children in schools and learning achievement, namely malnutrition, protection issues, health issues, food insecurity. This holistic approach is effective to ensure not just enrollment but retention of vulnerable children. That said, barriers to the retention of girls is still a major challenge as well as organizing interventions to identify and address learning supports for CWD and YWD. Further, increased enrollment and retention applies pressure to existing infrastructure and teaching capacity in places where there are a lack of teachers.

Recommendations for follow-on programming:

- Track CWDs and YWDs, increasing opportunities and resource supports for them.
- Strengthen local labor market and private sector engagement, as well as accompaniment supports for youth to strengthen successful transition from skills training to wage or self-employment opportunities.

2.6 Right to Play

Right to Play (RTP) International works with children and youth in disadvantaged communities in 15 countries across four continents.

Project and relevance: RTP's Play for the Advancement of Quality of Education (PAQE II) project (2017-2021) is a continuation of gains made by an earlier version of PAQE I supported by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) (2015-2017). RTP Norway and RTP International strengthen RTP Mali staff capacity to support the work with local partner organizations in-country through technical assistance and support. The goal of PAQE II is to improve education access and quality by ensuring that more children aged 6-12 years old (including girls, CWD, other vulnerable children) enroll and complete school, learn basic skills and are equipped to tackle adult life in target educational institutions grade 1-6 in the district of Bamako, and Koulikoro, Ségou and Sikasso regions. RTP Mali has become an essential partner to the MEN and works to integrate play-based learning approaches, with a focus on gender and disability, into the country's educational policy, plans and practices, including through in-service and pre-service teacher training.

⁷⁸ KII, Mali, March 2021.

⁷⁹ Of note, in the extension year of this project, IRC was forced to close its Kidal office and has been approved by Norad to continue activities under this portfolio in Ansongo.

PAQE II works closely with four key CSO partners in Mali: (i) OMAES (Œuvre Malienne d’Aide à l’Enfance du Sahel) in the Ségou region; (ii) RARE (Réseau d’Acteurs pour le Renouveau de l’Education) in the Sikasso region; (iii) ALED (Association pour la Lecture, l’Education et le Développement au Mali) in the Koulikoro region; and (iv) RED (Réseau des Experts pour le Développement) in the District of Bamako. Further, RTP Mali is an active member in the following national and international networks and coordinates with network actors: (i) the Forum of International NGOs in Mali; (ii) the Education Cluster; (iii) the Education for All Coalition; and (iv) the Child Protection sub-cluster.

Efficiency.

Outcomes	Results to date	Overall impact
Outcome 1: Children 6-12 years old in target educational institutions have by the end of primary school improved their achievements in reading (targets: 69,101 children achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in grade 4 reading, including 34,665 girls and showing a midline 8% improved reading proficiency and 15% improved reading proficiency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.2% of children (6.6% girls, 7.8% boys, 0% CWD) had achieved the minimum proficiency for reading at midline (endline to be determined 2021) 	Under target
Outcome 2: Children 6-12 years old in target educational institutions have improved their life skills (endline targets are 50% teamwork, 57% communication and 58% conflict resolution)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners show 82% (teamwork), 76% (communication) and 77% (conflict resolution) competencies achieved for life skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CWD at 65% above initial targets Slight variations only between girls and boys 	Exceeded
Outcome 3: Teachers in target educational institutions grades 1-6 have improved the learning environment for children to grow and develop to their fullest potential (target: 44% understanding and improvements made related to child safeguarding, gender equality, inclusion and positive discipline)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% teachers met RTP’s principles for a positive learning environment Construction and rehabilitation efforts delayed but RTP Mali anticipates finalizing remaining activities in 2021 	On target to be met
Additional Core Indicator for CWD (target: supporting identification and enrollment of 691 CWD in RTP supported schools)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 114 (53 girls, 61 boys) out of school CWD enrolled in (2019) 	Under target

Effectiveness. RTP’s partnership with CSOs results in 20% of the overall project budget provided to local partners to implement project activities. For Mali, RTP has completed a cost-per child calculation to assess the cost-efficiency per user and intends to reach 69,100 children in 200 schools. This equates to NOK 507 per child for the total grant of NOK 35 million. RTP’s human resource model has been developed with efficiency in mind and includes elements that have been externally assessed as cost-efficient, including the employment of national staff, regional technical support deployed on an as-needed basis, shared human resource costs with local partners, and a progressive reduction of staff in year four and five as CSOs and government partners take on responsibility for the project. RTP Mali has been successful in meeting many of its output targets early; that said it has underspent each year of implementation, including spending less than 10% in 2017 due to delays in start-up and arriving at a

75% spend rate in 2019. Even without 2020 expenditure data, and understanding that construction and rehabilitation costs remaining may be equal to if not slightly more than what has been spent to date, RTP Mali will not overspend. Where there have been cost savings, RTP Mali has pivoted to provide refresher trainings or expand the number of individuals reached.

Impact. RTP has developed targeted internal and external risk analyses against a rank of low, medium and high risk in accordance with conflict-sensitivity and do no harm. Internal risk relates to improper management of funds, insufficient child protection measures, inadequate participation of girls and CWD, instability and violence related to the socio-political situation, teacher mobility and strikes, and barriers to enrolment and retention for CWD (which received the highest risk rating). Teacher mobility has been a challenge, but RTP Mali has found anecdotally that teachers who have changed schools are transferring their learning to even more schools outside of the project target schools.⁸⁰ This is an unintended positive outcome, but may be balanced by the loss of those same teachers in project target schools.

Sustainability or Scale. RTP Mali has supported local CSOs under each outcome from the start of the project. Given that PAQE II is an extension of a former GAC-funded project, RTP Mali had key system-level relationships in place⁸¹ and the credibility at community level. Extensive assessment and review in selecting local partners was conducted. Aligning Norad-funding to a project in close-out and extending the success of one project into the efforts of this work has leveraged both tangible and intangible resources. RTP Mali is well-respected by community leaders⁸² though government leaders and CSOs want more transfer of skills and experiences to occur so that each can develop expertise and be less reliable on international NGOs.⁸³ RTP Mali's awareness of progressive reduction of staff and responsibility over time ensures that ownership of activities is left in the hands of government authorities and local communities. All reading materials developed under this project were validated by the government and have effectively been integrated into preservice and in-service teacher training and professional development. Further efforts should be made to bring these activities to scale.⁸⁴

Recommendations for follow-on programming:

- Strengthen capacity building of CSOs in play-based learning methodologies and support for inclusion and retention of vulnerable children in schools.
- Develop an institutionalization and scale-up plan of PAQE II programming (or its follow on) including relevant capacity building approaches for government ownership at regional and central levels.

2.7 Strømme Foundation

Strømme Foundation (SF) is a Norwegian-based international NGO that for 50 years has focused on inclusive education and lifelong learning for marginalized and disadvantaged populations, with the vision of a world free from poverty. SF works together with local partners in 11 countries across West Africa, East Africa and Asia.

Program and relevance. The Speed School program, operational in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, is a nine-month intervention designed to provide access to education for OOSC, especially girls and CWD, ages 8 to 12 years old

⁸⁰ KII RTP Norway, March 2021.

⁸¹ KII, Mali, March 2021.

⁸² KII, Mali, March 2021.

⁸³ KIIs, Mali, March 2021.

⁸⁴ KII, Mali, March 2021.

and enable them to enroll in a local school to complete their primary education. It consists of a condensed or accelerated curriculum covering grades 1 to 3 that is taught in a temporary school (built by the local community with local materials) to groups of around 25 learners. Upon program completion, children are able to enroll in grade 4 of formal primary school. SF works through 18 local implementing partners across the three countries, strengthening their capacity with management and technical oversight from its West Africa regional office. Speed Schools are an important second chance for older children that otherwise would have no opportunity to attend school. Speed Schools are linked to a government primary school within a 5km radius, ensuring that graduates can transition to a formal school at the end of the program. In 2011, SF set up a sub-regional Speed School Secretariat for the three countries to provide quality assurance to the program. In December 2018, the responsibilities of the Secretariat were transferred to the three respective governments who have taken on the mandate to compile data on Speed Schools in national education statistics and to have a point person in the ministries of education.

Efficiency.

Outcomes	Results to date ⁸⁵	Overall impact
Outcome 1: 600 Speed School centers created and operational – 200 in Mali, 240 in Burkina Faso and 160 in Niger over the four years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 635 Speed School centers (250 in Burkina Faso, 210 in Mali and 175 in Niger) were opened against a target of 600 (240 in Burkina Faso, 200 in Mali and 160 in Niger) ▪ An additional 35 school centers were achieved during the 2018-2019 school year 	Exceeded
Outcome 2: 15,000 children aged 8-12 (50% girls, 1% CWD) that have never been to school or that have dropped out early are enrolled in Speed Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 16,669 learners (50% girls, >1% CWD, see CWD results to date under Outcome 3) enrolled in Speed Schools between 2017 and 2021 	Exceeded
Outcome 3: 12,000 children aged 8-12 (50% girls, 1% CWD) complete their training in Speed Schools and transfer to primary schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 11,617 learners transferred to primary schools with the most recent cohort not yet included <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 88% of these learners transferred into grade 4 ○ 9% into grade 3 ○ 3% into grade 2 ▪ 252 CWD (45% female) were evaluated and transferred to primary school – equating to more than 2% of the learners 	Met
Outcome 4: 600 SMCs which will be established in Speed Schools to ensure that learners attend on a regular basis and that parents are supportive of their children’s education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SMCs in all 635 Speed School centers were trained in management responsibilities and inclusive education, in addition to center facilitators and animators 	Met

Effectiveness. The program has a strong focus on community sensitization and ownership as well as working with government, which has helped ensure its effectiveness. Many female animators have been recruited to work in Speed Schools as well as ensure 40% female participation in SMCs. Flexibility in the training to attract female trainers⁸⁶ and community sensitization on the importance of educating girls, has helped the program reach an equal number of girls and boys. SF’s approach of working through local implementing partners coupled with the use of temporary structures built by the local community for Speed Schools, all help to provide cost effectiveness.

⁸⁵ Rapport de Capitalisation, March 2021.

⁸⁶ KII, Mali, March 2021.

Working through local partners has enabled effective community sensitisation and engagement and helped to identify children who could benefit from Speed Schools.⁸⁷ The FAFO evaluation found that the Speed School program offered value for money when compared to national benchmarks on per student expenditure for primary education. However, it is important to look more closely at dropout and retention numbers to get an accurate cost effectiveness figure for the program after 1 year or 2 years.⁸⁸

Impact. SF has clear anti-fraud and corruption policies and well-defined response procedures. SF conducted a detailed conflict sensitive risk analysis and maintains an anonymous complaints and whistleblowing mechanism. That said, the risk analysis could be stronger at the level of child protection mitigation strategies given the populations SF serves. Despite this, a comprehensive mapping of CWD enabled the program to increase support for these vulnerable children.⁸⁹ An increase in insecurity coupled with COVID-19 closed some program-supported schools in Burkina Faso and Mali.

Scale or Sustainability of Efforts. Analysis showed that there has been a 5% increase in school enrolment of children/siblings among households whose children attended the Speed Schools program, showing a longer-term unanticipated impact of Speed Schools.⁹⁰ Under FAFO's evaluation of SF's overall Speed Schools program in the region, interviews with teachers and school leaders in formal primary schools found that Speed School graduates transition and perform as well as other students. Speed Schools feed graduates into government primary schools which are situated within a 5km radius of the Speed School to help make transition sustainable. SF has signed an agreement with the governments in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger to promote knowledge sharing and collaboration for all of SF's work in the region. The governments in each country have now assumed responsibility for the oversight of Speed Schools increasing their likelihood of sustainability. SF has leveraged funding from other donors in addition to Norad.

Recommendations for follow-on programming:

- Include tracking of Speed School graduates and their retention after transition to government schools.
- Develop program design to reach older age groups and transition into TVET or other post-primary education and skills programs (potentially as a follow-on innovation).
- Design scale up of programming to improve access and reduce dropout in more regions of target countries.

2.8 Woord en Daad

Woord en Daad is a Dutch faith-based NGO working in 22 countries. One of Woord en Daad's signature programs is Job Booster, an integrated approach playing a brokering role between demand and supply for youth employment. Job Booster Burkina Faso (JBBF) is the first Woord en Daad program Norad has funded.

Program and relevance. The Job Booster program includes the provision of vocational training and life skills for young people, job placement and coaching, and matching local demand for workers with supply of young people. The goal of JBBF is to decrease poverty through increasing employment with an overall expected result that 15,000

⁸⁷ KII, Mali, March 2021.

⁸⁸ The FAFO (2018) evaluation found that on average across the three countries, 68% of the 2014-15 cohort were still attending school but this was a much lower percentage in Niger and much higher in Burkina Faso and Mali.

⁸⁹ KII, Mali, March 2021.

⁹⁰ SF 2018 Annual Progress Report.

young people are enterprising, competent and economically active in a business-friendly environment within six months of completing training. JBBF is working in three regions of Burkina Faso in association with three implementing partners: Evangelical Support and Development Association (AEAD), Christian Relief and Development Organization (CREDO) and Permanent Secretariat of NGOs in Burkina Faso (SPONG), and 30-40 service delivery and training partners.

JBBF addresses the supply and demand side of employability among youth, working closely with the Ministry of Youth and Youth Entrepreneurship (MJPEJ). JBBF has signed an agreement with the Ministry of Employment to align JBBF with its budget and strategy on youth employability. Additionally, a memorandum of understanding has been put in place with a network of community banks, Réseau des Caisses Populaires du Burkina (RCPB), to support start-up loans for youth entrepreneurs. JBBF has engaged in capacity building of TVET centers to improve the quality and relevance of training to ensure youth have increased outcomes in wage and self-employment. JBBF tracks and disaggregates data by gender and disability.

Efficiency.

Outcomes	Results to date ⁹¹	Overall impact
Outcome 1 (policy/legislation): Civil society actors and business representatives are strengthened for effective dialogue with state actors and monitoring/influencing of public policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SPONG has engaged with government agencies and jobs stakeholders in order to provide a diagnostic report on the draft legal and institutional framework on TVET ▪ SPONG carried out three studies on the enabling environment for TVET, the enabling environment for decent employment, and on young people's access to decent employment study 	Met
Outcome 2 (quality): Improved quality and relevance of 41 vocational training centers in three regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall quality management system (QMS) scores for 40 TVET centers increased from 2.36 (2017) to 2.73 (2020) since the start of the program due to capacity development inputs but this is slightly below the 2020 target of 3.0 	Under target
Outcome 3 (training): 20,833 rural and urban vulnerable people (at least 50% girls) have access to quality vocational training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 24,791 youth trained through the program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 14% of the poorest youth (against target of 9.5%) including 317 YWDs ○ 36% of students trained were female (target 50%) 	Exceeded
Outcome 4 (employment /entrepreneurship): 15,000 trained young people earn a sustainable income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 18,071 youth trained under JBBF are employed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 317 YWD of these employed (54% female)⁹² 	Exceeded

Effectiveness. The MTR review found that JBBF's approach is cost-effective (scoring 5/6), in helping train young people and in enabling them to find work. Private sector engagement has increased over the life of the program. TVET centers supported by JBBF produce graduates with more practical and relevant training and employers have been engaged to subsidize training costs and then employ young people at the end of their training, thus creating investment. Further, JBBF has invested in partner capacity development, including reporting and management capacity.⁹³

⁹¹ All quantitative data in this section are taken from Narrative Progress Report 2019, Narrative Progress Report 2020 and Annual Plan, 2021.

⁹² KII, Woord en Daad, March 2021.

⁹³ KII, Burkina Faso, March 2021.

Impact. Woord en Daad has an anti-corruption policy and fraud protocol in place and monitors for even minor financial incompetence. However, there is no available evidence to indicate that a detailed risk analysis incorporating conflict sensitive and do no harm approaches has been developed and integrated into program risk management. COVID-19 had an impact on project delivery during the first half of 2020. As such, young people were not able to access credit as it was not possible for the JBBF team to finalise agreements with the National Guarantee Fund (SOFIGIB) and the RCPB until later in the year. However, the program accelerated activities in the second half of the year.

Scale or Sustainability of Efforts. JBBF was the first Job Booster program that Woord en Daad implemented and was seen as a proof of concept. As such Job Booster is in the process of scaling up both in the region and globally from best practices and lessons learned during its development and implementation in Burkina Faso. An additional 10,000 youth in the Northeast regions of Burkina Faso are being reached through Dutch funding which has allowed the program to expand. Woord en Daad is in the process of registering Job Booster as a social enterprise in Burkina Faso so it can operate on a full cost-recovery basis and support additional marginalized groups. The link with RCPB to enable youth to access finance is a success of the program, addressing a key barrier to youth entrepreneurship and economic growth.⁹⁴ Further, there is strong demand currently by MSMEs for youth graduating from JBBF. However, consideration needs to be given to whether local firms will reach a saturation point, and what diversification needs to be made within the program related to self-employment and emerging market opportunities, to ensure continuous wage and self-employment for vulnerable groups in keeping with economic growth.

Recommendations for follow-on programming:

- Conduct gender-sensitive local labor market assessments to design training for young women and target potential female employment opportunities in women-dominated sectors, traditional male-dominated sectors, entrepreneurship, and emerging green economies.
- Develop stronger access to finance through partnerships with microfinance institutions and national companies who might provide credit, reduced loans, or seed funding to start-ups.
- Test scalability of approach to ensure the program does not lose effectiveness over time due to market saturation in local areas.

⁹⁴ SPONG et Job Booster (2020).

SECTION 3: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the course of this review, all eight implementing organizations indicated that the relationship with Norad was a supportive partnership that allowed them to feel trusted and to deliver on the outcomes promised. In addition, it was noted that Norad's understanding of the context and its complexities allowed for flexibility and adaptability of programming as relevant. Further, Norad's responsiveness allowed for timely decision-making. The one suggestion across the portfolio was that Norad consider field missions to see activities, strengthen national level advocacy and government relationships, and reinforce the relationship with implementing partners at regional and field level.

3.1 Summary Findings and Lessons Learned from Across the Portfolio

Relevance. Most of the Norad-funded implementing partners under this review have strong relationships with central and/or decentralized government authorities in either Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger. Where these relationships exist, improvements to quality learning, infrastructure and a transfer of skills and knowledge has been successful. It is more challenging, however, in the case of behavior change, specifically advocacy on equity and inclusion in the form of new policies or government approaches to address barriers and harmful practices that exist, and the institutionalization of equity and inclusion as part of teacher preparation and training, professional development, community mobilization and school culture. In some instances, there are signs of improvement, but sustainable change is part of a longer trajectory.

While the portfolio calls for the strengthening of CSO capacity, there are mixed results showing how international NGOs are building local civil society capacity and passing on skills and knowledge to CSOs. In several key informant interviews, CSOs and community leaders wanted to learn how to implement the work and be mentored by an international organization, rather than watch the organization do the work and leave them without the know-how to sustain and amplify the work. This highlights the need for a more sustained, deliberate, explicit and planned focus on capacity development.

For the most part, the focus on girls and CWD are reflected in the indicators, and are a priority for disaggregation of data, monitoring and evaluation and other reporting. That said, there are few interventions in the portfolio that specifically address girls and young women or are created to directly address the gaps and needs determined from baseline reporting. One implementing partner created a link between the challenges of poverty and livelihoods security and the retention of girls and CWD in schools. As such, programming reflects how this organization has tried to strengthen linkages between cause and effect and increase enrollment as well as retention. This should be developed further and expanded across the portfolio in order to mobilize CSO support around these critical socio-economic challenges affecting education outcomes and increase retention and completion rates for children and youth in light of these multidimensional complexities. Resources on some projects were allocated to address out-of-school CWD in order to increase their attendance in schools. That said, across the portfolio, even when infrastructure and rehabilitation was provided as part of project deliverables to encourage attendance of CWD in schools, there was an overwhelming lack of teacher training on how to mainstream CWD in classrooms, as well as equipment or material resources to help children with specific disabilities related to sight, hearing, cognitive development among others.

Efficiency. The majority of implementing partners will have met or exceeded most outcome targets. A few organizations have achieved or exceeded targets even at MTR, which raises the question whether the targets were

underestimated for the funding support received. In addition, the results frameworks for each organization were reporting on output level data rather than cumulative progress towards outcome level data. As a result, output level data did not usually show annual versus cumulative results toward intended outcomes. Some organizations collected data for a particular country as part of other data collection and organizational strategic indicators. Overall, it could not always be determined whether there was double counting with numbers or if *output* numbers related to *outcome* target results when the former did not directly relate to stipulated outcome target numbers or percentages.

Effectiveness. All implementing partners have addressed the 10% cost share required of Norad, though a few have linked this to leveraging other donor partners and creating synergies between projects. There were variations in budgets in terms of how much was stipulated for local partner organizations and CSOs, oftentimes showing under budgeting for capacity development of CSOs where this should be a key outcome and impact of a portfolio ensuring CSO support for education.

Impact. All organizations provided detailed risk management plans and the majority had COVID-19 contingency plans. That said, there is no planning related to internal equity and inclusion in terms of hiring of staff that might reflect internal equity and inclusion priorities as well as external assets for reaching the most vulnerable. Several organizations included safeguarding, conflict sensitive programming, and child protection mitigation steps should staff or partner CSOs be involved in abuse, exploitation or violence. This should be mandatory across all implementing partners, along with a plan for connecting to key local level response and referral points of contact.

Sustainability. All of the projects were working with local actors (community, government and for the employability projects, the private sector) with many also working with central government at a policy and advocacy level. Greater engagement most often occurred with regional and local government authorities versus central level authorities. While important to keep central government relationships, the emphasis on decentralization resulted in more effective relationship building, advocacy and ownership at local and regional levels. By working at decentralized levels, in collaboration with government authorities rather than through parallel structures or siloes, this integrated approach has strong potential for sustainability provided there is sufficient external or national funding to support local and national activities and public-private partnership investments. Several projects have addressed pre-service teacher training and in-service professional development of teachers and other management level education staff. For equity and inclusion, more needs to be done to allow for scale and institutionalization of priorities related to girls and CWD/YWD. Further, a lack of emphasis on capacity building of CSOs that support and reinforce the school environment does not ensure that the supports around schools are being leveraged for the long-term or that policy level changes are held accountable in practice across the education system. Lastly, government representatives and community leaders reiterated that the State did not exclude children or youth and that the issue around out-of-school or vulnerable children was about poverty, food security and the fractured link to livelihoods. To increase and sustain access, retention and learning outcomes for vulnerable children and youth, more needs to be done to address poverty, resource scarcity and food security through a holistic approach embedded in policy and programmatic efforts.

3.2 Recommendations for a Possible New Period of Norad Funding

In early 2021, Norad published a new strategy to 2030⁹⁵ which outlines five strategic priorities:

1. Invest more strategically;
2. Be a key partner in sustainable development;
3. Contribute to a greener world;
4. Be a champion of innovation within development cooperation; and
5. Strengthen and systematize the development, sharing and use of knowledge within Norad.

Our recommendations are deliberately framed to align to these priorities.

Overarching recommendation: Continue funding a hybrid of education and skills training projects across the Sahel for vulnerable children and youth, with a focus on access and retention for (adolescent) girls and CWD/YWD. Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger are young populations facing high rates of OOSC and youth unemployment, among the countries furthest behind on reaching the SDGs, and threatened by cycles of conflict, humanitarian and environmental crises. This 2017–2021 investment has produced important results in challenging contexts and, in some cases, has leveraged additional investment from other donors. Continued investment also aligns with Norad’s new Sahel strategy.

Recommendation 1 (in line with Norad Strategic Priority 5): Develop a knowledge and resource sharing collaboration space for all grantees as part of the civil society portfolio support for education. This would enable grantees to meet quarterly or semi-annually, for example, to learn and share tools and resources across the portfolio in-person at country-level. Annually, a similar collaboration at regional level would enhance knowledge-sharing and collaboration in-person or through a digital platform that allowed for country/regional and organizational headquarters level participation. Several grantees noted that they had tried to reach out to other grantees in an effort to coordinate and leverage resources in-country at regional level. In two cases, a grantee worked with another grantee and was able to dovetail programming to increase local solutions for participant target groups in ways that helped reinforce access and learning opportunities for OOSC and other vulnerable children. This should be reinforced among all grantees as an expectation of support under this program in order to coordinate advocacy/policy with government officials and education authorities at central and local levels and increase the cost-effectiveness, impact and sustainability of programming and participation.

Recommendation 2 (in line with Norad Strategic Priority 1): Ensure budgets and results are clearly presented at outcome level and disaggregated by beneficiary groups so that progress can easily be measured. Cumulative results should be captured each year against the targets for each outcome. This would allow for more targeted discussions on whether a project is exceeding or underachieving targets on an annual basis, or on track to hit target numbers in support of outcomes as well as on cost efficiency and effectiveness. The following actions would further help to support this:

- Base targets and annual indicators on numbers not just percentages, with annual reporting showing clear progress toward outcome targets.
- Require disaggregation of targets and indicators by girls and CWD/YWD.
- Develop common templates for budgetary reporting, aligned with results, that would help categorize costs at outcome level in a way that would be comparable across projects.

⁹⁵ Norad (2021). *Norad’s strategy towards 2030*. Oslo: Norad. <https://www.norad.no/globalassets/publikasjoner/publikasjoner-2021/norads-strategy-towards-2030.pdf>

Norad should develop a standardized budget template and results framework that would not be burdensome to partners but provide a clear and consistent way of tracking and analyzing efficiencies, effectiveness and impact across the portfolio.

Recommendation 3 (in line with Norad Strategic Priority 4): Encourage grantees to design a proof of concept intervention under the project that manages risk but also demonstrates new approaches to existing challenges.

A portion of the overall budget (e.g. 5-10%) could be stipulated for an innovative and targeted approach to be piloted and developed *with* communities for the retention of (adolescent) girls or CWD/YWD, for example, or to explore how to scale an intervention in a contextualized way in other regions of the country or in neighboring countries. This would help organizations listen for new approaches led by communities and allow for lessons learned or a best practice to emerge that is different than imitation or duplication programming.

Recommendation 4 (in line with Norad Strategic Priority 3): Require grantees to demonstrate explicit plans and budget allocation for technical and operational capacity building of local CSOs in grants under this portfolio.

This should consider financial and grant management capacity, data collection and reporting and effective community and government (policy/advocacy) engagement on formal and non-formal education and/or skills and employability. As such, at least one of the outcomes for each grantee should be linked to increased capacity of local level CSOs with regard to support for education or skills training of vulnerable children/youth. This could include the development of a communications and messaging strategy to prioritize sensitization at both government and sub-community level and advocacy for equity and inclusion as part of policy and planning. Doing this would help emphasize policy change as well as community mobilization that reaches marginalized children and youth, supporting their own agency by providing information so they can learn about and access opportunities beyond what they hear from community gatekeepers/parents. This would improve efforts towards sustainability and scale.

Recommendation 5 (in line with Norad Strategic Priority 2): For youth-focused interventions, a requirement of skills training should be an accompaniment plan as part of a transition into new or better employment, or support to entrepreneurship that would include mentorship, access to finance and start-up resources, as well as connections to supply and value chains.

In addition, relevant organizations should develop a private sector engagement plan that builds the relationship between TVETs and the local business community or labor market. The private sector engagement plan should include identification of private sector partners through ongoing youth-driven local labor market assessments, and work to strengthen linkages between micro, small and medium enterprises and new start-ups as well as larger enterprises through peer and other mentorship and coaching. This would ensure demand-side and supply-side issues are considered.

Recommendation 6: Engage the Norwegian Embassy in Bamako as part of a more systematic management approach to support and track Recommendations 1 – 4 at country/regional level, strengthening relationships with implementing partners, knowledge sharing, cost-effectiveness, risk management and innovations to existing challenges.