

UNICEF Evaluation Management Response Template

Evaluation Title: MULTI-COUNTRY EVALUATION OF THE UNICEF-NORAD PROGRAMME "IMPROVING ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN IN THE SAHEL IN BURKINA FASO, MALI AND NIGER" (2017-2023)

Region: West and Central Africa

Office: WCARO

Evaluation Year: 2024

Person-In-Charge for Follow-up to Management Response: Arpana Pandey, Education Specialist, WCAR

Overall Response to the Evaluation: *Include here Senior Management general impression on the process and outcomes of the evaluation, adequacy of evidence collected, and reasonableness of and the concurrence with findings. Were there shortfalls or limitations in the process and/outcomes? Are there any additional insights not articulated in the recommendations?* The evaluation offers several valuable insights; however, it also presents notable methodological limitations. These include a reliance on perception-based, data that can be subjective and a relatively small sample size, which may affect the overall validity of the findings. While the evaluation highlights important challenges, such as gaps in monitoring and the support provided to children with disabilities, these issues are not sufficiently addressed in the recommendations. Some of the recommendations appear to go beyond the scope of the current programme and relate to initiatives that the country office is already actively pursuing.

Planned Use of Evaluation: *Include here what's the process to facilitate the intended use by the intended users, focusing on how evaluation findings will affect implementation of the programme and contribute to evidence-based decision making* The evaluation findings have been shared with the country offices and will be shared with key stakeholders in country to ensure that the findings and recommendations are integrated into future programs.

Allowed Editor: *Include here name/s of person/s who will edit the Management Response in the EMR Tracker*

RECOMMENDATIONS and ACTIONS:

Evaluation Recommendation 1: Integrate specific interventions for early childhood education (ages 3 to 5) into education sector programs. This is to address the demand for schooling for children of all ages in response to the positive impact of communication activities carried out within the communities served to promote social and behavioural change in favour of children's education (Burkina Faso and Niger)

Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Partially agree

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons: While UNICEF fully recognizes and actively supports the importance of Early Childhood Education (ECE), including through its programming and Country Programme Documents (CPDs) in the countries concerned, it is important to note that the scope of this particular evaluation focused on **the 6–17 age group** and did not include ECE. As such, while the recommendation aligns with UNICEF's broader priorities, it falls outside the remit of this evaluation.

Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage:	Actions taken	Supporting documents

Construction/rehabilitation of 87 spaces for pre-primary education in 5 regions of the country (Boucle du Mouhoun, Centre-Nord, Est, Nord, Sahel).	Burkina Faso	Franck Tamini	31/12/2025	Underway	A total of 87 community-based pre-primary education structures (Bisongo) have been built, equipped and are operational, providing education to more than 8,000 children aged 3-5 in the 5 targeted regions.	Education 2025 Annual Report
Teacher training in early learning and pre-primary education	Niger	Yolande Tiendrebeogo	31/12/2026	Underway	Training for pre-primary supervisors and students' parents on their roles and responsibilities is planned for the entire duration of the CPD. Given the limited means, the training is carried out by cascade in the hope of reaching as many supervisors and parents as possible.	2025 Annual Report

Evaluation Recommendation 2: Design a robust results framework with SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound) indicators that integrate gender, equity, and the rights of vulnerable people and/or people with disabilities when formulating education sector programs to ensure their evaluability. Therefore, actions related to the identification of final targets for impact, outcome, and output indicators should be carried out and updated based on contextual changes during implementation. As such, it is also and above all important to prioritize the use of results indicators for which baseline situations are known, in order to better assess the expected impacts. It is also worth considering the introduction of decentralized monitoring mechanisms. (Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali)

Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Disagree

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons: This recommendation is rejected. UNICEF uses SMART indicators. The recommendation seems to refer to multiple extensions and staff turnover that has created challenges in reporting rather than a lack of ability to formulate indicators. Additionally, to ease the burden of reporting, future projects should align impact and outcome level indicators as closely as possible with existing indicators in frameworks such as CPD/RAM and CSI, rather than creating new ones.

Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents

Evaluation Recommendation 3: Incorporate the construction and rehabilitation of school infrastructures into national priorities, as well as the priorities of international organizations, with a focus on completing these activities within a reasonable timeframe. This will help address the influx of new arrivals driven by the implementation of alternative and accelerated learning opportunities (SSA/P), aimed at providing educational access to the most marginalized groups. Additionally, it is crucial to emphasize the importance of strengthening teacher training and raising awareness of the specific needs of children with disabilities (Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali)

Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Partially agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons: The recommendation is relevant as it underscores the need to complement classroom construction with robust pre- and in-service training to meet the needs of children with disabilities. However, construction and rehabilitation of school infrastructure is already reflected in national education priorities across the targeted countries and UNICEF aligns its support, accordingly, based on available resources. Moreover, the construction time-frame also depends on the security situation, among other factors.						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage:	Actions taken	Supporting documents
Construction of 8 comprehensive and technical colleges and 15 primary schools in six regions of Burkina Faso according to child friendly school standards which include inclusion of disability and skills' development	Burkina Faso	Adama Traore	31/12/2025	Underway	Construction underway of 8 comprehensive and technical and vocational colleges in two regions of the country (Centre and Centre West) and 15 schools with BMZ and Japan Natcom funds	Partnership agreement between JICA-UNICEF
<p>UNICEF Mali is actively advancing the recommendations through initiatives aligned with national priorities. Key projects include the JICA-supported construction and rehabilitation of 42 classrooms and 30 WASH facilities.</p> <p>The ECW project, which covers the construction and rehabilitation of 60 classrooms and 20 early childhood development centers benefiting thousands of children.</p> <p>Additionally, 120 latrines are being rehabilitated in 80 schools, 67 accelerated learning sites (SSA/P) will support 2,000 children, and 1,500 teachers have been trained in areas such as</p>	Mali	Desire Adomou	<p>30/06/2026</p> <p>31/12/2026</p>	Underway	<p>In 2023 and 2024, significant progress was made in improving school infrastructure and teacher capacity. UNICEF supported the construction of WASH facilities in 11 schools and installed water and sanitation facilities in 57 schools, ensuring gender-segregated amenities that meet national standards. Additionally, semi-durable learning spaces were built in crisis-affected Mopti and Gao regions, leading to the establishment of two formal schools.</p> <p>On teacher training, thousands of educators received targeted capacity building in areas such as class assessment, instructional strategies, multigrade management, ICT use, peacebuilding, and gender-responsive pedagogy. Specialized training also included repetition reduction, pedagogy for large groups, mental health psychosocial support, and education in emergencies, enhancing teachers' ability to address diverse student needs effectively.</p>	<p>1)JICA and ECW result frameworks</p> <p>2) RAM 2023 et 2024</p>

gender-sensitive pedagogy, education in emergencies, mental health psychosocial support, and disaster risk reduction.						
Establishment of 140 Community Alternative Youth Education Centers Construction of the Route Filingue school Training of school committees. Members on safety and school maintenance	Niger	Yolande Tiendrebeogo	31/12/2025 31/12/2025	Completed Completed	UNICEF supported the establishment of 140 CCEAJ centers, with the construction process emphasizing the use of local materials and adherence to environmental standards. A newly built 14-classroom school, which includes a headmaster's office, a boundary wall, and three latrine blocks for teachers, girls, and boys. The school was constructed in line with environmental standards and is equipped with solar electrification. Access ramps were constructed to facilitate mobility for children with disabilities, ensuring the project's compliance with inclusion standards. Training was also provided to school management committees, including teachers and parents' associations, on school safety and maintenance, further supporting the inclusion of children with special needs, particularly those with disabilities.	
Evaluation Recommendation 4: To enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of education sector programmes strategic partnerships and/or strengthen coordination with other ministries with other ministries, such as those in charge of vocational training, agriculture and agriculture and livestock, and youth who deal with related issues of schooling schooling/training and child/adolescent protection. (Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso)						
Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage:	Actions taken	Supporting documents
Adoption of the triple nexus by the Education technical and financial partners (PTFs) and the	Burkina Faso	Adama Traore	31/12/2024	Completed	Protocol signed on July 7, 2021, between the Ministries of Water, Health, and Education and implemented during the period 2021-2024	Collaboration protocol. Email from the Secretariat of the

government through a partnership framework and a protocol.						Head of the Education TFPs shared within the partnership framework dated January 5, 2023
<p>Project on Toxic waste management, including the prevention of lead poisoning in school settings (NORAD)</p> <p>Collaboration with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of the Environment, Sanitation and Sustainable Development (National Directorate for Sanitation, Pollution Control and Nuisance Management) - Ministry of Health and Social Development (National Institute of National Health) 	Mali	Desire Adomou	31/12/2026	Underway	<p>The Education Programme in Mali is part of an integrated country programme based on the Life Cycle Approach, delivering services across education, health, nutrition, WASH, and child protection. To achieve its goals, the programme collaborates with multiple line ministries, including the Ministries of Environment, Health, Vocational Training, and Women's Empowerment, using related UNICEF sector programmes as entry points for coordination and joint action.</p>	<p>2020-2024 Country Programme Document (CPD)</p> <p>Note: The validity of the CPD has been extended until 2026.</p> <p>Concept Note approved and funded by NORAD</p>
<p>System strengthening - Digital learning solution (Collaboration with the World Bank and mobile phone companies)</p> <p>Teacher training in early learning and preschool education (Collaboration with the World Bank and UNESCO)</p> <p>System strengthening - Gender-sensitive access (excluding SRGBV)</p> <p>Collaboration with the Social and Behavior Change (SBC), Health</p>	Niger	Yolande Tiendrebeogo	31/12/2026	Underway	<p>With the support of the Generation Unlimited (GenU) team, UNICEF has helped strengthen the education and training system by providing a digital learning platform called "Passport to Earning (P2E)". As a result, 3,000 adolescents in the Diffa, Agadez, Dosso, and Zinder regions now have access to online learning opportunities to strengthen their employability skills. An assessment of 39 youth training and support structures was carried out in the four regions targeted by the P2E initiative. As a result, needs were evaluated and laptops, digital tablets with around 100 connection modems were provided thanks to a partnership with Airtel. Going forward, UNICEF is organizing co-creation workshops to expand the training offering with modules tailored to</p>	2026 annual report

and WASH sections, and UN agencies of the PHARE Programme (UNFPA, WFP, etc.)					the current needs of young people. The National Youth Council is the main technical partner.	
Evaluation Recommendation 5: Promote the replicability and institutionalization of implemented interventions by engaging relevant stakeholders to advocate for their inclusion in national and decentralized development plans. This approach will ensure that the sustainability of these interventions extends to those that require dedicated budgets for their continued implementation (Mali and Niger)						
Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Partially Agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons: This recommendation is partially accepted. While advocating for the inclusion of interventions in national and decentralized development plans supports their sustainability, it is also crucial to consider the objective of institutionalization and scale during the program design stage. This ensures that interventions are designed in a way that facilitates their institutionalization. This recommendation should be reformulated as the following: Prioritize the objective of institutionalization and scalability during the program design phase. This will help ensure that interventions are structured to support their long-term integration and expansion.						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
Continue ensuring the ownership of all relevant stakeholders (at national or decentralized levels) through their active involvement in the design and implementation of all interventions, to set the stage for replicability and institutionalization	Mali	Desire Adomou	Continuous	Underway	The concept of localization, which requires the active involvement of all relevant stakeholders (at national or decentralized levels) in the design and implementation of all interventions, is one of the core strategies that UNICEF Mali utilizes to ensure ownership, setting the stage for replicability and institutionalization of these efforts.	End-year RAM Reports
Strengthening the Digital Learning Solution System (Collaboration with the World Bank and Mobile Phone Companies) Strengthening the Gender-Sensitive Access System (excluding SRGBV)	Niger	Yolande Tiendrebeogo	31/12/2026	Underway	Partnerships with other organizations and donors help ensure that beneficiaries have sufficient resources to support a sustained period of ownership. Additionally, behaviour change campaigns led by the SBC will focus on promoting strategies for long-term ownership and sustainability	End year RAM report

Commented [AP1]: @Yolande Tiendrebeogo are there any partnerships with Ministries that can be included in this text?

Commented [YT2R1]: @Arpana Pandey a ce niveau les principaux partenariats établis sont avec la Banque Mondiale et Airtel

Collaboration with the Social and Behavior Change (SBC), Health and WASH sections, and UN agencies of the PHARE Program (UNFPA, WFP, etc.)						
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Evaluation Recommendation 6: Decide on and enforce deadlines for the timely transfer of resources by implementing partners in line with the need to implement interventions on the basis of partnership agreements (Mali)

Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Disagree

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons: This recommendation is rejected. Resources are transferred according to contractual agreements set in place respecting rules and procedures, not by perceived ‘urgency’ (which also has rules and procedures) The recommendation does not take into consideration the challenges in context which affect programming, often external factors which are beyond the control of UNICEF and its partners.

Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implement action stage:	Actions taken	Supporting documents

Evaluation Recommendation 7: To address the dysfunctions of the system of supply of material resources in general and particularly those of school kits for students and educational kits for teachers by improving their availability if possible through actions: (i) of pre-positioning in a timely manner if funds permit; (ii) prioritization of local purchases if feasible (iii) taking into account the CASH modality in the implementation of interventions if possible. (Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger)

Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Disagree

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons: The analysis of different options is typically undertaken at the country office level to ensure timely distribution of school kits, before moving forward with offshore purchase. This recommendation as such does not add anything new to the toolkit of the country office, nor require any action.

Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implement action stage:	Actions taken	Supporting documents

Evaluation Recommendation 8: Accentuate actions in the targeted communities on social and behavioral change with the aim of their acceptance of the **positive perception of girls' education** and the **improvement of child protection systems** (including issues related to child marriage, GBV and disability). These actions, reinforced by the provision of scholarships or the construction of local secondary schools to limit the displacement/confidence of children, would aim to make communities accountable, and would focus primarily on: (i) girls' education, to ensure that there is no discrimination in the

funding of education between girls and boys; (ii) the continuity of schooling for children after primary school, regardless of their gender. (iii) children with disabilities should benefit from a more tailored approach to their specific needs. (Burkina Faso and Mali)

Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Agree

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons: Partially agree as these actions are already underway at the country level.

Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
Implementation of integrated and multi-sectoral projects taking into account gender, GBV and inclusion within the framework of the Sahel resilience project (BRS/BMZ).	Burkina Faso	Adama Traore	31/12/2025	Underway	Implementation of multisectoral partnerships within the framework of the joint WFP-UNICEF-GIZ program in the Eastern region	2025 Annual Report of the Country Office
Collaboration with SBC section on Back-to-School Campaign.	Mali	Desire Adomou	Continuous	Underway	The Education Programme works closely with the SBC section to raise awareness of the importance of education. Each year, they jointly launch a “Back to Learning” campaign to encourage school enrolment, particularly for girls and children with disabilities. Throughout the year, SBC also engages Youth Ambassadors to promote continued attendance and retention in schools.	End-year RAM Reports (2025, 2026)

Evaluation Recommendation 9: Organize capacity-building for a large number of Ministry of Education stakeholders, while ensuring that a pool of beneficiaries (extended to community populations) is established over the long term in their deployment zone. This is to remedy their unpredictable transfer outside the target zones of implemented programs after they have benefited from capacity building linked to interventions (Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger)

Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Partially agree

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons: While UNICEF recognizes the value of capacity-building, it is important to note that comprehensive capacity building requires significant financial resources. There are also challenges with ensuring a fixed pool of beneficiaries is established. Given the dynamic nature of country and community contexts, as well as the evolving needs of vulnerable populations, a static pool may risk excluding newly emerging or shifting vulnerable groups

Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
Implementation of a new continuing education strategy based on local supervisors for scaling up innovations	Burkina Faso	Adama Traore	31/12/2026	Underway	Cascade training of education supervisors who in turn train teachers	Rapport annuel 2025 Education
Strengthening institutional and community capacities to improve education	Mali	Desire Adomou		Completed	<p>At the community level, over 10,000 School Management Committee (SMC) members from 1,921 schools received capacity building to support school operations, including monitoring student and teacher attendance. 1,449 SMC members were specifically trained in their roles and responsibilities, enabling stronger community engagement in improving education quality.</p> <p>At the institutional level, 43 technical staff from the Ministry of Education (including 5 women) at national and local levels were trained in participatory management, monitoring, evaluation, and supervision of SMCs</p>	RAM 2024; RAM 2023
<p>Training teachers in early learning and preschool education (in collaboration with the World Bank and UNESCO)</p> <p>Training school communities, such as parent-teacher associations and school management committees.</p>	Niger	Yolande Tiendrebeogo	31/12/2026	Underway	Training for pre-primary supervisors and students' parents on their roles and responsibilities is planned for the entire duration of the CPD. Given the limited means, the training is carried out by cascade in the hope of reaching as many supervisors and parents as possible.	End year RAM report