

ADRA Norway

SEAQE Sahel

Results Report 2017-2021

Acronyms

ADENOR Association pour le Développement du Nord Mali AMSS Association Malienne pour la Survie au Sahel

AMUPI Association Malienne pour l'Unité et le Progrès de l'Islam

BOND British Overseas NGOs for Development (BOND)
CAFO Coordination des Associations Feminines de Rharous

CAP Centres of Pedagogical Activities
CBO Community-Based Organization

CFEPD Certificat deFin d'Etudes du Premier Degre'
CORE Country Operations Review for Excellence

CSO Civil Society Organisation
CwD Children living with disables
DPO Disabled Persons Organisation

DRR Disaster risk reduction

EMA Educating Mothers' Association
EGMA Early grade mathematics assessment
EGRA Early grade reading assessment

eLab Electronic laboratory

ETLE Effective Teaching and Learning Environment Assessment

ETLL Education Technical Learning Lab FIFE Fridensau Institute of Education

GBV Gender based violence

GCE Global Campaign for Education

GITLL Gender and Inclusion Technical Learning Lab

HT Headteacher

IGA Income Generation Activities

MEAL Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning

MoE Ministry of Education

MOU Memorandum of Understanding

MP3 Media player audio MTR Mid-Term Review NFI Non-food items

NGO non-government organisation

NOK Norwegian Kroner

NRC Norwegian refugee council OOSC Out of school children

PAM Programme Alimentaire Mondiale de Tombouctou PASEC Programme for the Analysis of Education Systems PDAC Programme Development and Advisory Committee

PDO Persons with disability organisations

PSS Psychosocial support
PTA Parent Teacher Association
SDGs Sustainable Development Goals

SEAQE Sahel Strengthening Equity, Access and Quality in Education Sahel

SMC School Management Committee

ToC Theory of Change
TOFI Together for Inclusion
ToT Training of Trainers
VfM Value for Money

WASH Water, Sanitation and Hygiene WFP World food programme WHO World Health Organisation

WIDE UNESCO World Inequality Database on education

FIFE Friedensau Institute for Evaluation

FEMAPH Fédération Malienne des Associations de Personnes Handicapées

FNPH Fédération Nigérienne des Personnes Handicapées

Executive Summary

SEAQE Sahel is a comprehensive inclusive education program implemented in fragile rural villages throughout Mali and Niger. The program supports 25 schools across the Timbuktu region of Mali and 20 schools in the Tillaberi and Banicane regions of Niger. Since baseline (April 2018), enrolment numbers have increased from 12,858 (6,676 boys, 6,182 girls) students to 17,761 (9,087 boys, 8,674 girls) students in 2021, representing an additional 2,761 students (or 16 percent) above the program objective target. This result is attributed to the extraordinary commitment and engagement of communities to increasing enrolment, quality, and inclusion within SEAQE Sahel schools. Parents, community members, religious leaders and village elders are heavily involved in initiatives that promote inclusive education and the provision of school security. Their engagement is a testament to the realisation that education brings dignity to the population and, moreover, mitigates the risks of young boys and girls within the community joining jihadist groups.

SEAQE Sahel supported education continuity during COVID-19 school closures and back to school campaigns, which contributed to increased enrolment once schools reopened. In Mali, ADRA provided technical support to the Ministry of Education in planning and developing education radio broadcasting programs and related teaching and learning material. The radio programs were broadcast nationwide. To ensure remote schools in SEAQE Sahel target areas were reached, ADRA distributed solar-powered MP3 players with recorded radio program lessons to communities. Parent-teacher associations (PTAs), school management committees (SMCs), community leaders, parents and caregivers facilitated small groups of students, including vulnerable children and children living with a disability, to listen to the radio programs and supported students to complete related tasks. Consequently, once schools reopened, an additional 857 students, including 294 children living with a disability, enrolled in SEAQE Sahel supported schools. Likewise, enrolment numbers in Niger increased by 179 students following school closures. This is attributed to back-to-school campaigns, community engagement and advocacy.

Because of increased enrolments, particularly in the remote areas of Gourma Rharous, Timbuktu (Mali), teacher demand also increased. Mali suffers from a shortage of qualified teachers as there is a limited number of teacher training institutions in the country and the government requires teachers to be fully certified prior to their recruitment and deployment. To address teacher shortages, ADRA recruited and trained 40 volunteer teachers to teach in remote schools and advocated for the government to address teacher shortages by recognising and assuming responsibility for volunteer teachers, increasing the number of places available within Pedagogical Diploma courses in the teacher training institutions, and providing in-service teacher training opportunities. ADRA Mali's advocacy efforts have contributed to the government opening a new teacher training institute in Gourma Rharous in February 2022. The teacher training institute provides pre-service training for new teachers in the area and also provides existing volunteer teachers with in-service training so that they can obtain their Pedagogical Diploma while working.

SEAQE Sahel has strengthened the quality of training provided in teacher training institutes in both Mali and Niger. ADRA Norway, in close collaboration with ADRA Niger, ADRA Mali and the Ministries of Education in both countries, developed and delivered pedagogical training in positive inclusive classroom management and evidence-based pedagogical approaches to inclusive education. These training modules were delivered at the teacher training institutes and have now been incorporated into pre-service teacher training programs in both countries.

The program has strengthened the capacity of governmental education advisors, head teachers, teachers, school management committees, parent-teacher associations, and community members to promote equal access to quality inclusive education for girls, children living with disabilities and other marginalised groups. All actors are committed to effectively help manage the schools and promote inclusion. Community members have, for instance, been involved in maintaining the security of schools, advocating for more teachers, and building temporary classrooms. Following capacity building by ADRA, the program schools' headteachers are leading more efficiently and the teachers have increased pedagogical knowledge, inclusive child-centred attitudes, and effective teaching skills. This is contributing to improvements in primary school completion rates although external factors such as security risks strongly influence annual results as completion requires students to pass exams and in 2021, many students were unable to attend the exams due to security risks. The program will advocate with ministry of educations in both countries to identify and apply alternative pathways for students who are not able to take primary school completion exams due to security situation.

ADRA has strengthened engagement and collaboration with persons with disability organisations (PDOs) in both Niger and Mali. In Mali, ADRA collaborates with Fédération Malienne des Associations de Personnes Handicapées (FEMAPH) to promote inclusion and the identification, screening and enrolment of children living with a disability. FEMAPH has recently opened a new branch in Gourma Rharous due to ADRA's extensive experience in the region. Similarly, ADRA Niger collaborates with Fédération Nigérienne des Personnes Handicapées (FNPH) through the Together for Inclusion (TOFI) consortium. ADRA supports the capacity development of PDOs through building on their lived experiences and the unique expertise of their members.

The SEAQE Sahel program complements and is foundational to the effectiveness of other ADRA programmes, including the Norad funded TOFI program and the Breaking Barriers, Improving Girls Education, Hope and Totality (BRIGHT) funded by Canadian Aid. SEAQE Sahel has established linkages with Strømme Foundation Speed schools so that previously out-of-school children (OOSC) who complete the Speed School program are provided with pathways to enrol in SEAQE Sahel schools.

ADRA has built a comprehensive inclusive education program in close collaboration with all 45 SEAQE Sahel communities and is laying the groundwork for sustainability. SEAQE Sahel communities are characterised by high levels of poverty, insecurity, limited means of communication and low literacy levels. ADRA Niger and ADRA Mali are working with relevant government departments and local government units to secure their commitment and capacity to continue program support for infrastructure maintenance, provision of textbooks and learning materials, training of headteachers and teachers, follow up on e-learning labs, and school monitoring visits by education officers. ADRA Niger is more confident than ADRA Mali in the ability of government and other education partners to sustain the whole school approach when the project concludes. The limited human and financial resources and capacity of government and limited support from external organisations has limited progress toward sustainability. ADRA Norway and partners have developed comprehensive and participatory sustainability and exit plans for both countries. The plans will be followed through 2022 and updated at the end of the program to ensure commitments by various stakeholders have been kept.

1. General Information

Name of grant recipient: ADRA Norway

Norad agreement number: GLO-3768 RAF-17/0046

Agreement period: 2017 – February 2023 Reporting period: 2017 – February 2022

Report type: Results Report

1.1. Relationship to UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

SEAQE Sahel is aligned to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 that seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all. The program is closely aligned to several specific targets within SDG 4 described in Table 1 below.



SDG 4, Target 4.A is to build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and to provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

SEAQE Sahel contributes to this target by constructing and rehabilitating classrooms, building and rehabilitating latrines that are gender-segregated and accessible for persons with disabilities, ensuring access to clean and safe drinking water and improving school feeding facilities. This is an action under Outcome 2: More children are accessing safe, protective and inclusive schools.



SDG 4, Target 4.5 is to eliminate all discrimination in education.

SEAQE Sahel contributes to this target by training governmental pedagogical advisors, leaders in teacher training institutes, community leaders, school leaders, teachers, SMCs and PTAs, parents, and students on inclusive education. And by raising awareness to increase enrolment, particularly of girls, children living with disabilities and other marginalised groups. This is an action under Outcome 1: More marginalised children in targeted communities are accessing basic education, Outcome 3. Education policies and plans promote equality and inclusion, and Outcome 4: Schools provide relevant quality education to marginalised students.



SDG 4, Target 4.C is to increase the supply of qualified teachers in developing countries.

SEAQE Sahel does this by working to improve the teacher workforce through training teacher training institutes, governmental pedagogical advisors, teachers and headteachers in student-centred approaches, subject-specific knowledge, pedagogy, child protection, teaching methodology and school culture for inclusion. The program further develops the capacity of local education authorities to strengthen school monitoring practices. In addition, SEAQE Sahel advocates with governments for teacher recruitment and the improvement of teachers' working conditions. This is an action under Outcome 3. Education policies and plans promote equality and inclusion, and Outcome 4: Schools provide quality relevant education to marginalised students.

Table 1. Relationship between SEAQE Sahel and SDG 4 Targets

The overall development goal of SEAQE Sahel is for all children in target areas in Mali and Niger to receive access to quality education, with a focus on marginalised children. The objective is for at least 15,000 marginalised children in 45 schools to attend and participate in quality and inclusive basic education while demonstrating relevant learning outcomes. SEAQE Sahel has four intended outcomes in working to improve education quality in target areas of Mali and Niger, including:

- 1. More marginalised children in target communities are accessing basic education.
- 2. More children are accessing safe, protective and inclusive schools.
- 3. Education policies and plans promote equality and inclusion.
- 4. Schools provide relevant quality education to marginalised learners.

In addition to the specific targets of SDG 4, SEAQE Sahel is especially relevant to SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation), and SDG 10 (reduced inequalities) as described in Table 2 below.



SDG 5 Gender equality

SEAQE Sahel is gender sensitive and gender transformative at all levels. Interventions have been informed by a gender analysis that clearly shows girls are marginalised and excluded from and within education due to cultural norms. SEAQE Sahel works to ensure girls can access quality education, achieve positive learning outcomes, participate in decision making processes, and be safe from violence. SEAQE Sahel provides gender-segregated latrines and washing facilities, promotes equal representation of women within school governance and management structures, and supports inclusive education at home and in school. Gender equality is integrated across all four outcomes.



SDG 6 Clean water and sanitation

SEAQE Sahel contributes to this SDG under Outcome 2: More children are accessing safe, protective and inclusive schools, where it focuses on improving water and sanitation facilities in target schools. The Program constructs boreholes with water quality as per definition of the WHO in Niger and Ministry of Energy and Water in Mali.



SDG 10 Reducing inequalities

SEAQE Sahel does this by focusing on leaving no one behind, working across all four outcomes with students, parents, teachers, school leaders and policy makers to promote and strengthen the provision of inclusive quality education in Mali and Niger, even in extremely remote and disadvantaged rural areas.

Table 2. Relationship between SEAQE Sahel and SDG 5, SDG 6 and SDG 10.

2. Results

2.1 Progress towards achieving the objectives of the Program

Program Objective: At least 15,000 marginalised children in 45 schools in the communes of Rharous and Banicane, Gourma Rharous District, Timbuktu Region, Mali, and in the communes of Dargol and Tagazar in the departments of Gotheye and Balayara, Tillabéri Region, Niger, attend and participate in quality and inclusive basic education and demonstrate relevant learning outcomes.

For the 2021/22 school year, 17,761 (9,087 boys, 8,674 girls) students were enrolled in 45¹ program target schools, of which 16,572 (8,349 boys, 8,223 girls) were enrolled in 43 primary schools, 2,761 students above the target of 15,000 students. Since 2018, the program has exceeded its annual enrollment targets, suggesting that the program has successfully increased the demand for education throughout the target communities. In **Mali**, 9,454 (4,992 boys, 4,462 girls) students are registered for the 21/22 school year. In **Niger**, 8,307 (4,095 boys, 4,212 girls) students were registered in December 2021.

The enrolment numbers for both Mali and Niger indicate a continuation of the positive trend in enrolment, as shown in Figure 1 below. Boys' and girls' numbers are similar throughout the program period. In 2018, average enrolment numbers for boys were 8% higher than for girls. This has reduced to a 4.8% difference in 2021. In Niger, the enrollment number for girls has surpassed the number for boys. This is especially striking in a country where girls are generally less likely to go to school than boys; national figures show 42% of enrollments in basic education are girls compared to 58%, boys².

¹ Numbers are taken from the Norad Core Indicators in the results framework.

² Nigerien National Education Plan for 2020-22, 2021

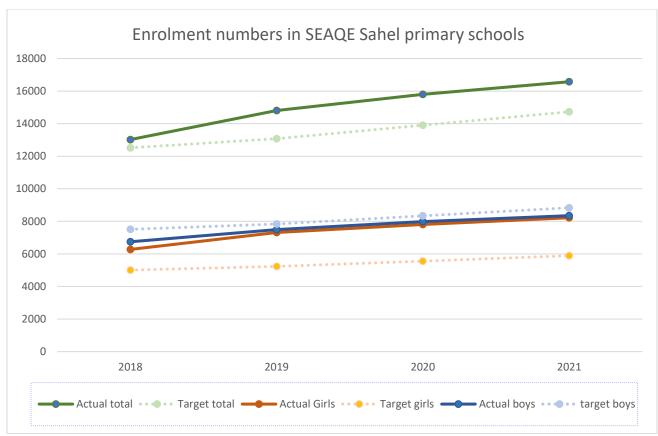


Figure 1: Total primary school enrolments in SEAQE Sahel disaggregated by gender.

The impact that SEAQE plans to make according to the program's Theory of Change (ToC) and the likelihood of achieving this is captured in the table below. The detailed results framework is included in Annex 5.

No	Impact area	Likelihood
1	More children, particularly marginalised children, are enrolled in education and participating fully in learning.	Highly likely
2	Drop-out rates decrease, particularly for marginalised children.	Highly likely
3	All children's learning outcomes begin to improve.	Likely
4	More children complete their primary education.	Highly likely
5	Schools and school communities have sustainable capacity to keep improving school governance and management	Likely
6	National and local governments have institutional capacity to sustain inclusive positive education policies, systems and practices.	Likely

Table 3. Likelihood of achieving key impact areas.

Table 3 is a summary of the key impact areas and the likelihood of achievement by the end of the program based on an assessment of current results and anticipated results in the coming 12 months in accordance with the implementation plan. Targets that have been ranked as 'highly likely' have already reached the end of program targets. Those ranked as 'likely' are on track to achieve the end of program targets.

Objective Indicator 1

Objective indicator 1: % and # of students in ADRA supported primary schools, who complete primary education (gender, type of marginalisation - if available)

Milestone Target (Year 2021):

Mali: 60% of students in ADRA supported schools complete primary education Niger: 60% of students in ADRA supported schools complete primary education

Since the commencement of the program, there has been a steady increase in primary completion rates of students in target schools in both countries.

In Mali, the baseline was conducted in cities where school completion rates are generally higher than in rural areas³ such as those in which SEAQE Sahel is implemented. Nonetheless, rural primary school completion rates have gradually increased both in numbers and percentages as shown in Table 4. The only exception is that a lower percentage of girls completed primary education in 2019 than in the previous year. This was partly due to the increased presence of terrorist groups in the program areas during exam time, which limited students' movement. Girls were disproportionately impacted by this situation. Hence, the number was relatively low in 2019 as the students who failed to show up for the exam were registered as not passing. The general increased completion rate in Mali can, amongst other things, be attributed to teachers being trained in topics such as child protection, positive class management, inclusive education, and foundational literacy and numeracy, the recruitment of more teachers, building and improving the school learning environment, and the active targeting and empowering of parents/caregivers, traditional leaders, and village chiefs to raise awareness around key issues, such as child marriage and domestic work, leading to fewer dropouts, especially among girls.

	Baseline		Actual 2018 Actual 2019		Actual 2020		Actua	l 2021		
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Students who took exam									227	215
Students who passed exam									150	133
% of students who passed									66%	62%
Average % completion									64%	
Enrolment in Grade 6 (G6)			226	218	245	220	285	265	315	320
Total enrolment G6		•	444	•	465	•	550		635	•
% Completing primary education	50%	38%	53%	53%	54%	35%	55%	56%	48%	42%
Average % completion	44%		53%		45%		56%		45%	

Table 4: Number and percentage of male and female students who passed the exam and completed primary education in **Mali**.

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³ The reason for undertaking the baselines in more urban schools was two-fold. Accessibility at the time of baseline was limited and that lack of rural schools in the target locations. Since then, rural remote schools have been established with the support of ADRA.

In 2021, only 442 out of 635 students (or 70%) enrolled in 6th grade took the exam, of which 227 boys, 215 girls and 51 children living with a disability. Of the 442 students who took the exam, 283 students (or 64%) passed, of which 150 boys, 133 girls and 41 children living with a disability. At the same time, the overall completion rate declined from 56% in 2020 to 45% (48% for boys, 42% for girls, and 80% for students with disabilities) in 2021. A terrorist attack in April 2021 against three primary schools in Mali impacted results, with 30% of 6th grade students who did not take the exam attending these schools. While ADRA, in collaboration with pedagogical advisors from the MoE, supported small groups of students to continue their lessons in the village, the attack significantly impacted attendance rates for the remainder of the school year, which concluded in mid-June. The 30% of students who did not take the exam were registered as not completing the 6th grade and hence unable to continue to secondary school. Of those who sat for the exam, 64% of students passed. ADRA plans to advocate through local CSOs and meetings with ministry of education to change the disadvantage this causes students. The hope is that the government can create reasonable pathways for students to sit the exam at an alternative time or alternative location.

As in Mali, the baseline in Niger was conducted in urban areas where primary completion rates are generally higher than in the rural areas where the program is located. Hence, actual numbers for 2018 were slightly below baseline. Since then, there has been an overall regular increase in the primary completion rates up until 2020, as shown in Table 5. This is attributed to the project's investments in education quality improvements, which significantly improved attendance rates and improved learning outcomes.

	Baseline		Actual	2018	Actual	2019	Actual	2020	Act 20	tual 21
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Students who took exam									451	430
Students who passed exam										254
% of students who passed								56%	59%	
Average % completion									57.	5%
Enrolment in G6			537	505	562	551	600	564	594	568
Total enrolment G6	tal enrolment G6		10	42	11	13	110	64	110	62
% Completing primary education	44%	36%	35%	37%	41%	44%	53%	53%	42%	45%
Average % completion	40%		36%		42%		53%		44%	

Table 5: Number and percentage of male and female students who passed the exam and completed primary education in **Niger.**

In 2021, 881 students undertook the Junior Secondary common entrance exam, including 451 boys (26 boys living with a disability) and 430 girls (11 girls living with a disability). A total of 506 students (boys: 252; girls 254) passed the exam, including all children living with a disability, and were admitted into the 7th grade. This represents a pass rate of 57% and an overall primary school completion rate of 44%, a decline of 9 percentage points on the previous year. This is attributed to 1) a deterioration in the security situation, especially in Dargol region, which resulted in fewer students taking the exam, and 2) a change in the Nigerien assessment system whereby the average score for passing the exam was adjusted from four to five and above. This resulted in a

lower pass rate and hence a lower secondary school transition rate and means that results for 2021 are not directly comparable to previous years. Similar to the advocacy proposed for Mali, ADRA will endeavour to influence change so that students who miss exams due to external factors can sit their exam elsewhere or at a different time. Already, and in response to lower secondary school transition rates, the Nigerien MoE has established technical education and professional centres that offer vocational education courses, such as electricity, plumbing, and car repair mechanics. These courses are open to students who have not passed the Junior Secondary common entrance exam.

Results for children living with a disability have improved, with the primary school completion rate for children living with a disability improving from 91% in 2020 to 100% in 2021, meaning that all 6th grade children living with a disability transitioned from primary to secondary school in 2021. This improvement is attributed to SEAQE Sahel's focus on inclusive education, which is further supported in 13 schools by the TOFI program.

Electronic laboratories (e-labs) appear to be having a positive impact on learning outcomes. The completion rate in the eight schools with e-labs is 49% as compared to 37% in the 12 schools without e-labs. This represents a 12 percentage points difference and is likely due to higher student motivation and engagement in e-learning opportunities.

Objective Indicator 2

Objective indicator 2: Number and percentage of ADRA schools supported with the "whole school approach" that meet the set benchmarks of good quality school/learning centres

Milestone Targets (Year 2021):

Mali: 16 (80%) of 20 primary schools supported with the "whole school approach" meet the set benchmarks of good quality schools.

Niger: 16 (80%) of 20 primary schools supported with the "whole school approach" meet the set benchmarks of good quality schools.

The "whole school approach" involves improving school infrastructure, accessibility, teacher competencies, child-centred learning and protection, as well as engaging parents and communities and working closely with government counterparts. Originally this approach was planned for 40 of the 43 primary schools, but budget has allowed for all program supported schools to receive the whole school approach. The set benchmarks (typically a score of 3 and above against a total performance score of 4) for the performance and targets for the whole school approach are based on a composite measure made up of nine indicators (also measured individually in the results framework) that cumulatively provide a measure of a 'good quality school'. Five of the nine indicators are measured with the Effective Teaching Learning Environment (ETLE) tool. The definitions for the 9 indicators as well as benchmark definitions for the ETLE ones are captured in Table 6 below.

SEAQE Sahel Results Framework Indicators	ETLE sub-indicators					
Output 1.1.1.b: % of target schools where parent teacher associations and/or school management committees are participating in school planning, decision making,	A: PTAs and SMCs are functional, hold regular meetings and perform as per their roles and responsibilities.					
monitoring and resource mobilisation.	B: PTAs and SMCs members fully participate in the development of School Development Plans.					
New definition 2021: Percentage of schools that score 3 or above in two of three of ETLE indicators A, B and C	C: PTAs and SMC members track and monitor vulnerable children (children at risk), dropouts, attendance, and usage of resources mobilised as per fulfilment of School Development Plans.					
Outcome 2: (Ci2) # of classrooms constructed or rehabilitated (level of education, type of learning space, constructed/rehabilitated)	Not an ETLE indicator					
Output: 2.1.1. # of schools with improved sanitation and hygiene a) The pupil (girls and boys): latrine ratio in ADRA supported schools improved b) # of toilets constructed or rehabilitated (boys, girls, both, children living with disabilities) c) # of children trained in sanitation and hygiene	Not an ETLE indicator					
Output 4.1.1: (Ci3) # of target students provided with learning material (gender, level of education, Mother tongue/non-mother tongue)	Not an ETLE indicator					
Output 4.1.1.a): # of government approved textbooks provided to supported schools.	Not an ETLE indicator					
Output: 4.3.1.a): % of trained headteachers operating effectively in ADRA supported primary and junior secondary schools.	K: HT monitors teachers and provides teachers with performance assessment and feedback, also planning for follow up mentoring or visits at least 2 times per month.					
Definition not changed: Percentage of schools that score 3 or above in at least five of ETLE indicators K, L, M, N, O, P and Q	L: HT takes part in and helps plan for meetings with SMCs and PTAs at least once per quarter.					
	M: Code of conduct and policies are displayed, signed and available at the school level.					
	N: HT is knowledgeable of child protection mechanisms and keeps confidential records of incidents and protective measurements in the school.					
	O: HT promotes a safe school environment for all children, free of physical punishment or harassment of students (e.g., students being harassed by not paying school fees or performing poorly)					
	P: Classes start and end on time following minimum national standards.					
	Q: HT ensures that all children have a minimum list of learning materials.					

S: Teachers utilise positive reinforcement and discipline methods to promote learners' engagement and positive outcomes and attitudes (child psychology). T: The teacher knows the students' names, addresses
them by name and interacts with all learners in a positive and respectful manner regardless of their background (e.g., gender, age, disability, religion, ethnicity, cultural background, language, affordability, or other personal factor).
U: Teachers' evaluation from HT or supervisors demonstrates positive analysis/feedback of their knowledge and skills in teaching literacy and numeracy. V: Teachers prepare quality lesson plans (reflecting the specific grade curriculum and needed skills) and revise them regularly. W: Summative assessment of students reflects the curriculum and skills relevant for that grade level. Formative assessments are also employed by the teacher and frequently recorded. X: Teachers use the mother tongue of most learners to further explain key concepts and support learning as needed (e.g., when mother tongue is not language of instruction). Y: Teachers are trained in psychosocial support to detect cases of abuse or trauma among their students and provide support.
Z: School inspectors provide quality feedback (completed and comprehensive feedback) for improvement is available at the school level as well as at the inspector's office. aa: Supervisor monitors school to provide feedback on school improvement at least one per year.

Table 6: Indicators that are measured for the "whole school approach" under Objective Indicator 2.

In both countries, progress is observed across all nine indicators for the whole school approach. Most targets for the construction/rehabilitation of classrooms, water, sanitation and hygiene activities (outcome 2 and output 2.1.1.) and the provision of learning materials and textbooks (output 4.1.1. and output 4.1.1.a.) were achieved and surpassed in the first year of the program, while targets for indicators measured with the ETLE assessment have proven more difficult to achieve.

In 2021, ETLE results increased and are close to or above targets for all indicators, especially in Mali. A summary of results for all nine indicators for Objective Indicator 2 are shown in Table 7 below.

9 Indicators	Mali					Niger						
measured for the whole school approach	Benchr percen		evement	of schools	Benchmark achievement of schools in percentage							
ирргодоп	Base	2018	2019	2020	2021	Base	2018	2019	2020	2021		
PTA/SMC participation (Output 1.1.1.b, <i>ETLE</i>)	0	0	15	-	100	0	25	42	-	80		
Classroom construction/rehabilitati on (Outcome 2)	0	100	100	100	100	0	100	100	100	100		
WASH activities (output 2.1.1, composite indicator)	0	45	90	90	88	0	100	100	95	93		
Learning material provision (output indicator 4.1.1)	0	100	100	100	100	0	100	100	100	100		
Textbook provision (output indicator 4.1.1.a)	0	100	100	100	100	0	100	100	100	100		
Headteachers' performance (output 4.3.1.a, <i>ETLE</i>)	0	0	60	-	100	0	60	63	-	67		
Teachers performance 1 (Output 4.4.1.a, <i>ETLE</i>)	0	0	75	-	100	0	0	11	-	53		
Teachers performance 2 (Output 4.4.1.b, <i>ETLE</i>)	0	0	25	-	100	0	0	11	-	60		
School inspection (Output 4.5.1.a, ETLE)	18	35	100	-	100	10	70	25	-	100		
Total schools performing effectively in <i>all</i> 9 benchmarks of good quality	0	0	5	-	88	0	0	0	-	40		

Table 7: Percentage of schools that achieved the desired benchmark per indicator for Objective Indicator 2 in Mali and Niger from Baseline to 2021.

To meet Objective Indicator 2, a school must reach targets/benchmarks on *all* nine indicators for the whole school approach. In 2021, the overall result for Objective Indicator 2 is 88% in Mali (15 out of 17 schools assessed), and 40% in Niger (6 out of 15 schools assessed). The ETLE assessment was not conducted in all schools as originally planned due to the security situation at the time of the assessment.

Of the four indicators that are not measured with the ETLE assessment, only output 2.1.1.a) student:latrine ratio has not improved. Even though the program has exceeded targets for the constructed/rehabilitated of toilets, the student:latrine ratio has only increased in two schools in Mali and one school in Niger. This is attributed to higher than projected increases in enrolment numbers, which has resulted in higher than projected need for additional latrines.

Apart from this, targets were reached in all schools for the remaining indicators that are not measured with ETLE. Classroom construction, the provision of textbooks and teaching and learning materials were met in 2021.

Targets for the five indicators measured with the ETLE assessment have proven difficult to achieve. This has been difficult for two primary reasons. Firstly, the definition and benchmark measures are difficult to achieve. The ETLE assessment scores its sub-indicators from 1 to 4 (score 1 = not functioning, score 2 = partly performing well, score 3 = high quality or performing well, score 4 = very high quality). In previous years, a school needed to reach a score of 3 or above on almost all the ETLE sub-indicators related to a given output indicator. For instance, to reach the target for Output 1.1.1.b., (linked to PTA/SMC participation), a school had to receive a score 3

or above on *all* ETLE sub-indicators A, B and C to be counted under Objective Indicator 2. This proved to be overly ambitious, and results hid the true progress. Requirements in the definition of some of these indicators changed slightly in 2021 to reflect the achievements made in the schools. These changes are captured in the results framework in Annex 5. The definition is still ambitious as the same school must score three or four in 13 of 20 ETLE sub-indicators. The ease in requirement for the ETLE scores, explains some of the leap in Objective Indicator 2 results in 2021, and also the fact that results were not collected in 2020.

Secondly, it is not only the measure that has proved difficult. Most ETLE indicators require behaviour change and steps taken to support this change are gradual and long-term. For instance, Output 1.1.1.b is linked to behaviour change of parents and SMC members, Output 4.3.1a is linked to head teacher performance and Output 4.4.1.a is linked to teacher performance. ADRA has noted that improvements in performance and engagement are gradual and often dependent on multiple inputs over time.

To explore this in more detail, the following section covers a number of discreet ETLE indicators and shows the progress that is being made over time. A summary of these indicators is initially presented in Figure 2 below.

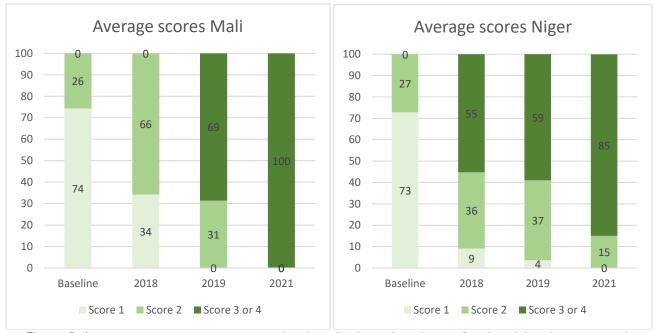


Figure 2: Average percentage score on school quality based on the professional development and performance of PTAs, SMCs, head teachers, teachers and school inspectors (output 1.1.1.b, output 4.3.1.a, 4.4.1.b and 4.5.1.a).

Figure 2 above shows that even though there are some schools that did not reach score 3 or above for *all* ETLE indicators, there has been progress over time in the performance of these indicators. This is especially clear for results from 2019. That year, only 1 school in Mali passed the requirement for Objective indicator 2, but when looking at the average score across these five indicators, 69% scored 3 or above and by 2021, this score had risen to 100%. A similar trajectory is observed in Niger; in 2019, none of the schools passed the whole school approach requirements for Objective Indicator 2, but 59% of schools scored 3 or above on these five indicators. By 2021, this score had risen by 85%. These results are encouraging, especially when comparing baseline results when none of the schools in either country reached score 3 or above on any of the ETLE sub-indicators. The evolution in average scores show that schools have improved significantly in quality throughout the program period, and PTAs, SMCs, head teachers,

teachers and school inspectors have significantly improved their performance from baseline. Further elaboration of the progress for each of these indicators is captured in the following paragraphs.

PTA and **SMC** performance:

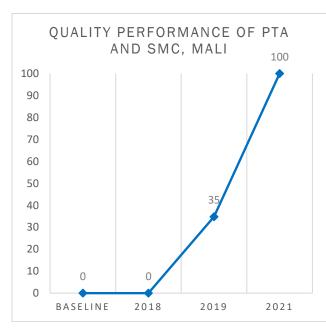
Output indicator 1.1.1.b: "% of target schools where PTAs/SMCs are participating in school planning, decision making, mentoring and resource mobilisation"

<u>Definition of indicator</u>: Percentage of schools that score 3 or 4 in two of three sub-indicators A, B and C.

PTA and SMC performance has steadily improved since the program began, as shown in Figure 3 below. In both countries, 0% of school PTAs and SMCs performed well at baseline. Throughout the program, PTA / SMC performance has improved significantly, with 100% of schools in Mali and 80% of schools in Niger scoring 3 or above in the 2021 ETLE assessment. Central to this achievement is the investment in continuous PTA / SMC capacity development.

The involvement of PTAs and SMCs is crucial to several aspects of the program. SMCs/PTAs are central to community engagement and were heavily involved in bringing children back to school following COVID-19 school closures. PTA/SMC efforts to bring children back to school extended to previously Out of School Children (OOSC), resulting in an increase in enrolments from pre to post COVID-19 school closures. As a response to increased enrolments, PTAs and SMCs mobilised to build temporary classrooms as the planned construction of classrooms was not sufficient to accommodate all students.

PTAs / SMCs in both Mali and Niger have shown strong commitment and ownership to SEAQE Sahel supported schools. Progress, however, is slower in Niger than in Mali. This may be because of PTA/SMC policies in Niger, where members can only hold their position for two years. While this allows more parents to be involved in PTAs/SMCs, it has also meant that in some years all PTA/SMC members have changed, leading to a higher demand for PTA/SMC capacity development training.



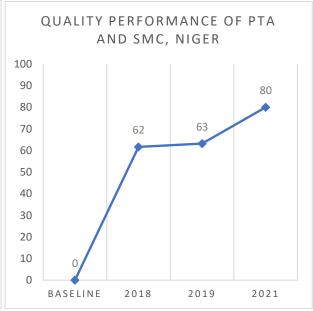


Figure 3: Average percentage of schools that score 3 or above on PTAs and SMCs performance (output 1.1.1.b.).

Head teacher performance:

Output indicator 4.3 a): "% of trained headteachers operating effectively in ADRA supported primary and junior secondary schools."

<u>Definition of indicator</u>: Percentage of schools where headteachers score 3 or 4 in at least <u>five</u> <u>of seven</u> of the sub-indicators K, L, M, N, O, P and Q.

The percentage of head teachers who lead schools effectively has improved significantly in both Mali and Niger, as shown in figure 4 below. In Mali, 0% of head teachers at baseline achieved scores of 3 or above for effective school leadership. Since baseline, the program has provided head teacher training in school leadership, positive discipline, child protection, including reporting and referral mechanisms, and school policies and professional ethics. Head teachers are supported by their communities and see their mission as more than a job, working hard to keep children safe and in school and mitigating risks of children being recruited into terrorist groups. Community support and capacity development of head teachers has resulted in 100% of head teachers achieving a score 3 or above for effective school leadership in 2021.

In Niger, 0% of the schools were managed effectively at baseline. This improved significantly in year two (2018), with 67% of head teachers reaching the benchmark for effective school management. There was a slight decrease (62%) in 2019 due to some head teachers trained by the program being transferred to other schools and being replaced with head teachers that needed capacity development support. In 2021, 87% of head teachers were assessed as demonstrating effective school leadership. Factors contributing to progress include head teacher training and follow-up in school management, child protection, psychosocial support and positive discipline.

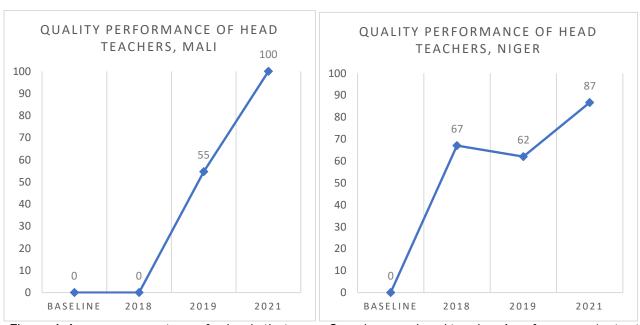


Figure 4. Average percentage of schools that score 3 or above on head teachers' performance (output 4.3.a.).

Teacher performance:

Output indicator 4.4.1.a: "% of teachers trained are applying inclusive education, child centred methodology, and child protection principles in their classrooms."

<u>Definition of indicator</u>: Percentage of trained teachers who score 3 or 4 in <u>two of three of</u> the sub-indicators R, S and T.

Output indicator 4.4.1.b: "% of teachers trained are teaching reading and mathematics skills effectively."

<u>Definition of indicator</u>: Percentage of trained teachers who score 3 or 4 on <u>three of five</u> of sub-indicators U, V, W, X and Y.

The professional development of teachers has similarly improved, as shown in Figure 5 below. In both Mali and Niger, 0% of teachers achieved a score of 3 or above at baseline. Significant progress has been made year on year, with 100% of teachers in Mali and 84% of teachers in Niger achieving a score of 3 or above in 2021. In Mali, a contributing factor is the close collaboration between program schools and the MoE/CAP, where a mentoring system that involves teacher directed professional development and regular one to one follow-up with teachers has been established. Additional factors include supporting teachers to use group work and interactive activities to create inclusive learning environments, the provision of modularised in-service training sessions, continuous professional development opportunities through learning communities and regular follow-up. CAP advisors provide regular pedagogical follow-up, identifying shortcomings in teacher practice and providing teachers with tailored guidance and support to strengthen their teaching strategies.

In Mali, insecurity and remoteness have resulted in high teacher turnover and the need for a different approach to teacher recruitment practices, with volunteer teachers now being recruited from local communities. Locally recruited teachers benefit from greater community support as they come for the local communities in which they teach and are therefore less likely to move. To address the training needs of locally recruited volunteer teachers, a new teacher training institute was opened in Gourma Rharous in February 2022. The institute is providing preservice training to more teachers in the area while also allowing volunteer teachers to obtain their Pedagogical Diploma while working. This will not only strengthen teacher competencies in program supported schools but will also contribute to increasing the supply of qualified teachers in coming years.

In Niger, similar year on year progress has been made with 84% of teachers achieving a score of 3 or above in 2021. As in Mali, program schools in Niger have established a close collaboration with MoE pedagogical advisors who provide regular pedagogical follow up and support. Furthermore, in March 2021 all teachers in program supported schools received training in positive discipline and class management. This training was in response to 2019 ETLE assessment results which showed that teachers struggled with providing psychosocial support to students. The 2021 ETLE assessment has shown an improvement in this indicator, with 63% of teachers scoring 3 and above compared to 36% scoring 3 and above in 2019.

In Niger, the target area of Dargol Niger has been subject to ongoing terror attacks and remains insecure. While no program schools have been directly targeted and head teachers and teachers work hard to keep students and schools safe (for example by meeting with the terrorist groups) the ongoing security situation has led to high turnover amongst teachers who request to be

transferred to other more secure regions. This has necessitated the need for continuous training of new teachers and ultimately lower scores on teacher performance as a result.



Figure 5. Average percentage of teachers who score 3 or above (output 4.4.1.a. and output 4.4.1.b).

School inspectors' performance:

Output indicator 4.5 a): "% of target schools inspected, supervised, or monitored by local education government authorities one or more times in the last school year."

<u>Definition of indicator</u>: Percentage of schools that receive at least one visit by a government inspector or supervisor in the last school year.

In both Mali and Niger, the percentage of school inspectors who scored 3 or above has increased significantly throughout the program period as shown in Figure 6 below. In Mali, school inspections have improved from 8% at baseline to 100% in 2019 and 2021. School inspections are valuable as inspectors monitor teacher performance according to MoE standards and provide feedback. In Niger, progress has been more gradual. Whilst an agreement between the MoE and ADRA Niger exists regarding inspectorate visits, ADRA Niger is less able to influence the planning of inspectorate visits. Hence, advocacy on the importance of school inspections has been required to raise MoE awareness of and commitment to school inspections and the expectations of teachers and headteachers. Advocacy efforts have been successful and 100% of schools were inspected in 2021.



Figure 6. Average percentage of teachers who score 3 or above (output 4.5.a)

2.2. Case-study representing results at outcome level

TITLE: Empowering girls to access, participate and complete their primary education for a brighter future.

COUNTRIES: Niger and Mali **SECTOR:** Inclusive Education

PARTNERS: ADRA Norway, ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger

INTRODUCTION: SEAQE Sahel has improved the access, participation and primary completion rates of girls, including girls that are marginalised, previously out of school and girls living with a disability, from the target communities in Mali and Niger. Supporting girls' empowerment is a fundamental component whole school of ADRA's approach. Student governments/representative councils have been critical to empowering girls to raise their voices, make decisions for their own futures and have helped change the way parents and communities view and value every girl's education. This is transforming negative cultural gender norms that perpetuate the practice of early forced marriage and is providing girls with a brighter future.

WHY: Girls education remains a significant challenge in Mali and Niger and is compounded by the poor security situation. In rural areas of Mali, most girls are out of school and only 31% of girls complete their primary education (UNESCO, 2018 data). In Niger, the situation is similar with only 42% of girls enrolled in basic education (NEP 2020 – 22).

Child marriage is a widespread cultural practice in Mali and Niger that prevents girls from participating and completing their education. Niger has the highest rate of child marriage and early pregnancy in the world with three out of four girls married before the age of 18 years and almost half (45%) having had a child or pregnant by the age of 18. (Chatham House, 2 July 2021). In Mali, girls are expected to marry by the age of 14 years, forcing them to leave school (The Borgen Project, 2018).

WHAT: Several initiatives have been implemented through the SEAQE Sahel program to promote girls' education and combat the practice of child marriage. These include:

- training teachers to promote equality, equity and practice inclusion in the classroom;
- giving incentives to parents and families to encourage girls, children living in extreme poverty and children living with a disability to attend school;
- empowering women parents through basic literacy and training on health and other social issues;
- supporting the establishment and training of mother associations on inclusive education and child protection practices; and
- conducting training on the rights to education, equality and child protection for community members and SMCs.

Furthermore, since the beginning of the 2020/21 school year, ADRA has supported schools to establish student governments with elected male and female representatives. Student governments are trained and supported by teachers to organise events, hold public speeches, conduct regular class discussions and develop action plans on issues affecting them, including issues related to inclusion, child protection and school life. The student governments have led child rights day celebrations and advocated for their rights through community sensitisation activities and engagement with local government on early and forced marriage, girls schooling and other issues.

HOW MUCH: SEAQE Sahel is a five-year program funded by Norad with 10% co-funding from ADRA Norway to a total budget of NOK 80 million. Norad provided an additional 17.8 million NOK for a cost extension for 2022.

RESULTS: Efforts to strengthen girls' access, participation and learning in SEAQE Sahel supported schools is yielding results. Girls enrolment has increased from 5,732 (including 80 girls living with a disability) at baseline (2018) to 8,223 (including 287 girls living with a disability) in 2021. This is an increase of 43.5% since baseline and girls now make up almost 50% of students in SEAQE Sahel supported schools.

Girls' learning outcomes have improved. In Niger, girls' learning outcomes as measured through the PASEC assessment have increased from 35% in 2019 to 63% in 2021. In Mali, girls early grade literacy and numeracy outcomes from grade 2 to 4 have improved, with girls slightly outperforming their male counterparts in literacy (girls: 40%; boy: 38%) by grade 4 – although girls numeracy outcomes remain low compared to their male counterparts (girls: 46%; boys: 56%), indicating more work needs to be done to improve girls early grade numeracy outcomes.

The role of student governments/representative councils in girls' empowerment and agency is illustrated through the story of Fadimata (name changed for anonymity):

Hello, my name is Fadimata, I live in the village of Sahamar, in Gourma Rharus, Mali and go to the Djigalo Abdou school. I am attending 7th grade. I am very proud and happy to have reached 7th grade. Before it was a dream for me to only reach 6th grade, because girls from my village were taken out of school in 4th or 5th grade to get married to a husband they did not choose, and then become mothers. The minds of our parents were that girls should get married as



soon as possible, because it was considered expensive to have girls at home and to send them to school.

I felt that I was saved by ADRA, because they arrived in my village when I was in 4th grade. There have been training and campaigns in my village for girls to go to school instead of getting married. Our school has trained the student government and I was elected by my class. We are engaging the whole school in advocacy work for children's rights like girls going to school instead of getting married and children's right to have a birth certificate. Before I did not know that girls and children with disabilities had the right to go to school, but our teacher taught us about our human rights. Our mothers have learned about the rights of girls and children with

disabilities in the mother groups. Everybody is very enthusiastic about changing the old practice of our village.

When our school celebrated children's rights day on 20th of November 2021, the whole village came to watch our roleplays, poems, songs and speeches about girls' right to education. I

talked about children's rights and the need to have a birth certificate, and we roleplayed about girls, every child's right to education and that we are against child marriage. The





student government arranged for the whole school to be involved in the celebration of the children's rights day and we invited the entire village to come and watch.

Before, a girl couldn't get past 6th grade, but the biggest and best change I can see after ADRA started its education program in our village is that it is becoming a new norm to let girls take the exam and enrol in 7th grade. My ambition is to complete secondary school and to continue to be part of student government. I will continue to advocate for this right and work to change attitudes and give hope to young girls. I will advocate to all my aunts, uncles and community about this, and we will continue celebrating children's rights day at our school. We need continuous support from ADRA to save more girls' lives.

Photo of the roleplay about problems with early marriage.
Photo above of Fadimata giving her speech
Photos: Rissa Ag Mittene, ADRA Mali

COST EFFICIENCY: Establishing and supporting student governments is considered cost effective because ADRA utilised internal technical capacity and existing school governance structures. ADRA Norway designed the student government curriculum and materials that were

implemented by ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger in close collaboration with school teachers, PTAs, SMCs and students.

SOURCES:

- ADRA Niger and ADRA Mali (2021), SEAQE Sahel country reports.
- Chatham House 2022; https://www.chathamhouse.org/2021/07/improving-education-girls-in-niger
- School-to-School International (February 2020), Strengthening Equity, Access and Quality in Education Sahel: Mid-Term Review Report prepared for ADRA Myanmar.
- Final Evaluation Report (2021), Friedensau Institute for Evaluation (FIFE)
- UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report 2020: Inclusion and Education: All means All (2020)
- UNESCO UIS (2016)
- UNESCO World Inequality Database on education (WIDE)
- World Bank (2015), "Out-of-School Youth in Sub-Saharan Africa A Policy Perspective

2.3 Explanation for achievements and challenges

As mentioned in the results section 2.1, enrolment and completion rates are on track to achieve expected results by the end of the program and improvements in the inclusion of children living with disabilities, including their primary completion rates, is progressing well.

The fluctuations that are noted in completion rates are partially explained by the difficult context. The national gross primary school enrolment rate for Niger is 71%, and girls constitute only 61% (UNICEF, 2022). Although primary school education is free, there are school-related and travel costs for children. According to UNICEF data, over 50% of children aged 7-16 are not in school, fewer than 60% of primary school students enter secondary school, and only 20% of lower secondary school students complete the cycle (boys: 23.7%; girls: 17%). Regional disparity and gender inequality exist. The gross enrolment rate in rural areas is only 64.4% against 78% in urban centres (Gender Analysis Report, 2021). The program schools are in extremely poor areas⁴, and most of the adult population are illiterate with little possibilities to support their children in school. General statistics show that only 36% of children in rural Mali completed primary education in 2018 (WIDE, 2021) and 51% of children and 63% of adolescents in rural Mali were out of school. In the program area in Mali, communication technology is limited; most families do not own a telephone or radio, and there is no electricity supply in the area. The remoteness limits access to information, and this affects provision of education, PTA/SMC participation in school management and parental support to the education of their children.

Due to ongoing conflict in both countries, especially in the Rharous area of Mali and Dargol area of Niger, the population often experiences insecurity and terrorist attacks caused by extremists. In 2021, three schools in Mali were closed by terrorists. This prevented 30% of the students from taking their exam. The Dargol area in Niger is experiencing several terrorist attacks each month, and this hindered many students from taking the exam. Fortunately, none of the program schools in Niger have been directly attacked. This is partly due to the fact that headmasters and school teachers have informal meetings with people from the terrorist groups to minimise attacks on schools. On one occasion, a terrorist showed up at school pointing his gun at one of the teachers. She bravely talked with him about school and education until he calmed down and left.

The Niger government is working to improve their education system and new requirements for passing the exam have become stricter. This is meant to improve the quality of education over

⁴ World Inequality Database on Education - Home (education-inequalities.org)- UNESCO World Inequality Database on education

time. The government has also opened new pathway opportunities for those students who do not pass the example to enter vocational training or repeat 6th grade will give more opportunities to students in the future and hopefully enable more students to continue their education into secondary.

The population in the program areas are exposed to extreme weather like droughts and floods that ruin crops and infrastructure. Environmental and climate change is having serious downstream consequences for children's education. The children in program schools are from farming families who need to move frequently to find fodder. The frequency of movement has increased dramatically in the past years. The already impoverished project areas are food insecure leading to some families opting to take their children out of school permanently or for some days per week so that they can contribute to household income generation.

The difficult living conditions in the program areas further create challenges in relation to the availability of teachers. In both program locations, recruiting teachers to work in these areas is difficult. Especially in Niger, the effectiveness of training is impacted by the frequent turnover of staff and the need for repeat training to ensure all teachers receive professional development. According to program staff, the challenges faced in reaching desired targets for teachers is partly explained by this reason.

In Niger the difference in completion rates is striking if we compare the Dargol to Balleyara. The area of Dargol is experiencing high insecurity with several terror attacks each month while there have not been terror attacks in Balleyara in 2021. Based on the students who sat for the exam 71% of students in Balleyara passed the exam even when the requirement for passing was stricter than before. In Dargol only 36% of those who took the exam passed. Students in this area have lost many days of schooling because they are kept at home on days considered more insecure. The table below provides this illustration.

	2018				2019		2020)	2021			
Balleyara:	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Passing rates % based on # of students enrolled	53	57	55	47	55	51	64	66	65	51	56	54
Passing rates % based on # of students taking the exam	60	62	61	54	52	53	76	78	77	69	73	71
Percentage of students taking the exam	88	91	90	87	106⁵	97	84	85	84	75	76	75
Dargol:												
Passing rates based on # of students enrolled	18	12	16	33	30	31	31	27	29	27	28	28
Passing rates based on # of students taking the exam	18	12	15	37	32	35	36	30	33	35	38	36
Percentage of students taking the exam	105 ⁶	100	103	89	92	90	86	89	88	78	75	76

Table 8: Examination results and pass rates of students in Balleyara and Dargol.

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⁵ In 2019, more girls took the exam than were originally enrolled because there was an increase in enrolment during the year. ⁶In 2018, more boys took the exam than were originally enrolled because there was an increase in enrolment during the year.

Looking at the progress of the ETLE indicators, there has been a steeper progress the latest years in Mali than in Niger. In both countries we see a very high ownership and engagement in the project villages. But the commitment in Mali is stronger perhaps due in part to the remoteness of the area being over 1100 km far from Bamako. The village chiefs, parents and the whole community are strongly engaged in the schools. They have engaged actively in action plans for safer schools, bringing OOSC back to school and advocacy for more teachers. The teacher training academy in Timbuktu is included the positive discipline training in their training curriculum. This engagement has led to the government opening a local teacher training institute in the project area Gourma Rharous. There has been a higher turnover of teachers in Niger where teachers are not from the local areas, and therefore are more likely to leave because of the security situation. When teachers leave and new ones arrive, they need to be trained again. ADRA is working with the MoE and teacher training institutes to make positive class management and inclusive education teaching methods part of the teacher training curriculum. In Niger there has also been a higher turnover of representatives for the PTA and SMC committees as the policy is that the same person is only allowed to sit for two years, and sometimes this leads to the whole committee being renewed the same year.

2.4 Unintended positive and/or negative consequences

There have been several unintended positive consequences, including:

- I. Stronger anti-corruption systems by partners. CSOs in the West Africa region have a reputation for high levels of corruption. This has traditionally limited the number of ADRA supporting offices that are interested and willing to partner with local organisations, including ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger. To address this risk, ADRA Norway has focused on building the anti-corruption capacity of our partners. This has led to a greater interest and willingness by other ADRA supporting offices to partner with ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger. To date, ADRA Canada, ADRA Germany and ADRA Czech Republic are planning to expand their presence in both Mali and Niger. This unintended positive consequence both contributes to anti-corruption efforts and strengthens complementarity with the SEAQE Sahel program.
- II. Rapid increases in enrolment. In both Mali and Niger, enrolments have exceeded targets year on year. The MTR attributed this in part to the speed with which the program implemented infrastructural changes by building classrooms, latrines and water wells and the provision of learning materials. Despite expecting a decrease in enrolment because of COVID-19 school closures, particularly of girls, enrolments have continued to increase beyond anticipated targets. The program attributes this to a strong "return to school" campaign and the significant engagement of PTAs and SMCs, which have been instrumental in supporting home learning and students safe return to school. Additionally, the project's approach to child protection and safeguarding has helped students to feel safer and protected in schools. This unintended consequence has contributed to more children accessing their right to education.
- III. Parent and community engagement have exceeded the program's expectations. In some communities, SMC members have raised money and contributed part of their own salaries to build homes for teachers. In other communities' parents have offered teachers, especially female teachers, a place to stay overnight so that they do not have to travel the long journey to school during weekdays. Parents in some communities have also come together to repair school desks and benches as well as maintain school gardens while PTA, SMC and EMA (Educating Mothers' Association), known as Association des mères d'élèves) members have taken on responsibilities to keep schools and latrines clean and tidy. Community leaders are also engaged in how schools in their villages are run. This

- unintended consequence has contributed to more children accessing their right to education.
- IV. **E-learning labs are having a higher-than-expected positive impact on student motivation and learning outcomes:** Teachers have reported greater motivation to perform among students because of the e-learning labs, which are equipped with electricity from solar panels, tablets with literacy and numeracy applications, and other hands-on learning materials. The e-learning labs have created much excitement among students and communities and provided students from poor rural communities with their first encounter with digital technology. Research on the impact of the e-learning labs on learning outcomes and teaching methods was completed by Fafo in 2022 and findings will be reported in the 2022 Annual Report. However, in Niger student exam pass rates for entrance into secondary school is 12 percentage points higher among students from schools with e-learning labs compared to students in schools without e-learning labs. This suggests a positive correlation between e-learning opportunities and improved learning outcomes, the rate of which is an unintended consequence contributing to children's right to a quality education.
- V. Addressing global food prices increase and impact of climate change. SEAQE Sahel target communities suffer from the impacts of climate change through intensified floods, droughts and the loss of water supplies. Additionally, an increase in food prices has negatively impacted food security for communities, including food security of children and women. To combat food security issues, PTAs and SMCs have successfully initiated successful school garden projects to increase food production and consumption. This has led to school communities taking more responsibility for food production and has increased the demand and support for school gardens and school feeding programs. In Mali, ADRA has been in negotiations with WFP to complement school gardens with a school feeding program. This unintended consequence contributes to climate change and environmental protection.
- VI. Complementarities with the TOFI program. SEAQE Sahel program schools in Mali and Niger have benefited directly from synergies established with the TOFI program. This includes strengthening collaboration with DPOs and building a deeper understanding of inclusive education. Additionally, program schools have benefited from the collaboration with and the capacity of DPOs through training of teachers and headteachers. The TOFI program is implemented in 13 SEAQE Sahel schools in Niger, and advocates for the rights of children living with a disability at the national level. Other consequences include increased understanding and commitment by PTA/SMCs and communities towards inclusion, which has led to a higher-than-expected enrolment of children living with a disability. This unintended consequence has contributed to more children accessing their right to education.
- VII. Addressing teacher supply issues in rural remote locations. The SEAQE Sahel program has been instrumental in supporting advocacy efforts to address teacher shortages and the government has recently opened a teacher training institute in Gourma Rharous as a result. This teacher training institute also supports volunteer teachers obtaining their pedagogy certificate while teaching, which has created opportunities for teachers from remote rural locations to be qualified. This unintended consequence has contributed to more children accessing their right to education.

The program has experienced some unintended <u>negative consequences mainly due to the</u> positive results, including:

I. Rapid increases in enrolment have resulted in crowded classrooms in both Mali and Niger. Crowded classrooms have meant that the program had to construct more classrooms than originally planned, resulting in the overachievement of some

- construction targets. Despite this, the need for more classrooms and latrines persists and student teacher ratios continue to be high, and this negatively impacts the quality of education. This unintended consequence has inhibited children's right to education.
- II. Rapid increases in enrolment have contributed to teacher dissatisfaction in Mali. Higher than anticipated enrolments have led to shortfalls in teachers across the country and have contributed to high student-teacher ratios. While teacher strikes are not new in the country, the high student-teacher ratio contributes to teacher dissatisfaction and is one of several reasons teachers continue to strike. The Malian government has responded to the strikes with a national teacher recruitment programme (launched in February 2020), which aims to recruit more than 10,300 new teachers. To date, 42 new teachers have been deployed to the 25 SEAQE Sahel supported schools and the program has supported an additional 40 teachers to help address teacher shortages. Together with the government's redeployment program, newly placed teachers need access to teacher training, and the program has faced challenges due to higher-than-expected recurrent training needs. This unintended consequence has inhibited children's right to education.
- III. The higher than anticipated enrolment of children living with disabilities has resulted in a greater need for inclusive education support to targeted schools and teachers. At the end of 2021, 629 children living with a disability were enrolled in primary schools, exceeding the target of 267 by 135%. This has led to a greater need for additional learning aids, such as speakers in classrooms and learning materials in Braille, as well as a need for more teachers to meet the education needs of children living with a disability and teacher training in inclusive education teaching practices. The program has supported teachers with training in Braille and sign language and the provision of learning materials in Braille but there is still a high need for additional support. Despite these challenges, children living with a disability who sat their exams in program schools in 2021 did extremely well, with a pass rate of 80% and 100% in Mali and Niger respectively. This unintended negative consequence has an impact on the rights of children living with a disability and needs further attention.
- IV. Aid dependency can be an unintended negative consequence of ongoing investment in fragile states and communities. The SEAQE Sahel final evaluation (2021) found that the project has to some extent led to dependency and increased expectations of ADRA, especially among local government politicians. ADRA Norway are working with ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger to develop strategies to manage expectations.

3.1 Assessment of the grant recipient's added value

ADRA Norway has contributed to strengthening the capacity of ADRA Niger and ADRA Mali, as well as in-country stakeholders such as the MoE CAPs and teacher training institutes in both countries through:

1. Strengthening the ADRA network's global focus and technical capacity in the education sector. ADRA Norway has initiated and chaired the Education Technical Learning lab (ETLL) for the ADRA network since 2015. Key achievements of the ETLL have included developing a draft global strategy and capacity statement; mapping internal expertise in education; and identifying common indicators for network reporting. ADRA Norway also participates in the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) working group in Norway. In addition, ADRA Norway is a member of the ADRA global Programme Development and Advisory Committee (PDAC) to further promote the education agenda and the Gender and Inclusion Technical Learning Lab (GITLL);

- 2. Developing a comprehensive and contextualised *Inclusive Education* and *Positive Discipline for Teachers* training packages for teachers in Mali and Niger. These two trainings were developed and implemented in close collaboration with ADRA Niger, ADRA Mali, MoE CAP leaders and representatives, and national teacher training institutes in both countries. ADRA Norway developed the training package and delivered training of trainers (ToT) through a three-day online seminars and face-to-face workshops.
- 3. Over the past two years, ADRA Norway has organised annual partnership workshops with key staff from ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger. These face-to-face workshops have provided an opportunity to strengthen the partnership between ADRA Norway and its country partners and has enabled both cross-learning and capacity building:
- 4. During 2020, ADRA Norway initiated online learning webinars with ADRA Niger and ADRA Mali staff on inclusive education, child protection and safeguarding. Webinars were also organised to adapt education activities in response to COVID-19 and ensure education continuity during periods of school closure;
- 5. Strengthening ADRA Niger and ADRA Mali's capacity to respond to child protection issues through monthly meetings to discuss and resolve issues that arise;
- 6. Through the provision of child protection and safeguarding expertise, local child protection systems have been strengthened, such as Village Protection Committees and the Department of Protection Services in Niger; and the Department of Social Development and Health in Mali;
- 7. Other ADRA supporting offices have now partnered with ADRA Niger and are building on progress made by the SEAQE Sahel program. This includes, ADRA Canada's three-year BRIGHT program funded by Global Affairs Canada and implemented in Niger among other countries. The BRIGHT program is a Girls education program that focuses on improving gender equality through gender-sensitive curriculum in the communities where SEAQE Sahel is implemented;
- 8. Further building the capacity of ADRA Niger and local DPOs to address the education needs of children living with disabilities through the complementary Norad funded TOFI program, where ADRA Niger is country lead. The SEAQE Sahel program benefits from the collaboration with and the capacity of the DPOs through training of teachers and headteachers. The TOFI program is implemented in 13 SEAQE Sahel supported schools as well as 2 other schools which specifically target the education needs of children living with disables and advocate for the rights of persons living with disabilities at the national level;
- ADRA Norway has been able to leverage SEAQE Sahel (and SEAQE2 implemented in East Africa and Myanmar) and is part of the TOFI Consortium of Norwegian organisations. ADRA Norway has accessed additional funds from Norad to implement TOFI Niger, where ADRA is a Country Lead.

3. Assessment of the Program Contribution to Strengthening Civil Society

3.1 Capacity Development of ADRA Mali and Niger

ADRA Norway has supported the organisational and programmatic capacity development of both ADRA Niger and ADRA Mali. Organisational capacity is assessed using the ADRA International Country Operations Review for Excellence (CORE) assessment tool. Assessments were conducted through desk review, interviews and exchanges with key ADRA Niger and ADRA Mali staff. Programmatic capacity is assessed using a tool adapted from British Overseas NGOs

for Development (BOND)⁷ and was conducted during monitoring trips with on-site verification of documentation, processes, policies and practices.

Following baseline assessments, ADRA Niger and ADRA Mali developed their capacity building plans in cooperation with ADRA Norway, ADRA Africa Regional Office and other ADRA supporting officers. The capacity building plans align with the ADRA Network accreditation standards for operational and management capacity and focus on the development of key policies, procedures and protocols.

Both ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger have demonstrated an increase in both organisational and programmatic capacity from baseline to mid-term as shown in Table 10 below. This is largely because of ADRA Norway's systematic approach to capacity-building. To date, capacity building has spanned a wide range of relevant areas, including inclusive education, MEAL, CSO partnerships, Child Protection and Safeguarding, organisation development, advocacy, sustainability, etc. In addition, ADRA Norway has conducted regular field visits and provided mentoring (both during visits and remotely) to ADRA country office staff.

Organisation	ADRA Mali	ADRA Niger				
Assessment	Baseline Mid-term Milestone		Actual	Baseline	Mid-term Milestone	Actual
Programmatic Assessment	1.6 (of 5)	2.1	2.2 (of 5)	1.4 (of 5)	1.9	2.4 (of 5)
Organisational Assessment	1.6 (of 3)	2.1	2.4 (of 3)	1.1 (of 3)	1.6	2.2 (of 3)

Table 10 capacity development of ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger.

Final capacity assessments will be undertaken in 2022, and results included in the SEAQE Sahel final report.

3.2 Strengthening capacity of CSOs and PTAs/SMCs

ADRA Norway has supported ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger to engage in several partnerships with local CSOs and DPOs and has strengthened the capacity of local organisations, PTAs and civil society at large. This has been achieved through organised capacity development activities and advocacy events to strengthen civil society's engagement in advocacy and support for education. For instance:

In Mali there were no PTAs or SMCs when the program began. Local communities were also unfamiliar with working collectively and were not involved in school planning and decision-making. Over the past three years, 250 PTA and SMC members have received training in action planning, decision-making, resource mobilisation and child protection. This capacity building has led to PTA and SMC engagement in promoting and supporting inclusive education. All members received additional training in inclusive education, child protection and advocacy in 2021 and have developed advocacy action plans. Furthermore, 26 members of SMCs were trained in income-generating activities in 2020 to support PTA action plans with follow up in 2021. In 2021 all PTAs and SMCs tracked children at risk and participated in developing school development

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⁷ Refer to 2019 progress report - Annex 8 and 9

plans for inclusion. The effective involvement of SMCs and PTAs together with the extensive participation of mothers in awareness-raising and decision-making has also contributed to improving girls' attendance and learning outcomes.

Civil society has been strengthened in relation to literacy and numeracy proficiency through literacy and numeracy circles supported by EMAs (mother's associations). Literacy and numeracy circles have enabled 707 men and women in Mali to develop functional literacy and numeracy skills (272/355 men and 269/352 women passed the literacy and numeracy end of activity assessment) to better support their children's education, improve cooperation among parents and caregivers and strengthen income-generating activities and small businesses.

In Mali, five forums with ADRA partners and other education stakeholders have been held to promote inclusive quality education at local, district, national and international levels. In December 2021, a forum that brought together education actors at the local, regional and national level, including government, international agencies and national CSOs ⁸ was held.

The forums aimed to:

- Promote evidence based approaches to inclusive education:
- Reflect on challenges to inclusive education and teacher shortage in the Timbuktu region;
- Review achievements against the action plans developed at previous forums;
- Highlight the impact of the program's achievements in improving enrolment and learning outcomes;
- Present the situation of out-of-school children and develop an action plan to address the education needs of OOSC and
- Identify the security challenges facing education stakeholders and create appropriate action plans.

In Niger, PTAs and SMCs are important civil society structures to promote inclusive education and support enrolment and school quality. In Niger, mothers' groups were also established and included in capacity building activities. From the beginning of the school year 2020/2021, capacity building of PTAs/SMCs and mothers' groups focused on advocacy, support to student governments, inclusive education and child protection. Cumulatively, 576 PTA, SMC and mothers group members (women: 354; men: 222) from the target schools received child protection training. As a result of the training, some PTA/SMC and mothers group members have assumed roles and responsibilities within Child Protection Committees and school action plans have been developed under the supervision of inspectorate focal points.

Literacy centres have been established to provide basic literacy and numeracy to illiterate parents/caregivers in their mother tongue so that they can support their children to attend school and learn. Parents and community members (240 male; 737 female) were trained in community literacy circles. Prior to opening the literacy centres, village general assemblies were held to engage the community and facilitate the construction of shelters for the literacy classes.

8 Participants included: Representative from the Norwegian embassy, Directors from the basic education division, directors and

UNICEF, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Plan, Strømme Foundation, PAM (Programme Alimentaire Mondiale de Tombouctou), AMSS (Association Malienne pour la Survie au Sahel), and ADENOR (Association pour le Développement du Nord Mali).

advisers from the educational animation centre at the Academy of Timbuktu, directors from the teaching academies of Timbuktu and Taoudéni, regional administrative authorities, education union representative, headteachers representatives, parents representatives, the presidents/chairpersons of the SMCs/PTAs of Rharous, CSOs, including Womens organisations (Service local de la promotion feminine de Gourma Rharous), FEMAPH (la Fédération Malienne des Associations de Personnes Handicapées), CAFO (Coordination des Associations Féminines de Rharous), Youth (Coordination locale des jeunes de Rharous), AMUPI de Gourma Rahrous (Association Malienne pour l'Unité et le Progrès de l'Islam), ESS (Service local du Development Social et de l'Economie Solidare), and representatives from NGOs working in the field of education, including ADRA Mali, ADRA Niger and ADRA Norway,

Cumulatively, 513 (53%) literacy circle participants (male: 136; female: 377) have gained literacy and numeracy skills and increased their knowledge of inclusive education.

Story from a mother in Niger who attended the literacy circle: Hello, my name is Fatouma. I am living in the village of Kabe. I have regularly visited the literacy circle established by ADRA. Before, I could not even write my name, but now I can write and count. Most women in my village now know how to write and count. This allows us to follow our children better in school. Our husbands have supported us in this without any problems. We also discuss important matters for our village when we meet for the training. We have agreed to let our daughters attend school and not get married early. And we have also understood the importance of allowing children with disabilities to go to school. Since I now know how to count and write, it has allowed me to earn some money for my family.

Another benefit of the literacy circle I want to tell you about is the peace it has brought to our village. We have had a problem in our village because it was divided. We even had two majors. And we were fighting about who could use the fields for fodder. We wanted two schools, so our children did not have to meet in school. But we had to agree to only one school otherwise they

would have chosen another village for the school. We are so happy that we have this school. It means everything to us. People with no education or dignity join the jihadist groups, which must not happen to our youth. Since we only have one school and one literacy centre, our children meet in school, and I meet the other mothers in the literacy centre three days per week. We are not only learning to



read, write and count, but we have also learned how to find solutions to our disagreements. And how to take better care of our children.

Photo of four women from the literacy circle in Aggau.
Photo: Anine Lauterer, ADRA Norway

In Niger, four forums with ADRA partners and other education stakeholders have been held to promote inclusive quality education at the local, district, national and international levels. In November 2021, a forum brought together education actors at the local, regional and national level, including government, international agencies and national CSO⁹s.

The forum aimed to foster participants' understanding of inclusive education quality practices and strategies in intervention schools.

Specific Objectives:

- To share experiences in inclusion among participants;
- To exchange and discuss the mechanics of quality management and inclusiveness of schools;
- To identify the different types of partnerships for successful inclusive education
- Gather feedback from beneficiaries on the sustainability of ADRA project investments
- Share experiences on child protection policy, girls and people living with a disability

⁹ Participants included: The minister of education and the national director of inclusive education, directors and advisers from the local educational government, representatives from the Abdou Moumouni University of Niamey, representative from the Dosso Teacher training College, regional administrative authorities, education union representative, headteachers representatives, teachers representatives, mother groups representatives, representatives of SMCs/PTAs, CSOs, including FNPH (Fédération Nigérienne des Personnes Handicapées), Foundation of the first lady, UNICEF, and representatives from NGOs working in the field of education, including Strømme Foundation, Plan, Save the Children, NOOR Foundation. Representatives from ADRA Norway, ADRA Canada and ADRA Niger.

4 Assessment of cost efficiency

Cost efficiency is a key guiding principle for all procurements and activities of SEAQE Sahel. This involves evaluating tenders and choosing contractors/suppliers who deliver the best quality at the best price. SEAQE Sahel seeks to purchase materials and equipment locally where possible to reduce costs and support the local economy.

Training approaches: ADRA is testing new approaches to improve cost efficiency and sustainability. Since the end of 2020, SEAQE Sahel has moved away from a conventional teacher training approach, where teacher training is provided directly to teachers at their workstations, to strategically test collaboration with teacher professional development institutions, such as the Academy of Education in Timbouktu, Mali, and Dosso Teacher Training College in Niger, for the delivery of teacher training. ADRA will complement this approach with mentoring and peer support for teachers. Furthermore, cost efficiency strategies include 1) a system of Training of Trainers (ToT) whereby experienced trainers train PTAs and SMCs who then cascade training to other parents and the community members; and 2) engaging school staff, parents and communities to mobilise resources, including to maintain and improve school infrastructure, to promote the enrolment of marginalised children.

Accelerated Learning Program: The originally 2021 cumulative target for the provision of education opportunities to OOSC was 200 OOSC in Niger and 200 OOSC in Mali. However, numbers reached 1,985 OOSC in Niger and 674 OOSC in Mali. This was made possible without additional budget through partnerships with other organisations, such as Strømme foundation in Niger and NRC and others in Mali, and a replication of the Strømme foundation's Speed School model in Niger.

Construction of facilities: ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger were able to reduce costs for construction of classrooms by tendering large volumes to improve economies of scale, and because of in-kind contribution by community members and PTAs and SMCs, such as building of headteacher's accommodation facilities, guarding of construction materials and in-kind labour contribution. The fact that all construction was completed prior to price hikes as a result of COVID-19 disruptions to produce and supply chains contributed to cost efficiency as the price of raw materials has increased significantly in the last two years.

Cost analysis by ADRA Norway has been conducted. ADRA Norway has collected and compiled additional data to support an analysis of selected output indicator unit costs and comparisons over program years, within one country, and between countries. The analysis found, among other things, that construction and rehabilitation costs of classrooms and toilets, teacher training and teaching and learning materials are more expensive in Mali compared to Niger while the installation of water supplies is more expensive in Niger compared to Mali. This can be explained due to project locations in Mali being more remote, and hence the cost of transporting materials is higher.

Remote management and monitoring modalities developed as a result of COVID-19 travel restrictions have created cost efficiencies and new ways of working that will continue. Following COVID-19 lockdowns and travel restriction, regular program support and communication was maintained through Zoom or Teams conference calls, WhatsApp, Skype and social media. Program teams were able to share updates, pictures and videos of program activities in real time. During 2021, face-to-face training was conducted during monitoring visits and a number of trainings were conducted through eLearning and webinars. Furthermore, during

2021, ADRA Norway's finance and anti-corruption team conducted virtual financial monitoring with both ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger. While not all activities can be conducted virtually, it is anticipated that the significant learning and use of online tools and platforms will continue, reducing the need and associated costs of in-country field visits.

5 Cooperation – Sustainability – Lessons Learned

5.1 Cooperation with other donors and/or national/local authorities

ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger collaborated with their respective MoEs to deliver capacity building, training, and school inspections aligned with MoE inspection processes. The education departments and teacher training colleges were included in the ToT to maximise outreach and ensure alignment with teacher education institutes. In Mali, the colleges further provided mentoring services for teachers. ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger contributed to the development of inclusive education plans and curricula through close collaboration with the national ministry and education stakeholder forums. In Niger, the curriculum was installed on school computers and on tablets in the e-Labs. Furthermore, every teacher was provided with a hard copy of the national curriculum.

ADRA Mali collaborated with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) to raise awareness on child protection issues and to establish control and reporting mechanisms in the program districts.

Furthermore, ADRA Mali collaborates with NRC and other education stakeholders, including AMSS (Association Malienne pour la Survie au Sahel) and ADENOR (Association pour le Développement du Nord Mali), to advocate for inclusive education. This includes conducting joint awareness and advocacy campaigns at the national, district, and local levels. Throughout the program, five education forums have been held. The most recent in November 2021 focused on inclusive education and brought together local, national and regional education stakeholders, including government authorities, representatives of teacher training institutes, education NGOs, CSOs and SMC/PTA representatives.

ADRA Niger partners with Strømme Foundation to support the enrolment of OOSC within program schools. Strømme Foundation established Speed Schools which offer accelerated learning programs that allow older OOSC to reintegrate into mainstream schools at an age-appropriate grade. This partnership has strengthened the enrolment of OOSC within the 20 program schools. The program has exceeded its 2021 cumulative target to enrol 200 OOSC and has reached 1,985 OOSC (girls: 923; boys: 1062). The same Speed School model has been adopted by the BRIGHT program funded by GAC Canada and implemented in the program area by ADRA Niger.

ADRA's visit to the Ministry of Education in May 2022 resulted in a commitment by the government to include the inclusive education and positive discipline training that was developed by ADRA in the teacher training curriculum, either as a separate subject or as part of the child psychology subject.

In Mali, the opening of a new teacher training institute in Gourma Rharous was the result of the advocacy work of ADRA and the school communities. This was initiated during one of the education forums. This new institute will accept volunteer teachers so they can gain a teacher certificate while working, and also allow young people from the area to be trained as teachers.

5.2 Safeguarding and addressing cross-cutting issues

Anti-Corruption: ADRA Norway has a risk analysis process for fraud and corruption to ensure that controls are in place to manage risks, including a risk statement, risk analysis, risk mitigation and monitoring. All partners have updated fraud, whistleblowing and complaints policies and practices in place. ADRA maintains a clear zero tolerance position against fraud and bribes. ADRA employees are required to report corruption or extortion that they face. Routine joint monitoring has helped to reduce the risk of possible corrupt practices. Given the risk of robbery, project staff avoid carrying funds physically as much as possible. Efforts are made to limit risks to staff and the project. In procurements that exceeded NOK 100,000, ADRA Norway oversees the procurement/tendering process, reviews all supporting documents and checks prospective contractors before contracts are signed.

During country visits, ADRA Norway staff perform regular on-site verification and spot checks, as well as awareness raising about anti-corruption and zero tolerance against fraud and mismanagement. ADRA Norway also conducts capacity building sessions and provides partners with training material and tools for further organizational development on anti-corruption. During the COVID-19 pandemic, monitoring took place remotely. In addition to the regular monthly monitoring of partners' finances through reports, in 2021 ADRA Norway conducted 4–5-day intensive virtual workshops with each of the partners. ADRA Norway thus engaged with the partners to assess all different parts of their internal control system, providing support and guidance for further improvement. ADRA Norway received very positive feedback from the partners, esp. field staff, who felt included as they could participate of such a session remotely from their field offices.

In 2021 one case was reported to Norad's "varslingsteam", in connection with an armed attack against three schools in Mali: a group of armed men (assumedly members of Islamist terrorist groups) stormed 3 schools supported by SEAQE Sahel after school hours. They stole computers and other equipment and burned schoolbooks and teaching materials. The case was reported to the local police. Given the lawlessness of the area, the case was not investigated further. ADRA Norway provided to Norad an overview of relevant preventive measures and their expected effect. Norad decided to close the case, after concluding that there was no evidence of fraud and mismanagement.

The environment and vulnerability to climate change: Before schools were built, SEAQE Sahel liaised with local authorities and communities to assess potential environmental and social impacts. Thereafter, mitigation measures were developed to ensure that the final design was environmentally sustainable and sound. Risks of natural disaster were also assessed and mitigated. In carrying out construction work, contractors were required to respect the environment and limit the use of chemicals or plastics that are likely to cause short or long-term environmental damage. In Niger, construction work must consider local and national tree protection standards. SEAQE Sahel staff in Niger and Mali were trained on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and resilience. This is done through partnerships with other ongoing projects in each country. Additionally, through partnerships with other organisations, there has been an emphasis on making schools safe, which includes measures taken by SMCs in school development plans to include DRR measures. During the one-year cost extension of the program, SEAQE Sahel will have a stronger focus on climate change mitigation and preparedness efforts.

A resilience plan has been prepared and is being implemented in Mali. A similar approach will take place in Niger during 2022. In Mali, teachers and principals have been trained on environmental

education. The program partners with the Department of Water and Sanitation and the Department of Forestry in charge of environmental protection in both countries. The departments are primarily involved in activities relating to the physical environment. This includes planting trees on school grounds, providing energy saving cooking stoves for schools, and installing solar systems in e-learning labs. In Niger each school has started its own school garden (20 schools). In Mali, the program has planted trees as living fences and will start school gardens during 2022. Moreover, the departments conduct awareness activities on infrastructure maintenance and support the procurement and distribution of hygiene and sanitation materials. In Niger, the program has conducted community radio programs and community sensitization events on resilience building and climate change.

During 2020, ADRA Norway has developed its organisational strategy for 2021 – 2025. The strategy has an increased emphasis on the environment and climate change. Moreover, ADRA Norway is working towards a lighthouse certification for the head office by 2022. In addition, ADRA Norway collaborates with ADRA Europe's "Resilience Working Group" to roll out a Carbon Neutral Strategy for the ADRA Network. In line with SDG goal 13, the Paris Agreement, and the Kyoto Protocol, ADRA Norway aims to ensure they deliver climate-resilient and sustainable development programs throughout their programs. This includes assessing our administration-related carbon footprint and exploring carbon-offsetting methods. We plan to develop an action plan to adopt environmentally friendly operations and work towards carbon neutrality in all our programs.

Human rights, including the rights of persons with disabilities: SEAQE Sahel prioritises the safety, wellbeing, and human rights of all while maintaining a Do-No-Harm approach. Child rights are a particular focus of ADRA Norway. The program child safeguarding and protection have been mainstreamed throughout activities to improve the capacity of schools to proactively safeguard and protect all children, including children living with disabilities and other vulnerable children. To this end, ADRA Norway has supported ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger to update their child safeguarding and child protection policies. This has included improvements to incident reporting and case management procedures. Further ADRA Norway has held a series of webinars with SEAQE Sahel partner staff on the impacts of COVID-19 on child protection and mitigation of associated risks.

At the program level, ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger have:

- Supported schools to establish and/or to develop the capacity of student bodies, such as student governments and councils.
- Worked with schools to develop whole school behaviour policies to improve the capacity
 of schools to implement positive discipline, raise awareness of behaviour expectations,
 and establish systems for recognition of student achievement.
- Trained stakeholders, including SMCs, PTAs, child protection committees, parents, caregivers, community leaders, and children in child protection. This has increased awareness of child rights and child protection reporting procedures. Further it has strengthened the protective environment in schools.
- Supported schools to develop and implement child protection policies that prohibit corporal punishment and raise awareness through displaying 'safe school' posters.
- Developed referral maps for students in need of additional support.
- Developed and delivered comprehensive positive discipline training to teachers in program schools.

Women's rights and gender equity: SEAQE Sahel seeks to be gender-sensitive and gender transformative through constructing gender-segregated latrines, establishing EMAs and educating EMA members on inclusive education and child protection practices. Further, SEAQE

conducts teacher training to promote equality in the classroom and encourages girls' attendance in school by providing their families with incentives. ADRA collects disaggregated data by gender, in addition to age and type of disability, for all relevant indicators.

The program has made significant progress regarding the enrolment of girls and enrolment of out-of-school girls. While the target was for 5,891 girls to have enrolled by the end of 2021 in primary schools, a total of 8,223 girls enrolled (4,011 in Mali and 4,212 in Niger). In Niger, the enrolmet number for girls has even surpassed the number of boys. SEAQE has, additionally, made significant progress when it comes to supporting out-of-school girls' enrolment in school. By the end of 2021, a cumulative total of 290 OOS girls enrolled in Mali and 923 OOS girls enrolled in Niger. Gender-segregated latrines and stronger child protection and safeguarding practices undoubtedly contributed to the retention of girls in school. In both countries, vulnerable girls are encouraged to continue education by receiving goats or other incentives to encourage transition into secondary education and help them generate an income for their family.

The percentage of girls who complete primary education in both Niger and Mali has increased compared to baseline. During 2021, completion rates for girls who sat for exams are respectively 62% in Mali and 59% in Niger. This increase is partly attributed to training provided to teachers concerning GBV, child protection, and gender-inclusive pedagogy, and partly to incentive packages including geometry kits, French books, maths books, English books, pens, soap and cloth menstrual pads. Additionally, having a positive effect are the awareness raising and capacity development of PTAs and SMC regarding the importance of girls' education as well as the incentives provided to at-risk girls to encourage the continuation of their studies. There is significant progress, despite the difficulty of keeping girls in school when society expects them to be married early and perform domestic duties. These expectations do not apply for boys. Whilst Mali's education policy emphasises equal access to quality education for girls and boys, education is still dominated by males. Due to this fact, a very small proportion of teaching candidates are female upon recruitment. Nonetheless, the program's awareness-raising efforts are slowly but gradually bearing fruit. Out of 30 teachers recruited by the program, 6 were female (20%). In total, 21 of the 91 teachers in SEAQE Mali schools are female, while in Niger, 142 of the 184 teachers are female.

Particular attention is paid to gender in program implementation, including girls' schooling and gender parity in community sensitisation events and meetings. SEAQE Sahel Mali has held forums and supported regional and national actors to advance this goal. Key activities in 2021 where gender was an important aspect included:

- Gender mainstreaming in the training of student governments to achieve gender parity in representation (girls: 49%; boys: 51%);
- Consideration of girls' dietary requirements at the school canteen;
- Advocacy sessions to combat early marriage and keep girls in school.

The final evaluation, through a case study has found that despite working in a difficult cultural and social context, there are examples where girls on the brink of child marriage, were rescued and have continued schooling. Multiple teachers in both countries have, moreover, reported that girls are more motivated and generally perform better in school than boys. ADRA program staff in both countries stressed that the child protection component focuses heavily on girls. A study conducted by the BRIGHT project in some of the SEAQE Sahel schools in Niger found that approximately 60% of respondents reported they noticed more girls attended school, teachers gave more support, more women groups were formed and the women groups received training on empowerment. The majority of the respondents also reported that they discussed various topics such as the importance of girl's education, empowerment, and avoidance of early marriage at community gatherings, meetings or religious meeting places.

Safeguarding and child protection activities

ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger benefit from regular safeguarding and child protection support from ADRA Norway. Meetings take place at least once every two months, with more frequent support readily available. In 2021, both country offices were supported to establish Safeguarding and Protection Taskforce, appointing a Focal Person and taskforce members including key staff from SEAQE Sahel. The taskforces' created action plans, which included adopting a suite of six safeguarding policies. Both countries have done this and had the policies adopted by their boards. ADRA Niger is in the process of establishing an additional child protection working group with the aim of sharing learning across projects and addressing challenges.

In November 2021, Mali and Niger staff received a three-day safeguarding and child protection training from ADRA Norway covering topics including how safeguarding issues arise, PSHEA, child protection and child rights, identifying child protection issues, the basics of child development, making referrals, case recording and tackling child marriage.

SEAQE Sahel staff across both countries report that corporal punishment has reduced when compared with the start of the project. Even though it is sensitive to provide data about this practice, individual observations, anecdotal evidence and ETLE results indicate that corporal punishment, particularly physical punishment, has indeed seen a marked decline in the target schools. Project staff in both countries report that all stakeholders are aware of ADRA's anticorporal punishment stance thanks to the message being reiterated repeatedly at meetings, visits and through training. ADRA Mali staff report that they no longer see the implements, such as rulers, canes and whips, used for corporal punishment in classrooms when they undertake spot visits. ADRA Niger staff report seeing the items from time to time, however the teachers quickly try to hide them when they see the staff entering their classroom. The biggest barrier to eliminating corporal punishment are local cultures which encourage it, and excessively large class sizes of up to 130 students making change an uphill battle. ADRA Niger conducted training in 2021 with all teachers covering positive discipline in detail, over three days. The training gives plenty of practical suggestions for maintaining a motivating and positive learning environment. Both ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger have action plans in place for 2021 to eliminate corporal punishment in programme schools.

ADRA Niger conducted awareness raising campaigns on early marriage and provided head teachers with training on the subject. The village child protection committees were given additional training on their roles and responsibilities in order to improve their efficacy. The committees and schools, following previous training from ADRA, sent child protection concerns to education inspectors, who worked hand in hand with the committees and head teachers to handle the cases. ADRA's child protection specialist maintained a close working relationship with the village chiefs, who are the heads of the committees. One case involved a girl who had become pregnant and then lost her baby shortly after birth. The girl was an orphan and lived with her aunt, who could not afford to send her back to school. SEAQE Sahel has now referred the girl to ADRA's BRIGHT project in the local area to ensure she receives the specialist help she needs to return to school

Conflict Sensitivity and alignment with the resolution on "Women, Peace and Security"

During 2021, ADRA Norway developed a conflict sensitivity guide to strengthen ADRA's capacity to ensure conflict sensitivity throughout all ADRA Norway programs. Relevant adjustments have now been made to the program to ensure conflict sensitivity. A more rigorous and continuous process of conflict analysis may have helped reduce tensions and avoid implementation delays in Mali, where armed groups have requested that schools supported by the program not teach in French, but rather in Arabic language. According to local government and education authorities, negotiations are underway to facilitate adding Arabic language as a subject in the schools of Mali. Local authorities also confirm that the program has helped build positive relationships between the school, community, and local stakeholders and has improved the relationship between diverse groups.

ADRA incorporates key elements of the resolution on "Women, Peace and Security" to actively promote and support the engagement of women in local and national processes, particularly in the community peace building activities that are incorporated into our work with local communities, PTA/SMC groups and with local stakeholders and authorities in our program areas. Our partners advocate for the rights of girls to education and broader wellbeing. Additionally, we have begun to partner with more women grassroot organisations. In Niger, a "Goat for Education" initiative, and in Mali, incentives have helped increase enrolment, retention and transition of girls into secondary schools. Additionally, student governments in both countries have strengthened the role of girls in advocacy and decision making. The end-of-project evaluation highlights the role of women in decisions about their children's education. Respondents mentioned in relation to the impact of the project that women parent's perception of girls' rights and the rights of children living with a disability to education had changed significantly. The program has expanded its literacy training and capacity building of parents using the REFLECT model. This has helped parents to understand the importance of education, and to engage in peace building processes, especially when nomad communities move during summer for food security and jobs.

5.3 Sustaining and Strengthening Program Achievements

SEAQE Sahel operates within the fragile contexts of Mali and Niger, where limited resources for inclusive education, untrained teachers, limited teacher training opportunities, poor school infrastructure, and weak or non-existent PTA and SMC structures prevail. Moreover, the education of girls and children living with disabilities is generally not prioritised by Malian and Nigerien parents and communities. It is within this context that SEAQE Sahel have made significant gains in strengthening access to quality inclusive education for all children, including those most vulnerable.

The program seeks to ensure sustainability through various means, including capacity building of headteachers, teachers, and government education officials. The skills and knowledge acquired by stakeholders through training will remain in and continue to benefit the community. Data from the ETLE assessment show that teachers' and head teachers' performance has improved significantly. During 2020, the program also shifted its approach to strengthening teacher capacities. Now, the focus is on regular coaching, school-based professional development, and partnerships with pre- and in-service teacher training institutes. In Mali, the government has opened a teacher training institute in Gourma Rharous which will allow the volunteer teachers to achieve teachers certification while working. This increases the program's reach and sustainability. This, furthermore, strengthens the institutions' ability to provide quality training in the future and ensures the institutionalisation and continuation of teachers' professional development beyond the program period. During school closures caused by COVID-19, the 30 teachers that were hired in the program in Mali (in addition to the government

teachers) demonstrated great resilience by providing home- and community-based learning to 3,085 students over a period of 6 months.

SEAQE Sahel has built the capacity of PTAs and SMCs to support the enrolment and learning of all children, including those most vulnerable. Data from the ETLE assessment show that PTA and SMC performance has improved significantly. In the majority of schools, these structures were non-existent or not operational prior to the commencement of the program. PTAs and SMCs have taken on increased responsibility in terms of monitoring school performance and identifying resources for infrastructure rehabilitation. In addition, they have been heavily involved in promoting the enrolment of OOSC and the COVID-19 back to school campaigns in both countries. The higher than anticipated enrolment rates and the fact that schools have maintained or exceeded enrolment targets, is a testament to the ownership and responsibility fostered within communities, parents, PTAs and SMCs.

In Mali and Niger, parents and community members also engage in volunteer work at the targeted schools. This includes school clean-up days, construction and repair of classrooms and supportive infrastructure, watering and maintenance of the school yard, planting trees for fences around school compounds, guarding computer and eLearning labs, and assisting teachers when needed.

Literacy training and capacity building of parents using the REFLECT model, has helped parents to understand the importance of education, to support the school, and to identify children living with disabilities and other OOSC to bring them to school. Parents have demonstrated improved performance in literacy and numeracy skills, and this is enabling them to better support their children with homework.

An important approach to sustainability at the school level, is to hand over schools, toilets and water supply to the local government, education office and communities. Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) are signed, understood and in place prior to handing over rehabilitated schools to the authorities, and include maintenance plans which describe the roles and responsibilities of the community and local authorities. The community has already provided cash and in-kind contributions to maintain infrastructure in response to maintenance plans.

In Niger, SEAQE Sahel has provided eight e-Learning labs. On the surface this might be perceived as unsustainable but from a learning perspective it has contributed to improvements in student learning outcomes. The provision of solar energy for e-learning labs, and close collaboration with the Ministry of Education to upload curriculum onto tablets to reduce the recurring expense of acquiring and replacing books, are important elements to sustainability. ADRA Norway partnered with The Fafo Research Foundation to conduct a study that provides evidence and lessons around the use of technology and interactive station-based learning in connection with literacy skills, including value for money, and teachers' adaptation to changes in pedagogy. The results of this study will be shared with Norad and the global development community with the final report.

SEAQE Sahel has identified and built the capacity of teachers who remain focal points for protection and safeguarding in schools. In addition, ADRA has formed village protection committees in every community where there is a supported school. Both teachers and protection committees, have already started to identify and handle protection cases including child marriage and corporal punishment. These structures will continue to receive training and mentoring and are expected to continue the provision of protection support to students beyond the program period.

ADRA Niger and ADRA Mali are working with relevant government departments and local government units to continue program support for infrastructure maintenance, provision of textbooks and learning materials, training of headteachers and teachers, follow up on e-learning labs, and school monitoring visits by education officers. Finally, ADRA Norway and partners have developed comprehensive and participatory sustainability and exit plans. The plans will be followed through 2022 and updated at the end of the program to ensure commitments by various stakeholders have been kept.

While system strengthening efforts are bearing fruit, there is more than can and should be done to ensure inclusive quality education for all children in Mali and Niger. ADRA stands ready to continue efforts to support the education rights of children in Mali and Niger.

5.4 Lessons Learned

Throughout the program several discoveries and lessons have been learned that could have a positive impact on program outcomes if prioritised. These include:

- 1. Build the capacity of local CSOs: The efforts of ADRA Norway and our local ADRA-partners in Mali and Niger to build capacity of other local CSOs and enable them to show progress has proven more challenging than anticipated. This is primarily because ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger lacked previous experience working with CSOs on capacity development. We have learned that a stronger focus on partnerships with other local CSOs will improve contributions to sustainable inclusive education. In 2021, capacity building of local CSOs has been a stronger focus of ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger.
- 2. Focus on harmful practices: Despite efforts to address early marriage, the SEAQE Sahel has been limited with its focus mainly on primary schools. In order to sustain results and address more cases of early marriage, increasing the number of secondary schools in the program would be desirable. This was also recommended by MTR stakeholders. Education authorities, community leaders, teachers and parents called for the program to be expanded to secondary schools. This would provide an important pathway for girls to education and future employment opportunities. Fortunately, this has now been included in a gender focussed education program funded by Canada.
- **3.** Collaboration with teacher training institutes to provide and sustain teacher training: Despite significant efforts to train teachers and headteachers, the high turnover of teachers has hampered progress. Since 2020, the program has engaged teacher training institutes in the provision of relevant in service training programs for teachers. A stronger focus on continuous teacher professional development opportunities is likely to improve teacher motivation and retention.
- **4. Strengthening inclusion in the program:** In Niger, collaboration with DPOs through the TOFI program has added value to the SEAQE Sahel program. All teachers received training in Braille and sign language. Moreover, students with visual impairment received learning materials in Braille. In Mali, all teachers received inclusive education training. The work that PTAs did also increased communities' understanding of inclusion and led to a higher-than-expected enrollment of children living with a disability. We believe teacher training on inclusive education and collaboration with DPOs were important contributors to successful implementation. ADRA Mali has partnered with the DPO FEMAPH and is establishing a local group in the program area to strengthen the engagement of DPOs and people living with a disability.
- **5. Importance of e-learning and e-learning labs in the schools**: The introduction of e-learning labs has increased student motivation. Anecdotal evidence suggests it has also had a positive impact on learning outcomes. There is reason to believe that learning

- outcomes will improve if e-learning labs are used effectively. To gain detailed insight, we are currently conducting additional research on this component.
- **6.** The need for fences around schools to keep learners safe. MTR respondents mentioned the critical need for fences around schools to reduce risks such as armed militia or animals wandering into the schoolyard and motorbikes taking shortcuts through the school property. To this end, ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger are conducting awareness-raising sessions with SMCs/PTAs and communities on the importance of keeping schools safe, including strategies to prevent unauthorised persons, traffic, and animals from crossing school grounds. Moreover, we have started to plant trees to serve as living fences around schools.
- 7. School canteens offering a daily meal supports attendance and retention. The MTR found that in some schools, learners leave the school compound during lunchtime without returning. It was felt that a school feeding program might be an important initiative to retain students. In Mali, at the beginning of the SEAQE program, the World Food Program (WFP) supported 16 program schools with food for learners. Unfortunately, this support was withdrawn due to a change in geographic priorities by WFP. In addition, we faced security issues with storing food. The provision of meals in school will be considered in a new program phase. This will include consultation with PTAs and SMCs, particularly to ensure that food supplies do not attract attention from terrorist groups. We will continue to establish and furnish school canteens and promote school gardens to address food insecurity concerns.
- **8. Need for more classrooms / construction.** High enrollment has led to the need for many more classrooms. Whilst PTAS and SMCs have been heavily involved in constructing temporary classrooms, they are small and limit student collaboration. They also posed a high fire risk.

6 Results monitoring and evaluations

6.1 Regular monitoring and data quality assurance

Both ADRA Mali and ADRA Niger have been collecting regular monitoring data related to indicators in the results framework, other activities, and cost data. Both offices have, in addition, conducted activities to verify collected data and visits educational institutional partners.

Work was undertaken to verify, and quality assure program data. In 2019, meetings were held in Bamako and Niamey, where ADRA Norway's MEAL Advisor joined the local teams to verify, and quality assure the data collected for 2018. Similar work was done remotely in 2020 and 2021 for data from 2019 and 2020. At these meetings, databases were studied carefully, original data was checked, and additional data was collected where needed. In the few cases where data errors were evident for previous years, this was corrected. This work increased the reliability and validity of the data in this report and the attached results framework. Whilst data verification has been more challenging during the COVID-19 pandemic, it has enabled a high quality data system to be maintained in the program. We are confident that prior to the pandemic, data reported as part of the annual reports is highly accurate (only a few, minor discrepancies have been found during checks on 2019 data in 2021), and we believe that accuracy has not been significantly compromised by the pandemic.

6.2 Evaluations

The final evaluation was conducted during May-October 2021. The evaluation report and the management response are attached as Annexes 6 and 7. A copy of the final evaluation will be sent to Norad's evaluation database. In October 2021, ADRA Norway contracted Fafo to conduct a research study that is expected to provide evidence and lessons around the use of technology and interactive station-based learning in connection with literacy and numeracy skills, including value for money, and teachers' adaptation to changes in pedagogy. This study will serve as a baseline for a second study that will measure progress. The results of this study will be shared with Norad and the global development community as part of the final report.

Finally, literacy and numeracy tests were conducted by the relevant ministries in Mali and Niger during 2021, applying the official PASEC (Programme d'analyse des systèmes éducatifs de la CONFEMEN (Conférence des ministres de l'Éducation des États et gouvernements de la Francophone) tests in Niger and Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA)/Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) assessments in Mali. In Mali, the PASEC tests were not conducted as originally planned due to a lack of qualified and trained education officers that can conduct such tests.

The following reviews and evaluations are planned for 2022:

- 1. An external review of the e-learning labs in Niger will be conducted and compared with the first study conducted by Fafo in 2021-2022
- 2. An internal ADRA ETLE assessment will be conducted in May 2022

7 Financial Reporting

Refer to Annexes 1-4 for the final report including a comparison of actuals against the budget.

8 Date and attestation

I am authorised to enter into legally binding agreements on behalf of the grant recipient and attest that to the best of my knowledge and belief the information given in this report is correct.

Date: 12 August 2022

Name/signature/electronic signature

Choon Boudli

Title: Programs Director, ADRA Norway

9 Annexes

Annex 1: SEAQE Sahel Consolidated Expense Report 2021

Annex 2: SEAQE Sahel Financial Statements 2021

Annex 3: SEAQE Sahel Audit Report 2021

Annex 4: SEAQE Sahel Management Letter by auditor 2021 Annex 5: SEAQE Sahel Results Framework with 2017-21 data

Annex 6: SEAQE Sahel Final Evaluation Report

Annex 7: Management Response to Evaluation Report

Annex 8: Risk Analysis SEAQE Sahel - Updated August 2021