

How is gender equality included in education sector planning?

An analysis of power, voice and social change in Chad

Chad Country Report

Annex D.5 Chad Country Report

Mott MacDonald Limited trading as Cambridge Education. Registered in England and Wales no. 1243967. Registered office: Mott MacDonald House, 8-10 Sydenham Road, Croydon CR0 2EE, United Kingdom

Cambridge Education
22 Station Road
Cambridge CB1 2JD
United Kingdom
T +44 (0)1223 463500
camb-ed.com

United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
3 United Nations Plaza,
New York, NY 10017
USA
Ungei.org

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List of Acronyms

CAMOJET	Collectif des Association et Movement de La Chad
COSOCIDE-TCHAD	Coalition of Civil Society Organisations for the Development of Education in Chad
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
LEG	Local Education Group
PIET	Interim Plan for Education in Chad
TFP	Technical and Financial Partners
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Context and overview of planning process

Although the last two decades have seen considerable progress on global commitments to address gender disparities in education, many challenges remain. Girls in Sub-Saharan Africa are still furthest from equality in educational access and achievement, with factors such as poverty and location compounding with discriminatory gender norms to exclude girls from education (UNESCO 2022b). Through the [Gender at the Centre Initiative \(GCI\)](#), a program that encourages Ministries of Education to embed gender equality at the heart of education systems, a study was commissioned to examine how gender equality is integrated in education sector planning in 8 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nigeria, Niger and Sierra Leone). The synthesis report identifies examples of good practice, opportunities and threats to promote gender transformative education systems. This country report presents the findings of the analysis for Chad.

The analysis focusses on the most recent Education Sector Plan planning process in Chad: the Interim Plan for Education in Chad 2 (PIET 2). This plan is directly based on the Interim Plan for Education in Chad 1 (PIET 1), which was due to end in 2020. As a significant number of activities could not be carried out within the given timeframe, an extension request was presented and granted, resulting in the production of an updated plan for the period 2021-2024.

UNESCO financed this process by mobilizing two international consultants to support the national teams with the preparation of the strategic documents. It took place between the beginning of 2020 and January 2022, in two phases: a phase of assessment of the implementation of the PIET between May and September 2020 and a phase of drafting the plan and the PTAB between September 2020 and January 2022.

Chad is operating in a very challenging context: security threats resulting from conflicts in neighboring countries, significant movements of population, a growing public debt. The scarcity of public finances has a direct impact on the education sector. Regarding gender, the Gender Inequality Index was, for 2019, of 0,710, in a country where more than 50% of the 15,9 million inhabitants are women or girls.

This analysis is based on 11 interviews with stakeholders: 4 Ministry representatives, 2 CSO/NGO, 1 youth representative, 2 consultants and 2 technical partners – 4 women and 7 men. It is important to note that at the time of this analysis, the process of drawing up the ten-year plan has been launched with the support of the World Bank. The actors interviewed pleaded that the results of this analysis should inform the process of drawing up the ten-year plan, for better integration of gender issues.

There were 11 Key Informants interviewed for this study.

4 Ministry representatives, 2 CSO/ NGO, 1 youth representative, 2 Technical partners and 2 consultants

7 men, and 4 women.

Thematic results

Political economy

Political will

Chad has adopted most of the international and regional Convention and Resolutions related to the promotion of gender equality. In operational terms, this is reflected by several positive developments, such as a National Gender Policy (Ministry of the Family and Social Action, 2011) and its Action Plan (2019-2023), the promulgation of a law prohibiting early marriage of girls and a decree imposing quotas for the recruitment of women in the administration.

Interviews confirmed that there is political will at the highest level to promote gender equality.

At the institutional level, in the education sector, gender issues are increasingly being taken into account, as highlighted by the creation by the 1994 Education Orientation Law, of a Unit dedicated to girls' schooling. This unit was then transformed into a Division, and it is now a specific Directorate. However, the head of the Directorate of Girls Education does not have the same status as other department directors.

“This component needs to be more highlighted, with clear goals for gender equality. Because it is cross-cutting, some activities stay outside of the ESP currently. My understanding is that we need clear, qualitative objectives in terms of reduction of gender-based violence for example. Specific goals which highlight the challenges” - MINEDH

The major constraint mentioned by the respondents is the lack of financial resources. There is a consensus, that due to the extreme poverty in the country, a result of the glaring basic needs of the education system (first and foremost, the underdeveloped school infrastructure and the lack of teachers), the available resources are not prioritized for actions aimed at promoting gender equality. Furthermore, the vast majority of the actions included in the Plan remain gender-sensitive actions related to access and hygiene, which are not funded. There is little room at present for more systemic actions. Stakeholders also indicated that the Ministry exclusively relies on its partners in its efforts to promote gender equality in the education system.

Another constraint mentioned by the stakeholders is the lack of knowledge at the national level on the concept of gender. There is a tendency to believe that gender

only concerns issues related to women and girls, and discussion is limited to equity of access. While issues related to the enrolment of girls are well known within Chad's education system, the broader issue of gender equality and what it covers is less known. Few interviewees were aware of it and their commitment is accordingly limited. Within the Ministry of Education, apart from the managers of the Directorate of Girls' Education, only two managers have been trained in gender-sensitive planning, and they are now among the most committed to this issue.

Accountability

Respondents were unable to indicate the existence of operational accountability mechanisms for the implementation of gender promotion actions.

At the governmental level, several Ministries were mentioned as important stakeholders in the promotion of gender equality (e.g. the Ministry of Family and Social Action and its National Gender Policy) but its actors were not involved in the planning process. There is also no accountability mechanism on gender aspects at a higher institutional level. A monitoring mechanism has been developed as part of the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Gender Policy, but it was not mentioned by the stakeholders interviewed.

Similarly, within the education sector, no accountability mechanism was mentioned. Interestingly, the existence of a Directorate for Girls' Education is perceived as a mechanism in itself and expected to design, implement and monitor all actions related to the promotion of gender equality within the education system.

There are also a few gender-specific indicators for monitoring. These include: a lack of time, gaps in training of planners on the subject and the absence of resources. These appear to be among the main explanatory factors. However, it was pointed out that there is no specific follow-up by the partners on the integration of these elements into the operational plan, either from UNESCO or the World Bank who are funding the planning processes.

Relationships

Power and decision making

The composition of thematic groups indicates the existing power plays in the planning process. Around 80% of the groups are composed of representatives of the Ministry. Although representatives of civil society, trade unions and parents are invited to participate, their involvement is limited to an advisory role at various stages of the process. Their active participation is limited by a lack of familiarity with the planning exercise: without knowing the rules of the game, they cannot really impact the process, which remains in the hands of the Ministry's

management. Moreover, within the ministerial team themselves, the decision-making power is mainly in the hands of those who are most used to the exercise.

"The reality is that it is those with the best ability to write strategic documents whose ideas will be best represented in the Plan" - TFP representative, Chad

Networks and Coalitions

The process of developing PIET 2 follows a participatory and inclusive approach involving all representatives of the education sector.

A technical committee dedicated to the development and follow-up of the Plan was set up by government order. This committee is coordinated by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education. The work is divided into thematic groups: a thematic group for each sub-sector and a thematic group for the cross-cutting axes, in which the gender issue is integrated from the perspective of girls' education.

The groups are composed of actors with different levels of responsibility and hierarchy. The CSO and ministry coalitions are reportedly ineffective and poorly organized. Respondents mentioned that collaboration with civil society or trade unions, for example, is sometimes difficult, as there are many demands and claims. Consultation processes aim to allow an open forum as far as possible, taking proposals into account or at justifying why they are not. Despite this however, stakeholders reported that ultimately the Ministry's Manager' positions take precedence. Furthermore, people from CSOs mentioned that they feel more effective trying to get directly to the high-level actors in the Ministry to "pressure" them on issues.

Few stakeholders mentioned the local education group (LEG) as an influential actor; any reference made to them was with regards to their role as a funder. The involvement of the technical and financial partners (TFPs) in the process also does not appear to be influential.

"There was no criticism or challenge from the TFPs to better integrate gender issues during the process" - CSO representative, Chad

Respondents state that TFPs are called upon to give their opinion at various stages of the preparation of documents but they have not put forward any specific recommendations or suggestions for better integration of gender issues into the

Plan. The multiple priorities and needs facing the Chad education system seem to limit the attention given to these issues. This is evidenced by the fact that in the Action Plan, none of the activities of the Directorate of Girls' Education has a specific budget, and all the funding remains to be found.

The participation of the CSOs is made possible by a platform that is invited to participate at key moments of the process. While the platform's operation is satisfactory to its members, who feel that their concerns are well represented, the platform's role has not been active. The stakeholders interviewed regretted not being given sufficient space to express their concerns, which stem directly from their work in the field, in order to feed these into the drafting of the Plan. In the absence of active participation in the drafting of the documents, they further mentioned the establishment of alternative channels of advocacy with stakeholders perceived as being key players in the process. By doing so, they intend to raise their awareness of gender equality issues and thus facilitate the inclusion of concrete actions in the Plan.

Voice

Gender expertise

While the equity thematic group was composed of gender experts (notably the Director). On the other hand, the members of the other thematic groups did not have specific resource persons on this issue. Gender mainstreaming was therefore ensured by working in synergy with the Director and respective teams and encouraged by the consultants who accompanied the process. Therefore, during the planning and budgeting stages of activities, the advice of gender experts was sought or proposed in order to design activities that took gender equality issues into account (example given of merit-based prizes or scholarships).

Nevertheless, and broadly speaking, the process of developing PIET 2 is perceived by the gender 'experts' as a success, as many aspects that were previously little mentioned have been taken into account and included in the plan. The PIET review has gone further in analysing the situation of girls, beyond the issues of access. In addition to the activities concerning hygiene kits, scholarships etc., they were able to introduce into the plan an action concerning the development of a Gender Strategy for Education.

Voice of young people and communities

The involvement of communities and young people in the process of drawing up the Plan was limited: the platform of civil society organizations that represents them was only consulted at various stages of drawing up the Plan but not directly involved. In addition, the severe time constraints relating to the development of

the Plan did not allow broad consultations and the work was largely concentrated around the Ministry's actors at the central level in N'Djamena.

Furthermore, while stakeholders understood these constraints but highlighted that the sector's planning work was not very inclusive. They advocated for the decentralization of the planning process: (i) allow provincial meetings to be organized with departmental stakeholders for greater inclusion (the example of the consultative process conducted in the framework of the Policy Dialogue is cited as an example) and (ii) a better upstream association of the actors involved in the field, at the time of planning. Both these steps will allow for better identification of implementation capacities and facilitate the operationalisation of the Plan's actions.

"We need to talk to people more closely to define activities in line with needs. Go to the grassroots." - CSO representative, Chad

Interviewees from youth groups were also surprised over the limited role of the Ministry of Youth in the planning process. As training of youth leaders and counsellors is the Ministry's responsibility inclusion of youth is important. Respondents shared that the youth are key and experienced actors in the implementation of many gender equality actions (especially in relation to health and reproduction issues).

Society

Social norms

While religious leaders were not directly involved in the process, there is agreement on the important role they can play in efforts to promote gender equality within the education system. Working upstream with these stakeholders during broad consultative processes is also seen as a positive lever for better integration of gender issues in planning, but also and especially in the implementation of actions. Respondents felt that by reassuring religious leaders over the objectives and urgency of the situation, it was possible, for example, to solicit their support for awareness-raising activities on girls' schooling or on violence against women. Some interviewees also mentioned examples of positive intervention seen in issues of female genital mutilation (FGM) in certain areas.

"In terms of advocacy, religious leaders are difficult to convince, but as soon as they understand what is at stake, they are great spokespeople. They can also be very useful when trying to work with sometimes obstructing actors such as the traditional and customary authorities." - CSO Representative, Chad

Resistance

The teams involved in the planning process were predominantly male. Although all the actors mentioned the obligation¹ to raise the number of women in all nominative or elective positions by up to 30%, this objective was found difficult to achieve. The reasons given were not linked to a phenomenon of resistance, but rather to the long timeframe over which these changes were taking place: in a system that has long been at the advantage of men, it is difficult to find women in sufficient numbers to occupy positions of responsibility. This phenomenon was observed at all levels of the Ministry's organization chart. However, the expertise and strong leadership of the women involved in the planning process is unanimously recognized and valued.

The stakeholders discourse did not reveal any resistance to the efforts geared at promoting gender equality in the education system. The diagnosis fully shared, as is the will to act (on the part of the actors involved in the planning process). The explanation given by all the respondents to explain the lack of progress in this area is the question of resources, or rather the extent of the needs. In a context of extreme scarcity of resources and colossal needs, priority is given to other areas.

Stakeholders indicate, however, that while in large cities and at high levels within the Ministry, gender equality issues do not meet with much resistance, the problem remains important in rural areas or in less affluent social categories.

¹ Decree No. 0433 implementing Ordinance No. 012 of 22 May 2018 instituting parity in nominative and elective functions in the Republic of Chad, 2021

SWOT analysis

3.1 Strengths

A clear political will on the part of the Government is present to move towards greater gender equity – and at times gender equality – at the national level in general, and in the education system in particular.

The increased attention given to the issue of girls' schooling over the past 20 years has resulted in the creation of a Directorate dedicated to this issue whose work is increasingly being recognised.

A vibrant civil society and its pledge to promote gender equality, both at the grass-roots level with communities and beneficiaries, and also in advocacy with the government creates foundations for strong planning processes.

The availability of local gender expertise within other government ministries, such as expertise involved in the elaboration of the Gender National Policy and Action Plan.

3.2 Weaknesses

Due to the deteriorating security situation in the sub-region, there is a tendency to direct funds towards covering basic needs and emergency situations than focus on gender planning and relevant interventions.

There is a limited understanding, among stakeholders at all levels (including those involved in planning processes, but also those at high levels of responsibility), of the concept and issues of gender. Due to information gaps, there is also a tendency to limit themselves, when the issue is addressed, to gender sensitive activities. Very little more transformative actions are proposed.

A lack of human resources trained in gender-sensitive planning in the Ministry of Education, to integrate gender issues into their regular activities at all stages of the process (starting with the sector analysis).

3.3 Opportunities

There is considerable space to popularise both the concept and the issues relating to gender for the Ministry's technicians and decision-makers (DGs, SGs, etc.) in order to ensure that they have a good understanding of the issues and to facilitate their support for the efforts undertaken.

The availability of local resources presents the opportunity to develop gender expertise amongst all stakeholders involved in the planning process.

There is space to define a new engineering of social participation in the planning processes in order to ensure that grass-roots voices are properly taken into account in the proposed strategies: more concrete support not just a consultative role at each stage of the document validation.

Work on cross-sectoral cooperation within the government so that the education system benefits from advances made in other sectors (e.g., Gender Strategy of the Ministry of Family).

Encourage better coordination of aid between the TFPs and greater involvement of the latter at the various stages of the process so as to

encourage better consideration of gender issues: by linking their funding upstream to precise and quantify objectives in this area, and by carrying out specific monitoring on these issues, we can hope for greater progress.

Establish a specific monitoring mechanism for actions in favour of gender promotion.

3.4 Threats

The Ministry is entirely dependent on partner funding for the implementation of its gender-related actions, however, some activities remain unfunded and, when funded, the complexity of disbursement procedures hinders the implementation of actions on the ground.

Beyond the issues of funding of actions, the issue of implementation capacity on the ground can also be seen as a threat: so far, actions have only been carried out in certain areas of the country, in the framework of projects supported by partners. The implementation of gender-sensitive actions on a national scale could be a challenge.

Dependence on funding partners and their priority areas of intervention (often the areas hosting refugees and displaced persons) increases disparities across the country.

Stakeholder analysis

Interviewees were asked to plot where they felt various actors sat on the following scale. While opinions varied, the matrix below does give an indication as to which groups could be targeted with different engagement strategies.

Stakeholder matrix

Within key informant interviews the researchers included a stakeholder mapping exercise. KII's were asked to plot actors on two axes: level of power and influence; and commitment to positive change on gender equality in education.

This exercise resulted in a mapping of actors in four groupings:

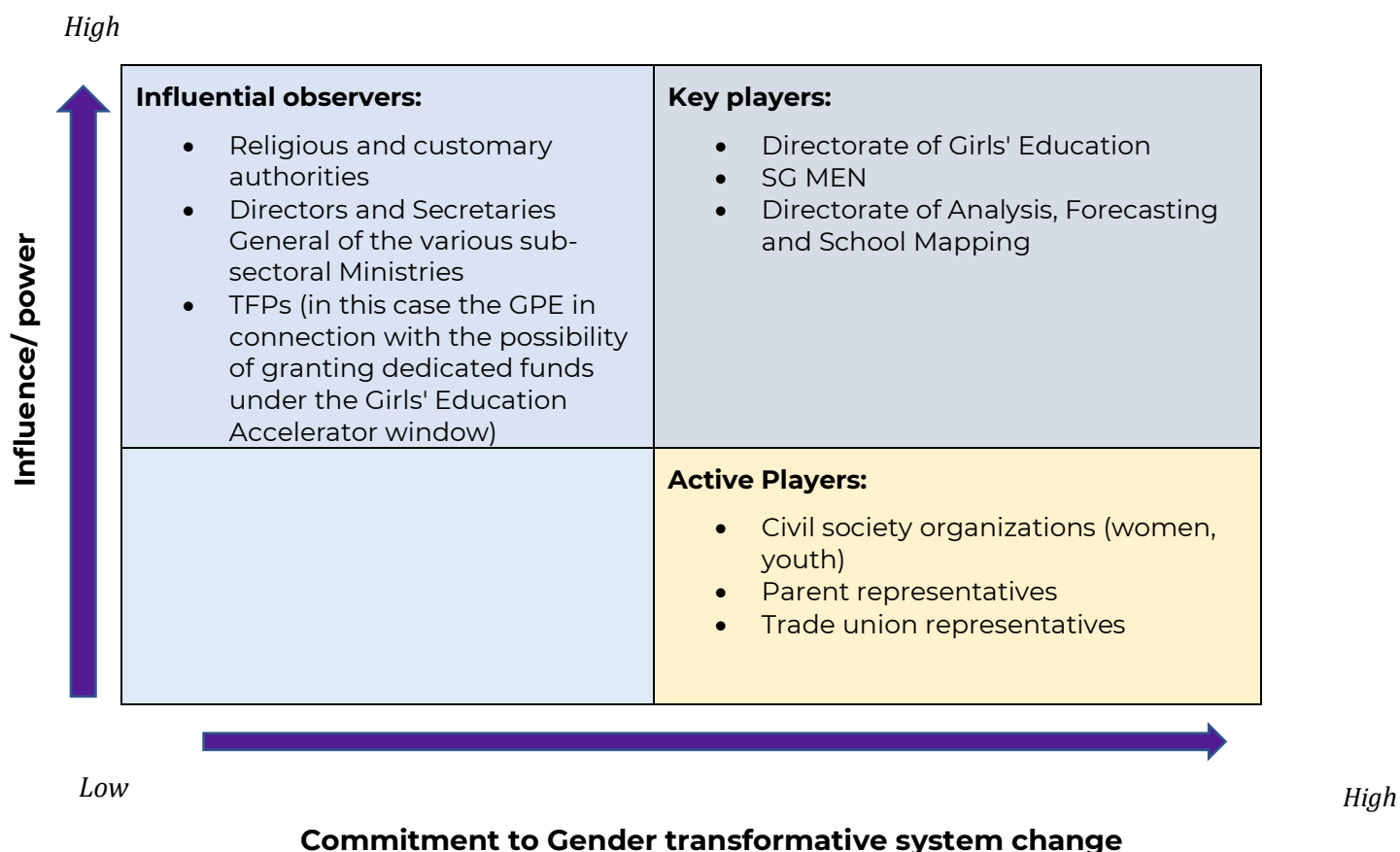
Influential observers: High power, low commitment to gender equality

Key players: High influence and high commitment

Active players: high commitment, lower influence

Observers: Low influence, low commitment

The results are valuable at country level to consider methods of influence to engage different actors or targeted in advocacy campaigns.



List of Documents Reviewed

1. Education and Training Sector Diagnostic Report, 15 November 2021
2. Review of the implementation of the PTAB of the PIET 2018-2020, 15 November 2021
3. Plan Intérimaire de l'Éducation au Tchad, Update PIET 2, Strategy for 2030 and 2024 objectives, 29 December 2021
4. Three Year Budgeted Action Plan PATB 2022-2024, 29 December 2021
5. National Gender Policy, Ministry of Family
6. Action Plan for the implementation of the National Gender Policy, Ministry of Family