

# EVALUATION REPORT

## SUMMATIVE EVALUATION OF THE GUINEA-BISSAU COVID-19 EDUCATION SECTOR RESPONSE PROJECT, 2020-2022



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## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

APEEA – Parents’ Association (*Associação de pais e encarregados de educação de alunos*)

ASPAAB – *Associação de Saneamento Básico, Proteção da Água e Ambiente* (Civil society organization - CSO)

CCC - Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action

CDC - Convention on the Rights of the Child

CFS – Child-friendly Schools

COGES – School Management Committee (*Comité de Gestão Escolar*)

COMES – Teacher Study Groups (*Comissões de Estudos*)

CNAPN - *Comité Nacional para o Abandono das Práticas Tradicionais Nefastas a Saúde da Mulher e da Criança* (CSO)

CPD – Country Programme Document

CRS - Catholic Relief Services

CSO - Civil society organization

CTIP - Technical Committee for the Implementation of the Contingency Plan (*Comité Técnico para a Implementação do Plano de Contingência*)

CTRIP - Regional Technical Committee for the Implementation of the Contingency Plan (*Comité Técnico Regional para a Implementação do Plano de Contingência*)

DGE – General Directorate for Education (*Direção Geral de Ensino*)

DRE – Regional Directorate for Education (*Direção Regional de Ensino*)

ECAS-D - *Estrutura Comunitária de Animação e Sensibilização para o Desenvolvimento* (CSO)

EiE - Education in emergency

ERIC - Ethical Research Involving Children

ESPIG - Education Sector Program Implementation Grant

GEROS – Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System

GPE – Global Partnership for Education

INEE - International Network for Education in Emergencies

LEG – Local Education Group

MEN – Ministry of Education (*Ministério da Educação Nacional*)

MHM - Menstrual hygiene management

MICS - Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys

NGO - Non-governmental organisation

PASEC – *Programme d’analyse des systèmes éducatifs de la CONFEMEN*

RENLUV - *Rede Nacional de Combate à Violência baseada no género e criança* (CSO)

SINAPROF – National Teachers’ Union (*Sindicato Nacional dos Professores*)

SRGBV - School-related gender-based violence

ToC – Theory of Change

UNCT - UN Country Team

UNEG - United Nations Evaluation Group

WASH – Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

WFP – World Food Programme

WHO - World Health Organization

# 1. Executive Summary

## 1.1. Introduction

In Guinea-Bissau, COVID-19 has exacerbated a deep learning crisis, related to many challenges in the education system, including a lack of inclusive and safe school infrastructures, qualified human resources and didactic and pedagogical resources, as well as teachers' strikes. When the first cases of COVID-19 were detected in Guinea-Bissau, all educational institutions (from pre-school to higher education) closed, further compounding the above challenges, reducing the learning time of students, and enhancing the risk of drop-out.

To respond to an emergency, UNICEF Guinea-Bissau received an emergency funding from the GPE for a total amount of USD 3,5 million. Initially designed to run for 18 months (from July 2020 to December 2021), the implementation cycle of the interventions covered by this funding was extended twice by a total of ten months, until the end of October 2022.

The main objective of the Guinea-Bissau COVID-19 Education Sector Response project was to support the government of Guinea-Bissau and the Local Education Group (LEG) to reduce the impact of the coronavirus on the education of children in the country by ensuring safe school operations and the continuity of learning and well-being for children and youth, especially for the most vulnerable affected by the outbreak.

This included the following specific objectives: i) To support response coordination and real-time monitoring (focusing on the most vulnerable); ii) To ensure safe school operations including through hygiene supplies and risk communication; iii) To support continuity of learning through access to remote learning programs as appropriate for Guinea Bissau; iv) To scale-up psychosocial, health, WASH, and nutrition services within the Education sector; v) To ensure a safe opening-back of schools through back-to-school campaigns, catch-up classes, and accelerated learning and vi) To codify and disseminate best practice and innovation.

## 1.2. Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is two-fold: accountability and learning. With regards to accountability, this evaluation will provide both the donor (vertical accountability) and the expected beneficiaries (horizontal accountability) with solid evidence regarding the extent to which the Guinea-Bissau COVID-19 Education Sector Response attained its envisaged objectives. As far as learning is concerned, it is expected that the findings will inform the design and execution of new initiatives within the new Country Programme. MEN, UNICEF, LEG partners, and the GPE will use the evidence-based findings to inform and improve the design, implementation, monitoring, and assessment of future development and humanitarian programming in the education sector.

## 1.3. Objectives of the Evaluation

The objectives of the evaluation are as follows:

1. To determine the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency of the Guinea-Bissau COVID-19 Education Sector Response project.
2. To identify lessons learning regarding what worked and did not work during the implementation of the project, including unexpected outcomes (positive and negative);

3. To critically analyse the theory of change and the extent to which its planned logical framework and assumptions compare with the actual implementation and the results achieved;
4. To assess the extent to which the project integrated equity, human rights, and gender principles into its design, implementation, and monitoring;
5. To formulate key recommendations regarding: (1) how to further strengthen the response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Guinea-Bissau; (2) how to prepare for future education in emergency (EiE) situations and make the education sector more resilient; and (3) how to better implement future EiE interventions.

#### 1.4. Scope of the Evaluation

Regarding the thematic scope, the evaluation all the intervention areas included in the Project. This included not only all the activities directly related to schools and learning, but also to the cross-sectoral interventions supported by the project (for example, cash transfers, nutrition, WASH, and child protection). The geographic scope was national , so the evaluation included national level secondary data, as well as information covering all regions of the country for the document review. The fieldwork included data collection in Bissau, Oio and Bafatá, considering rural and urban regions. Regarding the chronologic scope, the evaluation examined all the activities implemented from the launch of the project in July 2020 until the time of data collection in November 2022.

#### 1.5. Criteria and Evaluation Questions

In order to fulfil the aim and objectives stated above, this evaluation was guided by five OECD evaluation criteria: (A) relevance; (B) coherence; (C) effectiveness; (D) efficiency; and (E) sustainability, as well as (F) an additional Gender, Equity and Human Rights criterion. In order to clarify how well the Project matched these criteria, a total of 20 questions were formulated, and an evaluation matrix developed accordingly (see Appendix 6).

#### 1.6. Methodology

Within the overall framework of the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCC), a mixed-methods approach was used to collect and analyze information for the evaluation, consisting of a desk review, a review of learning and communication materials, secondary quantitative data analysis, and primary qualitative data (semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and focus groups). In total, 66 individuals (10 women, 31 men, 12 girls, and 13 boys) were interviewed in semi-structured interviews or focus groups.

Regarding the sampling strategy evaluation opted for a purposeful sampling strategy based on the selected intervention sites in Bissau, Oio and Bafatá.

After presenting and receiving feedback on the initial findings, the evaluation conducted a systematic review and analysis of all data, identifying key themes, patterns, relationships, and explanations relevant to the evaluation questions and indicators in the evaluation matrix. The analysis, which was performed manually, compared the project objectives with the actual findings, using the evaluation matrix as a framework to organize data and guide the analysis. The evaluation used different lines of evidence and triangulation of sources.

Data collection and processing were carried out in compliance with the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and its principles.

## 1.7. Presentation of the Main Findings and Conclusions

The Guinea-Bissau COVID-19 Education Sector Response project was a “hybrid” project, with both emergency and development aspects. As such, the Project fits with current reforms inspired by the World Humanitarian Summit, which focus on the ongoing quest to find “new ways of working” that bridge humanitarian action, development, peace, and security in a “nexus” approach, amidst protracted global displacement.

The evaluation arrived at the following conclusions regarding the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, as well as gender, equity and human rights:

**Relevance:** The Project was well aligned with the Contingency Plan for the education sector, supporting its main objectives and contributing to all four specific objectives of the Contingency Plan. Furthermore, the Project’s Theory of Change (ToC) was indeed logical and mostly aligned with implementation realities, as all the elements of the ToC were translated into planned project outputs, the majority of which were also implemented. Using the COVID-19 emergency situation as an entry point, the Project looked beyond the short-term impact of the pandemic to address systemic challenges related to the resilience of the education sector through a multi-sectoral approach. However, the Project’s resilience aspect (although it is discussed in the Project document narrative) was not made explicit in the Project objectives. However, a few aspects of the ToC were not fully aligned with implementation realities, namely distance learning, recovery classes, and accelerated learning. Given the multitude of supply- and demand-side factors hampering education in Guinea-Bissau, the multi-sectoral approach taken by the Project was highly relevant to tackle these multi-dimensional barriers.

**Coherence:** The Project’s objectives were fully aligned with government priorities and national policies, in particular the national Education Sector Plan 2017-2025 and the Government’s National Contingency Plan, as well as the UNICEF Country Programme Document 2016-2020 and the UNCT’s Socio-economic Response Plan. The Project accelerated other reforms previously discussed by MEN and partners, particularly in relation to the development of a national strategy for distance learning to benefit out-of-school children and the implementation of catch-up programmes to minimize the loss of learning.

**Effectiveness:** By extending emergency-related services to more than 1,500 schools, the Project made an important contribution to ensuring safe schools operations and the continuity of learning. The main objective and half of the specific objectives were nearly fully reached. Three specific objectives were partially reached. In particular, accelerated learning was not fully implemented, while the effectiveness of distance learning was doubtful, given the restricted access and lack of circular learning. Good practice and innovation were addressed only through a brief mid-term evaluation and the present final evaluation. Factors that promoted the effectiveness of the Project were the demonstration of MEN’s commitment (with UNICEF support) to assist schools to remain open, the alignment with the Contingency Plan, the multi-sectoral nature of interventions, and the use of the mWater database. Factors that hindered the effectiveness of the Project were the late recruitment of a full-time project manager, the low absorption and implementation capacity of MEN, leadership turnover in MEN, the lack of water at school level, transportation problems, and the non-availability of previously planned partnerships to conduct a learning assessment. Regarding unexpected outcomes, the Project



facilitated a trusted list of schools for MEN and its partners, fostered the accountability of governance in the education sector, and promoted awareness of the importance of WASH in schools.

**Efficiency:** Considering the challenges to implementation (including low absorption capacity, frequent leadership changes, and customs clearance problems, among others), the timeliness of the Project's implementation can be considered satisfactory. The largest shares of the budget went to Output 2 (Sanitization of schools) and Output 4 (Multi-sectoral services), which is justifiable, given the close linkage between Output 2 and the overall objective of continuing education, and the complexity of a multi-sectoral approach. Due to the high costs involved with water infrastructure, fixed handwashing devices were only installed in 20 schools that already had access to water. This was efficient, even though it may have exacerbated existing inequalities. Furthermore, the efficiency of the Project was facilitated by the installation of the CTIP for coordination and monitoring, synergies with existing initiatives within UNICEF, and the use of mWater as a low-cost tool for the collection, storage, and analysis of cross-sectoral data.

**Sustainability:** The project built logistical capacity for operating in an emergency situation, as well as overall capacity on education in emergencies, for example, through mWater which has alleviated known weaknesses in national education data systems and provided key information on the sector to guide and monitor action going forward. The main coordinating body established by the Project, the CTIP, was recently been entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating the Governing Council of the Ministry of Education and may function as the Education Sector Plan Coordination Committee in the future. Moreover, the agenda in favour of SRGBV, distance learning, and accelerated learning has been advanced as a result of the Project and have improved the capacity of the Education Sector to deal with other types of disruptions to fragile education system, notably teacher strikes, at central level. The sustainability of the Project was further enhanced by directly and indirectly engaging with the Teacher Study Groups (*Comissões de Estudos*, COMES), the School Management Committees (*Comité de Gestão Escolar*, COGES), and the parents' associations (*Associação de pais e encarregados de educação de alunos*, APEEA), all of which are regulated under MEN norms and standards. However, doubts remain regarding local school administration's capacity to deal with future emergencies.

**Equity, gender, and human rights:** The Project applied equity considerations in the selection of geographical regions and in the targeting and implementation of the cash transfer initiative. The priority geographical areas selected for the Project included (i) the regions and areas most affected by the spread of COVID-19 and (ii) the regions with the highest number of children out of school. Conversely, efficiency gains may have come at the expense of equity, with regards to the exclusion of households of out-of-school children for the cash transfer, and the installation of fixed handwashing devices in schools that already disposed of access to water. The Project addressed an important set of barriers to girls' and boys' school attendance, which had been previously identified as a concern by MEN and its partners, by tackling SRGBV. Generally speaking, the Project promoted the right to education (CRC Art. 28), and the right to health and a safe environment (CRC Art. 24).

## 1.8. Lessons Learned

The evaluation identified the following lessons learned:

LL1. It is possible to reach the majority of schools in Guinea Bissau with support during an emergency, with sufficient funding.

LL2. Tackling multiple barriers to education through a multi-sectoral intervention is an appropriate and feasible approach.

LL3. A complex multi-sectoral project requires a dedicated project manager.

LL4. The mWater database proved to be a useful tool for data collection and monitoring in education.

LL5. Unconditional cash transfers are a relevant social protection initiative in Guinea-Bissau, but baseline and endline studies for such an initiative should always be carried out within the same school year.

LL6. Accelerated learning and distance learning are complex initiatives, which require time to test, develop and assess new tools.

LL7. Schools need access to water. Therefore, attention to this aspect of school infrastructure is vital.

## 1.9. Recommendations

The following strategic and operational recommendations are supported by findings and conclusions.

Strategic recommendation 1: Ensure the integration of mWater with existing systems in MEN, for data collection, planning, and monitoring by designating a focal point in MEN, training MEN staff on mWater and advocating for usage among LEG partners (Users: MEN, UNICEF, LEG)

Strategic recommendation 2: Promote regional contingency plans on education in emergencies by developing contingency plans in all 11 educational regions, contextualizing INEE Minimum Standards, working closely with COMES and COGES and promoting a policy to stipulate incentives for teachers to stay in their place of duty in case of school closure ( Users: MEN, UNICEF, LEG)

Strategic recommendation 3: Continue efforts to develop and systematize accelerated learning by considering in depth accelerated learning in the context of the forthcoming national strategy on out-of-school children (Users: UNICEF, MEN, LEG)

Strategic recommendation 4: Continue efforts to develop and systematize distance learning by conducting a feasibility study for a robust distance education system that includes digital technology, integrating circular learning into distance learning methodologies (i.e., students' responses) and advocating for inclusion of Project tools in the current and future World Bank project (Users: UNICEF, MEN, LEG)

Strategic recommendation 5: Promote water infrastructure in schools by engaging in resource mobilization in favour of schools' water infrastructure, strengthening the issue of access to water in the Local Education Group and supporting the World Bank to map all school infrastructure. (Users: LEG, UNICEF, MEN )

Strategic recommendation 6: Carry out a study on child labour and school attendance, jointly between UNICEF Education and Child Protection Sections. (Users: UNICEF, MEN, LEG)

Strategic recommendation 7: Analyse the reasons for the lack of girls' enrolment in Oio region, and develop targeted interventions. (Users: UNICEF,MEN, LEG)

Strategic recommendation 8: Engage strategically with teachers' unions, to create synergies and avoid duplication of efforts, for example, in the provision of materials during an emergency. (Users: UNICEF, LEG)

Operational recommendation 1: Identify "champions" among COGES, and promote peer-to-peer education with other COGES, in order to promote good practice regarding school management, particularly during an emergency. (Users: UNICEF, MEN)

Operational recommendation 2: Provide further support for community volunteers, particularly with regards to distance learning, and monitor and evaluate their engagement, in order to strengthen the link between schools and communities and to better prepare for an emergency. (Users: UNICEF, MEN)

## 2. Evaluation Context

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) was declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a public health emergency of international concern under the International Health Regulations, and on March 11, 2020, as a pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted learning for over 89% of the world's student population. For more than 1.5 billion children in 188 countries, education has been interrupted. The gains in expanding access to education and improving the quality of education were in risk in being permanently compromised.

In Guinea-Bissau, the first cases of COVID-19 were recorded on 24 March 2020. Two years later, the country recorded 8,186 positive cases, including 171 deaths. The capital Bissau and the regions of Biombo and Bafatá remain the most affected. The most affected age group is 25-34 years old, followed by 35-44 years old and, the disease seems to affect men more than women. When the first cases of COVID-19 were detected in Guinea-Bissau, all educational institutions (from pre-school to higher education) closed, reducing the learning time of students already affected by long and frequent teacher strikes.

COVID-19 has indeed exacerbated a deep learning crisis. In Guinea-Bissau, 1 in 4 children of primary school age (6-14 years) were out of school before the advent of COVID-19. When they are in school, the level of achievement in school content is generally very low. The MICS data showed that only 1 in 10 children aged 7- 14 had mastery of basic literacy and numeracy skills.

In Guinea-Bissau, the education system faces many challenges: the system lacks inclusive and safe school infrastructures, qualified human resources (a good proportion of the teaching staff have no/limited background in pedagogy) and didactic and pedagogical resources. In recent years, teachers' strikes have occurred more frequently and for longer durations, increasing the number of out-of-school children and the risk of permanent drop-out.

For children, the lack of access to education can have lifelong impacts, creating a widening gap in learning and reducing their ability to acquire skills that increase their employability. The World Bank estimates that there will be a loss of income of US\$10 trillion for the current cohort of children if this learning crisis is not addressed.

To address these challenges in Guinea-Bissau, it was important to act on several levels and find educational alternatives that allow out-of-school children to acquire foundational skills for their personal and social development. With funding from the Global Partnership for Education, UNICEF Guinea-Bissau has therefore supported the scaling up of the education sector response to mitigate the impacts of the crisis on access and learning.

## 3. Evaluation Object

Guinea-Bissau received an emergency funding from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) for a total amount of USD 3,5 million. Initially designed to run for 18 months (from July 2020 to December 2021), the implementation cycle of the interventions covered by this funding was extended twice by a total of ten months, until the end of October 2022.

The **main objective** of the Guinea-Bissau COVID-19 Education Sector Response project was to support the government of Guinea-Bissau and the Local Education Group (LEG) to reduce the impact of the coronavirus on the education of children in the country by ensuring safe school operations and the

continuity of learning and well-being for children and youth, especially for the most vulnerable affected by the outbreak.

This included the following **specific objectives**:

1. Support response coordination and real-time monitoring (focusing on the most vulnerable);
2. Ensure safe school operations including through hygiene supplies and risk communication;
3. Support continuity of learning through access to remote learning programs as appropriate for Guinea Bissau;
4. Scale-up psychosocial, health, WASH, and nutrition services within the Education sector;
5. Ensure a safe opening-back of schools through back-to-school campaigns, catch-up classes, and accelerated learning
6. Codify and disseminate best practice and innovation.

**Table 1: Brief presentation of the object of the evaluation**

<b>Title of the project/program</b>	Guinea-Bissau Covid-19 Education Sector Response
<b>Country</b>	Guinea-Bissau
<b>Sources of project funding</b>	Global Partnership for Education
<b>Total Budget</b>	USD 3,499,497
<b>Project duration</b>	07/2020 – 10/2022
<b>Main Objective</b>	Support the government of Guinea-Bissau and the Local Education Group (LEG) to reduce the impact of the coronavirus on the education of children in the country by ensuring safe school operations and the continuity of learning and well-being for children and youth, especially for the most vulnerable affected by the outbreak.
<b>Components</b>	<p><u>Output 1</u>: The response to the COVID-19 pandemic at the level of the education system is improved and national emergency response capacities are strengthened.</p> <p><u>Output 2</u>: Public and community structures for pre-school and basic education are sanitized, inclusive and gender sensitive.</p> <p><u>Output 3</u>: Essential contents of preschool and primary education (1<sup>st</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade) are developed and made accessible for distance learning for the benefits of school-age girls and boys.</p> <p><u>Output 4</u>: services of water and sanitation, protection, psychosocial support, health, nutrition and social inclusion are extended to the benefit of children from vulnerable households.</p>

	<p><u>Output 5</u>: Public and community school structures reopen and propose recovery classes and accelerated learning programs.</p>
<p><b>Expected beneficiaries</b></p>	<p>420,436 children  1,500 school principals  6,029 teachers  1,500 school management committees  1,400 low-income households  <i>(Note: A gender breakdown of beneficiaries was not available in the original project document.)</i></p>
<p><b>Partners (institutional, implementing agencies)</b></p>	<p>MEN, LEG, Plan International, Comité Nacional para o Abandono das Práticas Tradicionais Nefastas à Saúde da Mulher e da Criança (CNAPN), Rede Nacional de Combate à Violência baseada no gênero e criança (RENLUV), Estrutura Comunitária de Animação e Sensibilização para o Desenvolvimento (ECAS-D), Associação de Saneamento Básico, Proteção da Água e Ambiente (ASPAAB), Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Aliança Social de Intervenção Comunitária, National Association for Local Development, Federação Battoden Gollen, Red Cross Guinea-Bissau, KONHENGUENA, ORDEMAR, Organização Guineense de Desenvolvimento, Associação de Assistentes Sociais da Guiné-Bissau, Judiciary Police, Coligação das Organizações de Defesa dos Direitos da Criança na Guiné-Bissau, Instituto da Mulher e Criança</p>

The **Theory of Change** (ToC) underlying the project was the following:

IF (i) the response to the COVID-19 pandemic at the level of the education system is improved and national emergency response capacities are strengthened; and

IF (ii) public and community structures for pre-school and basic education are sanitized, inclusive and gender sensitive; and

IF (iii) distance education strategies and educational alternatives are developed and implemented to ensure the continuity of education in the event of school closure; and

IF (iv) services of water and sanitation, protection, psychosocial support, health, nutrition, and social inclusion are extended to the benefit of children from 1400 vulnerable households; and

IF (v) public and community school structures reopen, and propose recovery classes and accelerated learning;

THEN safe school operations, continuity of learning and well-being for children and adolescents, especially for the most vulnerable, will be guaranteed.

The **key stakeholders** of the project and their contributions are the following:

- Global Partnership for Education (GPE)
  - The Global Partnership for Education contributed just under \$3.5 million in funding for the project
- Ministry of Education (MEN)
  - The Ministry of Education was responsible for developing high-level policy and for ensuring the coordination of the project amongst different stakeholders. The Ministry led these coordination efforts through the Technical Implementation Committee (or CTIP in Portuguese), which met frequently to coordinate project implementation
- UNICEF
  - UNICEF was the implementing agency for the Guinea-Bissau COVID-19 Education Sector Response project. It was responsible for managing and disbursing the project funds and liaising with the Ministry of Education to coordinate the implementation. In addition to the education section, the WASH, Child Protection, and Social Protection sections also provided technical support and implemented components of the project.
- Local Education Group
  - The Local Education Group (LEG) is a coordination mechanism led by the Ministry of Education that ensures mutual accountability for the implementation of the Education Sector Plan and the supervision of funds implemented with GPE funding. The group includes representation from all stakeholders including local civil society organizations (CSOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), donors, and multilateral agencies.
- Implementing Partners
  - UNICEF worked with several NGOs and CSOs to implement components of the project. These implementing partners worked to deliver results in narrow areas where they have specific expertise, such as community mobilization and sensitization.
  - In addition, UNICEF entered in a partnership with the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and the University of Minho to support MEN to accelerate the development of alternative education curriculum and a distance learning strategy.

## 4. Evaluation Purpose and Objectives

### 4.1 Evaluation Purpose

This evaluation has two purposes: accountability and learning.

1. **Accountability:** This evaluation will provide both the donor (vertical accountability) and the expected beneficiaries (horizontal accountability) with solid evidence regarding the extent to which the Guinea-Bissau COVID-19 Education Sector Response attained its envisaged objectives.

2. **Learning:** This summative evaluation, through the evidence-based knowledge generated, is expected to inform the design and execution of new initiatives within the new Country Programme. MEN, UNICEF, LEG partners, and the GPE will use the evidence-based findings of the project evaluation to inform and improve the design, implementation, monitoring, and assessment of future development and humanitarian programming in the education sector.

The following table summarizes the users and uses of the evaluation.

**Table 2: Users and use of the evaluation**

<b>Evaluation Users</b>	<b>Uses of the evaluation (how the findings and recommendations will be used)</b>
<b>Ministry of Education (MEN)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To assess the extent to which the project's funds were effectively used, and to understand how future interventions could be implemented in a more relevant, coherent, efficient, effective, and sustainable manner</li> <li>- To better prepare for future emergency situations</li> </ul>
<b>UNICEF Guinea-Bissau</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To understand how future emergency education interventions can be more effectively developed, including cross-sectoral components.</li> <li>- To understand how partnerships with NGOs and CSOs could be strengthened</li> </ul>
<b>Implementing Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To understand how implementing partner activities could be implemented more effectively</li> <li>- To better design, plan, and implement future EiE activities</li> </ul>
<b>Local Education Group and other Development Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To understand how oversight and coordination of emergency education activities in the education sector in Guinea-Bissau can be strengthened</li> <li>- To better understand how future projects (particularly emergency projects) can be designed, implemented, and evaluated</li> </ul>
<b>Global Partnership for Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To assess the extent to which the project's funds were effectively used, and to understand how future interventions could be implemented in a more relevant, coherent, efficient, effective, and sustainable manner</li> </ul>
<b>Population / Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To increase the knowledge of the population about the COVID-19 emergency programme and the role they play in strengthening the education system, as well as to increase their social accountability function</li> <li>- To increase transparency and social accountability regarding the project's implementation, with the aim of increasing community involvement and social accountability in future projects</li> </ul>

## 4.2. Evaluation Objectives

The objectives of this summative evaluation are as follows:

6. To determine the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency of the Guinea-Bissau COVID-19 Education Sector Response project.



7. To identify lessons learning regarding what worked and did not work during the implementation of the project, including unexpected outcomes (positive and negative);
8. To critically analyse the theory of change and the extent to which its planned logical framework and assumptions compare with the actual implementation and the results achieved;
9. To assess the extent to which the project integrated equity, human rights, and gender principles into its design, implementation, and monitoring;
10. To formulate key recommendations regarding: (1) how to further strengthen the response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Guinea-Bissau; (2) how to prepare for future education in emergency (EiE) situations and make the education sector more resilient; and (3) how to better implement future EiE interventions.

## 5. Evaluation Scope

### 5.1. Thematic scope

The summative evaluation of the Guinea-Bissau COVID-19 Education Sector Response project examined all the intervention areas included in the project. This included not only all the activities directly related to schools and learning, but also to the cross-sectoral interventions supported by the project (for example, cash transfers, nutrition, WASH, and child protection). The focus was on the extent to which the package of interventions was a coherent, relevant, efficient, and effective response that increased access to quality learning during the COVID-19 pandemic (with a particular focus on the most vulnerable).

### 5.2. Geographic scope

The project is national in scope; therefore, the evaluation included national level secondary data. The document review included information covering all regions of the country.

The fieldwork included data collection in Bissau, Oio and Bafatá, the latter being one of the regions with the poorest education indicators, based on MICS-6 data. The evaluation considered rural and urban regions. In total, eight schools were visited:

- Bissau: 2 (2 urban)
- Oio: 3 (2 urban, 1 rural)
- Bafatá: 3 (1 urban, 2 rural)

### 5.3. Chronologic scope

The evaluation examined all the activities implemented from the launch of the project in July 2020 until the time of data collection in November 2022.

## 6. Evaluation Questions and Criteria

### 6.1. Evaluation criteria

This evaluation was guided by five OECD evaluation criteria: (A) relevance; (B) coherence; (C) effectiveness; (D) efficiency; and (E) sustainability, as well as (F) an additional Gender, Equity and Human Rights criterion. It should be noted that the evaluation criterion of impact was not included because given the short duration and emergency focus of the project the impact would be difficult to measure and assess.

**Table 3: Overview of evaluation criteria**

<b>Relevance</b>	Measure of whether the objectives of a development intervention match beneficiaries' expectations, country needs, global priorities, as well as partners' and donors' policies. It checks whether the activities and results of the intervention are in line with the established programs and correspond appropriately to the identified needs.
<b>Coherence</b>	The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a given country, sector or institution. It captures the extent to which other interventions support or undermine the intervention, and vice versa. It addresses the synergies and interconnections between the intervention and other interventions carried out by the same institution, as well as the intervention's coherence with relevant international norms and standards to which that institution adheres (internal coherence). It considers the intervention's coherence with the interventions of other actors in the same context (external coherence). This includes complementarity, harmonization and coordination with others, and the extent to which the intervention is adding value while avoiding duplication of effort.
<b>Effectiveness</b>	Measure of whether the objectives of the development intervention have been achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance. It measures the extent to which the aid achieves its objectives. It is thus the relationship between the intended objectives and the results achieved.
<b>Efficiency</b>	Measure according to which resources are converted into results in the most economical way, and whether there is value for money. Measures the productivity of the intervention, in the sense that it will be most efficient if it achieves its objectives at the lowest possible cost.
<b>Sustainability</b>	Continuity in relation to the benefits resulting from a development intervention, after its completion. Measures the likelihood that benefits will endure over the long term. Aims to find out to what extent the target groups can and want to take ownership of the results of that intervention.

## 6.2. Evaluation questions

To achieve the purpose of the evaluation, the evaluation will seek to answer the following evaluation questions:

### Relevance

1. To what extent did the project respond to the needs identified by the Ministry of Education, the LEG, and other development partners with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic's negative impact on the education sector?
2. To what extent are the logic and assumptions that underpinned the theory of change aligned with the actual implementation of the project and its results achieved? What components of the logical framework were and were not aligned with implementation realities?
3. To what extent was the project flexible and responsive to changing contexts and needs, as identified by the Ministry of Education and other partners?

### Coherence

1. To what extent are the goals aligned with the national planning objectives/national strategies concerning the education sector?
2. To what extent did the activities implemented by the project complement existing interventions and services or education sector policies?
3. How complementary are the project's interventions with actions undertaken by the Ministry of Education or other line ministries to address the impact of COVID-19 on education or other sectors?

### Effectiveness

1. To what extent did the project achieve its envisaged objectives?
2. What are the factors (internal and external to the project) that most contributed to the attainment of the project's objectives?
3. What are the factors (internal and external to the project) that most hindered the attainment of the project's objectives?
4. What are the unexpected outcomes (positive and negative) of the project's implementation?

### Efficiency

1. To what extent were the financial, human and property resources:
  - a. sufficient (in terms of quantity) in relation to the identified needs and expected results?
  - b. adequate (in terms of quality) in relation to the expected results?
  - c. implemented in a timely manner?
2. To what extent could the same results be achieved by other less expensive alternatives?
3. What are the management factors that favored or hindered the efficiency of the project?

## Sustainability

1. To what extent has the capacity of the education sector (and actors) been strengthened to reduce the risk from disasters, increase preparedness and resiliency, and ensure continuity of access to education and learning and educational services during emergency situations?
2. To what extent has the project created or strengthened activities, platforms, mechanisms, or competencies/capacities that will support the long-term development and system-strengthening of the education sector?
3. To what extent was local capacity supported and developed by the project?

## Equity, Gender and Human Rights

1. To what extent have the most vulnerable boys and girls from the most disadvantaged areas of the covered municipalities benefited from the programme in the country?
2. To what extent does the programme provide the same teaching and learning opportunities for girls and boys?
3. To what extent has the programme addressed the gender-specific barriers that prevent girls and boys from accessing the activities and services available to them?
4. In general, to what extent have specific gender, human rights, and equity considerations been taken into account in the design, planning, implementation, and monitoring of the programme (for example, in relation to the participation of mothers and fathers, female and male teachers, etc.)?

## 7. Methodology

### 7.1. Evaluation approach

The overall framework for the evaluation are the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action<sup>1</sup> (CCC), which include the strategic result: “Children and adolescents have access to inclusive, quality education and learning in safe and protective environments.” In this regard, the CCC make commitments for leadership and coordination, equitable access to learning, safe learning environments, mental health and psychosocial support, strengthening of education systems, and community engagement for behaviour and social change.

Within this framework, a mixed-methods approach was used to collect and analyze information for the evaluation, consisting of a desk review, a review of learning and communication materials, secondary quantitative data analysis, and primary qualitative data (semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and focus groups). The evaluation used different lines of evidence and triangulation of sources.

The methodology included the incorporation of gender, equity, and child rights principles in all stages of the evaluation, including the design of data collection and analysis tools, involving an inclusive sampling strategy of all stakeholders and beneficiaries of the project, and disaggregating the data by age and gender.

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<sup>1</sup> UNICEF: “Core Commitments for Children for Children in Humanitarian Action”. 2020.

## 7.2. Methods and data collection tools

### 7.2.1. Desk review

The desk review drew on information from progress reports, government circulars and other sources and compare this with the initial project proposals and logical frameworks. This information was used to obtain an overview of the programme, identify knowledge gaps, and help develop hypotheses about relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability in the respective contexts. It also helped refine the questions for the interviews and focus groups.

The reviewed documents are listed in Appendix 3.

### 7.2.2. Quantitative secondary data analysis

The evaluation carried out a quantitative analysis of existing data through the mWater database (used to identify and monitor schools supported by the project), the cash transfers database, and enrolment data from the Regional Directorates of Education (DRE) in Oio and Bafatá. It triangulated these data, (including the enrolment statistics for the latest four school years, indicators for targeting beneficiaries for the cash transfers, back-to-school campaign statistics), with the available qualitative data. To this end, the quantitative and qualitative findings were compared, and in the case of discrepancies, further clarification was sought from Project stakeholders.

The quantitative data analysis complemented the desk study in establishing the knowledge base and oriented the primary data collection. For example, DRE officials were asked about the possible reasons the fact that school enrolment did not decrease over the surveyed period of time, and children and teachers in the focus groups in Oio region were asked why girls were still lagging behind.

### 7.2.3. Semi-structured interviews with key informants

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 30 key stakeholders (four women, 25 men, and one boy) from MEN at national and regional level, implementing agencies, UNICEF staff, school administrators, the teachers' union, students' council, and representatives of the local community. The questions for interviewees were specifically designed to reveal the extent of interviewees' awareness of the activities, perception of changes or improvements resulting from programme activities, and potential lessons learned and good practices emerging from the project. The interview guides can be found in the appendix.

### 7.2.4. Focus group discussions

A total of eight focus groups using interview guides with open-ended questions were conducted. Two focus groups were conducted with teachers, four with students in grades 5 and 6 (aged 12 to 17), and two with parents and community members, covering all aspects of the programme. The focus groups with students were divided by gender.

For the focus groups with children, specific visual aids were used to get their ideas and feedback. More specifically, the evaluator presented a sample of the tools distributed through the project, namely leaflets and manuals, in order to refresh the children's memory and elicit a response regarding the utility of these tools. During the focus groups with children, the evaluator was mindful of the principles of Ethical Research Involving Children (ERIC), including respect for the children's views and their

cultures, treating all children involved in the evaluation equally, not unfairly excluding children, and obtaining children's informed and ongoing consent (see Section 7.5).

For focus groups with children and parents, translation into national languages was provided by teachers and school administrators.

As with face-to-face interviews, focus groups helped fill gaps in knowledge identified during the desk review and secondary data analysis. In addition, the focus groups provided an opportunity to explore selected relevant topics in depth, for example, the following: changes in hygiene and sanitation; communication between schools, students, parents, and communities; and measures required to sustain the impact of the project.

In total, ten teachers (four women and six men) were interviewed in two focus groups, and 24 students (12 girls and 12 boys) were interviewed in four focus groups. In addition, two parents (both women) were interviewed in one focus groups. Each focus group lasted between 20 and 50 minutes.

#### 7.2.5. Direct observation through school visits

Visits were made to eight schools in Bissau, Ojo and Bafatá, that had received support from the Project, to observe the school environment, including water points and sanitation facilities, as well as the hygiene practices of the students.<sup>2</sup>

The respective guide can be found in the appendix.

#### 7.2.6. Review of learning and communication materials produced by the project

The evaluation reviewed learning and communication materials produced by the project, including radio broadcasts and television lessons, as well as COVID-19 risk communication leaflets. The evaluation looked at whether these materials were accessible, easy to use and/or understand, and consistent with other project interventions.

The respective guide for the review of materials can be found in the appendix.

### 7.3. Sampling strategy

For reasons of time constraints, the evaluation focused on schools in the reasonably accessible areas of Bissau, Oio, and Bafatá (in proximity to the main road from Bissau to Farim and Bafatá). Otherwise said, the evaluation opted for a purposeful sampling strategy based on the selected intervention sites.

For face-to-face semi-structured interviews with key informants, a non-probabilistic method was used. Participants were purposively identified based on UNICEF recommendations and through snowballing, based on their knowledge of and participation in the Project. School administrators' contacts in Oio and Bafatá were provided by the respective DRE. The full list of people interviewed can be found in the appendix.

For focus groups with community members (parents and children), a non-probabilistic method was used. The selection of the eight schools (five from an urban environment and three from a rural environment) was done through UNICEF (for schools in Bissau) and the DRE (for schools in Oio and

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<sup>2</sup> Contrary to what was indicated in the inception report, the evaluation was not able to visit two schools that had not benefitted from the Project as a control group, because MEN did not provide contacts for these schools.

Bafatá), based on proximity and rural/urban diversity. Initially, it was planned to include in the sample two schools that had not participated in the project, but the DRE did not facilitate these contacts. Therefore, the evaluation made comparisons over time within the same schools (for example, regarding school enrolment), rather than across participating versus non-participating schools.

For focus groups with teachers, a simple random selection was applied.

In the selected schools, the following total were carried out:

- Two focus groups with teachers
- Four focus groups with students (two with girls, and two with boys)
- One focus groups with parents and community members
- Eight semi-structured interviews with school administrators (see above)

Participants were selected on the basis of availability, and organized in collaboration with the respective school administration, and the DRE.

Each focus group consisted of a random sample of teachers, students, or parents from the selected schools. In the case of teachers and parents, participants were selected by availability. The focus groups with students and members of the community were differentiated by gender, to facilitate the free expression of women, men, boys, and girls. A questionnaire script was used for conducting the focus groups and interviews; it can be found in the appendix

Adults and children were informed about the research and asked for oral consent as to the potential collection of representative quotes for the final report, which would by no means be attributable. During the focus group discussions, the evaluation ensured that children were listened to and supported to express their views freely and in safety.

**Table 4: Summary of stakeholders consulted, by data collection tool**

Data collection tools	Sampling method	Number Total	Women	Men	Girls	Boys
<b>Focus group with teachers</b>	<i>Probabilistic / simple random</i>	10	4	6	-	-
<b>Focus group with students</b>	<i>Non-probabilistic</i>	24	-	-	12	12
<b>Semi-structured interviews</b>	<i>Non-probabilistic</i>	30	4	25	-	1
<b>Focus groups with parents</b>	<i>Non-probabilistic</i>	2	2	-	-	-
<b>Site Observation</b>	<i>Non-probabilistic</i>	8	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>74</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>

## 7.4. Data analysis and quality assurance

After presenting and receiving feedback on initial findings, the evaluation conducted a systematic review and analysis of all data, identifying key themes, patterns, relationships, and explanations relevant to the evaluation questions and indicators in the evaluation matrix (see Appendix 6).

The analysis was performed manually by a thorough review of interview and focus group transcripts, secondary quantitative data analysis (using Excel), and direct observations. The analysis compared the project objectives with the actual findings, using the evaluation matrix as a framework to organize data and guide the analysis.

The evaluation used different lines of evidence and triangulation of sources. To this end, multiple methods of data collection and analysis were used, including at least three lines of evidence for each conclusion drawn by the evaluation in relation to a certain question from various data sources. In cases where discordances were observed, the evaluator sought additional information. If the discordances persisted, this was either explicitly mentioned in the report, or substituted with similar relevant information.

To the extent possible, data was disaggregated by gender and age (data on disability groups and socially excluded groups were not available).

## 7.5. Ethical Considerations and Principles

The evaluation adhered to the following ethical guidelines at all stages. Data collection and processing were carried out in compliance with the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation<sup>3</sup> and its principles, namely:

- a. Independence: The evaluator is independent and has not been involved in project activities, nor has he been responsible in the past for the design, execution or supervision of the project;
- b. Impartiality: The evaluator endeavored to provide a comprehensive and balanced presentation of the project's strengths and weaknesses. The evaluation process was unbiased at all stages, and took into account all views received from stakeholders;
- c. Transparency: The evaluator communicated as openly as possible the purpose of the evaluation, the criteria applied and the expected use of the results with the interviewed stakeholders. The evaluation report aims to provide transparent information on its sources, methods and approaches;
- d. Disclosure: The evaluation report will serve as a mechanism by which the findings and lessons identified in the evaluation are disseminated to policy makers, operational staff, beneficiaries, the general public and other stakeholders;
- e. Ethics: The evaluator respected the right of institutions and individuals to provide information in confidence, and the sources of specific information and opinions contained in the report are not disclosed, except where necessary and only after confirmation by the person consulted ;
- f. Credibility: This assessment was based on data and observations that are considered reliable and trustworthy with respect to the quality of the instruments, procedures and analyses used to collect and interpret the information;

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<sup>3</sup> United Nations Evaluation Group: "Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation." 2020.



g. Usefulness: The evaluator endeavoured to be as well informed as possible, and the report aims to be beneficial to stakeholders, relevant, timely and concise.

Regarding the focus groups with children, the evaluator was particularly mindful of the following aspects, in alignment with the principles of Ethical Research Involving Children (ERIC)<sup>4</sup>:

- The evaluation was respectful of children, their views and their cultures. The focus groups recognised children’s status and evolving capacities and valued their diverse contributions.
- The evaluation was just and equitable towards children. All children involved in the evaluation were treated equally, and children were not unfairly excluded.
- The evaluation ensured that children could not be harmed by their participation in the evaluation.
- The evaluator obtained children’s informed and ongoing consent. Consent was based on a balanced and fair understanding of what was involved throughout and after the evaluation process. There were no indications of children’s dissent or withdrawal during the evaluation process, which would have been respected.

Due to the fact that complex ethical challenges arising during the evaluation process were not foreseen, the evaluation did not involve an ethical review at the national level.

## 7.6. Limitations and Mitigation Measures

**Table 5: Limitations and mitigation measures of the evaluation**

Limitations and Constraints of the Evaluation	Mitigation strategies implemented
Control group schools to compare enrolment and other data were not provided by MEN or DRE.	Comparisons of enrolment data were made at the regional level.
An in-depth mid-term evaluation of the project was not conducted (only a limited mid-term review).	Relevant information was collected instead through semi-structured interviews.
The cash transfer baseline and endline study were conducted in different school years, so the effectiveness in terms of retention is not captured in the endline report. The raw data underlying the report was not available.	Relevant information was collected instead through semi-structured interviews.
It was difficult to bring together members of the community for a focus group.	Only one focus group with two female representatives of the local parent association was conducted.
There are no recent national statistics on school enrolment, retention, and dropout.	Regional-level data was obtained from the Regional Directorates of Education in Oio and Bafatá.
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<sup>4</sup> Graham, A., Powell, M., Taylor, N., Anderson, D. & Fitzgerald, R.: “Ethical Research Involving Children.” UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti.

## 8. Findings and Preliminary Conclusions (by criterion)

This chapter aims to answer the evaluation questions by criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and equity, gender and human rights), presenting evidence for each question and preliminary conclusions at the end of each criterion.

### 8.1. Relevance



Q1. To what extent did the project respond to the needs identified by the Ministry of Education, the LEG, and other development partners, with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic's negative impact on the education sector?

Q2. To what extent are the logic and assumptions that underpinned the theory of change aligned with the actual implementation of the project and its results achieved? What components of the logical framework were and were not aligned with implementation realities?

Q3. To what extent was the project flexible and responsive to changing contexts and needs, as identified by the Ministry of Education and other partners?

*Q1. To what extent did the project respond to the needs identified by the Ministry of Education, the LEG, and other development partners, with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic's negative impact on the education sector?*

1. In May 2020, MEN, with the support of UNICEF, endorsed a Contingency Plan for the education sector<sup>5</sup> with the following main objective: "Create a strategy for the Guinea-Bissau education system to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and guide all actors in: (a) contributing to the reduction of the risk of the spread of COVID-19 in school communities; (b) identifying concerted actions to be implemented as Covid-19 prevention and control measures; (c) ensuring learning during the closure of schools; and (d) contributing to the strategy for the

<sup>5</sup> MEN: "Plano de Contingência para o Setor Educativo: Orientação da Ação do Setor Educativo para a Prevenção e Controlo do Surto Covid-19 e Reativação do Ensino na Guiné-Bissau." Maio de 2020.

recovery of the education system after the COVID-19 pandemic.” The semi-structured interviews with MEN stakeholders confirmed that the Contingency Plan was widely regarded as the main guiding document for the emergency measures during the Project period.

2. The Project was well aligned with the objectives of the Contingency Plan. In particular, the Project’s outputs supported the four specific objectives laid out in the Contingency Plan, as described in the following table.

**Table 6: List of Project activities supporting the specific objectives of the Contingency Plan**

<b>Specific objectives of the Contingency Plan</b>	<b>Supporting activities of the Project (by output)</b>
1) Inform and raise awareness among all actors in the education system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training technicians from the Ministry of Education (central and regional level) in education in emergency situations (Output 1)</li> <li>- Strengthen the response capacities of the operational teams at school level, taking as a key element the principal, on how to improve basic hygiene and sanitation conditions in schools, through the 3-Star approach (Output 2)</li> <li>- Training of community volunteers to boost awareness-raising actions for the prevention of COVID-19 and the protection of children, as well as participation in actions to improve the school environment (Output 2)</li> </ul>
2) Ensure clean and safe school spaces in an equitable manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support the operationalization of inclusive and safe practices in schools: (i) purchase of protective masks for children; (ii) purchase of 1st aid kits for schools; (iii) purchase of hygiene kits for the and other supplies (leaching, bar soap/liquid); (iv) buy infrared thermometers (Output 2)</li> <li>- Strengthen hygiene, prevention and control services for infections in schools: (i) school equipment with collective hand washing systems; (ii) production and dissemination of informative materials (posters) that promote good hygiene practices in schools (Output 2)</li> <li>- Implement strategies to address School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) (Output 4)</li> <li>- Provide school-based health, nutrition services and standards-based WASH facilities which prevent dropouts and keeps children safe and healthy (Output 4)</li> <li>- Provide vulnerable children, boys and school-age girls affected by COVID-19 with cash transfer in order to maintain retention (Output 4)</li> </ul>
3) Ensure the continuous learning of students in the event of closure of educational establishments and the resumption of face-to-face teaching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adapt and implement a non-formal radio education programme, based on available lessons developed by Child Radio Foundation (Output 3)</li> <li>- Develop a distance education program based on primary education curricula (1st to 9th), which considers gender issues and children with special needs, regardless of the means of dissemination (TV/Radio/printed materials) (Output 3)</li> <li>- Design and transfer useful information to parents and guardians, so that they can ensure a favourable and safe environment for learning at home (Output 3)</li> <li>- Mobilize the most vulnerable and at risk of abandonment, so that they return to the classrooms after the reopening of schools (Output 5)</li> <li>- Reorient the pedagogical activity of the 2019-2020 school year to the essential contents (Output 5)</li> <li>- Develop an Accelerated Education Program (PEA) based on the curricula of the 1st to 6th grade of elementary school, for children out of school (Output 5)</li> </ul>

4) Ensure the Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Contingency Plan.	Support the coordination, implementation, follow-up and evaluation and documentation of the response to COVID-19 (Output 1) - Collect up-to-date information about children affected by COVID-19, through innovative technologies and use of Short Message Services (SMS) and other communication channels such as telephone lines, WhatsApp and other platforms (Output 1)
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*Q2. To what extent are the logic and assumptions that underpinned the theory of change aligned with the actual implementation of the project and its results achieved? What components of the logical framework were and were not aligned with implementation realities?*

3. Overall, the evaluation found that the Theory of Change (ToC, see Section 1.1.), as laid out in the original project document<sup>6</sup>, was indeed logical and mostly aligned with implementation realities, as all the elements of the ToC were translated into planned project outputs, the majority of which were also implemented. Consequently, the goal of the ToC, “safe school operations, continuity of learning and well-being for children and adolescents, especially for the most vulnerable, will be guaranteed”, was largely achieved (see Section 4.3. on Effectiveness).
4. However, two aspects of the Theory of Change were not fully aligned with implementation realities. These are: “(iii) distance education strategies and educational alternatives are developed and implemented to ensure the continuity of education in the event of school closure”; and “(v) public and community school structures reopen, and propose recovery classes and accelerated learning”. In practice, neither viable educational alternatives, nor recovery classes, nor accelerated learning were widely implemented in a way that made them accessible to all children, due to challenges in implementation (discussed further below).
5. Using the COVID-19 emergency situation as an entry point, the Project looked beyond the short-term impact of the pandemic to address systemic challenges related to the resilience of the education sector through a multi-sectoral approach. In particular, the ToC in the project document stipulated that “(iv) services of water and sanitation, protection, psychosocial support, health, nutrition and social inclusion are extended to the benefit of children from 1400 vulnerable households”. The evaluation considers this multi-sectoral approach highly relevant, given the multitude of supply- and demand-side factors hampering education such as household poverty, gender discrimination, difficulties in accessing school, etc., in Guinea-Bissau,<sup>7</sup> which are exacerbated during emergency situations, including teacher strikes.
6. However, the Project’s resilience aspect (although it is discussed in the Project document narrative) was not made explicit in the Project objectives, i.e., neither in the main objective (“to support the government of Guinea-Bissau and the Local Education Group (LEG) to reduce the impact of the coronavirus on the education of children in the country by ensuring safe school operations and the continuity of learning and well-being for children and youth, especially for the most vulnerable affected by the outbreak”), nor within the specific project objectives (see Section 1.1.).

<sup>6</sup> Global Partnership for Education: “Cover Note for COVID-19 Accelerated Funding Request: Guinea Bissau.” 2020.

<sup>7</sup> See for example, Marshall et al: “Out-of-school children in Guinea-Bissau: A mixed-methods analysis.” In: *International Journal of Educational Development* 77 (2020).

7. Therefore, the evaluation notes that a specific objective related to resilience should have been explicitly included, along the lines of: “Enhance the resilience of the education sector in Guinea-Bissau to respond to emergency situations”. This specific objective would have clarified the main objective, strengthened the logic of the ToC, and aligned it more fully with the implementation realities.

*Q3. To what extent was the project flexible and responsive to changing contexts and needs, as identified by the Ministry of Education and other partners?*

8. Interviewed partners from MEN and the LEG confirmed that the Project communicated transparently, acted flexibly, and engaged LEG partners democratically, mostly during online meetings (due to COVID-19 restrictions on face-to-face meetings). A readjustment of the Project was duly proposed to and accepted by the LEG in early 2022.<sup>8</sup>
9. One of the examples of the flexible approach adopted by the Project was the planned training of teachers in accelerated teaching methods before the opening of schools with a budget of US\$ 250,000. With the opening of schools, the activity was considered no longer necessary by UNICEF, MEN and the LEG, so funds were reallocated to the following activities, which were more relevant at the time: (i) awareness-raising in the communities around the 1,500 targeted schools through the training of volunteers and social mobilization sessions (US\$ 80,000); (ii) identification and production of essential content for the accelerated curriculum (US\$ 50,000); (iii) teacher training on the essential content (US\$ 70,000); and (iv) learning assessments in preschool and primary school (US\$ 50,000).
10. Contrary to plan, it was not possible to call on technical partners to support MEN in conducting the learning assessment. The PASEC team could not be hired, due to unpaid debts, and the UNESCO team was no longer authorized to provide this type of support to country teams.<sup>9</sup> To remedy this situation, a learning assessment through a collaboration with the World Bank was planned for 2022, which required an extension of the project beyond its original end in June 2022. The necessity for an extension of the project was compounded by frequent changes in the leadership of MEN.<sup>10</sup>
11. Regarding the risk of duplication with other interventions, the Project actively sought a dialogue with other partners. In particular, since the World Bank also planned an activity on accelerated learning, the Project attempted to design its own activities in such a way as to avoid duplications and create synergies.<sup>11</sup> In terms of school feeding, the World Food Programme (WFP) participated in the elaboration of the project and its validation. School feeding programmes did not benefit from project funds, but complementary activities were considered, the focus of which were also public primary schools.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Quatrième enquête semestrielle sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2022.

<sup>9</sup> UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Troisième enquête trimestrielle sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2021

<sup>10</sup> UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Troisième enquête semestrielle sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2022. / UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Quatrième enquête semestrielle sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2022

<sup>11</sup> Source : Semi-structured interview with UNICEF and World Bank staff.

<sup>12</sup> Comment by UNICEF staff on the draft report.

### 8.1.1. Preliminary conclusion regarding the criterion “relevance”

Preliminary Conclusions – Relevance	Corresponding paragraph
REL1: The Project was well aligned with the Contingency Plan for the education sector, supporting its main objectives and contributing to all four specific objectives of the Contingency Plan.	1-2
REL2: The Project’s Theory of Change (ToC) was indeed logical and mostly aligned with implementation realities, as all the elements of the ToC were translated into planned project outputs, the majority of which were also implemented.	3
REL3: Neither viable educational alternatives, nor recovery classes, nor accelerated learning were widely implemented in a way that made them accessible to all children, due to challenges to implementation. These aspects of the ToC were not fully aligned with implementation realities.	4
REL4: Given the multitude of supply- and demand-side factors hampering education in Guinea-Bissau, the multi-sectoral approach taken by the Project was highly relevant for tackling these multi-dimensional barriers.	5
REL5: A specific objective related to resilience should have been explicitly included in the ToC. This would have made the Project’s relevance clearer.	6-7
REL6: The Project communicated transparently, acted flexibly, and engaged LEG partners democratically. In this way, the continued relevance of the Project was promoted.	8-9



## 8.2. Coherence



Q1. To what extent are the goals aligned with the national planning objectives/national strategies concerning the education sector?

Q2. To what extent did the activities implemented by the project complement existing interventions and services or education sector policies?

Q3. How complementary are the project's interventions with actions undertaken by the Ministry of Education or other line ministries to address the impact of COVID-19 on education or other sectors?

*Q1. To what extent are the goals aligned with the national planning objectives/national strategies concerning the education sector?*

12. The evaluation found that the overall and specific objectives of the initiative are fully aligned with government priorities and national policies. In particular, the Project was aligned with the national Education Sector Plan 2017-2025.<sup>13</sup> The Project contributed Strategic Priority 1 of the Plan: "Seek quality basic universal education, expanding basic education according to the Basic Law and ensuring that disparities are reduced." In effect, all Project outputs supported this strategic priority, including both access and quality aspects, particularly through its multi-sectoral approach.
13. In addition, the planned interventions related to distance learning (Output 3) and accelerated learning (Output 5) also supported Priority 2 of the Education Sector Plan: "Improve the quality and relevance of teaching/learning at all levels." However, these interventions were only partly realized.

<sup>13</sup> Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale : « Programme Sectoriel de l'Éducation de la Guinée Bissau (2017 -2025). »

14. The Project was also aligned with the UNICEF Country Programme Document 2016-2020,<sup>14</sup> in particular with the goal of supporting education equity and quality: “The programme will ensure that all children in every region have access to inclusive and comprehensive education services. Priority will be given to entry into primary school at the right age, increased primary school retention, completion rates and transition to secondary education, especially for girls in areas with high rates of child marriage.” In this regard, the Project supported particularly the aspect of increased primary school retention.

*Q2. To what extent did the activities implemented by the project complement existing interventions and services or education sector policies?*

15. The Project was coherent with the Education Sector Program Implementation Grant (ESPIG) 2017-2025.<sup>15</sup> First, it complemented ESPIG Component 1 “Strengthen school-based management practices and empower communities” through the engagement of community volunteers (Project Outputs 2 and 3). Second, the Project complemented ESPIG Component 3 “Strengthen education management capacity” through the promotion of coordination within MEN and the training of MEN staff on education in emergencies (Output 1).
16. The Project was also coherent with the Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) initiative, which was implemented in two phases from 2011 to 2020.<sup>16</sup> The CFS initiative focussed on WASH interventions and community participation (among other aspects), which were also elements of the Project (Outputs 4 and 2, respectively).
17. As a follow-up to the recommendations from the final evaluation of the CFS initiative, the Project successfully advocated for the integration of the National Quality Standards (NQS) module developed by MEN into the training of COVID-19 operational teams in schools.<sup>17</sup>
18. The Project was also in line with the intention stated in the CPD to strengthen the collaboration between the education and child protection sectors. In this regard, the Project included activities to address sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in schools in Output 4, addressing a need which had been identified by MEN and partners prior to the pandemic, by “seizing a perfect opportunity”, according to the Chief of Child Protection in UNICEF.<sup>18</sup>
19. The Project also leveraged synergies with the facilities of the already established youth project “Adolescent Girls Education Empowerment and Participation Project”. Awareness-raising about COVID-19 among impoverished communities was conducted by adapting the communication training of youth volunteers and supporting them in reaching out to communities to address needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>19</sup>
20. The Project also accelerated other reforms previously discussed by MEN and partners, particularly in relation to the development of a national strategy for distance learning to

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<sup>14</sup> UNICEF: “Country Programme Document: Guinea Bissau 2016-2020.” 2015.

<sup>15</sup> Global Partnership for Education: “Application Form for Education Sector Program Implementation Grant.” November 2017.

<sup>16</sup> Mundi Consulting: “Avaliação Sumativa da Iniciativa “Escolas Amigas das Crianças (EAC)” na Guiné-Bissau (2011-2019): Relatório Final.” 2019.

<sup>17</sup> UNICEF: “Country Office Annual Report 2020: Guinea-Bissau.”

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Head of Child Protection, UNICEF, 1.12.2022.

<sup>19</sup> UNICEF: “CASE STUDY 4: Adolescent girls’ empowerment leading to outreach for COVID-19 awareness – UNICEF, GUINEA BISSAU.” 2021.



benefit out-of-school children and the implementation of catch-up programmes to minimize the loss of learning due to the impact of COVID-19 on children's education.<sup>20</sup>

*Q3. How complementary are the project's interventions with actions undertaken by the Ministry of Education or other line ministries to address the impact of COVID-19 on education or other sectors?*

21. To reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the Government declared a state of emergency in March 2020 and announced for the closing of sea and air transportation and borders by land. The government also implemented guidelines and laws to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus within the community. These laws limited social gatherings, and screenings were made available to detect the COVID-19 virus.<sup>21</sup> Some critics argued that the pandemic was “turned into a security issue when it should be treated as a health and human right concern. Far from protecting the population, the emergency measures compound social inequalities in Guinea-Bissau.”<sup>22</sup>
22. The Government of Guinea-Bissau also developed a National COVID-19 Contingency Plan. The Plan focuses on scaling-up and strengthening all aspects of preparedness and response including emergency coordination, health vigilance, communication and social mobilization, prevention and infection control and clinical management.<sup>23</sup> The Plan was supported by the World Bank through the COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Project, which aims to strengthen the national public health preparedness capacity to prevent, detect and respond to the COVID-19 and future public health emergencies in Guinea-Bissau.<sup>24</sup>
23. It is important to note that the social safety net system in Guinea-Bissau remains cobweb thin, with 96 percent of the budget provided by development partners. The non-contributory social assistance programmes include cash transfer, school feeding and critical health interventions. To mitigate the immediate impacts of the pandemic, the Government (as of March 2021), made emergency allocations of XOF222 million (US\$ 0.4 million) to provide medicine, food, and medical equipment; and XOF580 million (US\$ 1 million) to distribute 20,000 bags of rice and 10,000 bags of sugar throughout the country, including in distant areas. As additional actions, the Government increased the targeted number of families to benefit from food support from an initial 3,000 to 20,000 and has provided other support to families (XOF 100 million).<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, the implementation of the Contingency Plan for education relied largely on the main donors in the education sector, i.e., UNICEF and the World Bank.
24. In response to the socio-economic challenges linked with the pandemic, the UN Country Team (UNCT) issued a Socio-economic Response Plan, which includes Education and psychosocial support under Pillar 2 “Protecting People”. The Plan urges to “support secured learning for all children and adolescents.”<sup>26</sup> The Project is fully coherent with this approach.

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<sup>20</sup> UNICEF: “Country Office Annual Report 2021: Guinea-Bissau.”

<sup>21</sup> Meribole, Joshua: “COVID-19 in Guinea-Bissau”. Borgen Magazine, 2020.

<sup>22</sup> de Barros, Miguel, Anaxore Casimiro, Aliu Soares Cassamá, Cadija Mané, Fatumata Jau, and Rui Jorge Semedo: “State of Emergency for health but State of Exception for people: Guinea-Bissau’s paradox in the battle against Covid-19.” Centro de Estudos Sociais Amílcar Cabral (CESAC).

<sup>23</sup> World Bank: “Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP): Guinea Bissau COVID-19 Emergency Response Project (P174243).” 2020.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> UN: “Guinea-Bissau COVID-19 Pandemic Socio-economic Response Plan.” 2021.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

### 8.2.1. Preliminary conclusion regarding the criterion “coherence”

Preliminary Conclusions – Coherence	Corresponding paragraph
COH1: The Project were fully aligned with government priorities and national policies, in particular the national Education Sector Plan 2017-2025.	12-13
COH2: The Project was also aligned with the UNICEF Country Programme Document 2016-2020, in particular with the goal of supporting education equity and quality.	14
COH3: The Project was coherent with the Education Sector Program Implementation Grant (ESPIG) 2017-2025 and with the Child-friendly Schools (CFS) initiative.	15-17
COH4: The Project promoted collaboration between the education and child protection sectors and leveraged synergies with the “Adolescent Girls Education Empowerment and Participation Project”, by adapting the communication training of youth volunteers and supporting them in reaching out to communities to address needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.	18-19
COH5: The Project accelerated other reforms previously discussed by MEN and partners, particularly in relation to the development of a national strategy for distance learning to benefit out-of-school children and the implementation of catch-up programmes to minimize the loss of learning.	20
COH6: The Project was coherent with the Government’s National Contingency Plan and the UNCT’s Socio-economic Response Plan.	21-24

### 8.3. Effectiveness



Q1. To what extent did the project achieve its envisaged objectives?

Q2. What are the factors (internal and external to the project) that most contributed to the attainment of the project's objectives?

Q3. What are the factors (internal and external to the project) that most hindered the attainment of the project's objectives?

Q4. What are the unexpected outcomes (positive and negative) of the project's implementation?

*Q1. To what extent did the project achieve its envisaged objectives?*

**Table 7: Level of achievement by expected result**

Expected results	Results achieved (Based on data collected by the evaluation team)	Level of Achievement
R 1: Support response coordination and real-time monitoring (focusing on the most vulnerable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CTIP established and functional for coordination</li> <li>mWater database used for monitoring</li> </ul>	<b>Good level</b>
R 2: Ensure safe school operations including	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1,500 schools equipped with minimum hygiene standards</li> </ul>	<b>Good level</b>

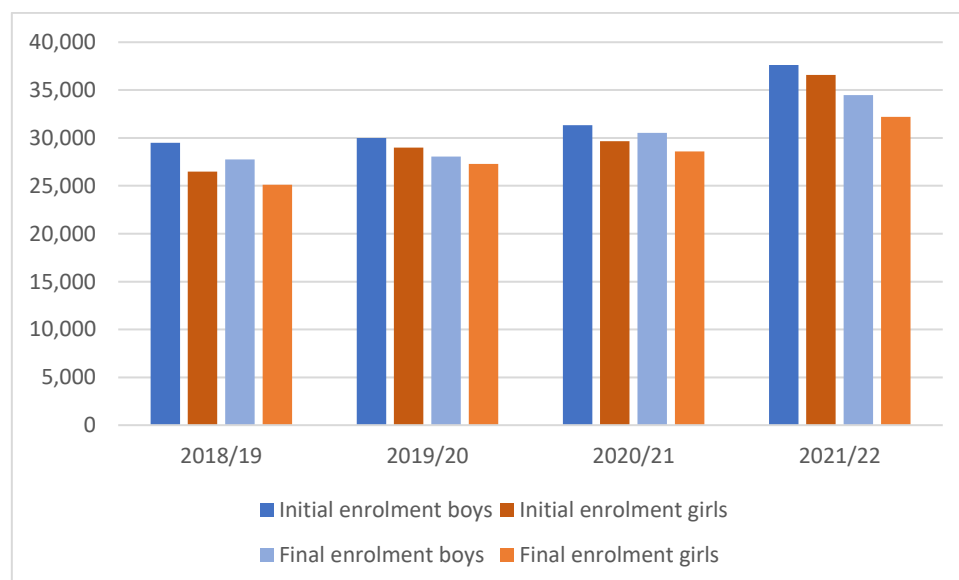
through hygiene supplies and risk communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7,500 school stakeholders trained on hygiene, water and basic sanitation matters</li> </ul>	
R 3: Support continuity of learning through access to remote learning programmes as appropriate for Guinea-Bissau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distance learning materials for children at pre-school and first cycle of basic education via radio and TV produced</li> <li>849 teachers trained in the use of distance learning methods and / or materials provided to support distance learning</li> <li>154,473 children benefited from videos and audios on the country's national radio and television (estimate)</li> </ul>	<b>Average level</b>
R 4: Scale-up psychosocial, health, WASH, and nutrition services within the Education sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19,164 children provided with access to programs and awareness campaigns aimed at minimizing the negative impacts of school closures (estimate)</li> <li>20 new fixed handwashing devices were installed, which were valuable also for teaching purposes</li> <li>Shock-responsive social protection scheme through cash transfers for 1,400 families and children relieved families from financial constraints, allowing children to continue schooling</li> </ul>	<b>Average level</b>
R 5: Ensure a safe opening-back of schools through back-to-school campaigns, catch-up classes, and accelerated learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Back-to-school campaign carried out three times</li> <li>849 teachers trained to provide accelerated learning to mitigate learning loss during school closure</li> <li>Schools re-opened safely in the school years 2020/21 and 2021/22, with a higher number of students than in the previous years in the regions of Oio and Bafatá</li> </ul>	<b>Good level</b>

25. The main objective of the Project was: “to support the government of Guinea-Bissau and the Local Education Group (LEG) to reduce the impact of the coronavirus on the education of children in the country by ensuring safe school operations and the continuity of learning and well-being for children and youth, especially for the most vulnerable affected by the outbreak.” By extending services to more than 1,500 schools (out of approximately 2,300), the Project did

indeed make an important contribution to ensuring safe schools operations and the continuity of learning.

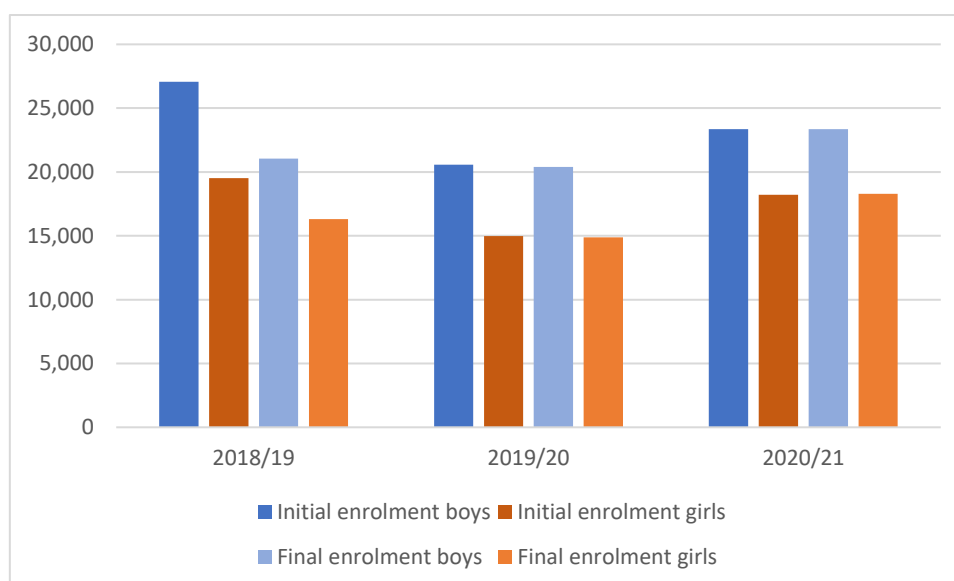
26. Figures 1 and 2 depict the initial and final enrolment in the school years 2018/19 until 2021/22 in Bafatá region and 2018/19 until 2020/21 in Oio region (where data for the school year 2021/22 was not yet available) for all grades (pre-school until grade 12). The results show that the COVID-19 pandemic has not had the negative effect of lowering enrolment in these two regions. On the contrary, both initial and final enrolment have grown in each school year, for both sexes (with the exception of a drop in enrolment in Oio between the school years 2018/19 and 2019/20, which happened prior to COVID-19). This could be interpreted as the Project's success in preventing a negative effect of COVID-19 on the education system, at least in terms of enrolment. This finding would be consistent with several interviewed school directors, who confirmed that the hygienic materials, together with the sensitization of the school community, had prevented dropout and motivated children to return when school re-opened.

*Figure 1: Initial and final enrolment in Bafatá region, school years 2018/19 until 2021/22 (in number of children)*



Source: Regional Directorate of Education, Bafatá

*Figure 2: Initial and final enrolment in Oio region, school years 2018/19 until 2020/21 (in number of children)*



Source: Regional Directorate of Education, Oio

27. However, care should be taken in attributing the apparent resilience of enrolment rates entirely to the Project. First, it is possible that the high enrolment rates are due to an increase in the age cohorts, and that the percentage of out-of-school children may have also increased (current data on out-of-school children were not available). Second, it is also possible that the enforced restrictions on pupil-to-classroom rates during the pandemic have led many schools to adopt (or re-adopt) a multiple-shift schedule, allowing them to enrol more children, at the expense of overall instruction time and therefore education quality. This was confirmed by a school director in one of the visited schools. In any case, the way the main objective was phrased (“to support the government of Guinea-Bissau and the Local Education Group (LEG) to reduce the impact...” ) means that Project can be considered effective in this regard.
28. Regarding Specific Objective 1 “Support response coordination and real-time monitoring (focusing on the most vulnerable)”, the evaluation notes that there was indeed MEN ownership of the Contingency Plan, upon which the Project was built. The Project was successful in establishing the CTIP, which coordinated the Project, ensuring effective coordination among different departments and ownership within MEN. However, it started functioning properly only in January 2021, when a dedicated project manager took office in UNICEF.<sup>27</sup> The CTIP met 78 times, and conducted nine joint monitoring visits until May 2022.<sup>28</sup> The CTIP is still functional, and MEN leadership is considering an even more prominent role for this committee, which may oversee the development, implementation and monitoring of the Education Sector Plan.
29. Moreover, the Project prompted the use of the mWater database for the education sector, which facilitated the monitoring of school supplies and other interventions during the implementation of the Project.<sup>29</sup> It offers increased possibilities for real-time monitoring of education indicators through data collection, storage, and visualisation, going forward.

<sup>27</sup> UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Troisième enquête trimestrielle sur l’état d’avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2021 / UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Deuxième enquête semestrielle sur l’état d’avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2021.

<sup>28</sup> UNICEF: “Updated results framework.” May 2022.

<sup>29</sup> UNICEF: “Country Office Annual Report 2021: Guinea-Bissau.”

30. Regarding Specific Objective (2) “Ensure safe school operations including through hygiene supplies and risk communication”, the Project trained nearly 7,500 school stakeholders on hygiene, water and basic sanitation matters and distributed key documents, tools and equipment to partners, enabling a safe reopening of schools in October 2020.<sup>30</sup> Visits to schools in Bissau, Oio and Bafatá confirmed that the hygiene materials had arrived in all visited schools in sufficient quantities, and that most schools had the thermometer and first aid kits readily available. Moreover, the communication was clear regarding the risks and prevention measures was considered clear, as was confirmed by all the interviewed stakeholders at the school level. Students in the focus groups confirmed that they felt safe with the masks, knowing that they should not hug or shake hands with their peers. Students in Escola Ponta Nova said that they even taught their out-of-school peers basic hygiene skills.
31. Regarding Specific Objective (3) “Support continuity of learning through access to remote learning programmes as appropriate for Guinea-Bissau”, the Project produced distance learning materials for children at pre-school and first cycle of basic education via radio and TV of good quality. However, the evaluation notes that current access to TV in Guinea-Bissau is insufficient to allow for wide access to these distance-learning materials across the country (due to the economic capacity of households and the availability of electricity, among other aspects); the same is true to a lesser extent for radio access. Nonetheless, UNICEF estimates that some 154,473 children benefited from videos and audios on the country's national radio and television in 2020.<sup>31</sup> Likewise, 216 radio lessons from an existing programme by Child Radio Foundation were translated and adapted to the Bissau-Guinean context and benefited more than 300,000 children, in and out of school, and their parents, according to UNICEF estimates.<sup>32</sup> However, the evaluation notes that the above estimates, which are based on population data and available hardware, are rather speculative, and that the impact of these interventions cannot be properly measured. Only one of the children interviewed in the focus groups (who had stayed in Bissau at the time) said that she had followed one of the lessons.
32. Apart from the restricted coverage radio, the evaluation questions the pedagogical value of reliance on “one-way” channels of education for quality learning.<sup>33</sup> In this regard, the Project was not able to conduct a learning assessment. Nonetheless, the Project improved chances for learning continuity, even with other types of disruptions to fragile education system, notably teacher strikes, by enhancing the pool of available materials, raising awareness among stakeholders, and training volunteers.<sup>34</sup>
33. Teachers in the focus groups affirmed that they would require more training on both logistical and didactical aspects of distance learning. In the absence of such training, they would otherwise not feel confident in conducting distance learning, according to the teachers.
34. In any case, it should be noted that the relevance of Specific Objective 3 was decreased by the fact that schools were able to reopen relatively quickly, so that the need for distance-learning was diminished. (As noted in Section 8.1, the Project responded flexibly to this shift in relevance.)

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<sup>30</sup> UNICEF: “Country Office Annual Report 2020: Guinea-Bissau.”

<sup>31</sup> UNICEF: “Country Office Annual Report 2020: Guinea-Bissau.”

<sup>32</sup> UNICEF: “Country Office Annual Report 2020: Guinea-Bissau.”

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/learning-through-radio-and-television-time-covid-19>

<sup>34</sup> UNICEF: “Country Office Annual Report 2020: Guinea-Bissau” and semi-structured interviews with UNICEF and World Bank staff.



35. Regarding Specific Objective (4) “Scale-up psychosocial, health, WASH, and nutrition services within the Education sector”, the Project was partly effective. On the positive side, the materials and activities under Output 2 increased the availability of hygiene supplies in schools and promoted hygienic behaviour. In addition, 20 new fixed handwashing devices were installed, which were valuable also for teaching purposes. The evaluator witnessed students’ washing their hands on these devices as well as on the plastic water containers (which were distributed to all schools) and verified that they were able to demonstrate the correct way of applying soap to the hands in the focus groups. The regional coordinator of inspection in Bafatá confirmed that there was now more awareness of the importance of hygiene among all school actors.
36. The Project increased awareness and capacity on school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) at school. An SRGBV manual was developed, and made available to teachers in all 1,500 schools. Moreover, 302 education stakeholders (teachers, directors, and COGES members) participated in a one-day training event on SRGBV. The interviewed directors and teachers were highly satisfied with the training. The director of one of the visited schools even noted that teachers had spent time in class sensitizing students, and that there had been several incidents where students had kept other students from mistreating their peers. Teachers at Escola Amizade China in Bafatá also affirmed that all students in their school had been sensitized on the issue.
37. The engagement for a shock-responsive social protection scheme through cash transfers for families and children relieved families from financial constraints, allowing children to continue schooling, especially at-risk girls. The Project engaged several CSOs, which provided intensive follow-up, for example advice and guidance on how to invest the cash transfers received. For example, the CSO *Associação de Saneamento Básico, Proteção da Água e Ambiente de Bafatá* (ASPAAB) agreed with some beneficiaries to pay the school fees of CFA 1,000 per month<sup>35</sup> for two years in advance, testified by a community representative (in case the school administration changes), while others bought goats as an investment. According to ASPAAB, twelve community schools were reactivated in Bafatá for one or two school years with cash transfer money, which was pooled among beneficiaries.
38. On the negative side, the evaluation visited three out of the 20 schools with fixed handwashing devices, finding that only the one at Escola São Pedro de Jugundul was currently operational (the one at Escola Ponta Nova was broken, whereas the one at Escola Gan Teuda was currently non-operational, due to the unavailability of water in the respective school). While all of the eight visited schools had received plastic water containers, four of these were broken (and in two schools replaced).
39. The design of the cash transfer intervention should have yielded quantitative and qualitative evidence regarding the effectiveness of this intervention. However, the delayed timing of the endline survey at the beginning of the new school year made it impossible to assess the impact on school enrolment (and other variables).
40. While the Project had intended to scale up nutrition in school, this was not achieved. Instead, the funds were used to build capacity in the Ministry of Health, which did not directly benefit children in schools.<sup>36</sup> In particular, as mentioned in Section 8.1., the Project did not achieve a

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<sup>35</sup> In theory, school fees at the basic level should not exist in Guinea-Bissau, but in practice, they continue to persist.

<sup>36</sup> Interview with UNICEF staff.



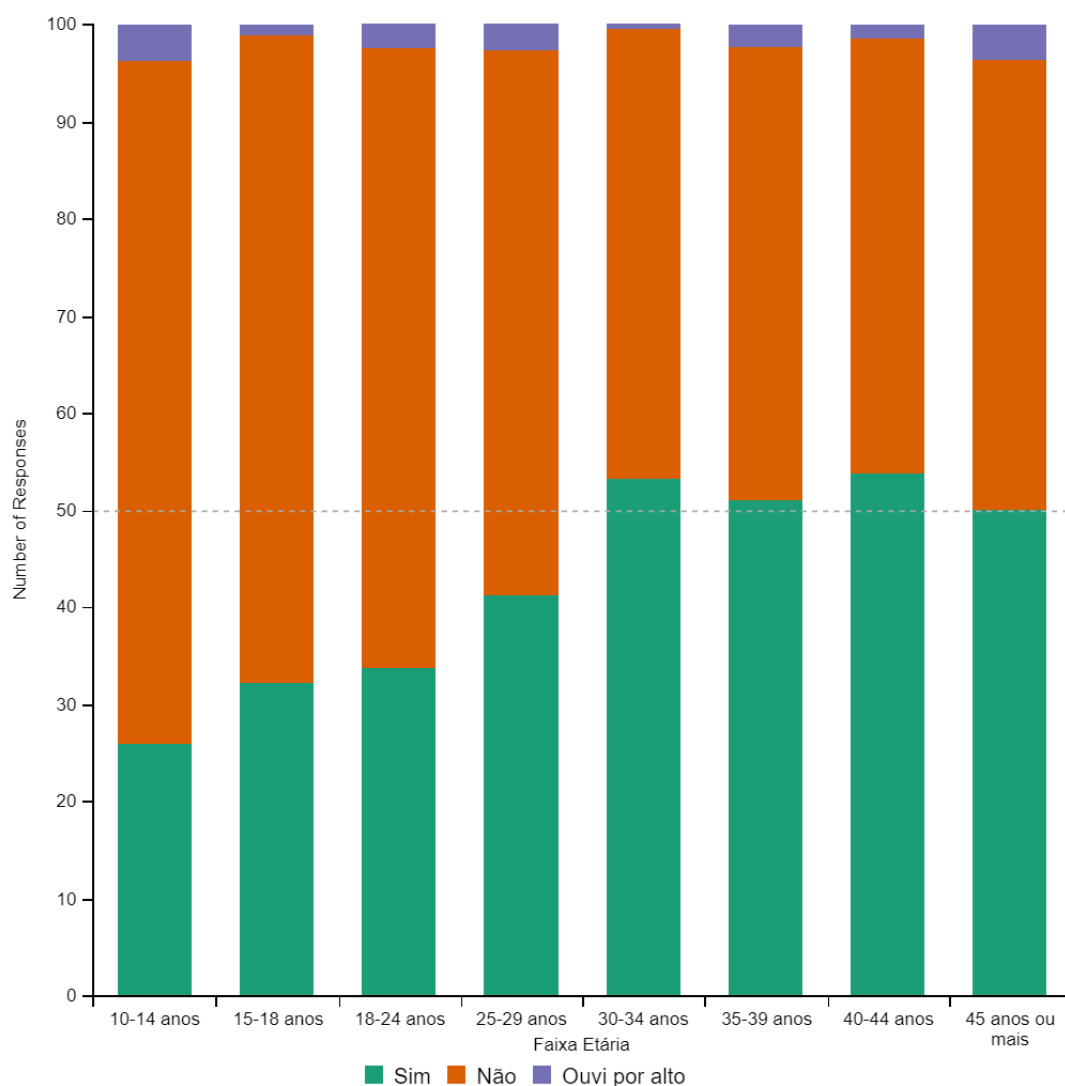
joint activity with the World Food Programme (WFP) or Catholic Relief Services (CRS) on school-feeding, which represents a missed opportunity.

41. Another potentially missed opportunity was the option to address child labour (apart from the Back to School Campaign, which included various factors that favor school dropout), particularly in cashew production, which has been identified as one of the main reasons for children dropping out of schools in some regions.<sup>37</sup> This was confirmed in the focus group discussions with students, who confirmed that some of their peers had dropped out of school due to child labour.
42. Regarding Specific Objective (5) “Ensure a safe opening-back of schools through back-to-school campaigns, catch-up classes, and accelerated learning”, the Project was effective: Schools re-opened safely in the school years 2020/21 and 2021/22, with a higher number of students than in the previous years in the regions of Oio and Bafatá (where such data were available) (see Figure 1 and 2).
43. The back-to-school campaign was carried out three times, in 2020, 2021, and 2022, and reached a large number of people, especially adults aged 30 and above. More than half of the population aged 30 and above said that they had heard of the campaign in 2022 (Figure 3).

*Figure 3: Percentage of respondents who had heard about the back-to-school campaign in 2022, by age group*

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<sup>37</sup> Marshall et al.: “Out-of-school children in Guinea-Bissau: A mixed-methods analysis.” 2020,

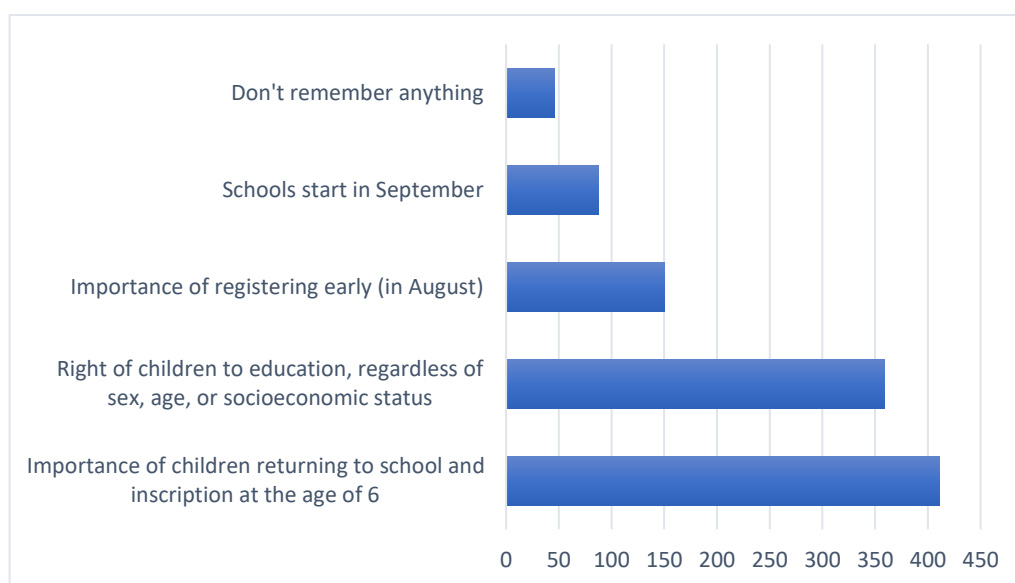


Source: mWater database

44. In August and September 2022, the Project produced and disseminated four radio spots before the school opening date; printed 4,500 posters, 1,000 stickers for distribution in schools, and ten rollups (out of which eight for DREs); disseminated promotional videos and other posts through social media; and organized awareness-raising “Djumbai” sessions with parents and community leaders.<sup>38</sup>
45. In response to the question “What are the two most important aspects of the campaign that you remember?”, respondents highlighted in particular (a) the importance of children returning to school and inscription at the age of 6, and (b) the right of children to education, regardless of sex, age, or socioeconomic status (Figure 4).

*Figure 4: Aspects remembered by respondents about the back-to-school campaign in 2022 (682 respondents; two responses were possible).*

<sup>38</sup> UNICEF: “Final report: Back to learning campaign 2022 “Ka nô para aprendi”. 2022.



Source: mWater database

46. All the students in the focus groups in the visited schools said that they had received notice when the schools reopened as part of the back-to-school campaign in 2020, mostly via radio or telephone, and that they had been eager to return. The COGES representative at one of the schools said that the campaign had brought new students into the system (however, some had been also turned away, due to supply-side restrictions).
47. However, neither catch-up classes nor accelerated learning were implemented as planned, which was largely due to the complex nature of these interventions. Nonetheless, the Project promoted the design and implementation of catch-up programmes through the development and printing of teacher guides and textbooks, and building capacity within MEN, which enhanced the likelihood of providing alternatives to minimize the loss of learning due to the impact of COVID-19, teacher strikes, or other emergencies, in the future.<sup>39</sup>
48. Regarding Specific Objective (6) “Codify and disseminate best practice and innovation”, no output was specifically dedicated to this objective, and the evaluation found little evidence of targeted activities geared towards this end, apart from the mid-term evaluation and the present final evaluation. The baseline and endline study on conditional cash transfers would have provided an excellent opportunity to enhance the knowledge base and establish clear evidence on the effectiveness of such a social protection initiative, which is linked to education. However, as noted above, the timing of the baseline and endline study over two different schoolyears did not allow for determining the impact of this initiative on enrolment.

## Q2. What are the factors (internal and external to the project) that most contributed to the attainment of the project’s objectives?

49. Several interviewees confirmed that the Project had demonstrated MEN’ commitment to support schools, thereby instilling confidence within schools and communities that the risks

<sup>39</sup> UNICEF: “Estimated budget for the Global Partnership for Education COVID-19 Accelerated Funding.” June 2022.

posed by the virus could be overcome. This was an important factor for the continuation of education at the local level.

50. With regards to the central level, the alignment with Contingency Plan, for which MEN has ownership, was identified as an important contributing factor for taking ownership for the Project, too. The manifestation of this ownership was the establishment of the CTIP, which met regularly and undertook several monitoring visits to the field.
51. The multi-sectoral nature of interventions engaged various government counterparts and section inside UNICEF, which created possibilities to address the complex set of supply- and demand-side factors hampering education in Guinea-Bissau.<sup>40</sup> The multi-sectoral approach made activities geared towards improvements to the school environment possible, through the provision of resources and training to address inclusion, corporal punishment, school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV), and menstrual hygiene management (MHM).<sup>41</sup>
52. The use of the mWater database facilitated the localisation of schools, which was in some cases not known at the level of the Regional Directorates of Education.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, the mWater served as an effective tool to monitor distribution of Project items and services.<sup>43</sup>
53. Initially, the donor had asked the question whether the cash transfer initiative could be made conditional on school attendance.<sup>44</sup> However, the Project rejected this idea and designed the cash transfer initiative in an unconditional way. The evaluation found this decision appropriate, given the limited local capacity required to administer a conditional cash transfer programme. Moreover, international experience has shown that unconditional cash transfers can have similar results on school attendance as conditional ones; they are also in line with UNICEF social protection policies.<sup>45</sup>

*Q3. What are the factors (internal and external to the project) that most hindered the attainment of the project's objectives?*

54. The Project was initially slowed down by the fact that a full-time project manager did not come on board until February 2021, i.e., eight months after the beginning of the Project.<sup>46</sup> The evaluation found that the complexity of the Project, with its five outputs and various sectors and partners involved, made this recruitment necessary, and that the delay in recruitment explains a large share of the delays encountered during implementation. In addition, it is important to note that due to COVID-19 restrictions on mobility, access to the UNICEF office was limited from March to November 2020, with all staff working from home, some in conditions not suitable for monitoring a project.<sup>47</sup>
55. The Project was also hampered by low absorption and implementation capacity of MEN, which was manifested in the lack of a robust list of schools, for example.<sup>48</sup> The low capacity was

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<sup>40</sup> See Marshall et al., 2020.

<sup>41</sup> UNICEF: "Country Office Annual Review 2021."

<sup>42</sup> Interview with UNICEF staff.

<sup>43</sup> <https://portal.mwater.co/#/forms/76460f0a9b3045f18828ef0162e8bb72/visualization>

<sup>44</sup> UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Enquête semestrielle sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2020.

<sup>45</sup> UNICEF: "Conditionality in cash transfers: UNICEF's approach." Social Inclusion Summaries, February 2016.

<sup>46</sup> UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Troisième enquête trimestrielle sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre », 2021.

<sup>47</sup> Comment on the draft report by UNICEF staff.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with UNICEF staff.

further exacerbated by frequent leadership changes, both at the ministerial and the departmental level. For example, four different Ministers of Education were appointed in 2022 (three of whom actually took office).<sup>49</sup> The personnel changes slowed implementation down, when the incoming minister or staff re-assessed MEN strategic priorities.<sup>50</sup>

56. The lack of access to water at most schools in Guinea-Bissau posed a significant obstacle to the WASH-related aspects of the Project (under Outputs 2 and 4).
57. During the first half of 2021, the Government imposed the payment of customs clearance fees on all partners, which delayed the delivery of some of the materials.<sup>51</sup> A few other delays occurred at the time of distribution, when some schools could initially not be identified by the transporters.<sup>52</sup>
58. Contrary to plan, it was not possible to call on technical partners to support MEN in conducting the learning assessment.<sup>53</sup> Specifically, the PASEC team could not be hired, due to unpaid debts, and the UNESCO team was no longer authorized to provide this type of support to country teams. To remedy this situation, a learning assessment through a collaboration with the World Bank was planned for 2022, which required an extension of the project beyond its original end in June 2022; nonetheless, the activity was not effectively implemented, as it proved too complex.<sup>54</sup>
59. The Project was very ambitious with regards to the specific objectives described above, which aimed to tackle some of the deep-rooted obstacles to providing quality education to all children. On the one hand, this is laudable, particularly considering current reforms inspired by the World Humanitarian Summit, which focus on “new ways of working” that bridge humanitarian action, development, peace, and security in a “nexus” approach.<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, the evaluation concludes that the result that several specific objectives were not fully achieved was due to the fact that the Project was overly ambitious, given the challenging context described above.

#### *Q4. What are the unexpected outcomes (positive and negative) of the project's implementation?*

60. Prior to the Project, MEN did not have a trusted list of schools, which became apparent when the original list of schools to receive hygiene supplies was submitted to UNICEF. In fact, many schools on the original list were no longer existent, whereas other schools were missing. Through the use of the mWater database, MEN now disposes of a trusted list of schools.
61. The Project fostered the accountability of governance in the education sector. According to the UNICEF Project Manager, key MEN actors at the national level, through their participation in CTIP monitoring missions to the field, were more sensitized to the reality on the ground. In

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<sup>49</sup> Interview with UNICEF staff.

<sup>50</sup> UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Troisième enquête semestrielle sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2022, and interviews with UNICEF staff.

<sup>51</sup> UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Deuxième enquête semestrielle sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2021.

<sup>52</sup> UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Deuxième enquête semestrielle sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2021.

<sup>53</sup> UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Deuxième enquête semestrielle sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2021.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with UNICEF staff.

<sup>55</sup> Mendenhall, 2019.

particular, they realized that the functioning of schools and DRE was worse than envisioned, for example regarding the poor state of infrastructure and the lack of monitoring visits by inspectors.<sup>56</sup> As a result, the overall budget allocation to decentralized structures was recently augmented.<sup>57</sup>

62. Linked with the previous finding, the Project promoted awareness of the importance of WASH in schools and enhanced the momentum to provide water infrastructure accordingly. As a result, MEN conducted a re-assessment of water infrastructure in schools in late 2020,<sup>58</sup> and discussions with the World Bank regarding possible investment in WASH are ongoing.

### 8.3.1 Preliminary conclusion regarding the criterion “effectiveness”

Preliminary Conclusions – Effectiveness	Corresponding paragraph
EFE1: The main objective (“to support the government of Guinea-Bissau and the Local Education Group (LEG) to reduce the impact of the coronavirus on the education of children in the country by ensuring safe school operations and the continuity of learning and well-being for children and youth, especially for the most vulnerable affected by the outbreak”) and three out of six specific objectives were nearly fully reached: (1) Support response coordination and real-time monitoring (focusing on the most vulnerable); (2) Ensure safe school operations including through hygiene supplies and risk communication; (4) Scale-up psychosocial, health, WASH, and nutrition services within the Education sector.	25-27
EFE2: Three specific objectives were partially reached: (3) Support continuity of learning through access to remote learning programmes as appropriate for Guinea-Bissau; (5) Ensure a safe opening-back of schools through back-to-school campaigns, catch-up classes, and accelerated learning; (6) Codify and disseminate best practice and innovation. In particular, accelerated learning was not fully implemented, while the effectiveness of distance learning was doubtful, given the restricted access and lack of circular learning. Best practice and innovation were addressed only through a brief mid-term evaluation and the present final evaluation.	28-48
EFE3: The Project had demonstrated the MEN’ commitment to support schools, thereby instilling confidence within schools and communities that the risks posed by the virus could be overcome.	49
EFE4: Other factors that promoted the effectiveness of the Project were the alignment with the Contingency Plan, the multi-sectoral nature of interventions, and the use of the mWater database.	50-53

<sup>56</sup> For example, Mamadou Banjai: “Missão de seguimento e avaliação do funcionamento dos comités regionais para a proteção da COVID-19 nas escolas.” Junho de 2021.

<sup>57</sup> Interview with UNICEF staff.

<sup>58</sup> UNICEF: “Country Office Annual Report 2020: Guinea-Bissau”.

EFE5: The Project was initially slowed down by the fact that a full-time project manager did not come on board until February 2021, i.e., eight months after the beginning of the Project. In addition, the Project was hampered by COVID-19 restrictions on access and mobility.	54
EFE6: Other factors that hampered the effectiveness of the Project were the low absorption and implementation capacity of MEN, leadership turnover in MEN, the lack of water at school level, transportation problems, and the non-availability of previously planned partnerships to conduct a learning assessment.	55-58
EFE7: Regarding unexpected outcomes, the Project facilitated a trusted list of schools for MEN and its partners, fostered the accountability of governance in the education sector, and promoted awareness of the importance of WASH in schools.	60-62

#### 8.4 Efficiency



- Q1. To what extent were the financial, human and property resources:
- sufficient (in terms of quantity) in relation to the identified needs and expected results?
  - adequate (in terms of quality) in relation to the expected results?
  - implemented in a timely manner?
- Q2. To what extent could the same results be achieved by other less expensive alternatives?
- Q3. What are the management factors that favoured or hindered the efficiency of the project?

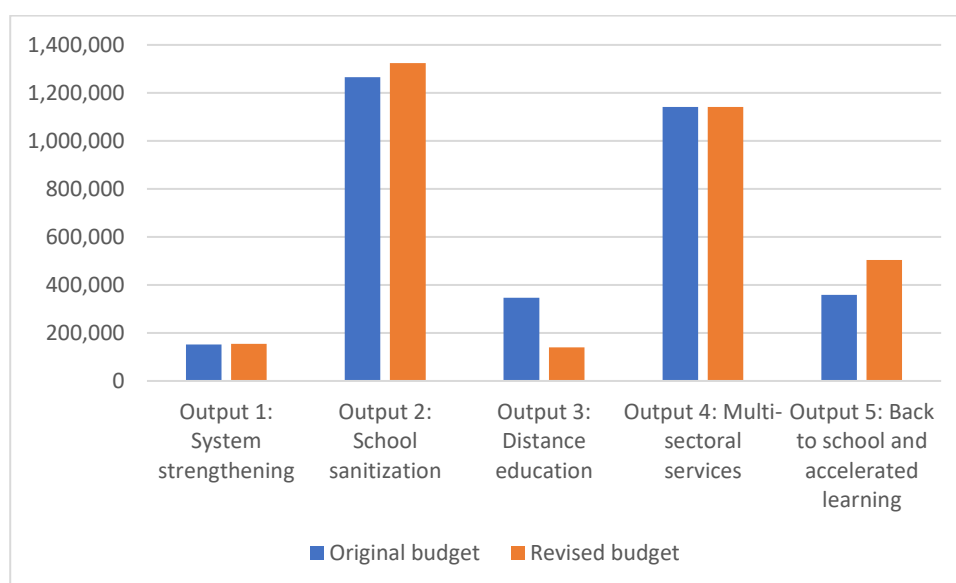
*Q1. To what extent were the financial, human and property resources:*



- a. sufficient (in terms of quantity) in relation to the identified needs and expected results?
- b. adequate (in terms of quality) in relation to the expected results?
- c. implemented in a timely manner?

63. Initially designed to run for 18 months (from July 2020 to December 2021), the implementation cycle of the Project was extended twice by a total of ten months, until the end of October 2022, due to the implementation challenges described above. Considering the challenges that led to these extensions (see Section 8.3, Paragraphs 54-59), the timeliness of the implementation can be considered satisfactory. By June 2022 (i.e., six months after the originally planned end, and four months before the actual end of the Project), the Project managed to disburse 95.3 percent of the budget.
64. The overall distribution of the planned and revised budget is depicted in Figure 5. Within the planned budget, Output 2 (sanitization of schools) and Output 4 (multi-sectoral services) received the largest share of the budget, with 38 percent and 33 percent, respectively. The remaining outputs received a smaller share, with Output 5 accounting for 10 percent, Output 3 for 10 percent, and Output 1 for only 4 percent of the total budget.

*Figure 5: Budget distribution, per Output (planned versus revised budget, in US\$)*



65. A budget revision was undertaken during the programme. Initially, it was planned to train teachers in accelerated teaching methods before the opening of schools (Output 5) with a budget of US\$ 250,000. With the opening of schools, the activity was considered no longer necessary, so funds were reallocated to the following activities: (i) awareness-raising in the communities around the 1,500 targeted schools through the training of volunteers and social mobilization sessions (US\$ 80,000); (ii) identification and production of essential content for the accelerated curriculum (US\$ 50,000); (iii) teacher training on the essential content (US\$ 70,000); and (iv) learning assessments in preschool and primary school (US\$ 50,000).
66. Thus, the budget revision shifted the relative share of the budget from Output 3 to Output 5.
- Output 2: 38 percent
  - Output 4: 33 percent

- Output 5: 14 percent
  - Output 1: 4 percent
  - Output 3: 4 percent
67. Given the main objective to ensure safe school operations and the continuity of learning and well-being, the evaluation finds the emphasis on Output 2, which has a clear short-term focus, appropriate. Likewise, the fact that a large share of the budget was also attributed to Output 4 was also justifiable, given the complexity of tackling barriers to education in a multi-sectoral manner. Since Output 4 has a more medium-term focus, this provided balance within the overall Project.
68. As discussed above, Outputs 3 and 5 were the most ambitious. Distance learning and accelerated education are difficult to integrate into an existing education system, even in non-emergency situations; during the pandemic, these interventions were only able to achieve an experimental status. In this regard, the evaluation finds the fact that both outputs received a relatively small amount of the budget also appropriate.
69. Initially, UNICEF colleagues had proposed a substantial investment in WASH infrastructure as part of the Project. However, this was not accepted by the donor, due to the high costs involved. Instead, fixed handwashing devices were only installed in 20 schools that already had access to water. While this was very efficient, it may have exacerbated existing inequalities (see Section 4.6.).

*Q2. To what extent could the same results be achieved by other less expensive alternatives?*

70. The evaluation found no indications of other less expensive alternatives. According to the reviewed documents and the interviewed stakeholders, the Project employed the most cost-effective means to achieve its objectives.

*Q3. What are the management factors that favoured or hindered the efficiency of the project?*

71. The efficiency of the Project was facilitated by the installation of the CTIP. This coordination mechanism met regularly and carried out several monitoring missions to the field, which increased ownership. As a result of the trust that MEN leadership puts in this mechanism, CTIP has recently been given further responsibilities (see Section 8.3).
72. The multi-sectoral approach was made efficient by building on existing initiatives within UNICEF. For example, a partnership with Child Fund on radiophonic lessons had already started in 2019. Likewise, discussions between MEN and the UNICEF Child Protection Section regarding SRGBV had also taken place prior to the project,<sup>59</sup> while deworming was scaled up from 27 CFS schools to reach all children until 5<sup>th</sup> grade in the Project schools.<sup>60</sup>
73. However, the evaluation noted the lack of involvement of the teacher unions, for example the National Teachers' Union (SINAPROF), which also provided materials to schools and capacity-building to teachers (funded by international partner organisations) in 2020. Coordination with teacher unions could have created synergies and enhanced the efficiency of the intervention.

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<sup>59</sup> Interview with UNICEF staff.

<sup>60</sup> Interview with UNICEF staff.

74. The evaluation noted that the use of mWater, which was discussed in the previous section, was also an efficient approach, as the database was already established and provided a low-cost tool for the collection, storage, and analysis of cross-sectoral data.

#### 8.4.1 Preliminary conclusion regarding the criterion “efficiency”

Preliminary Conclusions – Efficiency	Corresponding paragraph
EFI1: Considering the challenges to implementation (low absorption capacity, frequent leadership changes, and customs clearance problems, among others), which led to two extensions, the timeliness of the Project’s implementation can be considered satisfactory.	63
EFI2: The largest shares of the budget went to Output 2 (Sanitization of schools) and Output 4 (Multi-sectoral services), which is justifiable, given the close linkage between Output 2 and the overall objective of continuing education, and the complexity of a multi-sectoral approach.	64-67
EFI3: Due to the high costs involved with water infrastructure, fixed handwashing devices were only installed in 20 schools that already had access to water. This was efficient, even though it may have exacerbated existing inequalities.	70
EFI4: The efficiency of the Project was facilitated by the installation of the Technical Committee for the Implementation of the Contingency Plan (CTIP), synergies with existing initiatives within UNICEF, and the use of mWater.	71-72, 74

## 8.5 Sustainability



Q1. To what extent has the capacity of the education sector (and actors) been strengthened to reduce the risk from disasters, increase preparedness and resiliency, and ensure continuity of access to education and learning and educational services during emergency situations?

Q2. To what extent has the project created or strengthened activities, platforms, mechanisms, or competencies/capacities that will support the long-term development and system-strengthening of the education sector?

Q3. To what extent was local capacity supported and developed by the project?

*Q1. To what extent has the capacity of the education sector (and actors) been strengthened to reduce the risk from disasters, increase preparedness and resiliency, and ensure continuity of access to education and learning and educational services during emergency situations?*

75. At the national level, the Project provided an experience on how to operate logistically in an emergency, involving all directorates within MEN. On this basis, it can be expected that valuable lines of communication were developed or reinforced, upon which a similar intervention could draw on logistically. This hypothesis was confirmed by several respondents from UNICEF and MEN.

76. At the national level, the Project provided capacity-building on education in emergencies, using the International Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards. However, given time and resource constraints, these standards were not adapted to the context of Guinea-Bissau (which would require an extensive process of context analysis,

stakeholder mapping and consultations, etc.), so it is not clear how stakeholders in the regions would be able to apply these standards, in case of another emergency. In particular, the Project did not facilitate any contingency plans at the regional level, where school inspection, data collection and other key education services are coordinated and contextualised. Therefore, the development of contingency plans at the regional level remain a priority for future action.<sup>61</sup> During field visits to Oio and Bafatá, directors and inspectors at the DRE in Oio and Bafatá did not provide any plausible ideas, when asked if and how they would act differently if another emergency occurred.

77. The TV and radio lessons produced can be considered valuable for the sustainability of the Project, at least with regards to the capital region (given the poor access in many other regions). The manager of the education project led by the World Bank confirmed the likely use of these materials for distance learning interventions during the second phase of the respective project (starting in 2025). As mentioned in Section 8.3, the Project thus improved chances for learning continuity, even with other types of disruptions to fragile education system, notably teacher strikes. Two MEN stakeholders confirmed the Ministry's ownership of the TV and radio lessons and expressed their intention to use these materials in the future.
78. The cash transfer initiative may well have been "catalytic in opening up new possibilities for the development of a Social Protection System in Guinea Bissau under the Social Inclusion Programme from 2022", according to the Country Office Annual Report 2021<sup>62</sup>. However, the evaluation was not able to validate this assumption, due to a lack of data.
79. The mWater database has the potential to alleviate weaknesses in national education data systems and provide much needed information on the sector to guide and monitor action, for example, a dependable list of schools, water infrastructure, and delivery of school-related items.<sup>63</sup> Furthermore, the open access model is free to the end user cost, meaning there is no ongoing operating cost. As the developer of the portal explains, mWater (with its extension called "Solstice") is "an operating system for governance that aid can plug into and out of without disrupting the government's management strategy. In the case of creating strong government systems, sustainable means the work can continue without the influence of the aid industry. It is the operating system for sustainably managed governance."<sup>64</sup>

*Q2. To what extent has the project created or strengthened activities, platforms, mechanisms, or competencies/capacities that will support the long-term development and system-strengthening of the education sector?*

80. In addition to its primary responsibilities of supporting the coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the Contingency Plan, the CTIP has also been entrusted (by ministerial decree) with the responsibility of coordinating the Governing Council of the Ministry of Education.<sup>65</sup> This vote of confidence in the structure of the CTIP is an opportunity for the creation of the Education Sector Plan Coordination Committee with CTIP members, planned

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<sup>61</sup> da Silva, Rui: "Formação em Educação em situações de Emergência e os Requisitos Mínimos para a Educação - Relatório final." Julho de 2022.

<sup>62</sup> UNICEF: COAR 2021.

<sup>63</sup> UNICEF: COAR 2021.

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.mwater.co/blog/introducing-solstice>

<sup>65</sup> Interview with UNICEF staff.



to be part of the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of the Education Sector Plan.<sup>66</sup> However, clear evidence as to if and how the CTIP will fulfill this role was not available.

81. Several interviewees confirmed, the partial implementation of approaches to distance learning and accelerated learning has enabled MEN its partners to understand the need to put in place a robust distance education system, which may include digital technology.
82. According to UNICEF staff, the issue of SRGBV has been placed firmly on the agenda of MEN and its partners, including a collaboration with the police, as a result of the Project. However, data to triangulate this claim was not available.

### Q3. To what extent was local capacity supported and developed by the project?

83. The Project engaged with the Teacher Study Groups (*Comissões de Estudos*, COMES) the School Management Committees (*Comité de Gestão Escolar*, COGES), and the parents' associations (*Associação de pais e encarregados de educação de alunos*, APEEA), all of which are regulated under MEN norms and standards. As these mechanisms will continue to exist, the collaboration with them contributed to the sustainability of the project (even though the evaluation was unable to ascertain the extent to which capacity was built in each of these).
84. With regards to the COGES, the Project provided training directly on the use of the fixed handwashing devices in 20 schools. Moreover, members of the COGES participated in the training on SRGBV. COGES benefitted also indirectly, through training to school directors as focal points on SRGBV and school hygiene, which the school directors passed on to the COGES. The evaluation confirmed that the COGES actually benefitted in this way in the visited schools.
85. All 182 COMES groups received three sessions of training on the essential curriculum content for accelerated learning (under Output 5). These training sessions were mandated by the CTIP to the Regional Technical Committee for the Implementation of the Contingency Plan (CTRIP), which organized the COMES sessions through the inspector coordinator.
86. Generally speaking, the overall capacity of COMES remains limited. For example, the DRE in Oio and Bafatá admitted that the participation in the COMES was weak in 2021, and that only recently a daily subsistence allowance for the participation had been implemented, which successfully stimulated participation. Teachers in the focus groups noted that they would particularly like to receive more guidance on planning and preparation of teaching activities through their COMES.
87. Despite the interventions of the project, the interviewed school directors affirmed that they did not have increased capacity to handle a future emergency in an improved way. In particular, all the directors confirmed that there were no plans or ideas on how to guarantee the continuation of teaching and learning in the event of school closure, with many teachers likely to leave for Bissau (as happened during the COVID-19 pandemic).
88. The skills of twelve CSOs and NGOs were strengthened as part of the support they provided to the cash transfer programme. These CSOs worked specifically on the process of targeting households, collecting data for the base line, the end line and satisfaction surveys, support in the registration and distribution of SIM cards and mobile phones, and support for the

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<sup>66</sup> UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Troisième enquête semestrielle sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre », 2022.

organization of payment sessions.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, the Project trained 162 community volunteers to support parents to supervise their children's homework. As a follow-up on the Project, these volunteers are being trained to support radiophonic lessons with groups of student listeners, using pen drives. The collaboration with and training of CSOs and community volunteers strengthened the system's ability to link schools and communities.<sup>68</sup>

#### 8.5.1. Preliminary conclusion regarding the criterion "sustainability"

Preliminary Conclusions – Sustainability	Corresponding paragraph
SUS1: The project built logistical capacity for operating in an emergency situation, as well as overall capacity on education in emergencies.	75-76
SUS2: TV and radio lessons are available for future use, and may be scaled up by the World Bank. MEN stakeholders confirmed the Ministry's ownership of these materials, as well as their intention to use them in the future.	77
SUS3: The CTIP has also been entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating the Governing Council of the Ministry of Education, which will consolidate the existence of this mechanism in the future.	80
SUS4: The Project engaged with the Teacher Study Groups ( <i>Comissões de Estudos</i> , COMES) the School Management Committees ( <i>Comité de Gestão Escolar</i> , COGES), and the parents' associations ( <i>Associação de pais e encarregados de educação de alunos</i> , APEEA), all of which are regulated under MEN norms and standards. Therefore, the collaboration with these sustained mechanisms indirectly contributed to the sustainability of the project.	83-85
SUS5: However, school directors said that the capacity to deal with future emergencies at the school level had not improved.	87
SUS6: The Project built the capacity of CSOs and community volunteers through targeted training, which strengthens the system's ability to link schools and communities.	88

<sup>67</sup> UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Enquête semestrielle sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2020.

<sup>68</sup> Interviews with UNICEF and CSO staff.



## 8.6. Equity, Gender and Human Rights



Q1. To what extent have the most vulnerable boys and girls from the most disadvantaged areas of the covered municipalities benefited from the programme in the country?

Q2. To what extent does the programme provide the same teaching and learning opportunities for girls and boys?

Q3. To what extent has the programme addressed the gender-specific barriers that prevent girls and boys from accessing the activities and services available to them?

Q4. In general, to what extent have specific gender, human rights, and equity considerations been taken into account in the design, planning, implementation, and monitoring of the programme (for example, in relation to the participation of mothers and fathers, female and male teachers, etc.)?

*Q1. To what extent have the most vulnerable boys and girls from the most disadvantaged areas of the covered municipalities benefited from the programme in the country?*

89. The priority geographical areas selected for the Project included (i) the regions and areas most affected by the spread of COVID-19, namely Bissau, Biombo and Cacheu; and (ii) the regions with the highest number of children out of school, namely Gabu, Bafatá, Oio and Cacheu. The evaluation finds this selection suitable, in light of the Project objectives (for example, in the main objective: "... especially for the most vulnerable affected by the outbreak"). With regards to equity, the second criterion (number of out-of-school children) was particularly adequate. This was confirmed by focus groups with teachers and members of the community, who noted the difficulties of enrolling children in school and keeping them there.

90. The cash transfer intervention targeted households with children who live at least 10 km away from school. Given that international evidence shows that distance to school is one of the reasons for non-attendance and dropping out,<sup>69</sup> the evaluation found that this was an adequate targeting criterion to motivate at-risk children to remain in school.

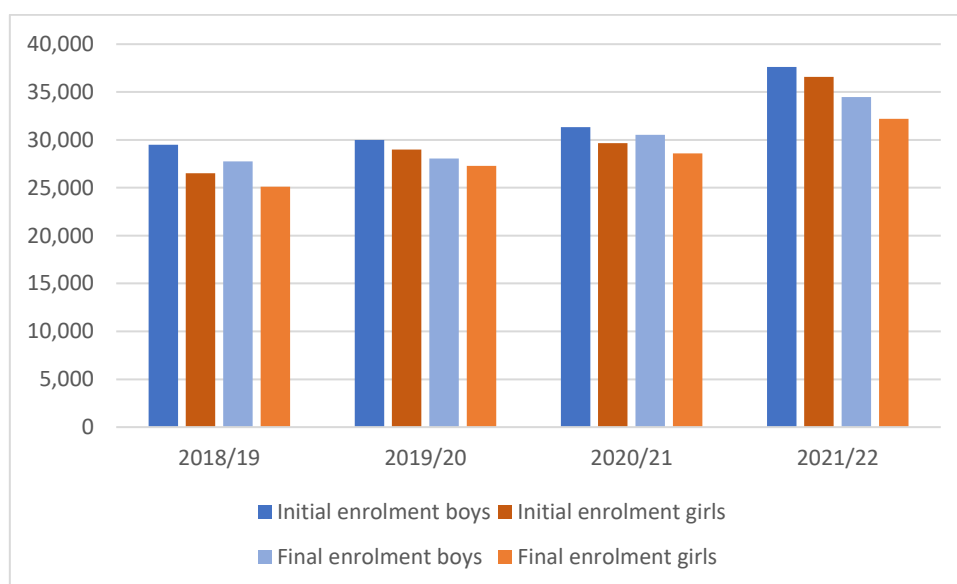
<sup>69</sup> For example: Sabates, Ricardo, Kwame Akyeampong, Jo Westbrook and Frances Hunt: "School Dropout: Patterns, Causes, Changes and Policies." 2010.

91. With regards to the selection of beneficiaries for the cash transfer, the Project considered only households with children who are in school. Therefore, households with out-of-school children (who should be considered particularly vulnerable with regards to their overall wellbeing) were not eligible for participation in this social protection initiative. On the one hand, this could be considered as a missed opportunity for bringing out-of-school children (possibly back) into the system. On the other hand, the baseline survey shows that the degree of vulnerability of the participating households was similarly high, so that this choice was justifiable, given the budget constraints for this particular initiative.<sup>70</sup>
92. Fixed handwashing devices were only installed in 20 schools that were already connected to the canalisation, while TV and radio lessons were produced, which could not be followed in many regions outside the capital region. While both of these strategic choices were understandable for reasons of efficiency, they may have exacerbated existing inequalities, because the most vulnerable children were excluded from the respective benefits.

*Q2. To what extent does the programme provide the same teaching and learning opportunities for girls and boys?*

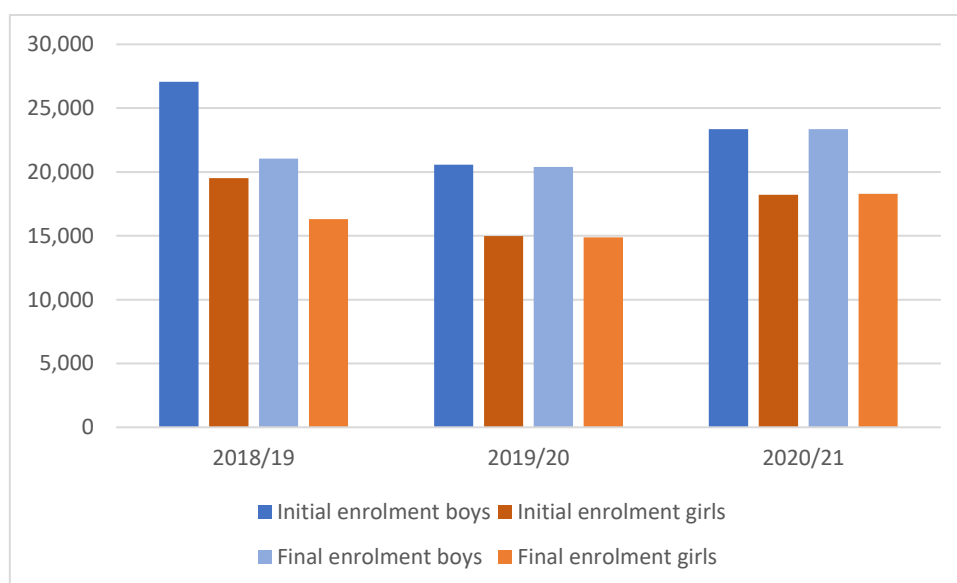
93. The evaluation found that the Project was designed in a way to provide girls and boys the same teaching and learning opportunities. In effect, the gender differential in the pattern of enrolment and dropout remained largely unchanged between schoolyears 2018/19 and 2020/21 in the regions of Bafatá and Oio, where these data were available (see Figures 6 and 7). This means that the pre-existing gap in enrolment in favour of boys, which is particularly high in Oio, continues to persist. Neither girls nor boys in the focus groups gave any indication of discrimination based on gender at their school.

*Figure 6: Initial and final enrolment in Bafatá region, school years 2018/19 until 2021/22*



*Figure 7: Initial and final enrolment in Oio region, school years 2018/19 until 2020/21*

<sup>70</sup> UNICEF: “Relatório do estudo da Situação Inicial (Baseline) das famílias seleccionadas para beneficiarias de Cash Transfere com o fundo GPE.” Maio de 2021.



*Q3. To what extent has the programme addressed the gender-specific barriers that prevent girls and boys from accessing the activities and services available to them?*

94. The Project provided resources and training on SRGBV in schools under Output 4. In particular, a training manual on the prevention of and response to SRGBV was developed, and the capacity of teachers and school inspectors built accordingly. In this way, the Project addressed an important set of barriers to girls' and boys' school attendance, which had already been included in the CPD (particularly child marriage, violence, and abuse),<sup>71</sup> and which had already been identified as an important area of concern by MEN and the LEG prior to the Project. However, neither girls nor boys in the focus groups provided any indication of information on SRGBV through the Project, nor of any experience of SRGBV.

95. The baseline study of the cash transfer initiative included questions related to early marriage and the school attendance of girls and boys. Based on the findings, the report highlights the need for "awareness-raising packages and dialogue with parents and community leaders about existing opportunities for girls' schooling."<sup>72</sup>

*Q4. In general, to what extent have specific gender, human rights, and equity considerations been taken into account in the design, planning, implementation, and monitoring of the programme (for example, in relation to the participation of mothers and fathers, female and male teachers, etc.)?*

96. Education is a right of all children, according to Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The main objective the Project was to guarantee this right during the COVID-19 pandemic, in a context that is characterized by a lack of financial and human resources, and where many children are out of school. The Project supported MEN to re-open schools in October 2020 and keep them open, thereby strengthening the realisation of children's right to education.

<sup>71</sup> UNICEF: "Country Programme Document – Guinea Bissau 2016-2020." 2015.

<sup>72</sup> UNICEF: "Relatório do estudo da Situação Inicial (Baseline) das famílias selecionadas para beneficiárias de Cash Transfere com o fundo GPE." Maio de 2021.

97. One of the aspects that demonstrates that the right to education is still somewhat compromised in schools in Guinea-Bissau is the fact that many students are much older than the age of the level they attend. For example, the boys and girls in the focus group from grades 5 and 6 were between 12 and 17 years old (instead of 11 to 13). International evidence shows that being older particularly diminishes the opportunities for girls to complete elementary school before they reach puberty, when issues of marriage and pregnancy can compete with schooling.<sup>73</sup> The Project addressed this aspect by including entry at the age of 6 as one of the messages in the back-to-school campaign. Children in the focus groups confirmed that they had heard of this message, but stated that it had not made a difference, as they had all intended to return to school, in any case.
98. The CRC also stipulates (Article 24) that children are entitled to drinking water, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment and information to help them stay healthy. The WASH activities of the initiative (Outputs 2 and 4) were a very important contribution to the realization of this right.
99. With regard to nutritious food, the initiative did not take advantage of a potential collaboration with WFP (as did happen within the scope of the CFS initiative) or CRS. Conversely, the Project contributed to the improvement of the health and physical well-being of students by providing deworming in schools.

#### 8.6.1. Preliminary conclusion regarding the criterion “equity, gender, and human rights”

<b>Preliminary Conclusions – Equity, Gender, Human Rights</b>	<b>Corresponding paragraph</b>
EGH1: The Project applied equity considerations in the selection of geographical regions and in the targeting and implementation of the cash transfer initiative.	89-90
EGH2: Efficiency gains may have come at the expense of equity, with regards to the exclusion of households of out-of-school children for the cash transfer, and the installation of fixed handwashing devices in schools that already disposed of access to water.	91-92
EGH3: There was no gender-specific difference in the Project activities benefitting boys or girls. The pre-existing gap in enrolment in favour of boys, which is particularly high in Oio, continues to persist.	93
EGH4: The Project addressed an important set of barriers to girls’ and boys’ school attendance (including child marriage, violence, and abuse), which had been previously identified as a concern by MEN and its partners, by tackling SRGBV.	94

<sup>73</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/immersive-story/2017/08/22/educating-girls-ending-child-marriage>

## 9. Final conclusions

It should be noted that the Guinea-Bissau COVID-19 Education Sector Response project was a “hybrid” project, with both emergency and development aspects. As such, the Project fits with current reforms inspired by the World Humanitarian Summit, which focus on the ongoing quest to find “new ways of working” that bridge humanitarian action, development, peace, and security in a “nexus” approach, amidst protracted global displacement.<sup>74</sup> This hybrid nature in a context of fragility, which was further exacerbated by the pandemic, posed significant challenges, which the Project had to confront.

With this in mind, the following conclusions can be drawn regarding the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, as well as gender, equity and human rights:

### Relevance

The Project was well aligned with the Contingency Plan for the education sector, supporting its main objectives and contributing to all four specific objectives of the Contingency Plan. Furthermore, the Project’s Theory of Change (ToC) was indeed logical and mostly aligned with implementation realities, as all the elements of the ToC were translated into planned project outputs, the majority of which were also implemented. However, a few aspects of the ToC were not fully aligned with implementation realities, namely distance learning, recovery classes, and accelerated learning. Given the multitude of supply- and demand-side factors hampering education in Guinea-Bissau, the multi-sectoral approach taken by the Project was highly relevant to tackle these multi-dimensional barriers.

### Coherence

The Project were fully aligned with government priorities and national policies, in particular the national Education Sector Plan 2017-2025 and the Government’s National Contingency Plan, as well as the UNICEF Country Programme Document 2016-2020 and the UNCT’s Socio-economic Response Plan. The Project accelerated other reforms previously discussed by MEN and partners, particularly in relation to the development of a national strategy for distance learning to benefit out-of-school children and the implementation of catch-up programmes to minimize the loss of learning.

### Effectiveness

The main objective and half of the specific objectives were nearly fully reached. Three specific objectives were partially reached. In particular, accelerated learning was not fully implemented, while the effectiveness of distance learning was doubtful, given the restricted access and lack of circular learning. Best practice and innovation were addressed only through a brief mid-term evaluation and the present final evaluation. Factors that promoted the effectiveness of the Project were the demonstration of MEN’ commitment (with UNICEF support) to assist schools to remain open, the alignment with the Contingency Plan, the multi-sectoral nature of interventions, and the use of the mWater database. Factors that hindered the effectiveness of the Project were the late recruitment of a full-time project manager, the low absorption and implementation capacity of MEN, leadership

<sup>74</sup> Mendenhall, 2019.

turnover in MEN, the lack of water at school level, transportation problems, and the non-availability of previously planned partnerships to conduct a learning assessment. Regarding unexpected outcomes, the Project facilitated a trusted list of schools for MEN and its partners, fostered the accountability of governance in the education sector, and promoted awareness of the importance of WASH in schools.

### Efficiency

Considering the challenges to implementation (including low absorption capacity, frequent leadership changes, and customs clearance problems, among others), the timeliness of the Project's implementation can be considered satisfactory. The largest shares of the budget went to Output 2 (Sanitization of schools) and Output 4 (Multi-sectoral services), which is justifiable, given the close linkage between Output 2 and the overall objective of continuing education, and the complexity of a multi-sectoral approach. Due to the high costs involved with water infrastructure, fixed handwashing devices were only installed in 20 schools that already had access to water. This was efficient, even though it may have exacerbated existing inequalities. Furthermore, the efficiency of the Project was facilitated by the installation of the CTIP for coordination and monitoring, synergies with existing initiatives within UNICEF, and the use of mWater as a low-cost tool for the collection, storage, and analysis of cross-sectoral data.

### Sustainability

The project built logistical capacity for operating in an emergency situation, as well as overall capacity on education in emergencies. The main coordinating body established by the Project, the CTIP, has recently been entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating the Governing Council of the Ministry of Education and may function as the Education Sector Plan Coordination Committee in the future. Moreover, the agenda in favour of SRGBV, distance learning, and accelerated learning has been advanced as a result of the Project. The sustainability of the Project was further enhanced by directly and indirectly engaging with the Teacher Study Groups (Comissões de Estudos, COMES), the School Management Committees (Comité de Gestão Escolar, COGES), and the parents' associations (Associação de pais e encarregados de educação de alunos, APEEA), all of which are regulated under MEN norms and standards. However, doubts remain regarding local capacity to deal with future emergencies.

### Equity, gender, and human rights

The Project applied equity considerations in the selection of geographical regions and in the targeting and implementation of the cash transfer initiative. Conversely, efficiency gains may have come at the expense of equity, with regards to the exclusion of households of out-of-school children for the cash transfer, and the installation of fixed handwashing devices in schools that already disposed of access to water. The Project addressed an important set of barriers to girls' and boys' school attendance, which had been previously identified as a concern by MEN and its partners, by tackling SRGBV. Generally speaking, the Project promoted the right to education (CRC Art. 28), and the right to health and a safe environment (CRC Art. 24).

## 10. Lessons learned

This section focuses on the lessons learned from the implementation of the Project, based on the evidence gathered in the evaluation process, and aims to leverage the experience gained from the

Project to identify clues to improving the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability for similar future projects in Guinea-Bissau or elsewhere.

Lesson learned	Corresponding paragraphs
<p><b>LL1. It is possible to reach the majority of schools in Guinea Bissau with support during an emergency, with sufficient funding.</b> The Project delivered supplies and provided training to a large number of stakeholders from 1,500 schools in a short period of time, so that schools could be re-opened quickly. In this way, the Project has built confidence in MEN and at the local level to be able to deal with emergency situations, with donor support.</p>	28, 30
<p><b>LL2. Tackling multiple barriers to education through a multi-sectoral intervention is an appropriate and feasible approach.</b> The Project involved various sections within UNICEF (Education, Child Protection, WASH, and Nutrition), as well as the respective Government counterparts to address long-standing barriers to education. While it was not possible to assess the impact of all the activities, the Project clearly demonstrated that such a multi-sectoral approach is both appropriate and feasible in the context of Guinea-Bissau.</p>	5
<p><b>LL3. A complex multi-sectoral project requires a dedicated project manager.</b> While the rate of implementation was initially low, it picked up significantly after a project manager, who inter-acted between UNICEF Sections, took office six months after the beginning of the Project.</p>	54
<p><b>LL4. The mWater database proved to be a useful tool for data collection and monitoring in education.</b> Among other aspects, the use of mWater facilitated the establishment of a trusted list of schools, and helped monitor supplies delivered through the Project and school infrastructure. In its cross sectoral approach in support to the education sector, mWater can contribute to strengthening sectoral data and overall monitoring capacities.</p>	29, 52, 60
<p><b>LL5. Unconditional cash transfers are a relevant social protection initiative in Guinea-Bissau, but baseline and endline studies for such an initiative should always be carried out within the same school year.</b> The evaluation found clear evidence that the cash transfer initiative was an effective social protection tool, which raised the likelihood that families stay out of poverty and keep children in school. However, the exact impact of the cash transfer with regards to school attendance was difficult to determine, given that the baseline and endline studies were carried out in different school years.</p>	37, 48, 53, 77
<p><b>LL6. Accelerated learning and distance learning are complex initiatives, which require time to test, develop and assess new tools .</b> While the evaluation confirmed</p>	4, 20, 31-33, 68



the relevance of accelerated learning for children who have missed out on schooling, as well as distance learning, which can provide alternative pathways for learning during emergencies or teacher strikes, the Project showed that they are difficult to develop and roll-out in a limited period of time. Therefore, it is important to ensure enough time to pilot and assess, for example, the impact of new tools for learning.	
<b>LL7. Schools need access to water.</b> The intervention demonstrated that it is difficult to implement improvements to hygiene in schools without access to water. Apart from the constraints to securing safe schools, the lack of access to water also led to the unequal decision to install fixed handwashing devices in schools that were already privileged by access to water. Therefore, the Project highlighted the necessity to invest in this important aspect of school infrastructure.	70, 92

## 11. Recommendations

The following strategic and operational recommendations are supported by findings and conclusions, and addressed to the evaluation users (UNICEF, MEN, LEG, and GPE).

Strategic recommendation	Addressee	Priority	Corresponding paragraphs
SR1: Ensure the integration of mWater with existing systems in MEN, for data collection, planning, and monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designate a focal point in MEN</li> <li>Train MEN staff on mWater</li> <li>Advocate for usage among LEG partners</li> </ul>	<b>MEN,</b> UNICEF, LEG	Medium	29, 52, 60
SR2: Promote regional contingency plans on education in emergencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop contingency plans in all 11 educational regions</li> <li>Contextualize INEE Minimum Standards</li> <li>Work closely with COMES and COGES</li> <li>Promote a policy to stipulate incentives for teachers to stay in their place of duty in case of school closure</li> </ul>	<b>MEN,</b> UNICEF, LEG	High	76, 83-85
SR3: Continue efforts to develop and systematize accelerated learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider accelerated learning in depth in the context of the forthcoming national strategy on out-of-school children</li> </ul>	<b>UNICEF,</b> MEN, LEG	Medium	4, 68
SR4: Continue efforts to develop and systematize distance learning	<b>UNICEF,</b> MEN, LEG	Medium	4, 20, 31-33, 68

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a feasibility study for a robust distance education system that includes digital technology</li> <li>• Integrate circular learning into distance learning methodologies (i.e., students' responses)</li> <li>• Advocate for inclusion of Project tools in the current and future World Bank project</li> </ul>			
SR5: Promote water infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in resource mobilization in favour of schools' water infrastructure</li> <li>• Strengthen the issue of access to water in the Local Education Group</li> <li>• Support the World Bank to map all school infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<b>LEG,</b> UNICEF, MEN, World Bank	High	70, 92
SR6: Carry out a study on child labour and school attendance, jointly between UNICEF Education and Child Protection Sections	<b>UNICEF,</b> MEN, LEG	Low	41
SR7: Analyse the reasons for the lack of girls' enrolment in Oio region, and develop targeted interventions	<b>UNICEF,</b> MEN, LEG	Medium	26
SR8: Engage strategically with teachers' unions, to create synergies and avoid duplication of efforts (for example, in the provision of materials during an emergency)	<b>UNICEF,</b> LEG	Low	73

Operational recommendation	Addressee	Priority	Corresponding paragraphs
OR1: Identify "champions" among COGES, and promote peer-to-peer education with other COGES, in order to promote good practice regarding school management, particularly during an emergency.	<b>UNICEF,</b> MEN	Low	84
OR2: Provide further support for community volunteers, particularly with regards to distance learning, and monitor and evaluate their engagement, in order to strengthen the link between schools and communities and to better prepare for an emergency.	<b>UNICEF,</b> MEN	Medium	19, 88

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Terms of reference

### 1. Evaluation Context and Background

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) was declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) under the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005) and on March 11, 2020, a pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted learning for over 89% of the world's student population. For more than 1.5 billion children in 188 countries, education has been interrupted. The gains in expanding access to education and improving the quality of education were in risk in being permanently compromised.

In Guinea-Bissau, the first cases of COVID-19 were recorded on 24 March 2020. Two years later, the country has recorded 8,186 positive cases, including 171 deaths. The capital Bissau and the regions of Biombo and Bafata remain the most affected. The most affected age group is 25-34 years old, followed by 35-44 years old and, the disease seems to affect men more than women.

When the first cases of COVID-19 were detected in Guinea-Bissau (in March 2020), all educational institutions (from pre-school to higher education) closed, reducing the learning time of students already affected by long and frequent teacher strikes.

COVID-19 has indeed exacerbated a deep learning crisis. In Guinea-Bissau, 1 in 4 children of primary school age (6-14 years) were out of school before the advent of COVID-19. When they are in school, the level of achievement in school content is generally very low. The MICS data showed that only 1 in 10 children aged 7- 14 had mastery of basic literacy and numeracy skills.

In Guinea-Bissau, the education system faces many challenges: the system lacks inclusive and safe school infrastructures, qualified human resources (a good proportion of the teaching staff have no/limited background in pedagogy) and didactic and pedagogical resources. In recent years, teachers' strikes have occurred more frequently and for longer durations, increasing the number of out-of-school children and the risk of permanent drop-out.

For children, the lack of access to education can have lifelong impacts, creating a widening gap in learning and reducing their ability to acquire skills that increase their employability. The World Bank estimates that there will be a loss of income of US\$10 trillion for the current cohort of children if this learning crisis is not addressed.

To address these challenges in Guinea-Bissau, it was important to act on several levels and find educational alternatives that allow out-of-school children to acquire foundational skills for their personal and social development. With funding from the Global Partnership for Education, UNICEF Guinea-Bissau has therefore supported the scaling up of the education sector response to mitigate the impacts of the crisis on access and learning.

### 2. Evaluation Object

In this context, also marked by the fragility of institutions and the weakness of capacity, Guinea-Bissau has received an emergency funding from the Global Partnership for Education for a total amount of USD 3,5 million. Initially design to run for 18 months (from July 2020 to December 2021), the

implementation cycle of the interventions covered by this funding has been extended by an additional 6 months (until June 2022).

The main objective of the Guinea-Bissau Covid-19 Education Sector Response project was to support the government of Guinea-Bissau and the Local Education Group (LEG) to reduce the impact of the coronavirus on the education of children in the country by ensuring safe school operations and the supporting continuity of learning, with a focus on the most vulnerable children affected by the pandemic.

This included the following specific objectives:

- Support response coordination and real-time monitoring (focusing on the most vulnerable);
- Ensure safe school operations including through hygiene supplies and risk communication;
- Support continuity of learning through access to remote learning programs as appropriate for Guinea Bissau;
- Scale-up psychosocial, health, WASH, and nutrition services within the Education sector;
- Ensure a safe opening-back of schools through back-to-school campaigns, catch-up classes, and accelerated learning
- Codify and disseminate best practice and innovation. The theory of change underlying the project was the following:

IF (i) the response to the COVID-19 pandemic at the level of the education system is improved and national emergency response capacities are strengthened; and

IF (ii) public and community structures for pre-school and basic education are sanitized, inclusive and gender sensitive; and

IF (iii) distance education strategies and educational alternatives are developed and implemented to ensure the continuity of education in the event of school closure; and

IF (iv) services of water and sanitation, protection, psychosocial support, health, nutrition, and social inclusion are extended to the benefit of children from 1400 vulnerable households; and

IF (v) public and community school structures reopen, and propose recovery classes and accelerated learning;

THEN safe school operations, continuity of learning and well-being for children and adolescents, especially for the most vulnerable, will be guaranteed.

The key stakeholders of the project and their contributions are listed below:

#### Global Partnership for Education

- The Global Partnership for Education contributed just under \$3.5 million dollars in funding for the project

#### Ministry of Education

- The Ministry of Education was responsible for developing high-level policy and for ensuring the coordination of the project amongst different stakeholders. The Ministry led these coordination efforts through the Technical Project Implementation Committee (or CTIP in Portuguese), which met frequently to coordinate project implementation

## UNICEF

- UNICEF was the implementing agency for the Guinea-Bissau Covid-19 Education Sector Response project. It was responsible for managing and disbursing the project funds and liaising with the Ministry of Education to coordinate the implementation. In addition to the education section, the WASH, Child Protection, and Social Protection sections also provided technical support and implemented components of the project.

### Local Education Group

- The Local Education Group (LEG) is a coordination mechanism led by the Ministry of Education that ensures mutual accountability for the implementation of the Education Sector Plan and the supervision of funds implemented with GPE funding. The group includes representation from all stakeholders including local civil society organizations (CSOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), donors, and multilateral agencies.

### Implementing Partners

- UNICEF worked with several NGOs and CSOs to implement components of the project. These implementing partners worked to deliver results in narrow areas where they have specific expertise, such as community mobilization and sensitization.
- In addition, UNICEF entered in a partnership with the Foundation Calouste Gulbenkian and the University of Minho to support Ministry of Education to accelerate the development of alternative education curriculum and a distance learning strategy.

## **3. Evaluation Purpose**

This evaluation has two purposes: accountability and learning.

This evaluation will provide both the donor (vertical accountability) and the expected beneficiaries (horizontal accountability) with solid evidence onto the extent to which the Guinea-Bissau Covid-19 Education Sector Response attained its envisaged objectives.

With respect to learning, this summative evaluation, through the evidence-based knowledge generated, is expected to inform the design and ex the design and execution of new initiatives within the new CP. The Ministry of Education, UNICEF, LEG partners, and the GPE will use the evidence-based findings of the project evaluation to inform and improve the design, implementation, monitoring, and assessment of future development and humanitarian programming in the education sector.

## **4. Objectives**

The objectives of this summative evaluation are as follows:

1. To determine the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency of the Guinea-Bissau Covid-19 Education Sector Response project.
2. To identify lessons learning regarding what worked and did not work during the implementation of the project, including unexpected outcomes (positive and negative);
3. To critically analyse the theory of change and the extent to which its planned logical framework and assumptions compare with the actual implementation and the results achieved;

4. To assess the extent to which the project integrated equity, human rights, and gender principles into its design, implementation, and monitoring;

5. To formulate key recommendations regarding: (1) how to further strengthen the response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Guinea-Bissau; (2) how to prepare for future education in emergency (EiE) situations and make the education sector more resilient; and (3) how to better implement future EiE interventions.

## **5. Evaluation Scope**

### **Thematic Scope**

The summative evaluation of the Guinea-Bissau Covid-19 Education Sector Response project should examine all the intervention areas included in the project. This includes not only all the activities directly related to schools and learning, but also to the cross-sectoral interventions supported by the project (for example, cash transfers, nutrition, WASH, and child protection). The focus should be on the extent to which the package of interventions was a coherent, relevant, efficient, and effective response that increased access to quality learning during the COVID-19 pandemic (with a particular focus on the most vulnerable).

### **Geographic Scope**

The project is national in scope; therefore, the evaluation should include national level secondary data. The document review should include information covering all regions.

The fieldwork should include data collection in a sample of regions. In the proposal prospective consultants should propose a sample of regions where they would undertake data collection. UNICEF suggests that data collection be as diverse as possible, including both urban and rural contexts and regions with the poorest education indicators. Based on the MICS-6 data, it is suggested that at least one of the regions of Bafatá or Gabu should be included in the sample.

### **Chronologic Scope**

The proposed evaluation should examine all the activities implemented from the launch of the project in July 2020 until the close of the project on June 30, 2022

## **6. Evaluation Criteria and Questions**

This evaluation will be guided by five OECD evaluation criteria: (A) relevance; (B) coherence; (C) effectiveness;

(D) efficiency; and (E) sustainability, as well as (F) an additional Gender, Equity and Human Rights criterion. It should be noted that the evaluation criterion of impact was not included because given the short duration and emergency focus of the project the impact will be difficult to measure and assess.

To achieve the purpose of the evaluation, the Evaluation Team will seek to answer the following evaluation questions:

## Relevance

- To what extent did the project respond to the needs identified by the Ministry of Education, the LEG, and other development partners with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic's negative impact on the education sector?
- To what extent are the logic and assumptions that underpinned the theory of change aligned with the actual implementation of the project and its results achieved? What components of the logical framework were and were not aligned with implementation realities?
- To what extent was the project flexible and responsive to changing contexts and needs, as identified by the Ministry of Education and other partners?
- What were the main contributions of the project to strengthen the Ministry of Education and the provision of its services at the national and subnational level?
- What lessons in terms of relevance can be taken from the project (regarding continued COVID-19 programming, strengthening resiliency of the education sector, or improving the design, implementation, and monitoring of future EiE interventions)?

## Coherence

- To what extent did the activities implemented by the Guinea-Bissau Covid-19 Education Sector Response project complement existing interventions and services or education sector policies?
- How complementary are the project's interventions with actions undertaken by the Ministry of Education or other actors to address the impact of COVID-19 on the education sector?
- How were the COVID-19 project activities aligned with existing structures, services, and policies in practice?
- To what extent did the project contribute to strengthening the capacity and performance of the Ministry of Education to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic (in terms of capacity development, improvement of infrastructures and environment)?
- What lessons in terms of coherence can be taken from the project (regarding continued COVID-19 programming, strengthening resiliency of the education sector, or improving the design, implementation, and monitoring of future EiE interventions)?

## Effectiveness

- To what extent did the project achieve its envisaged objectives?
- What are the factors (internal and external to the project) that most contributed to the attainment of the project's objectives?



- What are the factors (internal and external to the project) that most hindered to the attainment of the project's objectives?
- What are the unexpected outcomes (positive and negative) of the project's implementation?
- To what extent did partnerships with implementing partners and other key actors contribute to the attainment of project results?
- What lessons in terms of effectiveness can be taken from the project (regarding continued COVID-19 programming, strengthening resiliency of the education sector, or improving the design, implementation, and monitoring of future EiE interventions)?

#### ☐ Efficiency

- Were there other alternative strategies or activities that could have been put in place within the scope of the project that could have achieved the same level of result but at lesser cost?
- To what extent were the project's financial resources, human resources, and supplies:
  - o Sufficient (quantity)
  - o Adequate (quality)
  - o Distributed/deployed in a timely manner?
- To what extent did the partnerships help keep down the costs of programme delivery?
- What is the cost per student of the project? Is there a significant difference between the different cost categories/cost drivers that contribute to this cost (i.e., are some programme components more expensive than others)?
- What lessons in terms of efficiency can be taken from the project (regarding continued COVID-19 programming, strengthening resiliency of the education sector at national and local level, or improving the design, implementation, and monitoring of future EiE interventions)?

#### ☐ Sustainability

- To what extent has the capacity of the education sector (and actors) been strengthened to reduce the risk from disasters, increase preparedness and resiliency, and ensure continuity of access to education and learning and educational services during emergency situations?
- To what extent has the project created or strengthened activities, platforms, mechanisms, or competencies/capacities that will support the long-term development and system-strengthening of the education sector?
- To what extent was local capacity support and developed by the project?

#### ☐ Equity, Gender and Human Rights

- To what extent did the project ensure that the most vulnerable children have access to quality education and learning opportunities?
- To what extent were Gender, Human Rights and Equity principles duly integrated in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project?
- How did the project promote and consistently used equity, gender and child rights approaches in the formulation and implementation of interventions?
- To what extent did the project identify and tackle the barriers that prevent girls' and women's access to education and other services (as delivered by the project) made available in the targeted communities?

The above questions are questions suggested by the Guinea Bissau Country Office. However, the independent evaluation teams may adjust the questions in the technical proposal and, if hired for this mandate, finalize them in collaboration with UNICEF staff and possibly other evaluation stakeholders.

## **7. Evaluation Methodology**

The evaluation will be conducted using a participatory and inclusive approach to provide relevant and pertinent answers to the evaluation questions. The technical proposal will need to make a specific reference to the specific evaluation approach to adopt as well as to the theoretical framework underpinning the selected approach.

With regards to the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>1</sup>, the evaluation team is expected to propose adequate engagement of children and adolescents throughout the evaluation process (to this end, the use of "body mapping", the "H Framework" and the "Air balloon" methodologies are strongly recommended).

The evaluation will be based on mixed methods of collecting and analysing data obtained from the boy/girls/caregivers who are expected to benefit from the programme being evaluated.

The purpose of using multiple methods is to triangulate data from different sources to formulate the findings and to provide the most relevant and credible answers to the evaluation questions. To enhance the rigour of the evaluation, during the inception phase, the evaluation team will develop rubrics for each one of the indicators included in the evaluation matrix and each question will need to be addressed at least through 3 different methods (and not simply three different sources pertaining to only one method).

The evaluation will employ both quantitative and qualitative (i.e., mixed) research methods during both the data collection and analysis phases. Relevant data should be collected from the UNICEF education programme, the Guinea-Bissau Ministry of Education, other implementing partners, project beneficiaries and other key stakeholders. Primary data collection will involve qualitative and quantitative data and could include (but is not limited to) the following methods:

- A desk review of all documents related to the design, implementation, and monitoring of the Guinea- Bissau Covid-19 Education Sector Response project, as well as the education sector response to the COVID-19 pandemic more generally

- Qualitative Methods
  - o Key informant interviews;
  - o Focus Group Discussions;
  - o Structured and semi-structured interviews;
  - o Classroom observations;
  - o Visits to schools and inspections of WASH facilities;
  - o Review of learning and communication materials produced by the project (TV broadcasts, COVID-19 risk communication)
- A quantitative analysis of existing data, such as mWater (the databased used to identify and monitor schools supported by the project), the cash transfers database, etc.
- A process of dialogue with key actors concerned by the programme, including:
  - o UNICEF Staff (Education, Nutrition, WASH) at the Country Office level
  - o Staff of Ministries involved in the project
  - o NGOs and Civil Society directly involved in the implementation and service delivery related to the project

This multi-stakeholder dialogue will also serve as an opportunity to review, and amend, if necessary, the theory of change of the project in question.

A detailed design of the evaluation including the proposed methodology for each evaluation question and/or objectives, sample size, sampling methodology and the tools to be used will be proposed by the consultant/s in his/her/their bid. It is expected that the methods and sampling proposed for assessing the effectiveness and achieved results of interventions are sufficiently robust to ensure the credibility and internal validity of the evaluation results. The final methodology will be agreed to during the inception phase and approved by the evaluation reference group. The consultants are strongly encouraged to propose the use of innovative methodologies in their technical proposal.

Existing data and documents will be made available to the evaluation team by UNICEF staff at least one week before the start of the consultation. The consultant/s will submit an inception report with a detailed methodology, which will include both, quantitative and qualitative elements, designed to accurately answer the evaluation questions. In order to demonstrate that the evaluation team has clearly understood the content of the project as well as the fundamental questions to be addressed by this evaluation, the inception report will provide a critical summary of the information contained in the programmatic documents made available to the evaluation team by UNICEF after signing the contract.

The inception report will also indicate for each of the evaluation questions the following information: what methods and data collection tools will be used to respond to it, from whom the data in question will be collected (including the respondent sampling strategy), which analytical methods will be used to interpret the data, what measures will be adopted to ensure the quality of the evaluation, and how the data will be disseminated.

This report should also propose specific measures that will ensure that the evaluation complies with ethical standards including the confidentiality and respect for dignity of those involved.

The evaluation will be conducted according to the evaluation norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)<sup>2</sup> and the UNEG Code of Conduct<sup>3</sup>. Specific reference should be made to the Ethical Research Involving Children<sup>4</sup>, as relevant.

Transversal analysis of human rights, gender and equity aspects shall be conducted in line with the Guidelines on the Integration of Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations<sup>5</sup>. Close attention shall be paid to the conformity of different deliverables of this mandate with the Geros standards<sup>6</sup>, as UNICEF will not accept deliverables that do not comply with these standards or aforementioned UNEG guidelines. The Geros standards, that will be also used to determine the rating of the final report by a UNICEF-independent entity, will be shared by UNICEF with the evaluation team immediately after the signature of the contract.

In order to increase its use, the main conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation will be disseminated in the form of briefing notes or policy briefs. The evaluation validation workshop will serve as an opportunity to develop, in a participatory manner, the action plan for the implementation of the main recommendations of the evaluation or "management response".

## **8. The Work Plan (Key deliverables, Tasks, Timeframe and Payment Schedule)**

The individual consultant will be hired for a period of 60 business days between August 2022 and October 2022. The consultancy will consist of three main phases as described below ( see Table 2) . UNICEF Guinea Bissau will provide the necessary administrative and logistical support as needed for the consultant/s to undertake the activities (Visa Assistance; Transportation arrangement, Internet access in UNICEF Office provided). The consultant/s will be under the technical supervision of the Education Chief (direct supervisor). The project has planned for three weeks of in-country data collection and field work. The activities before and after the field work will be home-based.

### **Key Deliverables**

The consultant(s) / evaluation team will provide the following products in Portuguese electronically. In addition, the inception report, draft evaluation report, final evaluation report, evaluation synthesis and final PowerPoint should be translated into English or French. (further details and deadlines will be specified during the inception meeting):

1. Inception Report, including a detailed description of the methodology, data collection tools, and suggested work plan. The report (max. 30 pages + appendices) will be structured as follows:

- Introduction presenting the object of the evaluation, its purpose, scope, and objectives
- Preliminary results of the documentary review summarized in the evaluation context section
- Evaluation criteria and questions refined through the desk review and preliminary interviews
- Detailed description of the evaluation methodology, including relevant data collection methods that will allow answering evaluation questions and sampling strategy
- Evaluation matrix presenting for each evaluation criterion and each evaluation question planned data collection methods and data sources

- Methods of data analysis
- Limitations of the evaluation and section on ethics and ethical considerations
- Work Plan
- Suggested structure of the final report following the UNEG and UNICEF norms and standards
- Annex: List of the main documents reviewed; Proposed data collection tools; Initial list of key informants

2. Draft evaluation report elaborated according to the international evaluation quality standards namely: the UNEG Checklist on Quality of Evaluation Reports, the Geros Quality Assessment Criteria, and the UNEG Guide on the Integration of Gender Equality and Human Rights in Evaluation. This report will be the subject of several iterations (series of exchanges) between the evaluation team and UNICEF to ensure the respect of these standards. Each finding, conclusion and recommendation should be numbered and the links between them should be clearly stated in the conclusions and recommendations sections.

3. Power Point presentation summarizing key preliminary findings and conclusions (to be held before the international consultant leaves the country)

4. Evaluation presentation and recommendation validation workshop (to be facilitated remotely or by national consultant, as agreed with UNICEF). The Team Leader will produce and deliver PowerPoint presentations of the main evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations; the presentations will be shared with the ERG members.

5. Final Evaluation report (max 70 pages with the rest to be placed in annexes and an executive summary of 5 pages) incorporating the comments made by UNICEF staff and the Reference Group members

6. Power Point Presentation which summarizes the Evaluation Report with slide(s) on Key findings and Recommendations

7. Raw data in electronic medium, data collection instruments in electronic medium, transcripts in electronic medium, completed data sets, etc.

8. Evaluation synthesis for external audience (1-2 pages) summarizing the key findings and conclusions

9. Infographic illustrating key messages of the evaluation to share online or via e-mail.

10. An action plan for the implementation of the main recommendations of the evaluation or "management response": An action plan will be developed in a participatory manner during the validation workshop.

## **9. Ethical Principles in Evaluation**

The evaluation should be conducted according to the ethical principles and standards defined by the United Nations Evaluation Group:

- Anonymity and confidentiality: The evaluation must respect the rights of the people who provide information, guaranteeing their anonymity and confidentiality.
- Responsibility: The entire team must confirm the results presented in the report, any disagreements are to be mentioned. The report should inform about any conflicts or differences of opinion that may have arisen between the consultants or between the consultant and the programme managers regarding the conclusions and / or recommendations of the evaluation.
- Integrity: The evaluator will need to highlight issues that are not specifically mentioned in the ToR, in order to carry out a complete analysis of the programme.
- Independence: The consultant must ensure that he/she remains independent in respect to the programme under review, and he/she should not be involved in its implementation or any other phase.
- Incidents: If problems arise during fieldwork, or at any other point of the evaluation, they should be reported immediately to the Evaluation Manager. If this is not done, the existence of such problems can in no way be used to justify the failure to achieve the results expected by UNICEF in these terms of reference.
- Validation of information: The consultant/s must ensure the accuracy of the information gathered during the preparation of the reports and will be responsible for the information presented in the final report.
- Intellectual property: Using the different sources of information, the consultant/s must respect the intellectual property rights of the institutions and communities involved in the evaluation.
- Submission of reports: If the reports are submitted after agreed deadlines, or if the quality of the submitted reports is significantly lower than agreed, the sanctions provided in these terms of reference will apply.

## Appendix 2: List of people interviewed and schools visited

### A2.1. People interviewed

Name	Institution	Function	Place	Date
Mamadu Banjai	Inspeção Geral da Educação (IGE)	Inspetor General	Bissau	14.11.
Beto Embassa	Direção Geral do Ensino Básico e Secundário (DGEBS)	Diretor Geral	Bissau	14.11.
Jorge Sanca	Instituto Nacional para o Desenvolvimento da Educação (INDE)	Diretor Geral	Bissau	14.11.
João de Deus R. da Fonseca	Direção Regional de Educação	Diretor Regional de Oio	Oio	16.11.
Faustino Sanca	Direção Regional de Educação	Inspector Coordenador de Oio	Oio	16.11.
Adama Seidi	Direção Regional de Educação	Diretor Regional de Bafatá	Bafatá	17.11.
Uri Cali Sané	Direção Regional de Educação	Inspector Coordenador de Bafata	Bafatá	17.11.
Wesley Galt	UNICEF	Chefe do Programa Educação	Bissau (online)	1.11.
Sonia Polonio	UNICEF	Chefe do Programa de Proteção de Crianças	Bissau (online)	1.12.
Bessa Silva	UNICEF	Especialista de M&E	Bissau	15.11.
Lucy Monteiro	UNICEF	Especialista Educação - Ponto focal Crianças Fora da Escola (CFE) e adolescentes	Bissau (online)	7.10.
Amido Jalo	UNICEF	Especialista em Programas e Coordenador do Project PME	Bissau (online)	19.10.
Aminta Medina	UNICEF	Oficial Água/Saneamento e Ponto Focal Água e Saneamento na Escola	Bissau (online)	8.11.
Iama Sanhá	UNICEF	Oficial de Nutrição	Bissau (online)	8.11.
Christopher J Kingsley	UNICEF	Focal Point mWater	Bissau	14.11.
Geraldo Indequê	World Bank Group	Coordenador de Projeto	Bissau (online)	8.11.
Alfa Djalo	Plan International	Coordenador de Projeto	Bissau (online)	15.11.



Domingos Carvalho	Sindicato Nacional dos Professores (SINAPROF)	Presidente	Bissau	15.11.
Mussa Sanha	Associação de Saneamento Básico, Proteção da Água e Ambiente de Bafatá (ASPAAB)	Director Executivo	Bafatá	17.11.
Seco Injai	Escola Patrice Lumumba	Director	Bissau	15.11.
Sr. NN	Escola Primeiro de Maio	Vice-Director	Bissau	15.11.
Hibrahim Baca Baldé	Escola Primeiro de Maio	Presidente do Associação de Alunos	Bissau	15.11.
Sr. NN	Escola Unidade Africana	Director	Oio	16.11.
Carlos Embané	Escola Salquenhe Ndim	Director	Oio	16.11.
Keba Djata	Escola Ponta Nova	Director	Bafatá	17.11.
Mamadu Bari	Escola Amizade China	Director	Bafatá	17.11.
Adriano Vaz	Escola Gan Tauda	Vice-Director	Bafatá	17.11.
Luis Oliveira Quare	Escola São Pedro de Jugundul	Director	Oio	18.11.

## A2.2. Schools visited

School	Rural / urban	Region	Date
Escola Patrice Lumumba	Urban	Bissau	15.11.
Escola Primeiro de Maio	Urban	Bissau	15.11.
Escola Unidade Africana	Urban	Oio	16.11.
Escola Salquenhe Ndim	Rural	Oio	16.11.
Escola Ponta Nova	Urban	Bafatá	17.11.
Escola Amizade China	Urban	Bafatá	17.11.
Escola Gan Teuda	Rural	Bafatá	17.11.
Escola São Pedro de Jugundul	Rural	Oio	18.11.

## Appendix 3: List of documents consulted

### 1. Documents linked with the project

Comité Nacional para o Abandono das Práticas tradicionais Nefastas a Saúde da Mulher e da Criança: “Relatório de formação dos professores sobre a prevenção da violência baseada no género, assédio e abuso sexual no meio escolar – Fase III.” Agosto de 2022.

Comité Nacional para o Abandono das Práticas tradicionais Nefastas a Saúde da Mulher e da Criança: “Relatório de formação dos professores sobre a prevenção da violência baseada no género, assédio e abuso sexual no meio escolar – Fase II.” Janeiro de 2022.

Comité Nacional para o Abandono das Práticas tradicionais Nefastas a Saúde da Mulher e da Criança: “Relatório Sobre a Capacitação dos Técnicos Profissionais de Educação, Membros da Associação dos Pais e Encarregados de Educação e Comité de Gestão Escolar nas Regiões.” Agosto de 2021.

Comité Nacional para o Abandono das Práticas tradicionais Nefastas a Saúde da Mulher e da Criança: “Relatório de actividades de prevenção da violência baseada no género, assédio e abuso sexual no meio escola: Região de Bafatá, Gabu e o Sector Autónomo de Bissau.” Setembro de 2022.

da Silva, Rui: “Formação em Educação em situações de Emergência e os Requisitos Mínimos para a Educação - Relatório final.” Julho de 2022.

Frade, Alice, e Fatumata Djau Baldé: “Manual para prevenção do assédio, abuso e violência sexual em meio escolar.” 2021.

Global Partnership for Education: “Cover Note for COVID-19 Accelerated Funding Request: Guinea Bissau.” 2020.

Ministério de Educação Nacional e Ensino Superior: “Por uma escola 100 COVID: Nota de Orientação & Protocolos. Preparação e resposta ao COVID-19 nas Escolas.” 2021.

Ministério de Educação Nacional e Ensino Superior: “Relatório da revisão a meio percurso do Projeto de resposta à COVID-19 na Guiné-Bissau.” 2021.

Plan International: “Relatório final: Preparar as comunidades da Guiné-Bissau para se comprometerem a abandonar a MGF e enfrentarem um ano escolar no contexto da COVID-19.” Março de 2022.

UNICEF: “CASE STUDY 4: Adolescent girls’ empowerment leading to outreach for COVID-19 awareness – UNICEF, GUINEA BISSAU.” 2021.

UNICEF: “End User Monitoring Report - Back to Learning Campaign 2022 - “KA NÔ PARA APRENDI””. Social & Behavior Change Unit – SBC. 2022.

UNICEF: “Final report: Back to learning campaign 2022 “Ka nô para aprendi””. 2022.

UNICEF: “List of distribution for materials.” (not dated)

UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Première enquête trimestrielle sur l’état d’avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2020.

UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Enquête semestrielle sur l’état d’avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2020.

UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Troisième enquête trimestrielle sur l’état d’avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2021

UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Deuxième enquête semestrielle sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2021.

UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Troisième enquête semestrielle sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2022.

UNICEF : « Riposte au COVID-19: Quatrième enquête semestrielle sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre ». 2022.

UNICEF: "Relatório do estudo da Situação Inicial (Baseline) das famílias selecionadas para beneficiárias de Cash Transfere com o fundo GPE." Maio de 2021.

UNICEF: "Relatório do estudo da Situação Final (Endline) das famílias selecionadas para beneficiárias de Cash Transfere com o fundo GPE." Dezembro de 2021.

UNICEF: "Updated results framework." May 2022.

UNICEF: "Estimated budget for the Global Partnership for Education COVID-19 Accelerated Funding." June 2022.

UNICEF: "Implementation plan with timeframe." Updated - June 21, 2022.

## **2. Other documents**

de Barros, Miguel, Anaxore Casimiro, Aliu Soares Cassamá, Cadija Mané, Fatumata Jau, and Rui Jorge Semedo: "State of Emergency for health but State of Exception for people: Guinea-Bissau's paradox in the battle against Covid-19." Centro de Estudos Sociais Amílcar Cabral (CESAC).

Graham, A., Powell, M., Taylor, N., Anderson, D. & Fitzgerald, R.: "Ethical Research Involving Children." UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti.

Marshall, Jeffery H., Mathilde Nicolaib, Rui da Silvac: "Out-of-school children in Guinea-Bissau: A mixed-methods analysis." In: *International Journal of Educational Development* 77 (2020).

Mendenhall, Mary: "Navigating the humanitarian-development nexus in forced displacement contexts." UNICEF Education Think Piece Series: Education in Emergencies. 2019.

Meribole, Joshua: "COVID-19 in Guinea-Bissau". Borgen Magazine, 2020.

Ministério da Economia e Finanças, Direcção-Geral do Plano / Instituto Nacional de Estatística: "Monitorização da Situação da Criança e da Mulher Inquérito aos Indicadores Múltiplos 2018-2019." 2019.

Ministério da Economia, Plano e Integração Regional: "Plano Nacional de Desenvolvimento 2020-2023."

Ministério da Educação Nacional e Ensino Superior: "Plano de Contingência para o Setor Educativo – Orientação da Ação do Setor Educativo para a prevenção e controlo do Surto COVID-19 e reativação do Ensino na Guiné-Bissau." 2020.

Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale : « Programme Sectoriel de l'Éducation de la Guinée Bissau (2017 - 2025). »

Mundi Consulting: "Avaliação Sumativa da Iniciativa "Escolas Amigas das Crianças (EAC)" na Guiné-Bissau (2011-2019): Relatório Final." 2019.

Sabates, Ricardo, Kwame Akyeampong, Jo Westbrook and Frances Hunt: "School Dropout: Patterns, Causes, Changes and Policies." 2010.

UN: "Guinea-Bissau COVID-19 Pandemic Socio-economic Response Plan." 2021.

UNICEF: "Conditionality in cash transfers: UNICEF's approach." Social Inclusion Summaries, February 2016.

UNICEF: "Core Commitments for Children for Children in Humanitarian Action". 2020.

UNICEF: "Country Programme Document – Guinea Bissau 2016-2020." 2015.

UNICEF: "Country Office Annual Report 2020: Guinea-Bissau".

UNICEF: "Country Office Annual Report 2021: Guinea-Bissau".

UNICEF: "Guinea-Bissau – UNICEF Programa de Cooperação 2022-2025: Plano de trabalho contínuo 2022-2023."

World Bank: "Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP): Guinea Bissau COVID-19 Emergency Response Project (P174243)." 2020.

## Appendix 4: Data collection instruments

### A4.1. Interview guide

**Interview duration:** 60 to 90 min.

#### **Type of interview**

Semi-structured interview supported by a script that determines the thematic axes of the dialogue, being flexible in the development of the specific questions to be asked.

The interviewee's reaction should be induced from a generic, but very clear interrogative sentence. For the purposes of the questions asked, new complementary data, opinions, and judgments should be requested whenever necessary, using mainly the techniques of questioning, rephrasing.

#### **Procedures**

The objectives of the evaluation should be presented at the beginning of the meeting.

Participants must decide if they want to participate in the evaluation and can withdraw at any time.

Any sentences that are potentially unique or reveal a very personal approach by the participant should, where possible, be reproduced in the participant's own terms.

#### **Questions:**

1. What is your professional role? How did you get involved in the project?
2. If you were involved during the design phase, what was the process of developing the project? On which basis were the interventions? How were the schools identified?
3. What kind of support during implementation was provided to the schools and communities? How often?
4. What were the mechanisms for monitoring the interventions?
  - Were any changes /adaptation made during the implementation? Which one?
  - How were the schools and communities involved?
5. To which extent was the project successful?
  - What were the best aspects?
  - What were the shortcomings of the project?
  - In your opinion, did the interventions improve hygiene and sanitation in the schools? If yes, how? If no, why?
  - Did the intervention help children to remain in school?
6. How has the intersectoral approach and coordination worked? Which organisations were involved?

7. How have the interventions contributed to gender equality and greater respect for children's rights?
8. How effective have the interventions been in ensuring schooling for the most disadvantaged students? Please explain
9. Has the project succeeded in ensuring safe school operations? If yes, how? If not, why?
10. How was the project able to provide continuity of learning through access to remote learning programs?
11. How did the project help to improve psychosocial, health, washing and nutrition services in the education sector? Any specific examples that you can give us?
12. How were back-to-school campaigns successful? How did they help? Is there anything that did not work so well?
13. How did the project improve community participation in school issues?
14. What additional support is needed for schools to be resilient in the face of emergency situations?

#### A4.2. Guide for focus group discussions

**Duration:** 45-90 min.

##### **Overall Objective**

To promote a discussion based on the participants' sharing of views and ideas to allow for an examination of the different perspectives at play and how they were constructed, as well as their stability/irreducibility.

##### **Role of the facilitator (evaluator)**

The facilitator of the discussion should promote interaction and confrontation of different points of view to bring out the perceptions and views of the participants on the topics below. The facilitator's role during focus group discussions should be to spark discussion and broaden the range of responses. Participants should be encouraged to approach the issues from new and unexpected points of view.

It should be kept in mind that promoting confrontation of views and opinions should never put the participants in question, either from an institutional or personal point of view.

##### **Participants**

The group should consist of between 6 and 10 participants. Participants must decide whether they want to take part in the evaluation, and they may withdraw at any time.

##### **Procedures**

The objectives of the evaluation should be presented at the beginning of the meeting.

It is structured by discussion topics. It should include all comments considered relevant for a better interpretation of the participants' interventions, particularly behavioral signals. Attention is drawn to the care to be taken to avoid subjective

and abusive interpretations of the participant's words.

All sentences that due to their potential uniqueness or because they reveal a very personal approach of the participant should, whenever possible, be reproduced in the terms used by the participant.

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### **Teachers**

What are your views on the COVID-19 protocol approaches in the trainings?

What are your views on the teaching and learning approaches in the trainings?

Which aspects did you like the most? Which aspects were missing?

How did the interventions improve hygiene and sanitation in the schools?

When the schools were open, were the project materials and interventions sufficient for safe school operation?

How effective were the interventions in ensuring schooling for the most disadvantaged students?

How did the project improve community participation in school issues?

What additional support is needed for the interventions to be sustainable? What needs to be done to better prepare for future emergencies?

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### **Students**

What materials about COVID-19 have you received? Do you know how to protect yourself?

When schools were closed, did you study in any way?

Do you know the TV and radio spots? What do you think of them? What did you learn from them?

What else did you do when the schools were closed? Did you work?

Did your teacher interact with you when the schools were closed? If yes, how?

How did you know when the school opened again? Were you looking forward to coming back? Why (not)?

When the schools opened again, what changed compared to before COVID-19?

Did any of your peers not return to school? Why? What do they do now? What does it take for them to go back to school?

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### **Parents and community members**

How did the COVID-19 affect the education of children in the community?

Did you receive any financial support during the COVID-19 crisis? Any other support? When, how much, how long?

Was this support enough to overcome the crisis and send your children back to school? If not, what would have been needed?

Did you receive enough information from school or education officials about school closings



and continued learning?

What initiatives in your community were created to ensure continued learning? How were you told about them?

Did you read the flyers on COVID-19? Did you listen to the radio or TV lessons? Did they help them keep your children learning? What could be improved?

When the schools opened again, how did you know? Was the communication clear or confusing? Please tell us why

What additional support is needed to ensure that your child/children stay in the school system during difficult times? What needs to be done to better prepare for future emergencies?

#### A4.3. Guide for observation of services and practices

**Name of the school:**

Indicators	Yes	1	2 Med	3	No	Observations
1. Conditions created for all students and teachers to wash their hands?						
2. Is information on preventing COVID-19 available?						
3. Are students informed and educated about the importance of hygiene and hand washing with soap and water?						
4. Are the needs of students with special needs taken into account?						

#### A4.4. Guide for assessing the quality of tools

1. Was the tool accessible for the targeted beneficiaries?
2. Was it easy to use and/or understand by the targeted beneficiaries?
3. Was the content relevant for the targeted beneficiaries?
4. Was the tool consistent with other project interventions?

## Appendix 5: Evaluator's biodata

Peter Matz, born 6.4.1967, Germany

### Education:

1999: M.A. in International Affairs (Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies, Washington DC)

1996: Staatsexamen (M.A. equivalent) in Education, Physical Education and English (Eberhard-Karls-University, Tübingen, Germany)

### Work experience:

2000-2009: Staff member of ILO, UNICEF, and GIZ

Since 2010: Consultant for ILO, UNICEF, GIZ, UNHCR, FAO, and Plan International, working on education and child labour issues

### Key skills:

#### **Research & Writing**

Carried out and coordinated various research projects on education, child labour, and public policy. Wrote and co-authored several desk reviews, project proposals, strategic papers, technical reports, mapping studies, advocacy briefs, good practice studies, a national draft policy, and a working paper. Produced students' handbook for HIV/AIDS and gender clubs. Developed a textbook on child labour and a training manual on child labour and education. Wrote project proposals for funding from the EU and other institutions. Analyzed large quantitative and qualitative data sets.

#### **Monitoring & Evaluation**

Monitored and evaluated several education and child labour projects at HQ and in the field, and produced mid-term and final reports to donors accordingly. Carried out monitoring missions in all major world regions, consulting with high-level government officials. Oversaw large donor-funded research projects. Supervised the work of several national and international consultants. Identified and documented good practices for donor reporting.

#### **Training & Facilitation**

Led various seminars on education, child labour, and skills development in international and developing country contexts (micro and macro level). Designed and facilitated two online webinars for over 80 international and national staff. Developed training materials and implemented courses. Trained and supervised local project staff. Gave lectures on children's rights to government personnel, university students, and international development staff. Taught English and Physical Education at a German secondary school.

## Appendix 6: Evaluation matrix

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators
Relevance	1. To what extent has the project responded to the needs identified by the Ministry of Education, GLE, and other development partners regarding the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector?	Level of relevance of activities in the context of identified education needs
	2. To what extent are the logic and assumptions underlying the theory of change aligned with the actual implementation of the project and its results achieved? What components of the logical framework were not aligned with the implementation realities?	Evidence of alignment of theory of change with actual project implementation  Number and types of improvements needed to the revised ToC
	3. To what extent was the project flexible and responsive to changing contexts and needs, as identified by the Ministry of Education and other partners?	Evidence of consultations held with beneficiaries and partners, through information collected  Evidence of changes/adaptations made
Coherence	To what extent are the goals aligned with national planning objectives/national strategies concerning the education sector?	Level of alignment of objectives with national, regional and international policies and strategies
	2. To what extent do the activities implemented by the project complement existing interventions and services or education sector policies?	Level of complementarity between project interventions and identified existing services  Level of complementarity between project interventions and identified existing education policies

	3. How complementary are the project interventions with actions undertaken by the Ministry of Education or other stakeholders to address the impact of COVID-19 in the education sector?	Evidence of complementarity between project interventions and specific Ministry of Education interventions
Effectiveness	1. To what extent has the project achieved its intended objectives?	Evidence of achievement of the main objective, as well as the specific objectives of the project
	2. What factors (internal and external to the project) contributed most to the achievement of the project objectives?	Number and types of contributing factors identified at the level of conception/design, implementation management, participation and ownership of schools, parents and communities
	3. What factors (internal and external to the project) made it most difficult to achieve the project objectives?	Number and types of constraints identified at the level of conception/design, implementation management, participation, and ownership of schools, parents, and communities
	4. What are the unexpected results (positive and negative) of the project implementation?	Number and types of unexpected results, as identified by stakeholders and expected beneficiaries
Efficiency	1. To what extent were the financial, human and property resources: (a) Sufficient (in terms of quantity) in relation to the identified needs and expected results? (b) Adequate (in terms of quality) in relation to the expected results? (c) Implemented in a timely manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost-effectiveness</li> <li>• Level of adequacy of resources to planned activities, including resource planning</li> <li>• Level of adherence to project schedule</li> <li>• Number and type of factors linked to resources contributing or affecting the reach of planned objectives</li> </ul>
	2. To what extent could the same results be achieved by other less expensive alternatives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existence of complete and accurate financial information regarding the project's budget and expenditure</li> <li>• Existence of more economically efficient alternatives</li> </ul>

		alternatives
	3. What are the management factors that favoured or hindered the efficiency of the project?	Evidence of hindering beneficial effects of management factors (arrangements for coordination, decision making, monitoring etc)
Sustainability	1. To what extent was the capacity of the education sector (and stakeholders) strengthened to reduce disaster risk, increase preparedness and resilience, and ensure continuity of access to education and learning and educational services in emergency situations?	<p>Number and types of approaches/activities/strategies developed that have contributed to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduce disaster risk</li> <li>- Increase preparedness and resilience</li> <li>- Ensure continuity of access to education and learning in emergency settings</li> </ul>
	2. To what extent has the project created or strengthened activities, platforms, mechanisms or skills/capacities that will support long-term development and system strengthening of the education sector?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and types of new mechanisms, platforms and activities created as a result of the response that contributing to system strengthening of the education sector</li> </ul>
	3. To what extent has local capacity (e.g., school management capacity, teaching skills, communication between schools and community etc.) been supported and developed by the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and types of initiatives and training which contributed to strengthening local capacities (by type of capacities)</li> </ul>
Equity, gender, and human rights	1. To what extent have the most vulnerable boys/girls and/or the most disadvantaged areas of the municipalities covered benefited from the program in the country?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of vulnerability-based segmentation in the selection of schools and project areas</li> <li>• Number and types of decisions made during the planning and the implementation of the project which specifically were addressed to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of population</li> </ul>
	2. To what extent does the project provide the same teaching and learning opportunities for girls and boys?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of integration of gender equality strategies in program design and/or implementation</li> <li>• Level of participation of male vs. female</li> </ul>

		beneficiaries
	3. To what extent has the project addressed gender-specific barriers that prevent girls and boys from accessing the activities and services available to them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of adequate identification of key gender barriers in initial needs mapping</li> <li>• Evidence of integration of gender strategies in project design and/or implementation</li> </ul>
	4. In general, to what extent have specific gender, human rights and equity considerations been taken into account in the design, planning, implementation and monitoring of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of the use of international (national and regional) human rights and gender equality normative frameworks.</li> <li>• Evidence of integration of gender, human rights and equity strategies and interventions in the design and/or implementation of the project</li> </ul>

