

# OUTCOME AREA 5: EDUCATION

## THEMATIC REPORT

GRANT SC149905

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2017

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UNICEF Benin

Basic Education Programme YE 402

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## Acronyms

CEAP	Certificat Elémentaire d’Aptitude Professionnelle (CEAP)/Elementary Certificate of Professional Proficiency
CFS	Child Friendly School
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESP	Education Sector Plan
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
KRA	Key Result Area
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PCA	Programme de Cours Accélérés /Accelerated Learning Programme
PDDSE	Plan Décennal de Développement du Secteur de l’Education/Ten Year Plan for the Development of the Education Sector
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SCRP	Strategy of Growth and Poverty Reduction
SCS	Second Chance School
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework

## **a. Executive Summary**

Benin's report on the MDG 2 on universal completion of primary school indicates significant access rates, but below those usually published by the Ministry of Education yearly statistics (a net enrolment rate of 99%). Thus, the net enrolment rate in primary education is 75% and the completion rate of 70%, according to the MICS 2014. Gender equity has improved at primary level, with a gender parity index over 0.9 since 2014. However, there are still major geographic disparities or disparities related to disability, income, place of living, or occupations. Moreover, the quality of teaching and learning remains low with less than half of the schoolchildren in grade five able to properly read, write and calculate.

In 2016, the third year of the 2014-2018 Benin-UNICEF Country Programme, UNICEF continued implementing an equity-based programmatic approach in Education, mainly through the stabilization and adjustment of models of school inclusion for vulnerable out-of-school children on the one hand, and a model of alternative education for out-of-school adolescents. In doing so, care was taken to build the capacity of stakeholders at the central and decentralised levels to implement and evaluate those models. In particular, the abilities of school districts to generate and use educational data, information and knowledge have been improved. In the national context, 2016 was also a transitional year for the Benin education system, because the country completed the old ten-year education sector plan (2006-2014 ESP) and is preparing a new ESP for the period 2017-2030. UNICEF as the coordinating agency for the Global partnership for Education plays a key role in the preparatory work for the new ESP. Efforts are intensified to coordinate the interventions of the various partners involved in education and provide technical support to the Government for the elaboration of the new sector plan.

Among the recommendations of the National Forum of Education held as a prelude to the development of the new ESP, it is worth noting the extension of basic education to the end of junior high school (Grade 9). The implementation of this recommendation will necessarily have an effect on the positioning and role of UNICEF in the education sector. Another recent development is the Government's decision to define preschool-age as the period 4 to 5 years (instead of 2.5 to 4.5 years). This decision will hopefully limit early entry in primary school and reduce the great difference between net and gross enrolment rates (The GER is estimated at 114%).

In this context, UNICEF Basic Education Programme pursues its efforts to increase access of all children to school, improve retention and the quality of teaching and learning, targeting nine districts of Benin with the lowest indicators and the most marginalized children within these districts, namely children from the poorest households, disabled children, child herders, *Talibés* children, and out of school adolescents. To reduce disparities, the programme continues the implementation of a multi-pronged strategy: (i) increasing the sensitivity to equity of education stakeholders at central, and decentralized levels, improve information management and equity-focused programming; (ii) support the development, implementation and scaling up of models for inclusion in the formal education of marginalized children of school age, and strengthen the capacity of stakeholders to implement these models; (iii) stabilize, expand and mainstream the Accelerated Learning Programme or Second Chance School (SCS) -- an alternative education model for unschooled or dropout adolescents; and (iv) strengthen the capacity of education stakeholders to improve school attendance and the quality of teaching and learning including through proper preparation of young children for school.

The access outcome indicators to which the Programme contributes increased over the period 2014-2016 with a GER increasing from 53% to 65% and a Completion Rate rising from 38% to 58%. On the other hand, indicators of internal efficiency have stagnated: repetition rates and drop-out rates remain respectively at 13% and 15%. At the product level, progress towards achieving the milestones set for

2015 are quite variable from one part of the programme to another. However, during the year, there was a general improvement of the capacities of stakeholders in the education system at the central and decentralized levels to implement the schooling models introduced last year. Consequently, education stakeholders at all levels became more efficient in terms of knowledge management, and equity-focused programming and monitoring.

The strengthening of the Education Management and Information System (EMIS) at the decentralized level continued with the training of the people in charge of statistics in the nine school districts, the feasibility study of a school mapping and its piloting in the district of Zákpotá. School districts were able on their own to carry out data collection and analysis, and publish district statistical yearbooks for 2015 and 2016.

The capacity of 9 districts intervention to provide quality pre-school education were strengthened through their involvement in the initiative of childhood spaces. Thus, 13 new childhood spaces were created by communities, which allowed 390 new children, of which more than half are girls, to benefit from quality preschool education. There are now 183 preschool centres (public nursery schools and childhood spaces: community based centres) accommodating more than 10,000 children.

Finally, outside the district of Aguégués, the other eight districts of intervention are involved in the Second Chance School experience and have a management and monitoring mechanism of non-formal education centres for adolescents out of school.

General strategies (capacity building of education stakeholders at district level) based on a cost-sharing basis with districts have proved effective.). Nevertheless, their effectiveness could be optimized by a better capacity of generation and utilization of knowledge on out-of-school children. The study on out of school children, conducted in 2014 provides reliable information/data on these children, and should lead to an improved planning and regular monitoring of results.

The main implementing partner is the Ministry of Preschool and Primary Education through its central directorates and decentralized branches, namely the departmental directorates and school districts. Activities of conception, the development and validation of policies and strategies, and the training of teachers are carried out by these structures that often benefit from the support of NGOs, consultants or consulting firms. At operational level, the Education programme works with municipalities, town councils and parent teacher associations.

As per the 2016 Annual Work Plan, an amount of USD 1,486,980 including USD 751,869 of ORR was planned for the Outcome Area 5. All available resources were used.

## **b. Strategic context**

Benin has made significant progress towards achieving access and gender parity in primary education. Over the period 2006-2014, the net enrolment rate increased from 66% to 75% and the parity index moved from 0.80 to over 0.90. However, other forms of disparities still remain and some of them are even worsening: between regions of the country, between urban and rural areas, or between children from rich and poor background. There are also issues related to school completion and quality of learning and teaching: the completion rate was 70% in 2014, and less than half of five-graders have an acceptable level of mastery of Mathematics (cf. PASEC Assessment). The poor quality is due, among other things, to management and governance issues leading to insufficient time devoted to teaching. There are numerous strikes during the school year and teachers' absenteeism is very high.

To strategically address the main education challenges facing the country, the Government of Benin has developed a Ten-Year Plan for the Development of the Education Sector which defines the national priorities and serves as a strategic framework for interventions in education. Covering the period 2006-2015, it sets the following priorities for basic education: (i) improving access and equity in preschool and primary education; (ii) improving retention; and (iii) improving the quality of teaching and learning; (iii) improving the management of the education system. Activities implemented within this framework are funded mainly from the “Fonds Communs Budgétaires”, a pooled fund including GPE funds and contributions from bilateral cooperation agencies of which France, and Germany. The assessment of the ESP shows that most of its target have not been met. The lessons drawn from this assessment are taken into account in the ongoing preparation of the new ESP.

From an equity perspective, the UN system is positioned on improving access, retention, and quality for the most marginalized children such as “*bouviers*” (cattle herders), “*Talibés*” (children from Koranic schools begging in the streets), children with disabilities, children from poor households, and out-of-school adolescents. In line with UNDAF results, the Benin-UNICEF Education programme supports the Government and other key stakeholders in implementing the strategic options, and achieving results. As per the approved programme documents, the expected results of the programme are as follows:

***Outcome 1: By the end of 2018, girls and boys from 3 to 17 years, including those from under-educated groups have greater access and complete good quality basic education, including in emergency situations.***

***Output 1: By the end of 2018, the education system stakeholders at central and decentralized levels have increased capacity to analyse problems affecting the education of children, to planning, coordinate and monitor the implementation equity-focused national policies and strategies.***

***Output 2: By the end of 2018, the education system at central level and decentralized authorities of 09 districts with low access and completion rates and a suburban neighbourhood of Cotonou, have increased capacity to provide young children from 3 to 5 years a good quality early childhood care that prepares them for school.***

***Output 3: By the end of 2018, actors of the education system at central and decentralized levels are provided with schooling models of marginalized groups (disabled children, talibés, cattle herders ...) and the capacity for the implementation of inclusive education.***

***Output 4: By the end of 2018, the actors of the education system in 09 districts with low access and completion rates and a suburban neighbourhood of Cotonou have increased capacity to improve school attendance and the quality of teaching and learning.***

***Output 5: By the end of 2018, the central and local governments have an alternative education model for out of school adolescents from 10 to 17 years and increased capacity for its implementation.***

As a lead-agency in education and coordinating agency of the Global Partnership for Education, UNICEF ensures the alignment of the various partners’ interventions on national priorities and their complementarity. At this level, UNICEF helps in coordinating the efforts of the education partners which includes NGOs (PLAN, Aide & Action, CARE, etc.), bilateral cooperation agencies (France, Germany, and Switzerland), UN agencies (UNESCO, WFP), the World Bank, and the European Union. The organisation ensures the regular monitoring of GPE activities and provides technical support to the government in the preparation of the next Education Sector Plan.

### **c. Results Assessment Outlined by Key Programme Area**

In the prevailing context (high level of access, large disparities, low quality) the Basic Education programme moved forward the equity agenda through the improvement of access, retention, and quality for the most marginalised children: girls, children from poor households, cattle herders, “*talibés*”, and children with disabilities. Following the mid-term review of the programme, the overarching strategy has been the development and implementation of a two-pronged strategy targeting two main groups: (i) school-age OOSCs and (ii) adolescents from 10 to 17 years too old to go back to school. Various attempts were made to overcome the bottlenecks identified with regard to the schooling of the first cohort. A model of alternative education was implemented for the second group. In the process, it appeared necessary to build the relevant capacities of duty bearers at the central, decentralized, and local levels (as can be seen in the formulation of intermediate results in the previous section). These results are aligned with and contribute to the achievement of the 2014-2017 UNICEF Strategic Plan’s key Programme Areas under Outcome 5. The level of achievement by key Programme areas is as follows.

#### ***EARLY LEARNING (05-01): Enhanced support to communities with disadvantaged and excluded children to start schooling at the right age and attend regularly. (Output 2)***

UNICEF plays a strategic role in the development of a community-based model of preschool through the childhood spaces, rural nursery schools targeting children from 3 to 5 years excluded from the formal system. In a joint effort with other members of the Benin Network for Early Childhood, UNICEF strongly advocated for the integration community-based approach preschool education in the sector analysis and financial simulation leading to the new Education Sector Plan, for the period 2017-2030.

Preschool centres in the area of intervention area (childhood spaces and public nursery schools) received learning and teaching materials, textbooks, toys and playground equipment which help in improving the quality of the provided care). Moreover 90% of involved actors have been trained on early childhood care (for a target of 80%). The supply of preschool education has been strengthened in 9 intervention districts. Thus, 13 new childhood spaces were created by communities, which allowed 390 new children, more than half of them being girls, to benefit from a good quality preschool education. These new childhood spaces increased to 56% the proportion of villages of the intervention zone with a functional preschool centre (for a target of 60%). Through these activities, more than 10,000 children from 3 to 5 years were able to get a good quality care in childhood spaces and public nursery schools.

#### ***FOCUS ON GIRLS’ AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION (05-02): Increased national capacity to provide access to early learning opportunities and quality primary and secondary education (Outputs 3 and 4)***

To reduce disparities in access, completion and performance, the Basic education Programme has implemented a two-pronged strategy based on school inclusion of school-aged children on the one hand, and alternative education for out-of-school adolescents on the other hand. To effectively do so, it appeared necessary to overcome two of the main bottlenecks on the way to reaching marginalized out-of-school children: the lack of knowledge on these children and the limited capacity of duty bearers for generating and using such a knowledge. Significant progress has been made on all these aspects.

- ***Inclusion of school-aged marginalized children in formal primary schools***

The number of districts with inclusive models of schooling for marginalized children is still limited to the four communes of Alibori (for a target of six districts in 2016). Implementation of inclusive models is under way in the other districts. The late completion of the Strategy Paper on the Inclusion of Marginalized Children has affected the achievement of the outcomes. The availability and planned dissemination of the strategy paper will make it possible to move forward in the implementation of strategies for the inclusion of marginalized children as planned in all 9 districts. Implementation of this



strategy will include training on social mobilization, retention and monitoring of local, religious and traditional leaders, as well as decentralized and decentralized authorities in the communes of Gogounou, Malanville, Ségbana and Karimama. In addition, short-term actions to combat early marriage and pregnancy have been identified and will be implemented in 2017.

Approximately 15,000 children from poor households in primary education and 2500 vulnerable girls in junior secondary education were provided with school supplies and uniforms. The girls also received psychosocial support and financial support to cover photocopy fees. In addition the physical environment of 5 general education colleges was made more favourable to the retention of girls through the construction separate latrine for girls and boys.

As part of the training of local education stakeholders to mobilize households for the enrolment and retention of children in school, many school actors (directors, inspectors, PTA members) were trained. They have subsequently trained parents on the use of an attendance and performance monitoring sheet understandable by even illiterate parents.

- ***Alternative Education of out of school adolescents***

A study conducted in 2006 revealed that in Benin, 700,000 adolescents aged from 10 to 17 years were out of school. To allow these children to enjoy the right to education, a model was developed for the alternative education of unschooled or dropout adolescents. In this context, the Ministry of Preschool and Primary Education has adopted strategic documents, operational programmes and tools necessary for the implementation of the approach. These tools are currently used in developing the approach and can be used by all partners involved in alternative education for adolescents. This programme called Programme of Accelerated Learning ("Programme de Cours Accélérés": PCA) or " Second Chance School " (SCS) aims at providing beneficiaries in less than three years, with the basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics necessary to ( i ) pursue secondary or vocational education or ( ii ) integrate working life. SCS students also develop life skills that enable them, among other things, to protect themselves against HIV/AIDS. The SCS approach is implemented in a tripartite partnership between the Ministry in charge of Education, districts/mayors, and UNICEF. The SCS has entered its operational phase during the 2012-2013 school year, with the opening of 20 SCS centres. To date, 122 centres have been set-up, and they have helped to enrol 11,401 children (mostly girls). Nearly 200 have graduated and have successfully passed the "Certificat d'Etudes Primaires" exam (the end of primary education exam). Review of SCS activities showed, among other things, that students have acquired basic skills (reading, mathematics, oral and written communication) and are more proficient than the students of formal primary school (even those who never attended school before). However, given the high proportion of working adolescents among the learners, the time schedule must be flexible and adapted to their occupations.

The mid-term evaluation of the programme confirmed the relevance of the SCS experience and recommended its continuation and expansion. As a main constraint, it identified the problem of learners' dropout related to expectations of a very diverse audience, ranging from children wishing to continue their education to young people who just want to start their own business. To solve these problems, the evaluation recommended to define a SCS model to test and stabilize in the pilot phase, in view of its integration into national education strategies in Benin.

Ownership of the PCA by host districts started with the inclusion of SCs teachers' salaries in the budget of 16 districts.

An advocacy is being to extend the SCS experience and include it in the Education Sector Plan for the period 2017-2030.

***LEARNING AND CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS (05-03): Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling-up quality and inclusive education (Output 1)***

Children's participation and protection against violence have been improved through the establishment of child governments in 21 pilot schools in the communes of Aguégues, Nikki and Ségbana. Inspectors



and school directors and teachers were trained on child government's approach. The main goal of children's governments is to make children actors in the protection of their rights while preparing them for responsible citizenship. A travel study to Guinea was organized a UNICEF education specialist and officials of the ministry of education to learn about the successful experience of the Children's Governments in the Guinean educational system. Travelers are expected to use the acquired knowledge and experience to foster an environment conducive to genuine participation of children in school's life.

With the construction of 49 new separate latrines for girls and boys and hand washing devices, the proportion of schools with latrines in the intervention area has increased from 58% to 63%. This indicator, calculated on the basis of Ministry statistics, is slightly below the target of 65%, although paradoxically field missions have shown that latrine needs are already covered in most schools. This is the main reason for not reaching the target. In 2017 latrines will be built in schools where needs are identified. But the main emphasis will be placed on educating the hygiene of teachers and pupils, as well as supporting statistics for the identification of hygiene and sanitation infrastructures in schools.

***EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES (05-04): Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure girls and boys access to safe and secure forms of education and critical information for their own well-being in humanitarian situations***

The capacity building of education stakeholders at the central and decentralized levels in the prevention and response to emergencies in education continued through the training of 35 new managers, bringing the number of trained key actors to 101, for a target of 150 in 2015. The 2015 target was set taking into account the possible mobility of actors, which finally was less important than expected.

***EDUCATION-GENERAL (05-05): Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of school readiness and performance.***

- ***Coordination of the education system***

In its role of coordinating agency of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), UNICEF-Benin participates in the strategic and political debate and provides support to the Government, both for monitoring the education system and preparing the new Education Sector Plan for the period 2017-2030 with an aim of reducing inequities. Thus the organization was involved in the monthly monitoring of GPE activities and the preparation of the sector analysis note.

- ***Generation and use of knowledge on Out-of-School Children***

The EMIS produces statistical yearbooks for the whole country with disaggregated data for the 77 districts. Unfortunately, the statistical yearbooks cannot provide information on out-of-school children. To fill this gap of information, a study on out- of- school children was started in 2015 and finalized in 2016, in order to establish relevant databases in the 77 districts of the country. In addition to quantitative data on these children, the study provided qualitative information on bottlenecks to schooling and proposed ways of overcoming them in the 9 districts targeted in the 2014-2018 current Benin-UNICEF Country Programme.

At the decentralized level, to date, nine districts and a peri-urban neighbourhood of Cotonou have the capacity to collect, process, analyse and use statistics for preschool and primary education. Indeed, the strengthening of the EMIS continued through the training of the officers in charge of statistics at the district level, the editing of statistical yearbooks, and the production of State Reports of the Districts Education System (Rapports d'Etat du Système Educatif Communal/RESEC). To date 9 school districts (including the Lagunes school district in Cotonou) have been able to produce the statistical yearbooks for 2015 and 2016 and the Lagunes school district has produced the 2016 yearbook.

- ***Decentralized Monitoring of results in Education***

The district of Zakpota has established a functional system for monitoring the education of children from 3 to 17 years of age. This monitoring is done through a dialogue between the various local stakeholders in education. It identifies problems and their causes, and plans and implements actions to remove bottlenecks to quality education for all. It allowed local education actors to collect and process information on students' attendance and performance, and teachers' attendance. During the monitoring, village meetings covering 42 schools were organized in the district of Za-Kpota to review the results and propose corrective action. This innovation allowed the mobilization and empowerment of local stakeholders in monitoring the provision of education services.

Most of the activities implemented helped in advancing the equity agenda: they targeted under-served remote areas and marginalized children. They also ensured a more direct link between upstream work on strategies and actual service delivery. They thus pursued the development and stabilization of equity focused models of schooling to be mainstreamed during the remaining years of this programming cycle.

Monitoring activities are included in the AWP and are jointly carried out by UNICEF staff and government counterparts. A mid-year and an annual review are organised respectively in June and December to assess the level of programme implementation, identify constraints and propose remediation. One important aspect of the programme (the Second Chance School initiative) was examined during an external midterm evaluation. The evaluation highlighted the relevance, effectiveness, consistency and the positive impact of the experience in providing over-aged children with a good quality alternative education. The results of the evaluation will be further discussed in 2016, for their integration in education strategies and policies.

If general strategies (based on cost-sharing with districts) have proved effective and efficient, their effectiveness could be optimized through a better capacity of generation, analysis, and use of knowledge on out-of school -children. An ongoing study initiated in 2013 will provide reliable information about them, with a view to improve the planning and regular monitoring of results.

The main implementing partner is the Ministry of Preschool and Primary Education through its central directorates and decentralized branches, namely the departmental directorates and school districts. Conception activities like the development and validation of policies and strategies, and the training of teachers are carried out by these structures that often benefit from the support of NGOs, consultants or consulting firms. At operational level, the programme works with municipalities, town councils and parents /teachers associations. As the coordinating agency of the Global Partnership for Education and a lead agency in education, UNICEF-Benin helps in ensuring the alignment of interventions on the Ten-Year Development Plan for the Education Sector and their complementary.

#### **d. Constraints**

Two temporary constraints were the late signature of the AWP by the Ministry of Preschool and Primary Education and the presidential elections which led to a situation where many government partners were not fully available during the first quarter. These delays were overtaken through an acceleration process after the mid-year review. Another more long-lasting is that four ministries share the responsibility for basic education. This fragmentation significantly hinders the implementation of activities that require a systemic approach. It has been circumvented through the use of other coordinating mechanisms, such as the Development Partners Group and the Local Education Group.

This helped mitigate the consequences of the lack of coordination. However, the problem is not really solved and a durable solution will require the joint efforts of all education partners.

## e. Resources

As per the 2016 Annual Work Plan, an amount of USD 1,486,980 including USD 751,869 of ORR was planned for the Outcome Area 5 (cf. Table 1). Almost all available resources were used (99%).

Table 1 : Planned Budget for Outcome Area 5 and Available Funding

Outcome Area 5 : Education Benin

Planned and Funded for the Country Programme 2016 (in US Dollar)

Row Labels	Output Planned	Actual
05-01 Early learning		253,329
Other Resources - Regular		249,692
Regular Resources		3,637
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education		451,720
Other Resources - Regular		193,647
Regular Resources		258,073
05-03 Learning and child-friendly schools		34,573
Other Resources - Regular		15,942
Regular Resources		18,631
05-04 Education in emergencies		4,313
Regular Resources		4,313
05-05 Education # General		735,551
Other Resources - Regular		268,336
Regular Resources		467,215
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>1,479,487</b>

Other resources came mostly from Thematic Basic Education Fund (SC149905), a contribution of the Swedish NatCom for ECD (SC140157), and another from the UK NatCom (SC150213). As can be seen in the table below, other partners did not directly contribute to thematic funding for the country and their contribution were rather earmarked in response to specific proposals. The availability and flexibility of thematic funding made it possible to find a reasonable way to allocate resources to all areas of the programme.

Table 2: Other contributions available in 2016

Outcome Area 5 : Education		
Benin		
Contributions available for STP outcome 5 by UNICEF-Benin in 2015 (in US Dollar)		
Donors	Initial Contribution Amount	Available Amount in 2015

<b>BASIC EDUCATION AND GENDER EQUALITY (SC149905)</b>	<b>1,100,000</b>	<b>475,130</b>
<b>Swedish NatCom(SC140157)</b>	<b>750,000</b>	<b>251,269</b>
<b>UK NatCom (SC150213)</b>	<b>182,187</b>	<b>25,471</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,032,187</b>	<b>751,869</b>

## **f. Financial Implementation**

In 2016, almost all implemented activities fall within the scope of the SP 2014-2017 Key Programme Areas under Outcome Area 5 (cf. Table 3). The activities with the most far-reaching impact were the following: the inclusion of school age children, the implementation of the community-based approach to preschool (childhood spaces experience), and the continuation of the second chance school initiative for adolescents. They all targeted remote areas and excluded children, helped in improving quality, and established a link with service delivery and the development of policies and strategies.

**Table 3: Expenditures by Key-Programme Area**

Year	2016
Business Area	Benin
Outcome Area	05 Edu

Row Labels	Utilized	Actual
Other Resources - Regular	727,618	727,618
05-01 Early learning	249,692	249,692
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	193,647	193,647
05-03 Learning and child-friendly schools	15,942	15,942
05-05 Education # General	268,336	268,336
Regular Resources	751,869	751,869
05-01 Early learning	3,637	3,637
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	258,073	258,073
05-03 Learning and child-friendly schools	18,631	18,631
05-04 Education in emergencies	4,313	4,313
05-05 Education # General	467,215	467,215
	<b>1,479,487</b>	<b>1,479,487</b>

In 2016, UNICEF Benin utilized USD 1,479,487 for programme activities and interventions related to Basic Education and Gender Equality. The funds utilization is summarized in the table below.

**Table 4: Implementation in 2016**

Table 4 : Implementation in 2016				
Outcome 5 : Education				
Benin				
Summary of Financial Implementation in 2016 (in US Dollar)				
Outputs	Funding type	Total Budget	Total Utilized	Percentage
Politiques et Stratégies Educatives	RR	142,989	143,007	100%
	OR	34,928	34,928	100%
Espaces Enfance	RR	4,673	3,637	78%

	OR	228,869	228,869	100%
Accès au Primaire, Achèvement et Transition au Secondaire	RR	64,893	64,886	100%
	OR	190,039	190,039	100%
Fréquentation Scolaire et qualité	RR	20,759	18,631	90%
	OR	15,942	15,942	100%
Programme de Cours Accélérés	RR	182,982	178,936	98%
	OR	50,055	50,055	100%
Programme Support	RR	318,815	318,521	100%
	OR	232,036	232,036	100%
Sub-total RR		735,111	727,618	99%
Sub-total ORR		751,869	751,869	100%
Total Budget		1,486,980	1,479,487	99%

Table 5 shows the expenditures according to specific intervention codes. Major areas in the Focus areas 2 are covered with the predominance of quality and equity-focused interventions.

**Table 5: Expenditures according to specific intervention codes**

Year	2016
Business Area	Benin - 1170
Donor Class Level2	All
Fund Category	All Programme Accounts
Fund Sub-Category	All
Outcome Area	05 Education

Row Labels	Utilized
05-01-03 Institutional pre-schools	66,434
05-01 Early learning	66,434
05-01-04 Community-based child development and early learning	186,895
05-01 Early learning	186,895
05-02-01 Out of School Children Initiative (OOSCI)	240,941
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	240,941
05-02-04 Girls' Secondary Education (excluding UNGEI)	203,510
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	203,510
05-02-05 UN Girls# Education Initiative	-140
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	-140
05-02-06 Education for children with disabilities	2,116
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	2,116
05-02-07 Violence in schools including gender-based violence	5,294
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	5,294
05-03-01 Education materials for learning and teaching including classroom technology	3,811
05-03 Learning and child-friendly schools	3,811
05-03-02 Child Friendly Schools # Education	30,762
05-03 Learning and child-friendly schools	30,762
05-04-04 Education # cluster coordination in humanitarian action	4,313
05-04 Education in emergencies	4,313
05-05-01 Education -Systems	602,186
05-05 Education # General	602,186
05-05-02 Teacher development and deployment	2,438
05-05 Education # General	2,438
05-05-05 Education sector plans (incl. coordinating role)	5,153
05-05 Education # General	5,153
05-05-06 Education Management Information System	125,774
05-05 Education # General	125,774
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,479,487</b>

## g. Future Work Plan

Benin has made significant progress in terms of access and gender equity. The gross enrolment rate increased from 98% in 2007 to 114% in 2014 and the gender parity index rose from 0.87 to 0.91 over the period. However, there are still important disparities related to environment, occupations, households' income, place of living (urban/rural), and disability. Low primary completion rate (70%) and the quality of education also remain a concern.

In this context, the Basic Education programme aims at reducing disparities in access, and retention and improving the quality of education through the realization of the following expected result: "By the end of 2018, girls and boys from 3 to 17 years, particularly those from under-educated groups have increased access to and complete a good quality basic education, including in emergency situations". This strategic outcome is translated into the following five outputs: (i) By the end of 2018, education stakeholders at central, deconcentrated and decentralized levels have increased capabilities for the analysis of issues affecting the education of children, planning, coordination and monitoring of the equitable implementation of national policies and strategies; (ii) By the end of 2018, the educational system at central level, and deconcentrated and decentralized structures of 9 municipalities with low rates access and completion and a peri-urban area of Cotonou have increased capacity to provide young



children from 3 to 5 years with a good quality early care preparing them for school; (iii) By the end of 2018, stakeholders in the education system at the deconcentrated and decentralized levels have models of schooling for marginalized groups (children with disabilities, “talibés”, cattle herders, etc.) and capacity for the implementation of inclusive education; (iv ) By the end of 2018 the actors of the educational system in 9 municipalities with low access and completion rates and a peri- urban area of Cotonou have increased capacities to improve school attendance and the quality of teaching and learning, and ( v) By the end of 2018, the government and the deconcentrated and decentralized authorities have a model of alternative education for unschooled and dropout adolescents from 10 to 17 years and increased capacities for its implementation. These results follow directly from those of the 2014-2018 UNDAF Plan and are consistent with national priorities and aligned with the results of the UNICEF Strategic Plan for the period 2014-2017.

The year 2017 - the third in the current Programming cycle 2014-2018 - is marked by the preparation of a new Education Sector Plan for the period 2017-2030. This context shapes the priorities of the Education programme in terms of the technical support expected from UNICEF in its role of coordinating agency of the Global Partnership for Education.

Thus, at the strategic level, efforts are focused on: (i) the finalization of sectoral diagnosis and the development of the Education Sector Plan for the period 2016-2025. In this context, UNICEF is contributing to results attainment through the provision of technical support in the sector analysis and the financial simulation, and is strengthening its advocacy so that particular concerns are taken into account: equity, community-based preschool education, alternative education for adolescents; (ii) the setting-up of an online database for the EMIS in primary and secondary education.

At the operational level, the emphasis is on the following activities: (i) the support to 9 school districts and the production of statistical yearbooks and status reports on the district’s education system; (ii) the extension of the experience of education decentralized monitoring in Zakpota to all villages in the district; (iii) the pursuing of the childhood spaces (or community preschools) experience in 9 districts, their modelling through an improvement of the physical learning environment and a strong advocacy for their transformation into public nursery schools; (iv) the acceleration of the inclusive education of marginalized children such as those from poor households, *talibés* and cattle herders, by removing bottlenecks to their schooling; (v) the training of parents and caregivers on essential family practices and essential stimulation practices; (vi) a support for the transition of girls to secondary school, their performance and retention up to grade 9, through the provision of school kits and funds for affording the copying of documents ( e.g. courses), and their protection against early pregnancy and child marriage; (vii) the improvement of the physical and social environment of schools through the construction of sanitation facilities and hand washing devices, the setting-up of management committees and their training on best hygiene practices, the establishment and functioning of children's governments in schools; and (viii) the pursuit of the Second Chance School experience in favour of out of school adolescents.

In their respective roles of leader of the four Ministries in charge of Education and coordinating agency of the Global Partnership for Education (SME), the Ministry of Preschool and Primary Education and UNICEF will strengthen the partnership with NGOs, the civil society, technical and financial partners (Germany, USA, France and Switzerland) and the GPE.

The financial resources needed for the implementation of the programme amount to USD 1,876,614 including USD 881,000 of other resources (cf. table 6).

**Table 6: Budget Requirements for 2017**

**Outcome 5: Education**

**Benin**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Funding Type</b>	<b>Planned Budget</b>	<b>Funded Budget</b>	<b>Shortfall</b>
Strategies and Policies	RR	160,000	160,000	0
	ORR	105,000	105,000	0
Preschool Education	RR	80,000	80,000	0
	ORR	202,000	202,000	0
School inclusion of Marginalised Children	RR	209,000	209,000	0
	ORR	105,000	105,000	0
Quality of Education	RR	120,000	120,000	0
	ORR	80,000	80,000	0
Alternative Education of Adolescents	RR	80,000	80,000	0
	ORR	89,000	89,000	0
Programme Support	RR	346,614	346,614	0
	ORR	300,000	276,271	23,729
<b>Sub-total Regular Resources</b>		<b>995,614</b>	<b>995,614</b>	0
<b>Sub-total Other Resources - Regular</b>		<b>881,000</b>	<b>857,271</b>	23,729
<b>Total for 2017</b>		<b>1,876,614</b>	<b>1,852,885</b>	23,729

#### **h. Expression of thanks**

UNICEF-Benin would like to acknowledge the significant assistance of all the donors who contributed to the implementation of Basic Education activities. The flexibility in the use of thematic contributions made it possible to evenly cover the funding needs of various sub-components of the Basic Education Programme: support to policies and strategies, childhood development, formal primary education, life skills, and adolescent education. The thematic funds were critical to respond to the needs of the children of Benin, and to further contribute to the achievement of SDG 4 and UNICEF SP's outcome and outputs related to education.