The African Union

The UN Foundation once asked, “ Want to change the world?” and in response said “Educate a girl”.[[1]](#footnote-0) Despite this, while females make up roughly half of the world’s population, they are two thirds of the illiterate population.[[2]](#footnote-1) Africa especially, faces tough education barriers, and of the 59 million children between 6-11 years old not in school, 30 million are from Africa, and 17 million are girls.[[3]](#footnote-2) Niger recognizes the importance of bringing education to women and young girls, and the positive effects that it may have for a nation. Although, Niger is one of the poorest countries, and poverty has been identified as an important factors in determining whether a girl, or any child, is able to attend school.[[4]](#footnote-3) However, as research has shown, even one extra year of primary education can boost a woman’s eventual salary by 10-20% and secondary schooling boosts it by 15-25%.[[5]](#footnote-4) But sometimes even one year of investment in education is not possible for some families. It is the position of Niger that to tackle a lack of education for girls, the causal factors, namely poverty, must first be addressed.

Even as Niger’s GDP is expected to grow by 5% in 2016, Niger understands the importance of attracting foreign investment in order to meet the demands of the global economy.[[6]](#footnote-5) This is why Niger has taken significant steps in order to attract foreign investment by creating new rules for investors, increasing transparency, and making customs and taxing procedures easier.[[7]](#footnote-6) Much of the interest from foreign investment for Niger comes for our mining and extraction of natural resources, and Niger is looking to continue diversifying and inviting new FDI opportunities and strengthening our economy.[[8]](#footnote-7) Niger also accepts aid from organizations such as UNICEF. This funding goes into programs such as the Child Friendly Model that promote safety, trained teachers, resources and quality education.[[9]](#footnote-8) Ultimately, the focus of aid should be to bolster and improve existing education programs, to help create jobs and improve the state. It should not, make a country reliant on foreign aid to continue operations.

African countries consistently rank as some of the most corrupt in the world.[[10]](#footnote-9) It is in Niger’s opinion, that in order to improve the quality of life for our citizens and of all Africans, measures to create more transparent institutions are needed. Historically, Niger has faced some corruption problems, but is committed to improving its standing in the international community.

[[11]](#footnote-10) With a recently elected democratic leader, Niger has created the Bureau of Information and Claims and Combat Against Corruption and Bribery at the Ministry of Justice, in order to fight corruption in our country.[[12]](#footnote-11) By eliminating corruption, national economies will be able to better grow and bring Africans out of poverty, and on the whole, this would be a benefit to everyone.

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