

➤ REPORT OF THE PROVISIONAL INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL ADVISORY PANEL (ITAP)

ASSESSMENT OF ENABLING FACTORS¹

BURKINA FASO | DECEMBER 19, 2022

Background

In line with the GPE 2025 operating model, the government and country partners have analyzed country progress in the four enabling factor areas for system transformation. The *Contextualized Enabling Factors Analysis* completed by the local education group and supporting documentation were shared with the ITAP, tasked by the Board with providing an assessment of country status against the enabling factors.

The ITAP assessment seeks to contribute to country policy dialogue on the partnership compact. The ITAP considers the extent to which challenges in enabling factor areas act as bottlenecks to country education system transformation goals. Based on this assessment, it classifies each area as a low, medium, or high priority for action. A designation of high indicates that identified challenges may act as significant bottlenecks to transformation goals.

The ITAP report is shared with the government and country partners to collectively review for any disagreements in two areas: a) major factual errors that have affected the ITAP assessment, and; b) ITAP prioritization of enabling factors. Any such disagreements should be clearly and concisely explained and will be considered by the ITAP. Comments are optional: Should the government and country partners broadly agree with the conclusions in the report, a notification to this effect can be submitted. Comments are due within two weeks of the report is final.

The ITAP report is ultimately shared with the Board and feeds into Board decision-making on the system transformation grant allocation, with special attention given to how challenges in the high priority enabling factors are resolved in the country compact.

¹ The ITAP operates as an independent advisory body to the GPE Board. ITAP country panel members for this report: Susy Ndaruhutse (Chair), Anton de Grauwe, Sara Poehlman, and Barbara Reynolds. The views expressed in this report are solely those of the ITAP country panel.

Part A: Main Panel Conclusions

Data and Evidence

A peer review of the Burkina Faso Education Management Information System (EMIS) in 2019 (*Revue par les pairs du système d'information sur la gestion de l'éducation (SIGE) du Burkina Faso*) noted several good practices and judged the system to be acceptable overall, with the statistical process noted as being high quality. However, there were concerns about the multiple education databases and sources that are not integrated across different ministries. The 2018 National Learning Assessment (*Evaluation nationale des acquis scolaires*) brought together learning assessment results to provide a systems overview, after a small deterioration in learning outcomes for basic education between 2006 and 2014. Recommendations from the 2019 peer review of the EMIS highlighted the need for a coordinated electronic EMIS that could enable timely decision-making and provide information to overcome obstacles to education improvement, as well as the need to adapt the current evidence and data production for use by actors at central, deconcentrated and decentralized levels. The dispersed nature of evidence production and use at the Ministry of National Education, Literacy and the Promotion of National Languages (*Ministère de l'éducation nationale et de l'alphabétisation et de la promotion des langues nationales*) (MENAPLN) does not allow for systemic gender integration and the use of sex-specific data and evidence in project and program implementation remains a significant challenge. Considering the challenges of timely use of data and evidence in operational and policy decisions, the ITAP is rating this enabling factor as a **MEDIUM priority**.

Gender-Responsive Planning, Policy and Monitoring

For several years, Burkina Faso has had quite strong competencies and efficient systems for planning and monitoring. The preparation of sector plans and the organization of reviews during COVID-19 illustrate this. However, these systems have some weaknesses, which in the present crisis context become a serious threat to improvement. First, local and school capacities are weak, while the outreach of the central level has become more and more limited. Second, plans pay little attention to the interaction between the education system and the various crises. Third, monitoring focuses mainly on activity implementation, providing little insight into the reasons for the slow progress. The country's regression on some key indicators of equitable access and quality, and the limited progress in non-formal education for out-of-school children emphasize the need for rethinking policy and planning practices and strengthening local capacities. For these reasons, the ITAP is rating this enabling factor as a **HIGH priority**.

Sector Coordination

Inclusive Sector Dialogue and Coordinated Action:

There is adequate formal provision for inclusive dialogue and coordinated action, particularly at the national level, but less so at subnational and school levels. In addition, the perspectives and needs of several at-risk groups (for example, children with disabilities, refugee or displaced children, children in rural areas and out-of-school children) are not explicitly included in the coordination mechanism at the national levels nor is there any explicit formal linkage with the Education Cluster. Both of these factors place some limitations on inclusion and coordination. For these reasons, the ITAP is rating this enabling factor as a **MEDIUM priority**.

Coordinated Financing and Funding:

External financing for the sector is split across two main ministries – MENAPLN and the Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation (*Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur, de la recherche scientifique et de l'innovation*) (MESRI) which each prepare separate plans and budgets making it more challenging to take a coordinated sector-wide approach to external financing. In the basic and secondary education sub-sectors which sit under MENAPLN, there is strong potential for external financing to be coordinated and for funding to be channeled through the pooled fund *Compte d'affectation spécial du trésor – fonds de soutien au développement de l'enseignement de base* (CAST-FSDEB). However, this fund currently excludes external financing for higher education which sits under MESRI. In addition, an increasing majority of external financing for basic and secondary education is being funded through projects rather than through CAST. There have also been challenges with the predictability of both forecasts and disbursements of external financing through projects and CAST. Given these challenges indicate a direction of travel away from alignment, accountability and aid effectiveness, the ITAP is rating this enabling factor as a **HIGH priority**.

Volume, Efficiency and Equity of Domestic Financing

While the government has shown a commitment to spending at least 20 percent of total domestic resources on education, there is significant work to do to improve the efficiency and equity of resource use. High levels of repetition and dropout coupled with inefficiencies in teacher deployment lead to significant wastage of the relatively generous allocation of public resources to education. Considerable disparities remain in access and achievement, particularly for children living in regions affected by insecurity, children in rural areas and girls (in secondary education). More effort needs to be made to align the budget more explicitly towards achieving the outcomes outlined in the 2021–2025 Basic and Secondary Education Strategic Plan (*Plan stratégique de développement de l'éducation de base et de l'enseignement secondaire*) (PSDEBS). As a result, the ITAP is rating this enabling factor as a **HIGH priority**.

Part B: Assessment of Enabling Factors

1. Data and Evidence

Education Management Information Systems (EMIS)

A peer review of the Burkina Faso Education Management Information System (EMIS) in 2019 (*Revue par les pairs du système d'information sur la gestion de l'éducation (SIGE) du Burkina Faso*) noted several good practices and judged the system to be acceptable overall. The statistical process in and of itself was noted as being high quality but concerns were raised about the multiple education databases and sources that were not integrated across different ministries.

Statistical yearbooks (*Annuaire*s) provide extensive data – up to 500 pages of tables for non-formal education – disaggregated by gender, region, type of structure, financing sources, and other elements like family background. Post-primary and secondary yearbooks also disaggregate data tables to include data on students with disabilities and according to nationality. Beyond data reporting, the primary education statistical yearbook includes more analysis of data trends and performance over time and integrates examination results and financing, as well as including a focus on 43 priority communes to support targeting to close regional equity gaps. However, it is unclear how data is analyzed, reported and effectively disseminated for use in monitoring at school level, management at district level and informing regular implementation reporting on the 43 priority communes. Insecurity has prevented data collection for certain regions and the country's Enabling Factors Analysis (*Analyse des facteurs favorables*) noted that the non-integration of data on education in emergencies into the EMIS is a notable challenge.

Learning Assessment Systems

The 2018 National Learning Assessment (*Evaluation nationale des acquis scolaires*) brought together learning assessment results from different levels of education and examinations to provide a systems overview. Although examination results have continued being reported through the EMIS, the country's Enabling Factors Analysis highlights that the security crisis also impedes the ability to carry out learning assessments in affected areas. The ITAP concurs with the suggested need for adapted strategies to collect data and information to improve program delivery and effective decision-making in crisis-affected zones.

The 2019 CONFEMEN Programme for Education System Analysis (*Programme d'analyse des systèmes éducatifs de la CONFEMEN*) (PASEC) focused on the quality of the education system, noting that 65.8 percent of students at the beginning of their schooling did not have a sufficient level of competence to continue their studies successfully, with many having no understanding of the language of instruction despite the sector plan including

provision for instruction in national languages. Consequently, a key recommendation from the PASEC 2019 report is the acceleration of the national strategy for preschool education as a key component to quality improvements. The *2018 Summative Evaluation of GPE's Country-Level Support to Education in Burkina Faso* noted a small deterioration in learning outcomes for basic education from 2006 to 2014; subsequently, 43 priority communes were selected as focus areas for primary education building off past success of reducing geographic disparities under the 2012–2021 Basic Education Strategic Plan (*Programme de développement stratégique de l'éducation de base*) (PDSEB).

PASEC 2019 noted that the variation in performance between schools and students was more closely linked to school-based factors than to the family environment. Although the majority of teachers have the requisite education and competencies, learning assessment reports recommend additional teacher support to improve mathematics and language learning trends and to work with students who are struggling or falling behind.

Evidence Production and Use

The 2019 peer review of the Burkina Faso EMIS highlighted that EMIS practices were generally favorable to modernization that would lead to improvements in education system governance and evidence-based planning and decision-making. The ITAP concurs with the country's Enabling Factors Analysis that improvements in the use of data to drive program delivery at different levels of the education system is likely to lead to systems improvement.

The 2015 Education Sector Analysis (*Rapport d'état du système éducatif national*) (RESEN) highlights available databases that could serve as the basis for stronger analysis to inform planning, monitoring and systems management, including international assessments like PASEC, national assessments done by the Ministry of National Education, Literacy and the Promotion of National Languages's (*Ministère de l'éducation nationale et de l'alphabétisation et de la promotion des langues nationales*) (MENAPLN) Statistics Department (*Direction générale des études et des statistiques sectorielles*) and Examinations Office (*Office central des examens et concours*), national examination results and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey results. 2015 RESEN recommendations highlighted the need for a coordinated electronic EMIS with user-friendly analysis that could enable timely decision-making and provide information to overcome localized obstacles to education improvement. Recommendations also highlighted the need to adapt the current evidence and data production for use by actors at central, deconcentrated and decentralized levels, with a meaningful level of disaggregation in order to reduce inequities in education inputs and outcomes.

The 2020 Basic and Secondary Education Diagnostic Report (*Rapport diagnostic de l'éducation de base et de l'enseignement secondaire*) provides a robust analysis of five-

year trends in education, along with a high level of detail on unit costs, strengths and weaknesses of specific interventions. A complimentary draft Diagnostic Report on Gender by MENAPLN in 2022 (*Diagnostic participatif genre du ministère de l'éducation nationale de l'alphabétisation et de la promotion des langues nationales du Burkina Faso*) provides a deeper analysis of gender inequalities overlapping with other vulnerabilities such as insecurity and geography. The draft diagnostic recognizes that while the human resources to undertake regular disparity analysis exist, the dispersed nature of evidence production and use does not allow for systemic gender integration. Additionally, it notes that the use of sex-specific data and evidence before, during and after project and program implementation remains a significant challenge for MENAPLN.

Conclusion: While data collection, production and reporting are regular and provide extensive information, considering the challenges of timely use of data and evidence in operational and policy decisions, the ITAP concurs with the country's self-analysis and is rating this enabling factor as a **MEDIUM priority**. The current systems and practices do not support the systemic integration across ministries and use of evidence in implementation and financial decision-making in order for centralized, deconcentrated and decentralized education stakeholders to achieve quality improvements and reduce inequities.

2. Gender-Responsive Sector Planning, Policy and Monitoring

Strategic Planning Frameworks and Practices

The educational administration in Burkina Faso has developed a series of strategic planning documents, which are fairly well linked together and can be considered, to a large extent, as “credible” plans. The link between the 2007 Law (*Loi d’Orientation*), the 2017–2030 Education Sector and Training Plan (*Plan sectoriel de l’éducation et de la formation*) (PSEF), and the 2021–2025 Basic and Secondary Education Strategic Plan (*Plan stratégique de développement de l’éducation de base et de l’enseignement secondaire*) (PSDEBS) is clear and logical. When read in conjunction with MENAPLN’s 2022–2024 Triennial Action Plan (*Plan d’actions triennal ministeriel*) (PAT/M), these three instruments provide a comprehensive legal, policy and strategic framework that address access and quality; the broad dimensions of the right to education for all as codified in Articles 28 and 29; and the General Comment on Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to which Burkina Faso is a signatory.

The swift preparation of a COVID-19 response strategy further demonstrates planning capacity at the central level. The same can be said about the 2019–2024 National Strategy for Education in Emergencies (*Stratégie nationale de l’éducation en situation d’urgence*) (SN-ESU). As far as the ITAP could assess, there has been a genuine willingness to involve stakeholders, including development partners, though maybe insufficiently so other ministries. This is confirmed by the independent appraisal of the 2017–2030 PSEF and the 2018 Summative Evaluation of GPE’s Country-Level Support to Education in Burkina Faso.

There are, however, two profound challenges. First, while central-level capacity to design plans is strong, capacity at decentralized levels is much weaker. This long-standing issue is more critical now, because the outreach of the central level is weakened by the socioeconomic and security crisis. In addition, there is an intention to decentralize/deconcentrate more financial resources. The various plans do not present a comprehensive strategy to strengthen local and school capacity in planning and management. The 2017–2030 PSEF includes a program to strengthen decentralized management capacity (*Renforcement de la gestion décentralisée de l’éducation*) but this offers a limited vision of how to practically do this. The 2021–2025 PSDEBS also pays too little attention to this issue.

Second, the different plans do not succeed in presenting a comprehensive picture of the relationship between the various crises (including the security crisis) and the education system. The impact of these crises on education is not well analyzed, and the response by the education system receives limited attention. This may be more acceptable for the 2017–2030 PSEF, which was developed in a more stable context. Nevertheless, while the plan recognizes the security risk, the programs in the 2017–2030 PSEF do not address the issue. The 2021–2025 PSDEBS pays more attention to the crisis context, but includes few

programs which consider the linkage between education and crises. It includes a non-formal education program but does not focus on out-of-school children. The existence of a specific strategy on education in emergencies (SN-ESU) is positive, but the link with the 2021–2025 PSDEBS is too light: the 2021–2025 PSDEBS makes reference to the SN-ESU, but its strategies are not sufficiently reflective of those contained in the SN-ESU.

The fact that Burkina Faso has not yet committed to 12 years of compulsory and free education may be preoccupying in the long term, but is not an urgent source of concern (the gross enrolment ratio for pre-primary stood at only 4 percent in 2015, and just about 6 percent in 2020). What is more worrying, is that the policy commitment expressed in the 2007 Law, to provide basic education to all children from 6 to 16 years, has not yet been achieved, and that recently progress has declined. This represents a profound challenge for those in charge of defining policies and designing plans which aim at universal access and improved quality.

Operational Planning Instruments and Practices

The educational administration in Burkina Faso also systematically develops operational planning documents, which translate the strategic plans into three-yearly and yearly work plans. The link with the strategic plans is clear (because of a timing issue, the 2022–2024 Triennial Action Plan (PAT/M) refers more to the 2017–2030 PSEF and the 2012–2021 PDSEB than to the 2021–2025 PSDEBS, but this makes little difference in terms of content). Precisely because these operational plans are a faithful reflection of the strategic plans, they demonstrate similar strengths and weaknesses.

Budget Programming and Monitoring

The 2017–2030 PSEF includes a clearly argued chapter on the financing of the plan, based on a well-constructed simulation model. However, some key hypotheses (e.g., an annual average growth in gross domestic product between 2017 and 2030 of 5.2 percent), while acceptable at the moment of its writing, need to be reviewed. The preparation of the 2021–2025 PSDEBS offered an opportunity to do so, but unfortunately the cost and financing framework of this plan is weak, providing very little detail on the cost or the funding; neither does it present the major hypotheses behind the calculations. With so many essential elements missing, it is near impossible to assess the reliability of the projections.

The government has put in place processes that facilitate the link between the government budget and the sector programs. The government prepares a Multi-Year Budgetary and Economic Programming Document (*Document de programmation budgétaire et économique pluriannuelle*), the most recent being for 2022–2024. MENAPLN prepares its own, as well as an Annual Performance Report (*Projet annuel de performance*) which includes provisions for a three-year period. These are well designed, and their broad structure is clearly linked to the above-mentioned plans. The Budget

Program Performance Framework (*Cadre de performance des programmes budgétaires*) further strengthens the link with the strategic and operational plans.

Sector Monitoring Mechanisms and Practices

Burkina Faso has an efficient architecture to monitor the implementation of plans and programs. At the heart of this are a dialogue structure, very detailed yearly activity reports, joint sector reviews (JSRs), and accompanying aides-mémoires. The existence of two plans and different ministries of education is mirrored in the existence of two reports, respectively for the monitoring of the whole sector and basic and secondary education sector. The broader one integrates several elements of the smaller one. However, there are some minor inconsistencies in data between the two documents (e.g., on completion rates and the gross entry rate for post-primary and secondary).

The fact that this architecture continued functioning properly during COVID-19 and the security crisis is testimony to its strength and to the commitment by the country's partners. The ITAP highlights four main characteristics. First, the reporting is detailed, with a comprehensive overview of activities under the various programs. This is helpful to development partners, who fund many of these activities. Second, there is transparency through this level of detail and through regular comparisons with the objectives of plans and programs. Third, the reports and reviews build upon each other, year by year so there is potential to see the long-term trends. Fourth, participation in the JSRs is large in numbers and quite wide in terms of stakeholders.

Despite its strengths, the ITAP notes that the monitoring framework also has weaknesses. First, much more attention is given to implementation of activities, than to outcomes or impact. Admittedly, these are more difficult to appreciate and more open to disagreement, but they are also more useful for reflecting on the effectiveness of programs and strategies. Second, the reports are largely descriptive rather than analytical: there is rarely discussion on the causes of a particular challenge, and how to overcome these. For instance, the two most recent implementation reports, after presenting examination results, arrived at exactly the same conclusion, namely "in order to identify the explanatory factors for the decline in performance, it is necessary to conduct a study on the results of school examinations". The JSRs provide the potential for more in-depth discussions, but have rarely led to opportunities to do this.

Gender Mainstreaming Across the Policy Continuum

The 2007 Law defines the aims of education as the development of the physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, psychological, and social potential of children to assure their socialization, autonomy, and self-actualization, and in turn their participation in economic, social, and cultural development. While this law does not have a clear statement on gender, it does specify the reduction of inequities. When read in conjunction

with the 2020–2024 National Gender Strategy (*Stratégie nationale genre*) and the 2017–2030 PSEF, there is a comprehensive and detailed articulation of the aspirations, goals, initiatives, standards and expected outcomes for inclusion and diversity, including based on age, gender, socioeconomic status, location, ability, and other demographic factors.

The 2017–2030 PSEF includes strategies, such as targeting interventions, instruction in national languages, and provision in areas that intersect with education – particularly health, nutrition, water, sanitation, and hygiene. Very importantly, the 2020–2024 National Gender Strategy specifies, in the section on access to basic social services, not only access to education but to land and employment, two areas that have traditionally undercut participation in education for adolescents, particularly girls post primary schooling.

A 2021 Evaluation of Inclusivity and Gender Sensitivity in Schools in the Targeted Communes of the PARITY Project (*Evaluation de l'inclusivité et de la sensibilité au genre dans les écoles des communes cibles du projet PARITE*) suggested that the aspirations and goals in the 2017–2030 PSEF and 2020–2024 National Gender Strategy are not yet fully realized in community schools (key to development outside of the urban areas) at a rate to consolidate and sustain the returns on investment, more so at the primary rather than the post-primary levels. The evaluation suggested that school leaders, more so at the primary level, have insufficient capacity in gender and inclusion. This evaluation also noted that boys were dropping out at higher rates than girls, contrary to prevailing ideas about gender and girls, for economic reasons linked to poverty and the influence of gold-mining. Overall, the inference is that the well-articulated national plans, strategies, and initiatives are not yet fully supported at the local and school levels, and that monitoring at local and school levels is needed.

Conclusion: Burkina Faso has quite strong competencies and efficient systems for planning and monitoring. The country's legal framework reflects a commitment to free basic education for all. However, the educational administration has not succeeded in formulating and implementing convincing strategies to improve education in a context of crisis. This is illustrated by the lack of progress, and recent regression on some key indicators, including for instance, the increased number of out-of-school children. The main reasons are, first, that local and school capacities are weak, while the outreach of the central level has become more and more limited, and, second, that plans pay little attention to the interaction between the education system and the various crises. In addition, the routine monitoring processes offer a lot of detail on activity implementation, but little reflection on the deep-seated reasons for the slow progress. To overcome the crisis, the country needs to transform its planning and monitoring processes and to design more relevant strategies. For these reasons, the ITAP concurs with the country's self-analysis and is rating this enabling factor as a **HIGH priority**.

3. Sector Coordination: Inclusive Sector Dialogue and Coordinated Action and Coordinated Financing and Funding

3.1 Inclusive Dialogue and Coordinated Action

Coordination functions and practices

Burkina Faso has a well-laid out formal structure and process for sector dialogue and coordinated action, as decreed by its government. Led by MENAPLN, the local partnership coordination mechanism includes the Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation (*Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur, de la recherche scientifique et de l'innovation*) (MESRI), and the Ministry of Youth and Professional Training (*Ministère de la jeunesse et de la formation professionnelle*). The mechanism also has representation from the Presidency, the Prime Minister's Office, and the multiple directorates in other ministries, notably the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization and the Ministry of the Environment, Green Economy and Climate Change. The coordination mechanism includes representation from the private sector from civil society (including religious leaders, non-governmental organizations working in the education sector) and teachers' union(s). And finally, there is representation from the country's development partners and technical partners.

While civil society is represented, it is unclear whether certain constituency issues are ably or fully represented, among these the barriers to quality education for children with disabilities, refugee or displaced children, and children in rural areas, many of whom face multiple, intersecting deprivations. The large number of children not in school (pre-primary, primary and post-primary gross enrolment rates were 6.2 percent, 86.1 percent and 47.3 percent respectively in 2021 indicating sizeable numbers and proportions of children who are out of school) for these and other reasons, requires specific, coordinated action for children to be able to access and benefit from the alternative pathways outlined in the 2017–2030 PSEF. It should be noted that the official coordination mechanisms do not provide explicitly for alternative processes of coordination in emergencies. While an Education Cluster exists that coordinated some activities during the security crisis in 2021, its work appears not to be formally linked to the education sector coordination mechanisms.

Capacities for coordination

Five thematic sub-groups exist and cover access, quality, non-formal education, financial management and resource allocation, and policy/planning. There is also provision for interministerial and interagency coordination among development partners at the national level, but less so at the subnational, community and school levels. There is no evidence that the roles and capacities of personnel at the latter three levels are sufficiently defined and developed to implement the decisions taken at the national level.

In the signed minutes of coordination meetings, the ITAP noted that the process of the preparation of all documentation has been inclusive and conducted in a participatory manner, suggesting that, except for the non-inclusion of representation from the at-risk groups above, organizational arrangements are fit-for-purpose. However, it was not possible for the ITAP to deduce from the documentation how meaningful the engagement is to all stakeholders and/or how effective the coordination is for leveraging complementary strengths, knowledge, insights, and resources.

Conclusion on 3.1: There are comprehensive legal and policy frameworks in place for inclusion and coordination at the national level. However, these frameworks are not clearly reflected at subnational levels. In addition, the voices and perspectives of several at-risk groups (for example, children with disabilities, refugee or displaced children, children in rural areas and out-of-school children) appear to be absent from the coordination mechanisms. Given the underlying risks outlined above, the ITAP concurs with the country's self-analysis on this enabling factor of sector coordination and rates it as a **MEDIUM priority**.

3.2 Coordinated Financing and Funding

Availability of aid alignment and joint financing mechanisms

Burkina Faso receives external financing in support of the 2012–2021 PDSEB and the broader 2017–2030 PSEF, through projectized funding, a joint financing mechanism as well as indirectly through general budget support. External financing for the sector is split across two ministries – MENAPLN and MESRI which each prepare separate plans and budgets making it challenging to take a coordinated sector-wide approach to external financing. In the basic and secondary education sub-sectors, external projects and pooled funding financed between 7.1 percent and 10.9 percent of PDSEB activities between 2018 and 2021.

The pooled donor fund, the *Compte d'affectation spécial du trésor – Fonds de soutien au développement de l'enseignement de base* (CAST-FSDEB) has been operational for over 15 years with six donors – the Agence Française de Développement (AfD), Canada, Luxemburg, GPE, Switzerland and UNICEF – providing joint financing since 2017. All funds that flow through this account are highly aligned. The ITAP notes that in the 2017 signed protocol, development partners committed to provide three-year forecasts and commitments. In 2021, CAST-FSDEB contributed 5.4 percent of MENAPLN's action plan finances.

In addition to the pooled fund, nine donors² provide projectized financing for basic education to MENAPLN through ten active projects in 2021. Over 26 percent of the financial

² AfD, the African Development Bank, Austria, Global Affairs Canada, the Islamic Development Bank, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency, USAID, the World Bank and the World Food Programme.

value of these projects comes from USAID (via Catholic Relief Services) and the World Food Programme in support of school feeding. Despite the creation of a special treasury account for school feeding – the CAST-*Cantines Scolaires du Secondaire* (CAST-CSS) – the ITAP notes that only government funds have been channelled through this account in recent years. This suggests that more could be done to coordinate and align this substantial volume of external financing for school feeding.

Both CAST financing as well as other externally financed projects support the priorities in the 2012–2021 PDSEB and are included in MENAPLN’s Triennial Action Plan (PAT/M) and reported on in the annual PDSEB monitoring report. However, it is pertinent for the ITAP to flag that CAST-FSDEB funding focuses on basic and secondary education and that there is no equivalent fund or sub-sector plan for higher education. This suggests that the three externally funded higher education projects under MESRI that are mentioned in the 2020 Annual Performance of the Education and Training Sector Dialogue Framework (*Rapport de performance annuel 2020 du CSD-EF du plan national de développement économique et social (PNDES)*), and which equated to just over 40 percent of total external project financing (i.e. excluding CAST funds) for the education sector in 2020, may not be so well coordinated and aligned.

Accountability and dialogue around aid effectiveness

External resources for basic and secondary education are forecasted in the PAT/M and reported on in the annual PDSEB monitoring report demonstrating coordinated planning and resource management to implement activities outlined in the 2012–2021 PDSEB and now the updated 2021–2025 PSDEBS. However, work is needed to ensure a full sector-wider approach is taken to planning and monitoring across the different ministries with responsibility for education, including capturing and reporting on external financing for higher education in an integrated way.

The ITAP notes that there is significant room for improvement in the predictability of resources for CAST-FSDEB, as the 2020 and 2021 budgets required respectively two and three (upwards) revisions to capture additional funding commitments from some partners along with underspend from the previous year.

The ITAP observes that there have been challenges with the disbursement of external funds. Over the period 2016 to 2020, execution rates for CAST-FSDEB reported in the 2021 PAT/M fluctuated from a low of 57.0 percent to a high of 91.9 percent – averaging 70.6 percent. Execution rates for recurrent costs were slightly higher than those for capital costs. For externally financed projects, the average execution rate was 67.4 percent. For 2020, the reasons seem to be a combination of COVID-19, insecurity and late revision of the CAST-FSDEB budget. While two of these reasons are beyond the control of key stakeholders, this points to a need for more timely financing disbursements from

development partners in the early part of the year to ensure higher budget execution rates.

Commitment towards greater aid effectiveness practices

The establishment of CAST-FSDEB as a joint financing mechanism provides a good foundation for coordinated financing for primary and secondary education that is on plan, on budget and using the government's financial systems. However, for the period 2021 to 2023, external financing included in the Finance Law (*Loi de finances*) is forecast to drop by 40.2 percent. This is largely due to most external financing agreements expiring in 2022 (at the end of the 2012–2021 PDSEB) but also reflects a lack of information from some partners on medium-term forecasts. This highlights the need for more timely and accurate forecasts of future funding commitments to assist joint planning, and for external funding for the higher education sub-sector to be integrated. The 2021 PAT/M highlights a financing gap of 12.6 percent for basic and secondary education for the period 2022 to 2024, which could be partially met by new external financing commitments.

Conclusion on 3.2: While there is strong potential for coordinated financing and funding through CAST/FSDEB, this fund only covers the basic and secondary sub-sectors and currently excludes higher education. In addition, an increasing majority of external financing is being funded through projects rather than through CAST and there are challenges with predictability of both forecasts and disbursements of CAST and project finances. As this all indicates a direction of travel away from alignment, accountability and aid effectiveness, ITAP concurs with the country's self-analysis and is rating this enabling factor as a **HIGH priority**.

4. Volume, Equity, and Efficiency of Domestic Public Expenditure on Education

Volume

Between 2015 and 2020, Burkina Faso sustained an average annual economic growth rate of 5.8 percent and external financing grew as a percentage of GDP from 2.5 percent to 3.5 percent (2019), all of which resulted in growing public expenditure including for education. Over this period, the country consistently dedicated a high volume of domestic resources to education, exceeding the GPE benchmarks of 4 percent of GDP and 20 percent of total expenditure. Economic growth slowed to 2.5 percent in 2020 due to COVID-19 but bounced back in 2021 and is projected to maintain pre-2020 levels over the period 2022-2024. After a drop in 2020, the relative prioritization of education is projected to continue through to 2025 as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Share of education expenditure in GDP and in total government expenditure

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Education as a percentage of GDP	6.2%	3.8%	6.0%	5.8%	5.3%	5.0%	5.4%
Education as a percentage of government expenditure (excluding debt service) ³	29.9%	19.8%	31.9%	28.0%	27.4%	26.8%	26.4%
Recurrent education expenditure as a percentage of public recurrent expenditure (excluding debt service)	36.5%	23.8%	38.7%	35.3%	35.6%	35.1%	34.5%

Source: Computed from "Domestic financing requirement matrix"

The fiscal deficit has remained below 5 percent for the last few years so is at a sustainable level from domestic borrowing. The debt to GDP ratio has increased slightly over the last few years and in 2020 was 46.4 percent, but this is well below the West Africa Monetary Union maximum of 70 percent showing a stable macroeconomic environment.

The share of MENAPLN resources allocated to salaries has been stable at just over 70 percent in recent years with nearly 10 percent allocated to goods and services. In 2020, 6.3 percent of MENAPLN resources were transferred to communes with the majority for recurrent costs such as school feeding and equipment and teaching and learning materials for schools. This share rose to 8.9 percent in 2021. A minority share of the

³ These figures from the domestic financing matrix differ slightly from those in the Multi-Year Budgetary and Economic Programming Document (*Document de programmation budgétaire et économique pluriannuelle*) which state 29.27% for 2022 and 30.83% for 2024.

investment budget includes transfers for school construction and rehabilitation but the ITAP remarks that these transfers have fluctuated quite substantially from year to year and there have often been delays in procurement and low execution rates. Various reports state that the amount transferred to communes to cover school feeding is grossly insufficient in light of the significant food security challenges that the country faces, and often arrives late.

According to the 2021 PAT/M, the MENAPLN execution rate (including transfers to communes) has exceeded 98 percent for recurrent resources and 97 percent for capital resources except for in 2020 when capital resources were only executed at 81.1 percent. The 2020 PNDES Performance Report (*Rapport du Performance 2020 du PNDES*) looks at execution rates for the education sector as a whole and found that in 2020, the overall education sector budget execution rate was 87.5 percent, an increase from the 2019 rate of 83.9 percent.

Equity

Intrasectoral allocation of funds: Between 2022 and 2024, just over 80 percent of the entire education budget is forecasted to be allocated to MENAPLN. Of MENAPLN's resources, 67 percent are forecast for primary, 9 percent for post-primary general and 6 percent for post-primary technical and these figures are similar to those over recent years showing a broadly equitable distribution of resources across the different educational sub-sectors in the three ministries responsible for education.

There has not been a recent education sector public expenditure review and the only direct figures on the equity of public resources are contained in the 2015 RESEN which stated that in 2012/13, 46 percent of educational resources were spent on the richest 10 percent of the population which was a small improvement from 2006 when the figure was 50 percent. However, the ITAP notes that these figures are from nearly a decade ago so may not reflect the current reality. The ITAP has therefore looked at data and evidence on equity to infer the extent to which domestic resources are being used more equitably.

Priority communes: The ITAP applauds MENAPLN for having identified 43 priority communes in 2009 as being the most disadvantaged educationally and for prioritizing reporting on key education indicators for these priority communes as well as for the country as a whole to enable closer monitoring of progress. While in 2020/21 the key indicators were all lower on average in these communes than nationally, the ITAP notes that the gap has narrowed over the last six years, even though it is still sizeable (for example, the average primary gross enrolment rate was 45.7 percent across the 43 priority communes compared to 93.6 percent in the remaining communes).

Geographic, rural and gender disparities: There has been a modest increase in education access including an increase in the percentage of children in rural areas living

less than three kilometers from the nearest school. There has also been a slight increase in completion rates (the primary completion rate was 62.4 percent in 2021 with girls completing at a slightly higher rate than boys) and some improvement in gender parity. However, despite the modest increases overall, the national figures hide considerable geographic (regional and communal) and urban-rural disparities. Notably, gender parity has not been reached in secondary education and girls perform less well than boys in mathematics at primary level. There are also large regional disparities in learning scores under PASEC. The ITAP also notes that while overall the number of primary teachers is sufficient to meet the needs nationally, these teachers are not equitably distributed across regions and communes.

Insecurity and school closures: Six regions are affected by school closures due to insecurity. In 2018/19, 96 schools were occupied by internally-displaced persons and nearly 330k children had their schooling interrupted due to insecurity. In 2020, 24.5 percent and 46.7 percent respectively of primary and post-primary children were out-of-school highlighting inequities in access to schooling.

Household finances: The ITAP did not have access to any data on the level of household expenditure on education but the 2018 Harmonized Household Living Conditions Survey (*Enquête Harmonisée sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages*) (EHCVM) found that in the 2017/18 school year, 14.5 percent of families mentioned lack of finances as a reason for their children being out of school, 16.3 percent mentioned preference for a job and 0.5 percent mentioned high school fees. These responses suggest that the cost of schooling is a burden on poorer families and some prefer their children to work and bring in income rather than paying money for their schooling and foregoing this income.

Efficiency

Teacher allocation: The ITAP notes that there has been growth in the overall number of teachers resulting in a decrease in the average pupil-teacher ratio, but in 2015, a study found that 30 percent of teachers were not allocated to schools based on any assessment of teacher needs. Recent analysis suggests that this situation has not changed, resulting in inefficient deployment of teachers.

Internal efficiency: The ITAP concurs with the country analysis that repetition and dropout pose significant efficiency challenges both generally, and particularly in rural areas, resulting in sizeable numbers of overage children in the system, decreasing transition rates between sub-cycles of education and in wastage of public resources. The ITAP notes the 2018 analysis of the survival rate which found that for every 100 students who start in Grade 1 (*CPI*), 69 arrive in Grade 6 (*CM2*), 35 in Grade 10 (*3ème*) and only 10 in Grade 13 (*Terminale*), demonstrating serious challenges with internal efficiency. In 2020/21, the primary repetition rate was 6.7 percent in public schools and

this figure varied by grade and has fluctuated over recent years. Measures to reduce repetition in the lower grades of primary have succeeded but have had the unintended consequence of increasing dropout. Dropout rates in 2019/20 were around 10 percent in Grade 1 (*CPI*) and Grade 3 (*CEI*) and rose to 15.7 percent in Grade 5 (*CMI*) though were below 5 percent in other grades. At secondary level, repetition and dropout become an even bigger challenge – with a repetition rate in 2020/21 of 24.6 and 20.1 percent respectively in the first cycle and second cycle of public secondary education and 34 percent of learners repeating the final year of secondary (*Terminale*). Dropout rates were also particularly high in Grade 7 (*6ème*) and Grade 11 (*Seconde*) with rates being higher for boys than for girls; in Grade 11 they reached 35.6 percent and 30.8 percent respectively. Early marriage and pregnancy are a major reason for females dropping out of secondary education while for boys the reasons are linked to livelihoods and income generation.

Conclusion: Considering the significant challenges of equity and efficiency as well as the limited impact domestic resources are having on educational outcomes, the ITAP concurs with the country’s self-analysis and is rating this enabling factor as a **HIGH priority**. Overall, despite a relatively generous allocation of public resources to education, there is significant wastage of these resources given the challenges with internal efficiency. While there has been improvement in the equity of public resources, challenges still remain particularly for certain regions, rural areas and for girls in secondary education. With annual performance reports showing that most indicators remain under target, this suggests to the ITAP that public resources are not being used as effectively as they could be for sector transformation and could be better targeted to improve equity, efficiency and broader educational outcomes which remain low.

Part C: High-Level Summary of Enabling Factors Assessed as High Priority

Enabling Factor	Challenges and Rationale for High Priority Rating
<p>Gender-Responsive Sector Planning, Policy and Monitoring</p>	<p>Challenge: While central capacity in sector planning and monitoring is quite strong, the actual processes and products (e.g. the plans and joint sector reviews) are not fully relevant to the crisis context. Local capacities remain weak; reflection on the relationship between education and the crisis is rare; routine monitoring fails to provide insight into the causes of the longstanding challenges; progress on some key indicators has been slow (for example, numbers of out-of-school children) and recently has been negative.</p> <p>Rationale for high priority: In order to design innovative strategies to turn around the recent regression, planning and monitoring processes need transformation. In order to implement these strategies, local capacities need strengthening. Without these changes, planning and monitoring will not be able to provide a convincing response to the crisis.</p>
<p>Coordinated Financing and Funding</p>	<p>Challenge: External financing for the sector is split across two Ministries – MENAPLN and MESRI which each prepare separate plans and budgets making it difficult to take a coordinated sector-wide approach to external financing. Even though a pooled fund exists for basic and secondary education (CAST), an increasing majority of external financing for this sub-sector is being funded through projects rather than through CAST.</p> <p>Rationale for high priority: A reversal of the trend of increased projectized funding relative to pooled funding will be required to ensure greater coordination and alignment of external financing for basic education and wider use of government systems. An integrated approach by MENAPLN and MESRI to joint financial planning and reporting will help to provide a more effective focus on education system transformation.</p>

<p>Volume, Equity, and Efficiency of Domestic Public Expenditure on Education</p>	<p>Challenge: Inefficiency and inequity continue to pose major challenges to the country’s transformation agenda in education with large amounts of wastage of public resources due to repetition, dropout and inefficient deployment of teachers. While inequities have narrowed slightly in recent years, there still remain substantial geographic, rural-urban and gender disparities in educational access and achievement suggesting that the education budget is not being targeted sufficiently to reduce these disparities.</p> <p>Rationale for high priority: Better targeting of (the relatively generous share of) domestic finances for education to address efficiency and equity challenges and to ensure greater alignment of expenditure with 2021–2025 PSDEBS and 2017–2030 PSEF priorities is critical for the country to make progress with system transformation.</p>
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