



A STRENGTHENED EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO THROUGH PBF

INTRODUCTION

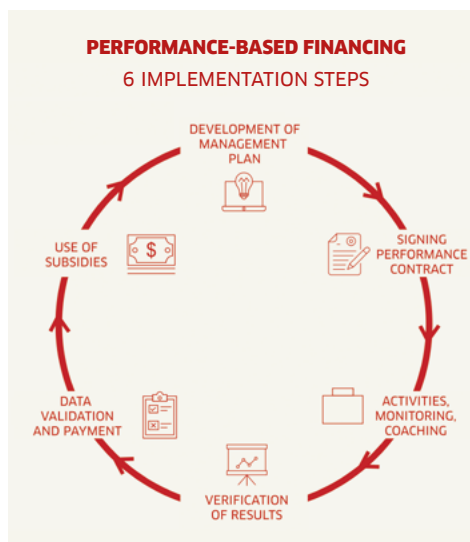
As part of the PAQUE project, between 2018 and 2021, CORDAID provided technical assistance to all levels of the DRC education system supporting the Ministry of Primary, Secondary and Technical Education (MEPST) through Performance-based Financing (PBF). The objectives of PAQUE are:

- To improve the quality of primary education
- To strengthen management in the education sector.

WHAT IS PBF?

PBF is a performance-based strategy for incentivizing basic social services to improve their quality. The schools and decentralised structures of MEPST participating in the PBF approach:

- develop a management plan to achieve the objectives of improving the quality of education;
- sign a performance contract with the Result Verification Agency (RVA), Cordaid and a regulator. A list of selected quantity and quality indicators is part of this contract;
- carry out activities during the school term to achieve the indicators and targets. Follow-up and coaching is provided by Cordaid and the RVA;
- receive a triannual subsidy based on the results achieved for the selected education indicators. The RVA verifies these results, while Cordaid validates them and uses the results to calculate the amount of the PBF subsidy per school/structure.



A local association conducts a community verification to establish the satisfaction of parents and pupils on the received education;

- decide autonomously how to use their earned PBF subsidies as long as their expenses are in line with the management plan they developed.

FACTS AND FIGURES

630,000
beneficiaries (pupils)

1,350
Primary Schools

14
Educational Provinces with PROVEDs (Provincial Directorates) and IPPs (Provincial Pool Inspections):

- Kasai 1 and 2
- Kasai Central 1 and 2
- Mongala
- Tshuapa
- South-Ubangi 1 and 2
- North Ubangi
- Equateur 1 and 2
- Lomami
- Tanganyika 1 and 2

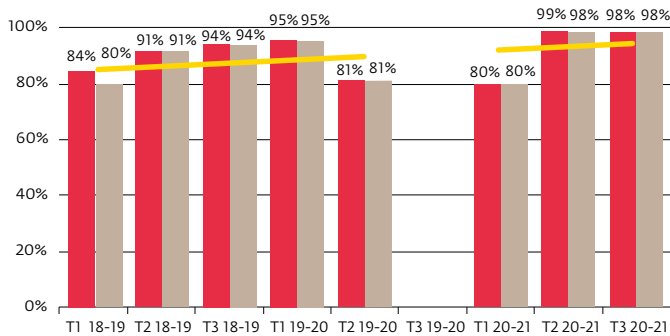
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Sub-Divisions with Sub-PROVEDs, Inspool (Pool Inspection) and COSPRO (Sub-Provincial Coordination)

At national level: the MEPST and the Technical PBF Support Unit

RESULTS

Schools in the DRC were partially closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic during the 2nd term of the 2019-2020 school year until the 1st term of the 2020-2021 school year. This had an impact on the project's results. The indicators used were adapted to this situation.

% OF VULNERABLE PUPILS PRESENT IN SCHOOL

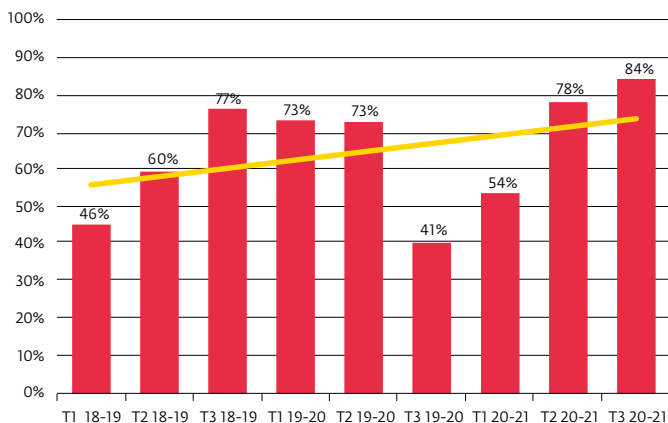


■ Girls ■ Boys

During the 3rd term of 2019-2020, schools were closed so no verification of pupil attendance could be done.

- The project has contributed to improving the school attendance rate of vulnerable children.
- 98% of vulnerable children identified by the schools are enrolled in school at the end of the project.
- The drop in pupil enrolment during the project corresponds to the period during which schools were closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

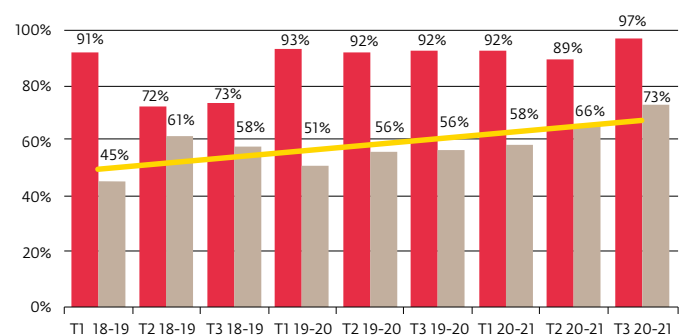
QUALITY % OF SCHOOLS



The quality of education increased from 46% to 84% due to the use of PBF subsidies for:

- The acquisition of school equipment such as benches and textbooks.
- The improvement of infrastructure such as latrines, classrooms and fencing.
- The improvement of the quality of teaching provided: reduction of teacher absenteeism, in-service teacher training, supervision by the director and monitoring of compliance with the curriculum and school calendar.
- The introduction of regular monitoring of pupils by teachers and better collaboration between parents and teachers.

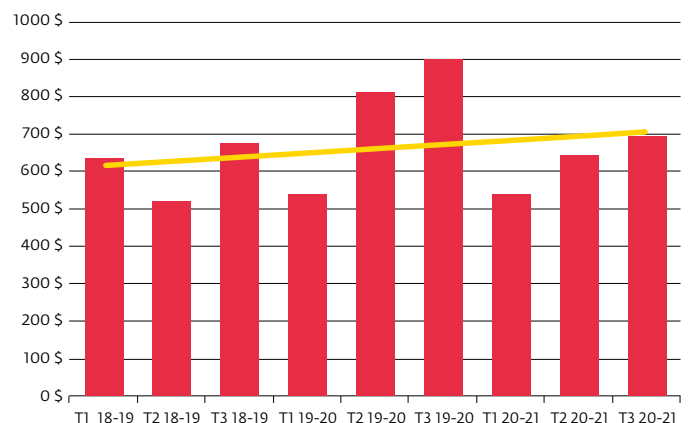
PARENT AND PUPIL SATISFACTION RATE



■ Parents ■ Pupils

- The level of pupil satisfaction (rising from 45% to 73%) is linked to the improved presence and punctuality of teachers, changes in the way they teach and the improvement of the school environment as a result of the investments schools realised with the PBF subsidies.
- The implementation of the free primary education reform in the first term of 2019-2020 also increased the level of parental satisfaction.

AVERAGE SUBSIDIES PAID TO SCHOOLS



- The average triannual PBF subsidy paid to schools throughout the project is 664 USD.
- The increase in the number of girls in school (from 218,148 to 300,337) is one of the most significant results in all provinces and contributed substantially to the level of subsidies paid to schools.
- During the COVID-19 period the project maintained the payment of the PBF subsidies to the schools to limit the demotivation of beneficiaries.



OTHER RESULTS

Motivated teachers

Schools can use up to 70% of their PBF subsidy for staff bonuses as an addition to their regular salaries. The remaining 30% has to be spent on investments to improve the quality of education. As a result, teachers became more involved with parents and pupils and had more resources to improve their teaching. In consultation with the parents, the teachers became more involved in the management of the school which contributed to improving the quality of their teaching.

An example of a parent committee and community involvement

In Bisende Primary School, Central Kasai Province, the Parents' Committee, was concerned about the high number of children enrolled: on average 81 pupils per class. Therefore, with the PBF subsidy and together with the teaching staff 6 new classrooms were built with locally made bricks and a corrugated iron roof. In addition, the schools furnished the classrooms with plastic chairs: one for each teacher and one for the head teacher's office.

An example of a regulator's investment

The sub-division of Bongandanga 2 (Mongala) purchased a motorbike to facilitate the supervision of schools in its jurisdiction and the sub-provincial coordination purchased cement bags and corrugated aluminium sheets for the construction of its office in a durable manner.

“Due to poor teacher management and lack of motivation, teachers were no longer preparing lessons and were not arriving at school on time. Lesson preparation, punctuality and attendance of teachers are among the PBF indicators in the project. During the project most teachers seriously improved their preparation and the pedagogical content of the lessons provided to the pupils”.

A head teacher in Yakoma



PAYMENT OF PBF SUBSIDIES WITH MOBILE MONEY

Cordaid normally pays the PBF subsidies into the bank accounts of the participating schools. However, in the DRC most of the schools are located in remote and isolated areas, tens or even hundreds of kilometres from the towns where the banks are located. Each school term the representatives of the schools (headmasters, teacher representatives, parent committee chairmen) lose a lot of time collecting their PBF subsidy by motorbike, bicycle or even canoe.

To reduce the travel time and associated costs, Cordaid started with a Mobile Money payment service via telecommunication operators in North Ubangi. By the beginning of August 2021, more than 114 schools were paid with mobile money for a total of USD 50,707. The first experiences with mobile money transfers has had a positive impact on the implementation of the project in remote areas.



“Before mobile money, we had to travel long distances (200 to 300 km) from Yakoma to Gbado on a very bad road to get our PBF subsidies. With a mobile money payment, we can collect our subsidies locally through our mobile phones at the nearest distribution point. This has reduced the stress of travelling long distances each time and also reducing the costs involved in the journey”.

A teacher from Yakoma

ABOUT CORDAID

Cordaid strives to eliminate poverty and exclusion. We do this in the most fragile and conflict-affected regions, as well as in the Netherlands.

We encourage local communities to rebuild trust and resilience and to strengthen people's independence. Our professionals provide humanitarian aid and create solutions to improve security, health and education, but also stimulate inclusive economic growth. In the DRC, Cordaid has offices in Kinshasa, Bukavu, Coma, Kananga, Gemena and Bunia and branches in other provinces.

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