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Education and Capacity Building, Tera, Niger Project Proposal

Brief Background: The Problem

Niger suffers from an appalling lack of access to education. Nearly three-quarters of the population cannot read or write, and in rural areas as many as 90 percent of women are illiterate. With only 38 percent of school age children enrolled in primary school there is massive need to support the education system.

The reasons for this dire situation are complex; national poverty and lack of infrastructure means there is an insufficient number of schools and teachers to provide quality education for the population. Many schools are made from mud and straw and teachers are poorly motivated due to low salaries and inadequate training. In addition parents are also unwilling to send children away for schooling when they need them to work at home. Early marriage is another barrier; when girls as young as ten become wives they are no longer able to attend school.

Project Goal

To improve access to quality education, better learning conditions and increase school enrolment in the target area.

Project Objectives

- Ensuring school facilities are in place to improve access to basic education and quality of learning
- Improving the quality of teaching at primary and preschool levels
- Strengthen the capacity of communities to manage their local education systems and promote awareness of children's rights

Project Area

Tera, located in the dry Sahel region of Niger, is 176 miles west of capital Niamey. The World Vision Tera Area Development Programme (ADP) covers 17 villages in the western region of Tillabéry.

In Tera, only four in 10 children aged 5–18 are enrolled in school, and just 27% of boys and 26% of girls complete basic education. 30% of the classrooms are built from straw and mud in this area.

Beneficiaries

This project will directly benefit 3,000 children aged 6–18 years, and will have a wider impact on a target population of approximately 23,000 people living in the project area through the community training and awareness aspects of this project.

Cover: In a classroom made out of straw these two young girls are keen to answer questions in class and gain an education.

Right: Landlocked Niger



Project Activities

- Ensuring school facilities are in place to improve access to basic education and quality of learning

The project will support the construction and enlargement of 10 classrooms with hardwearing materials. Solid walls will protect children against wind, rain, the heat and the cold. Improvements to the physical environments of the school will also help promote community awareness of the school's merits and encourage parents to send their children.

In addition to the classrooms, five blocks of three latrines and four school canteens will also be built. Communities will participate in the building of latrines and be provided with training on good hygiene and sanitation practices. Providing a meal at school in the canteen will prompt parents to send their children to lessons as this lunch may often be the only meal children receive each day.

- Improving the quality of teaching at primary and preschool levels

The project will provide educational and instructional materials for 17 schools and support the training of 75 teachers in new teaching and learning methods. By providing training or re-training where appropriate, the project will reinforce the capacity of teachers to provide quality education to the community.

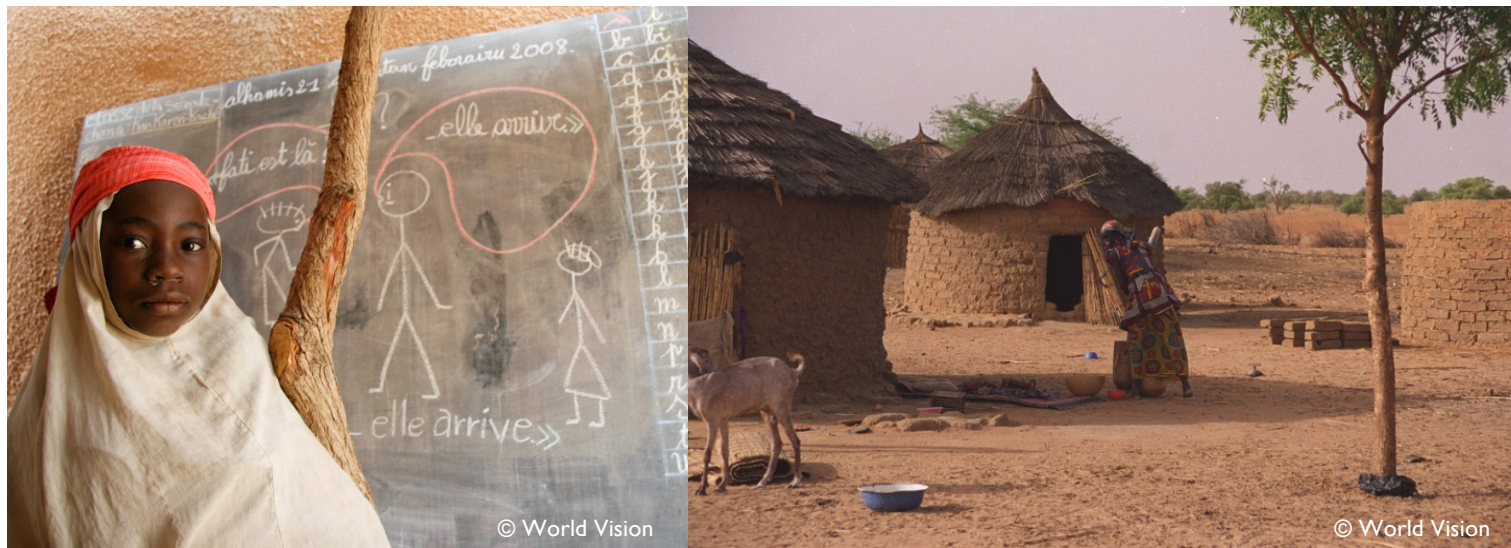
As an alternative to formal education, 14 literacy centres will be created each with its own literacy teacher and village literacy committee. These centres will also provide vocational training for older children.

- Strengthen the capacity of communities to manage their local education systems and promote awareness of children's rights

In order to mobilise people to become aware of the roles they play in promoting children's education, a major awareness campaign will be launched to bring communities together in the fight against violations of children's right to education. Women groups and other community-based organisations will be provided with sensitisation training on the importance of children's education, particularly for young girls. Children's clubs will also play a vital role in promoting awareness of child rights.

Below: Classrooms made from straw and mud are the norm in many areas





Above left: French is widely spoken in Niger and therefore a core subject at school

Above right: Many families prefer to keep girls at home where there are chores to be done to support their families

Recent Progress

The project has begun to make steady progress in what is an educationally barren environment. Recently the following activities have taken place;

- Two new fully-equipped classrooms together with a block of three latrines have been constructed allowing 100 more children to study in safe conditions away from the cold, heat, wind and dust.
- The project team is building up a strong relationship with the IEB (the local inspectorate of basic education) and is engaged in various village-level advocacy activities, designed to educate parents about the merits of enrolling children in school. This has resulted in a 2% increase of female students - a small but significant step in the right direction.
- Teacher training got off to a strong start with CAPED (Educational Training Unit) sessions held for local teachers and a total of 49 class visits by educational advisors around schools in the Tera and Djagourou townships.
- World Vision has supported the formation of 16 new children's clubs so far this year, taking the number of children's clubs in operation around the project area to a total of 20. Recent club activities have included a campaign to improve hygiene at school and the establishment of a tutorial programme where the more able students give assistance to low achievers. Advocacy activities are also promoted by children's clubs and the success story below highlights how these clubs can be a catalyst for change.

Children's Club Success Story

Recently, two young girls felt the direct benefit of the advocacy activities being initiated by their local children's club. The club members had been advised that the two sisters were about to be forced into an early marriage by their father. Once they received this information, the club organised an emergency session to discuss the issue. Understanding that once the marriage ceremony was conducted the girls would be put at great risk, they resolved to act as quickly as possible.

A delegation from the club was sent immediately to meet the headmaster of the school attended by the two girls to speak out about the situation and to pressure the school administration to inform the appropriate authorities. The Directorate of Child Protection was informed and the matter was taken before the courts. As a result, the marriages were stopped and the girls are free to continue with their education.

We are currently seeking **£56,891** for this project and would be very grateful for any contribution that you are able to make towards this work.

With your assistance we can continue to make significant changes in the lives of the children of Tera, Niger; providing them with more schools, better teachers and a brighter educational future. On behalf of all these children we would like to thank you for considering this proposal.

Thank you!

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