

## CASE STUDY 83

### **Mobilisation for enrolment and retention of girls in school in the town of Tibiri – Gobir, Niger**

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Country & Sector: Niger, education

#### **Context**

Created by Act No. 2002 -014, 11 June 2002 Common Tibiri is one of the five municipalities of the department Guidan Roumdji. The administrative centre of town is located seven km from the town of Maradi. It has 176 administrative villages and neighbourhoods with a population of 127,393 inhabitants in 2008. From the perspective of school infrastructure, the municipality has 349 classes, including 211 huts or 60.11%. The teaching staff consists of 322 teachers is divided in 39 teachers and 283 assistant teachers, one student teacher ratio of 46. These schools totalized 3,183 school tables for a ratio of 4.58 students per table.

#### The challenge

The Niger has had since 2003 a ten-year education development program (PDDE), whose overall objectives are (i) increasing access to the teachings of formal and especially for children, girls and the poor, (ii) improving the quality and relevance of education, (iii) capacity development of strategic management and operational responsibilities of governments and local communities. A specific objective is the involvement and mobilisation of communities in favor of schooling in general and girls in particular.

Despite multiple efforts by the state and its partners in PDDE in the field of basic education the town has 95 schools including five community schools, five French Arab and a special school for disabled children. All these schools account for a workforce of 15,039 students in September 2008-2009. 6275 students (41.74%) are girls.

But the Maradi region has one of the lowest enlisting rate in the country. At the beginning of school year 2008-2009, the gross enlisting ratio (GER) in the region was 65.66% against 67.8% nationally. Significant disparities are evident between urban and rural areas on the one hand, and between girls and boys on the other. Indeed, in 2008-2009 the GER was 54.2% for females against 78.6% for boys.

The urban commune Tibiri despite its proximity to the administrative centre of the region is not immune to this reality. At the inspection of the basic education which covers two Tibiri Commons (Tibiri and Sae Sabou) the GER was 84% overall with only 41.6% for girls.

The main challenges faced by young girls from their school are related to two aspects:

#### **The access:**

- Lack of school infrastructure with solid materials, the number of classes in straw hut in 2010 is 212 or 66.5% of classes;

- Girls from villages bordering the town of Maradi contribute to the domestic economy through the sale of garden produce on the market (65% of these girls are out of school), an activity that can be associated with the school.

### **Retention level:**

- The level of retention of girls in school is very low compared to boys. It appears that between 60 and 70% of girls enlisted fail to end the cycle (level 6th year of primary school). This further complicates a situation characterised by very low female enlisted in 2009, with girls accounting for 41.46% of the total;
- Early marriage and some cases of unwanted pregnancies are major obstacles to behaviour change of parents vis-à-vis the retention of girls in school;
- The teaching staff comprises over 85% of contract teachers with more than a quarter not being trained, with a low educational level and mostly unmotivated acts heavily on the quality of education. This discourages some parents to keep their children at school.

### **Client**

The activity was led by the Union of Women elected (UFE), Department of Guidan Roudji and urban commune Tibiri, both clients of SNV since 2006. UFE are women who have been elected Councillors or MP. Among them, are also women's relay, who are community-based. The activities cover UFE Tibiri commune where it is very active, in advocacy for girls' schooling.

In early 2009, the town of Tibiri and other school partners (FCC and IEB) committed at the regional forum for a social mobilisation to promote the education of the girl. So in that sense, facing such a complex problem, the urban commune of Tibiri-Gobir and UFE Department Guidan Roudji have requested support to develop and implement an action plan for community mobilisation for registering and keeping girls in school in the municipality's urban Tibiri.

### **Intervention logic and methods**

To achieve the goal of mobilising the various local actors to improve attendance and retention of girls in school in the municipality's urban Tibiri-Gobir, the support of SNV plays at several levels:

Definition and planning process to be implemented by the municipality;

- seeking additional funding, which helped mobilise one million FCFA ((1,000,000), Euro 1.520), with the support program on Local Governance (PAGL) funded by the Swiss Cooperation in Niger;
- development of a constellation of actors and an analysis of the problem of education of the girl in the municipality;
- development tools and methods for communication for behaviour changes during the village forums;
- analysis of problems identified during the community forums organised by the municipality;
- organisation of community forums (identification, discussion topics, preparation of papers) on the education of girls in the municipality;
- development of an action plan for social mobilisation through several working sessions with the Mayor, the President of the Union of elected women and the ad hoc committee to steer the process;
- preparation of evaluation workshop of the action plan (ongoing).

Municipal School Management organisations: Parents' Associations (EPA), Association of Educating Mother (EMA), Management Committee of the School (COGES) and Federation of Municipal Coges (FCC) are very active in social mobilisation for schooling despite their low level of internal structure. Under the management of school problems at the municipal level, policy dialogue and cooperation is relatively good between the municipality of Tibiri, inspection of basic education (IEB), community organisations (APE, AME and COGES) and traditional chiefs.

### **Outcome**

1. An action plan for improving enlisting and retention of girls in schools is developed. It identifies key activities and responsibilities of each actor in the school;
2. Dialogue and exchanges on the issue of education of the girl by the different actors that led to the development of a shared approach by all stakeholders;
3. Under 95 villages having schools, 63 have signed a document of collective commitment to work for the education of the girl;
4. An NGO partner of the commune (NGO Karkara) has developed a project file for the education of the girl in the town, which is currently in the fundraising circuit;
5. Membership of the partners in the process and information exchange; 64% individual (planned) commitments were signed by parents to register and maintain their girls at school;
6. An increase of 796 new registrations for the 2009-2010 school year for girls, because 2303 girls have been pre-registered, against 1507 in 2008-2009. The increase was so sudden and important that the state failed to provide sufficient number of teachers and build the required classes to accommodate them all;
7. A significant reduction in dropout of girls during the school year, with 479 against 916 the previous year.

### **Impact**

The activity is in progress, it is very early to get a tangible impact at this point. However, the success of the activity was such that the responsiveness of educational services for teachers and reception facilities had been largely insufficient.

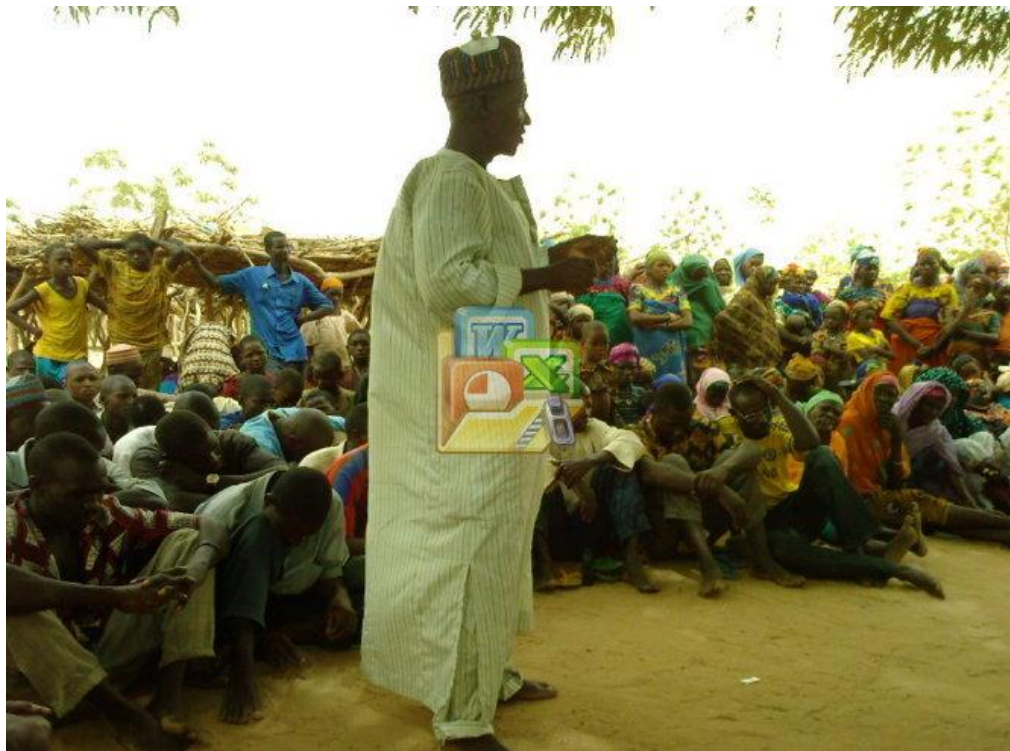
### **Lessons Learnt**

- The multi-stakeholder approach has resulted in a strong commitment of local stakeholders and resulted in a real mobilisation for the education of the girl; The strong involvement of traditional leaders and communities is crucial in mobilising for the education of the girl;
- The introduction in the awareness process of formal commitments (signed), both at community and individual does have an impact on the education of girls in rural areas (process of accountability);
- It is important to take into account the infrastructure capacity and planning for new teachers in the process of social mobilisation in favour of the school in general.

### **Photos and quote:**

*'Further to the campaign of mobilising people for mass registration and keeping girls in school organised by common Tibiri, I am satisfied with respect to the*

*merits of the education of girls. Thus I agree to register all the girls at school and letting them continue their studies.'* Kada Rabo, parent of student Garin Gado Sofoua.



**Details:**

Number of PPDs: 18

Total cost of activity

SNV: F CFA 1,298,250

Customers: 545.000 F CFA

Other partners: CFA 1,000,000

Total: 2,843,250 CFA