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**Décembre 2022**

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Acronymes

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SIGLES** | **DENOMINATION** |
| APC : | Approche par compétence |
| BEP : | Brevet d’Études Professionnelles |
| CASLT | La Confédération africaine des syndicats libres du Tchad |
| CATC | La Confédération africaine des Travailleurs Chrétiens |
| CEFEN | Certificat Elémentaire de Fin d’Etudes Normales CEG : Collège d’Enseignement Général |
| CETP : | Collèges d’Enseignement Technique et Professionnel |
| CFTP : | Centres de Formation Technique et Professionnelle |
| CLTT | Confédération libre de travailleurs du Tchad |
| CNS | Conférence Nationale Souveraine |
| CONAM | Commission Nationale des Affectations et des Mutations des enseignants |
| CONFEMEN : | Conférence des ministres de l’éducation des Etats et gouvernements de la francophonie |
| DFFTP : | Diplôme de Fin de Formation Technique et Professionnelle |
| ECOSIT | Enquête de Consommation et sur le Secteur Informel au Tchad |
| EFE | Education Formation Emploi |
| ETFP | Enseignement Technique et Formation Professionnelle |
| FENAPET | Fédération Nationale des Parents d’Elèves |
| GRP | Groupe de recherche pédagogique EFE : Education formation emploi |
| IDH | Indice de développement humain |
| INSEED | Institut national de la Statistique, des Etudes, Economique et Démographique |
| ISSED | Institut Supérieur des Sciences de l’Education |
| LETCO : | Lycées d’Enseignement Technique Commercial |
| LETIN : | Lycées d’Enseignement Technique Industriel |
| LETP : | Lycées d’Enseignement Technique et Professionnel |
| MC : | Maitres communautaires |
| MCPN | Ministère de la culture et du patrimoine national |
| MEN | Ministère de l’éducation nationale |
| MES | Ministère de l’enseignement de supérieur |
| MFPM | Ministère de la formation professionnelle et métier |
| MJS | Ministère de la jeunesse et des sports |
| MPS : | Mouvement patriotique du salut |
| ODD : | Objectifs de développement durable |
| OIT | Organisation Internationale de Travail |
| PASEC : | Programme d’analyse des systèmes éducatifs de la confemen |
| PDDEA: | Plan Décennal de Développement et de l’Alphabétisation |
| PIB : | Produit intérieur brut |
| PIET : | Plan intérimaire de l’éducation du Tchad |
| PND : | Plan national de développement |
| PREAT : | Projet de renforcement de l’éducation et de l’alphabétisation au Tchad |
| RESEN | Rapport d’Etat du Système Educatif National Tchadien |
| RGPH2 | Recensement Général de la Population et de l’Habitat |
| SET | Syndicat des Enseignants du Tchad |
| SIPEA : | Stratégie intérimaire pour l’éducation et l’alphabétisation |
| SNRP : | Stratégie Nationale de Réduction de la Pauvreté |
| SYNECS | Syndicat National des Enseignants et Chercheurs du Supérieur |
| ULST | Union Locale des syndicats du Tchad |
| UNESCO | Organisation des nations unies pour l’éducation, la science et la culture |
| UNST | Union Nationale des Syndicats du Tchad |
| UNTT | Union Nationale des Travailleurs du Tchad |
| USAT : | Union des syndicats autonomes du Tchad |
| UST | Union des Syndicats du Tchad |
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***Acknowledgements***

We wish to thank Education International (EI) and the Union of Education Norway (UEN) for supporting this study, which provided an opportunity for Chadian trade unions, senior staff of the National Committee for Social Dialogue (CNDS), the Federation of Parents' Associations and the Education Sector Project Director to reflect on the progress of the framework for social and policy dialogue in Chad.

We would like to thank the General Secretary of the SET and his team on the Executive Board for their welcome and the attention they gave to this study, as well as the President of the labour centre UST and his team.

This study is the last work of our colleague KOULLO BENDJA Belya, who died before the end of this project. We are posthumously grateful to him. May he rest in peace.

We are grateful to all those who agreed to meet us and answer our questions.

*Preface by the General Secretary of the SET*

The study on the context of the education system and the social and policy dialogue raised profound questions about the mission of the Chad Teachers' Union (SET). We learnt a lot from the study? Questions and new avenues of work continue to open up before us, and new challenges are constantly emerging. If for decades we have focused on defending the moral and material interests of teachers, wanting to raise their status as teachers, it is also important to consider that the education system as a whole necessarily needs our contribution in developing strategies, policies and pedagogies that are adapted and effective for our current generation. It is absolutely important to understand that the education system is a historical construction site where each generation tries to fulfil its duty, to make its contribution to meet the actual needs of the youth and the society of its time.

The study has opened our eyes to the continual and repetitive limits of the reforms of the education system and the successive memorandums of understanding that do not lead in any decisive way to the valorisation of the teacher, who plays a central role in education in our current context of social crisis known as the "Android society". The learning system is continually being modified by new information and communication technologies. This is an important advantage. However, the work of the teacher is becoming arduous and requires rigorous self-training, the scope of which we have not yet grasped in order to provide an appropriate response. Dialogue in the noble sense of the term in the social and political spheres is a good means for achieving conquest and solidarity between the actors in the education system in order to seek solutions together.

This study has placed side by side the education system, social/political dialogue and the trade union movement in the education sector. This approach is ultimately a pedagogical tool that enables SET to be in tune with its environment and to forge relations with trade union organisations in order to provide harmonised and concerted support for the education system, as the saying goes: you can't make the world on your own.

Enjoy your reading!

MBAIRISS Ngartoïdé Blaise

*Executive Summary*

This study analysed the local context to better understand the structural, political and socio-economic forces that influence the opportunities for teachers' unions to engage in both social and policy dialogue, with a view to influencing education policies and advancing workers' rights in the education sector.

The main aim of this study was to highlight the factors that influence the education system and the trade union sector, in order to analyse the various mechanisms that underpin the resulting social and policy dialogue. The study's method is qualitative, based on documentary analysis and interviews with key actors and personalities in Chad's education system at central and local level, including heads of public and private schools and teachers. The documentary analysis mainly provided information on the impact of education policies, the historical development of the Chadian education system and the emergence of the trade union movement. Interviews with key stakeholders revealed the different perceptions of the actors. Teachers, while pointing to the poor conditions in which they work, expressed dissatisfaction with the role of the State in assuming its responsibilities: "everything is politicised", said one interviewee. The leaders of the trade union organisations believe that social dialogue is an observed practice; it is both institutionalised by the meetings of the National Framework for Social Dialogue and spontaneous because it is provoked by social demands leading to strikes and requiring dialogue to envisage solutions. The leaders stress the limits of this dialogue, which does not systematically lead to the implementation of decisions: “The authorities lack the political will," said one respondent. Those in charge of the *Cadre National de Dialogue Sociale* (National Framework for Social Dialogue), for their part, believe that they do not have the resources to carry out the role assigned to them.

Indeed, it appears that the efforts made to carry out a number of reforms in the education sector have so far failed to produce credible results in terms of the quality of teachers' performance and the effectiveness of the learning system. The quantitative and qualitative shortfall in resources means that the growing demand for education cannot be met. This poses major challenges in terms of social and political dialogue. Historically, the education system was a "building site" opened up by colonisation to provide the means for expansion. The space for dialogue was very limited. It is true that several trade unions were set up, but their mission was and continues to be modelled on that of the unions in the colonising country, and they function as their intermediaries in Chad. Defending the interests of indigenous workers and trade union freedom was a long conquest until the Brazzaville conference in 1944, which laid the foundations for a change in the way workers were organised and put an end once and for all to the phase of forced labour that ruled out any possibility of social dialogue. The post-independence perio side by side d continued to experience political turbulence, which had repercussions on the development of the education system and was characterised by a low capacity for adaptation and innovation in response to the new problems that arose. The *Conférence Nationale Souveraine* (CNS) in 1993 and the Etats Généraux de l'éducation in 1994 laid the foundations for a political dialogue which strongly structured the demands of the teachers' unions and continues to do so through numerous agreements whose implementation is not effective in resolving the problems. From one protocol to another, the demands seem to be repeated and very few commitments have been honoured by the government. The many challenges facing the education system have led to the emergence of alternative groupings such as parents' associations and informal community teachers to fill the gap in the institutional education system.

The trade union movement thrives in both the public and private sectors. The education sector is becoming denser, but the networking capacity of the various trade union organisations in view of achieving larger scale action remains a major challenge. With regard to the results obtained by the teachers' unions at the major meetings of the CNS in 1993 and the 1994 general conference (*Etats Généraux)* on the promotion of the teaching profession, teachers have a fairly positive view of the unions, but a practically negative view of the State, which is the employer, does not honour its commitments and "politicises" union struggles.

The study showed that, since 2009, an institutional framework for tripartite national dialogue (government, employers and trade unions) has been put in place to moderate negotiations and monitor the commitments set out in the protocols, but its effectiveness remains to be proven. Moreover, the trade union fabric, particularly in the education sector, is growing and represents undeniable potential if it is better structured. However, these trade unions are pursuing virtually the same objectives and developing the same action strategies.

It is, therefore, clear that strengthening the system of social and policy dialogue remains relevant to increasing the capacity of the trade union sector in general and that of the education system in particular.

**Chapter I. Overview of the study**

This chapter describes the general framework of the study, which includes a presentation of the socio-economic context, the choice of conceptual framework for the study, the objectives set and the methodology used.

**1.1 General context of Chad**

With a surface area of 1,284,000 km2, Chad is a landlocked country sharing borders to the north with Libya, with Sudan to the east, with the Central African Republic to the south and with Cameroon, Nigeria and Niger to the west. The population is estimated at 11.04 million, with a density of 8.6 inhabitants per km2, according to the results of the general population census carried out in 2009 (RGPH2, 2009). This population, 50.6% of whom are women, 78.1% of whom live in rural areas, and 50.6% of whom are under 15 years old, with an average age of 19.7 years and a median age of 14.8 years, is expected to reach 19.34 million in 2025 and 44.21 million in 2050 according to the trend scenario (Examen national volontaire, 2019). Compared with other African countries with an average density of 30 inhabitants/km², Chad is sparsely populated.

The country has very low social indicators. It ranked 187th out of 189 countries in terms of the Human Development Index (HDI) in 2019. According to the results of the *Enquête sur la Consommation et le Secteur Informel au Tchad (ECOSIT)* (Chad Consumption and Informal Sector Survey) in 2012, "just under half the Chadian population (46.7%) lives in a state of extreme monetary poverty at the daily consumption expenditure threshold equal to around CFA 625 francs (USD 1.25), compared with 55% in 2003, with a considerable gap between urban and rural areas: 25% compared with 59%".

Chad's socio-economic context is, therefore, marked by a fairly high level of poverty among the population. This is at the root of the social tensions that are reflected in demands for higher living costs and wage increases in several public sectors. The political process of democracy has also been thrown into turmoil by several incursions by armed rebel groups into the capital and inter-community conflicts in all the provinces.

It is in this context of relative stability that this study is being conducted to understand the relevance and effectiveness of social and policy dialogue in the education sector.

**1.2 Conceptual framework of the study**

*Key words*: social dialogue - policy dialogue - consensus - stakeholder

*Social dialogue*: according to the ILO[[1]](#footnote-1), social dialogue includes all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between representatives of governments, employers and workers in various forms, on economic and social policy issues of common interest.

It may take the form of a tripartite process in which the government is officially involved, or bipartite relations between workers and employers (or trade unions and employers' organisations), in which the government may intervene indirectly.

Social dialogue processes may be informal or institutionalised or combined. It may take place at national, regional or company level. It may be cross-industry, sectoral or both.

The main aim of social dialogue is to encourage the formulation of a consensus between the main stakeholders in the world of work and their democratic participation. The structures and processes of a fruitful social dialogue are likely to resolve important economic and social issues, promote good governance, foster peace and social stability and stimulate the economy.

In Chad, social dialogue in the education sector covers exchanges and negotiations before, during and after strikes with the government concerning the situation of civil servants, particularly teachers. These negotiations are sometimes conducted by a single trade union organisation or collectively with one or more platforms grouping together several trade union organisations. In the case of Chad, the trade union platform for demands, the social dialogue platform and the *Confédération Libre des Travailleurs du Tchad* (CLTT) are generally the signatories of the agreements government.

**Policy dialogue**: According to WEIGO[[2]](#footnote-2), the expression "policy dialogue" brings together groups with different interests who undertake to examine an issue where the stakes are mutual, but not necessarily common. It assumes that people from different positions and circumstances have different points of view on the same issue, and that they are likely to have different information and ideas about it. A policy dialogue fully recognises these power differentials, but seeks to identify areas where it is in everyone's best interests to make improvements and reforms. This includes trade union involvement in developing and monitoring the implementation of public policies, programmes and projects, in this case in the education sector.

**Consensus**: Consensus is an agreement of wills without any formal opposition. Consensus differs from unanimity, which highlights the manifest will of all the members in the agreement. It is both agreement and consent on the part of the greatest number or public opinion. It is a procedure that consists of reaching an agreement without a formal vote, which avoids objections and abstentions. In the case of Chad, the negotiations between the trade unions and the government led to a consensus in the form of an agreement, duly signed and binds the concerned parties. Consensus is the method most frequently used in negotiations leading to agreements.

**Stakeholder** : A stakeholder is any actor (individual, organisation, group) concerned by a project, decision or action whose interests are affected in one way or another. In the case of Chad, a National Framework for Social Dialogue (CNDS) has been set up, which has defined 3 stakeholders: the government, employers and trade unions.

These definitions show that social dialogue is defined as a process of negotiation between stakeholders with a view to finding solutions to social problems. In this sense, the various negotiation agreements on teachers' working conditions fit in quite well. Political dialogue is an exchange based on the dynamics of the game of power held by the players in order to bring about improvements and reforms. The participation of stakeholders in the development, implementation and monitoring of public policies and programmes, if it requires a balance of power, can be considered as political dialogue. It is questionable whether trade unions participate in political dialogue about education policies and programmes with any real power to influence. This is one of the main purposes of this study.

1.3 Aims of the study

The aim is to understand the structural, political and socio-economic forces that influence the opportunities for teachers' unions to engage in both social and political dialogue, with a view to influencing education policies and advancing workers' rights in the education sector.

Specifically, the overall policy environment in the country should be examined to identify the underlying factors or factors that shape the opportunities for teachers' unions to participate in decision-making in the education sector.

1.4. Hypothesis of the study

The education sector in Chad faces crucial problems. These include poor access to education services, inadequate school infrastructure, and insufficient quantitative and qualitative human resources to meet the growing needs of the education system.

The study's hypothesis is that the many problems and complexities of the education sector can only be resolved through greater stakeholder participation, including that of education sector trade unions.

The question is therefore what structural factors facilitate or hinder the contribution of trade unions, and in this case teachers' unions, to resolving the many problems affecting the Chadian education system.

1.5. Methodology of the study

The present methodological approach consists of understanding social and political dialogue in the education sector in both its historical and factual dimensions, in order to take account of "the past and the present". Several sources of information were used to cross-reference historical data with the opinions of stakeholders in the current context. Two main data collection methods were used: documentary research and interviews with key figures.

a. Documentary study

The documentary study is based mainly on research carried out at the level of the ministries responsible for education, in particular the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Vocational Training and Trades, the Ministry of Higher Education, the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. This research was also carried out at the Ministry of the Civil Service and Consultation and with the trade union centres and unions in the education sector.

b. Interviews

Interviews were conducted with teachers, school heads, union leaders, heads of parents' associations and the administrative authorities of the ministry responsible for education.

Key informants were selected at random.

\*\*\* Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator (free version) \*\*\*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **N°** | **Cibles de l’enquête** | **Nbre d’informateurs clé** | **(%)** |
| 1 | Enseignants | 10 | 28.6 |
| 2 | Responsables d’établissements scolaires | 9 | 25.7 |
| 3 | Leaders syndicaux et les enseignants | 5 | 14.3 |
| 2 | Responsables des APE | 8 | 22.8 |
| 3 | Autorités scolaires du Ministère de l’éducation | 3 | 8.6 |
| 4 | **Total** | 35 | 100%[[3]](#footnote-3) |

Interview with union leaders: With regard to union leaders, the interview guide covers the following topics: i/ the various forums (formal and non-formal) for dialogue between the education authorities and stakeholders, ii/ the legal framework governing social dialogue and the performance and shortcomings of these legal frameworks, iii/ the contribution of dialogue to improving the status and working conditions of teachers.

Social dialogue is showing its limits in the poor implementation of the decisions taken at the end of the negotiations referred to in the agreements. The National Framework for Social Dialogue (CNDS), which is supposed to monitor the implementation of decisions, limits itself to the role of moderating tripartite meetings. In addition, the leaders cite other factors that undermine the dialogue, such as political clientelism as a means of gaining access to positions of responsibility and career management, the introduction of French-Arabic bilingualism without putting in place sufficient resources to ensure proper implementation, the poor working conditions of teachers etc.

Interviewing teachers: The teacher interview guide covers their assessment of pupil learning, teachers' working conditions and the role of the teachers' union.

It emerges that the majority of schools operate with untrained teachers, that the socio-economic status of teaching professionals is very low, that there is little application of the rules of ethics and deontology in this profession, that there is a shortage of teaching materials, and that education policies do not encourage rigour in the assessment of learning, and so on.

Interviews with the authorities in charge of national education: the interviews covered education policies, key factors (political, socio-economic) that have a strong influence on the education sector, and the historical development of education in Chad.

The interviews highlighted the benefits of dialogue, which led to the establishment of structures such as CONAM to monitor professional assignments and transfers, and the joint commission, whose task is to evaluate and monitor the application of the agreements. However, they note that the structures for dialogue lack effectiveness because of the lack of resources to follow up decisions.

c. Data analysis techniques

Faced with written or transcribed data from documentary research, direct observation and interviews, the preferred technique was content analysis. The data collected was codified in order to identify, classify, order and condense it, with a view to carrying out qualitative or quantitative operations (Van Der Maren, 1996). Data processing consists of cross-referencing the information from the documentary research with the various and varied points of view of the interviewees in order to broaden the scope of the analysis, taking into account both the factual (the present) and the historical (the past).

d. Scope, delimitation and limitations of the research

The study is hampered by the fact that social and political dialogue as a negotiating process between the government and the unions takes place mainly in the capital, NDjaména. Union leaders at national level are familiar with this practice, but most of the teachers and school heads we spoke to knew very little about it. This has repercussions on our interlocutors, who are unable to express a more enlightened point of view on the state of progress of the dialogue and fall into the "string of trade union demands" around wages and salaries, considerably omitting the vast areas that social and political dialogue can cover, as well as the varied roles that a trade union involved in a dialogue can play.

A review of the different phases in the development of the education system and the historical process of the emergence of the trade union movement has made it possible to decipher the different facets of social and political dialogue in relation to the political and legal framework of public freedoms.

The report describes the facts in the form of a statement of the existing situation, presents the writer's analysis and opinion in a box entitled "focus" and suggests recommendations for improving the practice of social and political dialogue in the SET.

The results of the study are presented in two chapters (see chapters 2 and 3). Chapter 2 briefly describes the landscape of the education sector in Chad in relation to educational and pedagogical policy reforms, the thorny question of the adequacy of resources (infrastructure, logistics and human resources) and the quality of education. The question arises as to whether the dialogue has brought any solutions. Chapter 3 deciphers social and political dialogue in terms of both its historical and institutional processes, and presents the trade union movement with its weaknesses, strengths and assets for dialogue. The aim is to find out how the trade union movement in the education sector in Chad can represent a potential for the development of the education system in Chad through dialogue.

\*\*\* Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator (free version) \*\*\*

Chapter II. The educational landscape in Chad and the challenges of social and political dialogue

The aim is to describe the strategic, political and pedagogical reforms initiated by the education authorities and their technical partners, the challenges facing the education system in terms of human resources and the problems of the quality of education.

Education is not only a fundamental right, as emphasised by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, but it also provides access to all other fundamental rights (UNESCO 2016) and is the basis for individuals to exercise their citizenship.

It is at the heart of development strategies and economic growth, progress towards equality, better health, access to rights and all the objectives that contribute to sustainable development. We note, however, that the increase in school enrolments poses serious problems of resource adequacy. Each year of schooling represents a 10% increase in an individual's potential income, or a 1% increase in GDP (source: RESEN-Tchad 2014). This represents a major challenge that has given rise to successive reforms. The question arises as to whether trade unions are associated with, involved in and considered key players in these successive reforms, which can be described as political dialogue.

2.1. Dynamics of the education system in Chad

a. Successive reforms of the education system

The Etats Généraux de l'Education of 1994 marked the beginning of a series of reforms in the Chadian education system. Several factors prompted the reforms: the evaluation of economic and socio-cultural systems, the transformation in the organisation of work and social demand. These factors have forced the education sector to adopt new pedagogical approaches. These reforms are rooted in the "World Declaration on Education for All" adopted in 1990, and operationalised in the Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO. 2000).

With the support of its technical and financial partners, Chad has reformed its education system on the basis of the achievements of the Education-Training-Employment (EFE) Strategy and the broad guidelines defined by the Etats Généraux for a renewed education policy adapted to the country's needs and resources. Thus, after the readjustment of the curricula in 1983, another readjustment was made in 1997. This new readjustment of primary schools curricula was implemented by Order N° 126/MEN/SE/DG/DEE/97 of 22 April 1997.

In 2000, the World Education Forum held in Dakar on the issue of quality education stressed that quality education must meet the educational needs of all young people. It must ensure equitable access to appropriate programmes and focus on the acquisition of knowledge and life skills. A new sectoral strategy on the issue of quality education, known as the Ten-Year Literacy and Development Plan (PDDEA), has therefore been drawn up. In December 2000, Order No. 219 appointed working groups to prepare the IDA basic education project.

These groups were responsible for drawing up and publishing the framework for the orientation of primary and secondary curricula, by subject and by level. They were also responsible for drafting, testing and validating content and assessment methods.

Twenty-one (21) years after the adjustment of these curricula, the national, regional and global context requires revisions to take into account present and future education and training needs to prepare the new generation for life in the twenty-first century. While giving priority to instrumental knowledge (languages, mathematics and science), the updated curricula now take account of the new issues facing contemporary Chadian society, namely: the environment, population problems, health, in particular STIs and HIV/AIDS, the culture of peace, democracy, human rights, etc.

**b. Adopting a new pedagogical approach**

The updated programmes of 2004 favoured an "objective" approach. From that year onwards, national decision-makers and partners in the education sector deemed it appropriate to introduce innovations into the content of the new curricula. This has led to a further updating of school curricula. As Meirieu (2005) points out, this new teaching approach is focused on developing skills and should "ensure that pupils are capable not just of reciting by heart, but of adopting easy and effective behaviours, recognising, isolating, classifying, analysing, modifying and transferring to other situations".

In 2008, the updated curricula revealed the limits of the aims assigned to basic education. It was against this backdrop that Chad undertook to rewrite the new curricula. This new method is based on a pedagogy of renewed objectives known as "integration pedagogy" or "skills-based approach" (APC).

The government's and communities' efforts to improve school provision have resulted in the creation of new schools and a significant increase in the recruitment of teachers for the various levels of education (see Appendix 3, Table 1 on page 44). For example, between 2003 and 2012, the number of teachers in primary education more than doubled (134%) in 10 years, and will increase by a third (34%) between 2012 and 2021. At middle-school level, the increase was 62% between 2003 and 2012, and almost double (97%) between 2012 and 2021. In general secondary education, there has been a very sharp increase in the number of teachers in charge of courses: almost fourfold (397%) in 2003-2012 and more than twofold (176%) in 2012-2021 (see Annex 4).

Despite these efforts, the APC curriculum reform is making no headway. It is struggling to replace old practices and to spread to all levels of the Chadian education system.

Focus 1 on education sector reforms

In conclusion, the various education policy and strategy reforms that have taken place in the education sector, from the Education Formation Emploi (EFE) strategy to the Plan Décennal de Développement de l'Education et de l'Alphabétisation (PDDEA) (Ten-Year Education and Literacy Development Plan), as well as certain pedagogical reforms such as "entry by objective" and competency-based approaches, have not succeeded in boosting the education system to achieve the expected results in terms of teaching quality and the effectiveness of the learning system.

Furthermore, the presence of trade unions at reform meetings is less visible and their contribution is not recognised as a stakeholder organisation in the education system in Chad.

However, during the surveys, the teachers recognised the unions in their role as bodies for demanding employees' working conditions.

It turns out that the role of the unions is being questioned. They must pursue their mission of defending the moral and material interests of their members, but they must also become a force for political proposals in the current situation, where the education system is faced with the challenge of the quality of teacher performance.

Box 1: Education sector reforms

The burning issue of the quality of teaching programmes/policies is compounded by the challenge of human resources.

2.2. The situation of teaching staff

According to UNESCO, a qualified teacher is "a teacher who has the minimum academic qualifications necessary to teach at a specific level in a given country. These qualifications relate in particular to the subject taught" (see glossary of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, https://uis.unesco.org/fr/glossary). In Chad, the criteria for a qualified teacher are defined in law 16 on the orientation of the Chadian education system in chapter 1 on teaching staff and in article 89, which stipulates that a qualified teacher must possess :

- Intellectual, physical, psychological, moral and social qualities;

- continually updated professional skills

- Ability to serve as an agent of development and a role model for society;

- Ability to undertake basic and applied research.

Despite these defined criteria, the Chadian education system faces two major challenges in terms of human resources: the status of community teachers (MC), and the allocation of staff to teaching and administrative posts.

a. Community teachers

In Chad, the education and training system relies in roughly equal proportions on regular government staff on the one hand and temporary/community staff on the other, with a slight predominance of the latter. According to data for 2021, some 83,339 staff, all statuses and functions combined, work in the ministries responsible for education and training (source: MENPC 2021 statistical yearbook). This stock of staff is divided more or less equally between the two main categories, i.e.: i) 38,603 regular State staff (civil servants, contractual State employees) and ii) 44,736 part-time teachers, including community teachers, just over half of whom - around 15,500 - are paid by the State and the rest, around 13,000, by parents' associations and communities (see appendix 3, table 1, page 50).

The phenomenon of community teachers is a crucial problem for the education system. In 2021, 18 years after their introduction into the education system, they will account for more than half (53.66%) of the staff in the system. Moreover, when we consider only the teaching staff in the classrooms, MCs represent around 78% in the same year at primary level. This is a high figure. The persistence of the phenomenon and, above all, its ever-increasing scale over the years no doubt indicate that it is a deep-rooted structural phenomenon.

b. Assignments as teachers and administrators

More than eight out of ten (82%) of the staff employed by the State, from all ministries combined, work in an educational establishment. This figure ranges from 73% for secondary education to 90% for primary education, and even 92% for higher education. In absolute terms, around 8,000 staff work outside schools, i.e. administrative staff in central and decentralised structures. Only around 18% work in the education system.

But in the schools, not all the staff taken on by the State are in a classroom situation. For example, when the notion of administrative staff is extended to include teachers in charge of classes in schools, it turns out that only 71% of the staff paid by the State are chalk teachers, and this proportion ranges from 49% in upper secondary education to 83% in primary education. In addition, 29% or almost one in 4 staff, i.e. around 12,700 staff, work in the system outside the classroom. This proportion, which was 22% in 2003 (see RESEN 2004), is higher than in countries with comparable economic situations, where the average is around 15%. (See appendix 3 for more details on teaching staff).

Focus no. 2 on human resources in the education sector

An analysis of human resources (HR) in the education sector shows that the state is feeling the impact of the exponential growth in demand for education and is losing control of HR management. Community teachers employed by parents are making up the shortfall in "chalk teacher" staff, but at the same time, the bureaucratisation of teachers in urban centres and the refusal to assign teachers to peripheral posts continue to exacerbate the shortfall. The number of teachers is still insufficient to cover school demand, and the situation is becoming crucial.

In addition, hundreds of graduates of vocational schools each year are not integrated into the teaching workforce.

So the HR issue is a good one for political dialogue. The unions could undertake studies to propose HR planning and management models that allow for both qualitative and quantitative renewal of HR and appropriate career planning as a basis for discussion of a sustainable HR policy.

Box 2: Human resources in the education sector

2.3. Quality of education

The level of learning in the Chadian education system is low, as two facts bear witness: (i) only 47% of adults who have completed a full primary education cycle can read fluently, compared with an average of 63% in sub-Saharan Africa; (ii) almost a third of pupils at the end of primary education are in serious difficulty (have not mastered the basic concepts of the curriculum), compared with an average of 27% in comparable countries (Rapport d'état du système éducatif national [RESEN] 2). Are the challenges linked to the learning system and the quality of teaching the subject of dialogue between the State and the education sector unions? No answer is given in the current literature on this subject.

a. The level of learning according to PASEC

The results of CONFEMEN's Programme d'analyse des systèmes éducatifs (PASEC 2014) highlighted the low levels of acquisition of Chadian pupils for the classes that took part in the tests. These results do not augur well for the other classes. The results are worrying: in grade 2, the Chadian education system ranks among the least effective countries at the start of schooling, as a large proportion of pupils (82% in language and 52% in mathematics) do not master the knowledge and skills considered sufficient to continue schooling under good conditions. Many pupils are in serious difficulty compared with those in other countries. In 6th grade, a large proportion of students (84.3% in reading and 80.9% in mathematics) do not master the knowledge and skills considered sufficient to continue their education under good conditions. A significant number of pupils (20.3% in reading and 43.7% in mathematics) are below the last level of the reading and mathematics proficiency scales at the end of their schooling. Pupils at this level do not at all have the skills measured by the test in the language of schooling.

This situation improved slightly during PASEC 2019: at the start of the cycle, 66% of pupils in Chad do not have the skills to continue learning without difficulty, compared with an average of 55% for the countries that took part in the assessment. Around half (50.8%) of pupils at the end of the cycle have very serious difficulties in mathematics, which could lead them to drop out of school. Chad is closely followed by Niger (43.7%), Côte d'Ivoire (42.1%), DRC (37.2%), Madagascar (36%), Togo (32.1%) and Cameroon (30.1%). In reading, Chad is characterised by an improvement of almost 20 points compared with 2014, when at the end of the primary cycle, almost 60% of pupils were below reading level (PASEC 2014).

b. Factors affecting the quality of education

One of the factors affecting the quality of education in Chad remains the qualifications of teaching staff. Data from the 2019-2020 statistical yearbook show that 29,911, or 64.8% of primary school teaching staff, are community teachers, of whom 11,482 are MC0s (38% of MC staff and 25% of total teaching staff), 6,603 are MC1s. A total of 18,085 MCs (MC0s and MC1s), or 39.20% of primary school teaching staff, have not received any teacher training before starting work. Nevertheless, there has been an improvement in the number of untrained teachers, which stood at 76% in 2013. Of the 13,601 teachers counted in 2019-2020, 6,353, or 46.70%, received no teacher training before starting work.

It should be noted that the Chadian educational context is marked by recurrent disruptions, due not only to conflicts, but also to strikes by civil servant teachers and community teachers, which considerably reduce school time. COVID-19 has added to these disruptions. Teacher training institutions are not spared by this situation. A teacher at the ENS in N'Djamena exclaimed "the minimum duration of a strike in the last 5 years is at least one month per academic year. This shortens the academic year. In 2019-2020, the academic year will be reduced to around four months.

Focus no. 3 on the quality of teaching

The recurrent poor results at school raise questions about the quality of the curriculum and its adaptation to the socio-cultural environment.

It has been clearly established that the level of learning is not effectively preparing young people for quality higher education, because of the failings of the education system, but also because of the disruptions caused by social, political and health movements, which have aggravated the situation.

Here again, the concern for quality and for an education system adapted to its social and economic environment is a key factor.

2.4. The challenges facing the Chadian education system

The challenges facing Chad's education system have led the country's authorities to organise several important meetings over the past 30 years. In addition to the Etats Généraux de l'Education in 1994, a forum for reflection on the education system and a government seminar were held in 2012 and 2014 respectively. The objectives of these forums were to speed up the implementation of Law 16 and to improve the performance of the system. As a result, sector plans were drawn up: the Interim Strategy for Education and Literacy (SIPEA) in 2012 and the Interim Education Plan for Chad (PIET) in 2017.

The SIPEA is of an interim and transitional nature, lasting three years (2013-2015), and is therefore an important step. Its implementation should lay solid foundations to ensure the launch and optimise the success of the implementation of a Ten-Year Programme, the preparation of which was planned during the SIPEA period. The endorsement of the SIPEA by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in 2012 enabled Chad to become a member of the GPE that same year. The SIPEA has therefore focused on the sub-sectors of primary education, female literacy and non-formal basic education. The choice of these sub-sectors was justified by the persistence of: (i) a high illiteracy rate, particularly among women, coupled with a high number of children who had dropped out of school or were not enrolled in previous years, and (ii) a low survival rate in primary education.

a. The limits of the SIPEA

Despite the appreciable achievements of the SIPEA, its track record remains mixed. The sector review of 17 to 20 August 2016 pointed to the following shortcomings:

- The policy of contractualisation of teaching staff, which has not seen the beginnings of implementation ;

- The continued excessive centralisation of budget management;

- The demobilisation of community teachers, exacerbated by the non-payment of their subsidies;

- The policy of free schooling, which has not received the expected support;

- The failure to respect the school timetable and its impact on learning achievement;

- The concentration of teaching staff in urban areas to the detriment of rural areas.

b. Contributions of PIET

The PIET is the Chadian government's education sector strategy for the period 2018-2020. While taking into account the experience of the SIPEA, the PIET covers all education sub-sectors. The plan is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 4 and the National Development Plan (NDP 2017-2021), as well as with "Vision 2030, the Chad we want", which is steered by the Ministry for the Economy and Planning and covers all of the country's sectors. It was drawn up following the 2nd RESEN, which identified the major challenges facing the education system. The PIET is a response to these challenges. The main priorities of the sector, which constitute the strategic axes of PIET, are as follows:

a. Priority 1: Pursue quality universal primary education by extending basic education to lower secondary education and ensuring that disparities are reduced;

b. Priority 2: Improve the quality and relevance of learning at all levels (improve the supply of teaching inputs, the training and motivation of teaching staff, the supervision of pupils, etc.);

c. Priority 3: Strengthen governance of the sector by improving steering, coordination and deconcentration.

Under Priority 2, the PIET focuses on improving initial and in-service teacher training. The aim is to train all the teaching staff needed to expand primary education. The number of student teachers in training will be at least 3,000 every two years. This number does not meet all the needs, as it is estimated that there are almost 13,000 trained assistant primary school teachers on the labour market waiting to be integrated. In addition, training programmes for community teaching staff will be continued, enabling a number of them to take the entrance and exit exams for the ENI and thus obtain the required diploma (PIET 2018-2020). The initial training of external teachers, which has been suspended since 2013 in favour of the professionalisation of MCs, should continue.

Following the government seminar on revitalising the education system in 2014, the government of the Republic of Chad undertook to integrate schools in refugee camps into the national system. As a result, camp schools, CEGs and lycées have been formalised, and BEF and baccalauréat examination centres have been set up in the camps. According to UNHCR data from 31 August 2019, more than 102,000 refugee students, 50.3% of them girls, have completed the 2018-2019 school year. 1,049 refugee teachers received two weeks of refresher training on the Chadian curriculum. 635 refugee teachers received initial training at the ENI in Abéché and Doba with a view to obtaining the CEFEN. 298 national teachers were deployed to schools in refugee camps and sites by the Ministry of National Education in 2014-2015. A total of 115 schools have been formalised in refugee camps and sites in Chad.

Focus no. 4 on the challenges facing the education system

The reforms of the education sector by the SIPEA and the PIET have aimed in particular, among other things, at reducing the illiteracy rate among women and the drop-out rate. The main strategies used to tackle the problem can be summarised under the following 3 headings: (i) contractualisation of teaching staff to improve the quality and effectiveness of learning at all levels, (ii) free schooling for universal quality primary education and a reduction in disparities, and (iii) devolved budget management to strengthen governance of the education sector.

It should be noted that SIPEA and PIET have not achieved the expected results. The involvement of global partners is also an opportunity to mobilise resources, but it is also a source of weakness, as the analysis of internal causes is poorly reflected in school policies and programmes.

It would be appropriate for the trade union organisations, in this case the SET, to include in their modus operandi the creation of ad hoc committees on the following themes: (i) contractualisation in the health sector to resolve the thorny problem of HR, (ii) the quality of education and universal quality education, (iii) governance and budget management for better management of the education system in Chad.

Chapter III. Social and political dialogue in Chad

This chapter presents the evolution of the experience of social and political dialogue throughout history in the colonial and post-colonial periods, the institutional framework of tripartite national dialogue and the evolution of the trade union movement as well as the trade union fabric in the education sector.

3.1. Social dialogue in historical terms

The gradual emergence of the State, from colonisation to the post-colonial period, has seen successive phases of transfer of responsibility to the natives. Education, or rather the education system, is one of the areas that best reflects the changing context of the transfer of responsibility. The history of the Chadian school provides a good reading of the transfer process and allows us to ask how the social and political dialogue on the key issues of this historical evolution is conducted.

a. Colonial phase

The school was introduced in Chad in 1911 with the initial aim of serving the economic interests of the metropolis and the colonial administration. According to Adoum MBaïosso, the aim was to train well-styled executives who would be used directly by the colonial administration (...), the colonial school constituted a mould through which the personality of pupils underwent a fundamental change (...). The aim of colonial education was to mould young natives into loyal and obedient subjects of France. It can therefore be seen that France used schools as a means of implementing its settlement policy. However, according to Madana Nomaye, the attitude of the indigenous community in this context of colonisation evolved from mistrust to tolerance and manifest interest: the northern regions, where Islam is the dominant religion, saw the school as a means of destroying traditional and ancestral values (...), an instrument of Christianisation and a competitor to traditional and religious education. The same perception applies to the southern regions, where traditional religions and cults were also practised. The school was seen as a "source of assimilation", pushing children away from their own culture and adopting the cultural traits of the colonists.

This mistrust faded in the light of comparisons between an elite with a Western education enjoying certain social privileges different from those of their society of origin. Speaking the colonial language and adopting the colonial way of life and way of thinking gave the indigenous elite an "enhanced status" that attracted the indigenous community and strengthened and prioritised the interests of the metropolis.

In this context, the status of teachers/monitors was relatively enhanced by regular salaries and access to investment credit, enabling them to live decently.

Furthermore, the emergence of the trade union movement at this time did not represent a social force that could represent the interests of the indigenous population and participate in a dynamic social dialogue.

The trade union fabric gradually developed and diversified as a result of three (3) main factors:

1/ In 1937, legislation in metropolitan France allowed an extension of "rights relating to the creation of trade unions in the colonies. Trade unions became accessible to African workers";

2/ The Brazzaville Conference in 1944, which authorised the creation of the French Community in 1946, heralded a number of changes in the organisation of workers and employers, despite the partial abolition of forced labour;

3/ France's signature of Convention No. 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise in 1948.

This relatively favourable historical context (1946 to 1957) saw the birth of the first 4 trade union representations, which acted as sections of metropolitan organisations. These were

- The Union Locale des Syndicats du Tchad (ULST), founded in 1946 and affiliated to the Confédération Générale des Travailleurs;

- The Confédération africaine des Travailleurs Chrétiens (CATC) created in 1950 and affiliated to the Confédération Française des Travailleurs Chrétiens;

- Union des Syndicats Autonomes du Tchad (USAT) founded by François Tombalbaye in 1956 and affiliated to the Confédération Générale des Travailleurs-Force ouvrière (CGT-FO);

- The Confédération africaine des syndicats libres du Tchad (CASLT) created in 1957.

Although this trade union movement represents a diversity of ideological thought, it is less present on issues of national interest because of the context of colonisation, which did not fully grant them the freedom to represent the interests of indigenous peoples. They generally functioned as relays for the metropolitan trade unions. Shouldn't we ask ourselves whether the laxity that is currently plaguing the trade union movement in Africa and Chad is not the result of a long history of ideological dependence that does not encourage creativity in the face of new situations?

Focus no. 5 on social dialogue in the colonial period

These historical elements show that social dialogue and political dialogue depend on the political context of democracy, which promotes freedom of expression and association.

In the same vein, we note that the complex problems of education stem from its colonial past. The old problems have not been resolved, they persist and are becoming increasingly complex.

This poses the problem for trade unions that they do not have sufficient technical capacity to work with the players in the education system to develop appropriate and sustainable responses to cushion crises when they arise.

We also note that the mentality of union members is dependent on a spirit of dependence and assistance linked to the colonial past. This does not facilitate the financial and technical empowerment of trade union organisations, including the SET.

In addition, the surveys show that union leaders do not feel involved in their role as co-constructors of policies and programmes in Chad because they are not consulted as actors in the education system when education policies are designed and their opinions are not generally taken into account.

b. Post-colonial phase

While during the colonial period, the priority was to achieve "assimilation" and the aim of the school was to provide subordinate agents and managers to serve the metropolis, the regimes that succeeded one another after independence left their mark on the education sector through their choice of political priorities, which were often disrupted by successive crises.

The first regime, under the administration of Chad's first president, Tombalbaye (1960-1975), attempted to "inculturate" the Chadian school system by adapting the content of teaching to Chadian realities under the terms "ruralisation" and "tchadisation". The regime of the Conseil Supérieur Militaire (1975-1979) undertook to focus teaching on the sciences by equipping collèges and lycées with physical science laboratories. However, these reforms did not have time to materialise due to the outbreak of civil war. The next GUNT government (1980-1982) set about reopening the school gates that had been closed because of the war, and was faced with the fact that the existing school structures were unable to respond satisfactorily to the increased demand for education (high numbers of school-age children). As an alternative, community schools run by parents developed to compensate for the lack of educational provision. The UNIR regime (1982 to 1990) overthrew the GUNT, abrogated the constitutional order and introduced French-Arabic bilingualism and civic education into the education system. This was also the period when international and bilateral institutions such as the World Bank and the French Cooperation provided additional funding to support the EFE strategy and to continue the refurbishment/construction of infrastructure and school equipment in order to improve educational provision. These efforts are still being pursued through a number of projects and programmes, but they are still a long way from curbing the continuing high demand for education.

As a result, the working conditions of public sector and education workers have hardly improved: schools are not always well equipped and teachers' salaries have sometimes been halved. The embellishment of oil exploitation will give a little improvement for a while.

At the same time, the space for trade union freedoms created by independence shrank drastically. The various unions were merged to create the Union nationale des travailleurs du Tchad (UNTT). From then on, the trade union movement stagnated as an arm of the political regimes in a one-party context. The unions were barely consulted, if at all, and were merely informed of the positions they "should" take in support of the regime's official political line. There were, however, some slight changes, for example the UNTT became the Union Nationale des Syndicats du Tchad (UNST) and there was talk of a participatory trade unionism to avoid deviating from the path laid out by the Union Nationale pour l'Indépendance et la Révolution (UNIR), the single party. Then, in 1991, the UNST gave rise to two (2) trade union centres: the Confédération libre des travailleurs du Tchad (CLTT) and the Union des syndicats du Tchad (UST) during the period of the MPS regime. The UST later imploded, giving rise to the SET.

Focus no. 6 on social and political dialogue in the post-colonial period

In conclusion, the succession of civil wars that brought the different regimes to power did not allow the education sector to correct its structural weaknesses to create satisfactory conditions for teachers' work.

In the post-colonial phase, there was a proliferation of trade union organisations, which resulted in a diverse trade union fabric in Chad, a guarantee of public freedoms. However, this proliferation also introduced conflicts of leadership and rivalry, which sometimes weakened the position of trade unions as a force for proposals in the various structures for social dialogue.

The post-colonial situation is therefore often characterised by political instability and a non-democratic context, and by a weaker trade union fabric that makes it impossible to build a social and political dialogue commensurate with the current challenges in the education sector.

3.2. The framework for dialogue in Chad

The social dialogue framework is governed by decree no. 1437/PR/PM/MFPT/09 of 05 November 2009 on the creation, organisation and operation of national dialogue structures and order no. 1546/PR/PM/MFPT/11 of 26 May 2011 on the organisation and operation of branch social dialogue committees. The main purpose of the CNDS is to conduct negotiations between the government and its social partners (trade unions and employers) and is a stakeholder in agreements between the platform of demands and the government.

The objectives pursued by the National Social Dialogue Committee (CNDS) are to :

- Help consolidate the consultation and negotiation process

- Contribute to promoting the prevention of social conflicts by implementing a warning mechanism through preventive negotiation;

- Examine all disputes arising from agreements between workers and employers;

- Facilitate the resolution of industrial disputes;

- Ensuring the correct application of agreements between employers' and workers' organisations;

- To study ways and means of promoting incentive systems within companies;

- Examine general working conditions in which wages, labour productivity and social protection could be modified in relation to economic indicators;

- Propose studies or information to the public authorities to supplement their information in their dealings with external partners and international institutions.

The composition of the National Social Dialogue Committee (CNDS) is tripartite and comprises 25 members from the :

- Public sector: 9 government representatives from the relevant ministries;

- Private sector: 8 representatives of the Conseil National du Patronat Tchadien (CNPT);

- Social sector: 8 representatives of the workers' unions.

The National Committee, which appears to be presented as a deliberative body, is made up of three bodies:

- Specialised committees: 5 committees for mediation, collective bargaining, economics and finance, training and social protection;

- The branch social dialogue committees: public sector branch and private sector branch. The industry committee is responsible for examining the issues referred to it, coordinating the industry's dialogue structures, and drawing up annual reports for the national committee;

- And the permanent secretariat, which is responsible for the day-to-day management of the services.

That said, the education sector is represented on the Conseil National du Dialogue Social (CNDS) by the Plateforme Syndicale revendicative, including the CIST. Representation on education branch committees is provided by the unions and the administration.

It can be said that the institutional set-up is impressive, but the details of the various deliberative, supervisory, executive and accountability functions, etc., are not clearly defined in the current organic texts.

Focus no. 7 on the CNDS

The opinions of CNDS members show that the Committee's operations seem to have been floundering since 2019, as the regulatory meetings are not being held, the budget to be granted by the State is not being followed, the tasks of coordinating the branch and company committees are not being carried out and the branch reports are not reaching the central level.

It should also be noted that the representation of women on the national committee is very low, with 2 women out of 25 members (less than 1%). It should be noted that the CNDS is a stakeholder in the agreements between the platform of demands and the government. Its main purpose is to conduct negotiations between the government and its social partners (trade unions and employers). However, implementation of the agreements is far from satisfactory.

It will be important for the trade union organisations to study the factors of weakness emanating from their ranks and to find solutions both in terms of capacity building for their representatives and structural innovations to facilitate the circulation of information at inter-union level.

3.3 Trade union movement in the education sector in Chad

a. The trade union fabric in the education sector

Following the abolition of the UNST in 1990, two groupings, the UST and the CLTT, took over the trade union scene. UST, the largest central union, is made up of the Chad Teachers' Union (SET) and the Chad Social Affairs and Health Workers' Union (SYNTASST). In turn, it experienced turbulence in 1996, leading to its implosion. The SET withdrew to form a new central organisation with the other trade unions, the Confédération Indépendante des Syndicats du Tchad (CIST), in 2009. At the same time, the education sector saw a proliferation of new trade union organisations. These were

- SYNAPET: Syndicat National des Professionnels de l'Education du Tchad;

- FET: Fédération des Enseignants du Tchad ;

- SYNAFORM: Syndicat National des Formateurs de Métier ;

- SAAGET: Syndicat des Agents de l'Administration Générale et de l'Education du Tchad;

- SLET: Syndicat Libre des Enseignants du Tchad (Free Teachers' Union of Chad);

- SNIT: Syndicat National des Instituteurs du Tchad ;

- SIT: Syndicat des Instituteurs du Tchad ;

- SNEP/Tchad: Syndicat National des Enseignants du Primaire du Tchad ;

- SYNAMEN: Syndicat National des Agents du Ministère de l'Education Nationale ;

- SYFOCT: Syndicat des Fonctionnaires et Contractuels du Tchad;

- SASEFORT: Syndicat Autonome du Secteur de l'Education et de la Formation du Tchad;

- SEBT: Syndicat des Enseignants Bilingues du Tchad ;

- SYNECS: Syndicat des Enseignants et Chercheurs du Supérieur.

As the social tensions of 2016 became increasingly acute, the CIST and UST came together for strategic purposes and formed a pool of trade union demands with other trade union organisations such as SYNECS (Syndicat National des Enseignants et Chercheurs du Supérieur) and SYMET, known as the plateforme syndicale revendicative, to defend the interests of public sector workers in negotiations with the government.

These trade union organisations, under the initiative of the SET, will set up in 2020 a new platform specific to the education sector called PSSET (Plateforme du Syndicat du Secteur de Education au Tchad), the dynamism of which remains to be tested.

School managers and teachers told us during our survey that the trade union sector is "politicised" by unqualified people in positions of responsibility and by political clientelism. Teachers note that the state is not genuinely committed to upgrading the teaching profession. The imposition of the Arabic language as the official language without any accompanying measures (not enough teacher training, textbooks and a popularisation strategy) is a way of delaying the Chadian school system by the State itself," says a union leader.

Focus no. 8 on the trade union movement in the education sector

The union fabric in the education sector is becoming increasingly dense, but it is also fragile. The main factors behind this fragility include: competition between leaders for power (leadership conflicts), resulting in the various implosions and multiplication of organisations, sometimes without any differentiation of objectives or working methods; latent conflicts of linguistic affiliation (French-speaking and Arabic-speaking); and quasi-permanent duels between union organisations of different political persuasions (allies or opponents of the political regime in power).

Moreover, it is clearly established that the trade union sector in the education sector in Chad represents a negotiating force because it is dense and varied and therefore represents a plurality of opinion which can enrich the dialogue. There is a need to consider strategic and operational ways of strengthening trade unions in the education sector in order to increase their effectiveness.

Box 8: The education sector trade union movement

b. Contributions of the teachers' union struggle

The trade union movement in the education sector has made a number of achievements under the SET. Recognition of the special status of teachers was seen as the greatest success of the SET's trade union struggle. Decree no. 477/PR/MEN/92 of 16 September 1992 confers a number of advantages on teachers, including

- Allowances in areas with difficult living conditions;

- Suggestion bonuses

- The cost of supervising dissertations for teachers in higher education;

- Examination and competition fees.

The decree also emphasised the following points

- The fact that the juries for the various examinations and competitions must be made up solely of teachers in the field and their supervisors;

- The organisation, as soon as possible, of a workshop to consider issues relating to teachers' health;

- Speeding up the process of holding the symposium on family allowances within a reasonable timeframe;

- The granting of an advance of two months' pay to new recruits;

- Funeral expenses equivalent to 3 months' salary for beneficiaries.

It was not until 2010 that a government memorandum of understanding with the SET insisted on the application of the special status, which was only partial, and called for its full implementation.

The Syndicat des Enseignants du Tchad (SET) was instrumental in setting up the National Commission for Teacher Assignments and Transfers (CONAM) in 1998, and in organising its annual sessions in partnership with the Ministry of National Education. The SET never failed to look after the interests of its staff, while Ministry officials insisted that teachers needed to be kept on or assigned on the basis of service requirements.

The trade union struggle also tackled the issue of improving salaries, the guaranteed minimum wage (SMIG) and the guaranteed minimum agricultural wage (SMAG).

As part of the social dialogue process, the following decrees were issued:

- 729/PR/PM/MFPT/MEN/10 of 22 April 2010, creating a joint committee responsible for sectoral negotiations with the Chad Teachers' Union (SET)

- 1435/PR/PM/MFPT/MEN/10 of 29 July 2010, adding to order no. 729/PR/PM/MFPT/MEN/10 of 22 April 2010

- 1436/PR/PM/ MFPT/MEN/10 of 29 July 2010 extending order no. 729/PR/PM/MFPT/MEN/10 of 22 April 2010.

The various social dialogue negotiations culminated in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the government and the Chad Teachers' Union (SET) on 16 October 2010. The text confers on teachers the benefits previously granted under the special status of teachers (allowances for difficult areas, chalk, dissertation fees, examinations and competitions, etc.). Under the terms of the memorandum of understanding, the government has undertaken to gradually apply the following points to teaching staff from 2012:

- Travel allowance

- Housing allowance

- Documentation allowance (for staff receiving the chalk allowance);

- Prize for creativity or initiative;

- Funeral expenses equivalent to 3 months' gross salary.

In return, the SET has undertaken to:

- Report to the Ministry of National Education, through its grassroots bodies, any behaviour incompatible with the teaching profession;

- To fight for the promotion of gender equality;

- Develop, as a "union of proposals", a responsible partnership with the government;

- Advocate for the improvement of children's study conditions;

- Observe a social truce of at least 5 years.

By mutual agreement, the two parties undertake to set up a joint monitoring committee to evaluate the protocol and resolve any difficulties or conflicts.

Despite the firmness of the terms used, the content of the protocol will only be applied from 2013 with the payment of allowances (chalk, transport, housing, difficult areas, remembrance expenses, etc.). These were suspended with the 16 measures taken unilaterally by the government in 2016 as a result of the fall in the price of a barrel of oil, which led to a financial crisis in the country: when the government announced that it wanted to reduce civil servants' allowances and bonuses to 80% over a period of no more than 18 months, the unions reacted strongly and reduced them to 50%. The crisis persisted, however, and led the SET to join forces with the other trade union centres to form a platform of trade union demands. This platform made it possible to set up a technical committee under the aegis of the National Committee for Social Dialogue (CNDS) and will serve as a framework for dialogue with the government.

However, demonstrations and social movements with general strikes became widespread. Their scale will be stifled by widespread repression of demonstrators. Legislation was introduced to ban demonstrations. Union leaders were threatened and arrested. The signing of the protocol on 26 October 2018 will gradually lift the 16 austerity measures and institute a social truce. This moment of calm would not last long.

Unresolved financial difficulties despite the lifting of austerity measures will undermine social peace and give rise to further strikes that will disrupt the 2020-2021 academic year. The strikes will extend the school year, with the risk of a "blank year". We therefore note the CNDS's dynamism in leading the various negotiations that resulted in the three-year social pact of 04 October 2021.

The new pact saw the participation of the signatories of the Plateforme syndicale revendicative (UST, CIST including SET, SYNECS, SYMET), the platform for social dialogue (CST, CSTT) and the CLTT.

This pact takes stock of the previous protocols: that of 26 October 2018 between the government and the trade union demands platform and that of 09 January 2020 between the government and the trade union organisations. Its general objective is to contribute to the establishment and consolidation of a peaceful social climate, conducive to emergence, notably through a significant improvement in the working and living conditions of the population and workers in particular". The specific objectives of this protocol are more explicit and show the difficulties that have plagued social dialogue in Chad. It aims to establish a climate of trust, reduce the risk of confrontation by promoting dialogue, productivity and performance in the public services.

A number of points in this pact are worth highlighting for workers in the education sector. There is mention of the gradual payment of transport allowance arrears for the period from 2016 to 2020 until the end of July 2022, specifying the following points:

- Payment and upgrading of retirement bonuses;

- Payment of chalk and documentation allowances

- Implementation of bonus increases for areas with difficult living conditions (30,000 to 60,000 CFA francs);

- Implementation of the SMIG and SMAG,

- Introduction of compulsory periodic medical check-ups;

- Increasing the annual budget for the health and education sectors;

- Clarification of the situation of community masters not covered by APICED;

- An increase in the amount of state subsidies paid to trade unions;

- The revision and adoption of a new labour code.

Focus no. 9 on the contributions of the trade union struggle

Successive agreements and the conclusion of the social pact with a three-year perspective show the willingness of the parties involved to continue the dialogue. The results achieved by the SET in improving the status of teachers are widely recognised.

However, the protocols have not been applied in full, and the social pact of 4 October 2021 appears to be a collection of all the outstanding claims that have not been applied, covering a scope of application that runs the risk of not being applied.

Although this pact offers great opportunities for improving the status of civil servants, including public sector teachers, it is far from being applied by the state budget in the current context of "economic restriction".

Box 9: The contribution of the trade union struggle

3.4. The limits of the trade union struggle

- Weakened leadership: the early 1990s saw a proliferation of unions, union platforms and political parties. Political differences and suspicions of "betrayal" weakened fears of unity and weakened corporatist movements. This state of affairs has prevented the unions from developing within themselves forces of proposals likely to establish genuine political and social dialogue with their partners.

- Attempts to "poach" teachers' union leaders who have agreed to be appointed to political posts have not made certain union missions easy. The departure of certain managers and leaders has prevented them from making technical proposals worthy of the name and ensuring real dialogue with senior ministry officials who are more experienced in their specific field.

- Strategic weaknesses relate to the lack of a long-term approach to the issues at stake. Some issues come up on an ad hoc basis and are only proposed at certain times, such as International Teachers' Day, celebrated annually on 05 October, and are ignored after these events. This leads to unorganised and undynamic advocacy. They are the source of teachers' demotivation and non-membership, and of difficulties in collecting dues from union members.

- Strategic shortcomings open the way to problems of upgrading the status of the teaching profession. This vision could be based on a mastery of the system of initial and in-service training as well as the systematic professionalisation of the profession. In fact, more than half of Chad's primary school teachers are community teachers who have not received any initial training or completed secondary school. This situation makes it impossible to tackle the issues of teaching quality and falling standards in a practical way. Examples of advocacy for 3 trained teachers per school in a long-term perspective against the backdrop of coaching of community teachers by trained primary school teachers could improve the quality of teaching.

- The unions' "classic" position on pay, payment of salary arrears, fringe benefits, bonuses for "difficult" areas and "chalk" blocks the level of debate and social and political dialogue, confining themselves to corporate demands. Corporate demands are what drive the dialogue back to demands, demonstrations and strikes, with partners staring at each other in the mirror, creating a closed mindset that is not always constructive, or instituting a status quo that limits effective progress.

- In addition to the leadership concerns already mentioned, there is the need for transparency in the management of material and financial resources. This calls for reorganisation and an internal policy of accountability, which would avoid demotivating members and at the same time improve the effectiveness of the trade union struggle.

- There is no support for improving the quality of education on offer. There is hardly any plea for a trade union contribution to the application of the constitutional provisions on free basic public education. At this level, the report reveals the country's economic limitations and the exhaustion of the Parents' Associations (APE), which make constant efforts to guarantee their children's education and support the running of schools. These economic pressures are at the root of the drop-outs and high drop-out rates recorded, particularly in schools located in rural areas.

However, it should be noted that the agreements that have emerged from the various negotiations show the great vitality of the trade union organisations. The recent creation of a framework for dialogue seems to provide the best possible structure for negotiations and ensure that the government's commitments are followed up.

CONCLUSION

The main aim of the study is to identify the factors influencing the education system and the trade union sector, in order to analyse the various mechanisms of social and political dialogue that result.

The presentation of the history of the Chadian school showed that the education system is a "building site" opened up by colonisation to provide the means for its expansion. The space for dialogue is very limited. It is true that a number of trade union centres have been set up, but their mission is modelled on that of the colonial country's trade unions and they function as their local relays. Defending the interests of indigenous workers and trade union freedom was a long conquest until the Brazzaville conference in 1944, which laid the foundations for a change in the way workers were organised and put an end to forced labour once and for all. The post-colonial period continued to experience political turbulence, which had repercussions on the development of the education system and was characterised by a low capacity for adaptation and innovation in response to the new problems that arose. The Conférence Nationale Souveraine (CNS) in 1993 and the Etats Généraux de l'Education (AGE) in 1994 laid the foundations for a political dialogue which strongly structured the demands of the teachers' unions and continues to do so through numerous agreements whose implementation is not effective in resolving the problems. From one protocol to the next, the demands seem to be repeated and very few commitments are honoured. The many challenges facing the education system have led to the emergence of alternatives such as parents' associations and community teachers in the informal sector to fill the gap left by the institutional system. However, the institutional mechanism for social dialogue at national level does not take account of these new players in the education system.

The trade union movement abounds in both the public and private sectors. The trade union movement in the education sector is growing, but networking to achieve scale remains a major challenge. With regard to the results obtained by the teachers' unions on the enhancement of the teaching profession (see page 30, point b. the contributions of the trade union struggle), teachers have a fairly positive perception of the unions but a practically negative one of the state, which does not seem to be honouring its commitments and is "politicising" the sector.

The study showed that, since 2009, an institutional framework for tripartite national dialogue (government, employers and unions) has been in place to moderate negotiations and monitor the commitments set out in the protocols, but its effectiveness has yet to be proven. In addition, the trade union fabric, particularly in the education sector, is being strengthened by the emergence of a dozen or so newly-created trade union organisations, which represent undeniable potential if they are better structured. However, the operating methods of these trade unions do not differ in terms of objectives or action strategy.

Strengthening the system of social and political dialogue remains relevant to increasing the capacity of the trade union sector in general and that of the education system in particular.

To improve the system of national dialogue, it is suggested that the trade union fabric in the education sector be strengthened.

RECOMMENDATIONS

a. Strengthen the information and continuing education system within the SET

The quality of teaching is a thorny issue which deserves to be addressed very seriously by the SET on a permanent basis. It is therefore necessary to equip itself with a documentation centre on educational subjects and to set up a continuous training system to encourage teachers to undertake continuous training using NICTs.

b. Setting up thematic working groups

The main cross-cutting themes, such as HR management, the quality of teaching and the learning system, and the governance of the education system, merit the setting up of thematic working groups, the aim of which is to produce ideas to encourage the public authorities to adopt more appropriate and effective policies.

c. Encourage education sector unions to look beyond corporatist demands

The education system inherited from colonisation has not yet completed the process of anchoring itself in the local value system and is generating problems of inadequate resources and adaptation to the new context, despite the projects and support programmes financed by the technical and financial partners.

It is important for trade unions to participate in this dynamic evolution of the education system. It is true that trade unions are sometimes involved in programmes, but their contribution is very negligible. The aim of the Political Dialogue approach would be to increase teachers' unions' sense of responsibility and their ability to contribute to the construction, alongside the State, of a more rewarding education system. It is essential to train union leaders to strengthen their capacity to play this new role in the various phases of identifying, formulating, monitoring the implementation and evaluating policies and programmes.

d. Structuring the trade union fabric in the education sector

There is a proliferation of trade union structures, some of which are in competition with each other, and the way they are organised does not always meet the concerns of efficiency and complementarity. Helping these organisations to clarify their mission in order to position themselves in a social environment that allows more synergy and complementary action, and helping to define ways of pooling in the form of a platform with more shared roles would be a great asset for the education sector.

e. Strengthening the existing dialogue mechanism

The National Committee for Social Dialogue has instituted branch dialogue, enabling each sector, including education, to conduct dialogue activities in the provinces and to report information from the education system at peripheral level to the central level. The results seem less satisfactory. The trade union organisations therefore need to build synergy to encourage their local branches to develop a dynamic of consultation and joint work in the education sector in order to provide the national system with more concrete information. In other words, strengthening trade unions to assume their "branch role" could boost the whole national system of dialogue.

f. Implementing commitments

A number of issues that represent the bottleneck in the Chadian education system are well known, for example the factors that reduce the quality of teaching and weaken the learning system, obscure the opportunities that enable teachers to be valued, and the lack of political will to initiate fundamental reforms and allocate adequate resources, etc. have not been integrated into the unions' approach to formulating upstream advocacy and social dialogue strategies. Support for the teachers' unions would consist of training them in the advocacy approach in relation to negotiation topics in order to improve the quality of their proposals during social and political dialogue.

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1. International Labour Organisation [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)