

Cost and budget impact analysis of inclusive education in Cameroon

Research summary

September 2022

Background

With funding from Irish Aid, Sightsavers has been providing technical assistance to the Ministry of Education (MINEDUB) in Cameroon since 2014. This included a pilot project for disability-inclusive education (2017-2020), covering four demonstration schools in the Central and Far North regions. To support the roll out of inclusive education in Cameroon, Sightsavers conducted a cost and budget impact study in 2021. Understanding the costs of making schools inclusive for children with disabilities, and assessing the affordability of scaling up interventions, will help inform government budgeting and planning of inclusive education. This summary note provides an overview of the findings.

Methodology

The costing study considered the incremental expenditure required to make primary schools inclusive using data from the demonstration project that was implemented by Sightsavers and the Government of Cameroon (2017-2020). This included routine financial and output data from the pilot project and generated two sets of costs:

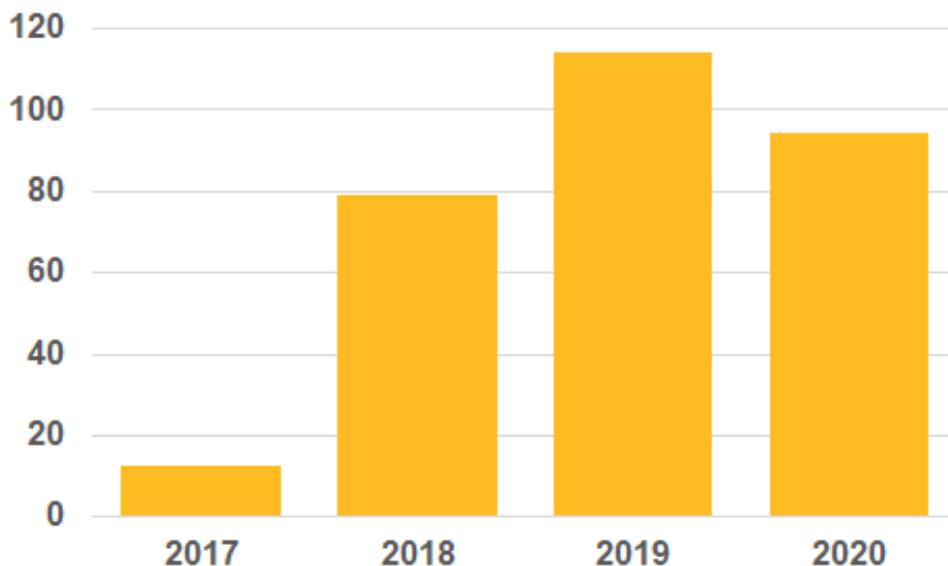
- Actual costs of the implementation of the pilot project in four demonstration schools, including expenditures covered by Sightsavers and other implementing partners
- Standard costs based on guidelines / minimum quality standards for inclusive education in Cameroon.

The budget impact study considered the financial cost of rolling out inclusive education during the period of the new education sector plan (2022-2030). The analysis considered scaling up inclusive education minimum standard activities to government primary schools in two scenarios: 428 government primary schools; and all government primary schools (reaching 15,324 schools by 2030).

Key findings

The total project expenditure on the four pilot schools from 2017 to 2020 was XAF 300,502,951 (USD 523,425). The average expenditure per school per year was XAF 13,420,678 (USD 23,354) and the average expenditure per child with disability per year was XAF 88,294 (USD 154). The annual breakdown of the expenditure is shown in figure 1.

Figure 1: Total project expenditure on pilot schools (XAF million)

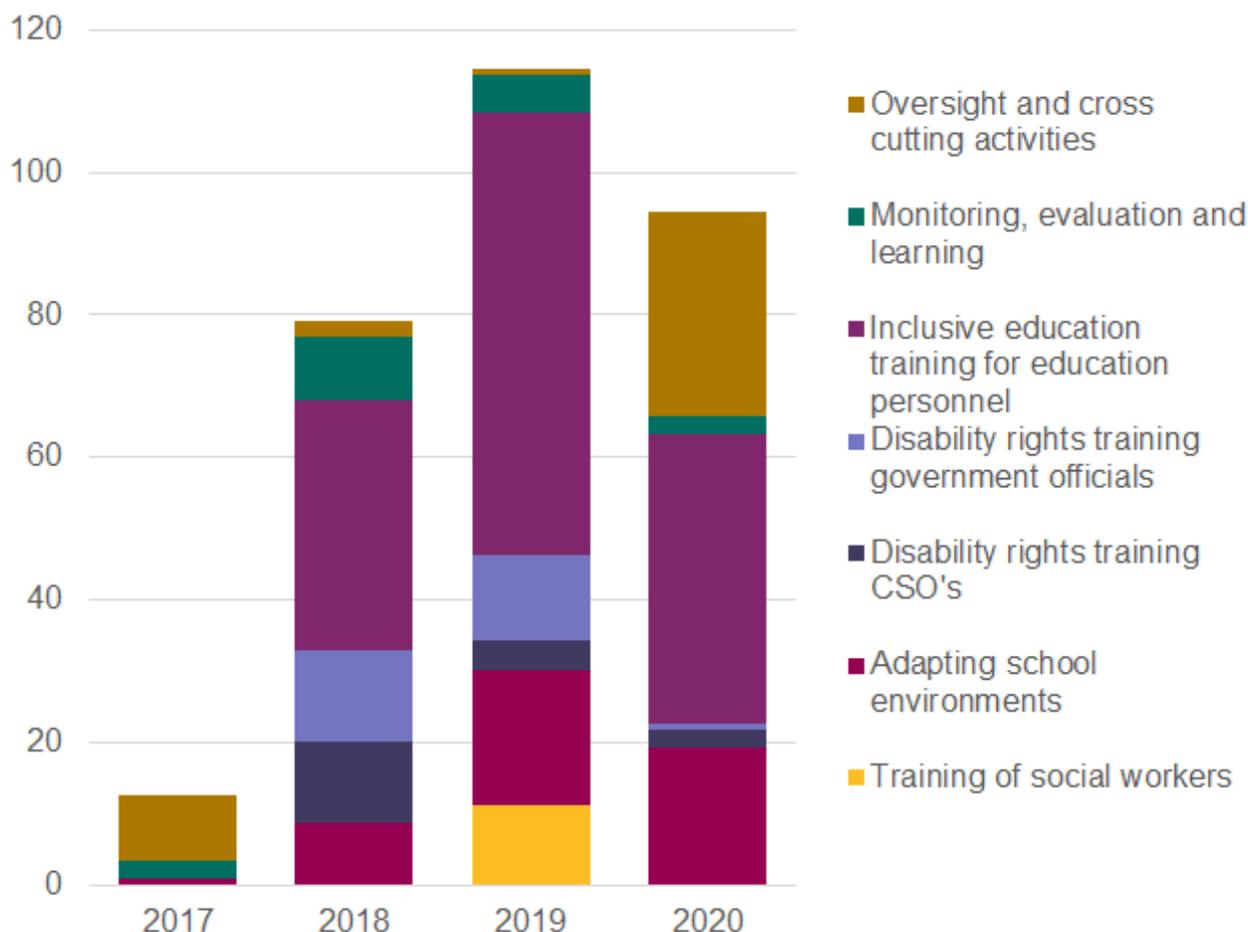


Project expenditure by project output is shown in figure 2. Over the period 2017-20, nearly half of the total expenditure (46%) was devoted to providing inclusive education training to education personnel to support the mainstreaming of quality, inclusive education. This included training in special schools of teachers and inspectors on communication, including braille and sign language, and the training of teachers on inclusive education and child safeguarding.

About 16% of expenditure was focussed on improving the school environment, including school refurbishment, conducting gender, disability, and medical assessments, and implementing mentoring and home-based support programmes. A further 4% was provided to train social workers to provide support to enrolled children.

Providing training and capacity-building on disability rights to civil society and government structures amounted to 6% and 9% respectively. Finally, project management costs represented a fifth (20%) of total project expenditure and included monitoring and evaluation, oversight, and cross-cutting activities.

Figure 2: Expenditure by project output (XAF million)

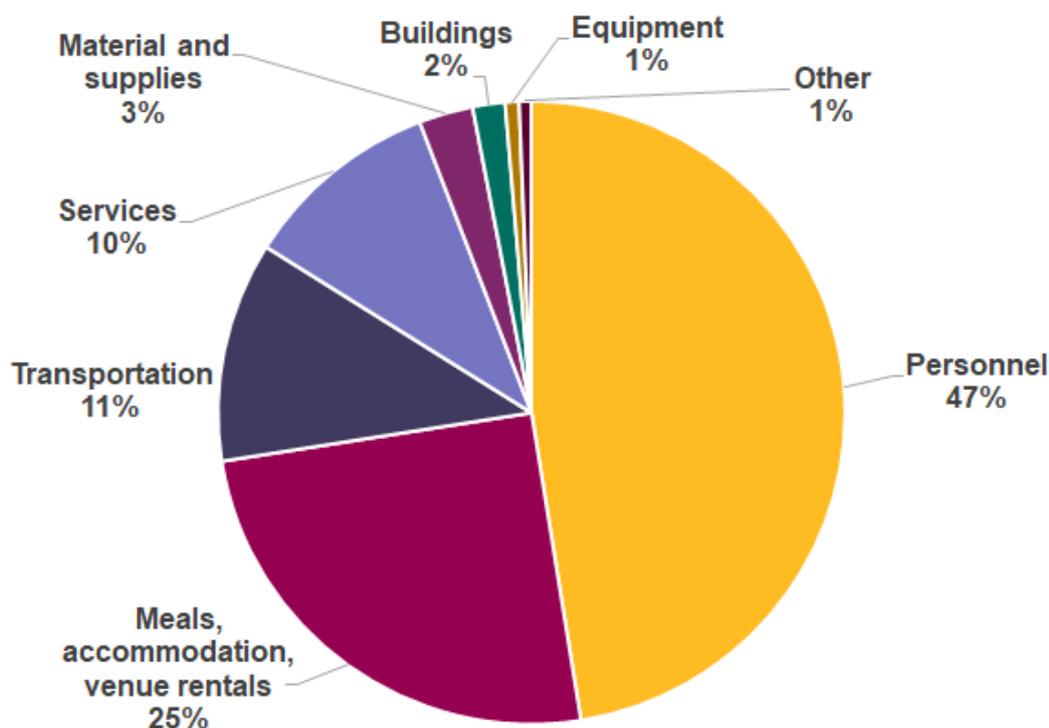


As figure 3 illustrates, nearly half (47%) of the total expenditure related to personnel costs, including: fees, indemnities and per diem for technical assistants and stakeholders participating in trainings and project activities. A further 25% related to meals, accommodation, and venue rentals related to all workshops and meetings. Around 11% related to transportation for project staff and stakeholders.

The remaining costs were due to services such as medical and rehabilitative services, media, printing, translation; materials and supplies; building rehabilitation; and assistive equipment.

Standard costs were calculated based on the eight minimum standards for inclusive education, as established by the capitalisation exercise of the pilot project which was written alongside the costing study. Expenditures for minimum standard activities amounted to XAF 217.4 million (USD 378,353), or 72% of the total cost of the inclusive education pilot project.

Figure 3: Total project expenditure by input (% of total expenditure)



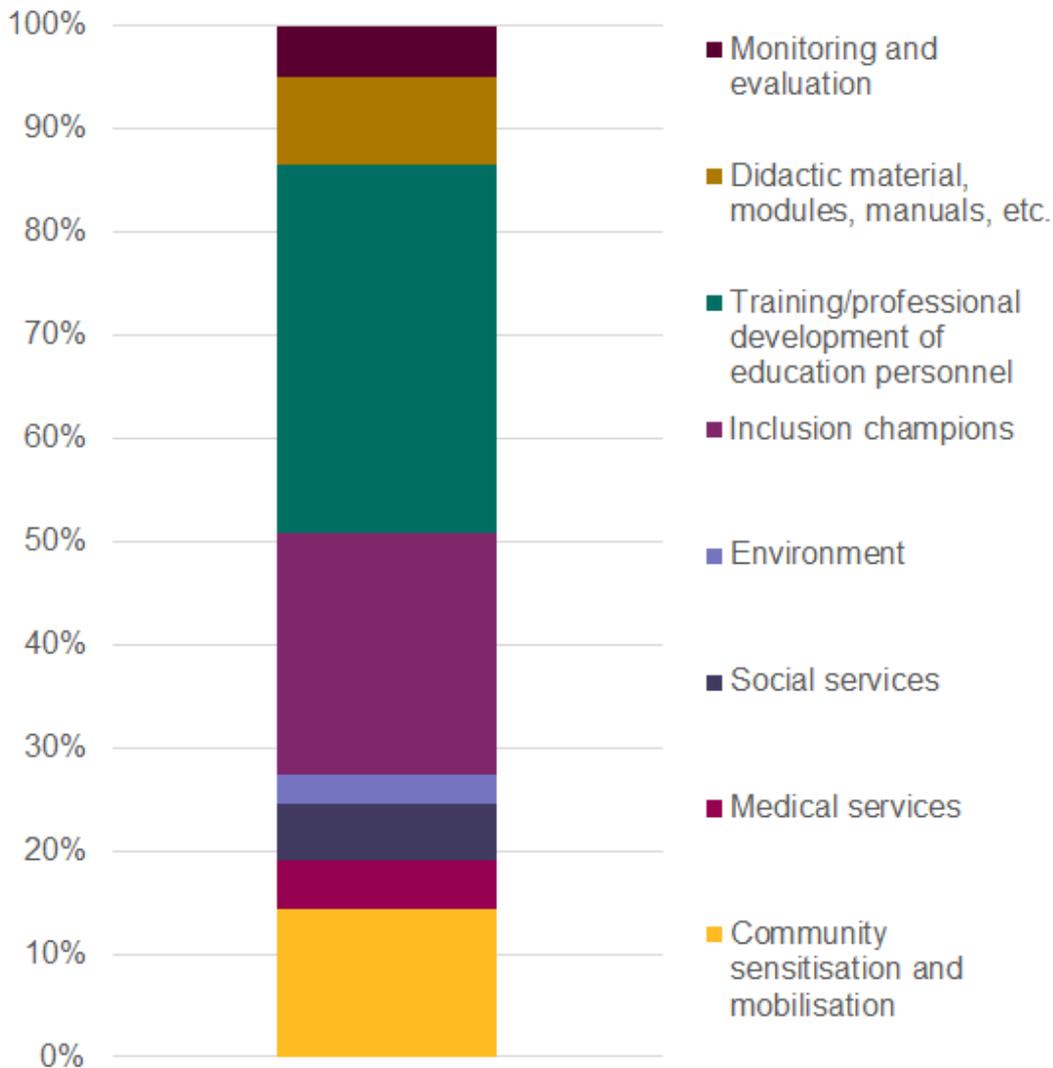
As illustrated by figure 4, over the project period most of the expenditure on the minimum standards (59%) related to the training and professional development of education personnel, including training of teachers and education cadres (36%) and the support for the work of inclusion champions (23%).

Other expenditure included: 14% related to community sensitisation and mobilisation activities; 11% related to medical and social services for children with disability; 9% related to elaboration of technical content such as didactic material, training modules and manuals; 5% monitoring and evaluation of learning achievements and social participation of children with disabilities; and 3% ensuring the environment and organisation in schools is adapted for children with disabilities.

The identification and orientation of children with disabilities (not indicated in figure 4) accounted for 0.2% of total expenditure.

The main cost drivers of the expenditure on minimum standards were the personnel costs and the costs associated with meals, accommodation and venue rental for the training and continuing professional development of education personnel, specifically teachers and cadres in the education system and inclusion champions. Together, they accounted for nearly half of minimum standard costs (49%).

Figure 4: Expenditure by minimum standard activity (% of total expenditure on minimum standard activities)



The budget impact of rolling out inclusive education at national level was calculated for two distinct scenarios for the period 2022-2030:

- In scenario 1, the inclusive education pilot initiative is extended to 428 government primary schools in Cameroon from 2022 and continued in all 428 schools thereafter
- In scenario 2, inclusive education is rolled out in all government primary schools in Cameroon (reaching a total of 15,324 inclusive schools in 2030)

The findings from the budget impact analysis are indicated in Table 1. In scenario 1, the inclusive education pilot initiative is extended to 428 government primary schools. The required budget would be XAF 27.8 billion (USD 47.7 million), approximately XAF 3.1 billion per year (USD 5.3 million). This would translate to XAF 7,228,725 (USD 12,387) per inclusive school per year and XAF 120,475 (USD 206) per school year completed by children with disabilities. The outcome of this scenario is that 231,127 school years would be completed by children with disabilities across all grades over the period 2022-2030.

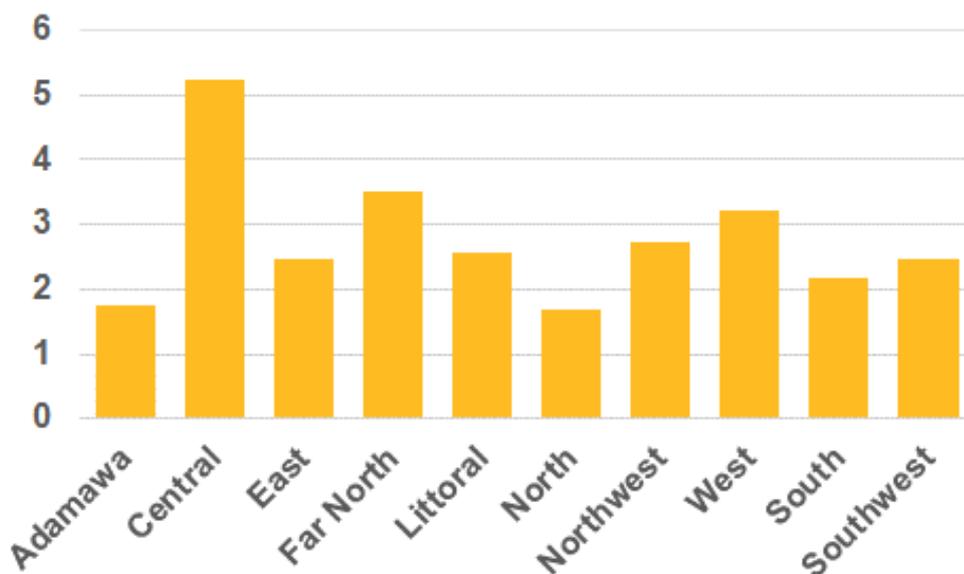
In scenario 2, inclusive education is rolled out in all government primary schools (reaching a total of 15,324 inclusive schools in 2030). The required budget would be about XAF 735.6 billion (USD 1.3 billion) over the period 2022-2030, an average of XAF 81.7 billion per year (USD 140.1 million). This translates to XAF 5,333,704 (USD 9,139) per inclusive school per year and XAF 524,710 (USD 899) per school year completed by children with disabilities. The outcome would be that 1,401,942 school years would be completed by children with disabilities across all grades over the period 2022-2030.

Table 1: Budget impact analysis results

	Scenario 1		Scenario 2	
	XAF	USD	XAF	USD
Number of inclusive schools	428		15,324	
Number of new entrants (children with disabilities)	52,850		344,072	
Number of school years (children with disabilities only)	231,127		1,401,942	
Need addressed (%)	12%		72%	
	XAF	USD	XAF	USD
Total budget impact	27,845,049,859	47,713,246	735,612,603,290	1,260,492,103
Average budget impact per year	3,094,894,429	5,301,472	81,734,733,699	140,054,678
Average cost per inclusive school/year	7,228,725	12,387	5,333,704	9,139
Average cost per school year for children with disabilities	120,475	206	524,710	899

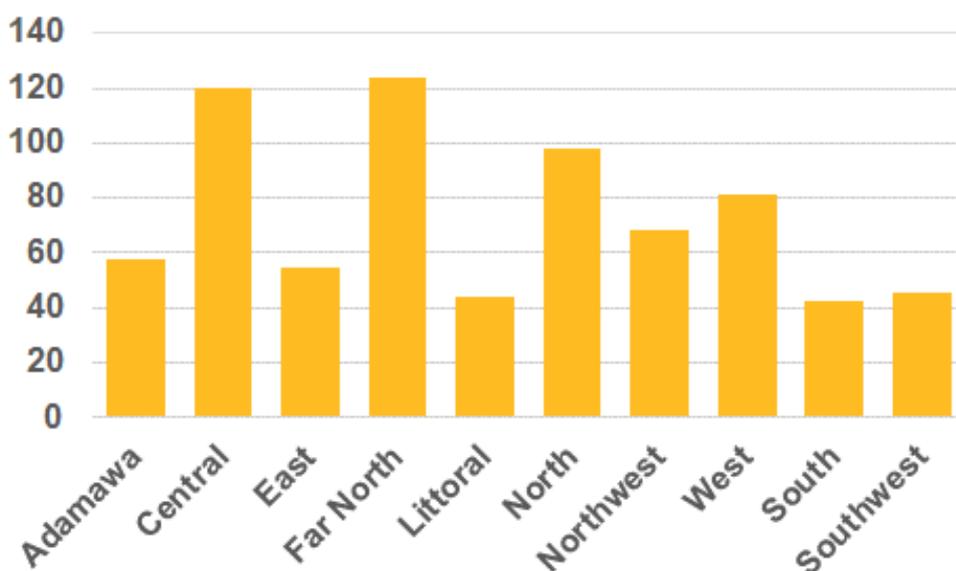
The budget impact was calculated for each region. The overall budget impact for the period 2022-2030 varied between XAF1.7 billion (USD 2.9 million) in the North and XAF 5.3 billion (USD 9.0 million) in the Central Region for scenario 1.

Figure 5: Scenario 1, budget impact by region (XAF billion)



For scenario 2, it ranged from XAF 42.3 billion (USD 72.4 million) to XAF 123.6 billion (USD 211.8 million) for the South and Far North regions respectively.

Figure 6: Scenario 2, budget impact by region (XAF billion)



Implications for policy and programmes

Having established demonstration programmes in four schools, Sightsavers and MINEDUB now intend to scale up inclusive education provision to 69 schools, one in each district and in each region of Cameroon. This costing study has identified the types and amount of costs that will need to be met for this scale up, based on the eight minimum standards.

Sightsavers, MINEDUB, and other key stakeholders now need to identify strategies for operationalising the costing study. They also need to ensure the Education Sector Plan and the new Inclusive Education Policy support the scale up of inclusive education.

Exchange rate: USD:XAF 584

Authors

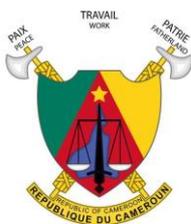
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