



STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026

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FOREWORD

The work of the Conference of the Ministers of Education of French-Speaking Countries (CONFEMEN) is linked to the international community's commitment to achieving the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, and in particular the fourth of these goals (SDG4), concerning education: *'ensuring that everyone has access to quality education on an equal basis and promoting lifelong learning opportunities'*.

CONFEMEN's mission is thus to support member states and governments with the reforms and adjustments needed to transform education. It reaffirms its identity through this Strategic Plan 2022-2026, which was adopted by the 59th Ministerial Conference held in Rabat in February 2022, and which specifies the nature and methods of its activities and its internal organisational structure with a view to achieving its mission more effectively.





INTRODUCTION

CONFEMEN, which was created in 1960 and brings together 44 states and governments, is an international organisation with the following key missions: keeping its members informed about progress in education systems and current reforms; encouraging discussion on themes of common interest with a view to joint action; and facilitating dialogue between ministers and experts in order to support regional and international education policies.

CONFEMEN has undergone constant development since its creation, and this has implications for its planning strategy. Planning was initially conducted on an annual and then on a biennial basis, but there has been a process of reflection since 2020 with a view to developing a five-year strategic plan for the period 2022-2026.

This strategic plan is divided into four parts. Part 1 deals with the general framework, presenting the context for the strategic plan's development and recalling the objectives, approach, and methodology. Part 2 concerns the diagnosis of the current situation in order to identify the problems and their causes and to highlight the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that characterise CONFEMEN's internal and external environment. Part 3 presents the strategic orientation framework which determines the strategic focuses, objectives, and outcomes. Finally, Part 4 is devoted to the framework for implementing, steering, monitoring, and evaluating the strategic plan.

PART 1: GENERAL FRAMEWORK

General context and process for developing the strategic plan

In 2016, CONFEMEN's 57th Ministerial Conference, held in Gabon, decided that the institution should have a five-year strategic plan, in order to set out its actions in a longer timeframe than that provided by the two-year plans previously used. The process of developing the five-year plan for 2022-2026 was initiated in 2020, at the time of the final two-year plan.

The international educational context and the challenges of achieving SDG4

The development of this five-year plan took place in a context marked, first, by an international community which has set itself new sustainable development goals to be achieved by 2030 and, second, international education actors that are working to ensure the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) within member states and governments.

In this context, the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused severe disruption and had very serious economic and social consequences, amplified the challenges to be met by education systems. CONFEMEN has therefore worked to improve the resilience of education systems and support educational continuity. Digital technology played a central role in this context through various projects, including the ImaginEcole initiative, led by CONFEMEN and UNESCO and implemented in ten French-speaking sub-Saharan African countries with the support of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the French government.

Objectives and methodological approach for developing the strategic plan

The specific objectives set for the development of the strategic plan revolve around five key challenges for CONFEMEN: (i) broadening the scope of its interventions and diversifying its activities in support of SDG4; (ii) consolidating and developing its economic model in order to allow the sustainable long-term financing of its activities and optimal management of financial and human resources; (iii) setting up secure technical and financial partnerships throughout the period of the plan in order

to ensure a full-fledged implementation of the planned activities; (iv) strengthening governance, in particular to ensure better collection of contributions from member states and governments, better management of human resources, a better organisational framework, and better employment conditions; (v) the introduction of an effective communication strategy throughout the plan's implementation period.

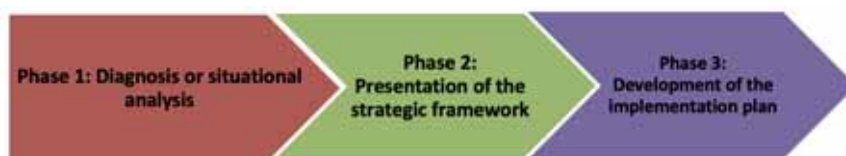
The development of the strategic plan was based on an exploratory study of the education sector plans for a group of 15 countries, commissioned by CONFEMEN in order to identify the challenges associated with working towards the targets of SDG4 by 2030.

Teams of consultants were recruited to develop the five-year plan for 2022 to 2026 and to review the provisional version with a view to its finalisation.



The strategic plan development process

The strategic plan was developed in three stages: **Phase 1**, diagnosis or situational analysis; **Phase 2**, defining the strategic framework; and **Phase 3**, developing a framework for implementing the strategy.



The overall conceptual approach consists of five stages shown in the diagram below, proceeding from diagnosis to the choice of overall objectives that will be broken down into strategic focuses relating to specific areas of educational transformation within the member states and governments for which precise outcomes will be expected.

An action and financing plan for the activities will then be developed to support the achievement of the outcomes.





PART 2: STRATEGIC DIAGNOSIS

Recap of the main achievements of previous plans and programmes

The diagnosis is based on two elements: the work of the Permanent Technical Secretariat (STP), and the achievements of the CONFEMEN Programme for the Analysis of Education Systems (PASEC).

The achievements taken into account in this diagnosis are numerous and varied. Over the past ten years, CONFEMEN has organised: the **Technical and Vocational Education and Training Sessions** in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) in 2012, on the theme, 'What professional and technical skills are needed to improve the socio-economic integration of young people?'; the March 2014 **panel discussion** on 'The role and place of the assessment of learning outcomes in the management and reform of education systems'; the **International Seminar on Education Financing** organised in collaboration with the Kingdom of Morocco in Rabat in 2017; and the launch of the ImaginEcole initiative for the benefit of teachers and students.

CONFEMEN has also taken other initiatives that reflect its increasing visibility and profile. These include the **Sponsoring Heads of State Programme**, whose first sponsor, appointed to coincide with CONFEMEN's 60th anniversary, His Excellency Mr Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, presided over the **launch of the PASEC2019 international report** in Dakar in December 2020. In addition, there are other outputs such as the national reports of the 14 countries of the PASEC2019 assessment, the national assessment completed by PASEC for São Tomé, the assessment of students in the Elan bilingual education programme, the assessment of the effects of COVID-19 on student performance in four pilot countries, and the first periodic report of the Observatory for the Quality of Education (OQE).

Key lessons learned

From the analysis of these achievements and outputs, we can conclude that CONFEMEN must: (i) strengthen its proven, high-level, recognised expertise in order to produce higher-quality scientific documents, (ii) mobilise sufficient financial resources to support its ambitions and policy, (iii) organise a fruitful dialogue and share experiences between member states and governments in order to

propose innovative solutions to the learning crisis, and (iv) strengthen its institutional capacities and its resilience to risks such as those associated with COVID-19.

Analysis of the current situation

Following the diagnosis supported by the causal analysis, the development of a problem tree and a SWOT analysis, we can conclude that the institution has definite policy-making influence with the backing of 44 ministers of education of French-speaking countries; however, the impact of its work on the education systems of member states and governments needs to be reinforced so as to reflect the quality and relevance of its programmes.

For CONFEMEN this implies: (i) greater use of the outputs of its programmes for decision-making with a view to improving education policies and the quality of teaching and learning; (ii) strengthening the support system for member states and governments with a view to the transformations necessary to achieve SDG4; (iii) better strategic positioning among the actors of the French-speaking world and international education; (iv) better governance of the STP.

The analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the STP and its four focus areas (Assessment, Educational Policies, Communication and Management) suggests that its main strength is that it is the first French-speaking intergovernmental body in the field of education and training, which gives it a high degree of political legitimacy to speak on behalf of member states and governments. However, it needs to assert its political identity and its added value relative to other international actors in education more effectively.

There are several opportunities in this respect: (i) the focus on achieving SDG4, which offers the opportunity for large-scale concerted ministerial action; (ii) the challenges facing countries, which require the coordination of efforts and the exchange of experiences and good practices, which are the core business of CONFEMEN; (iii) the specific goals set in terms of pre-school education, schooling for girls, inclusive education and lifelong learning, which should guide its actions; (iv) the urgency of developing new skills for the 21st century, which calls for far-reaching educational reforms to be supported in member states and governments; (v) the learning crisis, aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to international

enthusiasm for data on learning and the assessment of learning outcomes, an area in which CONFEMEN has proven expertise through PASEC.

PASEC's main strength is that it is one of the few programmes in Africa to conduct international assessments that provide information on progress towards the achievement of SDG4, with a methodology that is consistent with that of the major international assessment programmes, and that it disseminates quality publications. However, close consideration should be given to the interest that this may arouse in giving it more scope on a continental scale to respond to the requests of the international education community and the technical and financial partners, and care should be taken to ensure that it remains firmly embedded within CONFEMEN and to reinforce CONFEMEN's identity as an actor of the Charter of La Francophonie.

CONFEMEN must therefore respond in a clear-sighted manner to the desire of certain international donors to have a new institution in charge of the 'quality assessment' of SDG4 in order to turn it into an opportunity for PASEC; and PASEC must take advantage of the start that has already been made on significant diversification, in particular with the teacher survey carried out as part of the PASEC2019 edition.

The main strength of CONFEMEN's Education Policy Unit (PPE) transformed into the Support Program for Change and the Transformation of Education (PACTE) lies in its role in liaising with political bodies. With its Observatory for the Quality of Education (OQE) it help member states and governments express their needs in terms of support for education policies and the sharing and appropriation of relatively complex research data.

However, the complementarity between the PACTE and PASEC needs to be reinforced, as does the internal coherence of the PACTE (between the OQE and the other activities), and the PACTE's separate budget needs to be increased to allow it to affirm its added value relative to the many international actors developing a similar range of services in support of education policies.

The main strengths of CONFEMEN's Communication Unit are that it offers: (i) varied content on the CONFEMEN websites, one of which is dedicated to PASEC (statutes, statements by ministers, internal regulations of

the STP, guidance notes, action plans, PASEC assessment reports, study reports, etc.); (ii) reflection and orientation documents (DROs), scientific articles, communication tools on various media (posters, kakemonos, presentation brochures, etc.); (iii) two platforms dedicated to the OQE and the national correspondents. Its strength also lies in the use of contemporary communication channels, including social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) and a YouTube channel.

However, this unit needs extra human resources to carry out its many activities more effectively and enhance CONFEMEN's political identity through the richness of its content.

The strengths of the Management Unit are linked to the CONFEMEN budget, which benefits from regular contributions from member states and governments and from the PASEC partners, whose subsidies to the programme have increased constantly since 2012. However, it must increase its capacity to mobilise new resources to enable CONFEMEN to roll out new activities and optimise the impact of PASEC's growing resources on the overall functioning of CONFEMEN.

After appraisal of the results of the diagnosis, the strategic orientation framework has been broken down into different points: vision, values, and overall objectives.



PART 3: STRATEGIC ORIENTATION FRAMEWORK

Vision

The following vision has been used as the basis for the Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026: 'CONFEMEN will assert its position as a benchmark political and strategic institution for the French-speaking world in the field of education, by offering member states and governments the information and evidence necessary for decision-making as well as the technical support needed to bring about change in order to achieve the targets of SDG4.'

Values

CONFEMEN advocates the right to quality education for all and adheres to the general values of the French-speaking world: solidarity, cultural and linguistic diversity, democracy and human rights, peace and citizenship, promotion of the French language, and equality between women and men.

Overall objectives, strategic focuses, effects and expected outcomes

Two overall objectives are targeted: (i) increasing the impact of CONFEMEN's work on the education systems of states and governments by raising the level of satisfaction of states, governments, and partners to 80% by 2026, and (ii) improving other education actors' perception of the visibility, profile, and image of CONFEMEN, bringing it to a high level by 2026.

To achieve these objectives, three areas of intervention have been identified: (i) reinforcing the output of evidence to support decision-making; (ii) strengthening support for education policies aimed at transforming education systems; and (iii) improving the STP's strategic positioning and governance.



Table 1: Outcomes pursued per area of focus in the strategic plan

	FOCUSES		
	Focus 1	Focus 2	Focus 3
SEQUENCE OF OUTCOMES	Reinforcing the output of relevant and useful data to support decision-making	Strengthening support for education policies aimed at transforming education systems	Improving the STP's strategic positioning and governance
EFFECTS	Effect 1: The output of evidence for decision-making is strengthened	Effect 2: Support for education policies aimed at transforming education systems is strengthened	Effect 3: Strategic positioning and governance are improved
Outcomes / Outputs	Outcome 1.1. : The number of countries covered by PASEC assessments increases. Outcome 1.2. : PASEC assessments are extended to other levels and sub-sectors of education. Outcome 1.3. : The use of data produced by states and governments increases. Outcome 1.4. : CONFEMEN's expertise is internationally recognised and better used.	Outcome 2.1. : Support for national assessment capacity-building is improved. Outcome 2.2. : Policy dialogue and the sharing of best practices are strengthened. Outcome 2.3. : Monitoring of the implementation of institutional capacity-building actions for education systems is improved.	Outcome 3.1. : CONFEMEN is extended to other countries with ties to the French-speaking world. Outcome 3.2. : CONFEMEN's financial resources increase. Outcome 3.3. : The STP's human resources are reinforced both quantitatively and qualitatively. Outcome 3.4. : Communication with other education actors improves Outcome 3.5. : The CONFEMEN partnership grows.

Each of the three strategic focuses of the plan has an associated effect; certain outcomes or outputs contribute to the achievement of these effects.

These outcomes are transformative. The logical model of the theory of change that has been used can be broken down as a sequence of results that includes a general objective or impact, various specific objectives or effects, and various outcomes or outputs.

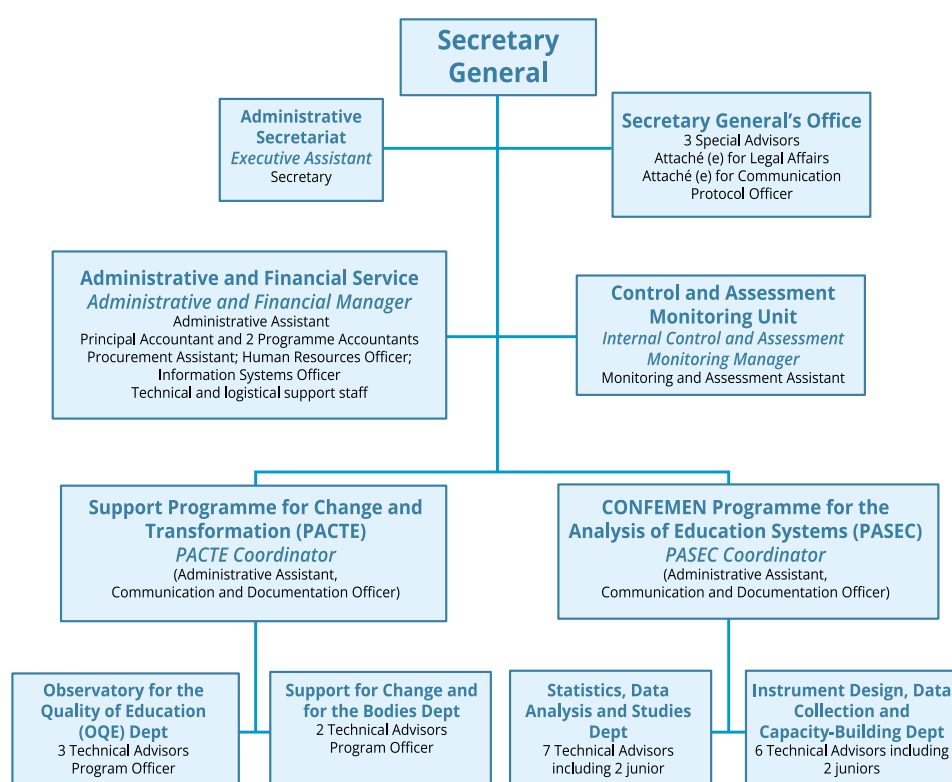
PART 4: THE STRATEGIC PLAN'S IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

Organisational resources

Following the strategic orientation framework, the implementation framework includes the general organisation chart, the organisational structure and method of intervention of the programmes, and the organisational structure of the support functions.

The STP's new global organisation chart makes a clear distinction between: (i) two programmes : the CONFEMEN Programme for the Analysis of Education Systems (i.e. PASEC, which keeps its name) and the CONFEMEN Support Programme for Change and Transformation in Education (PACTE), one department of which is the Observatory for the Quality of Education; (ii) the Administrative and Financial Service (SAF), which is the new name of the Management Unit; (iii) units reporting directly to the Secretary General at the top of the hierarchy (the Secretary General's Office, the Control and Assessment Monitoring Service, and the Administrative Attachée).

The new organisation chart of STP-CONFEMEN



Like the STP's general organisation chart, the organisation and intervention methods of the programmes have evolved.

The development of PASEC will mainly take place at two levels: (i) an increase in the number of countries benefiting from national analyses and international comparisons, (ii) an extension of the scope of investigations to provide a better response to the requirements of countries on the way to SDG4.

The development of the Education Policy Unit and **its transformation into the Support Programme for Change and Transformation in Education (PACTE)** including the Observatory for the Quality of Education (OQE) will first of all (i) enable states and governments that have benefited from PASEC assessments to make better use of the data to steer their education policies, and then (ii) respond to the numerous requests for support already made by states and governments or to needs that exist but have not yet been expressed, related to the steps to be taken to achieve SDG4.

Synergies between the two programmes will strengthen their complementarity: PASEC aims to improve knowledge and understanding of the functioning of education systems, while PACTE will give priority to supporting the transformation work carried out by the authorities of member countries on specific issues identified by mutual agreement (specific processes or fields of action targeted by a reform project).

The Administrative and Financial Service combines functions such as fund mobilisation and management, human resources management – which is a major preoccupation of CONFEMEN – the fitting out and maintenance of premises, the allocation and maintenance of staff equipment, etc. on which the proper functioning and effectiveness of CONFEMEN depend.

The Internal Control and Assessment Monitoring Unit, under the supervision of the Secretary General, will support the efficiency and effectiveness of the programmes by monitoring implementation, while the Secretary General's Office will support overall management of the institution, communication, and the development of partnerships for greater efficiency.

Economic model and financing plan

The proposed economic model includes a resource mobilisation strategy and a financing simulation. It is especially important for CONFEMEN to acquire more resources to develop its activities, address the lack of human resources, and upgrade the employment conditions and salaries of its staff.

Resource mobilisation strategy

The resource mobilisation strategy suggests (i) an effective policy for mobilising the statutory contributions (recovery of arrears, updating the statutes and the contribution levels, expanding the range of services), (ii) the optimisation of voluntary contributions (an increase in voluntary contributions from the northern countries and the possibility of establishing two types of voluntary contributions: budgetary support or specific contributions to particular projects, programmes or initiatives), (iii) the mobilisation of new resources by the programmes by increasing the provision of expert services.

Financial simulation

The financing simulation is based on a scenario in which there is a progressive increase in the statutory contributions from the southern countries in three phases: i) maintenance of the current level of statutory contributions in 2022, ii) an annual increase of 20% in 2023 and 2024, iii) an annual increase of 30% in 2025 and 2026.

For the period 2022-2026, the general budget is estimated at FCFA 33,245,062,168 (€50,681,771), taking account of a projection of the PASEC2024 assessment in 20 countries and the 17 countries covered by the OQE agreements. However, there is a financing shortfall of €20,016,089 which will need to be made up by strengthening the mobilization of statutory and voluntary contributions from Member States and governments and by diversifying the sources of funding through the revitalization of the network of technical and financial partners, to support the new dynamics of the Strategic Plan.

Concerning the recovery of arrears of statutory contributions, a 20% annual recovery rate is assumed. Any increase in voluntary contributions from northern states and governments is a matter for those concerned, as is

any increase in the number of countries making voluntary contributions. However, any such increase, even temporarily and on the part of only some northern states and governments, would make it easier to pay for the launch and functioning of the new programme until it is able to generate new resources.

Diversification of the technical and financial partnership

It is also proposed to seek (i) the support of CONFEMEN's traditional technical and financial partners, namely AFD and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (DDC), to cover the salaries of new technical advisors and/or other STP supervisory staff in line with international standards, (ii) the mobilisation of new donors to support the surveys and research work of the new programme (PACTE), by pointing to the quality of the work produced in the first phase of the strategic plan and taking account of the interest of potential new donors in the themes of the work envisaged in the second phase.

Table 3: Partners

Technical and financial partners (TFPs)	Financed programmes	Main themes
Traditional partners (existing)		
AFD (CZZ 2132 /ZZ 2502)	PASEC	Assessment/ capacity-building of states/governments
DDC D CONTRACT 81062936	PASEC	Assessment/ research, studies/ planning
New partnerships in progress (confirmed)		
Bill Gates Grants	PASEC/ PACTE	Assessment/ research, studies/ planning
GPE (via OIF)	PACTE	KIX-Africa 21 - sharing of experiences, innovation, etc.
UNESCO	PACTE	Evaluation of textbooks
OIF-IFEF	PASEC	ELAN programme (IFEF)
New partnerships to be mobilised (new agreements)		
GPE (via OIF)	PACTE	KIX-Africa 21 project
UNESCO	PACTE	Educational resources/ curriculum/ textbooks
AFD (new agreement)	PASEC	Assessment
	PACTE	Support for change
DDC (new agreement)	PASEC	PASEC2024 assessment
	PACTE	Support for transformation (languages, TVET/ alternatives)
GATES FOUNDATION	PASEC	Assessment
	PACTE	Support for change/ studies, research/ SDG monitoring
Other TFPs (WB/ EU/ AfDB/ Dubai Care, etc.)	PASEC	Assessment/ support with national assessment systems/ research
	PACTE	SDG4 monitoring (curriculum/ teachers/ early childhood/ studies and research

Risk identification and management

Identifying risks and managing them in advance are vital for the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan 2022-2026. These risks may be institutional or financial.

Three types of risks to be anticipated

Institutional risks relate to competition. For PACTE, it is important to take account of the presence of other institutions that support the transformation of education in the countries, in particular IIEP Dakar, which supports national education policies, the production of statistics, financial simulation, etc.; the Institut de la Francophonie pour l'Education et la Formation (IFEFF), which is involved in bilingual education and which, like the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF), is also involved in vocational training, teachers' pre- and in-service training, support for educational innovations and reforms, etc. For PASEC, it is important to take account of the competition that could arise from the enthusiasm of major international organisations for measuring the quality of learning in connection with the future assessment of SDG4.

In this context, CONFEMEN must not adopt a competitive mindset but, as far as possible, develop partnerships based on affirming the added value of the institution and its programmes, in order to attract interest from and mobilise the various donors for the sake of financing and the definition of the assessment monitoring parameters.

Financial risks relate to the institution's financing being insufficient to meet its ambitions. Faced with the increased need for financing of the two programmes and the insufficient mobilisation of contributions from member states and governments, CONFEMEN has no alternative but to increase statutory and voluntary contributions and develop new partnerships to finance the implementation of the strategic plan.

Operational risks of the programmes, in particular:

- (i) Failure of states and governments to appropriate and/or use the output of CONFEMEN's programmes,
- (ii) quantitatively and qualitatively insufficient human resources,
- (iii) irregular timing of meetings of the bodies,
- (iv) low attendance of states and governments at such meetings and
- (vii) insufficient staff capacity-building.

Risk management methods

Risk management can be undertaken by improving communication on CONFEMEN outputs; improved monitoring of CONFEMEN's involvement with states and governments; advocating the recovery of statutory and voluntary contributions; strengthening a dynamic and fruitful partnership; recruiting and retaining staff; using high-level expertise; boosting the skills, capacities, and motivation of staff.

Phasing of the implementation of the strategic plan

Four phases in the strategic plan's implementation have been defined as follows: (a) the first three months: mobilisation of actors; (b) the first year: introduction of the new focuses; (c) the second and third years: firming up financial partnerships and launching new activities; (d) the fourth and fifth years: consolidation of the new activities carried out by the two programmes.



The Strategic Plan 2022-2026 will be implemented through: (i) the affirmation of the specific political characteristics of the international bodies and introduction of the new organisation chart; (ii) the amendment of the staff regulations; (iii) the recruitment of PACTE and PASEC executives and technical advisors; (iv) the launch of the new projects, particularly in support of educational policies; (v) the geographical and thematic expansion of PASEC's field of activity; (vi) the introduction of the new economic model; and (vii) the development and implementation of the communication action plans.

These different phases will be supported by firming up the technical and financial partnerships and launching and stepping up the new activities.

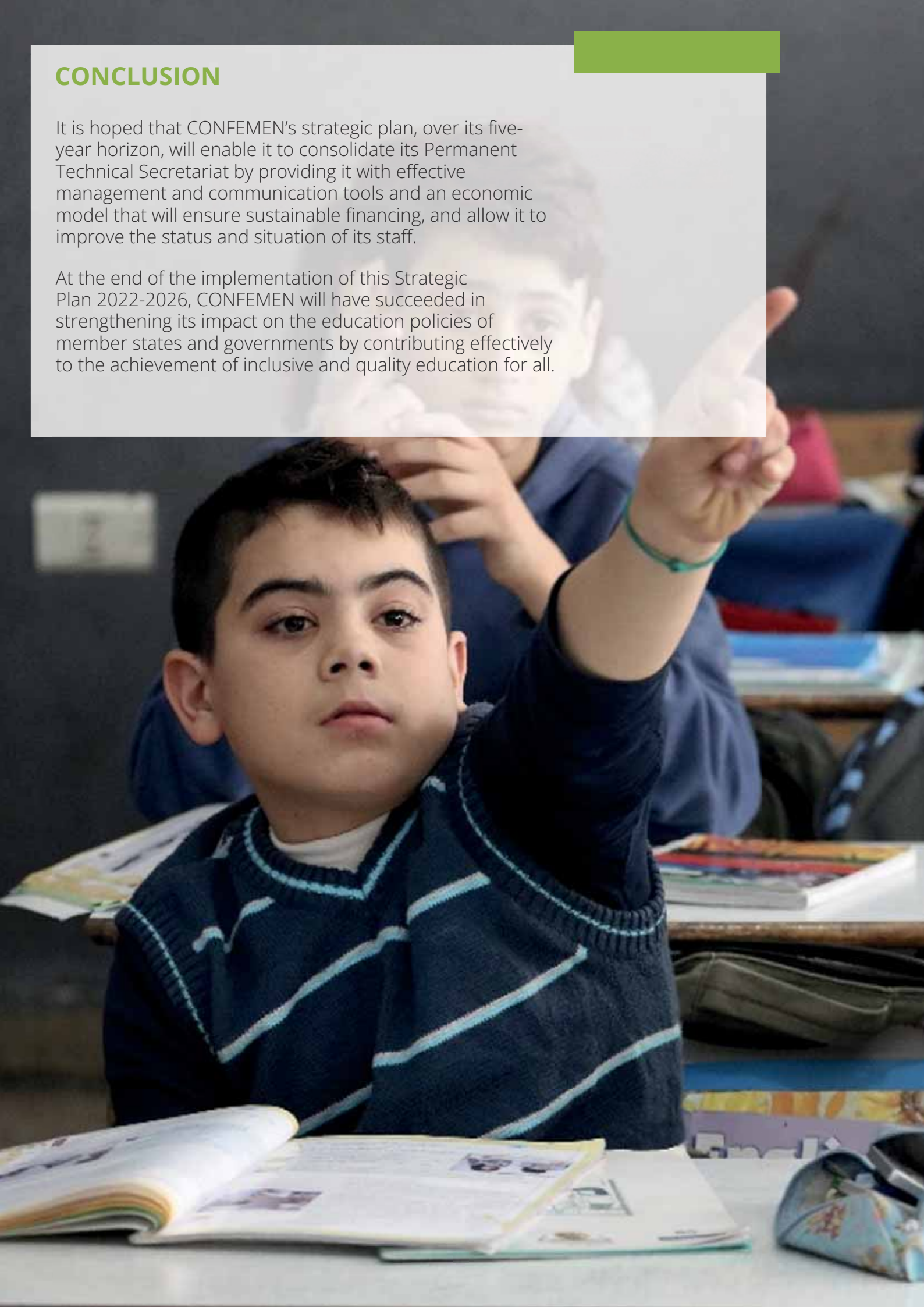
Steering the implementation of the strategic plan

The steering, monitoring and evaluation system consists of (i) political steering through the CONFEMEN bodies; (ii) technical steering within STP-CONFEMEN. A mid-term external evaluation is planned during the third year; this will enable any adjustments that are needed to be made to the plan's implementation for the last two years.

CONCLUSION

It is hoped that CONFEMEN's strategic plan, over its five-year horizon, will enable it to consolidate its Permanent Technical Secretariat by providing it with effective management and communication tools and an economic model that will ensure sustainable financing, and allow it to improve the status and situation of its staff.

At the end of the implementation of this Strategic Plan 2022-2026, CONFEMEN will have succeeded in strengthening its impact on the education policies of member states and governments by contributing effectively to the achievement of inclusive and quality education for all.









44 member States and governments

 Bénin	 Luxembourg
 Bulgarie	 Madagascar
 Burkina Faso	 Mali
 Burundi	 Maroc
 Cambodge	 Maurice
 Cameroun	 Mauritanie
 Canada	 Niger
 Canada-Nouveau Brunswick	 République Centrafricaine
 Canada-Québec	 RDP Lao
 Cap-Vert	 R D Congo
 Congo	 Roumanie
 Côte d'Ivoire	 Rwanda
 Djibouti	 Sao Tomé et Principe
 Égypte	 Sénégal
 Ex-République Yougoslave de	 Seychelles
 Fédération Wallonie-Bru	 Suisse
 France	 Tchad
 Gabon	 Togo
 Guinée	 Tunisie
 Guinée-Bissau	 Union des Comores
 Haïti	 Vanuatu
 Liban	 Vietnam



Complexe Sicap Point E, Immeuble C
3e étage, avenue Cheikh Anta Diop
BP 3220 Dakar Sénégal
Tél : +221 33 859 29 79 / 33 859 29 91

confemen@confemen.org



www.confemen.org

■ pasec@confemen.org

■ pacte@confemen.org