JUNE 9, 2021

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DECISION VIA AFFIRMATIVE VOTE

ALLOCATION FOR AN ESPIG TO BANGLADESH

Reference	Decisions
BOD/2021/06-01	**Allocation for an Education Sector Program Implementation Grant to Bangladesh:** The Board of Directors with respect to the application submitted in January 2021: 1. Notes compliance with the requirements for accessing the fixed part of the maximum country allocation (MCA) for an education sector program implementation grant, as described in the application and summarized and assessed in Annex B to BOD/2021/05 DOC 14. 2. Notes compliance with meeting the requirements for accessing the variable part of the MCA and approves the indicators on Equity, Efficiency, and Learning and their means of verification as described in the application and assessed in Annex B to BOD/2021/05 DOC 14. 3. Approves an allocation from GPE trust funds for an ESPIG, as described in the application submitted and summarized in Table 1 in BOD/2021/06-01 3 (c), subject to: a) Availability of funds. b) Board decision BOD/2012/11-04 on commitment of trust funds for ESPIGs in annual installments. c) Secretariat recommendations for funding, including (all amounts in US$):

Table 1 Application Summary and Secretariat Allocation Recommendations:

Bangladesh		
a.	ESPIG Maximum Country Allocation	53,900,000
b.	Fixed Part	37,730,000
c.	Variable Part	16,170,000
d.	Allocation Requested (100%)	53,900,000[1]
e.	**Allocation Recommended by Secretariat**	**53,900,000**
f.	Grant Agent	World Bank
g.	Agency Fee % - Amount	1.75% - 943,250
h.	Period	2 years
i.	Expected Start Date	October 31, 2021
j.	Variable Part Disbursement Modality	Ex-post
k.	Funding Source	GPE Fund

4. Requests the Secretariat to:
   a) Include in its notification of grant approval to Bangladesh the observations and requests for report-back set out in Annex A.
   b) Include an update on the requested report back in the annual Grant Status Report in accordance with the specified timeline.

[1] Includes US$375,000 for the cost of the grant agent to perform its roles and responsibilities.

Annex A – Secretariat Observations and Report-Back

Bangladesh	
Observations	The Secretariat positively recognizes Bangladesh's remarkable progress in recent years in the areas of sector planning and financing. The proposed program is relevant in the country context and well-aligned to the country's sector plan. The variable part indicators incentivize key sector results aligned with education sector plan priorities and their transformational nature is clear. With regard to the funding model requirements, Bangladesh is encouraged to: i) integrate new initiatives (proposed in the BESP) into the sub-sector programs, and monitor the progress on the BESP implementation, ii) continue its reporting to UNESCO Institute for Statistics and to use the strengthened education management information system (EMIS) to increase the number of key indicators it reports on. Headteacher training and School Level Improvement Plan/ Upazila Primary Education Plan (SLIP/UPEP) data publication activities are designed to support the professional development of teachers (through headteacher provision of school-based mentoring) and the more effective and efficient use of SLIP/UPEP funding, respectively. As both are relatively new interventions in the context, it is recommended that program evaluation activities consider the extent to which activities support progress toward proposed objectives. Given that the nationwide rollout of a second year of pre-primary education will take place over several years, initial lessons learned during this program could inform discussions on the budget envelope and strategy required to institutionalize the intervention nationwide. Finally, the Secretariat notes the impact of the pandemic on education systems and invites the government and the grant agent, in consultation with the local education group, to consider adapting the proposed program to emerging issues, notably impact on children learning as a result of school closures, as needed. Other adaptations to consider could relate to mitigation measures on potential delays or other constraints that the pandemic may have on program

	implementation including, if necessary, a modification of indicator targets.
Report-Back	*For the government* The Secretariat commends Bangladesh for its high commitment to financing for education while noting the possible impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the commitment. Therefore, the government is requested to report annually on domestic financing on education (both education's share of total public budget and primary share of the education recurrent budget) through annual implementation reports of the Bangladesh Education Sector Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25 (BESP).