REPORT OF THE FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE PART 2: RECOMMENDATIONS ON PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION GRANT ALLOCATIONS

For Decision

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to provide to the Board of Directors (the "Board"):

a. the recommendations of the Financial Advisory Committee ("FAC") regarding the current round of program implementation grants discussed at its face-to-face on 16-19 April 2013 in Washington, DC; and

b. the FAC's observations on general trends in relation to program implementation grants.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Table 1 below contains a summary of the program implementation grant applications reviewed by the FAC at its meeting on 16-19 April 2013 and the FAC's recommendations (including supervision allocations and agency fees).

Table 1 (all amounts in US$)

Country	Supervising Entity (SE)/Managing Entity (ME)	Allocation Requested	Allocation Recommended by FAC	Supervision Allocation	Agency Fee % and Amount	Period	Funding Source
Benin	World Bank (SE)	42,300,000	24,000,000		n/a	3 Years	Catalytic Fund II*
			18,300,000	400,000[1]	1.75% -320,250	3 years	GPE Fund
Burkina Faso	Agence Française de Développement (SE)	78,200,000	78,200,000	300,000	2.097% - 1,639,854	3 Years	GPE Fund
Comoros	UNICEF (ME)	4,600,000	4,600,000	n/a	7% - 322,000	3 Years	GPE Fund
Madagascar	World Bank (SE)	85,400,000	85,400,000	400,000	1.75% - 1,494,500	3 Years	GPE Fund
Mauritania	World Bank (SE)	12,400,000	12,400,000	400,000	1.75% - 217,000	3 Years	GPE Fund
Senegal	World Bank (SE)	46,900,000	40,000,000		n/a	3 Years	Catalytic Fund I*
			6,900,000	400,000[1]	1.75% - 120,750	3 Years	GPE Fund
Somalia: Puntland	UNICEF (ME)	2,099,426[2]	2,100,000	n/a	7% - 147,000	3 Years	GPE Fund
Somalia: Somaliland	UNICEF (ME)	4,187,178[3]	4,200,000	n/a	7% - 294,000	3 Years	GPE Fund
Tajikistan	World Bank (SE)	16,200,000	16,200,000	400,000	1.75% - 283,500	3 Years	GPE Fund
Yemen	UNICEF (ME)	10,000,000	10,000,000	n/a	7% - 700,000	4 Years[4]	GPE Fund
	UNICEF (SE)	72,600,000	72,600,000	1,000,000	1% - 726,000		

[1] The supervision allocation will be used for supervision of allocations from both funding sources.
[2] Program support costs of US$ 273,838 for UNICEF are included in the request.
[3] Program support costs of US$ 546,154 for UNICEF are included in this request.
[4] The emergency component is expected to be implemented over a one-year period.

Country	Supervising Entity (SE)/Managing Entity (ME)	Allocation Requested	Allocation Recommended by FAC	Supervision Allocation	Agency Fee % and Amount	Period	Funding Source
Zambia	United Kingdom Department for International Development (SE)	35,200,000	35,200,000	400,000	0	3 Years	GPE Fund
Zanzibar	Swedish International Development Agency (SE)	5,200,000	5,200,000	400,000	0	3 Years	GPE Fund
Zimbabwe	UNICEF (ME)[5]	23,600,000	23,600,000	n/a	7% - 1,652,000	3 Years	GPE Fund
Totals		**438,886,604**	**438,900,000[6]**	**4,100,000**	**7,916,854**		

*There are a number of Catalytic Fund trust funds that have remaining balances from which the Secretariat would like to source some of the allocations in order to close them down as soon as possible. These Trust Funds can have restrictions on who the supervising entity can be and the amount of agency fees that can be charged. No new contributions after 2013 are expected to be made to these Trust Funds. The Secretariat will seek to allocate a small expected remaining balance at that point to program implementation grant applications expected in Round 2 of 2013. The Board's decision on Annual Commitments (BOD/2012/11-04) will not apply to allocations from these Trust Funds due to the specific structure of these Funds. However, the Secretariat will compensate for this by delaying the commitment for the portion of the allocation to be funded from the GPE Fund so that cash from the Catalytic Funds are utilized first.

[5] UNICEF project support costs of US$ 1,994,886 and local overheads of US$ 1,028,822 are included in this request.
[6]The amount recommended is slightly higher than the amount requested due to the rounding up of the applications from Puntland and Somaliland.

2.2 Each Local Education Group ("LEG") in non-federal states applied for the maximum amount available under the current indicative allocations list. The LEG in Comoros, which is a federal state, also applied for the full indicative amount. In three cases, the applicants are sub-national entities and only part of the national indicative allocation is being applied for at this time. Specifically:

- The Somalia national indicative allocation is US$ 14.5 million. The applications from Puntland and Somaliland total US$ 6,286,604, and the FAC rounded up the recommended amount to US$ 6.3 million. Therefore, there is US$ 8.2 million potentially available to other Somalia sub-national entities, which will be requested by the LEG in Central/South zone as soon as possible.
- The Tanzania national indicative allocation is US$ 100 million. The recommended amount to approve for Zanzibar is for US$ 5.2 million. Therefore, there is US$ 94.8 million still available, which will be requested by the LEG in the Tanzanian mainland as soon as possible.

2.3 As can be seen from **Table 1** above, the FAC is recommending that the Board approve all of the applications as presented by the relevant LEGs.

2.4 In the case of Yemen, the following should be noted:

- the program is being implemented with two parallel modalities: one with UNICEF acting as Managing Entity for an emergency component to rehabilitate schools in certain areas after the period of instability; and another with UNICEF acting as Supervising Entity for the remaining activities;
- UNICEF had already requested an increased supervision allocation of US$ 200,000 a year available in fragile state situations;
- given the challenges in the program, the FAC is recommending that the implementation period is extended from three years to four; and
- as a consequence, the supervision will extend to five years and the total supervision allocation will be US$ 1,000,000.[7]

2.5 Central African Republic withdrew its application shortly before the start of the FAC meeting given the recent *coup d'état* in the country. The Secretariat provided the FAC with an

[7] An extra year of supervision is allocated for each grant beyond the implementation period to account for work done by the Supervising Entity in the six months before the application and six months after for closing purposes.

update on the situation and FAC members provided comments on the current application, which will need to be revised given the situation. It is expected that an application under the Guidelines for Accelerated Funding[8] will be submitted as soon as possible.

2.6 The application from Tajikistan is a re-application from the previous round upon which the FAC did not recommend for approval.

2.7 The Secretariat's Final Readiness Reviews under the Quality Assurance Review process for each of the applications are provided in **Annex 1**. The FAC has included recommendations and comments for each individual applicant LEG, which pursuant to the recommended decision, will be communicated by the Secretariat in its notification of the approval of the allocation. The FAC's comments are presented following the recommended decision below.

3. RECOMMENDED DECISION

The FAC recommends that the Board of Directors approves the following decision:

> **BOD/2013/05-XX – Approval of Allocations for Program Implementation Grants:** The Board of Directors:
>
> 1. approves the following allocations from GPE trust funds to be used for program implementation grants as described in the applications submitted for funding in the first round of 2013, subject to availability of funds and the decision BOD/2012/11-04 on commitment of trust funds for program implementation grants:
>
> **a. Benin:**
>
> i. US$ 42,300,000 for a three-year implementation period, with the World Bank serving as Supervising Entity;
>
> ii. US$ 400,000 for a supervision allocation; and
>
> iii. US$ 320,250 for an agency fee.
>
> **b. Burkina Faso:**
>
> i. US$ 78,200,000 for a three-year implementation period, with Agence Française de Développement serving as Supervising Entity;
>
> ii. US$ 300,000 for a supervision allocation; and
>
> iii. US$ 1,639,854 for an agency fee.

[8] http://www.globalpartnership.org/media/docs/library/121206_GPE-Guidelines-for-Accelerated-Funding-EN.pdf

c. Comoros:

i. US$ 4,600,000 for a three-year implementation period, with the UNICEF serving as Managing Entity; and

ii. US$ 322,000 for an agency fee.

d. Madagascar:

i. US$ 85,400,000 for a three-year implementation period, with the World Bank serving as Supervising Entity;

ii. US$ 400,000 for a supervision allocation; and

iii. US$ 1,494,500 for an agency fee.

e. Mauritania:

i. US$ 12,400,000 for a three-year implementation period, with the World Bank serving as Supervising Entity;

ii. US$ 400,000 for a supervision allocation; and

iii. US$ 217,000 for an agency fee.

f. Senegal:

i. US$ 46,900,000 for a three-year implementation period, with the World Bank serving as Supervising Entity;

ii. US$ 400,000 for a supervision allocation; and

iii. US$ 120,750 for an agency fee.

g. Somalia (Puntland):

i. US$ 2,100,000 for a three-year implementation period, with UNICEF acting as Managing Entity; and

ii. US$ 147,000 as an agency fee.

h. Somaliland:

i. US$ 4,200,00 for a three-year implementation period, with UNICEF acting as Managing Entity; and

ii. US$ 294,000 for an agency fee.

i. Tajikistan:

i. US$ 16,300,000 for a three-year implementation period, with the World Bank serving as Supervising Entity;

ii. US$ 400,000 for a supervision allocation; and

iii. US$ 283,500 for an agency fee.

j. Yemen:

i. US$ 10,000,000 for an emergency component, with UNICEF serving as Managing Entity, plus US$ 700,000 for an agency fee; and

ii. US$ 72,600,000 for the remaining proposal activities over a four-year implementation period, with UNICEF acting as Supervising Entity, plus US$ 1,000,000 for a supervision allocation and US$ 726,0000 for an agency fee.

k. Zambia:

i. US$ 35,200,000 for a three-year implementation period, with the United Kingdom Department for International Development serving as Supervising Entity; and

ii. US$ 400,000 for a supervision allocation.

l. Zanzibar:

i. US$ 5,200,000 for a three-year implementation period, with the Swedish International Development Agency serving as Supervising Entity; and

ii. US$ 400,000 for a supervision allocation.

m. Zimbabwe:

i. US$ 23,600,000 for a three-year implementation period, with UNICEF serving as Managing Entity; and

ii. US$ 1,652,000 for an agency fee.

2. requests the Secretariat to include in its notification to each of the relevant Local Education Groups of the approval of the allocations, the Financial Advisory Committee's comments on the program set out in BOD/2013/05 DOC 07b.

4. FAC COMMENTS TO THE LOCAL EDUCATION GROUP ON EACH APPLICATION

4.1 Benin

- Recognize the government's efforts in education, but concerned about the low level of funding going to improving quality

- Concern about delays in the implementation of previous GPE-funded program
- Concern about sustainability of certain elements of the program, including the provision of teaching materials (subcomponent 1.2), the school feeding and the promotion of girls' access in the most deprived districts (sub-component 2.2)
- Concern about the equity dimension of sub-component 2.2, where the amounts given are on a per-school rather than per-student basis
- The expectation is that, building on Benin's current capacity, a more aligned modality will be possible in the future
- Concern about the monitoring of the program in poor areas
- The results framework should better reflect the program and should be updated to include indicators on the improvement of quality
- Note the importance of literacy; the proposed studies in sub-component 3.3 are commended for future policy development in this area
- Encourage the LEG for look for other sources of funding to finance mother tongue instruction and also the literacy activities that were supported under the previous GPE grant.

4.2 Burkina Faso

- Appreciation for Agence Française de Développement taking on Supervising Entity role
- It is positive that the education sector plan includes a continuum of ten years of free compulsory education from early childhood development to secondary, with a focus on quality, including bilingual education
- Noted complementarity with the effectiveness of teaching and learning in bilingual contexts (School National language initiative ELAN), being funded by the GRA
- Appreciation of using a budget-support modality and fully using government systems, including the progress indicators from the education sector plan
- Noted that the plan for construction of classrooms in the ESP is ambitious
- The Local Education Group should make note of the need to address the issue of refugees coming in from Mali
- Note that the financing gap may be underestimated due to over-optimistic growth estimation
- Concern about the decreasing number of donors contributing to education aid in the country

4.3 Comoros

- Appreciate the focus on equity and the alignment with GPE priorities
- The targets in the result framework, which are the same as those for the whole education sector, should be revised so that they reflect the program financed by the grant; this should be shared with the Secretariat and results reported on an annual basis
- Encourage every effort be made to strengthen national systems in the implementation of this program in order to be able to make use of government procurement systems in the future

4.4 Madagascar

- Recognize that the program has been planned in a complex political context
- Recognizing that it may be necessary in the current political context, which it is hoped will improve following the election, gravely concerned that the grant is paying recurrent costs such as teachers' salaries and school grants
- Emphasize the importance of Component 3 (Strengthening the foundation of the primary education system by rebuilding planning and monitoring capacity at central and decentralized levels and improving community participation and social accountability) for the future of the education system in Madagascar and it should be closely monitored by the LEG
- The education sector plan being developed should include plans to address:
    - a sustainable method for meeting recurrent costs
    - a plan to address high drop-out and repetition rates, large number of out-of-school children, and addressing vulnerable groups, including children with disabilities
    - policies on language of instruction
- Results framework should be revised to include outcome indicators and not only output indicators, especially related to the teacher training component; the revised result framework should be shared with the Secretariat
- Civil society participation in the LEG should be broadened to ensure that it is more inclusive

4.5 Mauritania

- Civil society is an integral part of the Global Partnership's architecture, in particular in the Local Education Group; there is a serious concern that civil society organizations have not been included in the development of the application and the Global Partnership would urge that civil society membership in the LEG be rectified before the start of the implementation of the grant
- Encourage the use of evidence-based activities to improve girls' education in the program
- Encourage the use of the contingency amount of US$ 400,000 for activities focused on improving quality
- Although a project modality has been chosen, it is important that partners engage in policy dialogue

4.6 Senegal

- Great appreciation for the program, which is innovative and emphasizes quality
- Program is ambitious and therefore needs to be closely monitored in particular with regards to the block grants to schools, the performance-based contracts for schools and the improved alignment of Koranic schools into the national education system
- Admire the government's commitment to education wherein over 30% of budget is being allocated to education
- Appreciation of the commitment to use government financial and procurement systems by 2015
- Expected and encourage that further progress is made on de-centralization of the education system
- Welcome the public private partnerships, especially in construction, on the understanding that it is aimed to improve equity in education in the country

4.7 Somalia (Puntland and Somaliland)

- Recognize the challenging environment of Puntland and Somaliland and welcome these first proposals from each
- Concern that both of the transitional education sector plans are not financed

- Encourage that further attempts are made to get information about civil society and other donor program support in the country and its alignment to the plan
- Concern that the high proportion of grant funding is being used for teachers' salaries and encourage that the education sector plans being developed will include a sustainable solution
- The LEG should monitor whether paying teaching salaries from this grant will decrease the burden on households of paying for education
- New education sector plan being developed should include an improved analysis of gender and pastoralism and plans to increase government commitment to paying recurrent education costs
- Welcome UNICEF's commitment to reduce management costs wherever possible

4.8 Tajikistan

- Satisfied that comments on the previous proposal were addressed
- There is anecdotal information about informal payments for education being demanded from parents; this issue should be monitored by the LEG

4.9 Yemen

- The program is ambitious and there are multiple donors in the country contributing to education, which raises a concern about the absorption capacity; as such, the implementation period should be extended to four years rather than three
- More information should be shared with the LEG on all donor funding to the country for coordination purposes
- Positive elements of the program include early childhood development, targeting rural female teachers and the focus on the most deprived areas
- This is a fairly large and complex program, which is made more complex with the two different modalities being used; however, the emergency component is welcomed, and the expectation is that using a Managing Entity modality for this area will address the essential needs in the aftermath of the period of instability
- Given the high amounts being used on construction, suggest increasing targets on enrollment; also, given the focus on curriculum development and improving teacher performance encourage including indicators to measure changes in quality; changes in the result framework should be reported back to the Secretariat

- Provide more detail to the Secretariat on the Program Administration Unit structure and how fiduciary risks will be managed

4.10 Zambia

- This is an innovative program, and there is an appreciation that it has a holistic view and continuum from early childhood development through to secondary
- Due to the poor results of the early learning assessments conducted in comparison to the southern Africa region, a focus on early learning in encouraged; there is positive experience of improving quality at the school level in certain communities, which should be scaled up
- Appreciate the complementary with DfID support to the country
- Conscious of the risk associated as demonstrated by past experience and the Public Expenditure Financial Accountability assessment, but there is comfort with the attempts to mitigate these risks with the financial technical assistance components of the program
- The performance-based tranches component should be closely monitored and progress included in all reporting
- Concern about the downward trend in the government budget going to education
- Uncertainty about the contributions from other donors; the information should be updated and monitored
- The result chain between the system-level capacity building focus of the program and the outcomes directly related to the boys and girls of Zambia is not entirely clear; this merits further discussion among members of the Local Education Group; subsequent refinement and progress should be reported on an annual basis

4.11 Zanzibar

- Welcome the Swedish International Development Agency as a new Supervising Entity
- The program has a simple and solid design, is embedded in the education sector plan and is linked to GPE priorities
- Encourage further improvement in donor coordination and alignment of support to the education sector plan

4.12 **Zimbabwe**

- Substantial support for the proposal, appreciation of strong focus on teachers, which will facilitate the tracking of the impact of this program
- The program is well-positioned in the context of upcoming elections
- The background information provided is not positioned in a broader political context and the challenges in relation to HIV/AIDS
- Concern over high amounts from household income being dedicated to education—hope to see it addressed in the education sector plan
- Encourage that a Supervising Entity arrangement will be used in the future, provided the conditions are amenable
- Encourage civil society and teacher participation in the LEG, including in the joint sector review processes and the development of the education sector plan; teacher involvement is particularly important in order to promote a balanced approach to teacher training needs
- Encourage that the operational costs be reviewed and consider whether reductions can be made by using the same management structure of the Education Transition Fund

5. FAC OBSERVATIONS ON GENERAL TRENDS WITH REGARDS TO PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION GRANT APPLICATIONS

5.1 Some trends identified by FAC members included the following:

- In several applications, the household burden of paying for education (whether officially or through informal payments) is noted. The FAC questions whether the Global Partnership needs to (re)assert its commitment to free universal primary education.
- It is encouraging to see that some applications are supporting inclusive education interventions for disadvantaged groups, including girls and children with special needs (disability, etc.), which the FAC hopes will continue.
- As the pool of Supervising and Managing Entities expands, the preferences and priorities of the various agencies are becoming more obvious in the program design. The FAC is concerned as to whether the applications are truly country-led.
- The Global Partnership encourages the budget support modality, although this means that the details of the interventions being supported are not included in the applications. The FAC needs to be mindful of this when it undertakes its reviews.

5.2 The FAC also noted that in many cases, applications are being made before the country's current grant has been fully disbursed and activities are on-going. While this represents good planning by the country (and can decrease the impact on the school year), it also means that a full closure report of the results of the previous grant (due six months after closing) is not yet available. It is not fully clear when a country can apply for a new grant, although this is somewhat determined by the annual review of the indicative allocations, as countries that have on-going grants that will not be completed before the expiry of the applicable year are not included on the list. The FAC requested the Secretariat to consider this issue and provide some detail and guidance for the next annual review of the indicative allocations. It is important that lessons learned from the previous grant are reflected in any new application, as well as basic information on amounts committed and disbursed.

5.3 The FAC noted that is very important to have a full picture of what all donors (including civil society organizations) are contributing to the sector to put the application in perspective. The Secretariat advised that it will change the wording in the application form, which requests such information be provided "if available", to be required.

5.4 The FAC observed and welcomed the increased attention to civil society's participation and involvement in the LEGs, and emphasized the importance of ensuring that this happens in all countries. The FAC also emphasized that improving the quality of civil society participation should be supported and monitored.

5.5 Certain members noted that the Secretariat puts considerable efforts into the application process under the Quality Assurance Review ("QAR") process, and suggested using an approach which allows more engagement with the LEG on broader educational issues beyond the funding provided by the Global Partnership. This is related to the need for expansion of the Country Support Team.

5.6 FAC members noted the importance of monitoring the progress against their comments that are delivered to the LEG. The Secretariat is committed to providing an update in the annual portfolio review.

5.7 FAC members who represent Supervising Entities raised concerns with regards to FAC comments relating to improvements in the results frameworks for some of the applications under review and argued that these had already gone through internal decision processes of the Supervising Entities. The Supervising Entity representatives argued that the results frameworks are intensively discussed in an effort to ensure that they are not promising results that the

interventions cannot deliver. However, given the fact that the GPE needs to be seen to be showing results, FAC members felt it was very important that where the FAC noted considerable insufficiencies with regards to the results frameworks (e.g. lack of outcome indicators, lack of coherence between the indicators and the program and seriously un-ambitious targets), the framework and the indicators to be reported for the GPE grant would need to improve.

5.8 FAC members inquired regarding the availability of both Joint Sector Reviews and FAC minutes. The Secretariat noted that both were available on the GPE website.

6. NEXT STEPS

6.1 If approved by the Board, the Chair will immediately send a letter to the relevant LEG advising of the approved allocation and the FAC's comments on the application.

6.2 In addition, the Secretariat will continue to work with the Trustee to finalize the outstanding Financial Procedures Agreements with the relevant Supervising Entities and to issue the letter of commitment for the first year of each program implementation grant for existing Supervising and Managing Entities.

6.3 The Secretariat will also make the change to the application form described in paragraph 5.3 above.

ANNEX 1: FINAL READINESS REVIEWS

BENIN
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 42.3 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

With a population of just over 9 million, Benin is a low-income country that has had moderate economic growth over the past two decades following a transition to civilian, constitutional government in 1991. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita stood at US$ 680 in 2010 and its growth rate has ranged from 2.5 to 5.0 percent over the past decade, with a considerable slowdown following the global economic crisis. The population growth rate remains high at 3.2 percent, thereby reducing the rate of improvement in the delivery of public services and human development indicators. The economy is heavily reliant on agricultural production, particularly cotton, and on trade with Nigeria. Benin is ranked 166th in the 2013 UNDP Human Development Index.

The country faces considerable challenges in reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with the following goals currently rated unlikely to be achieved on time: (i) reducing poverty; (ii) promoting gender equity; (iii) universal primary education; (iv) reducing child mortality; and (v) improving maternal health. Progress towards the MDGs will likely require higher and more stable growth and a significant improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of public service financing and delivery.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Benin joined GPE in 2007 with the endorsement of its ten-year Education Sector Plan (in French: *Plan Décennal de Développement du Secteur de l'Education, 2006 – 2015*, or PDDSE) to be implemented in three phases. The Plan addressed challenges in the areas of access to schooling, retention and the quality of education for the primary level. For its second phase, the PDDSE specifically aimed to: (i) increase the Primary Completion Rate (PCR) from 54 percent in 2005 to 88 percent in 2011; (ii) increase the percentage of children reaching minimum competencies in math and reading in Grade 6 to near 100 percent; (iii) virtually erasing the gender enrolment gap by 2011; (iv) and reducing the student/teacher ratio from 50 in 2005 to 44 in 2011. The Plan also aimed to subsidize 6800 community school teachers.

Progress has been uneven, with the PCR stagnating between 2006 (65 percent) and 2011 (64.3 percent). Meanwhile, primary repetition has increased from 10 percent to 16 percent, suggesting that there are major quality and efficiency issues to be addressed. For gender parity at the primary level, there was only a one point difference in enrolment rates, while at the lower secondary level, a considerable gender gap remains. The student to teacher ratio had declined by 2011 to meet the PDDSE target. Nationwide sample-based testing showed that only 29.7 percent of Grade One students and 13.3 percent of Grade Six students achieved a minimally-acceptable competency in math and reading.

The PDDSE policy of subsidizing community school teachers was reversed as part of the implementation of the school fee abolition measure taken in 2007. The new plan was to bring all community school teachers into the state-paid contract teaching corps; in 2012, however, there remained more than 3000 unsubsidized community school teachers in the system. Communities have had to cover these teachers' salaries from their own resources. The increased reliance on civil servants and state-managed contract teachers has increased the budget share going to recurrent costs and decreased funds available for investment.

The third phase of the PDDSE, endorsed by development partners in March 2013, revises the initial PDDSE targets and aims to increase the PCR to 82.9 percent in 2015 and to reduce the primary repetition rate to 10 percent by the same year. The Plan includes specific measures to improve teachers' presence in school and students' learning time. It also focuses on improving the efficacy of pedagogical training in the teacher training institutes, continuation of the country's student assessment program, better distribution of teachers and repetition-reducing measures. Additional resources will be oriented to a group of 25 communes where data show the school system to be underperforming. In their endorsement letter, development partners note a residual funding gap, the need to move ahead with planned decentralization, the risk of teacher strikes and their impact on the number of days of effective schooling, and other concerns.

In Benin, the Danish Embassy continues to serve as Coordinating Agency. The Local Education Group (LEG) functions well, and past experience with the pool-fund mechanism has served to foster more efficient communication among partners and the ministries. Development partners include the French Development Agency (AFD), JICA, IDA, KfW, WFP, the Swiss Cooperation, the European Union, the Beninese EFA NGO Coalition, Plan Bénin, Aide et Action, and Right to Play.

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

With the World Bank serving as Supervising Entity, Benin received an allocation of US$ 76.1 million in May of 2007. The original program development objectives aimed *"to contribute to expanding equitable access to pre-school and primary education and to supporting the development of literacy programs, while improving quality and retention at primary level as well as the management of the sector."* The program had a very slow start-up with initial disbursements occurring only in 2009. There were two "restructurings" due to implementation delays and the changing sector context due to the school fee abolition and massive influx of new students, which resulted in changes to some targets and reductions in the number of activities. The program closed more than two years behind schedule in June 2012.

The program successfully contributed to: (i) increasing access to basic education; (ii) supporting teacher training; (iii) setting up of school feeding programs; and (iv) distributing pedagogical materials. Among the key achievements noted were the 119 percent Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in 2012, up from 93 percent in 2006; targets were exceeded as well in access to pre-school and adult literacy programs. The program's Implementation Completion Report (ICR) indicates that while the program was well aligned with the Government's program and achieved several of the objectives set, its implementation was hampered by weak ministry systems, changes in key ministry personnel following elections and corresponding delays in identifying solutions to move the program forward. The program received a "moderately unsuccessful" rating in the ICR. One of the main lessons learned from the program is that when there is relatively low capacity at the ministerial level, it is counterproductive to rely on underperforming government systems until they have been adequately strengthened. The ICR notes that while most activities were implemented through government systems, the three that used alternative systems (school construction, teacher training, and school feeding programs) were relatively more cost-effective. From an institutional-capacity building perspective, this finding is disappointing since the program allocated considerable resources to building institutional capacity.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The proposed allocation of US$ 42.3 million is in line with the Needs and Performance Framework (NPF) indicative allocation announced in January 2012. The World Bank was selected by the LEG to serve as Supervising Entity for the proposed program, working with the modality of a pool fund as in the previous program. A Joint Financing Agreement between the Government and its partners will cover arrangements for reviews, auditing, performance indicators and jointly agreed procurement arrangements. DANIDA, KfW and AFD are the other pool fund partners. The relatively smoother

implementation of during the final years of the previous program, in addition to improved coordinating mechanisms for the pool fund, will increase the likelihood of the new program getting off to a good start. The proposed "Benin Global Partnership for Education Program" supports the implementation of the PDDSE through the following:

Component 1: Improving the quality of basic education, with a focus on the most deprived primary school districts through in-service and pre-service teacher training, and subsidies to local schools for pedagogical materials acquisitions;

Component 2: Improving access and equity through school construction, school feeding programs and incentives for girls' education in "deprived districts"; and

Component 3: Improving the management and governance of the education system through support to Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), student learning assessments, school inspection and pedagogical management, and capacity building, project management and studies.

	Program Component	**Amount (US$)**	**Percent of Total (%)**
1	Improving quality of basic education, with a focus on the most deprived primary school districts	**8,200,000**	**19.4**
	Sub-Component 1.1: Improving teaching practices through in-service and pre-service training	6,300,000	14.9
	Sub-Component 1.2: Subsidize teaching materials	1,900,000	4.5
2	Improving access and equity	**25,300,000**	**59.8**
	Sub-Component 2.1: Construction of classrooms in deprived areas	11,500,000	27.2
	Sub-Component 2.2: Improving retention and equity	13,800,000	32.6
3	Improving the management and the governance of the education system	**8,800,000**	**20.8**
	Sub-Component 3.1: First phase of the EMIS	2,100,000	5.0
	Sub-Component 3.2: Strengthening of school inspection and improvement of pedagogical management through the use of student learning assessments	3,100,000	7.3
	Sub-Component 3.3: Capacity-building, project management and studies	3,600,000	8.5
	TOTAL	**42,300,000**	**100.0**

*Other Agency fees not included in the total grant requested: 1.75 percent of the GPE grant.

** Note that the Supervising Entity fee of US$ 400,000 per year is not included in the total grant

requested.

The Supervising Entity finds that the program risk is high in the area of governance because *"overall poor governance in the country and a weak implementation of rule of law has affected ministry agencies in practicing good governance."* In this respect, the context in Benin is not dissimilar from that of a fragile state. The risk assessment notes "substantial" risk in the following areas: (i) stakeholder risk; (ii) sector risks in the area of education finance and teacher strikes; (iii) capacity of ministries (and coordination between ministries); (iv) fraud and corruption at the central and local levels; and (v) delivery monitoring and sustainability. Among the mitigating measures planned are the inclusion of technical assistance in the areas of infrastructure assessment, EMIS and pedagogical monitoring. The World Bank also provides support to improved public financial management through a separate project.

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS SUMMARY

In the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Phase I, the Secretariat found the process in Benin to be transparent and collaborative; it also recommended that the Benin LEG be expanded to formally include representatives of Civil Society Organizations (CSO). With respect to learning outcomes, the Secretariat noted that the PDDSE mid-term evaluation in 2011 presented widely varying information on learning outcomes in the Beninese context with one instrument showing that over half of the children had acquired the necessary basic competencies in reading whereas two other instruments showed that only a small percentage of children acquired the basic competencies. The QAR Phase I recommendation was to develop interventions that better track learning outcomes and address the system shortcomings. Further, there was a recommendation to reflect on the possibility of developing mother tongue instruction, not as a "bilingual education system" but rather in the context of a model where children first learn to read in their own language and then transition to French in the primary cycle. For girls' education, the primary recommendation was to identify the most cost-effective interventions for addressing the remaining disparities. With respect to aid effectiveness, the Secretariat found that the discussions on modality had been constructive and that the continued use of the pool-fund arrangement would make it possible to capitalize on the relatively improved implementation capacity and performance in the final two years of the previous program.

The QAR Phase I mission also included discussions on the appropriateness of various modalities for implementation. Alternatives were considered, including that of the Managing Entity as well as that of separate project modality using a Supervising Entity. The LEG found that the most appropriate approach was to continue that of the pool-fund, building on the improving situation observed in the final years of the previous program.

For QAR Phase II, the Secretariat made the following main recommendations:

Simplification: The Secretariat recommended that the program be simplified to address the following concerns:

- The document structure deals with the same topics (risks, activity descriptions, etc.) at several different places which does not facilitate understanding the program itself;
- The proposed management structure as well as the Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) function depend on numerous entities collaborating efficiently in ways that they have not done in the past;
- Certain activities depend on continuous real-time data collection, the cost of which may not be commensurate with the value of those activities (annual evaluation of 9000 teachers, school performance evaluation, etc.), which involve only modest subsidies.

Clarification: The Secretariat recommended that the program be clarified in the following areas:

- Certain unit costs are not given;
- Cost estimates are incorrectly calculated for some activities (such as school nutrition);
- Some important activities' budgets are so limited that they may not have significant impact

(school-based performance grants, school furnishing, latrines, equipment, etc.).

Status of QAR recommendations:

Civil society participation in the LEG: In 2012, the Ministry for Primary and Pre-school education issued an administrative note formalizing the list of members of the LEG, including for the first time, Beninese CSOs.

Student assessment / learning outcomes: The proposed program approaches the quality challenge through two different axes. The student assessment capacity within the Ministry will be strengthened with a view to a nationwide student learning assessment during the 2014 – 2015 school year. Secondly, the support for in-service and pre-service teacher training will necessarily address some of the teaching methods that have arisen, particularly with regard to the difficulties encountered in the implementation of competency-based education and its aftermath.

Learning to read in mother tongue: While the proposed program does include a study to look further at "bilingual education" in the first two years of primary education, the LEG considered additional options in the development of this program, but there is no mother tongue instruction included in the final program document.

Girls' education targeted interventions: The proposed program includes a package of support for financially disadvantaged girls in 25 "deprived districts". The package includes school uniforms, school supplies, and a sensitization campaign. The intent is to offset some of the additional costs to families following the school fee abolition measure as well as to encourage girls to remain in school. It will be important to see if the additional attention to girls in the target areas leads to improved teacher attitudes, work habits and professional interaction with girls.

Simplification of program document: The structure of the document remains essentially the same, following the standard model used by the Supervising Entity.

Simplification of management structure and M&E function: The World Bank team notes that the management structure reflects the best practices of the final years of the previous program.

Cost effectiveness of data collection operations in support of school subsidy activity: The World Bank team agreed that the data collection operation was too cost-heavy compared with the modest size of the school-level subsidies, and that the approach was simplified. Rather than annual assessments of each teacher's competency, there will be one school level grant disbursement in the first year of the program, and other measures are planned to ensure efficiency and ownership.

Unit costs: The unit cost errors have been corrected.

Cost estimates: There was no specific proposal team response to this recommendation.

Budget allocations for activities with high unit costs: The final version of the program document reduces the number of classrooms to be built and increases the quantities for latrines, school furnishings and equipment. The unit cost for classroom construction, inclusive of latrines and furnishings, is approximately US$ 25,727. The lower cost community-driven approach used for some of the previous program is not included in the new program. The reason cited was the closing of another World Bank project aimed at supporting community-driven approaches.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program has been developed in a transparent and collaborative manner, that the application and supporting documents are internally consistent and complete, and that

the application package is ready for assessment by the FAC.

While the previous program's implementation was hampered by delays, the experience of the past two years has shown that major issues have been addressed and that it is probable that the new program will encounter fewer such problems. The education sector context in Benin, however, is facing major challenges, particularly in the number of hours of schooling and the quality of teaching methods. The proposed program, developed through wide, participatory consultations, is designed to address critical shortcomings. Some of the most critical challenges, such as teacher management, are not fully within the scope of the proposed interventions and constitute a continuing risk.

The program design has been simplified and the types of activities retained range from the straight-forward and well-tested to the innovative. The program is well-aligned with the sector plan and is oriented to reducing disparities and addressing the serious quality issues in the sector.

Collaboration in the program design has been considerable, but the explicit involvement of civil society is relatively new and is expected to improve with time. Greater involvement of teachers' unions would be an area for improvement in the future.

The program will be implemented in a complex environment and uses a pool-fund modality that has had a proven track record in recent years. The LEG finds that this approach is well suited to the substantial risk context and this position is backed by carefully planned activities in support of the implementation of the sector plan.

BURKINA FASO

Quality Assurance Review - Phase III

Final Readiness Review

Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 78.2 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Burkina Faso is a low-income, landlocked, Sahelian country with few natural resources. Its population was estimated at between 15 and 16 million inhabitants in 2010. The country's economy is dependent on cotton exports and is vulnerable to external shocks. Between 2000 and 2010, Burkina Faso maintained an average economic growth rate of over five percent per annum. Its estimated Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita was US$ 664 in 2011. The poverty rate was estimated at 46 percent in 2009. Burkina Faso ranks 183rd in the 2013 UNDP Human Development Index.

The 2006 census posted a demographic growth rate of 3.1 percent (compared to 2.3 percent in 1996). According to the World Bank, this rapid population growth is seriously hindering the impact of poverty reduction and human development initiatives, especially in the education and health sectors.

Burkina Faso experienced a period of domestic protests and political unrest in 2011, but the situation appears to have stabilized. However, the political situation could be severely tested in the coming months due to the conflict in neighboring Mali and the corresponding influx of more than 100,000 refugees.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Burkina Faso was one of the first countries to join GPE in 2003, based on a ten-year plan which prioritized basic education. The implementation of this first education sector plan laid the groundwork for education policy development in the years to follow, with a priority on the development of basic education, as reflected in the title of the plan, theBasic Education Ten-Year Development Plan (*Programme décennal de développement de l'éducation de base* - PDDEB 2002-2012).

The new Sector Program for Education and Training (*Programme Sectoriel de l'Education et de la Formation*– PSEF 2012-2021) includes for the first time the whole education system. It is accompanied by a three-year Action Plan. Both documents were finalized by the Government and endorsed by the Development Partners' Group in February 2013. The main goal of the education sector plan is to improve the supply of quality education around four main strategic priorities/programs: (i) increasing education and training supply; (ii) improving the quality of learning; (iii) accelerating literacy and strengthening non-formal learning for early childhood, teenagers, youths and adults; and (iv) improving the management and monitoring of the education and training system. One of the objectives of the education plan is to build a mandatory education continuum from preschool to junior secondary school, which would involve further development of preschool education, universalization of primary education, and increased access to junior secondary. Class size limitations, gender and geographical disparities, curricula, and teacher training reforms are some of the issues addressed by the Plan.

Strategic directions of the basic education sub-sector are detailed in a specific document entitled Strategic Development Program for Basic Education (PDSEB). This document is fully aligned with the broader sector policy.

The Sector Program for Education and Training (PSEF), as well as the Strategic Development Program for Basic Education (PDSEB), build on achievements of the PDDEB. Significant improvements have been made in the education sector: access to and completion of primary education increased: the gross

enrolment rate increased from 51.1 percent to 79.6 percent over a ten-year period; the primary completion rate increased from 32 percent in 2007 to 59.2 percent (58.3 for girls) in 2012; primary repetition rates dropped from 17.5 percent in 2002 to 8.8 percent in 2010; and effective teaching time in primary education increased from 574 hours(about 60 percent of the required total) to an estimated 736 hours (76 percent of the total). For each of the main indicators (intake, enrolment, completion), the gap between girls and boys was reduced.

However, not all children have access to primary education in Burkina Faso and there is still a long way to go before universal primary education is achieved. Strong regional disparities remain; the gross intake rate in the 43 "priority municipalities" is 35 percentage points lower than the national average of 88.3 percent. Beyond access to school, learning outcomes remain low and are one of the major challenges the system faces.

The Government's commitment to education is reflected in its budget, which has been steadily increasing as a share of GDP: 3 percent in 2008, 3.2 percent in 2009, and 3.3 percent in both 2010 and 2011. Education spending comprises between 16.2 and 19.5 percent of the national budget (17.5 percent in 2011). Spending for basic education accounted for 62 percent of the education budget in 2011. However, the levels of financing are inadequate to meet system needs. The funding gap to implement the Education Plan, which covers all levels of education, is estimated at US$ 21 million in 2013, US$ 38 million in 2014 and over US$ 90 million in 2015. For basic education alone, the gap will be more than US$ 20 million in 2014 and US$ 76 million in 2015.

UNICEF serves as the Coordinating Agency and the French Development Agency as the Supervising Entity. The Development Partners' Group is comprised of the French Development Agency, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the World Bank, the Swiss Cooperation, the European Union, USAID, UNICEF, the World Food Programme, Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark, and representatives of the Civil Society Consultation Framework. The Local Education Group meets regularly and ensures good coordination between development partners and the Government. It is also characterized by strong participation of civil society.

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

Burkina Faso received a grant of US$ 102 million in 2008. The World Bank served as the Supervising Entity and used a general budget support mechanism. The funds were provided in three tranches to support sector policy reforms under the Basic Education Program Support Grants (BEPSG 1-3). The agreement for the first tranche in the amount of US$ 22 million was signed in 2009. The agreement for the second tranche of US$ 45 million was signed in 2011. The third and final tranche of US$ 35 million was approved in September 2012.

The BEPSG 1-3 series were designed to support introduction of policy and institutional reforms. The reforms proposed to be supported were directly linked to the objectives of the Basic Education Ten-Year Development Plan(PDDEB): (i) improve access, equity, and expand coverage of basic education (preschool, primary, lower secondary education and vocational training as well as literacy programs); (ii) improve quality, efficiency, and relevance of basic education; and (iii) strengthen sector management (fiduciary, administrative, and pedagogic management) and monitoring in the context of decentralization of management of basic education services. Several important reforms were implemented under the BEPSG, including decisions to use school facilities more efficiently (through the development of multi-grade classes), strengthen decentralization policy and school-based management mechanisms, limit repetition, improve monitoring of teacher instruction time, increase students' learning time, and better assess student learning outcomes. These reforms contributed to the overall results obtained in the education system under PDDEB.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Burkina Faso is applying for a US$ 78.2 million grant, which is in line with the indicative allocation provided by the GPE Needs and Performance Framework.

The proposed program will use a sector budget support-like mechanism. In 2005, the Government established a Special Treasury Account in support of basic education (*Compte d'affectation special du Trésor/Fonds de soutien au développement de l'enseignement de base* - CAST/FSDEB) in close collaboration with its development partners. A Joint Financing Protocol signed between the Ministry of Economy and Finance and development partners defines the objectives and modalities of the Special Account. The latest revision of the Protocol was signed in November 2010. The resources in the Special Account are executed under the same conditions as those of the general budget and are subject to the same controls and monitoring.

The Program Document does not provide an exhaustive list of activities associated with the budget, as it would in the case of a project modality. It is based on the selection of five policies included in the education sector planning documents (PSEF and PDSEB), for which implementation will be more closely monitored through a specific results framework. The indicators used in this framework are designed to structure the sector dialogue (see Appendix 3 of the Program Document). The five policies are: (i) development of basic education, encompassing a continuum from preschool to post-primary; (ii) reduction of disparities; (iii) improvement of the quality of educational services; (iv) decentralization of the management of the education system; and (v) development of literacy and non-formal education.

Continuum from pre-school to post-primary. Implementation of the education continuum will include: (i) a change in the institutional and legal framework of the sector, and transfer of human and material resources from different ministries to the Ministry of National Education and Alphabetization (MENA); (ii) reorientation of the educational content of all cycles; (iii) development of links between formal and non-formal education; and (iv) ensuring consistency between primary, pre-primary and post-primary, especially through concerted planning of school building programs and teacher recruitment policies.

Reduction of disparities. The content of this policy will include: (i) the use of a fair distribution formula to allocate resources; (ii) the implementation of the national strategy of education for girls (SNAEF) 2011-2020 to stimulate demand for education and ensure the retention of girls in school; and (iii) the promotion of inclusive education, taking into account children with special educational needs.

Improvement of the quality of educational services. The content of this policy will include: (i) the extension of the teacher training program from one to two years and the strengthening of local training; (ii) improving learning time; (iii) the use of national languages at all levels; (iv) stronger involvement of school management committees (SMCs); and (v) building capacities in learning assessments.

Decentralization. The content of this policy includes, among other actions: (i) strengthening the communication between different actors; (ii) building capacities of local authorities in the management of education; (iii) provisioning technical assistance to the 48 "priority municipalities"; and (iv) testing the direct transfer of resources to schools throughout SMCs.

Development of literacy and non-formal education. The contents of this policy will include: (i) increasing the supply and demand for non-formal education (NFE) at all levels, with priority for young people; (ii) improving the quality of NFE; (iii) sharing structures and human resources; and (iv) decentralization of the management of NFE and literacy.

According to the indicative budget presented in the Mid-Term Action Plan, the use of funds pooled by partners in support of the education sector plan could be as follows (in US$ million):

Programs of the Education Sector Plan	Total cost 2013-2015	Sources of Funding				Total	Gap
		State Budget	Projects	Pool Fund (including GPE)			
				Total Amount	Share of Total Pool Fund (%)		
Increasing access to education and training	1,567	1,255	83	149	73.3	1,487	80
Improving the quality of learning	348	344	1	1	0.3	346	2
Accelerating literacy and strengthening non-formal learning	160	122	3	35	17.2	160	0
Improving management and monitoring of the system	244	225	0	19	9.1	244	0
Total	**2,318**	**1,946**	**87**	**204**	**100.0**	**2,236**	**82**
Share of Total Cost (%)	100	83.9	3.7	8.8		96.4	3.6

Two remarks can be made about this table. First, the Government has decided to fund almost all expenditure related to improving the quality of education, as it is one of the major goals of the education sector plan. The remaining gap, less than US$ 2 million, will easily be covered, especially through the possible entry of a new partner in the pool fund. Second, the Special Treasury Account is subject to the same operating system as the State Budget, except that the balance at the end of the year may be carried over to the following financial year. This option offers considerable flexibility in programming and implementing activities, especially for school construction. For this reason, the provisional budget has allocated the funds of the Special Account in priority to the program focusing on increased access.

Six development partners are currently part of the Joint Financing Protocol and collectively fund the Special Account: France, Canada, Denmark, The Netherlands, Switzerland and UNICEF. Luxemburg is expected to join in the coming months. Through funding of the Special Account, they all support the implementation of the education sector plan.

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS SUMMARY

QAR Phase I found the process used to develop the program to be transparent and collaborative, with strong participation of civil society organizations. The proposed program was found to be appropriately linked to the basic education plan (PDSEB), but it was noted that the country should develop a full education sector plan, including all sub-sectors of the education system. The proposed program was considered relevant to GPE's strategic priorities. In addition, the proposed modality was the most aligned and appropriate according to the country context and the discussions among partners.

QAR Phase II concluded that the program: (i) supports a sustainable education plan based on a robust financial simulation model; (ii) demonstrates an ambitious sector support approach that is strongly harmonized and results-oriented; and (iii) uses a fully aligned funding modality with strong potential for sustainability and capacity building.

The main recommendations for improvement from the QAR Phase II report included the following:

1. The Program Document could provide an operational framework for resources to be allocated over the next three years, linking results and interventions at the level of the overall resources of the Special Account. More precise information could thus be provided on the direct purposes of the program.

2. The functioning mechanism of the Special Account could be described more precisely, especially with regard to its operating procedures.

3. Existing fiduciary risks related to the operating procedures of the Special Account, known since 2007, could be more clearly stated in the Program Document, as well as proposals to mitigate those risks.

The following summarizes how the recommendations were addressed:

1. The three-year Action Plan has been revised to incorporate comments and recommendations. Forecast expenditures by funding source were introduced (state budget, Special Account, GPE, projects). It is important to note that this allocation is indicative since the choice of actions to be financed from the Special Account is determined annually, based on the results of the previous year and a collegial assessment (Government and partners).

2. An appendix has been included in the Program Document to give more details on the Special Account and its different modalities (programming, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation).

3. An appendix has been included in the Program Document which focuses on: (i) the measures that will be implemented to ensure greater speed in the processing and implementation of external Special Account audit recommendations; and (ii) capacity building activities that will be developed to ensure better management of the Special Account.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program was developed in a transparent and collaborative manner, that the application and supporting documents are internally consistent and complete, and that the application package is ready for assessment by the FAC.

Burkina Faso is a relatively stable country. The Government considers education a priority, to which it allocates a consistent share of its domestic resources. Over the years, the Government and its development partners have developed a strong working relationship with a robust and transparent collaborative framework inclusive of civil society.

The previous GPE grant was satisfactorily implemented. The proposed program incorporates lessons learned from this grant and the experiences gained by the World Bank, especially in terms of policy reforms and alignment with the country's education plan. Lessons learned from previous GPE and

donor-supported programs have led to a program design using existing national structures and systems.

As mentioned above, Burkina Faso has updated a sub-sector plan (non-formal education, preschool and primary, and junior secondary education), known as the PDSEB. Monitoring bodies are aligned with this sub-sector structure. No structure, however, is in charge of monitoring the complete sector plan (PSEF), developed in 2013 under the impetus of partners. This issue should be considered during the implementation phase. Dialogue addressing all education levels in a comprehensive manner will need to be better articulated and strengthened.

One of the main strengths of the program is that it will be fully aligned with national systems. Funds pooled by five partners directly support the implementation of the education sector plan developed by the Government. To succeed, such a modality requires strict implementation of the monitoring and evaluation framework provided in the program. A relationship of trust among partners and strong political commitment will also be necessary to achieve the expected results.

COMOROS

Quality Assurance Review - Phase III

Final Readiness Review

Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 4.6 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

The Archipelago of Comoros comprises four islands located at the entrance of the Mozambique Canal, northwest of Madagascar. Aside from the island of Mayotte, which remains under French administration, Comoros had an estimated population of 691,300 people in 2010, with population growth estimated at 2.3 percent per year. Its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita was estimated at US$ 768 in 2010.

Comoros went through a long period of instability, which resulted in a fragile political, economic and social environment. Since 2006, its political situation has greatly improved due to reforms that gave more autonomy to each island. In recent years, its real GDP has grown by 1.5 percent per annum. It ranks 169 out of 185 countries in the 2013 Human Development Report.

Comoros has recently passed the completion point for the Debt Reduction Initiative implemented by the Bretton Woods institutions. This initiative is likely to provide new financial prospects for the country. Nonetheless, Comoros suffers from geophysical vulnerabilities linked in particular to the active volcano on N'Gazidja island, as well as hydro-meteorological vulnerabilities such as cyclones and flooding.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Comoros joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in 2013 as a result of the assessment and endorsement of its Transitional Education Plan (TEP), referred to as the "Interim Education Plan," covering the period 2013-2015. Due to institutional and political fragility and weak national capacity especially in statistical data, Comoros opted for an interim education plan so it can better prepare for a comprehensive plan over the next three years. Beyond GPE's financial support, the consultative process led to the production of the first ever education plan. It also helped consolidate information from the different islands and strengthen sector coordination and funding.

The interim education plan's diagnostic study showed a low participation rate of 5 percent at the preschool level in 2010. At the primary level, estimates are 80 percent for gross intake rate (74 percent for girls), 99 percent for gross enrolment rate (95 percent for girls), and 63 percent for completion rate. The repetition rate is 29 percent, one of the highest in the world. In addition, the quality of education is mediocre, leading to poor learning outcomes. In 2012, 40 percent of students were competent in mathematics in grade 2 and only 30 percent of students read correctly at the end of the primary cycle.

The plan has three main priorities: (i) make progress towards the objectives of Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); (ii) optimize resources allocated to education; and (iii) improve the management of the education system. The strategic goals cover GPE's priority areas, including progress towards universal primary education; emphasis on fragile and post conflict states; inclusive education with better access for children with disabilities; focus on equity and gender issues; and rapid improvement of education quality and learning.

Overall, the interim plan aims at increasing early childhood education enrolment to 34 percent by 2015. At the primary level, the main targets of the plan include increasing gross enrolment to 88 percent and completion to 70 percent, and achieve a gradual reduction in the repetition rate to 19 percent from 29

percent, one of the highest in Africa. At other levels, the interim plan aims to enroll 40 percent of primary and lower secondary school graduates in technical and professional training programs, enforce the required hours of teaching at the secondary school level, and regulate enrolments at the tertiary level, along with the development of distance learning at the University of Comoros. Finally, the program aims to strengthen management and capacity at central and decentralized levels in order to sustain results.

There is lack of data due to weak statistical capacity and difficulty in consolidating data among the three islands. This is an area of focus for the interim plan. In spite of many hurdles, a complete financial framework was derived from a reference scenario. Recurrent expenditures for education represent 20 percent, which is funded by domestic resources and is projected to increase to 22 percent of the budget by 2015.

The total cost of planned activities in the three-year interim education plan, excluding recurrent costs, is estimated at US$ 64 million. Capital expenditures for the primary education sub-sector, fully funded by donor partners and the expected GPE support, amount to US$ 24 million (38 percent). In spite of this effort, the interim education plan has a projected financial gap of about US$ 15 million for secondary education and technical and professional training. The Government and development partners are committed to scaling up their support in order to close this unmet funding need.

Under the Government's leadership, a Local Education Group (LEG) has been formed with UNICEF as the Coordinating Agency. Members of this group include the European Union, France, UNESCO, the World Bank, The Arab Development Committee, China, and Japan. In the context of preparing the interim plan and the GPE grant application, all financial contributions were included within the budgeted program of actions. This approach helped identify synergies, which have reinforced areas of complementary support for increased aid effectiveness.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Comoros is applying for a program implementation grant in the amount of US$ 4.6 million, which is in line with the indicative amount derived from the GPE Needs and Performance Framework (NPF). Selected as Managing Entity, UNICEF is co-financing this project with a contribution of US$ 315,000 to build capacity. UNICEF's procedures will be used for the execution of the grant. Due to weak institutional capacity in areas of procurement and financial management, Comoros and its development partners concur that this project modality is the best option available. Other donor partners fund school infrastructure mainly using project modalities, as they help build national systems. UNICEF is well-established in Comoros, where it has supported the education system since 1984.

The project has three main components and eight sub-components[9]:

Component I aims to increase access and improve student retention. There are three sub-components: (i) infrastructure rehabilitation for the primary school level and school mapping; (ii) increased school accessibility for vulnerable children including children with disabilities; and (iii) reduction of the repetition rate.

Component II aims to improve education quality. There are three sub-components: (i) purchase of school books and training materials; (ii) system management and strengthening of education quality with standardized testing; and (iii) strengthening of inspections and pedagogical supervision.

Component III aims to strengthen sector management, monitoring and evaluation. There are two sub-components: (i) strengthening of information and statistical systems; and (ii) planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation of the project. In addition, UNICEF is co-financing this sub-component with US$ 0.3 million to reinforce capacity and improve sector coordination.

[9] Please note that page 10 of 23 of the Grant Application Form includes UNICEF's co-financing as an integral part of the project financing framework. Therefore the total project cost is up to US$ 4.9 million and the percentage shares are slightly different than those shown in the summary table below.

The project components are summarized in the table below.

	Program Component	Amount (US$)	Percent of Total (%)
I	Increase access and improve retention	1,600,000	34.8
II	Improve overall education quality	2,300,000	50.0
III	Strengthen sector management & build capacity	700,000	15.2
	TOTAL	**4,600,000**	**100.0**
	UNICEF co-financing: Capacity & sector coordination	315,000	n/a

*UNICEF fees not included in the total grant: 7 percent of GPE grant.

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS SUMMARY

The QAR Phase I concluded that the project concept and identification of activities followed a participatory process and that the approach was coherent with the strategic vision of the interim education plan and responded to the needs of the education system. Moreover, proposed project interventions were consistent with the strategic priorities of the GPE, in particular in terms of interventions to improve learning, focus on gender and girls' education, and support to fragile states with weak capacity with emphasis on children with disabilities and other vulnerable children. Finally, the project concept and its implementation instruments are well-adapted for Comoros, and thus respond to the GPE principles of aid effectiveness.

The following recommendations were submitted to Comoros in the QAR Phase II report:

a) *Better clarify and identify the areas of commonalities and linkages between the interim program, the specific activities to be funded by the project and the expected results by education levels; including their monitoring and evaluation systems.*

In response, the document was revised to clarify synergies, commonalities, and linkages between the long term objectives of the interim plan aimed at results beyond 2015 and the activities and expected results for the project. These revisions focused on the Results Framework, where a few indicators at the primary education level were selected for the project.

b) *Explain a bit more the choices made and the strategies adopted for infrastructure rehabilitation at the primary school level. This would help, given that: (i) unit costs are very high in Comoros; (ii) the project covers many sub-components; and (iii) the amount of the GPE grant is relatively small.*

In response, it was acknowledged that given numerous geophysical factors, unit costs are very high in Comoros. With regard to school infrastructure, it was clarified that the cost of construction and equipping a new classroom is US$ 47,000 and that rehabilitation is 25 percent of that base price (i.e. US$ 12,000). The analysis of the community approach for school construction found that the approach was inefficient and therefore not used for this project.

c) *Present and explain better: (i) the activities and instruments for strengthening capacity for more sustainable results; and (ii) UNICEF's internal rules and procedures, which are applicable to managing and executing the project in a Management Entity arrangement.*

In response, an additional annex was included to clarify the rules and procedures, as well as the capacity

building strategy. The annex describes project management and expenditure procedures, including commitments, disbursement of funds, monitoring and evaluation for results. UNICEF has planned focused presentations and training sessions for selected civil servants and interested development partners.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program has been developed in a transparent and collaborative manner, that the application and supporting documents are internally consistent and complete, and that the application package is ready for assessment by the FAC.

The Quality Assurance Review process concluded that the preparation of the interim education plan and the GPE grant application was led by the Government in a participatory manner with development partners. UNICEF is both the Coordinating Agency and the Managing Entity. In this dual role, it is co-financing the project for added coordination and capacity building as well as working closely with other donor partners to mobilize the additional resources Comoros needs to fully fund its interim education plan. This coordinated approach is likely to improve aid effectiveness further and result in effective implementation.

In order to ensure smooth and effective program implementation to achieve the expected results, Comoros and its partners are committed to providing regular updates on progress during the Joint Sector Reviews, and reinforcing coordination and the spirit of mutual accountability in terms of their technical and financial commitments.

MADAGASCAR
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 85.4 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Madagascar has a population of 20.7 million, of which 10.3 million are under 18 and 3.3 million are under five years old. Madagascar ranks 159th in the 2013 UNDP Human Development Report, down from 145th in the 2009 report. Seventy percent of the population lives in rural areas, andone quarter lives in zones where the risk of natural disasters, including cyclones, floods and droughts, is high.

Madagascar has been in political crisis since the unconstitutional regime change in March 2009. The prolonged crisis has resulted in a severe economic downturn, exacerbated by a series of external shocks and the withdrawal of most external funding. In the social sectors, there has been a reversal of the steady progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) experienced until 2009. The results of the 2010 National Household Survey (NHS) indicate that about 76.5 percent of the population lives in poverty, an increase of 7.8 percentage points compared to the previous NHS, which was conducted in 2005. Poverty incidence is 54.2 percent in urban areas and 82.2 percent in rural areas.

Attempts to resolve the political stalemate through mediation by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) recently advanced when the independent electoral commission announced presidential and parliamentary elections. Initially set for May 2013, elections are now planned for July 2013, with a potential second round scheduled for September. Despite this positive development, the political climate remains uncertain.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Madagascar joined the GPE in 2005, when the country's education sector plan was appraised and endorsed by development partners. After almost a decade of steady progress, key education indicators have declined since 2009. While primary education enrolment almost doubled from 2002 to 2009, it stagnated in 2010 and decreased for the first time in 2011. The primary completion rate, which had increased from 37 percent in 2001 to 79 percent in 2008, dropped to 74 percent in 2011. Dropout rates have increased from 19 to 25 percent since 2009. According to the 2010 Household Survey, the number of out-of-school children of primary school age has risen by 35 percent, from an estimated 590,000 in 2005 (the last NHS) to more than 800,000 in 2011.

Madagascar has achieved gender parity in primary education, and disparities are more linked to geography and poverty than to gender; girls in certain parts of the country are much more likely to leave school early than boys, but there are also areas where boys are less likely to be in school. More than gender, access to primary education is severely hampered by families' growing inability to pay increasing out-of-pocket costs resulting from sharp cuts in public spending. Primary public sector spending per student decreased by 15 percent from 2008 to 2011. As a result, education as a share of household expenditures has risen from 2.2 percent in 2005 to 3.1 percent in 2010.

In terms of learning outcomes, problems date back further than the political crisis of 2009 and can, in large part, be attributed to: (i) a growing proportion of untrained community teachers resulting from the surge in access combined with limited pre-service teacher training capacity (more than two-thirds of primary school teachers fall into this category); (ii) decades of shifting language of instruction policies with inadequate attention to teachers' language proficiency; (iii) different teaching approaches introduced through in-service training with varying degrees of success; and (iv) a lack of a relevant

curriculum—until 2008 there had not been a comprehensive curriculum reform in decades.

An updated education sector plan endorsed in February 2008 included curriculum reform, expansion of primary education from five to seven years, and a strategy to gradually train and upgrade community-recruited teachers and provide them with salary and benefits from the Ministry of National Education (MNE) budget. However, the de facto government installed in March 2009 did not take ownership of the endorsed plan and only implemented it partially, leaving a policy vacuum as no new plan was proposed. This caused general confusion around the length of the primary cycle, teaching approaches, language of instruction and curriculum. Moreover, the community teacher training strategy was not implemented and the salary and benefit portion of the plan has not progressed. GPE funds have been used to leverage the MNE to maintain their contribution of eight months' salary per year; GPE funds have paid for the remaining four months on the condition that the MNE has paid its share.

Education expenditure as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 3.8 percent in 2009/2010. This increased to 5 percent in 2010/2011, but dropped back to 4.2 percent in 2011/2012. Education as a share of the government budget increased from 15.6 percent in 2009/2010 to 18.3 percent in 2011/12 (compared to 24.4 percent planned for 2009, before the political crisis).

In addition to the policy vacuum, the severe impact of the crisis on resources has meant that previous strategies need to be adjusted. Madagascar received a GPE Education Plan Development Grant of US$ 250,000 in 2012 to develop a transitional education sector plan: the Madagascar Interim Education Sector Plan (IESP) 2013-2015. This plan was endorsed by development partners in February, 2013.

The Local Education Group (LEG) is co-led by the MNE and UNICEF (as Coordinating Agency) and includes the African Development Bank, the EU, the French Development Agency, ILO, JICA, Norway, UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank, Aide et Action (designated to represent civil society) and three national private education organizations. In view of the political situation, development partners have frequently held separate meetings during the past years.

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

Madagascar received US$ 60 million in GPE grants for the period 2006-2008. A grant of US$ 84.1 million was approved for 2009-2011 with the World Bank as Supervising Entity (SE), but because of the 2009 political crisis the grant agreement could not be signed. Partners therefore requested that the grant be managed directly by UNICEF. The grant was reduced to US$ 64 million and Madagascar became the first GPE Developing Country Partner to adopt a Managing Entity (ME) modality, used up until the present application.

Prior to the 2009 political crisis, GPE support contributed to Madagascar's steep increase in primary school enrolment and completion rates. Since 2009, GPE's support has mainly served to limit the impact of the political and economic crisis on the education sector, addressing basic service needs. The funding covered school grants in vulnerable regions, community teacher salaries for four months per year, school feeding in regions with food insecurity, school supplies (kits) for children, support to strengthen the monitoring and information system, and classroom construction. The grant was due to close at the end of 2012, but the construction work requires a mandatory period of one year between completion of classrooms and the final payment to contractors as a quality guarantee measure. A no-cost extension until the end of December 2013 has been granted in order to release the final payments in 2013. Approximately 99 percent of the grant has been committed to date.

Over the past four years, the GPE funds have been used to leverage continued education sector commitment by the Government, conditioning disbursements on the Government's payment of community teachers, as mentioned above, and the distribution of grants to schools. The funds have also served as a reason for education partners to work together in a coordinated way at a time when collaboration has been severely reduced in other sectors. Finally, GPE collaboration has served as a push for developing the IESP, which is an important step in regaining clarity around sector strategies and

priorities.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The requested amount is US$ 85.4 million, which is in line with the Needs and Performance Framework's indicative allocation for Madagascar.

In 2012, the World Bank applied its policy on rapid response to crises, based on the need to address the most critical pressures on education outcomes. This opened the way to commit International Development Association (IDA) financed emergency support to the education sector and to take on the role as SE. In view of the challenging context, a project modality is considered most appropriate by development partners. This will be a hybrid SE/ME approach; some components will be implemented by UN agencies and the remaining components will be managed by a project implementation unit that has been in place since before the crisis and which played a central role in the implementation of the UNICEF-managed activities.

The project supports the implementation of the IESP, building on complementarity and synergies with domestic and external partner activities in the sector. It will finance essential interventions for preserving critical education service delivery of acceptable quality in response to the negative effects of the persistent political and economic crisis, and to prepare a full sector plan. The following components are proposed:

Component 1: Facilitating access to and retention in primary education by reducing the costs borne by families (subsidies to community teacher salaries and children's school kits).

Component 2: Supporting the learning process by improving the teaching and learning environment through in-service teacher and school director training, top-up to school grants in vulnerable regions, school infrastructure improvements and school feeding.

Component 3: Strengthening the foundation of the primary education system by rebuilding planning and monitoring capacity at central and decentralized levels and improving community participation and social accountability.

	Program Component	**Amount (US$)**	**Percent of Total (%)**
1	Access and retention in primary education	**37,200,000**	**43.6**
	Sub-Component 1.1: Subsidies to community teacher salaries	22,300,000	26.1
	Sub-Component 1.2: Provision of school kits	14,900,000	17.5
2	Improving the teaching & learning environment	**35,900,000**	**42.0**
	Sub-Component 2.1: Community teacher training in basic competencies	9,600,000	11.3
	Sub-Component 2.2: Top-up to school grants	14,300,000	16.7

	Sub-Component 2.3: School feeding activities	7,000,000	8.2
	Sub-Component 2.4: School infrastructure improvement	5,000,000	5.9
3	Strengthening the foundations of the primary education sub-sector	**8,300,000**	**9.7**
	Sub-Component 3.1: Institutional strengthening	2,000,000	2.3
	Sub-Component 3.2: Capacity building for communities	2,000,000	2.3
	Sub-Component 3.3: Project management, monitoring and evaluation	4,300,000	5.0
	Unallocated[10]	**4,000,000**	**4.7**
	TOTAL	**85,400,000**	**100.0**

Targeting regions that do not currently receive donor support, the project complements other efforts to preserve basic education service delivery. External funding committed to the IESP amounts to US$ 113.4 million for 2013-2016, including from AFD, the European Union, Norway, UNICEF and the World Bank (IDA).

In addition to the broader political uncertainty, risks to effective and efficient implementation of the project include low MNE capacity at all levels, potential teacher strikes, and governance risks associated with the operation of the project under a de facto government without sound accountability mechanisms. Mitigation measures include the reliance on UN agencies and a trusted, experienced project implementation unit for the implementation of activities.

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS SUMMARY

The first phase of the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) concluded that decisions around the program had been made in a transparent, collaborative way, and that the program would be aligned fully to the IESP. It also concluded that all five of GPE's strategic objectives are relevant in Madagascar to varying degrees, and that the program is likely to contribute to progress in these areas according to their relevance: the proposed program will facilitate the development of an education sector plan in a fragile political context, will target improved learning outcomes and training and remuneration of teachers, and will promote equitable distribution of resources by addressing education costs for families living in poverty. QAR I recommended more attention to teacher training than what was initially planned for, and this was taken into account in the program. There was less attention paid to gender issues, as poverty-related issues are more pressing and there are complementary efforts by partners such as UNICEF to address girls' education and life skills. It was agreed that a project modality would be the most appropriate, considering capacity gaps and persisting uncertainty around the political situation.

[10] Planned to be used to cover cost overruns or as contingency for unforeseen costs related to project activities deemed necessary to achieve the objectives. In particular, to facilitate efficient response to unforeseen events that require rapid assistance to affected populations, and to adjust the design of the teacher training component if needed after the feasibility analysis is completed.

The main recommendations of QAR Phase II are summarized as follows:

1. *There were several discrepancies in the budget presented in the draft program document and between unit costs in the program document and those of the IESP.*

In response, a partial revision of unit costs and total costs has been done and coherence between the numbers ensured. Some of the proposed project components group together activities from different components of the IESP, and according to the SE there is not necessarily a direct link between unit costs by component in the IESP and those of the project, so this should not pose a problem.

2. *Some of the objectives and expected results in the draft program document did not appear realistic, notably the increase in primary completion rates and the number of qualified teachers.*

In response, the SE has explained that the objective with regard to qualified teachers refers to training in basic competencies and not more formal qualifications, and that this objective is considered realistic because training will occur at the local level based on a feasibility study carried out before implementation. Target rates for primary completion have not been included and targets are expressed in terms of outputs rather than outcomes. While outcome targets would have facilitated monitoring of the overall impact of the project, the emergency context and variety of factors that may influence outcomes, as well as the relatively short duration of the project, explain this choice.

3. *The infrastructure component lacks information on modalities, especially with regard to community-based construction, absorption capacity, and management capacity.*

This has been clarified and the final program document contains more detail.

4. *Despite the difficult context, sustainability should be considered in terms of the project's effect on national institutions and management systems. It is strongly recommended that development partners accompany the country in seeking a more aligned implementation modality that could go into effect once the political situation is resolved.*

In response, the SE has emphasized that the adopted modality seeks to preserve the current education system while preparing for the future. Partners will work towards more aligned modalities both in the education sector and in other sectors: notably through separate efforts addressing the need for a macroeconomic framework, improved public financial management, governance conditions and the monitoring and evaluation system. This is reasonable, considering the impact of the political crisis in all these areas.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program has been developed in a transparent and collaborative manner, that the application and supporting documents are internally consistent and complete, and that the application package is ready for assessment by the FAC.

The progress that has been made over the past year in Madagascar in terms of education sector dialogue and the development of the IESP is encouraging, and an important step towards stabilizing and rebuilding the education sector. Four years of confusion around the country's sector strategies have exacerbated the already-devastating effects of resource shortages. The IESP and newly committed support to the sector, as well as the present project, could potentially turn around the recent negative trends.

Uncertainty around the outcome of the planned elections later this year, including the eventuality that they will once again be postponed, presents an overarching risk. The hybrid SE/ME approach could minimize the impact of this contextual challenge on project implementation. This design will facilitate implementation and close supervision of the activities and will limit fiduciary risks, while simultaneously

enhancing the role of the MNE compared to their role in the implementation of the previous grant.

There is also a risk that approval of the grant could be used as a political tool by the government in the period running up to the election. Partners in Madagascar have therefore requested collaboration from the GPE Secretariat around a communication strategy that will emphasize the partner-based, politically-neutral nature of the grant. The risk of "political capture" will also be mitigated by integrating governance and social accountability mechanisms and enhancing independent supervision.

If approved and implemented as planned, this project will partially ease the economic burden on parents and allow vulnerable children to remain in school or return to school. It will also help Madagascar begin to address the poor quality of teaching and help improve learning conditions for more than 1.8 million children. Finally, it will enable the process of developing a full education sector plan through broad consultation and stakeholder ownership, stabilizing education sector development and rebuilding capacity. Overall, the grant will play a vital role in avoiding further loss and ensuring access to quality education in the years to come.

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Mauritania is located in West Africa and is mostly covered by the Sahara Desert. With an estimated population of 3.7 million in 2012, the country has a small production base. Exported commodities are traditionally limited to fish, iron ore and gold. The estimated Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per-capita was US$ 1,174 in 2012. It has doubled since 2006 when the country discovered new minerals such as oil and copper. Overall, the country context is characterized by weak and unstable institutions.

In combination with structural changes initiated since the 1970s, the new mineral resources have contributed to recent economic growth averaging 5 percent per year. However, poverty remains high due to frequent droughts and massive rural-urban migration. Rapid urbanization has also created a near crisis situation in social services, including education. Mauritania ranks 155 out of 185 countries in the 2013 UNDP Human Development Report.

Mauritania suffered a bloodless military coup in 2005. In the following years, it progressively returned to democracy, with elections in 2006. The Government engaged in more constructive political dialogue with civil society, along with a consultative process with its development partners on governance issues. The country has successfully implemented a series of poverty reduction strategies and benefited from the Debt Reduction Initiative and various poverty reduction programs funded by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Mauritania joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in 2002. Its development partners recently assessed and endorsed the revised Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP II) that covers the period 2011-2020. As a long term vision for economic and social development, the Education Sector Plan is articulated around equitable and inclusive education aimed at improved access, learning and system management.

The ESDP II is built on lessons learned and evaluations conducted on programs implemented over the past decade. The strategic objectives are fourfold: (i) achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially universal primary education; (ii) pursue previously introduced education system reforms; (iii) improve the relevance and quality of post-primary education to match the needs of the labor market; and (iv) consolidate gains and their sustainability in the long run.

The ESDP II seeks to make education a relevant pillar for economic growth and prosperity by providing improved access to ten years of equitable basic education of quality for its youth. Additionally, ESDP II seeks to make secondary education, technical and vocational training and higher education more responsive to the needs of the labor market. Operational tools include a comprehensive policy framework and a budgeted Action Plan. Planned interventions are also consistent with the Medium-Term Public Expenditure Framework for 2012-2015.

Since 2001, the basic education sub-sector has experienced a steady increase in access with an enrolment rate increasing by 4 percent per year. Progress was made in the primary cycle, although retention remains an issue. By 2012, the gross intake rate had reached 112 percent (116 percent for girls) while gross enrolment was 100 percent (104 percent for girls). However, the completion rate was low, at 72

percent for boys and girls, and the repetition rate was below 5 percent. The biggest constraints to schooling are poverty and low transition rates to lower secondary school, especially for girls traveling long distances to school and facing cultural barriers such as early marriage.

Mauritania's education system faces many challenges in reaching the Education for All goals by 2015. Prominent among these challenges is the insufficient number of qualified teachers at the secondary level, given the bilingual (French and Arabic) requirements. Moreover, the quality of learning is low at all levels, with the test results based PASEC[11] score showing a continuous decline in learning since 1999. Moreover, a teacher testing program administered in 2007 for skills in Arabic and French yielded poor results; only 43 percent of teachers who teach in Arabic were proficient in French and only 17 percent of those teaching in French had the required competencies in Arabic. These findings motivated the program to improve learning by emphasizing teacher recruitment and training.

In the past years, Mauritania's education expenditure as a share of GDP increased to 5 percent but its share of the budget fluctuated at around 14-15 percent. Budgetary allocations were insufficient for sustained investment in basic services beyond paying salaries. This has changed gradually as the economy has grown and additional mineral resources accrue to education. Mauritania seeks GPE support for the implementation of its long-term program, estimated to cost US$ 728 million for the period 2013-2015. The support will be devoted to investment in basic education since recurrent costs are already covered by the national budget, which also funds about a third of investments in basic education.

Donor partners funding the ESDP II are the French Development Agency, the World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO, Islamic Investment Bank, Spanish Cooperation, World Food Program and the Kuwait Fund. All these funds have been budgeted in the Action Plan and a funding gap of US$ 32 million is projected for the period 2013-2015. Under the Government's leadership, a Local Education Group (LEG) has been in place since the 2000s. However, it includes only donor and development partners. Further efforts are needed to extend membership to all partners, including civil society organizations and representatives of the private sector. The Coordinating Agency is the French Development Agency.

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

Mauritania was awarded three previous GPE grants amounting to US$ 23 million cumulatively since 2003. These grants supported the implementation of the first education sector plan (ESDP I), which covered the period 2001-2010. The World Bank was the Supervising Entity and a project modality was used. The most recent grant of US$ 14 million was approved in 2008. Funds were disbursed and used successfully to: (i) build classrooms in overcrowded primary schools or to accommodate bilingual/multi-grade teaching; (ii) purchase about three million textbooks and 75,000 learning materials; and (iii) extend the school feeding program to rural areas. In terms of quality, the grant funded new testing methods for students and teachers aimed at changing behavior and improving the school environment for better learning.

Besides increased access and improved tools for budgeting and planning, the previous grants helped Mauritania make progress in many areas. Between 2008 and 2012, the rate of completion of the primary cycle increased from 50 to 73 percent in 2012 due, in part, to the doubling of the percentage of schools with a complete cycle. The transition rate to lower secondary school almost doubled from 30 to 57 percent (53 percent for girls) over the same period. But improvement in poor and rural areas was lower, especially for girls. This explains the proposed project's emphasis on constructing additional lower secondary schools in those areas.

Many lessons were learned from previous programs and used for the concept and instruments of the project. These lessons include the need for a simple project design with a focused Results Framework based on limited indicators, as well as the use of an Implementation Unit (DPEF) located in the Ministry

[11] PASEC stands for Program of Analysis of Education Systems for the French Speaking countries.

of Education, which is used by all education sector donor partners. Other lessons learned were the need for renewed government leadership to strengthen collaboration and participation and for aid harmonization within a more consultative process.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The requested program implementation grant of US$ 12.4 million is in line with the indicative amount derived from the GPE Needs and Performance Framework (NPF). The World Bank was selected as the Supervising Entity and the modality is a project using the DPEF. Partners have agreed that this is the best option available.

Embedded within the Ministry of Education, DPEF remains the only stable directorate over the past years in spite of the institutional instability that followed the 2005 military coup. Procurement and financial management are high risks and explain the use of DPEF by all partners. Mauritania's public financial management system is improving, but risks are high in terms of: (i) ineffectiveness of internal controls and audits; (ii) lack of quality and timeliness of current year budget reporting and financial statements; and (iii) lack of assurance that funds will be used for their intended purposes.

Nonetheless, progress has been achieved. Donor partners have helped the government prepare a financial management reform program to address these issues. A new Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability initiative was launched in 2012 and its conclusions are expected by 2014. In continuing to be Supervising Entity, the World Bank has agreed on participatory supervision missions and on the strengthening of the annual Joint Sector Review (JSR).

As summarized below, the project has three main components. Each component has two sub-components with estimated base costs.

Component I seeks to improve the quality of education and teaching at the primary education level. It has two sub-components: (i) improve the quality of pre-service teacher training; and (ii) improve the learning environment in primary schools. This component will be implemented in partnership with the Spanish Cooperation and the French Development Agency, with a focus on in-service teacher training. This is a coordinated response to the poor learning issue highlighted under lessons learned from previous programs.

Component II aims to promote equitable access to lower secondary education, especially to benefit girls. There are two sub-components: (i) increase access to lower secondary education for girls in selected rural areas on the basis of transparent criteria, including poverty incidence; and (ii) enhance gender equity in education through measures to promote girls' schooling.

Component III seeks to strengthen the management of the education sector and build institutional capacity. There are two sub-components: (i) strengthen capacity for monitoring and evaluation; and (ii) strengthen program management and coordination.

The program components and sub-components are summarized in the table below:

	Program Component	**Amount (US$)**	**Percent of Total (%)**
I	Improve education quality and teaching at the primary level	**3,800,000**	**30.7**
	Sub-Component I.1: Improve quality of pre-service teacher training	1,800,000	14.5

	Sub-Component I.2: Improve the learning environment of primary schools	2,000,000	16.2
II	Promote equitable access to lower secondary for girls	**4,600,000**	**37.1**
	Sub-Component II.1: Increase access to lower secondary for girls	3,700,000	29.8
	Sub-Component II.2: Enhance gender equity in education & promote girls' schooling	900,000	7.3
II	Strengthen sector management & capacity building	**3,600,000**	**29.0**
	Sub-Component III.1: Strengthen monitoring and evaluation capacity	2,800,000	22.5
	Sub-Component III.2: Strengthen program and aid coordination	800,000	6.5
	Contingencies for unforeseen events	**400,000**	**3.2**
	Overall GPE Grant Amount*	***12,400,000***	***100.0***

*Other Agency fees not included in the total grant requested: (i) 1.75 percent of the GPE grant; and (ii) the standard Supervising Entity fee of US$ 400,000 for the duration of the program.

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS SUMMARY

QAR Phase I concluded that the project concept and identification of activities followed a participatory process. The program is articulated within the strategic vision of the education sector plan and responds to the needs of the education system. The project interventions are consistent with relevant strategic priorities of the GPE, focusing in particular on: (i) education quality through teacher training; (ii) girls' education; and (iii) strengthening institutional capacity. The QAR process led to recommendations that more effort should be devoted to strengthen the LEG and to reinstate Joint Sector Reviews on an annual basis, as well as to build capacity to move gradually to more aligned modalities with the use of country systems.

The following recommendations were submitted to Mauritania in the QAR Phase II report:

a) *The project components do not provide enough details on the proposed activities and how they focus on both the objectives of the education sector plan and the relevant GPE strategic priorities. Additional emphasis should also be put on: (i) lessons learned from previous programs; and (ii) commonalties and synergies between activities for better harmonization and aid-effectiveness*.

In response, the program document provides details on the objectives, activities and expected results. In addition to the annexes on institutional requirements, the description of each component and sub-component were revised, with clear indications of areas of focus, lessons learned from previous programs, and existing or expected partner support.

b) *Statistical capacity, data collection and analysis and timely dissemination of results are critical in monitoring and evaluation. Given that the integrated statistical system (EMIS) is not fully*

functional, it would help to outline the strategy and activities such as staff recruitment and training to improve the EMIS and strengthen inter-agency coordination between the DPEF and the Directorate of Strategic Planning.

In response, the program document provides additional information on the efforts of development partners to support capacity in several areas, including teacher training colleges, the DPEF and especially the Directorate for Strategic Planning and Evaluations. Progress is being made in terms of regular production and analysis of sector data, which will support sector monitoring for better planning and budgeting.

c) *Unit costs and estimates are important given the variety of activities planned under the project. At the stage of the review, the critical phase of the World Bank appraisal mission had not yet taken place. The team was advised to focus on completing the section on "Appraisal Summary"—including the economic and financial analysis—which aims at estimating relevant units costs.*

In response, the relevant parameters, actual and estimated units have been included in annexes of the program document, as well as in the main document as "Summary Appraisal".

d) Improving overall learning and girls' education are the main focus of the project. The draft program document does not make a strong case that the construction of 13 lower secondary schools aims to address both equitable access and gender issues. Therefore, there is a need to emphasize how this would benefit girls more than boys.

In response, there is better documentation of the support to transition to lower secondary school for girls. This supports the rationale for building the 13 lower secondary schools in rural areas selected based on high poverty incidence and high dropout rates for girls due to long distances to school, and cultural barriers such as early marriage and household chores. Although both boys and girls will go to these new schools, there is ample evidence that girls stand to benefit disproportionately.

e) Government leadership and commitment: As indicated in lessons learned, renewed government leadership and financial commitment, effective monitoring and evaluation through results-focused JSRs are required to restore improved sector dialogue. Therefore the QAR process stressed more budgetary support for education and the resumption of the JSR process as the premier instrument for frank dialogue around performance and results.

In response, the program document emphasizes the government's commitment to: (i) continue institutional reforms and capacity building for leadership (i.e. teacher training schools); (ii) gradually increase the share of education in the national budget; and (iii) take greater leadership for a renewed sector dialogue including resumption of the JSR process in 2012 with specific objectives, more relevant terms of reference, a predictable calendar and performance targets against agreed indicators.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program has been developed in a transparent and collaborative manner, that the application and supporting documents are internally consistent and complete, and that the application package is ready for assessment by the FAC.

The program includes a number of activities (including pre-service and in-service teacher training) to tackle the poor quality of education and learning due, in part, to challenges related to bilingual and multi-grade teaching. Progress and results in this critical area over the next three years should be one of the yardsticks for performance under the Education Sector Plan.

Mauritania is working closely with its education partners to mobilize the additional resources needed to implement its full education sector program. This coordinated approach is likely to improve aid

effectiveness and help the country achieve key results in education. Development partners in the education sector are working to improve coordinated support to the Ministry of Education to build its institutional capacity.

Finally, in order to ensure smooth and effective program implementation to achieve the expected results, the LEG is committed to strengthen consultation and aid coordination through a more participatory and inclusive process, monitor progress through Joint Sector Reviews, and reinforce coordination and mutual accountability in terms of additional technical and financial commitments.

PUNTLAND STATE OF SOMALIA
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 2.1 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Since the outbreak of the Somali Civil War in 1991, Somalia has suffered from years of prolonged conflict, piracy, and inability to deal with cyclical famine. Continued conflict also has led to the formation of distinct regions with separate governing bodies: the self-declared Republic of Somaliland, the semi-autonomous state of Puntland, and South and Central Somalia (including the capital Mogadishu and the Galmudug State). Currently, Somalia is undergoing a political transition which brings new optimism and expectations.

The Puntland State of Somalia was formed as an autonomous region in May 1998, as an integral part of a united Somalia. The population is estimated at 1.6 million, of which 70 percent is below the age of 30. The civil war had devastating impact on the economy, the physical infrastructure, and the lives of Puntland's population. With the exception of the border conflict with Somaliland over the disputed regions of Sool and Sanaag, and the threats of piracy on its coastline, most of Puntland remains relatively stable and peaceful. The continuing civil war in South and Central Somalia has led to an influx of Somalis from these regions which impacts negatively on the State's fragile socio-economic recovery. In spite of this, Puntland has made notable progress towards establishing basic political and administrative institutions that provide social and educational services. In addition, there is an active civil society and a growing private sector.

About 60 percent of the Puntland population consists of nomadic pastoralists, and it is heavily dependent on the livestock sector. Puntland is fragility is heightened due to the semi-arid and arid climatic conditions. The gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated to be US$ 428. An estimated 5 to 20 percent of households receive remittances from the diaspora, which contributes significantly to household incomes and provides substantial funding for small businesses and basic service provision including education. Somalia is not yet integrated in the Human Development Index.

EDUCATION SECTOR

In July 2012, the (then Transitional) Federal Government of Somalia officially joined the GPE Partnership as a federal state. Somalia's education sector is divided into three main administrations: the Ministries of Education of Somaliland (Ministry of Education (MoE) Somaliland), Puntland (MoE Puntland), and the Central South Zone (CSZ), where each ministry functions independently with its own unique education agenda.[12]

In 2012, the Puntland MoE embarked on a participative, consultative process which led to the endorsement in February 2013 of the transitional Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) for 2012-2016. It is based on Puntland's first national Five Year Development Plan (FYDP). The overall goal of the ESSP is to assure all children and 'many' adults receive high-quality education. It focuses on: (i) increased participation in education; (ii) enhancing the quality of education; and (iii) ensuring the effectiveness of educational support and management. The transitional ESSP is an important milestone towards the

[12]The South and Central Zone of Somalia is currently in the process of finalizing its ESSP and has the intention to come forward with a request to GPE during the second round of 2013.

development of the education sector in Puntland.

Puntland has 535 formal primary schools, with 61 percent in rural areas. The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) stands at 41 percent with 46 percent boys and 37 percent girls enrolled in school. Puntland has 5,093 teachers, and only 13 percent of them are female. In addition, only 636 teachers (18 percent females) have completed at least two years of teacher training. The highest drop-out rates are found between lower and upper primary school with only 3 out of 10 learners continuing to upper primary school. The 2011 Monitoring of Learning Achievements (MLA) results, particularly for numeracy, were very poor; revealing that half of the children in Grade 4 were innumerate.

In the financial year 2012, the national budget allocated for education was 3.6 percent. Ongoing advocacy has resulted in a pledge by the Puntland government to increase this allocation to 8 percent in 2013. This would more than double the current allocation but still falls short of the projected amount required to implement the ESSP. In Puntland only 18 percent of the 4,173 formal primary school teachers are on the government payroll. The greatest burden of paying teachers' salaries still falls on parents and communities.

Since February 2013, the EU is acting as Coordinating Agency for the Local Education Group in Puntland. The Local Education Group has established an Education Sector Committee (ESC) which is chaired by the MoE (co-chaired by UNICEF). The Committee is comprised of implementing partners, including local non-governmental organizations (LNGOs); civil society organizations (CSOs); international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) including Save the Children UK, Care, CfBT Education Trust, African Education Trust (AET), Islamic Relief, Diakonia, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), and Norwegian Refugee Council; multilaterals including UNICEF, UNESCO, and WFP; and donors including EU, DFID, and USAID. The Education Cluster has been transformed into the Humanitarian Working Group under the ESC. Due to ongoing security constraints, some development partners have travel restrictions in place for Somalia, including Puntland. To address this constraint, regular ESC meetings take place in Nairobi, Kenya.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Puntland is applying for a program implementation grant in the amount of US$ 2.1 million, which is in line with the indicative allocation. The total indicative allocation for Somalia is US$ 14.5 million. The GPE's Needs and Performance Framework was applied to divide the Somalia indicative allocation (US$ 8.22 million to South Central Zone, US$ 4.19 million to Somaliland, and US$ 2.1 million to Puntland). The submitted application for Puntland is the result of a consultative process between UNICEF as Managing Entity and the ESC. The main reasons for the use of a Managing Entity in Puntland include: (i) weaknesses in the national systems; (ii) financial volatility of government financing with resulting high fiduciary risk; and (iii) fragility.

The proposed program focuses on two main areas: (i) teacher salary payments; and (ii) the training and deployment of female teachers in pastoralist areas. Each of the components contributes to the overall goal of the program, which is to improve the MoE's capacity to deliver quality education for all in Puntland.

The largest component supports the MoE in the development of a teacher salary payment framework, which will improve the predictability of the MoE's payments to teachers. It will provide multi-year funding to sustain and incrementally increase the number of formal primary school teachers on the government payroll. The Government of Puntland is committed to increasing the number of additional teachers on the MoE's payroll at a rate of 150 teachers each year. This component will also focus on support to and an increase in the number of teachers in remote areas and pastoral areas, resulting in increased enrollments and improved quality of education provision.

The second component encompasses the training and deployment of female teachers to contribute to improving equitable outcomes for girls' education in pastoralist areas. The MoE will select 60 female teachers who are already working in, or would be willing to work in remote pastoralist areas. Each

teacher will receive an incentive and will also enroll in an in-service Teacher Training course.

The management of the program includes the recruitment of additional experts to monitor and to provide technical support to the Government of Puntland and specifically to the Ministry of Education.

The proposed interventions are embedded in the broader Education Sector Strategy Plan and will build upon the experiences of some of the partners working in the field such as Save the Children and UNICEF. GPE funding is expected to fill in the financial and technical requirements relative to existing and upcoming programs in Puntland.

Other external funding for the Education Sector is mainly channeled through INGOs. The European Union, DFID, USAID and other UN agencies, along with supporters from the Somali Diaspora, provide the bulk of development funding. Also, for teacher salaries, funding is mainly provided by communities and parents, primarily in the form of school fees in addition to incentive payments from INGOs, LNGOs, and/or UN agencies.

	Program Component	**Amount (US$)**	**% of total**
1	**Teacher Salary Payment System**	**1,296,000**	**61.7%**
1.1	Salary Payment for Teachers	1,296,000	61.7%
2	**Female Teachers Training and Deployed to Pastoralist Areas**	**228,600**	**10.9%**
2.1	Salary Payments for Female Teachers	129,600	6.2%
2.2	Teacher Training for Female Teachers	99,000	4.7%
3	**Program Management**	**300,988**	**14.3%**
3.1	Human Resources	265,192	12.6%
3.2	Monitoring and Evaluation	35,796	1.7%
4	**UNICEF Program Support Cost**	**273,838**	**13.0%**
	TOTAL	*2,099,427* **2,100,000**	100%

*Other Agency fees not included in the total grant requested: 7 percent of total budget (total budget minus UNICEF Program Support Cost): US$ **137,362.**

** Note that the standard Supervising Entity fee of US$ 100,000 per year is not applicable in this case.

*** Note that the % of the total is different in the Application Form where the UNICEF Program Support Cost has not been included in the calculation of the total.

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS SUMMARY

The QAR Phase I report concluded that: (i) considerable progress has been made over the last few months, notably regarding the development of the ESSP for Puntland; and (ii) the process of developing the ESSP was consultative and participative, recommending that the Education Sector Committee in Puntland based in Nairobi will be involved throughout the development of the Program Document for GPE funding. The QAR Phase I report considered: (i) the proposed program outline to be well-linked to the ESSP; (ii) the link between proposed activities and GPE strategic directions was clear; and (iii) with respect to Aid Effectiveness, the chosen modality appropriately reflected the conditions of Puntland's

fragile context and the experience of other partners. The process led to a coordinated education sector dynamic and has improved the dynamic of a joint dialogue with the government.

Incorporating the conclusions and recommendations of QAR Phase I, a draft of the program document was prepared by UNICEF in close collaboration with government and development partners. In summary, the main recommendations of the QAR Phase II report were to: (i) strengthen the Implementation Plan of the Program Document and the importance of an implementation strategy for the ESSP which includes the budget of the Puntland Government and the intervention of all the different stakeholders; (ii) explore opportunities for increased sustainability and sector coherence; (iii) improve Risks and Mitigation strategies; (iv) review the Monitoring and Evaluation indicators; (v) better outline the roles and interventions of other partners working in the sector, and show how the proposed program fits into the sector and will be coordinated with other activities; and (vi) give additional justification as to the human resources and management costs of the program.

In response, the following actions and measures were taken to address the key recommendations from QAR phase II:

(i) An Implementation Plan of the Program Document was revised and integrated as annex 1 of the Program Document, which provides more detail and specificity in timing. While the Government of Puntland has been making progress with the development of the ESSP, a comprehensive implementation plan has not yet been finalized.
(ii) Under each component, a section on "sustainability issues" has been added. These sections aim to clarify the MoE's sustainability plans for maintaining the gains made during the program after 2016. Furthermore, the MoE submitted a Letter of Commitment, expressing the government's intent to ensure that all aspects of the program will be sustained after 2016.
(iii) Program-specific risks have been described in more detail and mitigation strategies have been included in the Program Document. Those risks identified are mainly related to the commitment of the Government of Puntland to allocate at least 8 percent of the national budget for the Education Sector and to sustain payment of the additional teacher salaries after 2015.
(iv) The Monitoring and Evaluation strategy has been improved, indicators revised and the role of the Managing Entity clarified.
(v) The roles and interventions of other partners working in the sector have been clarified by adding a summary of the major education sector partners and their programs, together with suggested program linkages and complementarity.
(vi) UNICEF Management costs are based on standard direct support costs. Operating effectively in a conflict-affected state like Puntland is very expensive; high level security responses and employing alternative monitoring mechanisms are just two examples of costs that need to be covered. In addition, weak management systems require a strong element of capacity building which will be supported on a day-to-day basis.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program has been developed in a transparent and collaborative manner, that the application and supporting documents are internally consistent and complete, and that the application package is ready for assessment by the FAC.

The current political context offers opportunities to improve the education sector. It is important to use the GPE process and funding as a catalyst for a more coordinated, harmonized, and focused effort to support the education sector. Considerable progress has been made over the past number of months, notably regarding the development of the education sector strategy plan. The development of the GPE grant application package has already strengthened the coordination of the sector and the Local Education Group (LEG) as they prepared the application.

The proposed program has a clear, limited focus and is well-aligned with the ESSP. However, the actual implementation plan of the ESSP might be further elaborated and annual action plans prepared. This will ensure a better embedding of program implementation in the broader execution of the ESSP. The program attempts to build capacity and strengthen ownership of the government. The Secretariat anticipates that the LEG will begin working on a full Education Sector Plan for the post 2016 period during the implementation of this grant.

Sustainability of the program depends upon the willingness and capacity of the Puntland Government to follow on its commitment to allocate more funds to the education sector. To ensure that the program will achieve its objectives and that GPE resources will indeed be additional, it is important that Puntland provide feedback during implementation on progress towards fulfilling commitments made by the Government and other partners. This might be done during the joint sector reviews.

Implementation of any education program in the Somali context will be complex due to the extreme conditions, volatile financial context, and fragile environment. The LEG has come together to develop the program to be funded by GPE. The application was submitted by the European Union Delegation, Somalia Unit, on behalf of the Government and its development partners. The Managing Entity modality provides a reasonable probability of successful implementation in a context where there is low implementation capacity in government systems. Multi-year funding and a level of confidence in the management systems of the ministry means that the GPE funding will contribute in moving away from the fragmented project-based approach that has hampered sustainable development in the education sector in Puntland.

SENEGAL
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 46.9 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Senegal is a Sahelian country located in the westernmost part of Africa. With a population of about 13.7 million, its economy is dominated by a few sectors, including groundnuts, fisheries and services. Economic growth has averaged about 3.9 percent per year over the past decade, with economic growth slightly outpacing population growth. However, this rate falls below the Sub-Saharan African average of 4.7 percent.

The poverty rate is high for a country that has just reached lower middle-income status with a per capita income of US$ 1,737 in 2013. In recent years, the poverty rate declined only slightly from 48.5 percent to 46.7 percent. Extreme poverty decreased from 17 percent to 15 percent over the same period. Over 30 percent of the population is permanently living in chronic poverty, facing food insecurity and high child malnutrition. According to various indicators, inequality appears to have risen between 2006 and 2011. Fertility rates (1 out of 5), population growth (2.8 percent) and dependency ratios remain high, although they are declining slowly. Senegal ranks 154th out of 186 countries in the 2013 UNDP Human Development Index Report.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Under implementation of the Ten-Year Program for Education and Training (*Programme décennal de l'éducation et de la formation* – PDEF 2000-2011), progress has been made in improving access to education. The primary education gross enrolment ratio has reached 94 percent while the intake rate is 113 percent. The primary completion rate has come a long way, but at 65 percent, Senegal is still below the average among Sub-Saharan African countries (70 percent). Between 2005 and 2011, major improvements were made in reducing primary repetition rate from 13 to 3 percent and increasing the primary to middle school transition rate from 46 to 90 percent. Performance in gender equity is one of the most important accomplishments in recent years: Senegal has achieved and even exceeded set targets in primary and middle schools not only in terms of enrolment but also in terms of primary completion. If the current trend is maintained, gender equity will be achieved in secondary education within three years and only a few years later in higher education.

Despite substantial progress achieved in the past decade, issues and challenges still remain to be addressed, in particular: (i) low levels of learning; (ii) regional disparities in school enrolment and completion; (iii)low overall efficiency of the system; (iv) poor learning conditions that negatively impact the quality of education; (v) outdated programs and learning methods, especially at the middle school level; (vi) inadequate accountability mechanisms and low levels of community participation; (vii) insufficient resource allocation to schools for instructional materials and other quality inputs; and (viii) teacher qualifications and professionalism.

With the support of development partners, Senegal has prepared a new ten-year education sector plan – the Program for Quality, Equity, and Transparency Improvements in Education (*Programme d'Amélioration de la Qualité, de l'équité et de la transparencedansl'éducation*—PAQUET, 2013-2025). Eight priorities have been identified: (i) implement a universal basic education under the universal right to education; (ii) adapt, in partnership with the private sector, vocational and technical training to the needs of economic development; (iii) improve the quality of teaching and learning; (iv) promote the development of the teaching of science, technology and innovation; (v) continue and strengthen the

decentralization of management for more effective governance; (vi) strengthen sector efficiency; (vii) enhance staff productivity; and (viii) progressively develop the use of national languages.

In terms of resource allocation, Senegal has historically demonstrated a strong commitment to education, including primary education. Currently, the authorities allocate about 34.4 percent of the 2011 recurrent budget and 24.6 percent of total domestic resources to education, equating to about 6.2 percent of GDP in 2011 compared to the Sub-Saharan African average of 4.5 percent. An estimated 46 percent of the recurrent budget contribution to education is allocated to primary education.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) serves as the Coordinating Agency. In 2009, the technical and financial partners signed a Memorandum of Understanding which sets their relationship under the principles of the Paris Declaration. Most agree that cooperation works harmoniously, both among themselves and with the Government. The group includes the French Development Agency, USAID, the World Bank, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the African Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO, the Italian Cooperation and the Korean Cooperation.

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

Senegal joined GPE in 2006 after the endorsement of its education sector plan by the development partners' group. A grant agreement of US$ 81.5 million was signed in July 2009 with the objective of contributing to Senegal's goal of attaining universal primary education by 2015 through construction and equipping of classrooms. A first tranche of US$ 35 million was released in 2009. This amount was used to implement a program which built 1,960 classrooms, 254 school administration facilities, and provided water to 374 schools. The second tranche of US$ 46.5 million was used for the construction of an additional 2,400 classrooms, 460 latrines, 266 school administration facilities, and providing water for 421 schools. So far, 80 percent of the resources have been disbursed, and 3,164 classrooms have been completely built while 1,196 are being finalized.

The previous Education For All Fast Track Initiative Catalytic Fund (EFA/FTI CF) grant is on track to meeting its development objective. The Grade 1 intake rate has reached 113 percent while the target at the end of the project was only 110 percent. The primary gross enrolment rate of 93.9 percent is likely to meet the end-of-project target of 96 percent. Currently, more girls than boys are enrolled at the primary level. The primary completion rate rose from 59.1 percent to 66.5 percent for the 2010-11 school year, greater than the average 1 point annual increase over the last decade; if this continues for 2013, the target of 70 percent will likely be exceeded.

This FTI/GPE grant will close on September 30, 2013. In February 2013, 80 percent of the funds had been disbursed, while the remainder has already been committed and will be disbursed by the project closing.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Senegal is applying for a grant in the amount of US$ 46.9 million, which is in line with the indicative allocation provided by the GPE Needs and Performance Framework. The World Bank has been designated as Supervising Entity by the Local Education Group.

Fully aligned with the education sector plan (PAQUET 2013-2025), the program will build on prior achievements and complement the previous grant. After focusing on access through school construction, the focus is now on quality of education. The program is designed as a single project combining multiple funding sources: domestic resources complemented by those from three donors (World Bank, CIDA and GPE).Several activities are also building on partners' interventions. All this gives consistency to the principle of harmonization of aid. The proposed program has three components.

Component 1: Quality improvement of basic education (US$ 56.7 million, consisting of IDA US$ 18 million; GPE US$ 30.7 million; Government US$ 8 million). This component aims at improving the accountability chain to improve the quality of learning in the early grades of primary education through four different interventions. The first will provide block grants to District Education Authorities (IEF) under performance-based contracts between Regional Education Authorities and IEFs to improve the management of the education district and the quality and quantity of services they provide to schools in terms of supervision, support and advice, and teacher training. The second will develop school-based management through the training of school management committees and provide block grants to schools with performance-based contracts between each IEF and reporting schools. Schools will commit to improving teaching and learning and the IEF will provide resources. The third will improve the quality of teaching and learning of science and mathematics in middle schools. The fourth intervention will focus on improving teachers' qualifications by improving pre-service teachers' training.

Component 2: Equity in access to education (US$ 152.5 million, consisting of: GPE US$ 13.5 million; Government US$ 139 million). This component aims to reach out-of-school children and to provide them with a better quality education. This will be done by providing additional assistance to less advantaged areas in terms of new primary schools and by ensuring that all children, notably in selected Koranic schools, receive a quality education based on a well-defined curriculum. This component also aims to ensure that all children have the chance to attend primary and middle school levels in decent conditions by financing a public-private partnership approach for the replacement of all schools currently under shelters (this sub-component will be 100 percent financed by the state's contribution).

Component 3: Project management and capacity building (US$ 8.7 million, consisting of: IDA US$ 2 million; GPE US$ 2.7 million; Government US$ 1 million; CIDA US$ 3 million). This component will support sub-sector-wide initiatives directed towards improving the overall governance and management of the education sector as well as project management. The program will finance operating costs, equipment, training, and short term consultancies to strengthen the governance and monitoring of the education system.

	Program Component	**IDA (US$ Million)**	**GPE**		**Gov. (US$ Million)**	**CIDA (US$ Million)**	**Total Amount (US$ Million)**
			GPE (US$ Million)	**GPE Percent of Total (%)**			
1	Quality improvement in early grades of basic education	**18.0**	**30.7**	**65.5**	**8.0**		**56.7**
	1.1: Performance-based contracts IA/IEF	8.5	2.0				10.5
	1.2: School-based management	2.0	24.7				26.7
	1.3: Sciences and math at middle schools levels	7.4			4.0		11.4
	1.4: Improving pre-service teachers qualification	0.1	4.0		4.0		8.1
2	Equity in access		**13.5**	**28.8**	**139.0**		**152.5**

	2.1: Construction and rehabilitation of schools		10.0		135.0		145.0
	2.2: Grants for results to selected Koranic schools		3.5		4.0		7.5
3	Project management and capacity building	**2.0**	**2.7**	**5.7**	**1.0**	**3.0**	**8.7**
	TOTAL	***20.0***	***46.9***	**100.0**	***148.0***	***3.0***	***217.9***

*Other Agency fees not included in the total grant requested: **1.75 percent of the GPE grant.**

** Note that the standard Supervising Entity fee of US$ 400,000 is not included in the total grant requested.

The Grant will be financed under a Specific Investment Loan instrument (or project modality). It has been considered the most aligned modality available in the country in terms of using country systems while minimizing fiduciary risks. It will be coordinated and implemented by staff from the Ministry of Education at central and local levels, including financial management and reporting. However, considering the structural inefficiencies of government budget management and the lack of flexibility of the budget structure to send money to schools, the resources will be allocated in commercial bank accounts at the national and local levels. Parallel initiatives to improve the national financial management system will probably lead to a full education sector use of country's public financial management system by 2015. At that time, the project would be restructured to use the Government Treasury for financial management. Procurement for the proposed program will be carried out in accordance with the World Bank's procurement guidelines.

Bilateral and multilateral donors have worked over the past 12 years in partnership with the Government to support the education sector plan. The Ministry of Education and its partners will continue holding monthly meetings to monitor implementation progress of the PAQUET. The following donors are active in areas where the program will focus its efforts: (i) USAID is providing technical assistance to education structures (regional and district) to prepare a comprehensive education quality improvement plan focusing on primary education; (ii) JICA is providing support to the Government to develop a school-based management system with the involvement of local communities; it will continue to provide technical assistance for this aspect of the program; and (iii) AFD is supporting the sector by financing the construction of middle schools and school principal training in areas in and around Dakar.

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS SUMMARY

QAR Phase I found the process used to develop the program to be transparent and collaborative. The proposed program was appropriately linked to the Education and Training General Policy Letter[13] and inclusive of GPE's strategic priorities. The report finally raised the issue of the implementation modality since the project modality had been selected even though conditions would seem to be sufficient for the use of a more aligned modality (alignment on national objectives, good harmonization of donor activities, extensive use of national staff and structures for implementation).

QAR Phase II concluded that the program document demonstrates a real systemic ambition, focusing on the need to move from an input-based system (e.g. books, classes, desks, blackboards) to a results-oriented management system which will improve learning outcomes, school performance and equity.

[13] The education sector plan was completed and approved in February 2013; the program was prepared on the basis of this Letter.

Main recommendations for improvement from the QAR Phase II report included the following:

1. Implementation modalities could be better informed. The Program Document could in particular include a better description of the procedures to be used, particularly for procurement and financial management at national and local levels. More broadly, the program document should further highlight issues related to the alignment of implementation arrangements on national systems.

2. The contribution of different partners to different components and sub-components could be described in more detail.

3. The various components of the program would benefit from being developed and clearly explained. The Program Document could make a better use of studies and analyses that have contributed to the diagnosis of the education system, and elaborate more on lessons learned through the implementation of the Ten-Year Program for Education and Training (PDEF 2000-2011), previous programs supervised by the World Bank, and projects of various other partners. If the program is ambitious, it does not always demonstrate how its ambitions may be carried out in a relatively limited period of time.

4. Component 1 on improving quality through the introduction of performance-based contracts could be clarified by adding: (i) lessons learned from existing experiences in Senegal; (ii) operational elements; and (iii) safeguards (particularly financial) to achieve results.

Working with the Local Education Group, the Supervising Entity prepared a memo providing details on how the recommendations were taken into account in the final documentation. Following is a summary of how the QAR Phase II recommendations were addressed:

1. Annex 3 of the Program Document has been completed and describes in detail implementation arrangements. Regarding alignment and harmonization, the response states that: (a) all activities are coordinated and executed by national structures at both central and local levels, without a specific implementation unit; (b) the program integrates and harmonizes three sources of funding; (c) the program is consistent with other partners' interventions (CIDA, USAID and JICA); (d) a single manual of procedures is used by all partners; (e) at the regional level, all partners will use the same bank account to fund operations in the field; and (f) all accounts are managed by Government structures and administrative officers.

2. Annex 8 has been created to meet the contributions demanded by the different partners. Annex 9 has been created to explain how the public-private partnership will be implemented.

3. The Document has been strengthened in several sections to clarify lessons learned, analyses and experiments used in the design of the program. The draft version of the performance-based contracts' manual of procedures has been attached to the request.

4. Senegal experienced results-based management at the central level and between the *Inspections d'Académie* and the Ministry of Education in 2010, 2011, and 2012. The World Bank supports results-based management projects in higher education by funding performance contracts between the Government and universities.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program has been developed in a transparent and collaborative manner, that the application and supporting documents are internally consistent and complete, and that the application package is ready for assessment by the FAC.

The Government of Senegal considers education as a priority to which it allocates a consistent share of its domestic resources. Over the years, the Government and its development partners have developed a strong working relationship with a robust and transparent collaborative framework, largely including

civil society.

The previous FTI/GPE grant was satisfactorily implemented and led to improvements in the education system. The proposed program incorporates the experiences gained by the World Bank and other partners, especially those of JICA, CIDA and USAID, in terms of policy reforms and alignment of the country's education plan.

The program has been designed and developed based on a solid diagnosis of the education system. It is ambitious in its very principle: empowering all stakeholders in the education system, at both the central and the local levels, to develop a culture of results. Part of this approach is based on pilots tested by JICA in two districts between 2010 and 2012 to develop and implement a school-based management system with the involvement of the local communities. Short duration and geographical extension of the experiment may not provide sufficient guarantees that results can be obtained countrywide over the next three years. Similarly, the absence of pilots on the types of performance-based contracts envisaged between different decentralized levels (IAs and IEFS) leads to an identical conclusion. The implementation of the first component will thus have to be closely monitored and subject to great attention. It can only succeed if there is strong political will (which there is) and the commitment of all partners.

One of the strengths of the proposed program is the joint funding by three partners of a global set of interventions where the main investor is the Senegalese Government. Proposed activities are based on both clear policies exposed in the education sector plan and technical expertise and inputs from various partners.

SOMALILAND
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 4.19 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Since the outbreak of the Somali Civil War in 1991, Somalia has suffered from years of prolonged conflict, piracy, and inability to deal with cyclical famine. Continued conflict also has led to the formation of distinct regions with separate governing bodies: the self-declared Republic of Somaliland, the semi-autonomous state of Puntland, and South and Central Somalia (including the capital Mogadishu and the Galmudug State). Currently, Somalia is undergoing a political transition which brings new optimism and expectations.

Somaliland is situated in the north-west of Somalia. Since its unilateral declaration of independence in 1991, it has remained stable with functioning institutions and a peaceful transfer of power through democratic elections in 2010. The civil war had a devastating impact on the economy, the physical infrastructure, and the lives of Somaliland's population. With the exception of the border conflict with Puntland over the disputed regions of Sool and Sanaag, most of Somaliland is now relatively stable and peaceful. The government of Somaliland has shown a willingness to strengthen its internal financial systems through introducing robust and transparent Public Financial Management systems.

Many of Somaliland's 2.3 million inhabitants are nomadic pastoralists. Crop production complements the dominant economic activity of livestock production. Additionally, a significant segment of the population along the coast relies on fishing as a livelihood. The major causes of continued food insecurity in Somaliland are recurring droughts, prolonged dry seasons and failed rains. Other risks to human development include inflation, chronic water shortages and environmental degradation. A large number of the population relies on remittances in the Somali Diaspora which make up an estimated 25 percent of household income. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita is estimated at about US$ 250 to US$ 350, although it remains extremely difficult to accurately appraise the GDP of Somaliland. Somalia is not yet included in the Human Development Index.

EDUCATION SECTOR

In July 2012, the (then Transitional) Federal Government of Somalia officially joined the GPE Partnership as a federal state. Somalia's education sector is divided into three main administrations, the Ministries of Education of Somaliland (MoE Somaliland), Puntland (MoE Puntland), and the Central South Zone (CSZ), where each ministry functions independently with its own unique education agenda.[14]

Education is central to strengthening and contributing to Somaliland's National Development Plan 2012-2016. Its objectives are relevant to the education sector and are also related to the prevention of conflict and promotion of social cohesion; the strengthening of Somaliland's economic leverages; the acceleration of human resource development; and socio-economic progress. The ESSP can be considered a transitional education sector plan that serves as the guiding document for the education sector in Somaliland. The highest priority of the ESSP 2012-16 is the delivery of good-quality primary education to as many children as possible. This involves the supply of a sufficient number of classrooms and properly-maintained school facilities including water and sanitation, a sufficient number of competent and well-motivated teachers, effective supervision, appropriate learning materials, and provision of food

[14] The South and Central Zone of Somalia is currently in the process of finalizing its ESSP and has the intention to come forward with a request to GPE during the second round of 2013.

to the most disadvantaged children.

In 2011, Somaliland had 965 schools. The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) stood at 44 percent, with 50 percent of boys and 38 percent girls enrolled in school. Only 47 percent of students enrolled in Grade 1 in 2006 were enrolled in Grade 6 in 2011. Of the teachers in Somaliland, 51 percent have some form of academic qualification but only 48 percent of these are certified to teach. Female teachers constitute only 14 percent of the qualified cohort and 13 percent of the certified teachers. The quality of teaching is very weak which is reflected in students' learning outcomes. The 2011 Monitoring of Learning Achievements (MLA) results, particularly on numeracy, were very poor, revealing that half of the children in Grade 4 were innumerate.

Limited national budget allocation for the sector is hindering the Ministry of Education and Higher education (MOEHE) to deliver interventions based on the priorities outlined in the ESSP. Education expenditure in 2011 was 6.7 percent. Though the government pledge for 2012 was 12 percent, actual education expenditure remained at 7.2 percent. The pledge for 2013 is 13 percent. An increased budget allocation is needed to help support the realization of education targets; however a huge gap remains to meeting all the sector needs due to the low resource base.

Since February 2013, the EU has been acting as Coordinating Agency for the Local Education Group in Somaliland. The Local Education Group has established an Education Sector Committee (ESC) which is chaired by the MoE. The Committee is comprised of implementing partners, including some civil society organizations and national and international NGOs (Save the Children UK, Care, CfBT Education Trust, African Education Trust (AET), Islamic Relief, Diakonia, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Norwegian Refugee Council); multilaterals (UNICEF, UNESCO and WFP); and donors who have a vested interest in the Education Sector (EU, DFID, USAID). Due to on-going security constraints, some development partners have travel restriction in place for Somalia, including Somaliland. To cater for this, a regular ESC meeting continues to be held in Nairobi. Due to the GPE's emphasis on local involvement, the process of developing the GPE application has built a stronger bond among the members of the ESC, MOEHE, the Managing Entity (ME) and the Coordinating Agency (CA). Further, the ESC in Hargeisa, Somaliland, has increased its functionality for making decisions on key issues for the education sector in Somaliland. The coordination between Nairobi and Hargeisa improved after the appointment of Nairobi ESC Coordinator (Somali Diaspora) to be based in the field, resulting in strengthened authority over the Hargeisa ESC.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Somaliland is applying for a program implementation grant in the amount of US$ 4.19 million, which is in line with the indicative allocation. The total indicative allocation for Somalia is US$ 14.5 million. The GPE's Needs and Performance Framework was applied to divide the Somalia indicative allocation (US$ 8.22 million to South Central Zone, US$ 4.19 million to Somaliland, and US$ 2.1 million to Puntland).

This is the first time Somaliland is requesting GPE financial support. The submitted application is the result of a consultative process between UNICEF (as ME) and the ESC. The main reasons for the use of a Managing Entity in Somaliland context are: (i) weak national systems, financial volatility of government finance and resulting high fiduciary risk; and (ii) fragility.

The first and largest component of the proposed program focuses on strengthening teacher management systems through the payment of salaries of 300 new teachers (150 females per year and incentive payments for 900 head teachers and 13 regional education officers. This will aim to: (i) improve predictability of teacher salary payments with sustainable outcomes; (ii) strengthen school management through professionally motivated Head Teachers; and (iii) improve regional management and delivery of education services through professionally motivated Regional Education Officers (REOs). The second component focuses on the implementation of the Quality Assurance Framework by training workshops

and increased supervisory visits to schools. Under the third component, two teacher training institutions will be built and the design, development, and implementation of new teacher training programs supported. The fourth component aims to encourage female teachers to take up leadership positions in schools. The management of the program includes the recruitment of additional experts to monitor and to provide technical support to the Government of Somaliland and particularly to the Ministry of Education.

The proposed interventions are embedded in the broader Education Sector Strategy Plan and will build upon the experiences of some of the partners working in the field. Other external funding for the Education Sector is mainly channeled through international non-governmental organizations (INGOs). The European Union, DFID, USAID and other the UN agencies, along with supporters from the Somali Diaspora, provide the bulk of the development funding. For teacher salaries, funding is mainly provided by communities and parents, and primarily in the form of school fees in addition to incentive payments from INGOs, local non-governmental organizations (LNGOs), and/or UN agencies.

	Program Component	**Amount (US$)**	**% of total**
1	**Salaries and Incentive Payments**	**1,918,800**	**45.8%**
1.1	Incentive payments for 900 Head Teachers	792,000	18.9%
1.2	Incentive payments for 123 REOs	46,800	1.1%
1.3	Salary Payments for 300 new Teachers	1,080,000	25.8%
2	**Quality Assurance and Supervision**	**439,580**	**10.5%**
3	**Teacher Training Systems**	**732,707**	**17.5%**
3.1	National Teacher Training Institutions	500,000	12.0%
3.2	Teacher Training Framework	55,000	1.3%
3.3	Teacher Profile database	177,707	4.2%
4.	**Gender Equity in School Management**	**160,500**	**3.8%**
3	**Program Management**	**389,437**	**9.3%**
3.1	Human Resources	318,045	7.6%
3.2	Monitoring and Evaluation	71,392	1.7%
4	**UNICEF Program Support Cost**	**546,154**	**13.0%**
	TOTAL	*4,187,178* **4,190,000**	100%

*Other Agency fees not included in the total grant requested: 7% of total budget (total budget minus the UNICEF Program Support Cost): US$ **274,018.**

** Note that the standard Supervising Entity fee of US$ 100,000 per year is not applicable in this case.

*** Note that the % of the total is different in the Application Form where the UNICEF Program Support Cost has not been included in the calculation of % of total.

The QAR Phase I report concluded that: (i) considerable progress has been made over the past number of months, notably regarding the development of the education sector strategy plan for Somaliland; (ii) the process of developing the education sector strategy plans has been consultative and participatory with the organization of National Education Consultation Conferences; it has been recommended to ensure that both the Education Sector Committee in Somaliland as well as those based in Nairobi would be involved during all steps of the development of the Program Document for the GPE funding; (iii) the proposed program outline was well-linked to the ESSP; (iv) the link between proposed activities and GPE strategic directions was clear; and (v) with respect to Aid Effectiveness, the chosen modality appropriately reflects the conditions of Somaliland's fragile context and the experience of the partners in the country.

On the basis of the conclusions and recommendations of the QAR Phase I, QAR Phase II recommendations were related to: (i) strengthen the Implementation Plan of the Program Document and the importance of an implementation strategy of the ESSP which includes the budget of the Somaliland Government and the intervention of all different stakeholders; (ii) assure and clarify the sustainability and sector coherence; (iii) reassess the costing of the program; (iv) include a more comprehensive results framework, including quantitative and qualitative indicators; (v) reassess the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of some of the activities; (vi) include a more developed overview of the roles and interventions of other partners working in the sector, and show how the proposed program fits into the sector and will be coordinated with other activities; and (vii) give additional justifications on the human resources and management costs of the program.

In response, the following actions and measures were taken related to the key recommendations from QAR phases I and II:

(i) The final Program document clarifies how the implementation of all activities will be carried out by MOEHE using their own established systems including financial systems for teacher salary payments, contract, and procurement systems. The Implementation Plan of the Program Document has been revised and integrated as annex 1 of the Program Document. The ESSP has a detailed costing but a comprehensive implementation plan has not yet been finalized.

(ii) Under each of the components, a section on sustainability issues has been added. This section aims to clarify the MoE's sustainability plans for maintaining the gains made during the program after 2016. In the Foreword of the Program Document the Minister of Education confirmed government commitment to ensuring that all aspects of the program will be sustained after 2016.

(iii) A revised budget with a detailed breakdown of the costs is provided in the Program Document.

(iv) A more comprehensive results framework has been included in the Program Document, and quantitative and qualitative indicators on both outputs and outcomes have been formulated. The framework now includes a certain level of measurement of crucial success factors of different interventions, including the presence of teachers in the classroom and the possible impact of financed school inspection visits.

(v) The feasibility of several of the proposed interventions has been reassessed. The capacity of local accountability mechanisms, such as the Community Education Committees (CEC), will be strengthened to monitor whether or not teachers are paid in a timely manner and whether teacher absenteeism is reduced through monitoring and advocacy. Several other donor-funded education programs focus on strengthening CEC capacity to manage education at school level.

(vi) The roles and interventions of other partners working in the sector have been clarified by adding a summary of the major education sector partners and their programs, together with suggested program linkages and complementarity.

(vii) UNICEF Management costs are based on standard direct support costs. Operating effectively in a conflict affected state like Somaliland is very expensive; high level security responses and employing alternative monitoring mechanisms are just two examples of costs that need to be covered. In addition, weak management systems require a strong element of capacity building which will be supported on a day-to-day basis.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program has been developed in a transparent and collaborative manner, that the application and supporting documents are internally consistent and complete, and that the application package is ready for assessment by the FAC.

The current political context of Somaliland offers opportunities to improve the education sector. There is a real opportunity to use the GPE process and funding as a catalyst for a more coordinated, harmonized, and focused effort to support the education sector. Considerable progress has been made over the past number of months, notably regarding the development of an education sector strategy plan. The development of the GPE grant application package has already strengthened the coordination of the sector and the LEG through the preparation of the application.

The actual implementation plan of the ESSP might be further elaborated and annual action plans prepared. This will ensure a better embedding of program implementation in the broader execution of the ESSP. The program attempts to build capacity and provide ownership to the government. We anticipate that during the coming period the LEG will begin working on a full Education Sector Plan for the post 2016 period.

Sustainability of progress will depend strongly upon the willingness and capacity of the Somaliland Government to allocate more funds to the education sector. The increase over past years is encouraging, but it will be important to monitor the commitment of the Somaliland government. To ensure that the program will achieve its objectives and that GPE resources will indeed be additional, it is important that Somaliland provide feedback during implementation to the GPE Board of Directors on progress towards fulfilling commitments made by the Government and other partners.

Implementation of any education program in the Somaliland context will be complex due to the extreme conditions, volatile financial context, and fragile environment. However, the Managing Entity modality should give a reasonable probability of successful implementation in a context where there is low implementation capacity in government systems. Multi-year funding and a level of confidence in the management systems of the Ministry means that the GPE funding will contribute in moving away from the fragmented project-based approach that has hampered sustainable development in the education sector in Somaliland.

TAJIKISTAN
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 16.2 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Tajikistan is a small, low-income and landlocked country in Central Asia with a population of 7.6 million and a gross national income (GNI) per capita of US$ 800. A former Republic of the Soviet Union, it achieved independence in 1991 and underwent a period of civil unrest and economic contraction until peace accords were signed in 1997. Since then the country's political regime has been stable, the economy has grown steadily and setbacks in education have been partially reversed. Gross domestic product (GDP) grew on average by 7.9 percent annually during 2000-10, and growth in 2011 was 7.4 percent. Headcount poverty figures declined from 72 percent in 2003 to 54 percent in 2007. Nonetheless, the country remains among the poorest in the region. Tajikistan is ranked 125 in the UNDP's 2013 Human Development Index.

The population is young and growing: 37 percent is under the age of 14. The average annual population growth over the past five years was 2 percent. The number of jobs available in the economy grew by 0.9 percent on average in recent years, far short of the number needed to create full employment and provide opportunities for graduates entering the economy. Based on these facts and data, the development of the education sector has been identified as a priority for social policy in Tajikistan.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Tajikistan joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in 2005 after the Ministry of Education (MOE) published its National Strategy for Educational Development (NSED). The new National Strategy for Education Development (NSED) up to 2020 was approved by the Government in July 2012 and endorsed by the Development Partners' Group in August 2012. Its main goal is to create the conditions to ensure universal access to relevant and quality education. There are three main priorities: (i) to modernize the curricula; (ii) to re-organize the education system; and (iii) to ensure equal access to quality education. The NSED identifies six implementation mechanisms to achieve its aims: the development of a material and technical base; the development and introduction of new educational technologies; the strengthening of staff capacities; the modernization of the management system; the use of new financing mechanisms; and the promotion of social partnerships in education.

Basic education is mandatory (Grade 1-9). Enrolment and completion of the primary cycle (Grade 1-4) are near universal, with gender parity. The enrolment rate in the last year of lower secondary (Grade 9) is more than 90 percent. However, the grade 9 graduation rate for girls is only 88 percent. Enrolment in upper secondary (Grade 10-11) is lower.

The effectiveness of the education system requires further address. A survey conducted by USAID in 2010 Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) found that 30 percent of girls and 31 percent of boys in grade 2 did not meet national standards for reading fluency, rising to 45 percent and 56 percent, respectively, in grade 4. Further, the EGRA concluded that students struggled with inferential questions, indicating low levels of critical thinking and reading comprehension. Many factors contribute to the relatively poor performance of the education system: curriculum issues, inadequacy of teaching and learning materials, deficient learning environments, and insufficient use of the information system for decision-making and strategic planning. Moreover, there is as yet no system for regularly measuring learning achievements in order to gauge education system effectiveness. The Government of Tajikistan established the National Testing Centre (NTC) in 2009, which will only begin to conduct regular assessments of learning in basic

education after 2014.

The Government's commitment to education is reflected in its budget (education expenditure as share of GDP): 3.5 percent in 2008; 4.1 percent in 2009; 4.0 percent in 2010 and 3.9 percent in 2011. In 2011, education comprised 19.9 percent of the state budget. Spending for basic education accounted for 69.2 percent in 2011. However, the levels of financing are inadequate to meet system needs. The funding gap to implement the MOE's medium-term Action Plan (2012-14), which covers all levels of education, is estimated at US$ 131 million (out of a total US$ 512 million). This gap is mainly due to huge needs in infrastructure upgrade and equipment provision.

UNICEF serves as Coordinating Agency and the World Bank as Supervising Entity in Tajikistan. The Development Partners' Group is comprised of the Aga Khan Foundation, the European Union, the German International Cooperation (GIZ), the Open Society Institute, UNICEF, USAID, the World Bank and the World Food Programme. The Local Education Group, which includes civil society organizations, meets regularly under the direction of the Minister of Education, to ensure adequate sector coordination in support of the Government's education strategy and the medium-term action plans. The Development Partners' Group plans to incorporate discussion of the program in its regular meetings to monitor progress, identify and resolve bottlenecks, and to ensure that complementary activities supported by the partners are progressing satisfactorily. The education development donor partners also meet regularly as part of the Local Education Donors Group (LEDG), under the direction of the Coordinating Agency.

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

This is Tajikistan's third grant from GPE. The first grant was divided into two tranches (FTI-1 and FTI-2) of US$ 9.2 million each, which were fully executed respectively in 2008 and 2010. The second grant (FTI-3) of US$ 13.5 million became effective in April 2010 and, following an extension, has a closing date scheduled for June 2013, provided all activities have been completed. In February 2013, disbursement reached 78 percent (US$ 10.6 million), with another 18 percent already committed.

Past GPE grants in Tajikistan have had a catalytic effect on the mobilization and improvement in the use of national and international resources. Donor reviews have assessed implementation of previous and existing grants as satisfactory. Together, these grants have supported: improved physical learning environments for 37,000 students; alleviation of furniture shortages affecting around 100,000 students; publication of 1,663,500 textbooks in 27 titles, thus eliminating the shortage of Tajik language textbooks in major subjects; further development and national introduction of per capita financing reforms, a reduction in the wage bill share at school level, transparency in local budgeting processes, and an increase in funds for discretionary use at the school level; establishment of an Education Management Information System (EMIS); and improved management and fiduciary capacities within the MOE.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Tajikistan is applying for a grant in the amount of US$ 16.2 million, which is in line with the indicative allocation provided by the Needs and Performance Framework. The Grant will be financed under a Specific Investment Loan (SIL) instrument (or project modality). It is considered the most aligned modality available in the country in terms of using country systems while minimizing fiduciary risks. The SIL will: i) be implemented by the line ministry (rather than by a Project Implementation Unit or a sub-contractor) whose project management and implementation capacity will be augmented with local technical assistance (including a project coordinator, financial management, disbursement, and procurement specialists); ii) use the country budget planning system for planning expenditures under the grant; iii) use the Treasury system for funds flow and transactions so that the Grant Designated Account will be housed in the Treasury, and all withdrawal/payment applications under the Grant will be signed by the Minister of Education and processed as any other budget funds through the Treasury system. The Grant will not use country procurement, financial management reporting and audit systems

as available assessments of the country's fiduciary environment have concluded that these systems are weak and the risk to public funds is high.

The proposed program has four main components that are fully aligned with the National Strategy for Education Development (NSED). Each component works towards the development of child-friendly schools to ensure that the children of Tajikistan, especially the most marginalized including girls, ethnic minorities, rural children, and children with disabilities, are afforded the opportunity to achieve their education goals for future development and success.

Component One: Increasing Access to Quality Early Childhood Education Programs (US$ 2.55 million; 15.7 percent of total project cost). The objective of this component is to increase access to affordable and quality early childhood education programs. As such, this component will finance: i) an analysis of the pre-school sector; ii) the reinforcement of state kindergartens and early learning centers; and iii) where possible, expansion of the latter.

Component Two: Enhancing Quality of Education (US$ 3.25 million; 20.1 percent of total project cost). The objective of this component is to improve the quality of education in the general education program. There are three sub-components which build upon FTI-3 components and are in line with NSED 2020 goals and objectives to improve the quality of education at the primary and secondary levels.

Component Three: Improving child-friendly learning environments (US$ 8 million; 49.4 percent of total project cost). The objective of this component is to increase access to improved child-friendly learning environments in general secondary education[15] through the provision of safe and secure schools. As such, this component will finance improvement and expansion of child-friendly learning environments in approximately 30 schools to the benefit of approximately 7,900 students through construction or rehabilitation of premises and provision of furniture.

Component Four: Strengthening System Capacity (US$ 2.4million; 14.8 percent of total project cost). The objective of this component is to strengthen the capacities at the central and local levels to manage the education system.

	Program Component	**Amount (US$)**	**Percent of total (%)**
A	Increasing Access to Quality Early Childhood Education Programs	2,550,000	15.7
B	Enhancing Quality of Education	3,250,000	20.1
	Upgrading Primary Education Curriculum and Pedagogy	2,150,000	13.3
	Upgrading Secondary Education Curriculum and Pedagogy	350,000	2.2
	Promoting inclusive education	750,000	4.6
C	Improving Child- Friendly Learning Environments	8,000,000	49.4
	Increasing Access to Child Friendly Schools	7,000,000	43.2
	Provision of Supplies to Develop Child-Friendly Schools	1,000,000	6.2

[15] Grade 1-11.

D	Strengthening System Capacity	2,400,000	14.8
	TOTAL	**16,200,000**	**100**

**Other Agency fees not included in the total grant requested: 1.75 percent of total amount.*

*** Note that the standard Supervising Entity fee of US$ 400,000 is not included in the total grant requested.*

Program components are designed to support the education sector plan, NSED 2020, and in particular the medium-term Action Plan (2012-14). This is also true for activities supported by the development partners of the Government in their respective programs of cooperation. Many activities supported by development partners therefore serve a preparatory or complementary role to the program components, particularly for the development of Early Childhood Education (affecting Component 1), the reform of the content of general education programs (affecting Component 2), and the expansion of per capita financing to cover state kindergartens (affecting Component 4.3).

With regard to the quality of education, USAID intends to support the government's effort to improve reading skills in primary education by working on competency-based reading instruction (for Russian and Tajik) in grades 1-4. The amount of the grant is not known yet but should be several million US$. This program focused on quality is complementary with the focus of the GPE grant.

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS SUMMARY

The Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Phase I conclusions were that the process to develop the program was found to be transparent and collaborative, the proposed program was appropriately linked to the Education Plan and inclusive of GPE's strategic priorities, and the proposed modalities were the most aligned ones according to the situation.

With regard to QAR Phase II, in October 2012, the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) did not recommend the proposed Program Document of Tajikistan for approval, and expressed four major concerns:

1. Given the universal access to education in Tajikistan, the fact that this is not the first GPE program implementation grant, and the outstanding challenges remaining in the sector, a more balanced sector-wide analysis should be described in the proposal. This should also provide greater clarity around the overall vision of education in the country and in particular outline how each of the in-country partners supports that vision.

2. There is over-emphasis in the proposal on construction and not enough focus on achieving learning outcomes. A revised application package should contain indicator and targets for learning outcomes.

3. The proposal would benefit from an analysis of the needs of minority populations and addressing issues of exclusion.

4. The proposal should reflect an increased use of national systems, including consideration of a pooled funding mechanism if appropriate.

These recommendations were considered by the Local Education Group and resulted in revisions to the Program Document (see key responses and revisions in Appendix I). A second QAR Phase II report was then sent to the LEG. Its main conclusions were that the revised Program Document: i) addresses early childhood education (ECE) as a key component of the increasing children's readiness for school and thus increasing the effectiveness of the system; ii) draws on existing pool of donors and complementing interventions by other stakeholders; iii) presents fair rationale for infrastructure improvement; iv) builds on satisfactory performance in the previous GPE grant, making use of the resulting pool of trained

personnel from the previous implementation group; and v) includes ethnic-linguistic minorities' needs and addresses issues of exclusion.

The QAR II report highlighted the following main areas for improvement:

1. The case of the need for new/rehabilitated schools should be made stronger by explaining how those schools will improve learning outcomes. The results framework could also be enhanced, in particular in showing how infrastructure improvement will reflect on learning outcomes.

2. There could be better explanation as to how far government financial systems will be used and where World Bank systems will be used to accommodate project needs.

3. The way the new provision to guarantee inclusive education would be implemented could be clarified.

Working with the Local Education Group, the Supervising Entity prepared a memo providing details on how the recommendations were taken into account in the final documentation. The following is a summary of how the QAR Phase II recommendations were addressed:

1. The LEG clearly expects the improved physical environments brought about through civil works to contribute to improved learning outcomes. The case for improving learning environments has been strengthened by drawing on relevant research, and learning outcomes will be measured through a baseline survey, which will capture key education indicators prior to the school construction and rehabilitation.

2. The revised Document now provides a better explanation on how far implementation arrangements are aligned with country systems and on which aspects of financial management World Bank procedures will prevail (procurement and reporting).

3. A new sub-component "Promoting inclusive education" was added to the Program Document. This sub-component will build upon work of the LEG to work towards creating inclusive environments in the mainstream education system.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program has been developed in a transparent and collaborative manner, that the application and supporting documents are internally consistent and complete, and that the application package is ready for assessment by the FAC.

Tajikistan has become stable, recovering from a period of civil unrest and economic contraction during the 1990s. The Government considers education a priority to which it allocates a consistent share of its domestic resources. The program document's inclusion of school construction is understandable in the Tajikistan context given the extreme physical environment that exists in the country, as well as the remaining consequences of the civil war that took place between 1992 and 1997 (with 20 percent of schools destroyed in the country).

Previous GPE grants were fully and satisfactorily implemented. The current grant, which is scheduled to close in June 2013, is also being implemented satisfactorily. The proposed project incorporates lessons learned from previous GPE grants, and the experiences gained by the World Bank and other Development Partners in Tajikistan – especially in terms of synergy between partners, capacity building, civil works, and the use of teaching-learning materials. The activities either scale up or continue successful interventions from previous grants and operations supported by Development Partners. Lessons learned from previous GPE and donor-supported programs have led to a simple program design largely using existing national structures and systems.

Responding to the concerns of the FAC, revisions have been made to the Program Document that was presented in October 2012. The Supervising Entity, in close collaboration with the Local Education

Group, has modified components, including the reallocation of funding, and/or more detailed explanations of intentions.

Tajikistan's grant application package was submitted by UNICEF on behalf of the Government and its development partners. Through this analysis, the Secretariat confirms that the Program Document: (a) includes a set of well-coordinated activities which respond to the needs of the country's education system; (b) is aligned with the vision of the education sector plan and the relevant GPE strategic priorities; and (c) respects the principles of aid harmonization and effectiveness by using the most aligned modality feasible in the country context characterized by substantial fiduciary risk.

Appendix I: Recommendations and Revisions

Recommendations made by FAC	Responses/Revisions
Given the universal access to education in Tajikistan, the fact that this is not the first GPE program implementation grant, and the outstanding challenges remaining in the sector, a more balanced sector-wide analysis should be described in the proposal. This should also provide greater clarity around the overall vision of education in the country and in particular outline how each of the in-country partners supports that vision.	The revised proposal has addressed the first point by providing a more robust description of the education sector. The revised document also describes how the development partners work collaboratively to support the Government in implementing the NSED through various operations.
There is over-emphasis in the proposal on construction and not enough focus on achieving learning outcomes. A revised application package should contain indicator and targets for learning outcomes.	The construction component has been adjusted from US$ 11 million to $US 8 million; the revised document targets construction and/or rehabilitation in schools serving rural and poor areas, and ethnic minorities. A strong case has been made to link civil works to learning outcomes. Learning outcomes will be measured through a baseline survey which will capture key education indicators prior to the school construction and rehabilitation.
The proposal would benefit from an analysis of the needs of minority populations and addressing issues of exclusion.	The revised document describes how previous GPE-financed projects targeted a large share of resources to schools serving ethnic-linguistic minorities. A new sub-component "Promoting inclusive education" was added to the revised program.
The proposal should reflect an increased use of national systems, including consideration of a pooled funding mechanism if appropriate.	The program is not using any pooled funding modalities, but a better case has been provided to explain this choice. The proposed program will be financed under a Specific Investment Loan instrument, currently considered the most aligned modality available in the country in terms of using country systems while minimizing fiduciary risks. It will use the country budget planning system and the Treasury system for funds flow and transactions.

YEMEN
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 82.6 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

The Republic of Yemen, one of the poorest countries in the Middle East, faces a wide range of development challenges. With a rapidly growing population (3 percent), the population is expected to increase from 24.8 million to 47 million in 2040. The country remains overwhelmingly rural, with 76 percent of the population living in rural areas where the incidence of poverty is particularly high. In 2011, the 6-14 age group was estimated at 5.4 million. The demographic trend is putting significant strain on social services in a politically and economically complex environment. The country has an estimated GDP per capita of US$ 1,361 and is ranked 160th in the 2013 UNDP Human Development Index.

Yemen experienced intense and far-reaching country unrest from February through November 2011. During this crisis, the economy contracted by 10.5 percent and the population living below the poverty line increased from 42.4 percent in 2009 to 54.5 in 2011. The impact of the recent security, political and economic crisis is significant in all key development domains. As a fragile state, Yemen has enormous needs to rebuild its social and economic base rapidly and restore macroeconomic stability.

The country is embarking on a process of national dialogue and political transition, following the Transition Agreement signed in November 2011. A Government of National Unity was formed and a new President sworn in 2012, mandated, among others, to undertake constitutional reforms, prepare for the next general election in 2014, and work to stabilize the country's complex and difficult security and economic situation. In addition to having to respond to a pressing social demand for better governance, equity, employment, and a more open society, the Government is confronted with a long-standing regional conflict in the north, a separatist movement in the south, and the emergence of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Despite these serious security challenges, there are opportunities to start addressing the underlying factors of instability and social strife comprising high levels of unemployment and informality, state capture of the economy and the tribal patronage system.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Yemen became one of the first countries to join the GPE in 2002 with the endorsement of the National Basic Education Development Strategy (NBEDS) The NBEDS (2003-2015) aims to increase enrolment in basic education, particularly for girls and in rural areas, to reach 95 percent of the 6–14 year olds in Yemen by 2015. Over the past decade Yemen has made remarkable strides in expanding access to basic education. GER increased from 62 percent in 1999 to 86 percent in 2012. Girls' enrolment has increased substantially between 1999 and 2012, from 42 percent to 77 percent in basic education. However, only half of those who enter Grade 1 reach the end of the basic education phase (Grade 9). The country is unlikely to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for education in 2015 since many children never enroll, many others drop out early, and the population of school-age children is rapidly increasing. In 2010 there were still 857,000 out-of-school children of primary school age and another 718,000 of lower secondary school age. Girls' access to education has improved dramatically, but the country needs to increase efforts to close the gender gap: The Gender Parity Index (GPI) varies from 0.97 in Sana'a, the capital, to 0.59 in the Saada governorate. The quality of learning and the learning outcomes remain a challenge. In a study of learning achievements carried out in 2012, 43 percent of pupils in grade 2 and 25 percent of pupils in grade 3 could not read a single word of grade-appropriate text.

The Ministry of Education developed a Medium Term Results Framework (MTRF) to translate the objectives of the NBEDS into an operational education sector plan and constitute the framework for the integration of Development Partners (DPs) support to the education sector. In November 2012, the MTRF was updated for the period 2013-2015 and was endorsed by the Local Education Group in February 2013. The new version: (i) updates the main targets in terms of enrolment, gender parity and completion rates; (ii) provides a greater emphasis on quality and learning outcomes; and (iii) reflects the impact of the 2011 crisis and conflicts. Special attention has been given to assess and address the impact of the 2011 crisis in Yemen, which impacted the education sector included damage to and occupation of school buildings, inaccessibility of some schools due to insecurity, increased absenteeism of teachers and administrative staff and incomplete work on the curriculum update during the 2010/11 school year. Continued insecurity remains in some parts of the country.

Government spending on education has overall been on an increasing trend until 2012. In 2011, the share of education expenditure reached 19 percent of all government spending. There was a slight decline in this trend following the political crisis (towards 16 percent in 2012), but education in 2013 still accounts for the third largest share of public spending after defense and security. The Government has indicated that it plans to increase its spending on education in 2013 and 2014 (to 17 percent from the total public budget).

The MTRF financial gap (2013 – 2015) for basic education, pre-school education and adult literacy is estimated at US$ 409.4 million. The GPE proposed amount would cover 20 percent of the financing gap needed to support full implementation of the MTRF activities concerning these three sub-sectors. In an attachment to the MTRF endorsement letter, the Minister of Education commits to addressing the financing gap. In addition to additional resource mobilization efforts, the ministry will set up a task team to prioritize activities within the MTRF in the event that not sufficient additional resources can be mobilized.

Yemen has a well-functioning Local Education Group (LEG) which meets regularly, including international NGOs. Main partners are UNICEF, World Bank, UNESCO, WFP, Germany, The Netherlands, USAID, DFID, Care International, Save the Children, CHF International and the Social Fund for Development. However, due to security issues and the withdrawal of several partners, the physical presence of partners in Sana'a has been a challenge. Also the number of development partner (education) experts has declined over recent years. GIZ became the LEG's GPE Coordinating Agency (CA) in October 2012, taking over from UNICEF.

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

Yemen was selected in the first group of 10 countries to receive financing from the EFA FTI Catalytic Fund in 2002. Since then, the World Bank served as Supervising Entity (SE) for three consecutive Grants for a total amount of US$ 40 million.

The support contributed to increased access of children, especially girls, to primary education in seven governorates, through the construction of new primary classrooms and rehabilitation of existing classrooms and school infrastructure in the targeted districts. Support to improve the enrolment and retention of primary school students has been given through training and remuneration for approximately 1,500 female contract teachers, and providing 900,000 school materials kits to primary school students. The MoE and the PAU have acquired extensive experience in the implementation and supervision of the previous phase of the program and the management of the GPE funds.

Despite the 2011 crisis in Yemen, the implementation of the program activities has been progressing well. The overall implementation progress rating is satisfactory. However, due to the crisis, some activities had been delayed, such as construction, training for rural female teacher program, and school

kits. Thus the closing date has been extended to March 30, 2013.[16]

Some of the key lessons learned from the implementation of the previous grants are related to the importance of supply-side factors such as school infrastructure and availability of teachers in improving access and of demand-side interventions with a focus on the critical role of community participation in ensuring and sustaining student enrolment and attendance. There is also a need to establish a learning assessment system focusing on basic literacy skills, given the low relevance of international tests at this stage for Yemen. Furthermore, it is suggested to retain the existing implementation arrangements and to ensure the arrangement remain simple and well understood by all the implementers.

Various components of the new proposed program are building specifically on pilots and other successful interventions from the previous GPE grants. The program will be expanded to other governorates and will, for example, be building upon the experiences regarding the implementation mechanism for the contracting of rural female teachers (e.g. women eligible to apply should already live in the area and have graduated from secondary school) and the project management arrangements.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Yemen is applying for a grant of US$ 82.6 million, which is in line with the indicative allocation provided by the GPE Needs and Performance Framework. The budget for the Program under national project management procedures is US$ 72.6 million. The remaining US$ 10 million is planned as emergency aid. Due to the security situation, the limited presence of the World Bank on the ground, and the reduced possibilities to work in the whole country, the Ministry selected UNICEF as Supervising Entity (SE) for the new GPE Program Implementation Grant.

The program is based on the 10 Program Priorities included in the updated MTRF. The program targets 13 governorates based on a series of criteria, including low school achievement, regional representation and lack of coverage by other projects and programs.

The main components will be:

I. Improving the Quality of Education, mainly through a stronger focus on reading and numeracy skills;

This component will focus on school-based development providing support to 420 schools and covering both investments and recurrent funding (including school grants); support to curriculum development; training of teachers and governorate inspectors; the evaluation of learning outcomes and assessments; and to support pre-school education. This will be done in coordination with activities of the IDA-supported BEDP 2 project.

II. Promoting Equitable Access to Education

In the targeted governorates, it will focus on improving school physical environment through the construction of 600 new classrooms and the rehabilitation of 420 existing schools; hiring and training of female teachers and distribution of school kits in areas with high girls' dropout rates; promote access to out-of-school children; and to support adult literacy in updating the National Literacy and Adult Education Strategy and the support of training centers.

III. Strengthening Institutional Capacity

This component is to support national capacity in the management of resources through improving the Education Management and Information System (EMIS) at local levels in the targeted governorates (in complementarity to BEDP 2 activities for EMIS deployment nation-wide); improve quality assurance and school accreditation at the local level and the development of a new Education Strategy for 2016-2025. This component also covers the Project Administration Unit's operating costs, including the hiring

[16] This might be extended once more to August 2013 to get all actions completed.

of additional contract staff. PAU will manage the fiduciary and operational aspects of the GPE Program, in addition to existing project management mandates and the management of BEDP 2.

IV. Support to education in emergency affected areas (Cost US$ 10 million, submitted separately to the main program)

This intervention will be implemented as part of the emergency and early recovery response with UNICEF as Managing Entity (ME). The budget and activities are to be requested separately under the new GPE Accelerated Support in Emergencies and Early Recovery Situations Grant. This component is to start as soon as possible and prior to the other components but has been put on hold pending the finalization of the Financial Procedures Agreement with the ME. This sub-component will contribute to cover the education gap in the emergency-affected areas through improving the conditions of children's schooling. It will support teacher-training and rehabilitation in 142 schools in six conflict-affected governorates, covering 50,000 school age boys and girls, and is based on the CAP assessments.

	Program Component	**Amount (US$)**	**Percent of Total (%)**
1	***Improve Quality of Basic Education***	***23,941,000***	***29.0%***
1.1	School-based Development	11,849,000	
1.2	Curriculum Development	2,319,000	
1.3	Improve performance by teachers, school management and inspectors	8,885,000	
1.4	Support pre-school education	887,000	
2	***Promoting Equitable Access to Quality Basic Education in targeted governorates, especially for girls***	***44,442,000***	***53.8%***
2.1	Improving School Physical Environment	29,614,000	
2.2	Promoting Equitable Access	11,036,000	
2.3	Promote Access to Schools for Out-of School Children	3,244,000	
2.4	Literacy and Adult Education	547,000	
3	***Strengthening Institutional Capacity***	***4,218,000***	***5.1%***
3.1	Education and Management Information System in Selected Governorates	986,000	
3.2	Quality Assurance and School Accreditation at the Local Level	498,000	
3.3	Develop the General Education and Literacy Strategy 2016 – 2025	336,000	
3.4	GPE Project Management	2,398,000	
	Total main GPE Program (under SE modality)	**72,600,000**	
4	***Support education in emergency affected areas (to be***	***10,000,000***	***12.1%***

	implemented through ME modality)		
	TOTAL GPE PROGRAM	**82,600,000**	**100**

*Other Agency fees not included in the total grant requested: 1 percent

** Also Supervising Entity fee of US$ 200,000 per year (subject to justification) is not included in the total grant requested.

General planning, monitoring and evaluation of the activities of the Program will be coordinated by the Technical Office (TO) of MoE, in line with overall management of MTRF. The Project Administration Unit (PAU), attached to MoE, will be in charge of program financial management and acquisitions. The PAU, which also manages World Bank-funded operations and the current GPE grant, will be strengthened through the hiring of additional staff. A sub-unit within PAU will be set up for the GPE-funded Program. A program manual (to be released by 1 July 2013) will assign clear roles and responsibilities, set out effective coordination measures and reinforced financial management.

The planning for the GPE supported program has taken into consideration the scope of other operations and projects supported by development partners. A donor activity mapping exercise was organized and will ensure complementarity with the support from other partners and specifically BEDP 2 (expected to start in May 2013). The implementation arrangements of this Program are mainly based on the existing implementation arrangements used for Phase III of the GPE Grant and other World Bank financed projects, where the MoE's Project Administration Unit (PAU) is responsible for fiduciary management. Furthermore, MoE has established a single Annual Work Plan, which includes the public budget and donor-funded projects. This is progressively becoming the basis for alignment of all education partner interventions.

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS SUMMARY

The QAR Phase I found: (a) the process of the development for the request for the GPE Program Implementation Grant and the updating of the MTRF consultative and participative with the organization of various consultations; (b) the proposed program outline ambitious but well-aligned to the MTRF; (c) the link between proposed activities and GPE strategic directions clear; and (d) with respect to Aid Effectiveness, the chosen modality by using the PAU appropriately reflecting the conditions of Yemen's fragile context and the experience of the other partners in the country. Furthermore, some concerns were expressed on the availability of more financial and procurement expertise to assess fiduciary capacity and assist in designing the program implementation plan. The Minister of Education expressed his interest in making use of the recently developed facility to get accelerated support for emergencies and early recovery interventions in some of the Governorates heavily affected by the crisis. International NGOs are already participating in the LEG, though the participation of local civil society is still a challenge.

The main recommendations of the QAR Phase II report were to: (i) further elaborate the program design aligned with a finalized MTRF and the complementary with interventions of different other development partners; (ii) provide a detailed costing of each component; (iii) provide a clear implementation plan; (iv) provide more specific information on the capacity development efforts at the different levels; (v) improve the Results Framework; (vi) elaborate on potential monitoring and evaluation difficulties; and (vii) further clarification of the roles and responsibilities of the key parties involved with the implementation of the GPE supported Program at national level.

In response, the following actions and measures were taken related to the key recommendations from QAR phases I and II:

i. *The MTRF has been endorsed* and the Program Document for the GPE Grant has elaborated on how each component contributes to achieving the objectives of the 10 priorities of the MTRF and

how each component might be implemented specifically across the 13 governorates and fragile areas. Additional information has been provided on links and complementarity with the support from other development partners. Also more information is given on the interventions of other development partners. There will be a joint monitoring and evaluation process with the LEG, in particular through the joint sector reviews.

ii. A *detailed costing plan has been prepared* which includes unit cost for each activity of each component and sub-component. Breakdown across all the 13 targeted Governorates has also been computed, using needs-based criteria.

iii. The *costing plan also presents information on implementation, the responsible unit and the timeline of implementation*. This plan will be further complemented by the "operational manual" that is under preparation and will be finalized after the final submission and by the Annual Work Plan (AWP) the Government is preparing for 2014.

iv. More specific information on the nature of the *capacity development efforts* at the different levels, including its purposes, target audiences and likelihood of successful implementation, has been provided, but might be developed to ensure the linkages between overall capacity for implementing the GPE Program at the national level and capacity development at the decentralized levels.

v. The *Results Framework has been revised* and indicators and targets are computed for the 13 Governorates targeted by the GPE Financing. This also clarifies some differences between GPE program baseline and targets and those of the MTRF (national values) of the WB funded BEDP 2 project. The Results Framework now includes process-related outcomes and a log frame that presents the causal chains between inputs, outputs, process-related outcomes and outcomes for each component and sub-component.

vi. *Additional information concerning M&E has been added* in the program document. Focus has been placed on further consolidating the single coordinated planning and reporting framework set out by MoE. A fully operational plan will be elaborated by the end of the year, in line with MoF's MTEF and predictable DP contributions. The program will support MTRF-wide reporting, in line with BEDP II, by aligning its accounting software with the national Annual Work Plan (AWP). The ability of the M&E system to pull in reliable data for those governorates where there is some instability/access issues might remain a challenge.

vii. Further clarifications are provided in the Program Document on Implementation Arrangements, including on the PAU structure and the key role of the SE to ensure coordination and synchronization between the PAU GPE sub-unit, the other units in the PAU and well as the other MoE Departments.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program has been developed in a transparent and collaborative manner, that the application and supporting documents are internally consistent and complete, and that the application package is ready for assessment by the FAC.

The proposed program in support of the implementation of Yemen's Education Sector Plan represents a continuation of previous phases of funding under the Fast-Track Initiative (FTI). The new program aims to mitigate major challenges faced in the sector by leveraging good practices in education programs and by covering some of the resource gaps. It has been developed in consideration of the updated MTRF Framework 2013-2015 and includes specific attention to the 2011 crisis situation and its aftermath in Yemen which, if left unresolved, could worsen future prospects for education and society in Yemen. The proposed program focuses on remote governorates and areas of fragility that are of national and international importance. The program remains ambitious, given both the three-year timeframe and the

scope of interventions across the 10 MTRF programs.

The program would support educational achievements in the short, medium and long term since they focus both on immediate interventions that would assist (marginalized) children, teachers and improvement projects in a large number of schools, as well as capacity development that would strengthen the education system and some of its structures at the national and local levels.

Building sufficient capacity, both at the national level (within the Ministry of Education and the PAU) and regional level (District Officers and School Committees), but also within the LEG and with the Supervising Entity will be of vital importance to ensure a good implementation of the program.

Another challenge remains the complementarity with the interventions of other partners, mainly with the WB funded BEDP II. The challenge will be to ensure that the additional funds from the new GPE Program Implementation Grant will be coherent with and complementary to this BEDP II program in supporting the implementation of the Governments' MTRF.

ACCELERATED SUPPORT IN EMERGENCIES AND EARLY RECOVERY COMPONENT

In the Program Implementation Grant application, including the Program Document, specific support to education in emergency affected areas (US$ 10 million) has been integrated as part of the second component related to Promoting Equitable Access to Quality Basic Education. This intervention will be implemented with UNICEF as Managing Entity, as opposed to the Supervising Entity modality that will be used for the remaining program activities. This sub-component will contribute to funding the education gap in the emergency-affected areas through improving the conditions of children's schooling. It will support the rehabilitation of 142 schools and the provision of furniture and school supplies in six conflict-affected governorates, covering 50,000 school age boys and girls.

In November 2012, the Minister of Education and the Local Education Group expressed an interest in the possibility of accessing the new GPE Accelerated Support in Emergencies and Early Recovery Situations. However due to the fact that no Financial Procedures Agreement (FPA) with UNICEF (or any other managing entity partner) was in place, the process could not move forward. Instead, the request for emergency funding has been integrated in the overall Program Implementation Grant application. In this way, a link has been established between the overall program and the education in emergencies activities.

At the time of submission of the Program Implementation Grant application, the UNICEF FPA had not been signed and therefore the detailed programming for this subcomponent was not finalized. Annual action plans will have to be finalized after approval of the Grant Application, along with plans for the remaining non-emergency grant activities. The Managing Entity, on behalf of the Local Education Group, has prepared a draft document for the emergency component, to be finalized in the coming weeks.

AGENCY FEES AND SUPERVISION ALLOCATIONS

Agency Fees

The applicable supervision allocation and agency fees for the dual Supervising/Managing Entity role needs clarification and has not yet been adjusted in the current proposed Program Document.

The Proposal itself, under section 5.4 (Partnership Arrangements) makes explicit that a 1% agency fees is requested in addition to the grant. This will be applied to the US$ 72.6 million non-emergency component and will total US$ 726,000.

For the US$ 10 million emergency component, UNICEF as Managing Entity requests a 7% fee (i.e. US$ 700,000).

Supervision Allocation

Given the challenges of the country, the fragile and conflict-affected status and the high security challenges, UNICEF will be providing additional support to be able to play its role as Supervising Entity. UNICEF is requesting US$ 200,000 a year for a supervision allocation, in accordance with the

November 2012 decision of the Board of Directors, which permits increasing the supervision allocation up to US$ 200,000 in fragile states, provided that a costed plan is submitted. UNICEF has provided supplementary information to justify this increase (see attached).

Other Direct Management Costs

There will be no additional direct administrative costs charged to the grant. The Program Management budget line amounting to US$ 2,398,000 in the proposed program will support and strengthen the Ministry of Education and its internal structures, including the project administration unit (PAU), to carry out its fiduciary responsibility.

ZAMBIA
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 35.2 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

With an estimated population of 13.1 million, Zambia has experienced more than a decade of strong economic growth and was recently reclassified as a lower middle-income economy. Its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per-capita was estimated at US$ 1,435 in 2011. Zambia ranks 163 out of 185 countries in the 2013 Human Development Report. An estimated 60 percent of its people live below the national poverty line, especially in rural areas.

Zambia has experienced a series of successful multiparty elections since 1991. The most recent, held in September 2011, further strengthened the country's democratic credentials. The country has defined its development agenda through the Vision 2030 and the Sixth National Development Plan, from which the Education Sector Plan is drawn.

Zambia's long-term development is organized around the theme of broad-based wealth and job creation through citizen participation and technological advancement. Specific development goals include fostering a competitive and outward-oriented economy, significantly reducing hunger and poverty through education, and consolidating the country's middle-income status.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Zambia joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in 2008 as result of the assessment and endorsement of its second Education Sector Plan (the National Implementation Framework or NIF II) for 2008-2010. After the successful implementation of NIF II, Zambia developed the current Education Sector Plan (NIF III), which covers the period 2011-2015 and seeks to improve education quality and learning. Zambia faces many challenges in improving learning, including the high incidence of HIV/AIDS among teachers and about 700,000 learners (i.e. 25 percent) orphaned due to AIDS-related diseases.

With the change of Government in 2011, there has been a policy shift from a system of basic education (grades 1-9) to primary (grades 1-7) and secondary (grades 8-12). This measure was taken to improve the quality of teaching, as many grade 8 and 9 students are currently taught by primary school teachers without sufficient subject knowledge, qualifications or experience.

The basic education system adopted in the early 2000s resulted in significant achievements. By 2011, 15 percent of first graders had attended pre-primary education; primary school intake and gross enrolment rates for boys and girls were 118 percent and 129 percent, respectively; and the overall repetition rate was 5 percent. In spite of progress on access and equity, however, education quality and learning remain poor in rural areas. Between 2010 and 2012, the transition rate to lower secondary school improved modestly from 58 to 62 percent, with the transition rate for girls increasing from 54 to 57 percent.

Improvements in education quality and learning are key objectives for Zambia. Comparisons based on Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Measuring Educational Quality (SACQMEQ) test scores in reading and math show that Zambia's education quality is among the worst in the region. Zambia faces many challenges in improving education quality, due in part to high incidence of HIV/AIDS among both teachers and students and poorly equipped community schools accounting for 20 percent of primary

enrolments. Since 2011, these schools have been receiving government's financial and technical support.

With the main goal of improving education quality and learning, NIF III has thirteen specific objectives covering preschool to higher education. The objectives for basic education are: (i) to expand early childhood education along with school feeding at the preschool and primary levels; (ii) to re-introduce free education for all children in grade 1 through 12, with an expansion the of primary cycle to teach up to grade 7; (iii) to promote equitable access to education and skills training to enhance human capital for economic development; and (iv) to upgrade teacher qualifications to meet minimum standards and review the curriculum to emphasize life skills and labor market needs.

In the past decade, Zambia's annual budget for education has increased steadily from the equivalent of US$ 230 million in 2004 to US$ 1 billion in 2012 (4.6 percent of GDP). Increased government funding and policy decisions to abolish user-fees for primary education have increased the demand for and supply of education services. For the next three years under the GPE program co-financed by United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), the combined amount of US$ 95 million will be critical to ensure full implementation of planned activities. Additional funds totaling US$ 250 million will be provided by other partners, including USAID, Irish Aid, Japan, African Development Bank (AfDB), and UNICEF. Donor partners exiting the education sector include the Netherlands and Denmark.

In spite of these efforts, additional funding will be needed for Zambia to fully implement its education sector plan. The overall funding gap was projected at US$ 238 million for the five-year period 2011-2015 in the reference scenario; and as high as US$ 1 billion under the higher scenario covering the implementation of the full ambitions of the sector plan, including policies for providing free and compulsory education up to grade 12 by 2015. The estimated funding gap for 2013-2015 is US$ 113 million.

Under the Government's leadership, a Local Education Group (LEG) was formed in the early 2000s with representatives from USAID, Irish Aid, Japan, AfDB and UNICEF. Other partners and civil society organizations are represented in the LEG through the Zambia National Education Consortium (ZANEC). The two co-coordinating agencies are UNICEF and Irish Aid.

PERFORMANCE UNDER PERVIOUS GRANTS

Zambia was awarded a grant in 2009 for the amount of US$ 60 million to support the implementation of NIF II. The Netherlands was the Supervising Entity and the modality used was the Education Sector Pooled Fund. Other contributors to the Pooled Fund at that time were Irish Aid, Denmark and USAID.

Zambia acknowledged challenges that culminated in suspension of support for NIF II in 2010, including the second tranche of US$ 30 million from the GPE. Funds were frozen as result of misuse of funds identified in a 2010 Forensic Audit report. GPE Board members were briefed on this matter. Inappropriately procured contracts were cancelled, those overpaid were reimbursed, and officials involved were sanctioned. Many lessons were learned and applied to NIF III, including new procurement and financial management rules and independent audits. In that context, the recently adopted Financial Management Action Plan will become an important tool for reviewing performance against agreed actions and targets.

Moreover, financial audits are planned as part of the closure of NIF II and results are expected by May 2013. The Government has agreed with contributing donors that any ineligible expenditure will be fully reimbursed. This issue has been thoroughly discussed among members of the LEG, as documented by letters submitted as part of this grant application.

Overall, progress was made in many areas under NIF II by end-2011, as summarized in the performance assessment report included in the grant application. For the basic education sub-sector, for example, some specific outputs and results were as follows: (i) enrolments for grade 1 through 9 increased by 10

percent to reach 3.5 million students; (ii) the grade 9 transition rate increased by 4 percentage points to reach 52 percent; (iii) the grade 9 completion rate increased by 15 percentage points to reach 62 percent; (iv) about 5,000 teachers were recruited annually to total 20,000; and (v) some 4,500 classrooms were built in mostly poor and rural areas. In terms of policy reforms, the community schools were recognized legally and many administrative acts were passed for public procurement and financial management, including independent audits.

SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

The requested program implementation grant of US$ 35.2 million is in line with the indicative amount derived from the GPE Needs and Performance Framework (NPF). DFID was selected as the Supervising Entity and the modality chosen is Sector Budget Support (SBS) with a core tranche and a performance-based tranche. The remaining grant will be used to strengthen capacity, monitor program performance and evaluate results.

The overarching program objective is to increase learning achievement for boys and girls. The three main components are summarized as follows:

Component I supports the sector-wide approach through a Sector Budget Support (SBS) grant. It is divided into a core tranche and a performance-based tranche released once specified Disbursement Linked Milestones (DLMs) are achieved. The DLMs are: (i) improved girl's access to quality education through secondary education and equity between boys and girls as well as those who are disabled, disadvantaged or vulnerable; (ii) improved teaching and learning of basic literacy and numeracy skills; and (iii) enhanced government ability to effectively allocate and manage its domestic resources to achieve results.

Component II provides Technical Assistance (TA) for training, strengthened sector management and capacity building to ensure smooth program implementation. The aim is to strengthen the Ministry of Education's capacity for financial management as well as the management of human resources and data at both national and sub-national levels. This TA will be based on requirements as determined by a needs assessment and aligned with the annual planning processes.

Component III supports program supervision, monitoring and evaluation. This will ensure there is adequate and effective supervision of implementation and robust evaluation of key areas of support. It is expected that accurate data will be collected, analyzed, disseminated and used more effectively for planning and budgeting purposes. The main objective is to improve effectiveness and value for money, especially in the critical area of public financial management.

Main Program Components	***Amounts (US$)***	***Percent of Total (%)***
I. Education Sector Budget Support (SBS)	**30,800,000**	**87.5**
I.1 Core Tranche of the SBS	(25,900,000)	(73.6)
I.2 Performance-Based Tranche Linked to DLMs	(4,900,000)	(13.9)
II. TA to strengthen sector management & build capacity	**3,600,000**	**10.2**
III. Program supervision, monitoring and evaluation	**800,000**	**2.3**
Total Program Cost (GPE Grant)	***35,200,000***	***100.0***

Note: DFID's fees not included in the grant amount: (i) Agency fees: N/A (to be confirmed); and standard supervising fees of US$ 400,000 for the duration of the program.

Modalities used for funding education in Zambia are summarized in a new Joint Assistance Strategy (JASZ) signed by active donor partners (see page 15 of the grant application and the full JASZ report). DFID will co-finance the GPE program with an SBS modality. Identified risks are summarized in the grant application and pertain mainly to procurement and financial management issues. The use of the SBS is judged as a medium risk commensurate with the expected results in education quality and learning. Appropriate measures and actions are included in the program for corrective measure, as necessary.

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS SUMMARY

QAR Phase I concluded that: (i) the program concept and identification of activities followed a participatory process; (ii) the program concept was well articulated with the strategic vision of NIF III; and (iii) it responded to the needs of the education system. Moreover, proposed program interventions were consistent with the relevant strategic priorities of the GPE.

The following recommendations were made in the QAR Phase II report:

a) *Present better the broad areas of intervention by level of education, expected amounts and modalities used, as well as commonalities and linkages. Given the use of Sector Budget Support modality for the GPE/DFID grant, funds are not linked to specific activities. Nonetheless, such a presentation would help to assess the level of support versus the expected results, as well as their system of monitoring and evaluation.*

In response, the program documentation was revised to clarify areas of interventions, synergies, commonalities, linkages, donor interventions and instruments used. Moreover, the 2013 annual work plan and budget benefited from this recommendation, with details by activities, sources of funding and modalities.

b) *The Joint Sector Review (JSR) process stalled for a few years due to the poor sector dialogue and issues of procurement and financial management. The JSR should regain its status as the premier instrument for frank dialogue around performance monitoring and results. It was recommended that the terms of reference be revised.*

In response, the JSR process restarted in 2012. It was completely restructured, with clearer objectives, relevant terms of reference, and a predictable calendar. In the future, the JSR will include performance against agreed indicators in the Performance Assessment Framework, including intermediate and final outcomes. It has been agreed that the JSR will be held in June every year, with the aide-memoire disseminated within one month.

c) *With the aim of improving overall education quality and learning, the program design focuses rightly on teachers' recruitment and their professional training. But there are choices to be made between the policy shift (from basic to the traditional primary and secondary education) and the focus on training, qualifications and creating an enabling environment for teachers at the secondary school level. It would help to better explain and clarify options and choices made.*

In response, the revised program document provides more details on the choices made in that context, including changes to various curricula, as explained in more detail in the education sector plan. The Teacher Education Support and Specialized Services component has specific activities within the annual work plan and budget for training and upgrading at all levels of the system. Moreover, the technical assistance component of the program will also provide additional information in this critical area.

d) *Financial management and flows of funds will be closely linked to indicators and targets included in the Financial Management Action Plan, especially in light of lessons learned from*

previous programs. In that context, it would help to explain some of the agreed targets such as the 50 percent to be allocated or maintained for the primary sub-sector within the context of sector budget support.

In response, Zambia acknowledged and learned from the financial issues that led to a freeze of the Pooled Fund. An agreement has been reached with donors and all issues have been resolved. As for specific targets for budget allocations, it has been confirmed and reflected in the revised program document that 50 percent of resources would go to the primary level and 11 percent to the secondary sub-sector. The apparent two percent reduction is related to the reduction from nine years of basic education (old system) to seven years of primary education adopted in the new system.

e) *QAR II raised questions regarding the Education Management Information System, (EMIS), data accuracy and timeliness. Given the challenges and difficulties encountered during the implementation of previous programs, there appears to be an excessive reliance on the EMIS. It would help to explain the new strategy in terms of better and smarter technical assistance that is likely to yield results.*

In response, Zambia agreed that the EMIS and other statistical apparatuses need more targeted and better support than what has been provided in the past. Appropriate measures have been included in the final program document (see Strategic Performance Assessment Framework); with specific interventions for adequate and timely collection, analysis and dissemination of data for budgeting planning. Furthermore, the associated risk (risk register) has been increased from low to medium to acknowledge that data accuracy and timeliness are critical to achieving expected program results. If necessary, the technical assistance component of the program will be adjusted on the basis of implementation progress.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program has been developed in a transparent and collaborative manner, that the application and supporting documents are internally consistent and complete, and that the application package is ready for assessment by the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC).

In spite of the many challenges and low learning improvements overall, Zambia has made progress in improving school access, especially for orphans and other vulnerable children. Legal and administrative measures taken recently to support community schools are expected to help improve education quality and learning overall. NIF III includes activities and instruments for further progress in the future. Moreover, the SBS modality, using national systems with performance indicators, offers Zambia an incentive to further improve the quality of education and learning for all children. Nonetheless, this grant instrument has high financial risk, an area where progress is still needed.

The QAR process concluded that the preparation of the education sector plan and the GPE grant application were led by the Government in a participatory process. DFID is co-financing the program with about twice the amount provided by GPE. The Government of Zambia is working closely with its education partners to mobilize the additional resources to fully implement its program.

Zambia and its partners are committed to providing regular updates on progress during the Joint Sector Reviews and reinforcing the spirit of mutual accountability in terms of technical and financial commitments.

ZANZIBAR
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 5.2 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

The semi-autonomous Republic of Zanzibar includes the Indian Ocean Islands of Unguja and Pembe and a number of sparsely populated smaller islands off the east coast of Tanzania. Zanzibar maintains a political union with mainland Tanzania, but has its own government, including a legislative assembly, an executive branch headed by the President of Zanzibar and its own judicial system. The Union Government is responsible for defense, external affairs, fiscal policy and monetary issues, while Zanzibar has autonomy over development policy and execution of both recurrent and capital government expenditures.

Preliminary results from the 2012 census indicated a population of 1.3 million, up from 981,754 in 2002. The high population growth rate of 2.8 percent poses a major challenge to progress in social service delivery.

The majority of the population belongs to the Bantu-speaking Hadimu ethnic group. Kiswahili, a Bantu language, is the predominant language in Zanzibar.

Zanzibar's economy has traditionally been agriculture-based, but tourism has been rapidly growing, becoming a predominant source of income. Considerable disparities exist in the standard of living and about half the population lives below the poverty line. Zanzibar's GDP is US$ 536. It does not have its own ranking in the UNDP Human Development Index, but the United Republic of Tanzania is ranked 152. At the time of the 2010 Household Survey an estimated 17.1 percent of youth were unemployed.

Rapid population growth and youth migration to urban areas pose significant challenges to the provision of basic social services, challenging the achievement of the national poverty reduction strategy and the Millennium Development Goals.

EDUCATION SECTOR

The United Republic of Tanzania joined the GPE in March 2013 following the appraisal and endorsement of Zanzibar's and Mainland's already existing education sector plans. The appraisal of the Zanzibar Education Development Program (ZEDP) 2008/09-2015/16 was an opportunity to take stock of achievements and analyze the causes for limited progress towards targets midway through implementation. In line with GPE's new Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Preparation and Appraisal, the process also involved the development of a three-year ZEDP Action Plan 2012/13-2015/16 to translate broader policies into clearly defined, budgeted actions.

Reasons identified as causes for limited sector progress included high pupil classroom and pupil teacher ratios; a shortage of qualified teachers, particularly for mathematics and science; and unfavorable conditions for teaching and learning in many schools due to a shortage of desks, textbooks, learning materials, and school libraries. Poor donor alignment was also identified as a key problem. The GPE process led to agreement among development partners to align their support to the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training's (MoEVT) ZEDP Action Plan, and to move from project to program support while exploring the possibility for budget support in the longer run.

The Zanzibar education system covers two years of pre-primary and six years of primary school followed

by a four-year ordinary level secondary cycle—comprising 12 years of compulsory basic education. This is followed by two years of advanced level secondary education and three years of either higher education or technical and vocational education. ZEDP covers all sub-sectors. The objectives of the ZEDP Action Plan are: (1) ensuring gender responsive and equitable access to education; (2) ensuring quality education; and (3) improving efficiency and effectiveness of education sector management.

Education expenditure as a percentage of GDP was at 4.2 percent in 2011/12, compared to 3.8 percent in 2009/10 and 5 percent in 2010/2011. Education's share of the government budget was at 18.3 percent in 2011/12, compared to 15.6 and 20.2 percent, respectively, in 2009/10 and 2010/11. More than 90 percent of government education expenditure covers recurrent costs. The total cost of ZEDP for its remaining four years is US$ 290,388,943, with an estimated US$ 214,413,122 of domestic funding available. A funding gap of US$ 20,149,934 remains after taking into account existing donor commitments, excluding the GPE grant. It is hoped that the development of the ZEDP Action Plan and a more coherent and harmonized approach to education planning and financing will open the way for increased donor support.

Zanzibar had a gross pre-primary enrolment rate of 37.1 percent in 2012/13, a dramatic increase from 17.8 percent in 2009/10. The primary gross enrolment rate was 121.5% in 2012/13; 123.6 percent for girls. The primary completion rate was 78.7 percent in 2011/12; 87.3 percent for girls.[17] While these numbers indicate that girls are doing well in primary education compared to boys, girls begin to drop out at a higher rate in secondary education.

The language of instruction in primary education is Kiswahili, while English is the language of instruction in secondary education. After studying the problem of low exam performance in secondary, the Government decided to introduce English as a language of instruction in upper primary from grade 5 while reinforcing children's basic literacy skills in Kiswahili through two years of pre-primary education.

The Local Education Group is the Zanzibar Education Steering Committee (ZESC), which is led by MoEVT and includes representatives of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA), AfDB, SIDA, UNESCO, USAID, UNICEF, the World Bank, CSOs, NGOs and the private sector. DFID is the Coordinating Agency, taking over this role from CIDA in January 2013.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The GPE Needs and Performance Framework (NPF) indicative allocation for Tanzania as a whole is US$ 100 million. On behalf of the two ministries of education, the development partners requested the Secretariat's assistance in dividing the indicative allocation between Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar. Using the NPF indicators that were available for both, the Secretariat proposed an indicative allocation of US$ 5.2 million for Zanzibar and US$ 94.8 million for Mainland. This division was approved by the Local Education Groups. The US$ 5.2 million requested by Zanzibar is therefore in line with the agreed indicative allocation.

The ZESC requested Sweden to be the Supervising Entity and adopted a program approach with a special account for support to specific activities within the ZEDP Action Plan. The program's objective is to improve students' learning by: (i) expanding and strengthening pre-primary education, providing a greater number of students with a strong foundation for primary education; (ii) improving student performance through better teaching and improved access to learning materials with a specific focus on the sciences and mathematics; (iii) creating a safe learning environment which supports all learners according to their needs; and (iv) strengthening the accountability of the education system. To achieve these objectives, the program consists of four components:

[17]Sector data and baselines will be updated once the final results from the 2012 census are available.

Component 1 focuses on pre-primary education and has two sub-components:

- Expansion of the early childhood TUTU (TuchezeTujifunze) program, development of radio lessons, and monitoring of TUTU pupil and mentor progress.
- Training all pre-primary teachers in teaching pre-literacy skills, supporting the introduction of a new curriculum for pre-primary teacher training, and training 700 primary school teachers for transfer to pre-primary education.

Component 2 addresses improved quality in basic education through teacher training and learning materials. This component has four sub-components:

- Training 450 primary school teachers in science and math, and training all 6743 first through sixth grade teachers in using the new primary education curriculum.
- Developing minimum achievement standards for primary and secondary and training teachers in using them.
- Provision of 5th and 6th grade textbooks for all 32,000 pupils enrolled in these grades.
- Establishment of 10 library tents and 3 district libraries, rehabilitation of school libraries and distribution of resources to school and class libraries.

Component 3 promotes safe and inclusive learning environments through three sub-components:

- Construction of safe play areas in 90 pre-primary schools.
- Establishing counseling centers in primary and secondary schools, training 400 counselors and organizing counseling meetings with girls to address early marriage and pregnancy.
- Training 22 resource teachers in inclusive education and life skills, who will in turn support 480 teachers trained in identifying and responding to children's special needs. This sub-component will also provide equipment for special needs.

Component 4 focuses on strengthened accountability in the education system. Through two sub-components:

- The development of clear responsibilities for education officials, supervisory visits to identify and address capacity gaps, and increased accountability through public access to Education Management and Information System (EMIS) data.
- Annual dissemination of EMIS data on school performance.

The activities build on and complement activities by the MoEVT and partners. TUTU centers have been piloted in other districts and a 2009 impact assessment indicates their effectiveness. The pre-primary component is complementary to a USAID project that focuses on early childhood development and early grade literacy. The efforts to strengthen learning outcomes in primary are complemented by a World Bank supported training program for upper primary school teachers in using English as a language of instruction. The GPE program's support to textbooks for grades 5-6 is complemented by World Bank financing for textbooks for grades 1-4. SIDA, BADEA and the World Bank support the construction of classrooms, AfDB and UNICEF support the construction of sanitary facilities, and UNICEF and UNESCO support access to education for children with special needs. The British Council supports a pilot project to strengthen school management, and UNESCO provides capacity building to improve the ZEDP Action Plan results framework. Another important complementary effort is SIDA's support to strengthen MoEVT's financial management for efficient and transparent budget allocation, monitoring and resource use.

The program budget by component and sub-component is as follows:

	Program Component	Amount (US$)	Percent of Total (%)
A	**Pre-primary education**	**1,005,917**	**19.3**
	Expand and strengthen TUTU Centers	224,595	4.3
	Pre-primary teacher training	781,322	15.0
B	**Improve student performance**	**3,670,229**	**70.6**
	Teacher training	218,331	4.2
	Learning standards	758,721	14.6
	Textbook production	2,250,964	43.3
	School libraries	442,213	8.5
C	**Create safe, inclusive learning environment**	**298,469**	**5.7**
	Safe play areas	57,189	1.1
	School counseling system	77,250	1.5
	Special Needs Education	164,030	3.2
D	**Strengthen system**	**180,639**	**3.5**
	School administration and management	125,775	2.4
	EMIS data improvement and dissemination	54,864	1.1
	Sub-total of Components A,B,C, and D	**5,155,254**	
	Program Management Fees	45,000	.9
	Sub-total of Components and Fees	5,200,254	
	Contribution from Zanzibar	-254	
	TOTAL	**5,200,000**	**100**

* Note that the standard Supervising Entity fee of US$ 400,000 total is not included in the above budget.

Risks highlighted in the program document included capacity gaps and low accountability within the education system as well as external risks such as the high population growth and unpredictable government budget levels.

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS SUMMARY

QAR Phase I concluded that the decision-making around the use of the GPE Program Implementation Grant was transparent and collaborative, that the proposed program is derived directly from the ZEDP

Action Plan 2012/13-2015/16 and addresses GPE's strategic goals and objectives as relevant, and that the most aligned modality likely to be effective and efficient in the context of Zanzibar had been chosen.

According to the MoEVT's response to QAR Phase II, the revision process resulted in a greater level of thought behind program management structures and the role of different departments. The following summarizes the QAR II recommendations and the adjustments made in response:

1. *The program design needs to be further elaborated and detailed in terms of clearly defined outputs, explanations of activities and their corresponding budgets including unit costs, annual targets and milestones, monitoring mechanisms and corresponding capacity, and program-specific risks.*
2. *The results framework should be thoroughly reviewed.*

In response, the Department of Policy, Planning and Research (DPPR) improved explanations of specific activities, and activities were broken down into sub-activities matched with budgets and unit costs. The results framework was revised to include annual output targets, and work will continue on strengthening the results framework with the support of UNESCO over the next two months. The monitoring structure is based on the system already in place within MoEVT, making it clear how the ZEDP Action Plan as a whole will be monitored in a consistent manner across different areas of donor support. Capacity gaps have been identified and included in the risk analysis, along with mitigation measures.

3. *The chosen program-based funding modality should be defined and program management structures explained. Details on financial management and procurement processes should be provided. The risk analysis needs to incorporate capacity gaps identified in the Ministry's financial management and how these will be addressed.*
4. *A financial analysis should be incorporated into the Program Document.*

In response, the final program document includes an explanation of the funding modality. GPE funds will go to a special account for ring-fenced support to the specific activities described in the program document. Program management structures are explained and the risk analysis has been extended to include information on capacity gaps in financial management and mitigation measures. Sections on financial analysis, financial management and procurement processes have been included in the document.

5. *For some of the reforms and innovations in the Action Plan that will have an impact on the success of the proposed activities, there is insufficient information to ascertain whether the strategies are appropriate to address the identified challenges. More thought around the following seems warranted:*

   <u>Addressing population growth</u>. Zanzibar's population growth rate of over 3 percent[18] is identified as a risk that threatens to undermine efforts to improve educational quality. On their own, the counseling units and health and life skills education program proposed are unlikely to achieve the desired effect of keeping adolescent girls in school. More information on how the counseling program is situated within broader efforts would be reassuring.

In response, a section on population growth has been included in the risk analysis section of the program document, highlighting the MoEVT's role in addressing population growth as well as complementary actions that collectively will contribute to address the challenge.

   <u>Introduction of English language instruction</u>. The justification for the decision to introduce English as a language of instruction in primary school is not well elaborated, nor is there information that

[18]This has recently been adjusted down to 2.8 percent, following the preliminary results of the 2012 census.

permits an assessment of capacity to render such a reform successful.

The section on the language of instruction provides a much more detailed explanation of the rationale behind the reform, which is based on the findings from a University of Bristol Study entitled the Evaluation of the Orientation Secondary Class Zanzibar (2005). Detail is provided on preparatory measures undertaken in terms of number of teachers trained in English as a medium of instruction, textbook procurement status for the new curriculum and other measures. An emphasis has been placed on the activities in the proposed program that will support the transition. The change in language of instruction has also been identified as a risk, and mitigation measures have been explained.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program has been developed in a transparent and collaborative manner, that the application and supporting documents are internally consistent and complete, and that the application package is ready for assessment by the FAC.

The proposed components appear well justified in terms of their strategic importance and relevance and in relation to complementary actions by the MoEVT and development partners. The ZEDP Action Plan, while it still needs an improved results framework, puts all interventions within a coherent framework. In view of the relatively small number of schools and teachers in Zanzibar, there is reason to believe that this program could positively affect learning outcomes in the country.

According to the application documents, the appraisal of the sector plan and development of the request for a GPE Program Implementation Grant have led to improvements in education sector planning and collaboration. The application highlights the identification of key areas where reinforced efforts are needed, as well as a review of donor financing modalities and monitoring to strengthen alignment and coordination. This is a good illustration of the intended added value of the Partnership. The process seems to have led to increased awareness around MoEVT capacity gaps and funding modalities, and support has been mobilized to address these. The momentum and encouragement the process has created within the MoEVT seems to have energized and renewed efforts to achieve the objectives of the ZEDP.

ZIMBABWE
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 23.6 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Zimbabwe's economic decline and political problems over the past two decades are well known, as are the severe consequences for its population, which numbers more than 12.9 million according to preliminary figures from the 2012 census. 62 percent of the population lives in rural areas.

After more than a decade of economic decline, the near collapse of the Zimbabwean economy at the height of hyperinflation in 2008 resulted in widespread shortages of basic goods such as medicines, food and fuel, and a collapse in the delivery of social services. The signing of the Global Political Agreement in September 2008 and the subsequent formation of the Inclusive Government in February 2009 marked a turning point and improved Zimbabwe's prospects for economic stability and development. Real GDP grew by about 6 percent in 2009 and 9 percent in 2010. By the end of 2011, inflation was down to about 3 percent. In 2011, the Government presented a Medium-Term Plan for 2011-2015 to set the stage for further recovery. Zimbabwe now has a GDP per capita of US$ 757 and is ranked 172nd in the 2013 UNDP Human Development Index.

Zimbabwe is among the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa worst affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The estimated HIV prevalence among adults 15 years and above was 13.1 percent in 2011. The combined effect of HIV/AIDS and the economic crisis has taken a heavy toll on the work force over the past two decades, including teachers.

Despite the economic recovery and stability witnessed since 2009, the recovery in social service delivery is far slower. A key challenge is the shortage of public resources. If present trends continue, government revenue will be unable to adequately meet the demand for social services in the medium term without substantial external assistance.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Zimbabwe's Education Medium Term Plan (EMTP) was adopted by the Government in May 2012. At the time, the plan's lowest cost scenario was far above the resources likely to be available for the sector. In discussion with the Secretariat, the Local Education Group (LEG) agreed that the prospect for increasing partner support could be improved by further refining the EMTP, identifying and costing priority strategies and essentially converting it to a credible transitional plan. The GPE provided an Education Plan Development Grant to develop the EMTP Operational Plan. Zimbabwe joined GPE in March 2013, when the EMTP Operational Plan was endorsed by development partners.

The fiscal challenges experienced from the late 1980s until 2008 reduced the Government of Zimbabwe's (GoZ) capacity to provide adequate teacher remuneration, to plan and implement policies, and to assess learning. Both government expenditure and external financing for education increased significantly from 2009, however. Development partners set up the Education Transition Fund (ETF)—a multi-donor fund administered by UNICEF—initially to support emergency recovery efforts including the purchase and distribution of textbooks. The second phase of ETF (ETF II, 2012-2014) was informed by the strategic planning priorities emerging from the EMTP and is well aligned

with the Operational Plan.

Education's share of the GoZ budget was 23 percent in 2010, 25 percent in 2011 and 28 percent in 2012, reflecting strong political will to make up for the losses of the last two decades. Education public expenditure as a percentage of GDP increased from 6.9 percent to 10 percent over the same period. The non-salary share of the primary education budget was only one percent in 2012, however, underscoring the complete reliance on external support for capital investment.

While school data was unavailable for several years, recent efforts have resulted in a renewed base of data, underpinning the development of the Operational Plan. According to 2012 data, Zimbabwe's Primary Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is 115.2 percent overall and 115.5 percent for girls. The overall Primary Completion Rate (PCR) is 89 percent, with a slightly higher rate of 92 percent for girls. Girls' transition rate from primary to secondary is slightly lower than the overall rate, at 75.4 percent compared to 76.9 percent overall.

A significant achievement in Zimbabwe is the recent ETF-financed Zimbabwe Early Learning Assessment (ZELA), completed in 2012, which provided data on learning outcomes. ZELA revealed alarmingly low performance in early learning. The assessment provides a baseline for early learning performance and lays the technical, institutional and human resource foundations for an ongoing learning assessment system.

The objectives of the EMTP Operational Plan include: (i) strengthened teacher development and management; (ii) improved learning quality and relevance; (iii) improved conditions for learning in schools; (iv) improved education service quality through improved supervision; (v) strengthened school/system governance, monitoring and management; (vi) strengthened support to learners with the greatest needs; and (vii) strengthened sport, arts and culture. The total cost of the Operational Plan is set at US$ 3,658 million, with an estimated US$ 3,383 million in domestic funds available. External funding amounts to US$ 230.2 million from 2012-2015. The US$ 23.6 million requested from GPE would help reduce the remaining US$ 44.8 million funding gap.

Zimbabwe's LEG—the Education Coordination Group (ECG)—is chaired by the Minister of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture (MoESAC). A Steering Committee under the ECG oversees the ETF and will also oversee the GPE funded program. Members of the ECG include the Permanent Secretary of MoESAC, DFID, EU, Finland, Norway, KfW Germany, the Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa (OSISA), UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank. The ECG also includes representatives of the civil society organizations (CSOs) Camfed and SNV. The EU is the Coordinating Agency (CA).

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The application amount of US$ 23.6 million is in line with the indicative allocation provided by the GPE Needs and Performance Framework (NPF).

The program is derived from the EMTP Operational Plan, targeting three areas of intervention that are not adequately addressed by current government programs and donor support. These are: (i) strengthening teaching skills to reduce or eliminate performance lags in primary grades and improve learning outcomes; (ii) improving the supervision and management of teacher performance and development; and (iii) incorporating the growing evidence base into a comprehensive education sector strategic plan for the period 2016-2020. These three program components are further elaborated as follows:

Component 1: Professional Development for Better Teaching and Learning has two sub-components:

- In-service support to teachers in grades 1-3, strengthening skills to teach reading through the existing Better Schools Program of Zimbabwe (BSPZ); and
- Remedial education for grades 4-7, strengthening teachers' remedial education skills to bridge the performance gap through the Performance Lag Addressing Program (PLAP).

Component 2: Supervision and Management of Teacher Performance and Development has the following two sub-components:

- Improved teacher performance management by integrating the newly developed Teacher Minimum Standards (TMS) into school and teacher performance management; and
- A teacher training and development information system (TDIS) to monitor teacher performance and training needs and improve the management of teacher professional development.

Component 3: Strengthened strategic planning leading to Education Sector Strategic Plan 2020 consists of one component with four overlapping phases: Sector Analysis (2014), national debate and stakeholder consultation (2014-July 2015), development of the education sector strategic plan (ESSP) (May-September 2015), and operationalizing and implementing the ESSP (2016).

ETF II is the greatest single external funding source for the education sector, and the activities it finances cover six objectives of the EMTP Operational Plan. The GPE-financed activities are well integrated with the ETF activities, and both will be managed and reported on within a single framework under the same Steering Committee. The GPE activities target the continuous professional development of teachers, while the ETF focuses on upgrading of teacher qualifications and strengthening overall teacher policy. GPE will finance the establishment of the TDIS, while ETF is supporting EMIS. GPE will finance the development of ESSP 2020, while ETF is co-financing the development and operationalization of EMTP-OP. An illustration of this complementarity is the agreement by ETF to finance the start-up costs of GPE activities in "Year 0" (2013) of the GPE plan.

The following summarizes the GPE budget by component:

	Program Component	**Amount (US$)**	**Percent of Total (%)**
1	Teachers' professional development	**16,414,325**	
	1.1 In-service training grade 1-3 teachers	7,958,581	33.7
	1.2 Remedial training grade 4-7 teachers	8,455,744	35.8
2	Teacher Supervision and Management	**3,458,725**	
	2.1 Teacher performance management	1,346,125	5.7
	2.2 TDIS	2,112,600	8.9
3	Education Sector Strategic Plan	**703,400**	3.0
	3.1 Situation Analysis	171,600	
	32. National Debate	420,100	
	3.3 ESSP development	61,500	
	3.4 Finalization and operationalization	50,200	
	Sub-total of Components 1-3	**20,576,450**	
	Project Management Support Costs	1,994,886	8.5
	UNICEF Harare overheads*	1,028,822	4.4
	TOTAL	**23,600,158**	100

*Other agency fees not included in the total grant requested: 7 percent

Potential Supervising or Managing Entities were discussed in June 2012 with support from the Secretariat. Since current international sanctions and other circumstances prevent many development partners from channeling funds through government accounts, the ECG decided to use a Managing Entity (ME), requesting UNICEF to take on this function. This is in line with the "shadow alignment" approach taken by partners in Zimbabwe, meaning that funds are disbursed on the basis of ministry decision-making procedures without going into government accounts. These arrangements optimize alignment with government plans and procedures and help lay the foundation for more direct funding relationships once conditions permit.

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS SUMMARY

QAR Phase I concluded that decisions around the proposed program had been made in a transparent, collaborative way involving the MoESAC, Development Partners, CSOs, teachers' unions, school heads and teachers. The proposed program was well aligned to the EMTP and its Operational Plan, addressed key priorities of the GPE, and would use the most aligned modality appropriate in the context of Zimbabwe.

Overall, QAR Phase II noted that the draft document was of good quality. The main recommendations, along with the country team's responses, were the following:

1. Determine and describe how the team responsible for supervising and managing the teacher performance and development system will be installed within the national system.

Response: Teacher performance appraisal has been in place for many years in Zimbabwe. The quality and impact of appraisals on teaching practice is constrained by the fact that they have little bearing on performance, career development or promotion. From the national level to provinces and districts there are performance appraisal teams. Standardizing appraisal around the TMS and linking it to induction and probation will be the steps carried out over the next three years. Integrating TMS into the appraisal process will strengthen the quality and coherence of a reform already underway.

2. Revise the results framework to incorporate current data and numerical goals wherever possible, review the logic and realism of annual milestones, and ensure consistency with the sub-component descriptions in the text of the Project Document.

Response: The results framework has been revised and should now address the concerns.

3. Estimate the average costs of in-service training activities in order to derive estimates of the number of teachers who will receive in-service training and the number of children whose reading and math skills are expected to improve as a result of the interventions.

Response: More than 31,000 Grade 1-3 grade teachers will complete the early reading modules and receive two follow-up visits per term from the Cluster Early Reading Tutor (25 percent in 2014, 50 percent in 2015, and 100 percent by 2016). The total subcomponent cost is US$ 7.8 million, around US$ 250 per teacher. Costs for new teachers after 2016 will be closer to US$ 85 per teacher.

4. Identify, analyze, and include measures to address the risk that the new inequalities generated by local school fees and levies will become entrenched. The possibility of predetermining goals for the 2016-2020 strategic plan that eliminate fees and levies, and the payment of hardship bonuses to teachers in isolated poor areas should be considered.

Response: A separate school grants program will help address this risk. This issue is now also addressed, to the extent possible, in the risks section. The project could be affected by community disaffection with schooling or an economic environment forcing the withdrawal of children from school. The project does not seek to address this structural issue, but the district and cluster-based implementation will help ensure that project operations continue. It is not unreasonable to assume that improved quality of teaching will increase the willingness of parents to continue to make significant sacrifices to send their children to school.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program has been developed in a transparent and collaborative manner, that the application and supporting documents are internally consistent and complete, and that the application package is ready for assessment by the FAC.

If implemented successfully, this program could help improve learning outcomes for all 2.98 million children enrolled in Zimbabwe's 5,656 primary schools. Despite the Managing Entity modality, there is strong government ownership, clear elements of capacity building, and solid coherence between GPE-financed activities and government priorities.

Another strength of the program is its basis on recent sector analysis through the revival of EMIS data and the recent Zimbabwe Early Learning Assessment. The establishment of capacity to monitor learning outcomes is of particular interest to GPE, and may be an area where Zimbabwe can share its experience with other countries in future. The strategy to build on existing initiatives that are already familiar to key stakeholders at school and district levels increases the likelihood that the program will be effective and sustainable.

The success of the ETF, which is also managed by UNICEF, indicates that the GPE program is likely to be implemented effectively. This modality leads to additional administrative costs, but there is clearly a trade-off between cost and effectiveness. Uncertainty around the country's political and economic future could create unforeseen circumstances that may threaten the achievement of the planned results, but overall, this program has been well planned and the use of a Managing Entity provides reasonable safeguards against external shocks.