FINAL READINESS REVIEWS

For Information

CAMBODIA
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 38.5 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

The Kingdom of Cambodia is located in Southeast Asia bordering Thailand, Loas, and Vietnam. It has established remarkable economic growth and macroeconomic stability in recent years. Its growth rate averaged 12.9 percent per annum since 2002, and in 2011 real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased by almost 10 percent. Per capita income has doubled over the past decade to US$ 2080 in 2011[1]. The country's economic growth has been mainly driven by four sectors (garments, tourism, construction and agriculture) and has been underpinned by an open trade regime.

Despite a decade of robust growth, Cambodia is still one of the poorest countries in Southeast Asia. Approximately 20 percent of its 14.5 million inhabitants earn less than US$ 1 per day, and about 24 percent of Cambodian citizens live below the poverty line. Daily life is characterized by vulnerability due to poverty, the existence of landmines, disability, and a high incidence of mortality and morbidity, the effects of which are exacerbated by the lack of effective social safety nets. Cambodia ranks 138 in the 2013 Human Development Index.

The government of Cambodia and the donor community are working together to address many of these issues, and some success has been realized over the past five years. During that time poverty has been reduced by more than 60 percent in Phnom Penh and 44 percent in other urban areas.

[1] UNDP Human Development Indicators, 2011.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Cambodia has been a Global Partnership for Education (GPE) member country since 2006. The Government of Cambodia, in its efforts to reduce poverty and increase prosperity, has recognized the importance of education to its national development. In the basic education subsectors, the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2009-2013 has focused on two key issues: the achievement of universal access to high quality basic education; and the promotion of equity in educational opportunities to increase income and employment.

A draft of the new Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018 was appraised in July 2013, and recommendations raised in the report will be taken into consideration during the finalization and approval process of the ESP. The ESP 2014-2018 will be finalized once the National Strategic Development Plan has been approved in early 2014.
There have been a number of significant achievements and improvements in the Cambodian education sector in recent years: net enrolments at the primary and secondary levels have increased over the past two decades from 83.3 percent in 1992 to 96.4 percent in 2012 in primary, and from 16.6 percent in 2000 to 35.1 percent in 2012 in secondary; and girls have achieved good access to equal educational opportunities (the Gender Parity Index for net enrollment in 2011/2012 was 0.99 in primary, 1.13 in lower secondary, and 1.05 in upper secondary). The improvement of the Primary Completion Rate (PCR) from 47 percent in 2004 to 83 percent in 2010 has been remarkable. The Early Childhood Education (ECE) enrolment rate for 5 year old children improved from 24.6 percent in 2004 to 52.7 percent in 2012. Household data from the Cambodia Social and Economic Survey also confirm that the average entry age to Grade 1 reduced from 7.8 years old in 2004 to 6.8 years old in 2009. In addition to improving access, the Government has taken steps to raise educational quality through national assessments.

Despite the remarkable progress made in expanding access and improving the quality of its basic education, fundamental gaps in provision remain, particularly rooted in early childhood. Currently 77.5 percent of Cambodia's three to four year olds do not have access to Early Childhood Education (ECE) due to the shortage of pre-school facilities. For those with access to school, there is a lack of information on disparities in child development outcomes to gauge the efficacy, strengths, and weaknesses of the system. It has been concluded that the large majority of out-of-school children come from the poorest quintile of the population.

These challenges of access, learning, assessment, and teaching imply the need for a greater volume of resources flowing to these areas, but current government expenditure has not kept pace with rising demand. Cambodia spent 1.8 percent of its GDP on education in 2010, which is quite low compared to its neighbors. The estimated funding gap to reach 100 percent primary net enrollment is roughly US$ 51 million for 2013. The funding gap consists of both recurrent expenditures (salaries, training, utilities, insurance, etc.) and capital expenditures (construction and rehabilitation of schools, and the purchase of new furniture, equipment, and learning materials).

There is a very active Education Sector Working Group (ESWG) present in the country. It is currently being co-led by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) and UNESCO (Coordinating Agency) and includes Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Union (EU), Agence Française pour le Développement (AFD), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Education Partnership, Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), UNICEF, UNFPA, USAID, World Bank, and World Food Program (WFP).

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

Cambodia received US$ 57.4 million from GPE for the period 2008-2012. The World Bank was the Supervising Entity and a project modality was used for this Education for All Fast Track Initiative (EFA FTI) project. The project was instrumental in achieving many of the goals in the ESP, and some of the grant achievements have been highlighted as global best practice. GPE showcased and used Cambodia's Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) as a global good practice to target reading literacy with tangible, observable results. The disability survey supported by the grant piloted state of the art methodologies to use school systems to identify and respond to children's needs. The grant's ECE component has introduced new forms of service delivery modalities for 3-5 year olds and brought ECE for the first time into Cambodia's development agenda. Impact evaluation of the scholarship program also provided evidence of the effectiveness of demand-side incentives.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Cambodia's grant application is in the amount of US$ 38.5 million, which is in line with the Needs and Performance Framework's indicative allocation. The proposed project also complements various on-going interventions by development partners, and speaks to a larger coherent vision for moving the sector forward and achieving long-term positive impact.

The World Bank has been selected to be the Supervising Entity and the proposed grant will continue to use a project modality, following the previous EFA-FTI project. Building on the achievements so far, the proposed project will support pre-school education and improve access to quality education for Cambodia's disadvantaged and vulnerable populations. The project will also support teachers, principals, and MoEYS staff through training and capacity building activities.

The proposed project consists of four components:

Component 1 aims to increase access to ECE and care for disadvantaged 3-5 year olds throughout the country by improving current services to meet service standards, expanding new services with standards, and increasing access in rural and remote areas without ECE services.

Component 2 will finance the development and provision of textbooks for reading and mathematics, as well as training school administrators and teachers in preparation for the nationwide administration of the assessment tests.

Component 3 will focus on raising teacher quality in Cambodia by providing in-service Inclusive Education training and EGRA training as well as improving effective management of schools through in-service training and hands-on support to school principals.

Component 4 will support enhancement of results-based management for early childhood and primary education under the Public Financial Management Reform Program (PFMR), and will include project grant management, monitoring, and evaluation.

	Program Component	**Amount (US$)**	**Percent of total (%)**
1	Improving Access and Educational Experience of Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Students	**23,800,000**	**61.8**
	Sub-Component 1.1: Expanding access to Early Childhood care and Development	18,400,000	47.8
	Sub-Component 1.2: Increasing access to basic educational services	5,400,000	14.0
2	Benchmarking Student Competencies	**4,300,000**	**11.2**
	Sub-Component 2.1: Nationalizing Early Grade Reading and Mathematics (EGRA and EGMA)	4,000,000	10.4
	Sub-Component 2.2: Supporting National Assessment	300,000	0.8
3	Improving Cambodia's Teaching Force	**2,500,000**	**6.5**
	Sub-Component 3.1: Improving Pedagogical Training	1,400,000	3.6
	Sub-Component 3.2: Strengthening School Leadership	1,100,000	2.9
4	System Management and Monitoring and Evaluation	**7,900,000**	**20.5**
	Sub-Component 4.1: Strengthening System Management	7,300,000	19.0
	Sub-Component 4.2: Project Management and M&E	600,000	1.5
	TOTAL	**38,500,000**	**100**

*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$ 100,000 per year plus an additional US$ 50,000 totaling to US$ 350,000 is not included in the total grant requested.

This proposed project will be implemented under the same structure as the previous EFA-FTI project, and will be implemented at the national, provincial, district, and school levels from March 2014 to July 2017. MoEYS will assume overall responsibility for coordination and implementation of the program, including procurement, disbursement, and financial management. The implementation departments will be closely monitored by the Project Management Team. The ECE component will be implemented in coordination with National Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Committee and other related ministries.

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

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 fully aligned with the newly drafted Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018. Since Cambodia has already received one GPE grant, both MoEYS and development partners are familiar with the GPE model, and have ensured that GPE funding complements the country's own investments and responds to the education needs in Cambodia.

The QAR Phase II report complimented the Cambodia team on a solid project design. The following outlines recommendations made and responses by the country team:

1. Cost effectiveness: In order to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of each of the interventions, more detailed costing estimates for all activities (including civil works, training, etc.) and unit costs should be included in the proposed project PAD.

In response, detailed information on unit costs and quantities of each activity has been included in the PAD.

2. The use of assessment system and results: Information about the use of assessment results, and how it will be used to support system pedagogical and curricular improvements was requested, as well as information about how feedback from an independent national assessment system is used for the improvement of student participation and learning.

These points have been addressed by expanding on how this sub-component will use the results from piloted EGRA and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) assessments to improve the way reading and mathematics is taught in Cambodian schools. In addition, information about which department from the Ministry of Education will be responsible, and a detailed description of activities that will take place, was provided in the new version of the project description.

3. Target values: It was suggested that the Results Framework should include baseline values, as well as the targets for Project Development Objective (PDO) level indicators, as well as intermediate results indicators.

In response, information on baselines and targets for each year has now been included in the Results Framework, which will enable the project to track progress and results in a more accurate manner.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) details: Additional information with regards to how the M&E will be carried out was requested.

In response, a detailed breakdown about who will be responsible for monitoring – which departments, and at which level, as well as information about frequency of data collection and analysis has been included in the project description.

5. Project sustainability: It has been pointed out that the experience from the previous project demonstrated that the existing ministry capacity is weak and must be the focus of substantial assistance to bring it up to maximum utility and efficiency. Thus, the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) needs to elaborate further on the links between the proposed capacity building activities and sustainability issues.
In response, a separate section explaining the issues around project sustainability has been added to the PAD, providing a clear explanation about what makes the project sustainable and how the government's current structure is prepared to handle it.

6. Cash disbursement and anti-corruption measures: Considering that the project will be disbursing cash scholarships to disadvantaged students located in remote areas, it was recommended that an Anti-Corruption Action Plan be prepared and included in the PAD.

In response, criteria were included in the Operations Manual regarding eligibility and disbursement of the cash scholarships. Additionally, the Financial Management Manual, the internal and external audits, and the Good Governance Framework, which covers all World Bank projects in the Cambodia portfolio, provide additional risk mitigation measures. Information about these procedures is presented in the PAD annex.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

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

In the past several years Cambodia's education system has seen tremendous progress in providing education access to a large number of Cambodian children by building many schools and training a large number of teachers. In recent years the focus has shifted from basic access to improving quality and providing relevant education to all Cambodian children. In addition to making quality and relevance of learning the main focus areas of Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018, Cambodian Ministry of Education has shown strong commitment to providing access to children with disabilities and other special educational needs by implementing a disability data collection survey under the previous grant, thus making Cambodia the first GPE country with: (a) quality disability data disaggregated by the type of disability; and (b) intention to use these data to plan for and include children with disabilities

and other special needs in education. Lessons learned from implementation in Cambodia could provide a way forward for many other GPE countries to address the needs of and bring the most marginalized children to school.

If approved and implemented as planned, this project will enable Cambodia to bridge the gap by providing access to education to the remaining out-of-school children, improve education quality and relevance, and build the much needed in-country capacity to continue towards building a stronger and more equitable education system. Overall, the grant will play a vital role in supporting Cambodia's education sector, and will make a difference in the lives of thousands of Cambodian children.

CAMEROON
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 53.3 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Cameroon is a lower middle income country with an estimated population of 21 million and a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of US$ 1,165 (2012). Economic growth has been modest over the past decade but was negatively affected by the global crisis that led to weaker demand for Cameroon's non-oil exports. While the annual population growth rate is over two percent, real GDP per capita has grown by only one percent annually on average in the last decade. Poverty rates declined between 1996 and 2001, but have since stagnated at around 40 percent. Further, national average poverty figures mask major social and regional disparities. There is a growing income gap between regions, urban and rural areas, and between the rich and the poor.

Cameroon is one of the least aid-dependent countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and works with a relatively small number of Development Partners (DPs). The country ranks 150th in the 2013 United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Human Development Index.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Recent education data show Cameroon is largely off-track for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Although the Primary Completion Rate (PCR) has been improving rapidly, it is still below what is needed to attain universal primary schooling. In 2011, the PCR was in the range between 71.5 and 81.3 percent, depending on the source of data used. Gender parity declined from 0.88 in 2004 to 0.85 in 2010. The 2009 Programme on the Analysis of Education Systems (PASEC) assessment showed that learning outcomes have been declining since 2005, and a 2011 reading assessment found that 49 percent of 3rd graders had great difficulty in reading, and 27 percent could not read at all.

However, between 2007 and 2011, during the first years of implementation of the Education Sector Plan developed in 2006, Cameroon made some progress with respect to access to and completion of primary education. There have been notable increases in the PCR across genders, from 64.3 in 2007 to 81.3 (according to the World Bank Country Status Report), and a reduction in the repetition rate. In the ZEP (Educational Priority Zones), where the rate of progress has been slower than the rest of the country, the PCR increased from 51 percent in 2007 to 63.1 in 2011, and from 38 percent in 2007 for girls to 42.6 in 2010.

Cameroon faces three major challenges in the education sector:

(i) Financing. The GDP per capita allocation for education is about 3.2 percent (2011), which is significantly below the Sub-Saharan African average of 4.4 percent. Further, the share of total education budget allocated to basic education was only 38 percent in 2009, and has since stagnated. Cameroon's primary education is also characterized by high out-of-pocket expenses for households, at 42 percent of total education expenditure (as compared to 21 percent in Senegal and 13 percent in Niger). Households need to pay for textbooks, uniforms, exam fees, transportation. About 18 percent of primary school teachers are also paid by parents.

(ii) Delivery of education. Overall, the education service delivery is weak due to a shortage of teachers and textbooks. Cameroon's pupil-textbooks ratio is the worst in Sub-Saharan Africa, at 12:1.

(iii) Governance. Weak governance and accountability is pervasive in the education sector. Tackling this issue is made complicated by the fragmentation in the management of the education sector. The quality of education statistics is poor. There is also no national assessments framework with formative student learning evaluations.

In August 2013, the Government of Cameroon released a new strategy (*Document de Stratégie du Secteur de l'Education et de la Formation* - DSSEF) designed to tackle these issues. The DSSEF embodies a continuum of the policies outlined in the 2006 sector strategy and focuses on access and equity, quality and relevance, sector governance, management, financing mechanisms for education and training, as well as the institutional aspects and the modalities for monitoring and evaluation.

The Local Education Group (LEG) is composed of representatives from the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance, Government's education technical team (drawn from the five ministries of education), multilateral and bilateral development partners, representatives of civil society, private education providers. The LEG meets regularly, and is fully associated with the development of the DSSEF. The Government representative from the education technical team and the *Chef de File* coordinate the annual joint sector reviews.

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

Cameroon joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in 2006 after the endorsement of its Education Sector Plan. A grant agreement of US$ 47.3 million was signed in 2007 to support to the Government's Contract Teacher Program (CTP) which hired and contracted over 37,000 teachers in the country. The grant was disbursed in two annual grants: Year I financing in the amount of US$ 22.5 million for the payment of salaries for teachers hired in 2007 and 2008 (disbursed in 2008); and Year II financing in the amount of US$ 24.8 million for reimbursing the government for part of the 2010 salaries for contract teachers recruited

between 2007 and 2010, and for 2011 (disbursed in 2011). After 2011, the salaries of these teachers were fully covered by the national budget, as initially envisaged.
The Fast Track Initiative (FTI)-financed project closed in December 2011 after achieving most of its development objectives. The project contributed to (i) attracting and keeping children in school, (ii) reducing the Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR), and (iii) significantly increasing the teacher workforce, responding to the teacher shortage problem and reducing the inequity in the distribution of teachers across regions. However, it was rated moderately satisfactory because the goal to deploy teachers more equitably was not achieved.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Cameroon is applying for a grant in the amount of US$ 53.3 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 (SE) by the LEG. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) are Coordinating Agencies. The program is aligned with the Education Sector Plan (DSSEF 2013-2020). Several activities in the proposed program build on partners' interventions.

The grant will be financed under a project modality. Disbursements for the subsidy for teachers and the provision of teaching and learning materials (84 percent of the total allocation) will be made directly to Government Treasury. The Project will be implemented directly by the Ministry of Basic Education. The overall implementation risk is rated high. Mitigation measures have been introduced.

The proposed program has two components.

Component 1 supports improvements in primary education service delivery, in particular the early grades, with a focus on supporting the disadvantaged areas and improving girls' attendance. Its two major activities are (i) supporting the progressive conversion of existing parents' teachers to contract teacher; (ii) supporting the provision of teaching and learning materials for children in the first three primary grades. The project also supports setting up a system of regular monitoring of learning outcomes in the early grades.

Component 2 aims to limit the risks of poor management, weak citizen participation, and lack of transparency and accountability in the conversion of parents' teachers to contract teachers and in the distribution of teaching and learning materials, and to better monitor service delivery.

	Program Component	Amount (US$)	Percent of total (%)
1	Improving the equity and quality of primary education service delivery	**48,300,000**	**86.5**
	Sub-component 1.1: Increasing teacher availability	31,400,000	56.3
	Sub-component 1.2: Provision of teaching and learning materials	13,300,000	23.9
	Sub-component 1.3: Capacity development for teachers and inspectors	1,100,000	1.9
	Sub-component 1.4: Support for girls' education	1,100,000	1.9
	Sub-component 1.5: Student learning assessment	1,400,000	2.5
2	Building institutional capacity for improved service delivery	**5,000,000**	**9.1**
	Sub-component 2.1: Improving governance and accountability	3,300,000	6.0
	Sub-component 2.2: Building knowledge for improved service delivery and learning	1,700,000	3.1
	Total Financing from GPEF	**53,300,000**	**95.5**
	Government financing for project management	**2,500,000**	**4.5**
	Total Project	**55,800,000**	**100.0**

*Other Agency fees not included in the total grant requested: 1.75 percent of the GPE grant.
** Note that the standard SE fee of US$ 700,000 is not included in the total grant requested.

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

The Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Phase I found the process used to develop the program to be transparent. The proposed program is appropriately linked to the provisional Education Sector Plan and includes GPE's strategic priorities. The report finally raised three issues: (i) the level of collaboration between partners could be enhanced; (ii) the design of the project had to be finalized since an agreement had not yet been reached on components and activities among partners; and (iii) gender parity and girls' education had to be considered more appropriately. A recommendation to clarify its education policy priorities was also made to the Government.

QAR Phase II concluded that the proposed program (i) addresses some of the key challenges of primary education in Cameroon as identified by the Country status Report and included in

the sector strategy; (ii) builds on and complements actions undertaken by other Development Partners, and takes into account the lessons learned from previous interventions, and (iii) outlines the implementation risks. Following are the main recommendations for improvement from the QAR Phase II report, and a summary of how they were addressed by the LEG:

1. The document could make more explicit reference to the implementation of the first phase of the sector strategy.

In response, each component provides financial and technical support to the actions proposed in the Action Plan.

2. The program should draw all the consequences of the identified budgetary risks: substitution effect of GPE funding, stagnant share of education in the national budget, and low share of primary education in the education budget. These risks should be given special attention and be fully integrated into the framework of monitoring and evaluation.

In response, the Minister of Economy has signed a letter of commitment to increase the budget allocated to education in the coming years. At the same time, one of the responsibilities entrusted to development partners formalized in the new partnership framework is to ensure compliance by the Government of its commitments.

3. The various components of the program should be more clearly explained. In particular, all lessons learned from the previous FTI/GPE grant, including negative lessons, should be mentioned. In addition, direct gains that represent the conversion of parents' teachers for families should be specified.

Lessons from early stages of the CTP have led the Government to propose a decentralized approach to teacher recruitment that will overcome most of the factors that limited the positive impacts of previous phases.

4. Some of the activities of the program, especially the distribution of textbooks, should be better linked to a broader policy agenda.

The component on textbooks (…) must be understood as the trigger for reform in the book sector, much more than the simple provision of books for a cohort.

5. *The budget should be more detailed and include information on unit costs and quantities, particularly for textbooks. The question of the overall funding of the first phase of the sector strategy should also be more clearly addressed in the document.*

In response, the budget has the requested details in the final version and now includes unit costs for textbooks.

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).

The previous FTI/GPE grant was moderately satisfactorily implemented according to the Implementation Completion and Results Report released by the World Bank. It undoubtedly helped to stabilize the teaching profession in Cameroon. However, its objectives were only partly achieved. The dissatisfaction partially lies in the indicators that failed to highlight the real results of the project.

The proposed program is built on previous implementation experiences from various partners. Over the years, the Government of Cameroon and its partners, including civil society, have developed a good working relationship with a transparent framework. The project has been developed based on a solid diagnosis. Its main strength is that it addresses some of the key challenges in the education system: the high out-of-pocket expenses for households, the severe lack of teaching and learning materials for children, and the low enrollment of girls. The results framework shows that the proposed project aims at systemic improvements. However, two major points of vigilance should be highlighted.

First, the conversion of existing parents' teachers to contract teacher status should further be seen as a policy to improve *equity* within the education system rather than the *quality* of learning. Nowhere is there evidence that this policy will help to improve quality as such. If equity is a goal which is sufficient in itself, then it should not be expected to achieve something else, at the risk of repeating the unfulfilled expectations of the previous grant.

Second, some of the activities are not integrated enough into a broader policy agenda. The teaching and learning materials component could for example be tied to a national policy of reorganization of the schoolbook chain. Similarly, the girls' education component would be stronger if it was backed by a robust national policy on the subject. These two examples illustrate one of the weaknesses of the program, which lies in the shortcomings of the Education Sector Strategy itself, as pointed out in the appraisal report. Studies funded by the project should contribute to addressing the weaknesses of the sector strategy.

Lastly, it should be stressed that the program, as part of the Education Sector Plan, will only be successful if there is a significant increase in the education budget. Within the framework of the 2006 Education Sector Strategy, the Government had committed to increase the education budget to 19.5 percent of the national budget, but actual allocations fell short of this target: the budget share for education decreased from 17 percent between 2007 and 2009 to only 16.3 percent in 2011. The budgetary commitment of the Government to education will have to be particularly followed at annual joint sector reviews.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Accelerated Funding Proposal for Education in Emergencies

Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 3.69 million
(19.2 percent of total indicative allocation of US$ 19.2 million)

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

The Central African Republic (CAR) is a landlocked country in Central Africa. Spread over an area of 623,000 kilometers, it has an estimated population of 4.7 million as of 2012. About 70-80 percent of the population lives in remote areas. Despite an abundant endowment of resources such as diamonds, gold, uranium and wood, poverty remains high with 73 percent of households living beneath the poverty line. The country has a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of US$ 472 and a Human Development Index ranking of 180 in the 2013.

Since CAR's independence in 1960, the country has faced political unrest, including numerous attempted coups. In December 2012, a coalition of three rebel groups called the Seleka Coalition launched an offensive towards the capital Bangui. On March 24, 2013, Seleka took control of the country, and Michel Djotodia appointed himself as president. The military conflict resulted in many acts of violence against the civilian population as well as looting and destruction. Basic services were disrupted or destroyed with a significant impact on people's access to essential and basic needs, including access to clean water, primary health care, and education.

The political and security situation remains fragile and unpredictable, with a rising risk of interfaith conflict as results of acts of violence perpetrated by members of the rebellion.

EDUCATION SECTOR

The Central African Republic joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in February 2008 following a positive assessment and endorsement of the National Education Sector Strategy (NESS) for 2008-2020 by the Local Education Group (LEG). The NESS was developed around four priorities: (i) promote universal primary education; (ii) improve learning achievement in secondary and higher education; (iii) expand universal literacy; and (iv) develop higher vocational education.

The NESS was initially divided into three phases: (1) 2008-2011 emergency phase; (2) 2012-2015: implementation phase; and (3) 2016-2020: consolidation phase. However, the

first phase was delayed, thereby delaying the second phase to 2013-2015. During that first phase, the education sector showed real progress. In terms of access to primary education, the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) increased from 73.7 percent in 2008 to 87.2 percent in 2011. The Gross Intake Rate (GIR) was 75 percent in 2005, and reached 90 percent in 2011. The primary completion rate increased from 30 to 39.7 percent during this same period. The learning environment also improved, with the pupil-per-teacher ratio decreasing from 91 in 2006 to 81 in 2011, and the textbook-per-pupil ratio increasing from 0.1 to 0.7 in French and mathematics. Despite this progress, enrollment rates remain low and disparities are evident due to huge geographic, residential (urban/rural) and gender differences (the Gender Parity Index stands at 0.72).

Nevertheless, the situation has been jeopardized by the post-coup crisis. A rapid assessment organized in August 2013[2] by the Education Cluster showed that 49 percent of schools visited were still closed and, on average, five and half months of the school year have already been lost. Even more serious is the low school attendance rate; out of 100 students enrolled in school in September 2012, 70 were still not back in school in August 2013 with high disparities between regions. The fear of violence (mentioned by 81 percent of respondents) and the lack of teachers (mentioned by 36 percent of respondents) were the main reasons identified in the assessment.

Furthermore, according to the assessment, only 61 percent of teachers are currently back to work (compared to the 2012 school census). Due to limited domestic resources[3], 42 percent of primary teachers are community teachers directly paid by parents (called "Maîtres-parents", mostly untrained and unqualified) and it is this category of teachers that have been the first to return to the classroom (currently 81.5 percent have returned). Sixty-six percent of the civil servant teachers, called “titulaires” have returned, while only 42.5 percent of contract teachers (called “maître d’enseignement”)[4] have resumed work.

In terms of infrastructure, many school furnishings were stolen or destroyed during the crisis (more than 75 percent in some regions). School feeding and the restoration of order and security have been identified as key issues to encourage children to return to school.

In CAR, the 2013 Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) for Education showed a US$ 22.5

[2] The school year usually runs from September to June, but because of the circumstances facing the country, the school year 2012/13 is scheduled to be extended to December 2013 (scheduled for exams).

[3] The budget for the education sector has dramatically decreased from 1996 until the mid-2000s. In 2012, it has been estimated at approximately 2.3 percent of GDP and 13 percent of the executed National Budget.

[4] Due to financial constraints, a transitory approach involving a training and certification program implemented alongside “teaching grants” has been put in place. The certified teachers with the new status known as “maîtres d’enseignement” are not initially hired as civil servants and their salaries are approximately 30 percent lower than civil servant teachers.

million financing need. At the end of September, only US$ 7.3 million was covered by UNICEF and the World Food Program (WFP).

A LEG was created in 2008, catalyzed by the GPE processes for endorsing and appraising the Education Sector Plan at country-level. The LEG is composed of donors and international agencies (UNICEF, UNESCO, the World Bank, WFP, France), and the Ministry of Education (MoE). In 2012, as a result of the GPE process, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), including unions, joined the LEG and became active partners in current processes. Following the March 2013 coup, the World Bank, the "Agence Française de Développement" (AFD), and UNESCO closed their field offices in CAR due to security issues. UNICEF has remained the Coordinating Agency (CA). The Education Cluster[5] was reinforced in August 2013 with the arrival of a new Coordinator.

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

The CAR obtained its first GPE grant in December 2008 in the amount of US$ 37.8 million with the World Bank as Supervising Entity (SE). The closing date of the grant was June 30, 2013. The program was suspended on March 25, 2013, following the coup. The closure date was postponed to March 31, 2014 to allow the completion of activities already approved and launched before the coup.

The World Bank is currently conducting an assessment of the situation in the field (at a global and sectoral levels) to evaluate the possibility of resuming activities.

The suspended program has three components:
Component 1 (US$ 18.5 million): Access: school construction, rehabilitation and furniture.
Component 2 (US$ 8.2 million): Quality: teacher training and textbooks.
Component 3 (US$ 9.6 million): Management and efficiency. This component aims to address both immediate management challenges associated with the implementation of the above components, as well as to create the basis for future phases of the program.

Prior to suspension, program implementation was rated as highly satisfactory. Around 95 percent of the budget had been disbursed, and the implementation rate was above 90 percent for the three components before the coup. The grant was the main external funding for the implementation of the first phase of the NESS.

The learning environment in the CAR benefited from the availability of more textbooks and rehabilitated or newly constructed classrooms. More than 1.3 million textbooks in reading and mathematics were distributed to schools. This reduced the number of students per textbook considerably, from 7 to 1. School visits confirmed the presence of textbooks in schools and their

[5] Twenty-two national and international organizations are part of the Education Cluster (ACDES, ACTED, ADEM, APEC, ARESDI, CARITAS, COOPI, DRC, FAO, FHI, FIPADECA, FNAPEC, FRAD, IDC, IDEALE, MBOSCUDA, MERCY CORPS, REMOD, UDAPE, UNICEF, VITALITE +, WFP).

better utilization in the classroom. Some 510 classrooms were built and 380 rehabilitated, contributing to a lower student-to-classroom ratio, although classroom needs remain substantial, with persisting regional disparities. Finally, 1,500 contract teachers were trained and certified, and 750 are finishing their training.

As part of the GPE program, a sector review took place in May 2012 to assess progress and chart the future course of the NESS. The review confirmed the achievements of Phase I but also the remaining challenges. A progress report details the lessons learned and the areas of improvement. An interesting conclusion concerns the need to improve the coordination of the program monitoring, and the potential to build on the recent GPE process, particularly setting up the new LEG in July 2012. Another lesson learned is the important role of local authorities and communities in the success of the program.

The CAR prepared an application for a US$ 19.2 million GPE Program Implementation Grant in March 2013, just before the coup, in order to support the second phase of NESS, but this application was withdrawn following the SE's suspension of activities.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Considering the unstable political context, in April 2013, the Development Partner Group (DPG) has opted for the GPE Accelerated Funding Option and UNICEF was selected as the Managing Entity (ME). The maximum amount that can be requested through the Accelerated Funding request is US$ 3.84 million, representing 20 percent of the indicative allocation of US$ 19.2 million. The request received complies with this rule and stands at US$ 3.69 million (19.2 percent of the total indicative allocation).

The accelerated support program remains in line with the priorities of the withdrawn application and the endorsed sector action plan, but is adapted to respond to the new situation assessment. Discussions for the development of a new program to be implemented with the remaining allocation should be launched shortly.

Priorities identified by the Education Cluster to respond to the crisis consist of: i) assessing the education sector; ii) advocating with local and national authorities for classes' reopening; iii) supporting the return of teachers in their work areas; iv) repairing and equipping schools; v) distributing educational materials to support families; vi) encouraging the return of all students; vii) building stakeholders' capacity; and viii) supporting the Ministry of Education through coordinating the efforts of different actors.

Activities to be implemented with UNICEF and WFP through the Education Cluster remain fragmented in terms of both geographic and programmatic coverage, and mainly focus on school kits delivery, support to the return of 1,350 teachers, an advocacy campaign for school re-opening and a school canteen program.

Provisions have not yet been made to support those teachers that are paid by parents, which

remain the most economically vulnerable as they were the first to return to work in recent months but are also least likely to be paid by families struggling to ensure their contribution in the crisis context.

Furthermore, while teachers' attendance is key to promoting the return of children, no activities have yet been implemented aimed at to training and accompanying staff at the decentralized level to monitor and report the presence of teachers in the classroom.

Finally, there is also no support for Parent Associations ("Association de Parents d'Elèves"), which are in charge of maintenance and school repairs, although this support could provide a strong incentive for children to return to school.

The proposed program submitted through the accelerated process aims to fulfill these needs and focuses on the 10 to 14 prefectures (depending on the security situation) most affected by the crisis. The program is composed of three components:

Component 1: Supporting the restarting of educational activities, mainly through repairing and re-equipping schools (targeting 115,000 children) with involvement of Parent Associations and preparation of make-up courses (US$ 2.1 million, 57 percent of GPE grant). UNICEF will provide school kits and lead an advocacy campaign for school re-opening, and WFP will implement a school canteen program.

Component 2: Supporting teachers already back to school (875) and facilitating the return of others not at work (560) (US$ 0.31 million, eight percent of GPE grant). GPE financing will include a US$ 25,000 FCFA[6] grant per month for 1,435 teachers, who are community paid teachers and contract teachers not integrated into the national payroll, to implement make-up courses[7] and halve parents' contributions over that period. Key actors –mainly school heads and district school system administrators– involved in teacher support and monitoring will also receive means of communication[8] and training (125 school sector heads and 13 school district heads), while UNICEF will also support the return of an additional 1,350 teachers.

Component 3: Ensuring the overall implementation and monitoring of the program (US$ 1.3 million, 35 percent of GPE grant) that can be broken down as follows:

- Technical support (US$ 482,000) through technical staff hired by UNICEF or implementation partners
- Administrative costs (US$ 647,223 including administrative staff and UNICEF CAR's five percent operation costs and implementation partners' indirect costs of seven percent on some activities)
- Logistical costs (US $ 146,750) including the initial evaluation and selection of sites

[6] "Franc de la Communauté Financière Africaine"

[7] Half a day every school day over the period of December 2013-February 2014

[8] Telephones, telephone credits and basic office supplies

	Program Component	GPE (US$)	UNICEF (US$)	WFP (US$)	Total (US$)	Percent of total (%)
1	Access and Learning Environment	**2,101,450**	**1,300,000**	**6,536,500**	**9,937,950**	**84.9**
	Sub-component 1.1: Back to school campaign	1,754,250	1,300,000	6,536,500	9,590,750	81.9
	Sub-component 1.2: Development of make-up courses	347,200	0	0	347,200	3.0
2	Support to teachers	**312,680**	**182,000**	**0**	**494,680**	**4.2**
	Sub-component 2.1: Teachers' return and accompanying	225,740	182,000	0	407,740	3.5
	Sub-component 2.2: Teachers' monitoring	86,940	0	0	86,940	0.7
3	Technical and administrative support	**1,275,972**	**0**	**0**	**1,275,972**	**10.9**
	Sub-component 3.1: Technical support (staffs)	482,000	0	0	482,000	4.1
	UNICEF	*350,000*	*0*	*0*	*350,000*	*3.0*
	Imp. Partners	*132,000*	*0*	*0*	*132,000*	*1.1*
	Sub-component 3.2: Administrative support (staffs) and costs	647,222	*0*	*0*	647,222	5.5
	UNICEF	*355,719*	*0*		*355,719*	*3.0*
	Imp. Partners	*291,503*	*0*	*0*	*291,503*	*2.5*
	Sub-component 3.3: Logistical support	146,750	0	0	146,750	1.3
	TOTAL	**3,690,102**	**1,482,000**	**6,536,500**	**11,708,602**	**100.0**

* Other Agency fees not included in the total grant requested: eight percent of the GPE grant (UNICEF HQ Recovery Cost).

Activities to be financed by GPE will be complementary to the efforts undertaken by the Ministry of Education (resumption of teachers' salaries[9] payment, support for the return of school inspectors, heads of school sectors and districts, organization of examinations) and will be coordinated[10] with the other Cluster's activities (mainly financed by UNICEF and WFP), in partnership with non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

CAR's submission of this Accelerated Funding request has followed the process as described in the GPE Board-approved Guidelines for Accelerated Support in Emergency and Early Recovery Situations.

The LEG, in consultation with the Education Cluster, initiated the process by sending an email on April 25, 2013 recalling discussions among partners that led to the decision to apply through the Accelerated Funding procedure (Step 1).

UNICEF was selected as the Managing Entity (ME) to manage the Emergency and Early Recovery Funding (Step 2) and was the only agency to fulfill requirements: i) to be able to operate in the emergency or post-emergency context and provide rapid scale-up support; and ii) already have a Financial Procedures Agreement (formerly called Transfer Agreement) for the GPE Fund executed prior to the submission of the application to avoid delays. On April 25, 2013, The Secretariat confirmed CAR's eligibility for the Accelerated Funding.

The Secretariat has carried out a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) during the preparation of the proposal (Step 3), by reviewing and giving feedback on draft versions of the program document (QAR Phase II process). In response, the following actions and measures were taken to address the key recommendations from QAR phase II:

1. The criteria that led to the selection of prefectures targeted for the intervention have been clarified and a table showing last known information for each prefecture before the crisis has been added;

2. The different categories of teachers and, to the extent possible, the number and level of remuneration have been detailed;

3. The make-up courses policy has been clarified;

4. The compensation mechanism to finance make-up courses and how contributions paid

[9] For teachers who are civil servants

[10] The link between the make-up courses and the canteen program is particularly important to ensure that children remain at school in the afternoon for the make-up courses.

by families will be reduced has been detailed; and

5. Management fees dedicated to UNICEF and compensation for implementing partners have been detailed, and information about the satisfaction given by implementation partners that had previously been involved in UNICEF or WFP programs has been provided.

The submitted application (Step 4) outlining the program for accelerated financing is the result of a consultative process between UNICEF as ME, the World Bank, Cooperazione Internazionale Fondazione (COOPI), AFD, UNESCO, Save the Children, the other members of the Education Cluster, and the Technical Permanent Secretariat (MoE).

The proposal:

a. is based and aligned on the Education Cluster's emergency needs assessment;
b. provides information on the sources of financing for other emergency and early recovery activities planned, and includes information demonstrating that GPE funds will not displace government or other donor funding; and
c. contains an operational plan indicating activities, budgets, implementation strategies, and a description of how activities will be sub-contracted to other organizations as appropriate.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The CAR is eligible for the Accelerated Funding Option based on the fact that: i) the country is eligible for program implementation grant funding; ii) the country is affected by a crisis for which a humanitarian appeal has been launched and published by the UN Office of Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs, in which education is included; and iii) GPE funds will be in addition to other (donor / government) resources.

The proposed implementation period for the Accelerated Funding is less than one year (the maximum implementation period as set within the Guidelines), and the requested amount is less than the maximum 20 percent of the total indicative amount available for CAR.

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program has been developed in a transparent and collaborative manner, with strong involvement from the Education Cluster, 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).

This program targets essential needs assessed by the Education Cluster and relies on the main actors of the education system (Permanent Technical Secretariat of the Ministry of Education, heads of school sectors and districts, teachers, Association of Parents, etc.) in order to sustain the effects of the program, and also aims to reinforce the accompanying of decentralized levels, and the monitoring of the overall system. It builds as well on the

experience of UNICEF in education in CAR and its collaboration with various NGOs and national organizations well-established in the field.

The program targets the most affected prefectures (as soon as a minimum level of security is guaranteed), in coordination with the Education Cluster's work. A mid-term review after six months of implementation will be organized. The lessons learned from the mid-term review will be drawn from in order to inform the preparation of the program to be submitted on the remaining part of the allocation assigned to CAR.

DJIBOUTI
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 3.8 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Almost 40 percent of Djibouti's estimated 0.86 million population is under the age of 15. The large number of young people could act as the engine for Djibouti's economic growth and social development. However, the overall unemployment rate is approximately 60 percent, and is estimated at above 70 percent for young people. According to the 2013 United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Human Development Report, Djibouti ranks 164 in its Human Development Index.

Djibouti's economy is largely dependent on its port activities and foreign direct investments. Although the country is demographically small with limited resources, Djibouti has shown positive economic growth averaging 4.8 percent from 2008 to 2012. It was designated as an International Development Association (IDA) category III country in July 2010.

The Government of Djibouti is exploring ways to diversify its economy through the development of the private sector and industries such as tourism, fishing, transport, and energy production. In order to boost growth in these sectors, the Government aims to overcome deep structural barriers such as the lack of basic infrastructure, the high labor cost relative to worker productivity, and the lack of skilled workers through greater investments in infrastructure, private sector development, and human capital.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Djibouti has been a Global Partnership for Education (GPE) member country since 2005. In 2010, the Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training (Ministère de l'Education nationale et de la formation professionnelle, MENFOP) developed a new 10-year National Education Strategy (Schéma directeur, 2010-2019) and a series of action plans focusing on improving access, equity, quality, and efficiency of the education system. This year, the Government updated its Education Action Plan (2014-2016) which has subsequently been endorsed by the Local Education Group (LEG).

There are 159 primary schools in Djibouti, offering classes for Grades 1 through 6, 65 of which are in the capital, Djibouti-ville. Over the past ten years, the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in primary education in Djibouti increased from 32 percent in 1999/2000 to approximately 70 percent in 2012, while other sources report even higher figures. Girls' attendance in primary school also significantly improved with the Gender Parity Index increasing from 0.55 in 2005 to 0.88 in 2011. Secondary enrollments tripled during the same period. Primary Completion Rate

is estimated at 69.9 percent. Despite these important advances, Djibouti is not likely to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for achieving universal primary education and for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

The quality of the education system remains another major challenge, both in terms of student learning outcomes and teacher training. About 8.5 percent of Grade 5 students repeat the year. Two analyses of national assessments of student learning outcomes in reading conducted in 2009 and 2010 on a sample of second grade students showed that about 7 students out of 10 did not master well – or at all – basic reading. It appears that the students perform at a level below what is required for them to make the transition from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn' by the end of third grade. Early Childhood Education (ECE) enrollments are at less than two percent of the student population estimated for this age cohort.

The Government of Djibouti acknowledges the important role of education and devotes about a fifth of its national budget to the sector. In 2010, almost 20 percent of the national budget and about 8 percent of GDP went to education (35 percent of which for basic education). Djibouti's National Development Initiative (Initiative nationale de développement social, INDS) highlights improvement in management of the sector to increase access, quality and relevance of education as a priority. The second pillar of the INDS aims to develop human resources and improve access to basic services, in particular by: (i) improving access to education while increasing the quality of education services; (ii) reducing gender and geographic disparities in the sector; and (iii) improving the management of the sector. The Medium Term Expenditure Framework and the current Education Action Plan (2014-2016) are focusing on establishing an efficient system that concentrates on results and ensures access to education for all, guaranteeing quality and relevance of education and training.

The Local Education Group consists of the Ministry, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Agence Française de Développement (AFD), World Food Program (WFP), World Bank, USAID, Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), UNESCO, UNICEF and World Health Organization (WHO). UNICEF has been designated as the Coordinating Agency by MENFOP and Local Education Group (LEG), taking this role over from AFD. Civil Society Organizations have been participating in the various consultation rounds but are not yet part of the LEG.

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

In December 2005, Djibouti received a Fast Tract Initiative (FTI) Catalytic Fund grant for US$ 8 million, divided into two allocations of US$ 6 and US$ 2 million. A third grant in the amount of US$ 4 million was approved in June 2010. The World Bank was selected as the Supervising Entity (SE) for all three grants. The grants have been used to support the implementation of the last phase of the previous 10-Year Master Plan for Education and the first phase of the current 10-year National Education Strategy which has been implemented

via shorter-term Education Action Plans (EAPs) financed by the Government and its external partners. The focus has been on: (i) strengthening access to and participation in education; (ii) reducing education and training disparities; (iii) improving the quality and relevance of teaching and learning; (iv) strengthening the professional development of teachers; (v) building planning, management, and guidance capacities at all levels; and (vi) supporting and improving financial sustainability.

Despite factors such as weaknesses in institutional capacity on the government side and oversights in the project design which caused some delays, the implementation was generally successful. With support from these grants, Djibouti has been able to improve access and coverage in education drastically. There has been an increase of 44 percent in the number of primary schools built and functioning since 2003. Nevertheless, access to education continues to be a major challenge with a net enrolment rate of 69.5 percent[11]. The quality of the education system is another challenge.

The last grant closed on March 31, 2013. All major activities have been completed. The Implementation Completion and Result Report from the SE stated that overall the objectives have been met satisfactorily, as evidenced by the Outcome Indicators which, in some cases, surpassed the target. The contributions of this project were significant and supported the Government in attaining the results it had set in its goal of universal enrollment in primary education by 2015. The project benefited from the existence of a clear and coherent reform program, derived from a broad national consensus and supported by a strong political commitment.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The requested implementation grant of US$ 3.8 million is in line with the GPE Needs and Performance Framework's indicative allocation for Djibouti. Due to its current IDA III status, its eligibility to apply for a GPE Program Implementation Grant was reviewed and the Board of Directors decided during its November 2012 meeting to extend Djibouti's eligibility beyond Round 1 of 2013.

The World Bank has been designated again as the SE. The MENFOP will be responsible for the implementation, through the existing project management unit *(Service de Gestion des Projets,* SGP*)*, technical departments and a project steering committee which will provide oversight. The unit within the Ministry of Education supports various donor projects from IDA, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), JICA and AFD.

The program is derived from the Education Action Plan 2014-2016 and has been designed to support the access and quality components of Djibouti's National Education Action Plan. The program is also in line with the GPE strategic objectives.

[11] Djibouti Household Survey 2012.

Component 1 seeks to increase access and improve the learning environment through the construction and equipment of one school and the rehabilitation and expansion of six selected schools in four targeted areas in rural areas (20 new classrooms and furniture and equipment).

Component 2 focuses on improving student performance through investments in teaching and learning materials, as well as training for teachers, pedagogic counselors, school directors and inspectors, developing a student assessment policy, and piloting a community-based model for pre-school service provision in partnership with UNICEF. This component will further support investments for the most vulnerable children in school health and pre-primary education.

Component 3 provides supplemental financing to the existing project management unit, SGP.

There are challenges which constrain the implementation capacity of the MENFOP, namely, a high turnover of key personnel, recent changes in the organizational structure of MENFOP, and the fact that roles and responsibilities of the various MENFOP departments are not clearly defined. These challenges are known to the MENFOP and the donor community, and are the subject of a separate program supported by the World Bank to strengthen the institutional capacity and management of the education system (ACIGEF). The proposed support to the SGP will be complementary to other capacity building and training activities for the MENFOP departments already planned in the ACIGEF project.

	Program Component	**Amount (US$)**	**Percent of total (%)**
1	Access to Primary Education	**1,600,000**	**42**
	Sub-component 1.1: Construction and equipment of 1 Primary School	245,000	6.4
	Sub-component 1.2: Rehabilitation and extension of 6 Schools (20 classes)	1,210,000	31.8
	Sub-component 1.3: Physical contingencies	145,000	3.8
2	Quality of Primary Education	**1,900,000**	**50.0**
	Sub-component 2.1: In-service and pre-service teacher training	1,553,000	40.9
	Sub-component 2.2: Development of a student assessment policy and tools	93,000	2.4
	Sub-component 2.3: Pre-school education & school health	53,000	1.4
	Sub-component 2.4: Price contingencies	201,000	5.3
3	Project Monitoring and Management	**300,000**	**7.9**
	TOTAL	**3,800,000**	**100.0**

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

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

The proposed program will be executed in partnership and coordination with UNICEF, USAID, WHO and AFD during implementation. UNICEF will lead the ECE component, USAID will finance an early grade reading activity that will be closely linked to the early grade math activities financed by the proposed Project, and WHO will help facilitate the inter-Ministerial coordination between Health and Education. Currently, donors are supporting several interventions in the sector which are monitored in regular partner group meetings in the country. Joint sector review meetings will be organized to monitor and evaluate the Government and all donors' interventions in the sector.

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

In the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Phase I, the Secretariat found the process in Djibouti to be transparent and collaborative. It recommended however to have a better representation of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) since they are absent in the LEG. During the various consultation rounds, CSOs have been invited to participate but more work is needed to increase their participation. This has been mentioned also in the endorsement letter of the Education Action Plan. Furthermore, the Secretariat encouraged the Government, the SE and other partners of the LEG to prioritize and select a limited number of interventions which can be financed within this GPE Program Implementation Grant. Related to this point, the QAR I report urged for a better complementarity among the interventions of various partners, especially with regard to teacher training and assessments.

The main recommendations of the QAR Phase II report were to:

1. Further explain the connection between some of the planned interventions and the expected results, notably with regard to girls' education, use of 'double shifts' and the strengthening of quality.

In response, clearer indicators which reflect a better relation with the proposed interventions have been included in the final version of the Program Document.

2. The unit costs of some of the interventions had to be reviewed, mainly with regard to the construction and rehabilitation of classrooms.

In response, budget and unit costs have been reviewed and detailed in a specific Excel sheet. Where unit costs remain high, explanations have been given. For example, the unit cost for classroom construction is high because it includes one cafeteria/kitchen, one teacher/school director housing, six toilets, and the installation of solar panels.

3. The fact that the size of the education system in Djibouti is rather small, it should enable a more precise approach regarding the challenges, the interventions required and the link to expected results.

In response, the revised Program Document includes different trainings for pedagogic counselors, school directors, inspectors, and pre-service training for teachers and inspectors. Although Djibouti is a small country, it is confronted to enormous challenges regarding access and quality. The proposed program tries to find a balance to answer to these urgent needs simultaneously. It is not possible to detail more in the current Program Document. However it is foreseen to develop more adapted approaches regarding the context of each school.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

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

Previous GPE grants were fully and satisfactorily implemented in the country. The proposed program incorporates lessons learned from previous GPE grants, and the experiences gained by the World Bank and other Development Partners in Djibouti, especially in terms of synergy between partners, capacity building, communication and support to pre- and in-service teacher training. The proposed activities are a follow-up on successful interventions from previous grants and operations supported by Development Partners and are complementary to other interventions in the sector. The preparation of the grant encouraged and increased closer collaboration amongst various partners.

Djibouti's grant application package was submitted by UNICEF on behalf of the Government and its Development Partners. The proposed Program Document includes a set of well-coordinated activities which respond to the needs of the country's education system and is aligned with the vision of the education action plan for the coming years and with relevant GPE strategic priorities.

The modality choice to continue to work through a Project Implementation Unit is not the most aligned modality but probably still the most appropriate in the current context and currently used by most of the Development Partners. The conclusions of the 2010 PEFA (Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability) diagnosis highlight weaknesses in budget preparation, execution and control. Nevertheless, it will be important to continue to increase the collaboration with other partners and interventions to strengthen the capacity of the Government in order to move forward to more aligned modalities in the future.

The Secretariat finds that the application package from Djibouti is ready for assessment by the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC).

ERITREA
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 25,302,563
(indicative allocation: US$ 25,300,000)

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

The State of Eritrea gained independence in 1993. It has not conducted a population census since but has an estimated population of approximately 3.4 million[12]. Eighty percent of the population lives in rural areas and there are nine ethnic nationalities. Eritrea's economy is mainly based on agriculture, light industry, fisheries, and services including tourism. Its main export potentials are mineral reserves, including gold, copper and potash. The country has diverse topographical and climatic conditions with cooler and rainy highlands, coastal lowlands, and desert-like arid regions. Parts of the country are not easily accessible due to the rugged terrain and distance from access points.

Eritrea's long effort to attain independence negatively impacted the socioeconomic situation of the country. While Eritrea has been collecting data through Education Management Information System (EMIS) for two decades, education sector data—specifically as it pertains to the financing of education in Eritrea—is not readily available, and developmental and income inequality data is limited.

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita was estimated to be US$ 549 in 2012; a 16 percent increase from 2011. Eritrea has a Human Development Index ranking of 181 in 2013.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Eritrea joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in April 2013 with an endorsed Education Sector Plan (ESP). The three main objectives of the ESP are to: (i) increase equitable access to basic (including adult and non-formal education), secondary and technical and vocational education; (ii) improve the quality of basic, secondary and technical and vocational education; and (iii) strengthen institutional capacity to deliver better quality education services.

The education sector in Eritrea is decentralized with responsibility related to service delivery carried out by the lower level governments and their technical departments. Capacity at the regional and sub-regional levels is generally limited. This has an impact on the quality and effectiveness of service delivery and monitoring.

[12] This figure is according to the Eritrea Population and Health Survey (EPHS) conducted in 2010 and the current estimate by the National statistics Office (NSO).

Since 1993, Eritrea's education sector has made progress in expanding access, retention, and completion: elementary education enrolment has doubled from 150,870 to 334,245 and the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for elementary education currently stands at 107.4 percent (2013); enrolment in middle and secondary school has tripled; the GER for Early Childhood Development (ECD) has risen from 8.6 percent in 2000 to 31.5 percent in 2011/12. The survival rate to Grade 5 is 79.3 percent (EMIS 2011/12) and the Primary Completion Rate (PCR) is 70.4 (2013).

Despite gains made in the sector, 36 percent of children 5-14 years of age are currently out-of-school in Eritrea. Drop-out is also a challenge, with an elementary level drop-out rate of five percent in 2011/12. Repetition rates in elementary are also high with a national average of 12.6 percent. Eritrea's Gender Parity Index for elementary level is 0.82, with persistent gender disparities in enrollment at various levels of education.

Key drivers of the high out-of-school children numbers have been identified as difficult geographical terrain that impedes access to schools, the nomadic way life which has been affected by repeated long droughts and flash floods, and economic hardship.

Despite government efforts to provide quality education, supply and coverage of qualified teachers remain key challenges due to limited capacity of training institutions. The Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA II) study conducted in 2008 found that the quality of teaching and learning remains weak. None of the regions had the minimum levels of mastery in the three core subjects of Mother Tongue, English, and Mathematics at Grade 3.

Education expenditure represents two percent of the country's GDP. The share of government expenditure on education has been on an upward trend from 8 percent in 2010 to 12 percent in 2013. As a donor orphan, Eritrea had no external financing to education in 2011 and 2012. The estimated financing gap for 2013 is US$ 79 million. GPE support will comprise an estimated 53 percent of external funding to the sector in 2014.

In 2012, Eritrea re-constituted a Local Education Group (the Education Sector Working Group, ESWG). The ESWG is led by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and is comprised of development partners including: UNICEF, European Union (EU), African Development Bank (AFDB), UNESCO National Commission, and civil society organizations (CSOs) including the National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (NUEYS), the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW), and the Teachers Association of Eritrea (TAE) and a private training provider institute (SMAP). GPE processes at country-level have contributed to the strengthening of the newly-established ESWG. The group has been actively involved in the planning of the GPE-supported program and is expected to fully engage in its implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. UNICEF is the Coordinating Agency (CA).

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Eritrea is requesting a grant in the amount of US$ US$ 25,302,563, which is US$ 2,563 above their Needs and Performance Framework (NPF) indicative allocation of US$ 25.3 million. The grant will be implemented under a project modality with UNICEF as the Supervising Entity (SE).

The program is in line with Eritrea's ESP (2013-2017) and will contribute to its five strategic priorities: i) increase equitable enrolment in basic and secondary education; ii) enhance and expand the provision of literacy and continuing education; iii) improve the quality of basic, secondary and technical and vocational education; iv) develop technical skills and technology training; and v) strengthen sector capacity to deliver better quality education. It is also in-line with the GPE strategic objectives.

The overall objective of the "Enhancing Equitable Access to Quality Basic Education for Social Justice" program is to enable children from disadvantaged communities in Eritrea, who are out of school, to receive a quality education and successfully complete a cycle of basic education. The program is comprised on three components as follows:

Component 1 focuses on increased equitable access to basic education including the provision and expansion of classrooms and schools; strengthening of complementary elementary education; and upgrading of facilities catering to children with hearing impairments and others with special needs.

Component 2 aims at improving the quality of teaching and learning in elementary and middle schools, and Early Child Development (ECD) and adult literacy centers through strengthening the enabling environment for both students and teachers.

Component 3 aims to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Education in management and monitoring and reinforce the capacity of education departments to deliver quality basic education in effective and efficient ways. The component also includes work that will directly feed into the strengthening of Eritrea's ESP.

	Program Component	Amount (US$)	Adjusting for inflation in US$ at 2% p.a.*	Percent of total (%)
1	Component 1: increased equitable access to basic education	**15,936,740**	**16,255,474.8**	**64.24**
	Sub-Component A: Enroll out of school boys and girls in disadvantaged communities in ANGS regions: 40,000	937,500	956,250	3.78
	Sub-Component B: Construction and Expansion of Learning Spaces: provide and/or improve learning spaces	11,781,000	12,016,620	47.49
	Sub-Component C: Provide teaching and learning resources to the new schools and CEE centers	3,218,240	3,282,604.8	12.97
2	Component 2: Improved quality of education (teaching and learning)	**6,429,319**	**6,557,905.38**	**25.91**
	Sub-component A: Curriculum planning, development, implementation and evaluation	4,067,383	4,148,730.66	16.40
	Sub-component B: Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)	136,846	139,582.92	.55
	Sub-component C: Mother Tongue Education	161,060	164,281.2	.65
	Sub-component D: Training of Teachers and Facilitators	1,566,230	1,597,554.6	6.31
	Sub-component E: Strengthen and consolidate the school support system in targeted basic and secondary schools and CEE centers, as appropriate, with multimedia materials and equipment, science kits, libraries, laboratories and e-learning and refresher courses	497,800	507,756	2
3	Component 3: capacity building and systems strengthening	**1,601,511**	**1,633,541.22**	**6.46**
	Sub-component A: Improve the management and monitoring capacity of the MOE at all levels	481,000	490,620	1.94
	Sub-component B: Conduct targeted research & studies	634,341	647,027.82	2.56
	Sub-component C: Disseminate Policies	129,000	131,580	.52

	Sub-component D: Monitoring, support supervision and quality assurance of the additional schools, activities and programs supported by the Program	357,170	364,313.4	1.44
4	Program management cost (MOE)	**855,643**	**855,643**	**3.38**
	Sub-total of Components 1, 2, and 3, and program management cost	24,823,213	25,302,564.4**	99.99
	TOTAL	**24,823,213**	**25,302,564**	**100**

* Note that, given the high cost of inflation in Eritrea and the expected impact on the program over time, costings have been adjusted for inflation.
** Total of components 1, 2, 3 adjusted for inflation at 2 percent p.a. plus program management cost with no inflationary adjustment.
*** Note that the standard Supervising Entity Fee of US$ 100,000 per year is not included in the total grant requested. Eritrea has submitted a proposal for Supervision Fees of US$ 335,800 per annum.
**** There are negligible discrepancies with the budget presented in the Program Document as a result of the rounding of figures.

Supervision Fees of US$ 1,343,200 or US$ 335,800 per annum are requested for this grant, based on the statement that over 90 percent of existing capacity in UNICEF Eritrea is tied to specific projects. To ensure sufficient monitoring and supervision to warrant the quality of the program, UNICEF Eritrea will require a human resources team dedicated to the program. The SE also notes the high cost of operating in the Eritrean context where geographical formations make necessary site visits challenging and expensive due to the high cost of fuel. A more elaborated justification is presented by separate proposal to the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) and Board of Directors for consideration. This justification notes that a lower Supervision Fee will impede UNICEF's ability to satisfactorily carry out the role of SE.

The Ministry of National Development (MoND) will exercise overall coordination responsibility on behalf of the Government of the State of Eritrea (GoSE). The MoND, the MoE and UNICEF will work in partnership on the implementation of the grant within the framework of the existing GoSE–UNICEF Country Program of Cooperation modality, specifically, the Country Program Action Plan (2013-2016) and the Basic Cooperation Agreement. Related procurement and financial management processes and procedures will be in accordance with a Program Implementation Manual (PIM) which the MoE will develop prior to the commencement of the program, no later than 30 November 2013. The PIM will be approved by MoND and UNICEF.

The MoE will implement the program through the Project Management Unit of the Department of Administration and Finance (DAF). The DAF has some degree of experience implementing previous programs financed by the World Bank, AfDB, UNICEF, and the EU but a need for some capacity development within the DAF is anticipated.

The proposed program is linked to the UN Strategic Partnership and Cooperation Framework for 2013-2016. It envisages strong partnerships with other sectors (e.g. Health; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH); Child Protection and social services).

The primary risks to the program revolve around capacity and fiduciary arrangements. Additional risks and mitigation measures are outlined in the Program Document beginning page 43. In its role as SE, UNICEF will provide support for strengthening the overall system capacity. Weak monitoring and reporting capacity, especially at lower levels of government, will be addressed through integration of M&E into government systems and strengthening the capacity of relevant government staff and community representatives to monitor. At the community level, the program will build the capacity of the community members through targeted short-term training programs to assure the quality of construction.

To prevent delays in procurement and mitigate fiduciary risk, UNICEF will establish a separate Unit for the overall supervision of the program. Synergistic linkages will be promoted between the Unit and the Education Section of the Country Program under the supervision of the Chief of Education. Technical financial officers will also be appointed at the respective levels, and there will be a focused strengthening of the oversight capacity of zoba and sub-zoba administrators and technical personnel to enable efficient management of the sub-national level grants.

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

The Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Phase I concluded that a collaborative and transparent process was conducted in developing a concept note for the proposed GPE-supported program within the ESWG. QAR Phase I focused on the need for dialogue and decision on the modality of the grant; the need to prioritize what activities would be supported by the grant; and the need to ensure the program would be in alignment with the ESP, which was still being drafted.

A Managing Entity (ME) modality was decided during QAR I discussions, but following the QAR II, the GoSE expressed a strong interest in moving from the ME modality to a Supervising Entity (SE) modality, with UNICEF as the SE. All parties have agreed on this arrangement and have defined implementation arrangements and risk mitigation measures in the Program Document.

Key recommendations of the QAR Phase II and subsequent address in the final Program Document are outlined below:

1. Provide additional information on GoSE's commitment to implementing the project and to providing finance, including past expenditure breakdowns, and future commitments/expected commitments to financing education, particularly basic education.

In response, with regards to financing education, both actual and projected financial expenditures on basic education by the Ministry of Finance are now presented in the Program Document (Table 1, page 5).

2. Include clearer analysis of the challenges to enrolment in basic education, including the problems faced by settled and nomadic communities in the four zobas, and more contextual information surrounding proposed solutions.

In response, Section 2.1 of the Program Document includes more clear discourse on the challenges to enrolment in basic education and includes detail on the specific challenges faced by disadvantaged populations in Eritrea.

3. Describe and define a more elaborated Results Framework and M&E arrangements.

In response, detailed description of the Results Framework at outcome and output level indicators, and including baseline data and target values, has been included in the Program Document (Tables 10 and 11, Pages 57-58, and Annex 1, page 87). A Program Implementation Manual will be developed by the MoE prior to the commencement of the program, not later than 30 November 2013. The PIM will be approved by MoND and UNICEF before it can be applied. This will include a detailed plan for the monitoring and evaluation of program implementation.

4. Clearly link activities aimed at adult literacy to strengthened basic education in order to ensure alignment with GPE strategic priorities.

In response, the final program document emphasizes the need for a literate adult population to underpin the program activities aimed at enrolling out-of-school children, particularly in nomadic communities and with regard to girls. Adult literacy is coupled with sensitization campaigns to further develop an overall appreciation of learning and reading.

5. Develop a revised budget that clearly links costings to project activities/components.

In response, the budget has been revised to provide clear links between costs and activities.

6. Develop a program implementation manual to provide details on how the program is going to be implemented including project oversight and M&E arrangements as well as procurement and financial management arrangements.

In response, a PIM will be developed and approved prior to the commencement of the program.

7. Due to a number of significant gap areas in the draft Program Document identified in QAR II, the Secretariat strongly encourages the GoSE to delay the submission of the final grant application package to the GPE Secretariat until September 2013 to allow for critical development of both the ESDP and the Program Document.

In response, a decision was made to delay the submission of the application to September 2013. The interim time period has been utilized to strengthen both the Program Document and the ESP implementation plan.

QAR II discussions also focused on the need to further consider how GPE resources or complimentary work of partners would support girls' education in Eritrea. Since QAR II, the team has added a specific address of girls in the program.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program has been developed in a collaborative manner with engagement from the ESWG. The application and supporting documents are internally complete, and the application package is ready for assessment by the FAC. While initial discussions and planning with regard to education financing lacked transparency, there has been marked progress in this area and the GoSE has provided financial data needed to complete the application package.

The program is well-aligned with Eritrea's ESP and national development strategies, and with GPE strategic objectives. The GPE-supported program includes specific activities to strengthen the Plan and the grant will support more general implementation of the Plan. Development partners within the ESWG are widely supportive of the GPE program.

Communication between the Secretariat, the SE and the GoSE has been ongoing, with a number of significant challenges around the scope of the role of the SE and the implementation arrangements. The Secretariat has worked to facilitate a solution to which all parties agree.

The operating environment in Eritrea is complex, owing in part to the country's relative youth, its challenging climatic and environmental realities, and its previously relatively closed economic and political state. This will necessitate UNICEF taking on a stronger role as SE than it has done in Afghanistan and Yemen. UNICEF Eritrea has requested a higher Supervision Fee allocation for this reason. The modality may present challenges as the GoSE emerges from a period of relative isolation to one of greater transparency and external engagement. However, UNICEF has expressed considerable support to ensure the GoSE is appropriately supported to achieve the desired outcomes.

Risks to the program are centered on capacity, procurement and fiduciary considerations. While these risks are significant, measures have been put in place to address and mitigate them.

The current political climate in Eritrea offers opportunities for the MoE and education development partners to engage with global and regional initiatives to strengthen the education sector and increase access to quality education. Further engagement in the Global

Partnership will provide opportunities for Eritrea to both harmonize technical and financial support of development partners and, perhaps, to attract the support of new development partners to the sector. GPE processes have already contributed to strengthening coordination within the newly established ESWG in Eritrea. While the Secretariat would appreciate more, there has been an increased sharing of financial and other education-related data on the part of the GoSE. Overall, the Secretariat notes progress in Eritrea's education sector and in government commitment to education in the year since Eritrea initiated communication with the Secretariat.

ETHIOPIA
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 100 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Ethiopia is a multi-cultural and multi-lingual nation consisting of eleven regions under a federal government system. With a population of 91.7 million[13], it ranks second in population size among African nations. Only 17 percent of the population lives in urban centers. Ethiopia is one of the world's poorest countries, ranking 173 in the 2013 Human Development Index.

The Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) articulates Ethiopia's overall strategic economic and human development goals with the overall objective of becoming a middle-income country by 2023. The country has experienced strong economic growth over the past decade, averaging 10.7 percent per year between 2003/04 and 2011/12. This has brought the share of the population living below the poverty line down from 38.7 percent in 2004/05 to 29.6 percent in 2010/11. However, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita income remains low, at US$ 370.

Ethiopia has made rapid progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and is considered on track to achieve the MDGs on gender parity in education, child mortality, HIV/AIDS and malaria. Yet, Ethiopia remains vulnerable to trade shocks from international food and fuel prices as well as to droughts and famine. Continued advancement will depend on sustained economic growth and progress in the social sectors.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Ethiopia joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in 2005, when the third phase of the Education Sector Development Program was endorsed by its development partners (ESDP III, covering the years 2005/06-2009/10). The current education sector plan, ESDP IV, covers 2010/11-2014/15.

The priorities of ESDP IV are: (i) quality and internal efficiency; (ii) equity in access; (iii) adult education (in particular functional adult literacy); (iv) science and technical & vocational education and training; and (v) management capacities. Within ESDP IV, the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP) addresses quality issues nation-wide.

[13] United Nations, 2012. According to the Ethiopian Central Statistics Office, the population is 82.6 million.

The Government's strong commitment to education is expressed through its education spending, which increased from 11.3 percent of the national budget in 1999/00 to 24 percent in 2011/12. By investing a significant share of its resources in education, the Government achieved an increase in the number of primary and secondary schools from nearly 11,000 to over 31,000; the number of classrooms from nearly 72,000 to nearly 300,000; and the number of teachers from approximately 105,000 to 321,000 between 1999/00 and 2011/12[14].

These investments led to an increase in primary enrollment from 8.14 million to 16.99 million. From 2001/02 to 2011/12, the Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) increased from 62 percent (51 percent girls) to 95 percent (93 percent girls) and the Net Enrollment Rate (NER) increased from 52 percent (45 percent girls) to 85 percent (84 percent girls). The Gender Parity Index (GPI) improved from 0.76 to 0.95 during the same period. Between 2006/07 and 2011/12, the grade 5 completion rate increased from 67 percent to 74 percent and the grade 8 completion rate improved from 45 percent to 52 percent. In order to monitor learning outcomes, Ethiopia is one of the few countries in Africa that has institutionalized learning assessments through a periodic National Learning Assessment (NLA).

Despite the rapid increase in access, about three million primary-age children remain out of school according to UNICEF. The national grade one dropout rate was 28 percent in 2000/01 and 25 percent in 2011/12. Many of the children who do not enroll or drop out early face multiple challenges related to remoteness and geographical conditions, income and gender disparities. A significant proportion lives in disadvantaged ("emerging") regions where most pastoralist and semi-pastoralist groups live.

The total ESDP IV funding gap amounts to US$ 1,316 million, including US$ 821 million during 2013/14 and 2014/15.

Education sector support is coordinated by the Education Technical Working Group (ETWG), which is co-led by the Ministry of Education and a development partner on a rotational basis. Currently, the co-leading partner is USAID. Members of ETWG include the African Development Bank, Department for International Development (DFID), Denmark Embassy, Embassy of Belgium, Embassy of Finland, Embassy of Norway, European Commission, German Embassy/GIZ/KFW, Irish Aid, Italian Cooperation, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Netherlands Embassy, Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, USAID, World Food Program (WFP) and the World Bank. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are not represented in the ETWG, but participate actively in technical working groups under the ETWG.

[14] Education Monitoring and Information System (EMIS) 2000, 2012

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

In 2008, the Government launched the first phase of GEQIP, which aimed to improve the quality of general education in grades 1–12. GEQIP I was financed through a pooled fund with programmatic financing for implementation by the Ministry of Education. Financing from various sources was not earmarked to specific components, giving flexibility for moving resources across the components based on the progress made during implementation. GEQIP I was financed through national resources (US$ 84.5 million) supplemented by external funding in the amount of US$ 332.8 million from donors, including US$ 168 million from the GPE with the World Bank as Supervising Entity (SE) (US$ 70 million approved in 2008 and US$ 98 million approved in 2010). These overlapping grants have been disbursed at 96 and 99 percent, respectively, with the remaining US$ 3,391,707[15] committed for the payment of textbook contracts.

The main components of GEQIP I included: (i) Curriculum, Textbooks and Assessment; (ii) Teacher Development Program, including English Language Quality Improvement Program; (iii) School Improvement Program, including school grants; (iv) Management and Administration Program, including Education Monitoring and Information System (EMIS); and (v) Program Coordination, including monitoring and evaluation activities.

Among its targets, GEQIP set out to achieve a 1:1 student-textbook ratio. To this end, GEQIP I supported the development and distribution of more than 120 new textbook titles. In total, approximately 70 million textbooks have been printed and distributed to all grade levels. By the end of GEQIP I, before the end of 2013, a total of 78 million textbooks will have been printed and distributed to schools. A 2012 external evaluation assessed textbook availability and reported the textbook ratio at 0.58. The current textbook to student ratio is estimated at 0.82.

GEQIP has also led to significant progress in increasing the number of qualified teachers. The percentage of teachers with appropriate qualifications (diploma or degree) increased from four percent in 2006/07 to 30 percent in 2011/12, against a target of 16 percent for the first cycle of primary education (grade 1-4). Over the same period, the percentage of qualified teachers increased from 53 to 91 percent in the second cycle of primary (grade 5-8) compared to the target of 56 percent. For grades 9-12, an increase from 50 to 90 percent was achieved.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

[15] According to the Secretariat's disbursement records on August 31, 2013.

The application amount of US$ 100 million is in line with the indicative allocation provided by the GPE Needs and Performance Framework (NPF). The World Bank was selected as Supervising Entity (SE), and the pooled funding modality used under GEQIP I will continue.

Both phases of GEQIP contribute to the goals of ESDP IV. GEQIP II will continue one year beyond the end of ESDP IV and will be an integral part of ESDP V when it is developed. Primary beneficiaries of GEQIP II will be 21.65 million students in grades 1-12, of which 10.54 million are expected to be girls. Secondary beneficiaries include 456,000 teachers, including 182,000 female teachers. GEQIP has six main components:

Component 1 aims to revise the curriculum, increase access to teaching and learning materials, improve student assessment and strengthen school inspectorates.

Component 2 focuses on pre-service teacher training, in-service teacher training and the licensing and re-licensing of teachers and school leaders.

Component 3 focuses on school improvement plans and school grants to support the implementation of school improvement plans. Additional per capita incentives will be provided to the most disadvantaged regions and students, as well as performance-based incentives to promote improved learning outcomes.

Component 4 focuses on management and capacity building, including EMIS.

Component 5 is a pilot program designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning through the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

Finally, **Component 6** seeks to strengthen institutional capacity through the provision of technical advisory support, investment and non-salary operating costs, as well as monitoring and evaluation of the GEQIP program.

The total cost of GEQIP Phase II is estimated to be US$ 550 million. Of this, approximately US$ 474 million is either secured or in the pipeline, including the US$ 100 million allocation requested from GPE. The Government is discussing internally and with donors to fill the remaining US$ 76 million funding gap. Since a pooled fund mechanism is used, specific activities cannot be attributed to the GPE funds. The breakdown of the budget is as follows[16]:

[16] Some of the sub-component budgets do not add up to the total Component budget since there are slight discrepancies between the budgets in the Application Form and the Program Appraisal Document (PAD). Final negotiations on these details will occur in the weeks before the FAC meeting and a note will be prepared to explain adjustments. In the meantime, this Report uses the figures from the Application Form for the main components but the figures from the PAD for the sub-components.

	Program Component	Amount (US$)	Percent of total (%)
1	Curriculum, textbooks and assessment	**115,000,000**	**20.9**
	Sub-component 1.1: Curriculum reform & implementation	2,000,000	
	Sub-component 1.2:Teaching and learning materials	104,200,000	
	Sub-component 1.3: Assessment and Examinations	2,100,000	
	Sub-component 1.4: Inspection	6,000,000	
2	Teacher Development Program	**70,000,000**	**12.8**
	Sub-component 2.1: Pre-service teacher training	19,700,000	
	Sub-component 2.2: In-service teacher training	29,800,000	
	Sub-component 2.3: Licensing and relicensing of teachers and school leaders	20,500,000	
3	School Improvement Program	**255,000,000**	**46.4**
	Sub-component 3.1: School Improvement Plans	6,000,000	
	Sub-component 3.2: School Grants	248,900,000	
4	Management and Capacity Building	**20,000,000**	**3.6**
	Sub-component 4.1: Capacity building for education planning and management	4,800,000	
	Sub-component 4.2: Capacity building for school planning and management	4,300,000	
	Sub-component 4.3: Education Management Information Systems	12,500,000	
5	Improving the quality of learning and teaching through ICT	**35,000,000**	**6.4**
	Sub-component 5.1: National policy and institution for ICT in general education	1,200,000	
	Sub-component 5.2: National ICT infrastructure improvement plan for general education	28,400,000	
	Sub-component 5.3: Integrated monitoring, evaluation and learning system for ICT component	700,000	
	Sub-component 5.4: Teacher ICT professional development	2,800.000	
6	Program Coordination, M&E and communication	**20,000,000**	**3.6**
	Sub-component 6.1: Program coordination	9,800,000	
	Sub-component 6.2: Monitoring and Evaluation	6,000,000	

	Sub-component 6.3: Communication	4,100,000	
	Total components 1-6	**515,000,000**	**93.7**
	Physical contingencies	20,000,000	3.6
	Program contingencies	15,000,000	2.7
	TOTAL	**550,000,000**	**100.0**

*Other Agency fees not included in the total grant requested: 1.75 percent.
** Note that the Supervising Entity fee requested is US$ 150,000 per year, which is above the standard fee.

Apart from the GPE grant, additional contributions to the pooled fund include US$ 130 million in IDA funds, approximately US$ 190 million from DFID, US$ 27 million from Finland, US$ 10 million from Italy, and US$ 20 million from USAID[17]. Donor funding may therefore reach approximately US$ 477 million. The funding gap is impacted by the loss of Dutch funds, which contributed extensively to GEQIP I, as well as the lower amount from the GPE compared to the amount for GEQIP I. Some of these losses have been made up by funds from other donors, including an increase in the IDA allocation.

The Program Document reviews risks associated with design, capacity, delivery and monitoring. Mitigation measures build on the lessons learned in GEQIP I.

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

The Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Phase I concluded that a consultative process for the development of GEQIP had been set up but that it would be important to ensure that ETWG members not contributing to the pooled fund, as well as key stakeholders not represented in the ETWG, including civil society, would be involved in the program development process. It also concluded that the links between ESDP and GEQIP are clear and that four out of five GPE strategic objectives would be addressed by the program. Finally, QAR Phase I concluded that the multi-donor pooled fund supporting GEQIP is the most aligned education financing modality available and as demonstrated by GEQIP I, generally an effective way to pool resources in support of a government-led program.

The application testifies that the broader ETWC, including civil society and CSOs, were included in discussions on the program design through six technical working groups involved in the program design as well as in several consultative meetings culminating in a large workshop.

The principal QAR Phase II recommendations and their follow-up actions include the following:

[17] Since only the IDA, GPE and USAID amounts are given in US$, these amounts are estimates and may fluctuate according to exchange rates.

1. A review of the results framework to identify outcomes that accurately reflect progress and enable appropriate indicators to be designed; provide baseline and target figures; distinguish between 'outcomes' and 'outputs'.

In response, the finalized results framework includes indicators that are measurable, reflect the key investments in the project and focus on outcomes. Baseline and target values have been defined and added in the Program Appraisal Document (PAD).

2. Make risk and mitigation measures explicit in a clear chart that should represent the full range of inherent and external risks.

The Overall Risk Assessment Framework has been added in the document as well as a summary section in the PAD.

3. Address sustainability issues coherently and systematically, across all components of the program by indicating the measures that will be taken to promote sustainability.

The economic and financial analysis explains the potential investments needed to ensure sustainability. In addition to financial sustainability, a number of activities are explained to be one-off activities such as teacher upgrading and supervisor and principals retraining. Such activities will improve the institutional capacity to better manage the education systems and contribute to the sustainability of other activities supporting improved learning outcomes.

4. Provide a more complete picture of the context, including necessary assessments missing from the draft proposal; clear explanations of regional diversity and resulting factors that may affect implementation in different regions; and, *provide indications that the lessons of GEQIP I regarding the influence of contextual factors will be applied in designing the program.*

Procurement assessment, finance management assessment, institutional assessment and social assessment were conducted during the project design phase and the final design of the project reflects the findings of these assessments. Summaries of these assessments are attached to the application. The various guidelines are being simplified for ease of implementation in the more disadvantaged regions. Intensive communications campaigns will also target the harder to reach areas and the parents who are less likely to be involved at the school level.

5. Improve the monitoring and evaluation of the program by including explanations of how the data and conclusions resulting from monitoring and evaluation will be used in managing the program, planning and communication; clearly define arrangements for monitoring capacity development activities; conduct evaluation of the partnerships involved in order to analyse and improve coordination and management and learn lessons for the implementation of aid effectiveness principles.

Strengthened sections on monitoring and evaluations have been provided in the annex on component design. The suggested evaluation of partnerships has not yet been planned, since there are a number of evaluations of the various interventions that have been planned and this could overwhelm the government systems. However, the proposed evaluation is critical for future collaboration and may be planned outside the domain of the project.

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. An explanatory note will be added to reflect final adjustments in sub-component budgets.

The Government of Ethiopia has demonstrated strong commitment to education through the allocation of significant domestic resources and through rigorous attention to the design and adjustment of policies and programs through coordination mechanisms and sector reviews. There has been clear progress in the involvement of civil society, including through the establishment of an office for the civil society coalition, the Basic Education Network, within the Ministry of Education. The Secretariat will continue to discuss the involvement of CSOs with the Government and its partners.

In spite of Ethiopia's many challenges, the implementation of the first phase of GEQIP has exceeded targets in terms of several intended outputs, and there are indications that this concerted effort to improve quality is beginning to slow down the decline in learning outcomes and start progress towards concrete improvements. However, further efforts are needed and GEQIP II is a logical follow-up program that builds on the achievements and lessons learned of GEQIP I. The Secretariat notes the particular attention given to Ethiopia's vulnerable populations and regions.

While the program is complex, the satisfactory performance of GEQIP I together with the rigorous attention to its lessons learned by both the Ministry of Education and partners, provide assurance that GEQIP II will contribute effectively to continued progress towards quality education. The significant support mobilized from various donors demonstrates broad confidence in GEQIP II.

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 12.7 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

The Kyrgyz Republic is a landlocked mountainous country in Central Asia with a multiethnic population of 5.5 million, of which 29 percent are below the age of 15 years. With an estimated per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US$ 880 in 2010, the Kyrgyz Republic is one of the poorest economies in the Europe and Central Asia region. According to the latest available official statistics, an estimated 32 percent of the population lived below the poverty line in 2009, while three percent lived in extreme poverty. The incidence of poverty in rural areas (37 percent) was far higher than in urban areas (22 percent). The Kyrgyz Republic ranks 125th in the 2013 Human Development Index.

The country gained independence in 1991 but experienced civil unrest in 2005 and 2010. Political demonstrations in 2010 climaxed with violent clashes leading to hundreds of deaths and large-scale internal displacement. The causes of tension lie in multiple, persistent stresses in society which are being addressed through efforts at social reconciliation, and equitable investment in critical sectors, including investment in social services which vary considerably in quality across the country. Since 2010, the Government's agenda includes a program of security, governance, anticorruption and, where feasible, ethnic reconciliation measures in order to secure a political consolidation.

EDUCATION SECTOR

The Kyrgyz Republic joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in 2006 when its Education Development Strategy 2001-2010 was endorsed by education partners. Since then, the country has developed the Education Development Strategy 2012-2020 (EDS 2020) and the Medium-Term Educational Development Program for 2012-2014 (MTEDP 2012-2014). At the forefront of the Government's agenda is improving access and quality of Early Childhood Education (ECE) and improving learning outcomes in general basic education.

In 2009, there were approximately 1.1 million students in the education system, of which about
400,000 were in primary grades. 98 percent of students attend public schools, and over two-thirds of these students are in rural areas. While coverage is good, providing quality education remains a challenge. National student assessments conducted in 2009 showed that two-thirds of Grade 4 students could not master the basics in their mother tongue, mathematics, and science.

During the last decade the Government has demonstrated sustained financial commitment to education (averaging 6.2 percent of GDP per year) despite a difficult economic climate and increased political instability. This resulted in slight improvements to basic education enrolment from 85 percent to 87.8 percent during the period 2004-2011 and a high literacy rate (99.2 percent). The primary to lower secondary transition rate is universal. Gender parity between girls and boys has been achieved at the system level including preschool.

Despite these investments, the availability and quality of ECE in Kyrgyz Republic is very low. At the collapse of the Soviet Union, 34 percent of children aged 3-6 years were enrolled in ECE. Since then the rate has dropped significantly, especially in rural areas. As of 2010, only 18 percent of children age 3-6 were enrolled, and access remains highly inequitable by rural/urban location and socio-economic status.

The Education Sector Plan for 2012-2014 and additional projections for 2015-2016 identified an overall funding gap of US$ 61 million for the sector between 2014 and 2016. The yearly gap for pre-school education is estimated at about US$ 4.7 million for the same period. The GPE funding would account for 9.6 percent of the government spending on pre-school per year in the period of 2014-2016.

While the funding gap is likely to remain an issue in the education sector in the near future, efforts to raise the efficiency of education spending and to introduce alternative mechanisms to increase access to pre-school education should contribute to eventually reducing this gap. As such, the proposed project design was underpinned on the principle of supporting sustainable alternatives while promoting greater efficiency of education spending.

Under the leadership of the Government, the Local Education Group (LEG) meets routinely through the Development Partners Coordination Committee (DPCC) which is chaired by the Deputy Minister of Education and Science. UNICEF is the Coordinating Agency. Members of the LEG include the Asian Development Bank, Aga Khan Development Network, the EU, German International Cooperation (GIZ), Soros Foundation, USAID, and the World Bank.

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

In November 2006, Kyrgyz Republic received an FTI Catalytic Fund grant for US$ 15 million, divided in two tranches of US$ 9 million and US$ 6 million, for the period 2007-2009 with the World Bank as the Supervising Entity (SE). The grant agreement for the second tranche in the amount of US$ 6 million was about to be signed when the government was overthrown in April 2010. All World Bank operations were suspended, including the second tranche of FTI support. Following the stabilization of the government, the last tranche of US$ 6 million was finally released in March 2011 and the program closed in December 2012.

The first tranche of the GPE, then FTI, funds (FTI-1) contributed to an improved learning environment, an increased awareness among local communities and stakeholders of the importance of early childhood development, an upgraded teaching workforce and a better

material base in the Kyrgyz Republic. Forty-nine schools were rehabilitated, 841 teachers were trained, over a 100 titles of new preschool learning materials were developed with over 360,000 copies printed and distributed. About 300 schools provided nutrition supplements to 76,000 students and 99 pre-schools provided feeding programs to 11,000 students. Nonetheless, the short implementation period even with the extensions, prevented an assessment of improvements in student performance.

The second tranche of funds (FTI-2) was used to support the Government's introduction of the national school preparation program for a smooth transition to school for children between the ages of five and six years. A lesson learned from the FTI-1 grant was that project inputs are time-consuming and that high level outcomes or changes in the behavior of beneficiary groups cannot be achieved or measured in a short period of time. Therefore, this grant adopted simple and measurable outcome and output indicators. Given the short implementation period of 18 months, the existing Bank-financed Project Implementation Unit (PIU) within The Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) from FTI-1 was used. The project was successful in achieving its objectives. Since the official launch of the 240-hour school preparation program country wide in early April 2012, 2,135 schools have opened at least one preschool class offering the 240-hour program to the communities they serve. The total number of children enrolled in the program amounted to approximately 55,000.

Many lessons were learned from previous grants and reflected in the project design. These include the need for the Bank to ensure strong coordination with Development Partners but refrain from adopting a sector wide approach (SWAp) due to the lack of satisfactory country fiduciary systems and reliable monitoring mechanisms, as well as the importance of raising community awareness and fostering parental involvement to ensure that children have the opportunities to receive ECE services.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The requested program implementation grant of US$ 12.7 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 (SE). Although a sector-wide approach has been pursued to better coordinate development assistance under the Government's sector strategy and plan, pooling funds is not feasible as existing country systems are not adequate to ensure compliance with fiduciary requirements and procedures that meet acceptable international standards. Thus, the project modality has been selected and endorsed by the LEG.

The project supports implementation of the EDS 2020 and MTEDP 2012-2014 to expand access to quality preschool education. It will also increase equitable access to preschool education and establish conditions for improving its quality. The following components are proposed:

Component 1 aims to enable all children to benefit from a full-year school preparation program; increase access to pre-school education for children aged 4-5 years in underserved, marginalized communities; and support a pilot initiative to integrate children aged 4-6 years with special education needs into mainstream ECE services.

Component 2 aims to improve policy, programs, and system effectiveness.

Component 3 will finance communications and incremental operating costs generated by the project.

In addition to close alignment with the national Education Development Strategy, the following GPE priorities are addressed by the project:

- *Dramatic increase in the number of children learning and demonstrating mastery of basic literacy and numeracy skills by Grade 3.* International evidence clearly shows that quality ECE interventions are critical to the development of early numeracy and language competencies. Component 1 will address this by introducing a full-year preparation program for children aged 6, supporting community-based kindergartens for children aged 4-5 in the most marginalized communities, and supporting a pilot initiative for integration of children with special needs.
- *Improve teacher effectiveness by training, recruiting and retaining teachers and supporting them to provide a good quality education.* Component 1 will provide high quality in-service training to teachers and deputy directors.
- *Expand the volume, effectiveness, efficiency and equitable allocation of external and domestic funding and support to education.* Mechanisms are included to ensure equitable and pro-poor allocation of financial resources, and the government has demonstrated its commitment to the project by agreeing to finance recurrent teacher costs for the full-year preparation program.

	Program Component	**Amount (US$)**	**Percent of total (%)**
1	Expansion of quality pre-primary education	**11,600,000**	**91.3**
	Sub-component 1.1: Expansion of school preparation program	8,750,000	68.9
	Sub-component 1.2:Expansion of early education services	2,600,000	20.5
	Sub-component 1.3:Support for inclusive education	250,000	2.0
2	Improved policy, programs, and system effectiveness	**300,000**	**2.4**
3	Communications and implementation support	**800,000**	**6.3**
	Sub-component 3.1: Communications and Advocacy	60,000	0.5
	Sub-component 3.2: Stakeholder	100,000	0.8

	monitoring and evaluation		
	Sub-component 3.3: Implementation support	640,000	5.0
	TOTAL	**12,700,000**	**100.0**

*Other Agency fees not included in the total grant requested: 1.75 percent of the GPE grant.
** Note that the SE has requested a supervising fee of US$ 150,000 per year, which is US$ 50,000 above the standard. The total Supervising Entity fee of US$ 450,000 is not included in the total grant requested.

Aside from the broader political complexity, risks to effective and efficient implementation of the project include financing shortage, low institutional capacity, absence of a reliable education Management Information System, lack of transparency and accountability and overall governance challenges. In order to mitigate key risks, project design is simple and focused on few interventions that promote previously piloted alternatives. MoES departments would be directly involved in the project implementation and supported by a small Project Coordination Unit (PCU) in charge of fiduciary areas and project monitoring. The Deputy Minister responsible for Basic Education would be the national coordinator for the project.

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

The first phase of the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) concluded that the project concept and identification of activities followed a transparent and participatory process, and that the project is consistent with the national Education Sector Plan. It also concluded that three of the five GPE strategic objectives have been included in the project and recommended more attention be paid to equity, including girls, disabled children or children from ethnic and religious minority backgrounds. Finally, QAR Phase I noted strong country ownership and harmonization but recommended better alignment on national processes and procedures.

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

1. Improve alignment principles by changing the project modality so as to follow as much as possible national modalities, especially in terms of financial management or by moving to a complete sector-wide approach.

In response, given the fiduciary shortcomings of the sector, particularly of MoES, Development
Partners agreed that pooling funds is not yet feasible as existing country systems do not meet acceptable international standards. The proposed project would support the transition towards greater use of the country systems. Grant implementation will be carried out by the MoES using its existing pre-school and general education department rather than a stand-alone Project Implementation Unit (PIU). The MoES will be supported by a small coordination unit for managing procurement and financial management reporting to compensate for the lack of fiduciary function and adequate staff.

2. Improve the results' framework to better identify planned outcomes of the project and the outputs for each component.

In response, the outcome indicators have been revised to reflect the value added by the project. The proposed project would introduce two measurement tools to gauge the effectiveness of teaching training and the level of school readiness.

3. Address the issue of capacity building more deeply and propose robust capacity building activities.

In response, the program document has been improved to explain that building capacity is embedded in the design and is balanced with the long term institutional strengthening and capacity to manage immediate implementation challenges.

4. Involve a third party organization for monitoring and evaluation to ensure better transparency and quality.

In response, third party monitoring and evaluation has been incorporated in the component 3 to ensure independent assessment of the implementation and results.

5. Strengthen the communication strategy of the project through more community engagement in monitoring and reporting.

In response, the SE team has strengthened the communication strategy in the revised component 3. The expanded communication and advocacy activities target key stakeholders including parents and communities to stimulate the demand and support for early childhood education and development. Community voice and participation is supported by having the communities involved in the commitment to and selection of new community based kindergartens under component 1. An independent monitoring and evaluation has been introduced in component 3 to involve stakeholders and communities in implementation.

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).

Previous FTI/GPE grants were satisfactorily implemented. The design of the proposed project incorporates the lessons learned and to a large extent builds on the pilots supported by previous grants. The full year early childhood education program (480 hours) is an expansion of the 240-hour program with refinement of the content. The policy and legislative framework for expanding ECE was the direct result of the implementation of the

previous grant's second phase. Given that the implementation arrangements incorporate elements and structures used in the prior pilot with enhancements put in place, the project would be ready for implementation upon approval.

The EDS 2020 and MTEDP 2012-2014 articulate the Government's priorities to expand access to quality preschool education, introduce a full-year school preparedness program, and advance knowledge in ECE. The proposed project is fully aligned with these objectives and supports sustainable solutions and development of knowledge and capacity to reach these goals. The SE has agreed with MoES to start transitioning implementation arrangements to a mechanism whereby MoES Department/Unit heads would take the lead implementing role. The PIU from previous FTI projects has been downsized into a PCU to include only a core group of staff to carry out fiduciary and disbursement responsibilities. Although the implementation arrangement does not appear to be optimal with regard to alignment on national processes and procedures, members of the LEG agreed that the proposed arrangements are appropriate and realistic at this time.

The Kyrgyz Republic's program shows readiness to implement and the application package is ready for FAC consideration.

REPUBLIC OF NIGER
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 84.2 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

With a population of approximately 16.6 million, Niger has one of the highest population growth rates in the world at 3.5 percent. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita growth, averaging 6.5 percent over the last five years, while outpacing population growth, has not resulted in appreciable economic improvement among the 82 percent of the population living in rural areas. With a nominal GDP per capita of US$ 383, nearly 3 out of 5 Nigeriens live in poverty. In 2012, Niger was ranked in last place at 186 on the Human Development Index. Extensive flooding and recurrent famines are persistent problems that hamper economic development.

Uranium and petroleum extraction accounts for much of the economic growth, and much of this activity takes place in the northern part of the country, far from population concentrations. The security situation in this same region remains a concern following the movement of irregular military forces between Libya and northern Mali during the 2011-2013 period. The increased incidence of heavy weapons following the conflict in Mali, the return of migrant workers, the presence of refugees as well as the thriving trans-Saharan drug trade, are undermining the overall security situation.

EDUCATION SECTOR

The country's education system has been under severe strain for much of the past two decades. The strong demographic growth coupled with low levels of learning outcomes and high unit costs, particularly for civil service teachers, have left the youth of the country without the basic skills needed by the evolving economy. With much of the country sparsely populated, the school system has not been able to provide adequate proximity schooling to children in isolated communities. Over the past decade, the school system has undergone an impressive expansion with gross enrollment almost doubling from 42 to 79 percent and primary completion more than doubling from 26 to 56 percent between 2002 and 2012. Current enrollment in primary education was 1.72 million in 2010 and is expected to reach 2.16 million by 2014. While the expansion in access is impressive, this progression is relative to an extremely low starting point. Gender inequality remains a major concern with a 17 point difference in enrollment rates for boys and girls in 2012. Recent measures of learning outcomes show that nearly three-fourths of primary school leavers lack the minimum required competencies.

The country's public expenditure on education is 3.2 percent of its GDP, and 23.0 percent of total public expenditures, placing Niger above the median for comparison countries. While it is not likely that public spending on education will increase markedly, there is much room for improvement in the efficiency of that spending: decreasing teacher absenteeism, redeploying redundant administrative staff into teaching positions in what is now lower secondary and increasing student retention and primary completion. There could also be major efficiency gains in the way that schooling is organized in rural areas where there are not enough school age children for a standard school with one grade per teacher.

The current sector plan (PSEF: *Programme Sectoriel de l'Education et de la Formation*), endorsed in 2013, covers the period 2014-2024 and includes as priorities (i) a focus on the quality of basic education including the introduction of mother tongue instruction in the early grades, better pedagogical supervision, improved supply of pedagogical materials, (ii) continuation of the recruitment of state-paid contract teachers and a corresponding decline in the reliance on civil service teachers, (iii) redeployment of teachers to rural areas, (iv) incentive programs for girls' enrollment and retention, (v) extension of the basic education cycle to include the first four years of what is now lower secondary. The plan covers the entire sector and includes a detailed, costed action plan as per the guidance provided in Global Partnership for Education (GPE's) Sector Monitoring Initiative.

The education sector is facing a growing crisis in the transition between primary, lower secondary and upper secondary cycles. For example, the girls Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) is 63.9 percent in primary, 14.1 percent in lower secondary and only 2.5 percent in upper secondary. Given the PSEF's priority on creating an extended basic education cycle, the access crisis in Grade 7 will be particularly acute during the coming years.

The PSEF estimates recurrent and investment costs at US$ 1,631 million over the 2014-2016 period and includes a residual funding gap of US$ 68 million, or roughly US$ 23 million per year. Domestic financing for capital expenditures accounts for 5 percent of total domestic sector spending.

In Niger, UNICEF serves as Coordinating Agency (CA) for the Local Education Group (LEG). The country joined the Partnership in 2002. The LEG recently formalized the inclusion of civil society organizations, and two CSO EFA coalitions are signatories on the PSEF endorsement letter. This is a positive development since dissatisfaction among the teaching corps has had a substantially negative impact on the implementation of the preceding sector plan. The actively engaged partners that endorsed the PSEF include Agence Française pour le Développement (AFD), Swiss Cooperation, UNESCO, World Bank, European Union, World Food Program, Agence d'exécution de la coopération au développement luxembourgeoise (LuxDev), German International Cooperation (GIZ), Plan Niger, Save the Children, Oxfam, Aide et Action, Handicap International and the EFA NGO coalitions (ASO-Niger and ROSEN).

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

Niger has received a total of US$ 21 million funding (US$ 5 million in 2004 and US$ 8 million in 2005, and US$ 8 million in 2009). The most recent program, implemented with the World Bank serving as Supervising Entity (SE) had three components focusing on increased access, improved quality of primary education, and strengthened management. The Implementation Completion Report (ICR) rated the program "moderately satisfactory". The school construction activity saw 294 out of the planned 400 classrooms built, due to the decision by the SE to accept the government's request to pay taxes on the funding provided by the Partnership; this resulted in a 30 percent decrease in the number of classrooms built, although there was no modification of the relevant program indicator.

Program implementation was hampered by the security situation, particularly in the north of the country as well as the 2010 coup d'état. There were also delays in the procurement process due to the weakening of national systems following the coup. The program was implemented in the years following a major misuse of funds in a previous program and the incarceration of several ministry staff. The lesson learned was that while the decreased capacity may have been adequately assessed at the time of appraisal, the subsequent coup d'état decreased capacity further. At the time it may have looked as if implementation capacity was still relatively intact with the persons responsible for the financial irregularities having been sanctioned, but other capacity issues may have been underestimated.

The ICR indicates that for the higher level indicators (project development objectives), in all cases, the targets were surpassed, including primary completion, gender equality, and rural enrollment.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The requested funding, US$ 84.2 million reflects the amount published in the 2012 Needs and Performance Framework (NPF) allocations.

The World Bank is serving as SE for the new program, and the implementation mode is that of a pooled fund in project mode using a dedicated "Project Contracting Agency" embedded within the MENALPN (Ministry of Education, Literacy and Promotion of National Languages) using World Bank procurement procedures. The only other partner in the pooled fund at this time is the AFD which is contributing US$ 15.8 million, making for a total program budget of US$ 100 million. Although not contributing to the pooled fund, the following development partners are coordinating closely and providing complementary support to teacher training institutes and activities: LuxDev, UNICEF, Swiss Cooperation, GIZ and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The SE gives the program an overall risk rating of "substantial" due to vulnerabilities in the areas of design, implementing agency capacity and governance. The weak capacity in the MENALPN is cited as a vector of risk, including fiduciary, and the program management mechanism is designed to mitigate this. The use of Sector Budget Support had been

considered by the LEG during the program development process, but the fiduciary and governance risks were determined to be unacceptably high at this time.

The proposed "Basic Education Support Program" (BESP) will work at (i) expanding access to and retention in basic education in an equitable way, with particular focus on education infrastructure, girls' education and feeding interventions; (ii) improving the quality of teaching and learning, through more and better pedagogical inputs and teacher/teaching skills with more emphasis on learning outcomes; and (iii) strengthening management capacity, with focus on improving institutional capacity and incentives at the ministry, system and school level.

Two noteworthy priorities of the program are the efforts to reduce the cost of school attendance to families as well as the effort to improve learning outcomes through a focus on literacy and numeracy in the primary grades.

The Program Document indicates that its results framework indicators are primarily at the output level since, as a program aligned with the sector plan, the outcome indicators are essentially those of the PSEF.

	Program Component	**Amount (US$)**	**GPE financing (US$)**	**AFD financing (US$)**	**Percent of Total (%)**
1	Expanding equitable access to and retention in basic education	**70,700,000**	**54,900,000**	**15,800,000**	**65.2**
	Sub-component 1.A: Education infrastructure	51,400,000	49,000,000	2,400,000	58.2
	Sub-component 1.B: Girls' Education	2,500,000	2,500,000	0	3.0
	Sub-component 1.C: School feeding and hygiene programs	16,800,000	3,400,000	13,400,000	4.0
2	Improving the quality of teaching and learning	**17,700,000**	**17,700,000**	**0**	**21.0**
	Sub-component 2.A: Pedagogical inputs	7,200,000	7,200,000	0	8.6
	Sub-component 2.B: Teacher (initial and continuous) training	8,500,000	8,500,000	0	10.1
	Sub-component 2.C: Learning outcomes	2,000,000	2,000,000	0	2.4
3	Strengthening Management Capacity	**5,500,000**	**5,500,000**	**0**	**6.6**
	Sub-component 3.A: Capacity Enhancement of the Ministry in charge of Basic Education	1,500,000	1,500,000	0	1.8
	Sub-component 3.B: System and school	2,000,000	2,000,000	0	2.4

	Program Component	Amount (US$)	GPE financing (US$)	AFD financing (US$)	Percent of Total (%)
	management				
	Sub-component 3.C: Project management and coordination	2,000,000	2,000,000	0	2.4
	SUB-TOTAL	**93,900,000**	**78,100,000**	**15,800,000**	**92.8**
	CONTINGENCIES	**6,100,000**	**6,100,000**	**0**	**7.2**
	TOTAL	**100,000,000**	**84,200,000**	**15,800,000**	**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$ 500,000 is not included in the total grant requested. The requested amount is higher than the standard supervision fee.

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

In the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Phase I, the Secretariat found the process in Niger to be transparent and collaborative; it also noted that the LEG was working to formally include representatives of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). The Secretariat also noted that the proposed program, with 17 subcomponents at the time of the draft concept note, was well anchored in the then draft sector plan (PSEF), but that it would be better to limit the scope in order to facilitate smooth implementation. The QAR Phase I mission also found that the LEG needed to deal more clearly and completely with the complexity of implementing activities in the security-challenged north of the country.

The Secretariat also recommended exploring options for a pooled-fund approach for the new program, commended the LEG for explicitly laying out the role for NGOs in monitoring program activities at the school and community level. The proposed study on time-on-task for learning activities was also noted as being particularly relevant.

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

1. The Program Document needed to be completed, particularly in the following areas: results framework, risk analysis, lessons learned from previous program implementation, implementation arrangements for Subcomponent 2B.

In response, the missing elements of the Program Document were included in the final version. The program design reflects the existing security situation as well as a possible degradation. A series of contingency measures have been put into place to ensure adequate program implementation monitoring in the event that the standard SE supervision mechanism becomes impractical. The Program Document does not indicate that a specific conflict sensitivity analysis has been done. While the risk assessment covers the issue of

ministry implementation capacity and governance issues, it does not deal specifically with risks arising from conflict and the security situation.

2. There needed to be greater clarity in the discussion of mother tongue learning (language of instruction vs. subject to be studied) and the number of languages that would be included.

In response, the Program Document now includes in-service teacher training for the reading instruction in both French and mother tongue. The PSEF lays out the overall approach for children to learn to read first in their mother tongue and progressively transition to French as a language of instruction in higher primary grades. Subcomponent 2C includes a pilot activity in support of early grade reading (and reading assessment) in 5 of the 10 national languages, possibly expanded to 10, building on lessons learned to date in mother tongue instruction. The pilot will be implemented in collaboration with the ELAN initiative and focus on children reading properly by Grade 3.

3. A detailed budget was requested so as to better determine cost realism. There were unit cost inconsistencies between the PSEF and the Program Document for school construction (inclusive of latrines & water provision) and school nutrition.

In response, a detailed budget was provided for each subcomponent including the quantity and cost per year, so unit costs can be derived from that. The classroom unit cost, including furnishings, latrines and construction management and supervision totals US$ 21,715. A lower primary textbook costs US$ 1.63 whereas an upper primary book has a unit cost of US$ 5.92.

4. Include support for better human resources management since this area is cited as a bottleneck at various points in the document (or, alternatively, indicate how other partners are supporting these efforts).

In response, the Program Document includes a package of activities that will implement capacity-building recommendations coming from a comprehensive organizational review. Activities include the development of a human resources management strategy, training, equipment, development of a career path for teachers, and more. Partners have been identified to support work in areas not included in the program submitted to GPE funding.

5. Further develop reflections on how national systems could be used more and note how lessons learned from the previous pooled-fund arrangement have been taken into account.

The pooled fund used in the proposed program is less aligned with national systems than that of the previous program. The Program Document indicates that this measure reflects the implementation risks and lessons learned from the previous program. It also indicates that a mid-term review of the program will explore the possibility of returning to greater use of government systems.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The proposed program is designed to address a modest part of the considerable needs of a rapidly expanding school system where low quality of learning and insufficient equity of access are the major issues. The country context is particularly complex with education sector financing improving, significant sector governance issues remaining and looming uncertainties in the ability of sector ministries to provide basic services to remote areas of the country. The program implementation arrangements are only somewhat aligned with a pooled-fund supporting a sector project, and this reflects the past experience with sector governance and implementation difficulties. Successful implementation of this program will likely increase the capacity of government systems to the extent that they are part of the implementation structure.

The program includes some innovative activities, well anchored in the sector plan and if successful, may have a strategic impact in the area of reading in the early grades in the medium term. Otherwise the program is balanced and complementary to the interventions of other partners. Given the need to focus on a manageable package of activities, the program is not designed to address all of the critical gaps in the country's school system, and serious bottlenecks will remain over the medium term particularly in the area of ministry implementation capacity, access to schooling in rural areas, and strengthening of the lower secondary cycle that is to be part of a nine-year basic education cycle.

The LEG has been deeply engaged in the PSEF development as well as the program development process. The Secretariat finds that the application from Niger has been developed following the GPE guidelines in a transparent manner and that it is complete and ready for Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) review.

NIGERIA
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 100 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

With a population of 162 million, Nigeria is the largest country in Africa and accounts for 47 percent of West Africa's population. It has the largest natural gas reserves in Africa and is the biggest oil exporter on the continent. Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew at an average of 7 percent between 2004 and 2012, which is one of the fastest growth rates in the world in the last decade.

Despite Nigeria's strong economic track record, poverty is significant. Sixty-eight percent of the population still lives in poverty with less than US$1.25 a day. Underpinning these challenges is the core issue of governance, in particular at the state level. Fiscal decentralization provides Nigeria's 36 states and 774 local governments considerable policy autonomy, allowing them to control 50 percent of the Government revenues and manage delivery of public services. Capacity is weak in most states, especially in the five Northern states that are to be supported through the proposed GPE program (Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina and Sokoto). Nigeria ranks 153rd in the 2013 UNDP Human Development Index.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Nigeria joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in November 2012 after the federal government committed to achieving the Education for All Goals as well as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It has proposed to implement a comprehensive educational sector intervention in the areas of: (i) girls' education and gender equity; (ii) improved learning outcomes; (iii) out-of-school children; and (iv) focus on fragile states. Three states were first selected to participate in the implementation phase: Jigawa, Kano and Katsina. Two were added later: Kaduna and Sokoto.

The Nigerian education sector operates in a context of high demographic pressure: the population is growing at an average annual rate of 2.6 percent and 44 percent of the population is under the age of 15. By 2050, Nigeria should be the world's fourth most populous country with 400 million people. This demographic status represents a tremendous challenge for the education system and the country may not be on track for meeting most of the MDGs.

With over 10 million kids out of school, Nigeria accounts for 43 percent of all Sub-Saharan African out-of-school children, and about 20 percent of all out-of-school children in the

world. Over the past two decades, progress towards universal primary education has been slow. Primary Net Attendance Rate (NAR) increased by only 7 percentage points, from 54 percent in 1990 to 61 percent in 2010, and it has been stagnating since 2003. Primary school Gross Attendance Rate (GAR), including the over-aged children, showed improvement between 1999 and 2003, from 76 to 91 percent, but then declined to 85 percent in 2008. Regional disparities are significant: while attendance rates increased in the Northern states between 1999 and 2010, they declined in the Southern states. States with the largest gains are Jigawa and Kaduna (increased by 30 percentage points). Kano, Sokoto and Katsina made modest to substantial improvements, with primary NAR increasing by about 13 percentage points for Kano and Sokoto and by 5 percentage points for Katsina. However, Northern states are still lagging behind. About one half of the school-age children in these states remain out of school, compared to the national average of about one quarter. These children could have never attended school or could be attending non-integrated religious schools which enroll 18 percent of out-of-school boys and 27 percent of out-of-school girls in Nigeria.

Besides the large numbers of out-of-school children, the education system is characterized by complex and proliferating governance, low efficiency and weak learning outcomes. At the national level, 60 percent of Grade 4 and 44 percent of Grade 6 students cannot read a complete sentence. About 10 percent cannot add numbers by the end of primary school. Poor learning outcomes are most severe in the Northern states. More than two-thirds of students in the North remain functionally illiterate after completing primary school, as compared to only about 18 to 28 percent in the South. Eighty-seven percent and 95 percent of Grade 6 students in Jigawa and Sokoto respectively cannot read a complete sentence in their first spoken language which is Hausa.

Many factors prevent children from starting, attending or completing primary education. Poverty ranks first: a large number of families cannot afford the tuition or hidden fees. Religion and gender preferences come next: girls are less likely to be sent to school than boys, and a significant share of Muslim families prefer to send their children to non-integrated Islamiya/Qur'anic schools (about 25 percent of out-of-school children in the North are in fact attending these schools).

Other significant challenges remain to be addressed: (i) early childhood development is insufficient; (ii) teacher training is under-developed and inadequate; (iii) the provision of textbooks and teaching and learning materials is low; (iv) finally, poor infrastructure and a lack of accountability at all levels hinder the efficacy and efficiency of the education system.

To tackle these issues, the Government developed a 4-year Strategic Plan for the Development of the Education Sector (2011-2015) which focuses on: (i) strengthening the institutional management of the education sector; (ii) improving access and equity; (iii) strengthening standard and quality assurance; (iv) enhancing teacher education and development; (v) improving technical education and training; and (vi) mobilizing funding and strengthening partnerships in the education sector. In addition, each of the five supported states has developed or revised its own Education Sector Plan and Action Plan in

partnership with the state level Local Education Groups. These Plans have been endorsed by the federal level Local Development Partners' Group.
The federal level Local Education Group (LEG), which is comprised of the Federal Ministry of Education, the Universal Basic Education Commission, Department for International Development (DfID), USAID, the World Bank, UNICEF and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), holds weekly sector discussions. The LEG will establish and conduct annual joint sector reviews where the performance of the sector will be discussed with all stakeholders.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Nigeria is applying for a grant in the amount of US$ 100 million, which is in line with the indicative allocation provided by the GPE Needs and Performance Framework. GPE fund allocation is to be divided among the five participating states according to their indicative operational plan costing which reflects their planned activities and population sizes. During the course of project implementation, reallocations may be required among states so that resources are effectively and efficiently utilized should bottlenecks occur. The World Bank has been designated as Supervising Entity. USAID is the Coordinating Agency.

The grant will be financed under a project modality. The LEG did not recommend a more aligned modality given the governance structure and the existing funding bottlenecks in federal transfers to the states. The overall implementation risk is rated substantial. Mitigation measures have been introduced to tackle most of these risks.

The proposed program has been developed with close collaboration between the Government and Development Partners. It is aligned with the state-specific Education Sector Plans and the overarching federal strategy 2011-2015. The project complements the ongoing activities and new commitments of the education development partners in Nigeria. The designation of development partner leadership in each State (DfID for Kaduna, Kano, Jigawa; USAID for Sokoto and UNICEF for Katsina) demonstrates the objective of the GPE global strategy to improve cooperation and harmonization of activities in the sector.

The proposed program has three components.

Component 1 aims to improve education service delivery in pre-primary and basic education public schools. The program will support a decentralized mechanism for funding non-salary expenditures related to improving learning and teaching especially at early grade levels.

Component 2 aims to support the inclusion of girls in basic education, focusing on the demand-side interventions. This component would increase the number of female teachers, and provide capacity-building and operational support to local authorities and schools on issues affecting girls' retention. In addition, systematic sensitization and outreach would be conducted to encourage families to send their girls to school.

Component 3 aims to: (i) provide capacity building, operating costs, and technical assistance to the Federal Ministry of Education and Universal Basic Education Commission, State Ministry of Education, State Universal Basic Education Board and Local Government Education Authorities; (ii) support robust monitoring and evaluation, and streamline coordination of education activities at all levels including Local Government Education Authorities; and (iii) regularize annual measurement of student learning and achievement.

Project Costs (in '000 US$)

	Jigawa	**Kaduna**	**Kano**	**Katsina**	**Sokoto**	**Federal**	**Total**	**Percent of total (%)**
Component 1								
School Grants	4,441	7,781	12,092	4,627	5,878	0	34,818	34.8
School Based Management Committees	680	1,910	1,655	938	192	0	5,374	5.4
Teacher Training	1,133	3,184	2,758	1,563	319	0	8,957	9.0
Sub-Total	*6,254*	*12,875*	*16,505*	*7,127*	*6,389*	*0*	*49,150*	*49.2*
Component 2								
Scholarships for girls	7,639	4,180	7,906	3,808	2,145	0	25,677	25.7
Female Teachers	210	2,481	726	204	371	0	3,992	4.0
Sub-Total	*7,849*	*6,661*	*8,632*	*4,012*	*2,517*	*0*	*29,669*	*29.7*
Component 3								
Project Management	225	225	225	225	225	750	1,875	1.9
M&E	510	510	510	510	510	775	3,325	3.3
Impact Evaluation	0	0	0	0	0	1,000	1,000	1.0
Institutional Capacity Strengthening	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	900	8,400	8.4
Learning Assessment	210	210	210	210	210	0	1,050	1.1
LGEA Strengthening	810	690	1,320	1,020	690	0	4,530	4.5
Technical Support to States	0	0	0	0	0	1,000	1,000	1.0
Sub-total	*3,255*	*3,135*	*3,765*	*3,465*	*3,135*	*4,425*	*21,180*	*21.2*
Total	17,358	22,671	28,902	14,604	12,041	4,425	100,000	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$ 700,000 is not included in the total grant requested.

The program document notes that the Stakeholder risk is "substantial" whereas the Implementing Agency risk is "high".

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

To begin with, it should be noted that the first phase of the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) process started late and was made well after the program identification phase, thus limiting its usefulness. The QAR Phase I report found the process used to develop the program to be transparent, participative, and inclusive of GPE's strategic priorities. It recommended more effective communication between partners regarding the allocation, prioritization and linking of the proposed activities to the states' sector plans (including operational plans). Significant recommendations were made for the way that the girls' education activities were presented so as to ensure a holistic approach that would complement demand-side measures with supply-side measures. Another major concern was in the area of "do no harm" given the security situation and potential challenges. It was recommended that particular attention be given to conflict sensitivity issues and the link between those issues and the proposed activities.

The QAR Phase II report concluded that the proposed program (i) takes into account state plans, thus enhancing alignment and ownership; (ii) is relevant to the current challenges and circumstances of the five participating states and covers the objectives of GPE; (iii) complements the interventions of other development agencies active in the five states. Following are the main recommendations for improvement from the QAR Phase II report, and a summary of how they were addressed by the LEG:

1. The program design could be enhanced by: (i) showing clearly the state priorities in each component, and indicating the estimated cost of these elements; (ii) indicating lessons learned; (iii) indicating how the project will tackle some of the barriers identified but not addressed, such as girls' safety and security.

In response, a summary breakdown of costs by state is put under each component in the Program Document with detailed cost tables and a summary of project costs by state can be found in Annex 7. These clearly show individual state priorities. Lessons learned have been detailed in Annex 2. Details on girls' safety are included in the safeguards.

2. Selection criteria concerning girls' scholarships and subsidies for female teacher training are to be developed, but some indication of these should be included, including the decision-making process.

In response, these have been revised and details have been provided with regard to unit costs, number of eligible girls by state. Further details appear in Annex 2. In addition, the

Project Implementation Manual to be finalized at a later date will provide detailed criteria, procedures and guidelines on implementing this component.

3. Monitoring and evaluation could be strengthened by: (i) bringing together all indicators in one table that includes the disaggregated baseline data for the outcome indicators; and (ii) providing details on third party monitoring.

In response, the revised Program Document features a revamped Results Framework Matrix, with key performance indicators aligned to the Project Development Objective, and revised targets against state baselines to the extent possible, based on data provided by the states. As regard to third party monitoring, more detail has been provided but this level of detail is usually included in the terms of reference (TOR) and Project Implementation Manual.

4. The implementation arrangements could be clarified and enhanced by providing a mapping of the functions that will be executed by institutions at each of the four levels: federal, state, local government, school/community.

In response, an organogram has been included in the revised Program Document as well as further clarification on roles and responsibilities of each level of institutions.

5. Provide a clearer explanation of how the project will invest in the sustainability of the planned processes and interventions by specifying how the technical assistance will contribute to higher institutional capacity.

The project does not include extensive Technical Assistance (TA). Any TA is directly correlated to government need for expertise and support for carrying out expected activities and it will provide discrete assistance for time bound tasks. The program document lays out four strategies for ensuring sustainability. Building on existing management structures and setting a precedent for efficient financial support to local school management committees are two of the measures. Alignment of program activities with the existing state level sector plans, coupled with the relatively modest amount of funding, compared with state education plan budgets is seen as contributing to sustainability. It is not clear how this sustainability approach will play out in a context where the country is grappling with bottlenecks in the transferring of federal funds to state and local governments. The program is designed for implementation in the existing education sector financing environment, and the program document notes that allocations to the five states may need to evolve based on further developments in the mechanism of federal funding of education at the state level. The program does not include specific benchmarks or commitments for increased and sustainable federal or state financing to education. Rather, the program's technical assistance to the states is aimed at helping states "unlock" or leverage funding from existing federal resources.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the proposed program has been developed in a transparent and collaborative manner. The application itself contains numerous gaps and inconsistencies, particularly in the education sector financial and performance information by state and for the national level, and the LEG was unable to resolve these issues prior to the final submission deadline to the FAC.

The proposed program is largely built on previous implementation experiences from various partners, especially DfID, UNICEF and USAID. The complexity of the institutional framework, the high number of very small financial transactions, and the necessity to work in parallel in five different states in a security-challenged environment will present a real implementation challenge. Coordination involving all actors at both federal and state levels is essential. The articulation of all activities will require a strong commitment from the Nigerian authorities (both federal and states), a close involvement of all partners, and an in-depth follow-up at annual joint sector reviews.

The program has been designed to tackle some of the challenges facing the education system in Nigeria while adapting to a complex institutional context and aligning with the education sector plans of the five participating states. Some elements of concern need to be highlighted:

First, the recommendations made in the QAR Phase I report to give particular attention to security issues during the implementation phase should be carefully followed by all partners. Any reallocations of resources from a state to another during the course of the program should be done in a way that increases neither the fragility of the context nor the disparities in resource allocation.

Second, much hinges on the finalization of the Project Implementation Manual for the distribution of scholarships to girls (26 percent of the program funding) and other activities. The greatest care should be taken in this preparation due to the high number of small transactions and the potential for misuse of funds. The criteria for the allocation and distribution of scholarships will have to be both transparent and fluid to mitigate risks that may be associated with such a broad and complex mechanism.

Third, the weakness of education sector and financing data in the context of the five target states creates an element of risk for program implementation. The proposed program is designed for implementation in a data-lean environment, but at the same time, it may not be sufficient to materially address the existing education system management bottlenecks.

Lastly, while the LEG did not opt for a more aligned modality for this program, it will be important to work toward greater alignment in the future. Discussions on this matter could be conducted in line with the recommendations of the Learning for All Ministerial Meeting that took place in April 2013, especially the one indicating that bottlenecks in funding flows to states should be addressed.

SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 1.1 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

São Tomé and Príncipe (STP) is a Portuguese-speaking island nation in the Gulf of Guinea, off the western equatorial coast of Central Africa. It is an archipelago of just over 1,000 square kilometers, with almost 200,000 inhabitants. It is the second-smallest African country after Seychelles.

The country became a lower middle-income country in 2008, after a decade of sustained 5 percent growth on average between 2001 and 2011 of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP), driven by rising world cocoa prices (STP's primary export commodity), strong tourism receipts (STP's largest source of export revenue), payments for petroleum exploration rights, and rising private investment inflows. Nevertheless, as a result of the international food and fuel price spike in mid-2008 and the global financial crisis of 2009, STP's risk of debt distress will remain high over the medium term (but could be mitigated by oil production) even if the country has already reduced its debt-to-GDP ratio from over 300 percent in the 1990s to 50.5 percent in 2009.

The country's GDP per capita is about US$ 2,500 (2012). STP ranks 144 in the 2013 UNDP Human Development Index.

EDUCATION SECTOR

STP joined Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in October 2007, on the basis of a 10-year Education Strategic Plan (ESP) (2003-2013) that emphasized primary education as a priority and sought to ensure the achievement of universal primary completion by 2015.

In 2012, the Government of São Tomé and Príncipe developed a second Education Sector Plan for the period 2012-2022, which has been endorsed by the Local Education Group (LEG). The priorities outlined in the ESP specifically aim to (i) reach the education Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); (ii) improve quality of education at all levels; and (iii) improve overall governance of the education sector.

Over the past 10 years, STP's education system has shown good performance. Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) has considerably increased for pre-primary education from 15.7 percent (2001/02) to 30.9 percent (2010/11). It has remained high for primary education (128.6 percent in 2001/02 compared to 120 percent in 2012/2013) while repetitions have declined from 23 percent in 2004/05 to 12 percent in 2010/11. The primary completion rate

stands at 100 percent in 2011/12, which means that STP reached universal primary education. These rates combined with a high transition rate from primary to secondary education (97 percent in 2011/12) have led to an increase of the GER in secondary education from 42.6 percent in 2001/02 to 58.5 percent in 2010/11. The secondary education completion rate has also increased from 19.8 percent in 2000/01 to 45.2 percent in 2010/11.

Gender disparities are scarce throughout the system: almost nonexistent in primary education as universal primary education has been reached and the Gender Parity Index (GPI) stands at 0.98 in lower secondary education. In 2010, the GPI is estimated at 0.82 in upper secondary education.

Education expenditures as a percent of the GDP have increased from 2.7 percent in 2002 to 8.8 percent in 2010. However, a large proportion of education spending (37.4 percent in 2010) relates to scholarships for students abroad, which is common for very small countries that cannot afford to develop a comprehensive "in situ" university.

The first national examination for students of grades 2 and 4 was conducted in 2010/11 and showed that progress[18] could be made. The probability of being literate for life after 6th grade[19] is around 82 percent, which is a good score compared to most African countries[20], but can definitely be improved (in comparison, the same indicator in Cape Verde stands at 98 percent). An improvement in the teaching environment (classrooms, textbooks, and teachers' guides) can be observed over recent years and the allocation of teachers to schools is one of the best in Africa[21]. Nevertheless, the proportion of unqualified teachers remains high (60 percent in primary), mainly due to the closure of the teacher training institute for more than 10 years. Furthermore, primary teachers spend on average 3.5 hours per day teaching; the time on task of teachers is among the worst in Africa partially because of weak management of teachers.

The Local Education Group (LEG) includes the Government, Development Partners (UNICEF, World Bank, the French Embassy, Portugal, Brazil, Taiwan, China, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and World Food Program (WFP) and civil society organizations (two Federations of NGOs).

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

[18] The average scores in math and Portuguese language for grade 4 students were, respectively, 67.2 percent and 66.3 percent. For grade 2 students, the average scores were, respectively, 68.9 percent and 61.0 percent.

[19] Adults aged from 22 to 44 years

[20] Measured through Demographic and Health surveys (DHS) and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS)

[21] 95 percent of teachers' allocation directly arises from the number of students

Since 2007, the Government of Sao Tome and Principe benefited from two FTI Catalytic Fund grants for a total amount of US$ 3.6 million. The first one of US$ 1.04 million was approved in 2007 and an additional US$ 2.56 million was granted in 2008.

The program funded by the two FTI grants mainly supported the construction of 22 new primary school classrooms (to eliminate the triple shifting and allow the enrollment of additional 1,500 children) and 16 classrooms for early childhood education, the pre-service training of 60 new teachers and in-service training of 350 teachers, the purchase and distribution of 200,000 textbooks for primary education students, and the training for various technical staff of the education sector.

The program closed on June 30, 2011 and was rated as satisfactory. The project was also a catalyst in setting up partnerships with a private Portuguese foundation and the Cape Verdean Teacher Training Institute.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The requested amount of US$ 1.1 million is in line with the indicative amount derived from the GPE Needs and Performance Framework (NPF). The program will be co-financed by an additional US$ 0.9 million International Development Association (IDA) allocation.

The World Bank was selected by the LEG to serve as the Supervising Entity (SE) and a project modality will be used. The program will be technically implemented by different departments of the Ministry of Education (MoE) and supported by a Project Fiduciary and Administrative Agency (AFAP), embedded within the Ministry of Finance.

The proposed program, called Education for All Project - Phase II, has two components:

Component 1 aims to improve teaching practices in primary education through the setting up of a system of in-service teacher training (sub-component 1.1) and the development of a student learning assessment (sub-component 1.2).

Component 2 aims to strengthening the management of human resources in the education sector through an appropriate information system. The component will also support the reactivation of the inspection services to provide close supervision and school-based support (sub-component 2.1) and finance the costs associated with the management of the Project (sub-component 2.2).

	Program Component	Amount (US$ million)	GPE financing (US$ million)	IDA financing (US$ million)	Percent of total (%)
1	Improving the system of in service teacher training in primary	**1,100,000**	**1,100,000**	**0**	**55.0**

	education				
	Sub-component 1.1: Setting up in service teacher training	700,000	700,000	0	35.0
	Sub-component 1.2 : Developing learning assessment system	400,000	400,000	0	20.0
2	Strengthening management of human resources in the education sector	**900,000**	**0**	**900,000**	**45.0**
	Sub-component 2.1 : Developing information management system	640,000	0	640,000	32.0
	Sub-component 2.2: Project management	260,000	0	260,000	13.0
	TOTAL	**2,000,000**	**1,100,000**	**900,000**	**100.0**

*Other Agency fees not included in the total grant requested: 1.75 percent of the GPE grant.
** Note that the SE requested for US$ 150,000 per year over 4 years, totaling to US$ 600,000 which exceeds the amount in the current Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) policy.

The GPE/IDA program will focus on quality of primary education, which is identified as a priority in the ESP, while most partners support other segments of education system. WFP provides meals for primary education students and Brazil also supports the development of the learning system (sub-component 1.2) via the Secretary of Education of Pernambuco.

The SE has identified the risks as moderate due to potential political and institutional instability. The previous government, including the Minister of Education, was demised in December 2012. However, other social sector projects have been successfully implemented in the same context.

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

The Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Phase I concluded that the project concept and identification of activities followed a participatory process which included consultations with the major stakeholders of the education system. The program is articulated within the strategic vision of the ESP and responds to the needs of the education system. Strategic priorities of the GPE covered are: (i) education quality through teacher training and (ii) strengthening institutional capacity (targeted through sub-components 1.2 and 2.1). Gender issues are not a major concern and UNICEF is working with the Ministry to address the specific problems observed.

The QAR Phase I report recommended paying more attention to the question of learning time which has been identified as a major failure of the system. It is now a main focus of the program.

The key recommendations from the QAR Phase II report and to what extent they were taken into account by the LEG are listed below:

1. The number of activities in Component 1 may exceed the implementation capacity of the Ministry and should be reduced, but the articulation between activities has to be reinforced.

In response, the scope has been slightly reduced. Given the small size of the country (80 primary schools), the motivation of officials from the Ministry, and experiences from the previous program, the proposed program could be implemented.

2. Pay more attention to equity and the potential roles parents can play.

The reading improvement component (sub-component 2.1) is expected to be a leverage to reduce disparities. Parents associations are still in an embryonic stage and not yet formalized and organized. Other interventions are aiming to strengthen their roles in school management.

3. Provide details in the section on "School report cards".

School reports cards have been replaced by the development of new management tools at the central and school levels and will be developed in partnership with the Secretary of Education of Pernambuco (Brazil).

4. Prepare a detailed budget and implementation plan for each of the sub-components (with intermediate steps, structures involved, etc.) and clarify the results framework.

In response, an implementation plan including disaggregated costing has been developed.

5. Clarify the planned modality that uses both national and World Bank budgetary procedures.

Implementation arrangements have changed and will now use a Project Fiduciary and Administrative Agency (AFAP) which will follow World Bank's procedures.

6. Link the monitoring and evaluation of the program to the institution of an annual sector review.

In response, this recommendation has been integrated in the final Program Document.

7. Give more consideration to the results and lessons learned from the previous FTI program, relating them to the new program.

The recommendation has been partly taken into account. However, references to the previous project's experience remain scarce, especially on in-service teacher training activities which targeted about 350 teachers.

8. Strengthen the part relating to the sustainability of the project particularly in terms of human capacity.

Additional staff will be assigned by the MoE to relevant structures.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Secretariat finds that the program has been developed in a transparent and collaborative manner. The STP's program shows readiness to implement and the application package is ready for FAC consideration. Some minor discrepancies remain but they do not appear to be substantial.

The previous FTI grants were fully and satisfactorily implemented and the new program proposes to go further by focusing on the improvement of quality and learning. An annual Joint Sector Review (JSR) should be established to follow the ESP and program's implementation.

The Project Fiduciary and Administrative Agency (AFAP) used for previous grants has been maintained even though other modalities were considered. As most LEG partners directly manage their own funds, a pooled funding mechanism did not appear to be an appropriate workable option at this point. At a macro level, other donors (UNDP and EU) do not currently provide budget support. The World Bank implemented a grant[22] through budget support for the first time in 2011/12. With no previous experience in fiduciary management of external financing, the World Bank's assessment of the Ministry of Education's capacity to implement projects without support from external entities underscores fiduciary risks. In addition, the amounts available, especially in terms of expected additional support in the future, remain low to really strengthen incentives to move forward.

[22] Public resource management and governance reform development policy grant (US $ 4.2 million)

SIERRA LEONE
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 17.9 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Sierra Leone, located in West Africa, has a population of 5.75 million. The country consists of 14 districts, 19 local councils and 149 chiefdoms. Sierra Leone's civil war, which lasted for almost 10 years ended in January 2002. Government institutions across Sierra Leone were weakened significantly by the war, losing personnel and skill. Infrastructure in the education sector was particularly affected by the war.

While still designated a post-conflict fragile country, Sierra Leone is on the road to recovery, reestablishing a growing economy and government institutions across critical sectors. The country's economy is based on mining and agriculture. Per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is US$ 374 and average growth in GDP since the end of the war is 5.2 percent. Poverty has declined by about 20 percent from 66 percent in 2002 to 53 percent in 2011.

The impact of the war is particularly evident by Sierra Leone's rank of 177 in the most recent Human Development Index (2013). Though this is an improvement from the previously held rank of 180, the country is ranked 10th from the bottom. Under-five mortality is 174 deaths per 1,000 live births. The incidence of malaria, pneumonia and malnutrition continue to be high.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Based on a comprehensive Education Sector Plan 2007 – 2015 covering all sectors in education, the country joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in 2007. An adequate data and sector analysis was not available at the time of preparation to underpin the Plan. In addition, the proposed GPE program implementation period would not be covered by this Plan. For these reasons, the Local Education Group (LEG) decided to develop a new Education Sector Plan that replaces the earlier Plan.

The revised Education Sector Plan 2014 - 2018 brings together new data on the education sector, takes stock of the successes and challenges and charts a realistic way forward to meet critical goals in the education sector. This Plan also incorporates the Government's GBamenja Commission's White Paper on education. The Plan is accompanied by a three-year implementation plan.

Three critical areas are covered in the new Plan: Increasing Access; Quality and Relevance; and System Strengthening. The Appraisal Report recommends clear prioritization of

activities and the establishment of a strong monitoring and evaluation unit. The commitment of the LEG to the recommendations of the Appraisal is clearly stated.

Overall, since the country re-stabilized, steady progress has been evident in the education sector. Annual Joint Sector Reviews and the systematic analysis of education outcomes show significant improvements between 2004/05 and 2010/11. About 37,000 children are now attending preschools, resulting in an increase in the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) for this level by two percentage points. About 1.2 million children are now enrolled in primary schools. In the days immediately following the civil war, the primary completion rate was only 55 percent but it has now risen to 76 percent. The transition rate to junior secondary level is 77 percent, representing an increase of 5 percentage points from 2004. 45 percent of students enrolled in junior secondary are girls.

The country spends 3.5 percent of GDP on education, and about half the education budget is allocated to basic education. External financing of Education Sector Plan implementation is about US$ 236 million. The financing gap is US$ 145 million. The GPE Grant represents 7.5 percent of the external financing for education.

The Local Education Group (LEG), established in 2007, calls itself the "Education Development Partner Group." This group is led by the Coordinating Agency (CA), UNICEF, and includes several key bilateral and multilateral donors such as Department for International Development (DFID), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), German International Cooperation (GIZ), European Union (EU), the World Bank and the World Food Program (WFP). The CA played an important role in encouraging Civil Society Organization (CSO) participation in the LEG, which is now consistent and regular. International non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local NGOs are members of the LEG. The LEG systematically monitors sector activity and outcomes. There is a clear intent to be transparent and to support Government ownership and leadership in education and each other's involvement in the sector.

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

Sierra Leone received a first Fast Track Initiative (FTI) Grant of US$ 13.9 million, which started implementation in February 2009 with the World Bank as the Supervising Entity (SE). The original closing date, which was June 30, 2010, was extended by two years and three months to September 30, 2012. Delays to implementation were largely due to the limited availability of personnel and skill for project management in a post-conflict environment. Civil works was particularly affected, with approximately 11 percent of the classrooms not constructed. Some of the program activities were dropped as other partners decided to provide support (e.g. awareness campaigns, teacher payroll and salary verifications). Notwithstanding, most of the program targets were met contributing to the sector outcomes described above. The SEs rating for implementation by the end of the program is moderately satisfactory.

This Grant supported the construction of 255 classrooms, 42 sets of latrines and 40 wells. Tuition was provided to 75,000 junior secondary girls. The Grant supported a one-year distance training program for 1,000 primary and 260 junior secondary teachers. Evaluations indicate that teachers from this program are performing at a higher level. Approximately 1.7 million supplementary readers as well as 850,000 sets of pens, pencils, erasers, rulers, and notebooks for primary schools, as well as braille textbooks for another six schools, were procured. A de-worming program for about 1.2 million children was supported through this Grant. A framework for assessing student learning in Sierra Leone was also developed.

Important lessons learned through this experience include the development of clear guidelines; ensuring sufficient capacity exists when beginning implementation, and the role and involvement of local councils and communities.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Sierra Leone has requested a grant of US$ 17.9 million, which is in line with the Needs and Performance Framework (NPF) indicative allocation. The World Bank is SE. The modality for financing is the project mode. Taking into account the fiduciary environment and the relatively fragile institutions, this financing modality was considered by the LEG to be the most appropriate. The overall objective off the program is to improve the learning environment in targeted schools and establish systems for the monitoring of overall education outcomes.

The program has three components:

Component 1: Improve the learning environment and opportunities in targeted areas. This component has three subcomponents:

1.1 Result-based School Grants. It will provide additional resources in a phased manner to schools that commit to improving teacher and student attendance, and good financial management in four of the most marginalized districts. Schools that do well on a predefined set of criteria in the first phase will receive additional funds in the second and third phases.

1.2 Pilot approaches to increase school readiness. 50 pre-primary centers are to be established and 110 teachers trained. Support also provided to implement minimum quality standards for Early Childhood Care and Education.

1.3 Strengthen reading outcomes at early grades. This intervention finances two reading books per student, a grade level reading campaign and training for about 10 percent of teachers.

Component 2: Strengthen education service delivery. This component has three subcomponents:

2.1 Improve teacher management. Support will be provided to implement the Teaching Service Commission Act by establishing a “Commission” focusing on pre-service

training, professional development, performance evaluations and teacher management.

2.2 Build better measurement of learning outcomes. Resources will be provided to establish a semi-autonomous learning assessment unit.

2.3 Robust consistent school data collection. Support will be provided to improve data collection and reporting on education indicators.

Component 3: Project Management and Supervision. This component will support project management and supervision.

	Program Component	**Amount (US$)**	**Percent of total (%)**
1	Improving the learning environment and opportunities in targeted areas	**11,846,543**	**66.2**
	Sub-component 1.1 Performance-based School Grants	3,982,000	22.2
	Sub-component 1.2 Piloting approaches to increase school readiness	1,008,000	5.6
	Sub-component 1.3. Strengthening reading outcomes at early grades	6,856,543	38.3
2	Strengthen education service delivery	**4,516,000**	**25.2**
	Sub-component 1.1 Improvements in teacher management	3,000,000	16.8
	Sub-component 1.2 Building the foundation for better measurement of learning outcomes	1,100,000	6.1
	Sub-component 1.3Robust consistent school data collection	416,000	2.3
3	Project Management and supervision	**943,000**	**5.3**
4	Unallocated	**598,976**	**3.3**
	Total Project	**17,904,519**	**100.0**

*Agency fees/Recovery costs listed in the application is US$ 313,250 which is 1.75 percent of Grant.

**Note: Sierra Leone has requested US$ 250,000 above the standard SE fee of US$ 400,000 for four years which exceeds the amount in the current Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) policy.

According to the SE, the overall risk rating is substantial based on the need for technical skills, established systems for implementation, and availability of personnel at sub-national levels. The program also identifies the political risks involved in implementing the Teachers Service Commission. The program relies on the recruitment of independent entities, members of the LEG and the commitment of the government to address these risks.

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

The Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Phase I was completed in May 2013. The draft program reviewed was found to be collaboratively developed, in line with discussions of the content of the new Education Sector Plan, and addressed most of the GPE Strategic goals and objectives. Considering the constraints to implementing the previous program, the project modality was found to be the most suitable to the LEG.
QAR Phase II was completed according to schedule. The SE provided detailed responses to how the recommendations were addressed. The key recommendations and responses are summarized below.

1. Detailed costing information, which is provided in the revised Program Document.

2. The need for more detail and clarity in describing implementation arrangements for the project.

The revised Program Document reflects the significant amount of work done in designing the implementation of each component, especially the grants provided to schools. The program also now includes detailed procurement and financial management plans. Manuals for both will be prepared before the start of implementation. Key personnel are expected to be in place before the project starts.

3. Review and assess the role of the Education Sector Plan Secretariat, its responsibilities within the ministry and for the implementation of the proposed project.

The LEG is also concerned with this issue within the broader issue of Education Sector Plan (ESP) implementation and monitoring as described in the ESP Appraisal document. While the program does clarify the role of the ESP Secretariat vis-à-vis the program, discussions are ongoing with regard to establishing a unit responsible for better donor coordination and for ESP monitoring and reporting.

4. Two subcomponents in the draft Project Appraisal Document (PAD) required more development – the school fee subsidies subcomponent and the Teacher Service Commission.

Considerable attention has been given to finalizing these two interventions. Criteria for selection, integrating this financing in the subsidies provided by the government, crafting the incentive structure in phase II and III, the role and capacity of local bodies and the risks with this intervention have been identified. Similarly, the Program Document includes specific details on what will be financed in addition to an annex on the complexities of establishing the Teachers Service Commission. While the political, financial and operational risks are described, taking into account the significant number of ghost teachers in the system and the challenges to school functioning and improving learning, there is no doubt among the members of LEG that this is a critical intervention for the education sector in Sierra Leone.

5. The need to articulate criteria used and the existing process for the selection of districts and schools to receive school grants, including weights to be given for the different poverty

and education indicators. A mechanism that will ensure local willingness to assume responsibility for proper administration of a grant was also important.

While the program team is not using weights, based on actual percentages, the sum of the indicator values represent levels of marginalization and thus facilitate the selection of the four districts. Local level processes, management and reporting will need to be monitored carefully.

6. Clarify selection and distribution of reading books.

The SE is working on this specific area, preparing guidelines and protocols for the selection and distribution of textbooks, in preparation for the start of implementation if the Grant is approved.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Sierra Leone is making significant progress in ensuring political and economic stability, critical to timely and systematic implementation of the proposed program. Since the end of the civil war in Sierra Leone, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, has built an established structure that is consistently being strengthened. The commitment of senior government officials across different departments has been evident throughout program preparation.

The performance in the previous GPE Grant is particularly salient to the development of the current program. The capacity that was built in the previous project will support the implementation of this program.

The program design is complex, though critical to the development of education in Sierra Leone. For example, a teacher verification exercise found that about 14 percent teachers on payroll were not found in schools reflecting the substantial wastage in the system. On the other hand, a significant proportion of teachers were volunteers and not on payroll. Though challenging to implement, the component on the "Teacher Service Commission" addresses the many issues associated with teachers.

Led by the CA, the LEG is particularly strong in Sierra Leone providing coordinated and strategic support to the Government. In addition, there is a clear structure for civil society participation in the LEG. LEG coordination and support will assist not only the proposed program but external support overall to improve education outcomes in Sierra Leone.

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 is ready for assessment by the Financial Advisory Committee.

SOUTH CENTRAL SOMALIA
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review

Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 8.2 million
(16.8 percent of total indicative allocation, US$ 1.38 million, has already been requested as Accelerating Funding)

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Since the outbreak of the Somali Civil War in 1991, Somalia has suffered from years of prolonged conflict, piracy, and recurring famine. Continued conflict also has led to the formation of distinct regions with separate governing bodies within Somalia: the self-declared Republic of Somaliland, the semi-autonomous state of Puntland, and South Central Somalia (including the capital Mogadishu and the Galmudug State).

Currently, Somalia is undergoing a political transition which brings new optimism and expectations. Somalia is still a fragile state. The Federal Government faces major challenges to building peace and security, especially in South Central Somalia, and in establishing democratic processes and institutions, and strengthening human rights. The semi-arid and arid climatic conditions across the country are also major constraints to development. Though the first tentative steps towards recovery are being taken, the process is slow. Life expectancy is extremely low, infant and child mortality are extremely high, and access to sanitation is very limited. About 60 percent of the Somalia population is composed of nomadic pastoralists, and is heavily dependent on the livestock sector. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita is estimated to be US$ 284, one of the lowest in the world. The Human Development Index for Somalia is not yet available.

The country has the world's highest dependency on remittances, which account for 35 percent of the GDP. Continued humanitarian assistance is necessary to help the most vulnerable groups of people and to consolidate current gains in order to prevent future crises. An estimated 1.1 million Somalis are internally displaced, often living in poor conditions. Another one million Somalis are refugees in neighboring countries. The relative political stability in South Central Somalia has led to a rise in the number of returnees, with around 18,000 refugees reported to have returned from neighboring countries as of January 2013.

The government of the Somalia Federal Republic acknowledges the importance of education as being one of the most viable and effective vehicles to development, but the financing of education interventions is a significant bottleneck.

EDUCATION SECTOR

In July 2012, Somalia officially joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) as a federal state. Somalia's education sector is divided into three main administrations: the Federal Ministry of Human Development and Public Services (MoHD&PS), including education, is mainly in control of South Central Somalia; while in Puntland and Somaliland, Ministries of Education function independently with their own education agendas. With support from various partners and a GPE Education Plan Development Grant, Puntland and Somaliland have each developed a transitional Education Sector Strategy Plan. In addition, the GPE Board approved Program Implementation Grants for Puntland (US$ 2.1 million) and for Somaliland (US$ 4.2 million) in May 2013.

During the 20 years of civil war, more than 75 percent of pre-existing public schools were either destroyed or closed in South Central Somalia. State intervention in the education sector has been limited and fraught with difficulties. In response to the growing need for emergency education, privately owned educational institutions known as Education Umbrellas have been established and support education services through non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The Education Umbrellas sustained the education sector during conflict and continue to play a vital role in re-establishing the sector. With no functional central government, each organization provides education services with its own principles, standards, and design, including curricula and certifications. Going forward, discussions between the government and private organizations will take place to ensure a more coherent approach to education. Only 710,860 children out of an estimated 1.7 million of primary school-aged children are enrolled in school. The overall Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in Somalia, as indicated by school level data collected in 2011, is approximately 42 percent (for girls 37 percent).

The education sector in South Central Somalia is reviving through the Directorate of Education (DoE) under the leadership of a new Minister of Human Development and Public Services. The top priority for the Directorate is to get as many children into basic education as quickly as possible and to restore the functioning of the Directorate. The Directorate of Education continues to be constrained by the lack of financial capacity.

In 2012, the Federal Government of Somalia embarked on a participative, consultative process to develop the transitional Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) for 2013-2016 for South Central Somalia. The ESSP for South Central Somalia has recently been endorsed by the Local Education Group. It has a strong focus on access and on quality, through the construction and rehabilitation of classrooms and the recruitment and training of teachers, as well as the set-up of a teacher management system. In addition, ensuring teachers' recruitment (gender equity), incentive payments, provision of basic training, and the

presence of teachers at schools are key elements of the Education Cluster Strategy 2013 – 2015.

The European Union (EU) is the Coordinating Agency (CA) for the Local Education Group (LEG) in Somalia. The LEG has established an Education Sector Committee (ESC) which is chaired by the Ministry of Education (MoE), co-chaired by UNESCO and the NGO African Education Trust (AET). The Committee is comprised of implementing partners, including: local NGOs; Civil Society Organizations (CSOs); international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) (Save the Children UK, Care, Centre for British Teachers (CfBT), African Education Trust (AET), Islamic Relief, Diakonia, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and the Norwegian Refugee Council); multilaterals (UNICEF, UNESCO, World Food Program (WFP); and donors (EU, Department for International Development (DFID), USAID). The Formal Education Network for Private Schools (FENPS) is also part of the ESC. There is also still an active Education Cluster in South Central Somalia. Due to on-going security constraints, some development partners have travel restrictions in place for Somalia. To address this constraint, regular ESC meetings also take place in Nairobi.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The indicative allocation for all of Somalia was US$ 14.5 million. Following the GPE Board of Directors' approval of US$ 4.2 million for Somaliland and US$ 2.1 million for Puntland on May 21 and 22, 2013, the total amount made available to South Central Somalia was US$ 8.2 million. The Federal Government of Somalia has submitted a request for an accelerated funding proposal for South Central Somalia for the amount of US$ 1.38 million (16.8 percent of the indicative allocation for South Central Somalia). If the Accelerated Funding request is approved by the GPE Board (decision to be taken the first week of October 2013), this amount will be deducted from the current request. This in turn means that the current approval requested will be for the remaining amount of the US$ 8.2 million: so US$ 6.82 million[23] in total.

The requested accelerated funding support aims to provide a 15-day Accelerated Teacher Training program ('intensive crash course') for 1,000 newly recruited teachers, and to provide Incentive Payment to these 1,000 newly recruited teachers as well as 535 existing low-paid teachers for the first 4 months of the academic year 2013/2014. The current proposed Program Implementation Grant will build upon the proposed activities of the Accelerated Funding proposal. The program will be divided into five components.

Component 1 focuses on developing a Teacher Training System (US$ 515,052 plus co-financing from Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) US$ 63,000) in order

[23] The current Program Implementation Grant Application was submitted prior to the discussion in the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) of the Accelerated Funding proposal. A number of the comments and questions for clarification raised are already addressed in the current Application. Nevertheless, the Managing Entity for South Central Somalia has been requested to add a memorandum with additional information as requested by the FAC and recommended to the GPE Board of Directors.

to increase the number of teachers with access to quality assured, government-regulated Teacher Training. A Teacher Training Framework and Teacher Education and Training Policy will be developed as well as Minimum Standards and Quality Assurance Guidelines. With the accelerated funding, 1,000 new primary school teachers have been selected all over South Central Somalia and are being trained in child-centered methodologies in a 15-day Accelerated Teaching Program. Despite the aim of 40 percent female recruits, the Government has been able to recruit only 17 percent female teachers. The Ministry confirms to increase even more their efforts to increase the number of female teachers in the coming period.

Component 2 is the largest component and focuses on developing Teacher Management Systems (US$ 5,500,320 plus co-financing from DANIDA US$ 784,800), which aims to increase the number of teachers in government-supported schools who will benefit from more predictable salary payments. A Teacher Salary Payment System will be developed and operationalized for improved predictability of teacher salary payments. Selected primary school teachers will receive incentive payments which is a follow-up from the support planned with the accelerated funding proposal.

Component 3 aims to increase access to quality education through the improvement of school infrastructure (US$ 150,000), and the construction of classrooms and school facilities (including sanitation, recreation, sports, and staff rooms).

Component 4 focuses on Institutional Strengthening at the regional level (US$ 531,899.88) to improve support to basic education services for children and youth by Regional Education Officers.

Component 5 focuses on Quality Assurance (budget incorporated in Components 1-4) which will aim to improving equitable and quality education services at all levels. The activities are integrated in the 4 previous components.

	Program Component	Accelerated Funding Request (US$)	New Program Implementation Grant Request	Total Amount (US$)	Percent of total (%)
1	Teacher Training Systems	**420,052**	**95,000**	**515,052**	**6.3**
	Sub-Component 1.1: Teacher Training Policy	0	53,000	53,000	0.6
	Sub-Component 1.2: Initial Accelerated Teacher Training	420,052	0	420,052	5.1
	Sub-Component 1.3: In-Service Professional Support	0	42,000	42,000	0.5
2	Teacher Management Systems	**779,600**	**4,720,720**	**5,500,320**	**66.9**
	Sub-Component 2.1: Teacher Management System Development	0	30,000	30,000	0.4
	Sub-Component 2.2: Incentives for Teaching &	779,600	4,690,720	5,470,320	66.6

	Management Staff				
3	School Infrastructure	**0**	**150,000**	**150,000**	**1.8**
4	Institutional Strengthening at Regional Level	**0**	**531,899**	**531,899**	**6.5**
5	Program Management	**0**	**448,252**	**448,252**	**5.5**
	Sub-Component 5.1: Human Resources	0	377,504	377,504	4.6
	Sub-Component 5.2: Monitoring & Evaluation	0	70,748	70,748	0.9
	TOTAL PROGRAM COSTS	**1,199,652**	**5,945,871**	**7,145,523**	**-**
	UNICEF Program Support Cost	**179,948**	**891,880**	**1,071,828**	**13.0**
	TOTAL	**1,379,600**	**6,837,752**	**8,217,352**	**100**

* Other Agency fees not included in the total grant requested: 7 percent of total budget (total budget minus the UNICEF Program Support Cost): **US$ 657,388.19**

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 and, if granted, the accelerated funding proposal. Other external funding for the Education Sector is mainly channeled through INGOs. The European Union, USAID, DFID and other UN agencies, along with supporters from the Somali Diaspora, provide the bulk of the development funding. Danida has just confirmed additional support, aligned with the GPE funding through UNICEF of US$ 3.5 million. The Qatar Foundation (Educate a Child Initiative), the Government of Japan, and the Islamic Development Bank are considering or in the process of confirming contributions for South Central Somalia.

Given the complexities of the context of South Central Somalia and weak institutional capacities, a decision was made to work with a Managing Entity (ME). However, the implementation will take place through a phased approach over the program period. System reforms and institutional strengthening through a capacity building program, including those in other donor-funded programs (EU, USAID), will lead to the gradual transfer of implementation responsibilities. This will be the case regarding the payment of teacher incentives which will eventually be implemented through government systems. In the interim, payments will be made possible through a collaborative partnership between the DoE, UNICEF, and local NGOs that already have established payment systems. In the absence of a contract and procurement system within the Ministry, experienced local and international NGOs will be selected to ensure the rehabilitation of the eleven Regional Education Offices as well as the construction of the classroom/school facilities. On the management-side, UNICEF will use its own financial systems and management procedures to ensure full transparency of financial transactions. UNICEF will also be required to take on a substantial capacity-building role. This will entail central and regional level Education Officers working closely with the Ministry staff to build technical skills on a day-to-day basis in key areas of program management as well as joint monitoring of program implementation.

The UNICEF Management costs are based on standard direct support costs. Operating effectively in a conflict-affected state like Somalia is very expensive; high level security responses and employing alternative monitoring mechanisms are just two examples of costs

that need to be covered. The costs are assessed on all contributions to UNICEF Somalia and cover the costs of security, administration and finance support functions (both at central Nairobi level and in the zonal offices), operations (including office rent, utilities, communications, fuel, stationery, information technology (IT), etc.), transport, planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting. The allocation for South Central Somalia is four percent to security, three percent to program monitoring and evaluation, and eight percent operations, amounting to 15 percent in total.

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

The Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Phase I report concluded that, despite the security challenges, decisions around the program had been made in a transparent and collaborative way and that the program would be fully aligned with the draft education sector strategic plan. Besides consulting with the members of the Education Sector Committee in Mogadishu, and the different development partners based in Nairobi supporting the education sector in Somalia, it had been suggested to consult with other partners working on public finance reform, and peace and stability interventions, such as the World Bank, the Norwegian Embassy, and Denmark. This has been done which has resulted in an additional support from Denmark. It remains important to assure a clear link with the currently ongoing discussions to set up a multi donor trust fund for Somalia. The development of the education sector plan and the current application led to a coordinated education sector dynamic and has improved the dynamic of a joint dialogue with the government.

The main recommendations of the QAR Phase II report were to:

1. Better justify the choice to pay salaries and reassess the effect that this could have on the pursued outcome to improve professional motivation.

In response, the final Program Document specifies more clearly the reason and strategy to support incentive payments (and clarifies that these are not salary payments). The Program Document indicates that the incentives will have a positive effect on staff motivation as it allows for continuity and predictability of payment from previous programs for the next three years as well providing recognition for teachers with additional responsibilities.

2. Clarify the strategies and activities proposed to be financed under the accelerated funding option and the linkages with the current remaining Program Implementation Grant proposal. The same comments have been made by the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) when discussing the Accelerated Funding proposal.

In response, details of the key activities and linkages are provided in the final Program Document.

3. Clarity on the role of the Education Umbrellas and a recommendation to rather look towards cooperation, where the Umbrellas would continue to play a major role towards access, while the government would support them to enhance quality through teacher training and top-ups if necessary. This concern was also raised by the FAC when discussing the accelerated funding proposal.

In response, the endorsed Interim Education Strategic Plan (2013-2016) clearly states that the Ministry intends to work in cooperation with the Umbrellas. The ministry will facilitate "effective, coordination, liaison, and effective management of the transition to a well regulated education sector". The current proposal supports this approach through systems development and a focus on institutional capacity building at regional level. Continued partnerships with local NGOs will enable service delivery to continue and expand.

4. Elaborate a stronger link between the implementation of the Teacher Training System and the Salary Payment by the government.

In response, the current program has elaborated a clearer link between Component 1 (Teacher Training Systems) and Component 2 (Teacher Management Systems).

5. Elaborate on the implementation of the Capacity Development (long term), and Capacity Building (short term) elements over the three-year time span of the program.

In response, a more detailed and systematic explanation regarding the capacity development/building elements of the program has been provided under each Component of the program as well as under the section on Program Implementation.

6. Provide additional information on donor contributions and government revenues, including a possible multi-donor trust fund.

In response, additional information has been provided together with a Financial Baseline.

7. Provide a conflict-sensitive analysis of the geographical implementation of all activities.

In response, evidence-based data from several sources including Education Cluster Data and other conflict-sensitive analysis reports has been used, and an assessment of the geographical implementation of program activities has been conducted and a summary provided in the current Program Document.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The current political context of South Central Somalia offers opportunities to improve the education sector but is also still fragile. GPE processes and funding have already contributed to a more coordinated, harmonized, and focused effort to support the education sector in South Central Somalia. Considerable progress has been made regarding the development of

an interim education sector strategy plan and also with the recruitment of 1,000 new teachers. The new federal government is trying to take up its leadership responsibility in leading the coordination of the education sector in South Central Somalia.

The actual implementation plan of the ESSP has to be further elaborated, and annual action plans need to be prepared and budgeted. 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.

Sustainability of progress will depend strongly upon the willingness and capacity of the Somalia Government to allocate more funds to the education sector. This remains a concern, and therefore it will be important to monitor the commitment of the Federal Government of Somalia. The set-up of a teacher management system, including the payment of teacher incentives is a first step to get the Government again in the drivers' seat. The development partners as well as the Federal Government should encourage ways of engaging in the discussion of the set-up of a Multi-Donor Trust Fund that is being proposed by the World Bank and to assure how these mechanisms for improved Public Finance Management can be linked to the program and benefit the education sector.

Implementation of any education program in the South Central Somalia 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. Through the GPE funding, some multi-year funding and strengthening of the management systems of the Ministry will be provided and will contribute in moving away from the fragmented project-based approach to a more programmatic approach.

The UNICEF Management costs remain high. Operating effectively in a conflict-affected state like Somalia is very expensive; high-level security responses and employing alternative monitoring mechanisms are just two examples of costs that need to be covered. One of UNICEF's strengths in Somalia is its network of sub-offices that ensure direct contact with emerging local authorities and communities, enabling strong programming and use of resources. There is obviously a trade-off between the level of these costs and the fiduciary risks of working in these environments.

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 are also consistent with the Accelerated Funding proposal. The application package is ready for assessment by the FAC.

TANZANIA
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 94.8 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Out of Tanzania's population of 43.6 million[24], 44.2 percent is 15 years and younger. The annual population growth rate is three percent, and the primary school population is projected to reach 10.2 million by 2020. With a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of US$ 609[25], Tanzania ranks 152 in the 2013 Human Development Index.

Tanzania's economic growth rate was above 6 percent in 2012 and is projected to be about 7 percent by 2014. However, urban-rural disparities are considerable. Rural populations, about two-thirds of the total population, are less likely to benefit from economic growth. Gender inequality and unemployment, especially in the rapidly growing youth population, are additional challenges.

Tanzania's 5-year development plan for 2011/12 – 2015/16 is the first in a series of multi-year plans aimed at implementing the Tanzania Development Vision 2025. The Vision is to make Tanzania a middle-income country by 2025 through a shift from an agriculture-based to an industry-based economy. Youth employment creation is a cross-cutting theme in the Plan, as is the focus on improved quality of life for most Tanzanians.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Tanzania joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in March 2013 when the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) for 2008-2016 was re-endorsed by the Development Partners for the purpose of joining the Global Partnership for Education.[26] The ESDP forms the strategic framework for seven sub-sector plans: (i) the Primary Education Development Program (PEDP), (ii) the Secondary Education Development Program, (iii) the Teacher Development and Management Strategy, (iv) the Folk Education Development Program (FEDP), (v) the Adult and Non-formal Education Development Program (ANFEDP), (vi) the Higher Education Development Program, and (vii) the Technical and Vocational Education Development Program. The appraisal of the ESDP resulted in the recommendation

[24] National Bureau of Statistics, 2012

[25] World Bank, 2012

[26] The ESDP was initially endorsed in 2008, but Tanzania did not join the Global Partnership. A review of the ESDP was conducted in 2012 to assess the plan's progress and form the basis for a re-endorsement for GPE membership.

of a review to update it in line with developments and challenges in the sector and to achieve greater coherence between sub-sectors.
In addition to the ESDP, two more recent initiatives form the policy framework for education: the Education Reform Compact agreed with key donors in 2012, and the Big Results Now (BRN) initiative launched by the President in the first half of 2013[27].

The Government of Tanzania allocated 19.1 percent of its budget to education in 2013. The share of the education budget allocated to investment dropped from 9.5 percent in 2009/2010 to 3.95 percent in 2012/2013, with recurrent expenditures taking up almost the entire budget. The overall sector funding gap is at more than US$ 3,378 million for 2013/14 – 2016/17 as a result of highly ambitious sub-sector plans. Lower-cost scenarios exist and will be followed if funding falls short of the high cost scenarios. The cost scenarios for the three sub-sectors for which GPE support is requested have been adjusted down as a result of the process to develop clear action plans, and therefore have a relatively lower combined funding gap of US$ 325.49 million for the next three-year period.

Tanzania has been recognized for its policy of free, universal and compulsory education for all children aged 7-13, and the Government is the largest provider of both pre-primary and primary education. The primary Net Enrolment Rate (NER) reached 97 percent at its height in 2007, a dramatic increase from 59 percent in 2000. The secondary NER has begun a similar trajectory and expanded from six percent in 2011 to more than 30 percent in 2011. However, the primary NER has declined since 2007, dropping to 92 percent in 2012. According to UNICEF, nearly 490,000 children aged 7-13 are out of school. The rapid increase in access has put pressure on the system, which can be seen indirectly from completion rates and examination results: the primary completion rate dropped from 95.1 percent in 2009/2010 to 86.1 percent in 2011/2012.

Education sector support is coordinated by the Education Sector Development Committee (ESDC), led by the Ministry of Education and coordinated by a development partner on a rotational basis, currently USAID. A separate Coordinating Agency, Department for International Development (DFID), has been assigned for GPE-related matters. ESDC members include the African Development Bank, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Department for International Development (DFID), Agence Française pour le Développement (AFD), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), UNESCO, UNICEF, Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), USAID, World Bank and World Food Program (WFP). In addition, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are represented through the coalition Tanzania Education Network/Mtandao wa Elimu Tanzania (TEN/MET) and private schools and colleges are represented through the Tanzania Association of Managers and Owners of Non-Government Schools and Colleges (TAMONGSCO).

[27] The BRN builds on a Malaysian model, spans several sectors and sets out priorities for progress towards the 2025 Vision to be implemented in the next two years.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The application amount of US$ 94.8 million is in line with the indicative allocation provided by the Needs and Performance Framework (NPF). US$ 5.2 million of the total indicative allocation of US$ 100 million for Tanzania was approved for Zanzibar in May 2013.

The SIDA was selected as Supervising Entity (SE), and the financing modality is described as ring-fenced sector support. This means that the funds will be passed through the Government exchequer system in a specific account for targeted activities. The program will work through the existing education sector governance and dialogue structures, and the Director of Policy and Planning of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MOEVT) will be in charge of the day-to-day management of the program.

The Program, Literacy and Numeracy Education Support (LANES), is directly derived from three sub-sector Action Plans: the third phase of the Primary Education Development Program (PEDP III), the Folk Education Development Program (FEDP) and the Adult and Non-formal Education Development Plan (ANFEDP). LANES aims at improving acquisition of reading, writing and numeracy skills among children in and out of school, particularly targeting children in hard to reach areas, vulnerable and marginalized environments.

Component 1 focuses on the improvement of mastery skills in literacy and numeracy for children aged 5-11 in formal basic education, targeting children in lower grades in Tanzania's 15,525 primary schools. The component has four sub-components including (i) in-service teacher training on the '3R's; (ii) provision of teaching and learning materials; (iii) inclusive education; and (iv) curriculum revision.

Component 2 focuses on literacy and numeracy skills in non-formal basic education programs targeting children in the age group 9-13. It aims at establishing learning centers and satellite centers, providing radio instruction, establishing literacy clubs and enhancing teaching methods. The component also includes awareness raising on education and on violence against children. This component will be implemented in part by CSOs sub-contracted by the Government.

Component 3 promotes early childhood development for children aged 2-4 in preparation for enrolment at the pre-primary level. A first sub-component will finance training for daycare center facilitators and the provision of teaching and learning materials. The second sub-component focuses on research and design of a parental education program.

Component 4 aims to enhance evidence-based planning and management through performance assessment, data management, research and evaluations, including the establishment of a Basic Education Management Information System and scaling up a Life Long Learning Management Information System. This component also includes impact evaluations of PEDP and ANFEDP and the development of the next phases of these.

Component 5 aims to strengthen the capacity of the education system for improved coordination, planning and management. It involves the training of school committees, support to school supervision, and the development and distribution of school improvement tool kits.

Finally, **Component 6** seeks to establish an effective structure for management, reporting, information sharing, collaboration and monitoring and evaluation of the sub-sector plans including the LANES program. This component covers annual joint sector reviews and the costs of equipping the different operational units.

	Program Component	**Amount (US$)**	**Percent of total (%)**
1	Basic Education Literacy and Numeracy Improvement	**58,268,955**	**61.5**
	Sub-component 1.1 In-service teacher training	9,963,642	10.5
	Sub-component 1.2 Teaching and learning materials	37,538,955	39.6
	Sub-component 1.3 Inclusive education	3,300,013	3.5
	Sub-component 1.4 Curriculum revision	7,466,345	7.9
2	Non-formal basic education	**10,858,121**	**11.5**
3	Early Childhood Development	**677,550**	**0.7**
	Sub-component 3.1 Early childhood development centers in Folk Education Colleges	141,278	0.1
	Sub-component 3.2 Parenting education program	536,272	0.6
4	Institutionalization and mainstreaming of effective literacy and numeracy promotion	**4,717,747**	**5.0**
5	Strengthened Capacity and Human Resources for Coordination, Planning and Management	**17,900,065**	**18.9**
6	Program management, coordination and M&E	**2,354,764**	**2.4**
	Sub-component 6.1 Annual reviews	408,465	0.4
	Sub-component 6.2 Coordination structure	1,946,299	2.0
	TOTAL	**94,777,202**	**100.0**

*Other Agency fees not included in the total grant requested: N/A
** Note that the standard Supervising Entity fee of US$ 100,000 per year is not included in the total grant requested.

More than 60 percent of the budget is concentrated in the first component, and within this, 64 percent is allocated to school incentives, teaching and learning materials. Forty-two

percent of the budget is requested in the first year of the program. This is due to the relatively high procurement costs incurred during the first year.

The program is complex and integrated within three separate sub-sector action plans. The Action Plans were developed to ensure a coherent perspective of actions required to implement the sub-sector plans—including the BRN, which will have high political priority.

A descriptive risk analysis is included in the Program Document, highlighting risks related to budgets, accounting and procurement as well as programmatic risks that include teacher attendance problems, weak implementation capacity and other systemic weaknesses. The only risks rated as highly likely in the summary matrix are poor teacher attendance and accountability, and lack of school feeding in some schools. For the fiduciary risks, a table is also annexed that includes specific mitigation measures. Most risks are rated substantial in this table and mitigation measures are provided. The Program Document informs that existing sector review mechanisms will monitor the risks.

Tanzania has established clear structures to promote aligned and harmonized development aid. The Government receives both direct and sector budget support. Table 12 in the Program Document provides an overview of donor support categorized as general budget support and 'other' support, while Figure 7 shows the different channels of aid. The effectiveness of budget support has been mixed, and the choice of 'ring-fenced' support to the LANES program is deliberate and intended to optimize direct results on education quality improvements.

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

The Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Phase I concluded that the process set up to develop the LANES program was highly consultative and inclusive, and strongly government-owned. A clear focus on GPE priorities was integrated into the dialogue, in particular with regard to learning outcomes and teachers. Gender issues were also considered as an important element in the program development. The implementation modality was chosen with due attention to weaknesses in the effectiveness of existing modalities such as budget support in bringing about results in the Tanzanian context. It was agreed that support targeted at specific activities using Government systems would provide the best balance between alignment and optimal results.

Since Tanzania had originally planned to submit its application in March 2013, QAR Phase II took place in January 2013. The main recommendations included the following:

1. The design and funding of the Program should be more clearly aligned with the on-going development and management of the sector. The focus should be on the core of the primary school curriculum, teacher training, and provision of textbooks, and also be a priority in the MoETV's budget.

In response, the final Program Document shows that LANES is based on three existing sub-sector plans, the PEDP, FEDP and ANFEDP. Moreover, the Action Plans were developed alongside the LANES results framework to further clarify this coherence. Annex 2 gives an overview of the sub-sector plans to demonstrate the linkage. Further adjustment was required after the launch of the BRN. The LANES program in its final version covers elements of the President-led initiative, notably the incentives scheme.

2. The proposal should explain the modality, develop a cost implementation plan and outline the Program's implementation arrangements (with details of procurement); define the associated baseline and performance indicators; describe what will be measured at each stage and how this will be done, and explain how the program will be institutionalized.

This recommendation reflects the relatively incomplete status of the draft that was submitted for QAR Phase II in January, and contributed to the decision to postpone the application submission. The final document provides a great deal more detail on modalities and implementation arrangements as well as indicators, targets, timelines and budgets with unit costs.

3. The Program Document should demonstrate that there are strategies in place to address the exogenous factors identified in the document as being beyond the control of the program; and *the risk analysis should be revised and risk-mitigating measures within the control of the program developers be included.*

In response, a risk assessment is included in the final Program Document, as well as a fiduciary risk analysis and a matrix that outlines roles and responsibilities for the programmatic risks.

4. The Program Document could better demonstrate how lessons learned from previous programs and evaluations have informed the design of this program, especially with regard to monitoring and tracking performance and value for money.

In response, the QAR Phase II memo explains that the evaluation of PEDP II was used as the basis for PEDP III and that the risks identified in LANES build on the PEDP II evaluation. Other experiences on which the LANES program builds are also mentioned, including from Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ).

Since the Program underwent a great deal of development following QAR Phase II, the Secretariat carried out a follow-up review in early August in order to assess the status of the Program Document with reference to the earlier QAR II recommendations and the overall quality of the documents. The resulting comments and recommendations contributed to the finalization of the program. Finally, the SE conducted its own quality review.

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 complete and generally internally consistent, and that the application package is ready for assessment by the Financial Advisory Committee.

The indicative allocation for Tanzania is significant and the LANES program is large and complex. Its division into several components to be implemented by different government sub-entities as well as CSOs reflects the inclusive approach taken to the program development. The highly participatory process has been different from many GPE program development processes in that the SE has taken on more of an advisory and review role than a hands-on role in the development of the proposal. The program is fully government-owned and integrated in government plans and has contributed to direct capacity building in program planning.

The Secretariat strongly encouraged the development of the three detailed sub-sector Action Plans, since policy priorities were set out in the ESDP, the sub-sector plans, the Education Reform Compact and BRN. The Action Plans make it clearer how the strategies and priorities from these policy orientations will play out in detail, and how the LANES program fits into the broader framework.

Overall, this program has promising elements arising from the strong focus on addressing the core quality challenges of the Tanzanian education system through targeted and detailed actions aimed at improving learning outcomes. The program also has significant elements of risk in terms of its complexity and extensive use of Government systems. The weaknesses of these Government systems are transparently disclosed in the Program Document and its fiduciary risk annex, along with proposed mitigation measures. This is welcomed as a sign of openness. It should be noted that donor partners have chosen to continue direct budget support over the last years despite problems related to Government systems. A major EU-led review of general budget support concluded that it delivered major benefits in a harmonized manner but that achievements could have been greater with a different design and management approach.

Close attention to monitoring, including with regard to risk mitigation measures, will be important to ensure effective implementation. As a first step, the development of clear operations manuals and guides will be urgent and of high importance. The close involvement of the SE and other development partners in this endeavor will be reassuring.

There is potential for development partners to support the Government in addressing the systemic issues that have limited achievements up to now through different initiatives including LANES, the BRN, and a results-based instrument planned by donors (including DFID, the World Bank and Sweden). The challenge will be to ensure overall coherence through clear coordination mechanisms and through streamlined support to Government partners within the overall planning framework.

THE GAMBIA
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 6.9 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

The Gambia is a West African country with an estimated population of 1.8 million with more than half of its population is below the age 24. Except for a brief military coup in 1994, the country has remained stable since it received its independence in 1965 allowing for a consistent focus on development and growth. The country is divided into five regions or administrative divisions. Average Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is 3.3 percent and per capita GDP is US$ 610. The economy relies on the agricultural and tourism industries. The Gambia is vulnerable to external shocks and this situation together with a narrow economic base has led to a large debt burden. The country ranks 165th in the most recent Human Development Index (HDI 2013).

Though the country shows steady improvement over the last decade, its HDI ranking also indicates the challenges that remain with regard to the indices for health and education. In addition, about 40 percent of its population lives below the poverty line.

EDUCATION SECTOR

The Gambia was one of the first countries that joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in 2004. The Education Sector Medium Term Plan, covering all sub-sectors in education, was developed in 2008. This Plan came to an end in 2011.

The new "Education Sector Medium Term Plan" (ESMTP 2014-2017) developed by the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education includes interventions that address (i) access and equity; (ii) quality and relevance; and (iii) sector management. This Plan is based on an overarching Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) for the period 2014-2023. Both the ESMTP and the ESSP were appraised and endorsed by the Local Education Group (LEG).

According to recent Education Management Information Systems data, the Gross Enrollment Ratio for lower basic education (Grades 1-6) is 90 percent in 2012 and for upper basic education (Grades 7-9) it is 66.2. The expected increase for 2010 outlined in the Education Plan for lower basic education (95 percent) did not take place, while for upper basic education the targets were met. The Gambia's primary completion rate in 2012 is 72.4 percent. This completion rate is above the sub-Saharan African (SSA) average of 67 percent. Similarly, for upper basic education, the country's completion rate is the third highest (about 60 percent) in the group of 24 SSA countries.

While GPE financing has contributed to improvements in completion rates, learning levels remain weak. Early grade reading assessment showed that after two years of schooling, 54 percent of Grade 2 students and 27 percent of Grade 3 students were unable to read a single word. The mean score for the National Assessment Test results in 2012 in mathematics and language is approximately 45 percent for Grade 5. For Grade 3, it is 42 percent for language and 37 percent in mathematics.

Education expenditure as a share of GDP rose to 5.2 percent in 2010 and reduced to 4.2 percent in 2011. Over the last two years there has been a slight increase. Public expenditure on education as a percent of total spending is about 19 percent. About 73 percent is allocated to basic/primary education. In 2013, about 65 percent of the expenditure is on recurrent costs and 35 percent for capital expenditure. The financing gap is about 30 percent overall and the financing gap for just primary/basic is 24 percent. Overall 57 percent of the four year implementation plan is supported by external financing and the GPE funds accounts for about 7 percent.

The Local education Group (LEG) in Gambia, which is led by the World Food Program (WFP), is small with the following bi-lateral donors: French Embassy, the Islamic Development Bank, and Arab Bank for Economic Development, UNICEF and World Bank are the only multilateral donors. The LEG includes strong participation from civil society: the Peace Corps, Action Aid, the National Campaign for Education, and the Teachers' Union.

PERFORMANCE UNDER PREVIOUS GRANTS

The Gambia received three previous grants from the GPE of US$ 4million, US$ 9.4 million and US$ 28 million (ongoing). The current GPE Grant is expected to close in September 30, 2013 and it is fully disbursed. The original closing date for the Grant was December 31, 2012. The Government requested two extensions of closing dates: first, by six months and, then, by three months. The last extension was due to delays in the shipment of procured textbooks.

According to the Supervising Entity (SE), the last GPE Grant was rated satisfactory throughout its implementation period. Significant areas of support include (i) stipends provided to 2,800 teacher training students; (ii) the construction of 252 new classrooms (including 24 separate blocks of latrines for 9,779 girls) benefitting 10,000 students; (iii) providing 81 donkey carts for helping an additional 1,000 students go to school; (iv) in-service teacher training for 424 teachers; (v) training 2,492 teachers in early grade reading; (vi) providing financial assistance to 6,000 needy boys; (vii) providing 13,812 sanitary pads to help girls attend school; (viii) providing hardship allowances for teachers in remote areas; (ix) conditional cash transfers provided to 1,026 children in Koranic schools to receive basic literacy and numeracy skills; (x) hardship allowances for teachers in the remote regions of the country.

The lessons learned from this program are incorporated in the proposed new application. Critical interventions such as hardship allowances and donkey carts continue to be

supported and the project implementation unit is further strengthened. The program highlights the need for improvement in system-level governance and management of education, which is addressed in the proposed program.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The Gambia is requesting US$ 6.9 million, in line with the Needs and Performance Framework (NPF) indicative allocation. The World Bank is the Supervising Entity and the modality continues to use the project mode while introducing budget support with an emphasis on results in one of the components. In addition to the GPE Grant, the proposed "Results for Education Achievement and Development" project (READ) includes financing from International Development Association (IDA) (US$ 11 million) and from the Government (US$ 16.0 million). The objective of the project is to increase access to basic education, improve the quality of teaching and learning in lower basic schools, and strengthen education systems. The program has the following components:

Component 1: Increase access to basic education (US$ 13.0 million, of which IDA US$ 3.5 million, GPE US$ 2.3 million and Government financing US$ 7.2 million). This component includes the construction of 40 multi-grade schools and 20 Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers; the provision of 100 donkey carts; ECD teacher training and school grants.

Component 2: Improve quality of teaching and learning (US$ 10.6 million, of which IDA US$ 3.6 million, GPE US$ 1.6 million and Government financing US$ 5.4 million). This invention supports the reform of teachers' pre-service and in-service training, and improving learning.

Component 3: Technical and Institutional Support (US$ 7.4 million, of which IDA US$ 2.3 million, GPE US$ 1.7 million and Government financing US$ 3.4 million). This component will support the development of a communication strategy and institutional capacity building.

Component 4: Strengthen the education system with a focus on governance and management results (US$ 3.6 million, of which IDA US$ 2.3 million and GPE US$ 1.3 million). This component is innovative in that it provides incentives for the timely implementation of the above interventions. There are nine indicators and when each indicator is achieved in a timely fashion, an additional US$ 400,000 is given as budget support to the Ministry of Education budget for programming.

	Program Component	Amount (US$)	Percent of total (%)
1	Increase access to basic education	**2,300,000**	**33.3**
2	Improve quality of teaching and learning	**1,600,000**	**23.2**
3	Technical and Institutional Support	**1,700,000**	**24.6**
4	Strengthening the education system with a focus on governance and management results	**1,300,000**	**18.8**
	TOTAL	**6,900,000**	**100.0**

* The application requests a Supervision Fee of US$ 150,000 per year for four years, which is US$ 50,000 above the norm of US$ 100,000 annually (US$ 200,000 for fragile states).

Risks and mitigation measures: The program document identifies the disbursement linked indicators as a possible risk due to the lack of familiarity of the government with such an intervention. The program team is expected to provide additional support for the implementation of this component.

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

The Quality Assurance Review (QAR**)** Phase I was completed in January 2013. The report describes, on the one hand, the links between the components and the Education Sector Plan and, on the other hand, between the components and the GPE Strategic Plan. The draft application included interventions to improve access, learning and system building. The QAR Phase I provided suggestions for addressing the limitations in teacher management as well as observed risks to the implementation of the national language program. These suggestions have informed the proposed application.

The QAR Phase II includes the following list of recommendations and the SE has either made the changes in its revised program document or has provided an explanation.

1. Clarity on the program being four years instead of three.

In response, in the application, the SE has listed disbursement of the GPE Fund in three years while IDA disbursement continues in the fourth year.

2. Improve the financial and sustainability analysis in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD).

A detailed cost analysis is available in the application and a fiscal sustainability analysis is included in a separate section in the economic analysis in the program document.

3. Concerned the early grade reading program, which uses a relatively untested model for literacy with the mother tongue instruction as a subject in the early grades rather than as the medium of instruction.

An explanation was provided by the SE - the government had made the decision to maintain English as the instructional medium even in the early grades. Therefore, it was decided that the next best option would be to facilitate reading by providing additional instruction specifically in reading in the mother tongue.

4. Better integrate the different interventions related to teachers.

This recommendation facilitated a better, more integrated approach to the activities related to teachers. The revised program document does address the linkages between professional development and the institutional reforms to improve teacher management.

5. Revising the indicators for estimating whether the project achieves its objectives.

These indicators have been revised and there is greater clarity in this area in the final application.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The stable political context and the country's performance on previous grants bode well for the implementation of this Grant. The proposed program also provides continuity with the work that has been done in the sector by including some of the critical interventions in the previous Grant such as the hardship allowances for teachers, donkey carts, and the emphasis on student learning.

The program is complex but innovative. On the one hand, the program with some changes maintains the simplicity of three of the components. On the other hand, these components are accompanied by an introduction of the innovative disbursement linked component that incentivizes institutional reform. The funds allocated for this component are significant enough to be treated as an incentive. Moreover, the program sets the country on track for more aligned financing in the future by introducing budget transfer mechanisms in this component.

Despite a small number of donors in the Gambia, the WFP (as the Coordinating Agency), and members of the LEG have provided consistent support to the World Bank whenever possible. GPE processes were also instrumental in encouraging donors to work together to ensure their aid is aligned and that they are sharing responsibilities for the effective implementation of the program.

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 is ready for assessment by the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC).

UGANDA
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 100 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Uganda has one of the youngest populations in the world with 53 percent under 15 years of age and a relatively high population growth rate of 3.2 percent. Around 80 percent of the population is rural, making Uganda the second most rural economy in Africa. Poverty in Uganda has declined over the last 20 years from 56 percent in 1992 to 24 percent by 2009/10. However, inequality persists within and across regions. The country is close to halving poverty and addressing gender inequality. Uganda ranks 161 in the Human Development Index (2013) and has a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of US$ 547 in 2013.

While Uganda has a record of impressive growth, prudent macroeconomic management, and structural reform, growth has remained below historical trends since 2009 as it has struggled with both domestic and global economic down-turns. Despite an expansionary fiscal policy, economic activity in 2011/12 slowed to about 3.5 percent. The overall fiscal deficit including grants was estimated at 7.2 percent of GDP in FY2011/12 compared to 4.9 percent in FY2009/10.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Uganda's Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2007-2015 was updated in 2010 and endorsed by development partners in early 2011. The country joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in June 2011.

Uganda has made great progress in expanding access to education. The introduction of universal primary education (UPE) in 1997 led to significant gains in primary enrollment, which increased from about 3 million students in 1998 to 8.4 million students by 2010[28]. Uganda has a Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) of 115.3 percent in 2013. Primary net enrollment measured 94 percent in 2011, with parity between girls and boys.

Despite marked gains, Uganda is likely to miss attainment of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of universal primary education due to low completion rates. Although the absolute number of students completing primary education is gradually increasing as a consequence of the growing sizes of each cohort, a significant percentage of those who enter

[28] Annual School Census 2010

primary school do not reach the final primary grade. Uganda's Primary Completion Rate (PCR) is 67 percent, with 66 percent for girls. Low quality of education service delivery appears to be playing an important role in low primary completion. This is attested by high repetition rates, which are linked with high rates of discouragement and dropout at the primary school level.

The Government of Uganda (GoE) has identified a "literacy crisis" with low levels of performance in literacy and numeracy. In 2012, less than half the Primary grade 6 students tested by National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE) were proficient in literacy (41 percent) and numeracy (45 percent). In cross-country assessments (Southern and Eastern African Consortium on Monitoring Educational Quality, SACMEQ), Uganda students scored in the lowest one-third of countries.

Key national priorities for education as articulated in the ESSP 2007-2015 are increasing access, equity, quality, relevance (including expansion of training in business, technical and vocational education), and efficiency of education service delivery in Uganda. Uganda has an estimated financing gap of US$ 155.2 million for 2013, and expects this figure to increase to US$ 186.6 million in 2014. Despite prioritizing education in national development strategies, the share of government expenditure for education has decreased from 16.8 percent in 2011 to 14.6 percent in 2013. Uganda's education expenditure is 2.7 percent of its GDP. This downward trend in government commitment to education is of concern to development partners.

The Local Education Group (LEG) in Uganda includes UN-agencies such as UNICEF, UNESCO, International Labor Organization (ILO) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), multilateral partners such as the African Development Bank (AfDB), European Union and the World Bank, bilateral partners such as the Belgium Embassy and Technical Cooperation, Irish Aid, Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and USAID, and civil society organizations including Forum for Education non-governmental organizations in Uganda (FENU) and the Uganda National Teachers Union (UNATU). Irish Aid is the Coordinating Agency (CA) (incoming), supported by the Belgium Embassy (outgoing).

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Uganda is requesting US$ 100 million to support the Uganda Teacher and School Effectiveness Project. This request is in-line with the Needs and Performance Framework (NPF) indicative allocation for Uganda. The World Bank is the selected Supervising Entity (SE).

The grant will be financed through the Investment Project Financing (IPF) instruments of the World Bank. While a project modality is being used, credit disbursements will be made against selected key education budget line items referred to as Eligible Expenditure Programs (EEPs), up to capped absolute amounts. The event and amount of credit

disbursements will be based on the achievement of pre-specified results, referred to as disbursement-linked indicators (DLIs)[29], determined in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES). The project also includes a small Technical Assistance (TA) component which finances capacity building activities and strengthens fiduciary, safeguard and monitoring and evaluation systems.

Project implementation will be mainstreamed in the MoES using existing government structures. The overall responsibility for project implementation lies with the Permanent Secretary, with day-to-day implementation under the responsibility of the Department of Education Planning. Relevant units under the MoES will be responsible for specific project sub-components. Local governments will implement the school grants, teacher motivation, and the scaled-up inspections in line with the decentralized education service delivery. And the LEG serves as an advisory and coordinating group as per the GPE institutional arrangements.

The proposed Project Development Objective is to support the Government in improving teacher and school effectiveness in the public primary education system, specifically with a focus on pedagogical approaches for early reading and numeracy and improved school accountability and facilities. The following is a summary of program components (see Annex 2 of the program document for more details):

Component 1 focuses on strengthening teacher competency, teacher resources, and teacher motivation and accountability. The results linked to disbursement for Component 1 are: (i) the numbers of teachers trained (DLI 1); (ii) the numbers of schools with the standard kit of instructional material (DLI 2); the number of promotions according to the improved scheme and the improved weight of teaching performance in promotions (DLI 3); and the number of schools inspected at least once per term with reports filed in the real-time system (DLI 4).

Component 2 focuses on establishing a supportive enabling environment for the strengthening of teacher competency. The results linked to disbursement for Component 1 are: (i) the number of schools with trained head-teachers and SMCs (year 1) and the numbers of schools with information on usage of school funding publically displayed (year 2 and 3) (DLI 5); and (ii) the number of schools where procurement is concluded (year 1), construction is completed (year 2), and finished construction meets pre-defined quality standards (year 3). (DLI 6).

Component 3 will finance advisory, technical, and capacity-building for project implementation, data management, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), including the evaluation, review, and dissemination of the education sector Early Childhood Development (ECD) policy and operational standards; improvements in teacher payroll, and preparation

[29] The DLI approach within an Investment Project Financing instrument has been tried for over 5 years in the education sector with success.

of the ESSP for the next cycle. There are no disbursement-linked indicators for Component 3.

	Program Component	Amount (US$)	Percent of total (%)
1	Effective Teachers	**39,000,000**	**39**
	Sub-component A: Improving teacher competencies	17,000,000	17
	Sub-component B: Providing equipment and instructional materials	15,000,000	15
	Sub-component C: Rewarding teachers for good performance	3,000,000	3
	Sub-component D: Enhancing Teacher Supervision	4,000,000	4
2	Effective Schools	**45,000,000**	**45**
	Sub-component A: Enhancing school leadership, management, and accountability	2,000,000	2
	Sub-component B: Providing needs-based performance linked school grants for basic school facilities	43,000,000	43
3	Implementation Support and Capacity Building	**16,000,000**	**16**
	Sub-component A: ECD policy review and advocacy for improved enabling environment for the provision of quality early childhood education	3,000,000	3
	Sub-component B: Integrated ICT real-time school reporting, targeted beneficiary feedback, enhanced teacher supervision and inventory management system	4,000,000	4
	Sub-component C: Support to Teacher Payroll and Information Management	3,000,000	3
	Sub-component D: Support to M&E unit for project monitoring	2,000,000	2
	Sub-component E: Technical assistance for the design and improved implementation of project activities	3,000,000	3
	Sub-component F: Technical assistance for generating ESSP for the next cycle	1,000,000	1
	TOTAL	**100,000,000**	**100**

** Uganda is requesting Supervision Fees in the amount of US$ 600,000 for this grant which exceeds the amount in the current Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) policy.

Despite a strong anticorruption legal framework, Uganda has struggled to translate its anti-corruption laws into practice. In recent past, development grants have been suspended from Uganda citing irregularities with the way the grant funds were being used. The SE, therefore, rates governance challenges related to implementation as substantial. To mitigate governance

risks including fraud and corruption in implementation, measures will be taken to ensure transparency in bidding processes. The national School Grant Facility guidelines will also be revised to improve and further standardize procurement processes/documents, and incorporate third-party monitoring and well as unannounced school visits.

Risks related to capacity, monitoring, and sustainability are also thought to be substantial. To mitigate against these risks, a detailed capacity assessment of implementing units has been carried out (see Annex 5 of Program Document). Capacity risks are being systematically mitigated through a strengthened Technical Assistance component (Component 3). In addition to other actions for capacity building, the component will help strengthen project-specific staffing within the MoES. A strong and reliable data monitoring system – which is a part of Technical Assistance – is also expected to help strengthen risk-mitigation through timely reporting and monitoring (through various sources) of key project dimensions.

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

Uganda had originally planned to submit its application in the second round of 2012, using a ring-fenced project modality with the World Bank as Supervising Entity. The Secretariat undertook the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Phase I following a GPE mission to Uganda in May 2012. The mission and subsequent QAR I report highlighted a number of challenges that were evident in the planning and preparation of the proposed GPE-supported program for Uganda: a lack of collaboration and transparency within the LEG; a lack of consistent and meaningful inclusion of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the LEG and, specifically, in country-level GPE processes; the need to identify an effective balance between focus on quality and on access in the proposed program; the need to further consider how GPE resources or complimentary work of partners would support access and completion of education for girls and the marginalized, particularly in the fragile context of northern and eastern Uganda; the need for a strong M&E framework; and the attainment of consensus within the LEG on mother tongue instruction in the program.

After much discussion between the Ministry of Education, the World Bank, and other members of the LEG, a decision was taken to delay submission of a grant application until September 2013, allowing time to address the Secretariat's concerns and to develop a sound Program Document for submission.

The Secretariat undertook a second QAR I mission in February 2013 based on a new Program Concept Note. The main conclusions of the QAR I were that: the concept note for the program had been developed in a collaborative and transparent process; the LEG had actively engaged CSOs; the program would include a particular focus on girls and on addressing quality issues in the northern and eastern regions; consensus-building was underway around the potential address of both mother tongue and early child development (ECD) in the program.

The QAR Phase II made the following recommendations, presented below with subsequent responses:

1. Development of a detailed budget with unit costs, baseline data, target indicators, details of budgeting, etc.

In response, a detailed activity budget has been added to Annex 3 of the Program Document.
2. Development of a detailed log frame with intended outcomes, baseline indicators and benchmarks, target learning indicators, and milestones.

In response, all log-frame information has been captured in the Program Document. The Theory of Change has been updated. Intended outcomes, baseline indicators and benchmarks, and targets are captured in the Results Framework. Yearly milestones are reflected in the DLI table.
A consolidated log-frame is available on request.

3. Strengthening of the proposed Risk Mitigating Actions and capturing them in the project's Grant Agreement.

In response, the Operational Risk Assessment Framework (ORAF) within the Program Document (Annex 4) has been updated to better address fiduciary risks. Detailed Procurement and Financial Management Assessments have been carried out and corresponding risks and mitigation strategies have been detailed in Revised Annex 3 on Implementation Arrangements. Risk mitigation on these dimensions is also being supplemented through the revised DLI 7. Further, the revised Governance and Accountability Action Plan (GAAP; Annex 9) contains numerous actions designed to address some of the governance risks included in ORAF. A detailed capacity assessment of implementing units has been carried out. Corresponding risks and mitigation with respect to implementation capacity risks have been outlined in Annex 5 (Implementation Support Plan) of the Program Document. Capacity risks are being systematically mitigated through a strengthened Technical Assistance component (Component 3). In addition to other actions for capacity building, the component will help strengthen project-specific staffing within the MoES. A strong and reliable data monitoring system is also expected to help strengthen risk-mitigation through timely reporting and monitoring (through various sources) of key project dimensions.

4. Providing clear indication of readiness to implement by identifying what actions have already been taken, what actions are now being undertaken, and what will happen immediately after program launching.

In response, information on readiness to implement has been systematically collected and some of it is reflected in the Program Document. Detailed work plans have been generated for all project sub-components and were discussed in detail during project appraisal (August 19-23, 2013). These work plans are available but not included in the program document due to

space constraints. As a key prior action, a MoES project team has been established. Key preparatory activities and results have been identified and incentivized through Year 0 DLIs. Actions that will take place during the first year of project implementation are captured in the Implementation Annex.

Note that a lack of pre-financing (combined with liquidity constraints at Government) is a limiting factor for actions that can be undertaken before project effectiveness.

5. Developing a detailed and cost implementation/Action Plan.

In response, more detail has been added to the implementation plan (Annex 3) and this, in combination with the detailed budget (also in Annex 3), provides the information requested. Further detailed information and planning is available in the MoES work plan(s) which are not included in the Program Document due to space constraints.

In addition, QAR II discussion also highlighted the need for the LEG to consider a more aligned funding modality than the initially-planned ring-fenced project modality, if feasible in the current context of Uganda.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

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

The proposed program is well-aligned with Uganda's ESSP and national development strategies, and with GPE strategic objectives. The program components and activities are relevant to the Uganda context and focus strongly on learning outcomes. The country team has responded thoroughly to the Secretariat's QAR II recommendations and has addressed such recommendations in the final Program Document, strengthening it considerably since QAR II.

Given Uganda's well-established education sector and long-term development partner support to the sector, the LEG opted to move away from the traditional ring-fenced project modality. There is, however, a perception of increasing corruption in Uganda and, given this reality, the LEG agreed to a results-based funding modality utilizing DLIs.

Experiences show that this results-based instrument increases focus on achieving results, strengthens the government's own programs and project sustainability, which raises the development effectiveness of the support. The project proposes a middle-of-the-road

approach whereby the grant supports selected government programs by funding the government budget lines for these programs, while the SE has rigorous fiduciary oversight and procedures for these programs. Budget support or the Program-for-Results (P4R) instrument were not pursued because they require full assessment and reliance upon government fiduciary procedures, which the current governance situation suggests is not advisable. The proposed lending instrument allows for detailed fiduciary monitoring of key programs supported under the project, which is preferable.

Despite the commitment of the Government of Uganda to education, the share of education within the national budget has shown a declining trend over the last six years. A continued decrease in the budget allocation for the education sector could jeopardize the sustainability of the project activities, as these will, to a moderate degree, require continued financing. The risk of financial sustainability will be addressed at the macro-level through the Development Partners Poverty Reduction Strategy Credit framework and the Joint Budget Support Framework to maintain or increase the share of the budget going to primary education.

The Uganda program demonstrates readiness to implement and the application package is ready for consideration by the FAC.

UZBEKISTAN
Quality Assurance Review - Phase III
Final Readiness Review
Proposed Grant Amount: US$ 49.9 million

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Uzbekistan is a lower middle income country[30] located in Central Asia with growth that has averaged eight percent annually since the mid-2000s. Uzbekistan represents about a third of Central Asia's population, with 29.78 million inhabitants in 2012, and is the fifth largest country (by landmass) in the former Soviet Union. Uzbekistan gained independence in 1991, and since that time authorities have chosen a gradual path to reform, aimed at social stability with an emphasis on national independence, centralized government control and self-sufficiency.

Despite high growth rates, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita was US$ 1,717 in 2012[31], one of the lowest in the region, and an estimated 19.5 percent of the population was unable to meet their basic needs, in 2010[32]. In 2005 (the most recent year with available data), 74.7 percent[33] of those below the poverty line lived in rural areas of the country, where 48.8 percent[34] of the overall population lives. Uzbekistan is ranked 114 in the 2013 UNDP Human Development Index. Given the country's young population – 28.8 percent was under the age of 15 in 2012 – the Government of Uzbekistan (GoU) is keen to improve access to education, while also improving quality and increasing equity. This is part of a strategy to promote a smooth and gradual transition to a market-oriented economy across the entire country.

EDUCATION SECTOR

[30] According to the World Bank Atlas (based on the Gross National Income – GNI - per capita). Lower middle income countries have GNI per capita between US$ 1,036 and US$ 4,085.

[31] Data from World Bank EdStats database.

[32] Official data as cited in *Country Partnership Strategy for the Republic of Uzbekistan for the Period of FY12-FY15*. Poverty, or ability to meet basic consumption needs, is measured by a "national food-based norm of 2,100 kilocalories per person per day".

[33] Welfare Improvement Strategy for Uzbekistan (2007).

[34] According to the State Statistic Committee.

Uzbekistan recently joined Global Partnership Education (GPE) in September 2013 when its Education Sector Plan 2013-2017 (ESP) was endorsed by the Local Education Group (LEG). The proposed Project is aligned with the following three (of eight) strategic areas of the ESP:

- In pre-primary education: development and support of childhood development, expansion of the network of one-year half-day programs, as well as support for parents to encourage reading and early learning.
- In general secondary education: improving conditions for teaching and learning, increasing the quality of teaching and learning.
- Teacher training and retraining: design and deliver relevant training based on educational needs of teachers.

Uzbekistan's economic strategy emphasizes the maintenance of basic public services, including investments in education. The Law on Education N-464-I proclaims education as a priority of the state and guarantees equal rights to education for all. The primary Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) was 95 percent in 2011 and the Gender Parity Index (GPI) was 0.97. To achieve high levels of access, the GoU increased public expenditure on education from 5.6 percent of GDP in the mid-1990s to eight percent of GDP in 2010, dedicating an estimated 35 percent of the total annual budget to education in 2012. While this level of spending is considerably higher than the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) average, there are questions as to the efficiency and labor market relevance of the current education sector at all levels.

The GoU has produced an estimate of the cost to implement the actions of the ESP from 2013 to 2017. A simulation model was used to make projections on the resource requirements for each sub-sector, based on the framework outlined in the ESP. The results of the simulations found that while the GDP is expected to grow more than eight percent annually, the resources required for education will exceed the increase in available funds. The proposed project would help to decrease the deficit identified by the simulations model: the GPE funding estimated for 2014 is US$ 24.5 million (around 30 percent of the financing gap). In 2015 and 2016, the GPE funding is estimated at US$ 23.2 million and US$ 2.2 million respectively (around 30 percent and 3 percent of the financing gap, respectively).

The LEG and the Development Partner Group (DPG) were formed in February 2012 to represent key stakeholders. The LEG is chaired by the Minister of Public Education and has members representing Ministries of Specialized Secondary and Higher Education, Health, Finance, Economy, and the Cabinet of Ministers. UNICEF is the Coordinating Agency. In total, nine non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and ten donor agencies, as well as education institutions and research institutes contributed to the development of the ESP.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The requested program implementation grant of US$ 49.9 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 (SE) and a project modality will be used. In each phase of project preparation, the SE conducted broad consultations with the LEG members to gather ideas on how to address the challenges identified in the ESP.

The proposed Project is clearly aligned with the strategic objectives of the GPE to increase the number of children learning and demonstrating mastery of basic literacy and numeracy skills by Grade 3, as well as to improve teacher effectiveness by training, recruiting and retraining teachers and supporting them to provide a good quality education. It aims to increase access of children aged 3-6 to quality early childhood care and education in rural pre-primary institutions and to improve conditions for better learning outcomes of students of rural general educational secondary schools (Grades 1-9). It is also aligned with ongoing education activities of other international development partners, including the World Bank, UNICEF, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Activities of partners, including the half-day pre-primary education model, improvements to the teacher training systems, and provision of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) equipment, provide a good foundation for the interventions in this project.

The Project is to be implemented over a period of three years, between 2014 and 2017, and is organized around two components: improved access to quality early childhood education opportunities and improved learning conditions for students of general secondary education. The Project would be financed by a GPE grant of US$ 49.9 million plus US$ 4.2 million from the GoU to finance distribution of all goods to be purchased by the Project, from Tashkent city to schools.

Component 1 will improve access to early learning opportunities and quality pre-primary education in rural areas of Uzbekistan, by supporting the development and implementation of flexible models of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) service provision, including the training of pre-primary teachers to deliver those models. This is fully aligned with the two strategic objectives of the GPE highlighted above. International evidence suggests that children can benefit from high-quality ECCE programs that operate for as little as 15 hours per week, yielding increases in school readiness at entry to primary school.

Component 2 will improve teacher effectiveness by training, retraining and supporting teachers to provide a good quality education. This subcomponent would support the professional development of education personnel through improvements of training conditions at all 16 in-service training and retraining institutions in Uzbekistan, upgrade of training modules, revision of the regulatory framework of the promotion system, and development of information systems in support to the training system.

	Program Component	**Amount (US$)**	**Percent of total (%)**
1	Improving Access to Quality Early Childhood Education	**20,700,000**	**41.5**
	Sub-component 1.1: Developing	1,000,000	2.1

	More Flexible and Efficient ECCE Service Provision		
	Sub-component 1.2: Implementing Quality Early Childhood Education Opportunities	19,700,000	39.4
2	Improving Conditions for Better Learning Outcomes in General Educational Secondary Schools	**23,100,000**	**46.3**
	Sub-component 2.1: Supporting Training Programs for Teachers and School Managers	5,300,000	10.6
	Sub-component 2.2: Supporting the Implementation of Minimum School Standards	17,800,000	35.7
3	Strengthening the Capacity to Monitor the Education System	**6,100,000**	**12.2**
	Sub-component 3.1: Strengthening the Education System Monitoring Capacity	5,000,000	10.0
	Sub-component 3.2:Project Management	1,100,000	2.2
	TOTAL	**49,900,000**	**100.0**

*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$ 100,000 per year totaling to US$ 400,000 is not included in the total grant requested.

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PROCESS

The Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Phase I conclusions found the program was developed through a transparent and participatory process, though the scope of the LEG still was to be enlarged to include all education stakeholders, including civil society organizations and the private sector. Although clear sector prioritization was not available at the time, the proposed concept was consistent with the main government education goals proposed in the draft Education Sector Plan and with three of GPE's strategic objectives. It remains to be seen, however, what were the most cost-effective activities to be supported with regard to teachers' training and it was noted that girls' education could be more clearly emphasized. Likewise, more reflection was proposed on the use of national systems and financing modality to ensure country ownership and harmonization.

The following recommendations were submitted to Uzbekistan in the QAR Phase II report and replied from the country are summarized below.

1. Clarify linkages between students' learning outcomes and the activities proposed by the project.

In response, it was stated that international experience demonstrates that better conditions in schools may contribute to increased learning outcomes. Concerning the linkages between investments in ICT equipment and learning outcomes, findings show that ICT equipment can create learning gains when computer-assisted learning programs reinforce skills learned in the classroom, or when computer use is directly linked to pedagogy.

2. Clarify the project's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) arrangements and formulate better outcomes and indicators for children's school readiness, the effectiveness of teacher training, and the effectiveness of the management system implementation.

In response, the project document was revised to reflect a more detailed description of the proposed assessments of the ECCE service provision and the investments in quality teacher training activities. Regarding the general secondary education interventions, the proposed Project would support classroom and training observations in two different stages of the implementation for the purposes of the assessment of the quality of teaching. The effectiveness of the management systems improved by the project would be assessed during implementation.

3. It was recommended to ensure the goal to provide quality training to 300,000 teachers is realistic and to explain how the project would become sustainable.

In response, the goal to provide quality training to 300,000 teachers and school managers was revised to 200,000, while project sustainability will be addressed mainly with central and local government resources, while providing cost savings to parents estimated at US$ 10.4 million over three years.

4. Include lessons learned from previously implemented ECCE projects and provide a more complete overview of the education sector including other donor and government programs.

In response, lessons learned from previous ECCE projects, such as the initiative piloted by UNICEF in six regions of Uzbekistan, were included in the project document and it was revised to include a summary of the most relevant initiatives supported by other donors (including the Asian Development Bank).

5. It was suggested that needs of the ethnic minorities in Uzbekistan be considered in preparing learning materials as nearly a quarter of Uzbekistan's population consists of ethnic minorities. In addition, access and equity issues could be explored further.

In response, changes were made to meet the needs of ethnic minorities and special needs children in Uzbekistan. These include providing storybooks and teaching and learning materials for the ECCE component in Russian, Uzbek and Karakalpak languages. Moreover, the general secondary education component was revised to support the development and

production of teaching materials for training institutes in Uzbek, Russian and Karakalpak languages.

Additionally, children with significant special needs are educated in separate full day pre-primary education schools while children with minor special needs are mainstreamed into pre-primary school programs. All pre-primary education teachers complete pre-service and in-service training which includes courses on special needs education. Each pre-primary education school also has a specialist (generally focused on speech impediments) to work with children with special needs. Annual screenings are held in collaboration with district health officials to identify children with special needs. The teacher training program for children enrolled in the half-day model would include the topic of identifying and supporting children with special needs in the classroom.

6. Since Uzbekistan is ranked 170th out of 176 countries by Transparency International it was requested that the proposal explain its accountability and transparency procedures to prevent any misuse of funds.

In response, it was agreed that Ministry of Primary Education (MoPE) would have overall responsibility for procurement under the proposed Project. The MoPE has a local Procurement Consultant, experienced in procurement management under other Bank-financed projects. The World Bank Task Team will supervise the project to verify all procurement procedures, and to ensure fair competition, economy, efficiency, quality, and transparency. Concerning the detailed budget breakdown of sub-components and unit costs, a comprehensive Project Implementation Plan (see separate application document) was completed and agreed upon with MoPE and the LEG, at the appraisal stage. This Project Implementation Plan clearly shows all planned activities with respective costs, implementation timeline, fiduciary and M&E arrangements, responsibilities and linkages with the ESP.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

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

The complete application package indicates the proposed project is based on a careful assessment of the unmet needs of the education sector, is well aligned with the recently prepared ESP, and is the result of close collaboration between the government and education partners in Uzbekistan. As this is the first grant for Uzbekistan, GPE processes at the country level have contributed to bringing together government, civil society, and donor partners to discuss education sector issues and ways to collaborate to make their aid more effective. GPE's support will be catalytic in expanding access to quality early childhood education opportunities and improved learning conditions for students of general secondary education.

The project reflects GPE's strategic objectives on learning and will strengthen synergies with key sector partners such as UNICEF.

The proposed project modality incorporates the use of existing structures of MoPE as proposed activities to be financed are part of the everyday work of its staff. The Ministry has taken ownership of the project by preparing the draft version of the Project Operations Manual which includes processes, roles and responsibilities on technical and fiduciary areas. The draft will be sent to the SE in October for preliminary analysis. Once the grant is approved, a small team of local consultants would be hired to assist MoPE with day-to-day project management, and make sure it is implemented in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Grant Agreement and the Project Operations Manual. Capacity building would be financed using project funds and the operational procedures would be regularly updated to reflect lessons learned during implementation.

The Secretariat finds that the application is ready for assessment by the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC).