CEO DECISION MEMO

SEPTEMBER 23, 2022

TO: Charles E. North, acting CEO		
FROM: Fazle Rabbani (CEP Regional Manager), Sven Baeten (Grant Operations Team Lead), David Balwanz (QA), Subrata Dhar (CTL), Nooruddin Shah (ES) and Simon Hall (Finance)		
SUBJECT: Approval of Sudan's COVID-19 accelerated funding		
Country: Sudan	**Grant Agent:** UNICEF	**Start Date:** 10/1/2022
Grant Type: COVID-19 accelerated funding	**Agency fee % (+US$ amount):** 7% (US$ 416,269.42)	**Original End Date:** n/a
Amount: US$ 5,946,706 (remaining from original US$ 11M COVID-19 accelerated funding grant)	**Grant duration:** 3 months	**New End Date:** 12/31/2022

Action request

To approve Sudan's COVID-19 accelerated funding application in the amount of US$ 5,946,706 with UNICEF as the grant agent.

Request Summary

Due to the exceptional circumstances in Sudan caused by the military takeover in October 2021, the World Bank as the original grant agent for Sudan's US$11 million COVID-19 accelerated funding is no longer able to work with the de-facto authorities in Sudan. This request proposes to use the remaining US$ 5,946,706 with UNICEF as the grant agent to provide School Grants to 5679 schools for the 2022-2023 academic year which starts in October 2022. This intervention will complement the School Grants program that the World Bank has implemented before and will help schools to meet some of their needs as they seek to re-establish quality learning for children in the post COVID-19 period.

Current Portfolio

Grant	Amount in US$	Grant Agent	Closing date	Notes
ESPIG/MLT	62,620,000	World Bank	4/30/2025	11% disbursed
COVID-19 Accelerated Funding	11,000,000	World Bank	12/31/2021	Grant closed by WB on 12/31/2021 after disbursing $5.05M.
Accelerated Funding	11,800,000	World Bank	7/31/2021	

Significant Opportunities

In a context where most of international aid has stopped due to the military coup, this grant will provide much needed support for children of Sudan. Schools in Sudan are currently not receiving any direct budget support from the government. School grants provide financially constrained schools with resources to mitigate impact of COVID-19 and address their most basic needs, including WASH requirements, while at the same time raising the standards of the teaching and learning environment. They allow schools to plan according to their needs and specific situations and to prioritize and respond to local requirements, while giving them flexibility in terms of timing and sourcing of required materials. COVID-19 pandemic and worsening economic conditions have burdened parents and there is a high risk of children dropping out of school. The proposed intervention of providing school grants is expected to help in reducing education costs to the individual child, especially the poor and vulnerable children thereby providing the equalization effect, removing gender disparities and reducing drop outs.

Significant Issues and Risks

Humanitarian situation in Sudan is dire due to political instability, COVID-19, deepening economic crises, conflict and the drought in the region. With over 3 million children out of school even before pandemic, millions of children are at risk of dropping out of school and the learning loss due to COVID-19 related school closures is expected to be very high. The proposed program will support resource-constrained-schools to ensure learning continuity of disadvantaged children, but the scope of program is limited to 5679 schools out of total 16,500 schools. It is expected that GPE's ESPIG and other donors will continue supporting children in the schools outside scope of this program.

The program has three months to disburse grants to 5679 schools. It is highly likely that there will not be sufficient time to monitor the utilization of the school grants before the grant closes. However, the grant agent has proposed sufficient mitigation measures including issuance of clear guidelines on grant use, and strengthening monitoring by engaging multiple stakeholders (MoE, UNICEF, UNESCO and third party monitoring agents). World Bank has already supported MoE in developing school grants guidelines and established monitoring mechanism at MoE/PCU, which will be used by the grant agent for program implementation and monitoring.

Recommendation

The Review Meeting (RM) concluded, based on the Secretariat's quality assurance review, that the **RM recommends the CEO approval of Sudan's COVID-19 Accelerated Funding application in the amount of US $5,946,706 with UNICEF as the grant agent.**

RECOMMENDED DECISION

Grant: COVID-19 Accelerated Funding
Country: Sudan

CEO/2022/09-XX–XXXX

CEO, in his delegated authority from the Board of Directors, approves Sudan's COVID-19 accelerated funding grant in the amount of **US$5,946,706**, plus an additional **US$416,269.42** in agency fees to UNICEF as the grant agent. The grant has a start date of October 1, 2022 and an end date of December 31, 2022.

The full decision language can be found in Annex A below.

Annex A – Observations and Report Backs

Sudan	
Report Back	The grant agent is requested to document through the program completion report i) efforts done to direct resources to support children with disabilities and IDP and/or refugee children, especially if or where these children are not benefiting from other partners' support, and ii) how the training and grant activities were framed to be responsive and address specific barriers to school access, retention, or learning, faced by girls.

Date: September 23, 2022



Charles E. North
Acting CEO