Quality Assurance Review – Phase 3

Total Program Cost: US$18.82 million, of which
Proposed GPE Multiplier ESPIG Amount: **US$10 million**
Fixed Part: US$7 million, of which US$210,000 for Grant Agent's Implementation Support Costs;
Variable Part: US$3 million;
Proposed Regular ESPIG Amount:
Variable Part: **US$8.82 million**, of which US$484,219 for Grant Agent's Implementation Support Costs;
Total Performance Variable Part – US$11.82 million
Total Grant Agent Implementation Support Costs: US$694,219
Implementation period: 2 years and 3 months
Projected implementation start date: September 1, 2018
Grant Agent: UNICEF

1 BACKGROUND AND EDUCATION SECTOR OVERVIEW

A Maximum Country Allocation (MCA) of US$29.4 million was announced for Zimbabwe in December 2014. In December 2016, the GPE Board approved the fixed part of the grant or US$20.58 million which became effective in January 2017. In December 2017, the Board approved a Multiplier allocation of US$10 million. The country has decided to apply for the remaining US$8.82 million of the MCA (variable part) and the US$10 million Multiplier together for a total grant of US$18.82 million, of which US$7 million is fixed and US$11.82 million is the performance-based Variable Part (PVP) that includes US$3 million from the Multiplier and US$8.82 million from the MCA.

1.1 COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Zimbabwe faces economic challenges as a result of the systematic depletion of resources over decades, failure to develop a strong economic policy that funds growth, and the current daily cash crisis that is impacting the treasury, the civil service, the banks and ordinary Zimbabweans. Life for the ordinary 'middle class' citizen has become more difficult and for the majority of out of work and unemployed (estimates at over 80 percent), very grim. The wider economic context remains constrained. GDP growth slowed significantly to only 1.4 percent in 2015.[1] The low revenue inflows mean that the government can only meet its salary obligations to civil servants, the majority of whom are teachers.

Drought conditions continue to adversely impact agricultural productivity and make life for those affected very difficult. The 2015 Zimbabwe Poverty Atlas noted that poverty prevalence is high in 56 out of 60 districts, while another 2014 study showed that 65 percent of children experienced severe child poverty while 42 percent experienced child absolute poverty. While the country has succeeded in reversing the HIV prevalence rate from 24.6 percent in late 2002 to 14.7 percent in

[1] Program Document p. 7.

2012, AIDS related mortalities and high levels of poverty have created a population of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) of over one million.

Faced with this difficult socio-economic climate, the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) plans to reduce overall wage costs from around 66 percent of expenditure in 2016 to 50 percent in 2019.[2] The Government is also pursuing a gradual approach to strengthen its reengagement with the international community. Reform plans, such as rationalizing public expenditure and reducing public employment cost, have received broad support and, once implemented, should provide positive signals to donors, investors and creditors, and help unlock external flows to finance GoZ's development plans and private sector-led growth. Campaigning for the elections due in 2018 is underway after the long-time leader of Zimbabwe was replaced by a new President. The current government has stated that they want to have a more open and inclusive approach to working with the international community and in opening the economy.

	Zimbabwe
Population	13.9 million (Application, p. 15) 13.1 million (ESSP, 2012 census, p. 2)
Human Development Index Ranking	155 out of 188 countries (Human Development Report, UNDP, 2015)
GDP	US$16.6 billion (2016, World Bank Country at a Glance)
GDP per capita	US$1,076 (Application, p. 15) US$1,029 (2016, World Bank Country at a Glance)
World Bank Income Classification Level	Low income (FY2018, World Bank Country and Lending Groups Country Classification)

1.2 EDUCATION SECTOR OVERVIEW

The current structure of the education system in Zimbabwe is 2-7-4-2 with two years of early childhood development (ECD), seven years of primary education (though the first two of these also focus on ECD), four years of lower secondary followed by two years of upper secondary education. The Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) for 2016-2020 focuses on: 1) providing a strong legal regulatory context, 2) phasing in a new curriculum, 3) inclusive education and second chance opportunities to learn, 4) infrastructure, 5) teacher professional development, 6) building leadership and management skills at all levels, and 7) evidence based policy making. Under the current ESSP, Zimbabwe has also introduced Provincial Operational Plans (PoPs) and District Operational Plans (DoPs) and reviews at the decentralized level to be more responsive to local context.

The most recent Joint Sector Review (JSR) of education held in January 2018 notes that, despite some challenges, considerable efforts have gone into the implementation of the new curriculum with progress being made in all areas of access, equity and efficiency. However, challenges remain. Systematic underfunding from the late 1980s has caused the main challenge: the system is very dependent on parental and community support. Currently, parents contribute approximately 96 percent of the non-salary costs to education, raising equity concerns. The

[2] Program Document p. 8.

probability of dropping out is twice as high in schools that are in the most disadvantaged areas of the country compared to those in more affluent communities. Another challenge is the large dropout from lower secondary schools (over 20 percent). These challenges in turn have resulted in inequity of access and low quality of education provision, particularly affecting some parts of the country and the poorer populations.

From 2008 quality of teaching and learning declined together with transition rates from Grade 7 to Form 1. National pass rates at primary level dropped and from the late 1990s only 20 percent of students who appeared for the examinations were able to pass five or more subjects at 'O' Level.[3] However, from 2012-2016 after the peak of the economic crisis, many of the key sector indicators began to recover. For instance, the pass rate for primary grade 7 improved from 31% in 2011 to 42% in 2015 and again to 43% in 2016.[4]

The ESSP (2016-2020) sets out to reverse the impact on access and the quality of learning outcomes which has resulted from the historical context and the economic crisis. This requires in part, increasing the level of funding provided to disadvantaged schools so that they can improve their learning environment.

1.1.1. Learning outcomes:

The Zimbabwe Early Learning Assessment (ZELA) is a sample-based survey that is conducted every year in order to establish the extent to which learners have mastered the competencies that are expected of them at the end of the last year of the 4-year Infant School phase (end of first two years for primary).[5] As designed, ZELA can also measure progress in children's learning over time. Since 2012, ZELA has consistently found correlations between wealth and the factors that contribute to improved academic performance such as having books at home, eating more than one meal per day and having access to utilities like water and electricity at home. ZELA results for 2016 show 71 percent of children performed at or above grade level for English and 65 percent for Mathematics, with girls outperforming boys.[6] ZELA findings consistently confirm that location (rural/urban) is a variable that is associated with major differences in learning outcomes. The results for 2016 for example, show that the percentage of learners performing at or above the grade appropriate level for rural schools was 59 percent compared to 81 percent for urban schools. Results for 2017 demonstrate a slight decline in performance with 68 percent of children reaching the benchmark for English and only 55 percent reaching it in Math.[7]

The 2016 grade 7 national pass rates were at 43 percent. The grade 7 pass rates in mathematics fell slightly from 57.4 percent in 2015 to 56.9 percent in 2017. While girls did better than boys by 6 percentage-points, both males and females failed to reach the targets set for 2016 and 2017 in the ESSP, 56 and 57 percent for boys and 61 and 62 percent for girls, respectively. Available data shows that overall pass rates for rural (P3) schools are far lower than those for urban (P1 and P2) schools.

[3] Program Document p. 10.
[4] Summative Evaluation of UNICEF Support for Education in Zimbabwe p. 15
[5] In Zimbabwe, the Infant School phase covers ECD A, ECD B, Grade 1 and Grade 2. ZELA is administered during the first half of Grade 3 to test competencies at the end of Grade 2.
[6] In 2016, 74.6 % of girls met the benchmark for English and 67.6 % reached it for Math.
[7] In 2017, 72.7% of girls reached the benchmark for English and 59.4% reached it for Math.

Goal two from the ESSP relates to improving learning outcomes at grade 7. By 2020 the aim is to have 54 percent of students pass the grade 7 national exam with an emphasis on improvements in math. The ESSP cites strategies to improve teacher performance including the introduction of continuous assessment to provide opportunities for teachers to focus on student weaknesses.[8]

Moreover, the ESSP's vision is for the new curriculum to empower teachers to teach in a different way. The ESSP recognizes that efficient and effective teacher monitoring must be backed by appropriate and timely support to teachers and so goal three under the ESSP relates to strengthening the teaching quality assurance by making use of the Teacher Development Information System (TDIS) and the Teacher Professional Standards (TPS) to have more regular and formalized teacher supervision, performance monitoring and targeted capacity development opportunities.[9]

1.1.2. **Equity**:

Completion rates have been slowly increasing for all levels of schooling, though they fell slightly for primary education between 2016 and 2017 from 79.6 to 78.8 percent (EMIS). Poor primary performance automatically creates a bottleneck for improving lower secondary performance. However, while the EMIS data points to a Primary Completion Rate (PCR) of close to 80 percent, the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2014 indicates a national primary completion rate of 99 percent. According to the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS), the Gross intake ratio to the last grade of primary is 90.3 percent (2013).

According to the 2015 Education Situation Analysis (ESA) carried out to underpin ESSP development, the number of schools offering ECD has increased every year. ECD gross enrolment rates have also been increasing from 34.8 percent in 2013 to 55.9 percent in 2017. There is almost gender parity in enrolments. Despite the low participation rates, the latest MICS survey conducted in 2014 reported that 86.2 percent of children in Grade 1 had attended pre-school the year before. This is an unusually high share indicating the considerable growth in pre-school enrolments.

Primary and secondary school enrolments have increased slightly over the past 5 years with a gross enrolment rate of 105.6 percent in primary school in 2017 and 76.9 percent in lower secondary school. Net enrolment is 89.9 percent in primary in 2017 and 55.5 percent in lower secondary. However, the Net Intake Rate remains low (43 percent in Grade 1 in 2016) and the appropriate age for grade enrolment shows considerable variation across the country at both primary and secondary level. There are large numbers of over-age children in classes in grades 1 to 7 which carries over to secondary school.[10] In fact, over-age children made up around 60 percent of the primary school and lower secondary enrolments in 2013, with boys tending to be older than girls.

The MICS (2014) found the total share of out-of-school children nationally was 6.6 percent for primary school aged children and 20.6 percent for secondary school aged children. The access and equity situation varies widely from district to district suggesting a need for local solutions. The worst affected districts (with more than 11 percent of children out-of-school) are Beitbridge,

[8] ESSP 2016-2020 p. 53
[9] ESSP 2016-2020 p. 54
[10] ESAR 2015 p. 34.

Bindura, Bubi, Bulilima, Chiredzi, Lupane, Mangwe, Mbire, Mwenezi, Nkayi, and Tsholotsho. The shares of children not attending school is correlated with socio-economic background, such as mother's education and wealth quintile. In particular, the poorer the household the more likely it is that the child will not be attending school regularly or will have dropped out of school.

Equity issues at the level of the district and school type (urban/rural, grant class,[11] satellite/registered) have been highlighted and these include issues of finance, gender, status of orphans and vulnerable children and those with disabilities. The MICS (2014) linked school attendance, the age of enrolment, primary completion rates and transition rates to secondary school to wealth quintiles and the level of the mother's education.

1.1.3. Efficiency:

Repetition rates in primary and lower secondary schools are relatively low in Zimbabwe: in 2016 rates were below 1 percent in primary schools and below 2 percent on average in secondary schools. The exceptions are Forms 3 and 4 of secondary school where repetition rates are around 4 percent, presumably to help students prepare better for the O level examinations taken at the end of Form 4. The low repetition rates reflect the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's (MoPSE's) policy of automatic promotion. Permission from the Ministry is needed for a child to repeat. Repetition rates are higher for boys than girls.

Dropout rates vary by primary and secondary school and by sex. Dropout rates are higher in secondary schools (almost 4 percent) than primary schools (under 1 percent) and the dropout rates of girls become higher than boys in secondary school. The ESSP aims to strengthen community campaigns against early pregnancy and provide a safe environment for girls through guidance and counselling. The transition rate from primary to lower secondary was increasing up to 2016 when the rate was 80.7 percent. However, the rate dropped slightly in 2017 to 78.7 percent. Less than a quarter of students continue their education beyond Form 4.

The ESA figures show that there are issues with the equitable distribution of trained and experienced teachers that might require a change in deployment policies and practices, and the redeployment of teachers. Most primary (97%) and secondary teachers (84%) are qualified. The majority of primary school teachers have a diploma or certificate in education (77%), followed by those graduates with a teaching qualification (13%). Half of the secondary school teachers have a diploma or certificate in education (50%), and 30 percent are graduates with a teaching qualification. A very large share of ECD teachers are paraprofessionals but this share is declining and was down to 40 percent in 2016. These teachers fill a vital function in ECD provision as only half of the ECD teachers have diplomas or certificates in teaching (it is not known how many of these are trained in ECD methods).

1.1.4. Monitoring of Sector Performance:

The Education Coordination Group (ECG) is the national forum for regular multi stakeholder engagement in the delivery of the ESSP. The ECG has a mandate to provide the sector wide framework for stakeholders to support MoPSE priorities. It serves as an advisory group to MoPSE

[11] Schools are categorized by the economic status of communities they serve. P1 and S1 schools generally serve high income communities, P2 and S2 schools serve the middle income and P3 and S3 schools serve the low income bracket.

and an umbrella mechanism to help coordinate all existing and planned funding arrangements.[12] Members of ECG include the Minister, the Permanent Secretary, UNICEF, UNESCO, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED), donor partners including the World Bank and DFID, and the Education Coalition of Zimbabwe (ECOZI), including teacher representatives. The ECG meets regularly, every 6-8 weeks and meetings are chaired by the Minister.

MoPSE has committed to the ESSP as the principal education planning and sector monitoring document for 2016-2020 and is continuing to build on the existing annual review process. JSRs were first held in 2014 and 2015, with the first sector reviews for the ESSP 2016-20 taking place in November 2016 and January 2018. These JSRs were held with inclusive participation, ensuring that they were part of an ongoing institutionalized sector monitoring process involving the provincial and district, as well as the national levels. The annual operational plan monitoring reports from all 73 districts and all 10 provinces inform the JSR each year. The organization of the JSR is led by the ECG and district based education ministry officials are involved in the national discussions, ensuring inclusive participation.

The introduction of annual sector performance reviews that adopt a clear reporting framework at district/provincial and national levels is a laudable initiative that provides an opportunity to inform the adaptation of the ESSP and its operational plans during implementation. The process has contributed to ensuring a focus on learning outcomes and an equity perspective; analysis and understanding of disparities within provinces and districts allows for more informed actions on the ground and prioritization of support to the most disadvantaged schools. In-country Secretariat missions revealed that MoFED's attendance has not been regular in the ECG and that MoFED's meaningful participation is key at the JSRs. This has been appropriately addressed by MoPSE and MoFED's engagement in the sector is progressively improving through participation in the JSRs and with the ECG.

2. Fixed Part Requirements

The fixed part requirements were discussed by the GPC when the Fixed Part application was presented in October 2016. Zimbabwe's 5-year ESSP began in 2016 and concludes in December 2020. It is complemented by an operational plan and the application's implementation period (2018- 2020) is aligned to the ESSP.

Two report-back points were adopted by the Board. The first relates to the considerable amounts from household income being dedicated to education. At the time of application, the MoPSE education budget reflected in the ESSP represented 5.6 percent of GDP and 20.3 percent of the total Government budget, of which 99 percent went to salary related costs. While the government spending on education represented an important share of overall government expenditures (29.9 percent in 2014) parents were contributing approximately 96 percent of the non-salary costs to education, with resultant issues in terms of equity. [13]

The difficult economic environment and fiscal challenges continue to impact the resources available to the government to fund education. However, the Zimbabwean authorities have

[12] ECG TORS (revised 2015)

[13] An Analysis of Government Spending for Education in Zimbabwe, UNESCO/IIEP-Pole de Dakar March 2016 (pg. 21)

demonstrated strong commitment and are taking important steps to advance macroeconomic and structural reforms. In fact, the 2018 budget shows "a significant and positive shift, with an increased allocation to education allowing for decreased proportional spend on wages (90%) and increasing non-wage spend to $69.6m; showing Government commitment to addressing these concerns within a constrained fiscal environment."[14]

The adoption of the school financing policy, which is a variable part indicator under this application, is expected to bring more systematization to household contributions with an aim of alleviating the burden on the poorest of households and reducing the imbalance between disposable incomes that schools can access.[15]

The second report back concerns the inclusiveness of civil society and teacher unions in the policy dialogue. Non-state actors participated in the development of the ESSP and are members of the LEG. Teachers organizations are represented in the ECG by the National Coalition, ECOZI and have participated in the annual JSR.

3. MULTIPLIER

US$50.5 million in additional financing to the sector has been leveraged through the Multiplier.

Zimbabwe submitted an Expression of Interest for the maximum eligible allocation of US$10 million under the Multiplier in October 2017 noting that US$43.5 million was being mobilized as new and additional co-financing to the sector from DFID (24 million Pounds) and KfW (10 million Euros). Since the time of the Expression of Interest, the grant from KfW has increased from 10 to 15 million Euros while the 24 million British Pounds from DFID remain the same.

The program document clarifies that "As a result of the discussions around the use of the Multiplier in 2017, BMZ have committed an additional Euro 15m to support the ESSP, through UNICEF. KfW is aware that additional funding through the MF is increasing the amount of funding that could be used to support Districts in most disadvantaged Provinces to improve the quality of education. The German Government considers that these additional resources can provide good value for money through the EDF (Education Development Fund) program and will continue the strong focus on equity, improved learning and improvements to financial management in the sector." [16] The associated letter annexed to the package confirms receipt of Euro 15 million (about US$18 million) from BMZ by UNICEF.

The program document comments that "DFID Zimbabwe plans to continue to invest in the education sector through the EDF by up to £24m ($31.8m) over the next three years. As of March 2018, DFID Zimbabwe extended the EDF program for one additional year and is providing £8m in funding up to March 2019. In addition, a new business case of continued support to the education sector is being developed for the additional £16m DFID has committed to the education

[14] Program Document p. 9.

[15] Schools rely on levies to cover recurrent costs. The system distributes public funds per learner on an almost equal basis among schools where private funds vary from US$ 0 to over US$ 12,000 per learner per year. The median school fee paid by households is US$40 per year per primary pupil and US$95 per year per secondary pupil (EMIS data).

[16] Program Document p. 22.

sector, subject to Ministerial approval of the UK Government." [17] In addition, a letter from the head of DFID in Zimbabwe annexed to the application package confirms that "Under current plans and supported by the multiplier concept, DFID Zimbabwe will continue to invest in the education sector through the EDF by up to £24m ($31.8m) over the next three years, subject to UK Ministerial approval."

Currently, Zimbabwe is not eligible for Development Bank assistance of any kind and so none of the co-financing instruments are loans or other forms of debt.

Conclusion: ***The Secretariat considers that the requirements related to the multiplier are met. The ratio of funding mobilized from the Multiplier is 5:1, exceeding the 3:1 co-financing requirement.***

4. ESPIG

4.1. PAST ESPIG PERFORMANCE, IF APPLICABLE

The overall objective of the 23.6 million ESPIG 2013-2016 was: "To boost learning outcomes in basic education through continuous professional development of teachers, improved teacher supervision and management as well as strengthened evidence based policy and strategic planning." This was to be achieved through 3 priority areas, namely: 1) Professional development for better teaching and learning; 2) Supervision and management of teacher performance and development and; 3) Strengthened strategic planning leading to MoPSE's ESSP 2016-2020.

The summative evaluation commissioned by UNICEF Zimbabwe from April 2018 for both the EDF 2012-2015 and GPE 2013-2016 concluded that "despite a challenging context (not only a deteriorating social, economic and political context, but also due to development partners such as the EU and GIZ failing to meet initial commitments), both GPE and EDF achieved remarkable successes in delivering the expected outputs.[18] The GPE grant exceeded its target for Early Reading Initiative (ERI) by 41 percent by reaching 44,342 teachers trained instead of the 31,354 planned, and by 25 percent for the Performance Lag Address Programme (PLAP) by training 52,730 teachers in use of PLAP materials instead of the 41,855 planned. The grant was successful in rolling out the Teacher Development Information System (TDIS), although not all teachers are yet captured in the system. Questions remain as to how effective TDIS has been and whether or not it is being used as planned. With respect to Teacher Professional Standards (TPS), the training has reached all schools, but it is not yet apparent to what extent TPS is actually being systematically used as intended. Another conclusion of the evaluation is that the systemic capacity development and systemic functioning of the sector has 'yet to be fully realized" and 'will only happen once the Government of Zimbabwe provides meaningful financial support to the non-employment costs of the sector."[19]

4.2 ESPIG DESCRIPTION of current GPE 2 Financing (20.58 million fixed part) and results to date

[17] Program Document p. 22.
[18] Summative Evaluation of UNICEF Support for Education in Zimbabwe (April 2018)
[19] Summative Evaluation p. xiii.

GPE 2, a three-year program, began in January 2017 following approval by the Board in December 2016. The overall program objective is to increase the number of children successfully completing basic education. With support from the GPE 2 program, MoPSE is making progress in the areas of: policies and legislative reforms; curriculum rollout; equity; institutional strengthening; and monitoring. GPE 2 includes the following components:

Program Component	Implementation Status
Component 1: Providing a strong policy, legal and regulatory framework	Education Amendment Bill sent to the Attorney General's office for review. Some progress on drafting policies for non-formal education, inclusive education, school financing, and early learning.
Component 2: Curricula roll-out	Procurement plans developed and textbooks being purchased for poorest schools, ECD play equipment, ERI and PLAP materials being procured and progress on ERI and PLAP integration into In-service and Pre-service programs for teachers
Component 3: Improved equity and access	Secondary school syllabi compressed into 3 years for non formal education program. Screening tools for children with disabilities being procured and outreach activities for the identification of CwD in progress
Component 4: Institutional Strengthening	A concept note for holistic organizational development of the Ministry endorsed and consultancy team engaged to carry out the review. The Centre for Educational Research Innovation and Development (CERID) mapping has taken place and a draft concept paper on its establishment and functions has been drafted.
Component 5: Sector Monitoring	All Districts submitted their reviews of Operation Plans for 2017 and the 2017 JSR was held successfully in January 2018, with broad participation including Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Technology Development (MoHTESTD) and MoFED.

The work to date provides a strong foundation and is complementary to the support to be provided with the grant being considered for approval. GPE with a total investment of US$44.18 since 2013 and the Education Development Fund (EDF) with a total investment of approximately US$188 million since 2012, constitute the largest sources of donor funds for the sector and for UNICEF's education program. Efforts have therefore been made to ensure that there is no overlap between GPE and EDF and between the Fixed Part and this application, even when the interventions supported contribute towards ESSP shared objectives and goals. For instance, while both GPE and EDF support the roll-out of the curricula, GPE is supporting ECD materials and materials to support CwD as well as textbooks for complementary learning areas. EDF on the other hand is supporting the development, printing and distribution of syllabuses and the curricula framework and handbook. Similarly, to strengthen teacher capacity, GPE supports the training of teachers in teacher professional standards (TPS) and EDF supports the training of school heads on supervision and TPS.

4.3 MULTIPLIER AND VARIABLE PART GRANT DESCRIPTION

The Fixed part of the Multiplier Fund (MF) will be allocated through a one-off top-up of the School Improvement Grant (SIG) to 1,000 schools to finance expenditures to "complete classrooms and equip the learning environment so that the new curriculum can be delivered effectively." This will directly support equity as the targeted schools[20] are needy and in rural poor areas and is likely to support learning as the SIGs will improve the learning environment. In addition, this support benefits from ongoing work on the SIG process through the EDF and is aligned to that ongoing work.

The Performance Variable Part (PVP) will be released upon achievement of results measured through nine indicators, three in each of the domains of Equity, Efficiency and Learning. The PVP strategies and results are further described in the section 6: Assessing the Variable Part.

The PVP, once released, will finance five programs that are aligned to the ESSP and complement financing from the Fixed Part and EDF.[21] Effort has been made to build on the foundations being established. Risks related to targets not being achieved and non-release of the financing have also been considered. For instance, Program 1 will allow more rural schools to receive SIGs and help MoPSE to further distribute teaching and learning materials as part of the new curricula roll-out. Given that the curricula roll-out is a national priority, MoFED is also allocating funding to support materials for the new curricula.

The VP will finance:	
Program 1: Equity and improved access • Parental awareness training • Teaching and learning materials • School infrastructure (through SIGs)	$4,590,000
Program 2: Improved learning outcomes • Networks for mathematics teachers • Mathematics teaching and learning resources	$1,600,000
Program 3: Efficiency and Improved retention • Career, guidance and counselling • Child protection • Teacher capacity building on special needs and learning disability • T&L materials for children w. special needs	$3,770,000
Program 4: Institutional strengthening • Capacity and leadership development • Capacity development of districts	$820,000
Program 5: Programme management and monitoring • *Grant Agent Costs ($484,219)* • Other costs	$1,040,000

[20] The SIG program was established in 2013 and targets the poorest P3 schools, those that are most financially constrained, with an operational fund to improve the school environment. The 1000 schools being targeted are in rural communities and are the most disadvantaged P3 "satellite schools'. These are schools that lack basic infrastructure where learners are often housed in makeshift structures in some cases made of mud and wattle. (PD p 79)

[21] Program Document p. 86

The current project modality of working through UNICEF systems will continue to be used and funds will continue to flow using the UN HACT system for disbursements and expenditure control. However, given the Public Finance Management Systems (PFM) reform environment and the ongoing extension of Zimbabwe's Integrated Financial Management Information system (IFMIS) to districts, there are potential opportunities for greater alignment. UNICEF is monitoring the PFM reform agenda and actively engaging with government and key partners. MoPSE, with GPE financial support is training accountants and administrative officers who will be using the new grant module under IFMIS – this offers UNICEF a good entry point for pursuing changes in modalities as they are actively developed.

Table A: ESPIG Components and Costs

		GPE Financing US$	% of total
	Total available grant	$18.82 million	
Fixed Part			
A	Additional top up to 1000 poorest schools through School Improvement Grant (SIG) on agreed list of items	$6,790,000	36%
*Grant Agent's Implementation Support Costs**		*$210,000*	*1%*
	Sub-total Fixed part	**$7,000,000**	**37%**
Variable Part			
VP grant release linked to results in:			
A	Equity	$3,729,142	
B	Efficiency	$3,729,142	
C	Learning Outcomes	$4,361,714	
	Sub-total Variable part	**$11,820,000**	**63%**
Total GA Implementation Support Costs (FP+VP)		***694,219***	***4%***
GRAND TOTAL (with Grant Agent's Implementation Support Costs)		**$18,820,000**	100%
	Agency Fees**	$1,512,000	

* Include Grant Agent's direct costs, such as Program Management, Administrative and other direct implementation costs.

** Agency Fee is not included in the MCA and is calculated as percentage rate (agreed with each GA) from the Total Fixed Part and Total Variable Part.

*** Further information on Grant Agent's costs can be found on pages 104-5 in the Program Document.

5. ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAM DOCUMENT

The Government has responded positively to the suggestions for improvement provided during the QAR2 process. For example, the suggestions to: revise the target for measuring learning outcomes; develop further the Theory of Change; include an implementation plan; examine the high cost of supervision by the GA; and have VP indicators externally verified have all been taken on and the revisions or responses included in the new program document. In addition, suggestions on extending the implementation period from 2 to 3 years have been considered carefully and

while rejected, arguments for keeping the two-year implementation period have been advanced: GoZ wants to maintain continuity with the ESSP which ends in 2020 (as does the GPE strategic plan); and with the ongoing curriculum reform process. In addition, GoZ considers that the very ambitious targets are a stretch but not a "stretch too far".

The resulting Program Design builds on the ongoing successful implementation of the GPE 2 program and mainly focuses on improving the learning environment in primary and lower secondary schools. The interventions are justified by a diagrammatic Theory of Change supported by text linking inputs to outputs and outcomes and explaining transformation and stretch. The achievement of GPE strategic goals and objectives: Learning, Equity and Efficiency; are fundamental to the program as it supports a new learning curriculum and teacher continuous professional development, targets needy schools in poor districts, and aims to improve student flow and retention.

The Program Budget has been carefully prepared specifying some unit costs and comparing costs across neighboring countries. The budget is also detailed; covering all the activities to be supported. The GA's supervision costs are justified in this version of the PD.

The Program includes an M&E framework comprised of a strategy and methods to ensure accountability for achievements. There is also a Results Framework that describes in detail the nine indicators that have funding attached to them. The M&E arrangements and Results Framework are linked to the ESSP and to the current GPE 2 Fixed Part grant.

The Program appears ready to be implemented. The implementation arrangements are appropriate given the context, using the tested GPE 1 and GPE 2 Fixed Part modality and the UN HACT system for disbursement and expenditure controls. An implementation plan for the two years of the program has also been prepared. Nevertheless, it is recommended that a selection of the key Ministry staff review and further develop the implementation plan prior to grant effectiveness.

The PD includes a Risk matrix identifying external and internal risks, including the possible impact of the changing political environment, and identifies appropriate mitigation measures. The Program is designed to be sustainable despite the high share of MoPSE resources going to salaries, and the already high share of budget and GDP for education making it difficult for Government to reduce this share in the short-term. (Accordingly, it seems clear that Zimbabwe will be dependent on donor support for many non-salary items for the short- and even medium-term.) The Program has been designed to complement the activities of other Development Partners and support the objectives of the ESSP. In particular, the Fixed Part of the Multiplier expands the EDF supported by DFID and Germany. It is also aligning disbursement and accounting systems more closely with GoZ systems. Reporting is also aligned through the JSR process. Accordingly, the ESPIG application described in the PD is considered to have met GPE's requirements for support.

6. VARIABLE PART

The Theory of Change for the whole Program (Fixed and PVP) has been summarized diagrammatically in the program document. The diagram shows what problems have been identified and their causes, the strategies to address them, the ways in which progress will be measured through process, output, and outcome indicators and the final impact. Assumptions are also described. The program document then expands on each of the linkages in the detailed text

descriptions following the diagram. The outputs under the PVP are not financed by GPE 2. GPE 2 is, however, creating the stepping stone for achieving equity focused policy related outputs by providing support for the *development* of the school financing policy and the Education Act. However, the targets for release relate to endorsement by MoPSE, submission to Cabinet and in the case of the Education Act, approval by Cabinet in 2020.

Nine indicators have been proposed for release of the PVT funds, three for each domain: equity, efficiency and learning outcomes. Each of these indicators is described and targets for release of finance identified.

Equity

The indicators are:

	Targets		**Pay out schedule**		**Total release**
Indicator	2018	2019	2019	2020	
i) Improved transition Rate from Grade 7 to Form 1 of districts (17) with a 2017 transition rate below 70%	% increase of 10 lowest districts (December 2018)	% increase of all 17 lowest districts (December 2019)	1,232,000 (January 1, 2019)	1,232,000 (January 1, 2020)	2,464,000
ii) Revised and Approved Education Act	Submitted to Cabinet (December 2018)	Approved by cabinet (December 2019)	604,000 (January 2019)	28,571 (January 2020)	632,571
iii) School Improvement Grant released in quarter 1		SIG released Q1 (End April 2019)		632,571 (July 2019)	632,571
Total release			1,836,000	1,893,142	3,729,142
***unmet achievement rolled over for 1 year					

The first of these is also the indicator being used to measure progress on the GPE 2 FP and is an ESSP indicator. The education act is seen as a tool to help make schooling more attractive, particularly with the removal of corporal punishment while the earlier SIG release will improve equity as the SIG is targeted to the most disadvantaged schools. Incentivizing the timely release of SIGs addresses the challenge of schools receiving their SIGs late and not being able to fund their school development plans. The causes of late release have been identified as late selection of beneficiary schools, late acquittals and delayed confirmation of functional school accounts. The indicator will incentivize the adoption of strategies to respond which include basing selection criteria on first term preliminary reports finalized within two weeks of opening of schools and further targeted capacity building of personnel for effective implementation of the program.[22]

The targets are measurable and achievable but will stretch MoPSE. For example, improving the transition rates for the 17 districts will require a coordinated effort at national, regional and district levels. Ensuring that the new Education Act is submitted to and then approved by Cabinet and getting the SIG released in the quarter 1 will require senior management of MoPSE working with other organs of Government.

[22] Program Document p. 28

Efficiency

The indicators are:

	Targets		Pay out		Total release
Indicator	2018	2019	2019	2020	
i) Female Survival Rate Form 1 – Form 4	79% (December 2018)	81% (December 2019)	1,232,000 (January 1, 2019)	1,232,000 (January 1, 2020)	2,464,000
ii) School financing policy submitted to Cabinet	Submitted (December 2018)		632,571 (January, 2019)		632,571
iii) EMIS data available in the third quarter 1		Available (End of Sept)		632,571 (January 2020)	632,571
Total release			1,864,571	1,864,571	3,729,142
***unmet achievement rolled over for 1 year					

The Female Survival Rate is also an indicator for the FP and the ESSP. The ToC identifies inputs for improving the survival rate; Counselling and careers guidance; advocacy with parents and communities; and Leadership Development. Increasing the female survival rate would improve student flow efficiency in the education system (and also contribute to gender equity) and it has been selected because it has shown little consistent improvement in the past. The EMIS data indicator seeks to incentivize a timelier release of EMIS data, so that it can strengthen the evidence base for key decisions affecting the sector, including the Female Survival Rate. The PD argues that the school financing policy is necessary to enable schools to function well and will therefore contribute to efficiency. An implemented school financing policy should also contribute to a more equitable approach to distribute resources to schools.

Achieving the output target of 81% for the female survival rate will be very challenging, considering that the indicator has been declining (from 79% in 2016 to 77% in 2017). Building it back up again is going to require considerable effort at district, province and national level and the 2019 target of 81% is a stretch. Getting the school financing policy to Cabinet will require consensus around the content while having EMIS data available by Quarter 3 is valuable and necessary but also achievable.

Learning

The indicators are:

	Targets		Pay out schedule		Total release
Indicator	2018	2019	2019	2020	
i) Primary school teachers of mathematics successfully participate in the in-service mathematics training program to develop skills and knowledge so they can deliver the content of the New Curriculum	50% x2 teachers per school (December 2018)	50% x2 teachers per school (December 2019)	1,232,000 (January 1, 2019)	1,232,000 (January 1, 2020)	2,464,000

	Targets		Pay out schedule		Total release
Indicator	2018	2019	2019	2020	
ii) Zimbabwe Early Learning Assessment (ZELA) findings pre-2018 adopted and post 2018 implemented	Pre-2018 ZELA findings and recommendations reviewed and at least 3 being implemented and ZELA 2018 completed and shared on the MOPSE website (December 2018)	ZELA 2019 completed and shared on the MOPSE website and at least 3 new recommendations being implemented (December 2019)	632,571 (January 1, 2019)	632,571 (January 1, 2020)	1,265,142
iii) Every school received a package of documentation related to the curriculum framework, syllabi and continuous assessment tasks.	Target (December 2018)		632,571 (January 2020)		632,571
Total release			2,497,142	1,864,571	4,361,713
***unmet achievement rolled over for 1 year					

None of these indicators are directly funded by the GPE 2 Fixed Part and these are all very directly relevant to the longer-term outcome in the ESSP: improving performance in mathematics. The results in the Primary School Leaving examination (PSLE) mathematics exam will continue to be monitored as they have been slightly decreasing, particularly those of poorly performing schools. Initially, the target was to be improved performance in the PSLE but the Secretariat's QAR2 review advised against using examination results as a Variable Part indicator for various reasons, including that public examinations are not standardized measures of learning although they may be used to compare groups in the same year and on the same exam. MoPSE and partners considered constructing an indicator focusing on a between-group difference in exam results, but found this to be unworkable.

Therefore, the targets are input targets, but quite challenging. For example, providing in-service training for 12,000 teachers over two years and delivering a package of documents related to the curriculum framework to all schools will be logistically challenging and is a large-scale activity. Two teachers from each school across the country will be trained ensuring disadvantaged schools benefit. Reaching all schools with the curricula package will help to establish a system through which schools can pass on their information regarding their needs, projections of school needs can be monitored and replenishments can be procured.[23] Ensuring that the ZELA findings are discussed and acted upon is a relevant objective especially considering that learning levels in grade 2 English and Math are declining.

[23] Program Document p. 38

6.1. Assessment of the variable part

Selected strategies for the Variable Part have been discussed and validated by the ECG (Zimbabwe's LEG). The improved overall transition rates and female survival rates, the school level financing policy, the curriculum reforms, and the focus on mathematics and science teaching are all ESSP strategies, and the focus on improving the learning environment and the completion of basic schooling are all fully in line with the ESSP. The ECG discussed at length and vigorously what to measure and how for the PVP. For example, prompted by the QAR2 comments, they had a robust debate about how to measure improved learning in mathematics.

The proposal meets the standard for demonstrating transformative effect. Overall, the relatively high number of PVP indicators (9), which are all relevant sector level results, make for an ambitious PVP design – particularly when the two-year implementation period is taken into consideration. The design is well-developed in the PD with a discussion of each indicator, and the arguments are logical and coherent. The large number of indicators, their selection by the ECG and their focus on Equity, Efficiency and Learning outcomes should drive progress in basic education, and focus attention and efforts around a set of key results. The presentation meets GPE's standard for results chain and a credible theory of change.

Indicators and targets represent an adequate level of ambition and integration into the ESSP results framework. Taken together, the PVP is quite ambitious, particularly in relation to output targets for Equity and Efficiency to be achieved over two years. Indicators such as transition and survival rates can stagnate or even decline as education systems develop within a changing country environment, so improvements are not guaranteed and require dedicated effort. The indicator for in-service teacher training in mathematics also represents ambition and stretch given the scale and scope of the task; to reach more than 12,000 teachers and to reach them with adequate materials.

The standard for reliable means of verification is met. The means of verification are adequately described, including plans for independent verification through contracting external expertise to carry out quantitative as well as qualitative sample based verification prior to each Annual Review.

The disbursement mechanisms are clearly described and appear adequate. In case of partial achievement of the targets, pro-rata payments for the output/process targets is envisioned. The PVP evidence and verification table mentions the possibility for extending the deadline for certain targets, up to 12 months. The PD clearly explains what the VP funds will finance and how these activities will be implemented with technical support by the Grant Agent.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Secretariat recommends the Grant and Performance Committee consider that the three funding model requirements were assessed at the GPC meeting in October 2016 and were already been accepted as met at that time. Zimbabwe has a credible and endorsed sector plan, has demonstrated commitment to implementing the plan, and data collection and data availability are satisfactory and improving. There is also satisfactory progress on the report backs adopted by the Board.

The Secretariat finds the proposed program to be coherent, produced in cooperation with Development Partners, relevant in the country context and well aligned to the country's education sector plan. The indicators for the PVP are focused on key sector results to improve equity, efficiency and learning outcomes and are transformative. The ambitious time frame of just over 2 years for implementation of key and urgent reforms under the PVP, will stretch GoZ capacity to achieve bthem. That said, given the tight timeframe for execution, it may prove necessary to extend the program and allow an additional year for delivery.

The Secretariat welcomes the Summative Evaluation of UNICEF Support for Education in Zimbabwe [24] which highlights the need for outcomes to be tracked more consistently to have a better sense as to the key levers for change. To this end, the Secretariat encourages the country partners to introduce monitoring of instructional practice of teachers, especially in disadvantaged schools so that improvements in instruction can be measured and the effectiveness of teacher trainings on learning be better established.

The Secretariat considers that the quality of the Program Document itself is solid and that the aims and intentions will create a more equitable education environment for Zimbabwe's children.

[24] April 2018

Annex 1: Major Interventions of Development Partners

Donor name	Major interventions	Financial scale
DFID	a) Education Development Fund (EDF) aims to establish an equitable system for funding education through School Improvement Grants[25]. EDF also supports ECD related interventions. b) Zimbabwe Girls Secondary Education Project supports about 24,000 girls and spent £3 million per year in the 4-year period April 2012 to March 2016.[26] The Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) Programme[27] that covers two components as follows: c) The Improving Girls' Access through Transforming Education (IGATE), implemented by World Vision, targeting 49,000 rural girls, increases household capacity to support girls' education by mobilising mothers' groups, School Development Committees, local leaders and girls themselves. d) "New Equilibrium for Girls", implemented by CAMFED, targeting 40,000 rural girls in 24 rural districts in Zimbabwe (spending evenly across the years). The focus is on (a) increasing the retention of vulnerable girls through secondary school principally through the payment of bursaries; and (b) developing the capacity of female students to improve their learning outcomes.	a) USD 36 million (2015-2018)[28] b) US$ 4.58 million (2016-17) c) US$ 15.57 million (2013-2017) d) US$19,36 million (2013-2017)
The World Bank Group[29]	Education Technical Assistance (TA) Program,[30] a 2-year TA intervention. The TA is divided into 3 Components namely: • **Component 1: Teacher Management and Development** – Focusing on the establishment of a Teaching Professional and the improvement of Math and Science	US$ 690 000 (June 2015 – June 2017)

[25] SIG targets 6,200 disadvantaged schools. Schools use this money, to purchase learning materials, make repairs and pay the fees of OVCs. The grant allocates a per capita allocation of $35 per annum for primary students.
[26] A further extension of this programme is being planned for 2017-2020.
[27] Extension of the both components of the GEC programmes is currently being considered.
[28] As of March 2018, DFID Zimbabwe extended the EDF programme for one additional year and is providing £8m in funding up to March 2019.
[29] The Academic Centres of Excellence (ACE-II) program that supports selected Universities in East and Southern Africa to establish Regional Centres of Excellence on different thematic areas is still being designed, and is expected to have funding to the tune of US$ 5 million.
[30] The funding is limited since this is not a full program but rather a Technical Assistance intervention.

	pedagogy with specific focus on novice Math and Science Teachers. • **Component 2: Student Assessment** – Focus on supporting the ZIMSEC in its introduction of Continuous Assessment under the New Curriculum. **Component 3: ICTs in Education** – Integration of ICT in classrooms informed by low-cost best practices and ICT in Education Policy.	
BMZ	The German Government (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, BMZ) has been supporting the education sector in Zimbabwe through the Education Development Fund (EDF); which in turn is supporting the implementation of the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP). The last grant, before the multiplier fund was initiated, was in December 2016 through KfW.	As a result of the discussions around the MF in 2017, BMZ have committed an additional Euro 15m to support the ESSP, through UNICEF.

Annex 2: Quality Standards for the Assessment of Program Documents

Criteria	Description of Criteria	Observations
1. Program Design	Program addresses critical evidence-based challenge(s) identified in the education sector plan	***This sub-standard is considered met.*** The program, which is complementary to the recently approved GPE 2 program (Fixed Part) already under implementation, is mainly focused on improving the learning environment in basic schools; the program intends to achieve this through several pathways, including by supporting the roll-out of the new curriculum and the strengthening of mathematics and sciences teaching. These are evidence-based priorities identified in the education sector plan. The links between the GPE 2, other on-going programs, and this new program are explained in quite a lot of detail.
2.	Program has a logical and evidence-based results chain between interventions, outputs and outcomes	***This sub-standard is considered met.*** The Program Document includes a theory of change (p. 46-49) and a detailed discussion of the underpinning causality chains which are addressed by the program. The causality chains present the problem, inputs, outputs, outcomes, transformation, and stretch for each part of the causality chain, with a chart that summarized all the them in a single theory of change. The text makes references to available data, as relevant.
3.	GPE's strategic goals and objectives are adequately reflected	***This sub-standard is considered met.*** The Program adequately addresses GPEs goals and objectives. The learning goal is addressed through, for example, the roll-out of the new curriculum; equity is addressed through targeting the neediest schools and the specific focus on girls' retention in schools and child protection issues, while the systems/efficiency goal is addressed in multiple ways, through institutional strengthening, strengthening of accountability mechanisms, and a focus on improving student flow and retention in school. The PD is a little difficult to read, because of how the two grants (Multiplier and MCA Variable

		Part) are treated separately and both having variable parts, rather than simply presenting the total grant as a single program with one Variable Part. **The standard on program design is considered met**.
4. Program Budget	Program cost is justified	***This program cost standard is considered met.*** A program budget is presented (PD, p. 57) with some additional details in Annex 1 and further details and unit costs in Annex 2. The GA costs are also detailed in Annex 2 (p. 104). Value for money (VfM) considerations are provided and are based on EDF's experience. (PD, p. 66) 1000 schools will benefit from a top up to the School Improvement Grant under the fixed part and 500 additional ones under the PVP.
	Program is cost-effective (assessment tool under development)	
5. M&E	Program includes an M&E framework comprised of a strategy and methods to ensure accountability for achievements	***This sub-standard is considered met.*** Each component includes a brief description of how that component will be monitored, listing reports from districts as one of the tools, as well as EMIS and the ZELA survey. The PD further explains that the GA and the Ministry of Education will hold regular program implementation and review meetings and that the Education Coordination Group provides a forum for discussion and problem-solving. The ESPIG application mentions that information on program execution will be included in the documentation produced for the annual Education Sector Reviews and annual donor reports to GPE. The LEG's Annual Review field visits will also monitor the availability of the new curriculum materials in schools.
	Results Framework is robust and covers all interventions	**This sub-standard is considered met.** The results framework is entirely focused on the nine indicators that have funding attached to them. These indicators are described in detail and are appropriate. The Performance Framework of the ESSP and the Results Framework of the Fixed Part Program currently under implementation complement this PD's RF and should help to keep track of and

		report on key program outputs interventions not necessarily linked to the Variable Part. In this case, given that the Variable Part is a very large portion of this grant and is linked to the ongoing GPE 2 FP and the ESSP, the choice to include the 9 indicators relevant under this grant in the RF is considered justified. The M&E standard is considered met.
6. Implementation Arrangements and Readiness	Implementation arrangements are appropriate	***This sub-standard is considered met.*** The proposed Program will essentially use the same implementation arrangements as the current GPE2 program as well as for other donor funding flowing through UNICEF. Small ministry task teams will implement the program with the support of UNICEF. Funds will flow using the UN HACT system for disbursements and expenditure control. The procurement arrangements will be the same as those developed under GPE2, with some procurement to be carried out by districts and schools. Further details about the implementation arrangements are included under the description of the components (labelled Programs in the PD) and, on pages 67-70 and in the annexes. The PD points out that both ministry and donors are used to operating under these implementation arrangements. External financial monitoring of school grants program is planned, in addition to checks by provincial internal auditors, which seems appropriate given the emphasis on school grants in this program and the fairly large amounts that will be transferred to schools. Such arrangements clearly build on EDF's (DFID's) support to School Grants.
	Program is ready to be implemented	***This sub-standard is considered met.*** The Program start date is September 1, 2018 with the first VP results expected to be achieved by December 2018 (with a one-year grace period built in). The proposed duration is 2 years and 3 months. MoPSE is now used to operating within the systems and procedures developed by UNICEF, which greatly increases the program's readiness.

		The standard is considered met.
7. Risk(s) Identification and Mitigation Measures	Program includes appropriate risks matrix	The PD presents a risk analysis (p. 72), risk rating, and mitigating activities. The highest risk identified is a set of external risks outside the immediate control of the government or partners, that includes global economic trends, climate change and disaster risks, but the matrix also lists the upcoming elections in July/August 2018 as a risk to the Program, but proposes as a mitigating activity the training and support of any new government staff to ensure program continuation. Fiduciary risks have been rated as Low, and the risks related to the implementation of the new curriculum as Medium. **The standard on risk is considered met.**
8. Sustainability	Program has been designed to be sustainable	In the current difficult, but stabilizing economic context which is clearly presented in the PD, financial sustainability is a more long-term goal and not realistic in the short term. There is a thoughtful discussion of this in the PD relating to the sustainability of the School Improvement Grant (PD, page 120). Institutional strengthening activities of the ministry of education will be undertaken under Component 4 (Concept Note for the Holistic organizational development of MoPSE), thereby contributing to the institutional sustainability of the program. In this light, we can consider the Program to be designed to be as sustainably as possible in the context. **The standard on sustainability is considered met.**
9. Aid Effectiveness	Program is aligned with the main criteria of aid effectiveness	The program is fully aligned with the ESP and other sources of financing of the Plan. The implementation arrangements will use disbursement and accounting systems which align more closely with GoZ systems than for the previous GPE grant, which was disbursed through dedicated UNICEF accounts. The choice of implementation arrangements appears appropriate in the context. The finance unit of the ministry of education, as well as and the ministry's province and district offices, will be directly involved and responsible for some aspects of grant

		management, through the SAP system, and will be trained using GPE funds, thus building government capacity. The PD explains that the Ministry of Education has consulted with the MoF for inclusion of donor funds in the national budget, which is also a step towards greater alignment. The monitoring and reporting is harmonized with that of the ESP and other programs. The Local Education Group was consulted and the LEG validation is included in the country's submission. **The standard on aid effectiveness is considered met.**

Annex 3: Guidance Questions for the Assessment of the Variable Part

Criteria	Description of Criteria	Observation
1. Sector Alignment	Selected policies or strategies are discussed and validated by the Local Education Group as an integral part of the sector plan development, or alternatively, through the review and revision of a sector plan. They are ideally embedded in the Education Sector Plan, including the multi-year implementation plan.	**Yes, selected strategies for the Variable Part have been discussed and validated by the LEG**. The school level financing policy, the curriculum reform, and the focus on mathematics and science teaching are all ESSP strategies; and the focus on improving the learning environment and the completion of basic schooling are all adequate and fully in line with the ESSP.
2. Relevance of selected strategies on equity, efficiency and learning	Selected policies or strategies are relevant to improve equity, efficiency and learning outcomes in basic education.	**Yes, the strategies and indicators are clearly linked to equity, efficiency and learning outcomes in basic education**. Nine indicators have been proposed, three for each domain equity, efficiency and learning outcomes. For equity, the three indicators are: *(i) Improved transition Rate from Grade 7 to Form 1 of districts (17) with a 2017 transition rate below 70%; (ii) Revised and Approved Education Act; and (iii) School Improvement Grant released in quarter 1*. The education act is seen as a tool to more quickly reducing inequities in the system and the relevance of the school improvement grant release to equity is due to the targeting of this grant to the most disadvantaged schools. In addition, the timely release of SIG relates to operational efficiency as according to SIG reviews, late release of SIGs has been a significant challenge hampering the ability of schools to fund their development plans. The transition rate indicator is also correctly targeted to districts with the lowest 2017 transition rate. The efficiency indicators are: (i) *Female Survival Rate Form 1 – Form 4; (ii) School financing policy; and (iii) EMIS data available in the third quarter*. Increasing the female survival rate would improve student flow efficiency in the education system and has been selected because it has shown

Criteria	Description of Criteria	Observation
		little consistent improvement in the past. The EMIS data indicator seeks to incentivize a timelier release of EMIS data, so that it can strengthen the evidence base for key decisions affecting the sector. Learning Outcomes indicators are: *(i) Primary school teachers of mathematics successfully participate in the in-service mathematics training program to develop skills and knowledge so they can deliver the content of the New Curriculum; (ii) Zimbabwe Early Learning Assessment (ZELA) findings pre-2018 adopted and post 2018 implemented; and (iii) Every school received a package of documentation related to the curriculum framework, syllabi and continuous assessment tasks*. These are all very directly relevant to learning outcomes. Ensuring that the ZELA findings are discussed and acted upon is a very worthwhile objective especially considering that learning levels in grade 2 English and Math are declining.
3. Transformative Effect	Selected strategies or policies are: (i) key to improve equity, efficiency and learning outcomes in basic education, (ii) deemed likely to lead to substantial progress in the medium-term, and hence to be transformational. The justification for the proposed actions includes a results chain showing that the selected actions are based on a credible theory of change.	**Yes, the proposal meets the standard for demonstrating transformative effect**. Overall, the relatively high number of VP indicators, which are all relevant sector level results, make for an ambitious Variable Part design – when you consider also the short implementation period of two years. The design is well-developed in the PD with a discussion of each single indicator and appears thoughtful. The set of indicators seems like they could drive a lot of progress in basic education, and focus attention and efforts around a set of key results. The presentation meets GPE's standard for results chain and credible theory of change.
4. Adequacy of indicators and targets	Selected policies and strategies are measured by corresponding indicators. Targets set for these indicators should represent an adequate level of ambition, i.e. be above and beyond a mere	**Yes, indicators and targets represent an adequate level of ambition and integration in the ESSP results framework**. Taken together, the VP seems to have an adequate, even high level of ambition. Indicators such as transition and survival rates, often stagnate or even decline, when education systems grow, so improvement are not guaranteed and require

Criteria	Description of Criteria	Observation
	continuation of current trends, but achievable. Targets should ideally be integrated within the broader Education Sector Plan results' framework.	dedicated effort. The indicator on teacher training, although being a simple output target, also represents ambition and stretch given the scale and scope of the task (12,000 + teachers).
5. Reliability of means of verification	Means of verification for the attainment of targets are fully described as part of the justification for the proposed actions, and they are reliable.	***The standard is met***. The means of verification are adequately described, including plans for independent verification through contracting external expertise to carry out quantitative as well as qualitative verification prior to each Annual Review.
6. Clarity and adequacy of disbursement mechanism	Disbursement mechanisms are clearly described and appear adequate.	***Yes, the disbursement mechanisms are clearly described and appear adequate***. Each of the three results domains accounts for around a third of the variable part financing. The pricing of each indicator is presented in Annex 3. In case of partial achievement of targets, pro-rated payment for the output/outcome targets is envisioned. The VP evidence and verification table mentions the possibility for extending the deadline for the variable part results for one year. The PD clearly explains what the VP funds will finance (Programs 1-5) and how these activities will be implemented with technical support by the Grant Agent.