Financing Application Submitted to the GPE Fund for Primary Education for the UNION OF THE COMOROS

February 2018

BACKGROUND		
Country:	Union of the Comoros	
Grant agent(s):	UNICEF Comoros	
Coordinating agency(ies):	Coopération Française (French Embassy)	
Date of submission of the endorsed ESP/TEP:	10/25/2017	
Period of the ESP/TEP:	2018-2020	
Date of submission of the full ESPIG package:	2/13/2018	
Program Name (optional):	Project for the Transition of the Union of the Comoros' Education (PTEUC in French)	
ESPIG amount requested - Fixed Part:	US$2.3 million	
ESPIG amount requested - Variable Part:		
Agency fees (additional to the country allocation):	8% of the allocation	
Estimated ESPIG starting date:	7/1/2018	
Estimated ESPIG closing date:	6/30/2021	
Expected submission date of completion report:		
Grant modality - (please enter 'X')		Sector Pooled
		Project pooled / Co-financed
	X	Project/ Stand-alone

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II. FULFILLMENT OF FUNDING REQUIREMENTS – FIXED PART

II.1 Requirement 1: An endorsed quality ESP |TEP [2]

Please explain why the endorsed ESP/TEP can be considered a quality plan by summarizing the main conclusions and recommendations of the Appraisal Report and how these were addressed in the Appraisal Memo, including any adjustments made to the ESP/TEP and/or any medium-long term follow-up actions decided upon, as a result of the independent assessment, as well as any other outstanding issues related to the ESP/TEP.

The Government of the Union of the Comoros prepared a Transitional Education Plan (TEP) for the years 2017-18 and 2019-20, which was validated by the Government and endorsed in October 2017 by the partners, members of the LEG. The partners' endorsement is confirmation of the plan's credibility, following incorporation of several of the recommendations stemming from the independent assessment of the draft plan conducted in April 2017.

The TEP covers the entire sector and proposes key strategies to strengthen governance and management of the sector and improve system access, equity, quality and relevance. It was informed by the 2012 CSR, annual school data for the period 2013-2015, and an institutional and system performance analysis conducted in 2016. In addition to a policy letter covering the years 2018-2020 and a macrofinancial framework note, the TEP includes a budgeted three-year action plan (2018-2020) that is based on a 2016-2026 simulation model, and is aligned with a medium-term expenditure framework developed in concert with the Ministry of Finance.

In their respective letters endorsing the TEP, the Development Partner Group declares that it (1) played an active role in the drafting of the education policy letter; (2) observed the participatory and inclusive nature of the TEP preparation process; (3) noted the coherence between the general policy guidelines, key strategies, activities, and the budget; (4) is satisfied with the mechanisms for implementation of the TEP and the proposed results framework; (5) noted that the recommendations stemming from the ex-ante assessment of the TEP were taken into account; (6) has confidence in the Comorian Government's political will and commitment to support the education sector.

The external assessment indicates that the planning process included the development of a robust simulation model with three scenarios. While the TEP is, to a certain extent, an extremely ambitious document, it provides a road map for education authorities for the next three years. The Plan also allows the Development Partner Group to align its projects and activities with the guidelines adopted in the TEP.

[2] Evidence of a credible ESP will primarily be drawn from the ESP documents submitted prior to the application itself. This section should therefore be limited to a brief summary of key issues highlighted in the appraisal process.

II.2 Requirement 2: Commitment to finance the endorsed ESP/TEP

Please use the table below to provide information on external resource mobilization. ***For evidence of domestic resource mobilization, complete the Excel template in this link***[3] ***only if there are changes to the education financing data submitted in the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) process.*** Indicate if you are using fiscal or calendar year, and if the former please state when (the month) the fiscal year begins and ends. Also include, where applicable, the sources of all data.

TABLE 1 |

Evidence of external resource mobilization

Actual value for three years			Target values for the period of the Program					
Data for the past three years (indicate years as relevant)			Data for the relevant duration of the program (indicate years as relevant)					
year	year	year	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	year 4	year 5	Total
Education Sector Plan								
Education sector plan cost (local currency) in 000 of CF:								
			19,238,190	22,656,991	20,973,546			62,868,727

[3] This Excel template is the same as the domestic financing spreadsheet initially submitted during the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) process. It is also available on the GPE website at: ***http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/funding-model-requirement-matrix-domestic-financing-annex***. Should you have any question about this section of the application form, please send an email to the GPE Secretariat at ***gpe_grant_submission@globalpartnership.org***

External funding - excluding GPE funds (local currency) in 000 of CF (exchange rate): US$ 440								
			137,016	563,244	930,732			1,630,992
Funding gap as recorded in the ESP (local currency)								
								6,704,919
GPE support (local currency) in 000 of CF (exchange rate) US$1 = CF 440								
			254,087.68	444,942.45	312,969.80			1,011,999.93

II.3. Requirement 3: Availability of critical data, or a strategy to use and produce data

This requirement concerning the availability of data or alternatively a strategy to produce and use data is divided into three sub-components as indicated below.

II.3.1 A recent education sector analysis

- Provide information and dates on the most recent education sector analysis, including a list of which analytic elements are included (e.g. demographic analysis, analysis of existing policies, costs and financing, system performance and system capacity).
- Indicate how vulnerability and equity, particularly the situation of education for marginalized groups, including girls and children with disabilities, have been addressed.[4]

The Comoros conducted a CSR in 2012 and intends to conduct another toward the end of the TEP. At the request of the Comoros and with the agreement of the partners, the decision was made to produce a concise status report on the performance and functioning of the Comorian education system in 2017. This report covers (1) performance in the areas of enrollment, internal efficiency, equity, quality, management, and disparities recorded over the past five years in available resources for the education sector, and demand for schooling; (2) the organization and functioning of the education system that will help produce results, paving the way for a more efficient reorganization of educational institutions. Demographics, the macroeconomic context, and public financing are covered in the

[4] Reference can be made to the assessment made in the GPE Funding Model Requirements Readiness Matrix (Quality Assurance Review Phase I Matrix), with this paragraph limited to an update on progress vis-à-vis identified gaps; alternatively, if the analysis exists in another document, this section can simply reference that document, which should then be attached.

status report.

The report includes an analysis of the gross enrollment ratios between girls and boys, comparisons of geographical areas and quintiles, and probabilities of student enrollment and completion. Children living with disabilities are also included in the report. Financing from the GPE program under way was used to develop a strategy to incorporate children with disabilities.

II.3.2 Basic financial and education data

- Provide date of last submission of data to UIS and highlight any areas where data were not provided;
- Highlight any gaps in national data (such as data quality issues, disaggregation by gender, availability of data on marginalized groups, financial data, etc.); and
- Provide summary of strategies to address these, including how the implementation of a data strategies will be financed and whether they are part of the endorsed ESP.[5]

School statistics are available for the years 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2016-17. The Comoros was therefore able to provide data to the UIS for 2013 and 2014 and meet 8 of the 12 key indicators identified in the GPE's results framework. Collected data are disaggregated by gender, environment, and level in the education system. The TEP focuses in particular on improving system management, especially the capacity to collect, process, and analyze school data and information. Support from the European Union provided through the project to strengthen management and supervision of education in the Comoros (PRePEEC) has greatly contributed to the availability and improvement of statistical data over the past two years.

The Ministry of National Education launched a process to improve education indicators by setting up a monitoring mechanism akin to the most recent standards of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and UNESCO. By way of example, these standards take account of (a) equal opportunity and equity with a view to reducing social disparities that exist in primary schools and tend to widen in subsequent cycles; (b) quality, more closely tied to competencies and results pertaining to mastery of basic knowledge, particularly in French, the language of instruction, and in mathematics; (c) the impact of knowledge on the adult population where the 2012 CSR estimates the risk of illiteracy to be 49.7 percent; (d) the balance between the invested resources and results of the system's effectiveness.

[5] If these strategies are included in the endorsed ESP, this paragraph should be limited to a list of the strategies and their financing source and a reference to the relevant section in the ESP.

In a bid to minimize the challenges and weaknesses highlighted in the various assessments of the system, the MEN opted to implement the reforms needed to improve sector performance. It is against this backdrop that the Interim Education Plan (IEP) is being implemented and the Transitional Education Plan (TEP) for 2018-2020 is being devised.

II.3.3 A system or mechanisms to monitor learning outcomes

- Indicate whether there is a system for measuring learning outcomes and if so, describe briefly;
- Highlight any gaps and provide summary of strategies to address these, including how the implementation of the strategies will be financed.[6]

A PASEC-CONFEMEN assessment was conducted during the 2009-2010 period. Standardized tests in French and mathematics were administered in 2017 as part of the GPE program under way. The analysis of the results of the data will be available in March/April 2018. Similar tests are planned under the TEP in 2020 (see Component I, sub-component 3).

[6] If the system or strategy to develop one are included in the endorsed ESP, this section should be limited to a brief statement and a reference to the relevant section in the ESP.

III. COUNTRY INFORMATION

NOTE: 1. Federal State applicants should duplicate this section as needed for States applying.
2. Please include the sources of population and GDP data in footnotes.

Total population:	785,000 inhabitants in 2015 (Source: INSEED)
GDP Per Capita (USD):	GDP per capita of approximately US$737 in 2015 (Source: The World Bank)
School year runs from (month to month):	September to June
Budget cycle runs from (month to month):	January to December

IV. PROGRAM

IV.1 Program description – summary

In 1,500 words or less (maximum 3 pages), please:

- Provide a narrative of the Program in summary form, describing overall program objectives and related expected outcomes, and the components and sub-components with financing amounts (further details are to be provided in table form under IV.2 and IV.3).

- Indicate as relevant GPE's anticipated share by components and sub-components if this is a co-financed project.

The Project for the Transition of the Union of the Comoros' Education (PTEUC in French) (PTEUC) is subsumed within the Transitional Education Plan (TEP) for the period 2017-2020, whose aim is to lay the foundations for management of the education sector. The

project combines nationwide interventions (textbooks, information system support, distribution of indexes of texts on pedagogical and administrative management, improved accounting management in the MEN, monitoring and evaluation of the TEP and GPE project) with innovations tested in a sample of institutions (introduction of project schools) or in a geographic area (Mohéli island).

The Project consists of the following parts:

Component I. Governance and Oversight (US$1,024,886): The creation of minimum training conditions with a view to future development and implementation of a long-term education plan based on lessons learned from the local to the central levels requires the following: (a) building governance capacity at the grassroots level on a pilot basis through 50 project schools that will have 50 school councils, 50 principals, regional pedagogical inspectorates (CIPRs), and the Commissions (US$739,715); (b) improving the use of statistics by supporting the operations needed to produce statistical yearbooks; and the development of a common oversight culture while training grassroots actors to use statistical data collected to inform their decisions (US$127,664); (c) improving management by supporting accounting management in the four DAFs (financial and administrative departments) and the implementation and monitoring of the TEP and the GPE project (US$157,507).

Component II. Quality (US$526,921) With a view to enhancing quality: (A) pedagogical support actions for teachers are planned (US$ 329,640); (b) plans are in place to purchase textbooks and notebooks, with a target of one book per student in basic subjects (US$197,281).

Component III. Equity (US$435,155): The aim is to promote inclusive education by (a) strengthening gender equity and equality, focusing on the establishment of a standard school entry age for girls and boys and increasing retention rates on Mohéli island, based on the successful experience in the Nyumakele region on Anjouan island (US$249,205); (b) improving inclusion by admitting children with disabilities on a trial basis (US$185,950).

Component IV. Project Management (US$313,038): Grant agent support primarily relates to management costs that essentially are costs incurred by UNICEF-Comoros that cover such areas as human resources, logistics, operational support and contributions to audits.

Please define the event that will mark the start of the program and which will take place by the expected start date:

Start of the school year in September/October 2018	
Complementary information for overview purposes: Please specify whether the Program covers the following:	
• Development and use of Education Monitoring and Information System – EMIS (Please refer to definition in Annex I: **Definitions**)	Yes
• Development and use of learning assessment system? (Please refer to definition in Annex I: **Definitions**)	Yes.
Please complete the table below, specifying the levels of education and age (from age to age) covered by the program: *Extend or adapt the table to the number of levels covered by the program, by copying/pasting or erasing rows as relevant.*	

TABLE 2 |

Level of education covered by the program

Levels	Age
Primary - elementary cycle	6-11 years
Click here to enter text	Click here to enter text
Click here to enter text	Click here to enter text
Click here to enter text	Click here to enter text

For more rows, copy a set of the above set of rows and paste them here.

IV.2 Expected outcomes

Please complete the table below, extracting relevant information from the detailed program document. The Program will be monitored and progress will be reported against these **outcome indicators and targets** in the ESPIG annual implementation status reporting template to be submitted each year of the grant to the Secretariat.

Indicate the years starting with the baseline year. Extend and adapt the table to the number of components, subcomponents and outputs that fits the Program, by copying/pasting or erasing rows as relevant.

TABLE 3 |

Outcome indicators (as extracted from the program document)

Benchmark	**Benchmark**				
year 2017	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**year 4**	**year 5**
The 50 school councils are up and running; they assist with the management of the schools and support teachers and students.	**Project Results**				
Source of data:	*CIPR Reports and School Principal Reports*				
0	0	15	35		
Average test scores in French and mathematics in the 50 pilot schools increase by 15 points	**Project Results**				
Source of data:	*Learning outcomes*				

X	X	X	X+15		
The retention rate increases by 6 points	**Project Results**				
Source of data:	Statistical Yearbook and CIPR report;				
X	X	X+3	X+6		
The repetition rate is lowered by 5 points in the target areas	**Project Results**				
Source of data:	*Statistical Yearbook and CIPR Reports*				
X	X-1	X-3	X-5		
Pedagogical and administrative standards are applied in all schools	**Project Results**				
Source of data:	CIPR Report				
No	No	Yes.	Yes		
A scoreboard is prepared for each CIPR and each year	**Project Results**				
Source of data:	*CIPR Report*				
No	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Statistics for 2019 are captured	**Project Results**				

Source of data:	Statistical Yearbook				
No	No	Yes	No		
Number of quarterly meetings	**Project Results**				
Source of data:	LEG Activity Reports				
0	2	4	4		
An annual review is put in place	**Project Results**				
Source of data:	LEG Activity Reports				
0	1	1	1		
Accounting management at the MEN is improved	LEG Activity Reports				
Source of data:	**LEG Activity Reports**				
No	No	Yes	Yes		
A PASEC-type assessment is conducted	**Project Results**				
Source of data:	PASEC Assessment Report				
Yes	No	No	Yes		

The 4,300 teachers are making good use of early learning notebooks	**Project Results**				
Source of data:	*Report – principal, education inspector and pedagogical advisors*				
No	No	Yes	Yes		
1:1 pupil/book ratio in French, mathematics, and early learning	**Project Results**				
Source of data:	Report from school principals				
<1/1	<1/1	1/1	1/1		
The absenteeism rate among girls is lowered	**Project Results**				
Source of data:	Report from principals + independent assessment social mobilization and support for demand				
X	X1<X	X2<X1	X3<X2		
The retention rate among girls is increased in the target areas	**Project Results**				
Source of data:	Report from principals + independent assessment social mobilization and support for demand				
X	X1>X	X2>X1	X3 >X2		

The attendance rate of children living with disabilities (CLWD) is equal to that of other pupils	**Project Results**				
Source of data:	Report from principals and impact assessment				
CLWD rate < rate among other pupils	CLWD rate < rate among other pupils	CLWD rate < rate among other pupils	CLWD rate = rate among other pupils		
Quarterly field visits conducted	**Project Results**				
Source of data:	MEN/UNICEF Reports				
0	2	4	4		

For more rows, please copy the above rows and paste them here.

IV.3 Results framework[7]

Please complete the table below, extracting relevant information from the detailed program document. There is NO need to reproduce the full results framework here, as long as the program document provides a full results framework with a results chain. The Program will be monitored and progress will be reported against these **output indicators and targets** in the ESPIG annual implementation status reporting template to be submitted each year of the grant to the Secretariat.

If the program plans to purchase and distribute textbooks, train teachers, or build or rehabilitate classrooms, please use the following indicators (GPE Strategic Plan 2016-2020)[8]:

- Number of textbooks purchased and distributed
- Number of teachers trained
- Number of classrooms built or rehabilitated

NOTE: These indicators are NOT compulsory indicators. They are therefore applicable only when the program plans to implement these activities. In case of sector-pooled funds, please indicate numbers planned at sector level.

Indicate the years starting with the baseline year. Extend and adapt the table to the number of components, subcomponents and outputs that fits the Program, by copying/pasting or erasing rows as relevant.

TABLE 4 |

Outcome indicators (as extracted from the program document)	
Benchmark	**Goals**

[7] For sector-wide financing (through budget support or pooled funds), a reference could be made to the ESP results framework.
[8] For definition of indicators, see attached Annex1.

	year 0	year 1	year 2	year 3	year 4	year 5
Objective(s):						
Build governance capacity at the grassroots level		Project schools are in place				
Source of data:		IGEN and ad hoc assessment				
Output indicator:		250 members of school councils trained	Min. 15 project schools	35 project schools		
Improved use of statistics		Statistics for 2019 are captured				
Source of data:		MEN - Statistical Yearbook				
Output indicator:		-	Statistical Yearbook	-		
LEG operations		The LEG holds quarterly meetings and conducts annual reviews				
Source of data:		LEG Activity Reports and Annual Review Report				
Output indicator:		2 quarterly meetings. 1 annual review	4 quarterly meetings, 1 annual review	4 quarterly meetings 1 annual review		
Professional development for teachers is provided		The 4,300 teachers are making good use of the early learning booklets				

Source of data:	IGEN				
Output indicator:	-	4.300 teachers trained-	-		
Availability of teaching materials	All told, 195,737 pupil books and teacher guides and booklets are in the classes				
Source of data:	Report from principals				
Output indicator:	4,600 teacher guides and 337 assessment booklets	190,800 items (185,000 textbooks and 5,800 guides)	-		
Improved retention of girls	Actions on the ground conducted with the school councils, school kits provided to 2,500 pupils, and sanitary kits provided to 800 girls on Mohéli island				
Data Source	Report from principals + independent assessment				
Output indicator:	2,500 school kits and 800 sanitary kits	2,500 school kits and 800 sanitary kits	2,500 school kits and 800 sanitary kits		
Increased attendance rate among CLWD	The support program for 240 CLWD is established				
Source of data:	Report from principals and impact assessment				
Output indicator:	120 specialized tables and chairs, 60 devices and 60 eye glasses distributed	40 monitors trained (*encadreurs*)	-		
Sound project management	Conduct joint quarterly field visits				
Source of data:	MEN/UNICEF Reports				
Output indicator:	2 field visits	4 field visits	4 field visits		

IV.4 Financial overview

Please complete the table below, indicating program cost and disbursement by year as applicable, based on information extracted from the program document. If it is a co-financed project, indicate estimates for the expected disbursements of GPE funds by year.

TABLE 5 |

Program costs and expected disbursements by year – in USD

Indicate years:	2018	2019	2020	2021	year 5	Total
Total program costs per implementation year[9]	577,472	1,031,233	691,295			2,300,000
Total program costs per calendar year	289,874	831,544	685,822	492,760		2,300,000

Please complete the table below, listing the proposed interventions/components, and indicating the expected disbursement by year and total cost for each component, as well as their respective percentage of the total grant.

If it is a co-financed project, indicate estimates for the expected disbursements of GPE funds by year.

Extend and adapt the table to the number of components that fits the Program, by copying/pasting or erasing rows as relevant.

[9] Implementation year runs by 12-month cycle beginning with signing of grant agreement. For example, if the signing is expected to start in July 2016 then the implementation year is July 2016 to June 2017, and July 2016 should be entered as Year 1. The program costs per calendar year for 2016 should reflect the estimated costs for the July – December 2016 period.

TABLE 6 |

Program costs and expected disbursement by component[10] – in USD
(FOR DETAILS SEE THE BUDGET IN THE MATRIX IN THE ATTACHED EXCEL FILE)

Components	2018	2019	2020	Year 4	year 5	Total Cost (USD)	%
Component 1: Governance and Oversight	**204,211**	**322,562**	**498,113**			**1,024,886**	44.6
Component 2: Quality	**19,748**	**504,333**	**2,840**			**526,921**	22.9
Component 3: Equity	**255,840**	**86,665**	**92,650**			**435,155**	18.9
Component 4: Project Management	**97,673**	**117,673**	**97,692**			**313,038**	13.6
For more rows, copy a set of the above set of rows and paste them here.							

10 If not using budget support as grant modality.

IV.5 Supplemental program cost

TABLE 7:

Other grant agent costs and general agency fees – in USD

Indicate years:	year 1	year 2	year 3	year 4	year 5	Total
General agency fees (in addition to MCA):	61,334	61,333	61,333			184,000
Other grant agent costs, including for supervision, country office, etc. (part of MCA)	97,673	117,673	97,692			313,038

IV.5.1 Use of Other grant agent costs, including for supervision, country office, etc.

In 300 words, please indicate how Other grant agent costs, including for supervision, country office, etc. will be utilized.

Grant agent support pertains primarily to management costs that are essentially costs incurred by UNICEF-Comoros covering, among other things, human resources (contribution to salaries of one international staff and an assistant to liaise and coordinate project implementation, as well as handle administrative and logistical matters; support and monitoring missions; logistics linked to the project, including fuel for vehicles and the power generator for three years, maintenance and repairs of vehicles and power generators; office supplies and consumables for IT equipment; costs associated with the purchase of textbooks, booklets, and kits; and improved Internet connectivity in the office.

IV.6 Monitoring and evaluation

In 300 words, please:

- Explain how the Program will be monitored and evaluated.
- Include how the monitoring and evaluation of the Program is aligned with the national reporting systems and to the monitoring and evaluation of the Education Sector Plan through the Joint Sector Reviews or other processes.

This program will establish a coordination unit in the Ministry of National Education and in the CEIAs (Education Commissions for the autonomous islands). Island coordinators will thus be responsible for providing front-line support for project implementation, support to local actors, monitoring of project activities, quality control of the various reports submitted by the different entities involved in the project, and preparing monthly status reports on project execution. UNICEF procedures will be applied.

A joint semiannual assessment (MEN-CEIA-UNICEF) of implementation successes and challenges will be conducted in an effort to adjust disbursement projections for the second half of the year or for the following year.

The central coordination unit based at the MEN will ensure that results of monitoring exercises and status reports are directly reflected in the monitoring of the overall government sector plan (Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development - SCADD) for education and monitoring of the ESP.

IV.7 Risks, implementation readiness, and sustainability

In 300 words, please:

- Outline the principal risks and assumptions associated with the Program and what is planned to mitigate these risks.
- Demonstrate readiness for implementing the Program.
- Explain what is being done to ensure sustainability of the Program.

Risks outside the Project	Risk Management:

Macroeconomic and fiduciary risks	Fiscal and financial reforms envisaged in the Government's economic policy could mitigate risks that may affect the functioning of the education system.
Risk of natural disaster The Comoros is permanently exposed to natural hydrometeorological (cyclones, floods, tsunamis), geophysical (volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, landslides), biological (e.g., cholera epidemics, dengue, chikungunya), and technological (e.g., toxic leaks) hazards.	With support from the Development Partner Group, the Government is currently finalizing its national contingency plan and sector response plans. In addition, UNICEF has a policy in place for emergency actions and support to countries in crisis or in post-conflict or fragile situations, based on its "Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action," which includes: (i) continued assistance to the vulnerable populations, including their re-integration; (ii) the reconstruction and restoration of physical assets; (iii) tackling of the social impacts arising from crises; (iv) responses to natural disasters, famines, droughts, floods, etc.
Major risks at project level	Risk Management:
1. Target school councils will be overworked and will be unable to discharge their responsibilities. 2. Poor management of grants for project schools and pedagogical monitoring by the school councils.	1.1 The diagnostic assessment of the school councils planned for in the project will pave the way for the application of remedial actions coupled with training and local support by education inspectors and pedagogical advisors, including for project schools. 2.1 Analysis and evaluation at the start of the project of all preliminary and necessary tasks and arrangements; 2.2 Development of the accounting and financial technical procedures manuals and guides and training of actors for actual launch of the activities; 2.3 Close monthly monitoring from the first year of the project to facilitate timely identification and subsequent mitigation of unexpected potential effects during implementation of the activities; 2.4 Delegated management of the project to UNICEF minimizes fiduciary risks; 2.5 UNICEF has a wealth of experience supporting grassroots communities and entities in several areas of economic development.

3. Lack of adequate preparation prior to project interventions.	3.1. The list of selected pilot schools for project schools and inclusive schools will be drawn up and published prior to launch of the GPE project; 3.2 Textbook orders will not await implementation. Textbooks will be ordered before implementation and contracts will be signed only after formal notification of the availability of resources by the GPE; 3.3 Packages of books will be delivered to each school, and printing entities are responsible for their delivery to schools.
Other risks	Risk Management:
4. Poor coordination between the MEN and the CEIAs or with the coordination agency, the grant agent and the other partners of the LEG	4.1. Monthly meetings during the first year of the project; 4.2 Joint missions 4.3 Joint annual assessment report; 4.4 The coordinating agency (Embassy of France) serves as facilitator.

IV.8 Past and current performance

In 250 words or less, please:

- Describe the implementation status of any past or current GPE grants.
- Explain how the proposed Program builds on lessons learned through the implementation of previous grants.

For countries that are not past or current GPE grant recipients, answer “Not applicable” in the box below.

The ongoing GPE project has benefited from two extensions until June 2018. The project had to be extended twice because exogenous factors (political context, very limited education management capacity) delayed project implementation, requiring rescheduling of a number of activities. The Project will be fully disbursed by the closing date. The current rate is approximately 95 percent. Lessons learned from the implementation of the IEP, the ongoing GPE project and other technical and financial partners were taken into account in this proposed project.

The proposed project incorporates the main lessons arising from the reports on the mid-term review of the IEP in May 2015 and from the GPE in July 2016-June 2017 regarding the leadership of the MEN; coordination and consultation; collection and processing of statistics; the inclusion of local expertise, etc. (See page 22 and pages 32 to 35 of the project).

IV.9 Aid effectiveness

Please complete the table below to illustrate how the proposed grant financing modality is evolving in comparison to the previous grant (where applicable) vis-à-vis alignment with national systems.

TABLE 8 |

Evolvement of grant financing modality

	Previous GPE grant	Current application
In relation to the ESP | TEP		
Is the GPE-funded Program aligned with the Education Sector Plan?	Yes. The 2013-2018 GEP program is aligned with the 2013-2015 Interim Education Plan (IEP) that was extended to 2017. It was designed to bridge the financial gap identified in primary education and sector management. The program took all IEP indicators into account and supported the 2015 IEP joint review.	Yes. The proposed program is in line with the 2018-2020 ESP as it helps improve learning outcomes and develop core competencies underpinning the education system, with a view to the preparation and implementation of a future long-term education plan based on the budgeted three-year action plan (PATB).
Are the projected expenditures of the Program included in the multi-year forecast of the Ministry of Finance (Medium-Term Expenditure Framework)?	No. The IEP is not accompanied by an MTEF, which made it more difficult to work with the Ministry of Finance to put a multi-year education budget in place. Expenditures for the 2013-2018 GPE program were therefore not included in the Ministry of Finance's budget forecasts.	No. An MTEF is in place for the 2018-2020 TEP. This MTEF serves as the basis for the preparation of the Ministry of Education's multi-year budget for the period 2018-2020. All expenditures associated with the TEP, as well as the related programs, must be included. This intervention should pave the way for a process to integrate the program budget into the Ministry of Finance's multi-year forecasts.

In relation to the national budget and parliament		
Is the project included in the national budget?	No. No provisions were made in the national budget for the GPE program. However, budgetary efforts were made by the Government to support implementation of the education policy, in particular the 25 percent increase in the share of the State budget earmarked to education.	No. Development of the MTEF supported by the 2013-2018 GPE program is the first step toward inclusion of all external assistance projects in national budget planning.
Does the national annual budget show specific appropriations for the different planned expenditures (economic and/or functional classification)?	Yes. The national budget had made provisions for and financed certain non-salary IEP-related expenditures, particularly with regard to sector management (national examinations, education conference, etc.), secondary education (secondary school textbooks, etc.), and higher education (subversion).	The national budget is expected to cover wages and salaries and certain entity operating costs and implementation costs, EMIS, examinations, staff recruitment, the organization of examinations, academic scholarships.
In relation to treasury		

Is the majority of the financing disbursed into: (a) the main revenue account of government, (b) a specific account at treasury or (c) a specific account at a commercial bank?	GPE funds are disbursed through specific accounts opened by the MEN and the CEIAs in commercial banks in the country to implement sector activities. These accounts are not governed by treasury procedures.	GPE financing will be disbursed by the Grant Agent (UNICEF) All transfers from the UNICEF account must be deposited into the secondary bank accounts of the beneficiary entities, in accordance with the commercial banking rules in the Comoros, which require regular bank reconciliations. UNICEF reserves the right to audit these accounts.
Is the expenditure process (documents and signatures on commitment, payment orders, etc.) for the national budget used for the program expenditures? Are there any specific derogations or safeguards on the national execution procedures for the program expenditures (other documents and/or signatures)?	No. Owing to the lack of appropriate management tools, the expenditure process for the national budget is not used for program expenditures. The expenditure process used for program expenditures is in line with the process used by the Grant Agent (UNICEF).	No. The Grant Agent's process will be used. Fiduciary risks relating to the process used for national budget expenditures are very high. The TEP intends to promote transparency and improve management through the development of systems and tools.
In relation to procurement		
Are government procurement rules used? If so are there any derogations/safeguards on the use of these rules introduced?	No. The procurement rules and procedures of UNICEF (the Grant Agent) have been used for the GPE program. The sector focal point in the Government's procurement management entity (General Director for Planning in the	No. The procurement rules and procedures of the Grant Agent (in its capacity as Grant Agent) have been used for the GPE program. In the interest of transparency, the Government and the Local Education Group (LEG) will, as is the case with the current project,

	Ministry of National Education) was involved in the procedures managed by the Grant Agent.	be involved in the procurement process.
In relation to accounting		
Is the financial accounting directly on government's accounting systems used for the national budget? If not, are the accounting results afterwards integrated in government's accounting systems?	There is no accounting system integrated in accounting systems used for the national budget to manage project funds disbursed to the MEN and the CEIAs. The Administrative and Financial Departments of the MEN and the CEIAs lacked the tools needed to put an integrated accounting system in place.	The Grant Agent's financial accounting system will suffice. However, accounting management capacity in schools, school councils, CIPRs and CEIAs will be strengthened through the development of systems and tools with UNICEF support.
In relation to audit		
Will the financial accounts be audited by the government's external auditor?	In accordance with the Grant Agent's procedures, an international firm conducted a financial audit at the Ministry of National Education in 2017. Financial audits of funds disbursed under the GPE program and used by the CEIAs on the three islands are also being conducted.	A financial audit will be conducted by an international firm. In accordance with their sovereign duties, the State's audit bodies will have the opportunity to audit the resources to be managed by schools, school councils, CIPRs, municipalities or the Commissions. The Grant Agent will regularly audit disbursed funds based on an insurance plan

		that is defined annually for monitoring all support provided to partners.
In relation to reporting		
Will the information on project execution be included in the Education Sector Plan Annual Implementation Report prepared by the Ministry of Education?	Information on project execution is included mainly in the annual implementation report on the new Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development (SCA2D) for the education sector. A single ESP annual implementation report was prepared in 2015.	Yes. And in the annual review, mid-term, and final reports on the TEP.
Will separate / additional reports be required for the Program?	Annual status reports were submitted to the GPE. The next status report (July 2017-June 2018) is due on September 30, 2018 and the final report is due in December 31, 2018.	Information will be included in the semiannual project status reports submitted to the LEG and in annual reports to the GPE.

Please complete the table below, by providing and defining the selected indicators and providing recent data for the indicators, where applicable, to reflect past trends, and the specific targets for the Program.

Extend the table as necessary to fit the Program and number of indicators in each dimension, by copying/pasting rows as relevant.

Variable Part Indicators

AN EX-ANTE APPROACH IS BEING USED FOR THE COMOROS

	Past trends data		**Benchmark**	**Program targets**	
Indicate years for data entries:	**year**	**year**	**year**	**year**	**year**
1. Equity					
Indicator:	Click here to enter text				
Definition of indicator:					
Data/targets:					
Indicator:	Click here to enter text				
Definition of indicator:					
2. Efficiency					
Indicator:					

Definition of indicator:					
Data/targets:					
For more rows, copy a set of the above set of rows and paste them here.					
3. Learning outcomes					
Indicator:					
Definition of indicator:					
Data/targets:					
For more rows, copy a set of the above set of rows and paste them here.					

V.2 Strategies and actions in equity, efficiency, learning outcomes

For each specific dimension, please:

- Describe the selected strategies/actions in the Education Sector Plan to address the issue of each specific dimension.
- Explain how the proposed strategies/actions are included in a results' chain and can be considered transformational.
- Demonstrate that the proposed implementation strategies are robust and evidence-based.
- Demonstrate that the selected indicators have a stretch effect as opposed to a mere continuation of current trends.

1. Equity

With regard to equity in the education system, the TEP proposes: (1) Actions to provide access by children with disabilities and children from very underprivileged backgrounds, who currently do not attend school because of accessibility issues (unsuitable infrastructure or high costs); (2) awareness-raising activities to encourage families to send their children to school; (3) measures to expand free access to primary school (free distribution of essential textbooks, availability of school operating budgets, and ban on collection of payment from parents).

(For answers to the following points, see the table under learning)

2. Efficiency

With respect to efficiency, the TEP proposes: (1) The rigorous application of administrative and pedagogical management standards in all institutions; (2) the reduction of the repetition rates in each pedagogical sub-cycle in primary schools through an automatic promotion policy and awareness raising and information activities for teachers and parents on the adverse effects of repeating and dropping out of school; (3) early detection of dropouts or those at risk of dropping out; (4) regular organization by teachers of remedial activities; (5) with support from the school councils, actions to reduce late school enrollment; (6) an increase in the number of multi-grade classes in very sparsely populated areas to accommodate primary school-age children in financially sustainable conditions.

For answers to the following points, see the table under learning)

3. Learning outcomes

As regards learning outcomes, the TEP provides for, among other things: (1) increased availability of pedagogical inputs with the free distribution of textbooks, booklets, and school kits to teachers and pupils, and sanitary kits to girls on Mohéli island; (2) implementation of a mechanism to closely monitor learning, including general use of standardized bimonthly assessments in each CIPR; (3) regulation and harmonization of scoring practices; (4) the organization of integration weeks for each CIPR to analyze the outcomes and identify remedial priorities for each school and each assessment level; (5) the application of remedial actions upon identification of academic and professional shortcomings of teachers.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">Project change theory</td></tr>
<tr><td>IMPACT</td><td colspan="3">Grassroots actors support and monitor pedagogical and administrative improvements</td></tr>
<tr><td>OUTCOME TO IMPACT</td><td colspan="3">The grassroots education community (school principals, school councils, and the CIPRs) is trained, with the ensuing result being improved functioning and management of schools.</td></tr>
<tr><td>OUTPUT TO OUTCOME</td><td><u>If</u> the role of school councils is strengthened; <u>if</u> there is increased use of data in schools to ensure the sound management of education on the basis of informed decisions, <u>Then</u>: pedagogical and administrative standards will be applied to ensure improved functioning of schools.</td><td><u>If</u> pedagogical support is boosted and there is increased availability of teaching materials, <u>Then</u>: pedagogical inputs will help improve the learning environment to secure better learning outcomes.</td><td><u>If</u> tardiness, especially among girls, in the target areas is reduced; <u>If</u> there is improved care and support for children with disabilities, <u>Then</u>: behavioral changes will be seen in the population and the education community with respect to the enrollment and retention of vulnerable children in school.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Strategies</td><td colspan="3">The project’s selected activities help lay the foundation for a long-term central and decentralized education system (school councils and project schools, training in data analysis and use, sector plan monitoring unit, accounting management system, pedagogical training and monitoring, textbooks, inclusive education).</td></tr>
</table>

V.3 Means of verification

Please complete the table below by providing an overview of means of verification for each of the three dimensions, the timing and methodology (including inclusiveness) of the process for determining whether the target is reached as well as the process to determine (partial) disbursements based on the results. The means of verification should include:

1) Responsible party
2) Source document
3) Indicative timing of validation by local education group.

Extend and adapt the table if more rows are needed to fit the Program, by copying/pasting rows as relevant.

TABLE 10 |

Target attainment verification for disbursement
AN EX-ANTE APPROACH IS BEING USED BY THE COMOROS

Means of verification	Month and year of target attainment verification	Month and year of disbursement of variable part
1. Equity		
Indicator:		
		Click here to enter text
For more rows, copy a set of the above set of rows and paste them here.		
2. Efficiency		
Indicator:	**Click here to enter text**	
Click here to enter text	Click here to enter text	Click here to enter text

For more rows, copy a set of the above set of rows and paste them here.		
3. Learning outcomes		
Indicator:	**Click here to enter text**	
Click here to enter text	Click here to enter text	Click here to enter text
For more rows, copy a set of the above set of rows and paste them here.		

VI. INCLUSIVE APPROACH

VI.1 Consultation

In 300 words, please:

- Discuss the scope and depth of collaboration in the development of the application within the local education group, the government and its development partners including civil society organizations, teachers' organizations, and the private sector.
- Describe if and how the development of the application has strengthened local education group collaboration.

There were frequent consultations with the LEG, including unions and NGOs, on the project. Workshops for information sharing and technical or policy validations of the concept note were systematically held from October 2017 until finalization of the project in January 2018. In view of the limitations of the GPE grant, the areas selected in the TEP were reviewed and the following decisions were made: (1) the project intervention area will be exclusively limited to primary education, complementing ongoing and future support from other technical and financial partners; (ii) project activities must be in line with TEP priority activities, be simple, executable in three years with clear impacts, be realistic and proven, in support of improved learning, the promotion of equity and inclusiveness, and more effective management.

The work methodology used included the following: (I) identification of national partners and technical and financial partners to validate the work method and clarify responsibilities; (ii) collaborative effort on the project's different components, sub-components, activities, and tasks, unit costs, and the project's budgeted three-year action plan; (iii) institutional arrangements; (iv) feedback from the LEG.

VI.2 Sign-off

Signature of Applicant Ministry Representative:	
The below signatory endorses this application on behalf of the government. (Please scan this page after signature and include it as an attached file to the submission.)	
Name of signatory:	**Djalim Abdallah**
Date:	2/6/2018
Signature:	
Signature of the grant agent representative (Country Director of agency)	
The below signatory endorses this application on behalf of the grant agent agency or organization. (Please scan this page after signature and include it as an attached file to the submission.)	
Name of signatory:	**Dr. Marcel Ouattara**
Date:	2/6/2018
Signature:	
Signature of Coordinating Agency representative:	
The below signatory endorses this application on behalf of the Development Partner Group. (Please scan this page after signature and include it as an attached file to the submission.)	

Name of signatory:	**Laurence Arnoux**
Date:	2/6/2018
Signature:	

Submission

The coordinating agency submits the full ESPIG application package (see ESPIG Guidelines for details) on behalf of the government and the local education group via email addressed to gpe_grant_submission@globalpartnership.org, with copy to the grant agent, the ministry focal point and the country lead within the Secretariat.

Annex I:

DEFINITIONS	
The definitions below explain how certain terms used in the template should be understood within the context of the ESPIG:	
Relating to funding modalities	
Sector Pooled	This refers to a scenario of diverse group of grant or credit modalities with varying instruments and mechanisms. The specificity for sector pooled funds is that multiple contributing partners deliver funds in a coordinated fashion to support implementation of the national education plan, or specific parts thereof. Under this modality, country systems are normally used for procurement, financial management, M&E and reporting.
Project pooled / Co-financed	This refers to a scenario where the funding mechanism is made up of different source agency funds to support a common project.
Project/ Stand-alone	This refers to a scenario where the funding mechanism is unilateral, or in other words, not pooled with any other sources of financing.
Relating to key indicators	
Number of textbooks purchased and distributed	This indicator tracks the number of school textbooks that were purchased and distributed through the Program during the reporting period. Textbooks are books designed for instructing pupils in specific subject areas. The requested data should include textbooks that have been distributed to schools and have either been distributed to pupils on loan or kept in schools for use in the classroom. The data on textbooks should exclude books in school libraries as well as novels and books for use by teachers (such as curriculum guides, syllabi and teacher guides). The data of textbooks can include textbooks in stock but not currently in use by pupils and should include all languages of instruction.
Number of teachers trained	This indicator tracks the number of teachers who received and completed formal training, according to national standards, through the Program during the reporting period.

	The requested data refer to formal teacher training (pre- or in-service) designed to equip teachers with the knowledge, attitude, behavior, and skills required for teaching at the relevant level and perform their tasks effectively. Teachers are comprised of professional teaching/instructional personnel who are directly involved in teaching students. They include classroom teachers; special education teachers; and other teachers who work with students as a class in a classroom, in small groups in a resource room, or in one-to-one teaching inside or outside a regular classroom. Teaching/ instructional staff excludes non-professional personnel who support teachers in providing instruction to students, such as teachers' aides and other paraprofessional personnel.
Number of classrooms built or rehabilitated	This indicator tracks the number of classrooms that were built and/or rehabilitated through the Program during this reporting period. Data on classrooms should be reported upon completion of the building or rehabilitation during the reporting period. Classrooms comprise rooms in which teaching or learning activities can take place. They are semi-permanent or permanent physical structures and may be located in a school.

Relating to system areas	
Education Monitoring and Information System EMIS	A system for the collection, integration, processing, maintenance and dissemination of data and information to support decision-making, policy-analysis and formulation, planning, monitoring and management at all levels of an education system. ***It is a system of people, technology, models, methods, processes, procedures, rules and regulations that function together to provide education leaders, decision-makers and managers at all levels with a comprehensive and integrated set of relevant, reliable, unambiguous and timely data and information to support them in fulfilling their responsibilities.***
Learning assessment system	Assessment is "the process of gathering and evaluating information on what students know, understand, and can do in order to make an informed decision about next steps in the educational process," whereas an **assessment system** is "a group of policies, structures, practices, and tools for generating and using information on student learning and achievement."[11] It is the use of this information that is key for improving learning, and for that to be possible, learning data must be accompanied by contextual data so that factors that impact learning can be identified and action taken. When we talk about a **national learning assessment system**, then what we are talking about is a functional apparatus, usually housed within a Ministry of Education, which gathers information on learning – together with contextual data – nationwide and feeds this information back to the policy, management, and classroom levels to improve learning. As Pedro Ravela and his colleagues point out: "Assessment in and of itself does not produce improvement. There must be stable links between the domains of assessment and those of curriculum development, teacher training, research, policy design, communications and outreach, among others."[12] In this way, a strong national learning assessment system closes the feedback loop to the

[11] *Clarke, M. (2012) "What Matters Most for Student Assessment Systems: A Framework Paper."* SABER-Student Assessment Working Paper 1. Washington, DC: *WB.*

[12] Ravela, P. et al. (2008). "The Educational Assessment that Latin America Needs". *Working Paper Series No. 40*. Washington, DC: PREAL, p. 17.

	rest of the education system to achieve meaningful improvement in learning.