

# ENHANCING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

## ERITREA

### PROGRESS REPORT TO THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION

February 2018 - January 2019



UNICEF Eritrea  
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## Acronyms/List of Abbreviations

CEE	Complementary Elementary Education
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESP	Education Sector Plan
ESARO	Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office
EWG	Education Working Group
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GoSE	Government of the State of Eritrea
HACT	Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers
MoE	Ministry of Education
OOSC	Out-of-school Children
PMU	Programme Management Unit
SNE	Special Needs Education
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USD	United States Dollar

## Summary of Programme

Country	<b>Eritrea</b>
Name of Programme	'Enhancing Equitable Access to Quality Basic Education for Social Justice'
Name of DCP	Ministry of Education, Eritrea
GA's Programme ID (if any)	
Name of Grant Agent	UNICEF, Eritrea Country Office
Programme amount (original commitment)	USD 25,300,000
Revised Amount (where applicable)	
Disbursed Amount	USD 21,014,742.59
Reporting period (from: day, month, year, to: day, month, year)	February 2018 to February 2019
Programme duration (approval, effectiveness and closure date)	28 March 2014 to 31 December 2016
Revised programme duration (in case of revision/extension)	28 March 2014 to 30 April 2019
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### 1 Executive Summary

The Government of the State of Eritrea (GoSE) has been implementing the '*Enhancing Equitable Access to Quality Basic Education for Social Justice*' with a grant from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) of 25.3 million (USD) in 2013. This programme is implemented by the Ministry of Education (MoE) through its Project Management Unit (PMU). UNICEF Eritrea is formally designated as the Grant Agent of the GPE grant and manages the funds, disbursing resources to the Ministry through the Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) modality as per the Government-UNICEF Strategic Partnership Cooperation Framework (SPCF).

The programme has contributed to the implementation of the National Education Policy (2010) and Education Sector Plan (ESP 2013-17) to reach children from vulnerable communities in hard-to-reach areas and provide quality education to children at all levels. The programme aims to support the MoE to increase equitable access to quality basic education for at least 39,026 Out-of-school Children (OOSC) of whom 16,390 are females and 30,000 are adults from the four most disadvantaged regions of Eritrea. The programme also focuses on improving the quality of education and strengthening the institutional capacity of the sector.

The programme was planned for three years (2014-2016); however, due to various challenges the programme was extended for two additional years (2017 and 2018) as per request from the

GoSE.. As a result of substantive delays, in the distribution of construction materials procured from offshore to project sites, which led to more delays in construction related work - a no-cost extension request was made for the third time to cover 2019.

During the reporting period, the programme has supported the expansion of education opportunities for children from nomadic and semi-nomadic, as well as remote and disadvantaged communities. Overall, 18,880 (7,988 females) OOSC were enrolled in primary education via community-provided temporary learning spaces, whereby communities were mobilised to increase demand for education. As part of improving the quality of education, an in-service training was provided to 790 Kindergarten (KG) teachers, directors and caregivers on the national Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) and on the revised ECCE curriculum at the Zoba level.

Three different research studies were finalised and disseminated to a wide range of audiences from within the sector. Furthermore, procurement and distribution were finalised for furniture for the new classrooms under construction and for the underutilised primary and ECCE classrooms, the boarding school and the Special Needs Education (SNE) classrooms. Currently, substantial progress has been made in the construction-related component of the programme. Procurement of building materials both from in-country and offshore sources is finalised, and most of the project sites received the required materials and completed foundation works and elevation of walls.

Despite the achievements of the programme, completion of construction works, and procurement related activities remain a challenge. The peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea and the lifting of UN Security Council sanctions on Eritrea ushered a new era in 2018, the reprioritization exercise by GoSE of national development programmes has led to delays in the implementation of planned activities. As a result, a no-cost extension for the education sector implementation grant (ESPIG) is being requested to ensure that all school construction and remaining procurement related activities are completed in 2019.

## 2. Programme Implementation Progress

### 2-1. Programme Overview

The GoSE, has been implementing the ‘Enhancing Equitable Access to Quality Basic Education for Social Justice’ programme through the MoE since 2013, with the ESPIG allocation of USD 25.3 million from the Global Partnership for Education. In line with the MoE’s ESP 2013-2017, the overall objective of the programme is to increase equitable access, retention and completion of basic education, improve the quality of education and enhance the system and management capacity of the education sector. More specifically, the GPE supported programme aims to support at least 39,026 (16,390 females) out-of-school children (OOSC) and 30,000 adults from disadvantaged communities to access and enjoy their right to education and successfully complete a cycle of basic education. Furthermore, the programme focuses on improving the quality of teaching and learning by equipping teachers with the necessary pedagogic skills, providing learning materials and other school support systems. It also seeks to strengthen human resources and institutional capacity of the education sector to effectively monitor and deliver education services. These developments are expected to contribute to Eritrea’s realisation of Sustainable Development Goal 4. The contribution to the national goal will be attained by focusing on children aged 4-14 years, and older children who missed access to education at the right age.

During the implementation of the GPE programme, UNICEF as the Grant Agent, provides fiduciary oversight over the programme and disburses funds to the GoSE in accordance with the Harmonised Cash Transfers (HACT) principles. The GoSE through MoE is the main implementer of the programme; the Ministry of National Development (MoND) acts as a bridge between UNICEF and MoE to mainstream implementation of the programme in accordance with the National Development Guidelines.

### 2.2. Overall progress

Overall progress in Programme implementation	
Rating from Previous Reporting Period <sup>1</sup>	Rating for Current Reporting Period
<input type="checkbox"/> Highly Satisfactory (HS) <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory (S) <input type="checkbox"/> Moderately Satisfactory (MS) <input type="checkbox"/> Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU) <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory (U) <input type="checkbox"/> Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	<input type="checkbox"/> Highly Satisfactory (HS) <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory (S) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Moderately Satisfactory (MS)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU) <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory (U) <input type="checkbox"/> Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)

## 2.3. Progress per Component/Sub-component

### 2.3.1 Increase Equitable Access to Basic Education

This component seeks to narrow the gap of regional disparities due to inequitable access to education by providing attention to the specific characteristics of the populations. Targeting the four disadvantaged Zobas (regions) and rural communities, the GPE programme aims to provide access to 39,026 OOSC (16,390 females) children in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), elementary, middle schools, Complementary Elementary Education (CEE) and SNE across the programme cycle. This involves construction of classrooms, provision of three-seater benches and schooling materials, and community mobilisation to increase demand for education.

#### i. Provision of Learning Space

Despite the delays in construction-related work to create additional learning spaces for children, a total of 18,880 OOSC (7,988 girls) were enrolled as a direct result of the GPE supported programme. Of these, 6,194 students (2,715 girls) were enrolled in the existing nomadic and underutilised classrooms and the remaining 12,686 (5,273 girls) were enrolled in the temporary learning spaces provided by communities in some of the GPE targeted construction sites.

Despite the constant efforts made by MoE and UNICEF to unlock the bottlenecks related to construction work, and even after GoSE permission for construction in March 2017, the pace of implementation was slower than planned for 2018. Although there were elevated expectations that the construction materials procured in-country and offshore would be distributed, all materials were kept on hold by the GoSE until the end of 2018; which further delayed the construction. The GoSE released the construction materials only in December 2018 and is currently being distributed to project sites.

In 2018, UNICEF Eritrea disbursed USD 3,900,000 to expedite construction related works. The construction materials procured through the central procurement agency the Red Sea Corporation, were imported in December 2017. The materials were then stored until December 2018 in the warehouse of the MoE. However, the construction materials (10,800 quintals of cement and 5,268 reinforced steel bars) that were distributed in advance from the in-country stock to the three Zobas, were used to commence the construction-related work. As a result, the construction of 80 classrooms in Anseba and Northern Red Sea (NRS) regions has been completed and the roofs remain to be put in place, and this marks around 60 per cent completion rate. The construction for the 130 classrooms in Gash-Barka have concluded the foundation phase, which is around 20 per cent of completion rate.

During the implementation period, communities demonstrated their skills and commitment to coordinate the construction work while maintaining the required standards for quality. This has built confidence among community members that once the remaining construction materials are delivered to the sites, the communities can complete the work within the expected time period of the programme extension.

## ii. Provision of Teaching and Learning Resources for the Newly Constructed and Underutilized Classrooms

As indicated in the previous progress report, the new GoSE guidelines on procurement related activities has impeded implementation considerably. However, during the reporting period most of the furniture was procured and distributed to the respective project sites. These include 408 chalk boards, teacher desks and cupboards; and 6,300 three-seater benches for the newly constructed and existing underutilised classrooms, furniture for ECCE centres, the SNE classrooms, the Kerekebet Boarding School, and materials for community reading rooms. The procurement of ECD materials and SNE facilities are undergoing the bidding process.

### 2.3.2 Improve Quality of Education

This component of the GPE supported programme aims to improve the quality of teaching and learning in ECCE, elementary, middle and adult literacy programmes by equipping teachers with the necessary pedagogic skills, provision of learning materials and school support systems.

#### i. In service and Continuous professional development

In order to improve the quality of ECCE services and children's learning outcomes, 790 KG teachers, directors and caregivers received a familiarisation training on the national Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) and the revised ECCE curriculum that will benefit 22,000 pre-primary children. The training was provided in a cascaded model through the provision of a training of trainers (ToT) to 42 ECCE supervisors and coordinators from the six Zobas.

An in-service training was provided to 250 female teachers from across the six Zobas to enhance their pedagogic skills in Mathematics and English language teaching. Moreover, 70 MoE officers at the Zoba level received on-the-job training in planning, financing, and management.

### 2.3.3 Institutional capacity

To enhance institutional capacity in evidence-based decisions and planning, with support from GPE funding, the MoE conducted three educational researches on: *Assessment on Action Research, Impact of Summer Teacher Training of Uncertified Elementary Teachers, and Effectiveness of Mother Tongue Teachers' Training*. The research findings and recommendations were disseminated and discussed at the national and regional levels to guide future planning. Furthermore, the practice is believed to enhance the research capacities of 60 MoE officers and supervisors.

#### ***Monitoring and Supportive Supervision***

UNICEF and MoE have maintained regular joint field monitoring and supportive supervision to all Zobas. These field visits provided technical oversight for effective implementation of the programme in general; to monitor progress in construction, delivery of construction materials to

sites; and the delivery of the procured educational materials to schools and capacity building activities. During the reporting period, joint monitoring played significant role in effective utilisation of the distributed cement before the expiry date. All field reports have been recorded and the recommendations were addressed as required. The PMU of the MoE coordinated the monitoring processes to be implemented by the responsible departments of the Ministry for each component of the programme.

#### **2.4. Factors Delaying Implementation and Risk Mitigation Measures**

**Construction:** Delays in the release and distribution of the construction materials has significantly delayed the timely construction. Although significant efforts were made to unlock the bottlenecks, the imported construction materials were stored at the government warehouse for all of 2018, and which delayed the planned activity. As construction costs amount to 46 per cent of the total programme cost, this impacted the entire programme. On December 2018, because of UNICEF's sustained advocacy, including through the UN Resident Coordinator, the GPE country lead and UNICEF ESA Regional Director, and the changes in the political climate, the GoSE released the stored construction materials and provided permission to continue construction work.

The risks predicted in relation to inferior quality and delay in implementation of the construction work will be addressed by increasing frequency of joint field monitoring visits with MoE engineers. Additionally, the creation of different platforms such as tripartite and Education Working Group (EWG) meetings, continuous advocacy and engagement with the MoE management section for information sharing and coordination with stakeholders, will help to mitigate the concerns. As per UNICEF's internal Local Procurement Authorisation from the Supply Division, UNICEF has recruited an additional engineer to monitor the standard of the quality of the construction work.

#### **2.5. Major Changes to the Programme (if any)**

The major change in the programme in the reporting period is the additional no-cost extension request made for 2019 to complete the construction and procurement related activities.

### **3 Reporting on the variable part (if applicable)**

NA

### **4 Programme Disbursement**

*Find attached financial report*

### **5 Key Partnerships and Interagency Collaboration (if any)**

UNICEF as the grant agent is overseeing the implementation of the GPE supported programme. This role enabled UNICEF to strengthen its partnership with the GoSE. The national EWG represented by MoE, UNICEF, EU, Women's and Youth Associations and Teachers'

Associations, also created a forum for regular meetings to assess progress, recommend actions, and endorse education programme activities funded by GPE. The strong partnerships at the community level contributed in mobilising communities to provide learning spaces and promote access to quality education.

### **Lessons Learned (if any)**

Construction through community participation has created job opportunities for the community, development of construction skills within the community, active involvement of both gender in the construction work, and built a sense of ownership of the project.

## **6 Knowledge Product**

To enhance institutional knowledge and support evidence-based decisions, the MoE conducted three educational researches utilising its own human resources. Dissemination of these studies and their recommendations will support the MoE to improve the quality of education and initiate policy dialogue.

## **7 Future Work Plan**

- *Finalise all construction work in 2019;*
- *Finalise the remaining procurement related activities;*
- *Conduct joint monitoring and supervision of the GPE supported activities; and*
- *Address the additional QAR recommendations and submit the final GPE- ESIPG application for the second GPE grant.*

## **8 Expression of Thanks**

UNICEF Eritrea would like to express its sincere gratitude to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) for its support to the ‘*Enhancing Equitable Access to Quality Basic Education for Social Justice*’ programme.

We would also like to thank the GPE on behalf of the Programme Monitoring Unit of the Ministry of Education and the 39,026 out of school children (16,390 females) and 30,000 adults from the four most disadvantaged regions of Eritrea who will have equitable access to quality basic education opportunities because of this support.

## Revised Results Framework

Overall Objective 1: Increased equitable access to basic education	Output Indicator	Baseline 2012/13	Target values					2018/19 Extension 3	Progress by end of September 2018
			2013/14 (original plan)	2014/15 (original plan)	2015/16 (original plan)	2016/17 Extension plan	2017/18 Extension 2		
<i>Output 1.1 Construction of school infrastructure undertaken to accommodate more students in 189 elementary classrooms, 40 ECE centres, 90 CEE classrooms, boarding school with 8 classrooms, expansion of Keren school for the deaf with 6 classrooms and 8 SNE classrooms.</i>	Number of classrooms constructed	0	197	315		315	315	315	0
<i>Output 1.2 Teaching and learning materials and resources provided to students and teachers in newly established classrooms in elementary, middle school, ECE centres, CEE centres and SNE classrooms<sup>2</sup></i>	Number of teaching and learning materials distributed	0	12025			11,203	7,681	40 sets of ECD materials and SNE Facilities	11,609
<i>Output 1.3 Teachers selected from minority groups trained for elementary school, middle school, ECE, SNE and CEE are deployed in the targeted areas</i>	Number of teachers trained	0	800	750	950	-	-	-	1550
<b>Overall objective 2: Improve quality of education (teaching and learning)</b>									
<i>Output 2.1 Measures undertaken to provide quality teaching and learning in elementary and middle school, development and provision of teachers' guides and student text books</i>	Number of teachers' guides, and text books provided	0	1,117,154	156,600	-	662,168	-	-	3,428,668 <sup>3</sup>
<i>Output 2.2 Interventions carried out to improve quality teaching in ECE centres (Translation and dissemination of ELDS, review and dissemination of ECE teachers guides and ECD materials and books)</i>	Number of interventions made to improve quality teaching	0	2	1	-	1	-	-	3

<sup>2</sup> Supplier identification and low unit cost estimation during planning impede timely implementation.

<sup>3</sup> The over achievement is attributed to savings from unit cost of printing works.

<b>Output 2.3 Learning of the students enriched and fulfilled with promotion of the mother tongue education<sup>4</sup></b>	Number of MT training cassettes disseminated, and training conducted for MT teachers	0	11,125	125	-	-	9,500	-	9,500 cassettes and 478 trained.
<b>Output 2.4 Professional development activities for teachers implemented to foster effectiveness of teaching in schools in the four Zobas<sup>5</sup></b>	Number of teachers who received professional development/trainings	0	2544	2190	1530		-		2,756
<b>Output 2.5 School support system in targeted basic schools and in CEE centres strengthened and consolidated, as appropriate, with multimedia materials and equipment, science kits, libraries, and E-learning in education courses</b>	Number of multimedia materials and teaching equipment supplied, and refresher courses offered	0	412		-	406	-	-	406
<b>Overall Objective 3: Institutional Capacity Building and Systems Strengthening</b>									
<b>Output 3.1 Capacity building events organized for different level of education staff to strengthen in the areas of EMIS, monitoring, planning &amp; management, financial management</b>	Number of education personnel trained and received professional support	0	566	576	576		-	-	1287
<b>Output 3.2 Competency of National and Zoba staff strengthened to understand and conduct educational research methodology and the institutional knowledge base updated through findings of targeted research and six studies</b>	Number of researches conducted	0	2	2	2		3	-	6

<sup>4</sup> 9,500 copies from 650 cassettes of songs (master copies) in Eritrean languages produced and 478 MT teachers and language groups trained.

## Annex II: Donor Feedback Form

In acknowledgement of the contribution of your organization and in order to fulfil our reporting obligations, we continually strive to ensure that our donor reports are of a standard that assures you that funds are being used effectively and in the best interest of the child. Hence, we are interested in your feedback and seek your input towards improving our performance. Please take time to let us know how satisfied you are with the report you have received by completing the accompanying donor report feedback form.

Name of Report: “Enhancing Equitable Access to Quality Basic Education for Social Justice’

Reference no: SC140006

Contact Name: Shaya Ibrahim Asindua, Deputy Representative

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SCORING: 5 indicates “highest level of satisfaction” while  
0 indicates “complete dissatisfaction”.

1. To what extent did the narrative content of the report conform to your reporting expectations?

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If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we could improve on next time?

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2. To what extent did the fund utilization part of the report conform to your reporting expectations?

5	4	3	2	1	0

If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we could improve on next time?

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3. What suggestions do you have for future reports?

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4. Any other comments you would like to share with us?