

**MYANMAR EDUCATION SECTOR PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION GRANT ALLOCATION:  
REPORT FROM THE GRANTS AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE**

**For Decision**

---

*Please note: Board papers are deliberative in nature and, in accordance with the GPE Transparency Policy, are not public documents until the Board has considered them. It is understood that constituencies will circulate Board documents among their members prior to Board consideration for consultation purposes.*

**1. STRATEGIC PURPOSE**

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to request the Board to approve an allocation for an education sector program implementation grant (ESPIG) to Myanmar, as recommended by the Grants and Performance Committee (GPC) following its discussion of the grant application during its October 10-12, 2018 meeting.

**2. RECOMMENDED DECISION**

2.1 The Grants and Performance Committee recommends the Board approve the following decision:

**BOD/2018/11-XX–Approval of Allocation for an Education Sector Program Implementation Grant to Myanmar:** The Board of Directors with respect to the application submitted in the third funding round of 2018:

1. Notes compliance with the requirements for accessing the fixed part of the maximum country allocation, as described in the application and summarized and assessed in Annex 2 to BOD/2018/10 DOC 02.
2. Notes compliance with the incentives for accessing the variable part of the maximum country allocation and approves the indicators on Equity, Efficiency, and Learning and their means of verification, as described in the application and assessed in Annex 2 to BOD/2018/10 DOC 02.
3. Approves an allocation from GPE trust funds for an Education Sector Program Implementation Grant (ESPIG), as described in the application submitted and summarized in Table 1 in BOD/2018/11-XX 3 (c), subject to:

- a. Availability of funds.
- b. Board decision BOD/2012/11-04 on commitment of trust funds for ESPIGs in annual installments.
- c. GPC recommendations for funding include (all amounts in US\$):

**Table 1 Application Summary and GPC Allocation Recommendations for an ESPIG in US\$:**

| <b>Myanmar</b> |                                      |   |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| a.             | Maximum Country Allocation           | 73,700,000  |
| b.             | Allocation Requested (100%)          | 73,700,000 <sup>1</sup>   |
| c.             | Fixed Part Requested                 | 49,700,000<br>(of which 3,700,000 to be channeled through the Bank-Executed Trust Fund) |
| d.             | Variable Part Requested              | 24,000,000  |
| <b>e.</b>      | <b>Allocation Recommended by GPC</b> | <b>73,700,000</b>   |
| f.             | Grant Agent                          | World Bank  |
| g.             | Agency Fee % - Amount                | 1.75% - 1,289,750   |
| h.             | Period                               | 4 years and 5 months  |
| i.             | Expected Start Date                  | March 1, 2019   |
| j.             | Variable Part Disbursement Modality  | Ex-post   |
| k.             | Funding Source                       | GPE Fund  |

4. Requests the Secretariat to:
  - a. Include in its notification of grant approval to Myanmar the requests for report-back, and observations on the program as recommended by the Grants and Performance Committee and set out in Annex 1 to BOD/2018/10 DOC 02.
  - b. Include an update on the issues listed as “report back” in the annual Portfolio Review in accordance with the specified timeline.

<sup>1</sup> Includes US\$700,000 for the cost of the grant agent to perform its roles and responsibilities (formerly supervision fees). Per decision BOD/2015/10-02 supervision fees are funded from the maximum country allocation effective from the second funding round of 2016.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Committee assessed the grant application from Myanmar and discussed whether it met the funding model requirements to access the fixed and variable part of the maximum country allocation.

3.2 Prior to the discussion, the following conflict of interest was disclosed:

- Douglas Sumerfield, World Bank, as representative of the grant agent for the proposed program.

3.3 The GPC had a rich discussion regarding the application and found that Myanmar met the requirements. Moreover, the Committee recognized that the Quality Assurance Process including the Committee upstream feedback to the country during the application process has helped shape the application so that it responds well to GPE objectives, especially given the challenging country context.

3.4 The primary discussion points are summarized in Annex 1. The evidence for meeting the requirements and quality standards is set out in Annex 2.

**4. PLEASE CONTACT** Margarita Focas Licht ([mlicht@globalpartnership.org](mailto:mlicht@globalpartnership.org)) for further information.

### **5. ANNEXES**

5.1 This paper includes the following annexes:

- Annex 1 – GPC Observations, Report-Backs, and Conditions
- Annex 2 – Secretariat Quality Assurance Review Phase 3 (Final Readiness Review)

5.2 The following is available on the [Committee eTeam site](#):

- Myanmar ESPIG Application Package (GPC/2018/10 DOC 03)

## ANNEX 1 – GPC OBSERVATIONS, REPORT-BACKS, AND CONDITIONS

| <b>Myanmar</b>      |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Observations</b> | <p>The Grants and Performance Committee has closely followed Myanmar’s progress towards GPE membership and ESPIG application and expressed its appreciation for how the ESPIG program design responds to GPE priorities and concerns. The Committee confirms that Myanmar meets all three funding model requirements. There was strong support for the grant program, including the Variable Part. The program’s focus on equity, in particular for minority ethnic groups, is well-noted and appreciated. Progress on sector dialogue and coordination is also noted, including the inclusion of civil society in the work of the local education group (LEG; Education and TVET Sector Coordination Group), with particularly active dialogue in sub-sector working groups. The Committee encourages the LEG’s continued progress on strengthening sector dialogue and inclusion.</p> <p>For the Alternative Education (AE) sub-component, the Committee notes that the AE system is an important mechanism for reaching Myanmar’s out-of-school children and youth, and is a key strategy of the National Education Strategic Plan 2016-21 (NESP 2016-21), which also outlines important pathways to transition within and among the formal and alternative systems. The Committee urges that strategies should be in place to ensure that the provision of AE does not lead to a permanent establishment of parallel systems, with separate sets of quality standards.</p> <p>The Committee notes that despite some gender differences being recorded in NESP 2016-21, the program does not show a strong consideration of gender; the Committee notes that gender-responsive strategies are strategies which respond appropriately to the needs of both girls and boys. The Committee acknowledges that gender inequities vary according to local contexts and supports the consideration of gender-responsive strategies tailored to the local context as part of the school improvement plans, using the School Quality Assurance Standards Framework.</p> <p>Under the Efficiency component of the Variable Part, teachers will be deployed according to a framework which has not yet been designed. Noting the importance of teacher professional development and career pathways, the Committee recommends that the framework/process include a strong component to facilitate and incentivize adequate deployment and retention of qualified teachers to rural/remote schools and also at lower levels of education.</p> <p>As the teacher training will include a focus on peacebuilding and inclusion, and Myanmar will participate in Southeast Asia-Primary Learning Metric which includes a focus on citizenship, the Committee notes that it would be beneficial for the Ministry of Education, the grant agent and the LEG to explore how the Primary Learning Metric could be linked with the teacher training component on peacebuilding and inclusion.</p> <p>The Committee supports the ring-fencing of funding for northern Rakhine State, as well as the whole-state approach for Rakhine State. Since it remains uncertain if and when the displaced Rohingya refugees will return to northern</p> |

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
|                     | <p>Rakhine, the Committee will monitor the situation as it evolves, and requests the grant agent to closely follow the status of refugees/returnees as well as those children currently in northern Rakhine. Based on the situation and the progress of the program, the grant agent should consider restructuring the grant, if necessary, while ensuring that the original intention behind ring-fencing the amount of US\$14 million is maintained in any restructuring.</p>  |
| <p>Report-Backs</p> | <p><i>For the coordinating agency:</i></p> <p>Regarding the funding model requirement on domestic financing, the Committee requests the LEG to monitor the increase of the national budget allocation to the sector together with the expenditure through the Annual Performance Review, and the coordinating agency on behalf of the LEG and via the Joint Sector Review Report to provide an annual update.</p> <p>Given ongoing fragility and the high-risk nature of implementation in northern Rakhine, the grant agent is also requested to include in its regular annual progress report a specific update on the status of the implementation of the ESPIG in this region. On a related note, the Committee requests the coordinating agency on behalf of the LEG and via the Joint Sector Review Report to provide an annual update on the status of the development and implementation of the comprehensive Rakhine education sector plan, as recommended by the Rakhine Advisory Commission.</p> <p>Finally, the Committee recommends the strong consideration of mother tongue/ethnic languages in the Alternative Education certification system as well as the early grade reading component. The grant agent is requested to provide an annual update in its regular annual progress reports on this issue as it relates to ESPIG activities. Where appropriate, the Committee requests the coordinating agency on behalf of the LEG and via the Joint Sector Review Report to provide an annual update, in relation to broader sector issues in this regard.</p> <p><i>For the grant agent:</i></p> <p>Unrestricted access to townships down to the school level for the grant agent, especially in Rakhine and other states affected by conflict and fragility, will be essential to the successful implementation of the program. The Secretariat requests the grant agent to provide an annual update on access to townships and schools, as part of its regular progress reporting.</p> <p>While noting the need to carefully balance the Education in Emergencies (EiE) and “do-no-harm” principles with the perspective of gradual closure of camps for internally- displaced persons, the Committee notes the great need for improvement of education in/around these learning centers in the interim. Therefore, it recommends a discussion between the LEG and EiE partners on this, including an annual update from the grant agent as part of its regular progress reporting, of how these centers can benefit from School Improvement Funds.</p> |
| <p>Conditions</p>   | <p>n/a</p>   |

## ANNEX 2 – SECRETARIAT QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW PHASE 3 (FINAL READINESS REVIEW)

### Quality Assurance Review – Phase 3

---

Total Program Cost: US\$185 million, of which  
GPE: US\$73.7 million; GA: US\$100 million; and EU: US\$11.3 million  
Proposed GPE Grant Amount: US\$ 73.7 million  
Fixed Part: US\$49.7 million, of which US\$3.7 million for Bank-Executed Trust Fund, including Grant Agent’s Implementation Support Costs of \$700,000;  
Variable Part: US\$24 million  
Implementation period: 4 years, 5 months  
Projected implementation start date: March 1, 2019  
Grant Agent (GA): World Bank

## 1. BACKGROUND AND EDUCATION SECTOR OVERVIEW

### 1.1 COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Myanmar became a GPE member country in May 2018 upon the Development Partners’ (DPs) endorsement of the country’s first National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) 2016-2021.

After over five decades of military rule, from 2011 the country embarked on a range of political, economic and administrative reforms culminating in democratic elections in 2015. These milestone elections resulted in a victory for the National League for Democracy and the smooth transfer of power between the military and new civilian government. However, the military retains its dominance with 25 percent of the parliament seats, strong control over key ministerial posts,<sup>2</sup> and retention of positions of authority across the government.<sup>3</sup>

Despite strong economic growth (7.3 percent in 2015-16), and a reduction in poverty from an estimated 48.2 percent in 2004/05 to 32.1 percent in 2015,<sup>4</sup> Myanmar remains fragile,<sup>5</sup> and one of the poorest countries in Southeast Asia. Poverty was estimated to be at 32.1 percent in 2015, concentrated particularly in rural and conflict-affected areas.<sup>6</sup> People all over Myanmar struggle to access basic services and infrastructure including clean water, education and health services and electricity. Gender disparities persist in the labor force and employment.<sup>7</sup>

Besides the majority “Bamar” who are mostly Buddhists, 32 percent of the population consists of “ethnic groups.” The former mainly inhabit seven “Regions” surrounding Yangon, and the latter inhabit the seven “States” near the border with various neighboring countries. During the military rule, 135 “national races” were “constructed”; all others, including the Rohingya Muslims, are “outsiders” or immigrants.<sup>8</sup> The country is characterized by one of the world’s most enduring subnational conflicts affecting nearly one third of its townships; since independence, the government forces have been clashing with ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) who seek

---

<sup>2</sup> Defense, Home Affairs, Border Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> UN Human Rights Council (2018). Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar.

<sup>4</sup> World Bank (2014). *Myanmar—Ending Poverty and Boosting Shared Prosperity in a Time of Transition: A Systematic Country Diagnostic*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

<sup>5</sup> World Bank (2019) Harmonized List of Fragile Situations.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence/brief/harmonized-list-of-fragile-situations>.

<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Planning and Finance and World Bank (Forthcoming). *An analysis of poverty in Myanmar* (using Myanmar Poverty and Living Conditions Survey).

<sup>7</sup> Idem.

<sup>8</sup> UN Human Rights Council (2018).

autonomy and equal rights to resources.<sup>9</sup> Since 2011, the country has seen a surge in Buddhist nationalism and violence between the Buddhists and Muslims.<sup>10</sup> The National Ceasefire Agreement has been signed by 10 out of 21 EAOs, with the most recent signatures added in February 2018.<sup>11</sup> In the education sector, non-state education provision grew during the military rule as a civil society initiative to respond to the needs of the most disadvantaged children.<sup>12</sup> Many of these have been successful, and some provide a full cycle of education for ethnic children, in ethnic languages.<sup>13</sup>

Communal tensions and nationalist sentiment have been spurring violence in Rakhine State especially since 2012, deepening social fracture, and causing widespread internal and international forced displacement. Since August 2017, the country has faced an upsurge in violence, with a massive outflow of the Muslim population (the “Rohingyas”) into Bangladesh (estimated at more than 680,000 people, mostly from the Northern townships of Buthidaung, Maungdaw, and Yathedaung (BMY)) and an increasing number of internally displaced people (IDPs).<sup>14</sup> As a result, almost all schools and the three Township Education Offices (TEOs) in BMY closed at the onset of the crisis but started reopening in October 2017. By November 2017, all three TEOs were back online and 324 out of the 424 schools have reopened. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that, out of security concerns, many are only open a few hours a day and access to schools for some children can be limited. Other parts of the country, such as Kachin State, are also affected by recent renewed and escalated fights between the military and the EAO, displacing many civilians. Approximately 241,000 IDPs live in camps of which 77 percent are women and children.<sup>15</sup> Rakhine has the largest number of IDPs at 129,000.<sup>16</sup> Kachin State is home to 92,000, Shan to 15,000 and Kayin to 5,600 IDPs.<sup>17</sup>

| <b>Myanmar</b>                                |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Population</b>                             | 51.4 million (2016, World Bank. Databank)                      |
| <b>Human Development Index Ranking</b>        | 145 out of 188 countries (2016, UNDP Human Development Report) |
| <b>GDP</b>                                    | US\$69.322 billion (2017, World Bank. Databank)                |
| <b>GDP per capita</b>                         | US\$1,275 (2016, World Bank. Databank)                         |
| <b>World Bank Income Classification Level</b> | Lower Middle Income (2017, World Bank. Databank)               |

<sup>9</sup> Asia Foundation (2017). The Contested Areas of Myanmar: Subnational Conflict, Aid and Development.

<sup>10</sup> UN Human Rights Council (2018).

<sup>11</sup> Reliefweb <https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/eu-witnesses-two-more-parties-sign-myanmar-s-nationwide-ceasefire-agreement>.

<sup>12</sup> Lall, M. (2016), Diversity in Education in Myanmar.

<sup>13</sup> Idem.

<sup>14</sup> Approximately 120,000 people were already in IDP camps from prior peaks in the inter-communal conflict (2016, 2012, etc.).

<sup>15</sup> UNOCHA <https://www.unocha.org/myanmar/about-ocha-myanmar> accessed August 22, 2018.

<sup>16</sup> These people were displaced following violence in 2012. A further 688,000 refugees from Rakhine registered in Bangladesh between August 2017 and January 2018.

<sup>17</sup> Idem.

## 1.2 EDUCATION SECTOR OVERVIEW

Following the start of the country's various reforms in 2011, public funding for education has significantly increased, leading to an important rise in access. The primary net enrolment rate (NER) increased from 88 percent in 2009-10 to 93 percent in 2014-15.<sup>18</sup> Net enrolment in preprimary education saw an impressive growth between 2008 – when roughly 1 in 20 children were enrolled – and 2014 when nearly 1 in 4 children were enrolled.<sup>19</sup>

NESP 2016-21 was developed as a result of a nationwide Comprehensive Education Sector Review which started in 2012. The review was a long collective effort of over four years between the MOE and various stakeholders, to analyze and discuss strategies to improve education. The NESP represents an important milestone for education in Myanmar, as the country's very first education sector plan in the context of a major transition towards democracy. The following sub-chapters provide a general overview of the sector; it should be noted that data quality is still weak in Myanmar, and the NESP includes strategies to address this (as discussed in the requirements chapter).

### 1.2.1 Equity:

According to the Myanmar Living Conditions Survey 2017, primary net total enrolment rate for girls is 94.8 percent and for boys is 93.4 percent.<sup>20</sup> The gender gap increases in favor of girls beyond primary; the high school net total enrolment rate is 49 percent for female and 39.9 percent for male.<sup>21</sup> However, among poor households, fewer girls complete primary school compared with boys, and fewer girls transition to middle school.<sup>22</sup> As for geographical gender disparities, in Rakhine state, girls in the 10-15 age range are more likely to be out of school than boys.<sup>23</sup> This trend is reversed in other regions where boys leave school to join the labor force. In states like Mon and Kayah, girls' middle school net total enrolment is 20 and 15 percentage points higher than that of boys respectively.<sup>24</sup> However, where non-formal education programs exist for out-of-school children, boys are more likely to be enrolled than girls, though the reasons for this are unclear.<sup>25</sup> Due to the shortage of data, gender parity in terms of learning outcomes is difficult to establish. A 2016 report noted that among students who pass the matriculation examinations, results are generally higher among girls.<sup>26</sup> Adult literacy is reported as being 88.9 percent nationally (85.6 percent female, 92.8 percent male).<sup>27</sup> Shan State has the lowest literacy rate at 57.4 percent female and 73.4 percent male.<sup>28</sup> Literacy has improved over time and across generations, and the literacy gender gap is effectively zero in the 15-19 age cohort.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Ministry of Planning and Finance and World Bank (Forthcoming).

<sup>19</sup> UNESCO UIS, <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/mm>, last accessed August 22, 2018.

<sup>20</sup> Idem.

<sup>21</sup> Myanmar Living Conditions Survey (2017).

<sup>22</sup> World Bank (2018) Project Appraisal Document for An Inclusive Access and Quality Education Project (PAD).

<sup>23</sup> Asian Development Bank, United National Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2016). *Gender Equality and Women's Rights in Myanmar: A Situation Analysis*. <https://openaccess.adb.org>.

<sup>24</sup> Myanmar Living Conditions Survey (2017).

<sup>25</sup> Idem.

<sup>26</sup> ADB et al.(2016)

<sup>27</sup> Myanmar Living Conditions Survey (2017).

<sup>28</sup> Idem.

<sup>29</sup> Idem.

Primary completion rates<sup>30</sup> are estimated at 79 percent among children of high socioeconomic status, dropping to 31 percent among the poorest according to the NESP. Regional disparities are also important, with some townships in Shan State seeing primary completion rates as low as 20-23 percent.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, while the urban-rural gap has closed in net total enrolment for primary, the gap is still significant for middle school enrolment<sup>32</sup>.

Non-state education systems are said to provide education to Myanmar's most marginalized children.<sup>33</sup> These systems include monastic/religious schools, ethnic education systems, community schools, and temporary learning spaces in IDP camps. They offer "complementary basic education," the term used to refer to education provision which is aligned to the government curriculum (degree of alignment varies), but which is not sanctioned by the Ministry of Education (MOE).<sup>34</sup> In the Ethnic States, in the same locality, several types of schools are often available, alongside government schools. Monastic schools have links to the state system, and receive some public funds. Monastic schools may provide free meals for students and unlike government schools do not require a birth certificate, making them a viable option for orphans or migrant children.<sup>35</sup> All registered monastic schools offer the government curriculum.<sup>36</sup>

Ethnic schools and ethnic education networks are very diverse in their offering, including varying degrees of government and ethnic inputs (in terms of teachers, funding, etc.). They may be run by ethnic armed group education departments, communities, churches<sup>37</sup> and sometimes operate in partnership with monastic schools.<sup>38</sup> In some localities, ethnic education may be the only school provision available.

Ethnic education systems generally use mother tongue as language of instruction, though some offer Burmese as a separate subject. Some have developed into their own, full education systems, with Education Departments, teacher training colleges, and distinct curricula.<sup>39</sup> Different funding streams support their functioning.<sup>40</sup> As these systems are not recognized by the government, students often leave school without a formal qualification, which may limit their participation in tertiary education and in the labor market. Accreditation of students and teachers is seen to be one of the most pressing issues for these systems.<sup>41</sup> NESP goes a step forward in moving towards recognizing the important contributions of various education service providers to fulfill the demand for education; one of the strategies under basic education aims for the MOE to develop partnership mechanisms with these providers.

---

<sup>30</sup> Grade 5 completion.

<sup>31</sup> World Bank (2018) PAD.

<sup>32</sup> Net total primary enrolment is 95% urban, 94% rural (92% and 87% in 2010 respectively), and net total middle enrolment is 81% urban, 68% rural (72% and 47% in 2010 respectively). MLCS 2017.

<sup>33</sup> Lall (2016).

<sup>34</sup> World Bank (2018) PAD.

<sup>35</sup> Asian Development Bank, United National Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2016). *Gender Equality and Women's Rights in Myanmar: A Situation Analysis*. <https://openaccess.adb.org>.

<sup>36</sup> Registration is with the Ministry of Religious and Cultural Affairs.

<sup>37</sup> In Kachin and Chin states.

<sup>38</sup> Lall (2016).

<sup>39</sup> Systems of this type can be found in Mon, Kayin and Kachin states. Idem.

<sup>40</sup> Idem.

<sup>41</sup> Idem.

Children in IDP camps can receive education in Temporary Learning Centres. They often receive NGO support, as well as government in-kind support (uniforms, textbooks, volunteer teacher subsidies). Provision for IDPs is included in NESP 2016-21 and is reported on in the Annual Performance Review (Joint Sector Review).

An estimated 23 percent, or 2.7 million children between 5-16 years old were not enrolled in any system in 2015-16.<sup>42</sup> These out-of-school children (OOSC) may be from ethnic minorities and/or be internally displaced but may also be Bamar children from low-income households, or children with disabilities. Alternative and non-formal education (NFE) programs are proposed in the NESP as important ways to reach the OOSC in the short to medium term, under the newly formed Department of Alternative Education. MOE's NFE programs include the Non-Formal Primary Education and the pilot Non-Formal Middle School Education. In addition, besides various NGOs, UN agencies, monastic schools, philanthropical entities provide NFE programs. Although opportunities for second-chance education exist in all states (but not all townships), insufficient coverage, unsuitable modality (especially for working children), and low quality/relevance to children's lives or employability, are issues that need to be urgently tackled.

### **1.2.2 Efficiency:**

Data submitted to UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) suggests that the repetition rate for primary school is 1.1 percent (1.3 percent for boys and 0.88 percent for girls, 2017). The Primary Completion Rate according to this source is as 88.85 percent<sup>43</sup>. Dropouts mainly occur between primary and middle school. 60 percent of children who enroll in Grade 1 drop out before the end of middle school, the main determinant of drop out appearing to be socioeconomic status, with disability also playing a role.<sup>44</sup>

Teacher allocation across grades is strongly determined by teacher age, experience and qualification level, to the detriment of primary school where 40 percent of primary teachers have 4 years or less of experience.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, the current teacher career path is not linked to competencies or in-service training (which is for the moment sporadic and not well linked to the curricula), and is based on a single ascending salary structure from primary to high school. The only way for teachers to be promoted is to move up to a different level and then out of the classroom to administrative positions, penalizing lower grades. In addition, deployment and retention of teachers and staff in remote areas, or where ethnic languages are used, or near conflict zones is problematic, even though the MOE provides financial incentives.

### **1.2.3 Learning outcomes:**

According to the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) conducted with World Bank support, the percentage of Grade 2 students who are unable to read a single word in a level-appropriate paragraph was 17 percent in 2018 (nationally representative).<sup>46</sup> Results in mathematics appear

---

<sup>42</sup> World Bank (2018) PAD.

<sup>43</sup> UNESCO UIS, data from 2017, <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/mm>.

<sup>44</sup> World Bank (2018) PAD.

<sup>45</sup> Idem.

<sup>46</sup> Idem.

to be slightly higher. Results from a 2017/18 baseline for Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) indicate that among Grade 2 Students, 24 percent are unable to perform basic addition or subtraction.<sup>47</sup> Myanmar is currently preparing the Southeast Asia-Primary Learning Metrics to assess learning outcomes of Grade 5 students.

Teacher competency and qualifications vary widely. Pre-service training is divided into a degree-level university course for high school teachers and a diploma-level education college course for primary and middle school teachers.<sup>48</sup> In-service teacher training is sporadic and has not been prioritized. Ongoing reforms to address this issue include the drafting of Competencies Standards Frameworks for teaching and non-teaching staff and the upgrading of Education Colleges from 2-year diploma to 4-year degree awarding institutions.

To combat a deficit in teacher stock, over 60,000 teachers were hired, accounting for a substantial proportion of the country's 350,000 basic education teachers.<sup>49</sup> Many of these Daily Wage Teachers were hired under contract without receiving training, and are in remote and rural areas. Data on pupil teacher ratios is not available.

The learning of children in non-state schools is not well known at this point, although there may be differences among students in well-established ethnic provision networks and those in community schools that are not affiliated to any networks.

#### **1.2.4 Monitoring of Sector Performance:**

To accompany the NESP, a multi-year workplan and a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework was created, which guides sector monitoring in Myanmar. The first multi-stakeholder Annual Performance Review took place in August 2017, and the second in June 2018. During these reviews, departments responsible for NESP strategies provide updates on their progress towards NESP goals, as well as reporting on budget performance. Lessons learned from implementation, which are generated through a series of multi-stakeholder Sub-Sector Working Groups, are also presented. The NESP Mid-Term Review will take place in 2019.

Myanmar established a multi-stakeholder local education group, the Education & TVET Sector Coordination Group (ETVSCG), in 2017. The ETVSCG benefits from high-level leadership at MOE and is co-facilitated by DPs (currently chaired by Australia and UNESCO. Other DPs: Asian Development Bank, Denmark, DFID, EU, Finland, Germany, Japan/JICA, Switzerland, UNICEF, and the World Bank). Besides key MOE departments and DPs, iNGOs (Save the Children, VSO), and two local CSOs (MyMe and Ratana Metta) are active members of the group. Both CSOs are well-respected by the CSO community, but were not voted onto the ETVSCG by peers, rather they were invited by MOE. However, a larger number of CSOs participate in the sub-sector working group discussions. There are no official teacher unions in Myanmar, and so teachers are not represented.

---

<sup>47</sup> Idem.

<sup>48</sup> Idem.

<sup>49</sup> Idem.

## 2. FIXED PART REQUIREMENTS

### 2.1 Requirement 1: A credible, endorsed Education Sector Plan (ESP), or alternatively, a Transitional Education Plan (TEP).

The National Education Strategic Plan 2016-21 is Myanmar's very first education sector plan. It covers all education sub-sectors and was developed reflecting a comprehensive sector analysis supported by various DPs. The full ESP package was submitted to the GPE Secretariat on January 31, 2018, when Myanmar formally requested to join GPE.

NESP was appraised between December 2016 and March 2017 by an independent consultant trained by UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning and GPE. The appraisal concluded that NESP meets the criteria for a credible ESP. The appraisal recommendations were agreed upon by the LEG as follow-up action points. These mainly pertained to clarifying quantitative data and targets, which would in turn clarify the scope/coverage of the activities and facilitate evidence-based monitoring. In October 2017, the Secretariat shared the GPC recommendation to the DPs to carefully assess the readiness for endorsement, including whether the implementation plan and/or the M&E framework is robust enough to ensure clarity on the NESP coverage of ethnic children and children in the Rakhine State. Consequently, more work was undertaken particularly on the M&E framework. NESP was endorsed by the DPs in January 2018. The Secretariat assessment deems that the NESP is robust. The upcoming MTR in 2019 would be a good opportunity to review and strengthen some gaps.

In place of a single costed multi-year action plan, activities, timeline and targets have been included in the Priorities Plan 2016-21 and costs for activities/sub-activities are detailed in the Multi-Year Work Plan 2017-2019. As stated in the DPs' endorsement letter, the MOE and DPs plan to continue improving planning processes, i.e. further develop the system of monitoring/reporting against plans and use the MTR to take stock of the progress vis-a-vis the original appraisal recommendations.

***Conclusion: The Secretariat deems that Requirement 1 is met.***

### 2.2 Requirement 2: Evidence of commitment to ESP or TEP and its financing.

Although public expenditure on education is still relatively low, government commitment to increase education spending is evident from recent trends. Indeed, the national expenditure for education was 4.58 percent in 2011/12, and had doubled to 8.6 percent by 2016/17. It should be noted that Myanmar worked on the analysis of Requirement 2 mainly in 2017, before the GPC decided that both recurrent and capital budget should be assessed. The National Education Law of 2014 and its Amendment of 2015<sup>50</sup> state that the government will aim for public expenditure on education to reach up to 20 percent of total public expenditure. It is estimated that 2.4 percent of the GDP will be spent on education through the NESP years. The Ministry of Planning and Finance reaffirmed its commitment to continue increasing domestic financing to education in a letter to GPE on July 25, 2018.

---

<sup>50</sup> Sections 62 and 31, respectively.

Myanmar spends over 45 percent of its education funding on primary education (5-year cycle). A pro-rated calculation for 6 years of primary<sup>51</sup> is 51.3 percent in 2016/17, and should be maintained at 51.2 percent until 2021. The primary completion rate was 80.5% in 2014/15 according to the NESP.

The education simulation informing NESP's costing and financial projections included donor funding based on existing baseline data. While the MTR would include updated donor funding information, the ESTVCG has recently done a mapping of all on-going and planned support to the Rakhine State.

***Conclusion: The Secretariat deems that Requirement 2 is met, given that Myanmar has committed to a plan to increase the domestic share of resources to education progressively towards 20 percent. The Secretariat recommends that the GPC request an annual report back from the CA/LEG on the national budget allocation and expenditure to the sector.***

### **2.3 Requirement 3: Availability of Data.**

Myanmar conducted a Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR) which serves as the sector analysis. CESR, completed in 2016, includes analysis of context, existing policies, costs and financing, system performance and capacity. It addresses vulnerability and equity including marginalized groups, girls, children with disabilities, and out-of-school children.

EMIS data is collected twice per year and published in the Annual Statistical Yearbook. Data is collected on government schools; monastic schools; community schools affiliated with the MOE; private schools registered with MOE; and temporary learning spaces in IDP camps. However, it does not include ethnic schools. Data covers basic education, alternative education, higher education and TVET and is collected on 5 of GPE's 12 key indicators.<sup>52</sup> MOE, with technical support from UNESCO, conducted a review of EMIS and identified several challenges. MOE plans to address these through the EMIS Operational Plan 2016-2021- a strategic plan to enhance EMIS data collection, analysis and use. Myanmar reported some data to UIS in 2015 and 2017. UIS has conducted several missions to support Myanmar in developing a National Strategy for the Development of Education Statistics to enhance the country's capacity to report on the progress against SDG4. Discussions on issues related to data submitted to UIS have also been ongoing.

Myanmar is working towards the development of a National Assessment Policy as part of a NESP strategy. Learning assessment has been supported by DPs. Monitoring Learning Achievement for Myanmar language and math was conducted for Grades 3 and 5 in 2012/13 with UNICEF support. EGRA has been conducted with World Bank support since 2013, and EGMA was introduced in 2016. MOE is currently preparing the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics with UNICEF support. There is no funding gap for EMIS or assessment improvement in the NESP.

***Conclusion: The requirement is considered met, with the understanding that progress in data availability will be continued.***

---

<sup>51</sup> Myanmar's primary education is five years including 1 year of kindergarten.

<sup>52</sup> Pre-primary GER, Primary GER, Primary GIR, PTR primary, PTR secondary.

## 3. ESPIG

### 3.1 PAST ESPIG PERFORMANCE

Not applicable (This is the first ESPIG application from Myanmar)

### 3.2 ESPIG DESCRIPTION

The objective of Myanmar's program "Inclusive Access and Quality Education Project (IAQE)" is "to improve equitable access to, and quality of, basic education delivered through formal, non-formal and complementary institutions and providers". The program supports the improvement of basic formal education service delivery in disadvantaged townships through school plans/school grants and support to developing and implementing a continuous professional development (CPD) system. The expansion of non-formal primary and middle school education programs for out-of-school children, as well as dialogue and collaboration between MOE and the Ethnic Basic Education Providers (EBEPs) are also key components. System strengthening, notably for Public Financial Management (PFM) and Human Resource Management (HRM) are also proposed.

The proposed program is co-financed with the GA, the World Bank, and the EU and directly supports NESP implementation. The program design, excepting component 4, is a results-based financing hybrid using an Investment Project Financing modality with Disbursement-Linked Indicators (DLIs). In this design, following achievement of agreed on results, financing is disbursed to the Government to provide reimbursement for expenditures against pre-agreed budget lines (presented as an Eligible Expenditure Program). While the Variable Part supports the same strategies/objectives as the Fixed Part, its targets are placed further along the results chain towards outcomes.

The program will primarily target the most disadvantaged townships in Myanmar (through component 1 and 2.1), reaching around one third of the total 330 townships by the end. In addition to the approximately 3 million children attending 15,000 formal government schools in the targeted townships (of which 1.5 million will also benefit from teachers trained in early learning), around 101,000 children will benefit from non-formal education, and 70,000 students will benefit from education provided by EBEPs. All of Rakhine State will be targeted. Moreover, funding for Northern Rakhine is specifically ring-fenced, with discrete DLIs.

Component 4 on Technical Assistance (TA) will be input-based (i.e. not DLI-based) as will another US\$3.7 million, set aside to be directly executed by the GA (Bank-Executed Trust Funds-BETF). The BETF portion will be co-financed with the World Bank and the EU, to support the independent verification of DLI attainment, and to support contracting of services to support conflict-sensitive implementation of program activities where required (component 2.2).

## ESPIG Program Components: Summary

| Components  | Description   | Key activities  |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Component 1: Improving quality and inclusion in formal basic education schools (DLI)</b> |   |   |
| <i>1.1) Improving school planning and funding</i>   | Support improvement of basic education quality through achievement of minimum quality and inclusion standards                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved implementation of School Quality Improvement Plans using the School Quality Assurance Standards Framework (SQASF) in around 15,000 formal government schools</li> <li>- Provision of more flexible and equity-focused supplementary School Improvement Funds</li> </ul>   |
| <i>1.2) Improving skills and practices of teachers and head teachers</i>                    | Support development and implementation of a harmonized national Continuous Professional Development system                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishment of National Centre for Teacher Professional Development</li> <li>- Development and approval of CPD mapping and framework</li> <li>- Design and piloting of a large scale in-service training delivery system</li> <li>- Design and delivery of priority in-service training programs 1) Early Grade Teaching Training for 30,000 teachers, 2) Peace and Inclusive Education Training for 30,000 teachers</li> <li>- Improvement of EGRA/EGMA scores in target townships</li> </ul> |
| <b>Component 2: Improving access to quality education for marginalized children (DLI)</b>   |   |   |
| <i>2.1) Expanding access to quality non-formal education services</i>                       | Scale up NFE services through government and innovative public-private partnerships   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Revision/development of curricula and delivery models of various NFE programs</li> <li>- Provision of implementation grants to AE providers and enrolment of 101,000 OOSC in NFE</li> <li>- Quality assurance of AE services using the AE-Quality Assurance Standards Framework</li> <li>- Establishment of a national AE certification system</li> </ul>  |
| <i>2.2) Moving towards partnerships with Ethnic Basic Education Providers</i>               | Support partnerships between MOE and EBEPs towards the establishment of a minimum and coherent Union wide education framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Facilitated dialogue by independent experts in collaboration with DPs experienced in working with EBEPs</li> <li>- Pilot partnerships between MOE and EBEPs/religious schools</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Component 3: Strengthening systems (DLI)</b>   |   |   |
| <i>3.1) PFM system strengthening</i>  | Strengthen PFM institutional capacity (improve planning, budgeting, budget execution, reporting, internal control/oversight)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Delivery of basic PFM curriculum for budget and finance officers</li> <li>- Strengthen MOE accounting system (piloting of automation, establishment of e-payment etc.)</li> <li>- Gradual introduction of a multi-year performance-based approach</li> </ul>   |
| <i>3.2) HRM system strengthening</i>  | Strengthen HRM (improve HR policies, planning and process)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assessment and revisions of HR standards</li> <li>- Development of a comprehensive HR policy framework</li> <li>- Institutionalization of systematic analyses of HR data</li> <li>- Revision of promotion system to improve distribution of workforce across sub-sectors/schools</li> <li>- Training of staff in 200 townships on new HR policy, process and guidelines</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Component 4: Technical Assistance (Input based)</b>                                      |   |   |
|   | Strengthen MOE capacity to achieve components 1 to 3  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recruit individual/firm consultants to strengthen MOE capacity</li> </ul>  |

**Table A: ESPIG Components and Costs (US\$, millions)**

| Project Components  | IDA              | GPE            |                   |                |                   |               |                   | EU             | Total Program    |
|---|------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------|
|   |                  | Total          | % (Of MCA)        | Fixed Part     | %                 | Variable Part | %                 |                |                  |
| <b>Component 1: Improving quality and inclusion in basic education schools (DLI)</b>      | <b>\$50.3</b>    | <b>\$28.7</b>  | <b>38.9%</b>      | <b>\$20.7</b>  |                   | <b>\$8.0</b>  |                   | <b>0.0</b>     | <b>\$79.0</b>    |
| 1.1) Improving school planning and funding  | (\$30.4)         | (\$16.6)       |                   | (\$12.6)       |                   | (\$4.0)       |                   | 0.0            | (\$47.0)         |
| 1.2) Improving skills and practices of teachers and head teachers                         | (\$19.9)         | (\$12.1)       |                   | (\$8.1)        |                   | (\$4.0)       |                   | 0.0            | (\$32.0)         |
| <b>Component 2: Improving access to quality education for marginalized children (DLI)</b> | <b>\$28.0</b>    | <b>\$18.0</b>  | <b>24.4%</b>      | <b>\$10.0</b>  |                   | <b>\$8.0</b>  |                   | <b>0.0</b>     | <b>\$46.0</b>    |
| 2.1) Expanding access to quality non-formal education services                            | (\$21.6)         | (\$11.4)       |                   | (\$7.4)        |                   | (\$4.0)       |                   | 0.0            | (\$33.0)         |
| 2.2) Moving towards partnerships with Ethnic Basic Education Providers                    | (\$6.4)          | (\$6.6)        |                   | (\$2.6)        |                   | (\$4.0)       |                   | 0.0            | (\$13.0)         |
| <b>Component 3: Strengthening systems (DLI)</b>   | <b>\$21.7</b>    | <b>\$17.3</b>  | <b>23.5%</b>      | <b>\$9.3</b>   |                   | <b>\$8.0</b>  |                   | <b>\$8.0</b>   | <b>\$47.0</b>    |
| 3.1) PFM system strengthening   | (\$10.5)         | (\$4.5)        |                   | (\$4.5)        |                   | (\$0.0)       |                   | 8.0            | (\$23.0)         |
| 3.2) HRM system strengthening   | (\$11.2)         | (\$12.8)       |                   | (\$4.8)        |                   | (\$8.0)       |                   | 0.0            | (\$24.0)         |
| <b>Component 4: Technical Assistance (non-DLI)</b>  | <b>\$0.0</b>     | <b>\$6.0</b>   | <b>8.1%</b>       | <b>\$6.0</b>   |                   | <b>\$0.0</b>  |                   | <b>\$2.0</b>   | <b>\$8.0</b>     |
| <b>Total Costs</b>  | <b>\$100.0</b>   | <b>\$70.0</b>  | <b>95% Of MCA</b> | <b>\$46.0</b>  | <b>68% Of MCA</b> | <b>\$24.0</b> | <b>32% Of MCA</b> | <b>\$10.0</b>  | <b>\$180.0</b>   |
| <i>Bank-Executed Trust Fund</i>   | <i>\$0.9</i>     | <i>\$3.7</i>   | <i>5% Of MCA</i>  | <i>\$3.7</i>   |                   |               |                   | <i>\$1.3</i>   | <i>\$5.9</i>     |
| <i>GA (supervision) costs (within BETF)</i>   | <i>(\$0.775)</i> | <i>(\$0.7)</i> | <i>(0.9%)</i>     | <i>(\$0.7)</i> |                   |               |                   | <i>(\$0.3)</i> | <i>(\$1.775)</i> |
| <b>Total Cost</b>   | <b>\$100.9</b>   | <b>\$73.7</b>  | <b>100%</b>       | <b>\$49.7</b>  |                   | <b>\$24.0</b> |                   | <b>\$11.3</b>  | <b>\$185.9</b>   |
| <b>Agency fees (outside of MCA)</b>   |                  | \$1.289        |                   |                |                   |               |                   |                |                  |

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

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

As mentioned above, US\$3.7 million (5 percent of MCA) will be managed under BETF. This includes US\$700,000 (1 percent of MCA) of GA implementation support (supervision) costs. GA and EU funds also contribute to the BETF and the GA (supervision) costs.

### 3.3 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAM DOCUMENT

QAR Phase 2 was carried out in March 2018. In order to address the Secretariat recommendations and in response to the GA's own internal QA recommendations, the GA and country-level partners took time to finalize the program, by postponing the final application submission from May 2018 to August 2018. As a result, all QAR 2 recommendations are addressed in the final program. The main recommendation from QAR 2 was to strengthen the equity focus of the program by reviewing/clarifying and justifying the (extent of) program coverage/targeting and financing

especially regarding Rakhine and the other Ethnic States. It also encouraged the consideration of a whole-state targeting for Rakhine, with particular attention to Northern Rakhine.

The **Program Design** responds well to some of the key challenges in the Myanmar education sector, supports the achievement of several of the NESP's nine "transformational shifts", and is strongly in line with GPE objectives of equity, quality and system strengthening. Through co-financing with the GA and EU, the program likely leverages larger results than through a standalone ESPIG. This effect is amplified by disbursement linked indicators, which are directly tied to a selection of key NESP results. While one of the key NESP strategies to improve basic education is through a national school-based quality assurance system, the program incentivizes this to be implemented in a more equitable way, for example through its design to channel more funds to disadvantaged townships and the weakest/remotest schools, and to technically support them so that they could improve vis-à-vis the SQASF standards.<sup>53</sup> The work to develop/strengthen partnerships with EBEPs is critically important and if successful, will improve the education of some of the most disadvantaged ethnic groups of the country, while contributing to a more peaceful and harmonious coexistence of different populations. The program's strong equity focus is also witnessed by the targeting/funding allocation; the township selection is done based on a composite "need index" for the main program components, combined with qualitative evidence and feasibility information to be collected through consultations involving different stakeholders at the State and Regional levels. Of the total implementation cost of components 1-3 (through NESP and the ESPIG) 47 percent are estimated to be channeled to the Ethnic States whereas 27 percent of the population live there. The program builds well on and creates important synergies with past/existing initiatives, such as with the Decentralizing Funding to Schools Project (as country-level stakeholders) that funds school improvement funding, stipends etc. and SQASF being supported by Australia. Moreover, the program also supports MOE capacity building and efforts to strengthen sector dialogue, including participation of civil society in the planning, budgeting and monitoring process.

Regarding the **Program Budget**, funds will be disbursed to the Government, reimbursing the Government for expenditures under the agreed budget lines (Eligible Expenditure Program) if results are achieved. The program has specified DLI amounts. Although the program is DLI-based, an estimated amount of (government) funding that will likely go to each State/region through the relevant NESP components is provided. The total estimated costs for the targeted townships for the relevant NESP components during the program period is US\$443 million, of which US\$180 million will be supported by this ESPIG (with co-financing). References for unit costs of key inputs are provided, which are NESP unit costs. Costs for Rakhine are ring-fenced through specific DLIs, to avoid that the focus to this State is diluted in the overall results across different target areas.

In terms of **Monitoring and Evaluation** (M&E), the program's M&E framework is in alignment with the NESP M&E framework. Program results and disbursement-linked indicators are all expected to contribute to the NESP M&E framework. NESP has identified which MOE departments are expected to carry out for specific components and those departments are expected to submit the

---

<sup>53</sup> SQASF domains: (a) leadership, management, and administration; (b) teaching and learning; (c) parent and community involvement; (d) professional development; (e) budget and finance; and (f) infrastructure, facilities, and resources.

Department Annual Performance Report, which reports on achievement of NESP. The program plans to build the capacity of the MOE to as well as conduct additional M&E activities. M&E will also include disaggregation of data, allowing a better understanding of progress on equity. The program's theory of change is reflected in a strong results framework of stated PDOs (outcomes), intermediate outcomes, indicators, and targets (including baseline values).

As for **Fiduciary, Implementation Arrangements, and Readiness**, the implementation arrangements are well thought out, and use the existing MOE system while strengthening their capacity to implement. The Project Appraisal Document (PAD) includes detailed implementation arrangements down to the school level for each of the sub-components including GA oversight, although the forthcoming Project Operations Manual will spell out more details. However, on sensitive areas such as on the partnership with EBEPs and DLI verification, BETF will be used, which is deemed appropriate by the Secretariat. While the fiduciary risk is rated as substantial by the GA, the proposed mitigation measures appear adequate. MOE will create a negotiated "Project Procurement Strategy for Development" for major procurement activities which will follow government systems in accordance with WB procurement regulations for Investment Project Financing borrowers. The Office of the Auditor General, assessed by the GA as capable of auditing all GA projects, will audit the financial statements, and MOE will also carry out periodic internal audits at various levels. The program also proposes to strengthen MOE capacity on fiduciary management, through an important transition from a manual and cash-based system to a more automated system. The GA financial management and procurement specialists, based in Yangon, will accompany program implementation and help ensure the fiduciary and procurement arrangements are duly followed.

The **Risk Identification and Mitigation Measures** are deemed adequate and reflect past lessons learned. The PAD identifies environmental and social risks as high. Substantial risks are identified in political and governance, institutional capacity for implementation and sustainability, and fiduciary. However, appropriate mitigation strategies are identified wherever possible. For example, whereas the political and governance risks are high, the hiring of specialized experts on ethnic/religious groups as well as the arrangement for the GA to work with DPs and CSOs<sup>54</sup> with experience and expertise dialoguing with EAOs is also noteworthy and will enhance the chances of successful dialogue with EBEPs. Building on previous experience, "do no harm" principles will be followed. Safeguards documents and processes such as a Social Assessment Report as well as a Community Participation Planning Framework will be prepared before appraisal, to minimize the risk that IAQE fuels existing and deep-rooted tension amongst population groups. Additional conflict-related risk mitigation measures and grievance mechanisms for schools and communities are proposed.

The program's **Sustainability** is generally high, as the components are NESP strategies implemented by MOE departments, and implementation is expected to strengthen the capacity of MOE staff and stakeholders up to the school/community level. The program will support the development and implementation of several key frameworks. The key to sustainability for these frameworks will be government willingness to maintain an equity focus in the School Improvement

---

<sup>54</sup> Particularly UNICEF, EU, and Myanmar Education Consortium

Fund funding/targeting, and to keep financing/expanding Alternative Education. Component 2.2 - partnership with EBEPs - will probably remain vulnerable in terms of sustainability, with possibilities of setback depending on the political situation.

In terms of **Aid Effectiveness**, the program is highly aligned to the national system. It directly supports NESP components, and the majority of ESPIG funding reimburses MOE expenses using national FM systems. Implementation will be done by MOE staff, with some TA support. The program builds on past DP support, and seeks synergies with current DP support. For example, HRM strengthening will be based on UNESCO’s support to HR-MIS, and school planning/financing improvement has synergies with the DFAT-supported SQASF.

Regarding **Rakhine State**, the program does not have a dedicated component, but the approach of defining specific DLIs and ring-fencing funds (US\$14 million) for Northern Rakhine is considered appropriate and appreciated by the Secretariat given the current context. However, given that relatively few Rohingya children/families currently actually remain in Northern Rakhine (an estimated 160,000 Rohingyas are in BMY and 120,000 in IDP Camps) and that currently it is not yet decided whether IDP Camps will be targeted, the program may have little leverage over the improvement of education for this population. The impact will also depend on whether and how the repatriation of Rohingya refugees happens. If the repatriation begins during the program timeframe, the program is designed to have an important impact on the education of these children. The conditions of unrestricted access for monitoring and supervision will be included in the legal agreement between the GA and the MOE.

## 4. VARIABLE PART

### 4.1 Description of the Variable Part

32 percent of the total GPE financing (US\$24 million) is proposed as the Variable Part; supported solely with GPE funds. It supports the same NESP components/strategies as the Fixed Part, but is tied to indicators towards the end of the results chain; i.e. higher/outcome-level indicators. One indicator is proposed for each sub-component, except for Component 3, which focuses exclusively on Human Resource Management.

Below are the strategies and indicators for the Variable Part:

|                               | Strategy   | Indicator | Targets 2022-23 and funding |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Equity – NESP Outcomes</b> |  |           |                             |
|                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners can access and graduate from quality-assured, certified and nationally credentialed AE programmes to achieve their lifelong learning and career aspirations</li> <li>• Increased participation by different education service providers and partner organisations in the basic education sub-sector</li> </ul> |           |                             |

|   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Equity (a)</b><br>Component 2.1  | Expansion of NFE and certification of students  | Students having received MOE-approved certificates for completing a non-formal education program <sup>55</sup> delivered by government and/or non-governmental AE providers. | 77,000 students<br><br>US\$4 million        |
| <b>Equity (b)</b><br>Component 2.2  | Partnerships with EBEPs                         | Students in ethnic areas receiving education delivered by EBEPs which have signed partnership agreement(s) with MOE.   | 70,000 students<br><br>US\$4 million        |
| <b>Efficiency – NESP Outcome</b><br>Teachers are equitably recruited, promoted and deployed nationwide following the teacher recruitment, deployment and promotion policy and system  |   |  |   |
| <b>Efficiency</b><br>Component 3  | Strengthen HRM                                  | Teaching staff deployed, transferred and promoted per new processes (according to OGs) based on needs and/or “results”.  | 40%<br><br>US\$8 million                    |
| <b>Learning Outcomes – NESP Outcomes</b><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant improvements experienced by students in their school and classroom learning environment</li> <li>• In-service teachers actively participate in teaching and mentoring activities implemented by trainers and mentors, deliver interactive teaching in basic education schools, and achieve Teacher Competency Framework Standards</li> </ul> |   |  |   |
| <b>Learning Outcomes/ Quality (a)</b><br>Component 1.1  | Improvement of teaching and learning conditions | Average improvement in schools' SQASF scores (in targeted townships).  | 0.4 Standard Deviation<br><br>US\$4 million |
| <b>Learning Outcomes/ Quality (b)</b><br>Component 1.2  | Improvement of teaching and learning conditions | Average improvement in teachers' Teacher Competency Standards Framework scores (in targeted townships).  | 0.4 Standard Deviation<br><br>US\$4 million |

#### 4.2 Assessment of the Variable Part

QAR phase 2 recommended that the program document clarify the theory of change, justify the differentiated funding allocation for the three dimensions, and explain the ambitiousness/stretch of the indicators/targets. These recommendations have been taken into account in this final version. Funds are now equally distributed among the three dimensions, the indicators/targets have been revised to ensure a stretch, and more explanation has been provided to explain the rationale or the ambitiousness of the targets.

The **equity** dimension incentivizes the significant scale-up of NFE for out-of-school children, and development of partnerships between the MOE and EBEPs. Both strategies cater to the most vulnerable children of Myanmar, hence are highly relevant for improving equity and fill critical gaps

<sup>55</sup> Non-formal Primary Education, Non-formal Middle School Education, National Youth Education Certificate

that may not have been otherwise addressed at this point in time. The targets of students to be reached have been revised higher for both sub-components/indicators after QAR 2.

Setting up an AE system, including for quality assurance and certification is challenging, and increasing enrolment by 25 percent a year instead of the current trend of 6 percent is an important stretch for the MOE, given the opportunity costs and various vulnerabilities that led to these children being excluded from school in the first place, and in the context of Department of Alternative Education being new.

As for the EBEP partnerships, collaboration between the Ministry of Education and ethnic education providers has previously been impossible politically. NESP 2016-21 supports the concept of partnerships. However, the political and logistical complexity, and cost implications of merging several fully functional systems is significant, especially in a fragile context such as that of Myanmar. The equity dimension will incentivize and reward the effective brokering and implementation of these partnerships. The transformational effect will be realized through the process of consistently and successfully working to remove the current obstacles to collaboration and partnership between MOE and the EBEPs, resulting in more equitable education outcomes, and eventually in labor force participation, for children from ethnic groups. The indicator itself will count the number of students benefiting from education through the partnerships. This may not represent an increase in enrolment, but would represent the number of ethnic students who will be able to benefit from partnerships, through increased quality of education, and eventually having their qualifications recognized by the formal system. It may not be possible (and is even unlikely) that collaboration frameworks are agreed upon with all EBEPs during the program timeframe. However, entering partnerships with even a few of them would pave the way for improving education in these States, and for other EBEPs to continue dialoguing with the MOE.

The **efficiency** dimension encourages better human resource deployment and management as per the revised teacher transfer mechanism and the promotion system. Currently teacher allocation is very uneven across grades, with primary school teachers disproportionately inexperienced, and many teachers operating on temporary contracts and lacking qualifications. This strategy aims to revise teacher deployment policy and practice, to build a sustainable system which will meet the needs of all Myanmar's children in an efficient and equitable manner. This strategy/indicator also has a leverage effect across the other dimensions, as it would also contribute to learning outcomes and to equity, through better distribution of qualified and motivated teachers across grades/sub-sectors and across geographical zones. While it will take a full three years to develop the foundations, i.e. roadmap, norms, policies, process/guidelines for planning, recruitment, allocation, transfers and promotions/career path, the VP proposes that by Year 4, as many as 40 percent of the teaching staff would be transferred/promoted/deployed per new process, which appears quite ambitious. To ensure sustainability of system reform, relevant staff at all levels of MOE will be trained in the new HR policies, so that they can be implemented beyond the life of the program. Given the sheer scope of work and the target of the final year, this strategy/indicator can be considered a stretch and is clearly transformational for the sector.

The **learning outcomes** dimension incentivizes the improvement of teaching and learning, through the increased average scores of the new SQASF and Teacher Competency Standards

Framework (TCSF). Through the revised School Improvement Support Program and the school-based maintenance, repair and upgrade program, and using clear standards of SQASF, teachers and community members will improve and monitor school quality and inclusion. This strategy/indicator also contributes to the equity dimension, as it channels more resources and support to the most disadvantaged/remote schools with lower SQASF scores. Strengthening of teacher competency will be tracked and incentivized through the TCSF, reflecting various strategies such as the establishment of a National Centre for Teacher Professional Development, development of a CPD framework, and design and delivery of priority in-service training on early grade reading, peace and inclusive education. Previously, the proposed indicator focused on the overall average scores, but considering QAR 2 recommendations, it now incentivizes “average improvement”, meaning that disadvantaged schools and teachers also need to improve their status in order for the VP funds to be released (i.e. high-performing schools/teachers improving further is not enough). Using the scores, high performing teachers, as well as schools that have improved their performance will be rewarded publicly (through non-monetary awards) to promote faster changes. While the VP indicators themselves do not measure learning outcomes, the changes they incentivize are very likely to lead to improvements in learning outcomes (the program document highlights that they are actually penultimate outcomes). For example, SQASF takes a holistic approach to school quality encompassing not only the quality of teaching but also school management, infrastructure, community participation, and budgeting, recognizing the important role these all play in improving children’s learning. Monitoring and incentivizing the improvement of average TCSF scores further reinforces the impact on teaching and learning, helping to ensure that the transformational effect is felt by students.

For all three dimensions, policy-level outputs are facilitated by the Fixed Part, and the whole of the VP funding incentivizes the actual implementation of the policy developments. The theory of change explains well the link to the expected higher-level impact. The strategies and indicators have been assessed as sufficiently ambitious in the context of ongoing reforms nationally and within the sector.

The verification of results is clearly described; first, the MOE will submit reports, accompanied by various supporting evidence, outlined in the program document. Then, the GA will validate the achievements with the DPs considering the results of the verification by external agent(s) who will also verify through interviews with stakeholders. The DP group will provide their no objection, then the GA will officially communicate to the MOE the extent of the target achievement. As mentioned earlier, the costs of the results verification will be financed through the BETF, alongside the non-VP DLI verification.

The disbursement rules and mechanisms are clearly mentioned in the program document. As with the fixed part, the GPE Variable Part financing will be disbursed to the Government’s budget through eligible expenditures. In most cases, the disbursement is scalable, with a minimum of 60 percent of the target to be achieved. Once the indicators are verified, eligible expenditures (both recurrent and capital) incurred by the MOE to support the agreed NESP strategies (i.e. the ESPIG program components) will be reimbursed.

In summary, the Secretariat assesses that the ESPIG/IAQE Variable Part strategies are ambitious, aligned to NESP, and if implemented successfully could lead to lasting transformational change in the sector in the dimensions of equity, learning outcomes and efficiency.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS<sup>56</sup>

Since the time Myanmar started showing interest in joining the Partnership in 2016, the GPE Secretariat has worked with country-level partners to highlight the Partnership principles, its goals and processes. The Secretariat has consistently emphasized the importance of ensuring clarity in NESP regarding equity and inclusion, of demonstrating how the initiatives cater to the most disadvantaged, and of a careful process of inclusive consultation in program development (notably the ethnic groups and civil society). Similarly, the need for clarity with regards to the program coverage/inclusion of the Rohingya population was stressed. For these reasons the Secretariat, with GPC support, recommended the DPs to wait for NESP endorsement (even though the NESP was already officially launched) until its detailed implementation plan was developed, which led to the postponement of the application by over 6 months.

The Ministry, together with the DPs, has made very important strides during the two-year process in preparing this application. Although there is potential for a stronger civil society inclusion, the LEG is now functional with two national CSOs' participation for the high-level meetings and many organizations actively participating in the sub-sectoral working groups. The proposal has been significantly strengthened through the QAR process, with good involvement of various stakeholders.

The Secretariat recommends the GPC to consider that the three funding model requirements are met, with the understanding that the MOE/LEG would continue working on improving the planning/monitoring framework of the NESP, and the country would fulfill its commitment to continue increasing domestic financing to education. In this regard, the Secretariat recommends that the GPC request an annual report back from the Coordinating Agency or LEG on the national budget allocation and expenditure to the sector.

The Secretariat finds that the IAQE program represents a strategic use of GPE funds, with activities that contribute to addressing critical gap areas of education in Myanmar. It now has a strong equity focus, targeting the disadvantaged townships and promoting funds flow to the most vulnerable schools, and takes account of and supports different types of education provision in the country. Special attention to the conflict-affected areas of Rakhine State is noteworthy, as is the work to develop and materialize long-awaited collaboration frameworks between the central Ministry and the EBEPs. The development of the Peace and Inclusive Education in-service training is also promising and much needed given the country situation.

Overall, the proposed GPE program demonstrates well the willingness of the Ministry and its partners to make important steps forward to make the education system more equitable. However,

---

<sup>56</sup> These recommendations were adjusted by the GPC. The final recommendations are found in Board Document BOD/2018/10 DOC 02 Annex 1.

the success of the program is also dependent on the general political climate in the country. In many ways, Myanmar continues to lay the foundations of its education sector as the transition to democracy continues and fragility persists. While the GA has put in place a variety of robust mitigation measures to manage this risk, the GPC/Board may wish to recommend that the GA provides an annual update on the issue of access to townships, including the institutions to which access has been granted, and notifies the Secretariat whether the legal agreement between the MOE and the GA with the conditions of unrestricted access to monitor and supervise program implementation in all target townships including Northern Rakhine State is respected during the implementation. In addition, a recommendation may be considered so that the GA, together with the CA, notifies and provides at a minimum half-yearly update to the Secretariat on the progress regarding program implementation and the overall sector response in Northern Rakhine State when the Rohingya families' repatriation starts.

## Annex 1: Major Interventions of Development Partners

A table of major DP interventions in Rakhine State (excerpted from Annex 8 of the PAD).

| Subcomponent                                  | What   | Partner  |
|---|--|--|
| 1.1   | SQASF development: draft available, testing stage                            | DFAT, Denmark                                  |
|   | SIF 1.0: Since 2014, per capita basis, nationwide                            | World Bank, DFAT, Denmark, Finland             |
|   | TCSF: Developed beginning teacher, experienced teacher one under development | UNESCO, DFAT, Finland                          |
|   | EMIS database/education portal   | UNESCO   |
| 1.2   | Classroom-based assessment   | DFID   |
|   | EGRA/EGMA  | World Bank, DFAT, Denmark, Finland             |
|   | Reading intervention pilot   | World Bank, DFAT, Denmark, Finland             |
|   | Literacy boost pilot   | Save the children                              |
|   | Let's read pilot: Publication of children books                              | Room to read                                   |
|   | Library culture/reading habit  | MBAPF  |
|   | Teacher mentoring  | World Bank, DFAT, Denmark, Finland             |
| In-service Education and Training of Teachers | UNICEF   |  |
| 2.1   | Training of the NFE facilitator  | MLRC/UNICEF                                    |
|   | NYEC program development   | MyME, CDF                                      |
|   | Modular TVET classes   | ADB (EYE)                                      |
| 2.2   | MEC  | DFID, DFAT, Denmark                            |
|   | Conflict areas support for education   | Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) |
|   | Ethnic education   | EU   |
| 3.1   | PFM reforms of MOPF  | World Bank, DFAT, DFID, Denmark, EU            |
|   | PFM in education   | EU   |
|   | Townships-level planning   | UNICEF   |
|   | Result-based planning/department annual implementation plan                  | DFAT (MyEQIP)                                  |
|   | Education management and leadership training                                 | CDF  |
| 3.2   | Teacher comprehensive policy   | UNESCO   |
|   | EMIS database/education portal   | UNESCO   |