June 26, 2020

Hon. Matia Kasaija
Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
Kampala
Republic of Uganda

H.E. Ms. Janet Kataaha Museveni
First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports
Ministry of Education and Sports
Kampala
Republic of Uganda

Approval of COVID-19 Accelerated Funding to Support Uganda’s Education Sector

Hon. Kasaija, H.E. Ms. Museveni,

On behalf of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), I am pleased to inform you that with the delegated authority from the GPE Board of Directors, I have approved Uganda’s application for a COVID-19 accelerated funding request in the amount of US$ 15 million. I have also approved a 1.75% agency fee for the grant agent, World Bank, in the amount of US$ 262,500.

The grant has a start date of June 26, 2020 and an end date of December 31, 2021. The full decision language of this approval can be found in the annex to this letter.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mr. Fazle Rabbani, Country Lead for Uganda.

We look forward to working with you closely to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education of Uganda’s children.
Sincerely,

Alice P. Albright
Chief Executive Officer
Global Partnership for Education

cc:
Members of Local Education Group (LEG)
Ms. Jane Egau Okou, Commissioner for Teacher and Instructor Education Training, Ministry of Education & Sports
Ms. Doreen Mulenga, Representative, UNICEF
Mr. Kirill Vasiliev, Senior Education Specialist, World Bank
Ms. Safaa El Tayeb El-Kogali, World Bank
Mr. Douglas Sumerfield, Senior Operations Officer, World Bank
Ms. Natalia Cherevatova, Senior Operations Officer, World Bank
Mr. Nabendra Dahal, Chief of Education, UNICEF
Mr. Sven Baeten, Acting Country Support Team Manager, GPE Secretariat
Mr. Fazle Rabbani, Country Lead and Senior Education Specialist, GPE Secretariat
In line with the delegated authority granted by the Board of Directors, the GPE CEO approves the COVID-19 accelerated funding request for Uganda in the amount of US$ 15,000,000 plus an additional US$ 262,500 in agency fees to World Bank as Grant Agent. The grant has a start date of June 26, 2020, and an end date of December 31, 2021.

The GPE CEO recognized with appreciation the leadership and commitment of the Government of Uganda in preparing a national response plan and grant proposal that will mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the education sector as well as support the recovery of the education system from the crisis.

The GPE Board approved the COVID-19 funding mechanism on a first come, first served approach for the first US$ 125 million of the original US$ 225 million COVID-19 country funding window. Although the remaining US$ 100 million has been subsequently significantly increased to US$ 350 million by the Board, the demand for the COVID-19 funding mechanism still exceeds the available funds and the maximum allocation for Uganda is now US$ 15 million, lower than the initial allocation and requested amount of US$ 20 million.

Unless otherwise indicated by the decision language request for Report-Back, and keeping within the original budget of each component, the government and grant agent have full authority to prioritize within the approved activities of the original application, after consultation with the local education group.

Recognizing the GPE Board’s intent to proceed with the COVID-19 funding on a timeline which acknowledges the COVID-19 emergency, the Government and Grant Agent are asked to move forward with implementation immediately while addressing the following points and reporting back to the Secretariat by July 17, 2020:

**Requests for Report-Back**

1. The Grant Agent is requested to provide a revised program document (including results framework, budget, implementation plan and risk matrix), following consultation with the LEG and agreement by the Government. This revised program document needs to prioritize activities so as to keep within the new grant allocation and must address the requirements noted below. Upon receipt of the revised program document, the Secretariat will verify compliance with each of the requirements below, but there will be no additional grant approval issued, nor further reassessment of the program.

   (i) Prioritize activities that are targeted towards vulnerable students including remedial learning materials for girls and children with special needs. Please elaborate on the criteria to be used to identify children who will benefit from these targeted equity-improving activities.
(ii) Remove procurement of motorcycles and vehicles (Activity 2.2.3 a, b, e, and f) which is not aligned with the guidance for this emergency grant and its short 18 month implementation period.

(iii) Remove the establishment of a printery at NCDC (Activity 1.1.4), which is ineligible because printing equipment will be procured after February 2021 when the printing and distribution of materials allocated in the budget will have been completed, and also given the short 18 month implementation period of this emergency grant.

(iv) Adjust unit costs for workshops (especially per diems) to be equal to or lower than unit costs applied in the recently closed GPE ESPIG.

(v) Include the number and percentages of beneficiary population reached for all core indicators and include the required core indicator on learning assessments (Indicator 6, Table 2) from GPE’s M&E guidance for COVID-19 grants.

(vi) Include more information on establishing the ePlatform, especially on sustainability, if this activity is retained.

The Secretariat also raises the following points of observation, which are recommendations rather than requirements:

**Observations**

a) Given the urgency of the crisis, GPE expects grant implementation to commence on schedule and encourages the Grant Agent to submit a cash transfer request within two weeks of approval to facilitate the timely release of funds in support of program implementation.

b) Suggests an appropriate reduction in implementation support costs given the lower allocation.

c) Appreciates the focus on children from vulnerable and marginal population groups, including refugee children.

d) In line with LEG consultation, the Secretariat agrees on the importance of providing additional support for the re-opening of schools and calls on government and partners to make resources available to have a successful back to school campaign that includes an emphasis on supporting the return to school of girls and other vulnerable populations.

**Reporting**

Please note that during the implementation period, the GPE Secretariat will require the Grant Agent to fill out a quarterly survey which will request core data on program implementation. At the end of the implementation period, the Grant Agent is expected to submit a completion report to the GPE Secretariat. Detailed information on the reporting requirement is available in the Guidelines for COVID-19 Accelerated Funding on GPE website.
Reprogramming
The Government and the Grant Agent may reprogram this grant, in consultation with the Local Education Group and where active the Education cluster, for an amount not to exceed 25% of the allocation without prior Secretariat approval but must disclose such cases to the Secretariat. For an amount of 25% or more, as well as for any extension, advance approval from the Secretariat must be sought. The process for advanced approval will be that of non-minor revisions of ESPIG which can be found here: https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/policy-education-sector-program-implementation-grants