Hon. Mrs. Zainab Shamsuna Ahmed  
Federal Minister of Finance  
Federal Ministry of Finance  
Abuja  
Federal Republic of Nigeria

Hon. Malam Adamu Adamu  
Federal Minister of Education  
Federal Ministry of Education  
Abuja  
Federal Republic of Nigeria

June 19, 2020

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

Hon. Mrs. Ahmed, Hon. Adamu Adamu,

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 Nigeria’s application for a COVID-19 accelerated funding request in the amount of US$ 15 million. I have also approved a 7% agency fee for the grant agent, UNICEF, in the amount of US$ 1,050,000.

The grant has a start date of June 19, 2020 and an end date of November 30, 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 Dr. Subrata S. Dhar, Country Lead for Nigeria.

We look forward to working with you closely to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education of Nigeria’s children.
June 19, 2020

Hon. Mrs. Ahmed, Hon. Adamu Adamu

Sincerely,

Alice P. Albright
Chief Executive Officer
Global Partnership for Education

cc:
Members of National Education Group
Mr. Joseph Owoicho Achede, Acting GPE DCP Focal Point, Federal Ministry of Education
Mr. Sonny S. T. Echono, Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Education
Dr. Folake Olatunji-David, National Project Coordinator GPE-2, Deputy Director Planning, Federal Ministry of Education
Dr. Simone Field, Human Development Team Leader, DFID
Ms. Kate Jefferies, Education Adviser, DFID
Ms. Denise O'Toole, Education Office Director, USAID
Ms. Saadhna Panday, Education Specialist, Global Education Partnerships Lead, UNICEF
Ms. Poonam Buttan, Public Partnerships Officer, UNICEF
Ms. Reiko Okumura, Public Partnerships Specialist, UNICEF
Ms. Euphrates Efosi Wose, Chief of Education, UNICEF
Ms. Rosemary Nwangwu, Education Specialist, UNICEF
Mr. Sven Baeten, Acting Country Support Team Manager, GPE Secretariat
Dr. Subrata S. Dhar, Country Lead and Senior Education Specialist, GPE Secretariat
Mr. Morten Sigsgaard, Country Lead and Senior Education Specialist, GPE Secretariat
Annex – DECISION LANGUAGE

In line with the delegated authority granted by the Board of Directors, the GPE CEO approves the COVID-19 accelerated funding request for Nigeria in the amount of US$ 15,000,000 plus an additional US$ 1,050,000 in agency fees to UNICEF as Grant Agent. The grant has a start date of June 19, 2020, and an end date of November 30, 2021.

The GPE CEO recognized with appreciation the leadership and commitment of the Government of Nigeria 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 Nigeria 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 10, 2020:

Request for Report-Back

1. The Grant Agent is requested to provide a revised program document (including results framework, budget and implementation plan), 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. The program proposes that children with disabilities will benefit from remote learning programs, including take-home materials and ICT equipment. The GPE Secretariat requests that the Federal Ministry of Education develops clear criteria for targeting children with disabilities under this program so it is clear at the state and LGEA levels which types of children with disabilities should benefit from learning continuity materials financed by the program. The GA is requested to report back in six months (as part of the second quarterly survey under
GPE’s COVID-19 reporting requirements) on how many children with disabilities have been reached.

ii. The Secretariat requests that the program maintain a strong equity focus, as demonstrated in the targeting proposed for take-home materials, accelerated learning and children with special needs. The budget, despite having a lower allocation, should protect these priorities and activities.

iii. The grant agent is requested to provide a narrative and a breakdown of the costs associated with the US$ 2 million curriculum digitization activity (Activity 1.2.1) in the revised program document, if maintained.

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) An appropriate reduction is suggested in implementation support costs given the lower overall budget.

  c) The proposed program aims to work extensively on the development of distance learning materials and deploy various strategies to reach the most vulnerable of children. The GPE Secretariat appreciates these efforts and encourages the ministries of education at both federal and state levels along with the NEG to explore ways to leverage this work further to reach more out-of-school children in these target states and beyond.

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