

ENHANCING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE PROGRAMME ERITREA

PROGRESS REPORT TO THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION

February 2017 - January 2018



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Acronyms/List of Abbreviations

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

Summary of Programme

Country	Eritrea
Name of Programme	'Enhancing Equitable Access to Quality Basic Education for Social Justice'
Name of DCP	Ministry of Education, Eritrea
GA's Programme ID (if any)	
Name of Grant Agent	UNICEF, Eritrea Country Office
Programme amount (original commitment)	USD 25,300,000
Revised Amount (where applicable)	
Disbursed Amount	USD 15,480,082.91
Reporting period (from: day, month, year, to: day, month, year)	February 2017 to January 2018
Programme duration (approval, effectiveness and closure date)	28 March, 2014 – 31 December 2016
Revised programme duration (in case of revision/extension)	28 March, 2014-31 December, 2018
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1 Executive Summary

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

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

The programme was initially planned from 2014-2016 for three years, however due to various challenges the programme was extended for one year (2017), and exceptionally for an additional year (2018).

During the reporting period, the programme supported the expansion of education opportunities for children from nomadic and semi-nomadic as well as remote and disadvantaged communities. In 2017 a total of 18,464 children (7,883 girls) were enrolled in primary education via community provided temporary learning spaces using locally available materials. To improve the quality of education, over a million (1,074,041) textbooks were printed and delivered to schools to sustain the 1:1 textbook student ratio. Education support materials were also distributed to middle schools to improve the quality of education. In addition, procurement of furniture for newly constructed and underutilized classrooms progressed considerably. Regarding construction, offshore procurement of building materials and locally available materials was completed, and foundation works and erecting walls commenced in most of the programme sites. Additionally, three different studies were also completed during the reporting year.

Despite the achievements of the programme, the late start of classroom construction and procurement of furniture to equip the newly constructed learning spaces slowed down efforts to create more learning space for disadvantaged children. To this effect, a no-cost extension of the GPE grant was again requested and secured to ensure that all school construction and procurement related activities are completed in 2018.

In 2017, the Education Working Group (EWG) and Tripartite Forums enabled UNICEF to regularly raise bottlenecks pertaining to the delays in programme implementation. UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) Regional Director and UNICEF Eritrea Management continued to advocate for accelerating implementation, particularly on construction and procurement related activities. The GPE Country Lead visits to Eritrea were also an opportunity to encourage Government to expedite progress through meetings with its senior officials, discussions on factors contributing to the delays, and advanced planning for the second grant application.

2. Programme Implementation Progress

2-1. Programme Overview

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

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

2.2. Overall progress

Overall progress in Programme implementation	
Rating from Previous Reporting Period¹	Rating for Current Reporting Period
<input type="checkbox"/> Highly Satisfactory (HS) <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory (S) <input type="checkbox"/> Moderately Satisfactory (MS) <input type="checkbox"/> Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU) <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory (U) <input type="checkbox"/> Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	<input type="checkbox"/> Highly Satisfactory (HS) <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory (S) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moderately Satisfactory (MS) <input type="checkbox"/> Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU) <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory (U) <input type="checkbox"/> Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)

¹ This does not apply for a new programme

2.3. Progress per Component/Sub-component

2.3.1 Increase Equitable Access to Basic Education

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

i. Provision of Learning Space

Despite the delays in construction related work to create additional learning spaces for children, a total of 18,464 OOSC (7,883 girls) were enrolled as a direct result of the GPE supported programme. Of these, 6,089 students (2,655 girls) were enrolled in the existing underutilized classrooms and the remaining 12,375 (5,228 girls) were enrolled in the temporary learning spaces provided by communities in some of the GPE targeted sites.

Although construction related works were suspended nationally, thanks to the advocacy conducted by the MoE and UNICEF at all levels, special permission was granted from the Head of the State to commence classroom construction for the GPE programme in March 2017.

Following permission from the GoSE, UNICEF Eritrea disbursed USD 4,000,000 to MoE to initiate construction related work. Offshore procurement of all construction materials through the Red Sea Corporation was completed, and the materials were delivered to the central warehouse in Asmara in January 2018, ready for distribution to construction sites. Simultaneously, MoE disbursed operational and mobilization budget to all Zobas, and the Red Sea Corporation transported 10,800 quintals of cement and 5,268 reinforced steel bars to all Zobas from its in-country stock. The Zoba infrastructure departments mobilized communities to execute foundation works and erect walls in most of the sites. Considering the current momentum of programme implementation, all construction work is expected to be completed in the first two quarters of 2018; except for the Kerekebet Boarding School, which is expected to be finalized in the third quarter of the year.

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

As indicated in the previous progress report, the process of procuring furniture for the newly constructed classrooms was delayed considerably because of the new government guidelines. The guidelines on procurement mandated the Red Sea Corporation to handle all procurement related works (centralized) and due to competing national priorities, the GPE supported procurement activities took more time than expected.

During the reporting period, the bidding process for the procurement of 408 chalk boards, teacher desks and cupboards, 6,300 three-seater benches for the newly constructed and existing underutilized classrooms, furniture for the new SNE classrooms and for the Kerekebet Boarding School has been finalized and 50 per cent advance payment was provided to the winning suppliers. The progress of fabrication of the furniture by the suppliers has exceeded 90 per cent. Therefore, the remaining 50 per cent payment to the suppliers will be disbursed, and all the furniture produced will be distributed to programme sites during the first quarter of 2018. The procurement of Early Childhood Development (ECD) materials and furniture, SNE facilities and materials for community reading rooms, is under bidding.

2.3.2 Improve Quality of Education

This component of the GPE supported programme aims to improve the quality of teaching and learning in ECCE, elementary, middle and adult literacy programmes by equipping teachers with the necessary pedagogic skills, provision of learning materials and school support systems. This will contribute to the on-going national efforts of improving the learning outcomes of children which involves teacher training, implementation of learners' assessment and progression guideline at scale, strengthening the delivery of mother tongue education, and Mathematics and English.

i. Curriculum Materials

The MoE undertook reprinting of curriculum materials and distributed textbooks and teachers' guides for core subjects with the aim of maintaining the textbook-pupil ratio at 1:1. Most printing and reprinting works were completed and were distributed in 2017. However, during the reporting period, the programme supported re-printing of 1,074,041 textbooks and 91,882 teacher's guides for the four core subjects of Mathematics, Science, English and mother tongue for grades 3, 4 and 5 to support efforts in improving pupils' learning achievements and to sustain the textbook-pupil ratio. The distribution of these curriculum materials benefited 214,000 primary schoolchildren. During the reporting period, the programme also supported the familiarization of 250 teachers on the newly distributed textbooks by conducting a Training of Trainers (ToT) who further provided similar school level training to 2,000 additional teachers.

ii. School support system

The national curriculum is supported through an integration of academic and practical subjects. To enhance the engagement of pupils in the actual teaching and learning process, the programme helped to reinforce the school support systems. With support from GPE, the MoE procured and distributed 8,580 library books for 220 middle schools (grade 6-8), 188 sets of science kits to lower secondary schools benefitting 188,401 lower secondary school-age students. Moreover, 2,700 health kits were procured and distributed to strengthen the delivery of health services in primary and lower secondary schools nationwide.

Despite these collaborative efforts to enhance students' learning, the quality of education services continues to suffer from unqualified teachers, poor school infrastructure, and infrequent and weak supervision.

2.3.3 Institutional capacity

To enhance institutional knowledge and support evidence-based decisions, the MoE conducted three educational researches on School Development Plan, School-based Planning and Supervision, and on Text Books and Teachers Guide. The recommendation from these studies were incorporated into the ESP 2018-2022 to improve the quality of education.

With funding from GPE, 150 educational personnel were trained for four months in education planning, financing, management and monitoring. The training contributed towards improving the management and monitoring capacity of the MoE.

Monitoring and Supportive Supervision

UNICEF and MoE have conducted regular joint field monitoring and supportive supervision to all Zobas. These field visits provide technical oversight for effective implementation of the programme in general and to assess progress in construction, delivery of construction materials to sites and their proper storage, and delivery of the procured educational materials to schools. All field reports have been recorded and the recommendations were addressed as required. The PMU of MoE coordinated the monitoring processes to be implemented by the respective departments of the ministry which are responsible for each component of the programme.

2.4. Factors Delaying Implementation and Mitigation Measures (or Risks)

Delay in construction: Securing special permission for construction related work from the government considerably delayed programme implementation. As construction costs amount to 46 per cent of the total programme cost, its delay impacted timely implementation of the entire programme. Despite this, current construction of classrooms has commenced with a paid community participation modality. The risks related to poor quality and delay in implementation of the construction work will be addressed by enhancing continuous joint field monitoring visits with MoE engineers, and creating different platforms such as tripartite and EWG meetings, continuous advocacy and engagement with the MoE management section for information sharing and coordination with stakeholders. As per UNICEF's internal Local Procurement Authorization from the Supply Division, UNICEF is also hiring an additional engineer to ensure the quality of the construction work.

Lengthy procurement process: The lengthy process of procurement by Red Sea Corporation has also impeded the procurement related activities on time. To mitigate this, UNICEF and MoE have advocated continuously with the concerned line ministries and the central procurement agency for securing permissions and expediting procurement of required items.

2.5. Major Changes to the Programme (if any)

The major change in the programme in the reporting period was the additional non-cost extension due to the delay in construction and procurement related works.

3 Reporting on the variable part (if applicable)

NA

4 Programme Disbursement

Find attached financial report

5 Key Partnerships and Interagency Collaboration (if any)

UNICEF as the grant agent is overseeing the implementation of GPE supported programme. This role enabled UNICEF to strengthen its partnership with the GoSE. The national EWG represented by MoE, UNICEF, EU, Women's and Youth Associations and Teachers' Associations, also created a forum for regular meetings to assess progress, recommend actions, and endorse education programme activities funded by GPE. The strong partnerships at the community level contributed in mobilizing communities to provide learning space and promote access to quality education.

Lessons Learned (if any)

The programme document indicates the involvement of communities in the provision of learning infrastructure, a feature that Eritrea has developed over time. In order to deliver programme infrastructure to remote rural areas within a short period, the MoE and the zoba infrastructure units have utilized community engagement models for construction work, as well as identifying and supplying locally available construction materials such as gravel, sand and stones. This helped mitigate the scarcity of skilled labour in the market, and has created job opportunities for both men and women in rural communities. It also contributed to sustainable skills development among members of the beneficiary communities, fortified community ownership and strengthened value for money. Furthermore, the widespread advocacy and continued mobilization has empowered targeted communities to demand education and set up learning spaces constructed from locally available materials.

6 Knowledge Product

To enhance institutional knowledge and support evidence-based decisions, the MoE conducted three educational researches utilizing its own human resources. The completed studies are the *Assessment of School Development Plan*, *Assessment of Textbooks and Teachers' Guides of Basic Education*, and *Assessment of Planning and Implementation of School Based Supervision*. Dissemination of these studies and their recommendations will support the MoE to initiate policy dialogue and reform. Additionally, the identified issues and recommendations made from these studies are incorporated in ESA 2017 as well as in ESP 2018-2022 to improve the quality of education.

7 Future Work Plan

- *Finalize all construction work and other activities in 2018;*
- *Finalize the remaining procurement related activities;*
- *Conduct the remaining three target researches;*
- *Conduct joint monitoring and supervision of the GPE supported activities; and*
- *Finalize the application process for the second GPE grant.*

8 Expression of Thanks

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

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

Annex I: Results Framework

Overall Objective 1: Increased equitable access to basic education	Output Indicator	Baseline 2012/13 ²	Target values					Progress by end of September 2017
			2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	
<i>Output 1.1 Construction of school infrastructure undertaken to accommodate more students in 189 elementary classrooms, 40 Early Childhood Education (ECE) centres, 90 CEE classrooms, boarding school with 8 classrooms, expansion of Keren school for the deaf with 6 classrooms and 8 SNE classrooms.</i>	Number of classrooms constructed	0	197	315		315	315	0 ³
<i>Output 1.2 Teaching and learning materials and resources provided to students and teachers in newly established classrooms in elementary, middle school, ECE centres, CEE centres and SNE classrooms⁴</i>	Number of teaching and learning materials distributed	0	12025			11,203	7,681	3522
<i>Output 1.3 Teachers selected from minority groups trained for elementary school, middle school, ECE, SNE and CEE are deployed in the targeted areas</i>	Number of teachers trained	0	800	750	950	-	-	1550

² The baseline data is specifically referring to the GPE programme sites.

³ 10,800 quintals of cement and 5268 bars of reinforcement was delivered to Northern Red Sea, Gash Barka and Anseba regions and construction work has commenced since September 2017. Construction materials procured offshore delivered to MOE central warehouse awaiting distribution. Completion of construction work is expected in 3rd quarter of 2018.

⁴ 50% advance payment to suppliers effected and fabrication of most of the furniture is nearly completed.

Overall objective 2: Improve quality of education (teaching and learning)								
Output 2.1 Measures undertaken to provide quality teaching and learning in elementary and middle school, development and provision of teachers' guides and student text books	Number of teachers guides and text books provided	0	1,117,154	156,600	-	662,168	-	3,428,668 ⁵
Output 2.2 Interventions carried out to improve quality teaching in ECE centres (Translation and dissemination of ELDS, review and dissemination of ECE teachers guides and ECD materials and books)	Number of interventions made to improve quality teaching	0	2	1	-	1		3
Output 2.3 Learning of the students enriched and fulfilled with promotion of the mother tongue education⁶	Number of MT training cassettes disseminated and training conducted for MT teachers	0	11,125	125	-	-	9,500	1,128
Output 2.4 Professional development activities for teachers implemented to foster effectiveness of teaching in schools in the four zoba	Number of teachers who received professional development /trainings	0	2544	2190	1530		-	3,006

⁵ The over achievement is attributed to savings from unit cost of printing works.

Output 2.5 <i>School support system in targeted basic schools and in CEE centres strengthened and consolidated, as appropriate, with multimedia materials and equipment, science kits, libraries, and E-learning in education courses</i>	<i>Number of multimedia materials and teaching equipment supplied and refresher courses offered</i>	0	412		-	406	-	406
Overall Objective 3: Institutional Capacity Building and Systems Strengthening								
Output 3.1 <i>Capacity building events organized for different level of education staff in order to strengthen the areas of Education Management Information System (EMIS), monitoring, planning & management, financial management</i>	<i>Number of education personnel trained and received professional support</i>	0	566	576	576		-	1287
Output 3.2 <i>Competency of National and zoba staff strengthened to understand and conduct educational research methodology and the institutional knowledge base updated through findings of targeted research and six studies</i>	<i>Number of researches conducted</i>	0	2	2	2		3	3

Annex II: Donor Feedback Form

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

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

Reference no: SC140006

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

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

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

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

5	4	3	2	1	0

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

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3. What suggestions do you have for future reports?

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