Proposal
Global Partnership for Education (GPE)
COVID-19 Accelerated Funding for Cambodia

July 2020
## Cover Note for GPE COVID-19 Accelerated Funding

### OVERVIEW

| Country: | Cambodia |
| Grant agent(s): | UNICEF |
| Coordinating agency(ies): | UNICEF |
| Program name: | Cambodia GPE Covid-19 Education Sector Response and Recovery Programme |

| COVID-19 Accelerated Funding amount requested: | USD 7,000,000 |
| Agency fees amount (additional to COVID-19 Accelerated Funding amount requested): | USD 457,944 |
| Agency fees as % of total COVID-19 Accelerated Funding requested: | 7% |
| COVID-19 Accelerated Funding application date: | 17/07/2020 |
| Estimated COVID-19 Accelerated Funding program start date: | 1/10/2020 |
| Estimated COVID-19 Accelerated Funding program closing date (must be last day of the month, e.g. June 30, 2021): | 31/3/2022 |
| Expected submission date of completion report (At the latest 6 months after program closing date): | 30/06/2022 |

### Grant modality - (please enter ‘X’)

- [ ] Sector Pooled
- [X] Project Pooled/ Co-financed
- [ ] Project/ Stand-alone
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<td>Accelerated Learning Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>COVID-19</td>
<td>Coronavirus disease 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSL</td>
<td>Cambodian Sign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCT</td>
<td>Direct Cash Transfer</td>
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<td>DGPP</td>
<td>Directorate General of Policy and Planning</td>
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<td>DoF</td>
<td>Department of Finance</td>
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<td>ECE</td>
<td>Early Childhood Education</td>
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<td>ECED</td>
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<td>EMIS</td>
<td>Education Management Information System</td>
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<td>EQAD</td>
<td>Education Quality Assurance Department</td>
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<td>Education Strategic Plan</td>
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<td>Education Sector Working Group</td>
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<td>EU</td>
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<td>FACE</td>
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<td>HACT</td>
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<td>HRMIS</td>
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<td>IEC</td>
<td>Information Education Communication</td>
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<td>JTWG</td>
<td>Joint Technical Working Group</td>
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<td>LEG</td>
<td>Local Education Group</td>
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<td>MLE</td>
<td>Multilingual Education</td>
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<td>Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport</td>
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<td>Ministry of Health</td>
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<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>NGS</td>
<td>New Generation School</td>
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<td>SIG</td>
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<td>School Support Committee</td>
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<td>School Year</td>
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<td>Teacher Education College</td>
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<td>Teacher Policy Action Plan</td>
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<td>TTIs</td>
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<td>VSO</td>
<td>Voluntary Services Overseas</td>
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<td>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene</td>
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1. Global Context

The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) as a public health emergency of international concern under the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005), and on 11 March 2020 WHO declared it a pandemic. There are currently no licensed treatments or vaccines for the COVID-19 virus. Experimental treatments and vaccines are under development.

In addition to causing morbidity and mortality across the world,¹ necessary actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, such as adopting social distancing measures, have resulted in widespread and unprecedented global economic upheaval. According to current economic forecasts, the impact of COVID-19 is leading to the deepest global recession in eight decades, with a 5.2 per cent contraction expected in global Gross Domestic Product in 2020 despite unprecedented economic interventions by governments around world. Developing countries are particularly vulnerable to the economic shock caused by COVID-19, resulting in an expected shrinkage of per capita income in 2020 that will likely cause millions of people to fall back into poverty.²

Linked to the health and economic impacts of the virus, children’s education is being profoundly curtailed. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the learning of an estimated 1.1 billion children across 144 countries, representing approximately 68 per cent of total enrolled leaners.³ The impact on education is mainly the result of national school closures in many countries around the world, viewed as a necessary measure to control the spread of the virus.

As the nature of COVID-19 outbreaks evolve, countries are taking steps to assess when and under what circumstances education institutions, including schools, should re-open. Even though there were widespread school closures across the East Asia Pacific Region at the peak of the COVID-19 outbreak, circumstances are changing, with 15 out of 28 countries in the region currently in the process of partially or fully re-opening their schools. However, the threat of a ‘second wave’ COVID-19 outbreak is a real prospect for all countries, and may result in further school closures in future, depending on circumstances. The threat of school closures will remain for the foreseeable future, until a vaccine for the virus is found.

The impact of COVID-19 on education globally is so profound that gains made in recent years in expanding access to education and improving the quality of education risk being permanently compromised. This situation means that children who were already considered vulnerable before the COVID-19 pandemic are now even vulnerable, and children and their families who were not previously classified as poor are now facing impoverishment. According to recent global estimates, the economic fallout from COVID-19 could push up to 86 million more children into household poverty by the end of 2020, an increase of some 15 per cent. This would result in an estimated 672 million children living below the national poverty line in low- and middle-income countries by the end of 2020.⁴

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¹ Globally as of 13 June 2020, there have been 7,553,182 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 423,349 deaths, reported to WHO. Web reference: https://covid19.who.int/
2. Country context

Cambodia took the decision to close all educational institutions, including all public and private schools, on 16 March 2020. This decision, as in many other countries, was taken as a preventative measure against the spread of COVID-19. These closures are affecting Cambodia’s estimated 13,483 schools and around 3.2 million students, including some 2.86 million students enrolled in pre-school and basic education. Many children currently need to rely on distance learning opportunities established by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) and other institutions to progress their studies. Currently, it is unclear how long the shutdown will remain in place due to the changing nature of the COVID-19 outbreak in Cambodia.

The economic impact of COVID-19 is expected to plunge many more children and their families into poverty, which will make going to school and staying in school even more difficult for children. Cambodia’s economy is likely to register its slowest growth in 26 years, since 1994, with economic contraction in 2020 forecast at between 1 per cent and 2.9 per cent. This downturn is expected to increase unemployment and poverty rates.

An early indication of the immense social impact of COVID-19 in Cambodia was revealed through a recent rapid assessment of poor households, with 74.6 per cent of rural and 87.3 per cent of urban households confirming their income had reduced by some 50 per cent due to COVID-19. As a result, households are applying coping strategies in response to the significant impact on their livelihoods including: taking private loans (13.8 per cent); selling livestock (8.7 per cent); taking a bank loan (6.9 per cent); and selling possessions (1.3 per cent).

The poorest and most marginalized children and youth in the country are facing significant challenges. Many children are unable to keep learning due to limited access to: (i) learning resources to support them in distance learning; (ii) information on good hygiene practices, supplies and facilities; and (iii) social protection mechanisms, such as scholarships. These challenges are exacerbating existing challenges of: high student dropout rates, which have seen a sharp increase throughout basic education (Grades 1-9 in Cambodia) during the school year (SY) 2019/20; poor learning outcomes; rural/urban disparity; accessibility; and limited school infrastructure (refer to Annex 1 for an overview of Cambodia’s education sector).

There is an urgent need, therefore, to invest in Cambodia’s education system to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic, including to ensure children can continue to learn and are protected in safe and clean learning environments.

2.1 Current emergency response actions

MoEYS, with support from its partners, took early steps in responding to the COVID-19 outbreak in Cambodia to address the learning needs of children. The core of the MoEYS COVID-19 response

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5 MoEYS EMIS SY2019/20. Note: that basic education in Cambodia includes pre-school, primary and lower secondary education.

6 Cambodia currently has 126 COVID-19 cases and no reported deaths according to the WHO COVID-19 Dashboard, as of 13 June 2020. Web reference: https://covid19.who.int/


8 MoSVY and UNICEF joint rapid assessment to assess potential barriers to access and impacts of COVID-19 on some key wellbeing indicators. The assessment included 1,640 households and 602 communes and health centres, creating a national sample. It was implemented at the end of March 2020.
was to develop continuous or distance learning services for children engaged in Early Childhood Education (ECE) through to secondary education.

Initially, in March 2020, MoEYS began to prepare online e-lessons for Grade 9 and Grade 12 students, as students in these grades have annual national examinations. Expansion of online learning for all children involved in pre-school, primary and secondary education was and continues to be rolled out.

MoEYS has made efforts to deliver continuous distance learning to students across a variety of platforms. Initial continuous learning programmes from pre-school to upper secondary school could be accessed only online, through platforms such as Facebook and YouTube. MoEYS, with support from a variety of development partners, is now broadcasting continuous or distance learning programmes through a new dedicated education television channel (TVK2) and through radio. The TVK2 channel broadcasts learning content relevant to pre-schoolers through to upper secondary students, while the current radio programmes are focused on reaching children engaged in pre-school education, including Multilingual Education (MLE). Efforts have also been made to integrate Cambodian sign language (CSL) into primary and secondary education, both online and in e-lessons broadcast on television, to enhance inclusivity.

### 2.1.1 Access to continuous learning programmes

With the roll out of continuous or distance learning services, there are noted gaps in access, as many children from poor households and those living in remote locations are unable to either have regular internet access or do not have internet access at all. Some children and their families also face challenges accessing the education television channel and radio programmes, as many poor households do not own a television or radio.

The latest available figures based on a large-scale nationwide survey indicate 48.4 per cent of rural households in Cambodia own a television and 38.4 per cent own a radio. A 2016 survey (most recent large-scale figures available) showed that 48 per cent of Cambodians owned a smartphone (internet capability) and that "in 2016 Internet/Facebook became the most important channel through which Cambodians access information (30 per cent) — surpassing television (29 per cent) and almost doubling radio (15 per cent)."

A rapid assessment conducted by MoEYS’ Primary Education Department (PED) on access to distance learning and e-learning showed that 24 per cent of the 513,303 primary school students (Grades 1-6) in 2,858 primary schools surveyed had access to e-learning on television and 22 per cent have access via Facebook. Figures for upper primary grades were higher than for early grades. However, more in-depth checks showed worrying trends: only 17 per cent of students viewed more than 50 per cent of the length of every video; only 24 per cent of students received homework and feedback from teachers, although around 73 per cent of teachers reported distributing homework; and only 7 per cent of students were engaged with teachers on question-answer sessions. Distance e-learning has some potential reach, but greater engagement will be

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8 TVK2 is currently broadcast across 54 cable television services in all 25 of Cambodia’s provinces and municipalities, according to a report issued by MoEYS on 19 April 2020.


required even from those children fortunate enough to be able to access learning materials online.\(^{12}\)

Following these initial results, the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG) and MoEYS are planning to undertake a nationwide rapid assessment in the coming months to: (i) better understand the extent of multidimensional impact of COVID-19 on the education system; (ii) measure the level of access, quality and effectiveness of distance learning across different platforms for students; and (iii) identify current teaching and learning outreach efforts that are underway by schools and at Teacher Training Institutions (TTIs) to better understand the capacity development needs of educators to adequately support learners during school closures and beyond. Findings from this large-scale rapid assessment are expected to be available in August 2020 and will be drawn upon to inform the proposed interventions under Cambodia’s GPE-funded COVID-19 response and recovery programme.

Other small-scale rapid assessments have been conducted by education sector partners to better understand the gaps faced by children in accessing continuous or distance learning services. MoEYS and UNICEF Cambodia, for example, jointly conducted a small-scale online survey.\(^{13}\)

The most common challenges faced by respondents in accessing continuous learning platforms and programmes was poor internet connectivity (54 per cent); financial problems making it difficult to purchase internet/phone credit (42 per cent); inconvenience related to needing to share devices (23 per cent); poor television or radio coverage where they live (10 per cent); unawareness of television or radio schedule for continuous learning programmes (22 per cent) and no time to learn due to daily chores or taking care of their siblings (18 per cent). Note that accessing video lessons on a regular basis will require smartphone internet data at a cost of around $1/week, a significant barrier to many families.\(^{14}\)

The MoEYS-UNICEF small-scale rapid assessment found that a common concern of students and caregivers who had the means to access the continuous learning materials was learning outcomes, examinations and the future of their children’s education. In terms of learning outcomes, the majority (62 per cent) think they are learning less than when the schools were open; 3 per cent think that they do not learn at all; 26 per cent think that they are learning the same amount as before school closures; and 9 per cent think that they are learning more than when schools were open. Also identified by the survey was a request for innovative distance learning methods to better engage and motivate children, especially younger children, and better structures for monitoring the level of effort and learning levels of students. Teachers seem to have made progress, as 87 per cent of survey respondents reported they had been assigned exercises or homework, and of those, 87 per cent confirmed there was a mechanism put in place by the school and/or their teacher to monitor the completion of their homework.


\(^{13}\) The survey was conducted online between May 21st and June 21st. The findings are preliminary and currently unpublished. The study had 575 respondents (37% rural, 58% urban, 5% not specifying).

Similarly, a Save the Children small-scale assessment found that 97 per cent of children across primary and secondary school grades expressed concern about their learning during the pandemic.\(^{15}\)

### 2.1.2 Impact of continuous learning programmes

Continuous learning programmes are being used by children across Cambodia, some with support from their parents. As of 20 June 2020, there were around 600 video assets posted on various platforms,\(^{16}\) including the MoEYS official e-learning platform and social media accounts. These videos combined had achieved a total of 11.1 million views (including pre-school, primary grades 4, 5 and 6, and all grades in lower and upper secondary education). At the same time, secondary education videos had reached 8.8 million views; primary education videos had reached 2.2 million views; and pre-school video assets had reached 100,000 views. The average views per video asset on social media accounts (Facebook and YouTube) for primary and secondary education were estimated at 70,000 students.\(^{17}\) Around 61 primary and secondary education video assets have been integrated with Cambodian sign language and have reached over one million views in total, addressing the needs of some of the most vulnerable children.

The extent to which these programmes alone are impacting on student learning outcomes, however, is currently difficult to assess for several reasons: (i) as these programmes were developed in response to the COVID-19 emergency there has been insufficient time to fully assess their impact; (ii) these programmes require students to adopt a different learning methodology (e-learning in place of face-to-face classroom-based learning) representing a significant shift for children, including in their learning experience; (iii) the production of continuous learning programmes is new to MoEYS and teachers, and there is an element of ‘learning by doing’ in preparing these assets, which means there are opportunities for continual quality improvement of distance learning assets; and (iv) parental engagement in their child’s use of these programmes is understood to be a significant determinant of a child’s learning experience. The PED survey data presented in the previous section shows continued efforts are required to increase student interaction with all aspects of continuous learning to achieve a meaningful impact.

### 2.1.3 Role of teachers in continuous learning

In addition to parents’ efforts to support their children in distance learning, teachers also play a critical role in deepening the impact of continuous or distance learning programmes in Cambodia’s COVID-19 response and recovery context.

In recognition of the crucial role that teachers play in supporting students to learn by distance, at an early stage of its COVID-19 response MoEYS established a set of guidelines outlining teachers’ roles and responsibilities in this area. Through MoEYS initial directive on distance learning,\(^{18}\) a full list of platforms (both online and TV) broadcasting continuous learning programmes was provided.

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\(^{15}\) Including 67 per cent of primary education students, 96 per cent of lower secondary education students and 100 per cent of upper secondary education students. Save the Children. 2020. *Evidence to Action Report.*

\(^{16}\) The assets referred to here are those that are being produced by MoEYS with UNICEF funding, and therefore do not include assets being produced with support from other development partners.

\(^{17}\) Average views per video asset on social media accounts (Facebook and Youtube) is calculated by the total number of assets for each grade by the total number of views.

\(^{18}\) MoEYS. Directive No. 23 on ‘Distance Learning’ and ‘E-learning’ *Programme for Students from Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education.* Issued on 24 April 2020.
Directions were given to school directors and teachers to: (i) establish online learning groups with students and parents or caregivers; (ii) provide information on how to access continuous learning programmes; (iii) ensure their students can access additional paper-based learning materials/textbooks and (iv) conduct home visits to facilitate and monitor distance learning activities. MoEYS later released the more detailed continuous learning Guideline of Distance Learning No. 29, which further articulates the roles of teachers and other education professionals in support of distance learning. Importantly, teachers are expected to provide weekly paper-based learning resources to their students, and to meet their students on a weekly basis to provide their marked worksheets/workbooks and issue new ones for the week ahead.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that many teachers are responding constructively to requests from MoEYS for them to support continuous learning. Teachers are equipped with basic COVID-19 prevention measures and are conducting the tasks requested by MoEYS in accordance with public health advice. Some teachers have set up online learning groups of between five and ten students using the Telegram and Messenger social media platforms. Some are also conducting the MoEYS recommendation of weekly outreach visits to their students to support small group learning activities in which they provide feedback on their students' homework assignments. Teachers in a number of schools are using assessment tools to measure the learning of their students. Recent school visits also indicate that many schools are proactively and regularly providing paper-based worksheets on a weekly basis for their students in accordance with MoEYS instructions. Many teachers are conducting interactive classes online; the use of smartphones to stream the lessons seems to be the most common equipment used.

Despite distance learning innovation being initiated by many teachers in response to the extraordinary situation created by COVID-19, challenges remain in terms of reliability of internet access and access to financial support for teachers outreach work. The nationwide rapid assessment mentioned above should provide further insight into the extent of teachers' support to their students for distance learning, including teachers' competencies in delivering their professional duties using ICT and blended learning and the availability of professional support from school management and any existing mentoring programmes.

19 Through Telegram (preferred medium of MoEYS), Messenger or WhatsApp.
20 MoEYS. Continuous learning guidelines for 'Distance Learning' and 'E-learning'. No. 29. Issued on 8 June 2020.
3. Selection of Grant Agent

The selection of the grant agent for the GPE COVID-19 Accelerated Funding Window was conducted in a transparent and consultative manner through the Local Education Group (LEG) using a competitive selection process. The GPE Accelerated Funding Window Guidelines and related advice from the GPE Secretariat were shared and discussed with the ESWG and MoEYS through online meetings held on 9 April and 10 April 2020, respectively. After these discussions, UNICEF, as the GPE Coordinating Agency, assisted MoEYS with the preparation of Expression of Interest application documents in accordance with GPE quality standards. These draft documents were shared with the GPE Secretariat for review, and with the ESWG before being finalized by MoEYS. The expressions of interest were submitted on 24 April 2020. MoEYS convened a grant agent selection committee, chaired by the minister, involving both MoEYS and development partner/ESWG representatives. UNICEF was informed of its selection as grant agent for the GPE COVID-19 Funding Window by the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports on 26 May 2020.


4.1 MoEYS national COVID-19 response plan

Through MoEYS’ national response plan - *Cambodia Education Response Plan to the COVID-19 Pandemic*, a set of focused and integrated measures is proposed to ensure girls and boys are able to continue to learn in safe, protective and inclusive environments.21

Although the priorities identified in the national response plan focus on addressing the particular challenges created by the impact of COVID-19 in the sector, these priorities are consistent, and mutually reinforcing of Cambodia’s Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2019-2023. The ESP focuses on two major policy priorities: Policy priority 1: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; and Policy priority 2: Ensure effective leadership and management of education staff at all levels.

It is important to further contextualize these policies in the context of Cambodia’s overall strategy for national development, the Rectangular Strategy IV, 22 which prioritizes human resource development as its most important development strategy and includes: 1) Improving the quality of education, science and technology; 2) Vocational training; 3) Improving public healthcare and nutrition; and 4) Strengthening gender equality and social protection.

4.2 Cambodia’s GPE-funded COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme

The activities delivered under this programme will be focused on enabling learning to continue and on assisting Cambodia’s education system to recover from the impacts of COVID-19. The GPE has recently confirmed the availability of a country allocation to Cambodia of USD7million.

The proposed implementation timeline for the GPE-funded COVID-19 response and recovery programme is up to 18 months. However, the expectation is that most activities will be completed within the first 12 months of programme implementation This is due to the need to move quickly

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to extend necessary assistance for timely recovery efforts and recognizing the intention of MoEYS is to re-open schools in stages from August 2020. For the purposes of this programme the assumption is that schools will re-open for the 2020-2021 academic year in November.\textsuperscript{23} Resources under this programme will be used for activities to mitigate and recover from the impact of the COVID-19 crisis as identified in MoEYS’ national response.\textsuperscript{24}

This programme is expected to have national coverage, with special considerations included to benefit the most marginalized and vulnerable children, including with the aim of minimizing additional student drop-out caused by the pandemic.

Vulnerable children will be identified according to the criteria displayed in the table below, which will be explained to schools and local authorities:

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<tr>
<th>Indications of Vulnerability (children at high risk of drop-out)</th>
<th>Conditions/warning signs</th>
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<td>Identification by school</td>
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<td>Attendance</td>
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<td>Students from ethnic minority backgrounds</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Students from migrant families\textsuperscript{25}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social problems</td>
<td>Students with identified social problems at home (e.g. exposure to domestic violence, gender-based violence etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Any other area where the school has cause for concern</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following overall objective is proposed for Cambodia’s GPE-funded COVID-19 response and recovery programme:

To ensure girls and boys receive relevant, quality and continuous learning in safe, protective and inclusive learning environments to minimize the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

5. Programme description

The four strategic components of Cambodia’s GPE-funded COVID-19 response and recovery programme for the education sector are structured around four specific objectives. In this section

\textsuperscript{23} Academic year in Cambodia runs from 01 November until 31 August. MoEYS announced on 17 May 2020 that schools would remain closed until 01 November. This statement was superseded by the announcement that ‘high standard’ schools would re-open in August 2020; state schools offering basic education, however, are expected to remain shut until November 2020. Ref: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50741403/cambodian-schools-to-re-open-in-stages-from-august/> retrieved 07 July 2020.

\textsuperscript{24} MoEYS’ Cambodia Education Response Plan to COVID-19 Pandemic is expected to be publically available shortly, to be published on MoEYS’ website.

\textsuperscript{25} Children of nearly 85,000 migrant workers who have returned to Cambodia from various countries will be at risk of dropping out with financial hardship: https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/cambodia-govt-discusses-ways-to-provide-assistance-to-85000-migrant-workers-returning-from-thailand-amid-the-covid-19-pandemic
the four strategic components of the programme are described, with each relevant objective, along with the key interventions they comprise. A Theory of Change is provided for each strategic component, as well as a description of intended beneficiaries and delivery modalities.

5.1 Strategic component 1: Keep children learning

**Objective 1: Keep girls and boys learning by providing good quality, relevant and inclusive continuous learning programmes**

The core focus of Strategic component 1 will be to provide support for the ongoing delivery of continuous or distance learning services to children across the country, in urban, rural and remote areas. This support will be provided to children engaged in pre-school and all grades of basic education (grades 1-9) and will draw upon a number of diversified broadcasting platforms, including online/internet, television and radio.

The continuous or distance learning assets described in the sections below will be prepared to cover the full school year of 2020/21 or up to a two-semester period, if school re-opening occurs later than the start of SY2020/21.  

This coverage is necessary due to the likelihood that students will go back to school in a phased manner to ensure adherence to social distancing measures – particularly in pre-school and primary school where the pupil-teacher ratio in Cambodia is above 40 students per teacher at each level. It is therefore unlikely that all students will start at once, and that a staggered return by grade or by part-attendance, or a combination of these measures will be required.

A small number of schools (17) have been sequestered for use as temporary COVID-19 treatment and isolation centres, and it is unclear when these centres will be closed. This is due to uncertainty about a possible second wave of the virus, so there may be fewer schools available for students to return to – at least in the immediate term.

5.1.1 Expected results and Theory of Change

**Result 1: Girls and boys maintain their learning progress through access to quality, relevant and inclusive continuous learning programmes**

This result is predicated on a Theory of Change shaped in response to several bottlenecks, including:

(i) COVID-19-related school closures are affecting children’s ability to learn, most notably those engaged in basic education

(ii) there are disparities in children’s ability to access learning materials, with some children, particularly those in rural and marginalized communities, having limited or no internet access

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26 MoEYS Technical Departments are initially expecting to create learning content for three months (PED, primary) and five months (GDSE, lower secondary), which build on the continuous learning assets prepared during SY2019/20.


there is limited availability of printed learning materials at school level to assist students to maintain their learning by distance, particularly given financial limitations on school operating budget (SOBs)

parents, teachers and even school directors have limited understanding and knowledge about how to support continuous learning, including the use of associated technology

schools, particularly rural schools, have limited SOBs to provide printed materials for the delivery of continuous learning programmes. This situation is likely being exacerbated by a significant reduction in community contributions to schools due to households facing increasing financial hardship.

Result 1 will be achieved through the key interventions listed below. The impact of these programmes will be enhanced through appropriate pedagogical support from teachers and parents (refer to Annex 2 for a Theory of Change covering the programme as a whole).

5.1.2 Key interventions

Activity 1.1: Production of continuous or distance learning programmes

The production of continuous learning programmes and their assets will draw upon the lessons learned during the early response phase to COVID-19, with the aim to progressively improve the quality of the programmes and assets produced. Ongoing monitoring of the use and impact of these programmes will be undertaken and further information on this can be found in Section 10: Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting.

The programme will also seek support from the technical departments responsible for special educational needs in Cambodia - the National Institute for Special Education (NISE) and the Special Education Department (SED) - in relation to the complexities of providing continuous learning support for hearing impaired and visually impaired students. These departments will produce specialised continuous learning materials including Cambodian sign-language and braille. The production of materials will be reinforced with teacher professional development and some purchase of necessary specialist equipment.

Sub-activity 1.1.1 Pre-primary education and early learning

Support for continuous or distance learning programmes under the ECE sub-sector will focus on pre-school classes, i.e. children aged 5 years undertaking the year before primary school. Under this activity, educational videos for streaming online (such as through MoEYS’ Facebook and YouTube sites) and for broadcast through MoEYS’ education television channel will be produced.

Radio programmes to support pre-school children and their parents will also be produced. One radio series will be targeted towards children attending state and community pre-schools, while another radio programme series will be directly linked to the MoEYS multilingual education programme (MLE) supporting children engaged in MLE pre-school education.

Sub-activity 1.1.2 Primary education

Support for continuous or distance learning programmes under the primary education sub-sector will focus on children enrolled in all primary grades (Grades 1–6). The e-lessons produced for primary education will focus on the core subjects of Khmer and Mathematics. E-lessons will be

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29 Children with limited Cambodian Sign Language vocabulary may experience problems in accessing early grades material. Support in early phonics tuition for hearing-impaired children is a specialized field.

30 The MLE programme is a complete module that covers early primary (Grades 1-3) as well as pre-school.
made available online (such as through the MoEYS Facebook page, YouTube and other platforms) and will be broadcast on the MoEYS TVK2 channel. Provision is made for the integration of Cambodian sign language, where appropriate, to promote the inclusion of hearing-impaired students. MoEYS guidelines (June 2020) already reference the inclusion of signing for the deaf and translation for three minority languages.31

Sub-activity 1.1.3 Lower secondary education
Support for continuous or distance learning programmes under the lower secondary sub-sector will focus on children in Grades 7–9. These e-lessons will focus on six core subjects: Khmer, Mathematics, Biology, Physics, Chemistry and History. Special emphasis will be placed on preparing Grade 9 students for their national assessments/high-stake exams (Diploma of Basic Education) as part of this work.

The e-lessons will be made available online (such as through the MoEYS Facebook page and YouTube) and will be broadcast on MoEYS’ TVK2 channel. Provision is made for the integration of Cambodian sign language, where appropriate, to promote the inclusion of hearing-impaired students.

Activity 1.2: Equipment for continuous learning
Schools will be able to purchase basic equipment to support continuous learning. The purchase of basic equipment32 will be an eligible expenditure under the proposed block grant to schools (further detailed in the sections below). Guidelines will be provided to schools regarding equipment purchase, so that they can make considered choices. The expectation is that schools can be supported in file sharing in this way as well as having an increased ability to make their own recordings if they choose to do so to supplement centrally supplied resources. Basic technical advice will be offered to schools, through simple video instruction, to help them use their equipment safely and effectively.33

Activity 1.3: Pedagogical support for continuous learning

Sub-activity 1.3.1 Paper-based learning materials to support continuous learning
Consultation with MoEYS and development partners indicates the overwhelming need for paper-based resources to support the most vulnerable students, and the need for these to be delivered without the barrier of an access charge. MoEYS guidelines clearly specify that the most vulnerable students are to receive resources free of charge.34 These paper-based resources will be complementary to the e-learning resources (Activity 1.1) for students who have internet/television access. The design will also ensure that the most vulnerable children have the tools to self-learn without close guidance from their teachers, so the materials can be used as a stand-alone resource but will be complementary with the e-learning resources produced.

32 Such as USB sticks, small phone tripods for recording lessons, USB cables to link to smartphones.
33 For example, guidelines will be given for USB specifications (multiple smaller-capacity drives) as well as a short instructional video showing care for the equipment (e.g. how to install anti-virus software to scan a USB drive safely).
34 MoEYS. Continuous learning guidelines for the ‘Distance Learning’ and ‘E-learning’. No. 29. Issued on 8 June 2020, p6.
To ensure the provision of paper-based continuous learning materials by schools, School Operating Funds (SOFs) will be topped up by way of block grants to rural schools. These will provide an important contribution to meeting the printing costs for learning materials.

With the provision of these resources for paper-based learning materials, teachers will be supported to meet MoEYS directives to distribute and mark paper-based work for all students as described earlier (Section 2.1.3). The supplementary learning materials provided will focus on core subjects addressed through the continuous learning programmes described under Strategic component 1.

Historically, the use of worksheets in Cambodia is quite limited, due to the cost and accessibility of printing and the reliance on textbooks as lesson content. MoEYS will produce these worksheets centrally, and distribute them through the educational hierarchy; using, where appropriate, existing materials created and endorsed by MoEYS, including those from development partners. This aligns with the requirements of the MoEYS directive and provides a level of consistency to teachers who may struggle with new expectations associated with providing support for continuous learning. Central printing and distribution of resources is not cost-effective under existing systems and procurement tendering procedures mitigate against large print runs of multi-page materials.

Worksheets for primary and lower secondary education will be produced by core teams of educators, coordinated by the PED and the General Secondary Education Department (GSED). Producing the learning materials in this way will enable adequate quality assurance of the worksheets. Quality assurance in this context is a key issue, as teachers are creating worksheet content separately from a lesson plan and their teaching time. This is contrary to the usual procedure whereby a worksheet is an additional resource to reinforce teaching and learning. While MoEYS will lead the implementation of this work, some external technical assistance (from an organization with relevant experience) is expected to be mobilized to reinforce these efforts.

Besides worksheets for learning and skills development, this part of the programme will focus on the use of assessment tools to ascertain students’ levels of progress and to enable teachers to identify students in danger of failing an academic year and the consequent increased risk of student drop-out. A limited number of assessment tools is available in Cambodia. The use of these will be supported, and where necessary, further tools will be developed or adapted to the specific and exceptional circumstances existing at the current time. The quality assurance teams leading worksheet production will also be used to develop assessment tools. This approach will keep all continuous learning resources produced - e-learning, paper-based and assessment - fully aligned.

35 The proposed focus on rural schools for block grants will be verified once confirmation is provided on the focus of the EU’s complementary block grant contribution, further referenced in section 8 below.

36 For primary education (Grades 1-6) core subjects are Khmer and Mathematics; for lower secondary education (Grades 7-9) core subjects are: Khmer, Mathematics, Biology, Physics, Chemistry and History.

37 MoEYS. Directive No. 23 on ‘Distance Learning’ and ‘E-learning’ Programme for Students from Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education. Issued on 24 April 2020 (section 2).
**Sub-activity 1.3.2 Teacher support for continuous learning**

Work under this activity will seek to build upon the support already provided from other development partners in producing relevant and practical training for teachers to improve their pedagogical skills in relation to continuous learning for themselves and for their students. Teaching videos on this area of work will be developed and shared on MoEYS’ social media platforms (such as Facebook and YouTube) and through Telegram. Teachers will be encouraged to view and discuss these learning materials with their peers. MoEYS will be supported to deliver similar materials aimed specifically at school leadership and management that relate specifically to the current circumstances.

TTIs will be approached to offer any resources they have to assist in this area; however, the current pandemic has increased the workload on these institutions, and the availability of staff in the short- and medium-term future is likely to be limited. 38

In line with the MoEYS directives, 39 teachers will be encouraged and guided to create support groups online for sharing resources, good practice and mutual support in negotiating these difficult times. In primary schools, the cluster system (a group of around six schools linked with a central 'core' school) is well established with a monthly teacher meeting. This can be used as the base for a support group. In secondary schools, teachers express the need to work with subject colleagues (e.g. a ‘maths teachers’ group). 40 Groups of this nature will provide professional peer support for teachers and are expected to provide a level of psychosocial support for teachers during a professionally and personally difficult period. School areas that have operational mentoring systems in place will be expected to utilize these to consolidate the work of the support groups and further provide pastoral support according to teacher needs.

Although more logistically complex, the programme will also support school directors in a similar way, by providing additional professional development materials and leveraging existing peer support groups.

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38 Teacher Education Colleges (TECs), in light of recent educational reforms, are also midway through the process of developing new pre-service training. Regional Teacher Training Centres that deal with teacher training for lower secondary education will be approached for assistance as they may have additional support and human resources available in specialist subject areas such as ICT and blended learning.

39 MoEYS. *Continuous learning guidelines for the 'Distance Learning' and 'E-learning'.* No. 29. Issued on 8 June 2020, p6, points 3.4 and 3.5.

40 This was successfully pioneered in 13 provinces with the Third Education Sector Development Project (ESDP3) where teachers formed Telegram groups by subject and geographical area and used a central resources website communally. Source: communication with ESDP3 maths and science advisor.
5.1.3 Beneficiaries

The expected primary beneficiaries are the students, girls and boys, who are able to continue their learning. A summary of how Strategic component 1 is intended to benefit various stakeholders is show in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic component 1 – Expected beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beneficiary (group)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents/caregivers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Teachers, school directors and other education personnel | | • Recipients of centrally developed learning assets: videos, radio, paper-based resources and also professional development videos to develop their distance learning skills.  
• Support from peer groups (and mentors where available) |

5.1.4 Delivery modalities

One of the main delivery modalities for Strategic component 1 will be the use of direct cash transfers (DCTs) according to the guidelines listed in this report (refer **Section 9**) and within the MoEYS Financial Management Manual for Distance Learning (as a response to Covid-19 effect).41 Direct cash transfers will be used to support the implementation of continuous learning activities by key MoEYS technical departments including the Department of ECE, PED, GSED, SED, NISE and the Department of Information Technology.

Another delivery modality, specifically relating to paper-based learning materials to support continuous learning under Activity 3.1 will be the use of school block grants to contribute to the costs of printing these materials for students. The disbursement of block grants to primary and lower secondary schools will be guided by MoEYS SOF guidelines, which identify two disbursement windows, in January (semester 1), and the second in June (semester 2).42 It is envisioned that the full amount for block grants under the programme will be disbursed by UNICEF to MoEYS’ Department of Finance (DoF) in December 2020. DoF will then disburse the school block grant ‘top-ups’ to individual school bank accounts in January 2021 as part of the first disbursement window. Schools will then be able to utilize these funds against a set of pre-approved eligible expenditure items.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be signed between UNICEF as the Grant Agent and DoF. This will outline financial and programmatic monitoring as well as financial reporting requirements for the block grants. The MoU will further articulate eligible expenditures under the GPE block grant ‘top-up’. To allow for schools' individual circumstances and local needs, eligible

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41 MoEYS. 2020. *Financial Management Manual for Distance Learning Program (as a response program to Covid-19 effect)* Department of Finance, MoEYS.

expenditures will not have an earmarked actual amount attached. Instead, it will be up to the schools to allocate the funding against the different eligible expenditure items, according to their needs.

5.2 Strategic component 2: Children are ready for a safe return to school

Objective 2: Ensure girls and boys, including the most vulnerable, their parents and school communities are ready for a safe return to school

The core focus of Strategic component 2 will be to provide comprehensive and practical information to support the safe return of children to school. For this to be achieved, it is essential to engage with students, their parents and communities to ensure they have, well in advance, all relevant information relating to returning to school in the context of COVID-19. School leaders, teachers, school administrators and local authorities will also be important target groups in facilitating this work.

5.2.1 Expected results and Theory of Change

Result 2: Girls and boys, including the most vulnerable, have the necessary information and support to be ready to return to school

This result is predicated on a Theory of Change shaped in response to several bottlenecks, including:

(i) children, parents and their communities, particularly those living in rural and marginalized areas, have limited knowledge about COVID-19, the risks it represents to public health and wellbeing and the proactive measures that can be taken to reduce transmission and to ensure safety in schools\(^{43}\)
(ii) parents and communities lack awareness of, and agency in, demanding accountability from local education authorities and schools in providing minimum health, safety and protection standards in schools in the context of re-opening schools during the COVID-19 outbreak
(iii) children at risk of dropping out of school, and those who have already dropped out, and their families have limited access to accurate and timely information about support services to assist them to get back to school
(iv) school directors and teachers lack practical and consistent information on how to prepare their schools to re-open in the context of the COVID-19 public health emergency, including with reference to minimum health and wellbeing standards.

By addressing these bottlenecks through the key interventions proposed in the section below, according to the Theory of Change the expected result is that girls and boys, including the most vulnerable, will have the necessary information and support to be ready to return to school (refer to Annex 2 for a Theory of Change covering the programme as a whole).

\(^{43}\) Information circulating in the Cambodian facebook community has caused high levels of misunderstanding about the real situation.
5.2.2 Key interventions

**Activity 2.1: Back-to-school campaign**

The re-opening of schools must be safe and consistent with Cambodia’s COVID-19 health response, with all reasonable measures taken to protect students, school staff, families and communities. Precautions are necessary to prevent the potential spread of COVID-19 in school settings, however care must also be taken to avoid stigmatizing students and staff who may have been exposed to the virus.

MoEYS will be supported to launch a comprehensive nationwide back-to-school campaign as part of efforts to promote a safe return to school for children.\textsuperscript{44} This campaign would ideally be launched for eight weeks: at least two weeks prior to schools re-opening and six weeks after schools have re-opened, depending on the notification period provided by MoEYS regarding school re-opening and following consultation with local authorities. The campaign will be a joint campaign between MoEYS and education sector partners.

The key messaging throughout this campaign will be cross-cutting and include all aspects of a child’s wellbeing such as education, hygiene, health (mental, physical and psychosocial), nutrition, physical activity and safety (school, home and online). The campaign will also provide practical guidance for school leaders, teachers and school administrators, as well as parents, caregivers and community members, in maintaining practices that promote safe and healthy schools for everyone.

Media assets for this back-to-school campaign will be broadcast online through key social media platforms, television and radio. Paper assets will also be produced and distributed to all schools, such as a ‘safe and healthy’ school booklet for school directors and teachers and handwashing posters targeted at the entire school community.\textsuperscript{45} For a more detailed conceptualization of the back-to-school campaign refer to Annex 3.

**Activity 2.2: Communication for Education for a safe return to school**

To complement the back-to-school campaign, a Communication for Education initiative will be launched to directly reach and connect with communities to promote the importance of preparing their children for a safe return to school. This initiative will promote community demand for education and accountability of local authorities for the delivery of COVID-19 safe education. For example, disadvantaged parents and communities may not be aware of support services available to children to get them back to school, such as how to access the national scholarship programme. Similarly, parents and communities may not be aware of, or may not know how to ask for, the provision of basic hygiene facilities in their local schools, such as handwashing supplies and the implementation of social distancing measures to protect their children while they are in school.

Through this work, cross-cutting key messages will be promoted, complementary to those promoted through the back-to-school campaign, including those linked to the protection and safety of children’s mental and psychosocial wellbeing. Additionally, a specific focus would be made on reaching communities and families of children that are at risk of dropping out of school and those who have already dropped out of school. The Communication for Education initiative will use practical tools to promote a return to school for these particularly vulnerable children.

\textsuperscript{44} The campaign will target children from pre-school (ECE) to upper secondary school (Grades 10-12).

\textsuperscript{45} A draft concept for this joint Back to School Campaign has been developed, and can be found in Annex 3.
Lessons will also be drawn from Cambodia’s Child-Friendly Schools initiative Early Warning System (EWS), which details measures that can be taken to identify and support the most vulnerable children.\(^{46}\) In planning and implementing this work, synergies with the Implementation of the Social Accountability Framework Phase II (ISAF II) will be made where possible.

The Communication for Education initiative will target particularly vulnerable communities, with high levels of student drop out. The Communication for Education initiative would be implemented over a six-month period, commencing around the same time as the back-to-school campaign, before children are required to go back to school.

Systematic data collection and research contributing to knowledge generation will be conducted during the implementation of the Communication for Education activity, in particular to better understand how marginalized groups are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19; and to assist with the identification of policy and programmatic responses to more effectively assist these children as part of recovering from the impacts of the pandemic. Further elaboration of this work is given under Strategic component 4, Activity 3.

### 5.2.3 Beneficiaries

The expected primary beneficiaries are the students who will receive support in preparation for returning safely to their schools. A summary of how strategic component 2 should benefit various stakeholders is shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beneficiary (group)</th>
<th>Expected benefit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Students from target schools | ● Prepared and ready to return to school with the re-assurance of safe learning conditions  
● Provided with additional hygiene and sanitation and general wellbeing guidance  
● Recipients of information, education and communications (IEC) materials on safe practices and support services available |
| Parents/caregivers | ● Recipients of IEC materials on safe practices and support services available  
● Given re-assurance that return to school will be safe and effective for their children  
● Able to exercise greater accountability towards school and local authorities to ensure minimum return-to-school standards are applied in the context of COVID19  
● Greater knowledge and accessibility of additional financial support to assist their children to attend school, particularly for parents of most vulnerable children |
| Teachers and school directors and other education personnel | ● Prepared and able to return to work with the re-assurance of safe learning conditions  
● Provided with additional hygiene and sanitation guidance at work  
● Recipients of IEC materials, including paper-based materials, on safe practices and support services available |
| Local authorities | ● Supported to deliver accurate and timely information to their communities about the safe re-opening of schools. |

5.2.4 Delivery modalities

Key delivery modalities for the back-to-school campaign will include the use of DCTs with MoEYS’ School Health Department, particularly to support the development of content for paper-based materials for school directors and teachers; and direct contracting by UNICEF for specialist support in assisting MoEYS to design the overall campaign and its key elements.

The work relating to Communication for Education will be delivered through a consortium or partnership with NGOs who have demonstrated experience in this area. UNICEF will enter into a Programme Cooperation Agreement/s (PCA) with the NGO partner/s. The PCA/s, which will fully scope the work, will be developed in consultation with MoEYS.

5.3 Strategic component 3: Schools are hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environments

**Objective 3: Ensure schools are hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environments, able to meet the learning needs of the most vulnerable girls and boys**

For schools to become ready to re-open and to operate safely and effectively once re-opened, additional resources are needed to assist them in bolstering their operations to offer hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environments for all children, including the most vulnerable.

Work under this component would focus on two core areas: (i) improve hygiene practices in schools; and (ii) offer enhanced pedagogical support to deepen the impact of distance learning and specialized remedial support for children. Underpinning the need to provide adaptive learning for students, teachers will be supported to develop their pedagogical skills so they can more effectively support remedial learning.

5.3.1 Expected results and Theory of Change

**Result 3: Schools are hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environments that meet the learning needs of the most vulnerable girls and boys**

This result is predicated on a Theory of Change shaped in response to several bottlenecks, including:

(i) schools, particularly rural schools, have limited SOF for the purchase of additional hygiene supplies needed to meet and maintain minimum public health measures for safe school re-opening
(ii) disadvantaged children are experiencing disrupted learning during COVID-19
(iii) schools have limited SOF to provide resources for the delivery of remedial and accelerated learning programmes (ALPs) which is likely being exacerbated by a significant reduction in community contributions to schools due to increasing financial hardship of households
(iv) teachers and school directors have limited knowledge of adaptive learning practices to support the management and delivery of remedial and accelerated learning to their students.

By addressing these bottlenecks through the key interventions proposed in the section below, according to the Theory of Change, the expected result is that schools become hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environments that meet the learning needs of the most vulnerable girls and boys (refer to Annex 2 for a Theory of Change covering the programme as a whole).
5.3.2 Key interventions

Activity 3.1: Basic hygiene supplies for schools
By providing schools with increased financial resources as part of their SOFs to procure hygiene supplies this will assist schools to operate in compliance with public health measures aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19. This support will also provide students, parents and school personnel with the confidence and re-assurance necessary to promote a return to school. The promotion of hand hygiene will be at the core of this activity.

The proposed support under this activity will be complemented by the back-to-school campaign (outlined under strategic component 2), which will incorporate key hygiene, health and wellbeing-related messages for all schools nationally. Assisting schools to procure hygiene supplies through topping up their SOFs through a block grant, will complement other earlier investments in school hygiene supplies made by other development partners and programmes.

Activity 3.2 Remedial and accelerated learning for disadvantaged students
Given the lengthy school closure period in Cambodia in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, gaps in many children being able to access distance learning programmes and increasing economic difficulties, additional resources will be mobilized to schools to assist with the delivery of remedial learning and ALPs. Using existing and adapted early warning system materials to identify children at risk of dropping out of school, schools will be in a better position to target remedial programmes and ALPs in response to different learners' needs, including overlap of programmes where appropriate.

Additional financing for these services will be provided by way of a top-up to SOFs through block grants to primary and lower secondary schools. The use of these grants in covering printing and copying costs is expected to by a major factor in supporting schools in delivering paper-based materials to the most vulnerable students.

Activity 3.3 Teacher support for adaptive learning
Work under this activity will seek to build on support already provided by other development partners to produce relevant and practical training for teachers. This will improve their pedagogical skills in relation to adaptive learning practices, including how to manage e-learning and work with parents, that will be needed when schools re-open. A rapid assessment of teacher skills in the relevant areas of ICT, continuous learning and use of formative assessment will take place. Teaching videos on this area of work will be developed and shared on MoEYS social media platforms (such as Facebook and YouTube) and through Telegram. Teachers will be encouraged to view and discuss these learning materials during Thursday technical meetings, and through any active mentoring programmes. Materials to support school directors in school leadership and management interventions will also be adapted from existing materials and distributed.

TTIs will be approached to offer any resources they have to assist in this area; however, the current pandemic has increased the load on these institutions and the availability of staff in the short- and medium-term future is likely to be very low. Nevertheless, TTIs possess key human resources to assist with continuous professional development of teachers and this programme retains the hope that they will be able to offer some support in the post-COVID recovery period.

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47 Primary teachers in Cambodia are expected to participate in technical meetings on the fourth Thursday of every month. These meetings take place in cluster groups and used to discuss technical pedagogical matters.
The demand for remedial teaching when schools re-open will be unprecedented. Cambodia has some resources for remedial teaching but does not yet have a standardized remedial programme for students who are academically behind.

Remedial teaching will be adapted using existing materials from MoEYS and development partners with the addition of the continuous learning assets developed as part of the MoEYS COVID-19 response and recovery work. Other materials developed by development partners are also expected to be made available and potentially adapted to new circumstances. These will include:

- Existing teaching videos linked with the curriculum
- Existing paper-based resources and manuals that can be delivered in e-format
- Existing assessment tools\(^{48}\) to ensure that learning is taking place at the required rate
- MoEYS ALP may be adapted\(^ {49}\)

This activity is expected to be supported by external technical assistance as either an individual contractor or an institution.

Together with the re-development of student adaptive learning materials, resources will be developed for training teachers in this instruction. Materials will have to be available as distance learning, so the development of videos is expected. Note that almost all teachers possess smartphones. MoEYS will be able to use existing e-distribution Telegram methods to disseminate information. A focus on helping teachers understand the nature of remedial teaching is key: teachers will need to work with smaller groups, place greater emphasis on formative assessment and receive advice from MoEYS on how they can deliver lessons that will be required to deviate from MoEYS standard models.\(^ {50}\) This will be combined with necessary support for professional development on digital teaching and learning. Teachers may expect to use their peer support groups to learn collaboratively, including, where available, support from mentors.

5.3.3 Beneficiaries

The primary beneficiaries are students who will receive their tuition in a hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environment, supported by school personnel, including school directors and teachers, who will be equipped with the skills to deliver learning under new conditions. A summary of how strategic component 3 is expected to benefit various stakeholders is shown in the table below:

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\(^{48}\) MoEYS has developed and endorsed a number of assessment tools, including the 'Reading Benchmarks' for reading in Grades 1-3, Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Maths Assessment (EGMA) tools; various NGO partners have assessment tools based on norm- or criteria-based assessment linked to the curriculum. However, general assessment (monthly and semester assessments of learning) is decentralized to school level.

\(^{49}\) MoEYS ALP is a three-year course designed to deliver two academic years' worth of work each year. ALP Year 1 covers Grades 1 and 2, Year 2 covers Grades 3 and 4 and Year 3 covers Grades 5 and 6. It was originally intended for over-age students who have dropped-out of school to catch-up and potentially return to mainstream education.

\(^ {50}\) Further information on training for remedial teaching in the Cambodian context can be found in: KAPE. 2015. Delivering Remedial Support Services to Primary School Children Kampuchean Action for Primary Education & Save the Children Cambodia. Published June 2015.

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### Strategic component 3 – Expected beneficiaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beneficiary (group)</th>
<th>Expected benefit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Students from target schools        | • Able to continue learning in school (possibly on reduced or altered hours initially) under safe conditions  
• Provided with additional hygiene and sanitation resources and measures at school  
• Access to support programmes in ALP and remedial learning  
Parents/caregivers                    | • Given re-assurance that returns to school will be hygienic and safe  
• Re-assured that additional learning support will be offered to students according to need  
• No financial access barrier for parents of most vulnerable children  
Teachers, school directors and other education personnel  | • Able to return to work with the re-assurance of safe learning conditions  
• Provided with additional hygiene and sanitation resources and measures at work  
• Access to distance learning training on ALP, remedial teaching, and other necessary adaptive teaching and learning practices  
• Access to additional resources and guidance for management of distance learning and adaptive teaching for school directors, also drawing on core school-based management principles. |

### 5.3.4 Delivery modalities

As for Activity 3.1 under strategic component 1, the delivery modality for Activities 1 and 2 under strategic component 3 will be the use of school block grants to contribute to the cost of schools procuring additional basic hygiene supplies and providing printed learning materials associated with ALP and remedial classes, as needed.

Delivery modalities associated with the production of adaptive learning materials for teachers will use a mixture of DCTs to lead technical departments, such as PED and GSED; and contracting by UNICEF for technical assistance to support the development of remedial materials teaching and learning materials and resources to build the capacity of teachers to use them. Depending on available expertise, UNICEF will contract an appropriately experienced organisation with relevant in-house technical expertise to assist with this work.

### 5.4 Strategic component 4: Build stronger and more resilient learning environments

**Objective 4: Build stronger and more resilient learning environments for girls and boys, to enable them to attend and complete school**

Although the COVID-19 pandemic presents a serious global threat to education opportunities for children and is currently causing massive disruption to education systems globally, the virus is necessitating education systems and the people within them to work differently. Provision of inclusive continuous learning services is essential to reach children and help them to continue to learn. The need to provide outreach and adaptive learning services to children, particularly those unable to access continuous learning programmes, is an imperative. Teachers are being asked to work in ways with which they are not familiar, including using technology to assist them to teach, and their students to learn.

While these issues represent significant challenges, there are opportunities in the adversity created by COVID-19. There are opportunities to learn lessons from the COVID-19 response and
recovery efforts made under this programme to strengthen the future development of the education system in Cambodia.

5.4.1 Expected results and Theory of Change

**Result 4: Learning environments for girls and boys are stronger and more resilient and are enabling girls and boys to attend and complete school**

This result is predicated on a Theory of Change shaped in response to several bottlenecks, including:

(i) the impact of COVID-19 on the education sector in Cambodia is likely be complex and uncertain

(ii) given COVID-19 is an unprecedented global pandemic in modern times, there is currently a lack of available evidence to assess the relative effectiveness of education programme interventions at country, regional and global levels.

Although there is currently a lack of evidence on what interventions will be effective, there is sufficient opportunity for knowledge generation and sharing from good practice responses to COVID-19 to inform policy making and education system strengthening.

By addressing these bottlenecks through the key interventions proposed in the section below, and by using the opportunity to learn from the circumstances, according to the Theory of Change the expected result is that learning environments for girls and boys are stronger and more resilient and are enabling girls and boys to attend and complete school (refer to Annex 2 for a Theory of Change covering the programme as a whole).

5.4.2 Key interventions

**Activity 4.1: Efficient programme management and operational support**

As Grant Agent, UNICEF will provide technical support to assist with the implementation of the programmes through a team of education specialists available at the UNICEF Cambodia country office and by bringing in additional technical experts as required. UNICEF Cambodia’s education team members located in UNICEF field (or zone) offices and in the central office in Phnom Penh will assist with efficiently and effectively managing the programme.

The programme will also receive support from UNICEF Cambodia’s other sectoral teams relevant to the implementation of the programme, including with input from water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), health, communications, child protection and social protection specialists. UNICEF Cambodia will draw judiciously from technical support offered by the East Asia and Pacific Regional Office and from UNICEF Headquarters to support efficient programme management.

The programme will receive support from UNICEF’s operations section to ensure efficient grant management, procurement services and logistics required for implementation of programme activities.

UNICEF, as Grant Agent, will cooperate and collaborate closely at all stages with MoEYS’ Directorate General of Planning and Policy (DGPP) in its role as coordinating body for the Cambodia Education Response Plan to COVID-19 Pandemic.
Activity 4.2: Monitoring and Evaluation of Response Efforts
Work under this strategic component will focus on identifying and evaluating the impact of response and recovery efforts implemented under the programme, with a particular focus on understanding the impact on children’s learning, particularly vulnerable children.

As much of the proposed programme focuses on supporting continuous learning and improving the hygiene, health and protective environment of schools, lessons generated through this evaluation are expected to inform longer-term future investments in the sector. For continuous and distance learning, for example, there may be an opportunity to expand these services in the long-term use of mass digital and broadcasting tools. Cementing this approach in Cambodia’s education system in the long term would have the potential for Cambodia to tackle persistent and longstanding teacher accountability issues.

Activity 4.3: Knowledge generation, sharing and coordination
As Grant Agent for the GPE COVID-19 response and recovery programme for Cambodia and as Chair of the ESWG, UNICEF will facilitate knowledge generation, sharing and communication of knowledge-related work (such as case studies, lessons learned and good practices) generated as part of the programme in partnership with the GPE Secretariat. Knowledge assets will be shared on various regional and global network partnership platforms, as well as on other partner platforms such as the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies, the Global Education Cluster and the Global Education Coalition launched by UNESCO. UNICEF Cambodia will coordinate with sector partners to support knowledge generation and sharing and to assist with programme monitoring and oversight through programme management mechanisms.

As the proposed programme is a substantial input to the Cambodia Education Response Plan to COVID-19 Pandemic, all knowledge generation will be available to MoEYS. This is expected to lead to improved systemic resilience and capability in pandemic response in the future, including the possibility of a second wave of COVID-19 infections.

MoEYS will also be in possession of a comprehensive set of continuous learning resources covering core subjects for all education grades by the end of the programme that will remain accessible through the MoEYS website and Facebook ('Krou') page.

Knowledge generation will also relate to the reporting requirements of GPE in the areas of communications and visibility (refer to section 11 below).

5.4.3 Beneficiaries
The primary beneficiaries are the students, girls and boys, who will be supported to continue their education by a stronger education system, delivering improved means for them to complete their basic education and continue to further study. A summary of how Strategic component 4 is expected to benefit various stakeholders is shown in the table below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beneficiary (group)</th>
<th>Expected benefit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Students from target schools                          | • Able to continue learning in school (possibly on reduced or altered hours initially) under safe conditions until completion of basic education and beyond  
• Continued greater access to additional learning resources, including e-learning materials (videos etc.), paper-based resources and better developed ALPs and remedial programmes  
• Continuation of good hygiene practices and other WASH initiatives established  
• Improve teacher accountability linked to student learning due to more readily available continuous learning materials available on an on-going basis.                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Parents/caregivers                                     | • Reassured that students will have greater opportunities to complete their education through basic education and beyond  
• Reduced financial access barriers for parents of the most vulnerable children                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Teachers, school directors and other education personnel | • Able to continue to access e-learning and other continuous professional development resources to further professional development, particularly in the areas of management and implementation of continuous and adaptive learning  
• Maintain good practice in management and implementation of e-learning, e-teaching and improved hygiene/WASH practices  
• Improved professional support from MoEYS central and sub-national levels, especially in e-communications                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| MoEYS                                                  | • Improved professional practice in delivering distance learning, adaptive learning and e-learning on a nationwide scale  
• Improved ability to respond to crises with future resources bank to cover distance learning or other disruptions to normal education practices  
• Benefit from experience of UNICEF at national and regional level, as well as from other parties investing in support for the education system, including in its continuous improvement  
• Maintenance of resources such as TVK2 channel                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Education sector partners (in-country, regional and global) | • Body evidence that demonstrates the impact of continuous learning investments on children’s learning outcomes  
• Evidence on the efficacy of using government systems in emergency response and recovery settings, particularly the use of school block grants  
• Greater knowledge generation, sharing and communication of knowledge-related work to share with country, regional and global networks to support the development of good practice approaches in education in emergencies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

### 5.4.4 Delivery modalities

To ensure efficient programme management and timely operational support, UNICEF Cambodia will utilize its own in-house human resources to oversee the implementation of the programme and to monitor and evaluate its impact. UNICEF will also work with MoEYS to monitor key activities, which will be financed through a DCT arrangement with relevant technical departments.

To evaluate the impact of the overall programme, UNICEF will contract technical assistance, either an individual contractor or an institution, and seek to conduct this work in close collaboration with MoEYS and other sector partners.

For knowledge generation, sharing and coordination, UNICEF will encourage research collaboration with relevant partners to generate lessons learned from specific aspects of the programme. The NGO partnership/s engaged under strategic component 2, for example, will have
a discrete set of knowledge generation and sharing deliverables, the results of which will be shared with in-country, regional and global education sector partners and forums.

6. Implementation strategy

The programme will be implemented in collaboration with MoEYS and its relevant technical departments. UNICEF Cambodia will work closely with DGPP to lead in the planning, coordination and monitoring of programme implementation. UNICEF Cambodia will also work with other relevant MoEYS technical departments on specific activities, including the Departments of Planning and Policy; the Department of Early Childhood Education, PED, GSED, SED, NISE, the Department of Information Technology, the Teacher Training Department, and the School Health Department. Where necessary, UNICEF Cambodia will also engage with Provincial and District Offices of Education to ensure smooth and timely delivery of key interventions.

In addition to MoEYS internal centralized working group to oversee all COVID-19 response efforts in the education sector,\(^{51}\) it will be important for a technical-level steering committee comprising MoEYS and development partners to be formed to oversee the efficient and effective implementation of the programme (refer to Annex 4 for the programme’s budget and implementation timeline). This steering committee will meet on a quarterly basis. UNICEF Cambodia and DGPP will provide secretariat support for the smooth running of the committee. Additionally, the LEG/Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG), chaired by the Minister of Education, Youth and Sport, comprising development partners and key MoEYS technical department representatives will be engaged to oversee the timely achievement of results.

Given the scope and scale of the programme, government systems will be utilized to implement most key interventions. For the preparation and disbursement of block grants, the existing system for SOFs will be drawn upon as much as feasible in consideration of both UNICEF Cambodia and MoEYS financial procedures and processes. Engagement of NGOs in delivering some key activities will be based on a call for proposals in areas of technical expertise required by the programme and where they have comparative expertise. The NGO selection process will adhere to UNICEF’s Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA) procedures.

6.1 Gender

In Cambodia today, girls and boys struggle to complete school for different reasons, typically underpinned by ingrained attitudes about gender. Gender norms can significantly affect attitudes and decision making around education, including around gender. These influences vary across communities in Cambodia.\(^{52}\)

The gender context in schools is complicated. In some areas, girls show markedly better results and opportunities than boys. Girls, for example, are performing better than boys in primary and lower secondary education, with many more girls successfully completing school than boys. Repetition rates for girls in primary and lower secondary schools are consistently much lower than

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\(^{51}\) Known as the MoEYS working group to prevent the spread of COVID-19, which is under the leadership of the Minister of Education, Youth and Sport. Refer to MoEYS Nomination Letter, No. 2176, issued 14 March 2020; the MoEYS working group to prevent the spread of COVID-19 outlines membership of this group.

those for boys. However, in terms of achieving higher levels of education, there are more males with a higher-level post-graduate education, with a Gender Parity Index of 0.71. This situation plays-out in the education sector where the majority of upper secondary school teachers are male.

The implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on girls and boys outside school have not yet been studied and may never be clearly seen or fully understood. However anecdotal evidence suggests that all children could be at a greater risk of:

- Gender-based violence/domestic violence
- Sexual and physical abuse
- Forced labour.

Girls are also potentially at risk of a greater burden of household responsibility, including looking after younger siblings. Their risk of sexual abuse for girls may be greater than for boys, and there is also a possibility of more girls being forced into early marriage.

In delivering the programme, UNICEF Cambodia will consider the relevance of UNICEF’s five actions for gender equality in response to COVID-19 and apply these as relevant for the education sector. They are: (i) caring for carers; (ii) preparing for increases in gender-based violence throughout the COVID-19 pandemic; (iii) maintaining core health and education services and systems; (iv) engaging women and youth rights networks to support connectivity and the flow of vital information; and (v) ensuring gender data is available, analysed and actionable. An additional category is promoting gender equality in roles and responsibilities.

This programme will consider all strategic components and activities through a gendered lens. All appropriate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) reports will be reported, with statistics disaggregated by gender. In the case of the back-to-school campaign and Communication for Education interventions, emphasis will be placed on the risks mentioned above and key messages will be developed in consideration of the situation of girls and boys in preparing to go back to school.

6.2 Budget

Cambodia’s country allocation under the GPE COVID-19 Accelerated Funding Window has been advised by GPE as being USD7million. The budget for this proposal has therefore been prepared based on the assumption that a total amount of USD7million will be available from GPE to implement this COVID-19 response and recovery programme.

This section presents a summary of the main components of the expenditure expected under the programme. All costs are expressed in US Dollars (USD) and some numbers have been converted from the local currency, the Khmer Riel.

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For primary education, female repetition rates continue to be around three percentage points lower than for males, which equates to five males repeating for every three females repeating; while for lower secondary education, the trend is similar, with five males repeating for every two females repeating. *Cambodian Education Sector Analysis*. June 2020. Commissioned by the EU, using EMIS data.


Khmer Riel is tied to the US dollar; the exchange rate hovers around 4000-4100KhR to the dollar.
The majority of the GPE allocation (57 per cent) for this programme will be taken up by school block grants. This is in accordance with the requests by MoEYS for direct contributions to school, and in line with the PETS report (WB, 2017) which stated:

"School funds should be given top priority for improving quality of teaching and learning to address substantive outcomes in term of students’ achievements. The items could include support for slow learner students from week one of the school year, support for coaching less experienced teachers by more experienced teachers in school or from neighboring schools, support for teaching and learning materials, and enough drinking water and toilets for boys and girls." \(^{56}\)

The budget figures presented are based on:

(i) MoEYS costing norms within the Financial Management Manual \(^{57}\)
(ii) Harmonized daily subsistence allowance rates that apply to government officials as agreed by development partners \(^{58}\)
(iii) UNICEF and development partner previous purchases according to procurement guidelines

The table below shows a summary of the budget. A budget with an implementation timeline is presented in Annex 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Component</th>
<th>Budget (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic component 1</strong>: Keep children learning</td>
<td>1,030,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic component 2</strong>: Children are ready for a safe return to school</td>
<td>375,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic component 3</strong>: Schools are hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environments</td>
<td>4,310,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic component 4</strong>: Build stronger and more resilient learning environments</td>
<td>1,285,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total all components</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,000,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.3 Risk factors and mitigation

In preparing the proposal, UNICEF Cambodia, as Grant Agent, has undertaken consultations with government and development partners. Based on these consultations the following overall risks to the programme have been identified, together with mitigation measures.

In general, most overall risks to the programme are assessed as being low to medium. This risk profile is in large part a reflection of the approach that has been taken during programme preparation, which has been underpinned by recognized well-established government systems and partnerships to implement the programme. While the overall purpose of this programme is to provide an effective response to assist the education system in its recovery from the impacts of COVID-19, the opportunity to implement key interventions with the possibility of laying important


\(^{57}\) MoEYS. 2020. *Financial Management Manual for Distance Learning Program (as a response program to Covid-19 effect)* DoF, MoEYS

foundations for future system strengthening, in line with MoEYS reform agenda, particularly in relation to digital education, has helped to shape the design of the programme.

The major risks to the programme broadly fall into three categories: (i) external risks, including economic, political, natural disasters and security; (ii) organizational, relating to personnel, capacity and policies; and (iii) financial, including financial management weaknesses. Refer to Annex 5 for a detailed analysis of risks and associated mitigation measures.

7. Programme management

As grant agent, UNICEF Cambodia will work collaboratively with MoEYS to manage the implementation of this programme. UNICEF will provide technical, financial and monitoring support and oversight. Additionally, UNICEF Cambodia, in its role as GPE coordinating agent, and MoEYS will ensure key programmatic interventions are aligned with the MoEYS National COVID-19 Response Plan, as well as with the ESP 2019-2023. It will ensure compliance with GPE COVID-19 Accelerated Funding Window guidelines. Careful management will be achieved through regular steering meetings and as-needed technical level meetings.

UNICEF Cambodia’s Chief of Education will facilitate the overall coordination and implementation of the programme, closely supported by the education specialist for COVID-19 programming, and other education team members consisting of 20 international and national professional staff located at national and sub-national levels.

Additional quality control and support will be ensured through internal mechanisms, such as the careful monitoring and application of the Harmonized Approach for Cash Transfers (HACT) and transparent and competitive procurement and financial management processes. This integrated country level COVID-19 recovery programme for the education sector will be supported by the UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office, with assistance from the Regional Education Advisor. UNICEF Cambodia will draw on support from UNICEF HQ as and when needed, particularly with reference to global good practices.

8. Partnership and complementarity

The programme will be implemented in close collaboration with other education sector partners drawing on established government-development partner coordination mechanisms. These include the LEG/JTWG and the ESWG as well as linking with key partners of Cambodia’s Humanitarian Response Forum.

To assist with the coordination of COVID-19 response efforts in the education sector, UNICEF, as Chair of the ESWG, has initiated a mapping exercise of interventions already being implemented by ESWG partners, including bilateral and multilateral organizations and NGOs. A summary of partner COVID-19 response and recovery activities is provided in Annex 6, including an indication of how each of these interventions complement the work planned under the strategic components of this programme.

In developing the strategic components of this programme, UNICEF Cambodia conducted consultations with other development partners to identify possible complementarity. For example, the formulation of the block grants for schools, which are intended to assist schools with

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additional costs associated with continuous and adaptive learning, as well as the provision of basic hygiene supplies, was done in consultation with the World Bank and the European Union (EU). This was because they had existing or planned investments in providing school operating funds, including for COVID-19 response, and were using existing government systems to channel their investments in this area. Under the re-structure of the Higher Education Improvement Project, for example, the World Bank is using school block grants to cover the cost of printed materials to support poor students with distance learning for the second semester of SY2019/20. In developing the school block grant for this programme, UNICEF worked closely with the bank to ensure a similar approach and focus for the new school year, SY2020/21, which could enable continuity of services. Furthermore, the EU is in the processing of confirming their block grant contribution by way of their education budget support programme, which, if approved, would be highly complementary and mutually reinforcing of the school block grants planned as part of this proposal.

Similarly, UNESCO has been assisting MoEYS with the provision of continuous learning materials for early grades (Grades 1-3) during the immediate COVID-19 response period. In preparing the proposal for this programme, UNICEF therefore wanted to ensure that sufficient assistance would be provided to MoEYS to build on the investments made with UNESCO support as part of the COVID-19 recovery work. This proposal will enable continued complementarity with the work of CARE concerning the MLE radio programme. To date both CARE and UNICEF have been collaborating with MoEYS to produce the specialized radio programme aimed at assisting children enrolled in MLE to continue their studies by distance. Given the importance of this work, UNICEF has built-in ongoing support for the production of the MLE radio programme as part of this proposal in a way that is complementary to future CARE support for this area of work.

A high degree of complementary with other development partner investment also exists in relation to the provision of hygiene supplies to schools. UNICEF Cambodia, for example, has either procured or is in the process of procuring basic hygiene supplies for pre-schools, primary and secondary schools in both rural and urban areas across the country with support from USAID, the EU and other Capacity Development Partnership Fund partners. These supplies will be distributed just before schools re-open and are planned to last about four to six weeks over the initial school re-opening period. The school block grants under this proposal will be highly complementary to these initial investments in hygiene supplies made by other funding partners, as they will enable schools to procure basic hygiene supplies well into the school year.

The key interventions proposed in this programme complement the key actions highlighted in MoEYS’ National Response Plan. By implementing these interventions, the programme will make a critical contribution to the realization of results under the national response plan.

9. Financial management

The critical decision making for the planning, implementation, monitoring, adjustments and reporting will be done under the guidance of MoEYS and the JTWG/LEG.

This GPE funding will be administered by UNICEF and managed as per UNICEF financial rules and regulations. UNICEF’s role as the grant agent of the fund includes planning, administration, contracting, procurement of services and supplies as necessary, management of the funds, monitoring and reporting to the GPE.
The grant agent, UNICEF, is responsible for the management of the grant as well as financial management. The financial implementation and management of UNICEF is dictated by UN-wide financial management rules and regulations called the HACT framework. This provides measures to ensure all funds are properly utilized and accounted for, while making efforts to strengthen national capacities for financial management and accountability with a view to gradually shifting to using national systems and ensuring sustainability.

9.1 Fund transfer to MoEYS

For the GPE accelerated funding and fund transfers to MoEYS, UNICEF will comply with the MoEYS financial manual for COVID-19 programming. This financial manual was jointly developed by MoEYS and development partners, and aimed to establish proper accountability and transparency mechanisms in implementing the programme at the level of implementing technical departments and at DoF.

For GPE accelerated funding, DoF, as the unit in charge of financial management, is responsible for the request of funds to submit to UNICEF using the prescribed templates, that is, the submission of a Funding Authorization and Certification (FACE) form. The cash transfer modalities (direct cash transfers, reimbursement or direct payment) will be established in the agreement. Three cash transfer modalities are available to implementing partners within the HACT framework and as described in the agreed work plan:

- Direct cash transfers to implementing partners for expenditure to be made by them in support of activities agreed in the work plan
- Direct payments to vendors and other third parties for expenditure incurred by the implementing partner in support of activities agreed in the work plan
- Reimbursement to implementing partners for obligations made and expenditure incurred by them in support of activities agreed in the work plan.

Aligned with the standard operating procedures in the MoEYS COVID-19 Financial Management Manual, and upon submission of relevant documents, DoF will release funds to the different technical departments to implement the GPE programme related activities. The technical department is responsible for the liquidation of the cash advance in a timely manner. Within 15 calendar days of completing the activity, a liquidation report should be prepared by the technical departments and submitted to DoF.

During liquidation, in addition to the financial aspects of the liquidation report, DoF shall submit the direct cash transfer liquidation and FACE, based on the liquidation reports and the physical progress reports from technical departments, to UNICEF. The direct cash transfer liquidation report shall include high quality information reported by technical departments on the results attained by activities implemented and supported. The direct cash transfer liquidation shall be submitted by DoF to UNICEF within three months of receiving the funds, and strictly not later than six months. Any unspent amount of funding released by UNICEF shall be deposited back into the UNICEF bank account and a copy of the bank deposit slip shall be given to UNICEF. A separate FACE corresponding to the amount of unspent funds deposited to the UNICEF bank account shall be prepared by DoF and submitted to UNICEF.

The implementing partner (DoF) can request direct cash transfers on a quarterly basis. The condition of not transferring additional funds to an implementing partner, if the implementing partner is holding outstanding funds from direct cash transfers over six months, will be applied.
The HACT processes (capacity assessment, cash transfer through FACE form, quality assurance programme visit, financial spot check, scheduled audit and special audit and capacity development) will be applied.

Depending on what is being procured, both the MoEYS procurement department and the UNICEF Supply Unit will be responsible for procuring any supplies/materials and services required for this programme, and the procurement procedures will be followed.

9.2 Fund transfer to schools

It is envisaged that any funding to schools will be coordinated by MoEYS, specifically DoF. UNICEF, as grant agent, and DoF will develop and sign an MoU that elaborates the financial flow, fund disbursement and reporting requirements. It will include assumptions, specific conditions, etc. To promote the use of existing MoEYS financial systems and procedures, UNICEF and DoF will explore the possibility of using the existing SOB mechanism to transfer the funds. DoF will be responsible for disbursing funds to schools, monitoring fund utilization and collating financial reporting from schools. UNICEF will continue to implement its audit and assurance activities in line with HACT procedures.

9.3 Fund transfers to civil society organizations and other non-government partners

To modify existing partnerships or establish new partnerships for COVID-19 emergency response, UNICEF will prioritize procedural simplifications to expedite humanitarian responses, engaging with its regional and international partners/alliances for resource mobilization, as well as to accelerate collaborative response efforts.

In developing new partnerships, the UNICEF Cambodia country office may opt for either open selection or direct selection with one of the 10,000 civil society organizations registered on the UN Partner Portal. Alternatively, the Cambodia country office may engage civil society organizations via offline processes. New partnerships related to COVID-19 pandemic preparedness and response for up to a 12-month period may be processed using the Humanitarian Programme Document template, which is a simplified version of the standard Programme Document template.

For first-time civil society organization partners only that do not have a Programme Cooperation Agreement with UNICEF, the Small-Scale Funding Agreement may be used to transfer up to $50,000 cash in a 12-month period and, in addition, up to three months’ of humanitarian supplies with no limit on the value of the humanitarian supplies. The use of the Small-Scale Funding Agreement for humanitarian response is appropriate for first-time civil society organization partners, and in cases where the scale of the emergency is either limited or supply-oriented.

The HACT processes (capacity assessment, cash transfer through FACE form, quality assurance programme visit, financial spot check, scheduled audit and special audit and capacity development) will be applied to all implementing partner fund transfers, irrespective of government, civil society organizations or NGOs.

Regular meetings with MoEYS will ensure appropriate monitoring of operational and fiduciary progress for this programme. Overall, DoF/MoEYS will be accountable for the financial

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60 The UNICEF guidance note on implementing partnership management during the COVID-19 pandemic is available here: https://unicef.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/teams/KHM-Collab-2019-
management of this programme, and any procurement required will be sourced by the Procurement Department, with technical support from the UNICEF Operations Unit.

UNICEF will conduct investigations of any irregularities, including suspected cases of corruption, fraud, embezzlement, abuse of assets and waste or violation of laws and regulations. It will take necessary action if required, including reporting to the GPE as per the GPE zero tolerance policy.

10. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

The programme will adopt the results framework recommended by GPE guidelines as the basis for monitoring and evaluation. The monitoring objectives of the programme will primarily be to ensure the effective management and optimum use of funds and resources. These will be reported and tracked through the current mechanisms of the LEG/ESWG.

The end of programme progress report will be provided at the end of the 18-month period using the template provided by GPE. Data will be surveyed according to the frequencies shown in the results framework (refer to Annex 7) with a report reviewing progress against the targets to be delivered following the quarterly meetings of the technical-level steering committee. Regular meetings of the ESWG and the LEG/JTWG will have a standing agenda on the GPE COVID-19 programme.

Monitoring and evaluation will be implemented by UNICEF in the role of Grant Agent, MoEYS in the role of Implementing Agency and external DPs supporting technical assistance. As stated in the GPE M&E guidelines, there is no requirement for an external evaluation.

10.1 Learning from evidence approach

Consistent with its M&E model and guided by the GPE COVID-19 M&E guidelines, UNICEF will learn and share the implementation experience as the basis of continuous improvement to enhance the relevance and context of the programme, as the pandemic and school closures are an unprecedented event affecting the education sector.

The three areas in which evidence will be collected, reviewed and fed into future activities are: (i) relevance, (ii) effectiveness and (iii) efficiency. Some questions will be addressed on an ongoing basis, while others, which are more evaluative in nature, will be addressed in the final programme completion report.

10.1.1 Relevance

Relevance is considered to be the extent to which the grant meets the needs of children whose education has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including the most marginalized children. It will also consider the extent to which the programme aligned with the National Response Plan to COVID-19 and linked interventions from other development partners.

Key questions will be:

- Do grant stakeholders (children/teachers/caregivers/school leadership/education administrators, etc.) feel the grant is meeting/met their needs? Why or why not?
- Were the interventions supported by the grant targeted at the areas and children most in need?

• Were the interventions supported by the grant (e.g. educational and instructional materials provided) perceived as meeting the specific needs of the most marginalized children?

10.1.2 Effectiveness

Effectiveness is considered to be the extent to which the grant achieved its objectives and how grant activities contributed to the achievement of those objectives.

Key questions will be:

• To what extent has the grant achieved its output and outcome targets?
• Did the grant address specific barriers to learning faced by girls, boys and the most marginalized children due to COVID-19? How?
• To what extent did grant components mitigate learning loss that may have resulted from school closure due to COVID-19?
• What factors have inhibited or facilitated the achievement of grant goals, objectives, and expected results?
• Which programmes/interventions (if different interventions are deployed) were comparatively more/less effective? Why?
• Did grant interventions improve the availability of data required to plan and implement sectoral responses to COVID-19? How?
• Did grant interventions support coordinated responses (between external funders, government and other stakeholders) to COVID-19? How?
• Did grant interventions build government capacity to respond to COVID-19 and for future response and recovery efforts? How?
• Did grant interventions make effective use of existing MoEYS systems? How?

10.1.3 Efficiency

Efficiency is considered to be the extent to which grant resources (inputs) translated into intermediate results (outputs) and whether the same intermediate results could have been achieved with fewer resources.

Key questions will be:

• What was the speed of delivery of education services?
• Have block grants been delivered within the planned timeline? Why or why not?
• What were the unit costs of delivering the outputs? How do the unit/program costs compare across interventions in terms of reaching the beneficiaries (children/teachers/caregivers etc.)?

10.2 Implementation of M&E

10.2.1 Gender

Gender-specific indicators have been adapted and included in the results framework and gender disaggregated reporting will be utilized. Key questions on gender equality will follow the M&E framework adopted (relevance, effectiveness and efficiency).

10.2.2 Systemic capacity strengthening

UNICEF, through its HACT system, will act to strengthen the capacity of implementing government departments, local communities and civil society organizations to monitor and evaluate components of the programme. Data will be collected through the existing government Education Management Information System (EMIS), as well as through the reports being delivered from
school-district-provincial-central level, as mandated by MoEYS Directive No. 23. Dynamic data collection tools need to be developed and utilized to accurately capture the coverage and gaps of various distance learning approaches, as well as the attendance and learning situation when schools re-open.

Attention will be paid to tracking learning outcomes in the context of distance education. Monitoring will include the use of tools for assessing student learning. Reporting at school-level will follow established MoEYS procedures as far as circumstances allow, to minimise further burdens on school leadership. This is expected to include the use of the Quality-EMIS office, within the EMIS department, which collates learning outcomes for all schools nationally. Where appropriate, evidence will be gathered remotely, for example, by the use of videos/photographs to show evidence of activities and effectiveness.

10.2.3 UNICEF staff guidance on M&E

- Ensure that data collection is proceeding according to the monitoring plan
- Develop necessary tools to collect data that are currently not available
- Validate the data, review regular progress reports with managers, compare progress to what was planned
- Make field visits to project sites and gather data remotely
- Monitor UNICEF inputs
- Identify additional training, technical assistance and other resources that may be needed
- Change monitoring procedures, if necessary
- Identify additional studies and evaluations needed as the result of programme review
- Provide feedback to concerned parties.

In the case of programme activities where external technical assistance is used, two conditions apply:

i. UNICEF shall be responsible for monitoring the performance of the external partners

ii. Where appropriate, external partners will assist in monitoring as a means to assist the programme monitoring schedule and to inform their own progress

10.2.4 Use of external TA

In the case of programme activities where external technical assistance is used, two conditions apply:

iii. UNICEF shall be responsible for monitoring the performance of the external partners

iv. Where appropriate, external partners will assist in monitoring as a means to assist the programme monitoring schedule and to inform their own progress

Monitoring and evaluation will take place at the frequencies shown in the results framework (refer to Annex 7).

10.3 Reporting

As stated, reports will be delivered at the quarterly technical level steering committee meetings. This will link with the requirement for quarterly and six-monthly surveys, as listed in Annex III of the GPE M&E guidelines.

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62 MoEYS, Directive No. 23 on ‘Distance Learning’ and ‘E-learning’ Programme for Students from Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education. Issued 24 April 2020 (sections 7 & 8, page 4).
Reports will be submitted according to the templates supplied by GPE, which deliver a mix of quantitative and qualitative data. Reporting templates include:

(i) Brief quarterly survey (GPE guidelines reference - Report AIII.A)
(ii) Six-monthly survey (GPE guidelines reference - Report AIII.B)
(iii) End programme report (to be submitted 18 months after programme commencement)

Reports will be disaggregated for data according to GPE guideline expectations and as appropriate for individual indicators. These are all listed in the results framework (Annex 7).

UNICEF, as grant agent, will be responsible for submitting the reports to GPE. Using the technical level steering committee will allow for transparency, and the involvement of LEG/JTWG stakeholders and decision makers to the full extent possible.

The programme will use existing MoEYS reporting forms and collation procedures as listed in Directive No. 29, where information flows from the school (weekly) to the District Office of Education, and then to the Provincial Office of Education, and is collated bi-weekly at central level.

11. Communications and visibility

As grant agent, UNICEF Cambodia will seek to optimize the visibility of GPE’s contribution to Cambodia’s COVID-19 education response and recovery programme by clearly displaying the GPE visual identity in all communication and other programmatic assets produced as part of this grant. UNICEF will acknowledge in writing and verbally the role of GPE in the programme in all relevant situations.

There are several proposed key interventions where UNICEF Cambodia will highlight GPE’s support:

a) Recognizing GPE’s contribution to continuous learning by including the GPE logo in various e-learning visual assets (videos, e-books, posters, television shows, etc.), as well as acknowledging GPE’s support (audio) in all radio programmes produced with support from the grant. The visual assets will be broadcast nationally on the MoEYS education television channel and social media platforms (+8 million reach), and UNICEF Cambodia social media platforms (+2 million reach). The radio programmes cater to remote and minority communities (+ 200,000 reach).

b) Acknowledging GPE’s support by including its logo on e-learning assets produced to support teachers’ professional development as part of this grant.

c) Acknowledging GPE as a partner in the upcoming back-to-school campaign, a key nationwide cross-sectoral campaign led by UNICEF, in close collaboration with MoEYS. This campaign builds on the recent success of UNICEF’s COVID-19 Risk Communication community engagement campaign and has the ambitious goal of reaching every school and two thirds of the population.

d) When possible, GPE’s support will be acknowledged during community outreach work to be conducted under the Communication for Education activity, also under Strategic component 2.

63 The GPE Secretariat is developing a template for the grant completion report, which will be used by Cambodia.

64 MoEYS. Continuous learning guidelines for ‘Distance Learning’ and ‘E-learning’, No. 29. Issued 8 June 2020.

65 Including an estimated 200,000 pre-school aged children and 5,000 pre-schools, and Grade 1-3 primary school children engaged in MLE.
e) GPE support will be referenced in connection with M&E and as part of knowledge generation and sharing activities, to be delivered under Strategic component 4.

UNICEF Cambodia, as grant agent, will produce a variety of communication assets illustrating the impact of GPE-funded programme on the lives of Cambodian children, featuring children’s first-hand testimonies. Two op-eds (ideally jointly with GPE’s leadership) will be produced over the duration of the grant, focusing on the COVID-19 education crisis, challenges and the way forward. These assets will be posted on UNICEF Cambodia’s social media platforms and will be available for GPE’s own platforms.

UNICEF Cambodia will ensure that all implementing partners are fully briefed on GPE visibility requirements and are provided with necessary GPE visibility assets to incorporate, as appropriate, within the activities they deliver as part of the programme.
Annexes
Annex 1: Overview of Cambodia’s education sector

Guiding Cambodia’s development is the country’s Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency. Phase 4 of the Rectangular Strategy, which was adopted in 2018, aspires for Cambodia to become an upper-middle-income country by 2030 and high-income country by 2050. The strategy highlights human resource development as its priority. MoEYS is committed to achieving the strategy’s first goal of strengthening the quality of education, science and technology. In alignment with the strategic goals of the Rectangular Strategy, national and education sector-wide medium-term plans, the National Strategic Development Plan 2019-2023 and the ESP 2019-2023 were launched in 2019, as well as the 2030 Roadmap of Cambodia’s Sustainable Development Goal 4.

The ESP maintains a focus on equitable access to inclusive quality education for all children, with improved learning outcomes. The plan highlights sub-sector results targets and articulates strategies for how these targets will be realized; and identifies the main activities to be prioritized to realize the results targets, as well as resource and M&E requirements.

The Royal Government of Cambodia’s strong commitment to education is evidenced by a gradual increase in national budget allocations to the education sector. Expenditure in the education sector as a share of total public expenditure increased from 14.8 per cent in 2013 to 18.4 per cent in 2019, aiming to reach 19.1 per cent in 2023.66 In 2019, government expenditure on education was $807.4 million, with a total recurrent budget execution rate of 99.7 per cent. The impact of COVID-19 on the national education budget, however, is expected to result in a significant decrease in 2020 and 2021, particularly as economic forecasts indicate a reduction of 11.3 per cent in national budget expenditure in 2021.67

Education reforms

To ensure the effective implementation of education reforms at all levels, the minister identified five key reform priorities for his second mandate that are included the ESP 2019-2023.68 These are also called the five pillars, listed in the table below. The ESP identifies six other education management reforms for MoEYS to prioritize in the 2019-2023 ESP cycle. These are also referenced in the table below.

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66 The total liquidation rate of the MoEYS budget increased from 94.4 per cent in 2013 to 98.9 per cent in 2018.
67 Total national budget expenditure is projected to be USD7.2 billion in 2021, lower than USD8.1 billion in 2020 – a reduction of 11.3 per cent due to an estimated reduction in overall revenue of some 18 per cent. Source: IMF Macro Economic Framework 2021.
68 The five key priorities in the Minister’s mandate and other education management reforms are listed in Chapter IV, p 55: Education, Youth and Sport strategy reforms of the ESP 2019-2023.
Table showing major education reforms introduced under the Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023

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<td>Minister’s reform</td>
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<td>Pillar 1: Implementation of the Teacher Policy Action Plan</td>
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<td>Pillar 2: Review curricula and textbooks and improve learning environments</td>
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<td>Pillar 4: Improve learning evaluations to meet national, regional and international levels</td>
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<td>Policy and planning</td>
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<td>Improve the Education Management Information System (EMIS)</td>
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<td>Teacher training reform at teacher education institutions</td>
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<td>Youth development reform</td>
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<td>School reform</td>
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<td>Physical education and sport development reform</td>
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Promotion of digital education
Gender mainstreaming
Decentralization and de-concentration reform

In the context of COVID-19, it is interesting to note the promotion of digital education as an intended reform area. This reform was to be the main theme of the annual Education Congress scheduled for March 2020. Although the congress was cancelled due to the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak, digital education has become a major MoEYS focus over the last few months, with the establishment of a variety of diverse continuous or distance learning programmes being broadcast through social media platforms, television and radio to assist children to continue to learn during nationwide school closures.

Basic education analysis

The combined efforts of MoEYS and key education stakeholders have enabled year-on-year improvements against some targets set in the ESP 2019-2023. In ECE, the percentage of 5-year-old children enrolled in any form of ECE increased from 64 per cent (64.5 per cent for girls, 63.6 per cent for boys) in SY 2018/19 to 67.5 per cent (68.4 per cent for girls, 66.6 per cent for boys) in SY2019/20.\(^69\) Although the national average enrolment rate in ECE for children aged 5 years has been improving, disaggregated data of children aged 5 years by geographical regions shows significant disparity in enrolment levels, while gender-specific disparities are also noted. Out of 25 provinces, 15 provinces (60 per cent) achieved gender parity,\(^70\) while nine provinces (36 per cent) showed disparity in favour of girls and one province (4 per cent) in favour of boys. In addition to geographical and gender disparity in ECE enrolment, other vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of young children, such as those living in remote areas, children from low socio-economic families, children with disabilities and migrant children, are also marginalized from access to quality ECE.

\(^{69}\) Cambodian Education Sector Analysis. June 2020. Commissioned by the EU, using EMIS data.

\(^{70}\) Achievement of gender parity means a Gender Parity Index between 0.97 and 1.03.
At primary level, the gross completion rate remains relatively high. For SY2018/19, 86.2 per cent of students completed primary school (girls 90.3 per cent and boys 82.3 per cent) while in SY2019/20, 88.2 per cent of children completed primary school (girls 92.6 per cent and boys 84.1 per cent). However, the gender gap between girls and boys in regard to completion is widening. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) increased in favour of girls from 1.08 in SY2016/17 to 1.10 to SY2019/20.

At lower secondary level, there is a significant drop in gross completion rates compared to primary level, with no gender parity. The gross completion rate at lower secondary level in SY2018/19 was 47.5 per cent (girls 52.6 per cent and boys 42.8 per cent). Gross completion rates decreased further in SY2019/20 to 47.3 per cent (girls 52.5 per cent and boys 42.4 per cent). Like primary education, the gender gap between girls and boys continues to widen in lower secondary education, with around five girls completing lower secondary education for every four boys.71

The number of children dropping out of primary and lower secondary education rose sharply over the last two school years. There is significant concern that the impacts of COVID-19 will cause student drop-out to rise further still. For primary education, student drop-out increased to 6.8 per cent in SY2019/20 compared with just 4.4 per cent in SY2018/19, with boys’ drop-out rates rising the fastest. For lower secondary education, student drop-out increased to 18.6 per cent in SY2019/20, increasing from 15.8 per cent from SY2018/19, with girls experiencing the most rapid rise.72

**Geographical disparities**

In considering the issue of geographical disparity within the education system, it is informative to examine transition rates from primary to lower secondary education. Nationally, the transition rate between these two education levels is 85 per cent, slightly below the four-year average of 85.5 per cent. In urban areas the transition rate is 96.2 per cent, while rural areas are lagging with a transition rate of only 82.8 per cent, some 2.7 per cent behind the national transition figure, and 13.4 per cent behind urban areas.73 The same trend is evident when analysing data relating to ECE enrolment for children aged 3 to 5 years, which indicates 37.7 per cent for national enrolment (41.7 per cent in urban areas and 36.6 per cent in rural areas), representing a difference of some 5.1 per cent.74

**Learning outcomes**

Cambodia’s students continue to experience poor learning outcomes. These outcomes are linked to the general low quality and relevance of education. Student learning assessments, particularly focusing on Khmer language and mathematics, consistently show poor results from early grades through to secondary education. The learning targets established in the new ESP aim to move students out of the lowest achievement level: ‘below basic’ into ‘basic’, ‘proficient’ or ‘advanced’ levels. If these targets are achieved in the years ahead, this would be a positive indication that the education system is successfully helping more students demonstrate understanding and proficiency in Khmer and mathematics at above pass rate levels. Learning outcomes are assessed

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71 Between SY2016/17 and SY2019/20 the Gender Parity Index increased from 1.16 to 1.24. *Cambodian Education Sector Analysis*. June 2020. Commissioned by the EU, using EMIS data.
72 Ibid.
73 Ibid.
74 Ibid.
on a four-year rolling basis, with Grade 3 students assessed in SY2019/20. This will be followed by Grades 6, 8 and 11 until SY2022/23. As per the latest available data released in the first quarter of 2020, 50.5 per cent of Grade 3 students are in the ‘below basic proficiency’ bracket for Khmer reading, while 40.9 per cent are ‘below basic proficiency’ level for mathematics.

Student proficiency in Khmer reading shows a stable increasing trend as students’ progress through the education system. At Grade 11 (2018) only 20 per cent were considered ‘below basic proficiency’. However, the figure for Grade 11 also reflects that the majority of students have dropped out of full-time education by this point, leaving only the most fortunate still present. Mathematics has the opposite trend: students generally fare worse as they progress. For students in Grade 11, an estimated 72.3 per cent have ‘below basic proficiency’ in mathematics, but only 44.9 per cent were considered ‘below basic proficiency’ in Grade 3. Worth noting is that the Grade 8 assessment done in 2017 concluded that 36.3 per cent of students were ‘below basic proficiency’, a positive result compared to the other grades. Girls and boys had similar performances in mathematics.75

**Education access**

For Cambodia to maintain and expand access to education it will be essential for investments in school infrastructure to be prioritized across the basic education sub-sectors. There are currently significant infrastructure constraints at all levels of education. Current attempts to address these constraints include ongoing construction programmes and the use of double teaching shifts for primary and secondary education.76 A facilities needs assessment conducted with support from the EU in 2019 suggests prioritization of school construction based on equity principles.77 For ECE, the capacity to expand state-run ECE facilities was assessed as limited, due to a lack of teachers and a growing need for classrooms for primary students. On this basis, the study suggests an initial focus on expanding infrastructure facilities for community and home-based ECE services.78

For primary education, the assessment notes that the existing capacity of primary schools has been used in providing classrooms for ECE, and in reducing double-shift teaching. To alleviate the current overcrowding in primary schools and to meet future needs it is recommended that MoEYS constructs more than 120 primary school buildings per year over the next 10 years.79 For secondary education, the assessment assumes increased demand with an expected expansion of Cambodia’s economy, resulting in a rise in infrastructure requirements. For Cambodia to achieve 100 per cent gross enrolment rate in lower secondary schools in the next 10 years, the assessment finds that the number of lower secondary schools being constructed would need to double to some 250 per year.80

76 For primary schools, MoEYS EMIS data shows 39.7 per cent of primary schools are utilizing double shifts, and for lower secondary schools, 17 per cent are utilizing double shifts.
80 Loc. Cit.
Annex 2: Theory of change

While schools are closed due to COVID-19 pandemic

IF
All children are kept learning by providing good quality, relevant and inclusive continuous learning programmes with support from parents and teachers

IF
All children, including the most vulnerable, their parents and school communities are provided with the necessary information and outreach concerning COVID-19 to be ready for a safe return to school

AND when schools re-open

IF
Schools are provided with sufficient resources to be hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environments, able to meet the learning needs of the most vulnerable girls and boys

IF
Stronger and more resilient learning environments for girls and boys are built, to enable them to attend and complete school

THEN

All children will receive relevant, quality and inclusive continuous learning in safe, protective and inclusive learning environments to minimize the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
Annex 3: Draft Concept Note for Cambodia’s national back-to-school campaign

Introduction

The re-opening of schools must be safe and consistent with Cambodia’s COVID-19 health response, with all reasonable measures taken to protect students, school staff, parents/caregivers and families, as well as the wider community. Precautions are necessary to prevent the potential spread of COVID-19 in school settings and care must be taken to avoid stigmatizing students and staff who may have been exposed to the virus. School closures and the wider socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 on communities and society have left children more vulnerable to child protection risks such as physical punishment/abuse, sexual and gender-based violence, child marriage, child labour and child trafficking.

Disseminating evidence-based information and raising awareness, practising good hygiene, particularly washing hands and cleaning/disinfecting the environment, maintaining social distancing and monitoring COVID-19 symptoms (including temperature checks) in schools are all important measures that need to continue when schools re-open. All children should be able to return to safe, clean and supportive school environments so that their wellbeing and learning opportunities can be optimized. Hence, the messaging will be cross-cutting, including all aspects of a child’s wellbeing such as education, hygiene, health (mental, physical and psychosocial), nutrition, physical activity and safety (school, home and online). Addressing learning inequalities and protection concerns exacerbated by COVID-19, particularly for vulnerable boys and girls, will be a high priority.

It is therefore suggested that UNICEF and other education sector partners, together with MoEYS, launch an IEC back-to-school campaign to promote the safe return to schools. This campaign will provide practical ideas and steps to help children return to school safely. It will also give guidance, key messages and considerations for school administrations and teachers, parents, caregivers, local authorities and community members, as well as children themselves, on returning to school and maintaining practices that promote safe and healthy schools for everyone.

Going back to school safely campaign

1. **Key audience:** children, adolescents, parents and caregivers, teachers, school directors, other school staff, local authorities and communities.

2. **Duration:** The campaign will run for eight weeks: two weeks prior to schools opening and six weeks after schools have re-opened (depending on the notification period provided by MoEYS regarding school re-opening).

3. **Key messages:**
   - **Children**
     - When going back to school, wash your hands frequently at school, including when you enter the school grounds and/or classroom, and when you leave. Wash your hands with soap frequently including: before you eat, after you use the toilet, after you play and after you cough/sneeze
     - Tell your parents and ask to stay at home if you feel sick, especially with the COVID-19 symptoms81:

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81 These symptoms are those listed in the MoEYS Continuous learning guidelines for ‘Distance Learning’ and ‘E-learning’, No. 29. Issued 8 June 2020 (page 33, COVID-19 case definitions).
- Temperature (37.5 degrees or above)
- Persistent cough
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath

- Be kind to others: don’t stigmatize or tease anyone
- If you feel sad, worried or confused talk to someone you trust, like your parents, relatives, a teacher or counsellor/social worker when available, or call the government child helpline (1280) for free
- You can talk to safe and dedicated counsellors through these hotline numbers: 017 222 372 / 089 666 325 / 097 9111 918, or by visiting TPO Cambodia’s Facebook page: www.facebook.com/tpocambodia

**Adolescents**
- When going back to school, wash your hands frequently at school, including when you enter the school grounds and/or classroom, and when you leave. Wash your hands with soap frequently including: before you eat, after you use the toilet, after you play and after you cough/sneeze
- Protect yourself and others, be a leader in keeping yourself and others healthy, and practise good hygiene at home and at school: model good practices to younger ones, don’t stigmatize or tease anyone
- Stay home if you feel sick, especially with the COVID-19 symptoms:
  - Temperature (37.5 degrees or above)
  - Persistent cough
  - Runny nose
  - Sore throat
  - Shortness of breath
- Keep safe online
- When sharing information about the COVID-19 pandemic ensure it is accurate and coming from a reliable source: reference Ministry of Health (MoH), UNICEF and WHO sources: Facebook information may not be accurate
- If you feel sad or confused talk to someone you trust, like your parents, relatives, friend/s, a teacher or social worker/counsellor when available, or call the government child helpline (1280) for free
- You can talk to safe and dedicated counsellors through these hotline numbers: 017 222 372 / 089 666 325 / 097 9111 918, or by visiting TPO Cambodia’s Facebook page: www.facebook.com/tpocambodia

**Parents/caregivers and community**
- When schools re-open, encourage and support your child(ren) to return, and prevent them from dropping out
- Monitor your child’s health, including mental health. If your child is sick, keep them at home
- Teach and model good hygiene practices, including regular handwashing
- Encourage your child to ask questions and to express their feelings; prevent stigma by using facts about COVID-19 and remind children to be considerate of one another
When sharing information about the COVID-19 pandemic ensure it is accurate and coming from a reliable source: reference MoH, UNICEF and WHO sources

- Remember that information from Facebook or other social media may not be accurate and is unlikely to have been checked by a reliable source

Collaborate with your child’s school to receive information and ask how you can support the school’s safety efforts in respect to COVID-19 prevention

Your child can talk to safe and dedicated counsellors through these hotline numbers: 017 222 372 / 089 666 325 / 097 9111 918, or by visiting TPO Cambodia’s Facebook page: www.facebook.com/tpocambodia

- Teachers
  - Share the latest facts about COVID-19 and its prevention with students and parents
  - When sharing information about the COVID-19 pandemic ensure it is accurate and coming from a reliable source: reference MoH, UNICEF and WHO sources
    - Remember that information from Facebook or other social media may not be accurate and is unlikely to have been checked by a reliable source
  - Encourage students to ask questions and share information to prevent misunderstanding and stigma relating to COVID-19
    - If you do not know the answers to questions, promise students that you will check information with a reliable source
  - Model and promote good hygiene practices, particularly hand hygiene, school cleaning and disinfection; ensure that MoEYS directives on handling resources are followed
  - Observe and monitor students’ physical, emotional and psychological conditions daily
    - Contact parents in case of concern over any aspect of a child’s wellbeing
  - Take care of your own physical and mental wellbeing
    - Use the support of your colleagues in your school and cluster, including in virtual groups such as Telegram teams
  - If you see a student who is sick, assess their condition and have them stay home. Do this privately and avoid stigmatization per established procedures referenced below. Reassure students that they will be supported to catch up with what they might miss
    - In case a child is sick and needs to stay home, or there is a second wave and a school needs to close again, direct parents to resources and learning materials and guide them on how to support their children’s learning.

4. IEC assets include:
   4.1 Digital content for multiple platforms: television, radio, social media, Telegram groups, billboards in major centres with ‘Tips for going back to school’ targeting: 1) primary school students, 2) secondary school students, 3) parents, 4) teachers, and 5) local administration and authorities
   4.1.1 Existing digital content appropriate for the campaign, such as the ‘KHMENG CHHLAT’ (smart kids) WASH superhero role model for children

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82 The Safe and Healthy School booklet has technical guidance from MoEYS on school cleaning and disinfection
83 MoEYS. Continuous learning guidelines for ‘Distance Learning’ and ‘E-learning’, No. 29. Issued 8 June (pages 30-31).
4.2 Print assets:
4.2.1 Flyers / wellbeing postcards for children to bring home reflecting the same messaging and reaching audiences with limited access to digital platforms
4.2.2 Documents with limited (or simplified) print content to reach community members with limited literacy skills
4.2.3 Hand washing posters and reminder stickers about washing hands placed in hand-washing facilities and other locations
4.2.4 The ‘Safe and Healthy School’ booklet for school directors and teachers, including key messages and guidance for promoting safe and healthy schools. To be printed and disseminated to all schools nationwide and as an e-version available on key MoEYS online platforms.

5 Method of delivery/distribution:
5.1 All assets will be inclusive (including braille language for print), and available in Khmer and four minority languages spoken in Cambodia
5.2 Distribution channels include television and radio, billboards, online media and social media platforms, messaging groups via Telegram/Messenger/WhatsApp (provincial and district offices of education, school directors, teachers, school support committees)
5.3 Distributed to all schools before they re-open (or during the early stages of school re-opening, depending on the notification period given by MoEYS on school re-opening), including USB sticks with videos, Safe and Healthy School booklet, flyers and wellbeing postcards, posters and stickers.

6 Key messages in ‘Safe and Healthy School’ booklet
- Establish procedures if students or staff become unwell
- Know the latest facts, promote information sharing on the situation and on COVID-19 prevention. Ensure information shared is coming from reliable sources: MoH, UNICEF, WHO
- Monitor school attendance, including school children who are at risk of dropping out, working with local authorities, parents and communities in a collaborative way. Risks include:
  i. families with high levels of poverty, scholarship candidates, ID poor, other factors identified by the school
  ii. children with high levels of absenteeism
  iii. children with family members working in a migratory capacity (e.g. crossing national or provincial borders)
  iv. children with poor academic performance, e.g. those who have failed their Semester 1 test
  v. children with multiple repeated years in their schooling or who are studying at a grade level inappropriate for their age

84 The four Indigenous ethnic minority languages are Kreung, Tumpuon, Phnong and Kavet.
85 The booklet should align with available development partner and MoEYS resources, recommendations and guidelines, and refer to them whenever feasible.
86 The booklet could include guidance on this, i.e. if a student is feeling sick with fever and other symptoms, she or he should stay home for 14 days.
- Plan for continuity of (distance) learning in case of temporary school closures due to a second wave of COVID-19, or for individual students who are staying at home because they became sick
- Implement targeted health education (disease prevention and control in daily activities and lessons: age, gender, language, ethnicity and disability-responsive)
  i. Schools can ask for specialist assistance from the local health centre or other health professionals to make specific school/community visits to support students
- Support vulnerable populations (school links to social service systems, school health, school feeding programmes, therapies for children with disabilities and resources/tips for teachers on how to identify and support children who need additional academic support)
- Checklist for creating and maintaining a clean and healthy school environment consistent with the MoEYS school re-opening guidelines:
  i. Clean and disinfect school buildings and classrooms (deep cleaning before schools open and daily cleaning routine)
  ii. Establish regular hand washing and safe hygiene behaviours
  iii. Ensure soap is available and conduct regular systematic checks on WASH facilities
  iv. Increase air flow and ventilation in buildings wherever possible
  v. Post signs and information encouraging and explaining good hand and respiratory hygiene practices
  vi. Ensure trash is removed daily and disposed of safely
  vii. Establish easy-to-understand and age-appropriate protocols on physical distancing measures
- Tips for teachers and checklist to keep a learning environment safe for children, consistent with the MoEYS school re-opening guidelines (to include relevant helpline numbers / websites for all the points below).
  i. Understand the impact of COVID-19 on students in regard to child protection: mental health and the increased risk of violence (including gender-based violence and bullying), abuse, exploitation, stigma and discrimination
  ii. Identify children at risk
  iii. Understand what actions teachers need to take when they suspect violence or a child reports violence to teachers
  iv. Establish or strengthen reporting mechanisms as well as child protection policies or procedures to ensure children’s safety in and around schools
  v. Refer cases of concern to appropriate services such as social/child welfare, mental health and psychosocial support services
  vi. Support students’ mental health and psychosocial wellbeing and take care of your own mental health and psychosocial wellbeing
  vii. Support students and parents to keep children safe online during the COVID-19 pandemic.

7. Summary of planned activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of asset</th>
<th>Target audience</th>
<th>Coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Nationwide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MoEYS, Directive No. 23 on ‘Distance Learning’ and ‘E-learning’ Programme for Students from Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education. Issued 24 April 2020 (page 4, responses for re-opening school).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Digital Assets</th>
<th>Adolescents</th>
<th>Nationwide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New video for different audiences</td>
<td>Parents/caregivers and community</td>
<td>Nationwide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers and school directors</td>
<td>Nationwide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Print Assets</th>
<th>School directors, teachers</th>
<th>Distributed to all schools nationwide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Safe and Healthy School’ booklet</td>
<td>school directors, teachers</td>
<td>MoEYS online platforms; social media / mobile phone apps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flyers / wellbeing postcards</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Given to students at all schools nationwide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand washing posters &amp; stickers</td>
<td>Students and teachers</td>
<td>Distributed to all schools nationwide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Strategic Component 1: Keep children learning

- **Activity 1.1** Production of continuous or distance learning programmes
  - Sub-activity 1.1.1 Pre-primary education and early learning
  - Sub-activity 1.1.2 Primary education
  - Sub-activity 1.1.3 Lower secondary education
  - Sub-activity 1.1.4 Technical assistance

- **Activity 1.2** Equipment for continuous learning

- **Activity 1.3** Pedagogical support for continuous learning (school block grant)
  - Sub-activity 1.3.1 Paper-based learning materials to support continuous learning (school block grant)
  - Sub-activity 1.3.2 Teacher support for continuous learning

#### Subtotal Component 1
860,000 USD

### Strategic component 2: Children are ready for a safe return to school

- **Activity 2.1** Back to school campaign
  - Subtotal component 2
  - Budget (USD): 25,000

- **Activity 2.2** Communication for Education for a safe return to school

### Strategic component 3: Schools are hygienic, safe,

- **Subtotal component 3**
  - Budget (USD): 4,310,000

#### Budget and Implementation Timeline

<p>| Strategic Component | Activity | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | April | May | June | July | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | April | May | June | Budget (USD) |
|---------------------|----------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|------|------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|------|----------------|
| Strategic Component 1 | Subtotal Component 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1,030,000 |
| | Activity 1.1 Production of continuous or distance learning programmes | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 860,000 |
| | Sub-activity 1.1.1 Pre-primary education and early learning | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 170,000 |
| | Sub-activity 1.1.2 Primary education | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 470,000 |
| | Sub-activity 1.1.3 Lower secondary education | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 85,000 |
| | Sub-activity 1.1.4 Technical assistance | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 135,000 |
| | Activity 1.2 Equipment for continuous learning | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 30,000 |
| | Activity 1.3 Pedagogical support for continuous learning (school block grant) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Part of School Block Grant |
| | Sub-activity 1.3.1 Paper-based learning materials to support continuous learning (school block grant) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Part of School Block Grant |
| | Sub-activity 1.3.2 Teacher support for continuous learning | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 140,000 |
| Strategic component 2 | Subtotal component 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 375,000 |
| | Activity 2.1 Back to school campaign | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 25,000 |
| | Activity 2.2 Communication for Education for a safe return to school | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 350,000 |
| Strategic component 3 | Subtotal component 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4,310,000 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Component</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>Budget (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>protective and adaptive learning environments</td>
<td>Activity 3.1 Basic hygiene supplies for schools (school block grant)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity 3.2 Remedial and accelerated learning for disadvantaged students (school block grant)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity 3.3 Teacher support for adaptive learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategic component 4: Build stronger and more resilient learning environments</td>
<td>Subtotal component 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,285,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity 4.1 Efficient programme management and operational support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity 4.2 Monitoring and Evaluation of Response Efforts</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Activity 4.3 Knowledge generation, sharing and coordination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity 4.4 UNICEF Recovery Costs (7%)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk factor</td>
<td>Likelihood</td>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>Overall Risk Rating</td>
<td>Risk context</td>
<td>Risk mitigation measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Decline in government operating budget to schools lessens impact of COVID-19 response and recovery school block grants | Low        | High   | Medium              | • The RGC has instigated budget cuts for 2020, and budget revenue is forecast to decline in 2020, which means less financial resource availability for all ministries, including MoEYS  
• Both the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) and MoEYS have made firm commitments to maintain the level of school operating budgets | • Policy dialogue with MoEYS and MEF through the LEG/JTWG  
• Bilateral dialogue with MoEYS and MEF  
• ESP 2019-2013 is in place and has clearly prioritizes investments at school level |
| Insufficient development partner support for COVID-19 response in the education sector to assist with medium- to long-term recovery | Medium     | High   | Medium              | • COVID-19 is a pandemic that is resulting in a severe global economic downturn, there is an increased risk that development cooperation funding for the education sector will be reduced | • Coordinate regular mapping of development partner pipeline funding  
• Engage in policy dialogue through the LEG/JTWG and ESWG to discuss resource requirements and priority needs  
• Explore alternative sources of funding through regional and global channels |
| Poor quality of outputs delivered by implementing partners                  | Medium     | High   | Medium              | • This programme will work both through government systems and government partners and with external partners, such as NGOs | • Technical assistance to support quality assurance to be provided to implementing partners built into the proposal  
• Regular spot checks and monitoring missions  
• Funds released to implementing partners tied to deliverables and payments made upon presentation of |
| **Continuous learning materials and programmes fail to meet desired learner and curriculum goals.** | Medium | High | Medium | • The production of continuous learning assets, including electronic and paper-based assets is an important part of the work under the programme  
• Most of these assets will be produced by government partners, with technical assistance provided | • Continue to work with MoEYS to ensure quality assurance activities are implemented to standard to ensure continuous learning materials establish a foundation for learning gains  
• Regular monitoring from different levels (UNICEF, MoEYS technical teams, provincial-level) to assess learning and adaptation |
| **Institutional capacity for the comprehensive delivery of MoEYS Covid-19 National Response Plan remains weak** | Medium | Medium | Medium | • MoEYS COVID-19 National Response Plan covers key areas of work that will be delivered through this programme  
• There will be some areas of work within the national response plan that fall outside this programme, and will need government and other development partner resources to be realized | • LEG/JTWG and the ESWG used to regularly monitor and discuss the implementation of the national response plan  
• Policy dialogue through the LEG/JTWG and the ESWG will enable the identification of any major gaps in the implementation of MoEYS National Response Plan |
| **The procurement processes do not follow agreed standards or guidelines and procured materials do not follow agreed specifications** | Medium | Medium | Medium | • Direct procurement will be limited under this programme  
• Block grants to schools will provide schools with resources to procure basic items such as printing learning materials and hygiene supplies | • Procurement processes are well managed to follow standard procedures approved by UNICEF as Grant Agent and MoEYS through an approved financial manual  
• Procurement by schools will be governed by the MoEYS School Operational Fund (SOF) manual |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial risks</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Substantial delay in disbursement of block grants to schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• School block grants form a major part of the programme to ensure resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Policy dialogue through the LEG/JTWG and ESWG</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Bilateral dialogue with MoEYS Department of Finance and MEF</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Value for money not achieved in programme implementation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• This programme will draw on government systems and partners in programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Other partnerships with non-government partners are intended</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Precedents of high-funding (beyond harmonized rate) exist in recent</td>
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<td>• Prior in-depth reviews of partner policies and processes to identify gaps</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Technical assistance provided and capacity strengthening of implementing</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Cost norms established by MoEYS for production of continuous learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fund transfers to implementing partners tied to deliverables, payments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Financial spot checks and programme monitoring visits conducted regularly</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fraud and corruption cases arise during programme implementation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Different fund channelling processes will be used under this programme,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Risk rating assessment based on financial and procurement assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Spot checks and audits by Grant Agents</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fraud cases reported through the LRG/JTWG and through Grant Agent internal</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 6: Development partner COVID-19 response and recovery interventions

The table below provides a summary of major development partner investments in COVID-19 response and recovery. Regular programme activities that also happen to complement COVID-19 responses have not been included.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Contribution USD</th>
<th>Other Resources</th>
<th>Link to GPE</th>
<th>Geographic coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>$2,183,406</td>
<td></td>
<td>Linked to Strategic component 2 to ensure children are ready for a safe return to school: The EU support will enable a nationwide back-to-school campaign to be launched. GPE funds will be used to complement the EU investment in the back-to-school campaign, which is also being coordinated by UNICEF, with ESWG partners and MoEYS.</td>
<td>Nationwide (Approx. 11,529 schools)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>$463,000</td>
<td>CDPF88</td>
<td>Linked to Strategic component 3 to ensure schools are hygienic, safe, protective and are adaptive learning environments: The EU support focuses on providing basic hygiene supplies to ensure schools can re-open safely. Initial supplies (lasting about 4 weeks) will be provided to all public pre-schools and primary schools nationwide. GPE funds will be complementary, as they will enable schools to access further resources for basic hygiene supplies throughout the school year (i.e. beyond the initial 4 weeks period mentioned above).</td>
<td>Nationwide (Approx. 1,771 schools)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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88 Pooled resources from the Capacity Development Partnership Fund Phase III, of which UNICEF is fund manager. Capacity Development Partnership Fund funding partners include: EU, Sweden, USAID and GPE.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Support Details</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>$5,222,819</td>
<td><strong>Linked to Strategic component 1</strong> to keep children learning: The World Bank’s restructuring of the Higher Education Improvement Project is supporting MoEYS to continue to deliver continuous learning programmes from ECE through to upper secondary education. This support includes both the production of continuous learning assets and the printing of paper-based learning materials by schools via block grants. This support is being implemented to cover semester 2 of SY2019/20. GPE funds will enable the continuation of continuous learning programmes being implemented with World Bank support. GPE support to this area will enable continuation of distance learning services in SY2020/21.</td>
<td>Nationwide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>$950,000</td>
<td><strong>Linked to Strategic component 3</strong> to ensure schools are hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environments: USAID funds have supported key areas related to risk communication and community engagement/outreach. Of this contribution, $93,000 has been used to procure basic hygiene supplies for primary and secondary schools in urban areas to be used for an initial four-week period when they re-open. GPE funds will be complementary, as they will enable schools to access further resources for basic hygiene supplies throughout the school year (i.e. beyond the initial 4 weeks period mentioned above).</td>
<td>Nationwide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td><strong>Linked to Strategic component 1</strong> to keep children learning: GPE’s Education Sector Plan Development Grant is being implemented to support primary school students in inclusive continuous learning. The programme also supports the radio programme for ECE-aged children located in remote communities across Cambodia. GPE funds will be complementary to the ongoing delivery of continuous learning services to children across the country.</td>
<td>Nationwide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td><strong>Linked to Strategic component 1</strong> to keep children learning: UNESCO has supported MoEYS to expand continuous online learning across education sub-sectors including primary, secondary, and non-formal education. GPE funds will continue to support MoEYS to produce continuous learning programmes for preschool, primary and lower secondary schools, complementing the support already provided by UNESCO.</td>
<td>Nationwide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Food Programme (WFP)</td>
<td>$167,500</td>
<td><strong>Linked to Strategic component 3</strong> to ensure schools are hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environments: WFP is supporting MoEYS in a number of ways: through the supply of ‘take home’ rations to poor children who receive a national scholarship; and basic hygiene infrastructure and supplies to prepare for the re-opening of schools and re-commencement of school meals. GPE funds will be complementary to WFP, as WFP is implementing its support this current school year and for the last half of 2020. GPE support will commence for the new school year 2020/21.</td>
<td>5 provinces: Kampong Thom, Kampong Chhnang, Pursat, Siem Reap, and Oddar Meanchey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>Linked to Strategic component</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save the Children</td>
<td>$139,000</td>
<td>1 to keep children learning</td>
<td>Save the Children is supporting the provision of distance learning activities in specific primary schools in four target provinces. GPE funds will complement Save the Children’s support, due to the focus on supporting MoEYS to continue delivering distance learning services nationally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save the Children</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>3 to ensure schools are hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environments</td>
<td>Save the Children is providing hygiene and protective equipment. GPE funds will complement this work through nationwide support for schools to procure basic hygiene supplies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARE</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 to keep children learning</td>
<td>CARE, with UNICEF, is providing continuous learning for MLE through supporting the production and broadcast of an MLE radio programme for pre-school and early grade primary students (Grades 1-3). CARE is also supporting five lower secondary schools with e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. GPE funds will complement CARE’s support, due to the focus on supporting MoEYS to continue delivering distance learning services nationally, including for MLE students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Fund Cambodia</td>
<td>$71,000</td>
<td>1 to keep children learning</td>
<td>ChildFund Cambodia installed ICT materials, develop teaching manuals and provide capacity building to teachers on how to conduct distance learning. GPE funds will complement ChildFund's support, due to the focus on supporting MoEYS to continue delivering distance learning services nationally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finn Church Aid (FCA)</td>
<td>$17,166</td>
<td>1 to keep children learning</td>
<td>FCA is raising awareness on measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and assisting the availability of distance and online learning in target communities, including the provision of paper-based learning assets. This support includes capacity building of career counsellors through the provision of video lessons on career guidance counselling, mobile mentoring and weekly webinars. GPE funds will complement FCA’s support, due to the focus on supporting MoEYS to continue delivering distance learning services nationally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finn Church Aid (FCA)</td>
<td>$14,747</td>
<td>3 on hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environments</td>
<td>FCA provided hygiene supplies and IEC materials to target schools for COVID-19 prevention and recovery. GPE funds will complement this work through nationwide support for primary and lower secondary schools to procure basic hygiene supplies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>Linked to Strategic component</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan International Cambodia</td>
<td>$134,418</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to keep children learning: Plan International Cambodia provided print materials to support students in distance learning. GPE funds will complement Plan International Cambodia’s support, due to the focus on supporting MoEYS to continue delivering distance learning services nationally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan International Cambodia</td>
<td>$16,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>to ensure children are ready for a safe return to school: Plan International Cambodia organized hygiene promotion and produced IEC materials for 150 primary schools. GPE funds will be complementary through the back-to-school campaign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan International Cambodia</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>to ensure schools are hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environments: Plan International Cambodia is repairing/installing water supply and handwashing facilities at 100 pre-schools and primary schools. GPE funds will be complementary to support schools with hygiene supplies and practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aide et Action</td>
<td>$135,250</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to keep children learning: Aide et Action, in partnership with MOEYS, will support radio-based distance learning and materials for 3,369 ethnic minority children in pre-school and primary (Grade 1-3), and has created an online learning platform for children with disabilities. GPE funds will be complementary to support radio programmes for early childhood education and development and for the MoEYS MLE programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aide et Action</td>
<td>$34,960</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>to ensure children are ready for a safe return to school: Aide et Action deployed education campaigns in 300 communes to promote hygiene, social distancing by playing educational messages and safely delivery reading and colouring books to reinforce the implementation of government and WHO guidelines. GPE funds will be complementary through the back-to-school campaign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aide et Action</td>
<td>$52,600</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>to ensure schools are hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environments: Aide et Action has installed 400 hand washing stations and provided hygiene supplies to targeted schools. GPE funds will be complementary to support schools with hygiene supplies and practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VSO</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Expert volunteer technical assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JICA</td>
<td>$34,000</td>
<td>Expert TA provided to produce e-learning materials</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Linked to Strategic component 1** to keep children learning: JICA has been providing technical inputs to 2 Teacher Education Colleges (TECs) in Phnom Penh and Battambang through the E-TEC project, and this contribution will be used to developing the environment to produce e-learning materials for the student teachers of TECs, which in turn will benefit primary and lower secondary students of whom TEC graduates will take care.

GPE funds will complement the JICA’s support to TECs through the activities at the school level, such as the provision of pedagogical support and equipment for continuous learning and the production of continuous or distance learning programmes.

TECs: Battambang and Phnom Penh
Annex 7: Results Framework

All the interventions presented in this proposal will be monitored and assessed using the indicative Results Framework shown below, which will be further confirmed with MoEYS technical departments.

Note that indicator targets are set, but baselines are not given; as all baselines are assumed to be at zero. As further data is available, appropriate adjustments will be possible. Where verifications require sampling from technical departments, selected schools will be surveyed for all relevant indicators.

Programme objective:
*To ensure children receive relevant, quality and continuous learning in safe, protective and inclusive learning environments to minimize the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Disaggregation</th>
<th>Verification</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic component 1: Keep children learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 1: Girls and boys maintain their learning progress through access to quality, relevant and inclusive continuous learning programmes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result Indicator 1A</td>
<td>Access</td>
<td><strong>(Core) Number of girls and boys learning supported by good quality, relevant and inclusive continuous learning programmes</strong></td>
<td>2.86 million schoolchildren (girls and boys) reached through continuous learning programmes Pre-prim: 210,000 Primary: 2,040,000 L. Sec: 610,000</td>
<td>- Gender - Level of education - Geographical location - Disability status</td>
<td>MoEYS TDs confirm upload (report)</td>
<td>Every two months</td>
<td>UNICEF co-ordinate TDs (ECED, PED, GSED) report data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result Indicator 1B</td>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Percentage of schoolchildren (girls and boys) accessing continuous learning programmes</td>
<td>Schoolchildren (girls and boys) receiving continuous learning programmes by grade level - Pre-primary (age 5: 50%) - Primary (G1-3: 60%) - Primary (G4-6: 70%) - Lower Secondary (G7-9: 80%)</td>
<td>- Type of continuous learning programmes - Prescribed subjects - Level of education</td>
<td>Existing TD survey tools[^89] UNICEF verify data</td>
<td>Monthly (selected schools sample)</td>
<td>TDs (ECED, PED, GSED) UNICEF to track</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[^89]: Technical Departments have existing and tested survey tools and large-scale Telegram groups to take sample data from selected schools effectively.
### Activity 1.3

**Access**

Percentage of modules required to cover the designated core curriculum subjects over a full academic year are created and distributed at all levels of basic education and at pre-school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access</th>
<th>Percentage of modules required to cover the designated core curriculum subjects are created and distributed in:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|        | - Pre-primary and ECE  
|        | - Primary (G1-6, two subjects)  
|        | - Low Sec. (G7-9, six subjects) |

- **Type of continuous learning programmes**
- **Prescribed subjects**
- **Level of education**

UNICEF verify expected and budgeted outputs for each working group.

**Workshop reports (output reports)**

UNICEF coordinate TDs (ECED, PED, GSED) gather data.

#### Activity 1.3.1

**Access**

Percentage of identified vulnerable students receive free paper-based materials to support distance learning.

80% of identified vulnerable students receive free paper-based materials to support distance learning.

- **Gender**
- **Level of education**
- **Geographical location**

School reports on block grant expenditure

UNICEF to track.

#### Activity (1.1/1.2/1.3.1)

**Access**

Percentage of modules required to cover the designated core curriculum subjects over a full academic year are created and distributed at all levels of basic education and at pre-school.

90% of the modules required to cover the designated curriculum subjects are created and distributed in:

- Pre-primary and ECE  
- Primary (G1-6, two subjects)  
- Low Sec. (G7-9, six subjects)

- **Type of continuous learning programmes**
- **Prescribed subjects**
- **Level of education**

UNICEF verify expected and budgeted outputs for each working group.

Workshop reports (output reports)

UNICEF coordinate TDs (ECED, PED, GSED) gather data.

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90 Vulnerable students will be identified as outlined in section 4.2 of this report.
### Strategic component 2: Children are ready for a safe return to school

**Result 2:** Girls and boys, including the most vulnerable, have the necessary information and support to be ready to return to school

| Activity 2.1 | Access | (Core) Number (and %) of children previously enrolled in grant-supported schools who return to school once school re-opens | 95% of children previously enrolled in grant-supported schools return to school within six weeks of school re-openings  
Primary: 1,938,000  
L. Sec.: 579,500 | - Gender  
- Level of education  
- Geographical location  
- Disability status | MoEYS existing attendance reporting systems | Every two months (complete 6 weeks after final phase of return) | UNICEF to co-ordinate EMIS to collate data |
|-------------|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Activity 2.2 | Access / Protection and wellbeing | % of community members or households in target areas reached with campaign messages, especially the vulnerable communities | 90% of community members or households in target areas reached with campaign messages, especially the vulnerable communities | - Gender  
- Level of education  
- Geographical location  
- Disability status | TD survey tools and inspection tools  
Use of list of identified households  
Monitoring visits | TDs sample monthly  
As scheduled | Monitoring by TDs and UNICEF |

### Strategic component 3: Schools are hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environments

**Result 3:** Schools are hygienic, safe, protective and adaptive learning environments that meet the learning needs of the most vulnerable girls and boys

| Activity 3.1 | Protection and wellbeing | (Core) Number of grant-supported schools equipped with basic hygiene supplies for prevention of COVID-19 | 95% of grant-supported schools equipped with minimum hygiene supplies for prevention of COVID-19  
Primary: 5,898  
Lower secondary: 1,013 | - Level of education  
- Geographical location | School reports on block grant expenditure | Quarterly | UNICEF to co-ordinate TDs (PED, GDSE) to collate through POEs |

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91 Minimum supplies will be to ensure that schools have sufficient cleaning materials to last one semester (five months)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Area of focus</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Reporting</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Co-ordination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3.2</td>
<td>Enabling environment</td>
<td>Number of schools offering remedial/accelerated programmes to help children catch up with lost learning time</td>
<td>80% of schools in all provinces offer remedial/accelerated programmes to help children to catch up with lost learning time Primary: 5,242 Lower secondary: 853</td>
<td>School reports on block grant expenditure TD Survey tools</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>UNICEF to co-ordinate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3.3</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>(Core) Number (and % of teachers in programme area) of teachers self-trained by provision of materials to support remedial/accelerated programmes to mitigate loss of learning during school closure</td>
<td>90% of teachers self-trained by provision of materials to support remedial/accelerated programmes to mitigate loss of learning during school closure - Primary: 33,049 - Lower secondary: 10,722</td>
<td>MoEYS TDs confirm upload UNICEF verify reports</td>
<td>Every two months</td>
<td>UNICEF to co-ordinate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strategic component 4: Build stronger and more resilient learning environments**

**Result 4:** Learning environments for girls and boys are stronger and more resilient and are enabling girls and boys to attend and complete school

| Activity 4.1 | Operational management | Availability of efficient management and operational support from Grant Agent | Updates from LEG: ESWG meetings, JTWG-Ed. meeting to all have standing agenda item on COVID-19 funding 92 | Meeting minutes GPE reports: quarterly and six-monthly | Quarterly | UNICEF to co-ordinate |
| Activity 4.3 | Sustainability | Knowledge generation and sharing of resources are fed into education system (LEG) for future emergency response and recovery | All programme reports are fed into LEG as preparation for future emergency response and recovery Programme completion report | GPE reports: quarterly and six-monthly Programme completion report | Quarterly | UNICEF to co-ordinate |

92 The JTWG-Ed. is the LEG for Cambodia and meets quarterly. The ESWG meets monthly.
Annex 8: UNICEF Financial and Procurement Rules and Regulations

Pursuant to United Nations General Assembly Resolution 56/201 on the triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) framework was first adopted in 2005 by UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP (then UNDG ExCom Agencies) for transferring cash to government and non-governmental implementing partners (IPs).

The revised HACT framework was adopted by UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF and approved by UNDG on 6 February 2014. The adoption of HACT responds to the Rome Declaration on Harmonization and Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which call for a closer alignment of development aid with national priorities and needs. HACT is in line with the UN General Assembly resolution on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of UN operational activities for development. This resolution renews the call for simplification and harmonization of processes and business practices within the UN development system, with a view to providing effective, efficient and responsive support to the development efforts of countries.

UNICEF’s financial risk management is fully aligned to the UN HACT Framework. The HACT Framework represents a common operational framework for transferring cash to government and non-governmental partners irrespective of whether these IPs work with one or multiple United Nations agencies. HACT aims to support a closer alignment of development aid with national priorities and to strengthen national capacities for management and accountability.

HACT is based on an assessment of the risks associated with transferring cash to implementing partners, including the risk that cash transferred to implementing partners may not be used or reported in accordance with agreements between the agency providing the cash resources and the implementing partner.

According to the UN HACT principle it is recognized that the level of risk can be different for each IP. For each IP, UN agencies effectively and efficiently manage this risk by:

- Assessing the IP’s financial management capacity in applying appropriate procedures for the provision of cash transfers to the IP (mitigation measures)
- Maintaining adequate awareness of the IP’s internal controls for cash transfers and proper utilization of resources to beneficiaries through assurance activities, such as regular financial ‘spot checks’, programmatic field visits or financial audits.

Micro assessment

The first stage of the HACT financial management approach is to conduct a micro assessment of the IP’s financial management systems. The micro assessment is performed by a third-party service provider and includes a site visit to the IP. The assessment primarily consists of interviews with IP personnel and a review of relevant documentation to complete the micro assessment questionnaire. The questionnaire provides an overall risk rating based on responses:

- **Low risk** – Indicates a well-developed financial management system and functioning control framework with a low likelihood of negative impact on the IP’s ability to execute the programme in accordance with the work plan.
• **Moderate risk** – Indicates a developed financial management system and control framework with moderate likelihood of potential negative impact on the IP’s ability to execute the programme in accordance with the work plan.

• **Significant risk** – Indicates an underdeveloped financial management system or control framework with a significant likelihood of potential negative impact on the IP’s ability to execute the programme in accordance with the work plan.

• **High risk** – Indicates an underdeveloped financial management system and control framework with a high likelihood of potential negative impact on the IP’s ability to execute the programme in accordance with the work plan.

The overall risk rating is used by the UN agencies, along with other available information (e.g. history of engagement with the agency and previous assurance results) to determine the type and frequency of assurance activities as per each agency’s guidelines, and can be taken into consideration when selecting the appropriate cash transfer modality for an IP. It is also used to identify appropriate capacity building activities for enhancing financial systems of the IPs.

The results of the micro assessment are valid for a period not to exceed the duration of the Programme cycle and may extend across programme cycles. For example, a micro assessment conducted at the beginning of the fourth year of a five-year country programme cycle will be valid up to the end of the third year of the following country programme cycle, unless there was a change in the IP’s management structure or processes and procedures as noted above. If significant changes to an IP’s organizational management structure or processes and procedures with respect to the programme are observed, a new micro assessment may be deemed necessary by the agency during the programme cycle.

**Spot checks**

The UNICEF Procedure on Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers to Implementing Partners (FRG/2015/PROCEDURE/002) (HACT Procedure) defines spots checks as:

“...a review of financial records to obtain reasonable assurance that amounts reported by implementation partners on the FACE form are accurate. Spot checks are performed in the office of implementing partners where financial records are kept. Spot checks are not audits, therefore the extent of expense testing is generally lower (i.e. a single FACE form or quarter) than what would be undertaken during an audit.”

Spot Checks are performed to assess the accuracy of the financial records for cash transfers to the IP, the status of programme implementation through a review of financial information and whether there have been any significant changes to applicable internal controls. The spot check is not an audit. Spot checks include the following procedures:

- Inquiries related to the IP’s internal controls with respect to financial management, procurement and/or other controls required to appropriately implement the activities defined in the work plan
- Reviewing a sample of expenditures to confirm that documentation supports the expenditures and the expenditures are in accordance with the work plan.
The frequency of spot checks for each IP is determined by the total amount transferred to the IP. The HACT procedure specifies the minimum requirements. UNICEF offices may increase the frequency based on the operating context and knowledge of the IP. At a minimum, one (1) spot check is required for all implementing partners reporting more than US$50,000 in expenditure in a year from funds provided by UNICEF. Significant negative spot check findings result in scheduling of additional assurance activities.

**Audits**

The objective of the audit is to obtain reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements are free from material mis-statement, whether due to fraud or error, and prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with reporting requirements of the UN agency(ies) and the IP agreement(s).

The auditor also expresses an opinion on whether the funds transferred to the IP were used for the purpose intended in accordance with the work plan or programme document, approved budget, and the requirements of the applicable funding agreement.

The auditor assesses the implementing partner’s key internal controls in the areas of programme management, organizational structure and staffing, accounting policies and procedures, fixed assets and inventory, financial reporting and monitoring, and procurement and contract administration, and reports on specific control weaknesses. The audit is conducted in accordance with International Auditing Standards (ISA) 800 Special Considerations – Audit of Financial Statements Prepared in accordance with Special Purpose Frameworks.

The audit period is normally 12 months, with the specific dates prescribed by the UN agency(ies). The audit period can be modified to match the actual period of implementation of the annual programme activities.

The HACT audit is performed based on the total expenses reported during the audit period by the implementing partner on funds provided by the commissioning UN agency(ies). The statement of expenditure can be the sum of CDRs, or the sum of CDR equivalent downloaded for the IP from the UN agency(ies) system or prepared by the IP in its reporting format. The audit covers all expenditures incurred under the three modalities. The risk-based audit methodology utilizes a comprehensive process for selecting IPs to be audited, taking into consideration financial risks, the operating environment and prior audit results. The methodology allows for a robust global risk assessment and the ability to aggregate and analyse the audit results.

The UNICEF Cambodia country office is audited every five years and was last audited in 2015. The audit covered both programmatic and financial aspects of programme management. Audit reports are available through the normal UNICEF channels.

**Procurement procedures**

UNICEF financial regulation (Article XII) obligates all UNICEF country offices and their staff to carry out any procurement (of services and goods) by means of competitive tender. Major exceptions would be under acute emergency situations or where prices are fixed by some regulatory bodies. Depending on the nature of purchases, either invitations to bid, requests for proposals or requests for quotations are issued to invite interested service providers.
Those proposals and bids are evaluated by two different panels: 1) a technical panel comprising a group of experts specialized in the area, subject or item, and 2) financial panel comprising a variety of officers in UNICEF, including supply, financial and programme units. A financial panel opens and reviews only those proposals that were successful in the technical review. Both evaluation results are tabulated and ranked for the final recommendation. The Contract Review Committee’s mandate is mainly to review if: 1) appropriate authority has been obtained for making the commitment, 2) the interest of UNICEF and its funds (including donor contributions) are protected, and 3) the purchasing activities are carried out in conformity with the regulations and rules. The committee then meets and reviews the whole selection process, and recommends or does not recommend commitment. It is a lengthy process, especially if the amount of commitment is large, however the process ensures necessary procedures are followed and that any unnecessary and detectable misuse of funds is avoided.