

INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET CONCEPT STAGE

Report No.: ISDSC1121

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I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country:	Sri Lanka	Project ID:	P151916
Project Name:	Early Childhood Development Project (P151916)		
Task Team Leader(s):	Saurav Dev Bhatta		
Estimated Appraisal Date:	05-May-2015	Estimated Board Date:	25-Jun-2015
Managing Unit:	GEDDR	Lending Instrument:	Investment Project Financing
Sector(s):	Pre-primary education (90%), Public administration- Education (10%)		
Theme(s):	Education for all (90%), Other human development (10%)		
Financing (In USD Million)			
Total Project Cost:	50.00	Total Bank Financing:	50.00
Financing Gap:	0.00		
Financing Source			Amount
BORROWER/RECIPIENT			0.00
International Development Association (IDA)			50.00
Total			50.00
Environmental Category:	B - Partial Assessment		
Is this a Repeater project?	No		

B. Project Objectives

The proposed Project Development Objective is to enhance access to and improve the quality of ECD services for 3-5 year old children in Sri Lanka.

C. Project Description

Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) currently has an embryonic Early Childhood Development (ECD) program (framework) encapsulated in different policy and plan documents, including the National Policy on Early Childhood Care and Development, the National Plan of Action for Children of Sri

Lanka 2013-17 and the Sri Lanka Budget which includes a three-year plan. The program reflected in these documents identifies key challenges in the ECD sector, policy directions and activities for implementation. It provides a foundation for the proposed IDA-financed operation which will support implementation of selected strategic areas and components of the existing program. Drawing on the findings of an ECD study conducted by the World Bank in FY 2013-14, the proposed operation would enable GOSL to further develop this program into a more coherent and comprehensive one.

The proposed IDA-financed operation would include two components. Component 1 would provide support for the expansion and quality enhancement of ECD service delivery. It would seek to increase access to ECD services in unserved and underserved areas of Sri Lanka and enhance the quality of services across the country. Component 2 would finance technical assistance, program management and monitoring and evaluation.

The operation to support implementation of GOSL's ECD program would be financed through a US \$50 million Investment Project Financing (IPF) using a result-based funding modality. Disbursements would be made against selected eligible budget items in the annual budgets, or 'Eligible Expenditure Programs' (EEPs). Disbursement would be conditional on the achievement of pre-specified results measured by Disbursement-Linked Indicators (DLIs). Government stakeholders, including the Ministry of Finance and Planning (MoFP) and MCDWA, have expressed their preference for this financing approach.

Component 1: Program Support for the Expansion and Quality Enhancement of ECD Services

Guided by the national ECD framework, the Project would focus on two areas to improve the provision of ECD services in Sri Lanka: (i) expanding access to ECD services, and (ii) improving the quality of ECD provision.

(i) Expanding access to ECD services

Both demand and supply-side interventions would be used to make ECD more accessible to all and increase enrollment of children in the 3-5 year old age group.

Demand-side interventions

Parental awareness and interaction programs: Parental awareness programs would be conducted across the country to help families (parents, relatives and care-givers) better understand the importance of holistic child development and encourage the use of ECD centers in their communities. These programs would also include regular meetings of parents, moderated by facilitators, to discuss child development principles and approaches. Targeted towards parents of children in the 0-5 year age group, these programs would provide information on parenting skills for early stimulation, approaches to learning for children with special needs, plus child health and nutrition. To enhance the effectiveness of such programs, they would be linked to nutrition campaigns targeting mothers and children. Different stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), would work in partnership to conduct these programs.

Fee subsidies to ECD centers in selected underserved areas: To increase the enrollment of children who would not be able to attend ECD classes due to financial constraints, the Project would provide

fee subsidies to centers in selected underserved areas. Participating ECD centers, including both state- and non-state-run centers, would be required to lower their per child fees to a predefined level. They would also be required to provide a certain number of full fee waivers for the poorest children. To compensate for the loss of income faced by centers as a result of fee reduction and fee waivers, the Project would provide cash payments to them according to the number of enrolled children. The selection of under-served areas for fee subsidy support would be based on poverty mapping information from the Department of Census and Statistics and administrative records of the MCDWA.

Supply-side interventions

Construction and upgradation of facilities in unserved areas: The Project would finance the construction of new ECD facilities in unserved areas after mapping existing ECD facilities across the country. The national mapping of ECD facilities to identify unserved and underserved areas would be completed prior to Project effectiveness.

Space for the construction of facilities would be identified and provided by provincial councils, local government authorities and beneficiary communities. Construction grants could be used to build new facilities on government- or community-owned or common land. They could also be used to add ECD facilities to existing government- or community-owned structures. Furniture, equipment and teaching-learning materials would be provided under the Project.

In unserved areas where existing building space is made available by communities for use as ECD centers, the Project would provide funds to renovate and furnish these structures in accordance with GOSL's minimum quality standards for ECD facilities. Teaching-learning materials would be provided under the Project.

The new ECD centers in unserved areas would have teachers with the minimum prescribed qualifications. These teachers would be eligible for teacher training support under the Project.

Support for centers in under-served areas: Most ECD centers in Sri Lanka are run either by the private sector or by NGOs, temples and churches. In under-served areas, the Project would provide financial support to both state- and non-state-run centers to expand enrollment beyond existing levels. Support would be in the form of annual performance-based grants where each center receives a cash award for increases in enrollment over that of the previous year. The Project also proposes to support under-served children in orphanages and those from marginalized groups, such as fishing communities, plantations/estates and urban slums.

(ii) Improving the quality of ECD provision

To improve the quality of ECD provision in Sri Lanka, the proposed Project would support quality management, the provision of material inputs, the improvement of ECD facilities and training for ECD teachers, trainers and administrators.

Quality management: The Project would finance the revision of the curriculum framework and child development standards which guide the teaching-learning processes in ECD centers. The revision would focus on promoting holistic, child-centered, play/activity-based approaches for children's cognitive and non-cognitive development and prepare them for primary school. The Project would support the development of teaching-learning materials for teachers and 3-5 year old children in the Sinhalese, Tamil and English languages. Development of these materials would be guided by the

curriculum framework and standards endorsed by GOSL. The Project would also support strengthening GOSL's existing minimum quality standards and registration system for ECD centers.

Provision of teaching learning materials: To help ECD providers enhance the quality of services, the Project would support the provision of age-appropriate quality teaching-learning materials to both state- and non-state-run centers. Priority would be given to centers in remote and/or under-served areas. A sound monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system would be put in place to ensure proper utilization. of the support provided by the Project.

Improvement of existing ECD center facilities: Eligible state and non-state-run ECD centers would receive block grants to improve their physical facilities. Centers not meeting the quality standards set by the government would be required to use these funds to bring their facilities to a minimum level. Other centers would have greater flexibility in using the funds for improving their facilities. All centers receiving Project funds for quality improvement would have to attend to the requirements of children with special needs. Priority would be given to centers in remote and/or under-served areas. To be eligible for support from the Project, centers would have to provide detailed data to the Project on the state of their facilities when seeking funding.

Training of ECD teachers, trainers, and administrators: The Project would support the development and delivery of training programs for ECD teachers, teacher trainers and administrators, including new teachers hired in program-supported centers. As an initial step in the development of training programs, GOSL would prepare and endorse a comprehensive capacity development plan for these stakeholders.

Two categories of training for ECD teachers would be supported: (i) short-term training programs for in-service teachers, freshly recruited incoming teachers and potential new teachers; and (ii) one- to two-year long ECD certificate and diploma programs. To encourage learning through peer interaction, the Project would support teacher exchanges across ECD centers. Given that children's smooth transition from pre- to primary school depends partly on the primary school teachers' understanding of child development principles, the Project would support short orientation programs on holistic child development for primary school teachers and head teachers. These training programs would give special emphasis to approaches for facilitating the learning of children with special needs, and activities/techniques aimed at enhancing the development of cognitive skills. The Project would prioritize training for ECD teachers from geographical areas which lag behind others in terms of teacher training and qualifications.

Short-term training would be delivered through a combination of state- and non-state-run training institutions which have formal partnerships with ECD centers for providing trainees hands-on experience. Certificate and diploma programs would be delivered by universities and other recognized institutions. The Project would provide funds to these institutions for scholarship support to qualified and financially needy candidates interested in pursuing these programs.

The training of trainers supported by the Project would prepare the necessary pool of trainers to deliver different types of ECD training to teachers across the nation. These training programs would also be delivered by a combination of state and non-state providers. Training for administrators would focus on the capacity development of the different units and agencies, at all levels of government, engaged in implementing ECD activities. It would cover a broad range of topics, including administration, planning, budgeting, procurement, financial management, ECD domain knowledge and computer literacy.

Component 2: Program Management, Technical Assistance and Monitoring and Evaluation (M &E)

Program management: The Project would finance incremental program management costs, consulting services, transportation, equipment, staff training and other administrative expenses incurred during implementation.

Technical assistance: The Project would support the review and revision the embryonic national framework to bring greater coherence and consistency to the setting of objectives for and the planning of ECD programs and activities in Sri Lanka. The framework would be revised through extensive consultation with stakeholders in the sector. The Project would provide support for technical assistance to the program management team in a number of areas including, inter alia, institutional analysis, the preparation of guidelines, the development of information systems, training, monitoring and evaluation, procurement, financial management and social and environmental safeguards.

M&E and feedback system: The Project would develop and implement a robust and comprehensive ECD monitoring and evaluation system to ensure compliance with quality assurance standards and provide constructive feedback to ECD centers. While overall responsibility for carrying out and coordinating M&E activities under the Project would lie with the Children's Secretariat, relevant units at each administrative level would be responsible for local-level monitoring and data collection and entry. The Project would develop and use an electronic management information system (MIS), which would include ECD mapping data, as an integral part of the M&E system. The MIS would allow decentralized entry of data on ECD centers, teachers and children and the continuous updating of monitoring information. The Project would also support tracking studies, impact assessments and other research activities.

D. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

The project will be implemented in all 9 provinces of Sri Lanka. Physical activities are proposed to be undertaken on state owned or community land identified for development. No natural habitats or forest areas will be opened up for physical interventions.

E. Borrowers Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

A comprehensive policy and regulatory framework for the conservation of natural resources and environmental management is in existence Sri Lanka. The Central Environmental Authority (CEA) is the key regulatory body that is mandated by the National Environmental Act (NEA) to implement all regulatory provisions outlined in its statutes. All development projects, that fall in to a set of prescribed categories are required to conduct a comprehensive environmental screening and mitigation planning process (EIA or IEE). These processes are largely consistent with the Bank's safeguard policy on Environmental Assessment. With over two decades of experience the CEA demonstrates the technical expertise in evaluating environmental impacts of development projects. However even with an enabling legal environment and CEA capacity, field level enforcement of legal instruments and subsequent monitoring of environmental management activities has been very low. In addition, the types of interventions proposed will not fall within the EIA regulations of the country and therefore, the role played by CEA will be minimum. The Institute for Construction Training and Development (ICTAD) has also developed a set of comprehensive Environmental Codes of Practice which are to be implemented during construction activities and have been successfully implemented in Bank funded operations.

The key implementing agencies for the project have been identified as the Child Development

Authorities/Departments in the MCDWA, the Project Counterparts and the district offices which take part in provision of services and facilities for Child Development in various ways. The capacities and strengths of these entities will be assessed in relation to the implementation of environmental and social safeguards in line with program implementation. The proposed lead implementing agency, the Ministry of Child Development and Women Affairs (MCDWA), has no prior experience with Bank funded project and is therefore not familiar with Bank safeguard procedures, guidelines and requirements. In this account, there are substantial capacity constraints that will have to be ardently addressed via the second component of project, which is devoted to addressing capacity building needs.

During project preparation a detailed evaluation of the implementing agencies capacity for the implementation of safeguard policies will be conducted and instruments for capacity building will be put in place as part of the proposed Environmental Assessment and Management Framework (EAMF) that will be prepared prior to appraisal, based on the findings. The client will be provided with the required capacity building and technical assistance and guidance to prepare the EMGs as well. The EMGs will be prepared in a manner that will maximize the use of the existing country systems with which government agencies are generally acquainted with implementing. The capacity building instruments are envisioned to be included as a part of the Technical Assistance being provided via the project under Component 2. The EAMF will provide guidelines for evaluating environmental impacts and recommend possible mitigation measures to be applied during program implementation, outline relevant national standards and guidelines to be followed in terms of construction and operation, and discuss the relevant monitoring and reporting activities and processes.

F. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Darshani De Silva (GENDR)

Mohamed Ghani Razaak (GSURR)

Mokshana Nerandika Wijeyeratne (GENDR)

II. SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	The Bank will provide financing for the development of the GOSL's ECD program. Under the identified supply side interventions of Component 1, the construction and upgradation of ECD facilities in unserved areas will be financed. It is expected that potential environmental impacts from the proposed physical intervention will not pose major, irreversible environmental impacts due to their nature and scale. In order to mitigate potential impacts that may be caused due to new construction activities and upgrading as well as to ensure that all such activities undertaken are conducted in an environmentally sound manner, an Environmental Assessment and Management Framework (EAMF) will be prepared by the client with guidance from the Bank.

		The EMGs will include environmental assessment and screening guidelines, environmental codes of practice, impact identification and mitigatory measure implementation guidelines, environmental safety guidelines, monitoring mechanisms etc. that are in line with bank safeguard requirements whilst maximizing the use of country systems.
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	No	The construction of new facilities will be on either state owned land or community owned land as set forth in the project design. The rehabilitation and upgrading activities will focus on existing ECD centers operating in government/community owned structures. Thus there will be no impacts to sensitive natural areas or designated natural areas due to project interventions.
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	No activities in forests or in close proximity to forest areas are expected.
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	Not Applicable as no project interventions are made where significant use of pesticides and other such substances are utilized.
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	No	Project interventions are not envisioned to be conducted in areas close to sites of cultural importance. Renovation, rehabilitation and improvements will be made to buildings built over the last few decades and not deemed socially or culturally important. Measures to safeguard chance finds will be included as part of the measures taken under Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	TBD	Project will be implemented in all 9 provinces including the areas where historically known indigenous people are living scattered. The national population census does not show presence of IP population in the country or in specific locality. On the other hand, the project focuses on individuals than communities to provide early child education support. Thus, the project cannot aim at any specific interventions or programs targeting IP as a group or in specific locations. Decision to trigger the policy to be decided prior to appraisal.
Involuntary Resettlement OP/ BP 4.12	Yes	Although, it is expected that construction of ECD facilities will be confined to existing premises, new constructions of training centers are proposed to build at district and provincial levels in Government owned lands. Therefore, the policy is triggered as a precautionary measure in case there are temporary

		occupations of land by squatters and to ensure free form any encumbrances. Involuntary Resettlement Framework will be prepared to guide the project in managing potential social issues related to land and assets.
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	Not applicable as the project does not involve new construction/rehabilitation of any Dams
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	Not Applicable
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	Not Applicable

III. SAFEGUARD PREPARATION PLAN

A. Tentative target date for preparing the PAD Stage ISDS: 04-Mar-2015

B. Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing¹ should be specified in the PAD-stage ISDS:

The EAMF and IR framework are scheduled to be completed prior to appraisal, by 30th March 2015 (Tentatively)

IV. APPROVALS

Task Team Leader(s):	Name: Saurav Dev Bhatta	
<i>Approved By:</i>		
Safeguards Advisor:	Name:	Date:
Practice Manager/ Manager:	Name:	Date:

¹ Reminder: The Bank's Disclosure Policy requires that safeguard-related documents be disclosed before appraisal (i) at the InfoShop and (ii) in country, at publicly accessible locations and in a form and language that are accessible to potentially affected persons.