

**PROGRAM-FOR-RESULTS INFORMATION DOCUMENT (PID)  
CONCEPT STAGE**

Report No.: 113074

<b>Program Name</b>	Quality Learning for All Program (QLEAP)
<b>Region</b>	South Asia
<b>Country</b>	Bangladesh
<b>Sector</b>	Education
<b>Lending Instrument</b>	Program for Results
<b>Program ID</b>	P162619
<b>Borrower(s)</b>	Republic of Bangladesh
<b>Implementing Agency</b>	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
<b>Date PID Prepared</b>	January 12, 2017
<b>Estimated Date of Appraisal Completion</b>	September 14, 2017
<b>Estimated Date of Board Approval</b>	January 16, 2018
<b>Concept Review Decision</b>	Following the review of the concept, the decision was taken to proceed with the preparation of the operation.

## I. Introduction and Context

### A. Country Context

1. **Bangladesh has made remarkable progress during the past two decades in economic growth, and has recently joined the ranks of lower-middle-income countries.** The country has achieved steady economic growth of about 6 percent annually since the late nineties. It now has a per capita gross national income (GNI) of US\$1,190 (up from US\$420 in 2000)<sup>1</sup>, which places it among the group of lower-middle-income countries of the world. During this period, the bottom 40 percent of the population has experienced a higher growth in per capita income than the rest of the population, and the poverty rate has declined substantially. The percentage of people living below the poverty line of US\$1.90 per day<sup>2</sup> dropped from 33.7 percent in 2000 to 18.5 percent in 2010.

2. **At the same time, Bangladesh has made impressive gains in key areas of human development, including health and primary education.** Child and maternal mortality, as well as fertility rates, has decreased substantially since 2000, immunization coverage has improved, and the incidence of communicable diseases has decreased. There has also been some progress in reducing child malnutrition, though a significant percentage (around 36%) of children under 5 years of age remain stunted. Similarly, equitable access to primary education has improved drastically: over 97% of primary-age children are enrolled in school, and gender parity in enrolment has been achieved at both primary and secondary levels.

<sup>1</sup> According to the World Development Indicators (2016) data.

<sup>2</sup> Using 2011 purchasing power parity figures.

3. **While these achievements provide a solid foundation on which Bangladesh can build to reach its goal of becoming a middle-income country by 2021, the country is at a crossroads.** In the years ahead, Bangladesh is expected to benefit from a demographic dividend resulting from a higher share of working-age population and a declining dependency ratio. However, with 88.5 percent of the labor force in informal employment, and 41 percent of workers with no education at all, the economy is at risk of falling into a low-productivity/low-wage trap. The majority of the youth are stuck in low-wage, labor intensive and insecure informal work. This is especially the case for poor youth, who often do not have the required education and skills needed for accessing remunerative, formal wage employment.

4. There is thus a pressing need for the country to systematically upgrade its human capital by further enhancing the quality of and access to education. Knowledge and skills acquisition in later years largely depends on the foundational skills developed during the early grades. Hence, further investments in primary education, in particular, are critical for ensuring that the youth of tomorrow are equipped to steer the country to the next stage of economic and social development.

## **B. Sectoral and Institutional Context of the Program**

5. **The public education system in Bangladesh is large, complex, and growing.** In 2015, 19.1 million primary students (Grades 1-5) were enrolled in 122,176 schools. Over 72,000 schools are managed and financed by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) through its Directorate of Primary Education (DPE); more than 25,000 of these were newly nationalized starting in 2013. The remaining schools are under the responsibility of a range of other ministries and NGOs. There are 14.57million (BANBEIS, 2016) secondary students (Grades 6-12) in 29,395 schools and madrasahs, 98% of which are privately operated with public subsidies. These schools come under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education (MoE) through its Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education and Directorate of Madrasah Education.

6. **There is a conducive political, policy and program environment for education reform.** The Compulsory Primary Education Act of 1990 has made five-year primary education tuition-free and compulsory. The National Education Policy of 2010 (NEP), still in force, provides strategic guidance for achieving universal basic education. It proposes, *inter alia*, measures such as the introduction of one-year of pre-primary education (with the aim of eventually offering two years); nationalization of non-government primary schools; raising the level of teacher qualifications, strengthening recruitment procedures, and increasing the proportion of female teachers; the creation of child-friendly environments and promotion of interactive teaching methods; the strengthening of community participation in school management; and the achievement of a student: teacher ratio of 30:1 by 2018. It also proposes the extension of the primary cycle from 5 to 8 years by 2018.

7. **The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has undertaken a series of national level programs in the primary education sector during the past two decades with the objective of enhancing equitable access to and improving the quality of education.** The programs in this series include the Primary Education Development Program (PEDP 1: 1998-2004), Second

Primary Education Development Program (PEDP 2: 2004-2011), and the ongoing Third Primary Education Development Program (PEDP 3: 2011-2017). PEDP 3, which uses a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) as in PEDP 2 to pool GoB and Development Partner (DP) funding, covers the management, delivery and strengthening of primary education across the country. It is implemented by MoPME with financial contributions from GoB and ten DPs, including the World Bank. In a major departure from previous programs, external financing under PEDP 3 is tied largely to the achievement of a set of results agreed upon by GoB and the DPs. The primary education sector has benefited from the results-based financing approach and donor harmonization arrangements under PEDP3, and the GoB and DPs have agreed to continue with such an approach for the next program. Some notable achievements have been made in the primary education sector during the past two decades, and much of this progress can be attributed to GoB's strong political commitment and the national programs mentioned above.

8. **In particular, Bangladesh has made impressive gains in enhancing equitable access to primary education in recent years.** The primary net enrollment rate (NER) reached 97.9<sup>3</sup> in 2015, up from 87.2% in 2005. Similarly, the NER for grades 6-8 increased from 61.9% in 2005 to 68.4% in 2013. Access to pre-primary education has also been improving--the percentage of Grade 1 entrants who have completed at least one year of pre-primary education increased from 42.3% in 2010 to 51% in 2014. Improvements in ensuring equitable access have been equally noteworthy: gender parity has been achieved in both primary and secondary education, and disparity in access across income groups has also declined (the primary NER ratio between the lowest and highest income quintiles, for example, increased from .72 in 2005 to 0.89 in 2014<sup>4</sup>). Along with the increase in enrollment rates, student retention has also been improving, as indicated by an increase in primary survival rate from 67.2% in 2010 to 81.3% in 2015.

9. **Bangladesh has also made some progress in improving the quality of education.** Key achievements in this regard include the introduction of a competency based curriculum at the primary level, timely delivery of textbooks in recent years, increased variety and reach of in-service training for teachers, and the introduction of a high-quality Diploma-in-Education program for in-service teachers. The quality of physical facilities in schools has also been improved by adding 23,370 new classrooms during the past five years. Another notable achievement is the strengthening of the examination and assessment system under PEDP 3. The Primary Education Completion Exam (PECE) has been progressively transformed to assess competencies rather than content recall. And GoB has implemented three rounds of high quality national student assessments, with technical support from reputed international institutions experienced in undertaking large-scale assessments.

10. **Despite these achievements, however, much remains to be done, especially in the area of education quality.** The key challenges facing this sector are summarized below.

### *Quality*

11. **Low levels of learning and disparities in learning outcomes:** Poor student learning achievements are the primary education system's main challenge, with consequences for

---

<sup>3</sup> According to GoB's administrative data.

<sup>4</sup> According to the Education Household Survey Data 2014.

retention and learning at subsequent levels of education. For instance, according to the national student assessment conducted in 2015, among Grade 3 students, 35%/59% did *not* master the grade-relevant competencies in Bangla/mathematics. The corresponding figures for Grade 5 were 77% for Bangla and 90% for mathematics. Similarly, a 2013 learning assessment found that 51% and 65% of grade 8 students failed to master the grade-relevant competencies for Bangla and mathematics, respectively. These assessments have also found significant disparities in results across regions, and across students from different socio-economic groups, with children from the poorest income quintiles performing worse than those from the wealthiest quintiles. The assessment findings point to a strong need for interventions focused on ensuring the acquisition of foundational literacy and numeracy skills by all students<sup>5</sup>. It should also be noted that, for Grade 5, school-related factors accounted for around 75% of the variation in student performance, indicating that there is considerable scope for improving learning outcomes through more effective education policies and actions focused on school quality.

12. **Insufficient teachers and poor teaching quality:** Because of inadequate number of teachers and their sub-optimal distribution across the country, the average student-teacher ratio (STR) in schools was 41.2:1 in 2015, significantly higher than the NEP target of 30:1<sup>6</sup>. The problem of high STR is sometimes compounded by the government's use of teachers for non-teaching assignments such as elections and censuses, and by in-service training schedules that require teachers to be away from school for a number of days at a stretch. Furthermore, the average educational qualification of teachers is low--around 44% of the primary teachers do not have a bachelor's degree. Furthermore, anecdotal evidence suggests that teachers continue to rely heavily on lecturing and repetition, with little room for interactive learning, independent work and problem-solving. There is also a concern that many teachers themselves do not fully master the material they teach, and that the training they receive is not properly translated to the classroom.

13. There are weaknesses in the teacher training and support system which ultimately affects teaching quality. The Primary (Teachers) Training Institutes (PTIs), for example, often lack adequate infrastructure and currently have a 46% instructor vacancy rate. The in-service training system is overloaded with *ad hoc* trainings, while approximately one quarter of instructor posts at the Upazila Resource Centers remain vacant. The academic supervision system is weak, and teachers do not receive adequate at-school support to improve their pedagogical techniques.

14. **Inadequate institutionalization and use of student assessment system:** The student assessment system lacks institutional capacity and an overarching policy framework to clarify the role of assessment. There are several assessments and examinations used in the primary system, including internal exams conducted by schools, annual grade 5 Primary Education Completion Examination (PECE) designed by the National Academy of Primary Education and administered by DPE, and biennial sample-based National Student Assessment (NSA) of grades 3 and 5 designed and administered by DPE. Although the NSA and PECE are both designed to be aligned with the curriculum, the results from these two assessments are markedly different. While the PECE serves to certify primary completion and enable transition to Grade 6, its results

---

<sup>5</sup> PEDP3 includes an initiative called Each Child Learns focusing on activity-based learning and early literacy and numeracy, However, this initiative has not progressed beyond the pilot phase and has not yet produced a model that can be integrated into existing institutions and taken to scale.

<sup>6</sup> One third of the schools had an average STR of greater than 46:1.

are not analyzed to glean useful information for pedagogy or system management. The NSA regularly culminates in an analytical report, but the findings are not utilized to inform reforms in the curriculum and pedagogy. There is a need to create a proper institutional home for assessments and examinations, so as to ensure consistency across instruments, integrity in their design and administration, and better analysis and use of the results to improve education quality.

15. **Inadequate inputs for early childhood education:** There is extensive international evidence on the positive impact of early childhood education on learning in later years. The NEP recognizes this and proposes to introduce at least one year of pre-primary education (PPE) for all children over time. While the provision of PPE is steadily increasing in the country, the quality of PPE is an issue. There are concerns regarding over-crowding of PPE classrooms, adequacy of play and learning materials in the classrooms, and the assignment of properly trained teachers in PPE classes.

16. **Insufficient time-on-task:** The amount of time students spend in the classroom while actively engaging in learning, plays an important role in determining student outcomes. The time-on-task for Bangladeshi children is insufficient for a number of reasons: the use of double-shifts affects 77.4% of schools and often results in fewer lesson hours than prescribed; a significant number of teaching posts are vacant (e.g., 26.7% of head-teacher posts); there is high teacher absenteeism, partly due to training or other official duties, and also due to lateness; and student attendance is not regular (attendance was 86.9% in 2015).

17. **Inadequate essential inputs and physical learning environment:** Textbooks and supplementary teaching-learning materials are key inputs into the teaching learning process. While Bangladesh has made remarkable progress in ensuring timely delivery of textbooks to students (in 2015, 99% of schools received textbooks on time), there are concerns about the physical quality and durability of these books. Students currently have very limited access to other essential reading and teaching-learning materials, and the introduction of ICT for education is still in its early stages. Under PEDP 3, GoB has already constructed 23,730 new classrooms and 4490 WASH facilities to improve the physical learning environment. However, much more remains to be done. While classrooms have been designed to accommodate 40 students, only 32.7% of schools had an average student-classroom ratio of 40:1 or less in 2015. The percentage of schools without a separate functioning toilet for girls was 47%, and 26.8% of schools still do not have a safe water source.

### *Equitable access*

18. **Bringing out-of-school children (OOSC) into basic schooling** is the primary access challenge in the subsector. Despite the impressive progress made by Bangladesh in increasing primary enrollment nationwide, it is estimated that around 5.5 million children aged 6-14 years remain out-of-school. Among children aged 6-10 years alone, 2.9 million children have either dropped out or have never attended school. The prevalence of OOSC is particularly high in urban slums and the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and among children with special needs (such as those with physical and other disabilities). Available data indicate that more boys than girls are out of school, especially in the higher age groups: in 2014, for example, the percentage of boys/girls out-of-school was 17.3/16.0% and 21.9%/16.0% for the 6-10 and 6-16-year age groups, respectively. While PEDP3 has not performed well in providing educational opportunities to

OOSC so far, it has recently initiated a Second Chance Education intervention, which involves service delivery by NGOs, targeting 100,000 children. The largest initiative targeting OOSC is the World Bank-financed Second Reaching Out-of-School Children (ROSC 2) Project, which caters to over 200,000 children enrolled in ROSC-supported community learning centers. QLEAP will need to build on the lessons learned from and mainstream these interventions aimed at OOSC.

### ***Governance, management, and financing***

19. **Strengthening decentralization and local capacity:** Bangladesh has a highly centralized system for education service delivery, with fiscal and administrative powers largely concentrated in Dhaka. The centralized management system stifles local initiative and contributes to weak management, and transparency and accountability in the system. Under PEDP 3, as a step towards advancing decentralized management, schools and upazilas (sub-districts) are allocated grants in the program's annual operational plan for the preparation of Upazilla Primary Education Plans (UPEPs) and implementation of School Level Improvement Plans (SLIPs), respectively. However, the grants allocated for SLIPs and UPEPs are small and fixed, and not all upazillas receive UPEP funds every year. Furthermore, school management and social audit committees often lack the needed capacities and participation to ensure the effective design, implementation, monitoring and reporting of SLIPs. At the Upazilla level, the number and staffing of education offices and resource centers were determined at a time when far fewer schools came under DPE responsibility, and need to be revisited.

20. **Addressing the issue of career progression:** The managerial career path continues to remain controversial, as it does not allow teaching staff to reach senior management posts. Various efforts at reform have foundered over the years on broader service rules. Attempts by MoPME/DPE to get a revised proposal for the career progression of teachers, head teachers, and DPE officials approved have not been successful so far.

21. **Inadequate financing:** During the past decade, annual public expenditure on education has remained around 2% of GDP, which is the second lowest figure among South Asian countries and is lower than the expenditures of most other countries at similar levels of development. Public education generally receives 14-16% of the total public budget<sup>7</sup>; again, levels that are low in comparison to developing country averages. Most of the government's funding in the sector is heavily skewed in favor of teachers' salary<sup>8</sup>. Hence, there is a need for increased financing, and perhaps a more efficient allocation of resources to support activities related to quality improvement.

22. **Managing expansion of primary education to grade 8:** In the spring of 2016, GoB made a decision to expand primary education to grade 8. Implementing this decision will require careful planning, cross-ministry coordination, and execution, especially since grades 6-8 are currently under the purview of MoE (not MoPME) while the service delivery model being used

---

<sup>7</sup> Less than 45% of the public education budget is allocated to primary education.

<sup>8</sup> The recently approved 8<sup>th</sup> pay scale for government employees indicates that salary allocation in the education sector will increase.

for these grades (largely “public financing-private provision” model) is very different from the “public financing-public provision” model used for grades 1-5.

### **Government strategy**

23. **GoB seeks to address these challenges in primary education through a second-generation, results-based post-PEDP 3 program that puts special focus on enhancing education quality, including improving learning outcomes.** GoB has already started the preparation of the post-PEDP 3 program in close consultation with the DPs. Apart from a shift in focus to quality, the post-PEDP 3 program’s other distinguishing features under discussion include special emphasis on bringing OOSC into basic schooling, and the use of an enhanced results-based external financing approach that further utilizes and strengthens government systems by moving a step beyond the DLI-based financing model used in PEDP 3. Under post-PEDP 3, GoB plans to manage the expansion of primary education from grades 1-5 to grades 1-8 using a phased approach that would involve minimum disruption in the education system.

### **C. Relationship to CAS/CPF**

24. **The proposed program is fully aligned with Objective 2.1 of the World Bank Group’s Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Bangladesh, FY2016–2020.** The CPF Objective 2.1 is “improved equity in access and quality of education”. The CPF recognizes that the Bank is well-placed to tackle second-generation reforms aimed at improving the quality of education, and states that a primary education program will “continue to be the main instrument to bring disadvantaged children into pre-primary and primary education and improve learning quality”. Consistent with the CPF, the proposed program seeks to provide quality education to all primary aged children in Bangladesh. Its use of the sector wide approach and results-based financing is also consistent with the approaches the CPF proposes to continue in the health and education sectors.

### **D. Rationale for Bank Engagement and Choice of Financing Instrument**

25. **The World Bank has supported the education sector in Bangladesh for over three decades, and is viewed as a trusted partner with expertise in a wide range of sectoral and technical issues.** Apart from providing financial support to different education projects and programs, the Bank has been playing a leading role in promoting donor coordination and development effectiveness, especially through its engagement in the PEDP 2 and PEDP 3 SWAs. The DPs and GoB recognize the Bank’s ability to bring global expertise and learning from best practices around the world to better inform operational and analytical work in the country. Acknowledging the Bank’s comparative advantages in the sector, GoB and the PEDP 3 DP Consortium requested us in April 2016 to take up the position of Consortium Vice Chair responsible for leading the preparation of GoB’s post-PEDP 3 program. The Bank has, accordingly, been helping GoB in this effort. While the Bank’s financial support to the post-PEDP 3 program through QLEAP would be relatively small (less than 3% of the total program budget), as a leading member of SWAp, it would be able to leverage these limited funds to effectively support and guide the preparation and implementation of this large and important

government program. In particular, the Bank would be able to utilize its experience and expertise to support GoB in designing a results-based operation, strengthening monitoring & evaluation and fiduciary systems, strengthening donor harmonization, and bringing about institutional changes in the sector.

**26. Continuing the Bank’s lending support to primary education will allow the Bank to help GoB take a more integrated approach to tackling issues in school education.** The Bank can facilitate dialog between the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) and the Ministry of Education (MoE) to help reduce fragmentation in the education sector using our respective engagements with these two ministries. In particular, the phased approach to expansion of primary education to grade 8 will require close collaboration between the two ministries. As primary education is expanded to grade 8, there will also be a need for the two ministries to closely discuss how to expand the coverage of interventions aimed at bringing out-of-school children into the school system. Since MoE is interested in using a Sector-wide Approach (SWAp) in the proposed new secondary education program, there is also scope for MoE to learn from the extensive experience of MoPME in designing and implementing SWAp. Mutual sharing of knowledge and experience between the two sectors can be facilitated by the Bank.

**27. Adoption of the Program-for-Results (PforR) instrument is being proposed for this operation for a number of reasons.** First, investment project financing with DLIs is already being successfully used in PEDP 3, where over 70% of DP financing, including 100% of IDA financing, is linked to the achievement of DLI targets. Drawing upon this experience, for post-PEDP 3, MOPME/DPE and the DPs have agreed to seriously consider moving to a fully results-based financing approach if the fiduciary systems assessment that will be conducted during program preparation shows that the country is ready for it. The second largest DP co-financer in PEDP 3, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), has already expressed its preference for a Results-Based-Lending approach, which is similar to the Bank’s PforR instrument. Second, use of PforR would incentivise government’s ownership of critical reforms and enhance their focus on the achievement of results by shifting the dialog from inputs and transactions to results. And third, PforR would further utilize and rely on government systems for program implementation, in line with the principles laid out in the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness.

## **II. Program Development Objective(s)**

### **A. Program Development Objective (PDO)**

28. The proposed Program Development Objective (PDO) is to provide quality education to all children of Bangladesh from pre-primary to grade 8<sup>9</sup>.

---

<sup>9</sup> Note: The objective of GoB’s post-PEDP 3 program under preparation is “to provide quality education to all children of Bangladesh from pre-primary to grade 8, through the establishment of an efficient, inclusive and equitable education system.” The proposed QLEAP PDO is well aligned with GoB’s program objective. In this formulation of the PDO, quality education represents improved student learning outcomes, completion rate, and quality of key inputs. The goal of providing education to all reflects the program’s emphasis on equity.



## B. Key Program Results

29. Changes in the following results indicators would be used to measure progress towards the achievement of the PDO.

- Learning outcomes in Grades 3 [*quality*]
- Number of contact hours [*quality*]
- Primary cycle completion rate (up to grade 5 and grade 8) [*quality*]
- Primary net enrollment rate [*equitable access*]
- Percent of out of school children aged 6-14 [*equitable access*]

30. All the above indicators, apart from contact hours, will be disaggregated by gender. Baseline data for primary cycle completion rate and net enrollment rate will be available from the annual school censuses and projections based on the national population censuses. Similarly, baseline learning outcomes data are expected to be available from the NSA round planned for late 2017. National sample surveys will need to be conducted to gather data on contact hours and out-of-school children.

## III. Program Description

31. **The government's post-PEDP3 program under preparation is expected to cover education services under the direct managerial and financial responsibility of MoPME from pre-primary to Grade 5 (with certain exclusions explained below).** It is also expected to cover those aspects of Grades 6-8 that will progressively come under MoPME responsibility during the life of the Program. Stand-alone or discrete projects under MoPME/DPE such as school feeding and student stipends would be excluded from the post-PEDP 3 program. The program would cover all upazillas in Bangladesh and annually benefit over 15 million students and 400,000 teachers across the country. The proposed Bank operation—Quality LEarning for All Program (QLEAP)--would support the entirety of the government's post-PEDP 3 program<sup>10</sup>.

32. The post-PEDP 3 program is structured according to three results areas: (1) enhancing education quality; (2) ensuring universal access and participation; and (3) strengthening management, governance and financing.

### **Results area 1: Enhancing education quality**

33. The primary objective of this results area is to improve the quality of primary education and ensure that all children master the basic competencies. It consists of the following seven sub-results areas.

34. **Strengthening early childhood education (ECE):** In order to enhance school readiness of all children, the program will build up on the achievements of PEDP 3 in introducing one year

---

<sup>10</sup> If GoB's post-PEDP 3 program is expanded to include school feeding and stipends, the Bank's operation will exclude these activities and only support the remaining subset of GoB's program.

of preprimary education (PPE) in GPS, and ensure that at least one year of quality PPE is available in all DPE administered primary schools in the country. The quality of PPE will be strengthened by ensuring the availability of key inputs in PPE classes, including an essential set of teaching-learning materials and a teacher specially trained in early childhood education. Community outreach will also be expanded to promote PPE participation in school and early childhood stimulation at home.

**35. Improving foundational literacy and numeracy:** A foundational literacy and numeracy program for early grades will be progressively rolled out nationally to ensure that all students achieve the foundational knowledge and skills they require to enable them to complete their primary education. As part of the program, teachers will be trained to teach foundation skills, identify children who are falling behind, and provide remedial support; and high quality classroom-based assessment tools for early grade reading and numeracy will be introduced. In addition, all early grade classrooms will be equipped with age/grade-appropriate children's books and other literacy /numeracy materials.

**36. Improving curriculum and textbooks:** Quality and uniformity of primary curriculum will be improved through the *revision of the curriculum* for grades 6-8 to make it competency-based (as in grades 1-5). The revision will also ensure that the course contents for grades 1-8 are vertically aligned with the grade 8 terminal competencies, and are consistent with the number of hours prescribed by the curriculum. *The quality of the textbooks will be strengthened* by building technical capacities to write and design textbooks, piloting alternative modalities of manuscripts commissioning; improving physical specifications and monitoring adherence; and reinforcing the distribution network.

**37. Enhancing the quality of teaching:** The quality of teaching is a key determinant of student learning. Interventions aimed at enhancing the quality of teaching will cover pre-service training, teacher recruitment, in-service training and support, and the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in education. In order to create a large pool of qualified potential teachers, quality pre-service training will be scaled up by offering the *Diploma in Primary Education (DPED) program* as a pre-service program<sup>11</sup> as well. At the same time, the ongoing in-service DPED program will be strengthened through a redesigned curriculum reinforces the practicum component; and by recruiting more subject-specialist instructors, building the capacities of instructors, providing the required infrastructure and materials, and improving quality assurance.

**38.** To attract and retain highly qualified and motivated candidates to the teaching profession, *recruitment and career progression rules and procedures* will be strengthened by improving the entry requirements, transparently recruiting and appointing teachers, and creating incentives for professional development and effective pedagogy<sup>12</sup>. Furthermore, teachers will be recruited in sufficient numbers to reduce the student-teacher ratio (STR) in schools that exceed NEP targets. They will be deployed on a needs basis using transparent allocation criteria.

---

<sup>11</sup> It is currently offered to in-service teachers only.

<sup>12</sup> MoPME is discussing the need for the education system to ensure that all teachers achieve a minimum level of professional standards, the equivalent of a Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

39. The *in-service system of professional development and support* for existing teachers will be strengthened through a redesigned and integrated offering of demand-driven training opportunities; the timely appointment and capacity building of training instructors; the scheduling of trainings (and substitute teaching) to minimize classroom disruption; and the reform of academic supervision to increase time-on-task and encourage effective pedagogy adapted to classroom circumstances. In addition, effective use of *ICT in education* for quality enhancement will be strengthened by introducing ICT-integrated pedagogical techniques in training programs, and by further utilizing ICT for administrative and management purposes. A clear strategy for utilizing ICT to improve teaching and learning will be developed, and appropriate ICT for schools will be distributed accordingly to assist teachers in improving their classroom delivery.

40. **Strengthening student assessments and examinations:** An assessments and examinations policy framework will be developed to guide the strengthening of the assessments and examinations. While there is a strong likelihood that the national primary education completion exam (PECE) for grade 5 will be phased out, annual PECE for grade 8 will be introduced, and NSA<sup>13</sup> will continue to be undertaken on a regular basis. An institutional home for assessments and examinations will be identified and operationalized. Capacities will be built to enhance the quality of items and tests, particularly to ensure that the competency-based character of the curriculum is reflected adequately and consistently across instruments; to administer and score tests; and to produce actionable information at central and local levels. Findings based on rigorous analyses of PECE and NSA will be used to inform policy reform, including curriculum and examination reforms.

41. **Enhancing the quality of the physical learning environment:** In order to decrease the proportion of children studying in classrooms that are overcrowded or in unsatisfactory physical condition, the program will finance the construction, rehabilitation and equipping of classrooms, including at the pre-primary level. New construction will also be undertaken to progressively convert double-shift schools to single-shift schools. Beneficiary schools will be selected using needs-based criteria and a national database containing information on all schools and local demographics. Using a similar identifying mechanism, the program will also finance the installation of water and sanitary hygiene (WASH) blocks in schools with no or unsatisfactory water and sanitation facilities. The program will also finance works to increase access for the physically challenged. It will develop a new maintenance policy; and reinforce civil works supervision to reduce defects at completion.

42. **Education in emergencies:** In order to ensure continuity of quality schooling in emergencies, the program will develop a more workable policy framework that enables the quick identification of emergency-affected schools, and a rapid release of interim inputs followed by funds for relocation or rebuilding. It will also incorporate issues related to emergency response in teacher training programs.

## **Result area 2: Ensuring universal access and participation**

---

<sup>13</sup> Currently NSA covers grades 3 and 5 while the national assessment of grade 8 students is part of LASI. The two assessments will be harmonized during the course of the program.

43. The primary objective of this result area is to ensure universal primary participation. It consists of the following two sub-results areas.

44. **Reducing the number of out-of-school children:** A partnership of MoPME and civil society organizations will offer alternative modalities of education up to grade 8 for 8-14<sup>14</sup> year-old children who have either never enrolled in school or have dropped out of school. The modalities will be designed based on lessons learned under PEDP 3 and the ROSC project. They will have a particular focus on children from urban slums and from the Chittagong Hill Tracts, as well as on children with physical and other disabilities. Graduates of the OOSC schools will be eligible and encouraged to take the grade 5 or 8 terminal examination, enabling them to continue their studies in the formal education system.

45. **Addressing challenges for children with special education needs (CSN) in mainstream schools.** In order to create a more conducive and supportive school environment for CSN in mainstream schools, the program will design modules to be integrated into the DPED curricula and in-service training program, and build the capacities of instructors to deliver these modules. The focus will be on focus on children with mild to moderate disabilities. The modules will cover *inter alia* the early identification of special needs, specialized pedagogical techniques, creating an inclusive environment at school and in the classroom, and liaison with parents and specialized services. Furthermore, the program will pilot working with civil society organizations to provide supplementary in-school and at-home support, and early identification and referral. It will also strengthen linkages between schools and specialized services for CSN.

### **Results Area 3: Strengthening management, governance and financing**

46. The primary objective of this result area is to strengthen the management, governance and financing of primary education. It consists of four sub-results areas.

47. **Strengthening decentralization and local capacity:** The *Organization Development and Capacity Building Guide (ODCBG)* of DPE, which covers the DPE and its subordinate institutions, will be updated and implemented to improve the management and administration of the education system. This guide will include such measures as further decentralizing powers to district and upazila level; increasing the number of and adequately staffing education offices at the local level to reflect the larger number of schools coming under MoPME/DPE authority over the past decade; reforms to career paths; strengthening performance appraisal systems; and capacity building for managerial and administrative staff.

48. Another key intervention in this subarea is the *strengthening of UPEPs and SLIP*. Building upon the experience from PEDP 3, annual grants for UPEPs will be provided, the size of UPEP and SLIP grants will be increased, and a formula-based funding mechanism will be implemented. The capacities of school management councils and social audit committees will be built, and engagement with stakeholders during the development and implementation of UPEPs and SLIPs will be enhanced to further promote good governance and accountability. Benchmarked report cards will be utilized to better monitor the implementation of UPEPs and

---

<sup>14</sup> While the recommended age group for grades 1-8 is 8-14 years, the program will also give an opportunity to slightly older OOSC to join these alternative education programs.

SLIPs. The UPEP/SLIP guidelines will be updated and their implementation monitored, particularly to ensure that the community is informed about school performance, timely attendance of students and teachers is promoted, and more grant funds are used to purchase teaching-learning materials.

49. **Strengthening data systems for decision-making:** The strengthening of data systems will be done in line with the MoPME/DPE's ICT Strategic Vision and Plan. Moving a step beyond the current system of collecting school-level data, the education management information system (EMIS) will also collect individual student-level information which will allow the system to track students even when they change schools. Multiple data sets and information systems will be further integrated into one or more common platforms. ICT equipment and data storage services will be purchased as needed. Annual school censuses, household education surveys, independent classroom observations, and periodic independent verifications of EMIS data will be financed by the program. The program will publish, disseminate and facilitate discussion of reports on education system performance. The capacities of policy- and decision-makers at all levels will be built to understand and use data for monitoring, assessing system performance, and evidence-based planning.

50. **Ensuring adequate and equitable financing:** The program will have targets for steady or increased budgetary allocations linked to agreed new spending priorities, particularly non-administrative. Further, the program will review administrative expenditures to identify inefficiencies and potential cost-saving measures. GoB is also considering piloting and evaluating per capita financing in order to undertake a senior policy review of education financing principles and mechanisms.

51. **Improving procurement and financial management:** The measures for improvement will be articulated subsequent to the procurement and financial management assessment.

### **Cross-cutting issues**

52. **Social engagement and communications:** The program will also include social engagement and communications activities to keep stakeholders informed about program activities and enable stakeholders, including communities, to provide feedback on and input into implementation.

53. **Ensuring inclusiveness:** The program will ensure gender equity, enable children to learn in their mother tongues in early grades, mainstream children with special education needs, and provide second-chance education for OOSC. The last two of these four dimensions were addressed above in their respective sub-results areas. With respect to gender, the entire program will be gender-reviewed during design to ensure that all results areas are gender-equitable, and are monitored accordingly. Mother-tongue instruction applies principally to the languages of the Chittagong Division. The program will ensure that relevant textbooks and teaching-learning materials, as well as teacher education and development activities, are provided in the languages prevalent in the Division.

54. **Utilizing public-private partnerships (PPPs):** During program preparation, MoPME will identify those areas where PPPs can be utilized in line with its policy on PPPs. One major area already identified is the provision of alternative education modalities for out-of-school-children. Furthermore, it is expected that in the initial years of the program period, educational services for grades 6-8 will continue to be provided through public financing and private provision.

55. **Expanding primary education to include grades 6-8:** GoB is currently in the process of preparing a roadmap for the expansion of primary education to grade 8. During program preparation, results areas where there is sufficient policy clarity will include activities necessary to ensure that grades 6-8 are integrated into the functional responsibilities of MoPME/DPE. However, there will be a need during the program implementation period to ensure that the transition planning process continues. Therefore the program will finance ongoing technical assistance to clarify policy and develop costed action-plans, which will be integrated into the post-PEDP 3 program on an ongoing basis.

#### **IV. Initial Environmental and Social Screening**

56. **The proposed program is expected to be socially and geographically inclusive.** It will cover all upazillas, districts and divisions of Bangladesh. It will provide educational opportunities to out-of-school children, children with special needs, populations in hard to reach areas, indigenous people, and ethnic minorities through the interventions in results area 2. Results area 1 will contribute to enhancing equity in education quality by continuing to support the provision of separate latrine and sanitation facilities for girls and by providing textbooks in mother tongues for ethnic minorities and indigenous people. The proposed program is not expected to face issues related to land acquisition and resettlement, as it does not support the construction of new schools, and additional classrooms will only be constructed in existing government owned lands.

57. **The proposed program is not expected to have significant adverse environmental impacts.** Although the program will include construction and maintenance of classrooms and WASH facilities, MoPME already has an existing construction and maintenance policy to ensure a safe environment for the children. It has also developed measures to address the problem of arsenic and manganese contamination of water in schools. The construction and maintenance policy can be further strengthened in the new program as necessary.

58. In accordance with the Banks' policies, an Environmental and Social Systems Assessment (ESSA) will be undertaken during program preparation. The ESSA will be prepared in consultation with relevant stakeholders, and will be disclosed prior to program appraisal upon clearance and approval from the Bank's safeguards team. The ESSA will: (i) examine Bangladesh's existing legal, regulatory, and institutional framework for environment and social management systems; (ii) determine program areas where measures need to be adopted to offset any environmental and social impacts; (iii) evaluate MoPME/DPE/LGED capacity to implement social and environmental safeguards; and (iv) define measures to strengthen the system, and integrate those measures into the program. It will also review the proposed program activities to

evaluate their effects on the environment and potentially affected people. Risks identified through the ESSA will be addressed through the results areas, KPIs and DLIs as relevant. If required, safeguards risk mitigation measures could also be included in the PAP.

**59. MoPME already possesses a good safeguards management system under PEDP 3, including a harmonized “Environment and Social Management Framework”, and has regularized the preparation of bi-annual monitoring reports on safeguard compliance. It also has in place a grievance redress system. The ESMF will be reviewed and updated by GoB during program preparation. Given this existing institutional set-up, the initial assessment of the environment and social risk level of the PforR, after expected mitigation, is Moderate.**

## V. Tentative financing

Source:	(\$m.)
Borrower/Recipient	15,000
IDA	300
Financing gap (funds expected from other DPs <sup>15</sup> )	700
Others (specify)	
Total	16,000

## VI. Contact point

### World Bank

Contact: Saurav Dev Bhatta  
Title: Senior Economist  
Tel: +880-2-5566-7777  
Email: sbhatta@worldbank.org

Contact: Syed Rashed Al - Zayed  
Title: Senior Economist  
Tel: +880-2-5566-7777  
Email: salzayed@worldbank.org

### Borrower/Client/Recipient

Contact: Mahmuda Begum  
Title: Additional Secretary, Economic Relations Division  
Tel: 9180675  
Email: addl-secy2@erd.gov.bd

### Implementing Agencies

Contact: Mohammad Asif- Uz- Zaman  
Title: Secretary, Ministry of Primary & Mass Education  
Tel: 9540484  
Email: scy@mopme.gov.bd

## VII. For more information contact:

The InfoShop  
The World Bank  
1818 H Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20433  
Telephone: (202) 458-4500  
Fax: (202) 522-1500  
Web: <http://www.worldbank.org/infoshop>

---

<sup>15</sup> Including ADB, European Union, DFID, Canada, Australia, JICA, and UNICEF.