

# INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET

## CONCEPT STAGE

**Report No.:** ISDSC8016

**Date ISDS Prepared/Updated:** 06-Aug-2014

**Date ISDS Approved/Disclosed:** 21-Feb-2014, 06-Aug-2014

### I. BASIC INFORMATION

#### A. Basic Project Data

Country:	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Project ID:	P149130
Project Name:	Second Global Partnership for Education (P149130)		
Task Team Leader:	Pedro Cerdan-Infantes		
Estimated Appraisal Date:	06-Aug-2014	Estimated Board Date:	22-Jan-2015
Managing Unit:	GEDDR	Lending Instrument:	Investment Project Financing
Sector(s):	Primary education (90%), Pre-primary education (10%)		
Theme(s):	Education for all (100%)		
Financing (In USD Million)			
Total Project Cost:	16.80	Total Bank Financing:	0.00
Financing Gap:	0.00		
Financing Source			Amount
Borrower			0.00
Education for All - Fast Track Initiative			16.80
Total			16.80
Environmental Category:	B - Partial Assessment		
Is this a Repeater project?	No		

#### B. Project Objectives

The objective of the project is to support the Government in improving school effectiveness at the pre-primary and primary education levels.

The effectiveness of schools will be increased by: (i) providing additional grant funding at school and district levels and overall capacity strengthening to manage these resources increase and (ii)

enhancing the teaching and learning environment in schools, through improved pedagogies and instructional resources to support early grade reading.

### **C. Project Description**

The project seeks to improve the effectiveness of schools by strengthening the capacity for SBM, increasing funding at the school level and improving the teaching and learning of early grade reading. This will be done through two main components and a component to support project management. Component 1 will support the strengthening of SBM, by contributing funding at the school and district levels through school and district grants and building capacity for districts, schools and VEDC to manage these resources effectively. Very low performing districts will receive additional support in the form of larger district grants and more capacity building. Complementing the improvements in management and increased funding at the school level, component 2 supports the development, piloting, and evaluation of a new approach to reading instruction in Lao language, as well as the development of a framework to support ethnic students.

Phased approach. Component 1 will be rolled out in two phases, with the most disadvantaged districts getting support first and continuing to get support throughout the project. Disadvantaged districts are selected using rates of girl survival to grade 5, which in addition to measuring gender inequality captures a number of educational outcomes. By the end of the project, all districts, schools and VEDC will have received capacity building and at least one round of block grants and follow-up support from the district officers using district grants. The phased approach requires a four-year implementation period rather than the usual three for GPE projects. Component 2 will be implemented in a selected sample of schools, with the objective of providing rigorous evaluation results by the end of the project that can inform future policy changes.

#### **Component 1: Strengthening School-Based Management (SBM)**

This component will support the development of a national SBM framework and the strengthening of SBM by financing: (i) development of capacity of school principals, VEDCs, DESB staff in SBM, including effective SDP and improved financial reporting (both to districts through the Financial Reporting System and to communities in order to improve transparency and accountability); (ii) the provision of complementary SBG funds to primary schools and pre-primary classes or kindergarten 3 for five-year-olds and grants to DESB (for monitoring and support of schools) and iii) additional capacity development and grant support for very low performing districts.

This component will first strengthen capacity for school-based management at the central, provincial, district, school and community levels. In particular, the component will finance (i) technical assistance to develop a national SBM framework, revise and standardize SBM tools, training packages, and communications materials, and train a national team; (ii) training of DESB carried out by the national SBM team with technical assistance from the project on preparing SDPs, the use of SBG and reporting (including financial reporting); (iii) technical assistance for DESB to support schools and VEDCs in preparing, implementing and monitoring these SDPs, (iv) technical assistance for the existing system for management and reporting of school finances (transparency and accountability).

The project will finance complementary SBG to schools after they have received capacity building. The grant will be on a per student basis and will complement, not substitute, the government SBG. The amount will be per student and will match that provided by the Government. To ensure a minimum level of benefit to small schools, the project will fund a minimum level of 30 students,

regardless of the actual enrollment. The scope of eligible expenditures for the complimentary grant will be the same as for the government block grant. Funds will be used to finance non-salary operational costs defined under chapter 12 of the Government's Chart of Accounts. This will supplement support from UNICEF in the reprinting and distribution of primary school textbooks for all grades. Remote and disadvantaged schools in each district will receive additional technical and financial assistance support during project implementation.

This component will also provide grants to strengthen DESB capacity building and monitoring of SBM activities. The size of the grants will be based on the number of schools in the district and geographical conditions. Districts will be required to draw up district education plans to utilize GPE and government funds in support of SBM and other school related activities and districts that are getting comparable support from other development partners would not be eligible for these grants.

## Component 2: Improving Reading Outcomes and Assessment Capacity

This component will focus on promoting effective teaching and learning of early grade reading in Lao language. This will be done through a combination of targeted interventions for reading development in Lao language in Grades 1 and 2, instructional approaches for students with weak Lao language skills, and capacity building to MoES in key areas around student assessment, and curriculum development.

### Sub-Component 2.1: Reading Development Intervention for Grades 1 and 2 in Lao language.

The pilot intervention will finance: (i) a review of the Grades 1 and 2 Lao language curriculum and teaching to identify instructional gaps; (ii) the development of a scope and sequence for reading development in Lao language for Grades 1 and 2, (iii) the development of the reading intervention instructional materials; (iv) the training of teachers in the new pedagogical approach, training of principals, pedagogical advisors and DESB on relevant aspects of teacher support and monitoring; and (v) the evaluation of the effectiveness of the reading intervention to promote better teaching and learning of reading in selected schools, using the Lao EGRA and SSME tools. Pilot results are expected to inform ongoing and planned reforms around primary curriculum and reading development, instructional approaches and Lao language development to ethnic students.

The project will also support RIES's capacity building in four possible major areas: (i) survey design; (ii) data analysis; (iii) student assessment, and (iv) the design of evidence-based instructional and curriculum materials. Capacity building activities will be mainly short-term in nature.

### Sub-component 2.2: Lao Language Teaching to Ethnic Students

This sub-component will finance technical assistance to broaden the evidence base around effective approaches to reading development in contexts of ethno-linguistic diversity. The objective of these studies is to inform the MoES's evaluation of policy options to address the gaps in learning outcomes among ethno-linguistic groups in Lao PDR. Laos. In particular, this sub-component will finance the production of: (1) a review of country experiences with significant ethno-linguistic diversity in advancing effective approaches to reading development of students with weak skills in the official language of instruction; (2) a study on the orthographic and linguistic features of the main ethnic languages in Lao PDR; (3) an analysis of policy options and costing to address the reading deficits among non-proficient Lao speakers; and (4) an evaluation framework of policies / programs for instruction in Lao language for the MoES to assess the technical and implementation specifications

of pilot programs and activities for struggling readers.

### Component 3: Capacity Building and Project Management

This component will support the delivery of the project activities on planning and execution, financial management, procurement, internal audit and monitoring and evaluation. A particular focus will be on strengthening financial management capacity on managing the fund flows and control of the complementary grants to schools. The component includes activities designed to ensure efficient project management and early identification of corrective measures to solve any implementation problems. A series of workshops such as a launch workshop and annual review workshop are included in this component, together with financing for the required financial audits to support the Department of Finance. This component will also support the monitoring and evaluation of project activities, by strengthening the existing mechanisms for monitoring and data collection, and supporting project specific data collection when needed.

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

This is a nation-wide program.

#### **E. Borrowers Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies**

The proposed program is a follow-on operation of the IDA-financed Second Education Development Project (EDP II) and the ongoing GPE Program, in which the recipient demonstrated the capacity to comply with Bank safeguards policies throughout project and program implementation. Local ethnic teachers have been trained to teach ethnic students, especially those in pre-primary schools and Grades 1 and 2. Teachers are allowed to explain lessons in ethnic languages with drawings and available visual objects as needed. These mitigation measures are in line with the Ethnic Group Development Plan (EGDP) applied by the current program to help students overcome their language difficulty. Under the ongoing project, the District and Provincial Education officers are familiar with the social safeguards compliance requirements, which include: (i) adherence to the safeguards procedures as described in the Operational Manual, which includes monitoring and reporting of the program's performance in relation to safeguards compliance, and (ii) validation of the safeguards-related results on the ground. MoES will be responsible for day-to-day implementation of the grant at the operational level. MoES will appoint a designated Safeguards Officer who will be responsible for scrutinizing the social safeguards issues involved. The institutional capacity is deemed adequate for the program.

#### **F. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team**

Maya Gabriela Q. Villaluz (GENDR)

Satoshi Ishihara (GURDR)

## **II. SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY**

<b>Safeguard Policies</b>	<b>Triggered?</b>	<b>Explanation (Optional)</b>
Environmental Assessment OP/ BP 4.01	Yes	No civil works will be financed and no environmental impact is anticipated under the program. However, the policy is triggered due to the need to assess and take into account, in an integrated manner, the social aspects of the

		project particularly any impacts on Indigenous Peoples (ethnic groups) communities. However, no additional instruments need to be prepared as a result of triggering OP/BP 4.01.
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	No	The program will not cause any degradation of natural habitats as defined under the safeguard policy.
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	The program will not degrade critical forest areas as defined under the safeguard policy.
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	The program will not involve any procurement of pesticides nor cause any increased use of pesticides.
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	No	The program will not adversely affect sites with archeological, paleontological, historical, religious, or unique natural values.
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	Yes	<p>OP 4.10 is triggered because this is a nation-wide program because this is a nation-wide program covering the districts inhabited by poor ethnic groups (as Indigenous Peoples are called in Lao PDR).</p> <p>During program preparation, the MoES will undertake a social assessment in areas where ethnic groups are present, in order to assess the program's potential effects on ethnic groups. Free, prior and informed consultations will be conducted during program preparation with a representative sample of ethnic groups who are likely to participate in or be affected by the program. This process will allow their perspectives to be collected and reflected in the program design and will ascertain their support for the program. The existing Ethnic Group Development Plan (EGDP) for the proposed Early Childhood Education Project in Lao PDR will be updated based on the social assessment and consultations, and disclosed both through the InfoShop and in-country at convenient locations prior to program appraisal.</p>
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	No	<p>No civil work will be financed by the program.</p> <p>No acquisition of private land, or loss of private assets including trees and structures, is anticipated. It is not anticipated that physical relocation will be necessary.</p>

Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	The program does not involve any dams.
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	The program does not involve international waterways.
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	The program will not be located in any known disputed areas as defined in the policy.

### III. SAFEGUARD PREPARATION PLAN

**A. Tentative target date for preparing the PAD Stage ISDS:** 25-Jul-2014

**B. Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed.**  
**The specific studies and their timing<sup>1</sup> should be specified in the PAD-stage ISDS:**

A. Target date for the Quality Enhancement Review (QER), at which time the PAD-stage ISDS would be prepared: May 2014

B. The target date for preparing the PAD-stage ISDS: July 2014

C. Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed.

The existing EGDP for the proposed Early Childhood Education Project will be updated based on the social assessment and consultations, and disclosed both through InfoShop and in-country in an accessible place and understandable form and language to key stakeholders prior to program appraisal, currently scheduled for June 2014.

### IV. APPROVALS

Task Team Leader:	Name: Pedro Cerdan-Infantes	
<b><i>Approved By:</i></b>		
Regional Safeguards Coordinator:	Name: Surhid P. Gautam (RSA)	Date: 05-Aug-2014
Sector Manager:	Name: Prateek Tandon (SM)	Date: 06-Aug-2014

<sup>1</sup> 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.