



# Project Information Document (PID)

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 23-Jan-2025 | Report No: PIDDC01191



## BASIC INFORMATION

### A. Basic Project Data

|                                                            |                                             |                                                                                                                                       |                                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Project Beneficiary(ies)<br>Pakistan                       | Operation ID<br>P508940                     | Operation Name<br>Getting Results: Access and Delivery of quality Education Services and System Transformation in Punjab Project      |                                   |
| Region<br>SOUTH ASIA                                       | Estimated Appraisal Date<br>06-Jan-2025     | Estimated Approval Date<br>15-May-2025                                                                                                | Practice Area (Lead)<br>Education |
| Financing Instrument<br>Investment Project Financing (IPF) | Borrower(s)<br>Islamic Republic of Pakistan | Implementing Agency<br>Literacy and Non-Formal Basic Education Department, Special Education Department , School Education Department |                                   |

### Proposed Development Objective(s)

To improve girls' and boys' participation and learning levels in pre-primary and primary levels and enhance remedial learning at elementary levels.

## PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)

### Maximizing Finance for Development

|                                                 |    |
|-------------------------------------------------|----|
| Is this an MFD-Enabling Project (MFD-EP)?       | No |
| Is this project Private Capital Enabling (PCE)? | No |

### SUMMARY

|                      |       |
|----------------------|-------|
| Total Operation Cost | 47.85 |
| Total Financing      | 47.85 |
| Financing Gap        | 0.00  |

### DETAILS

Non-World Bank Group Financing



|                                              |                         |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Trust Funds                                  | 47.85                   |
| Global Partnership for Education Fund        | 47.85                   |
| Environmental and Social Risk Classification |                         |
| Moderate                                     | Concept Review Decision |

## B. Introduction and Context

### Country Context

- Poverty has increased slightly amid recent shocks, despite some economic stabilization and significant progress towards reducing poverty between 2001 and 2018 with the expansion of off-farm economic opportunities and increased external remittances.** However, this has not fully translated into improved socio-economic conditions: over one-third of school-age children across Pakistan were found to be out of school; nearly two-thirds of those in school in FY24 were learning deprived; and alarmingly high rates of stunting - 40 percent in FY23 - persist. Critical constraints, including recurrent fiscal and current account deficits, protectionist trade policies, unproductive agriculture, a difficult business environment, a heavy state presence in the economy, and a financially unsustainable energy sector, have remained largely unaddressed, leading to slow and volatile growth. COVID-19, 2022 floods, and economic volatility have worsened poverty, with an estimated 40.5% (US\$3.65/day 2017 PPP) lower-middle income poverty rate in FY24, with an additional 2.6 million Pakistanis falling below the poverty line from the year before.
- Pakistan experienced heavy monsoon rains in 2022 leading to catastrophic and unprecedented flooding with enormous human and economic impacts.** Roughly 33 million people were impacted, and many permanently displaced. More than 13,000 kilometers (km) of roads were destroyed, 2.2 million houses damaged, around 3.8 million hectares of crops were flooded, and an estimated 1.2 million livestock were killed. Limited access to input and output markets and temporary disruptions to supply chains subsequently drove up food prices and added to existing price pressures resulting from reduced agricultural yields and the global rise of food prices. The government's Post-Disaster Needs Assessment<sup>1</sup> estimated that the need for rehabilitation and reconstruction is at US\$16.3 billion.
- Pakistan has made recent progress towards macroeconomic stabilization, but risks remain high and faster sustained growth will require substantial reform.** At the beginning of FY24, Pakistan's economy faced a potential economic crisis in the face of political uncertainty, global monetary policy tightening, and fiscal and external imbalances, that led to pressures on domestic prices and foreign reserves. To preserve reserves, measures to manage imports and capital outflows were introduced, which disrupted local supply chains, economic activity and exacerbated inflationary pressures. Under the interim government, an IMF Stand-By Arrangement was approved in July 2023. Consequently, exchange rate flexibility was

<sup>1</sup> Government of Pakistan. 2022. *Pakistan Floods 2022 Post-Disaster Needs Assessment*. Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives



restored, import controls were relaxed, and steps were taken to contain the fiscal deficit. Political uncertainty also diminished with the successful conduct of the general elections. Coupled with favorable weather conditions and easing external conditions, the economy began recovering in FY24. Consequently, growth of real GDP at factor cost is estimated to have risen to 2.5 percent y-o-y in FY24, after contracting by 0.2 percent in FY23. Downside risks remain high, with the outlook predicated on the new IMF-EFF program remaining on track, continued fiscal restraint, and additional external financing. Heavy banking sector exposure to the sovereign, domestic policy uncertainty, and geopolitical instability pose significant risks to the outlook. Robust economic recovery over the medium term will require the steadfast implementation of much broader fiscal and economic reforms.

4. **The 2022 Country Climate and Development Report (CCDR) highlights Pakistan's severe climate vulnerability, ranking it among the top 10 most affected countries.** Frequent droughts, floods, heat waves, and risks to coastal cities like Karachi from sea level rise and erosion increase development challenges and could reduce GDP by 18-20% annually by 2050.

5. **Pakistan also faces an unfinished agenda on human development, which compounds its structural macro fragility and creates a drag on the economy.** The country's Human Capital Index, is 41, meaning that a child born in Pakistan today will be 41 percent as productive when she grows up as she could be if she enjoyed complete education and full health. The stunting rate of children under five remains among the highest in the world at 40 percent. Evidence suggests that the lack of safely managed water supply, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services is partly responsible for this staggering loss of human potential.<sup>2</sup>

#### Sectoral and Institutional Context

4. **Punjab has a large population of out-of-school-children (OOSC), with 24 percent of the total school aged population out of school.**<sup>3</sup> The challenge is notably more severe among girls, with 28 percent (3.96 million) of the total school-age (5-16) girls out of school, and in rural areas with 28 percent (5.89 million) school-age children not enrolled in school. At the primary level (age 5-9), 3.15 million children in Punjab are out of school, of which 51.5 percent (1.62 million) are girls and 48.5 percent (1.53 million) are boys.<sup>4</sup> The province also faces low completion rates: over the past ten years, out of students enrolled in grade 1, only 60.1 percent girls and 55.9 percent boys completed grade 10.<sup>5</sup> However, compared to the national average of 49 percent<sup>6</sup>, Punjab has increased school participation and completion through the expansion of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) and the establishment and expansion of the Afternoon School Program which runs middle school shifts in primary schools. Enrollments, however, are still low.

5. **Punjab's Gender Parity Index (GPI) for school enrolment is currently 1.04, the highest in the country, yet overall school participation for girls remains low.** The participation rate for children aged 5-16 is 66 percent, with a disparity between boys (73 percent) and girls (58 percent). While primary level enrolment has increased, with 90 percent of girls and 93 percent of boys (ages 5-10) attending school, early grade dropout rates are high: 18 percent of girls and 20 percent of boys drop out before grade 6. Only 34 percent of preschool-aged children (ages 3-4) attend some form of preschool in

<sup>2</sup> Mansuri, Ghazala et al. 2018. *When Water Becomes a Hazard: A Diagnostic Report on The State of Water Supply, Sanitation and Poverty in Pakistan and Its Impact on Child Stunting*. WASH Poverty Diagnostic Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.

<sup>3</sup> The missing third: an out of school study of Pakistani 5–16-year-olds, 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Pakistan Standard of Living Measure Survey 2019-20 and National Population Census 2017

<sup>5</sup> School Information System (SIS), PMIU-PESRP, 2014-23

<sup>6</sup> Pakistan Education Statistics Report 2023



Punjab. An estimated 7.56 million children in Punjab are out of school, with girls more likely than boys to never attend school. Ten percent of girls in Punjab will never go to school, compared to 7 percent of boys<sup>7</sup>.

6. **Punjab's School Education Department (SED) is responsible for approximately 48,500 primary, middle and elementary schools across its 36 districts.** The department delivers its mandate through its attached and autonomous departments, including the Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board (PCTB), the Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Education Development (QAED), the Punjab Examination Commission (PEC), the Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) and the Programme Monitoring and Implementation Unit (PMIU). District Education Authorities (DEAs) were established in 2017 in Punjab, with executive authority over decisions related to school upgradation, teacher rationalization and other school specific actions. Chaired by the Deputy Commissioner, these Authorities have four tiers for school support: Chief Education Officers, District Education Officers, Deputy District Education Officers, and Area Education Officers (AEOs).

7. **Public schools face a critical shortage of functional classrooms, particularly in rural areas:** 35 percent of primary schools have two or less functional classrooms, and 74 percent have less than five functional classrooms. The deficit increases with higher grades, where 53.5 percent of middle schools have fewer than eight classrooms. At the primary level, public schools in rural areas are twice more likely to have two or fewer classrooms (37 percent) compared to those in urban areas (19 percent). Overall, approximately 19,000 public schools house over 40 students per classroom.<sup>8</sup>

8. **Learning recovery post COVID-19 school closures has been gradual and public schools in Punjab are still recovering from the pandemic.** The lack of alternative methods to ensure continuity of learning resulted in a steep fall in learning levels with assessment data showing a decline of 19 percentage points in Urdu, 17 percentage point decline in Math and 16 percentage points decline in English performance for Grade 5 students during the pandemic<sup>9</sup>. Post pandemic, National Achievement Test (NAT) 2023 scores show that although Punjab outperforms other provinces, 36 percent of students tested in Grade 4 math and 29 percent in Grade 4 English could not answer basic questions<sup>10</sup> correctly. Moreover, Grade 8 NAT results show that the average student score in math is 27. PEC has established minimum proficiency standards for primary and middle grades in alignment with the Global Proficiency Framework for learning; however, there is no mechanism at present to record or use student level data from School-Based Assessments.

9. **A key contributor to low learning levels in Punjab are weak pedagogical practices in the classroom, with 75 percent of teachers in Punjab using low quality instructional practices, across early childhood education (ECE) classes and primary schools.**<sup>11</sup> Teachers lack relevant knowledge and skills and low quality multigrade teaching remains an important constraint to learning in approximately 90 percent of public primary schools.<sup>12</sup> The current Continuous Professional Development (CPD) model for primary school teachers is designed for monograde teaching. Another key contributing factor to low learning levels is the lack of formative assessments in the classroom. There is also little use of professional support for remedial targeted instruction, which has shown to be effective in raising learning levels.<sup>13</sup> The feedback mechanism in the CPD model is designed to have AEOs observe classrooms and provide feedback to teachers. However, the feedback often lacks a focus on discussing and demonstrating mechanisms for improving learning outcomes within classrooms.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Pakistan Standard of Living Measure Survey, 2019-20

<sup>8</sup> Punjab School Information System (SIS) - November 2024

<sup>9</sup> Assessments of Students' Learning Loss (COVID-19), 2020, Punjab Education Commission (PEC)

<sup>10</sup> Subject tests taken by students in Punjab based on the curricula of English, Urdu, and Math for Grade 4, and Math and Science for Grade 8.

<sup>11</sup> GEPD 2023, only 25 percent teachers were found to have satisfactory pedagogical skills.

<sup>12</sup> Geven (2019). Is there a learning crisis in Punjab? Results from the SABER Service Delivery survey in Punjab Pakistan.

<sup>13</sup> Beg, Sabrin, et al. "Strengthening teacher accountability to reach all students (STARS)." World Bank (SIEF). Milestone 3 (2019).

<sup>14</sup> Catalyzing Learning in Pakistan – Punjab Brief (World Bank, forthcoming)



10. **School Councils (SCs) exist for all schools and are provided Non-Salary Budgets (NSB) to improve the learning environment in their schools.** PESP III helped the Government of the Punjab (GoPunjab) to (i) simplify the transfer of NSB funds to address constant delays in disbursement of the NSB to schools and (ii) deliver a SC mobilization strategy to increase their participation in school management and improve utilization of the NSB. Given the acute needs of primary schools for additional classrooms and teachers, the government is increasing the ceiling for NSB to cover the recurrent cost of schools, provide needed infrastructure and facilities, and address staff shortages. The proposed increase in funding, from PKR 400,000 (US\$ 1,455) per year to PKR 5 million (US\$ 18,180) per year, however, has not yet been approved by the provincial Cabinet.

11. **The upcoming Punjab Education Sector Plan (PESP) 2025-29 focuses on quality ECE, non-formal education, inclusive education, and foundational learning.** It proposes using summer vacations to bridge learning gaps and introducing high-quality teaching and learning material, particularly at the primary level, to support foundational learning and improve student learning outcomes. The plan aims to provide quality ECE in all primary schools and establish district level centers of excellence for effective implementation of ECE. It also proposes expansion of educational opportunities to OOSC and proposes to facilitate their mainstreaming through non-formal education centers: over the next five years, the GoPunjab aims to enroll 3.6 million OOSC through non-formal education. Additionally, the plan emphasizes inclusive and enabling learning environments for differently abled children across the province. The plan commits to provision of accessible infrastructure in all schools by 2029. In the plan, the Special Education Department (SpED) has also committed to a 10 percent increase in the total number of SpED institutions and a substantial increase in enrolment numbers. However, funding is not available for learning materials and almost 200,000 assistive devices needed even for current enrolments.<sup>15</sup>

12. **The World Bank and other development partners, including the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), Asian Development Bank (ADB) and UNICEF have supported the SED over the last twenty years in** introduction and scale of PPPs, provision of conditional cash transfers, teacher development and assessment reforms, and introduction of data collection and monitoring. The World Bank's Punjab Human Capital Investment Project (PHCIP) (P164785) and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) funded Taleem (meaning education in Urdu) have supported scaling the ECE intervention introduced through PESP III, which established the minimum quality standards for ECE and set up 7,000 classrooms that met these minimum standards. The Literacy and Non-Formal Basic Education Department (L&NFBED) has received support from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to develop a 36-month primary level curriculum and an 18-month middle level curriculum. Support to expansion of primary level ALP centers is being provided by Taleem and the World Bank's Actions to Strengthen Performance for Inclusive and Responsive Education (ASPIRE) (P173399). The SpED was supported by FCDO's Punjab Education Sector Program II, through which a sector plan was developed for the sector, select public and PEF schools were supported with inclusive infrastructure and children with mild disabilities were screened, supported with assistive devices and mainstreamed into school.

#### Relationship to CPF

13. **The proposed Getting Results: Access and Delivery of Quality Education Services – System Transformation in Punjab Project (GRADES-STP) is consistent with the World Bank Group Country Partnership Framework for the period FY26 up to FY35 discussed by the Board of Executive Directors on Jan 14, 2025 (Report No CPF0000037).** The project contributes to Outcome 2 in the CPF, "Reduced Learning Poverty" by increasing access and attendance to quality schools and improving foundational learning for primary and middle level students, and by strengthening ECE and leveraging non-

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<sup>15</sup> Punjab Annual School Census 2021-22



formal education for older OOSC. The proposed project also contributes to the World Bank's Corporate Results Indicator 2.1, "12 million elementary and secondary children supported with better education."

14. **The project is consistent with the country's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).** The project is also aligned with the National Climate Change Policy of Pakistan and directly addresses its key priorities of building climate-resilient infrastructure and strengthening provincial decision-making by improving the planning and regulation for public school construction. The project also aligns with the Country Climate and Development Report's priority of strengthening human capital to achieve sustained and equitable development and climate resilience.

### **C. Proposed Development Objective(s)**

15. The PDO for the project is "To improve girls' and boys' participation and learning levels in pre-primary and primary levels and enhance remedial learning at elementary levels."

#### **Key Results**

16. PDO level indicators will include:

- Girls' Participation Rate in Pre-primary Education (age 4-5) (Percentage)
- Boys' Participation Rate in Pre-primary Education (age 4-5) (Percentage)
- School Participation Rate – Girls of Primary School Age (age 6-10) (Percentage)
- School Participation Rate – Boys of Primary School Age (age 6-10) (Percentage)
- Additional Share of Girls above Minimum Proficiency for Reading by Grade 4 (Percentage)
- Additional Share of Boys above Minimum Proficiency for Reading by Grade 4 (Percentage)

### **D. Concept Description**

#### **Component 1: Access to Schooling**

17. **The project's first component aims to enhance education access in Punjab, especially for OOSC, girls, early learners, and students with disabilities.** These include expanding quality ECE by improving the compliance of ECE classrooms with the Punjab ECE Policy 2017, improving support for OOSC by setting up non-formal education (NFE) institutions that offer Accelerated Learning Programs (ALPs), and creating inclusive learning environments by providing disability-friendly infrastructure in SED and SpED schools.

18. Sub-component 1.1: Implementation of an expanded ECE program. This sub-component will support the scale up of ECE according to the Punjab ECE Policy 2017. The initiative will prioritize girls' schools, targeting schools currently lacking ECE facilities, utilizing existing spaces where appropriate. The intervention will also provide ECE kits and books, age-appropriate furniture, and enhance classroom ambience through minor repair works.

19. Subcomponent 1.2: Supporting OOSC at the middle level with establishment of 1,000 non-formal education centers. L&NFBED will set up 1,000 community-owned non-formal ALP centers at the middle level to target OOSC and drop-outs beyond primary grades. These centers will be established across Punjab and will be located outside a five-kilometer



radius of middle schools, with 60 percent of the centers dedicated to female students. The centers will adhere to the standards for non-formal education deployed under Taleem, which include site identification and monitoring through community support. Teacher training for middle level ALP will be strengthened by developing a gender-responsive CPD program for L&NFBED, modeled on the SED's CPD framework, and will focus on equipping teachers with skills to be inclusive and enhance learning and gender-equity in classrooms. L&NFBED will be supported to scale its processes for mainstreaming graduates into SED schools. Horizontal linkages with the SED will be established to enhance coordination between the two departments, including platforms for sharing student data.

20. Subcomponent 1.3a: Provision of enabling infrastructure and equipment for SpED Schools. This initiative involves an infrastructure needs assessment of SpED schools, followed by the provision of accessible infrastructure to schools and assistive devices to SpED students. An ECE policy will be developed for SpED and 273 ECE classrooms will be established in SpED schools. A SpED School Council Policy will be also developed to empower school communities to undertake their own development activities to meet their children's needs, in a time and cost-effective manner. The policy will also provide the financial framework for the utilization of funds for the hiring of teachers as per the schools' needs and for the procurement of teaching and learning material (TLM) through localized procurements.

21. Subcomponent 1.3b: Provision of disability-friendly infrastructure to SED schools. The component will strengthen inclusiveness by providing disability-friendly infrastructure to 7,000 schools, of which 70 percent will be girls' schools.

## **Component 2: Improved Learning Outcomes**

22. **The project will assess existing teacher support practices to identify gaps in TLM and CPD models to enhance foundational literacy and gender-equity in early childhood and primary education, while supporting remedial learning in middle schools.** It will assess and revise CPD frameworks for SED, SpED and L&NFBED, develop child-centered and gender-sensitive teaching materials, and offer targeted teacher training that includes socio-emotional skills and language-responsive teaching. Additionally, Terms of Reference for district management will be revised to create a robust support framework for educators, with feedback to teachers targeted more towards pedagogical practices.

23. Sub-component 2.1: Development of TLM, teacher training and improvement of CPD framework. This component focuses on improving foundational learning TLM and the CPD framework for SED teachers and development of a CPD program for L&NFBED and SpED. It involves a review of existing materials and the development of foundational learning TLM for L&NFBED and SpED schools, as well as for grades 4 and 5 for SED's primary schools. Revision of material for grades 1, 2 and 3 is already placed under GRADES-P, and work on grades 4 and 5 will build upon this. GRADES-STP will also strengthen formative assessment at pre-primary, primary, and middle levels as per the formative assessment strategy developed by PEC in 2022 and improve the use of assessment results for the review of TLM. A CPD framework for L&NFBED has already been developed with the support of JICA and the project will use the framework to develop a CPD program for non-formal teachers, with a pilot proposed for 2,000 teachers before scale-up. Lastly, a CPD program will be developed for SpED teachers, including a pilot program targeting 600 teachers, with the understanding that the program would be sustained by the SpED following project closure.

24. Subcomponent 2.2: Establishment and operationalization of a content hub to create quality content. This subcomponent focuses on supporting the SED to create, curate and operate a state-of-the-art content hub, equipped with technology to produce high-quality digital content. The hub will develop TLM, resources for teacher training, and support the SED in both offline and online behavioral change campaigns. Additionally, the content hub will enable QAED to develop training modules based on training needs identified through tools like the AEOs' Classroom Observation Tool (COT) and



expand training options through synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning programs. Most important, in receiving support to develop its human resource capacity in content development, the hub will reduce dependence on development partners to support the SED to develop content.

25. Subcomponent 2.3: Bridging gaps in mentoring and coaching for teachers. This activity aims to bridge the gaps in mentoring and coaching practices for teachers by strengthening the support provided to district education management. Previously, leadership trainings of AEOs were a one-time activity focused on career management, financial management, employment rules, promotion rules and the Punjab Employees Efficiency, Discipline and Accountability Act. Leadership training through GRADES-STP will be informed by a gap identification study to assess the current mentoring practices within district management, identifying areas that include content knowledge, gender-responsive pedagogy, inclusive practices particularly in multigrade settings, among others where improvements are needed, with particular emphasis on the effective use of the COT.<sup>16</sup> Support will be adapted according to the findings of a process evaluation.

26. Subcomponent 2.4 (a and b): Establishment of 4,000 learning camps in primary schools and 4,000 remedial camps in middle schools, where 60 percent camps will be in girls' schools. The component will provide targeted support to students who require additional help to meet primary and middle grade-level competencies in Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN). A targeted instruction approach will be adopted in these camps, using lessons from the World Bank supported targeted instruction pilots in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Islamabad Capital Territory. Under this approach, students will be assessed before enrolment in both FLN camps and remedial camps to establish their competency level for enrolment in cohorts for their levels.

### **Component 3: Enhancing System Capacity and Data Systems**

27. **Component 3 will support data standardization, gender-responsive decision making, better conduct and use of assessments, and school empowerment.** It will (i) further develop the Integrated Education Management Information Systems set up through PESP III and expand them to L&NFBED and SpED, (ii) take forward PESP III's unique student identifier intervention, with support from the National Database and Registration Authority, (iii) support reforms in financial management through increasing school NSB and empowering schools with greater autonomy, and (iv) strengthen the conduct and use of school-based assessments, with focus on foundational learning.

28. Subcomponent 3.1: Standardization of Data. Student identifiers will be established and verified for all students in SED, NFE and SpED schools. This will (i) help remove duplicate enrolment entries from the system (ii) allow for cross-triangulation against population data from Primary and Secondary Health Departments as well as Population Welfare Departments, and (iii) help track the transition of students from public to private schools. Through this intervention, approximately 12 million children enrolled in SED schools, approximately 668,000 enrolled in L&NFBED schools and 40,000 children enrolled in SpED schools will be allotted unique identifiers through a uniform process.

29. Subcomponent 3.2: Operationalization of the Punjab Education Gender Cell (PEGC). The project will operationalize the PEGC already notified the SED to promote and advocate for gender equity and inclusion and child protection in education policies and the curriculum and introduce practices to ensure that both boys and girls have equitable access to quality education.

<sup>16</sup> Catalyzing Learning in Pakistan – Punjab Brief (WB, Forthcoming) uses data from Global Education Policy Dashboard 2023 survey in Punjab and highlights that even though only 10 schools are assigned to 1 AEO, classroom observations are reported to last less than 10 minutes at a time offering no substantive feedback and coaching.



30. **Subcomponent 3.3:** This subcomponent will focus on two Performance-Based Conditions (PBCs) to support enabling factors for school empowerment through more equitable access to resources and greater autonomy to use these resources. The PBCs will consist of four sub-conditions each, which will be required for the PBC to be considered met.

31. **PBC 1: More equitable budgetary allocations and to facilitate school-based hiring:** This PBC will have four sub-conditions: (i) PBC 1.1: Revision of the NSB formula to increase the weight assigned to primary schools in the provincial education budget, (ii) PBC 1.2: Development of school-based hiring guidelines and processes, (iii) PBC 1.3: Funds disbursed to schools according to the revised NSB formula, and (iv) PBC 1.4: Recruitment of 25,000 teachers from the NSB in understaffed schools, through school-based hiring.

32. **PBC 2: Empowerment of school leadership and management:** For this PBC to be achieved, schools will need to be empowered with financial and administrative autonomy to make decisions as per their needs. Schools will be empowered to localize decisions including, but not limited to, utilization of finances, hiring of teachers and support staff, provision of missing facilities, classrooms, school repair and maintenance. This PBC will have four sub-conditions: (i) PBC 2.1: A school empowerment strategy is developed and notified by the SED (ii) PBC 2.2: The School Council Policy 2007 (amended 2013) is revised to formalize enhancement in developmental spending limits for School Councils from PKR 400,000 to at least PKR 1,500,000 (iii) PBC 2.3: A school leadership and management training program developed and trainings on school management including financial and administrative management delivered to school heads/principals of SED schools, and (iv) PBC 2.4: A digital fund utilization tracking module developed and embedded in SIS.

#### Component 4: Influencing Behavior Change

33. **The component will identify locations with a high OOSC population, with an emphasis on low GPI districts, and design and deliver behavior nudges to improve enrolment and foundational learning.** The campaign will leverage the experience from the World Bank's successful SMS Girls Campaign in Punjab, which prompted girls to return to school after COVID-19 associated shutdowns. Community engagement will use SMS technology, social media, mainstream media to deliver targeted messaging regarding importance of girls' education, school readiness, ECE programs, and foundational literacy skills, responding to demand-side constraints that prevent children from attending school, staying in school and learning well. The content hub will be leveraged to develop content for the nudges and will coordinate with the PEGC on campaigns focusing on girls. Behavioral change campaigns focused on importance of reading at home, addressing child readiness, and ways to address child stunting will also be part of the engagement campaign. The project will also engage with parents through foundational learning prompts, leveraging lessons from a pilot in the Islamabad Capital Territory through which FLN prompts are sent to parents via SMS for them to test their children on the FLN items being covered in school, coinciding with the progression of the FLN curriculum and reinforce lessons in schools.

#### Legal Operational Policies

| Policies                                    | Triggered? |
|---------------------------------------------|------------|
| Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50 | No         |
| Projects in Disputed Area OP 7.60           | No         |



## Summary of Screening of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

34. **The environment and social risk rating of the project is assessed as moderate.** The primary environmental risks of the project are associated with planned minor rehabilitation and construction works in schools including dust, air, and noise pollution, community health and safety and Occupational Health and Safety risks. Additionally, the project may also involve the procurement of electronic equipment, which introduces the potential for e-waste generation at the end of the equipment's lifecycle. The social risk of the project are related to elite capture in site selection, which could lead to the exclusion of remote and rural communities (including ethnic and religious minorities).

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