



Appraisal Environmental and Social Review Summary

Appraisal Stage

(ESRS Appraisal Stage)

Date Prepared/Updated: 05/13/2025 | Report No: ESRSA04110



The World Bank

Getting Results: Access And Delivery Of Quality Education Services And System Transformation In Punjab Project (P508940)

I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Operation Data

Operation ID	Product	Operation Acronym	Approval Fiscal Year
P508940	Investment Project Financing (IPF)	GRADES-STP	2025
Operation Name	Getting Results: Access and Delivery of quality Education Services and System Transformation in Punjab Project		
Country/Region Code	Beneficiary country/countries (borrower, recipient)	Region	Practice Area (Lead)
Pakistan	Pakistan	SOUTH ASIA	Education
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Islamic Republic of Pakistan	Literacy and Non-Formal Basic Education Department, Special Education Department , School Education Department	15-Apr-2025	23-Jun-2025
Total Project Cost			
47,857,000.00			

Proposed Development Objective

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

B. Is the operation being prepared in a Situation of Urgent Need of Assistance or Capacity Constraints, as per Bank IPF Policy, para. 12?

No

C. Summary Description of Proposed Project Activities

The proposed operation, funded entirely by a System Transformation Grant by the Global Partnership for Education, will support the Government of the Punjab with improvements in school enrollment and retention, provision of early childhood education (ECE) and foundational learning at the pre-primary and primary levels, remedial and non-formal



learning opportunities for children who have not acquired foundational skills at the primary level, and inclusive education for children with disabilities. Project components include: Component 1: Provision of Access to Schooling This component will support the government to (i) expand and improve its ECE delivery in primary schools, (ii) increase the number of non-formal education institutions for middle school-aged out of school children, and (iii) make schools more accessible for children with special needs through inclusive infrastructure in 7,000 schools and 300 special education schools. Component 2: Improved Learning Outcomes This component will support the government to (i) improve learning resources and delivery of foundational learning across all primary schools and (ii) introduce remedial learning in 4,000 primary and 4,000 middle schools reporting low levels of foundational learning. It will also support improvements in teacher observation and coaching, with a focus in particular on language of instruction and teacher support in multigrade settings. A content development hub will be established in the government's teacher training institution to develop digital content for schools, teachers and managers. Component 3: Enhancing System Capacity and Data Systems This component will support the government to (i) standardize data collection and reporting (including learning data and student identifiers) across the school, non-formal and special education department, (ii) establish a gender cell in the School Education Department to support gender-focused and gender-responsive planning, service delivery and oversight and (iii) introduce more equitable school budgets and support financial and administrative autonomy of schools. Component 4: Behavior change This component will support the government to engage education communities through interactive online and offline content to influence them to play a more proactive role in their children's schooling and to encourage enrolment and retention. Communications content will be developed through the content hub.

D. Environmental and Social Overview

D.1 Overview of Environmental and Social Project Settings

The project will be implemented in Punjab, Pakistan's most populous province with approximately 110 million residents. The districts and exact location of subproject activities are not known at this stage; however, the target schools are expected to be predominantly rural, in the southern districts of the province. A final list of schools for intervention will be determined following a needs assessment. Civil works and construction activities planned under the project are expected to be confined within the already built environment of schools, with anticipated localized, temporary, and reversible environmental and health impacts. These risks will primarily affect surrounding communities, school children, and staff at construction sites. It is important to note the socio-economic context of Punjab, where a significant portion of the population is vulnerable to poverty, particularly during crises like floods and climate change-induced events. Climate-induced events can severely disrupt the education sector, as evidenced by the 2010 floods which damaged thousands of schools and impacted millions of children. Heatwaves also force school closures, hindering educational progress. Punjab also exhibits high levels of inequality, with a pronounced disparity in poverty rates between rural and urban areas. Therefore, the project's potential environmental and social impacts must be considered in conjunction with these pre-existing vulnerabilities and the ongoing challenges posed by climate change.

Punjab's Gender Parity Index 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 notable disparity between boys (73 percent) and girls (58 percent). A total of 9.6 million children (ages 5-16) in Punjab are out of school, (OOSC) with girls more likely than boys to never attend school: approximately 10 percent of girls in Punjab will never go to school, compared to 7 percent of boys. Overcrowded classrooms dilute the effectiveness of trained teachers, especially in under-resourced schools.



To help address the challenge of out of school children, the project intends to support up to 1000 Non-Formal Education Institutes (NFEIs) in areas that do not have a public school within a five-kilometer radius or have large number of overage OOSC. The environmental and social settings of these NFEIs will be varied—as the centers are expected to be in slums, informal settlements, and inside private homes. These facilities may not have the necessary safeguards to protect children from abuse, exploitation, or neglect. Ensuring accountability and oversight in non-formal education settings will be challenging, potentially leading to issues of transparency and governance. They may also lack proper emergency protocols and equipment, such as fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and evacuation plans. Finally, the establishment of non-formal education institutes in private homes may face resistance from the local community, especially if there are concerns about safety, noise, or disruption

During project preparation, a series of stakeholder consultations were held. These included government departments, educators, NGOs, and child protection advocates. Stakeholders highlighted the need for cross-sectoral collaboration on child safeguarding, consent, and identification of early signs of abuse in non-formal settings. From January to June 2024, 78 percent of the 1,630 reported cases of child abuse in Pakistan originated from Punjab, as highlighted in an NGO report. The PEEDA (Punjab Employees Efficiency, Discipline and Accountability) Act has been enacted to respond to reported issues of child abuse in public sector schools. Further, in March 2025, the Punjab Home Department issued a directive to the School Education Department to introduce awareness about “Good Touch, Bad Touch” in schools across the province, to educate children on personal safety, and develop a module for formal introduction into school curriculum. However, formal legislation and policy directives on issues of SEA/SH are lacking. The use of corporal punishment is prohibited under Section 16 of the Punjab Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2014, but the rules of business of this Act are not in place

Land related issues were also highlighted, including the need for risk mitigation protocols in cases of land disputes or reversals, especially for long-established institutions, which may result in residential and economic loss during classroom construction. The need to devise strategies to maintain enrollment during agricultural crop cycles (when child labor is often used in rural areas) was also recommended.

D.2 Overview of Borrower’s Institutional Capacity for Managing Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Punjab School Education Department (SED), and its associated department Special Education Department (SpED) and Literacy and Non-Formal Basic Education Department (L&NFBED) are the responsible agencies for the implementation of the project. The SED has approximately 20 years of implementing World Bank Projects including three results based IPFs Punjab Education Sector Reform Program (PESRP-1, 2 & 3) and an ongoing education component of the Punjab Human Capital Investment Project (PHCIP). The Project Management Implementing Unit (PMIU) has implemented these projects and also supported in preparation of E & S management instruments for recently approved Getting Results Access and Delivery of Quality Education Services in Punjab Project (GRADES-P, P176594). The activities of GRADES-STP and GRADES-P will be complementary; with SED PMIU being the implementing agency for both projects. The SED has experience and understanding of the bank E & S requirements under safeguards policies, however capacity building support will be required to build their capacity on ESF. The other implementing agencies SpED and L & NFBED have experience working with other international donors, however, have not worked with World Bank directly. Considering



the implementation arrangement, the capacity of the borrower is considered is moderate. The ESCP has detailed robust supervision and monitoring arrangements, and will also account for trainings to be provided to the Project's E&S staff on a variety of topics relating to the ESF

II. SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL (ES) RISKS AND IMPACTS

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Substantial

A.1 Environmental Risk Rating

Moderate

The project's environmental risk rating is moderate due to the construction of inclusive infrastructure such as ramps, minor upgrades, and toilet facilities in schools. These activities may cause air pollution, noise, wastewater, generation of solid waste and OHS risks from physical hazards, electrical works, slips, and trips. The construction activities may also create temporary nuisance within the school environment and also to the nearby communities. The project will also procure ICT equipment, which is expected to generate e-waste at end-of-life, which will generate environmental and health and safety impacts during recycling and disposal of e-waste. along with community health and safety risks for school children and nearby residents. However, since the civil works are small-scale and confined to school spaces, the environmental risks are localized, reversible, and can be mitigated with proper measures. Considering the E & S risks and the E & S capacity of the implementing agencies (as explained under Section D2), the project environmental risk rating is considered as moderate

A.2 Social Risk Rating

Substantial

The Social risk rating is considered Substantial. Efforts to improve early childhood education, provide services to out-of-school and disabled children and engage parents will generate positive socioeconomic benefits. However, there is a risk of of exclusion of vulnerable groups, particularly religious and ethnic minorities, in non-formal settings. Construction and renovation activities in existing schools could generate risks related to gender-based violence (GBV), labor management, and community health and safety by exposing schoolchildren and surrounding communities to adverse impacts, and may also trigger land related disputes and restrictions on land use. Despite training and behavioral change efforts, there is also a risk that there could be resistance to project activities because of inconsistent stakeholder engagement with groups such as rural parents, religious leaders, teachers unions and community-based organizations involved in the non-formal education sector. There is a substantial risk of incidents of violence against children, child abuse, exploitation and SEA/SH in the Non-Formal Education Institutes (NFEIs), and these will be challenging to monitor. Increasing the enrollment of students with disabilities may lead to increased risk of targeted bullying and physical abuse of these students and their families by their peers and the general population.

B. Environment and Social Standards (ESS) that Apply to the Activities Being Considered

B.1 Relevance of Environmental and Social Standards

ESS1 - Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Relevant

ESS1 is relevant. Since GRADES-P also includes similar kind of civil works included in the project, the Environment and Social Framework (ESMF) of GRADES-P can guide E & S screening criteria and the guidance of site-specific instruments



for GRADES STP. The site-specific instruments will be prepared during implementation to further assess and mitigate the E&S and SEA/SH related impacts of subproject activities. The relevant E&S requirements described in the GRADES-P ESMF will be incorporated into the Project Operations Manual (POM) for GRADES-STP. The POM will incorporate the relevant E&S screening and management measures through the Environmental and Social Codes of Practice (ESCoP). As the project involves civil work activities, Chance find procedure will be made part of site specific instruments to guide handling of any object of historical or archeological significance. The Environment and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) has captured the organizational arrangements, and risk management commitments by the implementing agencies

ESS10 - Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

Relevant

ESS10 is relevant. The project has prepared and disclosed Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) at the appraisal stage, and will implement it to ensure effective and inclusive engagement with stakeholders throughout its lifecycle. The SEP has mapped out all project stakeholders (including students, teachers, teachers' unions, non-formal education providers, parents—particularly of children receiving special education, and female teachers), and will ensure accessibility and inclusivity by proposing tailored approaches to engagement suitable to the specific needs of each stakeholder group. The Grievance Redressal Mechanisms (GRM) developed and implemented for GRADES-P, will be leveraged for GRADES-STG. It will be a three-tiered GRM, with Provincial, District, and School/Center level GRCs. Grievances can be registered by online portal, dedicated helpline, mail, and through complaint registers at site, with a 10 days timeline for resolution of grievances. The project will also incorporate community scorecards in selected districts to generate feedback on civil works and school management, and will also implement a communications campaign.

ESS2 - Labor and Working Conditions

Relevant

PMU-GRADES will develop stand-alone Labor Management Procedures (LMP) as indicated in project Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) in accordance with ESS2 which will be applicable for all type of workers likely to be involved in the GRADES-Punjab project, this will be extended to cover GRADES-STP project activities. Labor Management Provisions will be integrated into the Project Operations Manual (POM), which will establish comprehensive safeguards for all workers engaged in project activities, including construction labor and teachers recruited for Non-Formal Education Institutes (NFEIs) under sub-component 1.2 before the start of construction/civil work activities. Key provisions will encompass fair employment practices, occupational health and safety, timely remuneration, and accessible grievance redress mechanisms. Risks such as unscrupulous labor practices, OHS, community risks, waste generation, risk of GBV, workplace harassment, and exploitation of child and forced labor have been identified.

ESS3 - Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

Relevant

ESS3 is relevant. Construction activities will involve the use of various resources such as construction material, water, electricity, fuel for machinery, and other materials during implementation. These activities are also expected to generate some degree of pollutants (emissions, noise, dust, and construction waste) which may pose limited quantities of solid waste. The site-specific E & S instruments will cover all aspects of resource efficiency and pollution prevention and management. For resource efficiency, utilization of solar panels for schools could be considered and will be explored during project preparation. The project will generate E-waste as considerable amount of IT



equipment will be procured. An E-waste management plan will be prepared and implemented during project implementation.

ESS4 - Community Health and Safety

Relevant

ESS4 is relevant. The construction activities in schools which may be located in close proximity to communities/settlements may create nuisance to nearby communities, and temporary health and safety risks due to exposure to increased pollution and improperly disposed construction waste and solid waste. Additionally, the close proximity of some project activities to rural villages/communities may pose traffic safety risks due to temporarily increased road usage during construction activities. Furthermore, incorporation of universal access standards (such as ramps, accessible washrooms, and inclusive design features) in civil works is imperative to avoid exclusion risk for persons with disabilities from safe and equitable use of school facilities. The absence of Life and Fire Safety (LFS) considerations including lack of Emergency Preparedness and Response mechanisms, and proper evacuation procedures for the differently abled in the upgrading of education centers poses a significant risk to the safety and well-being of students and teachers. The Project will ensure the integration of LFS measures and universal accessibility during the design and construction phases of school upgrades through the preparation and implementation of a Community Health and Safety Plan. GBV/ SEA/SH and Violence Against Children Action Plan will be developed by PMIU-GRADES, and GBV service provider (Firm/NGO) will ensure the implementation of action plan to ensure GBV & SEA/SH risks are mitigated throughout implementation of project activities and specially during civil works.

ESS5 - Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

Relevant

ESS 5 is relevant. The Resettlement Policy Framework prepared for GRADES-P, will be leveraged for GRADES-STP. The schools where construction activity will take place are on government land and no land acquisition is expected. However, it has been observed that there are public schools that were previously established on voluntarily donated land, especially in rural areas. To avoid disputes during the construction and operational phases at the site, a land mutation record in the name of School Education Department (SED) Punjab will be mandated for schools at the screening stage. The project will finance civil works in those school sites, where land mutation record will be in the name of School Education Department and Special Education Department. No land acquisition is envisaged under the project, however Voluntary Land Donation (VLD) protocols will be integrated into Project Operations Manual (POM) to ensure due diligence as per ESS 5, if need arises. 1000 Non-Formal Education Institutions (NFEIs) are also to be established under sub-component 1.2 of the project. These will be established at privately-owned locations on pro-bono basis, with utility charges provided by the Government. It will be ensured through a negative list at screening stage, which will be integrated into Project Operations Manual, that selected locations are free from encumbrances, and adverse economic, accessibility or social impact. There is only temporary, voluntary, and non-disruptive use of land expected as a NFEI. The project will document agreements between L&NFBED and land/property owners, detailing understandings and agreement over the equitable use of his/her land and informed consent for establishment of a NFEI. An Independent Third Party Monitor will ensure regular monitoring of the land use as per the ESS 5. A negative screening checklist for NFEIs and Voluntary Land Donation (VLD) protocols as per the principles laid out in ESF will be integrated into Project Operations Manual (POM).



ESS6 - Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

Not Currently Relevant

The project is not expected to impact natural habitats. The project activities and the associated civil works will be confined within built up school premises. Screening of school sites conducted will eliminate any possibility of impact on sensitive biological and natural resources due to project activities.

ESS7 - Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities

Not Currently Relevant

There are no recognized indigenous people in the province

ESS8 - Cultural Heritage

Relevant

ESS8 is relevant. As the project involves civil work activities, Chance find procedure will be made part of site specific instruments to guide handling of any object of historical or archeological significance.

ESS9 - Financial Intermediaries

Not Currently Relevant

ESS9 is not relevant. There is no involvement of any financial intermediaries in the implementation of this project

Public Disclosure

B.2 Legal Operational Policies that Apply

OP 7.50 Operations on International Waterways

No

OP 7.60 Operations in Disputed Areas

No

B.3 Other Salient Features

Use of Borrower Framework

In Part

Punjab Employees Efficiency, Discipline and Accountability Act, 2006 will be triggered in cases of grievances relevant to VAC/SEA/SH and corporal punishment against the teachers and other staff involved in project activities under School Education Department.

Use of Common Approach

No

N/A

C. Overview of Required Environmental and Social Risk Management Activities

C.1 What Borrower environmental and social analyses, instruments, plans and/or frameworks are planned or required by implementation?

The existing project ESMF of GRADES-P will be the guiding document for preparation of site specific instruments during project implementation and E & S guidance will be incorporated into POM



The World Bank

Getting Results: Access And Delivery Of Quality Education Services And System Transformation In Punjab
Project (P508940)

Site specific Instruments (ESMPs/Checklists) will be prepared during project implementation before start of any procurements of civil work contracts.

III. CONTACT POINT

World Bank

Task Team Leader: Izza Farrakh Title: Senior Education Specialist
Email: ifarrakh@worldbank.org

IV. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

The World Bank
1818 H Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20433
Telephone: (202) 473-1000
Web: <http://www.worldbank.org/projects>

V. APPROVAL

Task Team Leader(s):	Izza Farrakh
ADM Environmental Specialist:	Sana Ahmed
ADM Social Specialist:	Shan Rehman