

**PROJECT INFORMATION DOCUMENT (PID)
APPRAISAL STAGE**

Report No.: PIDA553

Project Name	Yemen: Second Basic Education Development Project (P130853)
Region	MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA
Country	Yemen, Republic of
Sector(s)	Primary education (80%), Public administration- Education (20%)
Lending Instrument	Specific Investment Loan
Project ID	P130853
Borrower(s)	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
Implementing Agency	Ministry of Education
Environmental Category	B-Partial Assessment
Date PID Prepared	15-Nov-2012
Estimated Date of Appraisal Completion	31-Oct-2012
Estimated Date of Board Approval	14-Feb-2013
Decision	

I. Project Context

Country Context

Despite substantial improvement in its economic and social indicators, Yemen remains one of the poorest countries in the world. Situated on the southern end of the Arabian Peninsula, the Republic of Yemen has a population of some 24 million, of which about 76 percent live in rural areas where poverty incidence is particularly high. The country has a GNI per capita of US\$1,070 (2010) compared with an average US\$2,321 for lower middle-income countries. Yemen is among the ten countries in the world with the highest rates of food insecurity. The country ranked third for the highest level of malnutrition in the world: 58 percent of children under the age of five are stunted, and more than 1 in 10 children are acutely malnourished. On the UNDP Human Development Index, Yemen ranked 154th out of 187 countries in 2011. The report also showed that average life expectancy is up from 41.6 years in 1970 to 62.7 in 2010 with women's life expectancy mirroring the overall trend.

The impact of the recent security, political and economic crisis is significant in all key development domains. Yemen experienced intense and far-reaching country unrest from February 2011 until November 2011. The long lasting conflict and turmoil, and severe shortages of food and fuel, combined with high commodity prices have left many poor unprotected. During this period of crisis, the economy has contracted by 10.5 percent and the number of those living below the poverty line is estimated to have increased by 8 percentage points to 50 percent of the Yemeni population. Strong support from regional and global partners is needed to survive a critical transition period. As a fragile state, Yemen has enormous needs to rebuild its social and economic base rapidly and restore macroeconomic stability.

Yemen is undergoing a challenging political transition. Following the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) brokered agreement, a transitional Government of National Reconciliation (GNR) was formed in early December 2011 and mandated, among others, to undertake constitutional reforms, prepare for the next general election in early 2014, and work to stabilize the country's complex and difficult security and economic situation. In addition to having to respond to a pressing social demand for better governance, equity, employment, and a more open society, the GNR is confronted with a long standing regional conflict in the north, a separatist movement in the south, and the emergence of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. Despite these serious security challenges, the GNR has an opportunity to start addressing the underlying factors of instability and social strife comprising high levels of unemployment and informality, state capture of the economy and the tribal patronage system.

II. Sectoral and Institutional Context

Yemen has made remarkable strides in expanding access to basic education, yet it is still far from achieving universal primary education. Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) for basic education increased from 62 percent in 1998/99 to approximately 86 percent in 2010/11. However, the country is far from achieving the universal access to basic education: according to the 2005 Household Budget Survey, there were 1.8 million out-of-school children aged 6 -14 years, and the number is increasing and for those who are in schools, completion rates are low: only half of those who enter Grade 1 reach the end of the basic education phase (Grade 9). The Grade 6 Completion Rate in 2009/10 was 61 percent (51 percent for girls, and 71 percent for boys). Because many children never enter school, many others drop out early and the population of school-age children is expected to increase rapidly, Yemen is unlikely to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of Education for All to ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015.

Despite significant improvement, equitable access to education remains a challenge, as shown in persistent gender, sectarian and regional disparity in key education indicators. Girls' enrollment has increased substantially between 1997/98 and 2010/11, from 42 percent to 76 percent in basic education, and from 16 percent to 23 percent in secondary education. However, gender gaps are still large and vary from one governorate to the other. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) varies from a high of 0.97 in Sana'a to a low of 0.59 in Saada. Administrative data show that gaps in enrollment rate between districts within some governorates are large as well. There is also a growing community of marginalized children who tend to be at a higher risk of exclusion from the traditional education system, including the African-descendent Al-Akhdam and rural migrants to urban areas as well as migrants who returned to Yemen after the 1990/1991 Gulf War.

Quality is the area where no significant progress has been made. Education quality faces major challenges. Yemeni Grade 4 students ranked the lowest among many countries participating in the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) 2007; Yemen ranked the lowest in both the

mathematics and science tests among all 36 countries that participated. Ninety-four percent of Yemeni students did not reach the internationally set “low” performance benchmark for mathematics, and 92 percent did not reach the internationally set “low” benchmark for science. Despite a slight improvement, first results of TIMSS 2011 confirmed the low performance of Yemeni students. The poor performance of Yemeni students in the TIMSS is partially attributed to their inability to read the test questions. This low level of reading skills, most evident in rural areas, was confirmed by other surveys such as the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey and recent studies conducted by USAID and Save the Children. There is a risk that the planned expansion in enrollment could further reduce quality if not adequately planned and resourced.

The country crisis has had an impact on the delivery of education services. The Yemeni education system showed a strong resilience during the 2011 crisis. The school year 2010/11 was completed, including national examinations and Comprehensive School Survey (CSS), despite the difficult country context. Nevertheless, the 2011 conflict had a negative impact on the education sector, including damage to and occupation of school buildings, inaccessibility of some schools due to insecurity, increased absenteeism of teachers and administrative staff and less than full completion of the curricula in 2010/11 school year. Overall institutional capacity of the Ministry of Education (MOE) was affected by conflict-generated disruptions and severe budget constraints. Displacement affected about 390,000 people in addition to the stock of about 214,000 Internally Displaced Persons from previous conflicts, of which 30 percent are within the school age bracket. Family priorities have also shifted due to increased security concerns and hardship generated by the economic crisis. There is also a non-negligible effect on students’ and teachers’ psychological well-being.

The GoY strategy is framed in the National Basic Education Development Strategy (NBDES) which comprehensively addresses key reforms to improve access to quality, equity and efficiency of basic education. Since 2002, the Government has endorsed six different strategies to address education issues at the various levels of education. The National Basic Education Development Strategy (NBEDS, 2003-15) aims to increase enrollments in basic education, particularly for girls and in rural areas, to reach 95 percent of the 6–14 year olds in Yemen by 2015. The MOE also developed a Medium Term Results Framework (MTRF) to translate those objectives into an operational plan and constitute the cadre for the integration of Development Partners (DPs) support to the education sector. The MTRF covers eight core pillars of activities addressing all aspects related to access to, equity, quality and efficiency of general education services. Recognizing the fact that the main targets of the NBEDS are likely not to be reached by 2015, delays in the implementation of key reforms and the impact of the 2011 country crisis, the MOE is working on the revision of the MTRF for the last phase of the NBDES (2012-2015). The purpose of the revision is, within the NBDES strategic framework, to: (i) update the main targets in terms of enrolment, gender parity and completion rates; (ii) put a stronger focus on quality; and (iii) take into account the impact of the 2011 crisis and conflicts.

The basic education sector in Yemen is characterized by a high degree of donor harmonization. Even though Yemen is a low Official Development Assistance per capita recipient (US\$28 million in 2010), education receives a large share of this external finance. DPs supporting basic education have signed a Partnership Declaration to ensure greater harmonization and alignment of sector support on the basis of the NBEDS. The DPs meet regularly with the MOE to monitor the implementation of the NBEDS, share information and coordinate their support to the sector. A Joint Annual Review (JAR) meeting brings together MOE leadership, other ministries involved in education, local authorities, and relevant DPs and NGOs to discuss and endorse the annual sector plan. The ongoing World Bank-financed Basic Education Development Project (BEDP) and the third Education for All Fast Track Initiative grant (EFA-FTI III) are all in line with the MOE plans and NBEDS framework.

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III. Project Development Objectives

The Project Development Objective is to assist the Government of Yemen in improving student learning and equitable access to basic education in selected governorates and schools.

IV. Project Description

Component Name

Component 1: Improving the quality of basic education and enhancing student performance

Component 2: Improving access to quality education

Component 3: Developing Sector Institutional Capacity

Component 4: Project Management

V. Financing (in USD Million)

For Loans/Credits/Others

	Amount
BORROWER/RECIPIENT	6.00
IDA Grant	65.00
Education for All - Fast Track Initiative	82.00

Financing Gap	147.00
Total	153.00

VI. Implementation

VII. Safeguard Policies (including public consultation)

Safeguard Policies Triggered by the Project	Yes	No
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	X	
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04		X
Forests OP/BP 4.36		X
Pest Management OP 4.09		X
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11		X
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10		X
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12		X
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37		X
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50		X
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60		X

VIII. Contact point

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