



Project Information Document (PID)

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 14-Apr-2020 | Report No: PIDC28125

**BASIC INFORMATION****A. Basic Project Data**

Country Mozambique	Project ID P172657	Parent Project ID (if any)	Project Name Ending Learning Poverty in Mozambique (P172657)
Region AFRICA	Estimated Appraisal Date Nov 23, 2020	Estimated Board Date Jan 28, 2021	Practice Area (Lead) Education
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Ministry of Economy and Finance	Implementing Agency Ministry of Education and Human Development	

Proposed Development Objective(s)

Reduce learning poverty in basic education and improve transition of girls to secondary education in Mozambique.

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)**SUMMARY**

Total Project Cost	240.00
Total Financing	240.00
of which IBRD/IDA	100.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS**World Bank Group Financing**

International Development Association (IDA)	100.00
IDA Grant	100.00

Non-World Bank Group Financing

Trust Funds	140.00
Miscellaneous 1	140.00



Environmental and Social Risk Classification

Substantial

Concept Review Decision

Track II-The review did authorize the preparation to continue

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

- Mozambique has a young and rapidly expanding population, posing a challenge and an opportunity to long-term development.** Over the last 30 years, the population in Mozambique increased from 12 million to 28 million. Population growth reached an annual average of 2.8 percent since 2007, increasing 35 percent throughout the last decade¹. The fertility rate is one of the highest in the region and the world², with 5.2 children per adult woman. As a result, the Mozambican population has been getting younger and dependency rate has been increasing. A rapidly growing population with a persistent young age structure can put the country at risk in terms of its per capita economic growth, poverty reduction efforts and social stability, as the number of children and adolescents in need of social services increases exponentially. However, with the right investments in their health and education, this large pool of children can become the human capital that will lead Mozambique's development.
- Mozambique's human capital development is low, ranking 148 out of 157 countries according to the Human Capital Index (HCI)³.** In 2018, the HCI for Mozambique was 0.36, which is below the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) average of 0.40 and far from the worldwide average of 0.57⁴. Despite efforts over the last decades, illiteracy in Mozambique is still one of the highest in the region⁵. Average illiteracy rate among adults is 39 percent, with large regional differences, since illiteracy affects 18.8 percent in urban areas and 50.7 percent in rural areas.
- There are large gender differences with poorer outcomes for women.** Half of Mozambican women are illiterate compared to 27 percent of men. Low education, particularly among women, has a perpetuating impact on the weak education and health of children, as Mozambican women are, in general, those who carry this responsibility at home according to the country's social norms. Women in Mozambique achieved, on average, only 1.4 years of schooling, two years below the average schooling among men of 3.4 years which is also very low.
- The economy experienced strong and sustained progress over two decades, yet growth was not inclusive.** After the end of the civil war in 1992, Mozambique experienced an impressive recovery, with an average growth

¹ Population Census 2017, National Institute of Statistics of Mozambique.

² Demographic and Health Surveys, 2018.

³ The HCI is made up of three components: survival, schooling and health, and shows that the expected productivity of a child born today in Mozambique is only 36 percent of what it could be with complete basic education and full health.

⁴ HCI is new measure of countries' human capital capacity launched in 2018 by the World Bank. Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/human-capital>

⁵ Education Sector Analysis, MINEDH-UNESCO, 2019.



rate of 8 percent over two decades⁶. Poverty rate decreased from 60.3 percent in 2002/3 to 48.4 percent in 2014/5. However, growth disproportionately benefited the upper parts of the income distribution in urban areas, resulting higher inequality. Regional disparities within the country are also remarkable, with poverty rates varying from 3.8 percent and 11.8 percent in Maputo city and Maputo province, respectively, at the lowest extreme, to 66.7 percent and 64.9 percent in the northern provinces of Niassa and Nampula, respectively, at the highest end⁷.

5. **Economic growth slowed down since 2016 and is likely to remain low in the next few years, boosting however in the medium-term due to gas discoveries.** In 2016, Mozambique's economic performance experienced a sharp

downturn, triggered by falling commodity prices, adverse climate conditions, and the revelation of a USD2.2 billion previously undisclosed public debt, which had critical consequences on the macroeconomic and fiscal environment. GDP growth fell to an average of 3.6 percent between 2016 and 2018 and reached 2.2 percent in 2019. In 2019 the country was also affected by the devastating impact of tropical cyclones Idai and Kenneth, that resulted in losses of lives and destruction for an estimated value of USD 3 billion⁸. Growth prospects for the next three years are still modest, which is likely to come with a tight fiscal scenario. The country's medium-term economic prospects, however, are encouraging and bring a unique window of opportunity to leapfrog to a better development path. Income from massive gas deposits discovered off the country's northernmost coastline are estimated to boost Mozambique's economy starting near 2025. Investing in human capital development and promoting policies that address family planning and fertility will be key to cash in on those resources.

⁶ Mozambique Economic Update – October 2018, World Bank.

⁷ Mozambique Economic Update – October 2018, World Bank.

⁸ Mozambique Post-Disaster National Assessment (PDNA), 2019



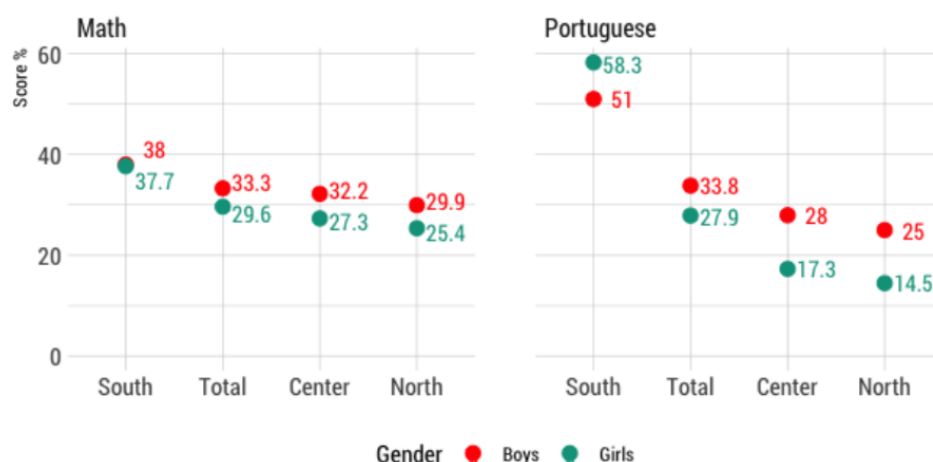
B. Sectoral and Institutional Context

6. The level of student learning is critically low, with less than 10 percent of children reading at the expected level by age 10. According to the most recent national assessment, in 2016 only 5 percent of Grade 3 students in Mozambique were able to read at the expected level. The Sector Delivery Indicators survey 2018 (SDI 2018), also showed very low levels of learning (although improving from 2014). In addition, the SDI results presented a considerable academic underperformance of girls (not observed in the national assessment). The gender gap was particularly large in Portuguese (reading and writing) (Figure 1). Differences between girls' and boys' test scores were large in the Northern and Center regions of the country, where overall learning levels are significantly lower⁹.
7. Weak learning outcomes are associated with a complex set of family and school factors. Lower learning in the North and Center are associated with higher levels of poverty and larger rural areas than in the South. Learning is also lower among students who don't speak Portuguese at home. Although the share of the Mozambican population that speaks Portuguese at home is increasing throughout the country, around 60 percent of children currently start school without any exposure to Portuguese, not even as a second language.¹⁰ According to a survey to teachers implemented with the national assessment in 2016, 58 percent of the teachers reported that more than half of their class (Grade 1) still has difficulty to speak Portuguese. The SDI 2018 results also indicate that learning is positively associated with minimum school infrastructure and availability of textbooks. Schools with higher teachers' absenteeism, as expected, present weaker results. The main predictors of learning, however, seem to be the level of students' absenteeism and the teachers' knowledge. Schools that showed the largest improvement of learning outcomes between 2014 and 2018 also presented decreased level of students' absenteeism combined with higher levels of teachers' content knowledge.¹¹
8. Moreover, children come to school unprepared. Currently, only 4 percent of 3-5 years old children have access to ECD programs, mainly among wealthier families and in urban settings. The inclusion of preschool as a new subsystem in the revised education law creates a conducive environment for its development and expansion to reach the most disadvantaged and rural areas of Mozambique. Having learners well prepared and motivated is a key precondition for learning. There is ample evidence on showing that children who receive good quality stimulation during early years have substantially higher chances of better performance in primary education.



Experiences also show that preschool attendance also impact the families of the children, increasing mothers' labor force participation and older siblings (mostly girls) attendance to school.¹²

Figure 1: Students test scores by gender in Mozambique (SDI 2018)



Source Mozambique SDI(2018)

9. Lack of teachers' skills contributes to the poor education outcomes. The number of teachers in Mozambique more than doubled since 2004, from near 60,000 to 136,000 in 2018. This increase helped to maintain (and even to reduce) the average pupils-teacher ratio, which nonetheless still reaches 64 in early primary education. In three provinces in the Northern region, average pupils-teacher ratio in early primary surpasses 70. The difficulty that large class sizes imply is aggravated by the fact that many teachers in the system do not have basic pedagogic competencies and general knowledge needed to teach effectively. According to the SDI 2018, less than 3 percent of Grade 4 teachers mastered 80 percent of the Math content that should be imparted in that grade. In Portuguese, this share was below one percent. Teachers also scored low in the questions asked about pedagogic practices, such as preparing a lesson plan or using students' test scores to make some statements about learning patterns. In addition to weak teaching skills, teachers in Mozambique are often absent to school. The SDI 2018 showed that teachers absenteeism fell considerably since 2014 but remains at a high level of near 30 percent. This means that at least one third of instruction time is lost because teachers are not in the classroom.

10. School enrollment is still a challenge in Mozambique, with high gender and regional inequality. There are currently 7.8 million students in basic education in Mozambique (6.7 million in primary and 1.1 million in secondary), 48.2 percent of which are girls (Figure 2). Overall gross enrollment rates (GER) in primary surpassed 100 percent in 2018, yet with a 10-percentage points disadvantage for girls (GERs of 125 percent for boys and 115 percent for girls). Enrollment in upper primary is low, with an average GER of 67 percent¹³. The national average hides important regional disparities, with Northern and Center provinces with GER close to 50 percent (51 percent in Nampula, 53 percent in Cabo Delgado Niassa and Tete). There is also a gap between girls and boys,

⁹ In the Southern region, girls got higher test scores than boys in Portuguese and similar levels in Math (SDI 2018).

¹⁰ Service Delivery Indicators Survey, 2018

¹¹ Service Delivery Indicators Survey, 2018

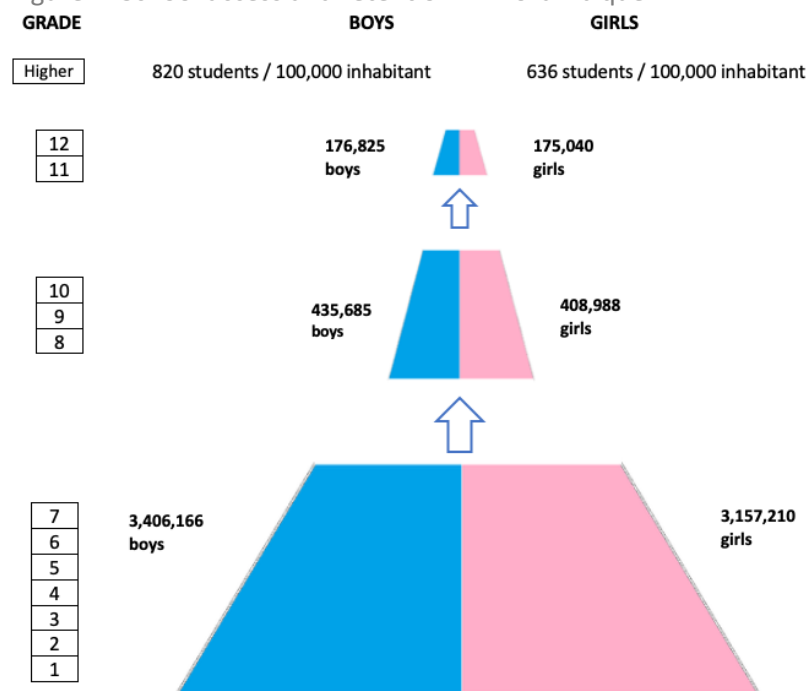
¹² S. Martinez, S. Naudeau and V. Pereira. The Promise of Preschool in Africa: A Randomized Impact Evaluation of Early Childhood Development in Rural Mozambique", 2012

¹³ EMIS, MINEDH 2019



especially in upper primary (Figure 3). GER for girls in upper primary is 62 percent, 10 percentage points below boys' GER.¹⁴The gender gap is particularly large in the Northern provinces. In secondary education, enrollment rates are still very low and similar for both genders (around 49 percent of students are girls). GER in secondary increased until 2012 and remained under 40 percent over the last seven years (38 percent for boys and 36 percent for girls in 2018).^{15 16}

Figure 2: School access and retention in Mozambique



Source: MINEDH (2018)

11. There is high early school dropout, mostly concentrated in the early grades (all children) or after Grade 5 (mostly girls). More than one third of students drop out before Grade 3 and less than half complete primary, well below the average in SSA.¹⁷ Around 15 percent of the children 6 to 12 years old were out of school in 2015 (606,000 children).¹⁸ Moreover, in the last household survey conducted in 2014/15, three out of four children (67 percent) 12 to 17 years old reported not completing primary education, which signals that most of out of school children once attended school and dropped out before graduation. Girls' and boys' dropout rates are equally high in early primary. In upper primary, the gender gap increases, as more girls abandon school prematurely. In 2018, 42 percent of girls graduated from primary compared to 47 percent of boys.¹⁹ The graduation rate in secondary

¹⁴ EMIS, MINEDH 2019

¹⁵ Education Sector Analysis, MINEDH-UNESCO, 2019, and EMIS, MINEDH, 2019.

¹⁶ The net enrollment in upper primary and lower secondary are 24 percent and 22 percent, respectively, with a slight advantage for girls. This is consistent with the fact that boys are more likely to lag behind during the schooling cycle and girls have a higher dropout rate.

¹⁷ The average primary education completion rate in SSA counties is 59% (Mozambique Education Sector Analysis, 2019)

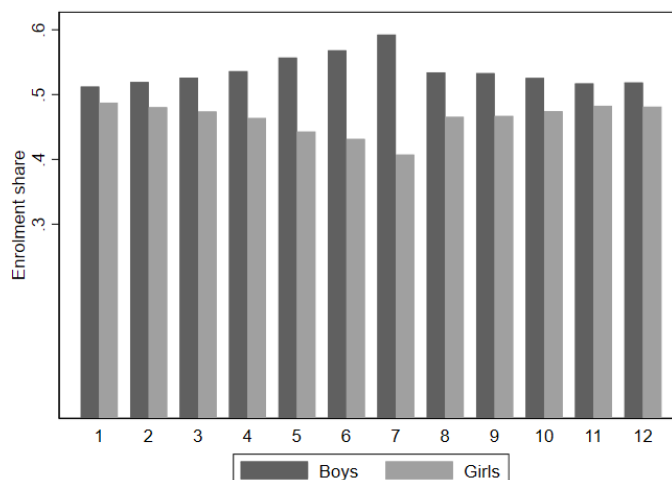
¹⁸ Longitudinal Evaluation of School Dropout in Mozambique: Drivers of School Absenteeism and Educational Attainment, UNICEF, KOICA and Pedagogic University, 2019

¹⁹ Education Sector Annual Assessment Report, MINEDH, 2019.



education is slightly lower for girls than for boys, with only 12.8 percent of girls graduating from upper secondary in 2017 (compared to a 13.4 for boys).²⁰

Figure 3. Gender gap in enrollment by grade (2017)



Source: Expansion of Secondary Education in Mozambique, The World Bank, 2019

12. School dropout and attendance are associated to both demand and supply-side factors. Country-specific research indicates that financial constraints and school-associated costs, distance to school and poor school infrastructure and materials are the main factors associated with high dropout and low attainment.²¹ The Government recently eliminated the school fees for lower secondary education, alleviating school-related costs. Distance to school is a key obstacle throughout the country, especially for girls. On average, 65 percent of the population aged 10 to 19 years old lives 5 km or more from the nearest lower secondary school, and 52 percent lives more than 10 km away. There are currently only 0.1 secondary schools and 1.2 classrooms per 1000 children aged 10 to 19 in Mozambique.²² There are large geographical differences in terms of school availability, with the Northern and Center regions showing the largest deficits. School infrastructure also presents big shortcomings. Near 40 percent of schools do not have proper toilet facilities and at least 30 percent don't have access to water.²³ This has a larger impact on girls and is usually reported as one of the main obstacles for girls to attend schools. The national assessment, for example, indicated that absenteeism is higher among girls than boys, which in part poor school infrastructure.²⁴ Increasing availability of schools and improving infrastructure conditions will be critical to help girls' access and retention in upper grades of schooling.

²⁰ Education Sector Analysis, 2019

²¹ Harnessing Demographic Dividend PAD (P166100); Van der Berg, Da Maia and Burger. Educational inequality in Mozambique, WIDER Working Paper 2017/212; Longitudinal Evaluation of School Dropout in Mozambique: Drivers of School Absenteeism and Educational Attainment, UNICEF, KOICA and Pedagogic University, 2019.

²² There are currently 12,737 primary schools in the first cycle (grades 1 to 3), 7,921 schools in the second cycle in Mozambique (grades 4 to 7). There are 556 lower secondary and 293 upper secondary schools.

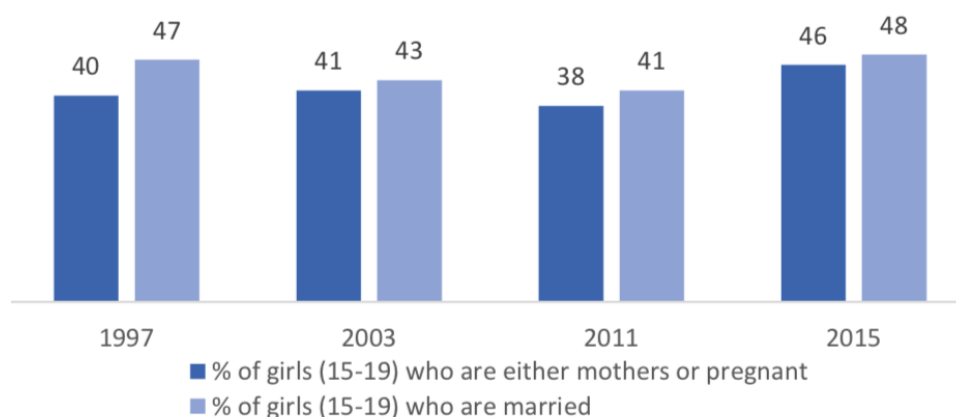
²³ Longitudinal Evaluation of School Dropout in Mozambique: Drivers of School Absenteeism and Educational Attainment, UNICEF, KOICA and Pedagogic University, 2019

²⁴ Longitudinal Evaluation of School Dropout in Mozambique: Drivers of School Absenteeism and Educational Attainment, UNICEF, KOICA and Pedagogic University, 2019



13. Child marriage and teenage pregnancy are major factors affecting girls' adolescence. Mozambique has the 10th highest rate of early marriage in the world, with almost half of the adolescent girls aged 15-19 reporting that they are married (Figure 4). As of 2015, about 46 percent of this population group were already mothers or pregnant, and this percentage has increased in the last twenty years despite the significant progress in education access.²⁵ Mozambique's adolescent fertility rate is the fourth highest in the world. Risk of gender-based violence in Mozambique is alarmingly high. About one-third of 15-year-old adolescents girls declares that they are survivors of physical violence, and 46 percent say they are survivors of domestic sexual or emotional violence from their partners²⁶.

Figure 4: Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy in Mozambique



Source: "Harnessing the Demographic Dividend Project" (P166100) based in DHS

14. **Sexual abuse and harassment against girls are real risks in the education system.** Across Mozambique, seven in ten girls report knowing of cases of sexual harassment and abuse in their school. The low percentage of female teachers in upper primary and secondary education aggravates an imbalanced environment that may contribute to these disturbingly high rates of girls' abuse in schools.

15. **Empowering girls through education does not only improve equity but also has a long-term impact for the country's development.** Achieving universal secondary education for girls in Africa could virtually end child marriage, reduce early childbearing by up to three fourths, reduce total fertility by one third, reduce under-five stunting rate by half, and increase economic opportunities, as each additional year of education increases African women's earnings by 14 percent.²⁷ Educating girls also impacts the education of their children, generating a virtuous cycle with long-lasting effects.

16. **Girls' (and boy's) academic performance improves with female teachers and guided instruction methods.** The SDI indicated that students of female teachers performed better than students of male teachers, and the difference was larger for girls. The gap between boys and girls in students test scores almost disappeared with

²⁵ Demographic Health Survey (DHS) 2015.

²⁶ Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Action, 2016. Perfil de Género de Moçambique (Gender Profile in Mozambique).

²⁷ Wodon, Q., C. Montenegro, H. Nguyen, and A. Onagoruwa. 2018.



female teachers, with both girls and boys performing better. This result is consistent with similar evidence for other countries.²⁸ Over the last years, the Government put effort to increase the number of women teachers. Women are 51 percent of teachers in early primary, but the share decreases sharply to 29 percent in upper primary and 23 percent in secondary education. Supporting teachers with guided instruction methods (detailed daily lessons plans) is also associated with better academic performance for girls, while also benefiting boys. Several countries implementing guided instruction (for example, South Africa, Kenya and Chile) showed positive results in students' academic achievement, especially in early grades, both for boys and girls.²⁹ In Mozambique, studies show that teachers frequently struggle to formulate a lesson plan or copy the lessons plan from the students' textbook.³⁰

17. **Mozambique allocates a large share of its budget to education and receives solid external support.** Since 2008, education spending in Mozambique averaged 19 percent of total government expenditure and near 6 percent of its GDP. In 2019 the state education budget reached USD 930.4 million. Almost two thirds of this budget were allocated to basic education (primary and lower secondary), a share comparable to the SSA average.³¹ The share of non-salaries expenses in education has been decreasing over the last years and currently represents 20 percent of the total sector budget. Most non-salaries expenditures of the sector (near 90 percent) are financed by external funds. Around 90 percent of the external funding is allocated through a pooled donors fund, the Education Sector Support Fund (FASE), currently financed by nine cooperating partners, including the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the World Bank.³² FASE has been operational since 2002. Over the last eight years, the average annual FASE allocation has been approximately USD 100 million. FASE has been financing basic education (with a priority on primary education) including funds for textbooks, schools' grants program, teacher training, supervision and school construction. All external support (FASE and non-FASE donors) is coordinated by MINEDH to support the implementation of the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESP 2012-16/19). A Local Education Group (LEG), comprising MINEDH, civil society and cooperating partners, actively participates in the education dialogue, helping the Government in the implementation of the country's education priorities.
18. **The National Education System Law was revised in December 2018, establishing a new structure for the education sector and abolishing fees for lower secondary.** The Government of Mozambique recently introduced important changes to the system. The revised education law increased mandatory and free education from seven to nine years, creating strong incentives for an expansion of the demand for lower secondary education. The duration of the education cycles was restructured, reducing primary from seven to six years, and increasing secondary from five to six years. The law also recognizes, for the first time, preschool as a subsystem of education (although not a requirement to enter primary), consolidating ECD as a priority of the sector. The strategic goal of the Ministry of Education and Human Development (MINEDH) is to increase the enrollment in lower secondary education from the current 60 percent to 85 percent by 2024 and 90 percent in 2029. This goal will clearly require expanding graduation from upper primary, and increasing the availability of schools, classrooms and teachers

²⁸ D. Evans and A. Le Nestour, Center for Global Development, 2019 - <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/are-female-teachers-better-girls-education>.

²⁹ For Kenya, see "Piper B., Zuilkowski, S. Dubeck M., Jepkemei, E and King S., 2018. Identifying the essential ingredients to literacy and numeracy improvement: Teacher professional development and coaching, student textbooks and structured teacher guides. World Development, 106". For Chile, see Bassi, M, Meghir C. and A. Reynoso, 2019. Education quality and teaching practices, The Economic Journal (forthcoming)"

³⁰ Service Delivery Indicators, 2018. Same results are also showed by a study commissioned by UNICEF in Tete and Zambezia.

³¹ World Bank, 2016: Mozambique Education Public Expenditure Review

³² The other FASE donors are Germany, Finland, Canada, Ireland, Italy, UNICEF and Portugal.



for lower secondary. MINEDH estimates the need to build 732 new schools for lower secondary (currently there are 732) and hiring 19,520 new teachers (currently there are 16,025).

19. **The new Law will guide the preparation of a new ESP in Mozambique, which will establish the sector priorities for the next decade.** With the previous ESP ending in December 2019, MINEDH is leading the preparation of a new ESP, which will cover for the first time a period of 10 years. The ESP is expected to be completed and approved by the Government in early 2020. This project expects to contribute to the implementation of the sector priorities included in the new ESP. Three strategic objectives were identified in the ESP: to ensure equitable and inclusive access, participation and retention; to ensure quality of learning; and to ensure a transparent, participative, efficient and effective management of the sector.

20. **To achieve long-term and sizeable progress in education, Mozambique needs important policy reforms, some of which were already started.** Mozambique needs to implement a comprehensive package of teacher policy reforms that cover recruitment into the teaching profession, pre-service and in-service training, teachers' deployment, school management, performance assessment, and meritocratic career progression. Attracting the best students to the teaching profession through a rigorous process that can identify candidates with a solid level of content knowledge is a starting point to strengthen the skills of the teachers' workforce. The system also needs a strong pre-service training and professional development, aligned with the curriculum that teachers need to teach and including a large practical component, as done in the best-performing systems. This would also require assessing the capacity of the Teacher Training Institutes (TTIs) and implementing the needed reforms, to ensure lecturers have the adequate profile, skills and support. Finally, teachers and principals should be selected and promoted on a meritocratic basis, including the implementation of an effective performance assessment mechanism. Mozambique initiated some of these reforms including the implementation a new pre-service training model and the technical discussions of the career ladder for teachers and principals. Yet, fully implementing these reforms require support from different levels of Government which involve other Ministries, and which may have fiscal implications.

21. **Education has been one of the main areas of support of the Bank in Mozambique over the last two decades.** The World Bank- Global Partnership for Education (GPE)'s support to basic education has been channeled through FASE. The Education Sector Support Project (ESSP P125127), which closed on December 31, 2019, was implemented over seven years (including three additional financing). The project included both IDA funding and a GPE grant for a total of USD 368 million (USD 220 million IDA and USD 148 million GPE). The project financed textbooks, the national school-grant program, teachers and principals' training, district supervision and support to school councils. It also included ECD interventions, helping to consolidate the preschool system in the country. While the ICR is currently under preparation, the project's main achievements included a considerable reduction of textbooks' unit cost through improving procurement mechanisms and developing internal capacity; the timely allocation of school-grants to all primary and secondary schools; the institutionalization of schools' supervision by the districts, making visits more frequent and improving reporting. The project was also successful in expanding the supply of preschool services in rural communities in five provinces of the country and helping to establish an ECD unit within MINEDH at the central level and ECD coordinators at the district level. This pilot project will help inform the ECD strategy for Mozambique in the next ten years. Overall, the project helped creating basic conditions in the education system, establishing minimum standards across the system.

22. **This project aims at having a visible impact on learning outcomes and school retention of girls.** To do that, the Project proposes to concentrate in the main bottlenecks in the education cycle in Mozambique, which are (i) learning during the first three years of primary schooling, and (ii) retention and transition in upper primary,



especially for girls. The Project will build on the previous project, which aimed at ensuring minimal conditions across the entire education system. Activities will be based on effective experiences in Mozambique and in other countries, and will use, to the extent possible, the existing strategies and systems already in place in Mozambique. The design of the activities will take into account sustainability considerations, with efforts to support local capacity in the education system, not only at the central level but more importantly, at the provincial, district, school clusters and school levels. Interventions will be regionally targeted, whenever possible, prioritizing vulnerable and lowest performing areas in the Northern and Centre regions, and seek synergies with other HD operations. The project will include funding both from IDA and GPE and will be channeled through FASE.³³

C. Relationship to CPF

23. **Alignment with CPF and multisectoral approach.** The project's goals are aligned with Mozambique's CPF objective of improving inclusion and the development of human capital through provision of quality education services. By focusing on learning in the first cycle of primary education as a way of building the foundation for progression and completion of basic education, the project will be contributing to the reduction of learning poverty, aligned with the global initiative recently launched by the World Bank that aims at reducing by half the percentage of children that cannot read by age 10. In line with the Human Capital Project, the project will use a multisectoral approach where relevant, bringing health and nutrition, and social protection interventions to improve education service delivery and outcomes. In particular, the early-childhood-development activities of this Project will be coordinated with the health sector to include a nutrition component and with social protection in the targeting of potential beneficiaries and regions. The activities to boost girls' education in upper primary and secondary education will be designed to complement the program implemented within the Mozambique Primary Health Care Strengthening Program (P163541), which provides sexual and reproductive health education to girls in secondary schools. This component will also be coordinated with the activities implemented by the project "Harnessing the Demographic Dividend (HDD)" (P166100), which supports girls who dropped out of school or are in risk of dropping out. Localities in which the HDD is implemented will be prioritized, to maximize impact. Thus, a multisectoral approach will be used to boost effectiveness through synergies with other human development activities closely related to this Project implemented in Mozambique.
24. **Support to the new Education Strategic Plan 2020-29 (ESP):** The Project will support the implementation of the ESP currently in preparation, which outlines the priorities for the sector over the next decade and operationalizes the implementation of the new Education Law. The Project Development Objective is aligned with the ESP main strategic objectives, as all emphasize the focus on inclusive and equitable life-long learning.³⁴ Gender issues are addressed in a cross-cutting way in all education subsectors, integrated explicitly at the strategic and operational levels of the ESP (in contrast with the previous ESP, which had a separate gender strategy). Expanding the supply

³³ The GPE part will include the maximum country allocation for Mozambique (USD 125 million) and up to additional USD 15 for the Multiplier Grant, which requires mobilizing other Cooperating Partners' new funds to the education sector (USD 1 million GPE grant for each USD3 million of new funds with a maximum of USD 15 million). The Bank, French Development Agency, The World Food Program and the Canadian High Commission agreed to increase their funding to education in Mozambique to leverage this GPE grant.

³⁴ The three main strategic objectives included in the ESP 2020-29 are: i) Ensure inclusion and equity in access, participation and retention; ii) Ensure quality of learning; and iii) Ensure a transparent, participative, efficient and effective governance.



of preschool services is among the priorities included in the ESP, as a mean to strengthen school readiness for children entering primary schooling. The ESP also emphasizes learning in the early grades to build necessary foundations to progress successfully over the entire education cycle. Lastly, expanding secondary education is a key pillar of the new National Education Law, to be implemented through the new ESP.

25. **Focus on corporate priorities.** The project will also include actions to tackle barriers affecting girl's education and empowerment, including actions to combat gender-based violence at schools. Supporting increased monitoring from the community, better reporting mechanisms, greater awareness among teachers, increased share of female teachers, among other actions, the project will address GVB in education directly. In collaboration with other HD projects, and development partners working in this area, the project will also act on social norms preventing girls from accessing education, early pregnancy, and high opportunity cost of attending school, contributing to Mozambique's efforts to harness the demographic dividend and promote inclusive growth and shared prosperity, aligned with World Banks twin goals.
26. **The Project will also introduce the use of innovative technology in several activities, aiming at improving the effectiveness of the interventions and ensuring conditions are given (or created) for technology to be used as expected.** The use of ICT will be considered for the package of interventions to improve learning in early grades, including providing tablets or smartphones to coaches and supervisors, using videos and digital materials for teacher training, and phones and text messages to facilitate the interaction between teachers and coaches and among peer teachers. ICT will also be considered to improve reporting and monitoring mechanisms, and to strengthen the sectors statistics. Finally, ICT will be used to expand and strengthen distance learning (DL) for secondary education. Successful DL experiences in Brazil using ICT will be analyzed to potentially be adapted for the context in Mozambique. The production and use of digital materials are part of Mozambique's policy and is lined up with the World Bank's digital skills for development initiative.

A. Proposed Development Objective(s)

27. Reduce learning poverty in basic education and improve transition of girls to secondary education in Mozambique.

B. Key Results

28. This project will contribute to improving learning for all students in early primary in Mozambique and boosting girls' education through retention in upper primary and increased transition to secondary schooling. Lowest performing and most vulnerable regions will be prioritized whenever possible.
29. Key results that this project aims to achieve include:
 - Improve girls' and boys' reading skills in grades 1, 2 and 3
 - Increase girls' retention in upper primary and transition to lower secondary education
 - Improve monitoring mechanisms and community involvement to prevent GBV in schools
 - Reduce inequality through regional targeting

C. Concept Description

30. The project will focus on improving learning outcomes and boosting girls' education, contributing to reduce current gender gaps while aiming at having a longer-term impact on development of Mozambique. Regional



inequality will also be addressed by considering geographic targeting whenever possible.

- 31. To achieve the Project’s development objective, interventions will be focused on the two main bottlenecks of the education cycle, as indicated by evidence. The first one occurs over the first three grades of primary schooling. Poor school readiness and weak learning outcomes lead to repetition, contribute to overcrowded classes and overage, and result in high dropout in Grades 2 and 3. The second bottleneck occurs in upper primary (after Grade 5) and the transition to lower secondary, affecting girls more than boys. Difficult access to school, poor infrastructure and lack of a “girl-friendly” environment at school, combined with high adolescent fertility and early marriage rates, contribute to girls quitting their education before graduating from primary and starting lower secondary.
- 32. The activities will be divided into three components: The first component will aim at improving learning outcomes for girls and boys in the first three grades of primary education. Interventions will be centered on reading skills in Portuguese for children by Grade 3. Although learning in other subjects also shows big deficiencies in Mozambique, there is a strong rationale for this project to focus on reading only. Firstly, reading is the foundation upon which other learning (numeracy, science, for example) is built. Reading is highly correlated with other academic skills and socioemotional skills (such as self-control). Secondly, experience shows that children who don’t read by late primary find it hard to catch up and are at risk of lagging behind. Lastly, reading has strong linkages with quality jobs later in life.³⁵ The second component will focus on retaining girls in the last years of primary education and support their transition to lower secondary. The third component will aim at improving system efficiency and strengthening governance and management.

Legal Operational Policies	Triggered?
Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	No
Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60	No
Summary of Screening of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts	

Note to Task Teams: This summary section is downloaded from the PCN data sheet and is editable. It should match the text provided by E&S specialist. If its revised after the initial download the task team must manually update the summary in this section. *Please delete this note when finalizing the document.*

The project Environmental Risk rating is classified as Moderate based on a combined analysis of the project type, location, sensitivity, scale, nature and magnitude of environmental risks and impacts and borrower capacity and commitment. The scale of the project is national, although the exactly geographical areas of intervention are not yet known. The project type is mostly capacity building activities, learning and education, however with significant involvement of some construction, expansion, improvement and/or re-qualification of school’s infrastructures. Moreover, there will be Technical Assistance focusing on policies and teacher’s training.

³⁵ World Bank. 2019. Ending Learning Poverty: What Will It Take? World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. Available at: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/32553>.



The project is expected to result in positive benefits to the target schools through improving hygiene and sanitation, however activities are also anticipated to generate adverse risks and impacts to the health and safety of workers and communities related to proposed infrastructure.

Risks and impacts related to civil works, including the construction and maintenance of schools, as well as school infrastructure improvements (e.g. functioning toilet facilities and latrines) are anticipated to be moderate and short-lived and will mainly emanated from earthworks for classroom improvements, excavation during rehabilitation works, use of heavy machinery that could lead to dust generation and vibration as well as traffic safety concerns, including occupational health and safety concerns related with works at heights and use of construction equipment and machinery. The project Social Risk rating is classified as Substantial after considering, in an integrated manner, the Sexual Harassment (SH), GBV/SEA risks and impacts of the Project, taking into account the capacity of the multisectoral implementing agencies (Education, Health and Social Protection) to manage social, GBV/SEA/SH and Violence Against Children (VAC) risks. MINEDH has no prior experience in implementing ESF projects and has very limited capacity and experience to monitor GBV/SEA/SH/VAC risks and impacts. Other risk is related to selection criteria of project areas and beneficiaries, considering the socio-cultural norms in different regions of the country (i.e “matrilineal communities” in the northern part of the country) . Selection criteria should be well and clearly defined in close collaboration with stakeholders and potential project beneficiaries. Aspects of vulnerability and poverty should be considered as critical in the selection process. It is also worth noting that a Gender-Based-Violence (GBV) assessment will be conducted based on planned activities, and the results of the assessment presented as annex to PAD.

The implementation of specific activities such as promoting access to sexual and reproductive health services for adolescents should take into account systemic, knowledge and sociological risks. Systemic risks relate to the health services’ ability to regularly provide medicines and other medical inputs. Since the project will specifically focus in supporting access to services (demand), the risk is on the ability of the service to address the demand. The knowledge risk is linked to persisting low demand for sexual and reproductive health services among adolescents, especially in rural areas. This results from limited awareness about the availability and relevance of these services. The sociological risks are associated to cultural and gender practices that ultimately undermine adolescents’ adherence to services. While major mitigation measures are clearly identified, a more systematic approach to community mobilization and participation is paramount to address risks of service adherence and knowledge. The project will consider the potential adverse social impacts (i.e early pregnancy, school dropout, sexual exploitation and abuse of girls in schools) of the Project in rural areas, which could result from imbalanced power dynamics between teachers and students at school.

The proposed project activities will require substantial efforts to ensure stakeholder engagement and regular community awareness interventions supported by adequate mitigation measures to address several factors outside the control of the Project with potential significant adverse impacts on the social performance and outcomes of the Project.

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