



# Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 19-Aug-2022 | Report No: PIDA33778

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

Country Afghanistan	Project ID P178758	Project Name Education Emergency Response in Afghanistan (EERA)	Parent Project ID (if any)
Region SOUTH ASIA	Estimated Appraisal Date 02-Aug-2022	Estimated Board Date 02-Sep-2022	Practice Area (Lead) Education
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) UNICEF	Implementing Agency UNICEF	

## Proposed Development Objective(s)

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to support access to learning opportunities for girls and boys and improve learning conditions in project-supported schools

## Components

Support Access to Learning Opportunities  
Improve Learning Conditions  
Strengthen monitoring and project coordination

The processing of this project is applying the policy requirements exceptions for situations of urgent need of assistance or capacity constraints that are outlined in OP 10.00, paragraph 12.  
Yes

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

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

**DETAILS****Non-World Bank Group Financing**



Trust Funds	100.00
Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund	100.00

#### Environmental and Social Risk Classification

Substantial

#### Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

Other Decision (as needed)

## B. Introduction and Context

### Country Context

1. **The events of August 2021 in Afghanistan triggered an economic crisis and a humanitarian emergency.** The country was already among the ten lowest in the world, with per-capita gross national income (GNI) at US\$500 (current dollars, Atlas method) in 2020. With gross domestic product (GDP) estimated to have fallen by one-third following the events of August 2021, it is likely that Afghanistan's per-capita GNI now ranks among the lowest in the world. Moreover, with half of the population already living below the poverty line, living conditions are becoming desperate. Survey data suggest that around 70 percent of households cannot meet even basic food and non-food needs due to unemployment, non-payment of salaries, and rising prices for critical household goods. More recently, the impacts of the war in Ukraine on Afghanistan's food security and rising fuel prices are compounding the existing crises. Based on a review of key constraints and potential sources of recovery in Afghanistan, the World Bank's "ERA: Economic Recovery in Afghanistan" estimates that between US\$1.3 and US\$3.9 billion will be needed from outside the Interim Taliban Administration (ITA), with the lower level of investment sustaining basic services and the higher level shifting toward sustainable economic recovery.

2. **In response to the crisis in Afghanistan, the World Bank (WB), Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) donors, and international partners have found pragmatic ways to provide support for essential basic services and livelihoods for the Afghan people.** The approach has been calibrated, with each intervention addressing progressively more complex needs and building on experience gained. **Approach 1.0 provided humanitarian gap financing** of \$280 million in uncommitted ARTF funds, approved on November 30, 2021 by the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors, following a decision by ARTF donors. **Approach 2.0 provides basic services and livelihoods support** in response to requests from the international community to protect the vulnerable, help preserve human capital, gender outcomes and key economic and social institutions, and reduce the need for future humanitarian assistance. This was approved by the Board on March 1, 2022 and includes financing, analytical work, and coordination/convening opportunities. Recipient Executed grants, decided by the ARTF are provided off budget and outside of the involvement of the Interim Taliban Administration (ITA), to United Nations (UN)



agencies and international and national non-governmental organization (iNGOs). Approach 2.0 is designed to respond flexibly, based on experiences of early implementation, and informed by strong coordination among the development partners.

3. **Approach 2.0 prioritizes partnership with other funding sources in support of the Afghan people**, including from multilaterals like the Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Union, and Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan managed by the United Nations Development Program; bilateral partners; and international NGOs. The Bank's Afghanistan Futures analytical work is supporting the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and multilateral and bilateral partners in the development of a simple prioritization and reporting framework to support an agile aid architecture responsive to the magnitude of the crisis in basic services and livelihoods.

4. **Through Approach 2.0, the Bank and ARTF take a programmatic approach of engaging in basic services and livelihoods for sustainability. Approximately three-quarters of repurposed ARTF financing was committed in FY22 for the first round of Approach 2.0 ARTF projects for agriculture, livelihoods, health, and education.** The projects for agriculture, livelihoods and health all used existing local-level non-government institutions. They are designed in tranches to allow ARTF partners to monitor progress prior to release of the second tranche. Support to the agriculture sector supports critical food production by providing seeds and other support to farmers. The livelihoods project focuses on cash-for-work to provide short-term opportunities and deliver essential services in rural and urban areas. The health project focuses on primary health centers, as well as secondary care, in rural and urban settings targeted to reach the most vulnerable Afghans. The support for education will begin with the first in a series of smaller projects aimed at community based education with a focus on girls. In addition, support is being provided to two cross-cutting engagement areas: capacity-building support to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the establishment of a potential Humanitarian Exchange Facility. These activities are designed to respond rapidly to the situation in Afghanistan and help reduce the need for future humanitarian assistance. Limited, ringfenced discussions with ITA technical staff are undertaken when necessary, as approved under Approach 2.0. The ARTF Third Party Monitoring agent provides critical oversight and on-the-ground reporting.

5. **Going forward, Approach 2.0 allows the ARTF to allocate remaining repurposed funds strategically, as well as to allocate new replenishments from FY23 onward to basic services and livelihoods support.** Additional interventions will address the link between health and safe water, and support micro and small private sector enterprise participation in livelihoods and basic services for greater sustainability. The proposed projects will be appraised by the World Bank, consulted with the ARTF Strategy Group, and confirmed by the ARTF Management Committee. Approach 2.0 can carry forward the basic services and livelihoods priorities of the ARTF partners over the next 24-36 months.

6. **ARTF will continue to be the lead platform for development support to the Afghan people under the Aid Architecture for Afghanistan agreed among the United Nations, multilateral agencies and bilateral partners through the Afghanistan Consultative Group.** The ARTF leverages pragmatic and consensus driven support of key stakeholders.

7. **ARTF partners have requested an eventual Approach 3.0 to leverage ARTF funds and include IDA, when there is consensus from donor partners and the Board, and repayment of IDA arrears.** Approach 3.0 would be expected to continue work in the basic services and livelihoods and offer scenarios



and principles under which these activities could expand into more expansive support to the private sector and livelihoods.

8. **The proposed education activities in this Project Appraisal Document (PAD) are consistent with Approach 2.0.** The ARTF funds will be signed into a Grant Agreement for the US\$100 million upon approval of the project expected to be in September 2022.

## Sectoral and Institutional Context

9. **Over the past two decades, Afghanistan made significant strides in improving access to basic education.** The number of children enrolled in primary and lower secondary levels increased almost tenfold, from 1 million in 2001 to 9.5 million in 2019<sup>1</sup> thanks to efforts in constructing and establishing public schools and effective teacher deployment and retention policy. Donor supported programs—including teacher training, provision of teaching and learning materials, community-based education (CBE)<sup>2</sup> and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in schools—have built the foundational capacity to deliver basic education services in a more equitable manner. Moreover, the average years of schooling increased from 2.0 in 2013 to 3.1 in 2021. Literacy rates also improved, increasing from 28 percent in 2011 to 43 percent in 2018, while the youth literacy rate increased from 47 percent to 65 percent over the same period<sup>3</sup>. These significant and hard-earned education advances must be sustained through political change.

10. **Despite these achievements, gender disparity in education access and the high number of out-of-school children remain a concern.** Only 43 percent of girls are enrolled in primary education and 34 percent of girls in lower secondary, compared to 62 percent in primary and 55 percent in lower secondary for boys.<sup>4</sup> In addition, while access has improved for both girls and boys over the past 10 years, the pace of progress has been slower for girls. This is mainly due to: (i) cultural norms; (ii) lack of female teachers; (iii) lack of adequate infrastructure (including school buildings and gender segregated WASH facilities); and (iv) insecurity (including distance to schools, lack of boundary walls in schools, etc.). The number of out-of-school children (OOSC) is also alarming. It is expected that over 4 million children are out of school (2019-2020). This number may have increased due to the COVID19 crisis, escalating insecurity, and increased levels of poverty.

11. **The August 15, 2021, political crisis has negatively impacted education service delivery at all levels.** While all primary schools (grades 1-6) officially reopened in September 2021 after school closures due to COVID-19, secondary schools (grades 7-12) only reopened for boys following the ITA's request for secondary girls and female teachers to stay at home till further notice. On March 23, 2022, while schools were expected to open for the 2022 school year for all children at all levels, the ITA issued a statement

<sup>1</sup> Including public (8.9 million) and private (0.6 million) school students.

<sup>2</sup> CBE refers to a practice of educating students in private spaces (houses) and is an important means of education, especially for girls not only in conflict-affected areas but also in sparsely populated areas, where there are no schools, or where the distance to the nearest school is more than 3–4 km. NGOs have played a key role in establishing, implementing, monitoring, and ensuring accurate reporting on CBE activities. CBE was set up as outreach programs for public schools with the idea that children, after having received three years of education in their community, could transit to public schools.

<sup>3</sup> Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey (ALCS) 2019–2020

<sup>4</sup> Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. 2021. *Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey 2019–2020*. Central Statistics Organization, Kabul.



continuing the ban on secondary girls until further notice. Despite the ban, some secondary schools in around 11 provinces opened for girls<sup>5</sup>, although not all schools in all districts, demonstrating the fluidity of the situation on one hand, and the continued commitment at local level to the education of girls on the other hand.

12. **Since August 2021, while the ITA has issued several statements indicating that girls can continue accessing schools and women can continue working in a manner that is consistent with the ITA's version of Sharia law, boundaries and practices of these restrictions remain uncertain.** Results from the Afghanistan Welfare Monitoring Surveys (AWMS)<sup>6</sup> show that although school attendance for boys and girls at the primary level has increased across the country compared to 2019, there is evidence of secondary school attendance declines for girls in urban areas, which is in line with reports from UNICEF. In addition, qualitative information shows that over half of enrolled female students in schools that remained open to girls were not in attendance because they were either prevented by the ITA, they were not allowed by their families, or they felt unsafe on the way to school. Anecdotal data also suggests that not all children are back in school, and that increased poverty is the main driver pushing children out of school, particularly boys.

13. **Changes to the way education is delivered are expected, especially as it pertains to gender. (i) Gender and Equity:** Secondary education girls are expected to eventually be able to access schools, though taught in a gender-segregated format, which may have financial and institutional implications. Such an approach may worsen inequities in access to education, unless appropriate measures and incentives are in place to both carefully plan conditions and monitor girls' access and to use all the levers possible to encourage girls' attendance in schools. The main bottlenecks to reopen schools for all at all levels are assumed to be insufficient buildings and number of qualified female teachers to meet demand in a fully gender-segregated context in already disadvantaged provinces where there are not enough schools and teachers to support a fully segregated education. There will likely be a severe shortage of female teachers (7,000 to 8,000) in lower and upper secondary grades to meet the demand with significant disparities between provinces and districts. (ii) **Curriculum:** The ITA have not formally taken a stance on the content of educational curriculum so far but have expressed the intention to refocus the curriculum on core subjects such as reading, math, and sciences, while scaling back some subjects such as arts, culture, sports, and life skills to allocate more time to Islamic studies. This may not present a drastic departure from the curriculum taught under the former government, in which more than four Islamic subjects were included in the basic education curriculum, particularly in secondary grades. Currently schools are using the existing national curriculum and, in some provinces, previous MoE textbooks<sup>7</sup> are being distributed. Under the former Taliban regime (1996-2001), revisions to the curriculum remained minimal, altering certain topics within existing subjects and adding one additional Islamic subject. The donor community remains concerned that the schools do not participate in active dissemination of

<sup>5</sup> Number of provinces varies by source and by date. Currently schools are either on summer (end of year) or mid-term break. Where schools are open, this is often due to local pressure on authorities. Where schools remain closed, authorities are awaiting formal confirmation of the reversal of the ban. It does not reflect a stand in favor or against girls' education.

<sup>6</sup> The AWMS was conducted between October and December 2021. World Bank Afghanistan Poverty and Equity Team. 2022. *Afghanistan Welfare Monitoring Survey: Round 1*. World Bank Group, March 2022. <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/138d0857c9a66e7e2a963a1a6137860e-0310062022/original/Afghanistan-Welfare-Monitoring-Survey.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> UNICEF is currently supporting the printing and distribution of the textbooks under the so-called 37 million Textbook project. Part of the books are already in schools, while the remainder is expected to arrive towards September.



ideologies that conflict with human rights principles, including through curricula and textbooks, and the evolution of this will be monitored closely in the coming months, through this project and beyond.

14. **Insufficient data on teacher salary payments by the ITA prevents a nuanced understanding of the administration's capacity to continue funding the sector in a sustained and stable way.** Although many teachers have reported receiving salaries from August 2021 to May 2022, they have received them on average two months late and bunched into two-month batches. The irregular and uncertain future of payments are particularly affecting working women in Afghanistan, as many of them are estimated to be employed as teachers (only 7 percent of women in Afghanistan are reported to be employed outside of the home<sup>8</sup>). Most female staff across ministries have been requested to stay home until further notice. In addition, many of the CBE programs, which were mainly funded through development partners to support out-of-school children, were suspended in 2021 in many provinces for a variety of reasons, including low cash liquidity, COVID-19, and winter recess. Despite all challenges, many CBE programs managed to reopen during late last year (October–December 2021), demonstrating the demand for education, particularly in areas that were previously hard-to-reach due to insecurity and where the public school system does not yet reach. Besides teacher salaries, there is also uncertainty surrounding the ITA's ability to provide funds to keep schools minimally functional and ensure key education inputs such as teaching and learning materials, teacher training and school maintenance. While the ITA may have been able to pay teacher salaries, there are no signs of allocating or mobilizing funding for other core areas such as basic infrastructure, WASH, textbooks and TLMs, or show inclination on the sustainability of the CBEs.

15. **The level and type of aid to the country is expected to drastically change, which could potentially pose risks to the sustainability of the education sector in the short to medium term.** Prior to August 15, 2021, and throughout previous administrations, an estimated 75 percent of public spending was financed through international donor contributions.<sup>9</sup> Close to 80 percent of civilian spending on wages and salaries in 2019 was concentrated in ten ministries, and the MoE – which was consuming 44 percent of the wage bill<sup>10</sup> – was among the top three ministries receiving foreign aid. Although the ITA's budget for the year 2022 has been approved, including allocations for teacher salaries, details of the budget have not been made publicly available<sup>11</sup>. The current level of donor funding is not sufficient to respond to the sector's needs and prospects for future funding is opaque.

16. **Remaining engaged in the education sector is essential to safeguard the gains achieved over the past 20 years.** Given the historical dependence of the education sector on foreign aid, the sector will experience severe shocks and setbacks if the international development community disengages—8.9 million students, particularly girls that represent around 39 percent of the school population, would be at risk of losing access to primary and secondary education. To this end, the currently proposed Education Emergency Response for Afghanistan (EERA) proposes interventions that originate from the objectives of

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<sup>8</sup> Girls' Access to Education Surveys: Wave I: November 2021, AMELA (Afghanistan Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Activity), prepared by USAID.

<sup>9</sup> Afghanistan Public Expenditure Update (2019), prepared by the Bank team.

<sup>10</sup> Policy note No4: Civilian Wage Bill Analysis prepared by the Bank team.

<sup>11</sup> Informally UNICEF received information that the education budget for the year March 2022/March 2023 is estimated at 25 billion Afg (equivalent to US\$277 million) of which 98 percent is meant to pay the salaries of teachers and administrative staff at all levels, leaving no budget available for other key education inputs such as teaching and learning materials or textbooks or the rehabilitation or construction of schools. With the suspension of external aid, it may be difficult for the ITA to sustain and cover recurrent education expenditures.





the EQRA project which aims to mitigate the impact of the current political and economic crises on ensuring learning opportunities mainly for primary students and to improve learning conditions.

17. **A dedicated coordination mechanism between the United Nations, ADB, Islamic Development Bank,<sup>12</sup> and the World Bank has been established to ensure strategic and operational synergies as well as the deployment of harmonized funding flows.** This mechanism is well aligned with the organizations' respective mandates and comparative advantages, is under the auspices of the UNAMA, and fully aligned with the existing coordination mechanisms that exist in the education sector at the technical level. The World Bank has been coordinating efforts with Education Sector Development Partners Group (DPG) together with key partners such as Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNICEF, Save the Children, Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), and other bilateral partners as well as NGOs, including the Education Cluster<sup>13</sup>. This partner's platform also ensures that complementarities are pursued, as exemplified by the ongoing dialogue on supporting the proposed EERA Project described below.

### C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Development Objective(s) (From PAD)

18. **The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to support access to learning opportunities for girls and boys and improve learning conditions in project-supported schools.**

#### PDO Level Indicators

19. Progress towards achieving the PDO will be measured by the following three indicators:

- Number of children supported with learning opportunities, by gender;
- Number of schools benefitting from gender-focused rehabilitation, boundary walls and/or provision of high-performance tents, by type of schools; and,
- Number of teachers and children who receive Teaching and Learning Materials, by gender.

### D. Project Description

20. **This project is an 18-month off-budget provision of support to the education sector implemented by UNICEF, with funds flowing outside of the ITA systems and with close coordination across donor platforms.** As the overall education engagement is designed with a flexible phasing approach to respond to evolving sector context and needs, this project is expected be followed by a series of additional interventions which could include stipends, school grants, teacher training or rehabilitation<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Membership forthcoming. The IsDB is also exploring the setup of a humanitarian trust fund under the auspices of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

<sup>13</sup> The Education Cluster brings together international, national and community-based organizations with the purpose to ensure a well-coordinated, strategic, adequate, coherent and effective humanitarian response in the education sector in Afghanistan.

<sup>15</sup> More detail breakdown of the expected number of CBEs by province as well as level of education (primary/secondary) will be





of infrastructure when there is better visibility on expenditures from the ITA (especially on salary and other recurrent costs payments) as well as positive movement on access and equity to basic education. In line with the principle of education equity for all as outlined in the donor-formulated Non-Paper on Principles for Support to the Education Sector in Afghanistan, this project seeks to ensure that access to learning opportunities for girls and boys in basic education is maintained at pre-August, 15, 2021 level by supporting public school students, promoting non-governmental institutions to continue/expand their education programs to increase learning opportunities, as well as by encouraging private sector and other relevant institutions to lift barriers to basic education. To this end, this project will establish two Entry Criteria for Access (ECA) to ensure curriculum continuity and equity in access to primary education. The ECAs, which are further detailed in Para 48, will be monitored throughout the life of the project, and discussed at the project Streeting Committee to guide project implementation. During a possible follow-on project and as the situation on the ground stabilizes, the WB will utilize lessons learned from the implementation of this proposed project and consider interventions that seek to address further increase in attendance and promote education quality. Because of the emergency nature of the project, its design is focused, straightforward and agile to support access to learning opportunities and improve learning conditions in project-target schools. The project design is built with the flexibility required to respond to an evolving sector context, implementation realities and challenges on the ground, data availability, findings of monitoring activities, and ongoing operational lessons learned and takes into consideration UNICEF's existing capacity as the implementation agency for the project.

21. **Given the complexity and the sensitivity of the operating environment, the desing of this project is a culmination of important coordination efforts** between the WB, UNICEF, ARTF donors and donors directly supporting education sector to ensure cohesion, harmony and complementarities. Coordination and harmonization with donors will be prioritized during project implementation, as will the establishment of coordination mechanisms to ensure ongoing synergy of support to the sector, coordinated monitoring and systematic reporting. All components will be implemented through UNICEF, and proposed activities have a high readiness level for implementation upon project approval and are in line with immediate sector needs to preserve education service delivery. As a principle of engagement, funds will flow directly from the Bank to UNICEF (and its sub-contractors) to beneficiaries.

22. **Touch points with the ITA will be limited to information sharing, technical discussions, and obtaining approvals and clearances to access to conduct day-to-day operations.** The ITA will not oversee the EERA, nor manage any of the funds, nor decide on Project beneficiaries, nor engage in procurement processes. However, it will be consulted and informed, as outlined in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP).

23. **Various agencies that are important partners in the education sector were assessed for this first phase to be an implementing agency of the EERA project.** UNICEF was selected according to the following criteria: (i) *global and country-related experience in prior World Bank financed contracts*, notably on institutional agreements and procedures, operational policy requirements, and operational policy flexibilities; (ii) *proven technical and operational competence in the education sector* including Community Based Education and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) activities under FCV context; (iii) *fiduciary capacity*, including the procurement capacity to enter into agreement and manage local/international NGOs for the provision of goods and services; (iv) *staffing, field and deployment capacity* as well as the

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described in the POM, in terms of continuity and newly to be established classes.



potential to scale; (v) *security considerations*, with a premium placed on engagement under the UN security umbrella to mitigate security risks; and (vi) *donor alignment to minimize fragmentation* as the choice of UNICEF is aligned to the ADB's approved project in which UNICEF is the implementation partner.

### Component 1: Support Access to Learning Opportunities

24. **This component will support access to learning opportunities in basic education.** The project will support relevant institutions (NGOs, CSOs, etc.) to provide both formal and informal education programs to primary and secondary age students. Specifically, this component will cover CBE as sub-component 1.1 and NGO Block Grants as sub-component 1.2.

#### Sub-component 1.1: Support to Community Based Education

25. **Through this sub-component, an estimated 5,000 CBEs<sup>15</sup> will be supported and will benefit approximately 150,000 girls and boys in disadvantaged communities.** UNICEF will be requested to prioritize CBEs in areas that were identified by the EQRA project mapping exercise which was completed in June 2021 to identify lagging villages in terms of out of school children and CBE coverage, not yet covered by other partners. This component will also include specific CBE classes<sup>16</sup> whose funding will run out by the end of 2022, and with cohorts that have not completed a three-year cycle or are not able to transition to public schools. The basis for identification of support to existing or to be established CBE classes will be the CBE database set-up jointly by UNICEF and the Education Cluster and provides a clear picture on gaps in CBE provision. A detailed package of CBE services, similar to the one used by the ADB and the CBE cluster, will be provided under the project comprised of teacher recruitment, training, deployment, remuneration, the provision of teaching and learning materials, CBE supplies, and handwashing, sanitizing and hygiene kits. The training package for teachers will include elements on awareness on climate change and its impact on vulnerable communities, as well as gender, amongst other aspects. As the project implementation phase is limited to 18 months, the CBE classes under EERA project will run for 1 or maximum 1.5 cycle. It is assumed that CBEs established under EERA will be sustained and financed by other sources, such as GPE or ECW, after EERA to complete a minimum of 3-year education cycle.

#### Sub-component 1.2: Innovative Block Grants Program to promote inclusion

26. **The objective of this sub-component is to support approaches which seek to provide options for secondary girls who have been forced to stay at home since September 2022 to remain engaged in learning.** Through the NGO Block Grants activity, the project will aim to support innovative, ongoing initiatives by NGOs and others which aim to provide learning opportunities for excluded secondary female students focused on catch up and skills development, including socio-emotional skills, using a variety of approaches involving no, low, or high technology, depending on feasibility in specific contexts. This will require supporting programs implemented through NGOs (local and international) as well as private entities which have shown promise, and which have implementation, expansion readiness on the ground

<sup>15</sup> More detail breakdown of the expected number of CBEs by province as well as level of education (primary/secondary) will be described in the POM, in terms of continuity and newly to be established classes.

<sup>16</sup> This is independent of who is currently supporting these classes, through UNICEF or otherwise.



and potential for future scale-up. A menu of eligible activities for financing under the Block Grants will be developed to encourage innovative solutions as specified in the Project Operations Manual (POM).

## **Component 2: Improve Learning Conditions at project-supported schools**

27. **This component will improve learning conditions in project-supported schools** by providing WASH facilities, boundary walls and high-performance tents to respond to the strong demands from public schools without school buildings. This component will also distribute Teaching and Learning Materials (TLM) to basic education students and teachers in project-supported public schools.

### **Subcomponent 2.1: Gender focused rehabilitation of school infrastructure**

28. **Gender-focused rehabilitation/ construction of school infrastructure<sup>17</sup> increases access and attendance and improves student learning. With strict adherence to the ITA's policy of gender segregation, demand for gender segregated WASH facilities and boundary walls will increase.** This sub-component aims to provide safe and inclusive learning spaces for all children in project-supported schools. Approximately 193 girls', boys', and mixed schools<sup>18</sup> of schools identified under EQRA will be selected to receive EERA's support for infrastructure rehabilitation/new construction to welcome girls and encourage their regular attendance. This sub-component will also support construction of safeguard mitigation measures for 12 schools that were identified under the EQRA project and categorized as critical, enabling them to become operational.

29. **This sub-component will also provide, distribute, and assemble high performance tents (HPT) for schools that lack sufficient and safe school buildings** (e.g., schools without buildings, overcrowded schools with buildings, etc.). Specifically, this sub-component aims to provide 4,000 HPTs for 1,000 schools or more (maximum four HPTs can be allocated for one target school).

### **Subcomponent 2.2: Distribution of Teaching and Learning Materials**

30. **This sub-component will provide appropriate Teaching and Learning Materials for students and teachers in public primary schools.** So far, there is no ITA budget allocated for teaching and learning materials in public schools in 2022. UNICEF has been able to provide basic learning materials for all grade one and five students, both girls and boys. Given the increase in poverty, lack of learning materials has become a critical factor behind many families' decision to send their primary and secondary students.<sup>19</sup> Materials to be distributed include basic materials such as (coloring) pencils, sharper, eraser, notebooks classroom posters, teaching charts, supplies for math and science lessons etc.

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<sup>17</sup> The situation of school infrastructure in Afghanistan is dire: half of existing schools lack buildings (8,500 out of 17,000 schools), and students are taught under tents, in the open air, or in spaces that lack proper infrastructure, all of which continues to hinder girls' attendance. At the national level, the student-toilet compartment ratio is 172 students per toilet compartment. This results in the rapid decay and damage of toilet facilities. Additionally, only 65 percent of schools have access to safe drinking water, and only 37.5 percent of schools have boundary walls (EMIS 2019).<sup>17</sup> These elements are considered essential for providing a conducive environment for attendance and learning, particularly for girls.

<sup>18</sup> 79 schools with full WASH package and boundary walls, 57 schools with only WASH package and 57 schools with only boundary walls (these figures could be revised due to the status of the current sites). It is expected that 180,000 girls will attend these schools once the rehabilitation is completed.

<sup>19</sup> Save the Children Assessment 2022.



### **Component 3: Strengthen monitoring and project coordination**

#### **Subcomponent 3.1: Strengthening monitoring and ensuring accountability**

31. **The aim of this sub-component is to ensure continued access to general education services for target children**, especially the most vulnerable and hard to reach; promote quality of education service delivery; ensure effective (financial) resource management, including fraud prevention in accordance with UNICEF policies, procedures, rules and regulations; identify bottlenecks to service delivery and quality and take action to address them. These aims will be achieved through UNICEF's internal due diligence procedures as well as specific interventions that focus on core education data collection on key education indicators related to service delivery. The collection of core data on key education indicators will feed into a joint monitoring framework of the Afghanistan Education Sector Transitional Framework (AESTF) being developed to be agreed by the DPG. The data collected at school level will be triangulated with the household survey (HHS) or Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) conducted by UNICEF partially with other resources.

#### **Subcomponent 3.2: Project implementation and coordination**

32. **This sub-component will support project implementation and coordination (includes UNICEF cost recovery and direct costs of total project cost included under the UN operational cost).** This will support the Recipient's direct and indirect costs. The direct costs will focus on project implementation and coordination, as well as ensuring monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of overall institutional, strategic/programmatic, operational, and contextual risks across the program through functions across the office (e.g., financial management, human resources, supply and logistics, partners' management, information and communications technology systems and information security). It will also support the regular reporting to the WB. Specific activities include direct management and supervision costs required to support project implementation (including the use of remote monitoring technology), such as: (i) handling procurement, financial management, and disbursement management, including the preparation of withdrawal applications under the Project; (ii) ensuring that independent audits of project activities are carried out according to the UNICEF regulatory framework (ex: HACT<sup>20</sup>); (iii) ensuring that all reporting requirements for ARTF are met according to the Project Grant Agreements; (iv) establishing an operational grievance redress mechanism (GRM) for UNICEF supported activities to document any possible complaints and ensure follow-up; and (v) operating costs to support results delivery.

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<sup>20</sup> This includes: capacity building of IPs in financial management, PSEA, GBV risk mitigation, Environmental and Social Safeguards, and programme and financial assurance.



## Legal Operational Policies

	Triggered?
Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	No
Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60	No

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

### E. Implementation

#### Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

33. **EERA will be implemented at the national, provincial, district and school level through an off-budget financial modality, over a period of 18 calendar months (September 2022 to March 2023).** UNICEF will assume the overall responsibility for implementation and coordination of the project, including procurement of services, use of funds and disbursements, financial management and ensuring that all the activities are in compliance with safeguard requirements. Detailed project implementation and risk mitigation will be outlined in the POM, to be agreed by the WB, within one month project effectiveness.

34. **A project-level committee, EERA Coordination Committee (CC), comprising UNICEF, the WB, ARTF donors will be put in place within one month of Project effectiveness.** UNICEF will manage the EERA-CC and provide secretariat functions. The EERA CC will meet at minimum quarterly, or more often based on need, and meetings will be co-chaired by UNICEF and a selected representative from ARTF. The objectives of the CC are to: (i) monitor the Project's ECAs (reviewing the status of compliance with ECA, discuss non-compliance issues, and consider supplementary data on curriculum and attendance and recommend corrective measures acceptable to the Bank); (ii) provide advisory support to EERA project implementation; (iii) periodically discuss the key Project deliverables and reports such as quarterly reports, third-party monitor reports, and progress on results framework indicators; and (iv) support and advise to address any bottlenecks that may arise during Project implementation. Detailed TORs of the CC will be included in the POM. In addition to the CC, a monthly meeting with representation from UNICEF, the WB and ARTF donors will be held and convened by UNICEF to inform stakeholders of overall implementation progress, discuss implementation bottlenecks and their resolution, and review the status of key activities.

35. **EERA will be implemented through UNICEF<sup>21</sup> based on its demonstrated capacities from ongoing activities in Afghanistan, global expertise, and its on-the ground readiness to implement proposed project components upon effectiveness.** UNICEF will implement all three components of the project either directly or by sub-contracting qualified NGOs and/or private contractors with on the ground presence and experience. As detailed in Annex 1, partnering with UNICEF allows the WB to leverage in-

<sup>21</sup> Since the ITA has not been recognized by the international community as a legitimate government, the Ministry of Education cannot be the implementing partner for this project. The WB conducted a thorough evaluation of the capacity of UN agencies and International NGOs in Afghanistan and finally concluded that UNICEF will be the principal implementing partner for this project.



country capacity, technical expertise, direct experience implementing relevant activities, readiness on the ground to start implementation upon approval, and relationships with various stakeholders. The partnership will also allow the WB to seek synergies with other education projects implemented through UNICEF (such as efforts under CBE) and build on ongoing education activities to achieve greater impact and accountability at the system level. In a possible follow-on project, the WB may seek additional implementation partnerships with NGOs and other stakeholders to implement activities at the CBE level and seek ways to support public schools.

**36. UNICEF will use its existing systems and procedures to ensure transparency, accountability and proper use of resources provided.** UNICEF has systems and procedures to ensure transparency, accountability, and proper use of resources provided. UNICEF's Education Section will have overall oversight and lead of implementing project activities and managing relationships with relevant NGOs and other partners involved by UNICEF in the project. Component 1 will be implemented by the UNICEF's Education Team with the selected implementation partners as well as UNICEF's already established Project Management Unit (PMU) responsible for payment of CBE teacher salaries Component 2 will be implemented by the UNICEF's WASH section and construction unit responsible for managing the implementation of the WASH/Boundary walls component of basic services. UNICEF's education team, in close collaboration with its supply unit will be coordinating the acquisition of tents and learning materials under this component. The details of the relationship with other partners as well as all procedures and systems in place for robust management of this project will be detailed in the POM, which will be developed by UNICEF and agreed by the WB within one month from the project effectiveness.

**37. Coordination with the ITA through limited technical level interactions and other development partners will also be important throughout project implementation** (please see 'Risks' section for the proposed touch-point arrangement for each activity). This will be especially important in the support provided to public schools and the establishment of (new) CBE classes. In addition, both the UNICEF TPM (as described under component 4) and ARTF MA will conduct monitoring for implementation of program activities which will be coordinated and agreed with the Bank Task Team. The ARTF MA will also conduct fiduciary review for the EERA. Specifically, ARTF MA is expected to conduct the monitoring of student enrollment and teacher attendance on sample basis disaggregated by gender, and the monitoring of the ECA, while UNICEF's TPM will monitor CBE establishment, functioning, management, and attendance disaggregated by gender.

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