



Appraisal Environmental and Social Review Summary

Appraisal Stage

(ESRS Appraisal Stage)

Date Prepared/Updated: 08/12/2020 | Report No: ESRSA00975



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Region	Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any)
Bangladesh	SOUTH ASIA	P174268	
Project Name	Bangladesh COVID 19 School Sector Response (GPE)		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Education	Investment Project Financing	7/16/2020	8/10/2020
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)		
Ministry of Finance	Secretary, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education		

Proposed Development Objective

The Project Development Objectives (PDOs) are to (i) strengthen the basic school system’s institutional capacity to respond to, and recover from, the COVID-19 crisis; and (ii) build resilience to face future crises from pre-primary to secondary levels.

Financing (in USD Million)	Amount
Total Project Cost	14.80

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

Yes

C. Summary Description of Proposed Project [including overview of Country, Sectoral & Institutional Contexts and Relationship to CPF]

This Bangladesh COVID 19 School Sector Response Project will provide grant in the amount of US\$14,800,000 through the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Accelerated Funding window for COVID 19 response in basic education. The proposed GPE fund is in response to a request from the Government of Bangladesh (GOB). The World Bank has been selected as the Grant Agent (GA) for processing and supervising the proposed grant through the consensus of the GOB and the Local Education Group (LEG) .



The implementation period of proposed grant would be 18 months. The grant will support the GOB's contingency plan and fund activities to mitigate and recover from COVID-19 to enable learning to continue and the education sector to recover from school closure and be more resilient to future shocks. The project will explicitly focus on safeguarding access and learning of girls and the most marginalized groups and use the crisis response for capacity building and sustainability for tackling future crises. The proposed project uses the Investment Project Financing (IPF) instrument. In view of the emergency situation, the proposed project is prepared under the condensed procedure covered by Paragraph 12 of Section III of the IPF Policy of the World Bank.

D. Environmental and Social Overview

D.1. Detailed project location(s) and salient physical characteristics relevant to the E&S assessment [geographic, environmental, social]

The Project will implement Response, Recovery and Resilience measures to address the impact of COVID-19 due to school closure. The Project will be in the form of Technical Assistance (TA) that will be provided for developing remote learning resources/contents, communication campaigns, school re-opening plan, preparation and implementation of school sanitization plan after school re-opening, re-enrollment activities, teachers' professional development, development of standard operating procedures for emergencies and periods of extended school closures. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capabilities of the Implementing Agency (IA) will also be developed through the TAs.

The scope of this project will be nationwide, covering all 08 (Eight) Divisions of the country. The direct beneficiaries of this project will be the students of pre-primary (around 3.7 million), primary (around 18 million) and junior secondary students (13 million) of Bangladesh. School teachers and parents will also benefit from this operation. Central and local level administration related to school service delivery system will also benefit through system level capacity building activities. There will also be indirect beneficiaries of the project, including the previous out-of-school children, illiterate adults, and content developers. While the project covers the entire country, particular focus will be given to vulnerable segments of the population, including girls and students from socio-economically disadvantaged and remote areas of the country.

D. 2. Borrower's Institutional Capacity

The Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) of Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) will act as the implementing agency of the project in collaboration with the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) of Ministry of Education (MOE). The Project will be financed through Investment Project Financing (IPF) and will need to meet the requirements of the relevant Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs) of the World Bank (WB).

Both Ministries (MOPME and MOE) have experience working with IDA in a number of projects including Primary Education Sector Development Program 2 and 3 and Skill and Training Enhancement Project (STEP). The current projects under development through these Ministries are AF of Quality Learning for All Program (QLEAP-AF) and Accelerating and Strengthening Skills for Economic Transformation (ASSET). However, they are less familiar with the new ESF of the WB and would require training on ESF. Besides provision of expert Environmental and Social Consultants in the PIU, project would support ESF training for the PIU staff which would include representative from MOE also.



While both Ministries have attained significant experience, several challenges remain, including the lack of dedicated E&S staff to develop and monitor E&S plans and maintain coordination with the WB and other development partners.

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

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Moderate

Environmental Risk Rating

Moderate

The Project will provide Technical Assistance (TA) for further development of the remote learning system and make it more effective by developing remote learning contents and enhancing dissemination capacity for schools. TA would also be provided for communication campaigns, school re-enrolment activities after COVID-19 pandemic is over, disinfection of schools before classes can resume, teachers' professional capacity development and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacity building.

Technical assistance will be provided to MoPME to prepare a school re-opening plan and engage a specialized agency or service provider with required technical expertise to implement the plan including health safety protocols issued by the MoHFW. School premises and classrooms will be disinfected, sanitization/hand washing facilities will be installed including health screening provisions. The technical assistance efforts of the GPE COVID 19 School Sector Response project will inform and compliment the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) interventions planned under the Government's primary education program (PEDP4) ensuring access to sanitation, hygiene and clean water to maintain students' and teachers' health and avoid potential viral infections. The major source of environmental concern will emanate from the use of disinfectant. Improper selection, use and disposal of such disinfectants might impact the physical environment, affect health and safety of the workers and communities living near the schools. As the locations of the schools are not yet known, an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) needs to be prepared which should include a plan for selection, use and disposal of such disinfectants.

There will be no civil works and hence no construction related environmental impacts are expected. The interventions also are not likely to affect any biodiversity, natural/critical habitat, ecosystem or living natural resources negatively.

The associated environmental risks owing to the Project is assessed to be Moderate.

Social Risk Rating

Moderate

Reaching all school-going children inclusive of all socio-economic backgrounds for distance mode of lessons delivery will be a major challenge. Given the lack of access to TV, radio, computer and Internet, even after rolling out all four platforms of distant learning (TV, Radio, Internet and Mobile) mechanisms, a significant segment of the student population will be out of reach and disengaged with learning activities. This will create a gap in accessibility to learning opportunities for the poor, vulnerable and marginalized segments of society. Resource constraints in the rural schools in terms of digital infrastructure provision of remote lessons and long term resilience will also create gaps in learning.



In addition, reaching all intended beneficiaries through the communication campaigns planned for raising mass awareness will be a challenge. The targeted marginalized groups, girls, and low-income households will have difficulty accessing and fully benefiting from the hygiene and COVID-19 related safety practices, education engagement and re-engagement messages (especially those targeted at girls and those at risk of dropping out), psychosocial counselling, and issues addressing Gender-Based Violence as most of the content will be disseminated digitally (given prevailing COVID-19 pandemic) where the targeted poor populations have limited access to digital means.

Beneficiaries living in small ethnic minority communities, as well as IPs meeting the criteria of ESS7, will also need differentiated approaches given their difference in language, culture and social norms, in the absence of which the inclusivity criteria of project beneficiaries may be difficult to achieve.

Without project interventions however, the education progress would cease and cause mass increase in school drop-outs, ultimately leading to increased incidence of early marriage, adolescent fertility, and child labor. De-escalation of crime and Gender Based Violence (GBV) will also result from Project intervention since many students, especially those living in poor areas are more exposed to gender-based and other violence, including in the home due to school closure.

The Project is not likely to cause any labor influx, land acquisition and resettlement activities, and adverse impacts on small ethnic communities/IPs and cultural heritage are also unlikely.

The Project's exclusion risks can be mitigated to a great extent through comprehensive stakeholder consultations that takes the views of stakeholders and beneficiaries during project design on how to engage with those beneficiaries that lack access to internet. Possible pathways could be use of local Radio FM Channels which are extensively used in rural areas and if further requirement arises—the use of Upazila Information kiosk that has round the clock internet facilities accessible to anyone for free. The borrower has prepared a preliminary Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). As part of the SEP, a project level Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) that is accessible to all stakeholders has been put in place for raising issues and grievances. Given that exclusion is one of the major concerns, a high level of coordination will also be required across the numerous stakeholders involved in the sector, especially those in remote, lagging areas, and tribal communities to ensure that students are not excluded due to lack of access to the various types of media considered by the project for remote/distance learning. The borrower will prepare the required ES instruments including an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), SEP, Small Ethnic Community Planning Framework (SECPF) and Labor Management Procedure (LMP) as agreed in the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).

Based on the scale of the Project, capacity of the Borrower, anticipated E&S risks and impacts and the context under which this intervention will be implemented, the social risk has been assessed as Moderate.

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

B.1. General Assessment

ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Overview of the relevance of the Standard for the Project:



This ESS is relevant. The project support would be in the form of Technical Assistant (TA) and no civil works would be supported. However, among others, TA would support preparation and implementation of school re-opening plan which include school disinfection by engaging a firm. The environmental and social risk assessment and management of such activities need to be carefully examined and plans to be prepared accordingly. Based on the description of Project components identified in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD), overall E&S risks are expected to be moderate. To address the potential risks, an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) will be prepared as the locations of the schools are not yet finalized which will include an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) template to be used for specific location once selection is completed. Due to the restriction in movement and impaired capacity of the borrower due to COVID-19 situation, the ESMF would be prepared within 2 months of Project effectiveness. An Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) containing material measures and actions on the Borrower's part has been developed. A Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has also been developed illustrating ways and means to communicate and engage with Project Stakeholders. A Labor Management Procedure (LMP) will also be developed along with ESMF. The bid documents will also include a requirement to develop Contractors-ESMP including Disinfectant and PPE usage and disposal plans, community engagement plan during communication campaign etc.

ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

Consultations and disclosure of information with stakeholders will be at the core for planning and implementation of the project. The key stakeholder will include students of pre-primary, primary and secondary level students (around 33 millions), Pre-primary, primary and secondary schoolteachers, parents, central and local level administration related to school service delivery, previous out-of-school children, illiterate adults, vulnerable populations including girls and students from socio-economically disadvantaged and remote areas of the country. Other stakeholders will include officials at the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME), Department of Primary Education (DPE), Ministry of Education (MOE), Department of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), teachers' organization, persons interested in education, NGOs working in primary education sectors, researchers/academics etc. The borrower has identified relevant stakeholders and have prepared a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) illustrating methods, channels and timing of engagement, feedback and grievance redress mechanism to raise concerns about the Project.

B.2. Specific Risks and Impacts

A brief description of the potential environmental and social risks and impacts relevant to the Project.

ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions

The Project will involve civil servants, individual consultants and consulting and technical firms for contents/manual/standards development and preparation of various plans related to remote learning system, communication campaign, school reopening, learning loss assessment and mitigation measures for recovery, teachers' professional development and tools to ensure mental health issues during post-shutdown and for disinfecting school premises for reopening. The Project will use the services of specialized firms for communication campaign and school disinfection works which will require a significant number of contracted workers. Although the existing labor acts and laws cover many aspects related to OHS and GBV, but the definition of workers is not same and hence a Labor Management Procedure (LMP) needs to be prepared which will include both PIU staff and contractors/workers using disinfection equipment and chemicals to avoid transmittance of Covid -19.



ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

Most of the activities of the project are not associated with environmental pollution and resource efficiency. However, one of the components would provide support to engage a specialized service provider for implementing the school re-opening plan which would include school disinfection/sanitization. This might adversely affect the environment, pose occupational health risk to the workers, can affect community health and safety if the disinfectant to be used is not properly selected, used and disposed. Unsafe disposal of any residual amount and PPE uses by the workers may contaminate surface water bodies and soil. Only the disinfectant approved by the government/WHO or other relevant international organizations should be used. ESMF will include guidelines for selection and proper handling of disinfectants to be used and safety protocols to be followed for disposal of residual amounts after use.

ESS4 Community Health and Safety

The project would support preparing and implementing a school re-opening plan which includes school disinfection. Improper use and disposal of any residual amount of such disinfectant in nearby land or surface water bodies may adversely affect community health and safety. An ESMF addressing use/transportation/disposal of disinfectant and disposal of PPE used by the workers will be prepared to address community health and safety issues. The ESMF will include a template for site-specific ESMP for schools under the project to be prepared and followed up when site information will be known.

ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

Project activities would be undertaken in the existing schools.

ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

Not relevant

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

The outcome of the Project will positively affect school-going children of small ethnic minority communities and IPs meeting the criteria of ESS7 by improving their access to learning, re-enrollment and resilience to face further crisis. A Small Ethnic Minority Planning Framework (SECPF) will be developed to address issues related to small ethnic communities/IPs taking into consideration their special circumstances and cultural and social needs.

ESS8 Cultural Heritage

The Project is unlikely to affect any Cultural Heritage.

ESS9 Financial Intermediaries

The Project will not engage any Financial Intermediaries (FI)



C. Legal Operational Policies that Apply

OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways

No

OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas

No

III. BORROWER’S ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL COMMITMENT PLAN (ESCP)

DELIVERABLES against MEASURES AND ACTIONs IDENTIFIED	TIMELINE
ESS 1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts	
An Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) (including a template for ESMP for schools under the project) would be prepared by the Borrower detailing procedures to be followed in assessment and management of environmental and social risk within 60 days of the effectiveness of the project. The bid documents will include the requirement for the development of Contractors-ESMP including Disinfectant and PPE usage and disposal plans etc.	11/2020
ESS 10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure	
A simplified Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been developed detailing ways, means and channels to communicate with the stakeholders including provision of a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) to raise concerns about the project	06/2020
ESS 2 Labor and Working Conditions	
The Project will employ Consultants, Civil Servants and Contract workers for Communication Campaign and classroom disinfection. A Labor Management Procedure (LMP) will be developed within 60 days of the effectiveness of the project to address issues	11/2020
ESS 3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management	
A plan for selection and use of disinfectant, cleaning of equipment and disposal of any residual amount after use would be included in the ESMF.	11/2020
ESS 4 Community Health and Safety	
Community health and safety issues related to the use and disposal of disinfectant will be covered in the ESMF.	11/2020
ESS 5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement	
ESS 6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources	
ESS 7 Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities	

Public Disclosure



The Project will cover interventions in areas where small ethnic communities meeting the criteria of ESS7 reside. A Small Ethnic Community Planning Framework (SECPF) will be prepared addressing the need of the small ethnic communities being cognizant	09/2020
ESS 8 Cultural Heritage	
ESS 9 Financial Intermediaries	

B.3. Reliance on Borrower’s policy, legal and institutional framework, relevant to the Project risks and impacts

Is this project being prepared for use of Borrower Framework? No

Areas where “Use of Borrower Framework” is being considered:

Borrower Framework will not be considered.

IV. CONTACT POINTS

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Borrower/Client/Recipient

Borrower: Ministry of Finance

Implementing Agency(ies)

Implementing Agency: Secretary, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education

V. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

Public Disclosure



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VI. APPROVAL

Task Team Leader(s):	Peter Darvas, Mokhlesur Rahman, Tashmina Rahman
Practice Manager (ENR/Social)	Christophe Crepin Cleared on 17-Jul-2020 at 17:54:42 EDT
Safeguards Advisor ESSA	Agnes I. Kiss (SAESSA) Concurred on 12-Aug-2020 at 08:35:29 EDT