



Combined Project Information Documents / Integrated Safeguards Datasheet (PID/ISDS)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 20-Jun-2018 | Report No: PIDISDSA22312

BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

| | | | |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| Country Afghanistan | Project ID P159378 | Project Name EQRA | Parent Project ID (if any) |
| Region SOUTH ASIA | Estimated Appraisal Date 04-Jun-2018 | Estimated Board Date 31-Jul-2018 | Practice Area (Lead) Education |
| Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing | Borrower(s) Ministry of Finance | Implementing Agency Ministry of Education | |

Proposed Development Objective(s)

The Project Development Objectives (PDO) are “to increase equitable access to primary and secondary education, particularly for girls, in selected lagging provinces, and to improve learning conditions in Afghanistan”.

Components

Increasing Equitable Access to Basic Education Especially for Girls in Selected Lagging Provinces
Improving Learning Conditions
Strengthening Education Sector Planning Capacity and Transparency
Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)

SUMMARY

| | |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Total Project Cost | 298.00 |
| Total Financing | 298.00 |
| 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 | 198.00 |
| Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund | 100.00 |
| EFA-FTI Education Program Development Fund | 98.00 |

Environmental Assessment Category

B-Partial Assessment

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

There have been substantial improvements in development outcomes in Afghanistan since 2001, particularly in expanded access to basic services such as water, sanitation, and electricity, and improved outcomes in education and health. However, some gains are now being eroded due to growing insecurity. Between January and September 2017, 2,640 people were killed and around 5,380 injured. The number of Internally Displaced People has increased at an alarming pace: in the first half of 2017 alone, more than 200,000 people have been displaced internally due to conflict and more than 296,000 refugees have returned from Iran and Pakistan. The increased conflict appears to be affecting business and consumer confidence as economic activity is continuing to stagnate. The annual economic growth rate is projected at 2.6 percent in 2017, increasing slightly from the 2.2 percent recorded in 2016. Growth is expected to edge up to 3.2 percent in 2018, but only assuming no further deterioration in the security environment. While this constitutes a moderate improvement compared to 2014 and 2015, it is still significantly below the 9.6 percent average annual rate recorded between 2003 and 2012. In the medium term, growth is expected to remain muted, increasing modestly to 3.6 percent by 2020.

Poverty rate in Afghanistan increased from 36 percent in 2011/12 to 39.1 percent in 2013/14 and is expected to remain high in the medium-term, driven by weak labor demand (despite an increasing labor force) and security-related constraints on service delivery. Rural poverty and living conditions are particularly acute. The unemployment rate is estimated at 22.6 percent. Unemployment is particularly severe amongst women, low-skilled and illiterate workers. With an average annual population growth rate of 3 percent and with an estimated 400,000 Afghans entering the labor market each year, much higher economic growth is required to improve per capita incomes and to provide quality employment opportunities for the expanding workforce.



Sectoral and Institutional Context

Afghanistan has made great strides in access to primary schools and enrollment, but access is still a constraint for children in lagged behind provinces, especially for girls. In 2017, approximately 8.5 million youth and children were enrolled in general education schools, representing a nine-fold growth since 2001. The bulk of these students are at the primary level representing 5.8 million students or a gross enrollment rate (GER) of 111 percent; lower secondary enrollment was 1.7 million or a GER of 66 percent; upper secondary was at 947,000 or a GER of 42 percent; and Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) institutes enrolled approximately 78,000 students. Islamic schools enrolled approximately 343,116. Community-based education (CBE)¹ enrolled another 400,000. On the gender dimension, at the primary level, the GER for female students is 92 percent compared to 131 percent for males. At the lower secondary level, boys are 1.5 times more likely to attend middle school compared to girls. At the upper secondary level, boys' access is twice the rate of girls' gross enrollment (Ministry of Education [MoE] Education Management Information System [EMIS]). The top three reasons why girls do not attend schools, according to the ALCS 2014 survey are: (1) security concerns, (2) family does not allow them, and (3) no school or school is too far. The urban-rural breakdown of the data shows that lack of schooling is primarily a rural problem.

Corrupt practices worsened the condition of the education sector. Corruption, including patronage, favoritism, abuse and theft, is perceived to be widespread in Afghanistan's public sector. In the last decade, Afghanistan was consistently ranked in the bottom ten countries of the global corruption perception index. The education sector is no exception and the Afghans perceive the sector, particularly the MoE, as severely prone to corrupt practices. Persistent stories of ghost teachers, students and schools as well as the buying and selling of teacher positions have significantly eroded trust in the sector. Recent reports and surveys on the vulnerability to corruption and girls' education indicate critical governance challenges that range from teacher management to corrupt practices in the recruitment of teachers and systematic failures to prioritize girl's education². Similarly, lack of a rigorous and transparent system for allocation and delivery of resources such as provincial budgets, teaching positions and more importantly educational materials (e.g., primarily textbooks) to schools is among other key constraints that continue to negatively impact the intended outcomes of investments in the sector.

Data quality and its strategic use for targeted interventions remains a concern. For example, enrollment rates do not present a full picture as many children are officially enrolled but not attending school. These are called 'permanently absent' students. This is particular to the Afghanistan context, where schools continue to keep children on their records up to 3 years even if they do not attend on a regular basis or have dropped out. The difference between enrollment and attendance represents more than 30 percent, necessitating a shift in focus towards attendance as opposed to enrollment.

Expansion of existing schools through additional classrooms and construction of schools have contributed to the positive growth in the sector, yet half of all schools lack buildings; others do not have

¹ CBE is a form of home-based schooling that provides an opportunity for educational access in areas where traveling to the nearest school is a challenge and where security concerns make it risky to operate school buildings.

² Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee report from 2017, Human Rights Watch Report on Girls' Access to Education (2017) and the Service Delivery Indicator Survey conducted by the World Bank provide new evidence on the status of governance issues in the Ministry of Education.



surrounding boundary walls, which are essential for security reasons. Half of the student population in Afghanistan is being taught under tents or in open air, which severely hampers student learning when inclement weather conditions prevent students from attending schools. The need for school buildings is also high in Kabul Province, where over a third of schools run two or more shifts. Thirty percent of those schools run triple shifts, significantly reducing the instructional time for each group and causing rapid wear and tear of the school facilities (MoE data).

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Development Objective(s) (From PAD)

The Project Development Objectives are “to increase equitable access to primary and secondary education, particularly girls, in selected lagging provinces, and to improve learning conditions in Afghanistan”.

Key Results

Increase equitable access to general education in selected lagging provinces, especially for girls

- Increase in the number of students (never enrolled or dropped out) attending school (Grades 1–12) 75 percent of the academic year in selected provinces, by gender
- Out-of-school children in selected provinces, by gender

Improve learning conditions

- Teachers teaching subjects for which they are qualified (%)

D. Project Description

EQRA will use an Investment Project Financing (IPF) instrument, consisting of four components with components 2 and 3 following a results-based modality. Components 1 and 4 will follow a traditional IPF approach with select disbursement conditions. For components 2 and 3, disbursements will be made against an eligible expenditure program (EEP) upon achievement of pre-specified results as measured by Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs).

Component 1: Increasing Equitable Access to Basic Education Especially for Girls in Selected Lagging Provinces (US\$190 million)

Component 1 aims to increase access to basic education, especially for girls in selected lagging provinces. To ease some of the constraints that limit school participation and regular attendance in



Afghanistan—including deteriorating security, cultural norms that undervalue education, opportunity costs to attending school, distance to school, lack of gender-segregated latrines, and lack of female teachers—this component will expand access through two interventions (a) improving school infrastructure in rural areas in selected provinces through (i) constructing new school buildings; (ii) providing missing essential elements for rehabilitation of existing schools; and (iii) strengthening MRRD's capacity with respect to school construction, which will fall under the responsibility of the MRRD; (b) providing school grants to eligible schools; and (c) supporting CBE through (i) strengthening the MoE's capacity to develop an implementation plan for the CBE Policy and (ii) expanding CBE classes in selected provinces, which will be managed by the MoE.

Extra efforts at all levels of the education system including national, subnational, and school are needed to attract and retain school-age children, especially girls, who are currently out of the system. The education system needs to innovate, reform, and strengthen the planning and management processes and incentivize authorities at different levels to pursue the same goal. EQRA will support financing of immediate, medium, and longer-term measures to achieve this goal. In the immediate term, provision of school grants to address small-scale needs of schools in the 17 provinces will be made in two tranches to all eligible schools. Establishing a safer learning environment through building, expanding, and rehabilitating existing school infrastructure, social mobilization and awareness programs will also play a key role in attracting and retaining new students into the system as medium-term measures.

Subcomponent 1.1: Improving School Infrastructure

Inadequate school infrastructure has resulted in overburdened schools running multiple shifts across Afghanistan. The experience from EQUIP II has shown that besides absence of female teachers, parents are reluctant to send their girls to schools that lack boundary walls and adequate sanitation facilities. With priority given to girls-only and mixed schools, this subcomponent will (a) construct new school buildings and additional classrooms to upgrade temporary structures (such as tents and outdoor classrooms) to permanent physical structures and (b) provide missing essential elements (such as boundary walls, water wells, and gender-segregated latrines). Compact fluorescent lamps will be used in an effort toward climate change mitigation. The school infrastructure needs in each district will be determined based on a geo-spatial school mapping exercise to determine underserved populations, which will inform the infrastructure policy and future school construction plans.

The mandate for school construction has recently been shifted from the MoE to the MRRD for schools in rural areas and to the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing for schools in urban areas. EQRA will focus on construction of schools in rural areas which will be implemented by the MRRD by involving the Community Development Councils (CDCs) supported by its engineers and technical staff. The modality uses locally available materials and local labor. In support of the GoA's initiative to provide physical structures for schools currently operating in open areas or under tents, the project will prioritize constructing buildings for girls' schools and mixed schools. If resources remain available, then EQRA will support boys' schools. Construction of missing items in existing schools will also be part of the project and prioritized in the same order as construction of school buildings. To improve transparency in the selection of school sites, EQRA will support the preparation of a school infrastructure policy under the Project Preparation Grant (PPG). It is expected that the policy will establish nationwide criteria to prioritize school construction in areas of the greatest need. This subcomponent will support the completion of 1,900 schools (1,200 new school buildings with necessary components such as latrines, water supply systems



for all schools, and boundary wall for girls' schools above primary level, and missing components such as additional classrooms, toilets, water supply systems, and boundary walls for 700 schools that have a building but lack these elements) in the 17 selected provinces. The list of schools supported under EQRA will be captured in the Project Procedure Manual.

Subcomponent 1.2: Provision of School Grants to Eligible Schools for Improved Access and Retention

This subcomponent will provide schools with financial resources, capacity building, and operational autonomy to undertake interventions to address local demand and supply-side constraints and will be implemented by the MoE. The proposed School Grants Program (SGP) under EQRA will be a pilot that will be introduced in all girls' schools in the targeting provinces, and provides a level of flexibility to schools to choose their intervention to increase student attendance according to the following agreed eligible expenditure categories.

To accommodate local-level variations in priorities, schools may choose any of the following eligible expenditure categories in any proportion they identify as necessary:

- (a) **School supplies**, including covering indirect costs of education such as school uniforms, stationery, and additional school-related expenses
- (b) **Access to hygienic products for girls**
- (c) **Transport facilities** for female students and female teachers between homes and schools to ensure better access for students and teachers who are beyond a particular distance from the school³. Where necessary and preferred, the grants may be used for hiring a Mubasera⁴ to facilitate the female students' travel to schools.
- (d) **Bridge courses**⁵
- (e) **Operations and maintenance (O&M) expenditures** to cover small repairs at the school level⁶

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) will release the first tranche to all girls' schools (approximately 1,200 schools in the 17 provinces) as described in the School Grants Manual, while the second tranche will be conditional upon individual schools demonstrating results in the following area: (a) successful utilization of the first grant with satisfactory financial reports as described in the School Grants Manual and (b)

³ Schools should take the lead in identifying common transport routes and ensure that transport service providers are locally selected to maximize trust and security for students and female teachers.

⁴ Mubasera is referred to a female community member selected by the community who collects female students from the community and take them to and back from the school, which has proved to be helpful in encouraging families to send their daughters to schools.

⁵ Many children who were out of school and have been incentivized to (re)enter school may face additional challenges in learning, assimilating in the class, and reaching the same academic level as their peers who have already been in school. Addressing these challenges would require focused attention and schools may need to make provision for special tutoring, bridging, and remedial lessons for out-of-school children who are reentering school. The SGP may be used for making ad hoc appointments of contract teachers specifically for teaching bridge courses and conducting catch-up lessons.

⁶ This category should not exceed 50 percent of the overall grant allocation.



increase by four percent the number of female students attending school (across nearly 90 percent of participating schools).

Subcomponent 1.3: Supporting Community-Based Education

This subcomponent will support the expansion of CBE through on-budget support, to extend service delivery in remote locations and in emergency situations affected by conflict. The CBE⁷ model establishes classrooms in villages, usually in homes, reducing the distance students have to travel. Evidence from Afghanistan has shown that CBE can be an effective way to reach students who would otherwise not be able to access the nearest school due to conflict, cultural, and religious or social restrictions. In addition, learning outcomes for students in some CBE classes are greater than or equal to outcomes for students in public schools.⁸ Results from the recent Systems Approach for Better Education Results - Service Delivery (SABER SD) study led by the World Bank, in a sample of 30 CBE classes implemented by the MoE (financed by the first on-budget GPE grant), highlighted that CBE is a promising way to provide access and improve learning, but the sample size is not statistically significant to allow for applying the findings of the evaluation on all CBEs across the board. Hence, there is a need for establishing the foundational work to guide the on-budget expansion of CBE. Subsequently, Component 1 will support the expansion and establishment of CBE classes based on needs in the 17 lagging provinces and through a sustainable mechanism.

Most CBE classes are donor-funded and off-budget, overseen and monitored by NGOs. A policy laying out the guidelines for CBE has been approved in 2017 and builds on previous experiences of CBE implementation. The key challenge has been to (a) harmonize the costs of service delivery among the various modalities while maintaining good standards, (b) ensure proper monitoring of CBE classes by the MoE, and (c) provide a smooth transition of CBE students to a hub school upon completion of CBE to ensure that students can complete a full schooling cycle. EQRA will support the establishment of harmonized standards to improving equity, cost-effectiveness, and scalability of CBE, which will be completed by Year 2 of EQRA implementation. Starting in Year 3, the MoE will expand CBE to an additional 33,000 students for three years in underserved communities, identified as areas where there are no Government schools within a specified distance of 3 km⁹ using the new quality and cost standards. The costs associated with CBE expansion will comprise incremental operating expenditures to support contract teachers, learning materials, and services (NGO contracting if this modality is selected by the MoE).

Component 2: Improving Learning Conditions (US\$35 million)

Global and local evidence finds that variables related to teachers are most critical to student learning. To strengthen the teaching and learning process, this component will focus on improving the capacity of

⁷ CBE varies by donor and/or NGOs. Some CBE comprise 9 grades while others only provide 3 grades.

⁸ Burde, Dana and Leigh L. Linden. 2013. "Bringing Education to Afghan Girls: A Randomized Controlled Trial of Village-Based Schools." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 5 (3): 27–40.

⁹ One potential incentive to enroll in primary school is whether there is a secondary school available to attend. Mukhopadhyay, Abhiroop and Soham Sahoo. 2012. "Does Access to Secondary Education Affect Primary Schooling? Evidence from India." IZA Discussion Paper No. 6507 finds that a "1 km reduction in distance to secondary school increases probability of primary enrollment by 0.074" in India.



teachers to deliver quality instructions in the classroom. The set of interventions consists of (a) a requirement that teachers have subject knowledge in the subject they are teaching while strengthening and standardizing instruction at TTCs, (b) provision of classroom support and coaching to teachers in a pilot program, and (c) delivery of current textbooks to schools while developing a new curriculum with improved relevance.

Subcomponent 2.1: Supporting Subject Knowledge Training of Teachers of Selected Grades and Developing Standardized Examination for TTCs

This subcomponent will improve standardization of teacher capabilities and quality assurance across the system. First, teachers teaching above Grade 6 (lower and higher secondary education) will be required to only teach subjects for which they have subject qualifications. Reassignment of teachers within schools and, potentially within nearby schools, will remedy part of the problem. For remaining teachers who do not have the knowledge of the subjects they are assigned to teach, TTCs will offer a one-year part-time subject training to existing teachers, ensuring minimum disruption to their teaching duties. To ensure uniform quality of TTC diplomas across the country, a Teacher Education Directorate (TED) will develop a harmonized exam to be administered at the end of TTC training in all TTCs for these subject-specific qualifications. More broadly, this subcomponent will address the large variation in the quality of instruction at TTCs where qualifications of the faculty members vary and many instructors are recent university graduates. TA, delivered under Component 4, will aim to simplify and improve the feasibility of the National Teacher Credentialing System under development, to ensure that it is more suited to the Afghan context. The costs associated with teacher training comprise incremental operating expenditures such as transport, learning materials, and teacher-college running costs. The share of teachers teaching subjects for which they have subject knowledge will be tracked as a PDO-level indicator.

Subcomponent 2.2: Supporting a Pilot Program Including its Evaluation to Strengthen Coaching and Training of Teachers and Classroom Observations

The objective of this subcomponent is to improve the quality of teaching for existing teachers through a pilot using classroom diagnostics with teacher observations, followed by the provision of coaching and capacity building. The aim is to improve the quality of teaching without displacing teachers from classrooms by using the World Bank's 'TEACH' classroom observation technique to strengthen the feedback loop for teachers, highlighting areas for improvement to further their professional development and providing coaching tailored to their needs. This will be used in 200 schools as a pilot. The use of the tool will be closely linked to the Department of Academic Supervision's existing teacher coaching scheme by academic supervisors. It will also seek to improve the capacity of school administrators such as heads of department and principals so that they can coach teachers on an ongoing basis.

The existing teacher coaching scheme itself will be significantly strengthened in a pilot sample of 200 schools. Teachers for Grades 3 to 6 will receive intensive instruction on using scripted lessons in teaching reading and mathematics (this involves providing lesson plans with a high degree of scripting, providing concrete steps for teachers), continually assess student performance, and receive frequent school-based pedagogic support and resource materials. Incorporated into this process will be training on subject



content as well. The training will be conducted through a cluster-based and limited cascade model.¹⁰ This training will be supplemented by school-level visits to support teachers at least once each month. In addition, school principals will receive training on how to support and coach teachers on an ongoing basis and create a conducive learning environment in the school. Though far from a magic bullet for learning in Afghan schools, the pilot takes a new approach that builds on global evidence on what works in teacher training and coaching, as well as proven successes in other conflict-affected countries.¹¹ This subcomponent links to DLI 1, which will track the average improvement in scores on the TEACH observation tool and performance in a basic content knowledge test by teachers in the pilot. The associated EEPs will be codes 22 and 25 from the discretionary and recurrent budget. The costs associated to EQRA comprise consultancies, training, materials, and supervision.

Subcomponent 2.3: Supporting Development of Curriculum and Learning Materials and Delivery of Textbooks from PEDs to Schools

This subcomponent will support distribution of the current set of textbooks to schools as well as the reform of the curriculum and development of new textbooks, teacher guides, and other instructional materials. Based on the newly proposed textbook distribution strategy, the vendor is responsible for the delivery of textbooks to PEDs and then it becomes the responsibility of the MoE, specifically the relevant PED, to deliver textbooks to the districts and then to the schools. The MoE will bear the financial burden of transporting textbooks from PEDs to districts but beyond districts, the MoE will be using a combination of government-financed delivery depending on the accessibility of roads or will invite the communities (school shuras and representative of schools) to collect textbooks for their schools from their relevant District Education Department (DED). In districts covered under the Citizens' Charter Afghanistan Project (CCAP), the MoE and the MRRD will work together to deliver textbooks effectively while tapping each other's resources. EQRA's financing against DLI 2, which focuses on delivery of textbooks and development of new curriculum, will be released upon the verification of the textbooks at the school level. The associated EEPs will be codes 22 and 25 from the discretionary and recurrent budget. EQRA will support the costs of consultancies, incremental operating expenditures to cover textbook delivery, and consultation and training for the use of the next textbooks among the teaching force.

The revised curricular materials and associated capacity building including coaching will be expected to have an impact on teacher practices in the classroom in the longer term. The delivery of the current set of textbooks and development of the new curriculum will also be tracked through DLI 2. Capacity building of school leaders, academic supervisors, and teachers on the use of the new instructional materials is supported under Component 4.

Component 3: Strengthening Education Sector Planning Capacity and Transparency (US\$39 million)

This component aims to strengthen planning and implementation capacity, coordination, and transparency of the MoE at both the central and subnational levels. The findings of a recent subnational

¹⁰ International/consultant experts train the trainers in the capital, and then those trainers go out to the schools and train teachers. In other words, there is only one layer (the trainers) between the top experts and the teachers.

¹¹ See http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACR618.pdf. USAID Liberia Plus: Program Evaluation Report. 2010. USAID, the Primary Math and Reading Initiative. Kenya Endline Impact Evaluation, 2014. <http://economics.mit.edu/files/5992>. Dufló, E, P. Dupas, and M. Kremer. 2010. *Peer Effects, Teacher Incentives, and the Impact of Tracking: Evidence from a Randomized Evaluation in Kenya*.



assessment of the education sector management (2015),¹² the MEC report (2017)¹³, Critical Administrative Constraints to Service Delivery in Afghanistan,¹⁴ and Social Service Delivery in Violent Contexts¹⁵ provide the evidence base for interventions under this component.

Subcomponent 3.1: Improving Education Management Information Systems (EMIS)

The MoE has made significant strides in developing and operationalizing an EMIS platform that collects, processes, and disseminates education data regularly. While the system covers administrative data such as demographic and school-level information for primary and secondary schools, verifiable and real-time information on the number, actual existence, and attendance of teachers, students, and administrative staff is a major sectoral issue.

The objective of this subcomponent is to (a) refine the datasets that are critical for education planning and management including off-budget CBE, (b) integrate fragmented systems, and (c) strengthen its verification process. The MoE intends to automate and integrate the information systems for financial management (FM), HR, procurement, and payroll. The MoE is also introducing a system for tracking student attendance and strengthening its data management capacity at all levels (programs, departments, and deconcentrated levels). The data verification will be conducted in three steps: (a) conduct monthly phone surveys for schools (principal or community shura representative) to collect data on teacher and student attendance and the functionality of schools (by gender), (b) conduct physical verification of data reported on the EMIS among a random sample of schools (minimum of 5 percent) by comparing actual observations to the data collected with the previous month's phone survey and an annual school census, and (c) ensure proper monitoring of CBE classes and data reporting on CBE in EMIS.

EMIS information will be further refined through comparison and verification of data reported in citizen scorecards under the CCAP. In districts covered under phase I, the CCAP will conduct an initial gap analysis on a broad set of indicators (for example, school construction, teacher qualifications, and teaching hours) from which two minimum service delivery standard indicators will be included in the biannual citizen scorecard. This information collected by CDCs will be shared with the EMIS team for comparison and to supplement each other. This dialogue would also allow CDCs to inform the Government about their needs and for the Government to report on progress. This comparison relies on the data gathering conducted by the CCAP. While the CCAP will support the citizen scorecards, EQRA will support the data collection through phone surveys and the verification of data under incremental operating expenditures. The piloting of a monthly phone survey will be supported under the PPG. This subcomponent links to DLI 3, which supports the improvement of EMIS data collection and the implementation of quality assurance procedures and the EEP codes 22 and 25 from the discretionary and recurrent budget costs associated with this subcomponent.

¹² Altai Consulting. 2015. *Education Sub-National Assessment: Strengthening Public Education Management*.

¹³ Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee. 2017. *Ministry-Wide Vulnerability Assessment to Corruption Assessment of the Ministry of Education*.

¹⁴ World Bank. 2014. *Critical Administrative Constraints to Service Delivery. Afghanistan*

¹⁵ World Bank. 2017. *SSD in Violent Contexts: Achieving Results against the Odds*.



Subcomponent 3.2: Improving Teacher Recruitment and Management

This subcomponent will buttress a transparent recruitment process for teachers and support the MoE to clarify and transparently communicate key policies, targets, norms, regulations, and guidelines regarding teachers to stakeholders and lower levels of the ministry's structure. The new process will rely heavily on the use of technology at the application and examination phases adopting the previously tested Kankor examination methodology.¹⁶ Regulations would also be clarified regarding temporary contract teachers, overtime payment, and incentive schemes, which will include an emphasis on hiring female teachers. A teacher policy will be required by 2018 under DLI 4 on implementation of teacher policy and any new teacher recruitment will have to follow the new process.

This subcomponent will introduce the establishment of a personnel database for its more than 270,000 teachers and administrative staff. Each staff member of the MoE will have a unique number, a photograph and biometric data captured in the database. This database will have an interface with the Afghanistan Financial Management Information System (AFMIS), and the payroll system to clean its records of ghost teachers. This subcomponent links to DLI 5, incentivizing the establishment of an integrated personnel registry and the EEP codes 22 and 25 from the discretionary and recurrent budget. Costs associated with this subcomponent include equipment and consultancy services.

Subcomponent 3.3: Improving Budget Planning and Introducing Results-based Reporting

This subcomponent will improve annual planning and reporting through the NESP III operational plan, foster greater coordination and transparency of on-budget and off-budget resources, and leverage better resource allocation and expenditures across the operating and development budgets. The annual Operational Planning and Reporting Framework will be prepared with TA from the World Bank. The TA provided under Component 4 will support the development of a simple procedural manual, codifying existing national annual planning, budgeting, and implementation processes that would lead to a holistic tool of resource allocation, including on-budget and off-budget resources.

To improve budget planning, this subcomponent will support the introduction of a norm-based O&M budget allocation formula to provinces disaggregated at the DED level (DLI 6).¹⁷ The formula will exclude the permanently absent students to focus only on students who regularly attend school and allocate a higher amount for girls attending school. In addition to bringing transparency and enabling the central MoE and the MoF to track its expenditures, it will also improve the use of the O&M budget by excluding the cost of permanently absent students and allowing related funds to be reallocated. The norms are intended to incentivize provinces and districts demonstrating higher outcomes on girls' attendance.

This subcomponent will introduce a basic performance management system for PEDs and DEDs based

¹⁶ Kankor' is derived from the French 'concours' which translates to 'competition'. The Kankor exam translates to 'competitive exam'. The process entails that examinees will receive electronically generated randomized questionnaires, with multiple-choice response format and electronic scoring of results. Applicants sitting the exam will receive a unique examinee ID code that links their identity to their questionnaire and response sheet. This will significantly reduce the opportunity to cheat during the exam, leak exam answers before the exam, or manipulate exam scores afterwards.

¹⁷ NESP III criteria: number of school-age children out-of-school, pupil-teacher ratio, teacher gender, student classroom ratio, and student textbook ratio.

on which their performance will be evaluated and peer-to-peer comparison made possible. The system will have well-defined standards and basic quantitative and qualitative indicators that should be achieved annually such as timely submission of budget, regular transmission of EMIS data, submission of updated teacher data, tracking of teacher and student absenteeism, and timely delivery of school supplies and all instructional materials to the schools. This builds on the MoE's recent efforts to prepare individual school snapshots and will allow benchmarking of schools with district-level performance. DEDs will review performance of all schools in their districts and bring the poorest performing to the attention of PEDs for management action. Academic supervisors will be tasked to conduct spot checks three times per year in the schools under their purview to track real teacher and student attendance to feed into the results-based reports. Citizens through the facilitation of the CDCs in CCAP areas or school shuras in non-CCAP areas will be involved in monitoring some key indicators such as (a) textbook delivery, (b) presence of teachers, (c) construction of classrooms, and (d) use of school grants. These would serve as an opportunity to cross-check the validity of the data reported on in the DED and PED results-based reports. The costs associated with the monitoring of the indicators in the CCAP districts will be supported under the CCAP. In the non-CCAP areas, EQRA will support the monitoring cost. This subcomponent links to DLI 7, which incentivizes the development of the NESP III operational plan and results reported and the EEP codes 22 and 25 from the discretionary and recurrent budget. The preparation of the annual operational plan for 2019 will be supported under the PPG.

Component 4: Technical Assistance (US\$34 million)

Component 4 aims to strengthen the capacity of the MoE at the national and subnational levels to achieve results in priority areas, and more broadly, to manage the delivery of quality education services promoted under NESP III. The TA will focus on strengthening essential functions within the MoE, which constitute either bottlenecks in service provision and management or represent high fiduciary risk. This component will also comprise a pilot of ECE. ECE is at a nascent stage and would first need to be rigorously evaluated to inform future scale-up. The costs associated with ECE comprise consultancies, training, and materials.

Table 1. Component 4 Costing

| Activity | Areas of Support | Costs |
|------------------------|---|----------------|
| ECE pilot | ECE pilot in mosques and CBE/general education schools | US\$2 million |
| TA | Long term: Curriculum reform and teacher coaching, | US\$24 million |
| | Short term: Procurement, planning, budgeting, teacher management, and civil works | |
| | Training | |
| Third-party monitoring | Monitoring of results and verification of annual Disbursement-Linked Results (DLRs) | US\$8 million |

Given the issues with data verification in the past and EQRA's need for independent verification of DLI achievements, Component 4 will also support the costs of third-party monitoring. The selection of an independent agency (or agencies) would be based on, among others, capabilities to carry out the verification processes, potential for a medium- to long-term engagement and capacity building in the Government system, and the ability to act fully independently of the MoE and the MRRD.

E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

NESP III oversight will fall under the purview of the National Education Strategic Plan Steering Committee (NSC), which is chaired by the MoE with overall responsibility for policy formulation and coordination. A joint working group comprising Deputy Minister for General Education, Deputy Minister for Finance and Administration, Directorates from General Education, Academic Supervision, Teacher Education, Curriculum, Directorates General for Planning, Financial Management, Procurement, Infrastructure and Civil Works, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development and select development partners (DPs) will be constituted to strengthen oversight, ownership, and stakeholder coordination.

This committee will oversee the planning of the annual budget, reviewing implementation progress according to the Operational Planning and Reporting Framework and resolving implementation bottlenecks. Terms of reference (TOR) for this committee will establish frequency of meetings and other details. The last phase of EQUIP II demonstrated that continuous engagement from the leadership of the MoE is critical to resolving implementation bottlenecks and moving the agenda forward, the absence of which can severely undermine the implementation process. Provincial-level oversight will be the responsibility of the Provincial Education Director as the Chairperson, the Heads of Programs at the provincial level, and Secretariat provincial staff as members. District-level oversight is the responsibility of the Head of DED. The DED will be supported by a dedicated technical team, if required.

School construction will fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD). This will be carried out in close coordination with the MoE which will remain responsible for preparing the school infrastructure policy and space norms and ensuring their compliance. The safeguards team comprising social and environmental safeguards specialists will be responsible for overall environmental and social safeguards management, including citizen engagement (CE) and will be led by the MRRD. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be signed between the MoE and the MRRD Ministers indicating the roles and responsibilities of each ministry with respect to subcomponent 1.1. The MoE will be responsible for implementing all the other subcomponents.

F. Project location and Salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

The specific location and total number of construction sites are not known at this stage, while the construction sites will be spread across 17 lagging provinces of Afghanistan. Under component 1, the project will be financing construction of new school buildings and refurbishment of existing schools. As the specific locations are not known at this stage, therefore the project will support the development of a school infrastructure policy to establish nation-wide criteria to prioritize school construction site selection in areas

of the greatest need. Construction work will cover new school buildings with latrines, water well and boundary wall and enhancement of existing school environments by adding boundary walls, water wells and latrines. The proposed project is categorized as an EA Category-B, since the proposed project activities will not cause any significant or irreversible environmental and social impacts in the project areas. Nevertheless, expected adverse environmental and social impacts will be avoided or mitigated through provisions set forth in the ESMF, which has been developed for this project.

G. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Sayed Mujtaba Shobair, Environmental Safeguards Specialist
Tariq Ashraf, Social Safeguards Specialist

SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

| Safeguard Policies | Triggered? | Explanation (Optional) |
|-------------------------------------|------------|--|
| Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01 | Yes | Activities described under component 1 suggest the triggering of OP/BP 4.01 (Environmental Assessment) since, this component will support investments in the construction of new school buildings and refurbishment of existing schools. The number of construction sites and locations are unknown at the time of appraisal. The environmental issues in this project will relate to site location and planning (natural hazards, sensitive ecological regions, arsenic and fluoride contamination of groundwater, presence of Asbestos on site, site drainage); building design and construction (indoor air quality and daylight factor inside the classrooms, sanitation facilities and waste management, water supply, handling hazardous chemicals in laboratories); and maintenance during operation period (site cleanliness and hygiene, prevention of enteric infection). The Borrower has prepared an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF). The ESMF further guides the preparation of Site Specific Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and other relevant tools as required. ESMP will be prepared to mitigate any negative impacts while maximizing the positive |

effects of the project. The ESMF also provides guidance with a detailed institutional arrangement and monitoring and evaluation mechanism, a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), including an estimated budget to allow sound and adequate implementation of the ESMPs. The ESMP will be binding to the civil works contracts as part of the Environmental and Social Clauses during project implementation stage and site specific ESMPs and/or RAPs should be prepared, approved by the Bank, and disclosed before any land take or civil work starts.

The ESMF has been disclosed in-country and at the Bank's external website.

| | | |
|--|-----|--|
| Performance Standards for Private Sector Activities OP/BP 4.03 | No | |
| Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04 | No | OP/BP 4.04 is not triggered as the activities proposed under this project will not have any effect on the Natural habitats. |
| Forests OP/BP 4.36 | No | OP/BP 4.36 is not triggered as no forests are considered to be affected by the civil works proposed under this project. |
| Pest Management OP 4.09 | No | OP/BP 4.09 (Pest Management) policy is not triggered because Project activities will not involve purchase, use or storage of pesticides, nor will it support the procurement, or use of, or lead to the increased use of other agricultural chemicals. |
| Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11 | No | OP/BP 4.11 is not triggered given that the project activities are not expected to impact physical cultural resources. However, the ESMF will comprise guidelines for Chance Find Procedures according to national law. |
| Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10 | No | OP/BP 4.10 is not triggered as there are no Indigenous Peoples that meet the criteria of OP/BP 4.10 in the project areas that could potentially benefit or be adversely affected by the Project's activities. |
| Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12 | Yes | OP/BP 4.12 is applicable because the project will support the construction of new school buildings and expansion of existing schools in 17 lagged behind provinces, which may trigger land acquisition and involuntary resettlement. |

Since the scope and other details of all proposed activities, including the exact locations of the schools to be supported are not yet determined, an ESMF and a Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) have been prepared and disclosed both in-country and at the Bank's external website. The ESMF and RPF will guide preparation of the social safeguards studies, such as limited social impact assessment and RAPs (where needed).

| | | |
|--|----|--|
| Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37 | No | OP/BP 4.37 is not triggered as the Project does not have any activity involving dams. |
| Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50 | No | OP/BP 7.50 is not triggered as the project does not involve any activity that affect international water ways. |
| Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60 | No | OP/BP 7.60 is not triggered as the Project does not involve any activity in any known disputed area. |

KEY SAFEGUARD POLICY ISSUES AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

A. Summary of Key Safeguard Issues

1. Describe any safeguard issues and impacts associated with the proposed project. Identify and describe any potential large scale, significant and/or irreversible impacts:

Physical interventions are foreseen under the project, whereby the construction, rehabilitation and refurbishment of schools would be financed. These interventions are of small to medium-sized scale. Thus, no potential large scale, significant and/or irreversible impacts are expected.

Anticipated potential adverse environmental impacts would be primarily during the construction phase of civil works (e.g. construction stage, debris generation, dust emission, noise, safety, and other standard impacts of construction). During the operational stage, potential negative impacts would be related to potential misuse or maintenance problems of the school infrastructure. The prevention, reduction and mitigation of these impacts are mainly based on the adoption of school building design, construction and management good practices, such as the specific measures included in the Environmental and Social Management Framework of the Project.

EQRA activities are expected to have overall moderate social impacts, which can be readily mitigated through implementation of the safeguards instruments. Social safeguards impacts would be mainly caused by temporary and/or permanent loss of land and other assets, particularly for new school buildings and other activities under component 1. Selection of sites for these activities will be screened for land disputes to avoid the situation where investments would fuel such disputes.

2. Describe any potential indirect and/or long term impacts due to anticipated future activities in the project area:
No adverse potential indirect and/or long-term impacts due to anticipated future activities in the Project area have been identified.

3. Describe any project alternatives (if relevant) considered to help avoid or minimize adverse impacts.
It was determined that the environmental and social screening process as outlined in the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) will adequately address any potential negative impacts of future rehabilitation activities, and therefore, project alternatives did not have to be considered.

4. Describe measures taken by the borrower to address safeguard policy issues. Provide an assessment of borrower capacity to plan and implement the measures described.
With the transfer of all civil works to the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), an additional capacity assessment has been carried out during project appraisal, which indicates that the MRRD has operational experience of World Bank safeguard policies. MRRD will appoint an Environmental and Social Safeguard specialist at the central level and environmental and social safeguard officer (ESS) at the provincial level to ensure the implementation of the relevant safeguard tools, which will be developed for each specific site. Component 1 of the project will also support capacity building of safeguards management and its institutional arrangements.

5. Identify the key stakeholders and describe the mechanisms for consultation and disclosure on safeguard policies, with an emphasis on potentially affected people.
The key stakeholders are the Governmental institutions i.e. Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education and any other relevant governmental/non-governmental organizations, civil society etc. The ESMF and RFP prepared for EQRA have been disclosed on MRRD's and MoE's websites as well as the World Bank' external website.

B. Disclosure Requirements

| Environmental Assessment/Audit/Management Plan/Other | | For category A projects, date of distributing the Executive Summary of the EA to the Executive Directors |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| Date of receipt by the Bank | Date of submission for disclosure | |
| 31-May-2018 | 07-Jun-2018 | |
| "In country" Disclosure | | |
| Afghanistan | | |
| 12-Jun-2018 | | |
| Comments | | |
| Resettlement Action Plan/Framework/Policy Process | | |
| Date of receipt by the Bank | Date of submission for disclosure | |

31-May-2018

07-Jun-2018

"In country" Disclosure

Afghanistan

12-Jun-2018

Comments

C. Compliance Monitoring Indicators at the Corporate Level (to be filled in when the ISDS is finalized by the project decision meeting)

OP/BP/GP 4.01 - Environment Assessment

Does the project require a stand-alone EA (including EMP) report?

Yes

If yes, then did the Regional Environment Unit or Practice Manager (PM) review and approve the EA report?

Yes

Are the cost and the accountabilities for the EMP incorporated in the credit/loan?

Yes

OP/BP 4.12 - Involuntary Resettlement

Has a resettlement plan/abbreviated plan/policy framework/process framework (as appropriate) been prepared?

Yes

If yes, then did the Regional unit responsible for safeguards or Practice Manager review the plan?

Yes

The World Bank Policy on Disclosure of Information

Have relevant safeguard policies documents been sent to the World Bank for disclosure?

Yes

Have relevant documents been disclosed in-country in a public place in a form and language that are understandable and accessible to project-affected groups and local NGOs?

Yes

All Safeguard Policies

Have satisfactory calendar, budget and clear institutional responsibilities been prepared for the implementation of measures related to safeguard policies?

Yes

Have costs related to safeguard policy measures been included in the project cost?

Yes

Does the Monitoring and Evaluation system of the project include the monitoring of safeguard impacts and measures related to safeguard policies?

Yes

Have satisfactory implementation arrangements been agreed with the borrower and the same been adequately reflected in the project legal documents?

Yes

CONTACT POINT

World Bank

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Senior Economist

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Education Spec.

Borrower/Client/Recipient

Ministry of Finance

Implementing Agencies

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APPROVAL

| | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Task Team Leader(s): | Nathalie Lahire Matiullah Noori |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|

Approved By

| | | |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Safeguards Advisor: | | |
| Practice Manager/Manager: | | |
| Country Director: | | |