

Cover Note for COVID-19 Accelerated Funding Request

OVERVIEW	
Country:	Bangladesh
Grant agent(s):	The World Bank
Coordinating agency:	UNICEF
Program name:	BANGLADESH: COVID-19 SCHOOL SECTOR RESPONSE PROJECT (CSSR-GPE)
COVID-19 Accelerated Funding amount requested:	USD 20 million
Agency fees amount (additional to COVID-19 Accelerated Funding amount requested): ¹	USD 200,000
Agency fees as % of total COVID-19 Accelerated Funding requested:	1.00%
COVID-19 Accelerated Funding application date:	5/11/2020
Estimated COVID-19 Accelerated Funding program start date:	7/1/2020
Estimated COVID-19 Accelerated Funding program closing date (must be last day of the month, e.g. June <u>30</u> , 2021):	12/31/2021
Expected submission date of completion report (At the latest 6 months after program closing date):	6/30/2022
Grant modality - (please enter 'X')	<input type="checkbox"/> Sector Pooled
	<input type="checkbox"/> Project Pooled/ Co-financed
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project/ Stand-alone

¹ General agency fees are additional to the Accelerated Funding amount requested and determined by the grant agent's own internal regulations. They are paid to the agency's headquarters and relate to overhead costs and are typically used to assist in the defrayment of administrative and other costs incurred in connection with the management and administration of grant funds. These fees are pre-determined in the Financial Procedure Agreement (FPA) between the grant agent and the GPE Trustee.

Note to the user

Informing the Secretariat:

→ Prior to submitting a COVID-19 Accelerated Funding application, the Government or the Coordinating Agency informs the Secretariat of the country's intention to apply and provides a timeline for the submission of their application to the GPE Secretariat.

COVID-19 Accelerated Funding Guidelines:

→ Applicants should read the [GPE Guidelines for COVID-19 Accelerated Funding Window](#), which explain the application development process, including timeline, and necessary steps. In case additional information is needed, the applicant can contact the Country Lead at the Secretariat.



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Report No: PAD3998

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

PROJECT APPRAISAL DOCUMENT

ON A

PROPOSED GRANT

IN THE AMOUNT OF US\$ 14.80 MILLION

TO THE

GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH

FOR A

BANGLADESH COVID-19 SCHOOL SECTOR RESPONSE (GPE)

{RVP/CD CLEARANCE DATE}

Education Global Practice
South Asia Region

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CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(Exchange Rate Effective {May 10, 2020})

Currency Unit = Bangladeshi Taka (BDT)

BDT 84.9 = US\$1

US\$ 1.38 = SDR 1

FISCAL YEAR

July 1 - June 30

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AF	Accelerated Funding
CD	Country Director
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
CSSR	COVID School Sector Response
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
DSHE	Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education
E-MIS	Electronic Management Information System
ESPIG	Education Sector Plan Implementation Grant
GA	Grant Agent
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
GRS	Grievance Redress System
HSC	Higher Secondary School Certificate
IPF	Investment Project Financing
LEG	Local Education Group
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHFW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
MoPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
NER	Net Enrollment Rate
NSA	National Student Assessment
OOSC	Out of School Children
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PECE	Primary Education Completion Examination
PEDP4	Fourth Primary Education Development Project
PIC	Project Implementation Committee
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PPE	Pre Primary Education
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PTA	Parent Teacher Association

QLEAP	Quality Learning for All Program
RRREP	Response, Recovery, and Resilience in Education Project
RVP	Regional Vice President
SEDP	Secondary Education Development Program
TA	Technical Assistance
TAPP	Technical Assistance Project Proposal
TSER	Transforming Secondary Education for Results Operation
WB	World Bank



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DATASHEET

BASIC INFORMATION

Country(ies)	Project Name		
Bangladesh	Bangladesh COVID 19 School Sector Response (GPE)		
Project ID	Financing Instrument	Environmental and Social Risk Classification	Process
P174268	Investment Project Financing	Moderate	Urgent Need or Capacity Constraints (FCC)

Financing & Implementation Modalities

<input type="checkbox"/> Multiphase Programmatic Approach (MPA)	<input type="checkbox"/> Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC)
<input type="checkbox"/> Series of Projects (SOP)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fragile State(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Performance-Based Conditions (PBCs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Small State(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Intermediaries (FI)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fragile within a non-fragile Country
<input type="checkbox"/> Project-Based Guarantee	<input type="checkbox"/> Conflict
<input type="checkbox"/> Deferred Drawdown	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Responding to Natural or Man-made Disaster
<input type="checkbox"/> Alternate Procurement Arrangements (APA)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hands-on Enhanced Implementation Support (HEIS)

Expected Approval Date	Expected Closing Date
10-Aug-2020	30-Jun-2022

Bank/IFC Collaboration

No

Proposed Development Objective(s)

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.

**Components**

Component Name	Cost (US\$, millions)
1: Engaging in Systemic Response	3.46
2: Supporting Education Systems Recovery	8.06
3: Building System Resilience	1.97
4: Project Management, Results Monitoring and Communication	1.06

Organizations

Borrower: Ministry of Finance

Implementing Agency: Secretary, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education

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

Total Project Cost	14.80
Total Financing	14.80
of which IBRD/IDA	0.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS**Non-World Bank Group Financing**

Trust Funds	14.80
Education for All - Fast Track Initiative	14.80

Expected Disbursements (in US\$, Millions)

WB Fiscal Year	2020	2021	2022
Annual	0.00	9.00	5.80
Cumulative	0.00	9.00	14.80

**INSTITUTIONAL DATA****Practice Area (Lead)**

Education

Contributing Practice Areas**SYSTEMATIC OPERATIONS RISK-RATING TOOL (SORT)****Risk Category****Rating**

1. Political and Governance	● Moderate
2. Macroeconomic	● Substantial
3. Sector Strategies and Policies	● Moderate
4. Technical Design of Project or Program	● Substantial
5. Institutional Capacity for Implementation and Sustainability	● Substantial
6. Fiduciary	● Substantial
7. Environment and Social	● Moderate
8. Stakeholders	● Moderate
9. Other	● Substantial
10. Overall	● Substantial

COMPLIANCE**Policy**

Does the project depart from the CPF in content or in other significant respects?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Does the project require any waivers of Bank policies?

☐ Yes ☒ No

**Environmental and Social Standards Relevance Given its Context at the Time of Appraisal**

E & S Standards	Relevance
Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts	Relevant
Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure	Relevant
Labor and Working Conditions	Relevant
Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management	Relevant
Community Health and Safety	Relevant
Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement	Not Currently Relevant
Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources	Not Currently Relevant
Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities	Relevant
Cultural Heritage	Not Currently Relevant
Financial Intermediaries	Not Currently Relevant

NOTE: For further information regarding the World Bank's due diligence assessment of the Project's potential environmental and social risks and impacts, please refer to the Project's Appraisal Environmental and Social Review Summary (ESRS).

Legal Covenants**Conditions**



I. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

1. The COVID-19 pandemic is causing profound socio-economic disruptions to countries across the world. The imposed “physical distancing” required to arrest its spread has brought economies in many regions to a standstill, while health systems are struggling to cope with the dramatic increase in demand. Perhaps less noticeable, yet no less profound, is its impact on education systems. UNESCO reports that schools in 188 countries have closed—many for the remainder of the academic year—affecting 89.5 percent of all learners or 1.5 billion persons worldwide. Immediate action is required to (i) ensure continuity of learning during the crisis, (ii) prepare school systems to reopen once the pandemic subsides, and (iii) be ready in case a second wave kicks in. This is particularly critical in the World Bank’s least developed client countries.

2. The COVID-19 accelerated funding window of Global Partnership for Education (GPE) presents a timely opportunity for the resource-constrained school education sector of Bangladesh. The COVID-19 pandemic is a disaster of unprecedented scale, causing massive disruption to socio-economic systems worldwide and if this situation continues unabated, it could have profound, long-term negative impacts on the country’s human capital development agenda. In this unparalleled crisis, there is severe funding gap to support the country’s education system to revert from this adverse situation. On March 31, 2020, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Board voted to create a US\$250.0 million COVID-19 Accelerated Funding Window. This window provides allocations to address the pandemic’s impact on basic education systems in 67 countries.

3. The World Bank was selected as the Grant Agent for the GPE COVID-19 Trust Fund by the Government of Bangladesh and Local Education Group (LEG)¹ on May 6, 2020. Following Bangladesh’s application submission to GPE on May 9, 2020, the GPE approved a Grant of US\$15 million under its second tranche of funding on June 15, 2020. The Bangladesh COVID-19 School Sector Response (CSSR) Project will provide the grant in the amount of US\$14,800,000² through the GPE Trust Fund.

4. The implementation period of proposed Grant will be 18 months and will close on December 31, 2021. The Grant will support the GOB’s contingency plan and fund activities to mitigate and recover from COVID-19 to enable teaching-learning to continue and the education sector to recover from school closure and be more resilient to future shocks. The CSSR Project will explicitly focus on safeguarding access and learning continuity 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, the proposed project is prepared under the condensed procedure covered by Paragraph 12 of Section III of the IPF Policy of the World Bank.³

A. Country Context

5. Bangladesh has made rapid social and economic progress in recent decades, reaching lower-middle income status by 2015. Gross domestic product (GDP) growth has averaged close to 6 percent annually since 2000 and, according to

¹ LEG comprises of civil society, international NGOs, development partners and GoB.

² After deducting Grant Agent supervision costs.

³ Projects in Situation of Urgent Need of Assistance or Capacity Constraints on the ground of “urgent need of assistance because of a natural or man-made disaster or conflict”.



official estimates, accelerated to over 8 percent in FY19. Strong labor market gains contributed to a sharp decline in poverty, with the national poverty rate falling from 48.9 to 24.3 percent between 2000 and 2016, while extreme poverty declined from 34.3 to 12.9 percent.⁴ However, the pace of poverty reduction has slowed in recent years even as growth accelerated, particularly in urban areas and in the west of the country. Similarly, the progress on shared prosperity slowed between 2010 and 2016 after a decade of improvements, with annual consumption growth of the bottom 40 percent trailing that of the overall population (1.2 versus 1.6 percent). Bangladesh entered the COVID-19 crisis with a relatively strong macroeconomic position. Garment exports and remittances narrowed the external deficit in recent years and international reserves were adequate at the end of April 2020 at US\$32.9 billion, equivalent to six months of imports. While tax collections are amongst the lowest in the world, under-execution of the budget has contained the fiscal deficit, which has been below 5 percent of GDP since FY01. As a result, public debt is low and stood at 33.7 percent of GDP at the end of FY19. A key economic vulnerability is in the banking sector where the non-performing loan (NPL) ratio is high at 9.3 percent of outstanding loans in December 2019, and is underestimated considering significant under-provisioning, regulatory forbearance, and gaps in the legal framework.

6. Growth declined sharply as the COVID-19 pandemic brought about major disruptions to economic activity. In the first half of FY20 (July 2019 to December 2019), growth decelerated as slower global trade and deteriorating external competitiveness lowered exports and tighter access to finance constrained private investment growth. With declining ready-made garment (RMG) orders, exports declined by 5.8 percent (y-o-y) during this period. A sharp contraction in capital goods imports (3.4 percent, y-o-y) suggests private investment also declined. Growth during the first half of the year was primarily supported by remittance-fueled private consumption. The initial phase of the pandemic in early 2020 disrupted the supply of intermediate goods from China, reducing manufacturing output. As the pandemic intensified abroad, export orders from Europe and the United States declined precipitously and an estimated US\$3.2 billion in RMG orders were cancelled or suspended.⁵ The government implemented a national shutdown from March 26 to May 30, 2020 to control an accelerating domestic outbreak of the virus. Control measures resulted in a sudden stop of many components of the service and industrial sectors. Remittance inflows declined by 23.6 percent year-over-year in April 2020 and exports declined by 82.9 percent in the same period. In FY19, inflation remained modest at an average of 5.5 percent, primarily driven by a rise in non-food prices. Demand for food surged with precautionary purchases ahead of the national lockdown but has eased more recently as government food distribution programs were implemented. Overall inflation reached 5.4 percent y-o-y by the end of May 2020.

7. COVID-19 has darkened the economic outlook through domestic economic disruptions, declining exports and remittances, and rising stress in the financial sector. FY20 GDP growth is projected in a range between 1.6 percent and a downside scenario of 1.0 percent. The downside forecast is based on a situation in which (i) lockdown measures are extended and mobility remains significantly constrained and (ii) the global outlook deteriorates further. In FY21, growth is projected between 1.0 and -3.0 percent. In the downside scenario, a second round of infections and a prolonged global recession would result in the realization of some contingent liabilities, especially from the financial sector. The extended national shutdown is likely to depress economic activity across all sectors in the last quarter of FY20, and varying levels of control measures are likely to continue in FY21. Private consumption, the main engine of growth, is expected to slow and declining remittance inflows reduce household income. The unprecedented uncertainties related to COVID-19 are likely to further dampen private investment. The decline in exports is expected to persist, as developed market recessions

⁴ Household Income and Expenditure Survey, 2000/01 through 2016/17.

⁵ Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), as of May 22, 2020.



depress demand for ready-made garments, Bangladesh's primary export. A shortage of intermediate inputs is expected to lower industrial production, while labor shortages could adversely impact all sectors. Transportation disruptions are expected to dampen agricultural growth, particularly production of perishable products like dairy, poultry, and vegetables. The recovery is expected to be very gradual, with ongoing economic disruptions and increasing fragilities in the banking system. In the medium term, a gradual recovery in growth is expected, with some increase in export demand and higher public spending.

8. Bangladesh is extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The Global Climate Risk Index ranks Bangladesh as the world's seventh most affected country over the period 1999-2018.⁶ Rising temperatures leading to more intense and unpredictable rainfalls during the monsoon season and a higher probability of catastrophic cyclones are expected to result in increased tidal inundation. It is estimated that a one-meter rise in sea levels would submerge 18 percent of arable land in coastal areas⁷. Recent studies estimate that by 2050 Bangladesh could have 13.3 million internal climate migrants.⁸ Additional rural-urban migration would have significant consequences for air and water pollution and unsustainable consumption of natural resources, while putting additional pressure on urban labor markets. Addressing climate risks is increasingly becoming urgent to ensure sustainable economic development of the country.

9. Bangladesh faces significant challenges with human capital formation, which the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic will only exacerbate. According to pre-pandemic estimates for Human Capital Index by the World Bank, a child born in Bangladesh today will be 48 percent as productive when she grows up as she could be if she enjoyed complete education and full health. Part of this lost productivity comes from low learning. Nearly 4.5 years of education are lost on average due to low levels of learning. And despite its recent onset, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in total school closures and already caused significant socio-economic disruption to families that will impact education outcomes in the future.

B. Sectoral and Institutional Context

10. Bangladesh has a large and complex education system involving two ministries, several line agencies and varied provider⁹. The education system has around 34.6 million students: 3.79 million in pre-primary; 16.3 million in primary; 10.5 million in secondary and 4 million in tertiary education¹⁰. There are 685,400 teachers at pre-primary and primary level in 134,147 primary schools; and around 357,000 teachers in 20,465 secondary schools.¹¹ There are two ministries managing education—the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME), which covers one of the largest primary education systems of the world (pre-primary and grades 1–5), non-formal education, and literacy; and the Ministry of Education (MoE), which is mandated to oversee secondary education (grades 6–12), technical and vocational education and training (TVET), higher education, and religious education. Both ministries operate through two directorates for primary and secondary education service delivery: Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) under MoPME and Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) under Secondary and Higher Education Division (SHED) of

⁶ Germanwatch (2020) *Global Climate Risk Index 2020*

⁷ UNFCCC (2007) *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*

⁸ World Bank (2018) *Groundswell: Preparing for Internal Climate Migration*

⁹ There are 13 types of providers in primary education; 10 examination boards at the secondary level; and about 98 percent of secondary institutions are private, mostly supported through public subsidies)

¹⁰ Annual Primary School Census 2019; BANBEIS, 2019

¹¹ Among the primary schools, around 75,345 are government schools which account for nearly 77 percent of total primary enrollments (ASPR, 2019).



MoE. Furthermore, the MoE has two divisions – the Secondary and Higher Education Division (SHED) which oversees policy for secondary and higher education and the Technical and Madrasah Education Division (TMED) which oversees the policy for TVET and religious education.

11. Bangladesh made impressive gains in ensuring equitable access to basic education and gender parity. Net enrolment rate (NER) at the primary level increased from 94.8 percent in 2010 to 97.9 percent in 2018 while NER at the secondary level increased from 49.5 percent in 2010 to 69.4 percent in 2018.¹² Bangladesh has also achieved gender parity in primary and secondary education. Disparity in access across income groups has also declined. Further, access to preprimary education (PPE) has steadily improved —the percentage of grade 1 entrants who have completed at least one year of PPE increased from 42.3 percent in 2010 to 80 percent in 2018.¹³ Progress in education quality is also visible. Key achievements include the introduction of a competency-based curriculum at the primary level, timely delivery of textbooks, and increased professional development training for schoolteachers. The Primary Education Completion Examination (PECE) has been progressively transformed to assess competencies rather than content recall. The GoB has introduced and implemented four rounds of National Students Assessments (NSA) in primary education and two rounds of Learning Assessment of Secondary Institutions (LASI) in secondary education providing critical information on the education system's performance in achieving student learning outcomes.

12. However, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Bangladesh was grappling with issues of out-of-school children (OOSC) and low and unequal learning outcomes. Equity issues remain with pockets of OOSC in hard-to-reach areas, such as urban slums, hill tracts and hoar areas. Around seven million children and adolescents (80 percent in rural areas) aged between 6-16 years old were out-of-school in 2016¹⁴. Furthermore, learning levels are low and unequal as majority of school children are not reaching their grade level competencies. The latest National Student Assessments show that more than 50 percent of Grade 5 students did not achieve grade level proficiency in Bangla and Math while 26 percent and 58 percent of Grade 3 students did not achieve grade level proficiency in Bangla and Math respectively¹⁵. At the Grade 8 level, competencies in English and Mathematics are 44 percent and 35 percent, respectively. There are large differences among sub-populations: student from well-off and urban areas do better than those from poorer families and rural areas.¹⁶

13. COVID-19 pandemic and its impact will exacerbate the situation and deepen the learning crisis of Bangladesh. Globally, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to more than 1.6 billion children and youth to be out of school in 161 countries due to school closures. This is close to 85 percent of the world's enrolled students.¹⁷ In Bangladesh, learning activities of around 38.6 million students have come to halt due to the pandemic. With the on-set of the COVID-19 pandemic, nationwide school closures were declared on March 17, 2020 and are expected to continue till September 2020.¹⁸ This also led to suspension of the first term examination of all primary schools of the country, while the Higher Secondary School

¹²Annual Primary School Census, 2018 for primary and BANBEIS, 2018 for secondary statistics.

¹³ Annual Primary School Census, 2018.

¹⁴Household Income Expenditure Survey (HIES), 2016-17. According to latest MICS, 13.95% of children aged 6-16 are OOSC, and only 35% of them was female.

¹⁵ Statistics for primary are from the National Student Assessment 2017 conducted by MoPME/DPE; statistics for secondary are from the LASI, 2015 conducted by MoE/DSHE.

¹⁶Statistics for primary are from the National Student Assessment 2017; statistics for secondary are from the World Bank 2018.

¹⁷<https://www.worldbank.org/en/data/interactive/2020/03/24/world-bank-education-and-covid-19>.

¹⁸ All education institutions, including public and private education institutions (schools, colleges, universities etc.) in Bangladesh.



Certificate (HSC) Examination (Grade 12/equivalent terminal exam) has been postponed for the academic year. In addition, the pandemic will almost certainly cause a substantial economic recession that will continue long after schools resume. Together these factors are likely to deepen the learning crisis and exacerbate existing inequalities. The potential impacts of the pandemic on education in Bangladesh are:

- **Potential Increase in Out-of-School Children (OOSCs):** During the current shutdown of schools, the drop-out rate in primary and secondary level is likely to increase, especially among girls and children from socio-economically disadvantaged families. Although declining in recent years, Bangladesh still experiences considerable incidence of drop-outs at both primary (around 18 percent) and secondary (around 35 percent) levels¹⁹. The estimated global economic crisis due to the pandemic and its severe impact on household income will increase drop-out rate, especially for girls and children from socio-economically disadvantaged households. Increase in school drop-out will most likely be linked to increased incidence of early marriage, adolescent fertility, and child labor.
- **Potential Learning Loss:** Long period of disengagement from school and learning activities will disrupt children's learning gains. The current situation is disrupting the planned activities of the school year and may result into complete year gap at the worst. Keeping children motivated with learning and maintaining engagement with lessons, especially among families with less educated parents, is also a challenge to ensure learning continues during this crisis.
- **Increase in learning inequality:** The most educated and wealthiest families will be better able to sustain their children's learning at home during school closures. They are more likely to have computer equipment and connectivity; space to study; books and other learning materials. They are also better equipped to help their children study. This means that when schooling restarts, disadvantaged children will find themselves even further behind their peers. This may also become a big problem for teachers when schools re-open, as they will have to deal with greater student heterogeneity within classrooms.
- **Teacher engagement and development:** Lives of teachers are also disrupted from the pandemic and school closures. Prolonged absence and disengagement from teaching and on-going professional training will affect their quality of teaching and motivation.
- **Risk to student health and safety:** In Bangladesh, government-led School Feeding Program in Poverty Prone Areas reaches over 2.7 million children per year.²⁰ As schools close, children who rely on these programs may go hungry and malnourished. Students' mental health may also suffer, due to isolation during social distancing and the traumatic effects of the crisis on families. For many students, and especially those living in fragile contexts, school can provide a (relative) haven from violence and other external threats, as well as access to services such as psychosocial support. With the closure of schools, children may be more exposed to gender-based and other violence, including at home.
- **Psychosocial issues for parents and teachers:** Prolonged inactivity from productive life due to pandemic and shutdown, stress and trauma caused by potential personal and economic loss and unprecedented uncertainty in

¹⁹ World Bank. 2018. Equitable Access to Education for All in Bangladesh, Washington DC: World Bank.

²⁰ <https://www.wfp.org/news/government-bangladesh-expands-school-meals-programme>.



this crisis period are likely to affect mental health of parents and teachers and may cause psychosocial issues during and post pandemic.

14. **Ongoing COVID-19 response efforts by the Government of Bangladesh in education sector.** The GoB has taken some quick initiatives to ensure that learning continues. Both MoPME and MoE have started leveraging remote learning opportunities through pre-recorded TV broadcasts and online platforms. MoPME has established working groups to develop learning content and roll out lessons through four platforms: Electronic Media Platform, Mobile Platform, Radio Platform and Internet Platform. Government, private and NGO entities are working together in each working group to produce and facilitate remote learning contents to reach maximum number of students²¹. However, at least 70 percent of the contents for tele-broadcasting is yet to be developed. For radio and mobile platform, the GoB is yet to develop content²². There is a huge financing and technical expertise demand to develop high quality and inclusive remote learning content and make the system functional across the four platforms. Additionally, the GoB is awaiting approval of a policy to provide primary school students with increased stipend amount for three months during the pandemic. The government has also decided to provide financial assistance to 6,959 Qawmi madrasas (religious schools) across the country. As the initiatives await approval and expansion, the GoB is intensively using media campaigns to keep students engaged and help to reduce the risk of dropout.

15. **Despite these efforts, there remains critical challenges especially in terms of coverage.** The major challenges for the basic education sector of Bangladesh are:

- **Reaching whole student population:** Reaching all school-going children from all socio-economic backgrounds is a key challenge. According to the latest Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey 2019, around 56 percent households of the country have access to television while it is a staggering 0.6 percent for radio. Only 5.6 percent households of the country have access to a computer and 37.6 percent households have access to internet. Access to mobile phones at household level is at a promising 95 percent. In this scenario, even after rolling out all four platforms of distant learning mechanisms, a significant segment of the student population will be out of reach and disengaged with learning activities as internet cannot be accessed from most of the mobile phones.

- **Low tech environment in school education sector:** In Bangladesh, the higher education sector is familiar with some form of digital activities. But the basic education system (preprimary to Grade 10) function on a low tech environment, where teachers and students are not accustomed in using digital platforms for teaching learning. Producing digital content and accessing it will be more difficult and challenging for early grade teachers and students. Moreover, young children require assistance and motivation to be engaged in distant learning activities which is an added challenge for households with less educated parents.

- **Resource constraints:** Currently, Bangladesh does not have the financial and technical resources for development of comprehensive digital infrastructure and digital literacy programs for resilience building of the school system. This makes effective and inclusive remote learning challenging, especially for reaching the whole student and teacher population.

²¹ UNICEF, a2i, BRAC, Save the Children, JAGGO Foundation, Light of Hope, Grameen Phone, Plan International, Alokito Hriday Foundation, Spice FM, BNNRC, Radio71, SACMID.

²² Based on administrative data on the latest number of remote learning contents produced from UNICEF.



16. Maintaining equitable access to learning resources is important to reduce expected learning gaps associated with student socio-economic profile and the consequent digital divide. In the short term, a combination of technologies needs to be utilized; and in the medium term, further resources will need to be devoted to accelerating digital development in Bangladesh. In country contexts with limited technological infrastructure, continued use of offline remote learning models may represent the best and only option. Given the variation in household access to the different types of technologies, maintaining equitable access to learning resources using alternative modalities will be important to reduce expected learning gaps. The expansion in Bangladeshi household access to technology, especially mobile phones, TV, radio and internet make these viable options for distance and interactive learning modalities in the long run.

17. **The Government's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan for Education Sector:** The GoB has prepared a COVID-19 response and recovery for plan for education that was developed with the leadership of the MoPME and MoE and in consultation with the Local Education Group (LEG). The Plan was widely consulted with government line agencies involved in education and the LEG. This Plan focuses on the learning discontinuation and its associated challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic based on a rapid situation analysis. To address the unprecedented challenges in basic education sector and ensure learning continues, the Plan conceptualized a three-phase response focusing on immediate, medium term and long term actions. The GoB expects to mitigate risks and safeguard achievements in the basic education sector from the COVID-19 crises through a set of time-bound actions in the Plan. The required interventions envisioned in this Plan aim to build on and complement the existing infrastructure and activities of two existing GoB programs in basic education – the Fourth Primary Education Development Program (PEDP4) and the Secondary Education Development Program (SEDP). While these two programs cater to the whole basic education sector of the country, the GoB is seeking Technical Assistance (TA) from Development Partners (DP) to implement its COVID-19 Plan, focusing on developing and strengthening its remote learning system, communication and outreach, and system resilience building. The Plan will be financed by Government of Bangladesh and Development Partners' contribution with necessary Technical Assistance. The Plan is publicly available on the MoPME's website (<https://mopme.gov.bd/>).

C. Relevance to Higher Level Objectives

18. The proposed Project is fully aligned with the World Bank Group's Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Bangladesh, FY2016–2021. The CPF Objective 2.1 is 'improved equity in access and quality of education'. The CPF recognizes that the World Bank is well placed to tackle reforms aimed at improving the quality of education and states that support to education will continue to bring disadvantaged children to education and improve learning quality. The interventions will also compliment the CPF pillar to "increase resilience of population to disasters". The proposed project is also aligned with GoB's National Education Policy (NEP) 2010 as it reflects a clear focus on addressing the most pressing challenge to universal basic education— "low and uneven learning outcomes" with a focus on OOSC/drop-out prone children in vulnerable population pockets, as well as, remains aligned with current Seventh Five-Year Plan (2016-2020)²³. The proposed interventions are aligned with the National Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID-19.

19. The proposed project is squarely aligned with the Government's COVID-19 response for education and GPE's goals for the COVID-19 Accelerated Funding Window. The Plan was developed with the leadership of the MoPME and MoE and consulted widely with government line agencies involved in education and the Local Education Group. The proposed

²³ The 7th Five Year Plan is which the national economic development plan for Bangladesh.



project, guided by the Government's Plan, fully meets the GPE eligibility criteria for this window as it will "enable learning to continue and education systems to recover from school closures" with a focus on the most vulnerable. Aligned with the GPE objectives, the proposed Project will support activities that mitigate risks and safeguard the gains achieved in access and learning in basic school system with a broader focus on the recovery phase.

20. The proposed Project will complement and align with the Government's PEDP4 in primary education and the SEDP in secondary education. The activities supported by the GPE funds will build institutional capacity, mainstream the standards, guidelines and ensure financial sustainability of the activities through the GoB Response plan and through links with both education programs (Annex 4 for details). The World Bank is uniquely positioned to link the two programs with the GPE COVID-19 response project as it contributes through its results-based financing operations, namely the Quality Learning for All Program (QLEAP, P162619) under PEDP4, as well as to the Transforming Secondary Education for Results Operation (TSER, P160943) under the SEDP.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

21. The proposed Project has triggered Paragraph 12, section III of World Bank's Investment Project Financing Policy that applies to projects in urgent need of assistance and provides certain exceptions to standard policy requirements. Bangladesh meets the definition of a country experiencing an urgent need of assistance as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the urgency to prevent learning loss during school closures by keeping children engaged in learning through providing distance learning programs, digital content, literacy and numeracy materials, as well as conducting communication campaigns to prevent dropouts in remote areas, focusing on children in the bottom quintiles, the application of Paragraph 12 of Section III of the IPF Policy to the Project will facilitate the World Bank's rapid actions in support of the Borrower's immediate response and recovery efforts.

A. Project Development Objective

PDO Statement

22. 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.

PDO Level Indicators

PDO Level Indicators. The progress towards achieving the PDOs will be measured by the following indicators:

- I. **Response.** Number (and % of children in the relevant age-group in the program area) of children supported with inclusive distance learning programs (disaggregated by gender)
- II. **Recovery.** Number (and %) of children previously enrolled in grant-supported pre-primary and primary level government schools who immediately return to schools once schools reopen



III. **Resilience.** Remote learning system integrated into the basic education school system

23. The proposed Project will use the Investment Project Financing (IPF) instrument. The Project will be implemented for two years (2020-2022), with the Grant to be completed over 18-months followed by six month for project completion evaluation. The Project interventions will be implemented through three key components to achieve the PDO: Component 1: Engaging in Systemic Response; Component 2: Education System Recovery; and Component 3: Building System Resilience. Project Management will be implemented through Component 4: ...

24. The Bangladesh COVID-19 School Sector Response (CSSR) Project will support the short- and medium-term response and recovery needs under the COVID-19 pandemic, while establishing the technical and institutional capacity to build back a stronger and more resilient education system. The three main components aim to support the Bangladesh basic school system to (1) **Respond** to the urgent crisis; (2) **Recovery** once schools reopen; and (3) building **Resilience** to respond to future crises. All activities will be provided through technical assistance services (TA). All three components can start concurrently and will complement each other.

Component 1: Engaging in Systemic Response (US\$3.46 million)

25. This component aims to provide technical assistance to MoPME and the Secondary and Higher Education Division (SHED) of the MoE to implement immediate response interventions during the first six (06) months of the project. While the activities planned under the Response component will be carried out intensively during the first phase, these are expected to continue on throughout the recovery phase to contribute to the ultimate goal of achieving system resilience building. Under the Response component, there are three sub-components focusing on content development and dissemination for remote learning systems, communications and outreach, and development of school reopening plan.

26. Expected Outputs from Component 1: (i) remote learning resources/contents; (ii) dissemination plan and technical expertise which operationalize all four remote learning platforms; (iii) communication campaigns; (iv) safe school re-opening plan and (v) safe school re-opening readiness assessment.

Sub-component 1.1: Develop and Disseminate Content to Prevent Learning Loss (US\$3.01 million)

27. This sub-component will focus on providing technical assistance to MoPME and SHED of MoE to strengthen the existing remote learning system by (i) *Making it more attractive* through enriched content; (ii) *Making it interactive* by encouraging teachers to use the tv and radio broadcasts of lessons interactively through phone calls, texts and mail to students; and (iii) *Increasing coverage through outreach and awareness campaign*. The following activities will be supported:

(i) **Content Development:** The GPE fund will strengthen the Government's existing Remote Learning System (RLS) through developing additional content to cover gaps in contents at preprimary, primary and secondary levels²⁴. The CSSR will support making remote learning contents appropriate, attractive and customized for the four remote learning platforms of tv (tele), radio, mobile and online broadcasting and inclusive for the most vulnerable population

²⁴ This includes preprimary, primary (Grade 1-5) and secondary level (Grade 6-10). Some of the subject content will be common for students in the religious streams, and expected to also benefit them.



groups. The project will support the development and delivery of learning content for priority subject areas for the whole academic year across all four digital platforms. The CSSR project will support the following priority subjects: (a) preprimary lessons and Bangla, English and Science from Grade 1-5²⁵; (b) English, Bangla, General Math, General Science for Grade 6-10. The priority subjects were selected based on: (i) high importance for safeguarding grade level numeracy and literacy competencies which are foundational for learning recovery; (ii) subject areas which would cover maximum student needs; and (iii) consultation with Government and LEG. The alignment of the digital learning contents with national curriculum will be prioritized to ensure meeting learning objectives of different grades while developing contents in shortest possible time to be rolled out amid the shutdown. This will be done through close collaboration and engagement with the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), which is responsible for developing and revising the national curriculum from preprimary to higher secondary levels as well as developing and refining textbooks and other teaching learning materials based on the national curriculum.

(ii) In addition, special focus will be given to ensure learning continues inclusively, especially for children who do not have access to digital remote learning and those from marginalized groups and with disabilities. The project will support the development and production of learning materials and packages, while the Government will support the distribution of these packages through local education offices. The learning packages will be distributed to 150,000 primary grade students from Chittagong Hill Tracts, tea gardens, wetlands, sandbars and children with disabilities, who do not have access to digital remote learning systems.

(iii) **Content Dissemination:** The learning contents will be disseminated through the remote platform to ensure that it is fully functional by the end of the project²⁶. The tele-broadcasting will serve as the master platform and it will serve as the basis of the structure, content and sequencing of programs through the other three (radio, mobile and online) platforms. A rapid assessment of the remote learning environment for different socio-economic levels will inform the remote learning system on: (i) optimizing the dissemination process through the multi-modal platform approach and (ii) options for scaling up during the recovery period, and (iii) how to integrate remote learning into the national school education system. Equity and inclusion considerations will be central to the dissemination design, so that students with poor access are not neglected. Mass awareness building on the learning contents will be part of the dissemination plan to ensure better engagement, coverage and inclusiveness. The capacity of the remote learning delivery system will be enhanced through necessary upgradation to reach more children.

28. The development of digital contents for the Remote Learning System, and its eventually integration into the basic education system also supports Bangladesh's response to climate change. With the integration of RLS in regular education delivery and key stakeholders (teachers, students, parents) adapt to using digital learning tools, it is expected to shift the education system toward e-learning. This would reduce use of paper and supplementary materials in regular teaching learning in the long term, thus supporting climate change resilience building within the basic education delivery system. Moreover, the digital contents developed under the RLS will also include lessons on climate change and adaptation as part of the science curriculum to help build awareness and adaptive capacity on climate change issues in Bangladesh.

²⁵ It is to be noted that Mathematics will be covered by JICA in coordination with CSSR and delivered through CSSR for Grade 1-5

²⁶ At present, only the tele platform is providing classes while some content is available through online platforms.



Sub-component 1.2: Communication and Outreach (US\$0.38 million)

29. This sub-component will focus on inclusive communication and public awareness campaign, reaching out to students, parents, teachers and communities about the importance of learning continuity, health and safety and other pertaining issues amidst shutdown. Technical assistance will be provided for following activities:

- i. **Protecting health and safety:** This activity will expand the public awareness campaign including health and education messaging throughout the project period, based on the on-going gender needs assessment of the pre-COVID-19 and the during school closures. The campaign will be expanded to include tele, radio and. It will focus on promoting hygiene and COVID-19 related safety practices, education engagement and re-engagement messages (especially those targeted at girls and students at risk of dropping out), and sensitization about the socio-emotional, gender-based violence and behavioral impacts that are associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures. The contents will be sourced from existing animations/simulations appropriate for young children and their ease of understanding of COVID-19 issues, as well as new communications materials developed as needed. The broadcasting of the campaigns will be included in the daily school programs to ensure maximum outreach to targeted population. There will also be awareness content on institutional safety and mental health.
- ii. **Stay in School campaign:** The pandemic increases the risks of dropping out of education, especially for girls and in low income households. At-risk students/households will be tracked, and proactive messaging/counseling will be provided to parents to minimize the risk of dropping out, early marriage and to maintain engagement with learning through remote learning. Community awareness building plans will be rolled out to ensure re-enrollment when schools reopen using promising global practices of re-enrollment campaigns.
- iii. **Outreach and support for parents:** A toll free hotline with grade-wise and subject-based teachers will be established to provide parents with tips to support student learning during school closure and with resources to manage student physical and mental health issues. The introduction of *remote* learning for children will place a greater burden on parents to manage schooling at home. Parents are especially critical to provide a structure to the educational activities for children in early grades, even if they have reliable and inclusive access to remote learning platforms. There are existing learning resources to help guide parents and guardians that will be made available more broadly through outreach. Parental support is even more crucial for those which children with disability and the outreach will focus strongly on them to ensure an inclusive approach in outreach.

Sub-component 1.3: Development of Safe School Reopening Plan (US\$0.07 million)

30. Technical assistance will be provided through this sub-component to: (i) develop a Safe School Re-opening Plan and (ii) support safe school re-opening preparedness assessment. The following activities will be supported:

- i. **Preparing for Recovery:** TA will be provided to MoPME and SHED, MoE to develop a Safe School Re-opening Plan (SSRP) detailing the criteria and steps for school re-opening post shutdown period. The plan will work as a national framework to guide primary and secondary educational institutions on safe school reopening. In addition to phase-wise re-opening steps and measures, the plan will have flexibility allowing authorities to make informed decisions by taking into account local specific circumstances and constraints. In the immediate period after the lockdowns are lifted there could be shorter term scenarios where authorities will have to plan for a blended



mode of education provision in the medium term with some school opened and others (schools/regions/cities) in temporary lockdown with renewed short-term and localized COVID-19 outbreaks. The SSRP will also provide guidance on gradual and staggered re-openings and to schools to explore alternative ways to deliver classes (e.g., staggered shifts or alternating weeks) and group events (e.g., scaled-down ceremonies, sports events, and Parent-Teacher gatherings).

ii. Prior to school re-opening, a safe school re-opening assessment will be conducted on the preparedness of schools (including critical facilities and health protocols in place) and of local education officers, school management and other stakeholders and provide guidance toward school recovery. This sub-component will be closely coordinated with guidelines from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and also complement the World Bank supported COVID-19 emergency operation in health sector (P173757).

iii. ***Coordination with government policies and development partnership:*** The school re-opening plan will incorporate government protocols and follow guidelines from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and also complement the World Bank supported COVID-19 emergency operation in health sector. Government is expected to strengthen coordination and relevant development partners to boost their support in education sector in this emergency. Preparation towards recovery will be built on these partnerships.

Component 2: Education Systems Recovery (US\$8.06 million)

31. The objective of this component is to focus on comprehensive recovery strategies for students, teachers, and schools once schools reopen while preparing to work towards building resilience. This component aims to provide technical assistance to MoPME to implement medium term recovery interventions during the first twelve (12) months of the project while the ongoing PEDP4 will continue to support the long-term plan. In case of SHED/MoE, the Recovery phase is agreed to be carried out through its ongoing Secondary Education Development Program²⁷.

32. **Expected outputs from Recovery component:** (i) safe schools re-opened and school health protocols in place; (ii) maximum re-enrollment at pre-primary and primary level; (iii) learning loss assessment and recovery lesson plans; (iv) teachers' professional development program; and (v) tools to ensure mental health issues post-shutdown.

Sub-component 2.1: Support Implementation of Safe School Re-Opening Plan (US\$7.2 million)

33. This sub-component will support MoPME to implement the safe school re-opening plan targeting 20,000 government primary schools. Specifically, the activity will help to ensure that school sanitation and health protocols are implemented and monitored through strengthened local education administration and community-based School Management Committees. Prior to re-opening schools for classroom learning, proper sanitization of schools, critical facilities and safety protocols need to be in place. Technical assistance will be provided to MoPME to engage a specialized agency or service provider with required technical expertise to implement the readiness measures including sanitization

²⁷ The SEDP is supported by the World Bank's Transforming Secondary Education for Results (TSER) program. The GPE CSSR will complement and align efforts of the TSER, which will play an expanded role to meet the financial and technical needs of secondary education under SHED, MoE under this COVID-19 crises. Similarly, GPE CSSR will complement and align efforts of the Bank's primary education program Quality Learning for all Program (QLEAP), which will support any financial and technical gaps for preprimary and education MoPME in managing and recovering from the COVID-19 crises.



of schools, provision of health kits, and training on health safety protocols (as guided by the SSRP) to local education administrators, school management and other stakeholders. The safe school re-opening training will also be delivered through digital and printed materials to reach and benefit as many school management, local education administrators and other stakeholders. This subcomponent will also inform and complement the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) interventions planned under the PEDP4 ensuring that re-opened school have the critical facilities in place, including access to sanitation, hygiene, clean water and hand washing facilities to maintain student and teacher health and avoid potential viral infections. The local education administration, school management committees, community leaders and the specialized firm will support continuous monitoring of re-opened school to ensure safety measures are in place.

Sub-component 2.2: Support Re-enrollment of pre-primary and primary students (US\$0.03 million)

34. This sub-component will focus on tracking and bringing back all the students back to school to resume classroom learning. Re-enrollment interventions will be supported through following activities: (i) support tracking and monitoring children in communities at risk of dropping out and (ii) engaging in community outreach to address the most important bottlenecks of re-enrollment and getting back all children to school. TA will be provided to design and deploy targeted re-enrollment campaigns, such as participatory community action and awareness-raising ensuring safety protocols. There will be a special focus on girls' re-enrollment as they are at a higher risk of not getting back to school on time or at all.

Sub-component 2.3: Support for Assessment and Learning Recovery (US\$0.83 million)

35. This sub-component will focus on enabling students and teachers a swift transition from remote learning to classroom activities through assessing and recovering learning loss occurred during shutdown.

i. **Assess learning loss and ensure back to school learning:** The project will support the assessment of students' learning level post-COVID-19 using adaptive formative assessments. Through this activity, TA will be provided to conduct formative assessments and identify learning lag and based on these assessments, inform remedial programs to mitigate learning losses and prevent exacerbation of learning inequality. The activity will be conducted based at least one school per school cluster, focusing especially for schools located in socio-economically disadvantaged and hard to reach areas. The activity will also involve local education officers and teachers to help build their classroom formative assessment skills. The TA will also help develop school-based learning loss recovery plans. This will include special recovery classes and curtailing lesson plan and flexible assessments to prevent loss of academic year depending on the length of the shutdown. There will be a need to review and update the primary education curriculum and high-stake primary examinations to adjust for the COVID-19 impacts on student learning and preparedness for these tests.

ii. **Ensure teaching at the right level:** This activity will finance the design and delivery of a teacher professional program to address learning gaps from the disruption of education and improve teachers' skills for remote learning environment. Technical assistance will be provided to develop and deliver: (i) a practical short-term teacher training design which will focus on formative and summative assessment practices and remedial education. An initial training of a targeted number of teachers in priority subject areas (Bangla, English and Math) will be included under the project; and (ii) a short term teacher training on distance learning strategies to better equip teachers on managing quality education delivery for remote learning environment. The design of standards, content, and delivery mode for the teacher training programs will be supported by the project. The lessons learned from this training will inform the strategy for expansion of these programs, which will then be implemented at a larger scale through support from the



PEDP4 component on Continuous Professional Development, along with the production of expanded teaching and learning materials.

iii. **Mental health services:** Support will be provided for schoolteachers through counseling and peer-networks to address potential burnout issues caused by long disengagement with school activities. Counseling services are needed not only for those directly affected by the pandemic, but also for children that may have developed anxieties and depression by living through the terrifying events. Tools will be developed to enable teachers to identify and support students through counseling to guide them back to normal academic routine.

Component 3: Building System Resilience (US\$ 1.97 million)

36. The Resilience component will focus on enabling the school system under MoPME and SHED of MoE to be better prepared to react and recover from future shocks. This set of interventions aim to improve the system's resilience in the long term. The implementation of some of the previous activities from Response and Recovery phases will be continued and mainstreamed through this component in preparation of a protracted pandemic or future crises.

37. **Expected outputs:** (i) system level remote learning integration plan; (ii) core group of teachers trained for remote education delivery; and (iii) emergency operation guidelines for future shocks

Sub-component 3.1: Continue and Integrate Remote Learning (US\$1.96 million)

38. This sub-component will focus on integrating remote learning; early-warning systems for at-risk students; and teaching-at-the right level into than national education system. The activities include (i) the continuation of remote learning content development by grade levels; (ii) developing low cost remote learning packages; and (iii) ensuring a sustainability plan for the four remote learning platforms. As part of system resilience development, the teacher training program on distance learning strategies will target around 500 teachers from primary government schools and 500 teachers of public funded secondary schools to develop their skills and strategies for quality education delivery through inclusive remote learning system.

Sub-component 3.2: Develop Emergency Operation Procedure (US\$0.01 million)

39. This subcomponent will support development of a strategy and standard operating procedures for education service-delivery during emergencies and periods of extended school closures. This activity aims to ensure the basic education sector can quickly respond to future crises, including those from health crises, climate change, and natural disasters, among others to which the country is prone. These will include emergency policy and procedures for continued learning and certification, remedial learning, attention to health and safety of students and staff, professional development for teachers, streamlined curriculum, leveraging the private sector, and mental and psychological support readiness. The subcomponent will also support creation of an emergency delivery unit with representation from government, private sector, NGOs engaged in education delivery to face any kind of emergency or launch a national effort that requires extended coordination. As needed, the delivery unit could call in guidance and support from private providers who are proven stakeholders that can provide immediate content and resources in an emergency setting.



Component 4: Project Management, Results Monitoring and Communication (US\$1.06 million)

40. The objective of this component is to support project management and build results monitoring and evaluation capability. Under this component, the Project will create a grievance redress mechanism (GRM), which covers all aspects of the project during implementation. In addition to providing TA and implementation support, this component will support project operating costs and will support the monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the Project.

41. **Lending Instrument, Project Costs, and Financing:** The total budgetary requirements to implement the COVID-19 School Sector Response Project will be USD 14.80 million grant over an 18-month implementation period (2020–2021)²⁸, fully funded under the GPE COVID-19 Accelerated Funding window, as shown in the following table.

Component	Total (in US\$ million)	Coverage
Component 1: Response	3.46	MoPME and SHED/MoE
Component 2: Recovery	8.06	MoPME
Component 3: Resilience	1.97	MoPME and SHED/MoE
Component 4: Project Management	1.06	
Total	14.6	

Note: Remaining amount is kept as contingency

C. Project Beneficiaries

42. The scope of this Project will be nationwide, covering all divisions of the country. The direct beneficiaries of this Project will be: (i) students of pre-primary (around 3.7 million), primary level (around 17.3 million) and secondary students (13 million) of Bangladesh²⁹; (ii) schoolteachers (around 685,400 pre-primary and primary teachers and 357,000 secondary teachers³⁰) and (iii) parents. Central and local level administration related to school service delivery system will also be benefitted through system level capacity building activities. There will be indirect beneficiaries from the Project, including the previous out-of-school children population, illiterate adults, and content developers, and it will help reduce the fiscal burden on Government for provision of resources for brick and mortar investments. While the Project covers the entire country, particular focus will be given to vulnerable populations including girls and students from socio-economically disadvantaged and remote areas of the country.

D. Results Chain

43. The Theory of Change of the proposed Project is illustrated in Figure 1. It is based on the premise of responding to COVID-19 and getting children safely back to school, while at the same time building resilience of the basic school education system to reduce the impact of the current and future external shocks on the education system. Inputs and activities are centered on high quality and widely accessible remote learning contents, implementing health and

²⁸ The project closing date will be June 2022, accounting for an additional six months for project completion evaluation. The US\$ 200,000 is excluded from total Grant allocation as the Grant Agent supervision budget as per GPE guidelines.

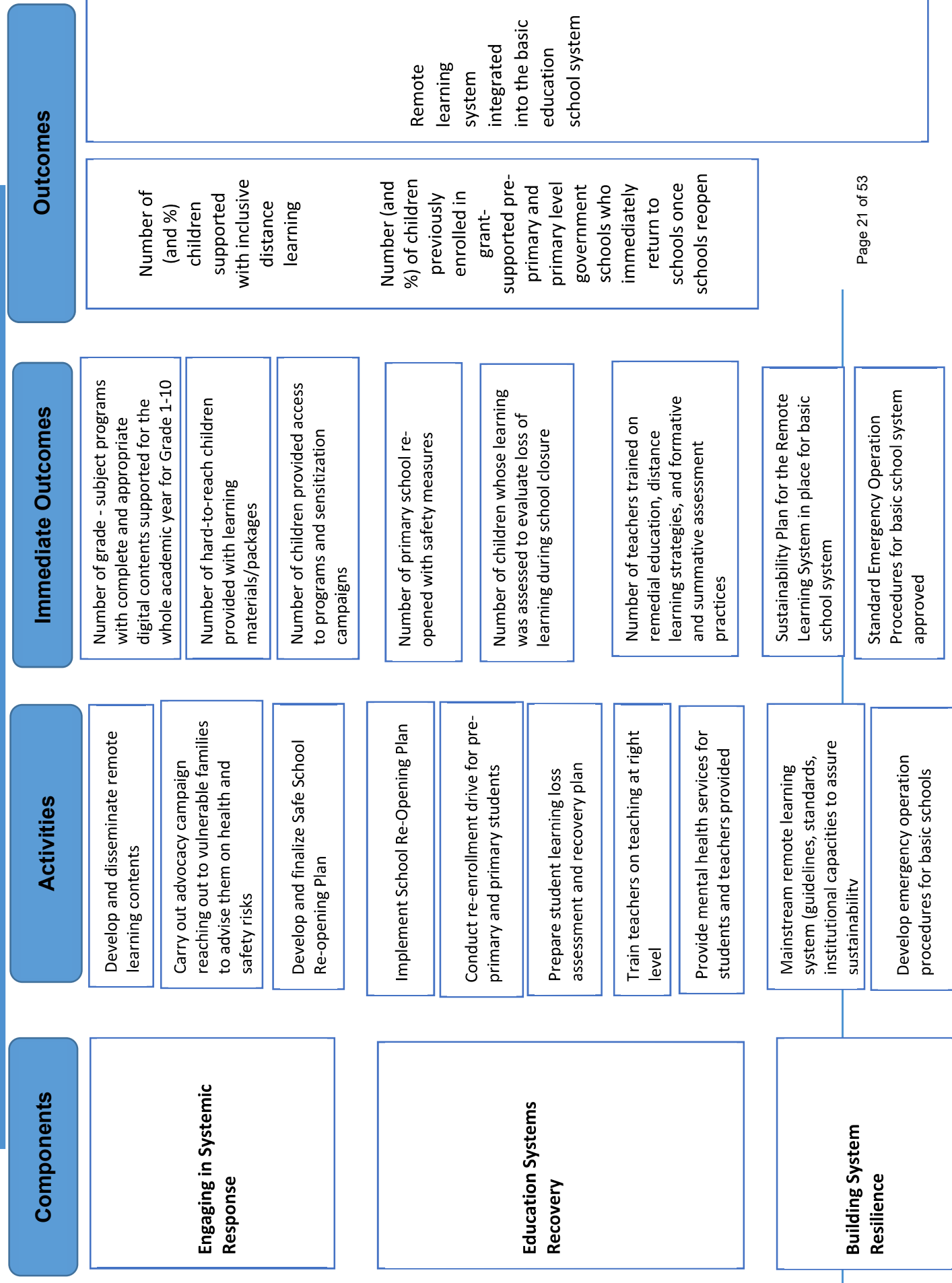
²⁹ In Bangladesh, primary covers Grade 1-5 while secondary covers Grade 6-10. Hence, the Project will cover preprimary to Grade 10.

³⁰ APSC, 2018; BANBEIS, 2018.



education communication campaigns, supporting teachers, students and parents, helping primary schools re-open safely and conducting teacher training and learning assessment and preparing and implementing emergency plans. Finally, strengthened central and local education institutions, improved policies, and better coordination could reasonably be expected to increase the education system's institutional capacity to reduce the impact of external shocks and maintain equitable access to quality education.

THEORY OF CHANGE FOR BANGLADESH COVID 19 SCHOOL SECTOR RESPONSE PROJECT





E. Rationale for World Bank Involvement and Role of Partners

44. The World Bank is a long-standing and trusted partner of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) within the education sector. The World Bank, through previous and current education projects in Bangladesh, enjoys a comparative advantage in leading education-sector dialogue and can play a leadership role by convening other international partners' support. Currently, the World Bank is supporting education in Bangladesh through four lending operations in pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary education, which culminates to a portfolio of US\$1.46 billion. The World Bank adds value by providing leading technical knowledge, operational and implementation experience, and convening power in the education sector in Bangladesh. The World Bank, previously serving as GA for GPE, clearly demonstrates that it has the ability to: (i) support to formulate and implementation of education programs in Bangladesh, (ii) discharge fiduciary and administrative responsibilities and in-country experience of managing fiduciary and administrative risks relative to the scope of the grant, (iii) support capacity building of the government in implementing the education programs, and (iv) support timely application development and implementation of programs. In addition, this Project will complement and coordinate efforts of the World Bank's operations in primary and secondary education building links to the Government's programs in school education in Bangladesh.

45. **Role of Partners.** The proposed project is financed by GPE which is by definition a Global Partnership for Education. The Government COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan was developed in close coordination with the Local Education Group. The Plan aims to align the Development Partners for concerted and coordinated efforts to respond and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. The UN agencies, including UNICEF, UNESCO and World Food Programme are also expected to support the education sector recovery through the UN Immediate Socioeconomic Response Framework, which aligns with the Government's Plan and CSSR. Bilateral partners like Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) which is also committed to support the Remote Learning System especially in Mathematics. There are also NGOs and other non-providers that are committed to adopt the new systems including BRAC.

46. The World Bank has been at the forefront of emergency education response projects around the world. In collaboration with the LEG and the education cluster, and as the current grant agent for the GPE Education Sector Implementation Grant (ESPIG), the World Bank has a comparative advantage in supporting the GoB in the design and implementation of COVID-19 accelerated funds through a cohesive and streamlined approach, coordinated and unified reporting mechanisms, and supporting donor harmonization. In line with the principles of the GPE, development partners are expected to boost their commitment to the education sector response to the emergency situation. In turn, the Government is expected to strengthen coordination among various partners and agencies responsible to delivering education services (schools, training institutions, local and central administration, providers of various education inputs.)

F. Lessons Learned and Reflected in the Project Design

47. The Project design draws heavily upon the lessons learned from the substantial World Bank-supported emergency projects, as well as analytical studies on Bangladesh's education sector and reflections on global experience relevant to Bangladesh. Experience of other countries from recent Ebola Epidemic (E.g. African countries) and current lessons from COVID-19 pandemic hit East Asian countries (e.g. China, Japan, Singapore) have been considered as good practices and adopted in proposed Project design where appropriate by context. The proposed approach also benefited from



frameworks and growing global evidence on how to reopen schools safely, including the Framework for Reopening Schools published by UNICEF, UNESCO, WFP, and the World Bank. These lessons are:

- Global evidence on distance learning point out that the key challenge is to ensure the uptake of the resources provided to students and teachers. Content development and dissemination plan should include outreach approach and reflected in communication campaign to reach the disadvantaged groups. Another lesson is the importance of involving, defining the role of, and supporting teachers for this new modality of education service delivery. For this, teaching at the right level and teacher support are key aspects of the Project design. Moreover, once schools re-open, formative assessment and tailoring academic calendar accordingly can mitigate learning loss and lead to swift recovery.
- The operational choices in the proposed Project benefit from recent analytical work carried out globally and in Bangladesh. These include the Bangladesh Education Sector Review, Bangladesh Preprimary Education Sector Review, the South Asia Ready to Learn Ready to Thrive as well as the World Development Report on Education 2018³¹. These analytical studies provide insight into the barriers to learning in school, especially for girls and other disadvantaged groups as well as the management capacity and coordination issues that exist in the school system. These insights will guide into designing and deploying suitable content and communication campaigns targeting vulnerable population pockets, drop-out prone households and early childhood education aspects.
- Important lessons are incorporated from countries like Singapore, and China who have gone through the process of staggered school re-openings. Norway is currently in the process of re-opening schools in April 2020.³² The system is adopting measures to minimize risks following re-opening. These include putting in place stricter sanitation protocols and social distancing practices within schools, more outdoor classes, dividing the day so that half the group meets early, the other meetings later, and the rest of the teaching can be done at home, reducing number of school days per week (as also seen in Singapore). Denmark is also one of the countries opening relatively early in mid-April, for children below 11 years old, strict protocols will be followed, and it is not expected that school activities will resemble those in the past³³.

III. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

A. Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

48. At the national level, a Project Steering Committee (PSC), chaired by the Secretary MoPME and co-chaired by the Secretary of SHED/MoE, will be constituted to (a) provide policy guidance to the implementing agencies; (b) approve annual development plan and review project progress; and (c) resolve implementation problems including inter-ministerial issues.

49. The overall responsibility of the proposed project implementation will lie with Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), as the lead implementing agency while Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) will support the implementation of activities with close cooperation with the DPE. A Project Implementation Committee (PIC), chaired

³¹ Studies are available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/research>

³²<https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/gradvis-apning-av-barnehager-skoler-fagskoler-hoyskoler-og-universiteter/id2697077/>

³³<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-52226763>



by the Director General, DPE, and supported by DG, DSHE will be constituted to (a) review annual development plan prepared by the GPE COVID-19 School Sector Response Project Implementation Unit and recommend for approval by the PSC; (b) monitor project implementation progress and provide implementation support; and (c) maintain strong coordination among the implementing agencies.

50. A project management and implementation unit called COVID-19 School Sector Response (CSSR) PIU will be put in place, which will be responsible for (a) planning, coordination, implementation and monitoring of project activities; (b) procurement and financial management; (c) capacity building at various level; (d) awareness campaign and communication; and (e) reporting on project progress. The project will be implemented within the parameters of the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) and the Technical Assistance Project Proposal (TAPP).

51. The CSSR PIU will be led by a Project Director who will be a senior government official at least at the rank of Joint Secretary level. In addition, the Project Director will be supported by two Deputy Project Directors; one from the DPE and another from the DSHE. They will be supported by other deputed staff and consultants, including financial management specialist(s), procurement specialist(s) and environment and social safeguard specialist(s).

52. Considering the unpredictable nature of the COVID-19 affect across the education streams and levels, there will be a need for high level policy coordination and guidance to inform decisions and ensure timely interventions. For this, an Advisory Committee, involving high level policy and decision makers of the two education ministries and Director Generals of DPE and DSHE will be formed. The CSSR will coordinate and support these high level meetings, as and when necessary.

B. Results Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements

53. The M&E section of the PIU will be responsible for monitoring, reporting, and evaluating program activities. The M&E section will develop a set of phone and online surveys, which could use a combination of phone calls and text messages to collect information for monitoring and evaluation from beneficiaries, especially during the response period. The Project will also engage broadcasting and telecommunication company data to monitor rates of take-up of remote learning content. If conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic permit data collection in person, some sample-based activities will be included. The M&E unit will also work with consultants and firms engaged for studies and evaluations planned under the CSSR. The PIU will provide project progress reports every six months to track implementation progress, which will include information on delivery of inputs, documentation of progress by activity, on fiduciary aspects, and project progress with respect to the results framework. The World Bank task team in Bangladesh will support the PIU on the resolution of day to day challenges on the ground. All reporting of Project results will be disaggregated by gender and, where to the extent possible, by geographic units.

C. Sustainability

54. The sustainability of the Project interventions will depend on the government's commitment and political will to initiate and continue with plans to support the most vulnerable target groups during and after the crisis.



55. **Government ownership and commitment to reforms.** The project is fully aligned with the Government's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan as it introduces critical initiatives to support response, recovery and resilience building of the basic education sector. Ownership and coordination from the MoPME and SHED/MoE are enhanced by the project design. The outputs of the Project are expected to be absorbed into the existing GoB program in primary and secondary education.

56. **Enhanced institutional capacity.** The Project will contribute to strengthening the planning and management capacity of the education sector at both the central, local and school levels and will boost their ability to respond to, recover from, and start building resilience to handle similar emergencies in the future. The platforms for coordination established through the Project will be particularly important in building longer term capacity and coordination for the efficient use of resources. The capacity building of teachers will also be an important aspect of enhancing system capacity to respond to the current and future emergencies and maintain learning continuity.

57. **Financial sustainability:** The financial sustainability of the project will require mainstreaming the Response Plan in Government standards, guidelines and in the education budget, and creating incentives for government agencies, service providers and schools to maintain remote learning, health and safety standards and ensuring ongoing outreach to vulnerable families.

58. **Engagement of key beneficiaries.** Sustainability is expected to be further strengthened through ensuring key beneficiaries' engagement in the design and monitoring of activities under the Project. In particular, teachers, parents and local communities will be consulted and involved in the processes to develop ownership and promote cooperation for successful implementation and sustainability of proposed activities.

IV. PROJECT APPRAISAL SUMMARY

A. Technical, Economic and Financial Analysis (if applicable)

59. The GPE supported CSSR project aims to mitigate the risks to and safeguard the PDOs of the Government's program in primary and secondary levels. The economic and financial analysis carried out for the GPE grant is based on the parameters that the results envisioned under the PEDP4 and SEDP in primary and secondary level hold in post COVID-19 timeframe. The cost-benefit analysis under the PEDP4 and SEDP analysis uses a 'counterfactual' identification approach that considers what will happen if these development programs were not in place. Expected benefits are assumed to arise from three sources: (a) increase in primary and secondary education completers with higher wages (compared to non-completers), (b) higher wage premium as a result of increased quality of education for all primary and secondary level completers, and (c) reduced wastage of public and private resources due to reduction in the number of school dropouts and repeaters. Costs include additional program costs (from GoB and DP sources) from new and enhanced interventions and private costs that include both direct household expenditures and opportunity costs of going to school.

60. Using a discount rate of 12 percent, the cost-benefit analysis shows that the present value of net benefits is positive, and the program's internal rate of return is 14 percent for primary and 18.1 percent for secondary interventions,



which are higher than the discount rate. These returns can be considered a lower bound estimate, given that positive externalities associated with enhanced education quality and equity have not been included in the analysis.

61. The proposed Project attempts to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 so that Program Development Objectives (PDO) and Key Results for both the national level primary and secondary development programs are achieved. The activities proposed here, such as remote learning system integrated into the school system and complete sets of digital contents available for the whole academic year for grades 1-10 are to minimize disruptions in schooling and ensure that children continue learning. In the absence of these contingency plans, there is risk that the reforms instituted, and gains made so far as a result of existing programs in basic education will not be sustained and losses in learning will be particularly pronounced for children from disadvantaged families and regions. Taking these factors into account, funding of this project through GPE Trust Fund is a sound investment decision.

B. Fiduciary

(i) Financial Management

62. In order to address the urgent need to respond to the COVID-19 emergency, the 'Special Considerations' accorded in paragraph 12 of the World Bank Policy, Investment Project Financing (IPF), dated November 10, 2017, "Projects in Situations of Urgent Need of Assistance or Capacity Constraints" is applied to the proposed project by deferring the FM assessment at the project preparation stage. The Bangladesh COVID-19 School Sector Response (CSSR) Project that will be implemented by the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) under the MoPME. Based on the latest assessment of the prevailing country system and fiduciary capacity of the DPE, the FM risk is rated Substantial.

63. As per the institutional arrangements for this proposed Project, the fiduciary responsibility for fund flow, accounting, financial reporting and audit of project implementation would be with the DPE which will appoint experienced Financial Management Consultants (FMCs), with qualifications acceptable to the World Bank, to lead and coordinate the FM activities under the Project. The consultant(s) will support the Project in strengthening budgeting practices, internal controls, fund reconciliations, and other relevant financial functions. The process of hiring the consultant(s) should begin before signing the financing agreement so that he/she can be onboard as soon as the project is declared effective. The Terms of Reference of the FMC will be sent to the World Bank for review and concurrence before starting the selection process. For the Remote Learning Activity under Component 1 (Sub-Component 1.1), an UN agency, UNICEF will be contracted where payments and reporting will be linked to deliverables and output.

Planning, Budgeting and fund flow

64. The Project will be included in the Budget and Accounts Classification System (BACS) as a 'scheme' for the Technical Assistance Project Proposal (TAPP) of MoPME to be determined under the operational segment for release of the allocated annual budgets to the PMU at DPE. Budget preparation and execution will take place electronically using iBAS++ and as such the budget must be released through the system in a timely manner for the PD to execute the project activities according to the budget allocation. A Designated Account (DA), in the form of Convertible Taka Special Account (CONTASA), will be opened with a nationalized commercial bank to receive the grant funds for implementation of the



relevant components of the Project. IDA funds will flow to the DA based on submission of withdrawal application, in the Client Connection, by the authorized signatory for the project. An alternative signatory arrangement will be made for submission of withdrawal application to ensure unhindered flow of funds for project execution. The disbursements/replenishment applications, to be submitted to the Bank, will be based on actual Statements of Expenditures (SOEs), incurred by the Project. The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) will be responsible to submit the disbursement/replenishment applications which can be processed, by the World Bank, as often as once per month. The Bank will disburse quarterly to UNICEF directly for the Sub-Component 1.1 against agreed budgets and periodic financial reports. DPE will use the IUFR (utilization report) from UNICEF to record the transactions in the government Integrated Budget and Accounting System (iBAS++). The iBAS++ report will be submitted by DPE to the World Bank to document the project expenditure and will be used as basis for replenishment to UNICEF.

Accounting, reporting and Audit

65. Accounting and financial reporting of the Project will be prepared using the Budget and Accounting Classification System (BACS), and it would be maintained in the integrated budgeting and accounting system (iBAS++) if iBAS++ is technically ready with users' access for this Project for accounting and financial reporting. DPE will prepare an Interim Unaudited Financial Report (IUFR) from iBAS++, in the format agreed with the World Bank, on a quarterly basis and submit to the World Bank for its review and clearance within 45 days from the end of each quarter. For reporting interim and final financial statements of UNICEF, the corporate SAP-based Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) application used in UNICEF offices globally, including Bangladesh will be used assigning unique code for the Sub-Component 1.1 and a fund code for reporting expenditure under this project distinctively. UNICEF will use the dedicated unique program code and fund code to keep accurate accounts and records in accordance with UNICEF's financial regulations and rules and in such form and detail to clearly identify all relevant charges and costs for corresponding deliverables in respect of the funds made available under the Agreement with the Government. Periodic reconciliation on utilization of UN payment against expected deliverables will be undertaken and intensified during the two quarters of closing the project to mitigate against challenges in refund of any unspent balance. In the case of the final Progress Report upon completion or early termination, a Consolidated Financial Summary on the use of funds for deliverables, offset of any paid advances, and any uncommitted balances to be refunded shall be included. The Government will consult with the World Bank and will provide UNICEF with the refund instructions if needed.

66. The project Annual Financial Statements will be submitted to the Comptroller and Auditor General's Office (C&AG) of Bangladesh within three months of the end of each fiscal year. The annual audit will be conducted by the Foreign Aided Projects Audit Department (FAPAD) under the OCAG (Office of Comptroller & Auditor General). FAPAD will express an opinion on the project financial statement in accordance with international standards of auditing and submit the report within six months of the end of the fiscal year. In addition, the auditor is required to provide a detailed management letter containing auditor's observations of the internal controls and compliance with financial covenants in the Financing Agreement. Upon request from the Government and following consultations between UNICEF and the Government, UNICEF may, subject to the UN single audit principle, furnish supplemental information or documentation to provide additional details. The Project Director (PD) will be responsible to provide clarification on possible audit observations within 30 days from the receipt of the report. The PD will also ensure resolution of the audit observation on a timely manner by no later than 90 days from the receipt of the final audit report. Resolution of audit observation may include recertification, actions and refunds of the public money under question.



67. **FM Risk Mitigation:** The following risk mitigation measures will be monitored during project implementation and the risk will be reassessed based on the actions taken.

Risks	Mitigation Measures
Delay in preparation of iBAS++ generated Annual Financial Statement (AFS) and Interim Unaudited Financial Statements (IUFR).	Relevant staff (PD, DPD, FM) to be brought under the scope of extensive training on iBAS by the Finance Division as well as ensure uninterrupted connectivity to iBAS.
Low FM capacity to ensure proper record keeping and documentation.	All FM and related fiduciary will be brought under the capacity building program.
Weak internal control function to promote accountability and to check irregular activities.	The internal audit unit under the PEDP4 will also cover this project as well.
Risk of proper safeguarding of IT assets at the PMU level.	Efficient use of the Computerized Asset Management System, wherever rolled out. Maintaining Asset Register and conducting periodic inventory of assets by the PMU.

(ii) Procurement

68. Procurement for the proposed Project will be carried out in accordance with the World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, July 2016, revised November 2017 and August 2018. Further, paragraph 12 of section III of the Investment Project Financing policy of the World Bank has been triggered, which allows to defer completion of Project Procurement Strategy for Development (PPSD) and Procurement Plan by the borrower to the project implementation stage. The triggering of paragraph 12 will allow flexibility in the use of streamlined procurement methods. The project will be subject to the World Bank's Anticorruption Guidelines, dated October 15, 2006, revised in January 2011, and as of July 1, 2016. The project will use the World Bank's Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement (STEP) to plan, record and track procurement transactions.

69. Procurement will involve mainly consulting services with a few non-consulting services and goods. Specific procurement activities will include, but not limited to, (i) development of inclusive remote learning resources/contents; (ii) content dissemination through four accessible remote learning platforms; (iii) communication campaigns and mass awareness raising; (iv) development of school re-opening plan; (v) school sanitization plan and safe schools opening; (vi) learning loss assessment and recovery lesson plan development; (vii) contents/manual/standards for teachers' professional development; (viii) tools to ensure mental health issues post-shutdown; (ix) system level remote learning integration plan; and (x) development of emergency operation guidelines for future shocks.

70. Keeping in view the emergency nature of the Project, simplified and streamlined procurement methods will mostly apply under the Project, including Selection Based on Consultant Qualifications, Single Source Selection and Procurement of UN agencies methods for consultant services, while Request for Quotations, Direct Contracting, and Open National Competition methods may be used for Goods and Non-consultant services. Where UN agencies offer a comparative advantage, they may be directly selected by CSSR PIU and standard forms of contract agreed between the World Bank and UN agencies will be used.



71. Details of the procurement arrangements will be set out in the streamlined Project Procurement Strategy for Development (PPSD) and initial procurement plan which are currently being prepared by CSSR PIU and will be finalized during early stage of project implementation. The PSD will spell out the detailed procurement arrangements (including the flexibilities available for the emergency procurement) for the project including the detailed risk mitigation measures. The World Bank will assist the PIU to prepare a simplified PSD along with a procurement plan. The procurement plan will specify each contract to be financed under the proposed project. This will also specify the selection method, market approach, contract modality, and Bank's review requirements, for each of the activities. The procurement plan will be uploaded and maintained in STEP and updated as and when necessary during the implementation.

72. The CSSR PIU to be set up in the DPE will carry out procurement activities planned under the Project. The DPE is familiar with the World Bank procurement procedures. The DPE is currently implementing one IPF and one Program for Results (PforR) operation. However, procurement capacity and contract management will require further strengthening. Lack of qualified procurement professionals may cause delay in procurement process. There is also a need to familiarize DPE with the World Bank's new Procurement Regulations.

73. The World Bank's procurement supervision will be ensured through increased implementation support. While the TORs of some of the key consultant services may require technical review by the Bank, most of the contracts under the Project are expected to be subject to procurement post review by the Bank which will be conducted at least on an annual basis as part of procurement supervision or more frequently based on need.



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

D. Environmental and Social

74. The Environmental and Social risk and impact assessment and management will be governed by the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) consisting of ten (10) Environment and Social Standards (ESS). Given the project design and interventions, the relevant E&S standards are: ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts, ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions, ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management, ESS4 Community Health and Safety, ESS7 Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities and ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure.

75. Considering nature and scale of the project, capacity of the Borrower, anticipated E&S risks and impacts and the context under which this intervention will be implemented, both the Environmental and the Social risk have been assessed as **Moderate**.

76. 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. 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.

77. Major social risk is likely to emanate from exclusion of rural and poor students who do not have access to TV, Internet and other digital medium to access learning. This will also likely to create gaps in addressing hygiene and COVID-19 related safety practices, education engagement and re-engagement messages, psychosocial counselling, and issues addressing Gender-Based Violence as most of the content will be disseminated digitally. Without project interventions the education progress would cease and cause increase in school drop-outs, leading to increased incidence of early marriage, adolescent fertility, and child labor. 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.

78. An ESMF addressing use/transportation/disposal of disinfectant and disposal of PPE used by the workers will be prepared to address environmental and related 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. 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.

79. The social risks can be mitigated by a comprehensive stakeholder consultation, taking the views from them for project design as well as by creating a robust pathway for raising issues and grievances through the development of a



Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). Given that exclusion is one of the major concerns, a high level of coordination will 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 left behind due to lack of access to the various types of media considered by the project for remote/distance learning.

80. Considering the current impaired capacity of the borrower and restrictions in mobility due to COVID-19 situation, Environmental and Social Management Framework would be prepared within 60 days of the project effectiveness along with a labor management procedure (LMP). Small Ethnic Community Planning Framework (SECPF) would also be prepared if necessary. A draft stakeholder engagement plan (SEP) and an environmental and social commitment plan (ESCP) have already been prepared, shared with the WB and publicly disclosed on July 4, 2020.

81. **Communications Campaigns:** The Project will fund a mass awareness campaign targeted at marginalized areas, girls, and low-income households. Messaging will cover 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 impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures, and the heightened risks of gender-based violence. Communications campaigns to be developed under Component 1 will need to account for the country's, linguistic, ethnic and cultural diversity in their design, especially in Tribal areas.

82. **Gender Based Violence:** There has been an alarming rise in Sexual Exploitation and Assault (SEA) reported during the lockdown situation prevailing due to COVID-19. Many children too are either being subjected to this or are witnessing it, which could lead to psychological scarring, depression, apathy towards school and even dropouts. Remote learning online and generally spending longer hours online during lockdown may expose students to increased SEA—including cyber harassment and bullying—and Violence against Children (VAC). The project will mitigate these risks by providing effective grievance redressal mechanisms (GRMs) with multiple channels and links to other forms of psycho-social support, including the ones in the project.

83. The three components under the Project are all critical to ensure that gender gaps, with respect to education access during and after COVID-19, are addressed. Given the closure of schools, the burden of housework responsibilities is likely to fall on girls, which means they are less likely to regularly participate in distance learning courses. It is therefore essential to tailor content of Tele-school and other modes of programming to counter this disruption and incorporate messaging into the awareness campaigns of the project to encourage parents and girls to utilize distance education. Due to the disruptions caused by COVID-19, there will likely be an exacerbation of gender gaps in re-enrollment, and hence it will be important to have targeted communication campaigns for parents of girls. The COVID-19 induced crisis has impoverished many households as jobs are lost and small/medium businesses decimated. When facing an epidemic, households go through severe financial constraints due to which girls' education may lose priority and some of the girls may not return to school. Girls may be kept back to help at home or pushed into some income generating activity. There is also a big risk of increase in early-marriage and may instead become involved in income generating activities or subjected to. As a result, a special focus towards reaching parents via communications tools and community mobilization will be essential to attain satisfactory levels of girls' enrolment. Further, since lockdown conditions are linked to higher levels of gender-based violence and violence against children, it is essential to build awareness messages into existing communications campaigns to empower students and teachers with knowledge of service provision. School Committees



should be made cognizant of these risks and GBV issues and mitigation measures should be incorporated into the Standard Operations Procedures (SOPs) to enable greater safety of students and staff in the future.

V. GRIEVANCE REDRESS SERVICES

84. Communities and individuals who believe that they are adversely affected by a World Bank (WB) supported project may submit complaints to existing project-level grievance redress mechanisms or the WB's Grievance Redress Service (GRS). The GRS ensures that complaints received are promptly reviewed in order to address project-related concerns. Project affected communities and individuals may submit their complaint to the WB's independent Inspection Panel which determines whether harm occurred, or could occur, as a result of WB non-compliance with its policies and procedures. Complaints may be submitted at any time after concerns have been brought directly to the World Bank's attention, and Bank Management has been given an opportunity to respond. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank's corporate Grievance Redress Service (GRS), please visit <http://www.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/products-and-services/grievance-redress-service>. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank Inspection Panel, please visit www.inspectionpanel.org.

VI. KEY RISKS

85. The overall operation risk is assessed as **Substantial**. The key risks affecting the overall rating are as follows.

- Macroeconomic risk is rated **Substantial**. The on-going COVID-19 pandemic is likely to lead the country to a complex macroeconomic situation and it may influence the political decision on the government's priorities or public financing for inevitable reasons.
- Technical design of project risk is rated **Substantial**. The Project has several activities designed to address the COVID-19 crisis comprehensively, while the duration of the project is only 18 months. Given uncertainties surrounding the COVID-19 situation, including the full duration of the national lock down, implementation will be challenging and may encounter delays. To mitigate this risk (i) the high-level PSC will be formed to guide, oversee, and review implementation progress of this project; (ii) a strong PIU within the DPE with dedicated consultants involved in implementation and monitoring; (iii) close consultation and collaboration with LEG, civil societies/ NGOs will benefit project implementation. Implementation will build on activities already underway, such as tele broadcasting and online content (although on a smaller scale). Some activities may be completely new. The Project will rely on lessons learned from successful programming in other countries, particularly those in the region. In addition, information gathered from EMIS and social audits will guide implementation adjustments.
- Institutional capacity for implementation and sustainability is rated **Substantial**. The project implementation will take place both during and after the COVID-19 breakout when the system will not be functioning normally. This adds to systemic challenges related to the availability of human resources within the Government, data and information management, monitoring and evaluation capacity, and support from regional and international consultancy if needed. To mitigate this risk, the necessary Terms of References for TA will be developed as soon as possible so that required human resources can be mobilized to support the project activities. In addition, the project will support capacity



building activities to target ministry, DPE, DSHE, local education staff. The capacity already developed through PEDP4 and SEDP will be useful and can be transferred to the project, as needed.

▪ Fiduciary risk is rated **Substantial**. Possible delay in procurement due to lack of technical preparation (ToRs, cost estimates, etc.) before start of the procurement process and weak procurement capacity in carrying out the procurement process and reduced participation and competition of firms due to the prevailing COVID-19 situation, as a result of which the Procurement risk at this stage is deemed to be Substantial and will be confirmed during Appraisal. Furthermore, duplication of efforts in financing educational interventions, slow progress in resolving audit observations, timeliness in the release of advances required for implementation, and delays in adjustments of these advances are challenges generally experienced in the implementation of development programs. To mitigate these risks, the following actions will be undertaken: (i) finalizing and following the PPSD at the early stage (within first 3 months) of project implementation; (ii) assigning qualified PIU staff for fiduciary matters, preferably experienced in Bank-financed fiduciary aspects; (iii) engaging UN agency, UNICEF, for specific activities under the project where there is a comparative advantage; (iv) providing training to relevant project officials on STEP, procurement, contract management, and fiduciary due-diligence considerations, as applicable in the World Bank's regulations and procedures; (v) use of the government's electronic procurement (e-GP) system, where applicable; and (vi) hiring of qualified Financial Management and Procurement consultants for the CSSR PIU with the Terms of References acceptable to the World Bank. Moreover, the World Bank's fiduciary oversight will be ensured through increased implementation support.

▪ **Other Risks.** The COVID-19 pandemic poses **Substantial** risk to the implementation of CSSR project activities, as with overall education delivery in Bangladesh and globally. National school closures has been in place since mid-March 2020. To mitigate the risks of COVID-19, the project activities take into considerations impacts of COVID-19 in its design. The Response component focuses on digital content development and communications, major part of which requires remote work and coordination. Data collection during the Response period also requires remote data collection methods. Health and safety protocols are built within the activity design as well as provisions to safeguard the PIU with protective equipment and video conferencing facilities.



VII. RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND MONITORING

Results Framework			
COUNTRY: Bangladesh			
Bangladesh COVID 19 School Sector Response (GPE)			
Project Development Objectives(s)			
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.			
Project Development Objective Indicators			
Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	End Target
To strengthen the basic school system's institutional capacity to Respond to COVID 19 crises			
Number (and % of children in the relevant age-group in the program area) of children supported with inclusive distance learning programs (disaggregated by gender) (Number)		0.00	2,500,000.00
Boys (Number)		0.00	1,205,000.00
Girls (Number)		0.00	1,295,000.00
To strengthen the basic school system's institutional capacity to Recover from COVID 19 crises			
Number (and %) of children previously enrolled in grant-supported pre-primary and primary levels government schools who immediately return to schools once schools reopen (disaggregated by gender) (Number)		0.00	3,240,000.00
Boys (Number)		0.00	1,590,000.00
Girls (Number)		0.00	1,650,000.00



Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	End Target
To build the basic school system's resilience to face future crises			
Remote learning system integrated into the basic education school system (Text)		Underdeveloped Remote Learning System	Remote learning system fully functional and integrated into the basic school system
Intermediate Results Indicators by Components			
Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	End Target
Engaging in Systemic Response			
Number of grade - subject programs with complete and appropriate digital contents supported for the whole academic year for Grade 1-10 (Number) (Number)		0.00	35.00
Number of hard-to-reach children provided with learning materials/packages (Number)		0.00	150,000.00
Number (and %) of children provided access to programs and sensitization campaigns to minimize the negative impacts of school closures, with a focus on girls (Number)		0.00	1,500,000.00
Boys (Number)		0.00	723,000.00
Girls (Number)		0.00	777,000.00
Supporting Education Systems Recovery			
Number (and %) of primary schools re-opened following implementation of Safe School Re-opening Plan (Number)		0.00	20,000.00
Percentage of primary schools re-opened following implementation of Safe School Re-opening Plan (Number)		0.00	31.00
Number (and % of children in program area) of children whose learning was assessed to evaluate loss of learning during school closure (Number)		0.00	350,000.00



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Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	End Target
Percentage of children in program area whose learning was assessed to evaluate loss of learning during school closure (Number)		0.00	4.60
Number (and % of teachers in program area) of teachers trained on remedial education, distance learning strategies, and formative and summative assessment practices (Number)		0.00	2,000.00
Percentage of teachers trained on remedial education, distance learning strategies, and formative and summative assessment practices (Number)		0.00	0.60
Building System Resilience			
Sustainability Plan for the Remote Learning System in place for basic school system (Text)		No Sustainability Plan is in place	Sustainability Plan for the Remote Learning System developed and included in Government's regular program
Standard Emergency Operation Procedures for basic school system approved (Text)		No Standard Emergency Operation Procedures in place	Standard Emergency Operation Procedures for basic school system developed and approved
Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning (CRI, Number)		0.00	35,900,000.00
Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning - Female (CRI, Number)		0.00	18,600,000.00

Monitoring & Evaluation Plan: PDO Indicators

Indicator Name	Definition/Description	Frequency	Datasource	Methodology for Data Collection	Responsibility for Data Collection
Number (and % of children in the relevant age-group in the program area) of children supported with inclusive distance learning programs (disaggregated by	Estimated as number of children reached through broadcasting of national distance-learning content	Semi-annual	PIU/DPE/DSH E	Progress Reports based on nationally representative phone surveys, studies, and	PIU



gender)	(TV, radio, mobile campaigns reach, social media reach), plus number of printed materials and connectivity devices distributed, adjusted by median number of school-aged children per household.				MICS.	
Boys						
Girls						
Number (and %) of children previously enrolled in grant-supported pre-primary and primary levels government schools who immediately return to schools once schools reopen (disaggregated by gender)	Measured by collecting gender-disaggregated data on number of children from 2020 academic year who re-enrolled in grant-supported pre-primary and primary grades in 2021	Annual	APSC report and database	Census of primary schools	PIU and Information Management Division (IMD), M&E Division, DPE	
Boys						
Girls						
Remote learning system integrated into the basic education school system	Remote learning system defined as communication and working mechanisms which lead to the successful delivery of activities to end-beneficiaries, which and could be triggered in the case of a second wave of COVID-19 contagion.	Annual	Evaluation report	Evaluation report	DPE (MoPME)/PIU	



Monitoring & Evaluation Plan: Intermediate Results Indicators					
Indicator Name	Definition/Description	Frequency	Datasource	Methodology for Data Collection	Responsibility for Data Collection
Number of grade - subject programs with complete and appropriate digital contents supported for the whole academic year for Grade 1-10 (Number)	Number of grade - subject programs developed for the whole academic year for Grade 1-10 supported for either radio, TV, mobile and or online platforms.	Semi-annual	PIU progress report	PIU will collect the data	PIU with support from DPE (MOPME)/ DSHE (MOE)
Number of hard-to-reach children provided with learning materials/packages	Number of children from marginalized background with no access to media or internet provided with printed learning packs and materials.	Semi-annual	PIU Progress Report	PIU will collect data	PIU with support from DPE (MOPME)/ DSHE (MOE)
Number (and %) of children provided access to programs and sensitization campaigns to minimize the negative impacts of school closures, with a focus on girls	Number of programs and sensitization campaigns that include (i) messages on the importance of education with special focus on girls and; (ii) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare endorsed messages on disease prevention and good hand washing practices; and (iii) schedule of TV and radio programs.	Semi-annual	PIU progress report	Progress report based on nationally representative phone survey	PIU with support from DPE (MOPME) and DSHE (MOE)
Boys					
Girls					



Number (and %) of primary schools re-opened following implementation of Safe School Re-opening Plan	Number of primary schools that reopen safely.	Semi-annual	PIU Progress Report	PIU administrative data	PIU/DPE
Percentage of primary schools re-opened following implementation of Safe School Re-opening Plan					
Number (and % of children in program area) of children whose learning was assessed to evaluate loss of learning during school closure	Schools will assess learning of students post COVID-19, and prepare recovery plans to accelerate learning for children falling behind.	Semi-annual	PIU progress report	Survey of schools	PIU/DPE
Percentage of children in program area whose learning was assessed to evaluate loss of learning during school closure					
Number (and % of teachers in program area) of teachers trained on remedial education, distance learning strategies, and formative and summative assessment practices	The number (and % of teachers in program area) of teachers who are trained either on remedial education, distance learning, and formative and summative assessment under the grant support	Semi-annual	PIU Progress Report	PIU Progress Report	PIU/DPE/DSHE
Percentage of teachers trained on remedial education, distance learning strategies, and formative and summative assessment practices					
Sustainability Plan for the Remote Learning System in place for basic school system	A Sustainability Plan for the Remote Learning System, detailing the system infrastructure, operations, staffing, financing and other critical aspects for	Semi-annual	PIU Progress Report	PIU	PIU with support from DPE(MOPME) and SHED/DSHE (MOE)



	integrating the system into the basic school system.					
Standard Emergency Operation Procedures for basic school system approved	Standard Emergency Operation Procedures for basic school system approved by MOPME and MOE	Semi-annual	PIU progress report	Progress report based on evaluation firm report	PIU with support from DPE (MOPME) and SHED (MOE)	
Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning		Annual		APSC and BANBEIS	PIU/DPE/DSHE	
Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning - Female		Annual				



ANNEX 1: Implementation Arrangements and Support Plan

1. At the national level, a Project Steering Committee (PSC), chaired by the Secretary MoPME and co-chaired by the Secretary of SHED/MoE, will be constituted to; (a) provide policy guidance to the implementing agencies; (b) approve annual development plan and review project progress; and (c) resolve implementation problems including inter-ministerial issues.

2. The overall responsibility of the proposed project implementation will lie with Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), as the lead implementing agency while Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) will implement activities with close cooperation with the DPE. A Project Implementation Committee (PIC), chaired by the Director General, DPE, and supported by DG, DSHE will be constituted to; (a) review annual development plan prepared by the GPE COVID-119 School Sector Response Project Implementation Unit and recommend for approval by the PSC; (b) monitor project implementation progress and provide implementation support; and (c) maintain strong coordination among the implementing agencies.

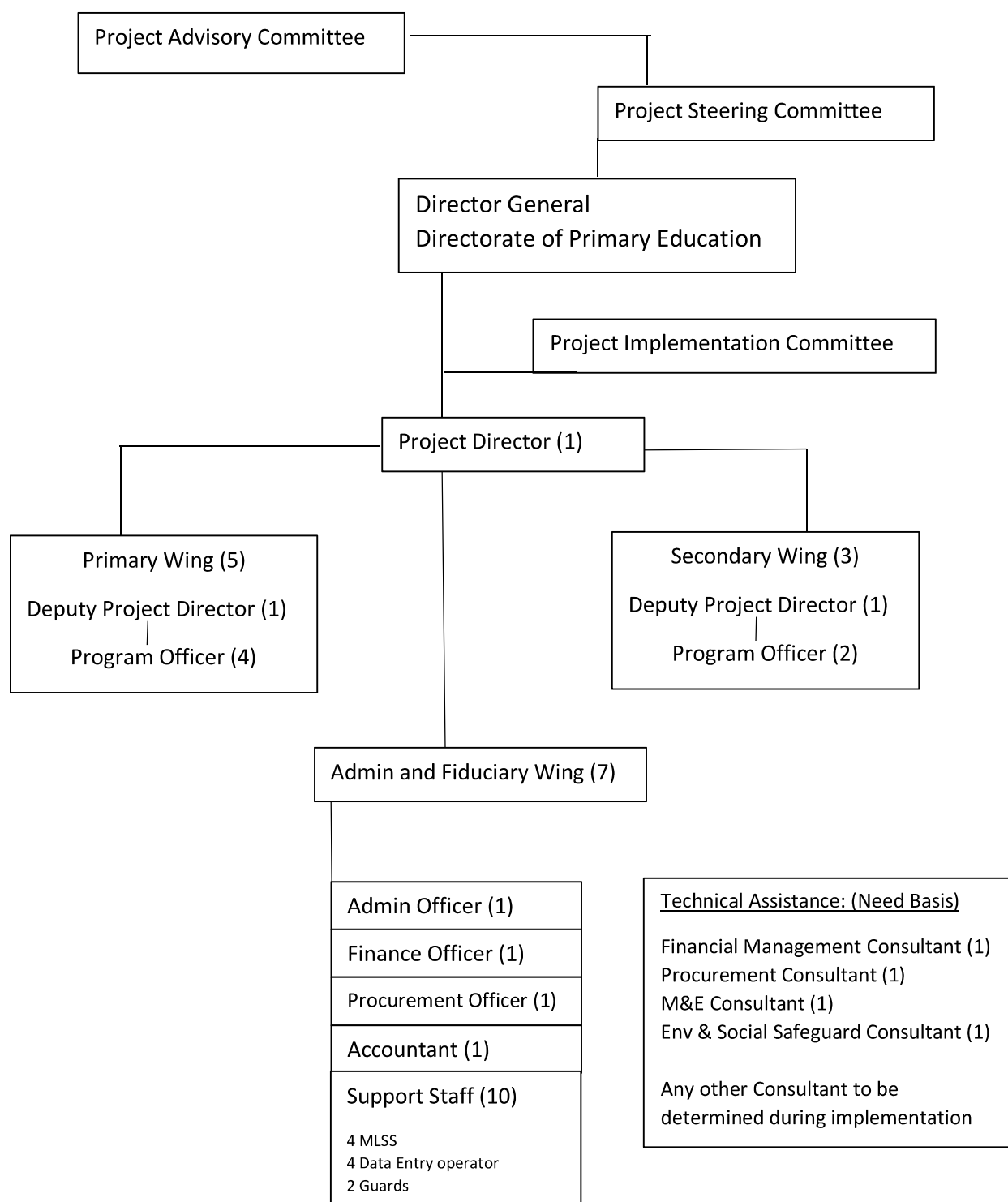
3. A project management and implementation unit called COVID-19 School Sector Response (CSSR) PIU will be put in place, which will be responsible for (a) planning, coordination, implementation and monitoring of project activities; (b) procurement and financial management; (c) capacity building at various level; (d) awareness campaign and communication; and (e) reporting on project progress. The project will be implemented within the parameters of the Project Appraisal Document (PAD), the Technical Assistance Project Proposal (TAPP).

4. The CSSR PIU will be led by a Project Director, to be a senior government official at least at the rank of Joint Secretary level. In addition, the Project Director will be supported by two Deputy Project Directors; one from the DPE and another from the DSHE. They will be supported by other deputed staff and consultants, including financial management specialist, procurement specialist and environment and social safeguard specialist. The figure below illustrates the structure of the proposed PIU. Figure 1 illustrates the structure of the PIU.

5. Considering the unpredictable nature of the COVID-19 affect across the education streams and levels, there will be a need for high level policy coordination and guidance to inform decisions and ensure timely interventions. For this, an Advisory Committee, involving high level policy and decision makers of the two education ministries and Director Generals of DPE and DSHE will be formed. The CSSR will coordinate and support these high level meetings, as and when necessary.



Figure 1: Structure of the CSSR PIU





ANNEX 2: How CSSR integrates the GPE's Learning from evidence approach

A. CSSR's Approach to Evidence-Based Operation

1. The project requires a flexible, learning from evidence approach, aligned with the GPE objectives to: (1) learn continually from evidence and apply that learning adaptively to enhance program effectiveness; and (2) generate knowledge and evidence on the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of grants. The project achieves this through three systems: (i) a comprehensive Results Framework which uses relevant core GPE indicators to track and monitor progress of project outputs and outcomes; (ii) assessments and studies integrated within activity designs under Component 1, 2 and 3 and (iii) evaluations within the M&E plan to assess efficiency and results from the project.

2. The project will use a number of national surveys to gather information on the targeted population and ensure information is collected in a reliable manner. These sources of information include: (a) national education system data from Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) and Ministry of Education (MoE); and (b) district and country-level household data from national surveys, including the Multi Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) and Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES).³⁴ The M&E section will develop a set of phone and online surveys, which could use a combination of phone calls and text messages to collect information for monitoring and evaluation from beneficiaries, especially during the response period. The Project will also engage broadcasting and telecommunication company data to monitor rates of take-up of remote learning content. Finally, the PIU will provide project progress reports every six months to track implementation progress, which will include information on delivery of inputs, documentation of progress by activity, on fiduciary aspects, and project progress with respect to the results framework.

3. Relevant international lessons from countries' experiences with their education systems' responses to COVID-19 (i.e. those continuously updated on the World Bank's COVID-19 landing page on the Education Global Practice website³⁵) will also be drawn upon to increase the use of research and evidence into implementation practice. Information on the project interventions' relevance, efficiency and effectiveness will largely be collected through telephone interviews with key stakeholders, including government officials, development partners, school officials (principals/administrators), teachers, and parents. Any decisions regarding changes to the learning from evidence approach that impact the Grant Agent's ability to meet Objectives I and II will be communicated to the GPE Secretariat during regular implementation reporting.

B. GPE Core Indicators

4. The project has a comprehensive Results Framework to track progress of grant-supported priority activities and achievement of the Project Development Objective (PDO). The Results Framework uses relevant core GPE indicators to track and monitor progress of project outputs and outcomes in accordance with GPE guidelines for M&E of COVID-19

³⁴Given COVID-19 situation, there is risk these nationally representative surveys may not be conducted during the Project period. If so, we can only use earlier rounds of data to understand situation prior to the Project period.

³⁵<https://www.worldbank.org/en/data/interactive/2020/03/24/world-bank-education-and-covid-19>



accelerated funding grants: (i) for the Response stage, the relevant GPE core indicator theme areas applicable for the project are – **Access** (*BD CSSR PDO indicator 1*) and **Protection and Well-being** (*BD CSSR Intermediate indicator 3*); and (ii) for the Recovery stage, the relevant GPE core indicators theme areas applicable for the project are – **Access** (*BD CSSR PDO indicator 2*), **Facilities and Services** (*BD CSSR Intermediate indicator 4*), **Learning** (*BD CSSR Intermediate indicator 5*), and **Teachers** (*BD CSSR Intermediate indicator 6*). Targets, disaggregation, data source and methodology for data collection are detailed out in Results Framework and M&E plan. While indicators will be reported mostly as disaggregated by Gender, data will be collected by age-group, grade level and geographic zones (districts/sub-districts) where applicable and reported in the project progress reports.

C. Cost Associated M&E Activities

5. There will be continuous data/information collection and reporting, evidence-base creation, and knowledge generation that will contribute to adjust activities throughout phases of the project in forms of monitoring reports, plans, assessments, surveys etc. These are aligned with generating evidence on relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of grants as presented in the table below:

Table 1: Alignment of BD CSSR Monitoring and Assessments with GPE Learning from Evidence Objective II

Sl.	Title of the study	No. of Phases	Objective	Data collection method	Alignment with GPE Learning from Evidence Objective II	Indicative Allocated Amount (in US million)
1	Safe School Reopening Plan (Sub-component 1.3)	1 (Response)	-To detail out the criteria and steps for safe school re-opening - To allow authorities to make informed decisions by taking into account local specific circumstances and constraints	Technical experts through assessment of local education offices, school management and other stakeholders	<i>Relevance</i> –by meeting needs of schools, teachers, local and central administration <i>Effectiveness</i> – by ensuring safe school re-opening output with required preparedness <i>Efficiency</i> –by enabling timely reopening of schools with proper safety protocols to resume learning activities as quickly as possible	0.006
2	Safe School Re-opening Assessment (Sub-component 1.3)	1 (Response)	-To assess if schools are ready to reopen following safe school reopening plan -To verify if required health and safety	Assessment by local education officials and verification through third party	<i>Relevance</i> –by meeting needs of schools, teachers, local and central administration <i>Effectiveness</i> – by assessing effectiveness of safe school re-opening through grant supported activities and creating evidence base for the	0.06



			<p>protocols are in place according to guidelines</p> <p>-To assess if relevant teachers and staff are trained in required safety measures</p>		<p>effectiveness of the safe school reopening plan with provision to need-based adjustment to the plan</p> <p><i>Efficiency</i>—by creating information flow to ensure speedy outcome of school reopening</p>	
3	Monitoring of Safe School Reopening	2 (Recovery, Resilience)	<p>A continuous monitoring and reporting mechanism by project M&E unit to ensure safe school reopening</p>	<p>Through project M&E information from local education offices, school management, parents, and teachers</p>	<p><i>Relevance</i> – by meeting needs of schools, teachers, local and central administration</p> <p><i>Effectiveness</i> – by ensuring safe school re-opening output and building on the effectiveness of safe school reopening plan</p> <p><i>Efficiency</i> – by creating information flow to ensure speedy outcome of school reopening</p>	1.11
4	Formative Assessment on Student Learning	1 (Recovery)	<p>-To assess student learning loss and learning inequity within a classroom when schools re-open</p> <p>- To support schools, develop Recovery Lesson Plans in an informed manner</p>	<p>Through a third party assessment and verification of 3000 sample schools</p>	<p><i>Relevance</i> – by meeting needs of children, teachers, schools</p> <p><i>Effectiveness</i> – by ensuring remedial education and formative assessment output</p> <p><i>Efficiency</i> – by ensuring proper account for learning loss and recovery according to remedial plan to be completed in time</p>	0.2
5	Tracking survey on inclusive distance learning [PDO Indicator 1]	3 (Response, Recovery, Resilience)	<p>To track and assess the effectiveness of grant-supported distance learning strategies to reach all students and ensure their access and learning continuation amidst school closures</p>	<p>Sample based phone survey, data from telecom providers on accessed content</p>	<p><i>Relevance</i> – by meeting needs of students, teachers, school leadership, education administrators</p> <p><i>Effectiveness</i> – by tracking and assessing the effectiveness of grant-supported distance learning and making informed adjustments in contents, usage of platforms, communication</p>	0.05



					strategies throughout all 3 phases <i>Efficiency</i> – by ensuring learning from evidence and adaptations to achieve outcomes within project life and making sustainable distance learning mechanism	
6	Assessing impact of grant-supported communication and outreach activities [IO indicator 3]	3 (Response, Recovery, Resilience)	<p>- To assess if the grant-supported communication and outreach programs have been effectively reaching target population focusing on girls and disadvantaged</p> <p>- To assess success of these programs (e.g. reducing drop-outs, GBV, negative psychological impacts)</p>	Sample based phone survey, administrative data, re-enrolment data	<p><i>Relevance</i> – by meeting needs of girls, most disadvantaged groups, marginalized community/minority, low-income groups</p> <p><i>Effectiveness</i> – assessing how effective were the grant-supported communication and outreach programs building on which required adjustments can be made throughout 3 phases</p> <p><i>Efficiency</i> – by ensuring learning from evidence and adaptations to achieve desired outcomes from these activities within project life</p>	0.05
7	Assessment on remote learning system (effectiveness, inclusiveness and sustainability)	3 (Response, Recovery, Resilience)	<p>-To assess the effectiveness of the and inclusiveness of the Remote Learning System in ensuring children have access to quality education during school closures and/or as a means of distance learning</p> <p>-To support evidence-based planning and designing of an inclusive remote learning system to be integrated into the school education sector</p>	Through a third party assessment and engagement of education expert committee	<p><i>Relevance</i> – by meeting needs of school leadership, education administrators</p> <p><i>Effectiveness</i> – assessing how effective were the grant-supported distant learning activities building on which required adjustments can be made throughout 3 phases and ensure sustainability of this system</p> <p><i>Efficiency</i> – by ensuring learning from evidence and adaptations to achieve outcomes within project life</p>	0.05



					make informed sustainability plan for future	
8	Assessment of Emergency Education operation procedure	1 (Resilience)	To contribute in preparing plan for emergency education operation procedure through lessons learned from implementation of this grant for future shocks	Assessments and evaluations of activities throughout the project; Feedback from key stakeholders	<p><i>Relevance</i> – by meeting needs of children, teachers, parents, schools, education administrators</p> <p><i>Effectiveness</i> – by assessing effectiveness of innovative methods under the grant and integrating into the system for sustainability</p> <p><i>Efficiency</i> – by ensuring learning from evidence and adaptations to establish emergency education operation procedure for the school education sector</p>	0.022
9	Need based studies	2 (Recovery, Resilience)	-to accommodate rolling out need based assessments or surveys during implementation of grant activities for flexibility and adaptation	Need based	<p><i>Relevance</i> – this provision will allow to make need based adjustments in the information flow and M&E process</p> <p><i>Effectiveness</i> – by enabling to make informed decisions and adaptations while learning from implementation</p> <p><i>Efficiency</i> – by allowing flexibility in achieving expected outputs and outcome</p>	0.07



ANNEX 4: WB Integrated Response to COVID-19 in Basic Education Sector of Bangladesh

I. COVID-19 IMPACT ON BASIC EDUCATION SECTOR OF BANGLADESH

1. **COVID-19 crises and impact on basic education:** In Bangladesh, learning activities of around 38.6 million students, including 3.6 million in pre-primary and 18 million in primary, have come to halt due to the pandemic³⁶. With the on-set of the COVID-19 pandemic, nation-wide school closures were declared on March 17, 2020 and are expected to continue till September 2020³⁷. This also led to suspension of the first and second term examination of all primary schools of the country, while the Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSC) Examination (Grade 12/equivalent terminal exam) has been postponed for the academic year. In addition, the pandemic will almost certainly cause a substantial economic recession that will continue long after schools resume. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Bangladesh was grappling with issues of out-of-school children and low and unequal learning outcomes. Equity issues remain with pockets of out-of-school children in hard-to-reach areas, such as urban slums, hill tracts and hoar areas. The COVID19 impact is likely to deepen the learning crisis and exacerbate existing inequalities. The potential impacts of the pandemic on primary education in Bangladesh are: (i) Potential Increase in Out-of-School Children (OOSCs); (ii) Learning Loss caused by long period of disengagement from school and learning activities; (iii) Increase in learning inequality; (iv) disruption of teachers' professional development; (v) Risk to student health and safety; and (vi) psychosocial issues of parents and teachers.

2. **The Government's Response to the COVID-19 in basic education sector:** The GoB has taken some quick initiatives to ensure that learning continues. Both MoPME and the MoE have started leveraging remote learning opportunities through pre-recorded TV broadcasts and online platforms. MoPME has established working groups to develop learning content and roll out lessons through four platforms: Electronic Media Platform, Mobile Platform, Radio Platform and Internet Platform. Government, private and NGO entities are working together in each working group to produce and facilitate remote learning contents to reach maximum number of students³⁸. However, at least 70 percent of the contents for tele-broadcasting is yet to be developed. For radio and mobile platform, the GoB is yet to develop content³⁹. There is a huge financing and technical expertise demand to develop high quality remote learning content and make the system functional across the four platforms. Additionally, the GoB is awaiting approval for a policy to provide primary school students with increased stipend amount for three months during the pandemic. The government has also decided to provide financial assistance to 6,959 Qawmi madrasas (religious schools) across the country. As the initiatives await approval and expansion, the GoB is intensively using media campaigns to keep students engaged and help to reduce the risk of dropout.

3. **Amid these resource constraints and low-tech environment in primary education sector, reaching all school-going children from all socio-economic backgrounds is the key challenge.** Table 2 shows the access to different types of remote learning systems by gender among children of preprimary to Grade 10 ages. Access to television remains high among both school-attending and non-attending children, while computer has the lowest penetration among the four remote learning systems. However, when considering income-levels there is a clear divide with only around 9.2 percent of school going and OOSC children from the poorest household quintile having access to tele-broadcasting as opposed to the 91 percent of school-going children and 88 percent of OOSC from the richest household income group (Table 3). While

³⁶Annual Primary School Census 2018; BANBEIS 2018

³⁷All education institutions, including public and private education institutions (schools, colleges, universities etc.) in Bangladesh.

³⁸ UNICEF, a2i, BRAC, Save the Children, JAGGO Foundation, Light of Hope, Grameen Phone, Plan International, *Alokito Hridoy* Foundation, Spice FM, BNNRC, Radio71, SACMID

³⁹ Based on administrative data on the latest number of remote learning contents produced from UNICEF.



access to mobile phones remains high across all groups, a large share of these may not include internet connections.

Table 2: Access to Remote Learning Platforms by Gender and Location (% share)

		Boys		Girls	
	Total	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
All children aged 5 to 15					
TV	56.7%	78.3%	49.2%	77.6%	50.0%
Radio	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Mobile phone	96.8%	97.9%	96.6%	97.8%	96.5%
Computer (incl. laptop, tablet)	5.0%	12.0%	2.5%	13.1%	2.7%
OOSC aged 5 to 15					
TV	43.6%	69.1%	36.5%	65.2%	37.1%
Radio	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%
Mobile phone	95.3%	97.2%	95.0%	97.1%	94.6%
Computer (incl. laptop, tablet)	2.0%	3.5%	1.3%	5.1%	1.3%

Source: MICS, 2019

Table 3: Access to Remote Learning Platforms by Income Quintiles (% share)

	Poorest	Second poorest	Middle	Second richest	Richest
All children aged 5 to 15					
TV	9.2%	35.5%	59.7%	75.9%	91.0%
Radio	0.3%	0.3%	0.5%	0.5%	0.8%
Mobile phone	92.1%	97.3%	98.0%	98.4%	98.9%
Computer (incl. laptop, tablet)	0.3%	0.6%	1.5%	3.9%	19.6%
OOSC aged 5 to 15					
TV	8.4%	30.5%	52.3%	66.8%	87.6%
Radio	0.2%	0.4%	0.4%	0.6%	0.5%
Mobile phone	90.9%	96.2%	97.1%	98.1%	99.0%
Computer (incl. laptop, tablet)	0.3%	0.6%	1.1%	2.4%	10.8%

Source: MICS, 2019

4. Maintaining equitable access to learning resources is important to reduce expected learning gaps associated with student socio-economic profile and the consequent digital divide. In the short term, a combination of technologies needs to be utilized; and in the medium term, further resources will need to be devoted to accelerating digital development in Bangladesh. In country contexts with limited technological infrastructure, continued use of offline remote learning models may represent the best and only option. Given the variation in household access to the different types of technologies, maintaining equitable access to learning resources using alternative modalities will be important to reduce expected learning gaps. The expansion in Bangladeshi household access to technology, especially mobile phones, TV, radio and internet make these viable options for distance and interactive learning modalities in the long run.

5. **The Government's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan for Education Sector:** The GoB has prepared a COVID-19 response and recovery for plan for education that was developed with the leadership of the MoPME and MOE and in consultation with the Local Education Group (LEG). This Plan focuses on the learning discontinuation and its associated



challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic based on a rapid situation analysis. To address the unprecedented challenges in basic education sector and ensure learning continues, the Plan conceptualized a three phase response focusing on immediate (response), medium term (recovery) and long term actions (recovery and system resilience). The required interventions envisioned in this Plan aim to build on and complement the existing infrastructure and activities of two existing GoB programs in basic education –the Fourth Primary Education Development Program (PEDP4) and the Secondary Education Development Program (SEDP). The Plan will be financed by Government of Bangladesh and Development Partners’ contribution with necessary Technical Assistance.

II. WB SUPPORTED PROJECTS: INTEGRATED COVID-19 RESPONSE IN PRE-PRIMARY, PRIMARY and SECONDARY EDUCATION

6. **World Bank’s support to GoB COVID-19 response in Education:** The World Bank will complement the CSSR efforts and support the Government in implementing its COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan for Education Sector in preprimary, primary and secondary education through the following operations covering the ‘Response, Recovery and Resilience Building’ phases.

- **First, the Bangladesh COVID-19 School Sector Response” (CSSR) Project (P174268)** which is an US\$15 million TA-supported **immediate emergency project** financed by the Global Partnership for Education and supported by the World Bank as the Grant Agent. The CSSR 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. The key results of the project will be to: (i) develop and sustain the Remote Learning System through providing technical expertise for digital content development and delivery; (ii) teacher capacity building for remote teaching learning strategies, formative assessment and remedial education; (iii) development and implementation of Safe School Reopening Plan and Emergency Protocols and Standards; and (iv) capacity building at all levels of basic education delivery to respond to future crises. This will be an 18-month Grant implementation between August 2020-December 2021.

- **Second, the additional Financing to QLEAP (P174047)** in the amount of US\$53.9 million funding under the Education Sector Plan Implementation Grant (ESPIG) of GPE will be implemented from July 2021 to June 2023 to improve three priority areas of PEDP4: preprimary education, teacher development and learning assessment. The AF will support the system recovery and resilience building phase by (i) incorporating COVID-19 pandemic considerations into the designs of activities under each priority area and (ii) building on the TA of the CSSR to fill gaps in coverage (e.g. management and teacher trainings) which will not be possible to cover under the financial and timeline restrictions of the GPE emergency funds.

- **Third, the restructuring of the parent QLEAP (P162619)** will help to reprogram the operation to address recovery and resilience building in response to the COVID19 during program MTR which is to initiate in July 2020 with key decisions to be approved by Jan 2021. The World Bank’s financing will be adjusted primarily through: (i) restructuring DLIs (such DLIs on OOSCs, Learning Assessment, Teacher Education) to support system recovery and resilience phase of the pandemic response and (ii) introduce further TA to support the digital technology development, continued strengthening of remote learning system and teachers’ preparedness for post-COVID teaching learning environment, in terms of areas and coverage that are not part of the CSSR or the GPE AF.

- **Fourth, the Transforming Secondary Education for Results Operations (P160943) which contributes to the government’s secondary program** has been working with MoE on longer term COVID-19 response for secondary education. These discussions have included: Access to Information (A2I), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education



(DSHE), Development Partners and Parliament Television. This response plan will go beyond an emergency response and will include strategies for building-back-better and introducing sustained long-term innovations in the system. To implement the response plan, the Transforming Secondary Education for Results Operation will be restructured to leverage Technical Assistance and align other components for: (i) effective multi-modal distance learning solutions (including low-tech options); (ii) tailored initiatives to reach the most disadvantaged; (iii) mass communication to students, parents and teachers; (iv) identifying and tracking at-risk students, leveraging scholarship and stipend programs to prevent drop-outs – especially for girls - and support families. Bank team under DSHE's leadership, is conducting a rapid impact evaluation (IE) of the government's remote learning initiative through Parliament Television. Baseline note will be available by July 2020 and IE results by September. The IE is generating evidence to strengthen the response plan.



ANNEX 5: BD CSSR Results Framework

	Baseline (2020)	End of Project Target (2021)	Frequency	Data Source/ Methodology	Responsibility for Data Collection
PDO Indicator 1: Number (and % of children in the relevant age-group in the program area) of children supported with inclusive distance learning programs (disaggregated by gender)	0	Total: 2,500,000 (9%) Boys: 1,205,000 Girls: 1,295,000	Bi-annual	PIU Progress Report using nationally representative phone surveys, studies, and MICS	PIU/DPE
PDO Indicator 2: Number (and %) of children previously enrolled in grant-supported pre-primary and primary levels (GPS) immediately return to schools once schools reopen	0	Total: 3,240,000 (31%) Boys: 1,590,000 Girls: 1,650,000	Bi-annual	Annual Primary School Census	PIU/DPE
PDO Indicator 3: Remote learning system integrated into the basic education school system	Underdeveloped Remote Learning System	Remote learning system fully functional and integrated into the basic school system	Annual	Evaluation Report	PIU/DPE
Intermediate Indicators					
Component 1: Engaging in Systemic Response					
1. Number of grade - subject programs with complete and appropriate digital contents supported for the whole academic year for Grade 1-10	0	35	Bi-annual	PIU Progress Report	PIU/DPE
2. Number of hard-to-reach children provided with learning materials/packages	0	150,000	Bi-annual	PIU Progress Report	PIU/DPE
3. Number (and %) of children provided access to programs and sensitization campaigns to minimize the negative	0	Total: 1,500,000 (5%) Male: 723,000 Female: 777,000	Bi-annual	PIU Progress Report	PIU/DPE



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impacts of school closures, with a focus on girls						
Component 2: Supporting Education Systems Recovery						
4. Number (and %) of primary schools re-opened following implementation of Safe School Re-opening Plan	0	20,000 (31%)	Bi-annual	PIU Progress Report	PIU/DPE	
5. Number (and % of children in program area) of children whose learning was assessed to evaluate loss of learning during school closure	0	350,000 (4.6%)	Bi-annual	PIU Progress Report	PIU/DPE	
6. Number (and % of teachers in program area) of teachers trained on remedial education, distance learning strategies, and formative and summative assessment practices	0	2,000 (0.6%)	Bi-annual	PIU Progress Report	PIU/DPE	
Component 3: Supporting Education Systems Recovery						
7. Total number of Beneficiaries (disaggregated by gender) supported by the grant	0	Total: 35,900,000 Boys: 17,300,000 Girls: 18,600,000	Bi-annual	PIU Progress Report	PIU/DPE	
8. Sustainability Plan for the Remote Learning System in place for basic school system	No Sustainability Plan is in place	Sustainability Plan for the Remote Learning System developed and included in Government's regular program	Once at EOP	Evaluation report	PIU/DPE	
9. Standard Emergency Operation Procedures for basic school system approved	No Emergency Operation Procedure	Standard Emergency Operation Procedures for basic school system developed and approved	Once at EOP	PIU Progress Report	PIU/DPE	