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Project Information Document/ Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet (PID/ISDS)

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 30-Jun-2017 | Report No: PIDISDSC21087



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country Gambia, The	Project ID P162890	Parent Project ID (if any)	Project Name The Gambia - Education Sector Support Program (P162890)
Region AFRICA	Estimated Appraisal Date Oct 19, 2017	Estimated Board Date Feb 28, 2018	Practice Area (Lead) Education
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) The Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs	Implementing Agency The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE), The Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology	

Proposed Development Objective(s)

To increase access to ECD and basic education and improve quality of teaching and learning.

Financing (in USD Million)

Financing Source	Amount
EFA-FTI Education Program Development Fund	5.00
International Development Association (IDA)	30.00
Total Project Cost	35.00

Environmental Assessment Category B-Partial Assessment	Concept Review Decision Track II-The review did authorize the preparation to continue
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Note to Task Teams: End of system generated content, document is editable from here.

Other Decision (as needed)



B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. **The Gambia is a low-income country with an estimated population of about 2 million people (2015) and Gross National Income (GNI) per capita (Atlas method) of US\$460 (2014).** It is a small open economy that relies primarily on tourism, agriculture, and remittance inflows, and is vulnerable to external shocks, as illustrated by the 2014/15 Ebola virus disease crisis and the delayed rainy season, which led to a poor harvest in 2014. From 2010 through 2015, the real gross domestic product (GDP) growth averaged 3.1 percent. In 2016 and early 2017 the macroeconomic situation deteriorated, due to an over-valued exchange rate and a rapidly increasing government domestic debt burden, with total debt over 100% of GDP by end 2016, and foreign exchange resources exhausted. The uncertainty in early 2017, around the change of government, exacerbated these challenges. However, the new Government, led by President Barrow, has now adopted a revised 2017 budget, which seeks to begin the process of tackling fiscal imbalances, and WBG has provided \$56 m through an emergency DPO to support this effort. The IMF has also agreed access under their Rapid credit facility, and other partners are expected to provide similar support. This support is expected to buy Government some breathing space to implement much needed reforms to provide a clear pathway to debt sustainability and macroeconomic balance.

2. **The key long-term development challenges that The Gambia faces are related to its undiversified economy, small internal market, lack of skills necessary to build effective institutions, high population growth, lack of private sector job creation, and high rate of out-migration.** Resilience to external shocks, such as volatile weather conditions and the effects of climate change, need to be strengthened through (a) diversification of the economy and an improved private sector investment climate; (b) effective civil service reform and improved public management capacity geared toward enhanced service delivery and conditions to support long-term growth and employment; and (c) improved transparency and accountability in public affairs and increased citizen participation.

3. **Human development indicators remain low, but have progressed in the last 20 years.** The Gambia ranks 173 out of 188 countries in the world in human development according to the United Nations' Human Development Index (2016). However, between 1990 and 2015 The Gambia has made steady progress in key human development indicators. For example, life expectancy at birth increased by 8.4 years, mean years of schooling increased by 2.1 years and expected years of school increased by 3.8 years.

4. **However, in recent years, fiscal strains have mounted substantially because of fiscal slippages and poor performance of state-owned enterprises that have led to a significant buildup of public sector debt.** The fiscal deficit averaged 11 percent as a share of GDP from 2013 through 2015, contributing to a rise in public sector debt to 108 percent of GDP in 2015 from 83.3 percent in 2013. Heavy reliance on costly domestic markets has contributed to rising debt. Interest payments increased from 25 percent of revenues in 2013 to 40 percent in 2015 and are projected to reach nearly 50 percent in 2016. Contingent liabilities that reached five percent of GDP in 2014 are also a contributing factor.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

5. **Government commitment to education has historically been strong in The Gambia.** Since 2010, the government expenditure on education as a percentage of total government expenditure has been between 16 percent and 19 percent. Public education expenditure as percentage of GDP was 3.2 percent in 2014.



6. **The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) and the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (MoHERST) are together responsible for implementation of the Education Sector Strategic Policy (ESSP, 2014-2022).** They are currently revising the ESSP (2017-2030) to align with the recently ratified Education Policy (2017-2030). The MoBSE is responsible for basic education (ECD to grade 12) and the MoHERST for technical and vocational education and training and higher education. The MoBSE and the MoHERST, guided by the ESSP, aim to achieve universal access to education and improve the quality of education provided in The Gambia.

7. **The Gambia has a multi-level school system, with four distinct phases: Early Childhood Development (ECD), Lower Basic Schools (LBS), Upper Basic Schools (UBS), and Senior Secondary Schools (SSS). There are also a number of Basic Cycle Schools, which cover both LBS and UBS grades.** The Gambia has 934 conventional schools, two thirds of which are fully financed and managed by the government. An additional 10 percent are grant-aided schools which are typically former mission schools managed by school boards and financed by the government through a grant to the management body. The remaining 22 percent are private schools which do not receive any government funding. In parallel there are 334 government recognized Madrassas. These institutions provide the same curriculum as those of the public schools plus additional Islamic instruction and receive subventions from the government.

Table 1. Schools in The Gambia by Type (EMIS, 2016)

		LBS	UBS	BCS	SSS	Total
Conventional Schools	Government	406	80	78	52	616
	Grant-Aided	23	17	15	35	90
	Private	134	47	11	36	228
Madrassas	Private	155	6	136	37	334
Total		718	150	240	160	1268

8. **Government and grant aided schools combined account for more than 70 percent of enrollment at each level.** Private schools overall account for 10 percent of enrollment, but are more significant at SSS level, accounting for 19 percent of senior secondary enrollment. Madrassas, conversely, are more involved at the lower levels, and account for 19 percent of LBS enrollments. Table 2 gives an overview of enrollment by level and school type.

Table 2. Enrollment by Level and Type (EMIS, 2016)

	Number of students					% of total enrolment			
	Government	Grant-Aided	Private	Madrassa	Total	Government	Grant-Aided	Private	Madrassa
LBS	199,112	22,092	28,402	59,123	308,729	64.5	7.2	9.2	19.2
UBS	57,638	14,567	7,877	10,756	90,838	63.5	16.0	8.7	11.8
SSS	11,207	29,005	11,127	4,662	56,001	20.0	51.8	19.9	8.3
Total	267,957	65,664	47,406	74,541	455,568	58.8	14.4	10.4	16.4

Access

9. **In the last five years enrollment has grown in the Gambia at approximately 6 percent annually. In the five year period, total enrollment grew by 32 percent, adding 111,875 students to the total number in school.** The majority of these additional learnings (80,000) were in LBS. However the fastest growth rate was in SSS where enrolment grew by



48 percent in the 5 year period. Table 3 shows enrollment in schools from 2011 – 2016. The official figures indicate that this growth in enrollment has outpaced the population growth. As a result it increased the gross enrollment rate (GER) in LBS to 104 percent and brought the net enrolment rate (NER) to 83 percent (EMIS 2016).

10. **That being said, data from the 2015 Integrated Household Survey (IHS) suggest significantly lower enrollment rates, particularly in the younger age groups.** The government has not yet reviewed and verified the IHS data. This discrepancy may be as a result of underestimation of the population, the current official-age specific population figures are projections from the 2003 census. However, the GER from 2013 census and EMIS 2013 are matched, thus the need for further analysis.

Table 3. Enrollment Rates, EMIS

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
GER Lower Basic	86.5	90.2	92.8	97.1	101.2	104.0
NER Lower Basic	72.1	74.5	73.6	76.9	80.8	83.3
Out of school 7-12	73,701	68,850	73,080	65,561	55,562	49,638
GER Upper Basic	65.8	66.7	68.1	68.1	68.3	66.8
GER Senior Secondary	34.9	36.2	39.0	41.2	41.6	44.0

11. **The Gambia has also been successful in developing an ECD program which provides valuable early years education for children ages 3-6, and enrollment rates have improved considerably from 21 percent in 2006 to 46 percent in 2016.** Despite the increase in provision, challenges in ensuring equitable access to early education remain. Given the positive impacts of ECD on school readiness, and learning outcomes, the Government is committed to expanding quality ECD programs within the country. At present the GER for ECD is at approximately 46 percent, which while high for the region, leaves an estimated 118,644 children between ages 3-6 who are not in ECD. Further, the distribution of access to ECD is inequitable, with higher participation rates in more affluent regions. In region 2 for example, the enrollment rate is 56 percent while in region 5, the enrollment rate is 25 percent. ECD provision in the more affluent regions is mainly provided through private ECD centers, while in rural areas there is a heavy reliance on public provision. Government funded ECD accounts for just 2.2 percent of ECD enrollment in Region 1, but 67 percent of ECD enrollment in Region 5.

Table 4. Enrollment in ECD and population by region 2016 (EMIS)

	ECD enrollment	Population age 3-6	ECD GER	Children not in ECD
Region 1	22,606	48,334	46.8	25,728
Region 2	41,672	74,474	56.0	32,802
Region 3	9,483	24,030	39.5	14,547
Region 4	4,303	9,543	45.1	5,240
Region 5	8,249	32,974	25.0	24,725
Region 6	14,036	29,638	47.4	15,602
Total	100,349	218,993	45.8	118,644



12. **The Gambia has made commendable progress in achieving near gender balance in enrollment in LBS for some time.** In recent years it has also met gender parity in UBS. In 2016, female students accounted for 51 percent of all enrollments, and accounted for over 50 percent of enrollment in each grade. Data confirms that girls continue on in the system and complete at rates similar to boys as well. At the senior secondary level 36.1 percent of girls complete against 37.1 percent of boys up from 25.2 percent in 2010 against 31.4 percent of boys in the same year. There may be slight gender differences in performance in mathematics and science. National Assessment Test (NAT) 2014 and 2016, which is conducted in grades 3, 5, and 8, suggests that boys slightly outperform girls in mathematics and science (statistically significant). However, the results from the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) is mixed. In 2014 and 2015, boys outperformed girls but it was opposite in 2016. Having said that, there are still a lot more boys pursuing math and science tracks as measured by those who sat for mathematics and science in WASSCE in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

13. **The Gambia decided to implement a fee-free education policy in public Lower Basic Schools (LBS, grades 1-6), Upper Basic Schools (UBS, grades 7-9), and Senior Secondary Schools (SSS, grades 10-12) in 2013, 2014, and 2015, respectively, by providing subgrants to schools.** The MoBSE prohibited public schools from charging parents with formal and informal fees. Parents and students have been able to enjoy fee free tuition from grades 1–12. The objective of the school subgrants is to increase access to education, as the cost of education was preventing financially disadvantaged children from attending school. Hardship and non-hardship LBS receive GMD 150 and 100 per student per year, respectively; non-hardship and hardship UBS receive GMD 575 and GMD 675, respectively, and all public SSS receive GMD 1,800 per student per year. A school is considered a ‘hardship’ school if it is located more than 3 km from a main road.

14. **Despite proactivity on the part of the Government, a large number of out of school youth remain, and regional disparities are evident.** Out of school children in the 7-12 age group fell by 24,603 from 73,701 in 2011 to 29,638 in 2016, but remain a key challenge particularly in region 5. While GER at LBS for example is generally high, the GER in Region 5 is only 67 percent, and only 60 percent for males. Within particular regions, there are districts that tend to perform even worse, for example within region 5 the districts of Niamina East, Nianija, and Upper Saloum have the lowest enrollment rates at 59, 53, and 45 percent respectively.

Table 5. Lower Basic Education GER by Gender and Region (EMIS, 2016)

	GER	Female	Male
Region 1	111.4	113.2	109.4
Region 2	107.9	109.8	106.1
Region 3	111.9	114.6	109.3
Region 4	101.9	106.5	97.4
Region 5	67.1	74.0	60.3
Region 6	100.0	99.3	100.5

15. **The National Study of out of School Children in the Gambia (2017) found a series of factors leading to absence from school.** These include financial factors, religious reasons, parent attitude, opportunity cost, distance to school and personal interest. In almost all focus group discussions undertaken to inform the study financial reasons (both direct and



indirect costs of education – including transportation barriers) were cited as the primary reason for children to never enroll or drop out.

16. **To date the Government has been heavily engaged in addressing access challenges through a combination of policies, and interventions.** In addition to the fee-free education policy, additional innovations include: (i) conditional cash transfer to Koranic schools (Majalis); (ii) provision of donkey carts to communities where early grade children have difficulty in commuting due to road condition and distance,; (iii) a mobile system for monitoring teacher attendance, and (iv) rigorous impact evaluations focused on models for early childhood development, and (v) introducing an innovative ‘learning by playing’ program through development of games using tablets for grade 3 mathematics that match with the Gambian curriculum.

Quality

17. **Improving students’ learning outcomes is a national priority, but learning outcomes remain low.** The Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) has been conducted on five occasions, in 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2016. The 2007 test results revealed low scores and the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) has been conducting lower grade teacher training to improve students’ literacy skills. More recent EGRA tests showed significant improvements in knowledge of letter sounds and word recognition; however, reading comprehension is still very low. The EGRA 2016 shows that on average in grade 1-3, students answered only one out of five reading comprehension questions correctly. The National Assessment Test (NAT) is conducted semi-annually in grades 3 and 5 and annually in grade 8. The scores are also considered low. In NAT 2012, the average score in English was 41.5 percent in grade 3 and 45 percent in grade 5. However, the learning achievement has shown some improvement. The test items of the NAT 2012 were linked to those of NAT grade 5 in 2016 to compare the students’ progress over the years and showed some improvement in both English and mathematics. English ‘true’ score improved from 47 to 53 and mathematics ‘true’ score improved from 43 to 49¹. The test items of NAT grade 3 in 2017 will be linked to those of 2013 to see the students’ learning outcomes across years.

18. **The number of teachers in The Gambia has grown rapidly in the last five years through sustained intervention from the Government to address shortages and increasing enrollment of students.** This has been a critical step in not only expanding access but in addressing quality given the critical role that adept teachers play in student outcomes. First, historically, LBS teachers were trained in Gambia College, however the shortages of teachers during rapid enrollment from the 90s onward lead to the creation of a large scale in-service program providing training for most of the unqualified teachers in region 5 which had the largest percentage of teachers with low competency. Second, the capacity in Gambia College was increased through a switch to a school-based model of initial teacher training whereby student teachers are based in schools for most of their training. This change also created capacity in Gambia College which allowed the expansion of the HTC (UBS) course. Third, the increasing output from senior secondary schools due to increased enrollments provided a greater pool of potential entrants to teacher training, and fourth the introduction of enhanced stipends provided for teacher trainees made entry to teaching more attractive and encouraged uptake in the profession.

¹ The "True Score*", which is an estimated of a percent score that is calculated from the IRT score. It is an adjusted score and not the raw percentage score. True scores cannot be directly compared year by year without the linking process but it should give a better idea of the learning outcome.



19. This increase has reduced the pupil to teacher ratio (PTR) significantly to 32 in basic education and 24 in secondary education (table 6). For example, between 2011 and 2016, the number of teachers grew by 80 percent to 14,943 – 12,631 in basic and 2,312 in senior secondary (table 6). At the same time the proportion of teachers who are qualified has increased to 90 percent (table 7) due to sustained efforts by the government to adequately address the number and quality of teachers. The majority of teachers (70 percent) are in government or grant aided schools. The other 30 percent are equally divided between conventional private schools and madrassas. Government schools tend to have a higher percentage of qualified teachers than other school types and the majority of unqualified teachers are in madrassas.

Table 6. Trends in pupil teacher ratio, 2011 to 2016 (all school types including Madrassa).

		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Enrollment	Basic	305,903	324,775	341,737	362,330	383,679	399,567
	SSS	37,790	40,533	45,041	49,113	51,225	56,001
Teachers	Basic	7,339	8,762	9,741	10,618	11,739	12,631
	SSS	954	1,226	1,590	1,971	2,099	2,312
PTR	Basic	42	37	35	34	33	32
	SSS	40	33	28	25	24	24

Table 7. Percentage of teachers who are qualified, all school types including Madrassa (2011-16)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
LBS	75	77	85	88	88	89
UBS	91	90	93	95	95	97
BCS	59	61	70	74	77	81
SSS	96	96	94	94	94	96
Total	77	78	85	87	88	90

20. The Gambia has had notable success in not only increasing the numbers of teachers but also in equalizing their deployment. Traditionally the more remote regions have had higher pupil teacher ratios, and a lower proportion of qualified teachers. Over the last decade, this situation has changed significantly. Against the overall lower PTR, variation between regions is not as significant. There is little inter-regional variation in regions 1-5, but region 6 has a higher ratio at 42. Similarly, the percentage of qualified teachers is not largely varied between regions. In regions 1-5 for example over 95 percent of teachers are qualified, however region 6 is again the outlier with 91.4 percent of teachers as qualified.

Table 8. Pupil teacher ratio by region 2016.

Row Labels	Enrollment	Teachers	PTR
Region 1	65,216	2041	32
Region 2	114,907	3506	33
Region 3	36,508	1240	29
Region 4	16,154	558	29
Region 5	31,986	1013	32



Region 6	28,638	678	42
Total	293,409	9036	32

* Figures are for grades 1-9 in government and grant aided schools.

21. **This reduction in disparities of qualified teachers is partially attributable to the Government’s hardship allowance which has been paid to teachers in remote schools (defined as more than 3km from a main road) for over a decade.** In 2014 this hardship allowance was extended to provide an additional remote hardship allowance for teachers in schools over 9km from a main road. The 2016 data show that there are now a slightly higher percentage of qualified teachers in hardship schools than in other schools.

Table 9. Proportion of teachers in hardship schools who are qualified (2016)

	N of teachers				% qualified		
	Not Hardship	3-8km	>9km		Not Hardship	3-8km	>9km
Region 1	2020	21	...		96	100	
Region 2	3506		95		
Region 3	680	286	274		95	94	99
Region 4	333	122	103		99	100	100
Region 5	488	246	279		97	96	98
Region 6	181	174	323		86	93	93
Total	7208	849	979		96	96	97

*Figures are for government and grant aided schools and exclude teacher trainees.

22. **Despite these successful efforts, shortages of teachers of mathematics and sciences at the senior secondary level remain.** This is a difficult challenge as a shortage of school leavers with mathematics and science skills means that those who do have many attractive options. Further the challenge is cyclical as the absence of a critical mass of quality mathematics teachers makes it difficult to raise standards in secondary schools, and to ensure future LBS teachers have sufficient understanding of mathematics and science. Similar deficiencies in competencies can sometimes be found in English teaching and impact foundational skills acquisition at all levels. This impacts quality as teachers who are not confident in their content knowledge may skip certain topics, or provide incorrect information.

23. This quality challenge is partially the result of adjustments to Gambia College entry requirements, or conditional admits to the Gambia College in response to the low supply of new entrants which would have resulted in insufficient numbers of teachers.² In response to the deficiency a large scale in-service training program for LBS teachers who did not have WASSCE credits in English and mathematics was launched. Take-up of the initiative was large perhaps partially due to financial incentives associated with WASSCE credit. In implementation, it became apparent that while attendance of training was high the WASSCE standard was too challenging for many of the teachers. For example, of the first cohort of 3000 who completed 130 days of training, only 15 achieved WASSCE credit in both English and

² There was a period in time when Gambia College could not get enough entrants with expected minimum standard of 4 WASSCE credits and admitted those that did not meet the minimum. Additionally, a conditional admission of those that did not have both English and math WASSCE credits with the idea that those without the math credit would achieve it prior to graduation although this was not strictly enforced. And lastly, it is not always the case that those who do achieve the WASSCE credit in mathematics have the right understanding of basic mathematics in addition to being able to effectively teach the subject (memorization for the test rather than an accurate assessment of mathematics teaching). All of these resulted in a lower qualified applicant pool.



mathematics. The training has since been reorganized with the support of international consultants to focus more on ensuring mastery of LBS and UBS content and on developing pedagogical skills. Pre-and post-testing of participating teachers indicate some improvement in content knowledge, but that progress is slower than anticipated. Since then, all the trainers had exams to test content knowledge in mathematics and English, which showed that almost of the trainers have sufficient content knowledge. As a result, in 2016, international consultants started training trainers on the pedagogical skills to teach in an interactive approach rather than one way teaching. In parallel Gambia College as part of pre-service training has developed a new curriculum to improve teacher content knowledge which will be introduced in 2017.³

24. **An innovative pilot with the New Jersey Center for Teaching and Learning (NJCTL) focused on math and science teaching where results were relatively weak, has improved integration of ICT in classrooms and a scalable approach to improved math and science.** The Progressive Science Initiative and Progressive Math Initiative (PSI-PMI) approach was designed to increase student access to and achievement in rigorous mathematics and science courses. The courses are characterized by a combination of free digital content, including instructional materials and assessment tools to teach sequenced mathematics and sciences courses, and an approach to teaching which emphasizes direct instruction mixed with small group discussion and problem solving. Technology use is integral to the process and integrates interactive whiteboards into the lessons. A three-year pilot to 24 upper basic and senior secondary schools demonstrated important gains in learning including for example increases in percentage of students receiving one of the top three WASSCE scores in subject area exams of physics, further mathematics, chemistry and science grew at a faster pace than those schools that did not participate, and faster rates of improvement were noticeable at WASSCE passing levels as well. Given these promising results, the Government is pursuing a scale-up by introducing an English language arts set of modules in addition to the PSI-PMI and broadening the pilot to more teachers/schools.

25. **An Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) and Education Sector Analysis (ESA) are currently under development and will support key priorities of access and quality improvement.** The ESSP focus areas will be access & equity and quality of education. Priority areas in access and equity will include, for example, physical facilities provision, special needs education, gender equity initiatives, and ECD. Priority areas in quality will include, for example, curriculum, examination, early literacy skills and teacher training, and teaching and learning materials. The MoBSE and MoHERST are currently revising the ESSP and developing the ESA as well as a three-year implementation plan of the ESSP. In 2013, an earlier ESSP was developed (2014-22), however it is under revision to align with the newly ratified Education policy (2016-30). All three documents will be finalized and submitted to GPE by June 1, 2017.

Relationship to CPF

The last World Bank Group country strategy for The Gambia was the Second JPS (FY2013 to FY2016), which was a joint document (Report #72140) of the World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB). The WBG had been planning to extend the validity of that strategy, but following the change of government in early 2017, decided instead to prepare a Country Engagement Note (CEN), expected to be delivered Fall 2017, explaining how the WBG will engage with the new government, while a Systematic Country Diagnostic and Country Partnership Framework

³ The curriculum revision emphasizes greater alignment of subject content with LBS and UBS curriculum, a stronger focus on methodology with more practice and feedback, an alignment with University of the Gambia curriculum which allows graduates to complete a degree in 3 years (2 years for upper level teachers), and a portfolio based approach where students build a personal portfolio of work at the upper level.



are being developed. The CEN will include a review of the achievements under the Second JPS. The CEN is expected to focus on three areas of engagement: macroeconomic stabilization; restarting growth; and protecting the poorest from the impact of macroeconomic instability. This operation will strongly contribute in this third area.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Note to Task Teams: The PDO has been pre-populated from the datasheet for the first time for your convenience. Please keep it up to date whenever it is changed in the datasheet.

To increase access to ECD and basic education and improve quality of teaching and learning in ECD, basic and secondary education.

Key Results (From PCN)

Table 10. Key PDO Results

Objective	Indicator
Overall project beneficiaries	Direct project beneficiaries (number), of which female (percentage)
Increase access to basic education, including ECD	Additional students in public ECD, Lower Basic Schools (LBS) and Upper Basic Schools (UBS) (Number) (Disaggregated by region)
Increase access to LBS in low enrollment areas	Increase GER LBS in select districts in Region 5
Improve learning in English and mathematics	Improvement in NAT average scores in English and mathematics in Grade 3 from 2016 (baseline) to 2020 (endline).
Improve Quality of Teaching and Learning	Revised classroom observation tool (COT) agreed, and used to observe at least 20 percent of LBS teachers.

D. Concept Description

Component 1: Enhancing Access to ECD and Basic Education

26. Although access to education has improved in the Gambia as described above, numbers of out of school children remain, as do disparities amongst regions. Lack of public ECD provision, distance to school, poorly outfitted classrooms, and financial challenges continue to constitute barriers for children. Component 1 constitutes a selection of carefully chosen interventions, based on previous pilot approaches and priority areas, to increase access to early and basic education.



27. **Subcomponent 1.1 - Increased provision of ECD in Targeted Areas.** The aim of this sub-component is to increase access to ECD, particularly in rural areas, through (i) provision of additional ECD opportunities; and (ii) provision of furniture for newly created ECD centers as well as existing ECD centers, which are not properly equipped. The sub-component will support additional ECD classrooms in rural areas close to existing LBS schools using a blended approach between annexed classrooms and a revised community based approach.^[1] Construction will include classrooms, toilet provision of furniture for each new classroom as well as water points and toilet blocks where needed. Additionally, current ECD classrooms supported under the prior project, which currently do not have appropriate furniture, will be outfitted. The community based model quality inputs (minimum standards for ECD classrooms, revised training) would be supported under sub-component 2.1.

28. **Subcomponent 1.2 – Increased access to LBS.** Increased access to LBS will be facilitated through (i) construction of lower basic schools in Region 5 where communities with low enrollment rate and no LBS within three kilometers, (ii) sensitization campaigns in communities with low enrollment rates, (iii) provision of donkey carts to reduce long distances to schools; and (iv) provision of adequate furniture to accommodate larger numbers of children. Through the sensitization campaign, the importance of attending schools will be conveyed to village leaders, villagers, and parents in the communities to sensitize communities the benefits of formal education. It will be conducted in collaboration with the women’s bureau, mothers’ clubs, Regional Education Directorates (REDs), and the gender unit under the MoBSE. In addition, after the policy pronouncement in 2004 that no student should have to walk more than 3 kilometers to a LBS customized donkey carts were developed on a pilot basis to provide transportation to early grade students who were more likely to still find the three kilometer walk burdensome. Under the most recent project a newer lightweight design was introduced and the donkey carts successfully allowed for students who were unable to travel longer distances by foot to access the schools. Under this sub-component 100 additional donkey carts^[2], using the light-weight design, will be financed to transport an additional 1000 early childhood and lower basic students daily. Additionally, LBS and UBS classrooms will be outfitted with furniture to increase the capacity within classrooms given lack of desks and chairs within particular schools.^[3]

29. **Subcomponent 1.3 - Revised Incentive Scheme to Faith Based Education Institutions (Majalis).** The Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) program was launched in a pilot bases in 2012. The program is aimed at providing an alternative form of education with minimum curriculum standards to children under difficult circumstances. Such children are in the custody of religious leaders whose responsibility is to teach them the Holy Quran and other Islamic values. The condition attached to the provision of a monthly stipend of US\$3 per month per child to the custodian (religious leaders) is the release of the children to attend classes. The children are exposed to literacy and numeracy classes for five hours a week each. It started with 12 pilot sites and was expanded to 17 sites in 2016. Facilitators (teachers) were trained and

^[1] A blend between the annexed approach and a community based approach is presented here. An earlier impact evaluation carried out in the Gambia comparing learning gains in both the community based and annexed approach showed better gains through an annexed approach and very little gains in the community based approach. It is possible that poor performance in community based ECD may have been the result of weaknesses in the implementation of the community based model, rather than the approach itself. There are settings throughout The Gambia which could benefit from both approaches and cost-effectiveness of both models needs to be considered. As such, a revised community based approach which addresses weaknesses of the earlier model is being explored and will be elaborated in the subsequent April mission, for a blended set of interventions moving forward.

^[2] The number of donkey carts to be built is still tentative. The project covers the costs of the donkey carts, and the Government covers the costs of the donkeys.

^[3] An assessment of numbers of desks and chairs per classroom is being carried out to inform exactly how many are needed.



teaching and learning materials were developed, validated and printed for use. The evaluation of the program was conducted in September 2014, which showed effective learning for acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills, protecting children from street begging, and access to alternative livelihood options. There will be another evaluation to be conducted including looking at a possible new model. The new model will provide in-kind assistance rather than cash, with a goal of sustainability, for example, materials that will support their farming or livestock raising. There are already a select group of Majalis that are doing this with support from elsewhere. The sub-component will finance the following activities: (i) sustain the existing arrangements with 17 Majalis in the CCT pilot; (ii) either scale up the current model or provide small one-of development grants to Majalis which agree to include numeracy and literacy classes based on the above-mentioned assessment; and (iii) provide facilitators to teacher literacy and numeracy in the Majalis including training of facilitators and a small stipend.

30. **Sub-component 1.4 - Supporting Learners with Special Needs.** The Gambia has a twin track approach to provision of access for students with special needs. The students who need very special facilities go to special schools, located in Banjul. There are three special schools in the country all located in Banjul; the school for the blind and visually impaired, the school for those having hearing difficulty and the school for those having learning disability. The children far from Banjul cannot easily benefit from these specialized schools. The MoBSE aims to provide additional special schools in other regions, but anticipates that this can be funded from other sources. As a matter of policy, students with moderate special needs are accommodated in mainstream schools wherever possible. In some cases, special equipment is provided to enable this integration. Typical items include hearing aids, specialist glasses, braille reading materials, and wheelchairs. The proposed project will finance support in identification of disabilities and ways to provide support, as well as a small fund for provision of special needs equipment and school modifications.

31. **Sub-component 1.5 – Second Chance Education Model.** Innovative options for second-chance education are desirable in The Gambia given the significant number of out of school children, some of whom have missed the opportunity for education at the commensurate expected school-age. This sub-component would support a feasibility study of options for provision of second chance education, possible models for a pilot, and, ultimately, implementation of the pilot program based on the findings from the feasibility study.

Component 2. Improving Quality of Teaching and Learning

32. This component aims to improve the quality of teaching and learning through a mixed set of strategic interventions which address improvements to early childhood and early grade teaching and learning; in-service and pre-service teacher training; strategies to improve the supply and deployment of teachers through various incentives; support to teaching and ICT utilization in mathematics and science; and provision of critical teaching and learning materials. Each of the sub-components is elaborated below.

New initiatives in early childhood and early grade teaching

33. **Subcomponent 2.1 - Enhanced quality in ECD.** This subcomponent is aimed at enhance the quality of teaching in ECD, through revitalized training and teaching and learning materials. Recently the Gambia College with support from a consulting firm reviewed and revised the ECD teaching curriculum. Teacher trainees will be enrolled in the new curriculum in September 2017. In addition, technical assistance will be provided to review the quality of current ECD classroom practices and to develop an in-service training plan with MoBSE. In-service training, informed by these recommendations, will be provided to current teachers. A proposed revision to the community based approach will also



be explored to rectify any weaknesses in an earlier model, and subsequently inform changes to and potential scale up of the current community approach potentially including revised training and format, and development of minimum standards.⁴ In addition, ECD teaching and learning materials will be provided for ECD centers, which do not currently have adequate materials.

34. **Subcomponent 2.2 - Improved literacy teaching in early grades.** This subcomponent will enhance the teaching of literacy in early grades as part of a national drive to improve early grade reading. The Gambia has previously applied three different reading approaches namely, Serholt Early Grade Reading Ability (SEGRA), Jolly phonics, and a national language program. In 2014, the MoBSE combined these three programs and created the Gambia’s national early grade reading program called The Gambia Reads. The Gambia Reads is a biliteracy program consisting of both national languages and English. Currently, the MoBSE with support from international linguists have been revising textbooks and developing leveled readers of all seven national languages and English for grades 1-3. Subsequently, they will revise the Teacher Guide and the Training Manual, and train trainers of national languages as well as training tutors of the Gambia College English Department. It is expected that all of this work will be completed by September 2017. As such, the proposed sub-component will finance training early grade teachers based on the revised textbooks, and printing of the teaching and learning materials. It will enhance the classroom practices of teachers by in-service refresher training focused on literacy teaching, and provide increased support and supervision for literacy teaching.

In-Service Teaching Training and Support to Teachers

35. **Subcomponent 2.3 - Support to in-service teacher training at the LBS level.** Following limited improvement in teacher mastery of content through in-service teacher training for LBS teachers, as described earlier, in-service training was revised, with the support of international consultants to focus more on ensuring mastery of LBS and UBS content in English and mathematics, and on developing pedagogical skills. Pre-and post-testing of participating teachers indicates there was some improvement in content knowledge, especially in English, but that progress was slower than anticipated. Since then, all of the trainers have had examinations to test content knowledge and math and English and have shown sufficient content knowledge. As a result in 2016, international consultants started training of the trainers on pedagogical skills to teach and interactive approach rather than one way teaching so that trainings are more effective. The proposed sub-component will continue to support in-service teacher training at the LBS level targeting those who require improved content knowledge and pedagogical skills. The scale of training and selection method will be further discussed.

36. **Subcomponent 2.4 - Sustaining the existing teacher hardship allowance.** As described earlier The Gambia has been successful in attracting and retaining teachers in remote schools through the hardship allowance of up to 40 percent of basic salary for teachers in schools more than 3 km from the main road in regions 3-6 in 2005 and the subsequent addition in 2014, of an enhanced hardship allowance for teachers in remote hardship schools (more than 9 km from a road) and for female teachers in hardship schools (up to 60 percent of basic salary as seen below).

Table 11. Hardship allowance bonus rates (% of basic salary)

Region	Hardship (>3km) Male	Remote hardship (>9km) Male	Hardship (>3km) Female	Remote hardship (>9km) Female
3 and 4	30	40	40	50
5	35	45	45	55

⁴ This is pending further analysis of both approaches and discussion with the government, which will take place in April in order to take informed strategic decisions on the blended approach.



6	40	50	50	60
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37. Partly as a result of this allowance, The Gambia has been able to ensure that a high percentage of the teachers in remote rural schools are qualified. The evaluation of hardship allowance in 2013 reported that hardship schools have lower pupil-qualified teacher ratios than non-hardship schools and that there is currently no statistically significant difference between students’ NAT scores in hardship and non-hardship schools. The proportion of female teachers in hardship schools has been slower to change, but is increasing slightly - however, it makes sense to retain this incentive, as it seems to have some influence. At present the original READ project is financing the hardship allowance for LBS teachers, and Government of The Gambia (GoTG) is paying the allowance for UBS teachers. The proposed project intends to continue this approach. It is important to retain these allowances, as they are effective in ensuring teacher distribution. The gender component is not progressing as quickly, but as its cost only arises when it is effective, it should be sustained. A policy of paired posting, which would allow two teachers who are married to be posted to the same district if they are willing to be assigned to a hardship school is also being explored. A formal policy that is publically shared may increase uptake particularly when combined with the hardship allowances.

Table 12. Number of teachers in receipt of hardship allowance 2014-2016

	2014	2015	2016
Normal hardship allowance (3-8km)	864	901	978
Remote hardship allowance (>9km)	772	851	848
Total	1,636	1,752	1,826
Increase		116	74
% increase		7.1	4.2

38. **Subcomponent 2.5 – Teacher supervision and classroom observation.** This subcomponent will support strengthening teacher supervision and improved utilization of the classroom observation tool. The Gambia has a network of “cluster monitors”, each responsible for oversight of a cluster of about 10 schools. Cluster monitors were introduced to provide monitoring and support for teachers, and particularly for unqualified teachers. Cluster monitors are expected to visit each school at least twice a month, and are provided with motorbikes, and a fuel allowance to ensure that they can travel easily. Since the establishment of cluster monitors, there has been a reduction in the proportion of unqualified teachers, and the cluster monitors have been assigned some administrative responsibilities, such as ensuring that EMIS data is collected. In recent years, the MoBSE is seeking to ensure that cluster monitors place a greater focus on their role as pedagogical support. To achieve this, cluster monitors have been provided with a classroom observation tool (COT), and their activities have been recorded by the Standards and Quality Assurance Directorate (SQAD) of the MoBSE.

39. A standard classroom observation tool was developed, piloted and implemented in the last two years. It was intended to provide a mechanism to encourage more supervision of teachers (by cluster monitors and head teachers), and to focus that supervision on the quality of teaching⁵. In parallel, the PSI/PMI program has developed its own teacher monitoring tool, which is also focused on classroom observation. It is now proposed to review both pilot tools

⁵ SQAD has collected the data on how schools are using the COT from a sample of 15 percent of LBS schools, and will shortly present data on the findings.



and COT from other countries and see if a more refined and unified instrument can be developed. Under this sub-component additional training and capacity development of cluster monitors will be supported, in conjunction with the training of head teachers and the Regional Education Directorate (RED), a stronger standardized mechanism to facilitate the cluster monitors teacher supervision will be introduced (standardized reporting and observation methods); revision of the COT and training on the COT, as well as replacement of nonfunctioning motorbikes.

Pre-service teacher training and Improving the Supply of Teachers in Priority Areas

40. **Sub-component 2.6 - Support pre-service curriculum review for grades 1-9 in all subjects.** The Gambia College has found that some teacher trainees have difficulty with the content knowledge. In response, the pre-service curriculum in the Gambia College has been recently reviewed and revised by the Gambia College staff with assistance from international consultants in 2016 and 17 with the aims of enhancing the relevant content knowledge and the pedagogical content knowledge of teacher trainees. The revised curriculum will be introduced for ECD Certificate, Primary Teacher's Certificate (PTC) and HTC in the 2017 enrollment. Under this sub-component the Gambia College will also coordinate with the In-Service Education Training (INSET) unit of the MoBSE to support teacher trainees in utilizing national languages in teaching literacy up to grade 3 as supported under sub-component 2.2. To adequately fulfill revision of the pre-service curriculum a review of the curriculum of all subjects for grades 1-9 will be conducted. Printing of the next round of corresponding textbooks (English, Mathematics, Science, Social and Environmental Studies, and the national language and the French language) will be supported for distribution in 2020 and will be aligned to any curricular changes.

41. To ensure that teacher standards are maintained the Gambia will introduce a teacher competency test, which can be used at the end of pre-service teacher training to assess teachers at the Gambia College. In effect this test will, combined with the reports of teaching placement, become the "license to practice" for teachers and will assess relevant content knowledge and other areas of professional competence. It will be benchmarked against international standards and revised regularly.

42. **Sub-component 2.7 – Recruiting and Incentivizing Teacher Trainees.** To attract school leavers with the required qualifications for more higher levels of teacher training (those that go on to teach upper basic are required to receive a higher teachers certificate (HTC) while those that go on to teach senior secondary attend University of the Gambia) in order to build a stronger supply of teachers, particularly in mathematics a mix of incentives will be provided to teachers in training. The sub-component will finance payment of a stipend of GMD 150 per month (US\$3) for HTC teacher trainees at Gambia College (excluding those who are in the HTC program upgrading from PTC, as they are already on salary). This will be in addition to the standard stipend of GMD350 per month (US\$8) paid by the MoHERST. To provide additional incentives, those enrolling in mathematics will benefit from an additional monthly GMD400 (US\$9).⁶

43. In addition the sub-component, in an effort to increase the number of University of the Gambia students with strong mathematics and science skills who choose to become teachers at the SSS, the sub-component will support tuition scholarships for those who commit to becoming teachers. Students at the UTG who enter into degrees in

⁶ . As of December 2015, a total of 2,976 teacher trainees receive stipends of GMD500 (About US\$11) per month, among which GMD350 paid by MoHERST and GMD150 paid by the READ project. In addition, approximately 260 teacher trainees who specialize mathematics receive additional GMD400 from the READ project. Therefore, it costs approximately GMD19,104,000 annually to provide stipends.



mathematics and science will receive a full tuition scholarship (approximately \$800 annually) if they commit to teaching after graduation for a minimum of 4 years. Approximately 30-40 scholarships will be provided annually.

Improving Skills in Mathematics, Science and ICT

44. Sub-component 2.8 – Enhanced approaches to skill development in Mathematics, Science, and Technology.

The project will support a strategic set of interventions across multiple levels of education to facilitate improved skills development in mathematics and science, as well as ICT integration into teaching and learning, through (i) scale up of the PSI-PMI initiative, (ii) an innovative ICT learning approach which supports mathematics acquisition through mobile based play; (iii) supplemental classes for girls in mathematics and sciences, and (iv) equipment of labs.

45. Scale-up of the PSI-PMI initiative to teachers who have not previously been exposed to the methodology as well as introduction of newly developed digital content of English will be supported. Provision of equipment such as interactive white boards, student polling devices, computers for teachers, and provision of associated teaching and learning materials will be provided to facilitate the interactive learning approach. The scale of the expansion and selection of schools will be determined after the CN. In addition, READ has supported the innovative ICT learning approach called “learning by playing” by developing a game that is completely aligned with the grade 3 mathematics Gambian curriculum. In 2016 the MoBSE purchased 1,000 tablets with their budget and conducted pre-implementation in a small scale, which facilitated refinements to the game based on the findings. The project will support implementation of the game and an impact evaluation to assess if mathematics games can have positive impacts on learning outcomes. The sub-component will also support supplemental classes for girls in mathematics and science outside of normal school time, to address lower performance in science and mathematics (exact form, and scale is to be determined) as well as equipment of science laboratories in select SSSs.

Component 3: Technical and Institutional Support

46. **Subcomponent 3.1 - Implementation of Communication Strategy.** As communication by the education ministry was previously ad-hoc, in 2016 the MoBSE developed a cohesive communication strategy to support the education sector’s strategic initiatives. It has since been reviewed by the Bank’s communication team and finalized. The proposed project will support the implementation of the communication strategy including procuring equipment, materials, publishing, dissemination, and logistics and administration.

47. **Subcomponent 3.2 - Institutional support and capacity building.** Support will be provided to the implementing agency for capacity building initiatives and project management. The sub-component will support (i) continuous implementation of assessment of learning outcomes and providing support to West Africa Examination Council (WAEC), (ii) strengthening data systems by: developing a unique student ID system from ECD to University, providing TA to strengthen MoHERST information system and develop a unified EMIS system between the MoBSE and MoHERST, and providing support for annual Education management Information System (EMIS) exercise; (iii) Project Coordination Unit (PCU) salaries and operating costs to coordinate the proposed project, and (iv) building MoBSE and MoHERST staff capacity development.

B. Overall Risk and Explanation

48. The overall risk is assessed as substantial based on the high risk rating associated with the macroeconomic context and substantial ratings related to political and governance, and, institutional capacity for implementation and



sustainability. The other ratings are all assessed as moderate. Limited fiscal space due to macroeconomic context presents sustainability challenges which are elaborated below.

49. **Political and Governance.** Political and governance risk is assessed as *substantial*. In December of 2016, the opposition candidate, Adama Barrow, won the presidential election and was sworn in in Dakar, Senegal in January 2017. The election represented Gambia's first democratic transfer of power in its history. The new government's chief priority is focusing on growing the economy, and the administration is pledging reforms that focus on financial transparency and governance. As with any change in elected leadership, there is an expected period of transition and turnover amongst ministerial and other government staff which may potentially cause short term delays. Delay risks to the education sector are largely mitigated by a highly experienced PCU and the relatively quick assignment of a new education minister.

50. **Macroeconomic.** Macroeconomic risk is assessed as *high*. As described earlier, fiscal strains have mounted substantially because of fiscal slippages and poor performance of state-owned enterprises that have led to significant buildup of public sector debt. The fiscal deficit averaged 11 percent as a share of GDP from 2013 through 2015, contributing to a rise in public sector debt to 108 percent of GDP in 2015 from 83.3 percent in 2013. Heavy reliance on costly domestic markets and external donor funding further impact fiscal sustainability.

51. **Institutional Capacity for Implementation and Sustainability.** Risk associated with Institutional capacity for implementation and sustainability is assessed as *substantial*. The institutional capacity of the PCU and associated ministries is sound given the extensive experience managing affiliated Bank projects, and strong technical capacity in the sector, however dependence on donor funding to the sector makes the risk to sustainability high. Limited fiscal space due to macroeconomic risks and high national debt can potentially impact the fiscal sustainability of the interventions. In 2016, for example, due to limited fiscal space in the education sector as a consequence of growing public debt, additional financing through the World Bank was approved to temporarily finance (in the form of reimbursement) teachers' salaries. Although the government is expected to fully resume paying teachers' salaries, the intervention is an example of potential sustainability risks. As such the overall rating for this category is assessed as substantial.

C. Economic Analysis

Development impact in terms of expected benefits and costs

52. The proposed Project aims to reduce the incidence of out-of-school children and to increase access and quality in all levels of education. The main focus of the Project is to increase access for primary school age children (age 7-12) where the out-of-school rate stands at about 20 percent and to improve the primary completion rate which is currently at 75 percent. In addition, it seeks to increase participation in ECD where the access rate is currently low with a GER of about 45 percent and where services are mainly provided by the private sector (72 percent). The Project mainly targets economically disadvantaged groups and areas where the incidence of out-of-school is high and access to education is constrained. Several studies have shown that ECD provision is linked to important benefits. It tends to increase school readiness, reduce the likelihood of being out-of-school, including dropping out from school, increase participation rates and improve the chance of survival through the system, and timely completion of desired level of education. Thus, the



proposed project will support the provision of ECD with the objective to increase access to primary education and beyond. The proposed Project will also support quality improvement in all levels of education (ECD to secondary levels). The Project's beneficiaries will be estimated based on the number of children who gained access to education based on the Project's related components and the overall improvement of the quality of education from ECD to secondary levels.

53. In terms of the benefits to education, the Gambian labor market provides a strong signal that investment on education yields important returns to the individual and to the household. In particular, better education is associated with better earnings, an increased probability of wage employment and increased likelihood of finding employment in more productive sectors. For example, estimates from the recent household survey (2015) shows that the attainment of some secondary education is associated with 40 percent more earnings compared with those who have no education. Survey data will be used to estimate the economic and other social benefits of education to generate internal rate of return (IRR) of education. It is expected that the IRR will be high based on the previous Projects' estimations.

Rationale for public sector provision/financing

54. Public sector provision of education services, and, as such, public financing of the education sector is indispensable in The Gambia. The Gambia is a low income country where 48 percent of population live under the national poverty line and with an estimated GDP per capita of 472 USD. Poverty is one of the key factors that contribute to the high out-of-school rate, especially since the cost of schooling is one of the key reasons why children are out-of-school and since the incidence is high among children from the poorer households. Given the importance of education in poverty reduction and high inequality in access to education, there is a strong rationale for the government to intervene in the system in order to ensure inclusive economic growth and development. In particular, without public support, many children from poorer households would not be able to go to school and many households would fall into the intergenerational poverty trap. Through this Project, it is expected that the government would reduce inequality across key socio-demographic groups as well as reduce regional inequalities. In terms of capacity, the government provides education services to most Gambian children at lower cost than private schools, and tends to serve the poor more than private schools.

Value added of Bank's support

55. The Bank has been supporting the Gambia education sector since the 1970's and has been one of the main development partners during the last 40 years. The Bank has a comparative advantage over other development partners given its consistent engagement in the sector and the successful implementation of several education sector Projects in the past. Through its working experience, the Bank also has gained a better understanding of the education sector issues and has developed strategies and methods to support the government most efficiently. The Bank also conducted several ASAs in order to better understand the sectors issues and to provide evidence-based support to the government. Furthermore, the current Project is also directly aligned with Banks' twin goals of inclusive growth and shared prosperity, and the Bank has global expertise who would successfully support the implementation of the Project.

Description of methodology/scope and next steps

56. The poverty Global Practice recently supported the government on the national household survey collection as part of their poverty assessment support. The proposed project will utilize the household survey to identify target beneficiaries (both in terms of poverty profile and geographic areas) and to estimate the economic and social benefits of



the Project's investment on education. Econometric methods will be used to estimate the benefits of the Project support and generate key indicators to carry out the cost-benefit analysis (CBA) and estimate the economic internal rates of return (IRR). The full economic and financial analysis will be prepared to guide the design, negotiation and implementation of the proposed project and will be incorporated as part of the Project Appraisal Document (PAD).

D. Implementing Agency Assessment

57. **The proposed project will be implemented over a period of three years.** Similarly to previous projects, an inter-ministerial senior management team (SMT) will retain oversight of the sector and the project activities. This team comprises the Ministers from the MoBSE and MoHERST, the permanent secretaries, the deputy permanent secretaries, and the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) manager. Once a year, a representative from Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA) will be invited by the SMT to discuss sector budget preparation and execution issues.

58. The majority of the members in SMT and PCU who implemented the Bank financed projects such as Third Education Project Phase II (P077903, 2006-13), EFA-FTI Project (P115427, 2009-13), and READ Project (P133079, ongoing) has not changed the last decade, and represent an experienced, technically able group of representatives. The PCU in MoBSE will be responsible for project coordination and procurement, FM, contract management, donor coordination, and compliance with safeguards policies. The M&E unit in MoBSE will be responsible for all sector M&E activities including those related to the proposed project. The PCU is fully integrated into the MoBSE and the team is well versed in IDA procedures including procurement under the previous and on-going IDA programs as well as all other donor operations including AfDB, BADEA, IDB, among others. The PCU has been functioning in a satisfactory manner in previously financed Bank projects. With this experience, it is expected that the proposed project will highly benefit from the arrangement of the MoBSE and PCU and will help in mitigating the residual risks that may exist, and is largely safeguarded from any impacts that result in changing of Ministers. In addition, the PCU comprises a qualified team including (i) a Project Manager and Deputy Project Manager who coordinates the proposed project, a financial controller and two accountants, (iii) a Construction Unit comprising three engineers and six construction monitors and a (iv) Procurement Unit. Thus, the current functions would remain appropriate in the proposed project.

59. While the MoBSE will be the key implementation agency, the MoHERST will be consulted for all pre-service teacher training activities since Gambia College oversight falls under its mandate and will thus carry joint-responsibility. The Regional directorates will be responsible for supervising all school related interventions via the head teachers and cluster monitors within their respective region. The directors in the MoBSE Headquarters will oversee all activities related to their mandates including in-service teacher training, planning, curriculum, monitoring and evaluation, early childhood development, standards and quality assurance. The WAEC, in partnership with SQAD and the Planning Directorate in the MoBSE, will continue to be responsible for assessment related activities.

SAFEGUARDS

A. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

Nationwide.



B. Borrower’s Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

There is limited Borrower environmental and social safeguard capacity, in spite of the implementation of several projects in the sector, in recent years. This, for the most part, stems from the limited coordination among project implementers (MoBSE) and the National Environmental Agency (NEA), in particular, in carrying out projects' environmental and social function. This concerns mainly the monitoring of the implementation of mitigation measures and compliance monitoring, a role that was devolved to the NEA through a MOU for compliance monitoring signed before the effectiveness of the ongoing project. The NEA recently accompanied the PCU on site monitoring and supervision missions, and they produced reports outlining their findings and recommendations for the PCU. Steps are currently being taken to strengthen the coordination between the PCU and the NEA for better safeguards monitoring in the sector.

The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) will prepare a new the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) for the proposed project, although they will largely be an adaptation of the ongoing project’s instruments. Like the ongoing project, the proposed project is set out to strengthen, as necessary, relevant stakeholders' capacity to meet their safeguard requirements. In other words, the proposed project shall implement any capacity strengthening measures that will be identified in environmental and social instruments applicable.

C. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Gernot Brodnig, Melissa C. Landes

D. Policies that might apply

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	OP 4.01 is triggered because of the potential environmental impacts resulting from project activities. However, those impacts are expected to be minimal, site-specific and manageable to an acceptable level. Due to the difficulty inherent in defining what the real environmental impacts of envisioned project, and determining what mitigation measures to put in place, an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) will be prepared and publicly disclosed in-country and at the Bank prior to the appraisal of the proposed project. The ESMF will formulate standard methods and procedures, along with institutional arrangements for screening, review, approval and implementation and monitoring of specific Environmental and Social Impact Assessment/ Environmental Management Plan (ESIA/ESMP) for schools construction subprojects, including the preparation of environmental clauses to be inserted in contractors' bidding documents.



Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	TBD	This will be determined when the real environmental impacts of envisioned project is defined.
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	There will not be forest involved in the proposed project.
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	There will not be pest management involved in the proposed project.
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	TBD	It is unknown which sub-project sites may contain Physical Cultural Resources (PCR). As a measure of prudence potential impacts on PCR are assessed in the context of the ESMF and mitigation measures commensurate to those impacts, including proper handling of chance finds, are included in the design, screening, implementation, monitoring of project activities, in accordance with national and Bank policies and procedures are included in the ESMF.
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	No	There will not be indigenous peoples affected in the proposed project.
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	Yes	<p>The project interventions will avoid where possible adverse impacts on people, land and other economic resources and livelihoods. In situations where this cannot be avoided, the Borrower will prepare and disclose in-country and at the Bank InfoShop a Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) to address the needs of persons who will be affected by loss of economic activities, access to resources, land acquisition and/or involuntary resettlement.</p> <p>In addition, where applicable, site-specific Resettlement Action Plans (RAPs) or Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plans (ARAPs) will be prepared and disclosed prior to school infrastructure construction.</p>
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	There will not be dams constructed in the proposed project.
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	The proposed project will not be on International Waterways.
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	The proposed project will not be in disputed areas.

E. Safeguard Preparation Plan

Tentative target date for preparing the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

Aug 31, 2017



Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing should be specified in the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

Safeguards instruments (ESMF and RPF) will draw on those of the predecessor project, and will be prepared in July/August, 2017.

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APPROVAL

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Note to Task Teams: End of system generated content, document is editable from here.