Additional Financing for the Girls’ Education and Women’s Empowerment Project (P169975)

Social Assessment Action Plan

Background:

1. The proposed Additional Financing and restructuring of the Girls’ Education and Women’s Empowerment (GEWEL) Project aim to deepen and widen its human capital impacts by expanding coverage and providing more complementary support to poor women and girls. GEWEL supports the achievement of human capital outcomes through educating, employing, and empowering women and adolescent girls from the poorest households. The AF and restructuring will enhance this impact by:

   (a) **Changing component and financing** to:

      (i) expand the Keeping Girls in School (KGS) and Supporting Women’s Livelihoods (SWL) components to additional beneficiaries;

      (ii) add a subcomponent under KGS to strengthen the Government’s social cash transfer (SCT); and,

      (iii) introduce a more concerted approach to mitigating and responding to Gender-based Violence (GBV) risks.

   (b) **Revising the program targets** in the Results Framework and adding new indicators;

   (c) **Extending the closing date** from September 30, 2020 to April 30, 2024.

   (d) **Adopting the ‘World Bank Procurement Regulations for Investment Project Financing (IPF) for Borrowers: Procurement for Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services’,** dated July 2016 and revised in November 2017 and August 2018 for the parent project and AF.

2. **GEWEL is a well performing project which is on track to meet its Project Development Objective.** GEWEL aims to support the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) to increase access to livelihood support for women and access to secondary education for disadvantaged adolescent girls in extremely poor households in selected districts. This IDA-funded project of US$65 million was approved in May 2015, became effective in April 2016 and is currently scheduled to close on September 30, 2020. To date, over 3.5 years of implementation, the project disbursement rate under IDA financing is 64 percent.

3. **Progress toward achievement of the PDO has been rated Moderately Satisfactory or above.** All PDO indicators are either on track or exceed their targets, showing that GEWEL has contributed towards increasing the school enrollment of adolescent girls from poor households and improving the livelihoods of poor women. More than half of all intermediate indicators (10 out of 15) are also either on track or exceed their targets. Data for one intermediate indicator are not yet available and two of them are lagging; the government staff and World Bank task team are closely following up to ensure that they are brought back on track.

4. **Key progress results include:**

5. **Component 1: Supporting Women’s Livelihoods,** implemented by the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (MCDSS), is on track to provide 75,000 women from extremely poor households with a package consisting of life and business skills training, a productive grant equivalent to US$225, mentorship, and support to form savings groups. As of October 2019, 32,497 beneficiaries of Phase 1 and Phase 2 have received the SWL package. Another 41,014 Phase 3 beneficiaries are scheduled to be enrolled in the project by the end of 2019. The SWL has made substantial investments in system

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1 Annex 2 provides more detailed information on GEWEL and its progress in implementation.
strengthening and capacity building of the MCDSS. The impact of this component is being measured through a randomized impact evaluation.

6. **Component 2: Keeping Girls in School**, implemented by the Ministry of General Education (MOGE), provides school fees\(^2\) for 16,239 female secondary students across 16 districts in all 10 provinces, exceeding its original end-of-project target of 14,000. In 2019, the KGS is enrolling an additional 9,000 girls in 11 new districts. In parallel, the KGS has sought to strengthen systems to better support schools (through regular supervision visits to schools by district teams) and improve attendance rates of girls (through the design of an innovative case management system). MOGE has developed a KGS-MIS that hosts data from school enrolment to payments and will soon include all monitoring data from schools to allow for improved tracking of attendance, dropouts, and performance. To complement this, the Ministry is contracting a firm to carry out independent monitoring of schools and girls receiving KGS support.

7. **Component 3: Institutional Strengthening and Systems Building** has supported the Ministry of Gender (MOG) to (i) oversee and coordinate the project; and (ii) strengthen the national gender policy, which has included investments in the capacity of ministries to mainstream gender. This component has also supported the MCDSS to invest in its core social protection systems. Three distinct innovations are currently being implemented by the MCDSS through GEWEL: (a) an innovative choice-based electronic payment (e-payment) system, which allows SWL beneficiaries to choose their preferred payment service providers (PSPs), has been designed, piloted, and rolled out;\(^3\) (b) a Single Registry of Beneficiaries (SRB) to improve coherence and targeting across programs has been developed by the MCDSS and piloted in 17 districts;\(^4\) and, (c) a Single Window is being piloted in six districts, with the support of the World Bank, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the International Labour Organization, through which the GRZ intends to provide a one-stop shop for the delivery of social sector programs.

**Social Assessment and Action Plan**

8. The GEWEL is investing in activities that aim to improve the well-being of women and girls from the poorest households in selected districts across the country. Women and young girls, particularly those in rural areas, are at risk of experiencing sexual violence due to existing cultural norms and unequal power relations at household level. While participating in the project is expected to enhance their wellbeing, it is possible that this may put them at an even greater risk with their male counterparts leading to sexual abuse or increased sexual violence. In anticipation of this risk, a study exploring how GEWEL may respond to the risks of GBV was conducted to ascertain the level of risk and propose mitigation measures to be implemented and to inform appropriate activities included under the proposed Additional Financing.

9. In response to the findings of the study, a detailed Action Plan to mitigate and respond to GBV risks was developed to be implemented by GEWEL, as part of a broader response through the World Bank’s human development projects, with close coordination between GEWEL and the World Bank-funded Zambia Education Enhancement Project (ZEEP, P158570) and the Zambia Health Services Improvement Project (P145335). The Action Plan further provides information on areas of strengthening client capacity to better manage and respond to GBV risks and the proposed Additional Financing and restructuring aim to support the implementation of this plan. A summary of this action plan follows:

(a) Roll-out the Grievance and Redress Mechanism (GRM) to all project areas and improve the ability of the GRM to accept GBV-related complaints.

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\(^2\) School fees also include fees for formal boarding schools managed by MOGE.

\(^3\) See Case Study on The Future of G2P Payments: Expanding Customer Choice in Zambia” by Silvia Baur-Yazbeck, Craig Kilfoil and Ioana Botea, CGAP Background Documents, March 2019, for more information.

\(^4\) GRZ is building on the SRB to develop an integrated program management system named Zambia Integrated Social Protection Information System (ZISPIS)
(b) Update and maintain the national GBV referral pathway in Project districts

(c) Strengthening the monitoring of the Keeping Girls in School (KGS) component of the GEWEL

(d) Design, pilot roll out of case management system in schools that have KGS beneficiaries

(e) Improve guidelines on standards of boarding facilities, establish achievement of standards certification process and oversight of them by Ministry of General Education.

(f) Sensitization of Ministry of General Education line structure staff and school students on SRGBV, in schools supported by KGS

(g) Design and pilot program to reduce violence against children in the school system through behavioral change at the community level.

10. The preparation of the study and the Action Plan benefited from consultation with gender and GBV-experts across the Ministries of Gender, General Education and Community Development and Social Services, the United Nations, development partners, and the University of Zambia. Further consultations are expected.