PROJECT INFORMATION DOCUMENT (PID)
CONCEPT STAGE

Report No.: AB932

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Second School Access and Improvement</th>
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<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sector</td>
<td>Secondary education (40%);Primary education (40%);Central government administration (20%)</td>
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<td>Project ID</td>
<td>P086994</td>
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<tr>
<td>Borrower(s)</td>
<td>REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI</td>
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</tbody>
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1. Key development issues and rationale for Bank involvement

Djibouti’s population is estimated at 700,000 \(^1\), with 65% living in the capital city, 83% living in urban areas, and 26% composed of refugees. The unemployment rate is currently over 60%. Djibouti lacks a functioning private sector, and most of the country’s GDP is provided by services since Djibouti port and transport services for Ethiopia and northern Somalia, as well as services related to the presence of French and American troops.

Djibouti’s social indicators rank 157th among 174 countries on the UNDP’s Human Development Index. Even by East African regional standards, Djibouti has extremely high rates of infant and under-five mortality, at 114 and 165 per 1000 live births, respectively. Maternal mortality, estimated at 740 per 100,000 live births, is one of the highest in the world. This is largely attributable to high fertility rates. Malnutrition is a serious problem in Djibouti, with indications that 14% of children under the age of five suffer from acute malnutrition and 31% from chronic malnutrition.

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\(^1\) The EDAM and PAPFAM survey have come up with a population figure of 520,000. However, this figure has yet to be validated by Government.
There is great uncertainty regarding HIV/AIDS prevalence levels given that disease surveillance systems are not yet functional. A recent seroprevalence survey, however, indicated that seroprevalence rate is high for the at-risk group, and particularly in Djibouti-ville. The knowledge of HIV/AIDS transmission is low.

Despite progress in expanding access, Djibouti’s education system is not on track to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Illiteracy is extremely high, especially for women (85%). About 50% of children are still out of school and more than 20% of those enrolled do not complete the six years of primary education. There are also large inequalities in access to education services: enrollment varies widely across regions, gender and income levels. Moreover, the system is very costly due to high unit costs for school construction, learning and teaching materials, and teacher salaries.

The Government of Djibouti in general, and the Ministry of Education in particular, are acutely aware of these issues and have set out their objectives and strategies in 3 main documents: (a) the ten-year perspective plan (Schéma Directeur 2000–2010), (b) the medium-term plan 2000–2005 (Plan d’action à moyen terme), and (c) the new Education Law (Loi d’orientation du système éducatif). These documents result from the National Education Forum (États généraux de l’Éducation) organized in December 1999, and in a very participatory manner. Essentially, these documents set the objective of universal primary enrolment by 2010 and progressive increases in access to middle and secondary schooling and significant improvements in quality at all levels. The strategies proposed for achieving these objectives include: (i) significant increase in school facilities, (ii) creating a nine-year basic education cycle, (iii) introducing the competence–based approach and promoting in-service teacher training, (iv) improving management and pedagogic support, iv) reviewing the curriculum, and (v) strengthening partnerships with the private sector and communities.

**Rationale for Bank Involvement:** During the preparation of the ten-year perspective plan, the Bank has been instrumental in two main areas: (a) technical advice in a variety of areas and in producing background documents including planning, financing and management; and (b) strategic advice for mobilizing donor support and facilitating consensus. The Bank is supporting the implementation phase through an Adaptable Program Lending (APL) which provides predictable and flexible financing to ensure that the core elements of the plan will be financed while other donors firm up their contribution. The Bank is associated with successful implementation of the ongoing Djibouti education sector reform which is mainly supported by the first phase of the APL. The Bank’s involvement and experience with the environment of macroeconomic change is expected to play a key role in helping to establish an expanded and sustainable education system in Djibouti.

The project has made great strides in several areas: (i) increased enrollment, with a primary GER of 52% compared to 39% at the start of the project; (ii) a decrease in repeater rates from 10% to 7%; (iii) greater availability of textbooks with a current pupil/textbook ratio of 1:1 for both French and Mathematics; (iv) an increase in training for teachers and school administrators; (v) a strengthening of didactic methods in training of pre-service teachers; and (vi) a revised curriculum following a competency-based approach. Furthermore, the 6 triggers agreed upon for the passage to the second phase of the APL have largely been achieved. These are: **effective**
classroom teaching has been mandated at 32 weeks – the effective implementation of this measure needs to be carefully supervised. Current public expenditures in the education sector is now above 16%. The decree which would certify private schools is substantially achieved with the text currently under approval by the Cabinet. A study and subsequent action plan has been completed on how to increase girls’ participation as well as children from poor/rural families. The decree on community participation is being shifted to Phase II, as several schools all around the country are implementing some form of community participation. As this is a long-term effort, and several donors are now starting their programs which have strong emphasis on this aspect, it was felt that this would be more appropriate to evaluate during the second phase. The replacement of the exam to one of assessment of skills for the end of the primary cycle has been achieved, as part of the Government’s orientation law.

Partnership: The main donors USAID, supporting the reform process are: the African Development Bank, Japan, the Islamic Development Bank, the Agence Française de Développement, the French Cooperation, and the Saudi Fund. They work closely with the Bank.

2. Proposed objective(s)

The Project would support the Government’s long-term education sector development strategy as defined in the “schéma directeur”. The objective of the second phase of the Schools Access Improvement Project is to expand coverage of quality basic education through targeted activities which contribute to increase access and retention rates of the system and to reduce repetition and drop-out rates. The specific objective of this phase is to increase the enrollment to 70% by 2008 with special emphasis on girls education.

3. Preliminary description

The phase II of the APL will continue to support classroom expansion, with greater attention paid to middle schools to take into account the number of places needed for the new nine-year compulsory education and the increased flow of students from primary to middle schools. This is a consequence of the elimination of the “entrée en 6ème” [entry into sixth form]. Improving the quality of schooling will remain a priority of the second phase, and the project will also assess the outcomes of the studies, currently being financed under a Project Preparation Facility (PPF), and their subsequent implementation, so as to improve the efficiency of the sector. The proposed project will comprise three main components:

(i) Increase access to and equity of basic education: The trend in school enrolment is positive. The GER for primary increased from 39% to 52% over the last 3 years. Despite these gains, too many children remain out of school and lack of access to education is particularly affecting certain groups (girls, children from poor and/or rural families, orphans and vulnerable children). Consequently, this component will continue to finance the construction and rehabilitation of schools in the four Districts of the Country: Djibouti, Tadjourah, Ali Sabieh and Obock. In addition to expanding the school system, this component will include measures to attract more female teachers and it will pay special attention to students with special needs. Studies financed by the PPF are underway to identify appropriate activities to be included in this component.
(ii) Improve quality: The quality of primary education is poor, largely due to insufficient in-service teacher training and shortage of teaching and learning materials. While primary school curricula has been updated, textbooks procured, and in-service teacher training expanded during Phase I of the project, Djibouti’s education sector still needs support to enhance overall quality. This component addresses the following quality elements: (i) availability of textbooks and learning resources, (ii) time on task, (iii) initial and in-service teacher training, (iv) school supervision, (v) relevancy of the curriculum, and (vi) role of communities.

(iii) Improve efficiency and build capacity: Among the problems faced by Djibouti’s education system are: high unit cost, low internal and external efficiency, and inefficient use of resources. The MOE lacks qualified staff to address these issues in a proper way. It is also obvious that the historically centralized management of the system is an obstacle to the delivery of quality services. The MOE therefore wants to strengthen capacity building in areas of planning, management, and monitoring and evaluation, as strategic priorities. This component will: (i) strengthen the capacity of the MOE through provision of staff training, technical assistance and equipment, (ii) support the MOE in introducing or implementing policies that aim at reducing unit costs of school construction, textbooks, and teachers, (iii) enhance monitoring and evaluation functions within the MOE, and (iv) improve intra- and inter-sectoral coordination.

4. Safeguard policies that might apply

An environmental assessment was undertaken during the first phase which highlighted the appropriate use of construction material, awareness campaigns on good hygiene within schools, and availability of functioning and appropriate sanitary facilities. All of these recommendations were undertaken during the first phase of the project. The second phase project will continue in the same vein of construction and rehabilitation, with a focus on maintenance, and on quality. The project team will ensure that the activities carried out in the first phase continue for the second phase. The Ministry of Education also has in place a special committee which is comprised of ministerial staff, teachers, inspectors, school directors, parent-student associations, and the private sector. This committee is fully participatory and has oversight over the reform process.

5. Tentative financing

Source: ($m.)
BORROWER/RECIPIENT 5.2
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION 10
Total 15.2

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