



Report No AB43

Updated Project Information Document (PID)

Project Name	ERITREA-Education Sector Improvement Project
Region	Africa Regional Office
Sector	Primary education (70%); Secondary education (30%)
Project ID	P070272
Supplemental Project	
Borrower(s)	GOVERNMENT OF ERITREA
Implementing Agency Address	GOE Ministry of Education Address Research and Human Resources Department, P.O Box 5610, Asmara, Eritrea Contact Person Petros Hailemariam Tel: 291-1-125428 Fax 291-1-121913 Email Petros Hailemariam@erimoe.gov.er
Environment Category	B
Date PID Prepared	April 17, 2003
Auth Appr/Negs Date	April 21, 2003
Bank Approval Date	June 19, 2003

1. Country and Sector Background

Sector issues:

The sector is characterized by very low access at all levels; low physical access; unequal access especially for disadvantaged groups—girls, children of nomadic groups and other minorities—low learning outcomes; inadequate time-on-task; poor teacher quality; poor physical learning environment; high repetition rates encouraged by stringent selection examinations; high dropout rates especially for girls; and poor delivery and planning capacity in both numeric and qualitative terms. At least in part, these challenges are a consequence of inadequate education resource inputs and inadequately developed delivery systems

Access to education:

Low enrolments at all levels: The first decade of independence registered notable expansion of access to education. Elementary school—grade 1 to 5—enrolments almost doubled from 151,000 to 299,000; while middle—grade 6 and 7—school and secondary—grade 8 to 11—enrollment more than doubled from 28,000 to 77,000; and from 19,000 to 64,000 respectively. To cope with this expansion, teacher supply increased from 5,188 to 9,240. Concerted effort also went toward the training of elementary teachers to teach in Eritrean languages as medium of instruction. This effort notwithstanding, nearly 60% of children of eligible age do not have access to elementary education (first five years). For middle and high school levels the proportion are 88% and 86% respectively. Current access rates are clearly inadequate to provide Eritrea with the number of educated people required to increase productivity, support private investments and facilitate growth: more than 70% of the population is illiterate. A variety of factors including the limited physical capacity of existing schools; distance from school; lack of fiscal resources required to bring schools closer to the learners; and overall poverty; combine to limit access to education.

Physical inaccessibility of schools: While there are variations across zobas, the average distance of elementary schools from learners prohibits effective participation in schooling. Zobas that have the highest concentration of schools have about one school within a 11.5 kilometer radius. For the least served zobas, the radius ranges from 435 to 1123 kilometers. The current 16 boarding facilities in the low lands and for marginalized groups are insufficient.

High Illiteracy and low community participation: A combination of widespread poverty and high illiteracy rates serves to provide a social environment that is not supportive of children's schooling. More than 70% of the population is illiterate. Because of poverty, the opportunity cost of children's schooling is high given the critical role they play in advancing family welfare. The cost is even higher for girls who ordinarily do more household chores. The MoE's guidelines empower communities to participate in substantive aspects of the school life such as in student / teacher relationships; provision of teachers' basic amenities, and up-keep of school infrastructure. In real terms however, community participation in schooling still remains low and is mostly limited to the provision of materials and financial support for their schools. Expansion of literacy programs and their linkage to formal education programs is required to provide a larger social environment that supports children's schooling.

Equity Issues:

Gender inequity: A combination of factors such as overall poverty, cultural beliefs pertaining to the value of educating girls, division of labor in the households, distance from school and related security issues, limited positive role models by way of female school teachers and other professionals, inadequate hygiene facilities in schools and specific inconveniences adversely affect girl's participation and success in schooling. In 2000/01, gross enrollment ratios at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels for girls were about 52%; 42% and 17%, while for boys were 61%, 45%, and 27%, respectively. Girls tend to repeat and drop out more than boys. Results of the MLA study also show that girls are outperformed by boys in the grade 3 and Grade 5 tests and across all learning areas tested.

Regional disparities: The distribution of schools across zobas is not equitable. The extent of inequities in access to elementary education across the six administrative zones is illustrated by the deviation of GER around the national mean which ranges from 47% in Deb-Keih-Bahri region to 20% in Maekel region. The NER is much lower in the Deb-Kei-Bahri, Sem-Keih-Bahri, Gash Barka, and Anseba regions where marginalized groups comprising largely of nomadic and agro-pastoralists are. Distance from school is also another factor of inequity of access especially for girls.

Nomadic children and other minorities: The lifestyle of pastoralists and nomads militates against effective participation and engagement through regular delivery modes. In addition, the opportunity cost of children's time makes schooling unaffordable for many families.

Inadequate physical learning environment: Eritrean schools are characterized by overcrowding, inadequate support facilities like libraries, laboratories and ablution blocks; and a general paucity of enrichment teaching and learning materials. On average, the physical environment is not conducive to effective teaching and learning. The average student / classroom ratio is 63:1, 83:1 and 97:1 for elementary, middle and high school respectively. These very high ratios are somewhat offset by the double shift system described below. However, they do have a negative impact on children's learning and on the attractiveness of schools to children, especially girls: one very large secondary school (5,000 children) has no latrines for students!

Inadequate instructional time: In effort to improve coverage within a context of limited physical capacity, most elementary schools operate a double shift. The school day is very short - a maximum of four-hours of learning time. Consequently, the Eritrean learners have inadequate time-on-task relative to many other countries. It is estimated that an average elementary and middle school year comprises of 800—900 clock hours relative to 900—1200 in OEDC countries.

Poor teacher quality: Teachers are in short supply and female representation in the teaching profession remains low. Shortage of qualified teachers is more acute in middle schools. Approximately 30 percent of elementary and high school teachers are unqualified relative to over 70 percent of middle school teachers. The planned expansion of education access and the extension of the duration of middle school can only exacerbate already existing teacher quality issues. Even where teachers are qualified, there is inadequate evidence of teaching quality. Other than low qualifications, teacher morale and motivation are low owing to inadequate incentives. Female teachers comprise 40%, 12% and 10% of the teaching force at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels. At present, capacity for training teachers for formal education is restricted and this constitutes a major barrier to the expansion of access and deepening of quality. The profession is male dominated and deprives girls in particular of positive role models. For instance, the Asmara Teacher Training Institute (ATTI) enrolled 560 trainees in 2002 only 22 of whom were female. The deployment of the few qualified teachers is not very efficient. Though primary school teachers are trained to handle all subjects, they are assigned to teach two to three subjects depending on the size of their school. There is no specialized unit or department within the MoE dedicated to addressing the enormous challenge to provide adequate numbers and quality of teachers as well as to effectively manage them.

Poor learner readiness and potential learner disengagement: Most learners enter school without an adequate level of readiness to cope with the first grade of elementary school. In addition, a large proportion of them are malnourished owing to endemic and severe poverty. For younger learners particularly, the distance from school, coupled with the absence of school feeding programs can compound the discomfort and fatigue that may lead to disengagement during lessons and at worst, to absenteeism.

Curriculum: Though some revisions have been done over the years, the curriculum that is currently offered is fairly dated. The elementary and middle school curricula were developed in 1984 and since then, only books and instructional materials have been evaluated and updated. The last substantial review of the secondary school curriculum was done in 1992. Key policy documents note that the curriculum bears no relevance to the needs of the labor market nor to the overall national development objectives

and priorities as well as labor market demands.

Learning outcomes: The results of the MLA studies show that students perform below the targeted minimum mastery level, especially in mathematics. Performance on national examinations, is difficult to interpret. Eritrea has a rigorous student assessment system that may actually encourage repetition. Low students' performance in examinations probably reflects the competitive nature of the examination more than the quality of the system. All the same, other indicators of education quality—education resource inputs, processes and the results of the MLA—point to unsatisfactory levels of quality.

Low internal efficiency:

Low internal efficiency: Internal efficiency indicators are unacceptably low. The repetition rate stands at about 20 percent for elementary and middle levels and 27 percent for secondary school. Repetition is encouraged by highly stringent selection examinations and the limited spaces as learner progress up the education ladder. In an attempt to improve their chances of qualifying for a place in the upper grades, learners repeat grades sometimes several times. At elementary level, it currently takes about nine years on average for a learner to complete a five year cycle. In addition to increasing the cost of education, high repetition rates deny other children an opportunity for schooling. It is estimated that at a ratio of 42 learners to a classroom, about 16,870 repeaters occupy 401 middle school classrooms and 11,627 repeaters take up 277 high school classrooms. Dropout rates are about 6 percent at elementary and 10 percent at middle and secondary.

HIV/AIDS: Currently, Eritrea does not have a program to avoid the potential spreading of HIV/AIDS and the consequent negative impact on the development of the sector. Although infection rates are known to be low; there are possibilities that if not addressed, the infection rate could reach unmanageable levels and seriously redress any developmental gains in the sector. Concern is particularly high with respect to teachers and learners.

Poor delivery and planning capacity:

Poor delivery capacity: The delivery of education services is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education (MoE) headquarters, zobas, sub-zobas, communities (through Parent-Teacher Associations) and schools. By design, the system is delivered through a very lean corporate governance that comprises four Ministry Departments, zobas, sub-zobas, schools and communities. The establishment has fewer staff than most Ministries with a comparable workload. Most MoE departments operate with an insufficient number of established positions in the establishment. For instance, the Department of General Education has requested 16 new posts (on top of the current 62); the Department of Research and Human Resources Development has requested 9 new posts (additional to the current 16), and the department of Administration has requested 20 posts (on top of the current 48). The accuracy of these figures need to be verified. A substantial proportion of requested posts are for professional cadres. Requests from Zobas are also substantial.

Absence of a Department of Policy Planning: A key weakness that underlies the weak delivery capacity is the absence of a central place in the MoE that is responsible for planning for the development of the sector as well as monitoring the overall sector development. As a consequence, the planning role is fragmented under different Departments and Units. Most importantly, there is poor integration of sector and financial planning. Current capacity to plan budget preparation and to monitor expenditures is very weak even at the MoE HQ. Capacity at zoba and sub-zoba levels is almost nonexistent. As MoE develops and implements its sector-wide approach, this will become more critical.

Ineffective Decentralization: The effective implementation of the Government's 1996 proclamation on decentralization is held back by limited regional capacities in terms of human and nonhuman resources, poor planning and coordination.

Government Strategy:

The Government's key strategies for developing the sector are encapsulated in various research and other analytic reports. These include: *Education for All in Eritrea (2000)*; the overall framework for human resources development "*Our People are Our Future*" (November 2001); the Draft *Concept Paper for the Rapid Transformation of the Eritrean Educational System (July 2002)*, the Draft *Eritrea National Education Policy (February 2003)*, and an *Outline of the EESIP* that the MoE presented for the World Bank consideration. In collaboration with the World Bank, the GoE also prepared the *Eritrea Education and Training Sector Note Report No. 24448-ERI, (July 2002)*. In all of these documents, the Government reaffirms its commitment to the attainment of MDGs and of EFA. Specific sector strategies focus on redressing challenges outlined above: *expansion of access to education and training at all levels; improving equity in education opportunities; enhancement of education quality; improving internal efficiency; better aligning education and training to national development goals and priorities, improving delivery capacity.*

The Government plans to ***improve access*** through the construction of new elementary and middle schools which will provide more places in the system. Boarding facilities will be expanded to cater for learners who are too far from schools and for those from nomadic and pastoralist communities. Alternative delivery modes will be put in place for adult learners and for youth who missed an opportunity to enroll in formal education. In addition, concerted effort will be made to create an enabling environment for private providers to contribute to the expansion of access.

Equity will be improved through the promotion of girls education; and through the education of children from nomadic communities, in remote areas, and from other disadvantaged groups. Current efforts to train teachers to become proficient in teaching in minority languages will be sustained.

Government strategies to ***improve education quality*** include the training of unqualified teachers, upgrading of under-qualified teachers, and recruitment of qualified teachers. In addition, teacher supervision, professional development and support will be intensified. Specific attention will be given to the training of teachers in new subject areas such as Modern Technology, Science and ICTs. Supplementary readings, workbooks, and teacher's guides / manuals will provide a more enriching teaching and learning environment. Improvements to teacher incentives such as through opportunities for professional development, introduction of career ladders, better management procedures will be instituted to enhance teacher commitment and motivation. Other than improving access, the planned construction of new schools and the rehabilitation of existing ones will provide an enabling physical teaching and learning environment. Progressive pedagogical approaches that are learner centered, activity oriented and that employ investigation and discovery modes of learning will be reinforced. A spiraled organization of the curriculum will reinforce learner-centeredness by allowing learners to ease into a deeper and wider content coverage as they progress through the grades. Another factor that will contribute to learning effectiveness is the continued use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction. Continuous assessment and criterion-referenced testing will be used to monitor the impact of all these interventions on learning achievement and to determine student progression. Systemic monitoring and evaluation and sustained supervision of education processes will be strengthened so as to better assess the impact of instituted quality improvement strategies.

The combined improvement of education quality and the introduction of normal progression through the grades are expected to *improve the internal efficiency* of the system by substantially reducing repetition and dropout from the system.

The *alignment of education to national development goals and priorities* will be attained mainly through curriculum reform and the extension of basic education to eight years. The new curriculum is intended to prepare learners better for the world of work through a steady introduction of practical skills that starts with a practical orientation at the elementary level, introduction of prevocational skills in middle school and integration of practical subjects in high school. Currently, basic education comprises seven years: five years of elementary education and two years of middle school education. From 2003, Government intends to increase middle school from two to three years.

Capacity to deliver education services will be enhanced by improving the education management skills of existing staff; strengthening the EMIS, and upgrading the monitoring capability of local education officers. The management of the education system will be more substantively decentralized—both devolution and deconcentration—leaving the MoE Headquarters with responsibility for sector analysis, policy formulation, planning, the setting and enforcement of standards and monitoring the performance of the system.

The Government recognizes that the success of the above strategies will require substantial improvements in human and nonhuman resources allocation. The most focused human resources developments will be in regards to teachers, managers and administrators. The Government plans to *increase expenditure on education*. In addition, mechanisms for cost sharing and cost recovery will be instituted. More effort will be placed on the mobilization and coordination of national and international partnerships for the development of education within a broader context of *a sector wide approach (SWAP)*.

The Government plans to introduce health education in the curriculum and to start HIV/AIDS clubs in schools.

2. Objectives

Eritrea has made a good deal of progress in increasing access to education since independence: almost doubling the numbers in elementary school (the first five years of education) and more than doubling numbers in middle (next two years) and secondary school (next four years). However, this has been at the expense of quality: diagnostic assessments of student learning show very poor learning achievement at the elementary level and all of the proxies for learning are inadequate at middle and secondary levels: student to teacher ratios are in excess of 50:1, student to classroom ratios are in excess of 80:1 and teaching-learning hours are no more than 4 a day in most schools. In addition, and despite the increase in numbers, the net enrolment rate in elementary school is below 40 percent and there are inequities in education access by region, for girls, children with special learning needs, children of the poor and for children of nomadic communities. While the Government of Eritrea is fully committed to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and of Education For All (EFA) goals by 2015, the actual attainment of these goals is becoming increasingly remote. Consequently, the main objective of the Eritrea Education Sector Improvement Project (EESIP) is to increase enrolment and completion rates in basic education (elementary and middle schools) particularly for disadvantaged children and to improve the quality of basic and secondary education.

3. Rationale for Bank's Involvement

The Bank's comparative advantage lies first in its understanding of challenges that face the development of the education sector in Eritrea. It has played a key role in facilitating the Government's identification and prioritization of these challenges. This work has culminated in the articulation of the Eritrea Education and Training Sector Note in July 2002. There is also continuance of Bank-supported assessment of the overall capacity to deliver the education system, capacity for critical sub-systems such as in Teacher Education, Professional Development, Deployment and Utilization, Curriculum and Instruction, Student Assessment and Evaluation, Physical Infrastructure and Cost and Financing of education. The Bank therefore has gained an in-depth understanding of the Eritrea Education system and is strategically positioned to design a contextually relevant and appropriate intervention.

The Bank's world-wide experience in developing and implementing sector improvement programs in general, and in post-conflict countries in particular puts it in a position of strength relative to other institutions. Furthermore, the Government of Eritrea values the Bank as a partner that is committed to the development of education over a sustained period of time.

4. Description

Project components will collectively and interactively improve access to education, equity in education opportunities, relevance / responsiveness of the education experiences to national development goals and priorities and particularly to labor market demands, and will strengthen MoE's capacity to deliver education services. About 70% of Credit resources will support basic education (elementary and middle school) with the remaining 30% allocated to secondary education.

The themes that constitute the focus of this project are addressed through the specific components described below:

Increased access to Basic education through Efficient and Equitable Provision of Schools and Classrooms:

This component supports the improvement of: physical capacity of the basic education system; equity and efficiency in the construction of schools and other education infrastructure; and the capacity for supervision and management of that construction. Physical capacity of the basic education system will be improved through a large scale construction program that will provide about 1100 elementary school classrooms and 550 middle school classrooms. (Through improvements to the physical learning environment, the project will also reinforce the Government's ongoing secondary school quality improvement efforts. Such improvement will include the renovation of existing classrooms and other infrastructure and the construction of about 400 classrooms and workshops to reduce overcrowding and physical degradation. This effort is briefly described under quality improvement below.) A Geographic Information System (GIS), will be developed within the MoE and integrated into the overall Education Information Management System (EMIS). The GIS and the EMIS will be used to map schools in accordance with population density and with the need to redress previous inequities in the provision of schools especially in remote areas. The two information systems will also be used to identify schools and other education infrastructure requiring rehabilitation. More efficient and standardized designs for schools and classrooms will be developed and applied. Training and technical support will be provided the MoE to apply better procedures for tendering and better practices for construction management and supervision. While the new classrooms for elementary school are expected to increase enrolment and at middle school to cope with Government's intention to add a year to middle school (now Grades 6, 7 and 8) while retaining four years of secondary education, the construction of secondary school classrooms is intended to reduce the overcrowding currently adversely affecting quality in the schools.

Improved Quality at all levels of education through:

(a) Teacher training, development and professional support

The project will support the establishment of a Teacher Training and Development Unit (TTDU) within MoE. The TTDU will develop and apply several programs and modes of delivery to reduce the proportion of unqualified and under-qualified elementary and particularly middle school teachers, as well as to provide sustained teacher development and professional support .

Fast-track teacher education programs will be developed and implemented to orient unqualified elementary school teachers (500-900) who will join the system by September 2003; elementary school teachers (500-900) who will be transferred to middle schools in September 2003; and new middle school teachers (700-1100) needed to cope with the extension of the duration of middle school which will also take effect in September 2003.

Distance teacher education programs will be developed and implemented to facilitate beneficiaries of the fast-track orientation and training programs and other serving unqualified teachers to acquire qualifications at a certificate level for elementary teachers and diploma level for middle school teachers.

Ongoing in-service and teacher professional development programs will be developed and implemented to help teachers stay in touch with new developments in the Eritrea education system—such as the new curricula, pedagogy and student assessment—and general developments in the profession as a whole.

Modern and clinical instructional supervision programs will be developed and applied in the training of supervisors and school directors to enable them to provide ongoing pedagogical support for teachers. For school directors in particular, the training program will be used to orient them to better execute their role and instructional leaders and not just school administrators.

(b) Curricula and pedagogical reforms, textbooks and assessments

The project will support the Curriculum Unit of the General Education Department to implement the curricula and pedagogical reform program. The project will also support the alignment of relevant sub-systems--student assessment, teacher education and training, instructional supervision, and textbook production--to the revised curricula and pedagogy. The implementation of the curricula and pedagogical reform will build on a new overall curriculum blueprint developed prior to project preparation. Based on the Texas curriculum, the new blueprint is characterized by an articulated design of the general education--K-12--curriculum with those for technical and vocational education and training; non-formal adult education and training; and teacher education and training. The curricula of all sub-sectors will receive more practical orientation, including kindergarten and elementary school education; integration of prevocational skills in the middle school curriculum; integration of practical subjects in the secondary school curriculum; applications of technology to traditional practical subjects and emphasis on science and English.

Specifically, the project will support the development of the basic and secondary school subject syllabi, the design and development of student textbooks, teacher's guides and other instructional materials--student workbooks, teaching aids etc--for the new curriculum. The project will also support the distribution of textbooks and instructional materials, the orientation of practicing teachers and instructional supervisors in the effective implementation of the new curriculum and its supporting textbooks and instructional materials; and the effective monitoring of the impact of the new curriculum on student learning through the improved student assessment methods.

Continuous assessment and criterion referenced testing will be developed and used to monitor student mastery of grade-equivalent competencies to be acquired through the new curricula and pedagogy.

(c) Reduction of overcrowding in secondary schools

With support from the strengthened construction planning and management capacity, about 400 secondary school classrooms, workshops and laboratories will be built. These are intended to provide a more enabling physical teaching and learning environment by reducing current overcrowding and degradation of physical infrastructure. These will not add to the current numbers in secondary schools.

Capacity Development:

A Department of Planning will be established, fully staffed and equipped. The newly established Planning Department will strengthen the application of research and analysis as well as participatory and inclusive approaches to policy development, planning and management. The Department will develop and articulate an education sector strategic plan (ESSP); integrate sector planning with financial planning; develop and apply mechanisms for Systemic Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E); and institute annual sector reviews to effectively support the implementation of the new National Education Policy and to build a solid base for a sector-wide approach (SWAP) to the development of the sector.

The capacity of existing MoE Departments at headquarters, zobas and sub-zobas will be systematically assessed for its quantitative and qualitative adequacy to implement the new education policy within the context of the Government's plan for a rapid transformation of the sector and the new IDA-supported project. The results will be used to develop and implement as systematic capacity development program.

In addition to capacities that fall within mainstream MoE responsibilities, capacities specific to implementing an IDA-supported project will be reinforced through the establishment of a Project Management Unit that will provide the MoE technical support in project management; construction management and supervision, financial management; and procurement.

Research and Innovation:

To reinforce the knowledge base required to support sector development and modernization, this component will cover applied research; small scale or pilot innovative programs and systematic documentation and dissemination of lessons emanating from the research and innovative pilot programs. Innovative programs will cover grants and bursaries to encourage girls' education; mobile schools; and the establishment of the World Links for Development program in selected secondary schools. The project will also support a range of studies of tertiary education and training designed to assist Government consolidate its strategy for the subsector, and of using non-formal education programs to improve the effectiveness of formal education programs.

1. Efficiently and equitably expand access to basic education:

Construction of Elementary school classrooms

Construction of Middle school classrooms

2. Improved quality of basic and secondary school education

Teacher training, development and professional support

Curriculum and Pedagogical Reforms

Development and distribution of textbooks and instructional materials

Assessment and examinations reform

Improving learning environment through construction of secondary school classrooms and workshops

3. Capacity Development
 - Policy development and planning
 - Service delivery management capacity
4. Research and Innovation
 - Word Links for Development
 - Pilot grants and bursaries for girls' education
 - Pilot program for nomadic children
 - Studies for tertiary education and training
 - Studies for Technical Education and Training
5. Project Management

5. Financing

	Total (US\$m)
BORROWER	\$15.00
IBRD	
IDA	\$45.00
Total Project Cost	\$60 00

6. Implementation

The project is to be implemented over a five-year period, beginning in September, 2003. The proposed completion date is August, 2008. The project will be implemented by line units of the Ministry of Education, initially at headquarters with responsibility being gradually transferred to Zobas in accordance with Government policy. Overall, a suitable environment exist for the proper operation of the project: there is support for a culture of accountability in government, and staff are dedicated, committed and have a clear sense of responsibility.

Project Management: Project management will be coordinated by the MoE through a Project Management Unit (PMU) that is currently being established. Core staff include a Project Manager, Financial specialist and Procurement specialist. The PMU will be overseen by a committee of the four Directors General within the Ministry. In addition, the project will support additional supervision and guidance activities, at both central and zoba-level.

A Project Implementation Manual (PIM) is being developed and will be finalized prior to effectiveness. The PIM will provide a clear picture of project administration, including a definition of roles of the PMU, its staff and relationships to other agencies and units.

Procurement Issues: All procurement will be coordinated by the PMU with support from MoE's Department of Administration. With the recruitment of a skilled Procurement specialist, the project has a good probability of being implemented in a satisfactory manner. Other supports will involve:

- (a) training and coaching for the PMU and ministry officials;
- (b) adequate coordination and management structure, with clear identification of responsibilities and accountability; and
- (c) satisfactory staffing at central level for the leading agency. Additional staff will be trained at regional training institutes.

Training needs for zoba-level additional staff will be provided at a national level.

Financial Management and Reporting: The PMU will be responsible for ensuring that financial management and reporting procedures for the project will be acceptable to IDA. The PMU will be responsible for the entire financial management, accounting, and disbursement functions of the project, including management of the special account, processing contracts and payments for goods and services.

A suitably qualified and experienced project financial officer will be recruited to participate in the development of the financial management system, and to guide and direct the financial management operations of the project. There will be a need to provide consultants to assist the PMU in adapting a comprehensive financial management system, and to develop a financial procedures manual, chart of accounts, and a fully integrated project accounting structure, using an appropriate accounting software.

Disbursement procedures will be as outlined in the World Bank's Disbursement Handbook, Direct Payment, Reimbursement and Special Commitment (if appropriate) will be followed. Withdrawal applications with full documentation or against Statements of Expenditure (SOEs) submitted by the PMU. To facilitate the flow of funds to the project, the PMU will open Bank accounts as follows:

- Special Account in US dollars for IDA funds;
- Project Account in Nafka for counterpart funds and local expenditures.

7. Sustainability

The main risk for sustainability of the project is the Government's maintenance of an increasing share of budget to the education sector, and within that share the ongoing allocation to basic education. A financing simulation model has been developed as part of Project preparation. This provides the overall framework within which the costs of sector development have been assessed. The model demonstrates that the recurrent costs necessary to maintain and improve the system can be afforded with an additional allocation of about 6 percent annually to the recurrent costs of education. Government has provided assurances that this allocation will in fact be exceeded. It will also be important to monitor the recurrent cost implications of the implementation of the new curriculum. Immediate introduction of all optional practical subjects will pose problems for investment resources as well as maintenance of those facilities and teachers.

8. Lessons learned from past operations in the country/sector

One of the key lessons from the Bank's work across the world is the importance of designing sector policies and strategies within a sustainable financial framework. Eritrea's commitment to EFA and the MDGs can best be realized when the recurrent resources necessary to support investments are already in place. The work on financing of education in the Eritrea Education and Training Sector Note is being complemented by the Government's own study on the financing of education in Eritrea and is likely to be further developed through a Public Expenditure Review. These will clearly demonstrate what financing is likely from Government sources for the sector. In addition, working with donors to the sector through a sector-wide approach is likely to result in greater predictability of external financing. Accordingly, the Project is supporting Government's efforts to improve its budgeting and financing process and to create a sector-wide approach to education.

Another important lesson for education development is that the education system is holistic: efforts to reform and support primary education succeed best within a plan for reforming and supporting the whole education system. While it may be a truism to state that primary schools need teachers and that teachers must be provided with education beyond the basic level, evidence also clearly shows that demand for primary education is sustained when parents see reasonable opportunities for their children to continue to other levels of education and training. There is further evidence that poor children given the opportunity to enroll in Early Childhood Development programs are more likely to stay on in primary schools. Accordingly, the Project supports Government efforts in elementary, middle and secondary schools (and the Bank is already supporting Early Childhood Development through a separate operation). In addition, the project will support a series of studies of the tertiary education sector, including its links to the labor market to help Government refine its policy and strategies for the development of tertiary education.

An increasing body of evidence shows that teachers are best prepared within the environment in which they will teach and, accordingly, much of the preparation should be provided while teachers are actually in schools. The World Bank's publication: *Enhancing Learning Opportunities in Africa: Distance Education and Information and Communications Technologies for Learning* clearly identifies the experiences and benefits of using distance education for teachers, both preservice and inservice. Accordingly, the Project supports an emergency distance education program for middle school teachers and the reform of preservice education to include a balance between college- and school-based preparation and greater utilization of distance education modalities during the school-based preparation.

9. Environment Aspects (including any public consultation)

Issues : The project will involve construction of several basic and secondary schools. The individual projects are likely to be small in size, and located throughout the country. The sites will not be identified prior to appraisal, but criteria for site-selection will be developed and integrated into the project. The criteria will be based upon project specific objectives, national and local procedures, practices and regulations, including the GOEs "National Environmental Assessment procedures and Guidelines".

However, since the sites for these new schools will not be identified before project appraisal, the Government of Eritrea (GoE) is preparing in compliance with Operational Policy 4.01 of the Bank an Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF) which will establish a mechanism to determine and assess future potential environmental and social impacts of the school construction program to be financed under the project, and then to set out mitigation, monitoring and institutional measures to be taken during implementation and operation of the project activities to eliminate adverse environmental and social impacts, offset them, or reduce them to acceptable levels.

Whereas significant efforts are to be made in the design and screening stages of project activities to avoid impacts on people, land, property, including people's access to natural and other economic resources, as far as possible, notwithstanding, land acquisition, compensation and resettlement of people maybe inevitable for some selected school sites . This social issue is of crucial concern to the Government of Eritrea and the Bank as its impact on poverty, if left unmitigated, is negative and immediate. Thus, a resettlement policy framework is also being prepared by the government in compliance with OP 4.12.

The GoE is will disclose both documents, that is the ESMF and RPF in-country as separate and stand alone documents so that they are accessible by the general public, local communities, potential project-affected groups, local NGO's and all other stakeholders and also at the Infoshop of the World Bank and the date for disclosure for both documents will precede the date for appraisal of the project.

Stakeholders were consulted for the development of the ESMF screening procedures through visits by selected MOE staff and IDA consultant. The stakeholders consulted included the Ministry of Land, Water and Environment, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Works, Zoba and sub-zoba officials.

10. List of factual technical documents:

11. Contact Point:

Task Manager

Paul Murphy

The World Bank

1818 H Street, NW

Washington D.C. 20433

Telephone 1-202-4736450

Fax: 1-202-4738299

12 For information on other project related documents contact

The InfoShop

The World Bank

1818 H Street, NW

Washington, D C 20433

Telephone (202) 458-5454

Fax (202) 522-1500

Web. [http // www.worldbank.org/infoshop](http://www.worldbank.org/infoshop)

Note: This is information on an evolving project. Certain components may not be necessarily included in the final project.

Tables, Charts, Graphs:

Processed by the InfoShop week ending: 04/17/2003

For a list of World Bank news releases on projects and reports, [click here](#)

[SEARCH](#)[FEEDBACK](#)[SITE MAP](#)[SHOWCASE](#)