



# Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary

## Concept Stage

### **(ESRS Concept Stage)**

Date Prepared/Updated: 11/21/2024 | Report No: ESRSC04551



I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Operation Data

Operation ID	Product	Operation Acronym	Approval Fiscal Year
P507512	Investment Project Financing (IPF)	GRADES-B	2025
Operation Name	Getting Results: Access and Delivery of Quality Education Services in Balochistan		
Country/Region Code	Beneficiary country/countries (borrower, recipient)	Region	Practice Area (Lead)
Pakistan	Pakistan	SOUTH ASIA	Education
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Islamic Republic of Pakistan	School Education Department, Balochistan	20-Feb-2025	30-May-2025
Estimated Concept Review Date	Total Project Cost		
31-Oct-2024	100,000,000.00		

Proposed Development Objective

Increase girls’ and boys’ enrollment rates in pre-primary and primary grades, and improve reading and numeracy proficiency in primary grades

B. Is the operation being prepared in a Situation of Urgent Need of Assistance or Capacity Constraints, as per Bank IPF Policy, para. 12?

No

C. Summary Description of Proposed Project Activities

GRADES-B will support the reform agenda of Balochistan that supports school readiness through early childhood education, improved access and quality of education at primary level, data and research in education. The key project components will include: Component 1: Getting Results Agenda This component is dedicated to supporting Balochistan’s education reform agenda by implementing interventions aimed at enhancing access and quality of education at the early childhood education (ECE), primary, and middle school levels. The goal is to establish a robust foundation for lifelong learning and the holistic development of children. By focusing on these critical stages of education, the component seeks to ensure that children receive the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in their



future educational endeavors. Component 2: Expanding Access to ECE, Primary, and Middle School The second component aims to increase opportunities for all students to enroll and participate in quality education programs. This involves tackling barriers that hinder access to education and ensuring that resources and support are distributed equitably across early childhood, primary, and middle education levels. By addressing these challenges, the component strives to create an inclusive educational environment where every child has the chance to benefit from quality education. Component 3: Technical Assistance, Evaluation, and Project Implementation This component will finance the implementation, monitoring, and communication of the GRADES-B project. It includes providing technical support to the departments responsible for implementing the Performance-Based Conditions (PBCs), conducting research studies, and third-party verification of PBCs. Additionally, the Project Management Unit (PMU) will be strengthened to support implementation, with supervision and monitoring ensuring compliance with environmental and social requirements during classroom construction. A functional review of the School Education Department (SED) will be conducted, followed by the development of an action plan with annual implementation targets. Surveys of schools and communities will be carried out to assess changes in teachers' knowledge and practices, student learning outcomes, school systems, and community involvement. Component 4: Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC, US\$0 million) This component is designed to provide an immediate response to an eligible crisis or emergency as needed.

## **D. Environmental and Social Overview**

### **D.1 Overview of Environmental and Social Project Settings**

The proposed project is located in Balochistan, Pakistan's largest province by land area but the least populated. Specific project sites have yet to be identified. Approximately 80 percent of Balochistan is characterized by inter-mountainous terrain, while the remaining 20 percent consists of floodplains and coastal regions. Due to the province's predominantly mountainous topography, only 15 percent of the land is viable for human settlements, agricultural development, and infrastructure such as roads. Balochistan faces significant water scarcity, with surface water resources primarily originating from precipitation runoff and supplemented by allocations from the Indus River.

Balochistan's Human Capital Index (HCI) is 0.32, placing it among the lowest globally. Approximately 74 percent of the population resides in rural areas, and 15 percent of the population is below the age of five. Balochistan has an estimated 3 million children who are out-of-school. Geographic isolation, security concerns, and the dispersed nature of small, rural communities further exacerbate access challenges. Education deprivation is also highly gendered, with around 78 percent of girls out of school compared to 63 percent of boys. In rural Balochistan, less than 5 percent of women are literate, making it challenging to engage them in the education sector or in early childhood development activities with children at home.

Balochistan's socio-cultural landscape is predominantly tribal, characterized by communal land ownership and collective governance systems. The province is also experiencing a persistent low-grade insurgency, with periodic attacks targeting security forces and migrant laborers, presenting an additional layer of security risk.

### **D.2 Overview of Borrower's Institutional Capacity for Managing Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts**

The project will be implemented by the School Education Department (SED), Government of Balochistan. SED is currently implementing the education component of the World Bank financed Balochistan Human Capital Investment Project (BHCIP). Through BHCIP, SED has developed significant capacity to manage environmental and social risks and



impacts. This includes specialist environmental and social staff who have been monitoring activities—including facility construction—adequately, and the project has successfully maintained a Satisfactory rating during implementation. The SED maintains a functioning education sector-wide GRM and has displayed proactivity in managing risks related to the rehabilitation of schools. The project intends to utilize existing institutional capacities developed under the BHCIP and the grant-funded STEP-B project that is being prepared in conjunction. However, as this will be the first project under the ESF, some additional capacity building will be required, particularly around issues such as stakeholder engagement, GBV/SEA/SH risk management, and working with the private sector. The expanded scope of the ESF requires targeted training, monitoring and technical assistance to support the effective implementation of the project.

**II. SCREENING OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISKS AND IMPACTS**

**A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)**

Substantial

**A.1 Environmental Risk Rating**

Moderate

The project activities would likely have temporary and localized environmental impacts, primarily associated with the physical construction process, including air and noise pollution, waste management issues, health and safety risks to workers and nearby communities, and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) risks such as accidents, falls, electrical hazards, and equipment-related accidents. The introduction of double shifts may strain existing resources and result in higher energy use. The introduction of climate-smart features, such as solarization and rainwater harvesting, could mitigate some environmental impact, but construction waste, water usage, and energy consumption may still pose risks if not properly managed. Additionally, tree planting and afforestation initiatives may have unintended consequences if non-native species are used or if they disrupt local ecosystems. To mitigate these risks, the borrower will develop a Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) outlining screening procedures, generic mitigation measures (e.g., dust suppression, noise reduction, waste management plans), supervision and monitoring protocols, compliance checklists, and institutional arrangements for Environmental and Social (E&S) management. During project preparation, when the construction work scope is determined to be not significant, E&S screening and management measures will be integrated through the Environmental and Social Codes of Practice (ESCoP) for classroom construction and rehabilitation. These environmental and social requirements will be included in the Project Operations Manual (POM), rather than developing a stand-alone ESMF. Given the temporary and localized nature of these impacts and the ESMF implementation, an Environmental Risk Rating of Moderate is proposed, reflecting potential risks and feasible mitigation measures. If the CERC component is activated, a CERC Manual would be prepared, including a description of the ESHS.

Substantial

**A.2 Social Risk Rating**

At the concept stage, the proposed project is assessed to have Substantial social risks. Marginalized communities—including remote and rural populations, ethnic/tribal minorities, and refugees—may not be able to access project activities. There is the explicit risk that girls may be excluded from the benefits of policy reforms and investments due to barriers to female enrollment in schools and employment as teachers. Social norms and cultural practices can prevent girls from enrolling in or continuing their education, and there may be resistance to project activities in some communities—which could also generate GBV and violence against children. Additionally, PPP models may exacerbate existing inequalities if not properly addressed through careful planning for equity and inclusion, and there is also a risk that the proposed scholarship program for female teachers may be subject to elite capture. Classroom

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construction activities proposed in Component 2 may require land, potentially causing adverse impacts related to involuntary resettlement and restrictions on land use. The subsidized transport program for girls will generate road safety related risks that may impact users of the school transport services; as well as GBV/SEA/SH risks. Oversight will be challenging because of the geographic remoteness and prevailing security conditions in the province.

**B. Relevance of Standards and Policies at Concept Stage**

**B.1 Relevance of Environmental and Social Standards**

**ESS1 - Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts** Relevant

ESS1 is relevant to the project. Since the specific locations, types, and designs of project activities are yet to be determined, the School Education Department (SED) will undertake an assessment to develop an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) in compliance with ESS1, building on the existing documentation from the BHCIP. The ESMF will outline a screening process for subprojects to determine the appropriate methods, tools, and instruments necessary to manage environmental and social risks. It will also address broader social issues such as child protection, gender equity, social exclusion, and citizen engagement. Key risk management measures, including Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and security management, will be incorporated into the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) and the Project Operations Manual (POM). The suitability of the Borrower's existing framework for managing these risks will be evaluated during project preparation.

**ESS10 - Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure** Relevant

The Project will prepare a Stakeholder Engagement Plan to provide a framework for consistent and inclusive engagement with stakeholders throughout the Project lifecycle. Key groups to consult will include: rural parents, parent-teacher management committees, teachers unions, female teachers, transport service providers, and NGO's and government departments involved in child protection. The SEP will aim to inform the subcomponent activities on parental/community engagement, with a specific focus on access to information given high illiteracy and remoteness. The SEP will also include a grievance redress mechanism (GRM) to receive and facilitate the resolution of concerns and grievances, including SEA/SH incidents. The guidance provided in the SEP will be especially relevant for community-level behavior change initiatives, and in ensuring women's participation in Project activities. The SEP will ensure that the mapping of stakeholders includes appropriate representation of tribal groups

**ESS2 - Labor and Working Conditions** Relevant

ESS2 is relevant since there are Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) risks related to the construction activities in Component 2. There may also be a risk of child labor and forced labor in civil works, as the project areas will be spread out and often remote. As part of the ESMF, Labor Management Procedures (LMP) will also be developed to provide guidance on employment terms, labor risks and mitigations, and other information related to labor and working conditions. Specific requirements to manage risks associated with labor influx, related to the interaction between workers and local communities, such as communicable diseases and gender-based violence/SEA/SH, will be managed through contractual requirements, code of conduct, and training set out in the LMP. The LMP will also outline protocols related to community labor contributions in the management of community schools, and child protection protocols for screening, recruitment of teachers which will also be a part of any contracts

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**ESS3 - Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management**

Relevant

The project poses environmental risks, including resource overconsumption, waste generation, pollution (air, noise, water), energy inefficiency, and vulnerability to climate-related impacts. Given the water-constrained environment and WASH-related project aims, these risks are moderate to significant. To mitigate these impacts, the project will adhere to relevant Country Frameworks and identify key gaps using the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF). The ESMF will outline measures to prioritize sustainable construction practices, proper waste management, energy efficiency, and climate resilience. Additionally, school rehabilitation and classroom design will incorporate water harvesting and responsible resource use features, such as rainwater collection systems and water-efficient appliances, to minimize the project's environmental footprint and align with WASH objectives.

**ESS4 - Community Health and Safety**

Relevant

ESS4 is relevant to the GRADE-B project, addressing risks related to construction and operation, such as accidents, traffic, noise, and dust, impacting local communities. Special provisions will be made to ensure safety during construction activities, particularly if refurbishment/construction occurs while schools are operational, including separate entrance/exit points, designated construction areas, and phased construction plans. The ESMF and C-ESMPs will capture these organizational provisions. Additionally, universal access will be integrated into school rehabilitation and construction, incorporating disability-inclusive design principles, age-appropriate and accessible furniture, and sanitation standards. The ESMF will reference applicable Life and Fire Safety (L&FS) assessment and management requirements and address natural disaster risks (floods, seismic activities) through hazard-specific design and mitigation measures.

**ESS5 - Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement**

Relevant

At the concept stage, the proposed interventions include classroom expansions in selected schools, as well as the establishment of community schools. These activities may require land, and these needs will be met through government owned land or voluntary land donation. The construction activity in existing schools may involve small scale, temporary impacts on livelihoods due to reduced access, particularly in urban schools. As part of the ESMF, a Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) will be prepared to address any impacts related to livelihood and land taking (if required). The RPF will include a protocol for land donations compatible with ESS5 requirements, as the experience with voluntary land donation in Balochistan in the education sector has, so far, not been adequately documented. The overall ESMF will be consulted upon and disclosed both in-country and on the Bank's website prior to appraisal. Site specific plans will be prepared if needed.

**ESS6 - Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources**

Not Currently Relevant

ESS6 is considered irrelevant since upgrades and new classrooms will primarily be built within existing school premises. However, potential environmental impacts related to vegetation clearance and habitat disruption will still be considered. These impacts will be addressed under ESS1, with measures outlined in the ESMF to minimize harm and protect ecosystems.

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**ESS7 - Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities** Not Currently Relevant

There are no recognized indigenous people in the province of Balochistan

**ESS8 - Cultural Heritage** Relevant

This standard is considered relevant since the project will need to ensure that the local communities’ cultural practices and traditions are respected, particularly in rural or indigenous areas where schools will be built or expanded. Any activities that may affect cultural heritage, such as land clearing or construction, must be carefully managed to prevent damage or destruction. ESS8 also emphasizes the need for appropriate consultation with local communities and stakeholders to identify, document, and mitigate risks to cultural heritage, ensuring that the project respects local customs, values, and heritage. The ESMF will cover a Chance Finds Procedure and specifically exclude activity on cultural heritage sites or site of cultural significance/ importance.

**ESS9 - Financial Intermediaries** Not Currently Relevant

The project will not involve Financial Intermediaries.

**B.2 Legal Operational Policies that Apply**

**OP 7.50 Operations on International Waterways** No

**OP 7.60 Operations in Disputed Areas** No

**B.3 Other Salient Features**

**Use of Borrower Framework** In Part

The use of the Borrower Framework will be explored during preparation.

**Use of Common Approach** No

The project will not require the use of a common approach.

**C. Overview of Required Environmental and Social Risk Management Activities**

**C.1 What Borrower environmental and social analyses, instruments, plans and/or frameworks are planned or required by Appraisal?**

- Stakeholder Engagement Plan
- Environmental and Social Management Framework (including Resettlement Policy Framework and Labor Management Procedures and incorporating elements of the Borrower Framework)
- Draft Environmental and Social Commitment Plan
- CERC Manual ( when the CERC is activated)

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**III. CONTACT POINT**

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**V. APPROVAL**

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