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IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION AND RESULTS REPORT

P174223

ON A

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION GRANT

IN THE AMOUNT OF US\$ 19.85 MILLION

TO THE

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN

FOR

COVID19 RESPONSE, RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE IN EDUCATION PROJECT (COVID19 RRREP)

May 28, 2023

Education Global Practice  
South Asia Region

## CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(Exchange Rate Effective Mar 17, 2023)

Currency Unit =	PKR
PKR 223.95 =	US\$1

FISCAL YEAR  
July 1 - June 30

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ASPIRE	Actions to Strengthen Performance for Inclusive and Responsive Education Program
COVID-19 RRREP	COVID-19 Response, Recovery and Resilience in Education Project
CPS	Country Partnership Strategy
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
FM	Financial Management
FY	Fiscal Year
GOP	Government of Pakistan
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
ICT	Islamabad Capital Territory
IR	Intermediate Result
IPEMC	Inter-Provincial Education Ministerial Conference
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
MOFEPT	Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NCHD	National Commission for Human Development
NEDPG	National Education Development Partners Group
OOSC	Out-of-school-children
OTT	Over The Top
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
PDO	Project Development Objective
PREP	Pandemic Response Effectiveness in Pakistan
PSLM	Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey
PTCL	Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited
PTV	Pakistan Television Corporation
RF	Results Framework
SHIFT	First Programmatic Securing Human Investments to Foster Transformation Development Policy Credit
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
TA	Technical Assistance
TOC	Theory of Change
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
WFP	World Food Program

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**DATA SHEET**

**BASIC INFORMATION**

**Product Information**

Project ID	Project Name
P174223	COVID19 Response, Recovery and Resilience in Education Project (COVID19 RRREP)
Country	Financing Instrument
Pakistan	Investment Project Financing
Original EA Category	Revised EA Category

**Organizations**

Borrower	Implementing Agency
Islamic Republic of Pakistan	Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training

**Project Development Objective (PDO)**

Original PDO

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to strengthen federal and provincial capacity in the education sector to: (i) respond to and recover from the COVID-19 crisis in the short term; and (ii) lay the foundations for resilience to face future crises, with a focus on disadvantaged areas and vulnerable populations.



<b>FINANCING</b>			
	<b>Original Amount (US\$)</b>	<b>Revised Amount (US\$)</b>	<b>Actual Disbursed (US\$)</b>
<b>World Bank Financing</b>			
TF-B3319	19,850,000	19,850,000	19,269,569
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,850,000</b>	<b>19,850,000</b>	<b>19,269,569</b>
<b>Non-World Bank Financing</b>			
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>19,850,000</b>	<b>19,850,000</b>	<b>19,269,569</b>

<b>KEY DATES</b>				
<b>Approval</b>	<b>Effectiveness</b>	<b>MTR Review</b>	<b>Original Closing</b>	<b>Actual Closing</b>
20-Jul-2020	25-Nov-2020	17-Jan-2022	30-Nov-2021	30-Nov-2022

<b>RESTRUCTURING AND/OR ADDITIONAL FINANCING</b>		
<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Amount Disbursed (US\$M)</b>	<b>Key Revisions</b>
09-Nov-2021	7.35	Change in Loan Closing Date(s)
16-Jun-2022	14.58	Change in Loan Closing Date(s)

<b>KEY RATINGS</b>		
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Bank Performance</b>	<b>M&amp;E Quality</b>
Highly Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Substantial

<b>RATINGS OF PROJECT PERFORMANCE IN ISRs</b>				
<b>No.</b>	<b>Date ISR Archived</b>	<b>DO Rating</b>	<b>IP Rating</b>	<b>Actual Disbursements (US\$M)</b>
01	20-Nov-2020	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	0
02	05-Mar-2021	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	3.61
03	17-Dec-2021	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	7.35



04	28-Jun-2022	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	14.58
05	30-Nov-2022	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	18.99

## SECTORS AND THEMES

### Sectors

Major Sector/Sector (%)

**Education 100**

Public Administration - Education	49
Primary Education	11
Other Education	40

### Themes

Major Theme/ Theme (Level 2)/ Theme (Level 3) (%)

**Human Development and Gender 100**

Disease Control	42
Pandemic Response	42
Education	100
Education Financing	42
Teachers	67
Student Assessment	42
Education Governance, School-Based Management	42
Standards, Curriculum and Textbooks	100
Education Facilities	67

## ADM STAFF

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## I. PROJECT CONTEXT AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

### A. CONTEXT AT APPRAISAL

#### Context

**1. At the time of appraisal of the COVID-19 Response, Recovery and Resilience in Education Project (RRREP, the Project), Pakistan had been making progress in stabilizing its economy and implementing structural reforms to address the issues that had constrained its growth to levels below those of its South Asian neighbors.** The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic was expected to have significant negative impacts on the economy, leading to a contraction between 2.6 to 3.3 percent in FY20 and between 0.2 and 4.0 percent in FY21, down from pre-COVID growth projections of 2.4 percent in FY20 and 3.0 percent in FY21.

**2. Pakistan had made consistent and significant progress in reducing poverty**—the poverty headcount using the national poverty line fell from 64.3 percent in 2001 to 24.3 percent in 2015—but the COVID-19 pandemic was expected to reverse some of this progress. The Government of Pakistan aimed to prioritize investments to offset reversals in poverty reduction and human capital caused by the pandemic and potential climate change and disaster-related vulnerabilities.

**3. Faced with the challenge that recent gains in addressing its low human capital were being put at risk by the pandemic, the Government adopted a holistic approach to human capital accumulation and protecting human capital was at the center of its COVID-19 response plan.** The World Bank (WB) was supporting the GOP in this COVID-19 response agenda through a support package that included new lending and the restructuring of ongoing projects to quickly mobilize funding for response and mitigation measures (Para 73).

#### Sectoral Context

**4. The 18th Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan devolved education service delivery to the provincial governments,** however the federal government has an overarching responsibility to ensure that all citizens have reasonably comparable access to basic educational services, regardless of their place of residence. All provinces have developed education sector plans, and sizeable parts of provincial budgets are allocated to the education sector. However, coordination among provinces and the federal level could be improved to achieve national level objectives and face challenges at the national level.

**5. Even before the pandemic, Pakistan's education system faced substantial challenges in access, quality and management; these were likely to be exacerbated by the pandemic.** Before the crisis, about 30 percent of school-aged children were out of school (approximately 19 million children) with stark disparities in gender.<sup>1</sup> Learning poverty was high; 75 percent of 10-year-olds could not read and comprehend an age-appropriate text. Further, the education system was inefficient with significant repetition and dropout rates.

**6. The COVID-19 pandemic had an immediate effect on Pakistan's education system. The GOP announced a nationwide lockdown in March 2020—including the closure of all schools.** Restrictions were eased after a two-month closure in view of economic consequences, but the closure of all educational institutions was extended through mid-July. The pandemic was impacted over 50 million students. In addition, the Government cancelled all examinations and students would be promoted to the next level based on their previous grades and assessments. In the interim, the GOP began

<sup>1</sup> Pakistan Social and Living Standards Survey 2019.



exploring and defining modalities under which educational institutions could reopen safely during the pandemic.

**7. The disruption in education was expected to affect disproportionately disadvantaged and hard-to-reach children, including girls and young women.** The pandemic was expected to reduce both supply of and demand for education in view of: (i) negative shocks to household incomes that would make children less likely to attend school once they reopened; (ii) negative effects on household perceptions and attitudes towards sending children to school due to contagion fears; and (iii) negative impacts to the supply of education due to the permanent closure of low-fee private schools due to the pandemic. The depth and scope of these effects would depend on the length of the pandemic, its potential seasonal characteristics, education authorities' response, and the financial and technical capacity to mitigate their effects. Education inequity was likely to increase due to unequal access to technology-based remote learning.

**8. The GOP faced both challenges and opportunities in mitigating the pandemic's impact on education,** including: (i) speeding up the response, recovery and resilience of the system while better targeting support to the most vulnerable and guaranteeing a safe return to school of all students, teachers and administrators; (ii) using the disruption caused by COVID-19 to improve learning opportunities for out-of-school children (OOSC) and at-risk students using traditional and innovative approaches, such as distance learning, to rebuild a better education system; and (iii) strengthening federal-provincial coordination.

**9. The GOP's immediate response was strong and called for improved coordination between the federal and provincial governments, and with the private sector, to make these efforts both effective and sustainable.** At the national level, the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (MOFEPT) began broadcasting pedagogical content via TV and awareness campaigns through Pakistan Television Corporation's new channel, "TeleSchool", that broadcasted classes for grades 1 to 12 based on Student Learning Outcomes aligned with the curriculum. It also began considering other mediums such as radio, newspaper, and social media. At the provincial level, the Government of Punjab launched pedagogical websites with free-of-cost content and a TV channel for short-term courses through cable operators. Other provinces were considering similar distance learning initiatives but were struggling to implement them. The private sector had developed a sizeable supply of content for grades 1 to 12, and the potential to reach children out of school due to COVID-19.



**10. The RRREP Project was fully aligned with the Pakistan National Education Response and Resilience Plan for COVID-19 (NERRP).** This plan was developed with the leadership of the MoFEPT and with the support of UNICEF (Coordinating Agency), the National Education Development Partners Group (NEDPG) Co-chairs (JICA and WFP) and other NEDPG partners, including the Foreign Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO) and the World Bank. The Project was part of the broader World Bank's support to the GOP's Plan which also included the complementary Actions to Strengthen Performance for Inclusive and Responsive Education Program (ASPIRE, P173399) and the Pandemic Response Effectiveness in Pakistan Project (PREP, P178758) that together support the GOP's efforts to combat the pandemic and disruption in its education sector and help its education systems become more responsive, resilient, and inclusive.

### Theory of Change (Results Chain)

**11. The Project's Theory of Change (TOC) was based on the premise that responding to COVID-19 and getting children safely back to school, while including distance learning opportunities and provincial-federal collaboration, would reduce the impact of the current and future external shocks on the education system.** Inputs and activities would focus on carrying out health and education communication campaigns, supporting teachers and students and preparing and implementing emergency plans. Demand side interventions supported by the Project to nudge demand for education, particularly for girls, would result in increased access to education in disadvantaged areas. Strengthened federal and

provincial government institutions would help increase the education system’s capacity to reduce the impact of external shocks and expand access to quality, equitable education in the longer term. The TOC from appraisal is presented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Theory of Change**

Activities/Actions	Outputs	Short-Term Outcomes	Medium-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes
<b>Component 1: Response</b>				
Sensitization campaigns to minimize negative effects of school closures  Equipment and content developed for TV, radio and on-line  Support to teachers and students	Emergency plans for distance learning and school opening  Inclusive Distance Learning	Reduced impact of external shocks on the education system		
<b>Component 2: Recovery</b>				
<b>Supply.</b> School inputs: safe school protocols, hygiene standards, teacher training and student socio-emotional support, etc.  <b>Demand.</b> Communication campaigns on importance of education continuity and girls’ enrollment	Schools ready to open and support teachers and students  Mechanisms to expand education demand deployed	Reduce loss of access to safe and quality education, particularly in disadvantaged areas	Strengthened management capacity to: (i) respond to, and recover from, the COVID-19 crisis, and (ii) build resilience to face future crises (focus on disadvantaged areas and populations)	Improved equity of education outcomes in the country
<b>Component 3: Resilience</b>				
Design and approval of joint federal/provincial response plan for emergencies in the education sector	Coordination of education response to emergencies	Strengthened federal and provincial governments’ institutions and policies		

### Project Development Objectives (PDOs)

**12. The Project Development Objective was to strengthen federal and provincial capacity in the education sector to:** (i) respond to and recover from the COVID-19 crisis in the short term, and (ii) lay the foundations for resilience to face future crises, with a focus on disadvantaged areas and vulnerable populations.

### Key Expected Outcomes and Outcome Indicators

**13. The key expected outcome was strengthened institutional capacity whereby federal and provincial governments would be able to work together to implement the short- and medium-term response and recovery needs to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector.** The Project also aimed to establish the technical and institutional capacity to build back a stronger and more resilient education system. It focused on disadvantaged areas and vulnerable populations in two ways: (i) Funds were allocated among provinces based on a formula that considered indicators such as poverty, out-of-school children, lagging districts, and education efficiency indicators; and (ii) most



project activities focused on disadvantaged areas - 52 prioritized lagging districts across the country, defined lagging as having a high number of out-of-school children, low gender parity, and high learning poverty. These districts are typically populated by the most vulnerable groups in the bottom economic quintiles, who are often concentrated in remote areas. In addition, the Project placed a particular emphasis on supporting girls in these districts.

**14. Progress towards achieving the PDO would be measured by the following PDO indicators:**

PDO Indicator 1: *Response*. Number of children in disadvantaged districts supported with distance learning (disaggregated by gender) (*Baseline: 0; Target: 1,000,000*);

PDO Indicator 2: *Recovery*. Number of children provided access to programs and sensitization campaigns aimed at minimizing the negative impacts of school closures, with a focus on girls (disaggregated by gender) (*Baseline: 0; Target: 5,000,000*); and

PDO Indicator 3: *Resilience*. Strengthened federal and provincial coordination for immediate response (*Baseline: No platform for coordination apart from IPEMC; Target: 2 sessions of the Technical Steering Committee, including decision on the remaining funds to be spent before closing of the Grant; federal/provincial response plan for emergencies in the education sector, including standard operating procedures during emergencies developed, finalized and endorsed*).

**15. The Results Framework (RF) also contained 10 Intermediate Results (IR) Indicators (Annex 1).**

**Components**

The Project comprised three components, as follows:

**16. Component 1: Response** (US\$6.5 million) was designed to focus on emergency response activities to ensure education continuity. It comprised three sub-components:

Sub-component 1.1: Ensuring Learning Continuity would support: (i) expansion of national distance-learning content, including the development of additional content for all primary grades and its dissemination through media, such as radio, print, social media and mobile applications; and (ii) distribution of learning materials (both existing and to be developed) in lagging districts, including the provision of tablets and connectivity devices, reading materials, home-based assignments, and supporting materials for parents. The Project would finance activities that support the hardest to reach children, with emphasis on girls who are the most at-risk of dropping out or being exposed to social pressures and abuse.

Sub-component 1.2: Protecting students' and teachers' health, safety and wellbeing would support the expansion of communication campaigns to include health and education messaging throughout the longer response and recovery phases based on gender needs assessments pre-COVID-19 and during school closures. The campaigns would focus on promoting hygiene and COVID-19-related safety practices, education engagement and re-engagement messages (especially those targeted at parents of girls and of those at risk of dropping out) and sensitization about the socioemotional and behavioral impacts that are associated with the pandemic and school closures.

Sub-component 1.3: Designed and implementing Distance Learning Competency Standards and Assessment Framework was to support capacity building for the government to design and implement an inclusive distance learning certification pathway to target the 19.1 million out-of-school children and the ones that would leave schools due to the negative shocks to household income caused by COVID-19. This would be achieved by providing technical assistance (TA) to the federal government to design a Distance Learning Competency Standards and Assessment Framework and to assess its effectiveness in engaging learners, with a focus on out-of-school girls.



**17. Component 2: Recovery** (US\$11.5 million) would improve the Government's implementation capacity for effective recovery of education services. It would be achieved by promoting school and teacher health safety in schools and by improving the capacity of educators to safely deliver education to their students. It comprised two sub-components:

*Sub-component 2.1: Promoting Safe Schools* would promote safe schools through the design and implementation of federal and provincial governments' guidelines and protocols for safe schools. It would provide TA to help the governments: (i) improve their capacity to identify and design safety protocols for school reopening, and (ii) design and execute implementation and monitoring mechanisms. Additional provincial support could include financing for measures to limit the spread of second wave contagions by reducing student contact through approaches such as staggered shifts and alternating weeks. Enhanced psycho-social support for students, parents and teachers would also be provided through the promotion of the wellbeing programs established under sub-component 1.2.

*Sub-component 2.2: Supporting Teachers and Students to Prepare for the Recovery* would be done through the design and implementation of initial teacher training to address learning gaps from the disruption of education. This training would focus on remedial education, distance learning strategies, and formative and summative assessment practices and associated teacher professional standards. Additional modules on gender and gender-based violence could be imparted to teachers to improve understanding of the gender gaps in education, particular to the context of the crisis. These trainings of a targeted number of teachers (predominantly female teachers where possible) in priority areas would pave the way for an expansion strategy to be supported by other projects at a larger scale, along with the production of expanded teaching and learning materials. Students would also be supported through the purchasing and distribution of school supplies and learning materials in order to lower barriers to school re-entry for the most disadvantaged students.

**18. Component 3: Resilience, Monitoring and Evaluation** (US\$1.85 million) was designed to finance activities to increase the resilience of the education system to respond to and recover from future shocks, including potential new waves of COVID-19, and natural and man-made disasters. It would improve the capacity of provincial and federal governments to design effective strategies and implementation plans to deal with education disruptions that have negative impacts on learning outcomes. It would also invest in improving monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacity with a focus on expanding equitable access to education for girls and students in disadvantaged areas, identifying effective distance learning strategies that lead to improved education outcomes, and financing the operating costs of a Project Coordination Unit (PCU). It comprised two sub-components:

*Sub-component 3.1: Strengthen Planning for System Disruption* would support development of strategies and standard procedures for education service delivery during emergencies and periods of extended school closures, including: (i) emergency policy and procedures for continued learning and certification; (ii) remedial learning; (iii) attention to health and safety of students and staff; (iv) teachers' professional development; (v) streamlined curriculum; (vi) leveraging the private sector; (vii) mental and psychological support readiness; and (viii) challenges faced by girls in accessing schooling during crises and measures to address them. Policies and Codes of Conduct would be developed for teachers to mitigate risks of violence against children in schools and would be disseminated. The Project would also support establishment of: (i) an emergency delivery unit with representation from the federal and provincial governments, and with guidance and support from private providers, to face any kind of emergency or launch a national effort that required extended coordination; and (ii) a Policy Analysis Unit within MOFEPT to lead coordination efforts and support standardization of data collection measures in education, among others.

*Sub-component 3.2: Resilience, Implementation and Monitoring and Evaluation* would support coordination across provinces, project implementation, analytical work and monitoring and evaluation (M&E), including evaluations of local interventions and management practices. Supported by a gender consultant hired at the federal level, staff of project-



related institutions would be trained on gender issues, especially in the context of COVID-19, and integrate lessons into M&E efforts. This sub-component would help strengthen the technical and implementation capacity within provincial departments of education, using a learning from evidence approach to build in iterative improvements in planning and implementation processes. Finally, it would support project management, including reporting, data collection (including gender-disaggregated data), and fiduciary and safeguards compliance requirements.

## B. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES DURING IMPLEMENTATION (IF APPLICABLE)

### Revised PDOs and Outcome Targets

**19. Neither the PDO nor the Project's PDO outcome targets were revised.**

### Revised PDO Indicators

**20. The PDO Indicators were not revised.**

### Revised Components

**21. The Project's components were not revised.**

### Other Changes

**22. The Grant's Closing Date was extended for a total of one year**, first by nine months, from November 30, 2021, to August 31, 2022, and then by three months, from August 31, 2022, to November 30, 2022.

### Rationale for Changes and Their Implication on the Original Theory of Change

**23. The Project was restructured twice to extend the Closing Date.** In November 2021, In November 2021, it was extended by 9 months to August 31, 2022, to support the Ministry in reopening schools safely after COVID-19 closures, ensure distance learning and building resilience. In June 2022, it was extended by 3 months to complete Project activities and ensure safe school functioning, learning continuity, and system-level resilience. The extensions did not impact the TOC.

## II. OUTCOME

### A. RELEVANCE OF PDOs

#### Assessment of Relevance of PDOs and Rating

**24.** The Relevance of PDOs is rated High. The Project continues to be fully consistent with the World Bank Group's Partnership Strategy (CPS) for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for the period FY2015-FY2019 (Report No. 84645-PK, which was in effect at the time of preparation).<sup>2</sup> The CPS was extended to FY20 under the May 2017 PLR (Report No. 113574), and currently remains in effect (a new Country Partnership Framework is currently under preparation). The Project supports Results Area III (Inclusion: Reaching Out to the Underserved, Neglected and Poor) and its sub-outcome 3.2 of reducing vulnerability for groups at risk by increasing girls' gross primary education enrollment. It also supports Results Area IV (Service Delivery: Accelerating Improvements in Services) and its sub-outcome 4.3 of increased school enrollment and adoption of education quality assessment through increased access for out-of-school children, innovative education methodologies and improved assessment practices and tracking of learning outcomes.

**25. The PDOs were especially relevant to "Saving Lives, Scaling-Up Impact and Getting Back on Track" which set out**

<sup>2</sup> A new Country Partnership Framework is under preparation in FY23.



the World Bank's approach to provide exceptional support in speed and scale to countries as they tackled unprecedented threats posed by the COVID-19 pandemic which was expected to disproportionately affect disadvantaged and hard-to-reach children, including girls and young women (Para 7). The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted plans to achieve sector priorities and forced strategy adjustments in to focus on the response, recovery, and resilience needed to increase human capital. As part of its immediate efforts to coordinate and plan for system response and recovery, the GOP produced the COVID-19 response plan, Pakistan National Education Response and Resilience Plan for COVID-19. The Project was part of the broader World Bank's support to the GOP's Plan which also included the complementary Actions to Strengthen Performance for Inclusive and Responsive Education Program (ASPIRE, P173399) and the Pandemic Response Effectiveness in Pakistan Project (PREP, P178758) that together support the GOP's efforts to combat the pandemic and disruption in its education sector and help its education systems become more responsive, resilient, and inclusive.

**26. The high relevance of the PDOs was confirmed in the aftermath of the September 2022 floods** that devastated the country and hindered access to and continuity of learning for millions of children throughout the country, especially vulnerable populations in disadvantaged areas. Through enhanced federal and provincial coordination, the project was able to strengthen the resilience of the education sector and its ability to respond more promptly to disaster in a coordinated manner.

#### **B. ACHIEVEMENT OF PDOs (EFFICACY)**

**27. To evaluate the efficacy, this section disaggregates the PDO into three sections**, rather than two, since the first part of the PDO "respond to and recover from the COVID-19 crisis in the short term" is actually two-fold. In addition, recovery in the context of the development outcome is interpreted as being a mid-term objective. The three components of the project correspond to each section of the PDO, which are to: (i) respond to the COVID-19 crisis in the short term, with a focus on disadvantaged areas<sup>3</sup> and vulnerable populations<sup>4</sup>; (ii) recover from the COVID-19 crisis in the medium term, a with a focus on disadvantaged areas and vulnerable populations; and (iii) lay the foundations for resilience to face future crises, with a focus on disadvantaged areas and vulnerable populations.

**28. Despite a difficult operating environment (Para 52 - 55), the Project achieved its objectives**, as measured by the progress towards PDO Indicator targets, achieved important results, and paved the way for parallel World Bank-financed operations that are currently under implementation and that will sustain its results.

#### **Assessment of Achievement of Each Objective/Outcome**

**29. PDO 1: To respond to the COVID-19 crisis in the short term, with a focus on disadvantaged areas and vulnerable populations.**

<sup>3</sup> 52 selected districts with high number of OOSC, low gender parity, and high learning poverty, across 4 provinces.

<sup>4</sup> Such as girls, students with low learning outcomes, or from disadvantaged backgrounds, as these were the most likely to disengage from schooling, thus further exacerbating the OOSC challenge.



PDO Indicator 1:	Number of children in disadvantaged districts supported with distance learning (disaggregated by gender) ( <u>Baseline</u> : 0; <u>Target</u> : 1,000,000; <u>Status</u> : EXCEEDED).
IR Indicator 1 (1.1):	National early childhood education and grades 1-12 content developed and implemented ( <u>Baseline</u> : No content developed; <u>Target</u> : National early childhood education and grades 1-12 developed and implemented; <u>Status</u> : ACHIEVED).
IR Indicator 2 (1.2):	National safety and well-being programs developed and implemented ( <u>Baseline</u> : No COVID-19 response national safety and well-being programs; <u>Target</u> : National safety and well-being programs designed, disseminated and implemented targeting girls and young women in disadvantaged areas; <u>Status</u> : ACHIEVED).
IR Indicator 3 (1.3):	Development of Distance Learning Certification Program ( <u>Baseline</u> : Distance learning certification program not developed; <u>Target</u> : Legal analysis and implementation plan for pathways for certification developed; <u>Status</u> : PARTIALLY ACHIEVED and continued under the ASPIRE).
IR Indicator 4 (1.3):	Number of children whose learning was assessed to evaluate loss of learning during school closure: ( <u>Baseline</u> : 0; <u>Target</u> : Implementation of assessment in sample per province (5,000 children in total), and results disseminated; <u>Status</u> : EXCEEDED).
IR Indicator 5 (1.3):	Parent Surveys to assess satisfaction of project interventions implemented ( <u>Baseline</u> : 0; <u>Target</u> : 5,000; <u>Status</u> : EXCEEDED).

**30. Rating: High.** The Project fully achieved PDO 1 and responded to the COVID-19 crisis by ensuring the continuity of education during the pandemic in disadvantaged areas (the focus, definition, and justification of “disadvantaged areas” is further elaborated further in Paras 13 and 44). By completion, 2.7 million children in lagging districts were supported with distance learning, far exceeding the target of PDO Indicator 1 (1.0 million children). Of the overall outreach to over 5 million children, 2.7 million were children in lagging districts. Of these, 1.5 million children participated in Tele-School viewership (804,240 boys and 772,701 girls). Further, 1.2 million children accessed and utilized Radio School, learning materials and smart boards. At the onset of COVID, content of existing videos was shared by local education technology service providers with the MoFEPT, and the dissemination/broadcasting through TV and Radio was supported under the PREP. Once the Project was approved, RRREP supported i) the broadcasting of the existing content (1,566 videos) through Pakistan Television (PTV), the national public broadcaster of Pakistan, and Radio (Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation, which have an extensive network of transmitters that covers a large part of the country, especially lagging districts which made possible for project to reach children who may not otherwise have access to other forms of media; ii) the procurement and dissemination of new content (over 6,000 digital content videos) for Kindergarten to Grade 12 level (IR Indicator 1), and; iii) the development of an Over The Top (OTT) app for dissemination of new content. National safety and well-being campaigns were designed, disseminated, and implemented using print, electronic and social media (IR Indicator 2); here too dissemination focused on lagging districts. The Project aimed to develop a distance learning certification program and prepare a legal analysis and implementation plan for pathways for certification of OOSC to be developed (IR Indicator 3); the implementation plan was developed, but the legal analysis is being finalized under the ASPIRE Project, as part of a deliverable to pilot implementation mechanisms for distance education programs. Through leveraging identified synergies with ongoing efforts, the MOFEPT was able to carry out an assessment of 281,410 students in Grades 1-5 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) for their learning level in Mathematics, English and Urdu subjects (IR Indicator 4), enabling them to far exceed the target of assessing 5,000 children; the result of this assessment confirmed an alarming need for remediation in foundational skills (Para 35) and is supporting policy dialogue surrounding the importance of accelerating foundational learning in government and donor led initiatives. Parent surveys were conducted from 8,393 parents in the lagging districts, including from 4,045 parents as embedded in the Gender Study on the impacts of Covid-19 on the health, wellbeing and safety of teachers and students and 4,348 from the TeleSchool Evaluation Survey of project-implemented interventions including provision of distance learning materials, the safety and wellbeing campaign and the distribution of learning materials in lagging districts (IR Indicator 5).

**31. PDO 2: To recover from the COVID-19 crisis in the medium term, a with a focus on disadvantaged areas and vulnerable populations.**





PDO Indicator 2:	Number of children provided access to programs and sensitization campaigns aimed at minimizing the negative impacts of school closures, with a focus on girls (disaggregated by gender) ( <u>Baseline:</u> 0; <u>Target:</u> 5,000,000; <u>Status:</u> EXCEEDED).
IR Indicator 6 (2.1):	Safe school reopening protocols identified, designed and disseminated ( <u>Baseline:</u> Safe school reopening protocols not designed or disseminated; <u>Target:</u> Federal and provincial safe school reopening protocols identified, designed and disseminated via mass communications campaigns; <u>Status:</u> ACHIEVED).
IR Indicator 7 (2.1):	Number of schools provided with supplies and learning materials for safe school reopening ( <u>Baseline:</u> 0; <u>Target:</u> 10,000; <u>Status:</u> EXCEEDED).
IR Indicator 8 (2.1):	Number of schools equipped with minimum hygiene standards for prevention of COVID-19 ( <u>Baseline:</u> 0; <u>Target:</u> 12,000; <u>Status:</u> EXCEEDED).
IR Indicator 9 (2.2):	Number of teachers trained to provide accelerated programs to mitigate loss of learning during school closure ( <u>Baseline:</u> 0; <u>Target:</u> 15,000; <u>Status:</u> PARTIALLY ACHIEVED).

**32. Rating: High.** The Project fully achieved its PDO 2 by ensuring the safe reopening of schools, raising awareness of safety, health, and well-being, and building the capacity of teachers to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on student learning in selected disadvantaged areas. By completion, 35 million children and parents were reached through different mediums to participate in programs and sensitization campaigns aimed at minimizing the negative impacts of school closures, exceeding by far the target of PDO Indicator 2 (5 million children). The content of these campaigns included topics such as mental well-being and positive conflict resolution between parents and children, animated videos on girls’ and boy’s education and mental well-being of students, an animated video on school bullying, and a documentary for OOSC. These targeted communication campaigns particularly focused on girls and were broadcast in lagging districts (Para 44). Of the children and parents targeted, 12.82 million were reached by print media, 2 million by SMS and 20.18 million through social media (in all reaching about 20 million boys and 10 million girls). For the lagging districts, beneficiaries were reached through advertisements in local newspapers, radio channels and through location-based targeting on social media that allowed the project to reach targeted demographics in the lagging districts. Federal and provincial safe school reopening protocols were identified and designed by the Government and disseminated under the Project to relevant stakeholders by the MOFEPT directly together with school reenrollment campaigns through print, electronic and social media (IR Indicator 6). Distribution of supplies and learning materials was completed in 12,045 schools, all in the lagging districts, providing for safe school reopening; learning materials were distributed to 8,689 primary schools for 849,811 grade 1-5 children, also in lagging districts (IR Indicator 7). About 350 smartboards were procured, distributed, and installed in schools all over Pakistan. A total of 12,045 schools met minimum hygiene standards for prevention of COVID-19; a total of 6.57 million hygiene kits were distributed in the lagging districts to about 2.8 million students (IR Indicator 8). The Project partially achieved (82 percent) its target for training teachers—12,290 teachers were trained against a target of 15,000—to provide accelerated programs to mitigate loss of learning during school closures. Of the teachers trained, 6,656 were female and 5,634 were male; 2,163 were in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT); 5,187 - in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP); and 4,940 – in the lagging districts of the Punjab province. The teacher training component (IR Indicator 9) fell short by 20 percent of the original target since teacher training in Sindh province could not be carried out due to the flood emergency in 2022. While every province was impacted by the floods, estimates show that Sindh was the worst affected. Satellite-based estimates for the flooded areas suggest that approximately 4,000 km<sup>2</sup> in Sindh, were under water for weeks (UNOSAT 2022). Almost 26,600 schools were damaged or destroyed, the majority of which are in Sindh. The flood emergency in 2022 did not permit the training of teachers in Sindh province (Para 57). However, teacher professional development activities are continuing under the ASPIRE project (with a target of 40,000 teachers across Pakistan), picking up on the same nomination of teachers (who could not participate in Sindh) and training areas.

**33. PDO 3: To lay the foundations for resilience to future crises, with a focus on disadvantaged areas and vulnerable populations.**



PDO Indicator 3:	Strengthened federal and provincial coordination for immediate response ( <u>Baseline</u> : No platform for coordination apart from IPEMC; <u>Target</u> : 2 sessions of the Technical Steering Committee, including decision on the remaining funds to be spent before closing of the Grant; federal/provincial response plan for emergencies in the education sector, including standard operating procedures during emergencies developed, finalized and endorsed; <u>Status</u> : ACHIEVED).
IR Indicator 10 (3.1):	Creation of Emergency Delivery Unit with federal and provincial representation ( <u>Baseline</u> : No Emergency Cell Delivery Unit with federal and provincial representation; <u>Target</u> : Emergency Cell Delivery Unit with federal and provincial representation created, active and sharing knowledge on response activities; <u>Status</u> : ACHIEVED).
IR Indicator 11 (3.2):	Evaluation of local interventions and management practices conducted ( <u>Baseline</u> : No evaluations conducted; <u>Target</u> : Evaluations of local interventions and management practices implemented in all four provinces, and report on lessons learned on the effectiveness of engagement in distance learning strategies, particularly for girls; <u>Status</u> : ACHIEVED).

**34. Rating: High.** The Project also fully achieved its PDO 3 to lay the foundations for resilience to face future crises by an overall strengthening of education sector systems. It supported the establishment of a Technical Steering Committee (TSC) which held two sessions to discuss national project interventions on a broader level, particularly focusing on establishing a robust interprovincial coordination mechanism to respond to future emergencies. The TSC comprises representatives from both federal and provincial levels and provide a forum for knowledge sharing (IR Indicator 10). The National Education Response and Resilience Plan, a framework of strategies and interventions for Pakistan’s education system to cope with the effects of COVID-19, was developed with technical support under the Project and approved by the Inter-Provincial Education Ministerial Conference (IPEMC). While MoFEPT funded the Plan’s development, the RRREP Project Coordination Unit (PCU) was highly involved in the technical discussion, consultations with the provinces and development of the draft. The Project interventions well complement the three Priority Areas (PAs) of the framework presented in the plan: (i) continuation of learning; (ii) system strengthening and resilience; (iii) physical, psychological and hygiene safety.

**35. Several project-wide analytical tasks and evaluation studies were carried out by MoFEPT under the Project:** an *Assessment of Learning Continuation Programs* provided an evaluation of selected distance learning solutions (e.g., Tele-School and Radio School), including assessing parents’ awareness and satisfaction, viewership and listeners, as well as effectiveness of local interventions and management practices implemented in all four provinces and recommendations to optimize and enhance the scale, effectiveness and impact of the programs (IR Indicator 11); a *Review of Digital Content* study evaluated over 6,000 videos procured by MoFEPT under the Project to assess alignment with the national and provincial Standard Learning Outcomes; a Gender Study evaluated Impacts of COVID-19 on the health, well-being and safety of students and teachers; a study sought to propose pathways to *Mainstreaming OOSC*; and a *Learning Diagnostic Testing of Primary Students in ICT and KP* assessed the impacts of a targeted instruction program aimed to support students improve foundational learning post COVID-19 school closures. Annex 6 summarizes findings from all studies. Most of the Project’s interventions are being institutionalized (Para 42).

#### Justification of Overall Efficacy Rating

**36. Overall Efficacy is rated High.** The Project fully achieved all of its three PDO objectives.

#### C. EFFICIENCY

**37. Economic Efficiency.** The Project’s economic efficiency was Substantial, given that the net present value (NPV) at completion is higher than expected at appraisal. Annex 3 elaborates on the Project’s economic analysis at appraisal and at completion. The economic analysis of the Project at completion was carried out using the same methodology and data as appraisal. The only difference is the education profile of students at completion – in other words the probability that a student completes each education level for the COVID-19 cohort at age 16-20. The Project was evaluated using NPV and



internal rate of return (IRR). Specifically, the net benefit and cost of the impact were simulated based on the differences in the future labor earnings and the private costs of schooling including the opportunity cost of schooling with and without the Project. At appraisal, the economic analysis showed that the proposed project was economically viable with an IRR of 5 percent and NPV ranging from 22,000 PKR to 57,000 PKR per child. At completion the Project's observed impact on secondary completion is higher than expected from the intervention, (Annex 3 Table 1); the NPV is estimated at 76,378 PKR per child, which produces an IRR of 5.05 percent, which represents a higher impact than estimated at appraisal. The reasons behind a much higher NPV but only modestly higher IRR is the relatively higher weight of initial net cash flows on IRR results. The higher NPV is due the positive cash flow in the final years being greater than the negative cash flow in the initial years. However, the IRR is only modestly higher because the initial negative cash flows have a relatively larger impact on the IRR calculation. This is due to differences in the return of education completion in urban areas, which fared poorer than rural areas, and which result in higher negative net cash flows during the initial years. At appraisal, it was assumed that the impact would be similar across groups, and the negative net cash flows during the initial years were estimated to be lower than actual. Finally, project costs were efficient as compared to Government costs; for example, the government cost per teacher for training averages US\$ 109, while the project cost per teacher for training averaged US\$50.<sup>5</sup>

**38. Implementation Efficiency.** The Project's implementation efficiency was Substantial. It was implemented during an emergency, faced a further disaster during implementation (floods), and achieved its objectives efficiently in only two years after effectiveness, including a one-year closing date extension. The initial delays in effectiveness and early procurements were compensated by later efficiencies, even though multiple waves of COVID-19 and a second compounding crisis (floods) hit the country during implementation. Despite challenges, the Project laid the ground for and enabled expansion and refinement of recovery and resilience-building activities, reached significantly more beneficiaries than planned, achieved implementation targets despite substantial external and unanticipated shocks, and unit costs for training were lower than comparable government costs (Para 37). The final allocation of project costs is presented in Annex 3.

#### Assessment of Efficiency and Rating

**39. Efficiency is rated substantial** based upon the higher than the expected economic efficiency and the substantial implementation efficiency.

#### D. JUSTIFICATION OF OVERALL OUTCOME RATING

**40. Overall Outcome is rated Highly Satisfactory** based on its High Relevance, High Efficacy and Substantial Efficiency, and the fact that it has helped establish and cement various mechanisms that were not only successful in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic but can also be valuable for any future events

#### E. OTHER OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS (IF ANY)

##### Gender

**41. The pandemic affected boys and girls differently, with girls expected to bear the burden of housework and engage in income-generating activities, making girls less likely to participate regularly in distance learning courses and more likely to exacerbate already high gender gaps in re-enrollment upon school reopening.** Lockdown conditions also raised concerns about gender-based violence. To tackle these issues, the Project adapted TeleSchool content (ensuring broadcast reach to lagging districts) and launched awareness campaigns to encourage parents and girls to utilize distance education, to highlight the importance of re-enrolling girls when schools reopen and to build awareness messages into communications campaigns to empower students, teachers and parents with knowledge of service provision, promote

<sup>5</sup> As emailed by PCU, MoFEPT to the Bank Task Team on 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2023



distance education and re-enrollment. The Gender Study carried out under the Program (Annex 6) confirmed these expectations, brought focus to, and defined the vulnerable population and its challenges in times of crises, and highlighted the need to sustain efforts to address them. Gender inclusion was integrated in interventions design by incorporating the following: (i) digital content review included a gender and inclusion parameter to ensure content was inclusive and did not perpetuate gender biases, (ii) the communications campaign complied with gender inclusion and other provisions laid out in the project's ESMF, (iii) the Project developed a Protection against Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Plan, (iv) trainings on gender awareness and protection against GBV were also conducted with provincial counterparts, and (v) the gender study included perspectives of the "Khwaja Sira" (transgender) community - a gender minority in Pakistan - to further inform pandemic response.

### Institutional Strengthening

**42. Although the Project was designed to respond to the COVID-19 emergency, it also supported longer-term institutional strengthening.** This is especially important and relevant since Pakistan is vulnerable to natural disasters, as evidenced by the monsoon floods of 2022. The strengthening of institutions will allow the government to apply the instruments developed by the Project both in the event of future emergencies and in reducing the number of OOSC. The areas of institutional strengthening include:

- Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Pakistan Telecom Corporation Limited (PTCL) and eTaleem Portal: TeleSchool will be sustained through AIOU, PTCL and eTaleem Portal. The MOFEPT is investing in multiple technologies including satellite, OTT and IPTV broadcasting and e-learning platforms to ensure students have access to digital learning resources in the long term. The National Distance Education Strategy supported under ASPIRE aims to address the challenges in implementation and student-uptake experienced with the first round of Tele School at the start of the pandemic;
- Digital Content: Similarly, investments in AIOU infrastructure and management will enable the MOFEPT to develop digital content for students through its attached department, and additional digital content is being developed with support from the ongoing PREP project;
- Learning Losses Assessment: The MOFEPT in collaboration with the provinces will design and implement an assessment program to identify learning losses of children in all lagging districts. Assessment results will inform the policy reforms. Similarly, to assess distance learning programs' impact on student learning, MoFEPT will avail innovative assessment tools such as phone-based learning assessments – which is now being piloted under the Bank Executed Trust Fund called Data and Research in Education (DARE).
- Awareness Campaign: Material developed under Communication Campaign will be recirculated (with any required updates) through the campaigns under the PREP and ASPIRE projects (Para 46) to ensure sustainable use of the tangible initiatives;
- The foundational literacy and numeracy program, piloted in KP/ICT, may be scaled up in other provinces and areas;
- The MOFEPT will incorporate the learning accrued from the findings of the analytical studies in the existing sustainable distance learning program to make it more efficient and effective;
- The MOFEPT is exploring the possibility of establishing an inter-provincial coordination secretariat to strengthen coordination among the provinces and federating units;
- The PCU will continue coordination with provinces under ASPIRE and PREP; and
- The strengthening of the Pakistan Institute of Education - PIE (AEPAM/NEAS) has increased its capacity to lead and conduct national and international assessments in future.

### Mobilizing Private Sector Financing

**43. The Project did not mobilize private sector financing but did promote private sector engagement to provide and**



**educational alternative for children at the outset of the pandemic.** The government, with private sector support, quickly created and broadcasted educational TV programming by utilizing existing content from private sector service providers, showcasing collaboration between public and private sectors.

#### Poverty Reduction and Shared Prosperity

44. **All of Pakistan’s 50 million children enrolled in the education system were impacted by school closures following COVID-19,** but the pandemic worsened inequality between students in private versus public schools due to unequal access to online classes. Although the Project was to cover the entire country, it's focus was on 52 disadvantaged districts with high numbers of OOSC, low gender parity and high learning poverty – which are some of the defining characteristics of the most vulnerable populations in bottom economic quintiles, concentrated in remote areas. It also focused on girls in those areas (through targeted communications campaigns for instance and ensuring gender-balanced access to distance learning) who were especially prone to dropping out of school because of socioeconomic shocks and who had lower access to information technology equipment. This was promoted by establishing a system of incentives for provinces to invest in the most disadvantaged areas and supporting the adoption of alternative modes of education service delivery.

#### Other Unintended Outcomes and Impacts

N/A

### III. KEY FACTORS THAT AFFECTED IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOME

#### A. KEY FACTORS DURING PREPARATION

45. **The Project was framed within the context of the Government’s National Education Policy Framework 2018, the National Education Plan 2020, and Provincial Sector Plans. It responded directly to the NERRP for COVID-19, prepared and published in May 2020.** NERRP was developed under the leadership of the MOFEPT and with the support of Pakistan’s National Education Development Partners Group (NEDPG). It provides a framework to help Pakistan’s education system cope with the effects of COVID-19 by helping mitigate the medium and long-term effects the COVID-19 pandemic will have on providing equitable access to quality education. The Government’s Plan factors in the support received from the World Bank and other development partners to respond to the immediate and short-term needs at the start of the pandemic, thus narrowing the focus on key gaps hindering achievement of national goals under the longer-term pandemic conditions. This includes safeguarding education support for at-risk student populations such as girls, students with low learning outcomes, or from disadvantaged backgrounds, who may quickly disengage from schooling, thus further exacerbating the OOSC challenge.

46. **The Project is part of a package of support that the World Bank, in alignment with other development partners, prepared to help Pakistan’s efforts to speed up the response, recovery, and resilience of the education system in light of COVID-19.** The Project, together with ASPIRE that was under preparation at the time of the Project’s appraisal, was designed to contribute to both short- and long-term interventions to accelerate recovery of a better education system while promoting equity through establishment of a new system of incentives for provinces to invest in the most disadvantaged geographical areas and encourage uptake of alternate modes of education service delivery. Being an emergency-response, the Project paved the way for a number of interventions that are later planned to be scaled and replicated under other projects (ASPIRE & PREP) in World Bank’s COVID-19 education support package. Complementing the Project, ASPIRE further supports three of the five Results Areas in the Government’s National Equitable Education Program 2020-2025, and builds on the short- and medium-term response and recovery efforts initiated under the RRREP Project, using a PforR instrument to (i) Improve education quality in lagging districts; (ii) Improve education access in underperforming districts with special focus on girls’ participation; and (iii) Develop capacity for crisis management and



innovative solutions. The World Bank's support for the COVID-19 response also included the PREP operation, which was designed to mitigate the pandemic's impact on education. Funding under PREP (US\$5.0 million) was allocated to start responding to the challenges of COVID-19, including by establishing a Project Coordination Unit at the MOFEPT with support through National Commission for Human Development (NCHD).<sup>6</sup> Together, these 3 engagements supported the system, with the Project acting as the immediate response and piloting interventions that could be carried forward by ASPIRE and PREP.

**47. The Project builds upon a solid program of assistance to Pakistan's education sector.** It was aligned with the World Bank's Human Capital Investment approach, along with the forward-looking strategy report *Pakistan@100 – Shaping the Future* and directly addresses the global priority of reducing learning poverty in Pakistan. The approach also frames the World Bank's support to education through multiple education and human capital operations in Pakistan's provinces.<sup>7</sup>

**48. RRREP was designed in coordination with Pakistan's donor partners.** The World Bank worked closely with FCDO, UNICEF and JICA, among other partners active in provincial Local Education Groups (LEGs) and the NEDPG. The Project's design incorporated and its implementation was to benefit from technical expertise from NEDPG members such as JICA, UNESCO, USAID and FCDO, all of which had extensive experience working with non-formal education and/or the design of distance learning in Pakistan (and other countries). Project implementation also benefited from frameworks and growing global evidence on how to reopen schools safely, including the *Framework for Reopening Schools Safely* published by UNICEF, UNESCO, WFP and the World Bank.

**49. In addition to the valuable input by Pakistan's donor partners, the Project's design drew upon lessons and recommendations from extensive analytical work by the World Bank both globally and in Pakistan.**<sup>8</sup> This work provided insights about the functioning of local governments, constraints to girls' education for the most disadvantaged, equity challenges, and behaviors of teacher, students, and school principals. The Project's design incorporated lessons from an extensive database on radio and TV distance learning approaches, as well as new experimentation to incentivize demand for distance learning. This was expected to be particularly important for girls since 55 percent of OOSC in Pakistan were girls and young women. Lessons about federal and provincial coordination were captured from the *Pakistan Financial Management and Accountability to Support Service Delivery* project that emphasized the importance of coordination, incentives, and clear mechanisms for work between provincial and federal governments.

**50. Since Pakistan's Constitution devolves responsibility for delivering education services to the Provinces (which held complete autonomy to implement activities under their Provincial mandates), the Project's design included institutional arrangements involving both federal and provincial governments.** Activities would be selected and implemented by the provinces, while funds and procurement would be managed centrally by the MOFEPT with support from the NCHD. Based on their predefined allocations<sup>9</sup> and the identification of lagging districts, provinces would develop implementation plans by selecting activities responding to their COVID-19-related needs. The MOFEPT would then procure the goods and services centrally and distribute them to the provinces. This procurement arrangement was selected as it would have

<sup>6</sup> NCHD is an institution reporting to and funded by the MOFEPT with capacity to carry fiduciary, safeguard and M&E responsibilities.

<sup>7</sup> Punjab Human Capital Investment Project (P164785), the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Human Capital Investment Project (P166309), the Sindh Early Learning Enhancement through Classroom Transformation (SELECT, P172834), and the Balochistan Human Capital Investment Project (P166308).

<sup>8</sup> Expenditure and Quantity of Service Delivery Survey in the Primary School Sector, the Constraints to Girls Education Study, the Punjab SABER Service Delivery Indicators Survey, the District Capacity Assessment Study, and the Poverty to Equity—Pakistan@100 report, World Development Report 2018—*Learning to Realize Education's Promise*, and World Bank's Human Capital Project.

<sup>9</sup> Funds were to be allocated to provinces based on a formula that considered indicators such as poverty, OOSC, lagging districts, and education efficiency indicators. The preliminary allocations were as follows: Punjab, US\$7.24 million; Sindh, US\$4.43 million; Khyber Pakhtunkhwa US\$3.33 million; and Balochistan, US\$2.85 million.



been too cumbersome to sign Implementation Agreements with all provinces under emergency preparation timelines, and to leverage efficiency in centralized procurement together with local definition of provincial needs.

#### A. KEY FACTORS DURING IMPLEMENTATION

**51. The Project was approved by the Global Partnership for Education Board under its GPE-funded COVID-19 Accelerated Window on May 29, 2020 and by the World Bank on July 13, 2020.** The US\$19.85 million Grant Agreement was signed and became effective on November 25, 2020. The Project's Mid-Term Review (MTR) was held on January 17-21, 2022 and a follow-up technical mission on May 17-20, 2022. During its two-year implementation period after effectiveness, the Project's implementation was consistently considered Satisfactory or Moderately Satisfactory. The following were mentioned as factors behind the Moderately Satisfactory rating: (i) initial delays; (ii) the impact of COVID-19; (iii) staffing issues and Government leadership changes; (iv) lengthy procurement processes (Paragraph 65); and (v) provincial engagement. In its final stage of implementation, most Moderately Satisfactory ratings were upgraded to Satisfactory as the completion of several project activities converged and together with findings of concluded assessments revealed that the Project had fully achieved its objectives, with continued high relevance and efficiency, in effect compensating for early delays despite the flood emergency.

**52. Although funding for preparation and early implementation was provided under the PREP Project and recruitment of project specialists was under way, implementation suffered initial delays due to system-level delays in finalizing government procedures.** Following its approval, the Government took four months to prepare an approved PC-1<sup>10</sup>, and then extra time to set up fiduciary systems and staffing of the PCU which concluded in July 2021. During this time, MOFEPT's offices were closed several times due to staff testing positive to COVID-19, and several staff within the Ministry were transferred and reshuffled which only compounded delays.

**53. The COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted education across the country, affecting over 40 million students, and disrupted implementation of the very project activities that were aimed at responding to the crisis.** Multiple closures of educational institutions due to waves of the virus resulting in over eight months of closures worsened challenges of access, quality, and equity for students, and strained educational bureaucracies' ability to plan improvements. Educational offices also faced closures due to COVID-19 outbreaks, including MOFEPT.

**54. The complementarity to the ASPIRE and PREP Projects brought economies of scale to the Government implementing the Project and to the World Bank in providing implementation support.** To reduce transaction costs, the World Bank consolidated policy dialogue, reporting, processes, and implementation arrangements both with the PCU and provincial engagements.

**55. The absence of a Project Director for the first months of implementation, staffing of the PCU and Government leadership changes created continued challenges, but the Government was responsive to addressing staffing and capacity issues.** Despite MOFEPT's Additional Secretary fulfilling this role, the Ministry was unable to fill the Project Director position due to a lack of suitable candidates as well as differences in procurement processes between the Government and the World Bank.<sup>11</sup> Capacity of PCU required strengthening and changes in government leadership affected coordination. At times, the capacity of the PCU required strengthening to respond to emergency Project timeline demands, and the Bank requested MOFEPT to strengthen the PCU by staffing up key functions such as M&E. Finally, frequent changes in government leadership positions at both federal and provincial levels - including three of four provincial Education Secretaries along with key staff - affected coordination between federal and provincial departments

<sup>10</sup> PC-1 is a Government of Pakistan owned and mandated project-related document

<sup>11</sup> The MOFEPT requires that an age limit be set as part of the hiring criteria, while this is not allowed by the World Bank's procedures.



for critical technical work, having an adverse impact on timely implementation. Despite these challenges, the Project was able to steadfastly progress towards its achievements in an uninterrupted manner, and overall achievement of targets speaks to the relevance of design and quality of World Bank implementation support (Para 67).

**56. There were initial difficulties in aligning provincial mandates with requirements of the Project.** The World Bank facilitated meetings with provincial counterparts to bring alignment and agreement. Provinces requested MOFEPT's support for nationwide school-level delivery of activities, which required additional procurement, logistics, and management time, and hence, additional time to complete.

**57. Pakistan was impacted by unprecedented floods in October 2022, that affected 33 million people, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable districts.** Sindh was the worst affected province with close to 70 percent of total damages and losses, followed by Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab. A recent note prepared by the World Bank reports on the extent of the floods and their impact on human capital in Pakistan.<sup>12</sup> It reports that the floods affected project beneficiaries indirectly by limiting access to schools and leading to behavioral concerns in children. The impact of the floods had an immediate impact on education access and will likely make it even more difficult for children to attend school and receive quality education. More than half of those families with flooding in their area (51 percent) reported that the floods had negatively impacted their children's education. Nearly one-third (28 percent) of respondents reported that their children's schools were disrupted and/or damaged, and almost one third (35 percent) reported that their children's school was completely damaged. School damage due to flooding most often occurred in Sindh and Balochistan. Approximately 17 percent of schools were also used as temporary shelters for displaced families, which has further depleted school infrastructure. This situation was most prevalent in Sindh. The floods impacted some project activities such as training of teachers, distribution of smart boards and hygiene kits, that were not carried out due to the destruction of infrastructure and the engagement of education departments in relief activities in the Balochistan and Sindh provinces. Conversely, the Project's objectives became increasingly relevant, especially those related to building resilience for post-COVID shocks, as school closures due to floods further disrupted learning, indicating a growing need for coordinated responses and distance learning pathways.

#### IV. BANK PERFORMANCE, COMPLIANCE ISSUES, AND RISK TO DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME

##### A. QUALITY OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E)

###### M&E Design

**58. The Project's PDOs were well-defined, and its TOC and RF were concise and appropriate to monitor progress and evaluate the eventual achievement of its objectives.** PDO Indicator 1 defined "disadvantaged districts" by provincial ranking on education outcomes, as per the Pakistan Living Standards Measurement Survey. Monitoring data would be compiled by the PCU from the provinces' monitoring and evaluation systems that included annual school census data, and from the collection, analysis and dissemination of this data by the Academy of Educational Planning and Management under the MOFEPT, which is responsible for compiling information on enrollment, internal efficiency, teachers and school characteristics. The Project activities included surveys/evaluations to assess its interventions. These included Parent Surveys to assess the level of satisfaction of parents with project activities, including distance learning materials, safety and well-being campaigns and distribution of learning materials. Evaluations of local interventions and management practices would also be carried out. A Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist was contracted to the PCU.

###### M&E Implementation

**59. Implementation of M&E began slowly, with lack of data to support progress on certain indicators.** A Monitoring

<sup>12</sup>Floods in Pakistan: Human Development at Risk (World Bank, November 2022)





and Evaluation Specialist was contracted to the PCU in June 2021 but remained on board for a short time before a replacement was contracted in May 2022. These staffing issues (also discussed in Para 55) caused delay of the first progress report. M&E ratings were Moderately Satisfactory through completion mostly due to staffing issues, though M&E reports were then produced regularly. In addition, the MOFEPT's viewership study, Parent Surveys and various evaluations of distance learning practices were finalized by completion, which complemented the M&E reports by producing significant data to inform the achievement of the Project's closing targets (as discussed in Para 60).

### M&E Utilization

**60. The greatest value of the Project's M&E comes from the evaluations and studies carried out under the Project,** including: (i) Assessment of Learning Continuation Programs under COVID-19; (ii) Review of Digital Content; (iii) Learning Diagnostic testing of primary students in ICT and KP; (iv) Study on the Gendered Impacts of COVID-19 on the Health, Wellbeing and Safety of Students and Teachers; (v) Developing Pathways to Mainstream OOSC; and (vi) Development of Distance Learning Standards. These studies and evaluations are notable achievements from a short-term emergency project, and have been used to inform follow-on strategies and activities including: (i) a National Distance Learning Framework and Strategy being developed; (ii) Distance Learning Standards and Assessment; (iii) Solutions to Mainstream OOSC; and (iv) data use and strengthened capacity of key federal agencies such as the Pakistan Institute of Education in establishing a data center for improved policy making, planning and allocation, that will help support the standardization of data collection in education (as listed in para 42). It should be noted that utilization of data for purposes of monitoring the Project's progress was uneven since indicators that monitored number of students accessing distance learning could only be estimated in progress reports and only confirmed once data from the viewership study was available. This is because in Pakistan, TV and Radio networks cannot provide viewership information. As the Project was implemented in the short-term, data is currently not available on the impact of distance learning and focused on reach instead. Indicators that monitored actions and outputs were routinely updated and utilized to accompany progress.

### Justification of Overall Rating of Quality of M&E

**61. Overall Rating of Quality of M&E is Substantial.** Despite moderate weaknesses described above, the system as designed and implemented was sufficient to assess the achievement of the PDOs. In addition to routine monitoring, evaluations and studies carried out not only confirmed the achievement of the PDO but have also served to inform the design of activities under the PREP and ASPIRE Projects (Para. 42).

## B. ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND FIDUCIARY COMPLIANCE

### Environmental and Social

**62. At appraisal, the Project was expected to have positive environmental and social (E&S) effects, and the environmental risks were considered moderate.** The Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) Standards ESS1, ESS2, ESS3, ESS4, ESS8 and ESS10 were relevant to the Project. To address this, the MOFEPT with support of the provincial departments of education prepared an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) that provided a framework and procedures for schools to plan and implement school-specific management measures to mitigate the potential environmental, health and safety risks and impacts associated with the Project, in accordance with national legislation and applicable World Health Organization Guidelines. In addition to the ESMF, the MOFEPT prepared an Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) to meet the requirements of ESSs and a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). The social risk was considered Moderate, but the Stakeholder Risk was considered substantial. This was because the public education system has several overlapping stakeholders, including administrators, local governments, politicians, as well as the provincial and federal departments of education that could create challenges for collaboration. The SEP was expected to mitigate these risks and guide a transparent selection process for districts in which the activities would be carried out. The ESCP required the carrying out of a Gender and Social Assessment as a part of the ESMF.



**63. Throughout implementation, project ratings for E&S compliance were considered satisfactory.** Environmental and social aspects were coordinated by an E&S Specialist assigned to the PCU. The Project's ESMF was revised since there was an existing WASH/Safe School Reopening Guideline document developed by the Ministry of National Health Services and UNICEF that had been distributed to the provinces. Also, it was revised to provide a comprehensive Environment, Health and Safety (EHS) Guidelines document covering all aspects of both the Environmental and Social Assessment of ASPIRE and the Project's ESMF and ESCPP. All safeguards documentation was disclosed to the provinces and each province nominated a safeguards focal person. The PCU delivered training to provincial staff on SEP, ESMF and the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) which relied upon the MOFEPT's complaints phonenumber and website as well as provincial ones to receive information and grievances, managed by PCU. Further, under the RRREP project, a dedicated dashboard was created on the centrally managed Citizen's Portal which is directly managed by the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit. Two focal persons were appointed to this dashboard, streamlining grievance redressal processes. A dedicated landline was also set up at the PCU where grievances/feedback/suggestions related to the Project and the ASPIRE and PREP projects were directed. Relevant environmental and social specifications and requirements were incorporated into procurement documents and all project activities. In all, 47 grievances were registered in relation to Tele-school, were mostly limited TV and Radio connectivity. In addition, around 140 grievances from teachers who were engaged in the KP and ICT teacher training were received pertaining to transport and other reimbursable costs under the training. At completion, all grievances had been resolved satisfactorily within required deadlines.

#### **Fiduciary**

**64. Fiduciary functions, Financial Management (FM) and Procurement, were carried out by the MOFEPT.** FM functions were carried out in accordance with World Bank FM Procedures. Procurement was carried out centrally by PCU and the flexibilities provided in World Bank Procurement Regulations and Guidance in emergency situations were used under the Project.

**65. During implementation, the MOFEPT hired a Finance Specialist conversant with the GOP's and World Bank's fiduciary requirements to cover FM matters for all World Bank-financed education projects.** FM ratings were mostly Satisfactory throughout implementation, as sufficient timely budget was available, records were well maintained, and external audits were timely, with unqualified opinions. Handling of FM posed challenges towards the end of implementation due to weak fiduciary oversight by the PCU on closure considerations. Similarly, the procurement function was mostly Satisfactory despite delays throughout the procurement cycle and follow-up to complaints - which had been identified as risks at appraisal, and which necessitated enhanced fiduciary support and oversight from the task team throughout project implementation. Like the FM function, procurement posed challenges towards the final implementation period whereupon it was subject to various basic errors resulting in incorrect awards being made, which in turn required enhanced supervision from the World Bank team.

### **C. BANK PERFORMANCE**

#### **Quality at Entry**

**66. The Project had a solid Quality at Entry and was prepared rapidly in response to an emergency that was expected to have very adverse impacts on an already difficult learning environment.** Per GPE requirements for the COVID-19 emergency grants, which was the financing source for this Project, the project's lifecycle was set to the maximum allowable 18 months. Its objectives and design responded to both the Government's NERRP for COVID-19, and to the package of support that the World Bank, in alignment with other development partners, prepared to help Pakistan's efforts to speed up the response, recovery, and build up resilience of the education system. The Project correctly focused on supporting at-risk student populations such as girls, students with low learning outcomes, or from disadvantaged



backgrounds, as these were the most likely to disengage from schooling, thus further exacerbating the OOSC challenge, and monitoring progress. It was designed with support from another ongoing World Bank-financed operation (PREP). Its preparation was coordinated with that of the ASPIRE Project since they were designed to be complementary, as well as with assistance from Pakistan's donor partners through the LEG and NEDPG. Its design benefited from extensive analytical work, and incorporated lessons learned from earlier assistance, both worldwide and in Pakistan. Its federal-provincial implementation arrangements were to ensure efficiency in procurement together with local definition of the provinces' needs. The main issue with preparation was poor readiness for implementation, in part due to the accelerated preparation schedule. Consequently, effectiveness, initial staffing and fiduciary arrangements were delayed, and resulted in challenging timelines as per the initially planned ambitious 18 months of implementation per GPE guidelines. However, the task team worked closely, frequently, and in a reinforced manner with the counterpart to strengthen readiness for implementation while the PCU was being staffed – especially in the areas of procurement and financial management

### Quality of Supervision

**67. The Quality of Supervision was very strong, the Bank team actively helped address implementation issues related to readiness while contending with various waves of the pandemic.** This meant that the task team had to work closely, frequently, and in a reinforced manner with the counterpart to ensure the government's readiness for project implementation while the PCU was being staffed – especially in the areas of procurement and financial management. The task team also had to work closely with the government to ensure its focus and attention to the strategic programs supported under the Project given the various phases of school closures, repeated closures of the ministry offices themselves (due to COVID-19 outbreaks), and a significant discontinuity in staffing due to COVID-19 related illnesses, which further compounded delays. The World Bank provided valuable complementarities to the Project through its work and support under the ASPIRE and PREP Projects. To reduce transaction costs, the World Bank consolidated policy dialogue, reporting, implementation arrangements, the PCU team, and processes across the projects. Aide Memoires also covered all projects and education activities under the three operations. also allowed the task team to have constant implementation support and supervision oversight as they supervised progress across three projects. To respond to difficulties in aligning provincial mandates with Project requirements, the World Bank task team provided facilitation by participating in meetings and workshops with provincial counterparts to bring alignment and agreement among all parties involved. The supervision team provided hands-on support on technical and fiduciary issues in view of the repeated leadership and staffing changes in counterpart agencies. There were challenges with aligning Project procurement timelines with MoFEPT's policy and procedures which caused some delays towards the end of the project, but these were mitigated through increased implementation support. The Project's MTR, held in January 2022, was results-oriented and well-documented, as were its Implementation Status and Results Reports. The MTR led to the second extension in June 2022, resulting in the closing date extended from August to November 2022.

### Justification of Overall Rating of Bank Performance

**68. Overall Bank Performance is rated Satisfactory** in view of its rapid preparation of a well-designed emergency response project, and a tailored and responsive supervision effort that helped achieve strong and sustainable results in the middle of a pandemic and a later emergency.

## D. RISK TO DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME

**69. The Project's PDO by definition aimed not only to respond to and recover from the COVID-19 crisis, but also to lay the foundations for resilience to face future crises.** It aimed to apply the experience under the Project to build capacity and sustainability for developing and adopting efficient and effective disaster and/or shock response mechanisms. In addition to the activities that the Project supported to respond to the COVID-19 emergency, it also supported institutional strengthening of the MOFEPT and other institutions involved (Para 42). Most of the activities supported have been



internalized in the modus operandi of these institutions to help address future emergencies or disasters and help address the problem with OOSC. Further, these efforts continue under the ASPIRE and PREP Projects that are being implemented by the same PCU. Specifically, the MOFEPT's work on Distance Learning is being integrated into the National Distance Learning Framework and Strategy that was developed and approved by the technical steering committee in May 2023. . The TeleSchool Initiative continues to be supported through the MOFEPT's engagement with AIOU, the pioneer for distance learning in Pakistan, and through PTCL, the telecommunications company with the largest viewership in the country. The Distance Learning Standards and Assessment approach is expected to be piloted under the ASPIRE Project. ASPIRE has also supported data use and capacity strengthening of agencies such as the Pakistan Institute of Education to establish a data center for improved policy making, planning and resource allocation, which will help support the standardization of data collection in education. The inter-provincial coordination forum established under the Project will continue to operate under the ASPIRE and PREP Projects, and the MOFEPT is finalizing the formalization of its structure.

## V. LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**70. Emergency projects should focus on a small number of priority activities that can be implemented in a short period and be monitored and measured to show results during that time.** The Project's design and institutional arrangements were streamlined and its Results Framework, including PDO and IR Indicators, defined to measure what the Project could be reasonably expected to achieve in a short period. For this reason and others (Para 45), the Results Framework did not attempt to measure impacts on learning outcomes, rather insights on learning outcomes were sought through the studies supported under the project.

**71. Emergency operations create an opening for innovative approaches that can be relevant in a range of situations from pandemic to disaster.** The alternative learning methods utilized in this operation had been under discussion at MoFEPT, and the Project created the opening for these to be applied and thereby institutionalized (Para 42), building on the complementarities of other projects (ASPIRE and PREP) in the Bank's COVID-19 response package. Bank Procurement rules for these relatively newer and innovative approaches should also be clearly defined.

**72. Low-tech platforms like TV and radio are effective in reaching children impacted by crises thanks to their wide coverage as well as their gender parity in reach, but lack interactivity.** They should be supplemented by engagement and support from parents and teachers. Ministries can also consider low-tech assessment tools like phone-based assessments to evaluate distance learning.

**73. Swift procurement procedures can be used by ministries in emergencies, with careful considerations when signing contracts with UN agencies.** For short-term emergency response projects, ministries should be ready and willing to leverage the WB's emergency procurement procedures to ensure that project activities get up and running swiftly after approval. Furthermore, in emergencies, governments can consider outsourcing some parts of service delivery to UN Agencies who are present on the ground, and who are usually well-placed to deliver effectively and speedily in times of crisis. In order to gain in efficiency and speed, the Ministry could (i) start negotiating with UN Agencies as part of project preparation to have proposals ready, and; (ii) time and structure contracts with UN Agencies (who often include a sizeable contingency allocation in their budgets) to include several payment tranches to ensure potential savings or cost overruns are known at least 6 months prior to project closing, to ensure utilization of remaining project funds in the last mile of a project's lifecycle.



**ANNEX 1. RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND KEY OUTPUTS**

**A. RESULTS INDICATORS**

**A.1 PDO Indicators**

**Objective/Outcome: Response**

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Number of children in disadvantaged districts supported with distance learning (by gender)	Number	0.00 01-Jul-2020	1,000,000.00 01-Jul-2020		2,700,000.00 30-Nov-2022

**Comments (achievements against targets):**

Overall viewership reached over 5 Million. The reported 2.7 Million focuses on lagging districts. Tele-school viewership in lagging districts - 1.5 Million (804,240 boys and 772,701 girls). Radio School listenership in lagging districts - 1.2 Million.

**Objective/Outcome: Recovery**



Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Number of children provided access to programs and sensitization campaigns aimed at minimizing the negative impacts of school closures, with a focus on girls (by gender)	Number	0.00 01-Jul-2020	5,000,000.00 01-Jul-2020		35,000,000.00 30-Nov-2022
<p><b>Comments (achievements against targets):</b> 27% Female, 73% Male; broadcast targeting to lagging districts.</p>					

**Objective/Outcome:** Resilience, Monitoring and Evaluation

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Strengthened federal and provincial coordination for immediate sector response	Text	No platform for coordination apart from IPEMC	2 sessions of the Technical Steering Committee, including decision on the remaining funds to be spent before closing of the Grant; federal/provincial response plan for emergencies in the		2 Sessions of the Technical Steering Committee, including decision on the remaining funds to be spent before closing of the Grant; Joint federal/provincial response plan for emergencies in the



		01-Jul-2020	education sector, including standard operating procedures during emergencies developed, finalized and endorsed. 01-Jul-2020		education sector, including standard operating procedures during emergencies developed, finalized and endorsed. 30-Nov-2022
<b>Comments (achievements against targets):</b>					

**A.2 Intermediate Results Indicators**

**Component:** Component 1: Response

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Sub-comp 1.1: National early childhood education and grades 1-12 content developed and implemented	Text	No content developed 01-Jul-2020	National early childhood education and grades 1-12 developed and implemented 01-Jun-2020		National early childhood education and grades K-12 content has been acquired and in the process of being implemented under PREP 30-Nov-2022



Comments (achievements against targets):

6000 lectures for Grade K-12 were procured- Details of subjects level wise include- **Pre- primary and Primary**- English, Math, Urdu, General Knowledge **Middle** - English , Math, Science **Secondary**- Math , Physics, Chemistry, Biology **Higher Secondary** - English, Math, Urdu, Pak studies, Physics, Chemistry, Biology

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Sub-comp 1.2: National safety and well-being programs developed and implemented	Text	No COVID-19 response national safety and well-being programs  01-Jul-2020	National safety and well-being programs designed, disseminated and implemented targeting girls and young women in disadvantaged areas  01-Jul-2020		National safety and well-being programs designed, disseminated and implemented targeting children, parents and teachers, particularly girls and young women in disadvantaged areas.  30-Nov-2022

Comments (achievements against targets):

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
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Sub-comp 1.3: Development of Distance Learning Certification Program	Text	Distance learning certification program not developed	Legal analysis and implementation plan for pathways for certification developed		Implementation plan for pathways for certification has been developed
		01-Jul-2020	01-Jul-2020		30-Nov-2022

Comments (achievements against targets):

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Sub-comp 1.3: Number of children whose learning was assessed to evaluate loss of learning during school closure	Text	0.00	Implementation of assessment in sample per province (5,000 children in total), and results disseminated		Implementation of assessment conducted in KP and ICT for 281,410 children in early grades
		01-Jul-2020	01-Jul-2020		30-Nov-2022

Comments (achievements against targets):

MOFEPT carried out an assessment of 281,410 students in Grades 1-5 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) for their learning level in Mathematics, English and Urdu subjects.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised	Actual Achieved at Completion
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				<b>Target</b>	
Parent Surveys to assess satisfaction of project interventions implemented	Number	0.00 01-Jun-2020	5,000.00 01-Jul-2020		8,393.00 30-Nov-2022
<b>Comments (achievements against targets):</b> Parent surveys were conducted from 8,393 parents in lagging districts, including from 4,045 parents as embedded with the Gender Study and 4,348 for the Tele-School Evaluation Survey of project-implemented interventions including provision of distance learning material, safety and wellbeing campaign and distribution of learning material.					

**Component:** Component 2: Recovery

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Sub-comp 2.1: Safe school reopening protocols identified, designed and disseminated	Text	Safe school reopening protocols not designed or disseminated  01-Jul-2020	Federal and provincial safe school reopening protocols identified, designed and disseminated via mass communications campaigns  01-Jul-2020		Federal and provincial safe school reopening protocols identified, designed and disseminated via mass communication campaigns  30-Nov-2022

**Comments (achievements against targets):**



Federal and provincial safe school reopening protocols were identified and designed by the Government and disseminated under the Project to relevant stakeholders by the MOFEPT directly together with school reenrollment campaigns through print, electronic and social media.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Sub-comp 2.1 Number of schools provided with supplies and learning materials for safe school reopening	Number	0.00 01-Jul-2020	10,000.00 01-Jul-2020		12,054.00 30-Nov-2022

**Comments (achievements against targets):**

All target schools located in lagging districts. Through this, 849,811 children supported with distance learning materials and 350 smartboards were procured, distributed and installed in schools all over Pakistan.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Sub-comp 2.1: Number of schools equipped with minimum hygiene standards for prevention of COVID-19	Number	0.00 01-Jul-2020	12,000.00 01-Jul-2020		12,045.00 30-Nov-2022

**Comments (achievements against targets):**



6.57 million hygiene kits were distributed to about 2.8 million students, all in lagging districts.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Sub-comp 2.2: Number of teachers trained to provide accelerated programs to mitigate loss of learning during school closure	Number	0.00 01-Jul-2020	15,000.00 01-Jul-2020		12,290.00 30-Nov-2022

**Comments (achievements against targets):**

12,290 teachers were trained against a target of 15,000--to provide accelerated programs to mitigate loss of learning during school closures. Of the teachers trained, 6,656 were female and 5,634 were male; 2,163 were in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), 5,187 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and 4,940 in Punjab provinces.

**Component:** Component 3: Resilience

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Sub-comp 3.1: Creation of Emergency Delivery Unit with federal and provincial representation	Text	No Emergency Cell Delivery Unit with federal and provincial representation	Emergency Cell Delivery Unit with federal and provincial representation created, active and sharing knowledge on		Emergency Delivery Unit with federal and provincial representation created, active and sharing knowledge on



		01-Jul-2020	response activities 01-Jul-2020		response activities 30-Nov-2022
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Comments (achievements against targets):

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Sub-comp 3.2: Evaluations of local interventions and management practices conducted	Text	No evaluations conducted  01-Jul-2020	Evaluations of local interventions and management practices implemented in all 4 provinces, and report on lessons learned on the effectiveness of engagement in distance learning strategies, particularly for girls  01-Jul-2020		Evaluations of local interventions conducted in all 4 provinces  30-Nov-2022

Comments (achievements against targets):

**Evaluation studies include** : the Evaluation Study (digital content assessment study to see the content’s alignment with the national and provincial Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), and the Gender Study that targeted 4,045 respondents, Mainstreaming OOSC, Standards and Evaluation for Distance Learning viewership.



Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning	Number	0.00 04-Jan-2021	1,020,000.00 01-Jul-2020		1,211,782.00 30-Nov-2022
Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning - Female	Number	0.00	510,000.00		450,000.00
<b>Comments (achievements against targets):</b>					



**B. KEY OUTPUTS BY COMPONENT**

Objective/Outcome 1 - Response	
Outcome Indicators	<p>PDO Indicator 1: Number of children in disadvantaged districts supported with distance learning (disaggregated by gender)</p>
Intermediate Results Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. IR Indicator 1 (1.1): National early childhood education and grades 1-12 content developed and implemented</li> <li>2. IR Indicator 2 (1.2): National safety and well-being programs developed and implemented</li> <li>3. IR Indicator 3 (1.3): Development of Distance Learning Certification Program</li> <li>4. IR Indicator 4 (1.3): Number of children whose learning was assessed to evaluate loss of learning during school closure</li> <li>5. IR Indicator 5 (1.3): Parent Surveys to assess satisfaction of project interventions implemented</li> </ol>
Key Outputs by Component (linked to the achievement of the Objective/Outcome 1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 2.7 M children in disadvantaged districts supported with distance learning</li> <li>2. National early childhood education and grades 1-12 developed and implemented</li> <li>3. Implementation plan for distance learning certification pathway developed</li> <li>4. Distance learning Standards developed</li> <li>5. 281, 410 Students between Grade 1-5 assessed in Math, English, Urdu</li> <li>6. Parent surveys were conducted from 8,393 parents</li> </ol>



<b>Objective/Outcome 2 - Recovery</b>	
Outcome Indicators	PDO Indicator 2: Number of children provided access to programs and sensitization campaigns aimed at minimizing the negative impacts of school closures, with a focus on girls
Intermediate Results Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. IR Indicator 6 (2.1): Safe school reopening protocols identified, designed and disseminated</li> <li>2. IR Indicator 7 (2.1): Number of schools provided with supplies and learning materials for safe school reopening</li> <li>3. IR Indicator 8 (2.1): Number of schools equipped with minimum hygiene standards for prevention of COVID-19</li> <li>4. IR Indicator 9 (2.2): Number of teachers trained to provide accelerated programs to mitigate loss of learning during school closure</li> </ol>
Key Outputs by Component (linked to the achievement of the Objective/Outcome 2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 35 million children and parents reached through the sensitization campaigns</li> <li>2. 12,045 school received hygiene kits standards for prevention of COVID-19; a total of 6.57 million hygiene kits were distributed</li> <li>3. 12,045 schools provided safe school reopening supplies; learning materials were distributed to 8,689 primary school for 849,811 grade 1-5 children</li> <li>4. 12,290 teachers were trained</li> <li>5. Federal and provincial safe school reopening protocols were identified, designed and disseminated to relevant stakeholders</li> </ol>
<b>Objective/Outcome 3 - Resilience</b>	
Outcome Indicators	PDO Indicator 3: Strengthened federal and provincial coordination for immediate sector response (Text)





Intermediate Results Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. IR Indicator 10 (3.1): Creation of Emergency Delivery Unit with federal and provincial representation</li><li>2. IR Indicator 11 (3.2): Evaluation of local interventions and management practices conducted</li></ol>
Key Outputs by Component (linked to the achievement of the Objective/Outcome 3)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Technical Steering Committee (TSC) which held two sessions</li><li>2. Emergency Cell Delivery Unit with federal and provincial representation established</li><li>3. Evaluation studies - Gender Study that targeted 4,045 respondents, Mainstreaming OOSC implementation plan developed, Distance learning standards Developed, and Evaluation study for Distance Learning and teachers training conducted</li></ol>

**ANNEX 2. BANK LENDING AND IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT/SUPERVISION****A. TASK TEAM MEMBERS**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>
<b>Preparation</b>	
Juan Baron, Elena Maria Roseo	Task Team Leader(s)
Khalid Bin Anjum	Procurement Specialist(s)
Akmal Minallah	Financial Management Specialist
Ria Nuri Dharmawan	Counsel
Shahram Paksima	Team Member
Manal Bakur N Quota	Team Member
Takeaki Sato	Environmental Specialist
Babar Naseem Khan	Social Specialist
Neelam Ejaz	Team Member
Shan Rehman	Social Specialist
Uzma Quresh	Social Specialist
<b>Supervision/ICR</b>	
Elena Maria Roseo	Task Team Leader(s)
Rehan Hyder	Procurement Specialist(s)
Mirza Omer Baig	Financial Management Specialist
Maryem Rahim	Team Member
Maliha Hyder	Team Member
Khine Thwe Wynn	Environmental Specialist
Ayesha Tabassum	Team Member
Uzma Quresh	Social Specialist

Shan Rehman	Social Specialist
Izza Farrakh	Team Member
Juan Baron	Team Member
Ria Nuri Dharmawan	Counsel

**B. STAFF TIME AND COST**

Stage of Project Cycle	Staff Time and Cost	
	No. of staff weeks	US\$ (including travel and consultant costs)
<b>Preparation</b>		
FY22	13.400	56,401.92
FY23	3.858	9,615.37
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.26</b>	<b>66,017.29</b>
<b>Supervision/ICR</b>		
FY21	0	42,150.92
FY22	3.350	103,771.69
FY23	1.000	1,730.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.35</b>	<b>147,652.61</b>

**ANNEX 3. PROJECT COST BY COMPONENT**

Components	Amount at Approval (US\$M)	Actual at Project Closing (US\$M)	Percentage of Approval (US\$M)
Response	6500000.00	9,358,311.00	144%
Recovery	11500000.00	7,545,983.00	66%
Resilience, M&E	1850000.00	2,364,814.00	128%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,850,000.00</b>	<b>19,269,108.00</b>	<b>97%</b>

## ANNEX 4. EFFICIENCY ANALYSIS

**1. This Annex summarizes the economic rationale for the Project by presenting the economic analysis at the time of appraisal and at the completion.**

### Economic Analysis at Appraisal

**2. The economic analysis showed that the proposed Project was economically viable with an IRR of 5% and net present value ranging from 22,000 PKR to 57,000 PKR per child.** The project was evaluated using NPV and IRR. Specifically, the net benefit and cost of the impact were simulated based on the differences in the future labor earnings and the private costs of schooling including the opportunity cost of schooling with and without the Project.

**3. COVID-19 school closures may lower enrollment rates and hinder learning.** The Project aimed to mitigate this negative impact on education. Limited evidence available suggests COVID-19 could reduce enrollment by 15%, but the Project interventions could reduce this impact to 2-10%. Liberia's response to the Ebola epidemic suggests that increased education funding and focus can lead to a recovery of enrollment rates.

**4. The analysis evaluates the net benefit and cost of the Project by simulating the differences in future labor earnings and private schooling costs for a representative child aged 6-15 in 2020.** It uses Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement 2018-19 data to estimate the education profile, future labor earnings, and schooling costs of the COVID-19 cohort when they reach 16-20 years of age. Several input parameters, such as urbanization rate, real earnings growth rate by employment category (waged, self, and unpaid workers), and the survival rates of demographic groups by urban/rural and female/male were considered. The estimated Project cost per child is 73 PKR, and a detailed description of benefit and cost projections and input parameters is provided below.

**5. The analysis considers separate parameters for different demographic groups and estimates future labor earnings based on the probability of working in different employment categories and education levels.** Other input parameters, such as urbanization rate, discount rate, survival probabilities, and real annual earnings growth, are also considered. The education profile of young workers aged 16-20 changes based on the impact scenarios; (i) the urbanization rate is assumed to be 0.9%, (ii) discount rate is 10%, (iii) adult mortality rates are extrapolated to impute survival rates, (iv) earnings profile of unpaid workers is artificially constructed by applying a reduction factor of 75%, and (v) real annual earnings growth rate is assumed to be approximately 4%.

### Economic Analysis at completion

**6. The economic analysis at completion was carried out using the same methodology and data used at appraisal.** The only difference is how we estimate the probability of a student completing each educational level for the COVID-19 cohort at age 16-20 for each population group. Given that we do not have access to updated microdata, we focus on checking how the observed aggregated education level completion during COVID-19 confirms the extent to which the Project contributed to mitigating the COVID-19 impact. Specifically, the education level completion was estimated by combining Census 2017 data and the number of students who completed high school reported in the Pakistan Education Statistics 2020-21, a proxy for education completion.



For this purpose, we must suppose that secondary completion was similar across population groups. In addition, given that all students were auto-promoted to the next grade, we discounted from students who graduated in 2020-21 those who would have repeated the grade using the pre-COVID-19 repetition rate from Pakistan Education Statistics 2018-19.

**7. The observed impact on secondary completion (column 6) is higher than expected from the intervention, as shown in Annex 4 Table 1.** Based on the observed secondary completion, the net present value is estimated at \$76,378 PRK per child, which produces an IRR of 5.05%, which represents a higher impact than estimated at appraisal (from 22,000 PKR to 57,000 PKR per child).<sup>13</sup>

**Annex 4 Table 1 Estimated education profile of COVID-19 cohort at age of 16-20 (share of each education level, %)**

Population group (1)	Education level (2)	Pre-COVID-19 PSLM 2018-2019 (3)	Expected with COVID-19 (4)	Expected with RRREP (5)	Observed in 2020-2021* (6)
Male Urban	Less than primary	17	29	21	16
	At most primary	30	26	29	28
	At least secondary	53	45	51	56
Male rural	Less than primary	30	40	33	30
	At most primary	32	28	31	33
	At least secondary	38	32	36	37
Female urban	Less than primary	22	34	26	21
	At most primary	23	20	22	21
	At least secondary	55	47	52	58
Female rural	Less than primary	48	56	51	48
	At most primary	25	21	24	25
	At least secondary	27	23	25	27

Note: \* we did estimate the education level completion by combining Census 2017 and the number of students who completed high school reported in the Pakistan Education Statistics 2020-21. We compute the pre-COVID-19 repetition rate based on the Pakistan Education Statistics 2018-19. We suppose that secondary completion was similar across

<sup>13</sup> Per child net present value in PKR (2019 price); discount rate of 10%.

## ANNEX 5. BORROWER, CO-FINANCIER AND OTHER PARTNER/STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

Verbatim comments received from: **Sana Isa, Coordination & Implementation Specialist, PCU** on behalf of the MoFEPT and PCU

Received on Friday, May 12, 2023

“Dear Elena,

I'm writing this email on behalf of the Ministry of Federal Education (MoFEPT) and the Ministry's Project Coordination Unit. Thank you again for sharing the draft Implementation Completion and Results Report for the Response, Recovery and Resilience in Education Project with us. We circulated the report for comments and feedback, and have attached the document with all feedback/minor edits reflected (via track changes).

Firstly, I would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation for your team's support during the implementation of RRREP. The work we managed under the project and the capacities we built have laid the foundations for similar future work currently being undertaken at the Ministry. The sustained and consistent support provided by you, Juan and Maryem helped us streamline project processes, manage expectations and essentially deliver on activities, interventions and analytical work that contributes to strengthening the resilience of the education system in Pakistan.

With regards to the ICR, we think the report reflects the overall aims and objectives of the project and meaningfully evaluates the longer-term impacts of the project. Going through the report allowed us to situate our work in a larger educational and national context. We are also happy to see that the project received positive ratings! Therefore, we endorse the overall report, with a few qualifications/points of consideration we have added to the report (attached). The minor revisions/feedback in the report include the following:

- Some minor revisions pertaining to the number of lagging districts under RRREP, names of initiatives etc.
- In some places 'PIU' is used instead of PCU, so we've corrected that
- Correction in implementation arrangements - in one place the report states that NCHD was responsible for implementation which was initially in the pad but was not the case
- Some additions and revisions to quantities, narrative, etc.
- Addition of the Implementing agency's (Ministry and PCU) perspective on certain aspects including our experience of supervision and also, lessons learnt.
- Revision to component-wise budget allocations
- Some other minor comments/edits.

Please note that any comment in the document that states 'collective' means that the feedback is collective Ministry-PCU feedback. All other comments are individual comments added. Please feel free to incorporate any edits/comments at your own discretion.

Finally, the entire PCU and Mr. Waseem Ajmal have reviewed the report and we collectively endorse the report, its findings and are grateful for this document that enables reflection and learnings we can incorporate in future projects. Please reach out if you have any questions and/or comments.

Sana Isa, Coordination & Implementation Specialist, PCU – MoFEPT”

## ANNEX 6. EVALUATION STUDIES AND ANALYTICS UNDER THE PROJECT

**1. Findings from project-wide analytical tasks and evaluation studies that were carried out by MoFEPT are summarized below:**

**2. The Assessment of Learning Continuation Programs evaluated distance learning strategies, including Tele-School and Radio School, and assessed parents' awareness and satisfaction, viewership and listeners, and effectiveness of local interventions and management practices in all four provinces.** The evaluation considered relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability using quantitative and qualitative methods. The main findings included that televisions were a good vehicle for content, and students found it engaging.

**3. A Review of Digital Content evaluated all the digital content procured under the Project.** Nearly 4,000 videos were found to be of high technical and pedagogical quality; around 1,700 videos were identified as requiring minor improvements.

**4. A Set of Distance Learning standards and guidelines were developed to establish benchmarks that ensure the quality, effectiveness, and equity of educational programs delivered remotely.** These standards are designed to provide a framework for educators, institutions, and policymakers to develop and implement high-quality distance learning experiences. An implementation plan to guide the operationalization of the standards and practices was also developed, which will be implemented under ASPIRE.

**5. The Learning Diagnostic Testing of Primary Students in ICT and KP aimed to assess students for the targeted instruction program that was designed to help primary-aged children catch up to grade level in foundational numeracy and literacy following school closures.** The findings showed that students had fallen behind during school closures, and remediation is sorely needed, particularly in English and Mathematics, and for students in rural areas. It is important to note that the purpose of this learning diagnostic was not to compare results to pre-pandemic baseline. Learning poverty in Pakistan was already high (75%) before the pandemic. The target of the Project design was to reduce the impact of the current and future external shocks on the education system, through distance learning opportunities and provincial-federal collaboration.

**6. The Study on the Gendered Impacts of COVID-19 on the Health, Well-being and Safety of Students and Teachers analyzed issues relating to access, education service delivery, institutional capacity, and responsiveness.** The key findings showed an increase in household burden, household responsibilities, and care work for girls, learning losses, and a gendered and rural-urban digital divide. Female teachers and students have less mobility than their male counterparts, and teachers struggle to identify student well-being and stressors.

**7. An activity on Developing Pathways to Mainstream Out-of-School Children shed light on the importance of non-formal education streams to catering to the needs of OOSC and the need to strengthen linkages between non-formal and formal education to ensure pathways to mainstream children, possibly through distance learning.** The implementation framework used a design thinking methodology, which involved collaboration between provincial and federal stakeholders and beneficiaries to map out pathways for subsequent certification and inclusion in mainstream education.