



Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 06-Apr-2021 | Report No: PIDA31078



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country Djibouti	Project ID P175464	Project Name Expanding Opportunities for Learning Additional Financing (GPE)	Parent Project ID (if any) P166059
Parent Project Name Expanding Opportunities for Learning	Region MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA	Estimated Appraisal Date 14-Apr-2021	Estimated Board Date 31-May-2021
Practice Area (Lead) Education	Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Republic of Djibouti	Implementing Agency Ministry of Education and Vocational Training

Proposed Development Objective(s) Parent

The project development objective is to increase equitable access to basic education, improve teaching practices, and strengthen MENFOP's management capacity.

Components

- Component 1: Establishing foundations for quality preschool education
- Component 2: Expanding access to and improving retention in primary and lower secondary education
- Component 3: Building capacity to support teaching and learning
- Component 4: Strengthening MENFOP's management capacity and data systems

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)

SUMMARY

Total Project Cost	2.30
Total Financing	2.30
of which IBRD/IDA	0.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS

Non-World Bank Group Financing

Trust Funds	2.30
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Education for All - Fast Track Initiative

2.30

Environmental and Social Risk Classification

Moderate

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. **The smallest state in the Horn of Africa, Djibouti has witnessed strong economic growth since 2000, but challenges remain in reducing poverty in the country.** Djibouti is a lower middle-income country with a population estimated at approximately one million, with around 75 percent mainly concentrated in and around the capital Djibouti-Ville. Djibouti has experienced an average annual real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increase of 4.4 percent in per capita terms in the last two decades. The stability of the country in a regional context marked by violent conflicts partly explains this economic growth, driven by the presence of military bases, port-related activities, as well as an increase in Foreign Direct Investments and an expansion of public infrastructure. Nevertheless, close to 21 percent of the population live in extreme poverty (Djibouti Household Survey 2017), with the densely populated district of Balbala in Djibouti-Ville alone accounting for 32 percent of the poor in the country, while extreme poverty averages 45 percent in remote areas of the country. In addition, the Government of Djibouti (GoD) is facing risks of falling tax revenues linked to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. Women tend to be among the most vulnerable, with a lower labor force participation and higher unemployment, and limited access to services¹.

2. **Djibouti is particularly vulnerable to climate change.** The country ranks 159th out of 181 with respect to its vulnerability to climate change and its lack of readiness to address these vulnerabilities. In addition, the country does not have the necessary resources to recover from disasters. According to a government-led Interagency Rapid Assessment of floods that occurred in in November 2019, an estimated 250,000 people were affected by the floods, with nearly US\$16 million in housing damage and an estimated need of US\$25 million for reconstruction and recovery². These events were followed by the April 2020 floods which impacted 110,000 people across Djibouti-Ville. Other natural hazards include intense flash floods, fires, frequent earthquakes, volcanic activity and rising sea levels. Year-round high temperatures limited arable land, low regular rainfall, together with extended multi-annual droughts and a scarcity of ground water have adverse effects on livelihoods and agriculture production. The recent prolonged drought in Djibouti and its neighboring countries has further spurred desertification and exposed at least 20 percent of the population in Djibouti-Ville and 75 percent of rural households to food insecurity.

¹ Enquête djiboutienne sur la santé de la famille (2003/2004).

² World Bank (2020), "Rapid Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA), Djibouti, December 2019".



3. **Finally, the COVID-19 situation in Djibouti is dynamic.** The number of new daily cases peaked in early May 2020, at around 200 per day. Numbers dropped from August 2020 to January 2021 to an average of around 5 per week. The daily number of cases has started to rise in March, reaching 49 per day on 17 March 2021, and as of 17 March 2021, there were 6,385 recorded cases and 63 deaths. However, the apparently low incidence of COVID-19 should be interpreted with great caution due to the low testing capacity. Djibouti has carried out over 117,000 COVID-19 tests for a population of one million people. These indicators are essential inputs for the most urgent decisions about COVID-19, including physical distancing policies and COVID-19 health care preparedness and response planning. It would also have learning implications as the potential of a new wave could lead to another lockdown. On the other hand, Djibouti received its first shipment of vaccines in early March, receiving 24,000 doses of the Astra-Zeneca /Serum Institute of India vaccine out of a total order of 108,000 doses by the COVAX initiative. The Djiboutian government started the vaccine campaign in mid-March. While MENFOP quickly resorted to alternative learning opportunities and initial data from impulse surveys suggest relatively good student participation, the impact on the continuity of learning remains uncertain.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

4. **Access to and quality of education at all levels continues to be a major challenge.** Gross enrollment rates are showing an increase with 94 percent for primary and 75.5 percent for lower secondary (both compulsory) and some growth in the nascent pre-school sector which still stands at only 14 percent and is voluntary, according to MENFOP. However, findings from the latest household survey in 2018 suggest updated figures for Net Enrollment Rates for primary are lower at 74 percent nationally, 79 percent for Djibouti-Ville, and range between 60.6 percent and 74.6 percent in the regions (Arta and Ali-Sabieh respectively). Moreover, at least one out of five school age students has never been to school. Limited access to and quality of pre-school education hinders school readiness. Several national indicators show that quality remains quite low, reflected in high levels of repetition (over 20 percent of students) from primary to lower secondary.

5. **Inequality is also relatively high in Djibouti, especially in relation to education and employment.** Girls' enrollment is lower at all education levels. Girls make up 46 percent of preschool, 46 percent of primary, and 46 percent of lower secondary school students. Even though girls' repetition rates are lower at primary level and their primary school national examination scores are slightly better than boys', girls experience higher dropout rates in fifth grade, which partially accounts for the disparities in enrollment in lower secondary. The lower enrollment rates for girls in lower secondary are especially prevalent in rural areas. Children with special needs experience stigma and are at high risk of not going to or dropping out of school. In terms of unemployment, Djibouti's youth are particularly affected. Djibouti has a high youth population with 51 percent of the population under 25 years of age. However, 47 percent of people aged 15 and older are unemployed. To address these issues, Djibouti has made investing in human capital one of the five pillars of its national strategy – Vision 2035 – with a focus on inclusion and economic opportunities for all Djiboutians.

6. **Over the past two decades, the government has placed education at the center of its development policies, with reforms focusing on improving access, quality and efficiency.** The current education sector plan and accompanying plan of education action include strategies and targets to address these priorities including a commitment to achieving Universal Primary Education by reducing class size and eliminating double shifting. More recently, renewed efforts are underway to strengthen assessment against learning standards, modernize the curriculum and promote new, more interactive teaching and learning pedagogies. Accompanying these efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic is an expansion of digital learning, adapted to the context of limited internet



connectivity. The themes were identified as priorities in the education sector analysis of 2020 and will inform the development of the new education sector plan which will get underway in 2021.

7. **The teacher professional development system is highly centralized and in its present form has limited impact on teacher practices. the Personnel Training Center for National Education (*Center de Formation des Enseignants de l'Enseignement Fondamental - CFEEF*)** is the training center of Djibouti Ville in charge of providing initial training for primary, lower secondary and secondary education teachers. The current centralized approach to in-service teacher training is cumbersome for many teachers in the regions especially in remote locations and trainers have limited opportunities to improve and strengthen their training skills.

8. **Assessment systems** are not fully utilized for learning and policy decision-making and need to be redesigned to capture student performance against learning standards. At the end of the second year (first cycle) and fifth year (second cycle) of primary school, students sit for the *Objectifs Terminaux d'Intégration* (OTI) exams. To transition to lower secondary, students must pass their fifth year OTIs. Fifth grade OTI results are managed at the national level while the second-grade results are managed at the school level. Currently, only basic analysis is conducted for the fifth grade OTI and *Brevet de l'enseignement fondamental* – BEF (end of Grade 9) exam results. Strengthened MENFOP capacity to analyze and use assessment data would optimize the feedback systems to inform teaching practices and strengthen the pedagogical support to teachers.

9. A process of **curriculum modernization** is currently underway. The revision aims to make appropriate adjustments, additions and improvements to introduce innovative pedagogical practices and includes a focus on integrating Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) into curricula, and developing digital and 21st century skills. Revisions have started, and work related to materials development, trialing and production require additional support from PRODA and AF.

10. **Djibouti is home to a rising refugee population.** The GoD continues to demonstrate openness and commitment to providing protection to refugees. It ratified the “Djibouti Declaration on the Rights of Education” in 2017 and promotes the integration of refugees into national systems such as health, education and the labor market. As part of its support to education, MENFOP coordinates provision of appropriate curriculum in appropriate languages among the main refugee groups from Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Yemen. MENFOP continued to prioritize refugee education during the COVID-19-related school closures, ensuring logistics for refugees to undertake end-of-school exams.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Original PDO

The project development objective is to increase equitable access to basic education, improve teaching practices, and strengthen MENFOP's management capacity.

Current PDO

The PDO remains the same: the specific objectives of the Additional Financing (AF) are to expand and deepen activities and results under the parent project, notably activities under component 3 “Building Capacity to support teaching and learning” that have emerged as priorities for the system to adjust to a future where distance or blended learning take higher precedent; and (b) to strengthen MENFOPs preparedness and resilience to promote continuity of learning in the event of subsequent waves of COVID-19 or future disasters.



Key Results

11. The proposed AF activities will continue to support PRODA’s objectives and will scale-up activities under component 3 as well as strengthen management needs by: strengthening and modernizing the exam and assessment system; strengthening and expanding the inspection system; expanding professional development of teachers to improve teaching practice; supporting the ongoing revision of the basic education curriculum; strengthening printing capacity as part of resilience for classroom and distance learning; strengthening system resilience and the role of parents and civil society in supporting learning/distance learning.

D. Project Description

12. **The Additional Financing (AF) in the amount of US\$2.3 million** will continue to support the achievement of PRODA objectives and will expand and complement existing components and activities. The AF would support changes to component 3 “Building capacity to support teaching and learning” which is central to the government’s education reform effort and includes activities that were not able to be fully funded at the time under the parent project or where unexpected funding gaps have emerged.

13. **The AF, aligning with the parent project PRODA would support the following changes to component 3 “Building capacity to support teaching and learning”:** an expansion of existing activities to ensure better service delivery to the regions (an expanded and strengthened inspection service) and that the revision of the curriculum is fully financed; additional activities to implement reforms to strengthen the system (modernization and capacity building for exam and assessment system); strengthening system resilience and preparedness to respond to COVID-19 and other shocks (strengthened parental engagement in supporting student and remote learning). These proposed changes are mutually reinforcing and will both strengthen ongoing reform efforts and enable the system to adapt to a rising demand for remote or complementary learning. Unlike the parent project, the AF resources will not include PBCs.

14. The AF would innovate beyond the parent PRODA, notably in the areas of inspection, improved teacher performance and delivery of learning materials. In addition, it would introduce select additional activities to strengthen reform of the system and build resilience, such as modernizing the exam system and an enhanced role for parents in supporting learning and distance learning.

Legal Operational Policies	
	Triggered?
Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	No
Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60	No

Summary of Assessment of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts



E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

15. **Institutional arrangements:** The project will continue to be implemented by the MENFOP, with the Secretary General as project leader. The Project's Service Unit (SGP or *service de la gestion des projets*) will manage fiduciary aspects of the project, with the support of additional fiduciary, M&E, and environmental and social specialists which have recently been recruited. The DGA within MENFOP will be the focal point responsible for liaising with all concerned departments and for results monitoring and reporting. Other MENFOP departments and entities will play important technical roles, including but not limited to CFEEF, CRIPEN, the Direction Générale de l'Enseignement, the General Inspectorate, the evaluation service, and others.

16. **Institutional arrangements will follow PRODA agreements and procedures.** An Operational Manual has been developed for PRODA to set out procedures and processes to follow to comply with World Bank requirements in procurement, financial, environment and social management. This will be up-dated to include arrangements for AF.

17. The national platform of the Local Education Group (LEG), comprised of education development partners and civil society organizations, has proven to be an effective coordination mechanism in Djibouti, under the leadership of MENFOP and UNICEF. The LEG will continue playing a vital role in collaboration and implementation of activities where appropriate to maximize harmonization and complementarity of effort.

18. **The AF is an opportunity to amend/restructure the mechanisms for oversight and setting strategic direction for PRODA to ensure a more appropriate level of decision-making and accountability.** The PRODA envisages the establishment of a project steering committee (SC) chaired by the Secretary General with the mandate to ensure: overall supervision and strategic orientation for project implementation; approval of work plans and budgets; coordination and review of implementation progress. The SC has been set up to include all concerned directorates and meets on a regular basis. In the course of implementation, it has become clear that the current SC arrangement functions more as a technical committee (TC) for implementation support of the project rather than a higher-level oversight committee. To ensure that PRODA disposes of the high-level function of oversight and strategic direction setting that is envisaged by all Bank-supported projects, it is proposed to make two formal changes:

- a) Transform the current SC into a Technical Committee for Implementation Support. The members would remain the same directorates and the chair the Secretary General. This committee would have the responsibility for daily management and execution of the PRODA project. The chair of the TC is also in charge of PRODA implementation.
- b) Establish a new, high-level SC with the function of providing strategic level oversight and strategic direction of the project. This SC will be chaired by the Minister of MENFOP and composed of leaders in the education sector including the head of the observatory and others.

19. This new arrangement will have the advantage of maintaining the original vision to empower the committee responsible for project management with day-to-day decision-making functions. Moreover, it will secure a more effective oversight structure and ensure greater accountability.



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APPROVAL

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