



Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 20-Mar-2020 | Report No: PIDA28042



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

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|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| Country Tuvalu | Project ID P171681 | Project Name Tuvalu Learning Project | Parent Project ID (if any) |
| Region EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC | Estimated Appraisal Date 17-Mar-2020 | Estimated Board Date 04-Jun-2020 | Practice Area (Lead) Education |
| Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing | Borrower(s) Ministry of Finance | Implementing Agency Ministry of Education Youth and Sports | |

Proposed Development Objective(s)

To improve the readiness of children entering first grade and improve the reading skills of students in Tuvalu.

Components

Strengthening early childhood care and education and school readiness for all children
 Improving Literacy Outcomes in all Schools
 Research, learning assessment and policy review
 Strengthening institutional capacity, monitoring and evaluation, and education sector management

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)

SUMMARY

| | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Total Project Cost | 16.00 |
| Total Financing | 16.00 |
| of which IBRD/IDA | 16.00 |
| Financing Gap | 0.00 |

DETAILS

World Bank Group Financing

| | |
|---|-------|
| International Development Association (IDA) | 16.00 |
| IDA Grant | 16.00 |



Environmental and Social Risk Classification

Low

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

- Tuvalu is one of the smallest, most remote and climate-change vulnerable countries in the world and is characterized as a fragile state.** Tuvalu is a Pacific Island country of approximately 11,000 people living on nine small islands with a total land area of just 26 square kilometers scattered over 0.5 million square kilometers of the Pacific Ocean. Six of the islands (Nukulaelae, Funafuti, Nukufetau, Vaitupu, Nui, and Nanumea) are low-lying coral atolls, while the other three islands - Niulakita, Niutao, and Nanumaga - are raised limestone reef islands. More than half of the total population live on Funafuti, which is also where the nation's capital is located. With most of the country lying just above sea level (average elevation is one meter above sea level and highest point just four meters above sea level), Tuvalu is acutely vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change and sea level rise. In addition, Tuvalu is exposed to several natural hazards including cyclones, floods, storm surges as well as droughts and tsunamis. For example, on January 16-17 Category 3 storm Tropical Cyclone Tino struck Tuvalu causing gale force winds, widespread flooding and is estimated to have affected approximately half of the country's population prompting the Government to proclaim a State of Public Emergency. Tuvalu's outer islands are only accessible by sea vessel, with scheduled routes operating every few weeks, weather permitting, presenting significant challenges to service delivery.
- The very small size of the domestic economy and Tuvalu's extreme remoteness from major markets, near total dependence on imports, particularly of food and fuel, and vulnerability to external shocks, climate change and rising sea levels pose significant challenges to macroeconomic performance.** Highly dependent on external aid, as well as remittances from Tuvaluans working abroad, gross domestic product (GDP) growth is constrained by the small size of the domestic economy, limited natural resources (except for fisheries) and infrastructure deficits in utilities, transport and communications. Tuvalu's GDP growth is estimated at 3.8 percent in 2018, largely driven by infrastructure construction related to Tuvalu hosting the 2019 Pacific Island Forum Leaders Meeting. Inflation is expected to decline from 3 percent per year to 2 percent as economic growth slows. The fiscal deficit is expected to increase to 5 percent of GDP over the medium term. The lack of economies of scale in such a small and fragmented domestic market constrain private sector development and the public sector dominates the economy. The economic and fiscal costs associated with health care expenditures of an aging population and an epidemic of non-communicable diseases further limit macroeconomic performance. The most recent poverty assessment indicates 26 percent of the population was living below the national poverty line (2010). Disparities in levels of poverty have increased over time between the outer islands and Funafuti with poverty generally concentrated in the outer islands. Lack of access to services, employment opportunities and exposure to shocks (such as food price shocks and natural disasters) limits inclusive growth. However, female headed households are less likely to be identified as poor and the gender parity index demonstrates a high level of access to



education.

3. **Te Kakeega III (2016-2020)¹ is the Government of Tuvalu’s National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) which aims to achieve security and prosperity for all Tuvaluans; higher standards of quality health and education; and good relations with allies on the international stage.** This vision is expected to be realized through: (i) improved resilience, mitigation and adaptation to climate change; (ii) strengthened institutional capacity to serve the public interest with competence and justice; (iii) sound macroeconomic management and policy; (iv) improved health and social development; (v) strengthened island development policies; (vi) improved private sector, employment and trade; (vii) high quality education to equip people with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve a higher degree of self-reliance in a changing world; (viii) maximization of social and economic returns from the management and sustainable use of Tuvalu’s natural resources; (ix) efficient, high quality infrastructure and support services; (x) protection, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems; (xi) addressing internal migration and urbanization; and (xii) conservation of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. While the NSSD notes that Tuvalu is performing better than most Pacific countries when it comes to wage employment of women, the strategy strives to improve gender equality and women’s empowerment, as well as advancing the legal rights of women. It also aims to ensure gender and disability perspectives are incorporated into disaster risk management
4. **According to the Human Capital Index which measures the amount of human capital that a child born today can expect to attain by age 18, Tuvalu ranks 83rd out of 157 countries.** A child born in Tuvalu today will be 55 percent as productive when he/she grows up as he/she could be if she/he had complete education and full health. The current ranking is skewed by the education challenges. Out of the average years of schooling in Tuvalu (11.9 years), the number of quality adjusted learning years is 7.4, meaning children are in school but not learning for nearly 4.5 years, pointing to issues of quality of learning.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

5. **The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) is responsible for Tuvalu’s education system and policy.** The Government of Tuvalu provides free primary education for all, which includes Years 1 through 8. By law, it is compulsory for all children ages 6-15 (Years 1 to 10) to attend school. There are 18 community-based Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) centers providing preschool services for children under 6 years old that receive support from the government through grants and teacher salaries; ten are on the main island of Funafuti, and one on each of the other islands and atolls. There are nine government primary schools (one on each island or atoll) and a faith-based primary school in Funafuti. Secondary education consists of five years of schooling (years 9 through 13) and is delivered by two schools- a government-run boarding school on Vaitupu island (Motufoua) and a non-government day school located in Funafuti (Fetuvalu). As a result of a recent decision by the Prime Minister year 9 students were removed from the high school campus in 2017 and were being taught at primary schools, but this decision was reviewed and reversed in 2019 with year 9 students returning to the high school campuses in 2020. There is also one center to cater to children and young people with disabilities, Fusi Alofa, but this is not a special school. The Tuvalu Maritime Training Institute (TMTI), the only post-primary technical/vocational institution in Tuvalu is no longer being used for maritime training but the government has plans to introduce a number of new

¹ National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2020. Government of Tuvalu, “Protect and save Tuvalu: Improve the quality of life and prosperity for all.” March 2016.



course offerings there. However, a technical/vocational stream has been introduced in primary and secondary schools in recent years. The University of the South Pacific (USP) campus on Funafuti is the only tertiary institution in the country. Most secondary school graduates travel abroad for tertiary degrees, and continuous professional development (conducted overseas) is offered to civil servants through study leave often supported either by government scholarships and/or development partner scholarships.

6. **Education is a priority sector in Tuvalu.** The education sector absorbs the largest share of the national budget (increasing from 13 percent in 2012 to 18.4 percent in 2019) reflecting its status as a priority sector and biggest public sector employer. Tuvalu's education expenditures are higher than most other Pacific Island Countries, including Tonga (16%), Samoa (15%), Kiribati (14%), and Vanuatu (12%).² Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Tuvalu plays a key role in supporting education investments annually. Government estimates that over 24 percent of student funding in 2017 was contributed by donor partners. The Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is currently the donor with the largest investments in the education sector. However, the MEYS has steadily increased per-child expenditures since 2012 across all sub-sectors. Average unit costs per student range from AUD1,000 in ECCE to almost AUD4,000 at the secondary level in 2017. Per capita costs have increased considerably since 2012- (AUD728 in 2012 to AUD1,276 in 2017 in primary education) in line with the increase in overall Tuvalu budget, recurrent expenditures and nominal GDP. These unit costs are in line with other small countries and fragile states, although the allocation to ECCE is considerably higher than other countries in the Pacific.
7. **Near universal access to basic education.** The Tuvalu Education Sector Plan (TESP III) which has been implemented since 2016 outlines an overarching strategy to promote nationwide access to relevant and modern curriculum, quality schooling and efficient and sustainable education systems in Tuvalu. The next plan (TESP IV 2021-2026) will be prepared during 2020 and launched in January 2021. Achievements to date include significant access to pre-primary and primary education and increased primary school completion rates. With a total enrollment of 3,046 in pre-tertiary and 211 qualified teachers³, class sizes and pupil-teacher ratios are low. Net Enrollment Rate (NER) in primary education is 89 percent, surpassing many of the middle-income countries in the Caribbean States. However, Tuvalu's NER in secondary education is only 62 percent (2019), lower than most of the Pacific and other small island states, such as Kiribati (69 percent), Tonga (75 percent) and Samoa (77 percent). Only Melanesian countries have lower rates in the Pacific. Completion rate to year 8 has increased from 81 percent in 2012 to 92.8 percent in 2017, and transition rate from primary to secondary has increased from 65 percent in 2017 to 81 percent in 2019.⁴ The majority of teachers are female and have the requisite certification/qualification to teach. Out of 211 full time teachers, 167 are female, 55 are teaching in ECCE centers, 106 are in primary schools and 46 in the two secondary schools. There are four teachers in the special needs center. The highest numbers of teachers are on Funafuti and Vaitupu islands where the largest share of students attend school.

Key challenges facing the education sector

8. **Quality of education and low literacy.** The Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA) 2018 data indicates that only 32 percent of grade 4 students meet or exceed proficiency level for literacy (significantly lower than the 57 percent for small island states (SIS) subregion). Grade 6 results are similarly

² World Bank 2019; latest UIS data.

³ MEYS 2019

⁴ Data as reported in the *Tuvalu Education Statistical Report for 2016/2017*. MEYS, November 2017.



low at 47 percent achieving proficiency (against 63 percent for the SIS subregion). However, these results represent an improvement over 2015 results which indicated only 22% of grade 4 and 33% of grade 6 demonstrating proficiency.⁵ Weak results are also reflected in the Tuvalu Junior Certificate (TJC) examination (year 10) pass rate of just 27 percent in 2019. Passing rates at the end of primary education have fallen from 80 percent in 2017 to 59 percent in 2019. Literacy challenges, however, begin much earlier, with Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) 2016 results indicating only 20 percent of Year 3 students meeting the benchmark for reading comprehension, and 40 percent with zero scores for reading comprehension. Students fare better on numeracy than on literacy assessments. In 2018, approximately 69 percent of Year 4 students performed at or above the expected minimum proficiency level for numeracy and 83 percent of Year 6 students performed at or above the expected level.

9. **Drop outs pose a challenge at the secondary level.** While access to primary education is high across Tuvalu, secondary education net enrollment rates drop sharply. The decline has serious implications for human capital development and the flow of skilled graduates available to enter the labor market, take up key leadership positions and influence future directions for economic growth. Recent analytical work⁶ indicates that some students fail to attend schools because parents cannot afford the indirect financial requirements. To attend schools, students need school uniforms, school stationery, lunches, transport to and from schools, parent teacher association funds, field trips, sports gear, examination fees, and many other schools' activities that require additional outlays from parents. Quality of learning also has been identified as a possible cause of student drop outs, as students struggle to keep up with the pace of curriculum once they start to fall behind. Bullying/hazing in schools has been identified as a contributor to the high dropout rate at the secondary level but there remains little data on the prevalence of gendered school-based violence.
10. **Teacher education levels are improving, but continuous professional development presents challenges.** In 2019, there were 55 ECCE teachers for 676 students, 106 primary teachers for 1,687 students, and 46 secondary teachers for 683 students, resulting in very low pupil teacher ratios across all islands except Funafuti, with two islands recording less than ten primary pupils per teacher. These low ratios, which are well below the national benchmarks, often lead to teachers being responsible for multi-level classes, which teachers do not currently receive training on. Teachers in Tuvalu are categorized as either qualified⁷, certified⁸, or neither. According to the data from MEYS, all ECCE, primary and secondary teachers have been qualified at a minimum since 2016. While 86 percent of ECCE and primary teachers were certified in 2017, only 63 percent of secondary teachers were, meaning over a third of secondary teachers have no specialized

⁵ The Education Quality and Assessment Program (EQAP) housed within the Pacific Community (SPC) has worked with Government of Tuvalu to implement the Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA). The PILNA was conducted in 2012, 2015 and 2018 to assess the learning achievement of pupils in school after 4 and 6 years of education. Overall the PILNA results show that student performance has improved from 2012 to 2018, with more students achieving in the higher proficiency levels (levels 7 and 8) for both literacy and numeracy. The proportion of students in lower proficiency level (levels 0 to 2) also decreases from 2012 to 2018 (PILNA 2018 Tuvalu Report, EQAP).

⁶ Realizing Education Access for the Pacific, DFID and TuEHCI 2017.

⁷ A qualified teacher in Tuvalu is identified as a teacher who has undertaken some training and/or post-secondary studies but not any specialized teacher training.

⁸ A certified teacher in Tuvalu is identified as a teacher who has undertaken specialized post-secondary teacher training and has met the course requirements, with or without other post-secondary qualifications.



post-secondary teacher training. Tuvaluan teachers currently receive pre-service teacher training overseas, predominantly in Fiji through the USP, with some receiving scholarships to study in other countries. However, they do not receive training on the Tuvaluan education system and curriculum upon returning to teach in Tuvalu. The Australian Support to Education in Tuvalu (ASET) Program is exploring development of an onboarding teacher training that is Tuvaluan-specific and reflects the Tuvaluan curriculum. The MEYS has intended to carry out annual continuous professional development (CPD) for in-service teachers since 2014 when standards for teachers were introduced, but this has not happened regularly, and has not reached all teachers. Anecdotally, the Department of Education also reports gaps in subject content knowledge of teachers in the country. “In-service training” is offered to a select number of teachers each year, with 20 relief teachers in 2017-2018 offered an opportunity to upgrade their qualifications through USP to fill gaps in the country’s teaching needs. MEYS is trying to improve quality of learning with a focus on teacher professional development and by developing a Teacher Professional Development Framework. Additional activities to improve pedagogy for teaching foundational skills are also being planned.

11. **School leaders need greater support to be effective in their roles.** The MEYS, with support from the Educational Quality and Assessment Program (EQAP), a regional agency within the Secretariat for the Pacific Community (SPC), has developed school leadership standards, indicators and an appraisal instrument, which is intended to inform development of CPD for school leaders. The appraisal has not yet been conducted as it is still under review. The MEYS plans to develop a similar appraisal instrument for teachers. With the introduction of standards for school leaders in 2014, the government has tried to offer annual CPD for school leaders on topics identified to be most needed or lacking in classrooms and schools; however, trainings did not take place in 2018 or 2019 due to budget constraints and the outstanding need for a review of the appraisal instrument for school leaders. Effectiveness of these trainings is not known as evaluations and follow up do not take place. With infrequent boat schedules, long round trips, dependence on the weather to operate the vessels, and resulting in costly trainings, this presents unique challenges in scheduling and running CPD trainings.
12. **The Department of Education, MEYS lacks current operational policies in several areas essential to guide teaching and learning.** These include policies related to: school-based management; textbook and learning materials; classroom assessment; inclusive education; instructional leadership; workforce planning; and teacher quality. As the Government continues to build the education evidence base, efforts are underway to document key policies and programs to have consistent guidelines available for all education stakeholders. The Department of Education is also concerned about the lack of alignment of the curricula for Years 1-13 with the Tuvalu National Curriculum Policy Framework (TNCPPF) and across grades and subjects, as well as the mismatch between the curricula and resources available for learning. The Department carried out a review of the TNCPPF and found the practices and subjects taught in schools do not go in line with the framework and entire subjects listed in the document are not taught in schools. One of the key challenges for early grade reading is the lack of curriculum/syllabus or instructional materials for years 1-3, especially in local language (*Gana Tuvalu*) given that it is not a written language. The dearth of readers, simple books and other early education resources limits the development of a reading culture. In addition, current teacher training (pre-service and in-service) does not adequately focus on the teaching and learning of basic reading skills in either Tuvaluan or English.
13. **Gender parity is in favor of girls, boys are not doing as well.** While gender parity is relatively even in ECCE and primary education, the percentage of boys in secondary education drops off significantly, with gender parity ranging between 1.27 and 1.55 between 2012 and 2017. Transition rate from primary to secondary



education demonstrates the imbalance with 88 percent of females transitioning against 75 percent of males in 2019. Assessments also indicate gaps in learning outcomes with boys performing less well on standardized tests. Girls outperform boys in both PILNA and TJC and students in urban areas perform better than students in rural areas. While regional differences in scores were not statistically significant, the disparity between girls and boys demonstrated higher reading fluency and comprehension for girls across all sub-tests. The results also showed factors positively associated with better oral reading fluency such as pre-school attendance, reading at home, if a student enjoys reading, and classroom pedagogical practices such as new vocabulary, daily reading, and teaching unfamiliar words. Social analyses have pointed to the impact of gender norms and expectations on girls and boys education, the lack of parental supervision and encouragement for boys to focus on their school work and the poor quality of educational material to address gender biases and stereotypes. This has the potential to cause issues not only for the boys that are not reaching their full education potential or future employment prospects, but evidence from international studies suggest this can also lead to other social issues through the reinforcement and perpetuation of gender and social norms. Girls' achievement is not causing boys' underachievement and a disadvantage for boys in education does not translate into an overall advantage for girls in terms of gender equality with boys and men continuing to have increased resources, decision-making and privileges compared to girls and women. Further country-level analysis would help to better understand the causes of the gender gap. Schools can play a key role in mitigating these risks with appropriate interventions directed at students, teachers and communities.

14. **Child Development and School Readiness.** According to the Tuvalu Early Human Capability Index (TuEHCI) 2016, 37.3 percent of children ages 3 to 5 in Tuvalu are stunted, comparable to rates of stunting in Sub-Saharan Africa. This has profound implications for the overall development of children, including in cognitive domains. Looking at all undernutrition indicators – stunting, underweight and wasting – males fare considerably worse than females in this age group. More analysis is required to better understand the causes of stunting in children and identify cost effective actions to address the issue in Tuvalu. Across all domains of child development measured by the TuEHCI, results were lowest for perseverance, pre-literacy and pre-numeracy, skills normally learned at preschool. It is positive to note that preschool enrolment did have a positive impact on these domains; however, the relationship between preschool enrolment and child development was not as high as would be expected. This could be attributed in part to the low quality of preschool instruction, low attendance rates picked up in the survey, as well as the effects of stunting on cognitive development. There is significant international evidence that shows that parent engagement is crucial to ensuring children are ready to start school. While the TuEHCI reported high levels of parent engagement, home stimulation levels were recorded as low to moderate. There is need to increase the activities parents/caregivers do at home to stimulate children while improving attendance rates at ECCE centers. Parent and caregiver engagement is also critical to the preparedness for and participation in school for children with disabilities.

15. **Teacher and Student Absenteeism.** Teacher and student attendance are not monitored at the school level, nor reported to the central level, making it difficult to obtain information on teacher and student absenteeism. However, anecdotal evidence based on school visits and information from Department of Education staff indicates attendance for both teachers and students is inadequate. Community sensitization about the importance of education, including gender sensitive and disability inclusive messaging, is critical for ensuring consistent student engagement and learning. Collecting teacher and student attendance should be mandated at the school level and monitored at the central level. Data on students with special needs is not currently available, but their exclusion is suspected given the low enrollment in the center for children



and young people with disability run by Fusi Alofa (16 clients in 2019, 4 girls and 12 boys⁹). Additional social and gender assessment surveys would help shed more light on the reasons for low attendance and potential solutions. Further to the absenteeism issue reducing the number of hours available for student learning is the number of hours allocated to instruction time by the MEYS, which is considerably lower than many neighboring countries. Years 1 and 2 are allocated 3.5 hours per day, and Years 3 and 4 are allocated 4 hours per day, compared to most other Pacific countries which allocate between 5 hours and 7 hours¹⁰. Exacerbating this loss of instructional time are the school closures in Tuvalu due to extreme weather conditions, health issues such as the 2019 dengue outbreak, extended celebrations, and extensive testing six times each term¹¹.

16. **Collection and use of education data for decision making.** The Government of Tuvalu is investing significant resources in its education system, with a strategic focus on early childhood education. In its efforts to get schooling “right” at the foundation levels, data collection, management and analysis is critical to improve the quality of the system. Tuvalu’s participation in regional learning assessments, education surveys and early grade assessments such as EGRA are commendable. The Tuvalu Education Management Information System (TEMIS) collects data through an annual school census and a statistical report is produced, albeit with some delay. This can in part be attributed to the difficulty in obtaining school census data from the outer islands due to poor communications channels (Ultra-High Frequency radios are largely relied on to transmit data), and infrequent boat schedules. Technical assistance is provided by DFAT, SPC and the EQAP. However, more real time data collection (supported by investments in improved connectivity) is required along with improved data analysis and forecasting. A feedback loop for assessment data, school performance and cost-benefit analysis of interventions would go a long way towards steering education policy and improving accountability of the sector. Providing schools with data on student performance, attendance and other data would shape how teachers and administrators focus efforts on teaching and learning. Having schools disseminate this data to parents and community members would improve school level accountability. Complementing quantitative data with qualitative data would provide more insight into gender and location disparities present in the quantitative data.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Development Objective(s) (From PAD)

To improve the readiness of children entering first grade and improve the reading skills of students in Tuvalu.

Key Results

PDO Level Indicators

- Average school readiness score for children aged 5 years¹² (disaggregated by gender)

⁹ Data is not age-disaggregated but currently the majority of clients at the centre are young adults not school age children, so it is possible that clients from previous years were also not all school-aged.

¹⁰ ASET Program, Discussion Paper: Teaching English Literacy in the Classroom: Allocation of Time, 2019.

¹¹ ibid

¹² Measured as a simple average of scores on numeracy and concepts, formal literacy (reading) and formal literacy (writing) on a scale of 0 to 1 in the TuEHCI assessment.



- Percentage of students meeting the minimum reading fluency benchmark in grade 3¹³ (disaggregated by gender)
- Percentage of students meeting minimum literacy proficiency levels in grades 4 and 6¹⁴ (disaggregated by gender)

D. Project Description

17. The proposed project builds on the analytical work carried out under the recently closed Pacific Early Age Readiness and Learning (PEARL) Program (2014-2019), funded by the Global Partnership for Education and executed by the World Bank in Tuvalu and other countries in the Pacific. In Tuvalu, PEARL carried out surveys measuring school readiness and early literacy, and piloted interventions to provide the government with evidence of what works to improve school readiness and early grade reading skills of children in the country. Based on this evidence, the government developed a Tuvalu Early Education Roadmap 2019-2023 to scale up the successes of PEARL, and do more to strengthen children's early experiences, both in preparing them for formal schooling, and improving their reading skills through increased availability of instructional materials and improved teaching practices in the early grades of preschool and primary education.
18. The proposed project would scale up the PEARL activities across all ECCE centers and primary schools in Tuvalu (18 ECCE centers and 9 primary schools). School-based interventions would focus on ECCE and primary education. However, given the small size of the education sector and the urgency of building human capital across all beneficiaries, the TuLEP would include support beyond these grades and include some support at the upper primary and secondary grades. System-level strengthening, research and policy support would cover the entire education sector. Such system-wide activities would support assessments (e.g., TuEGRA, TuEHCI), policy reviews (e.g., curriculum, teacher policy), survey/research (e.g., stunting), teacher training (short term professional development) and school leadership strengthening. In addition, the proposed project may also support key actions related to improving school safety and resilience, and school health and nutrition.
19. In order to achieve the PDO, the project consists of four components: (a) strengthening early childhood care and education and school readiness for all children; (b) improving literacy outcomes in all schools; (c) research, learning assessment and policy review; and (d) strengthening institutional capacity, monitoring and evaluation and education sector management.
20. **Component 1: Strengthening early childhood care and education and school readiness for all children (estimated costs: US\$1.8 million).** Component 1 aims to support ECCE and community engagement to improve school readiness of all children in Tuvalu. Outreach to communities and parents is central to improving health and education outcomes. This component would (a) strengthen the delivery of ECCE services; and (b) conduct public awareness programs and community outreach. The ECCE centers, through playgroup interventions, encourage this linkage and help sensitize teachers, caregivers and parents in child stimulation, nutrition, importance of education, and inclusivity. Further study on the scale and causes of stunting among young children (under Component 3) would also inform future messaging and targeted

¹³ Minimum reading fluency benchmark is defined as 50 correct words per minute (cwpm) as measured for grade 3 students in the TuEGRA assessment.

¹⁴ Measured as the percentage of grade 4 and 6 students reaching or exceeding minimum proficiency (Level 4 and Level 5 respectively) in literacy in the PILNA assessment.



interventions under this project or those supported by other development partners.

21. *Sub-component 1.1: Strengthen the delivery of ECCE services.* This sub-component aims to improve the capacity of preschool teachers through improved training and resources to deliver quality ECCE services to children and facilitate playgroups with children and their caregivers. To achieve this, the project will: (i) provide training to ECCE teachers on implementing the ECCE curriculum, playgroup methodology (play-based learning with caregivers and young children) with continuous mentoring support through lesson observations, and training in gender, GBV, child protection and disability inclusion; (ii) supporting weekly playgroups at all 18 ECCE centers (enrolling 3-5 year old children) across the country (Playgroups@preschools activity piloted under the PEARL Program); (iii) provide playgroup kits and pre-school learning materials/activity guides/resources to the centers annually; (iv) develop and provide age-appropriate reading resources to ECCE centers, including training for teachers on writing and illustrating books themselves; and (v) support regular nurse visits to ECCE centers to carry out child health and hygiene monitoring¹⁵ and discussions with parents, including costs of travel to centers, printing of resources and other related operational costs. Materials would be developed for community sharing (e.g., ECCE resource library) so that parents and caregivers could borrow /have access to materials, toys, children books etc. to engage with their children at home.
22. *Sub-component 1.2: Conduct public awareness program and community outreach.* This sub-component aims to raise the understanding of parents, caregivers, churches and community leaders on the importance of early childhood stimulation, preschool participation, nutrition and health for school readiness, and build awareness/knowledge on climate health impacts. The outreach campaigns would include surveys and feedback from communities on the quality of programming, challenges with attendance and barriers to access including differences relating to gender and disability. In addition to focus groups, radio, community and church meetings, the project would support child protection and positive behavior management strategies as well as messaging for inclusive education and disability screening. The awareness program would also support a “Read with your Child” campaign to encourage community support for a culture of reading.
23. **Component 2: Improving Literacy Outcomes in all Schools (estimated costs: US\$4.1 million).** Component 2 will support local language literacy in the early grades (Years 1-3) to improve reading, understanding and writing skills. Additional literacy activities in local language and English would also be implemented for the early grades and beyond. The ASET program is currently supporting English language instruction in the Years 1-4, which includes the transition from local language to Tuvaluan at Year 4 and has started a program in teaching numeracy in 2020. The bilingual dual language approach to reading requires consistent terminology and teaching methods in order to be mutually reinforcing and not cause confusion among teachers. The focus on reading complements ongoing support from DFAT and offers the foundation for children to better access the entire curriculum (from learning to read to reading to learn). This component will also support technology-enabled learning materials, teacher training and literacy enrichment activities to strengthen literacy beyond the early grades.
24. This component will provide resources to improve reading in all schools through: (a) the implementation of the Tuvalu Reading Program, including development of a package of learning materials for reading, teacher training, and teacher coaching; and (b) strengthening literacy in all schools through teaching and learning

¹⁵ The project could include screening for hearing and vision impairment in ECCE centers.



innovations and enrichment activities.

25. **Sub-component 2.1: Implementation of the Tuvalu Reading Program (years 1-3).** The project will: (a) develop and produce additional learning materials for Year 1 local language reading lessons in addition to those already developed under the PEARL Program, (b) develop a package of Year 2 and Year 3 reading program materials, pilot lessons and materials, and revise in preparation for national scale up; (c) train teachers and coaches on the Tuvalu Reading Program (TRP) for Years 1-3; and (d) supply the package of materials to all Year 1-3 classrooms across the country. Teachers will also be trained in the administration of pupil rapid assessment tests, a regular quick test by teachers and coaches to inform teachers where students' reading level is against the expected level so appropriate support can be provided. Activities will include:
- (i) Development and provision of teacher guides (scripted lessons), student work books, classroom library books, homework book/materials, a local language word list resource, basic instructional materials and equipment to all schools¹⁶;
 - (ii) In-service training for all teachers and school principals, head teachers and assistant head teachers in the TRP approach for Years 1-3; and
 - (iii) Coaching and mentoring of all teachers implementing the TRP.
26. **Sub-component 2.2: Strengthening literacy in all schools through teaching and learning innovations and enrichment activities.** This sub-component would encourage school-based enrichment efforts to promote literacy for all, especially targeting boys and encourage regular attendance with school-based activities. It would also provide educational technology innovations to support teachers and students. At the school and teacher level, this includes: (a) aligning e-learning resources and e-learning library to the curriculum and context; (b) facilitating distance professional development and coaching of teachers in the outer islands; and (c) resourcing Information Technology Centers for Schools. At the student level, this sub-component will include: (a) an e-reader pilot to expand number of reading materials available to students in both *Gana Tuvalu* (Tuvaluan language) and English; and (b) additional learning enrichment activities including digital literacy, computer classes, digitized gamification of literacy concepts, phonics for emergent learners (P4ER) to support students in higher grades that have missed out or fallen behind with their reading, educational videos, and learning through sports. In addition, the sub-component would support training and engagement of teachers in the use of digitized resources and edtech interventions being introduced.
27. **Component 3: Research, Learning Assessment and Policy Review (estimated costs: US\$3.6 million).** This component will provide resources to strengthen the evidence base of what works in improving learning in Tuvalu through: (a) strategic research, surveys and analysis; (b) strengthening the policy framework for education through key policy reviews and operationalization of newly adopted policies; and (c) measurements of student learning and school readiness to strengthen the availability of data and ability of the government to utilize and disseminate it to relevant stakeholders.
28. **Sub-component 3.1: Strategic research, surveys and analysis.** The lack of data and information available to inform government, community and development partner decisions around investments and priorities in education requires attention to ensure future decisions are based on evidence, including investments under the TuLEP. The knowledge gaps the project will make efforts to fill will be through: (a) a study on teacher and student absenteeism; (b) a gender analysis of enrolment and retention to understand why boys are

¹⁶ Materials would include local language readers for students to take home.



dropping out of school in greater numbers than girls, and why boys are underperforming compared to girls, to inform government decisions, some of which could be supported by the project, to improve educational outcomes for boys; (c) a workforce planning exercise to inform improved management of the MEYS staff; and (d) a time-on-task study to identify teaching and learning efficiency in the classroom. The project will fund the technical assistance (TA) required for activities under this subcomponent, workshop and travel costs required for collection of data and information, and costs of dissemination of results and key messages.

29. **Sub-component 3.2: Strengthening the education policy framework.** The MEYS currently has very few policies to inform the activities it carries out and the responsibilities under its mandate. The project will support activities to: (a) develop recommendations to improve health and nutrition of preschool- and school-aged children, incorporating findings from the 2019 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) carried out by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) on likely contributors to stunting and undernutrition in Tuvalu, and where possible provide support towards implementation of select recommendations; (b) carry out a curriculum review and develop comprehensive Goals and Objectives for curricula from Years 1-13 to inform the government’s plans for an overhaul of the primary and secondary schooling curricula; (c) providing technical assistance to review and strengthen the existing school leader and teacher quality¹⁷ framework through improvements in pre-service and in-service training, and school leader and teacher appraisals; (d) support implementation of the disability and inclusive education plan being developed with support from the ASET Program; (e) share TEMIS data with schools and communities through school report cards, aligned with the ASET Program support; and (f) host two iterations of the National Conference of the Child (2020 and 2024), to consider evidence and priorities for ECCE strengthening, and multisectoral collaboration, particularly across ministries of education, health and home affairs.
30. **Sub-component 3.3: Measurements of school readiness and student learning.** While many learning assessments are carried out in later grades in Tuvalu, learning outcomes can be improved by intervening early in a student’s life, even before they start school. Under the PEARL Program, the MEYS carried out the Tuvalu Early Human Capability Index (TuEHCI) assessment in 2016 to measure the school readiness of preschool children across multiple domains of child development. The project will support another two iterations of the TuEHCI to provide the government with data to monitor progress on its efforts to improve school readiness outcomes, and to determine the effectiveness of project interventions carried out under Component 1. Under PEARL, the MEYS carried out the Tuvalu Early Grade Reading Assessment (TuEGRA) in 2016 to measure reading skills of children in Years 1-3. The project will support another three iterations of the TuEGRA to monitor children’s reading development in the early grades,¹⁸ which has a significant impact on their learning outcomes later in school and determine the effectiveness of project interventions carried out under Component 2. Support for these surveys under the project will include: (i) TA to develop/adjust the instruments, pilot, clean and analyze data, and produce reports and other dissemination materials; (ii) training enumerators to carry out the surveys; and (iii) data collection costs, including supervisor and enumerator travel. The project would further support the review and adaptation of lesson observation tools - Measuring Early Learning Environments (MELE) and TEACH for the Tuvaluan context to guide teacher coaching and mentoring at the ECCE and lower primary levels and provide regular feedback to teachers.

¹⁷ The policy could include a review of the materials and courses offered by pre-service teacher training and ensure alignment with in-service modules on teaching reading in early grades.

¹⁸ Continued support from EQAP and USP to carry out national assessments would be envisaged. The project would help formalize ongoing technical engagement from these regional institutions.



- 31. **Component 4: Strengthening institutional capacity, monitoring and evaluation and education sector management (US\$6.5 million).** This component will provide overall support to the other three components and help ensure the activities are sustainable beyond the life of the project, including monitoring and evaluation (M&E), training, management, and operations related to project activities. In addition, the component will finance the establishment and operation of a Central Project Management Office (CPMO) to oversee and support the coordination, preparation and implementation of all World Bank-financed and co-financed projects in Tuvalu.
- 32. **Sub-component 4.1: Project Management support.** This subcomponent will fund a TuLEP Project Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator and M&E activities conducted at the headquarters, island and community level, as well as operational costs. School leadership training, school-wide coaching and increased monitoring of outer islands would be supported as well as improved connectivity to schools through Information and Communications Technology (ICT), and internet connectivity.¹⁹ In addition, the project could support an evaluation of project interventions on learning outcomes.
- 33. **Sub-component 4.2: Central Project Management Office (CPMO) (estimated cost US\$5 million).** This subcomponent will support the establishment and operation of a CPMO within the Ministry of Finance (MOF) to strengthen the capacity of Government of Tuvalu to provide implementation support to this Project and other IDA/IBRD financed or co-financed operations. The CPMO will comprise international and national staff in project management, procurement, financial management, safeguards and monitoring & evaluation. Activities to be financed will include: (a) operating costs of the CPMO including remuneration of national and international personnel; (b) training and workshops for capacity building activities to be delivered by the CPMO; (c) small goods and equipment; (d) financial audits; and (e) monitoring and evaluation. Project specific technical specialists and coordinators will be financed separately by projects as necessary.

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

¹⁹ A school infrastructure assessment, initiated as a Bank-executed activity with support from WB Pacific Disaster Risk Management team and the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), would be conducted in parallel with the project to identify the vulnerability of schools to natural hazards and climate change and identify contributing factors of risk in order to inform the development of a comprehensive strategic plan to enhance school building safety. If any recommendations come out of this work in terms of curriculum or policy – i.e. inclusive evacuation drills, natural hazard awareness messages in learning material - then they may be incorporated into the work undertaken in this component of the project.



Impacts associated with the Project are expected to be largely positive. Strengthening of the education policy framework, teacher capacity and M&E of education performance are expected to lead to improved education outcomes. Beneficiaries are located across the country as the Project will be implemented in all nine islands of Tuvalu. The E&S risks associated with Project activities are expected to be limited and easily managed through project design and effective implementation.

E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

34. The Ministry of Finance will be the Executing Agency for TuLEP. The Department of Education within the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MEYS) will be the implementing agency (IA) for components 1, 2, 3 and 4.1 of the Project. Component 4.2 will be implemented by the Ministry of Finance (MOF).
35. The Government of Tuvalu wishes to establish a Centralized Project Management Office (CPMO) to sit within the MOF. The CPMO will be comprised of international and national staff in project management, procurement, financial management, safeguards and monitoring & evaluation roles. The CPMO will oversee and provide hands-on support in the coordination, preparation and implementation of World Bank financed development projects in Tuvalu. The CPMO will also provide capacity building for the different government ministries implementing World Bank-funded projects.
36. From the establishment of the CPMO, new World Bank financed projects, including TuLEP will no longer establish their own Project Management Units. Instead many of the tasks will be undertaken by the CPMO working closely with a Project Coordinator/Manager within the Implementing Agency. A Project Coordinator and Deputy Project Coordinator within Department of Education will be responsible for the day-to-day coordination of the implementation of components 1, 2, 3 and 4.1 of TuLEP.
37. Project oversight will be ensured by the Project Steering Committee comprising representatives from MOF, MEYS, Ministry of Health Social Welfare and Gender Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, and Kapules.
38. To support implementation of components 1, 2, 3 and 4.1 the following will be prepared and adopted by the Department of Education:
 - **Processes and Procedures Manual:** The Department of Education Processes and Procedures Manual shall be finalized no later than six months after project effectiveness and will incorporate institutional arrangements for day-to-day execution of the project including monitoring, reporting, evaluation and communication arrangements (including processes for obtaining stakeholder feedback).
39. To support implementation of component 4.2 the following will be prepared and adopted by the MOF:
 - **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)** for the CPMO shall be prepared no later than six months after project effectiveness and will include institutional arrangements for day to day operation of the CPMO as well as processes for execution of all new World Bank financed projects in Tuvalu.
40. An annual work plan and budget will be submitted for World Bank review by August 31 for each year the project is active. Progress reports will be submitted twice a year (45 days after end of each semester) to inform supervision missions. A mid-term review will be conducted during the third year of implementation.



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APPROVAL

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| Environmental and Social Standards Advisor: | | |
| Practice Manager/Manager: | | |



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|-------------------|----------|-------------|
| Country Director: | Mona Sur | 24-Mar-2020 |
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