



# Project Information Document/ Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet (PID/ISDS)

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Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 24-Jan-2018 | Report No: PIDISDSC20710



**BASIC INFORMATION**

**A. Basic Project Data**

Country Guinea-Bissau	Project ID P160678	Parent Project ID (if any)	Project Name Guinea Bissau: The Quality Education for All Project (P160678)
Region AFRICA	Estimated Appraisal Date Feb 05, 2018	Estimated Board Date Mar 28, 2018	Practice Area (Lead) Education
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) The Republic of Guinea-Bissau	Implementing Agency The Ministry of National Education	

**Proposed Development Objective(s)**

The Project Development Objective is to improve the teaching and learning environment in grades 1-4 in targeted schools in Guinea-Bissau.

**Financing (in USD Million)**

Financing Source	Amount
EFA-FTI Education Program Development Fund	4.30
IDA Grant	10.70
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>15.00</b>

Environmental Assessment Category C-Not Required	Concept Review Decision
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Other Decision (as needed)

**B. Introduction and Context**

1. Guinea-Bissau is a small state in West Africa with approximately 1.8 million inhabitants, 60 percent of whom live in rural areas. The country borders Senegal and Guinea and includes a large archipelago consisting of nearly 100 small



islands. The country is rich in natural resources and biodiversity with low coastal plains and swamps of Guinean mangroves. However, despite these resources, Guinea Bissau continues to battle extreme poverty and low growth. According to the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI), the country is ranked 178<sup>th</sup> out of 188 countries and remains one of the poorest countries in the world. Over two-thirds of the population survives on less than US\$1.9 a day.

2. Guinea Bissau has suffered from decades of political instability and remains a fragile state. Since its independence in 1974, there have been four *coup d'états* along with many additional coup attempts, the highest number in the world. In 2014, however, democratic elections took place and the country appeared to be on a path towards long-term stability. However, political tensions emerged again in 2015 and, since that time, there have been four changes in government. With the transition in 2014, the government adopted a strategy known as Terra Ranka (“Fresh Start”). This national development plan prioritizes investments in five areas – human development, infrastructure, business development, urban development, and biodiversity – with an overarching theme of peace and governance. Despite the continued political turmoil, this overall strategy remains the main document guiding the country’s economic growth and development agenda.

3. The cost of this long history of political and institutional fragility has been significant. At the time of independence, Guinea Bissau’s literacy rate was only one percent. More than 40 years later, the majority of the population continues to have limited access to basic goods and services. Underinvestment in human capital, driven by weak, under-budgeted, and inefficient systems, has led to frequent strikes and disruptions of both education and health services. Economic recessions and a lack of adequate financing for basic services has undermined the country’s ability to lift its population out of poverty; low educational attainment remains a major obstacle to improving labor productivity and generating income for the population.

4. While poverty is widespread, it is more prevalent in rural areas. In some districts, such as Gabu and Cacheu, more than 80% of the population lives under the poverty line. Living standards and access to basic services outside of the capital are considerably lower. This includes access to schools, health centers, markets, electricity, etc. While overall resources are limited, the allocation of these resources strongly favors the capital and more urban areas. Elite capture has led to a system geared toward providing private goods to elites rather than public goods to citizens.

5. Some of the fragmentation of Guinea Bissau’s society finds its roots in the variety of ethnic groups, languages, and religions present in the country. Significant investments were not made in the country during the colonial period other than what was required to extract natural resources. While Portuguese is the country’s official language, only 14 percent of the population speaks Portuguese. The most spoken language is Crioulo, a Portuguese-based creole language, which is spoken by 44 percent of the population. The rest of the population speaks a variety of native African languages. The main religions are Islam and African traditional religions with a Christian minority. Despite the variety of ethnic groups, inter-ethnic and inter-religion marriages are common and violence between groups has been minimal.

6. Education is recognized as a basic right in Guinea Bissau and is central to the country’s vision for development. Reliable and effective delivery of basic education services is identified as an urgent priority in the country. According to the Education Law of 2011, basic education in Guinea Bissau is organized into three cycles covering the first nine years of schooling. The first cycle is Grades 1-4 (EB1); the second cycle Grades 5-6 (EB2), and the third cycle Grades 7-9 (EB3). The first two cycles are compulsory and free and constitute the full cycle of primary education. Secondary education consists of Grades 10-12 in addition to various forms of technical and vocational training.

7. Despite the ongoing political turmoil, Guinea Bissau has made strides in increasing primary school enrollments and closing the gender gap at the primary level. Since its independence, the cohort of primary school age children has



nearly tripled from approximately 115,000 to 333,000 in 2015. A law passed in 2002, which abolished fees in primary education, had a significant impact on improving primary school enrollments. Even while faced with rapid population growth, net enrollment rates steadily increased over the past few decades. Primary school attendance improved from 45 percent in 2000 to 67 percent in 2010.

8. While progress has been made, a number of significant challenges remain. Recent data collected through MICS suggests that net school enrollment may have recently declined to 63% in 2014. Evidence points towards frequent disruptions in service provision and poor education quality as contributing factors. Primary completion rates in Guinea Bissau are also low and only 76 percent of children who enter school complete Grade 6. If one includes in this figure out of school and overage children, this primary completion rate drops to as low as 22 percent. Some of the reasons why children are unable to complete a full cycle of primary education include incomplete schools, poor education quality, high repetition rates, and late entry into school. Children in Guinea Bissau are expected to enter into Grade 1 at age 6 and finish Grade 6 at age 12, although this rarely happens in practice. In reality, only 32 percent of children start school on time. Due to late entry and high rates of repetition, at age 12, 57 percent of children are still in EB1. It is not uncommon to find children as old as 18 years old in EB1. The greatest number of dropouts occur between Grades 4 and 5. This is, in part, due to the fact that only 25 percent of schools offer Grades 5 and 6 and these schools are mostly located in semi-urban and urban areas. Additionally, poor learning outcomes and high repetition rates keep students from being able to advance through the system. It is estimated that due to internal inefficiencies, nearly 47 percent of resources allocated in education are lost. Given the limited resources available, there is an urgent need to improve the quality and efficiency of the current system.

9. Due to limited financing, poor teacher quality, high teacher absenteeism, weak management, and limited oversight and monitoring, the current system suffers from low quality and poor learning outcomes. Weak governance and a lack of adequate financing has led to the entire system being frequently paralyzed by widespread teacher strikes. In recent years, the large majority of support in the sector has come as emergency financing such as assistance to pay teacher salaries. However, it has become absolutely critical to address some larger, overarching constraints that are impeding the system from being able to function properly. Issues of overall governance, administration, monitoring and evaluation, and financing of the sector must be addressed in order to improve the overall quality of education services provided at the primary level.

10. While demand for education services has increased, the state has not been able to keep up with the increasing demand. Therefore, over the last several years, a large number of community schools have emerged with communities playing a greater role in service delivery. In several more remote areas, parents and communities have come together to construct a simple school building and pay teachers out of their own pockets. While the total number of primary schools increased from approximately 1,500 to 1,725 from 2010 to 2012, many of these schools are community schools that offer only a few grades and there has been no plan for expansion guiding their development. In the government's Education Sector Plan (ESP), the government indicates its intention to eventually convert many of these schools into public schools. However, a school mapping is needed to determine a sustainable and economically viable plan to achieve the goal of universal access to grades 1-6.

11. While the majority of the country's population lives in rural areas, less than half of the resources allocated to the education sector are distributed to rural areas. The majority of sector resources are spent in Bissau. Bissau accounts for 26 percent of the student population while benefiting from over 60 percent of public resources. In contrast, in Oio, the student population represents 14 percent of the population while receiving less than 4 percent of available resources. The state recruits more teachers to work in Bissau than in other areas. This results in a student/teacher ratio in Bissau of 1/25 whereas in Gabu the ratio is 1/65 on average. Teachers are not deployed on the basis of need, with limited



correlation between number of students and number of staff. Due to a lack of planning and standards regulating the sector, school conditions in different districts vary greatly.

12. While access and equity issues remain key challenges, the low quality of primary education represents the most significant challenge facing the education sector in Guinea Bissau. Results from a recent assessment of learning outcomes in Grades 2 and 5 in Portuguese and Mathematics demonstrate very low levels of learning achievement. Average scores for Grade 2 students in both Portuguese and Mathematics are low across the board whether a student lives in an urban or a more rural area, is a boy or girl, or attends a public or community school. Even more concerning are the scores in Grade 5. The results capture a significant decline in levels of learning achievement between Grades 2 and 5, especially in Mathematics. While Grade 2 students only mastered half of the material taught, in Grade 5 this drops to less than a third. This score places Guinea Bissau in 13<sup>th</sup> place out of 14 countries in the region.

13. The poor quality of learning outcomes is a result of several constraining factors, including the quality of the teaching force, inadequate financing and weak management at all levels of the education system. The same learning assessment administered to students was also administered to the teachers. The results demonstrated that nearly 94 percent of teachers in Grade 5 were unable to answer all of the questions in Portuguese and 98 percent in Mathematics. This low teacher content knowledge likely explains the drop in achievement between Grades 2 and 5 where more difficult content is taught. Mastery of the Portuguese language is another significant obstacle to effective learning. Although Portuguese is the official language of instruction, it is a foreign language for most students and a second language for most teachers. As a result, many students do not understand well the lessons taught and often teachers lack the content knowledge required to teach effectively.

14. Teacher absenteeism is also of serious concern and negatively impacts the quality of education provided. The main causes for teacher absenteeism are participation in traditional ceremonies, travel to center to receive salaries, and low salaries. Often, teachers engage in agricultural work for additional income and participate in frequent and prolonged strikes to protest systematic arrears in salary payments. Strikes alone have resulted in more than 30 percent of teaching days being lost each school year on average. Further, there are systematic delays in recruitment, with many contracted teachers only being hired three months or more into the school year. Learning outcomes are unlikely to improve until mechanisms are in place to ensure that teachers are actually in the classroom for the entire school year and use all of the teaching time available.

15. Education financing as a percentage of the national budget is also generally low. The education portion of the state budget accounted for only 11 percent in 2008-2012 and appears to have only slightly increased to 13 percent in 2013. This figure is much lower than the average level of financing (of 23 percent) allocated by countries with a similar gross domestic product (GDP). Primary school teachers in Guinea Bissau earn only about half of the salaries of teachers in comparable low-income countries in Africa. Even so, teacher salaries absorb almost the entire education budget in Guinea Bissau. Ninety-seven percent of the current budget goes toward teacher salaries leaving almost no resources available for other key expenses (i.e., textbooks, learning materials, transportation costs, school maintenance, other operating costs at the school, regional and central level, etc.). The Government's inability to transfer funds to schools is also a major issue. While some schools benefit from resources and support from various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the large majority receive nothing more than chalk and a book to register students at the beginning of the school year. Teachers frequently have to call on parents to cover the costs of basic school needs, including paper and pencils, cleaning supplies, etc.

16. To address teacher complaints and attempt to reduce strikes by Guinea Bissau's politically powerful teachers' unions, a decision was made to reduce the number of hours of primary school teachers to just 20 teaching hours per



week and another 8 hours for planning and participation in in-service training activities per month. However, these limited hours have made in-service teacher training nearly impossible. The central Ministry of Education reports a number of incidences over the past couple of years where teachers refuse to participate in in-service training without receiving additional compensation. Given the low quality of the teaching force and the binding constraints of the current levels of financing and teacher contracts, any initiatives to train in-service teachers need to be creative and work within this existing environment.

17. The lack of adequate learning materials has hampered education quality in the past. Many schools fail to provide students with any learning materials. While many donor-financed initiatives have provided textbooks to schools, there has been a serious need to modernize and revamp the primary school curriculum. With UNICEF's support and financing made available through the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the Ministry of Education has been working with technical experts to develop a new primary school curriculum for Grades 1-4. While this updated curriculum should have a positive impact on quality, there is a serious need to train teachers on the new curriculum and provide additional support during its implementation. Given the limited capacity of teachers in Guinea Bissau and in order to improve the quality of instruction, the resources provided to teachers must not only include manuals and guides but additional aides like scripted teaching lessons and step-by-step teachers' guides.

18. Improving the quality of education services will also require developing criteria for the expansion of education in urban and rural areas, and for the strengthening of policies for hiring, management, and cost control/financing. Guidelines for proper planning, recruitment, hiring and training of teachers, as well as ensuring that children are present at school on time and able to learn are critical in improving the quality of education provided. In addition, there must also be a plan in place to ensure adequate financing to the sector. Resources must be available to pay teachers and provide at least a small operating budget for schools. Once resources are available at the school-level, quality assurance mechanisms relying on community participation and adequately trained school directors must also be in place to ensure that resources are well-managed and used as intended.

#### Development Partner Support to the Education Sector

19. The main education sector development partners in Guinea-Bissau are: UNICEF, the European Union, the African Development Bank, Portugal, Plan International, and the World Food Program (WFP). Development partners have strongly mobilized around the GPE model and have provided strong technical and financial support to the Government in the preparation of the current Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2016-2025, which is currently being finalized. All of the activities selected for financing under this project are directly aligned with the latest version of the Government's draft plan and the accompanying draft three-year implementation plan. As a fragile state, Guinea Bissau faces daunting challenges in education. The project has aimed to be selective to ensure measurable, concrete results are achieved by the end. There is the need to move towards more performance-based financing in education. As such, the project has been designed where activities are paired with one or two selective reforms and policies in order to improve the overall functioning of the sector. While larger reforms may not be possible due to the ongoing instability in the country, selective reforms such as regulating teacher training and certification, and the selection process for directors have potential to have an enormous impact in the day-to-day functioning of the current system.

20. The proposed project was prepared by the Ministry of Education in close collaboration with other members of the Local Education Group, led by UNICEF. The Bank has been selected as the Grant Agent for the new GPE funds and, together with the Ministry of Education, will report on the progress made on the implementation of the project. UNICEF, as Coordinating Agency, will continue to work with the Ministry of Education and other partners to ensure adequate coordination in the implementation of the ESP as a whole. This project will be a major source of financing for the



education sector over the next five years. As such, there is a strong need to continue to support past investments made by GPE and UNICEF under the previous project so these efforts are sustained and positively influence the overall system.

**Table 1: Expected Contribution of the Project to the Implementation of the Education Sector Plan 2016-2025**

EDUCATION SECTOR PLAN STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES	PROJECT COMPONENTS/SUB-COMPONENTS
<b>STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ACCESS AND EQUITY</b>	
Access and Equity in Pre-School	
Access and Equity in Basic Education	1.1, 1.2, and 3.1
Access and Equity in Secondary Education	
Access and Equity in TVET	
Access and Equity in Higher Education	
Access and Equity in Non-formal Education and Adult Literacy	
<b>STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE QUALITY</b>	
Quality of Pre-School	
Quality of Basic Education (EB 1 and 2 - Grades 1-6)	2.1, 2.2
Quality of Basic Education (EB 3 - Grades 7-9)	
Strengthen the Skills of Teaching Staff in Basic Education and Pre-School	2.1, 2.2
Quality of Secondary Education	
Quality of TVET	
Quality of Higher Education and Scientific Studies	
Quality of Non-formal Education and Adult Literacy	
<b>STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT</b>	
Financial Management and Administration of the Sector	1.1, 1.2, 3.2
Sector Monitoring and Oversight	1.3, 1.4, 3.1, 3.2
Management of Human Resources	1.3, 2.1, 2.2
Management of Teaching	1.4
Improved School Planning and Construction	3.1

Source: Education Sector Plan (Draft as of June 2016)

21. The proposed project contributes to the goals stated in GPE’s Strategic Plan (2016-2020): (i) improved and more equitable learning outcomes; (ii) increased equity, gender equality and inclusion; and (iii) effective and efficient education system. It aims to raise the level of learning outcomes in early grades through in-service teacher training and the use of scripted teaching; increase equity and the share of education resources in disadvantaged areas through a targeted school grants program; and collect the data necessary to vastly improve the efficiency of the current system and improve monitoring at the school level to ensure the effective use of resources. It is expected that this project will help to stabilize the current system, introduce appropriate systems and frameworks to regulate the sector, and adequately plan for a system that will be able to achieve universal access in grades 1-6.



22. One of the two focus areas of the Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Guinea Bissau FY18-FY21 is increased access to basic quality services. This includes increased access to quality primary education, in particular. The aim is to move beyond just emergency support (i.e., paying teacher salaries, limited school construction, etc.) and work towards transformational change. This includes initial efforts to support some core-state sector functions such as regulation, quality assurance, human resource policies and financial management.

23. The proposed project is directly aligned with the CPF. It includes activities to increase access to quality education services and selective reforms such as introducing some key regulations on teacher training, decentralization of funding to schools (through school grants), and establishing quality assurance mechanisms drawing on the community and other non-state actors to monitor performance at the school level. It also includes training in financial management at the community, regional and central levels to improve overall budget planning and execution and capacity to manage fiscal resources.

24. Given the fragile context, the World Bank's CPF places a particular focus on empowering communities and engaging citizens to strengthen bottom-up demand and accountability for better services. To assist the ability of the state to provide a quality primary education, non-state actors and NGOs will be used to work alongside the government and improve service delivery. Specific attention will be paid to areas outside of the capital where access to basic services and quality of learning outcomes are particularly low.

25. The CPF also gives special attention on the issues of governance and gender. The proposed project places a high priority on improved governance and accountability mechanisms in the education sector. In terms of gender, the country has almost reached gender parity in primary education. However, learning outcomes are slightly lower among girls and women often are not given a voice in key decisions at the school level. The proposed project includes specific measures to ensuring adequate representation of women on school management structures and efforts to boost learning outcomes across both genders.

### **C. Proposed Development Objective(s)**

To improve the teaching and learning environment in primary schools in Guinea Bissau.

Key Results (From PCN)

*PDO-level indicators (proposed)*

- Percent of targeted schools executing 75% or more of school grants as in their school improvement plans
- Percentage of in-service teachers with improved content knowledge in Portuguese and Mathematics
- Direct project beneficiaries (number), of which Female (percent) (Core Indicator)
- Decrease in repetition rates

### **D. Concept Description**





26. The proposed project aims to address the most important challenges in primary education while taking steps to incrementally build the education system. This means focusing on a few policy reforms to address critical shortfalls in the sector, while prioritizing the empowerment of communities to play a key role in school governance and oversight and improve the teaching and learning environment in primary schools. Based on lessons learned from previous engagements in Guinea Bissau, the project has been designed to be limited in the number of activities and very selective. Past projects have shown that efforts at core public sector institution building have been hampered by the continuous changes in government leadership. Given this fact and limited capacity in the sector, significant efforts have been made to design activities in a way that empowers the government to set overall policies but then draws as much as possible on non-state actors, NGOs, and other alternative forms of service delivery to ensure quality and measurable results in improving sector performance. Nationally agreed policies and programs are also expected to improve the ability of non-state actors already active in the system to work alongside the government in a coordinated way and help the government reach its goals and objectives. It is expected that this approach will reduce the current fragmentation in the system, enable previously successful pilots to be brought to scale, and enable transformational change in Guinea Bissau's education sector.

27. Through school-based grants and innovative verification mechanisms, the project hopes to create incentives for change at the community level and pave the way for continued performance and results-based financing efforts in the future. The timeline for the project is proposed to be five years in order to be realistic about possible delays and the challenges the project is likely to face during implementation.

28. The project will consist of three components:

### **Component 1: Strengthen School-based Management Practices and Empower Communities**

29. This component aims to improve the management of schools at the local level. This component will directly support one of the main priorities of Guinea Bissau's Education Sector Plan 2016-2025, specifically "Priority Four: To strengthen sector governance, improving management, coordination, decentralization, and financial management." Community-driven development has been shown to be an important anchor for education interventions in fragile states. Empowered communities can play a key role in improving school performance. This component will work primarily at the community level to create organizational structures to engage with community members, transfer fiscal resources to disadvantaged schools, and conduct additional oversight and quality assurance of resources allocated at the school level. Four sub-components are envisioned under this component: (i) establishing school management committees; (ii) creating a school-grants program; (iii) establishing structures to verify and monitor the use of school resources; and (iv) improving the selection process and training of school directors.

#### *Sub-component 1.1: Establishing school management committees*

30. This sub-component would support the establishment of School Management Committees (SMCs) in all schools selected to participate in the school grants program under the proposed project. SMCs have been shown to improve governance in the education system, by enabling parents to have authority and a voice in improving educational quality, as well as promoting shared accountability. The recently conducted SABER-School Autonomy and Accountability study revealed that, while SMCs exist in a number of schools as a result of previous NGO and donor-supported initiatives, there is no agreed upon model and these committees are not systematically supported and empowered. This activity will consolidate and build on the foundation that already exists in the country, in order to more systematically utilize such committees to improve school management – and in turn, with careful attention to key determinants, the quality of education provided. The proposed project will primarily draw upon recent positive experiences engaging with



communities at the school level including the World Bank's Community Driven Development Project and the pilot of UNICEF's Child Friendly Schools in the Oio District. The project will support activities to (i) consolidate the various existing manuals and adopt a national policy on SMCs; (ii) establish and train SMCs with the support of local NGOs; and (iii) carry out community sensitization campaigns to encourage on-time entry into school, fewer grade repetitions, and sharing of information regarding the school calendar.

31. A national policy and manual will be developed with support from the proposed project, which will clearly define SMCs composition and formation, roles, processes/procedures for managing school funds, and collaborative planning. The national policy on SMCs will also include a gender component. Early evidence collected during project preparation has shown that some of the existing SMCs include women representatives while others do not. All SMCs supported by the project will include structures to ensure women are adequately represented and empowered to play an active role in the SMCs. The work to establish SMCs and provide relevant training will be done by local NGOs contracted by the project. Training topics will include basic financial literacy and hands on support to create simple school improvement plans.

32. The target number of SMCs to be established and in what areas outside of Bissau will be determined once data have been collected through the adapted Service Delivery Indicator (SDI) instrument. Past experience has shown that it takes time in Guinea Bissau to build the sense of community and local capacity. The project will aim to work in some areas where there is already some form of a SMC in place so the school grants program can be rolled out and implemented as quickly as possible without compromising quality or introducing unnecessary fiduciary risks.

#### *Sub-component 1.2: Creating a school grants program*

33. Primary schools in Guinea Bissau currently do not receive any operating budget. The objective of this sub-component will be to provide financial resources at the school level, while at the same time building local capacity and empowering communities. The World Bank has experience developing successful school grants programs. Another Portuguese-speaking country in Africa, Mozambique, has decades of experience decentralizing funds and administering school grants. The proposed project will draw on this example and other similar programs in creating and setting up the school grants program in Guinea Bissau. During project preparation, a school grants manual will be created together with the Government including various aspects such as grant procedures, flow of funds, eligible expenditures, and processes for management and oversight of grants in schools.

34. Activities to be financed by the school grant will be based on the creation of a simple school improvement plan by the SMC. The school improvement plan would then be approved by local education authorities. In terms of the flow of funds, in theory all schools in Guinea Bissau should have a bank account. However, in practice, many schools do not have active accounts due to long distances to banking institutions and bank fees. A system for mobile money has been established in some areas but it is not yet accessible in many of the more rural parts of the country. In order to increase transparency and appropriate use of school funds, one initiative by UNICEF that has worked is to purchase a lock box with various locks and keys held by various community members from different neighboring communities. No one person is able to open the box without the others present and community members hold each other accountable to ensure that no cash goes missing. (During project preparation, the team will work closely with the FM Specialist to determine an option the most suitable arrangement acceptable to the Bank to mitigate against fiduciary risks.)

35. The grants will be provided on an annual basis and amounts will be relatively small (no more than US\$500 per school) initially to reduce fiduciary risks and build capacity. In order to reduce perverse incentives, grant amounts will be determined at a flat rate or with a few tiers (vs utilization of per capita formulas). Based on performance, schools that successfully implement their grants will be eligible for another grant the following year. To provide additional incentives,



there may also be a small bonus for strong performance to increase the amount for the school the following year. To enable the Ministry to collect more timely and reliable education data, school directors will be required to have successfully submitted necessary data/ statistics to the central ministry before the school will be eligible to receive their yearly grant. The NGOs contracted to support the SMCs will also be responsible to assist school directors in filling out the EMIS data sheets.

36. The grants will be piloted among a small number of schools (between 25 to 30) in the first year, including both public and community schools, and will be gradually expanded each year to reach 50-100 additional schools. (The exact amount for the grants and target schools will be determined based on data collected through the adapted SDI survey. Efforts are being made to design the school grants program in a way that it would be able to reach nearly 400 schools-approximately a quarter of total primary schools - by the end of the project.) Efforts will be made to target areas that receive less financial support for the sector and which have the highest rates of poverty.

#### *Sub-component 1.3: Establishing structures to verify and monitor the use of school resources*

37. This sub-component will support the creation of a local system to monitor school performance and use of school inputs. This will include monitoring teacher attendance, school feeding materials, use of school grant funds, and other inputs at the school level. This activity will be developed based on recent experiences in other fragile countries, such as Haiti, to reduce the misuse of public resources in its education system. Through the use of call centers and phone lines for anonymous calls, third party verifications have been able to dramatically reduce the misuse of school feeding inputs and improve overall accountability and monitoring of the performance of its schools. This activity will aim to adapt the experience in Haiti, another fragile state, to conditions in Guinea-Bissau in an effort to reestablish trust and confidence in the education sector's ability to manage and effectively use public resources.

#### *Sub-component 1.4: Improving the selection process and training of school directors*

38. School Directors are critical to leading and overseeing effective school performance. A key issue in the Guinea Bissau education system is the high turnover of directors due to often politically motivated appointments and a lack of clear processes and criteria for recruitment. As a first step, this activity will require the Ministry of Education to conduct reforms to improve regulations regarding the appointment of School Directors. Reforms will include a clear selection criteria and the establishment of three-year contracts. Based on the successful adoption of these reforms, the proposed project will support the development and implementation of a targeted training program for School Directors. This training will cover areas such as collecting education statistics, school planning, basic accounting and financial management, and using data for decision-making.

### **Component 2: Improve the Quality of Instruction**

39. Guinea Bissau's ESP identifies the need to drastically improve the quality of instruction in its primary schools. Some of the specific actions highlighted include the need to (i) establish standards and harmonize the system for teacher training in order to reduce the frequency of teacher strikes; (ii) improve in-service teachers' content knowledge and skills to effectively teach basic literacy and numeracy; (iii) and improve student learning outcomes in Portuguese and Mathematics in early grades. To address these needs, two sub-components are envisioned under this component: (i) establishing a process for teacher certification and professionalization; and (ii) conducting in-service teacher training and developing scripted teaching lessons in Portuguese and Mathematics.



*Sub-component 2.1: Establishing a process for teacher certification and professionalization*

40. With regard to teacher training, this sub-component will support the development of policies and a system for teacher certification in order to improve teacher qualifications and professionalize the teaching force. These policies are intended to help harmonize the system for teacher training and clarify aspects of the Teacher Career Law adopted in 2010. It is expected that clarifying the policies for teacher training and certification will help to reduce the frequent teacher strikes. This work would include a set of three inter-related activities: (i) the development of a Teacher Qualifications Framework defining required competencies and skills of basic education teachers in Guinea-Bissau; (ii) the adoption of a national teacher training curriculum to respond to these needs; and (iii) the setting up of a certification process to allow for coordination of different teacher training activities. This work will build on recent efforts led by UNESCO to design a framework of competencies and the development of a national pre-service teacher training curriculum and in-service teacher training modules.

41. To achieve the objectives above, the project will provide technical assistance to establish a new certification body in the Ministry of Education. The main responsibilities of this body will be to validate teacher training programs and assess and validate teacher competencies. The body will also be responsible for defining modalities for certifying various training programs delivered by both state and non-state actors and awarding training certificates.

*Sub-component 2.2: Conducting in-service teacher training and developing scripted teaching lessons*

42. As described earlier, the Ministry of Education has been working together with technical experts to develop a new school curriculum for Grades 1-4 with financial support provided by GPE and UNICEF. This new curriculum, which is almost finalized, integrates subject areas and includes new teaching material. In order to successfully implement this curriculum, there is a significant need to provide training for in-service teachers and develop additional teaching aides such as step-by-step teaching guides and scripted teaching lessons. Recent assessments have shown a large percentage of current teachers have limited training and lack subject mastery in basic Portuguese and Mathematics. To support the Ministry of Education and the donor community's efforts to improve the quality of instruction, the project will (i) support the implementation of the new curriculum in Grades 1-4; (ii) provide face-to-face training to in-service teachers in critical areas; and (iii) develop scripted teaching lessons in Portuguese and Mathematics and use Interactive Audio Instruction (IAI) to deliver these lessons.

43. To ensure the successful implementation of the new curriculum, the proposed project will first provide technical assistance and financial support to conduct a pre-pilot in a small number of schools in Bissau and the surrounding area. During the pre-pilot, teachers and school leaders will be trained on the new curriculum and an evaluation conducted on what areas prove to be the most challenging. The project will also help the Ministry design an overall plan for implementation and roll out of the new curriculum with appropriate sequencing (i.e., grade levels, number of schools/districts per year, etc.). The project will finance the production of the new manuals and other didactic materials that support teaching early literacy and numeracy skills and in-service training for teachers and school leaders from schools participating in the first phase of implementation.

44. Based on the results of the evaluation conducted as part of the pre-pilot, the project will support the development of a training program for in-service teachers that will support the acquisition of skills needed to successfully implement the new curriculum. This training will be considered continuous professional development. Technical experts together with local NGOs will be contracted to work with the Ministry to develop and deliver the training program. The training models developed by UNESCO on Portuguese and Mathematics will be used in addition to new complimentary training materials specific to the new curriculum. These face-to-face training sessions will be delivered at the newly constructed



teacher training centers throughout the country. Teachers targeted to participate in the in-service training will be from schools participating in the pilot of the new curriculum. School leaders will also be expected to participate in the training in order to ensure appropriate follow-up and support at the school level.

45. Given the significant deficits in teacher capacity, it is unrealistic to expect that the limited in-service training sessions will be sufficient to produce measurable improvements in learning outcomes. Additional support on almost a daily basis is needed to guide teachers and ensure students receive a quality learning experience. Decades of research shows a very effective method of in-service teacher training and alternative form of service delivery has been the use of scripted teaching and IAI.

46. The proposed project will use the implementation and roll out of the new school curriculum to introduce the use of scripted teaching. Aligned with the teacher guides and other materials already developed, the proposed project will support the creation of scripted teaching lessons in both Portuguese and Mathematics. It is expected that by the end of the project, 100 different 30 minute lessons in each subject will have been developed. It is also expected that these scripted lessons will be delivered via radio broadcast although the possible use of mobile phones is also being explored. Radio broadcast has the advantages of high access, low costs; mobile phones have the added benefit of being more flexible, ability to track usage. During preparation, an assessment of what already exists in schools, what can be locally procured, and associated costs of each (i.e., radio broadcast vs. mobile phones) will be conducted to determine the best mode of delivery.

47. The Ministry of Education has prior experience developing radio instruction programs based on a pilot conducted with UNESCO. While the pilot was successful, a military coup led to its discontinuance. The project will build on this experience and work directly with the National Institute for Development of Education (INDE) – the department responsible for developing the new school curriculum – to develop the scripted teaching lessons and Interactive Audio Instruction program. Another nearby Portuguese-speaking country, Cabo Verde has a very successful radio instruction program including the development of lessons in Portuguese in particular. The project will draw on Cabo Verde’s experience in designing the program and recruit a firm to work with the Ministry to develop the lessons and oversee implementation. Training for teachers on using the audio programs in their classrooms will be included in the in-service training sessions.

### **Component 3: Strengthen Education Sector Management Capacity**

48. The aim of this component is to improve the overall functioning of the education system by increasing the availability of data to guide decision-making and by strengthening the overall capacity of the Ministry of Education. This component will include two sub-components: (i) sector studies; and (ii) project management.

#### *Sub-component 3.1: Sector studies*

49. There is a significant need to improve the availability of data in the system in order to guide reforms, determine future actions to take to improve efficiency, and monitor education quality. Three different studies to collect additional data have been identified in addition to a mechanism to share data more broadly and ensure its use. These include: (i) a school mapping exercise; (ii) a national learning assessment in grades 2 and 5; and (iii) an adapted SDI survey. In addition, the project will support the creation of an online portal within the Ministry of Education.

50. As highlighted in the Education Sector Plan, there is an urgent need to conduct a detailed school mapping exercise.



The Ministry urgently needs these data to determine the fiscal, human, and physical resources needed in order to reach its goal of universal access in grades 1-6. Once these data are available, an operational plan and budget will be developed to determine a cost-effective way to expand the current system. The trust between the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance has eroded over time and needs to be strengthened. An international firm with the requisite expertise will be recruited to conduct the school mapping exercise including a process agreed with the Ministry of Finance on verifying teachers needs and the teachers present at primary schools in the country.

51. A sample-based national assessment, based on the regional PASEC assessment, was conducted by the Government with the help of Pole de Dakar in 2012. The proposed project will finance the implementation of this same assessment to collect additional data on learning outcomes for Grades 2 and 5 and further build the Ministry's capacity to monitor student learning outcomes. Concentrated efforts will be made this time to share the results more broadly and to identify specific actions various departments and key stakeholders at the local level can take to improve quality.

52. As part of preparation, an adapted version of the World Bank's SDI survey is being administered. This survey is collecting key information on issues such as teacher absenteeism, school management practices, financial resources, etc. The project will finance the application of this same survey again before the project's completion in order to measure progress made on key project indicators.

53. Currently in Guinea Bissau, education data and policies are not readily accessible. Legislation, regulations and procedures are not readily available and often are found only in paper files. Many times staff are not even aware of various policies, and information is often not shared between departments within the Ministry. In order to improve system wide management and coordination, and reduce fragmentation, this activity will produce an online portal on which data (including the education management information system - EMIS), policies, and education laws are made available online and accessible to all of the Ministry. This is expected to improve coordination within the Ministry while also enabling NGOs and other non-state actors to more easily align their interventions with government policies.

#### *Sub-component 3.2: Project management*

54. This sub-component will finance the costs associated with management of the Project and the additional international expertise to be recruited. Due to limited capacity within the Ministry of Education, a Project Coordination Unit (PCU) will be established to support project implementation. Costs include salaries for PCU staff, operating costs, and training activities for the Ministry of Education staff in line with costs in other PIU in Guinea-Bissau.

## **SAFEGUARDS**

### **A. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)**

### **B. Borrower's Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies**

n/a



**C. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team**

Gernot Brodnig, Social Safeguards Specialist  
Medou Lo, Environmental Safeguards Specialist

**D. Policies that might apply**

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	No	
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	No	
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	No	
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	No	
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	No	
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	

**E. Safeguard Preparation Plan**

Tentative target date for preparing the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

Nov 01, 2017

Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing should be specified in the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

The current design does not trigger any safeguards. While no safeguards have been triggered at the PCN stage, the safeguards team requested the project team to clarify with the Borrower the types of eligible expenditures for the school grants program to verify that these would not include any investment in works and infrastructure. The project team confirms this is the case.

In addition, it is important to note that a school grants manual is being developed and includes a detailed section on eligible expenditures. When the school management committees are established and receive training on the school grants program, they will be made fully aware that infrastructure investments are not eligible expenditures under their school improvement plans. After developing their school improvement plans and identifying potential activities for financing, these will be approved by the Regional Education Directorate who has also been involved in the development of school grant manuals and is aware of the safeguard policies.



## CONTACT POINT

### World Bank

Emily Elaine Gardner  
Senior Education Specialist

### Borrower/Client/Recipient

The Republic of Guinea-Bissau  
Joao Alage Mamadu Fadia  
Minister of Finance  
joafadia@hotmail.com

### Implementing Agencies

The Ministry of National Education  
Sandji Fati  
Minister  
sanfa12@hotmail.fr

## FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

The World Bank  
1818 H Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20433  
Telephone: (202) 473-1000  
Web: <http://www.worldbank.org/projects>

## APPROVAL

Task Team Leader(s):	Emily Elaine Gardner
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### Approved By

Safeguards Advisor:	Maman-Sani Issa	24-Jan-2018
Practice Manager/Manager:	Meskerem Mulatu	24-Jan-2018
Country Director:	Louise J. Cord	07-Feb-2018





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