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IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION AND RESULTS REPORT
ON A
GRANT
IN THE AMOUNT OF US\$14.7 MILLION
TO THE
Government of Uganda
FOR THE
Uganda COVID-19 Emergency Education Response Project
June 29, 2022

Education Global Practice
Eastern and Southern Africa Region

CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(Exchange Rate Effective Jan 1, 2022)

Currency Unit = Ugandan Shilling (UGX)

0.00028 = US\$1

FISCAL YEAR

July 1 - June 30

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BoU	Bank of Uganda
CERP	COVID-19 Emergency Education Response Project
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
CRI	Corporate Results Indicator
DA	Designated Account
DES	Directorate of Education Standards
DLG	District Local Government
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
FM	Financial Management
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoU	Government of Uganda
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GRS	Grievance Redress Service
HCI	Human Capital Index
ICWMP	Infectious Control and Waste Management Plan
IDA	International Development Association
IFR	Interim Financial Report
IRR	Internal Rates of Return
LMP	Labor Management Plan
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Center
NAPE	National Assessment of Progress of Education
NPV	Net Present Values
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
RDCs	Resident District Commissioners
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SH	Sexual Harassment
SMCs	School Management Committees
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
TA	Technical Assistance
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNEB	Uganda National Examination Board
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollars
USE	Universal Secondary Education
UTSEP	Uganda Teacher and School Effectiveness Project

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DATA SHEET

BASIC INFORMATION

Product Information

Project ID	Project Name
P174033	Uganda COVID-19 Emergency Education Response Project
Country	Financing Instrument
Uganda	Investment Project Financing
Original EA Category	Revised EA Category

Organizations

Borrower	Implementing Agency
Government of Uganda	Ministry of Education and Sports

Project Development Objective (PDO)

Original PDO

The objective of the Project is to support student learning in pre-primary, primary and lower secondary during school closures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure a safe reopening and student reentry.

PDO as stated in the legal agreement

The objective of the Project is to support student learning in pre-primary, primary and lower secondary during school closures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure a safe reopening and student reentry.



FINANCING			
	Original Amount (US\$)	Revised Amount (US\$)	Actual Disbursed (US\$)
World Bank Financing			
TF-B3597	14,700,000	14,700,000	14,700,000
Total	14,700,000	14,700,000	14,700,000
Non-World Bank Financing			
Total	0	0	0
Total Project Cost	14,700,000	14,700,000	14,700,000

KEY DATES				
Approval	Effectiveness	MTR Review	Original Closing	Actual Closing
29-Aug-2020	26-Sep-2020	15-Apr-2021	31-Dec-2021	31-Dec-2021

RESTRUCTURING AND/OR ADDITIONAL FINANCING		
Date(s)	Amount Disbursed (US\$M)	Key Revisions

KEY RATINGS		
Outcome	Bank Performance	M&E Quality
Highly Satisfactory	Highly Satisfactory	Substantial

RATINGS OF PROJECT PERFORMANCE IN ISRs				
No.	Date ISR Archived	DO Rating	IP Rating	Actual Disbursements (US\$M)
01	30-Nov-2020	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	6.75
02	02-Jun-2021	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	14.55
03	30-Nov-2021	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	14.70
04	18-Jan-2022	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	14.70

**SECTORS AND THEMES****Sectors**

Major Sector/Sector (%)

Education 100

Early Childhood Education 2

Public Administration - Education 42

Primary Education 54

Secondary Education 2

Themes

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

Human Development and Gender 100

Gender 48

Disease Control 100

Pandemic Response 57

Education 100

Access to Education 12

Teachers 8

Student Assessment 8

Standards, Curriculum and Textbooks 51

Education Facilities 42

ADM STAFF

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Director:		
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I. PROJECT CONTEXT AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

A. CONTEXT AT APPRAISAL

Country context

1. Uganda has been one of the top performers regionally in terms of economic growth and poverty reduction in the 90s and early 00s. This growth followed a period of contraction between 2011 to 2017, owing to droughts, sub-regional conflicts,¹ private sector credit constraints, and weak execution of public projects., the current growth trend remains inadequate for Uganda’s lower middle-income status ambitions, especially when considering the medium-term ramifications of the COVID-19 shock. The economic growth trajectory over the next five years is also insufficient to absorb the growing youth bulge and new job seekers resulting from one of the world’s highest population growth rates. Although poverty declined since 2015 leading into the COVID-19 crisis, large regional disparities persist and vulnerability to poverty has become more evident, with the poverty headcount rate fluctuating as a result of Ugandans’ inability to cope with negative shocks. Furthermore, while there has been some structural transformation, it remains limited and has been partially reversed by the effects of the COVID-19 shock.
2. At the time the COVID-19 Emergency Education Project was appraised in August 2020, only a few months after the first case of COVID-19 was reported in March 2020, the national lockdown was announced by the President. Initial projections indicated that the growth trajectory would deaccelerate considerably in 2020, with real GDP growth that was projected to fall from 6.5 percent in FY19 to 3.3 percent in FY20. This was due to a combination of limited trade, travel restrictions thwarting the tourism industry and widespread closures of businesses across the country. The flow of remittances, which provide crucial support to the poorest, was also expected to decline. Poverty had already increased significantly after the first lockdown from March-June 2020 and was likely to have risen again given another shift of workers to agriculture and the slow recovery of household incomes.

Sector and COVID-19 context

3. School closures came into effect alongside the first lockdown on March 20, 2020 after only a month of the new school year,² affecting more than 15 million students and 548,000 teachers at all levels from pre-primary to upper secondary. By appraisal, all students continued to be out of school. Candidate and pre-candidate students’ classes (Primary 6-7, Senior 4-6) were allowed to return to schools in October 2020 to sit their exams. Other classes (P4-P5, S1-S3) briefly returned to classrooms in March 2021, before schools closed again in June 2021. Therefore, candidate and pre-candidate classes (Primary 6-7, Senior 4-6) were in school between October 2020 and June 2021. Other classes, (P4-P5, S1-S3) were in school between March and June 2021. Schooling for early grades (P1-P3) was interrupted completely and students did not return to classrooms at all between March 2020 until the full reopening which took place on January 10, 2022. Table 1 shows the schedule of partial reopening.

¹ Sub-regional conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and South Sudan.

² School year in Uganda begins in February.

**Table 1: Schedule of partial reopening**

Grades	Period in school during partial re-opening	Months in school in the period between March 2020 and January 2022
Primary 1-3	Schools did not re-open for these grades	0 months
Primary 4-5	March 2021 - June 2021	3 months
Primary 6-7	October 2020 – June 2021	9 months (including school holidays)
Senior 1-3	March 2021 - June 2021	3 months
Senior 4-6	October 2020 – June 2021	9 months (including school holidays)

4. By appraisal, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) had already developed the Uganda Education Sector COVID-19 Response Plan in April 2020 and the associated Continuity of Learning Framework. The MoES constituted a sector response Task Force to strengthen the education sector preparedness and response measures to mitigate the impact of the outbreak of COVID-19 on Uganda’s education system. The key objectives of these documents were to: (1) minimize the adverse effects of COVID-19 on students, teachers and the education system at large; and (2) enhance the capacity of the MoES, District Local Governments (DLGs) and stakeholders to promote protection of students and teachers and ensure continuity of learning and transition to normal school program. The COVID-19 Emergency Education Project was designed with a view to accelerate the implementation and operationalization of these frameworks. No counterpart funding was provided by the Government of Uganda (GoU). It is important to note, that COVID-19 Emergency Education Response Project (CERP) was the largest donor supported project in country that provided education emergency response and the only one fully implemented through the GoU systems.
5. Uganda faced a learning crisis before the COVID-19 pandemic. While the country was one of the pioneers of introducing the Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997, and the Universal Secondary Education a decade later, these early gains failed to translate into improved learning outcomes for all students. While enrollment increased dramatically since the introduction of UPE, gains in enrollment have not translated into improved learning outcomes. Uganda’s education system suffered from a set of interrelated challenges at different stages in the life cycle. Poor access to early childhood education leads to poorly prepared learners and high rates of repetition in primary education, compounded by poor quality and low completion rates through the primary cycle and low transition rates and poor access to secondary education.
6. In terms of access, although gross primary enrollment rates remained high (110 percent in 2017), primary completion rates fell to 62 percent in 2016 from 64 percent in 2011, due to high repetition and dropout rates.³ The probability of school completion was worse for girls, children from geographically disadvantaged areas, and from the lowest SES, as well as students with special needs. This was in part due to low survival rates throughout the primary cycle, which are more acute for vulnerable populations. While expected years of schooling for an average student were 6.3 years, insights from HCI disaggregated by socioeconomic status (SES) quintiles

³ Government of Uganda Education Management Information System (EMIS) data (2015).



indicated that a child in the richest 20 percent can expect to complete 9.5 years of school by her 18th birthday starting at the age of 6. This was above 8.3 years of school that a child from the poorest 20 percent can expect - a gap of 1.2 years of schooling.

7. Despite efforts in ensuring pro-poor access,⁴ secondary level access remained insufficient to offset trends in demographic growth in the long term, marked inequities in access. The Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) for secondary education had stagnated at 25 percent since 2010.⁵ This is partially due to high drop-out rates in primary and low transition rates from primary to lower secondary education, which had declined from 72 percent in 2013 to 61 percent in 2017.⁶ There were disparities in access to secondary education by region, location, wealth, and gender. The secondary enrollment rates in urban areas of the Central region were significantly higher than those in rural and underserved areas in the North. For instance, in 2015, GER for secondary education in the capital city of Kampala was over 50 percent, while in rural Karamoja, it was only 5 percent. Early childbearing and marriage rates are among the highest in the region, impeding girls' educational attainment. Uganda has one of the highest adolescent fertility rates in the region, with over 113 births per 1,000 women, compared to 73 in Kenya and 38 in Rwanda.⁷
8. Literacy and numeracy outcomes have mostly declined over the past decade and were expected to deteriorate further because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2008, 71 percent of children at Primary 3 level met the required numeracy rate, compared to only 55 percent ten years later. Literacy rates have declined from 58 percent of P3 students having met the required literacy rate in 2010, to 50 percent in 2018.⁸ Similarly, numeracy at the P6 level declined from 54 percent to 51 percent between 2008 and 2018, while literacy at the P6 level improved only modestly by 5 percentage points in a decade.
9. Low levels of learning are product of an array of underlying issues. The vast majority of Ugandan children are unprepared when they enter primary education and Primary 1 curriculum does not respond to the needs of those who did not attend pre-primary education. The government does not support delivery of pre-primary education, which is entirely financed by the private sector, and these services tend to be concentrated in urban areas and serve wealthier families. This is exacerbated by poor learning environment, especially in lower grades, including overcrowded classrooms and unevenly distributed teachers. Around one-third of schools get more teachers than they are entitled to, at great cost to the 45 percent of schools which get fewer teachers than they are entitled to.^{9,10} There is a skills gap among teachers' current skill sets and competencies: 32% of the district officials report that teachers are not able to interpret the curriculum as expected and 57% of the teachers taught without planning their lessons, indicating challenges in their ability to deliver the curriculum in primary and secondary education¹¹. The overall system is not aligned for learning – there is a misalignment between

⁴ Due to GoU's commitment to have one secondary school per sub-county.

⁵ When focusing on the lower secondary cycle alone, which is the minimum level expected to be attained by every citizen, since 2010 the GER has been consistently confined to between 31 and 35 percent.

⁶ The main barriers to improved transition rates are low P7 pass rates in the Primary Leavers Exam (PLE), which stood at only 47 percent in 2017 (according to the Uganda National Examinations Board), and an insufficient number of secondary schools to absorb the growing demand.

⁷ World Development Indicators (2021). Accessed at: <https://databank.worldbank.org/>

⁸ National Assessment of Progress in Education, Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) (2008, 2018).

⁹ Relative to the standard Student to Teacher Ratios (STR) recommend by the Basic Requirements and Minimum Standards document developed by the Ministry of Education and Sports.

¹⁰ UNESCO (2014). Accessed at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000229777>

¹¹ Education and Sports Sector Analysis (ESSA) (2019).



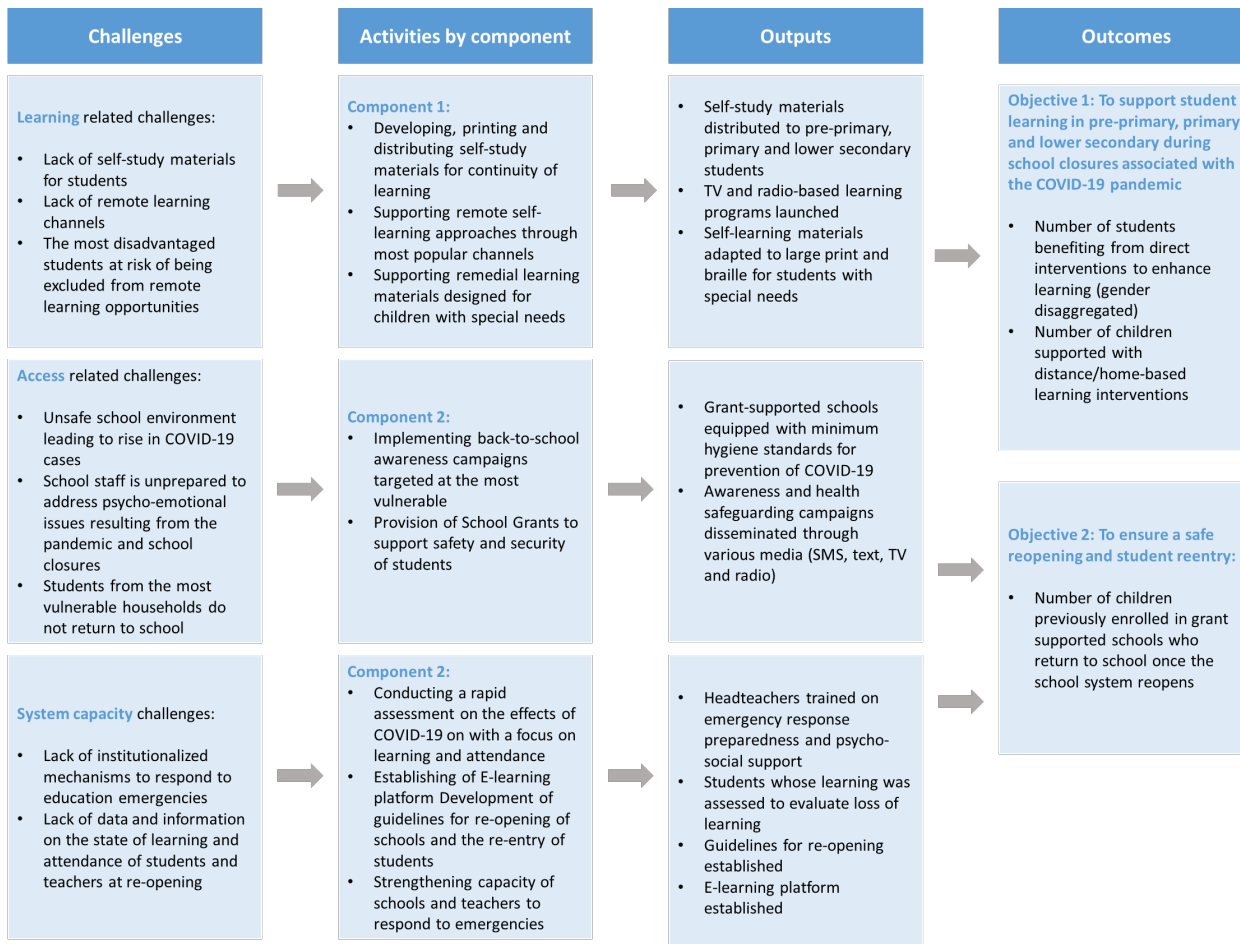
pedagogy, curriculum, and exams.

10. While the COVID-19 Emergency Education Response Project was designed in this wider context of declining education outcomes, and early access gains being threatened by low survival and completion rates, the project was not designed to address the root causes of these issues. The key rationale was to support the MoES in the emergency situation to implement continuity of learning interventions, to prepare the school system to safely reopen, and to build the system's capacity to respond to future emergencies. This includes embedding the systems in place to ensure student learning continues to take place and further, COVID-19 induced losses in access are minimized, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged groups, who already faced severe pre-existing challenges.

Theory of Change (Results Chain)

11. A Theory of Change (ToC), showing the links between the main challenges facing Uganda's education system at the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, project-supported activities, intermediate results or outputs, and outcomes of the project design, is presented in figure 1. The link between inputs, activities, intermediate results and outcomes is almost one-to-one. The results chain under the Objective 1 envisaged that the development and distribution of self-study materials, radio and TV learning programs, adapted for special needs students, will support student learning during the school closures. The achievement of the Objective 1 was supported by Intermediate Result Indicators (IRIs) 1 and 2. Under Objective 2, the project design envisaged two sets of activities aimed at: (i) ensuring that school environment is safe for students to return; and (ii) that school system is prepared to respond to education emergencies (including the current and future emergencies). The achievement of Objective 2 was supported by IRIs 3-8.

Figure 1: Theory of Change



12. The key assumption of the ToC was that the schools will re-open throughout the project’s lifetime (see a more detailed discussion under the section ‘Key factors during implementation’). The challenges envisaged in the ToC refer to both *evident challenges* and *anticipated challenges* at the preparation time.

Project Development Objectives (PDOs)

13. As stated in the Grant Agreement and in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD), the Project Development Objective is ‘to support student learning in pre-primary, primary and lower secondary during school closures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure a safe reopening and student reentry.’

Key Expected Outcomes and Outcome Indicators

14. The PDO had two objectives with the following PDO-level indicators (PDIs) measuring project achievements:

Objective 1: To support student learning in pre-primary, primary and lower secondary during school closures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, measured through the following key outcome indicators: (i) Number



of students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning (gender disaggregated number); (ii) Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning interventions.

Objective 2: To ensure a safe reopening and student re-entry, measured through the following key outcome indicator: (i) Number of children previously enrolled in grant supported schools who return to school once the school system reopens.

Components

15. **Component 1: Ensure learning during school closure and prepare for school reopening (US\$7.63 million).**

This component was to provide access to resources to strengthen student learning during the school closure and preparation for school reopening. Students were to receive the self-learning materials developed by the National Curriculum Development Center (NCDC). This component also focused on reaching the most vulnerable students, in particular girls and children with special needs. It supported the design, printing and distribution of self-learning materials to students, and broadcasted lessons via radio and TV. By focusing on creating pathways to access learning during the school closures, the component was designed to manage student transition to school reopening.

16. **Component 2: Supporting safe re-opening, student re-entry and capacity building for resilience (US\$6.72 million).**

This component was designed to support efforts of the MoES, Local Governments, school leaders and teachers to prepare effectively for the re-opening of schools and the re-entry of students. The MoES carried out COVID-19 sensitization and back-to-school awareness campaigns to encourage re-entry enrollment and re-integration of students into the formal schooling system. School grants were provided to support the implementation of Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programs, provide psycho-social support to ensure safety and security of students. As part of the interventions to build system's resilience, the project supported a rapid assessment on the effects of COVID-19 on Primary and Secondary Education with focus on monitoring continued learning, school attendance and learning assessment and to address the risks of school dropout. Additional support was provided by developing content for e-learning platform with content available through smart technology and simple Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) technology.

17. **Component 3: Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (US\$0.35 million).**

This component was designed to provide support for project implementation, monitoring and evaluation, procurement, financial management and auditing. It financed project staff salary, equipment, transportation, data collection and analysis, and operating costs.

B. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES DURING IMPLEMENTATION (IF APPLICABLE)

Revised PDOs and Outcome Targets

PDO was not changed during project implementation.



Revised PDO Indicators

The PDO indicators were not changed during project implementation.

Revised Components

The components were not changed during project implementation.

Other Changes

No other changes were made during project implementation.

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

NA

II. OUTCOME

A. RELEVANCE OF PDOs

Assessment of Relevance of PDOs and Rating

The relevance of the PDO is rated *High*.

18. Alignment with World Bank's strategic documents: The project was and remains highly consistent with the Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for FY16-21, particularly the CPF strategic objective 3 – to strengthen human capital – along with the CPF outcome 3.1 – improved access to and quality of primary and post-primary education. The project is also consistent with the findings of the recent Sector Country Diagnostics (2021) and its analyses of challenges for the sector also in the context of COVID-19 school closures. The project is aligned with the World Bank Education Global Practice recent policy paper, *The COVID-19 Pandemic: Shocks to Education and Policy Responses*, which outlines how countries can respond to shocks to the education systems.
19. Alignment with Government's strategic plans: The project design and results responded to key priorities identified by the Ministry of Education and Sports as captured by the Uganda Education Sector COVID-19 Response Plan developed in April 2020 and the associated Continuity of Learning Framework. The key objectives of these documents were to: (1) minimize the adverse effects of COVID-19 on students, teachers and the education system at large; and (2) enhance the capacity of the MOES, District Local Governments (DLGs) and stakeholders to promote protection of students and teachers and ensure continuity of learning and transition to normal school program. The project remained highly relevant until its closing and afterwards when schools reopened.



B. ACHIEVEMENT OF PDOs (EFFICACY)

20. **On the achievement of the PDOs (efficacy), the project is given the rating of *High*.** The ICR analysis assessed efficacy based on the achievement of the project's key expected outcomes under the two objectives, as reported in the RF and drawing from supporting evidence. Subsequent sub-sections provide details on the achievements of each outcome and the related intermediate results.



Assessment of Achievement of Each Objective/Outcome

21. To assess the efficacy under each project objective, the following elements are considered: (i) validity of indicators; (ii) the impact of the project as measured by achievements on PDIs and IRIs based on evidence provided in the RF and other available data; and (iii) the plausible linkages (pointing to attribution) between project interventions and achieved outcomes, including by drawing from corroborating sources.

Objective 1: To support student learning in pre-primary, primary and lower secondary during school closures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Efficacy rating – High

22. Validity of indicators: Progress under Objective 1 is measured by the two PDIs and two associated IRIs, presented in Table 2 (column 1). In the table, column 2 presents baseline values, while columns 3 and 4 present the target and current values respectively. The outcome indicators that are used to measure achievement of Objective 1 are assessed to be highly appropriate and valid and can be used to effectively assess the efficacy of the project towards the objective of supporting student learning during school closures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Emerging evidence, including in Uganda (see paragraph 24), points out to the efficacy of distance/home-based learning interventions in mitigating future learning losses. Distance learning interventions employed, including home-based study materials, radio and television broadcast are assessed as context-appropriate modalities. The PDI 2 corresponds to the Corporate Results Indicator (CRI) on “students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning,” which was considered as PDI 1 on this project.

Table 2: Achievements Under Objective 1

Objective 1: To support student learning in pre-primary, primary and lower secondary during school closures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic					
	Targets and current status			Analysis of progress to meet end-of-project target	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
PDO Indicators (PDIs)	Baseline	Target	Current	Actual achievement relative to the end-of-project target	Comments
1) Number of students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning (CRI)	0	14,000,000	14,073,880	↑ 101%	Target exceeded
<i>Students benefitting from direct interventions to enhance learning – Female (CRI)</i>	0	7,000,000	7,036,940	↑ 101%	Target exceeded
2) Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning interventions	0	11,900,000 (85%)	12,629,565 (90%)	↑ 106%	Target exceeded
Intermediate Result Indicators (IRIs)	Baseline	Target	Current	Actual achievement relative to the end-of-project target	Comments



IRI 1: Awareness and health safeguarding messages disseminated to students, teachers, parents and community members through various media	0	10,000,000	10,000,000	100%	Target achieved
IRI 2: Self-learning materials adapted to large print and braille for students with special needs	0	Yes	Yes	100%	Target achieved
<i>Source: World Bank Operations Portal, ISRs, AMs and PAD</i>					

23. **Impact:** Achievement of expected outcomes under Objective 1 is *High* as demonstrated by evidence reported in the ISRs. Comparison of columns 3 and 4 shows that the project’s final achievements exceeded the end-line targets for the PDIs associated with the objective of supporting school learning during school closures. Specifically, the following results were achieved by project closing:

- The project reached and benefited more children than planned, with the target for the number of students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning being exceeded by almost 74,000 students. The project benefited more girls than envisaged by the project’s target, exceeding it by almost 37,000 female students.
- The project exceeded its target for students supported with distance/home-based learning interventions by 729,565 students. This represented a 6-percentage point increase between the target and the actual achievement.

24. The efficacy of the achievements under Objective 1 is corroborated by the evidence from the UWEZO household survey, which concluded that the main source of distance learning was printed self-study materials and radio broadcasts from the government. Further, the study emphasizes linkages between the distance/home-based learning interventions and the higher order learning outcomes. For children enrolled in P3-P7, statistically significant differences were observed in rates of English reading competence and numeracy competency according to whether a child was able to continue studying during school closures.¹²

25. The project’s impact and the linkages between project interventions and outcomes is also demonstrated by the significant outputs and intermediate results reported under Objective 1. The end-line targets of two IRIs under this objective were achieved. Achievements under the two IRI and other significant outputs include:

- IRI 1: 10,000,000 awareness and safeguarding messages were disseminated to students, teachers, parents and community members through various media including SMS, television and radio, meeting its RF target.
- IRI 2: Self-learning materials were adapted to large print and braille for students with special needs, thus meeting its RF target. The learning materials were adapted by NCDC for students with special needs, including copies of braille materials (2,133), lessons recorded on the MP3 players and Victor readers distributed to 115 special and inclusive beneficiary schools.
- Additional outputs:

¹² Uwezo Uganda (2021) Are our Children Learning? Illuminating the Covid-19 Learning Losses and Gains in Uganda. Uwezo National Learning Assessment Report, 2021. Kampala: Uwezo Uganda.



- The project supported the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) to develop the curriculum, contents, and teaching guides for home-study materials for pre-primary, primary and secondary education levels.
- Home based learning initiatives were complemented by lessons that aired on the radio and television between June and September 2021, targeting students from P4-P6 and S1. Sixteen selected radio stations were engaged from various sub-regions in the country. Radio has the highest rate of penetration amongst all media therefore was targeted as the medium reaching the highest number of beneficiaries.

26. Linkages pointing to attribution: COVID-19 Emergency Support Project (CERP) was the main source of funding for the MoES for the implementation of the activities in the 'COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan', including the distribution of home-based materials and other distance learning interventions (including radio and television). Coexistent interventions implemented by other Development Partners (DPs) were smaller in scale and typically focused on specific geographical areas. CERP was by far the largest project, implemented at the national scale, and the only project using MoES systems. The independent household survey collected by UWEZO in August 2021 indicated that for those children who continued to study during school closures, the distance learning materials provided by the MoES, coupled with television and radio transmissions (all financed through CERP), constituted the main modality of distance-learning. This provides additional corroborating evidence on the project's important role in significantly improving access to distance/home based interventions, thus providing a strong basis for the rating of *High* for the efficacy under Objective 1.

Objective 2: To ensure safe re-opening and student re-entry.

Efficacy rating – High

27. Validity of indicators: Progress under Objective 2 is measured by one PDI presented in Table 3 (column 1). In the table, column 2 presents baseline values, while columns 3 and 4 present the target and current values respectively. The outcome indicator that is used to measure achievement of Objective 2 is assessed to be highly appropriate and valid and can be used to effectively assess the efficacy of the project towards the objective of ensuring safe schools re-opening and student re-entry. The indicator focuses on measuring the number of children previously enrolled in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system reopens. Support to schools provided by the grant was critical in ensuring that schools implemented health and safety Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) issued by the Ministry of Health to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, and therefore provided safe environment for students to return. Emerging evidence shows that the main reason given for not going back to school, when schools temporarily re-opened in Uganda, was the fear of contracting COVID-19.¹³ Therefore, supporting schools to implement health and safety measures aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19 is assessed as highly appropriate and relevant in encouraging pupils to re-enroll.

¹³ Of the surveyed 867 children, whose schools/classes had reopened but did not return to school, 47.5 percent cited the fear of Covid-19 as the reason. Source: Uwezo Uganda (2021) Are our Children Learning? Illuminating the Covid-19 Learning Losses and Gains in Uganda. Uwezo National Learning Assessment Report, 2021. Kampala: Uwezo Uganda.



Table 3: Achievements Under Objective 2

Objective 2: To ensure safe re-opening and student re-entry					
	Targets and current status			Analysis of progress to meet end-of-project target	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
PDO Indicators (PDIs)	Baseline	Target	Current	Actual achievement relative to the end-of-project target	Comments
3) Number of children previously enrolled in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened.	0	5,986,540	6,362,078	↑ 106%	Exceeded
<i>% children previously enrolled in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened.</i>	0	85	90	↑ 106%	Exceeded
Intermediate Result Indicators (IRIs)	Baseline	Target	Current	Actual achievement relative to the end-of-project target	Comments
IRI 3: Number public primary and lower secondary of grant supported schools equipped with minimum hygiene standards for prevention of COVID-19	0	12,200 (85%)	13,756 (96%)	↑ 113%	Exceeded
IRI 4: A rapid assessment on the effects of Covid-19 on Primary and Secondary Education conducted	No	Yes	Yes	100%	Achieved
IRI 5: Number of officials and teachers in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened	0	151,858 (85%)	159,247 (89%)	↑ 105%	Exceeded
IRI 6: Number of Headteachers trained on emergency response preparedness and psycho-social support	0	12,200 (85%)	14,353 (100%)	↑ 118%	Exceeded
IRI 7: Number of students whose learning was assessed to evaluate loss of learning during school closure	0	3,181,039 (50%)	2,606,817 (41%)	↓ 82%	Partially achieved
IRI 8: % of students provided with access to programs on psycho-social support	0	60%	63%	↑ 105%	Exceeded

Source: World Bank Operations Portal, ISRs, AMs and PAD



28. **Impact:** The achievement of Objective 2 as measured by progress made on the indicators in the RF is rated *High*. Table 3 summarizes the significant achievements made under this objective, where column 3 presents the target for the PDI and the sub-indicator, and column 4 presents the improvements made by project closing. Columns 5 and 6 show that the project’s final targets were exceeded for the PDI and sub-indicator, both at 106 percent in terms of the actual achievement relative to the end-of-project target. The results under PDI 3 indicator were achieved in the context of only *partial* school re-opening for selected grades (see paragraph 3 for a detailed description of the sequence and the extent of partial reopening). Therefore, the achievement under PDI 3 is reported using a denominator that reflects the total number of students who were allowed to return to school during the partial re-opening. The maximum number that could be achieved is the total number of students who were previously enrolled in grant-supported schools in those grades that reopened, which was 7,042,989 (as per the pre-pandemic enrollment numbers, see table 4 for details). The revised denominator therefore is 5,986,540, which is 85% (target) of 7,042,989. Grades Primary 4-7 and Secondary 1-6 were allowed to return to school during the partial opening. Of those grades, 6,362,078, or 90%, of students returned to school which exceeded the target of 85% for PDI 3.

Table 4: Students per grade that were *allowed* to return vs those who *have returned*

Grade	Maximum number of students allowed to return (based on the number students previously enrolled in grant-supported schools in those selected grades)	Number of students who actually returned during partial re-opening
Primary 4	1,670,912	1,503,821
Primary 5	1,423,677	1,281,309
Primary 6	1,168,244	1,051,277
Primary 7	788,241	749,810
Senior 1	504,998	454,498
Senior 2	467,481	420,733
Senior 3	429,420	373,595
Senior 4	377,656	333,767
Senior 5	105,444	94,900
Senior 6	106,916	98,367
TOTAL	7,042,989	6,362,078

29. Looking at the outputs of the key interventions of the project under Objective 2, the final targets were mostly exceeded, often by a substantial margin, with one target partially achieved. Of particular note are the following achievements under the six IRIs:

- IRI 3: 13,756 schools were supported with grants to enable them to implement minimum hygiene standards for prevention of COVID -19, thus exceeding its target of 12,200. This provided critically needed operational funding for schools, that helped them to purchase goods and equipment required to comply with the SOP’s mandated by the Ministry of Health. This support was critical, given the large share of the capitation grants disbursed by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Development (MoFPED) typically used to cover all



operational cost, was severely delayed and not fully disbursed. This is based on the fact that capitation grants are disbursed based on enrollment numbers in a given school term. Thus, while schools remained closed for the majority of the school year, the capitation grants were not disbursed. CERP-financed school grants constituted the main source of funding for schools to ensure that schools complied with the SOPs – a necessary pre-requisite for re-opening and keeping students safe – which lies at the heart of the PDO. As a consequence of the above, the share of public primary and lower secondary schools equipped with minimum hygiene standards for prevention of COVID-19 was very high at 96 percent. This is corroborated by the independent household survey conducted by UWEZO Uganda which indicated that of the primary schools that were partially reopened in 2020-21, 93 percent confirmed that they had a hand-washing and sanitizing facility.¹⁴

- IRI 4: The project achieved the target aiming to support the Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB) to conduct a rapid assessment to determine the effects of COVID-19 and loss of learning at primary and secondary education levels. A field based national assessment was undertaken by UNEB in March 2021 with a sample of 700 schools (500 primary and 200 secondary) selected from 100 districts. The findings of the report fed into MoES' strategy for support after widespread schools re-opening in January 2022 (see paragraph 68 is "Lessons Learnt" for more details)
- IRI 5: 159,247 of officials and teachers in grant-supported schools returned to schools once the school system partially reopened, thus exceeding its target of 151,858.
- IRI 6: To build capacity at the school level, CERP supported DES and district-level COVID-19 task forces, to train 14,353 head teachers in primary and secondary schools on emergency response preparedness and psycho-social support, a number that exceeded its target of 12,200.
- IRI 7: For the reasons outlined in paragraph 11 above, learning could not be assessed for 50% of *all* students as envisaged at the design stage. The team therefore revised the denominator to 50% of 6,362,078 students *who have returned* to classrooms during the partial re-opening, which was 3,181,039. The actual number of students assessed was 2,606,817, or 41%, representing a partial achievement against its target of 50%.
- IRI 8: The project piloted psycho-social support services and delivered it to 63 percent of primary and lower secondary school students, exceeding its target of 60 percent.
- In terms of additional outputs, the project supported the MoES in implementing large-scale "Back to school campaigns" targets at students most vulnerable to drop-outs.

30. Linkages pointing to attribution: While CERP was by far the largest COVID-19 education response and recovery project, implemented at the national scale, the existence of contemporaneous DP-funded interventions supporting the response to COVID-19 impacts on education makes assessing attribution conclusively challenging. Other DPs supported interventions aimed at: (i) vaccination support for teachers (e.g., Norway, Belgium, Ireland); (ii) community-led learning, Accelerated Education Programs (e.g., UK/Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office, UNICEF, USAID; and (iii) focused support to refugees' students including cash transfers and psycho-social support (European Union-ECHO) .¹⁵ The multi-pronged nature of support amongst the DPs across the supply and demand/school-based and household-based factors makes it challenging to conclusively attribute outcomes to CERP's interventions.

¹⁴ Uwezo Uganda (2021) Are our Children Learning? Illuminating the COVID-19 Learning Losses and Gains in Uganda. Uwezo. National Learning Assessment Report, 2021. Kampala: Uwezo Uganda

¹⁵ The overall contributions to the COVID-19 prevention and response amongst the DP was approximately US\$18 million. None of this was delivered through government systems.



Justification of Overall Efficacy Rating

31. **The overall efficacy rating of CERP is assessed to be High** for the following reasons. First, in terms of the outcomes related to the number of children supported with distance/home-based learning interventions under Objective 1, all PDI targets were exceeded by a substantial margin, thus clearly justifying the High rating. Second, the project exceeded its PDI target under Objective 2, that focused on ensure safe re-opening and student re-entry. Thirdly, the project either achieved or exceeded the large majority of the IRIs (only IRI 7 was partially achieved due to partial school re-opening). Finally, the project made substantial achievements at the output level that contribute to the MoES' current learning recovery efforts and therefore represent considerable foundational investments. For instance, the MoES plans to scale up psycho-social support piloted under CERP and continue investments in "Back to school campaigns," also in the context of strengthening the implementation its new policy of re-entry to young mothers.

C. EFFICIENCY

Assessment of Efficiency and Rating

Economic Efficiency Rating – High

32. Economic Analysis: The cost-benefit analysis (CBA) was conducted to include actual Project costs and achievements at Project closing. It considered the steps and assumptions from the assessment conducted at appraisal, while incorporating the required updates. The benefits from the Project originate from the lower share of students in primary and lower secondary education who drop out of the system, and from reduced learning losses as a result of home-based learning interventions financed by the Project, particularly distance learning materials provided by the MoES, coupled with television and radio programs. The costs are equivalent to the total cost of the Project and additional costs due to the increased number of students enrolled in primary and lower secondary education as a result of the implementation of Project's activities.
33. The CBA estimates demonstrated that the project was economically viable. The internal rate of return (IRR) associated with the Project was 13 percent, for a net present value of US\$523 million. The IRR is higher than the official discount rate of 6.5 percent, providing strong evidence of the economic efficiency of Project's investments while reflecting the high returns to education in Uganda and the importance of mitigating learning losses and school dropouts for over 12 million students in primary and lower secondary.

Implementation Efficiency Rating - High

34. Implementation Efficiency Analysis: The implementation efficiency analysis focuses on efficiency in design aspects as well as implementation processes. The project design was based on complementary interventions aimed at continuity of learning support during school closures, and ensuring safe school re-opening and student re-entry, which together supported the achievement of the project objectives. Activities designed to support the project's



outputs and outcomes were clearly detailed in the PAD. Overall, the project’s simple design and streamlined implementation arrangements allowed for an efficient implementation and to large extent shielded the operation from additional shocks related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- 35. During the implementation there were significant efficiency gains due to attaining costs savings across several sub-components, allowing the project to reach a larger number of beneficiaries. Table Annex 3 shows allocations per sub-component at appraisal compared to actual expenditures at closing.

- 36. The project did not encounter any cost or time overruns and achieved all PDI and IRIs within the envisaged project’s ambitious timeframe of 15 months and budget. It was fully disbursed and only encountered initial delays in procurement which were resolved quickly with no impact on the final project outputs and outcomes and thus did not affect the implementation efficiency. Additional factors contributing to greater implementation efficiency included using a very experienced WB task team and the PCU team (PCU coordinator and Procurement Specialist), with in-depth knowledge of the Uganda’s systems and pre-existing relationships with the client, thus allowing for a speedy resolution of any bottlenecks arising. The project did not use any Bank’s Budget for the preparatory activities and operated using a very lean team. In addition, all supervision missions were conducted virtually thus contributing to substantial cost savings. Several factors allowed to achieve additional marginal savings: favorable exchange rate; saving on the procurement of radio lessons; and change of bidding method from Direct Selection Method of single supplier that was a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE), to competitive bidding using three companies, spread strategically across three regions in the country, thus allowing for savings in transportation and distribution costs. The competitive process also resulted in a low unit rate and thus the number of home study materials increased from 3,750,369 to 5,430,529.

D. JUSTIFICATION OF OVERALL OUTCOME RATING

Relevance	Efficacy	Efficiency	Overall
High	High	High	Highly Satisfactory

E. OTHER OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS (IF ANY)



Gender

37. As articulated by the PDI 1 (CRI) under Objective 1, the project sought to target at least 50 percent of girls as the beneficiaries from direct interventions to enhance learning. The PDI target has been exceeded, with 7,036,940 girls reached with direct interventions to enhance learning, compared to 7,000,000 as envisaged by the project target. The project design also boosted GoU's "back to school" campaigns aimed to encourage re-entry, enrollment and re-integration of students into the formal schooling system. These campaigns had a targeted design feature to specifically reach girls and children from vulnerable populations to mitigate risks of student dropout. The intervention aimed at reinforcing MoES' recently passed policy of school re-entry for teenage mothers, by sensitizing communities about the possibility to re-enroll. While an important input, it should be noted that it is difficult to establish the extent to which these interventions may have contributed to PDI 3 (Children previously enrolled in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened) under Objective 2 aimed at safe re-opening and student re-entry. This is because of the challenge to delineate CERP-financed support to re-enrollment campaigns with wider MoES-financed interventions, as well as difficulty in isolating the effects of these interventions vis-à-vis other supply side activities implemented by the project.

Institutional Strengthening

38. **Institutional strengthening was built into CERP-supported interventions as well as supported by component 2.2.** The sub-component focused on improving the capacity of key stakeholders to respond to future emergency-induced challenges to the education sector. The project contributed to the creation of national level strategies that supported the continued learning of students, developed guidelines for reopening of schools and the re-entry of students, as well as strengthened capacity for assessment, monitoring and inspection of schools. The most notable outcomes include:

- **Laying a strong foundation for scale-up and institutionalization of the psycho-social support services at the school level to enhance student well-being.** To build capacity at the school level, CERP supported the Directorate of Education Standards (DES) and district-level COVID-19 task forces, to train 14,353 head teachers in primary and secondary schools on emergency response preparedness and psycho-social support, a number that substantially exceeded its target of 12,200. In addition, elected 666 Centre Coordinating Tutors, 479 head teachers 119 college Tutors, 88 district officers were trained to train teachers, head teachers and learners in offering psychosocial support. The project piloted psycho-social support services and delivered it to 64 percent of primary and lower secondary school students. The growing body of evidence pointing to psycho-social services creating conditions for improved learning for children and youth affected by crisis and the success of the CERP interventions led to future plans to scale up psycho-social support as part of the continuous professional development for teachers.
- **Laying strong foundation for future blended learning approaches.** The project further contributed to building resilience of the basic education system by establishing a customized E-learning platform. The E-learning platform provides basic education, e-learning content in both low-tech (USSD-enabled messaging) and high-tech (smartphone, tablet, laptop-enables), and has already over 1 million subscribers. The E-learning platform is part of a broader e-initiative piloted by the MOES, with plans for further scale-up.
- **Strengthening community-level outreach mechanisms by creating a strategy for Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE).** This included "hygiene campaigns," which have proven to be moderately



effective in terms of spreading knowledge of precautions against COVID-19 according to the recent household survey,¹⁶ “back to school” campaigns and other communication campaigns that provided communities with more information on the various steps to mitigate risk during the pandemic.

- **Designing and developing home study materials and kits for parents for pre-primary education.** The project designed materials for pre-primary, developed, the National Harmonized Parental Guide/Boost to support home learning for children of 3-6 years to encourage parent-led pre-school education. The English version of the Parental Guide/Boost was interpreted to three local languages used in the four pilot districts.

Mobilizing Private Sector Financing

39. Not applicable.

Poverty Reduction and Shared Prosperity

40. The project’s achievements towards improved access to basic education are likely to contribute towards the two larger objectives of the World Bank—reducing poverty and boosting shared prosperity. By supporting student learning in pre-primary, primary and lower secondary during school closures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, CERP contributed towards measures to reduce the potential learning losses resulting from 21 months of school closures. The project would have likely contributed to mitigating reduction in Learning-Adjusted Years of Schooling (LAYS), which is a key component of Human Capital Index. Human capital formation is, in turn, a necessary condition for poverty eradication and the promotion of equitable and sustainable economic development. CERP is likely to have contributed towards shared prosperity by targeting vulnerable groups, including girls, through its re-enrollment and “back to school” campaigns.

Other Unintended Outcomes and Impacts

41. Not applicable.

III. KEY FACTORS THAT AFFECTED IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOME

A. KEY FACTORS DURING PREPARATION

42. **Rapid preparation process:** Given the COVID-19 emergency, the project was designed and prepared in record time, within four months from receiving the financing request to approval. The project was approved on August 29, 2020, the Grant Agreement was signed and became effective on September 26, 2020. There were no effectiveness conditions in place. The processing time was extremely fast given the average time it takes for a World Bank education sector operation to achieve effectiveness. This was partially due to the fact that the project was financed by a GPE grant and therefore had a shorter approval process that did not require Cabinet and

¹⁶ Uwezo Uganda (2021) Are our Children Learning? Illuminating the Covid-19 Learning Losses and Gains in Uganda. Uwezo. National Learning Assessment Report, 2021. Kampala: Uwezo Uganda.



Parliamentary approvals. The familiarity with the GPE process amongst the MoES and MoFPED staff, due to recently completed GPE-financed Uganda Teacher and School Effectiveness Project (UTSEP, P133780), was also a factor that influenced the speed of the preparation process. The project had disbursed US\$6.75 million by the first implementation support mission held between October 23 and 28, 2020. This level of absorption rate is a strong indicator that the project responded well to the MoES' most pressing needs. Indeed, CERP was the main source of funding for the implementation of the MoES' Uganda Education Sector COVID-19 Response Plan and the associated Continuity of Learning Framework.

43. Simple design that aided the preparation and approval process: Overall the project design was simple, components clearly structured, with the logical results chain clearly articulated. The project components corresponded directly to the two Outcomes as captured by the PDO statement. The project design was grounded in correctly identified access, learning and system-related challenges, both challenges that were evident at the project preparation stage (e.g., lack of remote learning materials) and anticipated challenges expected post-reopening (e.g., learning losses, absenteeism). However, the project design had the following shortcomings:

- Despite approximately half of the total project funding being allocated to printing and distribution of home study materials, the relatively high cost of printing and distribution, meant that the allocation was insufficient to cover all P1-P7 and S1-S6 students. Candidate and pre-candidate classes (P5-P7) and S1-S4 were prioritized, and as a consequence alternative source of funding had to be sought to fund the lower primary (P1-P4) and upper secondary (S5-S6) levels. As a result, the delivery of home study materials to those classes was delayed, compared to levels covered by CERP.
- School grant support focused on public schools only, with no support to non-state schools, which cater to a substantial share of learners both at primary and secondary levels. The non-state providers are crucial service delivery providers in Uganda and account for 32 percent of enrolments at the primary level and 62 percent at the secondary level. Protracted closures deprived the non-state education providers of their primary source of income, the students' fees, which prevented them from purchasing the necessary equipment to conform to the new health and safety SOPs mandated by the MoES and MoH. A portion of these non-state providers and community schools, which are grant-aided, meaning they receive a per capita allocation from MoFPED to cover recurrent costs. However, because MoFPED withheld capitation grant releases for a significant portion in 2020¹⁷, the grant-aided non-state schools suffered an extra financial shock.

44. Learning from and building on the past initiatives: the project design was built on frameworks and implementation arrangements developed by the GPE-supported Teacher and School Effectiveness Project (UTSEP, P133780), which closed in 2019. School grants were distributed through an already established mechanism of fiscal transfers to LG, who further distribute grants to schools. Existing LG grant expenditure guidelines were updated to reflect the new lines of expenditures related to the implementation of SOPs. The project leveraged a well-functioning grant auditing mechanism, including a requirement for headteachers to publish school income and expenditures. This requirement was strengthened through a DLI-based incentive under the UTSEP operation.

B. KEY FACTORS DURING IMPLEMENTATION

¹⁷ Capitation grants are released based on enrollment numbers. MoFPED withheld release of capitation grants on the basis that schools are closed and no students are enrolled.



45. Overall, the healthy disbursement rate and the completion of all project activities on time indicates a good quality of project implementation. Several factors that facilitated or hindered implementation are highlighted in the discussion below.

Factors subject to the control government and/or implementing entities:

46. Strong commitment coordination from the MoES: As discussed in various sections above, the project implementation benefited from a strong support at the MoES central level, LG levels and school levels due to its full alignment with the MoES' Uganda Education Sector COVID-19 Response Plan and the associated Continuity of Learning Framework. This included shared operational arrangements, such as COVID-19 taskforces, or grant auditing arrangements, that spearheaded the SOPs implementation and compliance at the LG level.
47. Strong and experienced leadership of the Project Coordination Unit: The project leveraged the availability of staff who were employed by the recently closed UTSEP project. The use of experienced and qualified staff in the implementation of the project, especially the Project Coordinator, enabled a timely achievement and completion of all project's interventions. The proficiency of the Procurement Specialist in the World Bank Procurement procedures and processing was key in ensuring that contracts were processed efficiently. The experience, familiarity with key implementers in the relevant departments of the MoES, as well as a strong understanding of the MoES political economy, resulted in overall good quality of the project implementation. However, despite strong and effective good PCU leadership, the project only provided a limited number of salaried staff positions in the PCU. The Financial Management Specialist, two accountants, as well as a number of support staff who were part of the PCU implementation team were government's civil servants with regular "day jobs" at the MoES. As a result, their time dedicated exclusively to the project was limited, and at times, affected the speed of implementation.
48. Delays with printing and distribution of the home study materials: The implementation of the activity delayed at various stages, due to both *exogenous* factors and internal processing delays at the MoES. Initially the delays were related to the use of Direct Selection Method of single supplier that was a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE). The process of submitting documentation to demonstrate that the SOE met the eligibility criteria of the Procurement Regulations that govern procurement processing took longer than expected and caused delay in the commencement of the procurement process. Given the presence of the private sector to execute the job, the Direct Selection of the SoE was not approved by the Bank and the MOES agreed to use a competitive bidding process. In addition, the pace of the distribution was affected by a number of *exogenous* factors, including:
- Disruptions caused by the general presidential and parliamentary elections held in January 2021, including the periodic internet shutdown affecting the transactions with service providers;
 - Strict COVID-19 curfew that remained in place for the majority of the calendar year, which limited the distribution window;
 - Limited school officials present at the school premises, due to protracted school closures, which affected the speed of distribution to schools;
 - Adverse weather conditions including heavy rains and flooding, which disrupted the distribution schedule;
 - School exams in March 2021 resulted in restrictions in accessing school premises to deliver the materials.

Other exogenous factors:



49. The majority of students remained out of school for the entire duration of the project: School closures came into effect when the nationwide lockdown was instituted in March 2020. By the time of appraisal, all students continued to be out of school. The MoES envisaged a phased re-opening as soon as the pandemic situation allowed for a safe return to classrooms. The MoES' Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID-19 issued in May 2020, envisaged two scenarios: Scenario 1, which assumed that schools will be closed for another one month, and Scenario 2 ("the worst-case scenario"), which assumed that schools will be closed from 1 to 6 months. While the CERP design assumed the latter scenario, it did not anticipate that the large share of pupils will be out of school for 21 months (see paragraph 3 for a detailed description of the sequence and the extent of partial reopening). This affected the implementation of CERP, which envisaged that schools fully re-open during the duration of the project.

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

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

M&E Design

50. The results chain through which the project interventions were expected to lead to the achievement of the PDO was clearly described in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) and the RF reflected this logic. The PDO statement was clear, reflecting two objectives aimed at supporting students learning during school closures and ensuring safe school re-opening and student re-entry (see detailed discussion on the validity of the PDIs under Efficacy section). The RF included 8 IRIs, which covered key aspects of project interventions under the project components. The PDIs and IRIs were relevant, clearly defined, and measurable. To track progress on each of the indicators in the RF, the project used a combination of data sources including project reports, inspections data from the Directorate of Education Standards (DES), students National Assessment of Progress of Education (NAPE) results data from the Uganda National Examination Board (UNEBC), and audit statements related to school grants releases and expenditures. The M&E design clearly defined roles and responsibilities of the different implementing agencies at the central level, outlined in the PAD. At the central level, the main responsibility lied with the MoES' specific agencies and departments including, DES, UNEBC, NCDC, Gender Unit, as well as the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS). Given the unpredictable operating environment, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures, the M&E design could have relied more on percentage-based, rather than number-based targets, which are more appropriate in contexts highly prone to change.



M&E Implementation

51. In general, the project's planned M&E activities were implemented, though with minor challenges that were unforeseen, including protracted school closures. Data on project indicators (both PDIs and IRIs) was collected and reported regularly in the ISRs and Aide-Memoires. The day-to-day monitoring of the project interventions has been carried out well, partially due to strong M&E background of the Project Coordinator (PC). Before their current position as the PC for CERP, and UTSEP, she led the M&E function of the UTSEP project and her familiarity with the MoES M&E institutional set-up was considered to be a great advantage. However, because of the protracted school closures during COVID-19 Pandemic, data collection could not be carried out to the extent it was envisaged at the design stage. For instance, data on all students could not be collected on the PDI 3 or IRI 7.
52. Overall, the data collected was analyzed in a methodologically sound manner. Inspections' data collected by DES was particularly useful in providing up-to-date information on the extent the schools were implementing the SOPs and psycho-social support training prior to school re-opening. The reports provided details on performance by region and district, thus allowing for further follow-up activities at the LG-level through COVID-19 District Taskforces. The data provided by DES went beyond the scope of the project's design focusing on primary and lower secondary and extending the inspection coverage to upper secondary and BTVET institutions, which speaks to additional efficiency gains achieved under the project. The project also leveraged strong, existing FM systems to gather further data on school grants management and compliance with the updated Grant Guidelines. The monitoring and accountability system established at the LG and school levels allowed for good quality implementation monitoring of these interventions under Component 2.
53. The rapid assessment to determine the effects of COVID-19 and loss of learning at primary and secondary education levels was based on national sampling.

M&E Utilization

54. A difficult operating environment (e.g., limited mobility due to curfews and protracted school closures) limited the possibility of feedback loops generated by the project M&E. However, a review of project documents including Aide-Memoires and ISRs provides sufficient evidence that findings of the M&E activities informed the World Bank and the MoES teams' decision making, thus leading to improvements in the implementation of project activities.
55. For instance, issues flagged in the first implementation support mission related to the speed of implementation under PDO 2, led the World Bank team to advise the MoES to change the mode of procurement to fast-track the implementation. Similarly, as reported above, data collected by DES allowed for further uptake of that



information by the LGs and COVID-19 District Taskforces for follow-up support to districts and schools that did not comply with SOPs standards.

Justification of Overall Rating of Quality of M&E

56. The overall quality of M&E is rated **Substantial**. The M&E system as designed and implemented was sufficient to assess the achievement of the objectives and the efficacy of the results chain. In terms of the project's design, the RF is aligned with the theory of change, the PDIs were shown to be valid measures of the PDO and the IRIs covered all aspects of the project-supported interventions under the two objectives. Data collection and M&E implementation mechanisms were well established and reliant on existing MoES systems that were tested in prior GPE-funded interventions (i.e., UTSEP). The planned M&E activities were implemented and results on the project's achievements were reported regularly. To the extent possible, given the challenging operating environment, the findings were used to make decisions that have improved implementation. A minor shortcoming was related to the use of number-based targets, rather than percentage-based targets in the M&E design, which are more appropriate in emergency projects and in contexts highly prone to change.



B. ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND FIDUCIARY COMPLIANCE

57. Environmental and social safeguards. The Environmental and Social Review Summary (ESRS), Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) were prepared and disclosed before appraisal on July 21, 2020. Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) was prepared by the MOES in consultation with stakeholders and beneficiaries. Other safeguards instruments required were the Environmental and Social Management Plans to be prepared under the Environmental and Social Framework (ESMF) that included: Labor Management Plan (LMP); Infection Prevention and Control and Waste Management Plan (IPC&WMP); Communication Strategy; Gender- Based Violence (GBV) Action plan; Vulnerable and Marginalized Groups Plans and the final SEP. The reason for the MS rating assigned until the project's midline was due to delays in the finalization of the draft environmental and social risks management instruments. The project finalized the preparation of all safeguards instruments by the mission in October 2021, which led to a rating upgrade to Satisfactory.
58. The project performed strongly in terms of disseminating the E&S related policies, guidelines and materials to over 328 district and school level staff. These included: (a) Guidelines on prevention and management of teenage pregnancies in school setting; (b) Guidelines on the roles and Responsibilities of Senior Men and Senior Women teachers; and (c) Guidelines for Reporting, Tracking, Referral and Response guidelines. The project also supported community engagements through the existing structures and platform, specifically to reinforce messages relating to the behavior and practices aimed at limiting the spread of COVID-19.
59. Financial management: FM under the project rated Satisfactory throughout the entire implementation period. Key areas of strong performance included:
- As discussed earlier, existing PFM structures were used for the FM of CERP, which enabled the leveraging of existing capacity and experience within the Government.
 - The project's financial management arrangements were considered adequate in recording and reporting project transactions throughout the duration of the project.
 - The project performed strongly in terms of accountability record for funds disbursed to schools through school grants. The project staff visited all LGs and over 90 percent have successfully submitted the accountability reports to their respective districts governments.
 - All audit reports were submitted on time.
 - The project staff included an experienced accountant and an assistant with strong track record acquired through the recently closed UTSEP project. However, the positions ended up not being remunerated through project's funds, as the individuals were GoU's civil servants, thus limiting their available time to allocate to project's activities.
60. Procurement. The project was initially rated as MS, but later updated to Satisfactory, and Highly Satisfactory (HS) by the time the project reached its midpoint. Overall performance of the procurement system in terms of processing steps, internal controls, record keeping, and implementation was in accordance with the PAD and the grant agreement. No substantial procurement-related issues arose, however early on during project implementation some challenges were observed. For instance, cancelling of the activity for printing equipment for NCDC, as funds had already been allocated by the MoES; initial delays in commencement of the procurement of printing and distribution of learning materials (already discussed in the section on key factors during the implementation); and delays with procurement for TV and radio due to Uganda Communication Commission's (UCC) delays in providing the list of stations with the widest coverage. The project leveraged the



submission of bids through email, encouraged as part of the COVID-19 SOPs. This was an important factor in speeding up the processing time of a number of procurement activities.

C. BANK PERFORMANCE

Quality at Entry

61. The World Bank's performance at entry is rated *Highly Satisfactory*. The World Bank team supported the preparation of a project that was relevant to national priorities and to the World Bank's priorities in Uganda as captured in the CPF (FY12-21) by providing technical and coordination support to the MoES. As discussed earlier, the World Bank team assisted the GoU in processing and fast-tracking the emergency request leading to project being approved within four months from receiving the project request from MoES. Simple design and leveraging existing human resources and institutional structures developed during the recently closed UTSEP project facilitated speedy processing, fast-tracking of the preparatory activities, and the timely approval process. The final appraisal of the project was comprehensive, providing a solid analysis and assessment of technical, economic, fiduciary, environmental and social-related issues and risks. The various assessments conducted by the World Bank at entry informed the project design, risk mitigation measures and M&E arrangements.

Quality of Supervision

62. The quality of supervision of the project by the World Bank is also rated *Highly Satisfactory*. As discussed earlier, the project's implementation was of very good quality throughout the project's duration. The project benefited from high quality supervision and technical support which allowed for early resolution of any challenges that arose during implementing stage, which led to successful delivery of all project activities. The task team was composed of team members with the appropriate skills to support project implementation, including education specialists, procurement specialists, FM specialists, as well as environmental and social safeguards specialists. The continuity in the task team leadership from concept to completion as well as the depth of contextual knowledge brought by the task team greatly enhanced the quality of support and supervision. The project benefited from using the same team, including the TTL, who successfully implemented the GPE-funded UTSEP project, which closed in March 2020 thus leveraging the contextual knowledge and existing relationships with the MoES. Finally, the key factor in project's successful supervision was a strong collaboration with DPs, including UNICEF, FCDO and USAID.

Justification of Overall Rating of Bank Performance

63. Based on the ratings for quality at entry and supervision, both rated as *Highly Satisfactory* respectively, the overall Bank performance is rated as *Highly Satisfactory*.



D. RISK TO DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME

64. The risk the project outcomes that have been achieved will not be maintained post completion is **Moderate**.
65. **The key risk to the Outcome 2 focused on student re-entry is the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education system.** Students' dropouts are expected to continue after schools re-open due to a number of household and school-level factors including loss of household income, rising school fees, child labor, teenage marriage and pregnancy amongst others. The GoU, with support from CERP, aimed to mitigate those risk by continued "Back to school" campaigns, that will also be supported under the Uganda Secondary Education Expansion Project (USEEP), for which the FA was signed in March 2022. It is expected that a number of project's interventions under USEEP will ensure that investments under CERP are sustained.
66. **Increasing fiscal pressures and the lack of continued counterpart budget pose risks to the sustainability of some of the interventions.** In particular, the low value of the capitation grants to schools, especially at the primary level, will likely be insufficient to cover additional WASH equipment required to comply with the SOPs to ensure that schools remain open. This can have significant implications ranging from schools needing to raise school fees, to increased rates of virus transmission, or school closures resulting from lack of compliance with the SOPs.

V. LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

67. Several lessons emerge from the experience of CERP and the most significant ones are outlined below.
68. **Lesson 1: Remote learning interventions yield promising results in terms of mitigating learning losses, but more focus is required on poor and vulnerable populations who are expected to incur greater learning losses.** This includes those who were already falling behind, rural children, children with disabilities and girls. This is especially relevant to primary school students who have lost significant time mastering their foundational literacy and numeracy skills. As the findings from the NAPE assessment supported by CERP indicate, numeracy proficiency outcomes amongst P6 students are far worse for girls (with 36 percent of girls rated proficient compared to 46 percent of boys), and students in rural areas (with 36 percent of rural students rated proficient compared to 58 percent of urban students). In addition, students from public schools have much lower proficiency rates, compared to students from private schools (36 percent vs 64 percent). While this data provides insight into state of learning losses amongst those students who returned to schools after closures, learning losses amongst age specific populations are expected to be far greater. This has significant implications for future operations which should specifically target students at greater risk of falling behind and dropping out, with tailored interventions based on an understanding of barriers, developing tools to monitor re-enrolment, as well as setting up structures to bring vulnerable learners back.
69. **Lessons 2: Additional grants to finance SOPs implementation were critical in ensuring the schools were ready to re-open.** This was especially critical given the MoFPED did not disburse capitation grants to schools for the majority of 2021 due to school closures making it impossible for schools to finance SOPs implementation prior to re-opening. However, additional grants disbursed under CERP were allocated on per school basis, based on a standard figure of 1.5 m UGX (US\$400) per school, which was insufficient for schools with high enrollment rates, especially in Refugee Hosting Districts. Two lessons and recommendations



emerge from this intervention: (a) future interventions should consider using per capita formula linked to student enrollment to address equity concerns; (b) expenditures should be tracked at the school level to identify schools' more pressing needs in the context of SOPs compliance to inform future decisions regarding the level of capitation grant increments.¹⁸

70. **Lesson 3: Radio broadcasting and home study materials were the most popular means of remote learning amongst students that could be scaled up and adapted as supplementary learning modalities post school re-opening (e.g. as catch-up materials and remedial learning modalities).** As the findings from the school-based NAPE assessment supported by CERP show, more than 90 percent of Senior 2 students and nearly 80 percent of Primary 6 students used radio broadcasting lessons to learn during school closures. Rates for using home study materials were relatively high at 74 and 76 percent amongst P6 and S2 students respectively. These results have been corroborated by a UWEZO household survey¹⁹ which indicated that radio lessons and printed materials from government were the main resources used to support with home-based learning. The MoES could consider leveraging the existing contracts with radio broadcasters to continue broadcasting lessons as part of the remedial education program (e.g., home based 'literacy hour' program). Established printing and distribution channels for home study materials could be utilized to produce supplementary catch-up/remedial learning packages.
71. **Lesson 4: Ed-tech interventions need to be accompanied by corresponding measures aimed at improving teacher competencies.** The project supported the design and development of the e-learning platform with content for P4-P7 and S1-S2 for math and English. While training for a pilot group of learners and parents was conducted as part of the project's intervention, CERP did not include plans to support teachers in the use of the platform. Capacity building for teachers and Parents Teachers Committees to support children's use of distance learning resources is critical in ensuring that the platform is used on a continuous basis once the schools re-open.
72. **Lesson 5: The GoU and any future WB operation could build upon the structures established to provide psychosocial support services.** The demand for psychosocial support was high amongst students and teachers, as suggested by number of teachers participating in the training, which exceeded the target. There is a growing body of evidence demonstrating that psycho-social services create conditions for improved learning for children and youth affected by crisis. The project provided 'training for trainers' support to the selected 666 Centre Coordinating Tutors, 479 Head Teachers, 119 college Tutors, 88 district officers. The existing structures could be leveraged to set up a scaled-up sustainable model for training school and district staff to provide continuous psycho-social services.
73. **Lesson 6: The GoU could rethink the strategy to developing and printing learning materials to reduce the overall high unit costs.** The relatively high cost of printing and distribution of home study materials meant that funds available under the CERP grant were insufficient to cover all P1-P7 and S1-S6 students. Uganda has some of the highest unit costs per textbook on the continent, leading to low pupil per textbook ratios. This is due to a variety of factors including generally low competitiveness of the industry, issues related to the purchase of design rights by the government, as well as high distribution and storage costs. Revisiting the

¹⁸ As part of the Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers Reform, the GoU is committed to making incremental year-on-year to capitation grants increases at primary, secondary and TVET levels between 2017 and 2024.

¹⁹ Uwezo Uganda (2021) Are our Children Learning? Illuminating the Covid-19 Learning Losses and Gains in Uganda. Uwezo. National Learning Assessment Report, 2021. Kampala: Uwezo Uganda.



textbook supply chain mechanisms and investing more in equitable digital learning materials could help to reduce the overall high costs of textbooks provision.



ANNEX 1. RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND KEY OUTPUTS

A. RESULTS INDICATORS

A.1 PDO Indicators

Objective/Outcome: Support student learning during school closures and safe reopening associated with the COVID-19

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning	Number	0.00 30-Jun-2020	14,000,000.00 30-Jun-2020		14,073,880.00 31-Dec-2021
Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning - Female	Number	0.00	7,000,000.00		7,036,940.00

Comments (achievements against targets):

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
PDO Indicator 2. Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning interventions	Number	0.00 01-Jul-2020	11,900,000.00 31-Jul-2020		12,629,565.00 31-Dec-2021



% of children supported with distance/home-based learning interventions	Percentage	0.00	85.00		90.00
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Comments (achievements against targets):

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
PDO Indicator 3. Number of children previously enrolled in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened.	Number	0.00 01-Jul-2020	5,986,540.00 31-Aug-2021	15-Oct-2021	6,362,078.00 31-Dec-2021
% children previously enrolled in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened	Percentage	0.00	85.00		90.00

Comments (achievements against targets):

Achieved.

PDO 3 indicator measures the number of children previously enrolled in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened. This indicator was achieved based on numbers of students who returned to schools during the partial school re-opening between October 2020 and June 2021 for the selected classes (Primary 4-7, Senior 1-6). During the re-opening a total of **6,362,078** students returned, out of **7,042,989** students previously enrolled, representing a share of 90 percent, thus above the target of 85 percent (5,986,540).



The original target was set based on the assumption that the COVID-19 pandemic would not last longer than a couple of months and most of the students will return to school when school reopened. But the reality was that, only classes Primary 4-7 classes and Secondary 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 classes were allowed to return to school by June 2021. Schools reopened for all classes by January 2022 after the project was closed.

A.2 Intermediate Results Indicators

Component: Component 1: Ensure learning during school closure

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
IRI 1: Awareness and health safeguarding messages disseminated to students, teachers, parents and community members through various media (SMS, text, TV and radio) (number)	Yes/No	No 01-Jul-2020	Yes 31-Jul-2020	Yes	Yes 31-Dec-2021

Comments (achievements against targets):

The Target for IRI 1 is 10,000,000, The actual achieved is 10,000,000.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
IRI 2: Self-learning materials	Yes/No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes



adapted to large print and braille for students with special needs (yes/no)		15-Jun-2020	31-Jul-2020		31-Dec-2021
<p>Comments (achievements against targets): 2,133 copies of braille materials, lessons recorded on the MP3 players and Victor readers distributed to 115 special and inclusive beneficiary schools.</p>					

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Large-scale primary/secondary learning assessments completed	Number	0.00 30-Jun-2020	1.00 31-Jul-2020		1.00 31-Dec-2021
<p>Comments (achievements against targets): This is a new core indicator added to the RF by Global Education GP during the project implementation, which did not exist before the project effectiveness. This assessment is the same assessment of IRI 4.</p>					

Component: Component 2: Support safe re-opening, student re-entry and capacity building for resilience

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
IRI 3. Number public primary and lower secondary of grant-supported schools	Number	0.00 01-Jul-2020	12,200.00 31-Jul-2020		13,756.00 31-Dec-2021



equipped with minimum hygiene standards for prevention of COVID-19					
% public primary and lower secondary of grant-supported schools equipped with minimum hygiene standards for prevention of COVID-19	Percentage	0.00	85.00		96.00
Comments (achievements against targets):					

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
IRI 4: A rapid assessment on the effects of Covid-19 on Primary and Secondary Education conducted	Yes/No	No 15-Jun-2020	Yes 31-Jul-2020	Yes	Yes 31-Dec-2021
Comments (achievements against targets):					

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
IRI 5. Number of officials and	Number	0.00	151,858.00		159,247.00



teachers in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened.		01-Jul-2020	31-Jul-2020		31-Dec-2021
% of officials and teachers in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened.	Percentage	0.00	85.00		89.00
Comments (achievements against targets):					

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
IRI 6. Number of Headteachers trained on emergency response preparedness and psycho-social support.	Number	0.00 01-Jul-2020	12,200.00 31-Jul-2020		14,353.00 31-Dec-2021
% of Headteachers trained on emergency response preparedness and psycho-social support.	Percentage	0.00	85.00		100.00
Comments (achievements against targets):					



Target was exceeded as all headteachers were required by the MoES to participate in the emergency response preparedness and psycho-social support training.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
IRI 7. Number of students whose learning was assessed to evaluate loss of learning during school closure.	Number	0.00	3,181,039.00		2,606,817.00
		01-Jul-2020	31-Jul-2020		31-Dec-2021

Comments (achievements against targets):

learning could not be assessed for 50% of *all* students as envisaged at the design stage. The team therefore revised the denominator to 50% of 6,362,078 students *who have returned* to classrooms during the partial re-opening, which was **3,181,039**. The actual number of students assessed was 2,606,817, or **41%, representing a partial achievement against its target of 50%.**

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
IRI 8. % of students provided with access to programs on psycho-social support.	Percentage	0.00	60.00		63.00
		01-Jul-2020	31-Jul-2020		31-Dec-2021

Comments (achievements against targets):





B. KEY OUTPUTS BY COMPONENT

Objective/Outcome 1: To support student learning in pre-primary, primary and lower secondary during school closures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic	
Outcome Indicators	<p>PDI 1: Number of students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning (CRI)</p> <p>PDI 2: Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning interventions</p>
Intermediate Results Indicators	<p>IRI 1: Awareness and health safeguarding messages disseminated to students, teachers, parents and community members through various media (SMS, text, TV and radio).</p> <p>IRI 2: Self-learning materials adapted to large print and braille for students with special needs.</p>
Key Outputs by Component (linked to the achievement of the Objective/Outcome 1)	<p>COMPONENT 1: ENSURE LEARNING DURING SCHOOL CLOSURE AND PREPARE FOR SCHOOL RE-OPENING.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and Produce self-study materials for learners in Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary; • Print and distribute 2,617,341, Primary 5-Primary 7 copies of home study learning materials; • Print and distribute 2,813,504, S1-S4 home study materials i.e., one booklet for Humanities and One booklet for Science Subjects; • Air lessons on Radio and Television to support learning; • Facilitate teachers to prepare and deliver lessons on radio and T.V.; • Adapt Learning Materials for learners with special needs;



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design, write and produce learning materials for pre-primary schools; • Customize Content for Special Needs Education & Electronic Media; • Procure 200 Braille machines for learners with a visual impairment; • Procure assorted equipment for learners with Visual and Hearing Impairment.
<p>Objective/Outcome 2: To ensure safe re-opening and student re-entry.</p>	
<p>Outcome Indicators</p>	<p>PDI 3: Number of children previously enrolled in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened.</p>
<p>Intermediate Results Indicators</p>	<p>IRI 3: Number public primary and lower secondary of grant-supported schools equipped with minimum hygiene standards for prevention of COVID-19.</p> <p>IRI 4: A rapid assessment on the effects of Covid-19 on Primary and Secondary Education conducted.</p> <p>IRI 5: Number of officials and teachers in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened.</p> <p>IRI 6: Number of Headteachers trained on emergency response preparedness and psycho-social support.</p> <p>IRI 7: Number of students whose learning was assessed to evaluate loss of learning during school closure.</p> <p>IRI 8: % of students provided with access to programs on psycho-social support.</p>
<p>Key Outputs by Component (linked to the achievement of the Objective/Outcome 2)</p>	<p>COMPONENT 2: SUPPORT SAFE RE-OPENING, STUDENT RE-ENTRY AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR RESILLIENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop messages and materials for re-opening of education institutions;



- Disseminate messages on re-opening of Education Institutions;
- Provide school grants to implement the water sanitation and hygiene to all 12,472 registered public Primary Schools;
- Provide school grants to implement the water sanitation and hygiene to all 1,284 registered public secondary Schools;
- Sensitize parents, students, and communities around the 32 Education Institutions used as Isolation Centres for COVID-19
- Monitor all 135 Local Governments to ensure compliance with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for re-opening of Education Institutions as communicated by government.
- Develop a Communication Impact Strategy for the Education Sector;
- Procure and supply a service van for the MOES's Communication/Press Team;
- Procure and develop a customized e-learning platform for tracking of learning;
- Train 356 District Education Officers from all Local Governments, on responding to emergencies and offering psychosocial support;
- Train 14,353 Head teachers on emergency response preparedness and psychosocial support related to COVID-19.
- Conduct a rapid assessment on the effects of Covid-19 on Basic and Secondary Education in all 135 Local Governments.

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

Name	Role
Preparation	
Hongyu Yang	Task Team Leader(s)
Grace Nakuya Musoke Munanura	Procurement Specialist(s)
Paul Kato Kamuchwezi	Financial Management Specialist
Jean Okolla Owino	Team Member
Damalie Evalyne Nyanja	Team Member
Christine Kasedde	Environmental Specialist
Diana Rita Nantaba Sekaggya Bagarukayo	Team Member
Asasira Hilari Kamushaga	Counsel
Ndiga Akech Odindo	Counsel
Christine Katende Namirembe	Social Specialist
Supervision/ICR	
Hongyu Yang	Task Team Leader(s)
Grace Nakuya Musoke Munanura	Procurement Specialist(s)
Paul Kato Kamuchwezi	Financial Management Specialist
Christine Katende Namirembe	Social Specialist
Ndiga Akech Odindo	Counsel
Christine Kasedde	Environmental Specialist
Elizabeth Janet Aisu	Social Specialist
Sandra M Kuwaza	Team Member
Naomi Obbo	Environmental Specialist
Jean Okolla Owino	Team Member



Elif Yonca Yukseker	Team Member
Michael Trucano	Team Member
Agnes Kaye	Team Member

B. STAFF TIME AND COST		
Stage of Project Cycle	Staff Time and Cost	
	No. of staff weeks	US\$ (including travel and consultant costs)
Preparation		
Total	0.00	0.00
Supervision/ICR		
Total	0.00	0.00

This section is not editable. Therefore, adding explanations below:

This project was financed by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) grant. The project was responding to the Covid-19 pandemic. It was an emergency operation. The preparation time was very short. Given that, there was no budget code planned for the preparation. The team members charged their time to different tasks. For supervision, the GPE provided a supervision grant of \$300,000 for 16 months implementation plus 6 months for project closing and preparation of Implementation Completion Review Report (ICR). The supervision fund was fully utilized.

ANNEX 3. PROJECT COST BY COMPONENT

Components	Amount at Approval (US\$M)	Actual at Project Closing (US\$M)	Percentage of Approval (US\$M)
Component 1: Ensure learning during school closure and prepare for school reopening	7.63	7.40	97%
Component 2: Supporting safe re-opening, student re-entry and capacity building for resilience	6.72	6.87	102%
Component 3: Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation	0.35	0.353	101%
Total	14.70	14.60	99%

ANNEX 4. EFFICIENCY ANALYSIS

1. The Project Development Objective for the Uganda COVID-19 Education Response (GPE) Project was to recover and mitigate effects of COVID-19 on pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education students and teachers and create resilience to future shocks in the education system in Uganda. This was achieved by providing resources to ensure that children continued to learn during the period of school closures and by preparing schools for a safe reopening, as well as by enhancing the capacity of key education stakeholders to respond to the emerging needs during and after the COVID-19 outbreak.
2. The Project aligned with the MoES' response plan to the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of this response plan was to ensure better preparedness and an effective response to the outbreak: (1) minimizing the adverse effects of COVID-19 on learners, teachers, and the education system at large; and (2) enhancing the capacity of the MoES, DLGs and stakeholders to promote protection of learners and teachers and ensure continuity of learning and transition to normal school program. It represented an opportunity to build the basis for long-term improvements in several areas such as pedagogy, technology (distance learning and assessments), financing, and parental involvement.
3. In Uganda, schools were closed on March 20, 2020. Over 15 million learners and about 548,000 teachers at all levels from pre-primary to upper secondary were impacted.^[1] Students in candidate classes (Primary 6-7, Senior 3-6) were allowed to return to schools in October 2020 to sit their exams. Schooling for students in early grades (P1-P3) was interrupted completely, while students from other classes (P4-P6, S2-S3) briefly returned to classrooms after a year, in March 2021, for a brief period until schools closed again in June 2021. Schools fully reopened in January 2022, meaning a large share of students did not return to classrooms for a period of 21 months.

Expected Impact

4. Experience from the Ebola outbreak, which killed more than 11,000 people in West Africa between 2014 and 2016 showed that school closures, restrictions on gatherings, and loss of family income have impacts beyond the illness itself. For school age children, prolonged school closures increase the risk of dropouts and can contribute to increased rates of sexual abuse and exploitation of children. Particularly for young girls, the social distancing and quarantine recommendations, in addition to increased economic stress and uncertainty, exacerbate GBV risks. Increased numbers of teenage pregnancy would likewise increase girls' likelihood to dropout from school. The current crisis can also exacerbate inequalities, as children and youth from poorer and marginalized households face broader risks linked to limited access to essential services such as water and sanitation, school information, electricity and internet services.

Sierra Leone experience with Ebola

5. In Sierra Leone, schools were closed for 8 months, which represented a lost year of schooling. Among measures to support students and communities, the Government used radio to reach students, invested in the safety and health of the learning environment, and monitored radio/TV programs and school re-opening.
6. Experience showed that education radio programming was important to keep the link with education. It covered content from the primary and secondary levels, in core subjects, five days a week, where listeners could call in with questions.

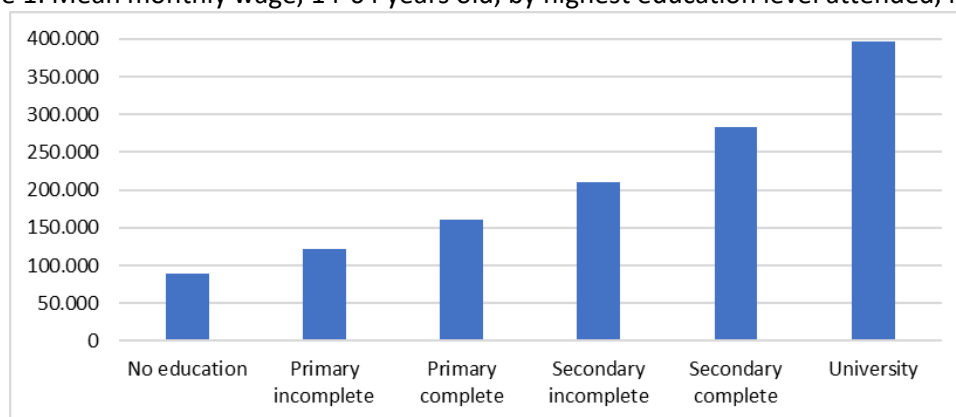
7. A safe and secure learning environment was crucial for children’s reenrollment in schools. Schools were cleaned up and maintained, and WASH and hygiene kits were provided. Monitoring of school re-opening was important to increase trust, and data showed students’ enrollment was comparable to pre-crisis levels.
8. Additional measures included shortened academic years, with accelerated syllabus and psychosocial support to special needs of survivors, orphans, and alternative education for pregnant or mothering girls.
9. Experience showed that while educational institutions are closed, any gains in terms of access and learning are at risk. School closures can lead to learning losses, increased dropouts, and higher inequality. In addition, it was expected that the economic impact of the pandemic would also affect households, with negative impacts on education demand and long-term human capital and wellbeing costs.

Cost-Benefit Analysis

10. This Project supported activities to help mitigate the adverse effects the COVID-19 pandemic would have on education outcomes, which are a critical component of human capital. As the nature of work evolves in response to rapid technological change, investing properly in human capital is considered not only desirable but necessary in the pursuit of economic development and wealth. To illustrate this concept, the World Bank developed the Human Capital Index (HCI), which measures the impact of underinvesting in human capital on the productivity of the next generation of workers. It is defined as the amount of human capital that a child born today can expect to achieve in view of the risks of poor health and poor education currently prevailing in the country where that child lives.
11. Education is a major component of the HCI, and Africa is the region of the world with the highest economic returns to education. The key drivers of these returns are the quality of education and the average years of schooling that a child may benefit from. Analyses of HCI indexes among developing countries show that Uganda is underinvesting in the future productivity of its citizens. A child born in Uganda today will be only 38 percent “as productive when she grows up as she could be if she enjoyed complete education and full health.” A child born today in Uganda is expected to complete only 6.8 years of education combined by age 18, compared to a regional average of 8.3. Because of the low levels of learning achievement in Uganda, this is only equivalent to 4.3 years of learning, with 2.5 years considered as lost due to poor quality. Even though Uganda is ranked among the countries in the lowest quartile of the HCI distribution, with an index slightly lower than the average for the SSA region, the index has increased over time. The current pandemic represents a risk to any gains associated with education and, therefore, the importance of this Project to mitigate those risks.
12. The independent household survey collected by UWEZO in August 2021 – 17 months after schools were initially closed – showed that the distance learning materials provided by the MoES, coupled with television and radio programs, constituted the main modality of distance-learning.^[2] While survey results showed that the share of children fully competent in English reading increased from 32.5 percent in 2018 to 39.5 percent in 2021; the share of non-readers doubled, from 6.2 to 11.6 percent. The available evidence seems to point out that children who were already behind appear to be further behind, with those from poorer households as the most affected.

13. Private returns to education in Sub-Saharan Africa are higher than the worldwide average. While the regional mean in terms of years of schooling is lower, at 5.2 compared to the world average of 8 years, the private rate of return to an additional year of education was estimated at 10.5 percent compared to the global average of 8.8 percent.^[3] In addition, as shown in the figure below, the average expected income also increases according to the highest education level attended.

Figure 1. Mean monthly wage, 14-64 years old, by highest education level attended, in UGX



Source: UNHS 2016/17.

Notes: Monthly wage from main job, for those employed as paid employees, employers or self-employed.

14. By the end of the Project in December 2021, 14,073,880 students in preprimary, primary and lower-secondary education benefited from Project’s interventions, with 12,471,399 children supported with home-based learning interventions. The main goal was to ensure learning continuity, with expected positive education outcomes such as lower learning losses and higher retention rates, particularly for those children from poorer households and young girls. Finally, grants disbursed to schools were critical to ensure safe schools reopening and support school re-entry. In grant-supported schools, about 90 percent of students in selected classes returned after the partial school reopening between October 2020 and June 2021.
15. For the cost-benefits analysis, results achieved are compared with a hypothetical scenario in the absence of the Project. Based on observed achievements, it is assumed that 10 percent of students in primary and lower secondary education dropped out of school because of the pandemic and resulting school closures. In general, the opportunity costs of schooling increases as children age. Also, life and job losses related to the pandemic resulted in financial stress at the household level. Finally, it is expected that a higher number of young girls married or became pregnant during school closures, preventing them to continue their studies. Without the Project, it was assumed that these numbers would have doubled. Moreover, it is assumed that the remaining students would have been for nearly two years without classes resulting in decreased and delayed learning. In the United States, the evidence from 3-month summer breaks points to learning losses equivalent to about a month’s worth on average, in terms of students’ achievement scores. Considering that in Uganda schools were closed for about 21 months, it is assumed that students would have lost an equivalent to 7 months of learning, or almost 60 percent of a school year.
16. Costs are equivalent to the total cost of the Project – which disbursed US\$17.4 million over a period of 18 months – and additional costs due to the increased number of students enrolled in

primary and lower secondary education as a result of the implementation of Project's activities. These additional students correspond to those who were enrolled in either primary or lower secondary education and would have dropped out in the absence of the Project. These students would not complete primary or secondary education.

17. Finally, in Uganda, primary education lasts 7 years, from ages 6 to 12, while lower secondary education lasts 4 years, from ages 13 to 17. In 2017, completion rates were 53 and 26 percent for primary and lower secondary education, respectively. It was also assumed that students would join the labor market the year after graduating, at an overall employment rate of 77 percent, and they would work for 40 years.^[4] Finally, the discount rate used to calculate the present value of costs and benefits was 6.5 percent.^[5]
18. The economic analysis confirms the high efficiency of the Project, with an internal rate of return (IRR) of 13 percent. The net present value was estimated at US\$523 million, reflecting the high returns to education in Uganda and the importance of mitigating learning losses and school dropouts for over 12 million students in primary and lower secondary who were supported with home-based learning interventions financed by the Project.
19. Nonetheless, it is important to also acknowledge the impact of other COVID-19 response interventions financed by development partners in Uganda that might as well have contributed to the positive results observed in the Project. These include, for instance, vaccination support for teachers, community-led learning, and financial and psycho-social support to students, which all contribute to reduce learning losses and improve students' retention.

^[1] Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) preparedness and response plan 2019.

^[2] <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/ugandas-record-breaking-two-year-school-closure-led-to-no-decline-number-kids-who-can-read>.

^[3] Psacharopoulos, George, Harry Anthony Patrinos. 2018. Returns to Investment in Education: A Decennial Review of the Global Literature. Policy Research Working Paper; No. 8402. Washington, DC: World Bank.

^[4] Life expectancy was 63 years in 2019 (World Bank - World Development Indicators).

^[5] <https://www.bou.or.ug/bou/bouwebsite/BOU-HOME>. Accessed in March 2022.



**THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS**

**UGANDA COVID-19 EMERGENCY EDUCATION RESPONSE PROJECT
FUNDED BY
GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION**

MANAGED BY THE WORLD ABNK

**IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2020- DECEMBER 2021
(Summarised Version)**

FEBRUARY 2022

1. INTRODUCTION

The Uganda Covid-19 Emergency Education Response Project (CERP) was funded by the Global Partnership for Education and implemented by Ministry of Education and Sports with the World Bank as the Grant Agent and UNICEF as the Coordinating Agent. The project was designed to support learning in pre-primary, primary and lower secondary during school closure associated with the Covid-19 pandemic and ensure safe re-opening and student re-entry. CERP was implemented for 15 months from September 26, 2020 to December 31, 2021 and activities targeted learners in the entire country. The project was structured around three components:

- i) Component 1: **Ensure learning during school closure and prepare for school re-opening.**
- ii) Component 2: **Support safe re-opening, student re-entry and capacity building for resilience.**
- iii) Component 3: **Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation.**

2. SUMMARY OF PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

This section summarizes the achievements of the project indicators and the project planned outputs.

2.1 Project Development Objective Results Indicators

S/N	Outcome Indicators	Baseline (Prior to project start)	Planned End Target	Actual Achieved
1	PDO 1: Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning	0	14,000,000	14,073,880
	Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning - Female		7,000,000	7,036,940
2	PDO 2: Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning interventions (Number)	0	11,900,000	12,629,565
	% of children supported with distance/home-based learning interventions (Percentage)		85%	90%
3	PDO 3: Number of children previously enrolled in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened. (Number)	0	5,986,540	6,362,078
	% children previously enrolled in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened (Percentage)		85%	90%

2.2 Project Planned Outputs

S /N	Planned Output	Actual Cumulative output
1.	COMPONENT 1: ENSURE LEARNING DURING SCHOOL CLOSURE AND PREPARE FOR SCHOOL RE-OPENING	
1.1	Design and Produce self-study materials for learners in Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● Self-study materials for pre-primary, Primary and Secondary were developed by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC).
1.1.2	Print and distribute 2,617,341, Primary 5-Primary 7 copies of home study learning materials P5- 1,423,584 P6- 1,168,086 P7- 25,353	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● Printed and distributed 2,617,341 set of home study materials to Primary 5, Primary 6 and Primary 7 learners in 28,931 public and private primary schools. ● Each book contained four subjects of English, Mathematics, Social Studies and Integrated Science.
	Print and distribute 2,813,504, S1-S4 home study materials i.e. one booklet for Humanities and One booklet for Science Subjects. S1- 1,009,946 S2- 934,962 S3- 858,840 S4- 9,706	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● Printed and distributed 2,813,504 copies of home study learning materials for secondary school learners from S1-S4 to 5,300 private and public secondary schools. ● Each Learner received two booklets one for Humanities (English, History and Geography) and Science (Mathematics, Biology, Physics and Chemistry) subjects.
1.1.3	Air lessons on Radio and Television to support learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● The airing of lessons on radio was done during the second lockdown of education institutions to ensure that learners continue learning. ● A total of 22 radio stations across the entire country were procured and aired lessons following a timetable prepared by the Ministry of Education and Sports. ● <i>Aired lessons for P.4 and P.5 from June 15 to July 14, 2021.</i> ● <i>Aired lessons for P.6, S.1, S.2, S.3 and S5 from August 16 to September 10, 2021.</i> ● <i>For hard-to-reach areas, special lessons were aired from November 15 to December 10, 2021.</i>
1.1.3.1	Facilitate teachers to prepare and deliver lessons on radio and T.V.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● All teachers who prepared and recorded lessons were facilitated under the project through NCDC.
1.2	Support students with special needs	

S /N	Planned Output	Actual Cumulative output
1.2.1	Adapt Learning Materials for learners with special needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● Materials adapted into braille for 7 classes (P.1, P.2, P.6) and (S.1, S.2, S.3 and S.5) by NCDC. ● Lessons on various topics were recorded on to the MP 3 players and victor readers and distributed to the 115 primary schools.
1.2.1.1	Design, write and produce learning materials for pre-primary schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● Materials for the pre-primary levels; Baby, Middle and Top Classes were designed. The home study materials for the pre-primary were not printed since this was not planned under the project. Other stakeholders used the designed materials to print and distribute for their districts of jurisdiction. ● The National Harmonized Parental Guide/Boost was developed to support home learning for children of 3-6 years. This will be used even after the COVID-19 pandemic. ● 15,000 copies of the Parental Guide/Boost English version were printed for the 4 pilot districts of Butebo, Pallisa, Butaleja and Budaka, ● The English version of the Parental Guide/Boost was interpreted to three local languages used in the four pilot districts.
1.2.2	Production and Customizing of Content for SNE & Electronic Media	
1.2.2.1	Customize Content for Special Needs Education & Electronic Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● Materials developed were uploaded on the website. ● These can be assessed on https://ncdc-go-ug.digital and www.education.co.ug.
1.2.2.2	Procure 200 Braille machines for learners with a visual impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● The 200 braille machines procured were distributed to 65 beneficiary primary schools.
1.2.2.3	Procure assorted equipment for learners with Visual and Hearing Impairment. These included: 77 victor readers, 154 SD cards, 100 MP players, 37 Braille Embossers, 137 Sign language manuals, and; 90 rolls of braille paper.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● Assorted equipment procured was all distributed to the 115 primary schools in 65 districts. ● Training of teachers in the use of the equipment was conducted to ensure proper use.
2.	COMPONENT 2: SUPPORT SAFE RE-OPENING, STUDENT RE-ENTRY AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR RESILLIENCE	
2.1	Support the re-opening of education Institutions	

S /N	Planned Output	Actual Cumulative output
2.1.1	Develop messages and materials for re-opening of education institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● Messages developed in conjunction with the Ministry of Health for both teachers and learners.
2.1.2	Disseminate messages on re-opening of Education Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● Messages disseminated to students, teachers and to the general public.
2.1.3	Provide school grants to implement the water sanitation and hygiene to all 12,472 registered public Primary Schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● School grants were disbursed to 12,472 public <i>primary schools in February 2021</i>. Each school received UGX 1.5m (USD 400) to procure materials in an effort to implement the SOPs.
	Provide school grants to implement the water sanitation and hygiene to all 1,284 registered public secondary Schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● School grants were disbursed to 1,284 (<i>1,178 Secondary Schools on USE Program and 106 Public traditional secondary schools</i>) in February 2021. Each school received UGX 1.5m (USD 400) to procure materials in an effort to implement the SOPs.
2.1.4	Sensitize parents, students, and communities around the 32 Education Institutions used as Isolation Centres for COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● Sensitization of all the communities in the 32 quarantine centres done by the Ministry of Health.
2.1.5	Monitor all 135 Local Governments to ensure compliance with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for re-opening of Education Institutions as communicated by government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed ● 29,240 schools were inspected by the Directorate of Education Standards (DES) in 135 Local Governments since the re-opening in October 2021 to ensure compliance with SOPs.
2.2	Sub-Component 2.2: Capacity Building for resilience	
2.2.1	Strengthening communication of the impact of the education sector	
2.2.1.1	Develop a Communication Impact Strategy for the Education Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● Communication Impact strategy developed by the Ministry.
2.2.1.2	Procure and supply a service van for the MOES's Communication/Press Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● Procured a service van and handed over to the Ministry's Communication/Press Team to quickly respond to any COVID-19 related emergency situation.
2.2.2	Support to teachers in the use of E-learning	
2.2.2.1	Procure and develop a customized e-learning platform for tracking of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● Development of E-learning system was done.

S /N	Planned Output	Actual Cumulative output
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> About 1,000,000 learners of P4-S2 were identified across different districts and regions and registered on the system. The system is being managed by (DES) and is in use.
2.2.3	Strengthen the capacity of Education Institutions to respond to Emergencies	
2.2.3.1	Train 356 District Education Officers from all Local Governments, on responding to emergencies and offering psychosocial support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed. A total of 1,410 officers were trained on responding to emergencies, offering psychosocial support and training of others. These included Inspectors of schools, Education Officers, Tutors of Primary Teachers Colleges.
2.2.3.2	Train 14,353 Head teachers on emergency response preparedness and psychosocial support related to COVID-19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed. A total of 14,353 head teachers in primary and secondary school were trained on emergency response preparedness before reopening of schools. Selected 666 Centre Coordinating Tutors, 479 head teachers 119 college Tutors, 88 district officers were trained to train teachers, head teachers and learners in offering psychosocial support whenever needed.
2.2.4	Conduct a study on the effects of Covid-19	
2.2.4.1	Conduct a rapid assessment on the effects of Covid-19 on Basic and Secondary Education in all 135 Local Governments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed. A field based national assessment was conducted by UNEB in March 2021 in a sample of 700 schools (500 primary and 200 secondary) selected from 100 districts. Some of the key findings are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>P.6 Pupils proficient in Literacy reduced by 4.7 points from 31.8% in 2018 to 27.1% in 2021. P.6 pupils proficient in numeracy reduced by 13.4 percentage points from 54.6% in 2018 to 41.2 % in 2021.</i> <i>S.3 Students proficient in English increased by 10.3 percentage points from 47.4% in 2017 to 57.7% in 2021 and proficiency in mathematics increased by 3.2 percentage points from 39.3%</i>
3	COMPONENT 3: PROJECT MANAGEMENT, MONITORING and EVALUATION	
3.1	Project Management	
3.1.1	Procure office equipment such as laptops and other small equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed. Laptops and other small office equipment were procured and handed over to the project implementation team.
3.1.2	Procure Office Stationery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed.

S /N	Planned Output	Actual Cumulative output
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Procured assorted office stationery.
3.1.3	Quarterly Monitoring of project implementation,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed. ● Project implementation on procurement management, financial management, Environment and Social Safeguards and all operations was conducted. ● Effective coordination with all stakeholders was done to ensure the project was on track and achieved within the timelines.

3. CHALLENGES

During the implementation of the project, some challenges were encountered and these are outlined as per the interventions below:

(a) *Provision of home study learning materials*

- i. Although the project allocated about half of its total funds for home study materials, it was still not enough to print study materials for all classes from P1-P7 and S1-S6. P5-P7 and S1-S4 benefitted under the project Hence, there was a delay in printing and distributing materials for the lower primary (P1-P4) and the upper secondary (S5-S6) as Government had to find other sources of funds.
- ii. Safety and insecurity situations were challenging during the distribution of the materials especially in some parts of the Northern region bordered with South Sudan and DRC.
- iii. Broken bridges and heavy rains made it difficult to reach some areas in time during the distribution of home study materials.
- iv. Due to the lengthy period of school closure during COVID-19, some private schools completely closed and could not be located during the distribution of materials. Materials for such schools were returned to the Ministry.

(b) *Airing of lessons on radio*

- i. Some families didn't have a radio set for learners to listen to the radio lessons.
- ii. Some learners were engaged in home chores and casual labour which hindered them to attending lessons on radio regularly.

(c) *Provision of school grants to implement the WASH program*

- i. **The standard figure of Ugx.1.5m (USD 400) allocated was inadequate for some schools with high enrolment especially after the re-opening of schools for the non-candidate classes.**

(d) Assessment on the effects of loss of learning during Covid-19 for Primary and Secondary Education

- i. Given the COVID-19 situation in the country during project implementation, re-opening of schools was phased and therefore the assessment could not be conducted on all learners per class as planned. Only two classes of P6 and S3 were assessed.

(e) Inspection of schools on compliance to SOPs

- i. Although over 90 percent of schools complied with SOPs, there were small number of schools especially private schools which were reluctant to follow the Ministry's guidelines to implement the SOPs on COVID-19.
- ii. Difficulty to collect data in some schools as they had closed due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

(f) Implementation of social and environment safeguards

- i. **Difficulty in tracking the social and environmental safeguards at school level as schools were closed for most of the project implementation period.**
- ii. **Inability to collect data from some schools as no one was found on site due to the lockdown.**

(g) Procurement management

- i. **Delay to commence the procurement of home study materials. The Ministry had proposed to use a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE) that printed the first round of home study materials. However, the process of proving that the SOE was legally and financially autonomous took longer than expected hence causing delay in the commencement of the procurement process. The second round of home study materials were eventually printed through the competitive bidding process by three private firms and distributed to both government and private primary and secondary schools in the country successfully.**
- ii. **Delay to commence the procurement of airtime on radio stations to support learning during the lockdown. The user department within MoES had to prove to the Contracts Committee that there would be value for money since schools were reopening under a phased approach and whether families had radios for the learners to use. In addition, preparation of content to be aired on radio was time intensive.**
- iii. **Delayed procurement process for the service van for the Ministry communication team. Only one out of the three bidders issued with the solicitation document submitted a bid. This was evaluated and was found responsive and therefore awarded the contract to supply the van. However, the firm declined to sign the contract because the model they quoted for was out of stock and the one available was more expensive. This process was cancelled, and a new procurement process started. The new process resulted into a signed contract and the Van was successfully delivered.**
- iv. **Since the project was considered emergency, limited time was given to the suppliers to implement the awarded contracts.**

(h) Financial Management

- i. **The Project did not have counterpart funding from Government of Uganda and so, some activities which are eligible under GOU could not be made under the project since they were not included in the project such as purchasing vehicles for PCU use for field work.**
- ii. **The project used MOES staff for the positions of Financial Management Specialist and two accounts staff to handle all financial matters. However, they were not remunerated under the project because they are government employees (civil servants) and receive salary from the government.**

(i) Project Operations

- i. Support staff including a secretary and an office attendant from the mainstream²⁰ Ministry were attached to the Project Coordination Unit (PCU); however, these were irregular leading to the technical project staff filling in their gaps.
- ii. No Ministry vehicle and driver were allocated to the PCU. The main form of transportation under this project was motorcycles (boda boda) or foot. This made movement to the different offices difficult.

4. LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Lessons Learnt

- a) **The amount of flexibility, resilience adopted by the project in its implementation within the given resource envelope were good lessons to learn. The project managed to print and distribute home study learning materials to support continuity of learning among upper primary and secondary school learners; adapted materials and equipment for special needs education, carried out radio lessons and printed materials for e-learning platform.**
- b) **The high level of involvement and support by the Ministry of Education and Sports Officials both at the centre and at the various local governments was paramount in the implementation of the project's activities.**
- c) **The school grants disbursed to public schools played a big role in facilitating adherence to SOPs put in place by the Ministry of Health.**
- d) **In a bid to comply with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), electronic submission of bids was encouraged and saved time. More time would have been required for submission given the distance in case of radio stations to travel and deliver the hard copies of bids as usually was the practice.**

²⁰ No provision was made for support staff in the budget. Hence, the use of mainstream/MoES staff who already had other responsibilities.

- e) The use of experienced and qualified staff in the implementation of the project enabled timely achievement and completion of all project outputs.

4.2 Recommendations

- a) The implementing agency (MOES) should always follow the guidelines/regulations governing project implementation to avoid time wastage in case of diversion.
- b) Government should set aside some resources to always complement donor funds specially to meet some expenses which are not funded by the project.
- c) Market surveys should always be made to ensure that the planned activities fit within the planned budget.

5. PERFORMANCE RATING

5.1 Ministry of Education and Sports

(i) **Rating:** Satisfactory

(ii) **Justification:**

- a. Project Development Objective achieved.
- b. 100% of the grant disbursed.
- c. 100% of the planned activities completed.

5.2 The World Bank

(i) **Rating:** Satisfactory

(ii) **Justification:**

- a. Technical support fully provided to the ministry implementation team in all project interventions that included; procurement, financial management, safeguards and monitoring.
- b. The use of the Bank's Procurement Framework provisions to fast-track emergency procurement enabled timely completion of procurement related activities.

Annex 1: The Project Results Framework

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline April 2020	End Target, Dec. 2021	Cumulative Achievements by December 2021	NOTES
Project Development Objective Indicators					
PDO 1: Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning	Number	0	14,000,000	14,073,880	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieved. ● There are 14,814,611 (95%) learners in pre-primary, primary and secondary level affected by the closure of schools due to Covid-19. ● This includes awareness and health safeguarding messages developed and disseminated to learners (SMS, TV, Radio, and Community), Radio and TV lessons, e-platform, school grant, and home visit programs for ECCE, home study learning materials.
Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning - Female	Number	0	7,000,000	7,036,940	
PDO 2: Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning interventions (Number)	Number	0	11,900,000	12,629,565	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieved. ● These comprised of home study learning materials for P1-P7 and S1-S6, adapted materials and equipment for special needs education, online materials, and radio lessons, TV programs, and printing materials for e-learning platform.
% of children supported with distance/home-based learning interventions (Percentage)	%	0	85	90	
PDO 3: Number of children previously enrolled in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened. (Number)	Number	0	5,986,540	6,362,078	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieved. ● This is achieved based on number of students who returned to schools during the partial school re-opening between October 2020 and June 2021 for the selected classes (Primary 4-7, senior 1-6).
% children previously enrolled in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened (Percentage)	%	0	85	90	
Intermediate Results Indicators					
Component 1: Ensure learning during school closure					
IRI 1: Awareness and health safeguarding messages developed and disseminated to students, teachers and communities (SMS, TV, Radio (Number)	Number	0	10,000,000	10,000,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieved. ● Through Government efforts, all learners have received or are aware of the health safeguarding messages on Covid-19.
IRI 2: Self-learning materials adapted to large print and braille for students with special needs (yes/no) (Yes/No)	Yes/No	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieved. ● Materials were adapted and distributed to schools with learners having special educational needs.
Component 2: Support safe re-opening, student re-entry and capacity building for resilience					
IRI 3: Number public primary and lower secondary of grant-supported schools equipped with minimum hygiene standards for prevention of COVID -19	Number	0	12,200	13,756	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieved. ● At the re-opening of schools from the first lockdown in October 2020, grants were sent to all public primary and

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline April 2020	End Target, Dec. 2021	Cumulative Achievements by December 2021	NOTES
					secondary schools to ensure implementation of SOPs on Covid-19. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regular school inspections were undertaken to ensure compliance to SOPs.
% public primary and lower secondary of grant-supported schools equipped with minimum hygiene standards for prevention of COVID-19 (Percentage)	%	0	85%	96%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieved.
IRI 4: A rapid assessment on the effects of COVID-19 on Primary and Secondary Education conducted (Yes/No)	Yes/No	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieved. ● The assessment was conducted.
IRI 5: Number of officials and teachers in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened. (Number)	Number	0	151,858	159,247	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieved. ● The number was calculated based on MoES/DES inspection report (90% of teachers returned) conducted in March 2021 for primary schools, plus estimated secondary school teachers returned to schools (30%) between Oct 2020 and March 2021. ● Based on the assessment report, teachers of lower classes were also handling the upper classes to ensure social distancing in class. i.e., more streams were created for each class.
% of officials and teachers in grant-supported schools who return to school once the school system is reopened. (Percentage)	%	0	85	89	
IRI 6: Number of Headteachers trained on emergency response preparedness and psycho-social support. (Number)	Number	0	12,200	14,353	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieved.
% of Headteachers trained on emergency response preparedness and psycho-social support. (Percentage)	%	0	85%	100%	
IRI 7: Number of students whose learning was assessed to evaluate loss of learning during school closure. (Number)	Number	0	6,000,000	2,606,817	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Partially Achieved. ● Due to the phased re-opening of school policy during COVID-19 pandemic, only classes P6-P7 and S3, S4, S6 were allowed to return to school by March 2021. No sooner had the classes P4, P5, S1, S2 reported to school than the second lockdown was instituted. The students in the pre-primary and the lower primary (P1-P3) were never allowed to return to school. The second COVID-19 lockdown was instituted in June 2021. ● As a result, IRI 7 is partially achieved due to selected classes (P6 and S3) being assessed in the brief period of re-opening.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline April 2020	End Target, Dec. 2021	Cumulative Achievements by December 2021	NOTES
IRI 8: % of students provided with access to programs on psycho-social support. (Percentage)	%	0	60%	63%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieved. ● Learners were supported as they reported to schools.

ANNEX 6. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (IF ANY)

1. Key project documents
 - a. Project Appraisal Document
 - b. Grant Agreement
 - c. Implementation Status Reports (November 2020, June 2021, November 2021, January 2022)
 - d. Aide Memoires (October 2020, April 2021, October 2021)
2. Other project documents
 - a. Inspection Reports. Directorate of Education Standards.
 - b. “The Effect of COVID-19 Pandemic on Teaching and Learning at Primary and Secondary Education Levels in Uganda” National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE). Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2021)
 - c. School grants accountability records
3. Other World Bank documents
 - a. Country Partnership Framework (2016-2021)
 - b. Country Systematic Diagnostics (2021)
4. Other documents
 - a. Uwezo Uganda (2021) Are our Children Learning? Illuminating the COVID-19 Learning Losses and Gains in Uganda. Uwezo. National Learning Assessment Report, 2021. Kampala: Uwezo Uganda.