



Getting to Best in Education (P162089)

AFRICA WEST | Liberia | Education Global Practice |
Recipient Executed Activities | Investment Project Financing | FY 2018 | Seq No: 6 | ARCHIVED on 30-Jun-2021 | ISR47232 |

Implementing Agencies: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning

Key Dates**Key Project Dates**

Bank Approval Date: 17-May-2018

Effectiveness Date: 25-Jun-2018

Planned Mid Term Review Date: 30-Nov-2020

Actual Mid-Term Review Date: 30-Nov-2020

Original Closing Date: 30-Jun-2022

Revised Closing Date: 30-Jun-2022

Project Development Objectives

Project Development Objective (from Project Appraisal Document)

The Project Development Objectives (PDOs) are to : (a) improve equitable access to early childhood education, teacher quality in early childhood education (ECE), and primary education in targeted disadvantaged counties, and (b) strengthen National School Accountability Systems.

Has the Project Development Objective been changed since Board Approval of the Project Objective?

No

Components Table

Name

Improving the Quality and Access to Early Childhood Education in Targeted Counties:(Cost \$2.90 M)

Supporting Teacher Training and Certification in Targeted Counties:(Cost \$1.60 M)

Improving school management, accountability, and systems monitoring:(Cost \$2.00 M)

Achieving Better Learning through Improved Equity, Efficiency, and Accountability:(Cost \$3.57 M)

Project Management and Sector Program Support and Coordination:(Cost \$1.00 M)

Overall Ratings

Name	Previous Rating	Current Rating
Progress towards achievement of PDO	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderately Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderately Satisfactory
Overall Implementation Progress (IP)	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderately Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderately Satisfactory
Overall Risk Rating	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate

Implementation Status and Key Decisions

The Getting to Best in Education Project is now in the third year of implementation and currently being restructured mainly due to implementation delays resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. An official request for restructuring was received from the Government of Liberia (GoL) on March 24, 2021 with an addendum letter specific to restructuring the Disbursement-Linked Indicator (DLI) 2.1 received on April 16, 2021. Implementation progress under each component is described below based upon mission discussions and agreements.

Implementation Progress:



Component 1 (Improving quality and access to early childhood education [ECE] in targeted counties): The second round of the grant disbursement process started the first week of March 2021 with the verification of school enrollment data in the targeted counties. In Year 2 of school grant implementation (academic year 2020/2021), 53,496 students are expected to benefit from school grants being disbursed as of June 2021. As of mid-June 2021, schools are accessing their grants. Ten additional schools will benefit from the grants for the first time, bringing the total number of beneficiary schools to 523 for school grants Year 2.

Subcomponent 1.2 (Community-based ECE) finances 60 community caregivers and supports the establishment of at least 20 community based ECE centers in remote areas in the targeted counties. Training was conducted for all 60 caregivers and 54 caregivers started receiving stipends as of January 2021. All 20 centers were established with 18 centers fully operational as of May 2021. The centers are operating under the guidance of a caregiver training service provider, the We Care Foundation, who also led on the caregiver training in coordination with the MoE's Bureau of ECE. As of May 2021, 877 children (49% female) are enrolled in the centers.

Component 2 (Supporting teacher training and certification in targeted counties): Trainings of the first cohort of unqualified ECE teachers (subcomponent 2.1) and unqualified primary teachers (subcomponent 2.2) were completed in December 2020 by two service providers. These providers also provided capacity building support to the three Rural Teacher Training Institutes (RTTIs). The first cohort of trainees received C Certificates in January and February 2021. For subcomponent 2.1, 184 ECE teachers graduated and received C Certificates. For subcomponent 2.2, 185 unqualified primary level teachers graduated and received C Certificates. Over 30 Master trainers from the RTTIs were trained and certified.

During the mission, the MoE and the World Bank discussed the significant increase in the cost of the trainings due to COVID-19 and the current fiscal environment and its effect on the results indicators. The project initially budgeted for a unit cost of US\$800 per teacher. The revised unit cost is US\$1,338 per teacher. The MoE proposed that the targeted number of teachers to receive training under the project be reduced from 1,400 teachers (700 ECE and 700 primary teachers) to 1,200 teachers (600 ECE and 600 primary teachers) in total. The MoE has requested a reallocation of funds from the school grants subcomponent due to cost savings and the cancellation of the School Quality Assessment (SQA) evaluation to cover the cost overrun for teacher training of approximately US\$60,000 (for both ECE and primary). It was determined during the May 2021 mission that the Results Framework end targets of certifying 560 teachers for each level are still achievable.

Component 3 (Improving school management, accountability, and systems monitoring): The activities funded under subcomponent 3.1 include: (i) the 2019/2020 Annual School Census (ASC); (ii) pilot of the 2019/2020 SQA conducted in the project targeted counties for grade 6 which assesses the quality of instruction, curriculum delivery, school management and resourcing; and (iii) School Grading (SG) which mainly assesses school infrastructure. There have been prolonged delays with the ASC. While data collection for the 2019/2020 academic year has been completed, further analysis is pending along with the drafting of the EMIS Statistical Yearbook for the last academic year. The delays with the completion of this exercise were mostly due to technical challenges with the data collection and digitizing the process.

For the SQA, the project has already exceeded the intermediate indicator end target (percentage of SQA reports completed for public schools in targeted counties) with 79 percent, surpassing the end target set of 75 percent. For the PDO-level indicator related to the SQA (percentage of public schools receiving feedback from a SQA visit annually in targeted counties), the actual value is 0 as this indicator measures District Education Officers (DEOs) conducting visits to public schools to discuss the SQA reports and this has not yet commenced. The project will fast track these visits to begin reporting on this PDO-level indicator.

Under subcomponent 3.1, the National School Quality Standards (NSQS) are meant to be informed by the assessment of the SQA tool piloting. Under the project RF, the NSQS are meant to be established by the end of the project. On May 24, 2021, the MoE shared the draft NSQS seeking the feedback of development partners. The World Bank provided comments on June 9, 2021.

Under subcomponent 3.2 (principal training) the World Bank and the MoE discussed the increase in the training costs for the school leadership program and its effect on the expected end target of certifying 1,300 principals. The MoE informed the World Bank that the amount available to train the final two cohorts of principals is insufficient because of the increase in cost to provide trainings in Liberia due to COVID-19 and the current fiscal situation. The unit cost has increased from US\$660 to US\$1,350 to train principals. As a result, the MoE has requested that the targeted number of principals to receive training under the project will reduce from 1,500 principals to 1,200 principals. The proposed project restructuring will capture the new proposed end target of 1,175 principals being certified.

Component 4 (Achieving better learning through improved equity, efficiency, and accountability): As summarized below and given the limited implementation progress leading into year 3 of the Project including taking into consideration COVID-19, there have been delays in meeting the DLI targets.

1. **DLI 1 (Increase the proportion of qualified ECE and primary teachers in the targeted counties):** The process of updating the MoE teacher's registry for 2020/2021 has been slow. The MoE, as of April 27, 2021, presented the report for the DLRs for Year 3 and 4 to the LEG. The IVA verified the targets and submitted the draft report on June 17, 2021 for World Bank verification.
2. **DLI 2.1 (Improve the system of teacher payroll management):** The MoE reported to the LEG on April 27, 2021 that the Year 3 target – which is the publication of the updated 2020/2021 teacher's registry – had been achieved. The IVA verified achievement of this DLR as captured in the IVR submitted to the World Bank on June 17, 2021. As part of the proposed restructuring, an amendment to the Grant Agreement to amend the disbursement arrangements under this DLI are being proposed. Currently no rollover is allowed and an amendment to allow for rollover is proposed to enable disbursement against the DLRs for Years 1-3.
3. **DLI 2.2 (Improve the quality of the teaching workforce):** The MoE reported that they have removed 358 functionally illiterate teachers from the payroll and compensated them yet reaching the end target of 750 teachers is not possible given that 750 teachers meeting the original



criteria can no longer be identified. The MoE achieved the Year 1 and part of the Year 2 targets as per the MoE's report presented to the LEG on April 27, 2021. Given that revisions to the variable part of a project (the portion supported with results-based financing -RBF or DLIs) have not been approved by the GPE Board to date, a possible action would be to capture this amount as a "non-disbursed" part of the variable part (RBF) of the grant. The MoE agreed to this proposal and to proceed with a request to cancel US\$392,000 from the original total DLI allocation of US\$970,000 as part of the proposed restructuring.

4. **DLI 3 (Establish a national primary student learning assessment system):** This activity is two years behind schedule yet has made significant progress in the past 6 months. The contracted firm (Innovations for Poverty Action [IPA]) developed a national assessment policy and framework and has piloted a student assessment in grades 3 and 6 in English and mathematics in selected schools. The national primary student learning policy and framework, and pilot results were endorsed by the MoE Senior Management Team (SMT) in March 2021 and presented to the LEG on April 27, 2021. The National Learning Assessment Policy was adopted by the GoL in early May 2021. The IVA submitted the IVR, verifying the DLRs for Years 1 and 2 on June 17, 2021.

Component 5 (Project management and sector program support and coordination): Component 5 includes financing for salaries of personnel/staff of the PDT, operating costs, technical assistance (TA) including for the national learning assessment, the Joint Education Sector Review (JESR), audits and PFMU costs. This component figures prominently in the restructuring discussions given the large cost overrun of the PDT salaries. On June 6, 2021, the MoE confirmed that the salary costs for the National Procurement Specialist will be financed under the on-going IDA-financed Improving Results in Secondary Education (IRISE) Project given the position also handles IRISE procurement. The MoE has proposed that the Financial Management Officer (FMO) remain under the project.

Risks

Systematic Operations Risk-rating Tool

Risk Category	Rating at Approval	Previous Rating	Current Rating
Political and Governance	☐ Substantial	☐ Moderate	☐ Moderate
Macroeconomic	☐ Substantial	☐ Substantial	☐ Substantial
Sector Strategies and Policies	☐ Moderate	☐ Moderate	☐ Moderate
Technical Design of Project or Program	☐ Substantial	☐ Substantial	☐ Substantial
Institutional Capacity for Implementation and Sustainability	☐ Substantial	☐ Moderate	☐ Moderate
Fiduciary	☐ Substantial	☐ Substantial	☐ Substantial
Environment and Social	☐ Moderate	☐ Moderate	☐ Moderate
Stakeholders	☐ Moderate	☐ Moderate	☐ Moderate
Other	☐ Substantial	☐ Substantial	☐ Substantial
Overall	☐ Substantial	☐ Moderate	☐ Moderate

Results

PDO Indicators by Objectives / Outcomes

Improving the quality and access to ECD in targeted disadvantaged counties



▶ Direct project beneficiaries (Number, Custom)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	43,253.00	54,361.00	43,000.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022
Comments:	This figure as of June 2021 includes: Year 2 school grants underway for 523 schools with student enrollment of 53,497 (47% girls), 60 ECE community caregivers having received training under subcomponent 1.2, 877 children enrolled in the ECE centers under subcomponent 1.2, teachers having graduated with C certificates (184 ECE teachers and 185 primary teachers) under subcomponent 2.1 and 2.2, 395 principals having graduated with C certificates under subcomponent 3.2, and 40 District Education Officers (DEOs) having receiving training under project subcomponent 3.1.			
□ Female beneficiaries (Percentage, Custom Supplement)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	47.00	47.00	47.00
▶ Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning (Number, Corporate)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	41,552.00	53,497.00	45,000.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022
Comments:				
□ Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning - Female (Number, Corporate Supplement)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	19,529.00	25,494.00	20,000.00
□ Early Childhood Education - Total Number (Number, Custom Breakdown)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	41,552.00	53,497.00	40,000.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022
□ Early Childhood Education – Total Female (Number, Custom Breakdown)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	19,529.00	25,144.00	20,000.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022
□ Primary Education – Total Number (Number, Custom Breakdown)				



	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	3,718.00	0.00	5,000.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022
<input type="checkbox"/> Primary Education - Total Female (Number, Custom Breakdown)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	1,822.00	0.00	2,500.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teachers recruited or trained (Number, Corporate)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	789.00	794.00	2,420.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022
Comments:	<p>Under this Project, this CRI reflects number of teachers trained. Under Getting to Best, 1,400 teachers will be trained to improve their effectiveness to teach ECE and primary-level students. In addition, 1,500 principals will benefit from principal certification training. Given that most principals in Liberia also have a teaching load, this figure includes principal training.</p> <p>As of December 2020, 198 unqualified ECE teachers completed training to receive the ECE C Certificate, 196 unqualified primary teachers completed training to receive the primary C Certificate and 400 principals completed trained in the new national certificate program to be certificated. Of those who participated in training, 184 ECE teachers passed the certification exam, 185 primary teachers passed the certification exam and 395 principals passed the certification exam.</p> <p>The end target for this CRI is aligned to the Project Results Framework for consistency and continuity.</p>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers recruited or trained - Female (RMS requirement) (Number, Corporate Supplement)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	156.00	203.00	847.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Large-scale primary/secondary learning assessments completed (Number, Corporate)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022
Comments:	<p>The number of Bank-supported completed large-scale assessments at the primary level. Under the G2B Project, this refers to the annual student learning assessment for grades 3 and 6 in English and Math (DLI 3) for which one round will be funded following the creation and adoption of the National Assessment Policy and piloting of the assessment in 2021.</p>			

Increasing enrollment and improving access to education



► Net Enrollment Rate (NER) in ECE in the targeted counties (Percentage, Custom)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	23.00	23.00	23.00	27.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022
Comments:	The MOE is conducting an annual school census (the first since 2017) and data analysis is expected in August 2021 following the Annual Joint Education Sector Review. This indicator will be updated accordingly.			

Supporting Teacher training and certification in Targeted counties				
► Share of qualified ECE and primary education teachers in the targeted counties (Percentage, Custom)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	45.77	47.20	47.20	60.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022

Improving school management, accountability and systems monitoring				
► Percentage of public schools receiving feedback from a School Quality Assessment (SQA) visit annually in targeted counties (Percentage, Custom)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	35.00	0.00	50.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022
Comments:	For this indicator, the actual is being revised to 0 as this indicator measures DEOs conducting visits to public schools to discuss the SQA reports and this has not yet commenced. The project will fast track these visits to begin reporting on this PDO-level indicator. This was clarified by the new M&E Specialist during the May mission.			

Intermediate Results Indicators by Components

Access to ECD in targeted counties				
► Percentage of eligible public schools receiving ECE grants in targeted counties (Percentage, Custom)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	90.00	92.00	90.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022
Comments:	523 schools out of 572 school eligible to receive the school grants (as captured in the Project documents) is 92 percent.			



Ten (10) additional schools are benefitting from the grants for the first time, bringing the total number of beneficiary schools to 523.

Support teacher training and certification in targeted counties

► Number of trained ECE caregivers placed in community-based ECE centers in the targeted counties (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	54.00	54.00	60.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022

Comments: Of the 60 caregivers, 54 caregivers started receiving stipends as of January 2021. All 20 centers have been established with 18 centers fully operational as of June 2021.

► Number of teachers receiving ECE C certificate (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	184.00	184.00	560.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022

► Number of primary teachers receiving accelerated C certificate (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	185.00	185.00	560.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022

► Number of school principals awarded certification (Number, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	395.00	395.00	1,300.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022

Improving school management, accountability and systems monitoring

► Percentage of SQA reports completed for public schools in targeted counties (Percentage, Custom)

	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	35.00	79.00	75.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022

Comments: The project has already exceeded the intermediate result indicator end target.



► Establishment of national school quality standards (Yes/No, Custom)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	No	No	No	Yes
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022
Comments:	On May 24, 2021, the MoE shared the draft NSQS seeking the feedback of development partners. The World Bank provided comments on June 9, 2021.			

Project Management and sector program support and coordination				
► Number of annual project progress reports publicly accessible (Number, Custom)				
	Baseline	Actual (Previous)	Actual (Current)	End Target
Value	0.00	1.00	2.00	4.00
Date	29-Dec-2017	06-May-2021	24-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2022
Comments:	The GPE Year 1 Implementation report, to meet GPE and World Bank requirements, was offered No Objection in January 2020 and subsequently shared with the GPE. The GPE Year 2 Implementation report was offered No Objection in May 2021 and shared with the GPE.			

Performance-Based Conditions

Data on Financial Performance

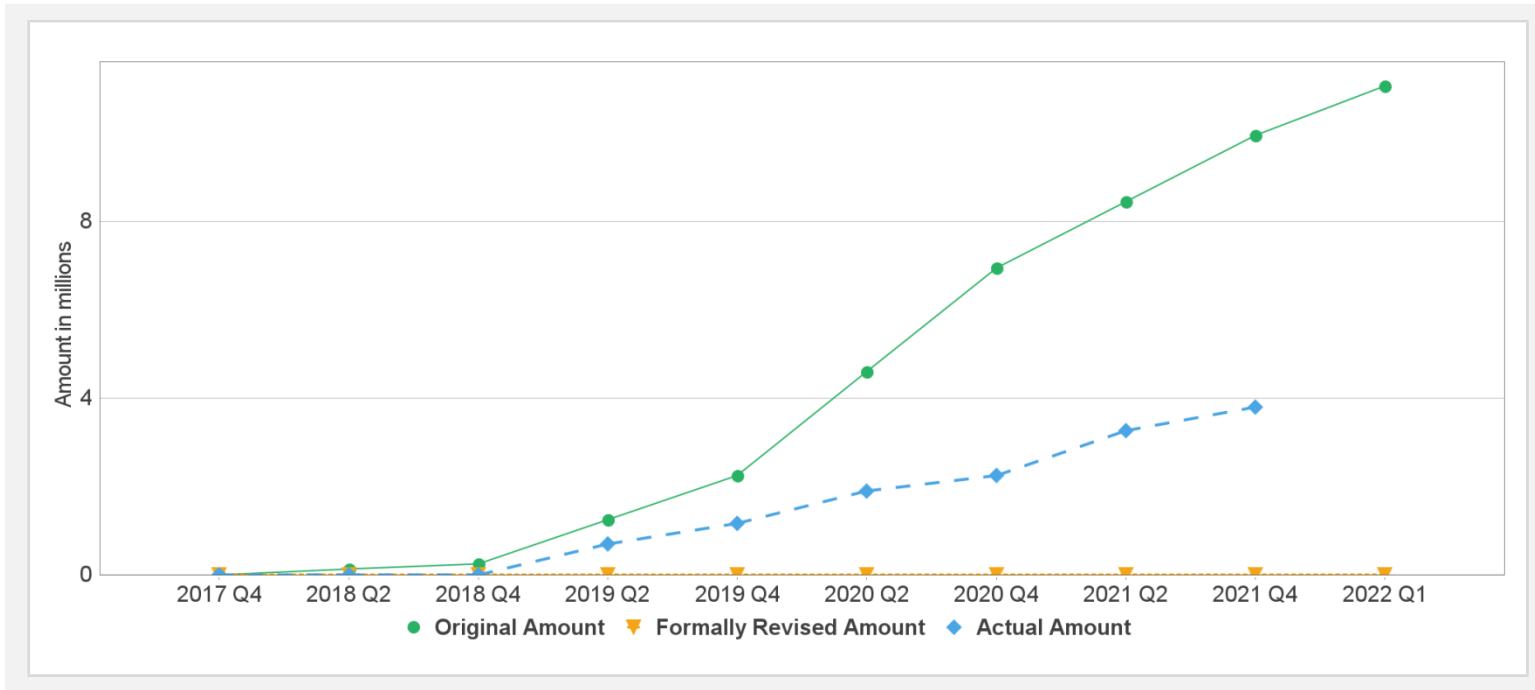
Disbursements (by loan)

Project	Loan/Credit/TF	Status	Currency	Original	Revised	Cancelled	Disbursed	Undisbursed	% Disbursed
P162089	TF-A7093	Effective	USD	11.07	11.07	0.00	3.79	7.28	34%

Key Dates (by loan)

Project	Loan/Credit/TF	Status	Approval Date	Signing Date	Effectiveness Date	Orig. Closing Date	Rev. Closing Date
P162089	TF-A7093	Effective	17-May-2018	19-Jun-2018	25-Jun-2018	30-Jun-2022	30-Jun-2022

Cumulative Disbursements



PBC Disbursement

PBC ID	PBC Type	Description	Coc	PBC Amount	Achievement Status	Disbursed amount in Coc	Disbursement % for PBC

Restructuring History

There has been no restructuring to date.

Related Project(s)

P170418-Liberia GPE Getting to Best MCA