



## 1. Project Data

<b>Project ID</b> P143842	<b>Project Name</b> P143842- NG Partnership for Edu. Project		
<b>Country</b> Nigeria	<b>Practice Area(Lead)</b> Education		
<b>L/C/TF Number(s)</b> TF-18918	<b>Closing Date (Original)</b> 29-Jun-2019	<b>Total Project Cost (USD)</b> 99,968,666.79	
<b>Bank Approval Date</b> 08-May-2015	<b>Closing Date (Actual)</b> 29-Jun-2020		
	<b>IBRD/IDA (USD)</b>	<b>Grants (USD)</b>	
Original Commitment	100,000,000.00	100,000,000.00	
Revised Commitment	99,968,666.79	99,968,666.79	
Actual	99,968,666.79	99,968,666.79	
<b>Prepared by</b> Hjalte S. A. Sederlof	<b>Reviewed by</b> Judyth L. Twigg	<b>ICR Review Coordinator</b> Joy Maria Behrens	<b>Group</b> IEGHC (Unit 2)

## 2. Project Objectives and Components

### a. Objectives

The Project Development Objective (PDO) for the Nigeria Partnership for Education Project as set out on page 5 of the Credit Agreement and page 10 of the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) was *to improve access and quality of basic education in selected States, with particular attention to girls' participation.*

Achievement of the PDO will be assessed based on each of the following two specific objectives:



- to improve access to basic education in selected states, with particular attention to girls' participation; and
- to improve quality of basic education in selected states.

The focus on girls only in the first objective reflected two considerations: gender disparity in educational outcomes mainly in terms of access, with learning outcomes being equally poor for girls and boys; and the absence of disaggregation by gender in quality-related indicators.

"Basic education" included only primary education, not pre-primary or junior secondary education, reflecting absence of appropriate data to measure the full scope of "basic education." (The basic education system includes one year of pre-primary, 6 years of primary, and 3 years of junior secondary education.)

The selected States include five States in the northwestern part of Nigeria: Sokoto, Katsina, Kano, Kaduna, and Jigawa. The focus on Northern States reflected considerable disparities between North and South in access and quality of education, in favor of the South. States were selected on the basis of commitment to reform, the number of out-of-school children and low girls' participation in basic education, and to complement gaps in development partner support in addressing constraints in basic education.

A Level 2 restructuring was undertaken during implementation (see below "Significant Changes During Implementation"). At that time, the project implementation period was extended, and targets for key indicators were modified, expanding the scope of the project; project commitments remained unchanged. Therefore, a split rating is warranted.

**b. Were the project objectives/key associated outcome targets revised during implementation?**

Yes

**Did the Board approve the revised objectives/key associated outcome targets?**

No

**c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?**

No

**d. Components**

To improve access and quality of basic education, the project had three components:

**Component 1: Promoting school effectiveness and improved learning outcomes** through the provision of school improvement grants to be used according to specific manuals (estimated cost at appraisal US\$42 million; actual cost US\$48.3 million). There were three sub-components:

**Sub-component 1(a): school improvement grants channeled to primary schools** for non-salary expenditures to improve school learning and teaching.

**Sub-component 1(b): school improvement grants channeled to pre-primary schools** for non-salary expenditures to improve school learning and teaching.



**Sub-component 1(c): support to teachers' professional development** by financing the cost of training and related materials to develop the skills of primary school teachers in core areas of literacy and mathematics.

**Component 2: Increasing access to basic education for out-of-school girls** (estimated cost at appraisal US\$40 million; actual cost US\$32.2 million). There were three sub-components:

**Sub-component 2(a): girls' access to primary education** to increase the demand for girls' education by providing scholarships to families to encourage the enrollment of girls in lower primary schools.

**Sub-component 2(b): scholarships for female teachers** to increase the supply of qualified female teachers.

**Sub-component 2 (c): community mobilization and training for school-based management committees (SBMC)**, including capacity building and operational support to local education authorities, focusing on enrollment and girls' retention issues, outreach activities, and community mapping, to encourage sending children to school and keeping them enrolled.

**Component 3: Strengthening planning and management systems including learning assessment and capacity development** (estimated cost at appraisal US\$18 million; actual cost US\$18.5 million). There were two sub-components:

**Sub-component 3(a): management and implementation support** to provide resources for technical assistance and capacity building to the Federal Ministry of Education for the management, monitoring, and supervision of the project.

**Sub-component 3(b): monitoring, evaluation and learning assessment** to provide resources for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities, including capacity building for M&E data analysis and the implementation of learning assessments.

### **Significant Changes during Implementation**

One Level 2 restructuring was undertaken, including a 12-month extension of the Closing Date to allow all project activities to be completed, and adjustments to key targets to take into account the Closing Date extension.

#### **e. Comments on Project Cost, Financing, Borrower Contribution, and Dates**

Project cost. At appraisal, total project cost was estimated at US\$100 million. Actual project cost at closing was US\$99.97 million, reflecting discrepancies in exchange rate conversions.



Financing. The project was financed by a US\$100 million equivalent Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Grant, of which US\$99.97 million was disbursed.

Dates. The project was approved on May 8, 2015 and became effective on November 2, 2015. The original Closing Date, June 29, 2019, was extended once, to June 29, 2019, to allow completion of ongoing project activities.

### 3. Relevance of Objectives

#### Rationale

The PDO was relevant to the country situation, especially as it presented itself in the Northern part of the country, and it reflected government strategy for education reform as well as the Bank's country strategy. Project interventions addressed key challenges in Nigeria's education system, including the persistence of poor learning outcomes driven by low access and low quality of basic education due to a series of factors: low enrollment numbers, especially in girls' education; limited teacher availability, especially in rural areas and in teaching core subjects; and low quality of teaching. System performance was further constrained by weak governance and management capacity, especially at sub-national levels.

The PDO was consistent with a long tradition of gradual reform in Nigeria's education system. The PDO contributed to programs and priorities in the participating States in addressing education access and quality, and in focusing on improving girls' opportunities for education. They were consistent with Nigeria's 2017-2020 economic growth plan that identified access to education as a key strategic goal. Likewise, the objectives were consistent with Nigeria's Vision 20:2020 aimed at achieving universal access to basic education, and they are in line with a recently launched Human Capital Development Vision for 2030, which includes targets for primary school enrollment rates and increased competence in basic reading and mathematics.

The relevance of the PDO is reflected in the findings of the Bank's 2020 Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD), and the PDO are closely aligned with the current Country Partnership Strategy for FY21-FY25, which draws on the SCD. Both documents identify persistent gaps in the quality of education, pointing to the shortage of qualified teachers, insufficient teaching and learning resources, and limited school autonomy and accountability.

#### Rating

High

### 4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)



## **OBJECTIVE 1**

### **Objective**

To improve access to basic education in selected States, with attention to girls' participation

### **Rationale**

The objective was to be achieved by introducing measures that encourage out-of-school children (especially girls) to participate in basic education, including through the provision of scholarships to girls to attend school and to female teachers for skills upgrading, and by stronger school-level planning and management. Success was to be measured through changes in primary net enrollment rates (NER), an improved gender parity index (GPI) in primary enrollment, and the number of direct project beneficiaries, disaggregated by gender. The indicators were valid: they are commonly used and measurable, and the data was available.

The ICR (p. 9) pointed to several key assumptions that were likely to have conditioned outcomes under both Objective 1 and 2: the adequacy of SBMC and teacher training for achieving meaningful results that mitigated the adverse impact of teacher and student absenteeism, and a project period that might not have been sufficient to produce sought-after results.

### **Outputs**

417,000 girls received scholarships, exceeding the initial/revised targets of 87,000 and 360,000 girls. The ICR noted that a reduction of cost per student may have motivated States to encourage families to send their girls to school.

132,400 primary teachers received in-service teacher training with a focus on skills to teach reading and writing in early grades. This exceeded the target of 96,000 trained teachers.

14,300 SBMCs were trained, compared to initial/revised targets of 12,000 and 12,130 committees. With a key focus of SBMCs being the implementation of school improvement plans, often prioritizing girls, increased SBMC activity in this area may also have contributed to the rise in girls seeking/receiving scholarships. This may also have been generated by increased competence of female teachers.

School improvement grants to finance school improvement plans were delivered to 46,400 schools, compared to a target of 27,700 schools. All schools that received grants prepared improvement plans, implementing at least 80 percent of such plans. This output contributed not only to improved access, but also to Objective 2 – improved quality. The ICR noted, plausibly, that the school improvement plans also may have contributed to increases in access. Moreover, stronger education management information systems that were introduced with the school improvement plans are also likely to have facilitated the monitoring of access-related outcomes.

Five annual education sector reviews were completed for each State, in line with the target.

### **Outcomes**



In project States, primary NER reached 57 percent at project closing in 2020, against a baseline of 48 percent in 2015 and a target of 54 percent, exceeding the target by 9 percentage points. NER for girls reached 90 percent against a baseline of 72 percent and a target of 76 percent, exceeding the target by 18 percentage points.

The overall target for enrolling beneficiary children (direct target beneficiaries) reached 6.3 million in 2020, exceeding the original/revised targets of 5.7 million and 6 million, respectively.

**Summary.** The project's achievements – all indicators exceeded their targets – were confirmed with additional evidence from household surveys. The ICR (p. 15) reported that pre-and post-project comparisons on access in participating States showed a significant improvement in attendance rates, as did a comparison with non-project States, where rates tended to decline. This indicates that training may have been sufficient to overcome the adverse effects mentioned above.

**Rating**  
High

## **OBJECTIVE 2**

### **Objective**

To improve the quality of basic education in selected States

### **Rationale**

The objective was to be achieved by promoting school improvement plans and teacher training, and by strengthening school-level planning and management. Success was to be measured by changes in Hausa and English language reading rates, introduction of a system for learning assessment at the primary level, and the utility of that system. The indicators were valid and measurable, and data was available. Reading fluency is a frequently used measure (ICR, p. 16), and the other indicators are straightforward means of assessing learning at a system level.

The same key assumptions that were likely to have conditioned outcomes under Objective 1 are also relevant for Objective 2: the adequacy of SBMC and teacher training for achieving meaningful results that were to mitigate the adverse impact of teacher and student absenteeism, and a project period that might not have been sufficient to produce sought-after results.

### **Outputs**

The same school improvement program mentioned as an output supporting Objective 1 contributed to improving the quality of basic education, as improvements were introduced into the teaching and learning environment that were likely to encourage both teachers and students.



132,500 primary teachers, compared to a target of 96,000 teachers, received in-service teacher training (professional upgrading) with a focus on teaching reading and writing in early grades.

### **Outcomes**

The Hausa reading rate of students enrolled in primary 2 and 3 grades, measured as words read correctly per minute, increased by one word from a baseline of 4 words, falling short of the target of 10 words. The English reading rate of primary 3 students increased by 0.6 words from a baseline of 3 words, also falling short of the target of 10 words. While there was considerable variation between the participating States – the ICR noted, for instance, that in Hausa, Kaduna State increased from 2.4 words to 8 words, while Jigawa State remained unchanged at 3 words -- none achieved the end-of-project target of 10 words per minute.

A system for learning assessment at the primary level was established for all schools in participating States from a baseline of zero, and one round of early grade reading assessments was implemented. A second round was planned but interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The introduction of a learning assessment system will fill a critical information gap and allow regular monitoring of the quality of education as well as international comparisons.

**Summary:** Early grade reading achievement was consistently below target results, albeit with some variation between States. The ICR (p. 17) pointed to several issues that are likely to have accounted for the modest learning outcomes: a short implementation period, partly due to the onset of COVID-19, that interfered with the early grade reading assessments and with quality interventions (teacher training and the school improvement plans), as well as the effects of increased enrollments on teaching quality, and relatively elevated student and teacher absenteeism. The relationship between increasing enrollments and lower quality has been observed in other sub-Saharan African countries, but so far not in Nigeria. Increasing absenteeism, however, has been observed, and is even raised as a key issue by the ICR (p. 18), noting that on the day of assessment, absenteeism among students in Kaduna State was around 30 percent, while teacher absenteeism rates as high as 55 to 60 percent were observed in Sokoto State.

### **Rating**

Modest

## **OVERALL EFFICACY**

### **Rationale**

The project included two objectives. The first objective was rated high: all its targets were exceeded, but this achievement raised concerns about quality and student/teacher absenteeism that might arise from strong, rapid expansion of enrollments. The second objective fell short of meeting its quality improvement objectives,



partly as a result of concerns related to increased access under Objective 1, and partly due to constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. On balance, overall efficacy is rated substantial.

The ICR (p. 19) noted that there were other education projects financed by the Bank and other development partners concurrently active in the same States, complicating attribution of observed outcomes to this project's interventions. The ICR explained that the parallel Bank-financed project (Better Education Service Delivery for All, \$611 million, FY2017-2022, P160430), which operates in all States in the country, was significantly delayed, and therefore it could not have influenced the outcomes described here. Other projects financed by the United States Agency for International Development and the UK Department for International Development (DfID) were considerably smaller in scope, and where there was geographic overlap, this project worked to leverage the contributions by other partners. For example, this project benefited from materials and processes for school improvement grants and SBMCs developed under DfID's Education Sector Support Program. This project was therefore a major factor, but not the sole factor, in producing desired outcomes, and development partners achieved synergy and complementarity toward achievement of those outcomes.

### **Overall Efficacy Rating**

Substantial

## **5. Efficiency**

Efficiency analyses were undertaken for the PAD and the ICR. They were, however, not comparable. The analysis in the PAD drew on evidence from the literature on the impact of similar interventions on the macroeconomy, labor markets, beneficiaries' health, and other areas. The PAD also applied multivariate analysis. It concluded that "project activities were expected to yield high rates of return...[and were] cost effective." The ICR included a benefit-cost analysis of Objective 1 – access – including the costs of Objective 2, but not the benefits, as targets for learning outcomes remained unmet. The analysis still showed substantial net positive returns: the net present value of the project at completion was estimated at US\$65.5 million with an estimated internal rate of return of 16.7 percent, both representing significant positive returns. The ICR (p. 21) noted that positive returns could also be expected to arise from positive externalities arising from girls' education, especially in an environment of previously low gender achievement.

The ICR recorded several aspects of implementation with either positive or negative effects on efficiency. On the positive side are the simplicity of project design and straightforward implementation arrangements; close engagement with both government authorities and donors; and cost savings, as unit costs turned out to be lower than appraised, allowing beneficiary coverage to be increased. On the negative side, there were gaps in project design and capacity causing delays and reducing implementation efficiency. Suitable teacher training programs were scarce; the project had been designed around scaling up of existing in-service teacher training programs before suitable programs had been identified. Similarly, school improvement grants were distributed before school management committees could meet eligibility requirements. Implementation was also delayed by the





insurgency and, early on, by national elections. A year-long extension of project closing also raised costs, but the extension also allowed the project to raise its targets in some instances.

On balance, considering operational inefficiencies, efficiency is rated modest.

## Efficiency Rating

Modest

a. If available, enter the Economic Rate of Return (ERR) and/or Financial Rate of Return (FRR) at appraisal and the re-estimated value at evaluation:

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal		0	0 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
ICR Estimate		0	0 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

\* Refers to percent of total project cost for which ERR/FRR was calculated.

## 6. Outcome

Relevance of Objectives is rated **high**, noting the project’s strong relevance to country conditions and its alignment with government and Bank priorities. Achievement of the first Objective is rated **high**, with targets achieved or exceeded. Achievement of the second Objective is rated **modest**, reflecting limited progress on learning outcomes. Overall efficacy is rated **substantial**. Efficiency is rated **modest** due to significant operational inefficiencies. Taken together, these ratings indicate that there were moderate shortcomings in the project's preparation and implementation, leading to an Outcome rating of **Moderately Satisfactory**.

### a. Outcome Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

## 7. Risk to Development Outcome

At appraisal, the overall risk rating for the project was **high**, as was the rating for implementing agency risk. Project risk was rated **substantial**. While mitigating factors were introduced (governance-related reforms to counteract corruption and leakages in service delivery, such as stronger local education management, enhanced M&E, and stronger fiduciary oversight), the ICR still rated the risk of not maintaining achievements post-completion as substantial. A number of challenges remain after project completion. A key assumption underlying project design was the availability of quality teacher development programs that could be “easily” scaled up, but this turned out not to be the case (ICR, p. 28), and such concerns about teacher training remain post-project. There are continued disruptions from the Boko Haram insurgency. Most



recently, COVID-19 caused all schools to close in March 2020, and (as of the time of this review) they have only partly opened since then. Limited distance learning options are unlikely to compensate adequately for the absence of classroom learning, and inequities in the system across States, in income levels and gender, are likely to have increased again, potentially reversing positive project outcomes. The government remains committed to improving education outcomes; it has launched a COVID-19 Plan and has increased its dialogue with development partners to build back basic education after the pandemic.

## 8. Assessment of Bank Performance

### a. Quality-at-Entry

The project was strategically relevant, having been introduced to support an ongoing process of education reform by focusing on creating equitable access to quality education. It was concentrated in the North, giving it a strong poverty focus as it was intervening in an area of high poverty where the share of out-of-school children was high and girls' participation low. It was also an area that was falling behind as a result of the Boko Haram insurgency. The project objectives aligned well with approaches that were being applied by federal and local governments and donors, and the project drew on experience that Bank teams had already accumulated through field work and project development. The choice of a GPE grant for project financing would prove to be a challenge, as its processes were unfamiliar to the participating States, project design was insufficiently adapted to GPE requirements, and approval would ultimately take two years. GPE concerns included the decentralized administration of school grants and scholarships in an environment that was unfamiliar to the organization, and a project design that initially insufficiently emphasized GPE's priorities such as out-of-school children and girls' education. Also affecting the pace of preparation was the need to coordinate not only with the Federal government and five States, but also with numerous development partners active in the same areas and supporting activities that also were supported under this project. A revised project design was subsequently approved, informed by other ongoing government and donor programs and as a result of effective coordination between the Bank team and donors.

Previously mentioned gaps in design and capacity, insufficiently addressed during project preparation, would subsequently influence learning outcomes: quality and capacity challenges in SBMCs and teacher training programs, high levels of teacher and student absenteeism, and gaps in schools' and communities' awareness of project interventions.

The results chain was straightforward, albeit with some gaps in M&E arrangements. The risk to project outcomes did increase as a result of COVID-19. Still, some of the challenges that arose during project supervision might have been forestalled, including issues with the Treasury Single Account Policy; low awareness about the project among Federal- and State-level officials; school and community awareness of project interventions, especially where funds were to be transferred to local levels (grants and scholarships); a stronger understanding of the capacity of teachers to fully benefit from project-funded training programs; and more attention to eligibility requirements for school improvement grants.

### Quality-at-Entry Rating



Moderately Unsatisfactory

### **b. Quality of supervision**

Project supervision benefited from a team that had the appropriate skills composition to support implementation, and was able to identify additional skills as the need arose, including the introduction of an education advisor at the Bank’s country office. Early on, the supervision team focused on selected implementation challenges: building implementation capacity among technical staff at Federal and State levels through workshops and training sessions; raising awareness about the project in communities; and addressing weaker-than-expected capacity among teachers to apply the in-service training in the classroom – all interventions introduced early in the project cycle and ones that are likely to have improved overall project performance and, ultimately, the quality of the teaching and learning experience. The team also benefited from Federal and State government commitment to project objectives and oversight that contributed to facilitating implementation, as did collaboration with donors active in the participating States, including other Bank projects. Nevertheless, performance fell somewhat short of expectations, especially in the quality of education component. This may partly have been due to exogenous factors, notably the delay in project effectiveness caused by security concerns that hampered school-level supervision, and the 2015 national elections.

#### **Quality of Supervision Rating**

Moderately Satisfactory

#### **Overall Bank Performance Rating**

Moderately Satisfactory

## **9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization**

### **a. M&E Design**

The theory of change described in the PAD and detailed in the ICR was straightforward and mapped a logical chain of how project inputs were to achieve changes in outcomes through activities and outputs. Project objectives were clearly specified and included eight key indicators, four for the first objective and four for the second one. They were all relevant, defined, and measurable, and they all had baselines and targets; they all measured outcomes. Outcomes were backed up by nine output indicators, also relevant, defined, and measurable, and adequate to monitor progress towards outcomes.

Institutionally, performance was monitored on the basis of existing information systems and aligned with the annual process of monitoring and evaluation of States, which was done primarily through an annual education sector performance review at the State level. Also at the State level, technical committees were responsible for monitoring State-level plans. At the Federal level, the Ministry of Education was responsible for oversight. The project included third-party validation to ensure the credibility of monitoring systems and results.



Although there were (and continue to be) tangible differences among States in key outcome indicators, and a key recommendation during project preparation was to disaggregate and tailor endline targets by State, according to the ICR, the Bank team chose not to do so and instead focused on keeping the project design simple.

### **b. M&E Implementation**

Data on project indicators was collected and reported regularly in Implementation Status Reports (ISRs) and aides-memoire. However, because of the COVID-19 epidemic, end-line early-grade reading could not be assessed, limiting final project reporting and the usefulness of the findings under Objective 2 of the project. Planned impact assessments and third-party monitoring were undertaken. The latter came to include monitoring conducted by a civil society coalition, providing independent and local-level monitoring that was extensive, covering some 10,700 beneficiary schools, and complementing earlier project-funded verification based on a sample of schools. Supported by the project, all participating States set up their own learning assessment systems, generating timely reporting on access outcomes.

### **c. M&E Utilization**

As noted above, data on project indicators was collected and reported regularly in ISRs and aides-memoire. This served to set the agenda for Bank teams on supervision and inform relevant State authorities on implementation issues. For instance, the ICR (p. 30) pointed to instances where M&E data signaled weaknesses and/or delays in teacher and community training, both key features of the project. Impact assessments and third-party monitoring also served to inform course corrections in applying and transmitting teacher and community training. Use of project tools was somewhat hampered by COVID-19, as end-line early-grade reading could not be assessed, limiting final project reporting.

### **M&E Quality Rating**

Substantial

## **10. Other Issues**

### **a. Safeguards**

The project's safeguards performance was rated moderately satisfactory for most of the project implementation period. The project was categorized as environmental assessment category "B," Partial Assessment. The Environmental Policy (OP/BP/4.01) was triggered due to State investment grant-related interventions that could finance minor renovations and civil works. During most of the project implementation period, no major environmental and social safeguards issues emerged. All States established a grievance redress mechanism and developed action plans in response to feedback received from the communities in their States. In the last few months of implementation, additional risks related to the COVID-19 pandemic emerged. The availability of adequate water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities for teachers and students in schools as well as compliance with COVID-19 response protocols were emphasized as important measures to keep school communities safe.



## **b. Fiduciary Compliance**

Financial Management (FM). Fiduciary compliance was assessed as satisfactory. There were several areas of strong performance by the project in key aspects of FM. First, the existing Federal Project Financial Management Unit and its State equivalent (SPFMU) structures were used for project FM. To strengthen the SPFMUs, States deployed additional FM staff and resources. Second, annual work plans were prepared by States and the Federal Ministry of Education consistently; these were then reviewed and approved by the task team. These work plans were the basis for project implementation. Third, flow of funds to States was smooth for the most part, while some interruptions occurred in terms of the flow of funds to the Federal Project Implementation Unit. Initially, there were some delays in States establishing designated accounts. Some challenges limited the effectiveness of FM processes (for example, at the State level, manual accounting processes were used during project implementation, which led to delays in financial reporting). In most States, interim financial reports were often delayed, in part due to the cumbersome manual accounting process. External and internal audits were conducted on a regular basis. Regular external audits were produced later in the project life in each State. The main issues identified by external audits included unretired advances, inadequate documentation for expenditures, and some expenditures being made prior to receiving a no-objection from the World Bank.

Procurement. Throughout the implementation period, procurement was rated Satisfactory, and no major issues on procurement arose.

## **c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)**

None reported.

## **d. Other**

**Gender** Improving girls' participation in basic education was one of the primary objectives of the project. In many project states, girls faced significant disadvantages in access to quality schooling. Project design included demand-side interventions (e.g., to address barriers related to household poverty and social norms that undervalue girls' education) that would be critical for improving girls' school attendance. Key interventions included scholarships for girls coming from the poorest households, and community mobilization, advocacy, and sensitization campaigns, including by working with community and religious leaders. To strengthen school-community collaboration on girls' education, the project used SBMCs as the main entry point, including by providing training on how to prepare school plans that are responsive to challenges in improving girls' access to education. Committees were strengthened to have an increased role in school management, including in the preparation of school investment plans and utilization of school resources. This training provided to the SBMCs was intended have a continued positive impact on the focus placed on girls' education at the school and community levels.

The project also sought to increase the share of qualified female teachers in basic education. It was expected that girls' retention would be positively impacted by an increase in the number of qualified female teachers. Recognizing the scarcity of women in senior positions in the education sector in Northern Nigeria,



it was also expected that helping female teachers obtain the required qualifications could be a first step to improving their career growth and their rise into leadership and decision-making positions.

## 11. Ratings

Ratings	ICR	IEG	Reason for Disagreements/Comment
Outcome	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	
Bank Performance	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	
Quality of M&E	Modest	Substantial	IEG agrees with the ICR that intermediate results indicators (output indicators) measured numbers of outputs rather than the quality of what was produced. But the key outcome indicators did measure sought-after outcomes of access and quality as a result of changes in knowledge and behavior.
Quality of ICR	---	High	

## 12. Lessons

**Lesson 1: Demand-side interventions aimed at alleviating key constraints related to poverty and social norms can be effective in addressing entrenched and complex economic and social constraints to girls' education.** Experience under the project indicates that the provision of scholarships and community mobilization initiatives tied to school and community-based initiatives can raise awareness about the importance of education for all, and facilitate the entry of girls into the school environment and ensure that girls remain in school.

**Lesson 2: Increasing teachers' motivation and accountability can be critical to improving student learning outcomes.** Interventions such as the provision of State-level investment grants, learning materials, and training of teachers are unlikely to be effective if teachers are absent, lack motivation, and are unaccountable for student learning. Project data show that even after years of project implementation, teacher absenteeism remained a major unaddressed challenge in participating States. Numerous factors may enhance or reduce teachers' motivation including policies on selection, salary, and career growth, as well as school-level factors such as working conditions, availability and quality of support for teachers, and accountability systems. Understanding and addressing these factors is important to improving the quality of teaching in the classroom and, ultimately, student learning outcomes.

**Lesson 3: Raising schools' and communities' awareness about project interventions, including on eligibility requirements and selection processes, can be critical to ensuring**



**inclusivity and building trust.** Under the project, communities and schools lacked awareness about the grant and scholarship selection processes and requirements, leading to delays and confusion in the early years of implementation. Investing in awareness-raising and community engagement activities early on, even during preparation, can help prevent delays and build trust and partnership with beneficiary communities.

### 13. Assessment Recommended?

No

### 14. Comments on Quality of ICR

At 35 pages in the body of the text and an additional 25 pages of annexes, the ICR was long, but consequently the document was generous in the quality of its analysis and in providing evidence to back up that analysis. The careful discussion of the project's theory of change and the assumptions underlying it was well done. The assessment of the validity of the results framework's intermediate and outcome indicators was direct and thorough, as was the discussion of plausible attribution of observed results to the project's interventions. In the discussion surrounding the findings, the abundant information candidly presented, along with the high quality of analysis, enable a reviewer to follow easily the logic and the case being made for both achievements and challenges. The ICR also highlighted valuable experiences in its "Lessons" section, some of which are presented in abridged form in this ICRR.

#### a. Quality of ICR Rating

High