

SFG2553

Community Participation Plan

For

Myanmar Decentralizing Funding to Schools Program

2016-2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. Program Background: Decentralizing Funding to Schools Program	1
B. Objective and means.....	1
C. Programs to be supported	1
D. Ethnic Minorities and Legal Rights in Education	2
E. The CPPF.....	3
1. Applicable World Bank Policies.....	3
2. Social Assessment (SA) for the Stipend Program	3
3. Conflict sensitivity approach	4
4. Monitoring and Evaluation of the CPPF.....	5
5. Grievance Redress Mechanisms	5

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CPP	-	Community Participation Plan
CPPF	-	Community Participation Planning Framework
DBE	-	Department of Basic Education
DFAT	-	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DLI	-	Disbursement-linked Indicator
GoM	-	Government of Myanmar
MoE	-	Ministry of Education
EFA-NAP	-	Myanmar Education for All-National Action Plan
EGRA	-	Early Grade Reading Assessment
FGD	-	Focus Group Discussion
PTA	-	Parent and Teacher Association
SA	-	Social Assessment
SGSC	-	School Grant and Stipend Committee
SY	-	School Year
TEOs	-	Township Education Offices
TGSC	-	Township Grant and Stipend Committee
MEWG	-	M&E Working Group
WB	-	The World Bank

A. Program Background: Decentralizing Funding to Schools Program

The Ministry of Education (MoE) in Myanmar is currently decentralizing funding for education through two national programs: (1) it transfers funding for various operating expenditures through townships to schools based on the number of primary students in the school, and (2) it transfers funding through townships and schools to provide cash stipends to poor children and scholarships to high achieving students.

Both of these initiatives were established and implemented through Ministry of Education's mainstream according to the needs of the Ministry to improve completion and decrease drop in all over the country. The programs are nominally national in coverage, both are small in size of funds allocated.

The school grants program was initiated in all government-supported schools in Myanmar since 2012-13 AY. Overall, more than 40,000 schools received about \$15 million equivalent in 2012/13 school year. The budget allocated in 2013-14 was more than doubled the budget allocated in the previous year.

The implementation of the stipend program is focusing on poverty criteria. All selected schools are encouraged to nominate students for the stipend program, and selection among the nominated students is then made at the township level. Townships are encouraged in the existing guidelines to form committees to allocate stipend across schools. In some state/regions, school officials consult with Parent-Teacher Associations and/or Boards of Trustees in making the stipend awards, although such consultations are not mandated.

For the school grant program, each township is responsible for ensuring that the funds reach the school and are spent on eligible items in accordance with simple guidelines.

The Ministry of Education has asked the World Bank and the Government of Australia for financial and technical assistance to help expand and improve these programs. Following is a description of that donor project funding for the Ministry of Education's programs.

B. Objective and means

The objective of the Myanmar Decentralizing Funding to Schools Project is:

- to improve and expand Myanmar's existing school grants and student stipends programs.

This objective will be achieved by:

- (a) Improving the design of the programs,
- (b) Expanding their coverage,
- (c) Promoting their financial sustainability, and
- (d) Building the Ministry of Education's capacity to implement them and monitor their progress.

C. Programs to be supported

This funding will contribute three specific programs:

- (1) Expansion of MoE's existing national schools grants program that benefits all government-supported schools,
- (2) Expansion of its student stipends program, focusing on 55 townships over the four year project duration,

- (3) Strengthening of its capacity to monitor and implement these programs and lay the foundation for more focus on learning outcomes in future programs by conducting an early grade reading assessment baseline.

The Bank will manage a parallel technical assistance program to support program design, monitoring and evaluation and a Bank-executed part of a Bank-executed Multi-donor Trust Fund. School Survey, Household Survey and Qualitative and Quantitative Assessment lies under the monitoring and evaluation program.

The other technical assistant program that will be implementing under the additional financing program is to help design, implement and evaluate a Teacher Mentoring program over a four year period. The program is providing teachers with continuous professional development and mentoring in their schools or in small school clusters.

D. Ethnic Minorities and Legal Rights in Education

It is estimated that there are more than 130 ethnic groups in Myanmar, though the government usually identified eight groups as major national ethnic races including Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Bamar, Rakhine and Shan. Bamar is the largest group which comprises around 69%, followed by Shan at 8.5%, Kayin 6.2%, Rakhine at 4.5%, Chin at 2.2%, Kachin at 1.4% and other groups at 0.1 %¹.

Ministry of Education has been implementing ethnic language learning program in Basic Education Schools since 2013-2-14 school year. MoE supported salaries to 16,908 ethnic language teachers at the rate of kyats 30,000 per month and also made free delivery of ethnic language books of 44 languages in 18 States and Regions.

According to new government's restructuring the ministries, a new ministry named Ministry of Ethnic Affairs was evolved but no details yet out how the departments will be structured under the ministry and how it will address the ethnic related issues at a macro level (Peace process and Ethnic policies) and micro level such as school language, mother-tongue based primary education, reaching out to ethnic service providers to ethnic education, etc. MoE will adapt its policies and guidelines in observance of new leadership.

National Education Law described the following in its Articles:

- 42 (b) help to open classes to develop the ethnic groups' literature, language, culture, arts and traditions and to start subjects/majors in ethnic groups' culture, literature, and history in universities.
- 43 (a) Instruction can be in Myanmar or English or in a combination of Myanmar and English.
- 43 (b) If there is a need, an ethnic language can be used alongside Myanmar as a language of instruction at the basic education level.
- 44 In Divisions or States, teaching of ethnic languages and literature can be implemented by Division or State governments, starting at the primary level and gradually expanding (to higher grades.)

Stipend Program

¹ The data is according to the 1983 population census. There is no more concrete updated reference on the composition size of ethnic groups.

Overall, SA found that students and parents are generally pleased with the stipend program and they confirmed that the majority of funds do reach poor, eligible students. They mention that stipends, even though small in amount under the current allocation, greatly help poor students go to school, especially at the primary level.

The stipends program was implemented differently across schools, depending on how TEOs and schoolmasters understand the very general guidelines provided to them. One criterion that is common across schools is the orphanage, however, almost all schools use additional poverty related criteria in selecting beneficiary students, which vary depending on the preference and judgment of school headmasters and teachers where they are involved in the selection. No school is found to use ethnicity as a criterion, and FGD participants including ethnic parents indicates that they did not see the discrimination in the selection of beneficiaries on the ground of ethnicity.

School Grants Program

SA found that all schools are eligible for school grants to cover various operational expenditures. Compared with the stipend program which will be provided only to selected students from among other students who also meet eligibility criteria, the school grants program by design does not involve significant risks of social exclusion given the fact that all schools receive the grant. It also found that school grants help schools cover many operating expenses such as stationery, sanitation, drinking water pots, chalk, dusters, painting the blackboard, and teaching and learning materials.

Existing grievance handling mechanisms

It is important to strengthen feedback/ grievance mechanisms for the stipend and school grants program in order for the programs to be able to improve its fairness, transparency and effectiveness. The responsible persons at different levels such as States/Regions Officials, District officials, Township Officers and School Committees should keep records of complaints and how they are handled in a systematic way so that each and every year they can share the information to other stakeholders of how many complaints coming up and managed by respective levels.

E. The CPPF

1. Applicable World Bank Policies

The World Bank Safeguard policy is in line with the objectives of the programs both of which aim to ensure that the poor and vulnerable including those among ethnic groups living in the project operating areas are informed and able to participate and benefit from the programs, and that any negative issues are avoided or mitigated.

2. Social Assessment (SA) for the Stipend Program

The SA will be conducted on an annual basis, and cover those new townships that will be included into the stipend program in the respective year. It will consist of two aspects, namely: *vulnerability assessment*, and *free, prior and informed consultations* at selected schools. Results of the SA will help inform the development of the CPP.

The vulnerability assessment aims to identify those social groups within the townships who are potentially eligible and in particular need of the stipend program. The result of the vulnerability assessment will be aggregated and send to DEPT in Nay Pyi Taw to prepare its annual CPP and the update of the CPP for the subsequent years.

Free, prior and informed consultations: The DBE officers, in collaboration with TEOs, ATEOs and TGSCs, will visit selected schools and carry out consultations with parents and students to seek inputs to the design of the stipend program and potential measures to better implement the program.

From the second year on, TEOs and TGSCs will take the lead in carrying out the SA and, under the guidance and supervision of DBE, carry out vulnerability assessment and stakeholder consultations. DBE remains responsible for ensuring that SA is done in line with this CPPF.

3. Conflict sensitivity approach

Townships which are situated in the conflict area should benefit the stipend program more than the other townships. Field visits were conducted to see how much concerns they already have had on stay in peace in their own community. In order to ensure that all potentially eligible students and their parents are aware of and can potentially benefit from the stipend program, a brochure describes the objectives, eligibility criteria, selection process and feedback process will be prepared in Myanmar and key ethnic languages.

Project Steering Committee had made a decision to roll out the stipend expansion to conflict affected areas in year 3, especially Rakhine, Kachin and Shan (North). Being proactive, MEWG decided to do pre-assessment in those areas prior to actual implementation using the Social Assessment form which was revised to explore more elements on conflict and security in the school and local context. A tri-partied group consisted of MEWG members, World Bank, DFAT, Save the Children made field visit to sample townships in Rakhine, Kachin and Shan (North). The process involved the meaningful participation of States Offices and TEO offices. Three townships were Putao in Kachin, Mong Yai in Shan-N and Rathetaung in Rakhine. The tasks involved in these preassessment visits were:

- Collecting Social Assessment forms filled by school heads,
 - Collecting School Characteristics forms filled by school heads
 - Identification of communities where hard-to-reach and minority lives
 - Field visits to 3 identified communities & Consultation with them
 - Produce Township Report
-
- The findings and recommendations (see below) of the Pre-assessment teams were discussed at the MEWG meeting for DBE's follow-up and forwarded to senior leadership for decision making. The recommendations on implementation were: 1) To conduct conflict Assessment before implementation, and 2) To conduct training on Conflict Awareness and Peace Building strategy to Government staff. The key policy

recommendations were: 1) Local governments must have formulated Inclusive Policy in Public Service Delivery, 2) MoE should organize Advocacy meetings with local governments, Parliamentarians, and different key stakeholders with effective use of IEC materials.

In addition to the above mentioned institutional arrangement to explore conflict sensitivity and social mapping, the WB/DFAT hired a consultant to work on "Conflict Sensitivity Analysis" in selected townships (some townships from year 3, some townships from year 2 where conflict has occurred in the past). The consultant visited 10 townships (4 townships from Rakhine State, 1 township each from Kachin State, Shan (E), Shan (N) and Mon States and 2 townships from Kayin State). It was expected that applicable and meaningful recommendations will be integrated into the trainings for implementation and some policy recommendations will be dealt by the MoE leadership.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation of the CPPF

The Ministry of Education empowered SGSC in the monitoring of the stipend and the school grants programs through supporting their oversight roles. For the stipend program, the SGSC met beneficiary students/families and receive feedbacks especially on stipend payments 2/3 times per year mostly informally.

SGSCs regularly monitored the implementation of the school grants according to the endorsed school improvement plan.

The World Bank conducted missions twice a year to oversee the implementation of the stipend and the school grants program. The implementation of CPP elements will be part of midterm review and end-project evaluation by independent consultants

5. Grievance Redress Mechanisms

It is the MoE's intention to manage key complaints/feedbacks at the township level to make key issues public and solve the issues in a transparent manner. Detailed processes and procedures of feedback/ complaint handlings were developed and included in the MoE's program guidelines for year 3.

Consultations and Disclosure for Stipend Program Planned for 2016-2017 school year

Sn.	Activity	2016-17	By Who
1	Revising the School Grant and Stipend Operational Guidelines based on findings and program expansion to new areas including conflict affected townships, including the revision of Social assessment questionnaire that explore the social context in those conflict affected areas	March last week, 2016	MEWG, WB, DFAT, Save the Children
2	MoE Training includes a session of conflict sensitivity for TEOs from conflict affected townships	May 9,10,11	DBE, WB, DFAT, Save the Children

3	Field visit to at least 3 schools in a township for Social Assessment and consultation with communities	May	TEO teams
4	Conducting Township Consultation workshop on stipend program inviting representatives from religious groups, ethnic groups, minority groups, CSOs, NGOs and other ministries	May	TEO teams
5	Disclosure of the draft CPPF in MoE website at www.moemyanmar.net	June	DBE counterparts
6	Newspaper articles about grant and stipend programs in local newspapers	June	DBE counterparts
7	Disclosure of the selected schools for stipend program in the township	June	Township Committees
8	Receiving feedback and complaints on the selected schools list	June	Township Committees
9	Establish facebook page on school grants and stipends programs	July	DBE counterparts
10	Using ethnic radio channels for awareness raising of the school grant and stipend programs	July	DBE team in collaboration with MRTV
11	Disclosure and announcement of the stipend program in the community mass meetings at village level	July	
12	Disclosure and Announcement of the selected students for stipend program at school level	July	School heads and School committees
13	Receiving and handling feedback and complaints	July	School heads, class teachers and School committees
14	Township Sharing Workshop to disclose the stipend program achievement and challenges	February and March 2017	Township committees

Disclosure Plan for 2016-17

At DBE level

- The detailed implementation procedures of disclosure at township and community levels will be integrated in the revised Operational Guidelines and training modules.
- The posters and pamphlets about school grant and stipend program will be printed and distributed to schools and communities across the country in May and June 2016.
- DBE will coordinate with MRTV and other available media groups to make use of Ethnic FM channels for the public awareness raising on school grant and stipend programs.
- DBE will set up a Facebook page on School Grant and Stipend program

- DBE will upload the documents _Progress Report including SA report, CPPF and CPP in the MoE website www.moemyanmar.net

At States/Regions level

- Organizing Advocacy meetings with local governments, departmental personnel and other stakeholders at States/Region level

At Township level

- Organizing Consultation meetings or/and Sharing Lessons Learned meetings inviting key representatives from different stakeholders at township level
- Make sure and support schools to implement community announcement and consultation meetings at village level
- Submitting SA report to DBE for its compilation and preparing CPP for next year

At School level

- Organizing consultation meetings involving hard-to-reach people, parents, and stakeholders
- Announcement of nominated stipend students at school and at village administrative office
- Announcement of selected stipend students at school and at village administrative office
- All the records and documents related to school grant and stipend program will be accessible to all who seek to find out
- School heads make sure that information about grant and stipend implementation will be shared to communities as a regular basis at PTA meetings, community meetings, village development meetings, etc.

Stipend program implementation timeline (2016-2017)

Sn.	Activity	2016-17	By Who
1	Revision of School Grant and Stipend Operational Guidelines based on lessons learned	March last week	MEWG, WB, DFAT, Save the Children
2	Development of Training Modules for Grant and Stipend implementation	March last week	MEWG, WB, DFAT, Save the Children
3	School Characteristics and Social Assessment forms filled at township level	March 29	School Heads in stipend townships
4	Training for 55 TEO teams on Stipend implementation in NPT (including conflict sensitivity)	May 9,10,11	DBE, WB, DFAT, Save the Children
5	Preparing Social mapping utilizing the information from SC and SA forms.	May	TEO teams
6	Field visit to at least 3 schools in a township for Social Assessment	May	TEO teams

7	Conducting Township Consultation workshop and Forming Township Committee	May	TEO teams
8	Preparing school ranking, review and school selection	May/June	Township Committees
9	Announcement of the selected schools list	June	Township Committees
10	Receiving feedback and complaints on the selected schools list	June	Township Committees
11	Township Stipend training for the stipend school Heads	June	TEO teams
12	Community announcement and mass meeting for awareness of stipend programme (village level).	June/July	School heads and School committees
13	Preparing student ranking, review and student selection	July	School heads, class teachers and School committees
14	Announcement of the selected students list within village.	July	School committees
15	Receiving and handling feedback and complaints	July	School committees
16	Getting approval from the TEOs for the selected students.	July	School heads
17	Registration of the selected students	July	School heads, teachers and School committees
18	First stipend payment to the stipend students (for the first 2 months)	End July	School heads, class teachers