



**THE WORLD BANK**  
IBRD • IDA | WORLD BANK GROUP

**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**

Report No: PAD3336

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

PROJECT APPRAISAL DOCUMENT

ON A

PROPOSED GRANT

IN THE AMOUNT OF SDR36.5 MILLION  
(US\$50.0 MILLION EQUIVALENT)

TO THE

REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

FOR A

FREE EDUCATION PROJECT

June 5, 2020

Education Global Practice  
Africa Region

This document has a restricted distribution and may be used by recipients only in the performance of their official duties. Its contents may not otherwise be disclosed without World Bank authorization.

## CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

Exchange Rate Effective May 31, 2020

Currency Unit = Sierra Leonean Leone (SLL)

---

SLL 10,000.00 = US\$1

---

SDR 0.72885235 = US\$1

## FISCAL YEAR

January 1–December 31

Regional Vice President: Hafez M. H. Ghanem

Country Director: Pierre Laporte

Regional Director: Amit Dar

Country Manager: Gayle Martin

Practice Manager: Halil Dunder

Task Team Leader: Mari Shoji

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AF	Additional Financing
ASC	Annual School Census
AWPB	Annual Work Plan and Budget
BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
CERC	Contingent Emergency Response Component
CO	Country Office
CoP	Communities of Practice
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
DA	Designated Account
DEO	District Education Office
DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
D-i-D	Difference-in-difference
DP	Development Partner
EC	European Commission
ECDN	Education for Children with Disabilities Network
EET	Education Emergency Taskforce
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EIMPG	Education Inter-ministerial and Partners Group
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESCP	Environmental and Social Commitment Plan
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESP	Education Sector Plan
ESS	Environmental and Social Standard
FM	Financial Management
FQSE	Free Quality School Education
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GDL	Global Digital Library
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrollment Rate
GM	Grievance Mechanism
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanisms
GRS	Grievance Redress Service
HCI	Human Capital Index
IC	Internal Control
IDA	International Development Association
IE	Impact Evaluation

IFMIS	Integrated Financial Management Information System
IFR	Interim Financial Report
IPF	Investment Project Financing
IPR	Independent Post Review
IRR	Internal Rate of Return
JSS	Junior Secondary School
LC	Local Council
LEG	Local Education Group
LT	Lead Teacher
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MBSSE	Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education
MDTF	Multi-donor Trust Fund
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoPED	Ministry of Planning and Economic Development
MTEF	Medium-term Expenditure Framework
MTHE	Ministry of Technical and Higher Education
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NLA	National Learning Assessment
NPSE	National Primary School Examination
NPV	Net Present Value
PBF	Performance-based Financing
PDO	Project Development Objective
PFM	Public Financial Management
PFMU	Project Fiduciary Management Unit
PPR	Procurement Post Review
PPSD	Project Procurement Strategy for Development
PQTR	Pupil-Qualified Teacher Ratio
PTR	Pupil-Teacher Ratio
REDiSL	Revitalizing Education Development in Sierra Leone
RPF	Resettlement Policy Framework
SBM	School-based Management
SCD	Systematic Country Diagnostic
SEA/SH	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-based Violence
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMC	School Management Committee
SSS	Senior Secondary School
STEP	Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement
TA	Technical Assistance
TLM	Teaching and Learning Material
TMIS	Teacher Management Information System
ToR	Terms of Reference
TSC	Teaching Service Commission
TTL	Task Team Leader

UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WAEC	West African Examinations Council
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WASSCE	West African Senior School Certificate of Education
WDR	World Development Report

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DATASHEET .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>I. STRATEGIC CONTEXT .....</b>	<b>7</b>
A. Country Context.....	7
B. Sectoral and Institutional Context .....	8
C. Relevance to Higher Level Objectives.....	15
<b>II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION.....</b>	<b>16</b>
A. Project Development Objective .....	16
B. Project Components .....	16
C. Project Cost and Financing .....	29
D. Project Beneficiaries.....	31
E. Results Chain.....	31
F. Rationale for Bank Involvement and Role of Partners.....	31
G. Lessons Learned and Reflected in the Project Design.....	35
<b>III. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>37</b>
A. Institutional and Implementation Arrangements .....	37
B. Results Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements.....	38
C. Sustainability.....	40
<b>IV. PROJECT APPRAISAL SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>40</b>
A. Technical, Economic and Financial Analysis .....	40
B. Fiduciary.....	43
C. Legal Operational Policies.....	44
D. Environmental and Social.....	44
<b>V. GRIEVANCE REDRESS SERVICES .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>VI. KEY RISKS .....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>VII. RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND MONITORING .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>ANNEX 1: IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS AND SUPPORT PLAN .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>ANNEX 2: PROJECT TARGETING FRAMEWORK.....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>ANNEX 3: ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>82</b>

## DATASHEET

### BASIC INFORMATION

Country(ies)	Project Name	
Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone Free Education Project	
Project ID	Financing Instrument	Environmental and Social Risk Classification
P167897	Investment Project Financing	Moderate

### Financing & Implementation Modalities

<input type="checkbox"/> Multiphase Programmatic Approach (MPA)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC)
<input type="checkbox"/> Series of Projects (SOP)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fragile State(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Performance-Based Conditions (PBCs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Small State(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Intermediaries (FI)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fragile within a non-fragile Country
<input type="checkbox"/> Project-Based Guarantee	<input type="checkbox"/> Conflict
<input type="checkbox"/> Deferred Drawdown	<input type="checkbox"/> Responding to Natural or Man-made Disaster
<input type="checkbox"/> Alternate Procurement Arrangements (APA)	

Expected Approval Date	Expected Closing Date
29-Jun-2020	30-Sep-2025

Bank/IFC Collaboration

No

### Proposed Development Objective(s)

The project development objectives (PDO) are to improve the management of the education system, teaching practices, and learning conditions.

**Components**

Component Name	Cost (US\$, millions)
Policy, Governance, Accountability, and System Administration	6.15
Teacher Management and Professional Development	18.00
School Level Education Development	36.29
Project Management, Coordination and Monitoring and Evaluation	5.56
Contingent Emergency Response Component	0.00

**Organizations**

Borrower:	Republic of Sierra Leone
Implementing Agency:	Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Educaiton

**PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)****SUMMARY**

Total Project Cost	65.97
Total Financing	65.97
of which IBRD/IDA	50.00
Financing Gap	0.00

**DETAILS****World Bank Group Financing**

International Development Association (IDA)	50.00
IDA Grant	50.00

**Non-World Bank Group Financing**

Other Sources	15.97
UK: British Department for International Development (DFID)	1.78
EC: European Development Fund (EDF)	10.25





IRELAND, Govt. of

3.94

**IDA Resources (in US\$, Millions)**

	Credit Amount	Grant Amount	Guarantee Amount	Total Amount
<b>Sierra Leone</b>	0.00	50.00	0.00	50.00
National PBA	0.00	50.00	0.00	50.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>50.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>50.00</b>

**Expected Disbursements (in US\$, Millions)**

WB Fiscal Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
<b>Annual</b>	0.26	5.80	10.12	12.65	10.30	10.87	0.00
<b>Cumulative</b>	0.26	6.06	16.19	28.83	39.13	50.00	50.00

**INSTITUTIONAL DATA****Practice Area (Lead)**

Education

**Contributing Practice Areas**

Governance, Health, Nutrition &amp; Population

**Climate Change and Disaster Screening**

This operation has been screened for short and long-term climate change and disaster risks

**SYSTEMATIC OPERATIONS RISK-RATING TOOL (SORT)**

Risk Category	Rating
1. Political and Governance	● Substantial
2. Macroeconomic	● Substantial
3. Sector Strategies and Policies	● Substantial
4. Technical Design of Project or Program	● Moderate
5. Institutional Capacity for Implementation and Sustainability	● Substantial
6. Fiduciary	● Substantial



7. Environment and Social	● Moderate
8. Stakeholders	● Moderate
9. Other	
10. Overall	● Substantial

## COMPLIANCE

### Policy

Does the project depart from the CPF in content or in other significant respects?

☐ Yes   ☒ No

Does the project require any waivers of Bank policies?

☐ Yes   ☒ No



## Environmental and Social Standards Relevance Given its Context at the Time of Appraisal

E & S Standards	Relevance
Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts	Relevant
Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure	Relevant
Labor and Working Conditions	Relevant
Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management	Relevant
Community Health and Safety	Relevant
Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement	Relevant
Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources	Relevant
Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities	Not Currently Relevant
Cultural Heritage	Relevant
Financial Intermediaries	Not Currently Relevant

**NOTE:** For further information regarding the World Bank's due diligence assessment of the Project's potential environmental and social risks and impacts, please refer to the Project's Appraisal Environmental and Social Review Summary (ESRS).

## Legal Covenants

### Sections and Description

The Recipient shall, not later than six (6) months from the Effectiveness Date, establish and thereafter maintain throughout the implementation of the Project, the Free Education Project Secretariat (FEPS) responsible for the day-to-day management and coordination of the Project, with adequate resources, key staff including an environmental specialist, a social development specialist, and a monitoring and evaluation specialist with qualifications, skills and terms of reference satisfactory to the Association.

### Sections and Description

The Recipient shall, not later than six (6) months from the Effectiveness Date establish and thereafter maintain throughout implementation of the Project, a Multi-Donor Trust Fund Free Education Project Steering Committee ("MDTFSC"), with a composition, mandate, terms of reference and resources satisfactory to the Association.



### Conditions

Type Disbursement	Description No withdrawal shall be made for payments under Category 2 (Performance-Based School Grants) unless and until the Recipient has prepared a School Maintenance/Renovation Grants Manual satisfactory to the Association.
Type Disbursement	Description No withdrawal shall be made under Category 3 (School Maintenance/Renovation Grant), unless and until the Recipient has prepared a Performance-based Financing Manual” satisfactory to the Association.
Type Disbursement	Description No withdrawal shall be made under Category 4 (Emergency Expenditures under Part 5 of the Project – the CERC Part), unless and until the Recipient has furnished or caused to be furnished evidence satisfactory to the Association that measures referred to in Section I.C of Schedule 2 to the Financing Agreement have been met in a manner satisfactory to the Association.



## I. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### A. Country Context

1. **Sierra Leone is a small low-income country on the west coast of Africa with a population of approximately 7.8 million people.** The population is young—with around 45.8 percent of the population below the age of 15 and 74.8 percent below the age of 25 in 2018. Human development outcomes are low, with Sierra Leone's ranking on the Human Capital Index (HCI)<sup>1</sup> among the lowest in the world at 151 out of 157 countries in 2019. This index, as a composite measure of human capital, confirms that only around two-thirds (61 percent) of today's 15-year-olds can be expected to survive to the age of 60 and about one-quarter of the country's children are stunted, a condition resulting from chronic malnutrition. Moreover, the HCI measure predicts that a child born today in Sierra Leone can be expected to be only 35 percent as productive when he or she grows up as the child could have been if he or she had enjoyed complete education and full health.
2. **The human capital situation in Sierra Leone is challenging and this is further complicated by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.** The population of 7.8 million has the fifth lowest life expectancy globally (51 years) in 2019. High fertility (4.2 children), adolescent pregnancy and child marriage perpetuate the vicious cycle of poverty and gender inequality: a girl in the poorest wealth quintile has a 40 percent probability of being pregnant by 18 years, she has a 21.8 percent chance of finishing secondary school, which detracts from the development outcomes of each of the 5.6 children that she will have in her lifetime. Youth under 35 years of age account for 75 percent of the population but much of this cohort spent their formative years in the decade-long war. The youth bulge is therefore associated, in part, with low skills and some frustration around unmet expectations, an important source of fragility. These issues are further complicated by the COVID-19 crisis which—as the Ebola experience showed—will likely be accompanied by school closures and a spike in adolescent pregnancies.
3. **The pace of poverty reduction has slowed in recent years.** The poverty rate fell by 1.5 percentage points annually over 2003-2011 and by 0.8 percentage points annually over 2012-2018 to reach 56.8 percent in 2018. Inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient, increased from 0.33 (2011) to 0.37 (2018). Poverty remains disproportionately rural (78.5 percent), and the largest reduction occurred in urban areas outside of Freetown (by 0.9 percentage points annually over 2012-2018). The major determinants of poverty are large household size, low education of the household head, employment in agriculture and non-wage employment. Furthermore, poverty rates for households with access to electricity are between 13.5 and 20.2 percentage points lower than those without electricity access. Disturbingly, extreme poverty in rural areas increased by 4.3 percentage points (2012-2018); it is equally disturbing that three (out of 15) districts have poverty rates of above 80 percent. While the share of food-insecure Sierra Leoneans decreased from 49.8 percent to 43.7 percent (2012-2018), 3.2 million people remain food insecure.
4. **Sierra Leone reported the first case of COVID-19 on March 31, 2020.** As of June 4, 2020, Sierra Leone has reported 914 confirmed cases and continues to be vulnerable to a more widespread outbreak.

---

<sup>1</sup> The HCI is made up of five indicators: the probability of survival to age 5, a child's expected years of schooling, harmonized test scores as a measure of quality of learning, adult survival rate (fraction of 15-year-olds who will survive to age 60), and the proportion of children who are not stunted.



While the magnitude of the COVID-19 crisis is unprecedented, Sierra Leoneans, having gone through the Ebola pandemic, know the setbacks that restrictions on economic activities and lost educational opportunities would inflict on citizens, especially on the young generation. The Ebola crisis hit West Africa in 2014–2015 and had a devastating impact on human development outcomes and the country's economy. The fall in economic activity reduced employment, boosted poverty rates, and increased food insecurity. The Ebola crisis resulted in the loss of the lives of more than 3,800 people, the infection of a total of around 12,000 people, and tens of thousands of children orphaned. In Sierra Leone, schools were closed for eight months, resulting in a lost year of learning. Research on the effect of the Ebola pandemic shows that thousands of girls were left vulnerable and that there were increases in unwanted sex and transactional sex for food and other essentials, which saw more than 18,000 girls fall pregnant.

**5. Education is at the heart of the Government's Medium-term National Development Plan (NDP) 2019–2023.** In May 2018, the current administration came to power. The new Government is guided by five core principles: disciplined leadership, national integration, efficiency, professionalism, and delivery. The NDP outlines eight strategic priorities: (a) education for development; (b) health; (c) water; (d) macroeconomic management; (e) energy; (f) agriculture; (g) tackling corruption; and (h) security. Specifically, the NDP highlights the importance of education in enhancing human capital development and facilitating the transformation of the country. Many measures are being developed and are currently under-way to address each of these priority areas.

**6. COVID-19 has already been affecting the implementation of the Government's NDP 2019-2023.** The rapidly evolving situation calls for an adaptive response with course correction. Previous major outbreaks like Ebola, had negative impacts on food and nutrition security—particularly for the most vulnerable, including children, women, the elderly, and the poor. To respond to this challenge, the Government has launched a Quick Action Economic Response Program<sup>2</sup> (QAERP) not only to maintain macro-economic and financial stability, but also to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 shock on citizens, households and businesses.

## B. Sectoral and Institutional Context

**7. The education sector is managed by the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) and the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education (MTHE), with the MBSSE being responsible for basic education (primary school and junior secondary school [JSS]) and senior secondary school (SSS) and the MTHE responsible for technical/vocational tertiary and higher education including preservice teacher training.** According to the 2019 Annual School Census (ASC), there were 11,168 basic and senior secondary education schools in Sierra Leone. Of these, preprimary schools accounted for 15.7 percent, primary schools for 64.1 percent (7,154 schools), JSSs for 14.6 percent (1,633), and SSSs for 5.6 percent (623). There are approximately two million students in basic and senior secondary schools in Sierra Leone<sup>3</sup>.

**8. Education services are provided by a mix of government and nongovernment providers.** The majority of schools delivering basic and senior secondary education lie outside government ownership. At the primary level, only 18 percent are owned/run by the Government, while the majority (58 percent) are owned/run by missions, 14 percent by the community, and 9 percent by a private entity. At the JSS

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.statistics.sl/images/2020/Documents/GoSL\\_COVID\\_19\\_Quick-Action-Economic-Response-Programme.pdf](http://www.statistics.sl/images/2020/Documents/GoSL_COVID_19_Quick-Action-Economic-Response-Programme.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> According to the 2018 ASC, there are 90,701 students for preprimary, 1,369,738 for primary, 315,500 for JSS, and 206,536 for SSS.



level, only 10 percent are government schools, and 90 percent of schools are owned/run by nongovernment providers (44 percent by missions, 24 percent by the community, and 21 percent by a private entity).

9. **The Government supports nongovernment community/mission schools through funding of teachers and learning materials.** The Government has in place a school approval process that can, in time, qualify community/mission schools for government assistance. In 2019, three quarters of schools have been approved for government assistance (53 percent in preprimary, 79 percent in primary, 77 percent in JSS, and 80 percent in SSS). Government approval implies the payment of subsidies, textbooks, teacher salaries, and examination fees; the increase in government-approved schools adds substantial fiscal outlay to the Government.

10. **Sierra Leone has made substantial progress in increasing access to education, especially among girls, since the end of the civil war in 2004.** The primary school completion rate increased from 55 percent in 2004 to 75.4 percent in 2016 and is above the regional average (69 percent). Secondary school enrollment increases in the post-war period have been especially remarkable (a 50 percent increase in male and more than a 100 percent increase in female enrollment from 2010 to 2016). Completion rates in JSSs and SSSs increased from 26 percent and 11 percent in 2004 to 64.5 percent and 27.6 percent, respectively, in 2016. Access also increased at the tertiary level with the number of students enrolled in public tertiary institutions increasing from 8,913 in 2000 to 31,103 in 2012. Notably, female enrollment increased sharply—the gender gap in enrollment has closed at the primary level and has been reduced substantially at the JSS level though it persists at the SSS and tertiary levels. This, in turn, has resulted in low levels of female participation in the teaching workforce, with only 30 percent of primary school, 15 percent of JSS, and 8 percent of SSS teachers being women.

### Key Challenges Facing the Education Sector

11. **While there have been significant gains in enrollment, learning outcomes are low and skills acquisition is limited. There are also major inequities in access, weak sector governance, ineffective management, and low and inefficient public spending.** The ambitious Free Quality School Education (FQSE) Program launched by the Government in 2018 sets out to address many of these issues. The FQSE Program will be implemented in the context of a rapidly growing student population. A U.K. Department for International Development (DFID)-funded costing of the FQSE Program<sup>4</sup> has estimated the funding gap to be between US\$3 billion and US\$6 billion between now and 2023. In addition to delivering promised access and learning improvements, the FQSE Program will need to drive substantive efficiency gains for free quality education to become affordable and fiscally sustainable.

12. **The education system is characterized by a deficit in evidence-driven, criterion-based policy which impedes rational planning and budgeting.** This situation affects virtually every aspect of system administration and notably in those areas that receive the largest budget allocations—from infrastructure expansion to teacher recruitment and deployment as well as approvals of schools that receive the Government's financial support.

13. **Education outcomes are among the lowest in the region.** HCI research found that a child born in Sierra Leone today can expect to complete 8.9 years of schooling by age 18 (out of a total of 12 years).

---

<sup>4</sup> Presentation on the Progress on Implementation Plan for the FQSE Program and Costings by Dr. M Mambo.



However, the learning-adjusted years (when the figure is adjusted for the quality of learning) is equivalent to 4.5 years.<sup>5</sup> A 2014 Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) found that 87 percent of Grade 2 students could not read a single word. Learning outcomes are also low at the JSS and SSS levels. DFID-funded learning assessments in 2017 and 2018 show that student learning outcomes are lower than curriculum expectations—60 percent of junior secondary Grade 2 students (JSS2) and 40 percent of senior secondary Grade 2 students (SSS2) demonstrate English skills no higher than what would be expected at primary Grade 6. In mathematics, the gap is even wider, with 70 percent of JSS2 pupils and 50 percent of SSS2 pupils showing skills no higher than what would be expected at primary Grade 6. In public examinations, only 50 percent of Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE)<sup>6</sup> candidates received a pass in English or mathematics, while only 3.59 percent of West Africa Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) candidates obtained a credit in any five subjects including English and mathematics (2016). It is expected that COVID-19 will further exacerbate the existing learning deficiency as schools have closed early, and public examinations have been adversely affected.

14. **Key factors driving poor education outcomes include most notably low and inequitable access to education and low quality of education services provided.** Fewer than 10 percent of children make it through school to their final mathematics and English exams, and 90 percent of those students who take exams fail. Overall, rural students' performance in school is worse than that of urban students, and girls are less likely than boys to transition to secondary education, are more likely to drop out, and have poorer scores on examinations. For those fortunate enough to stay in school, the low quality of education services is driven by poorly trained and motivated teachers, a chronic shortage of subject specialist teachers at the secondary level, an inadequate teaching and learning environment, insufficient teaching and learning materials (TLMs), and an inadequate student assessment system. Together, these issues are further exacerbated by low and inefficient public spending and weak sector governance and management. Each of these is described in further detail as follows:

- (a) **Low and inequitable access.** While most children begin primary school, most of them drop out of school before completing the cycle. The gross enrollment rate (GER) was only 55 percent for JSS and 30 percent for SSS in 2018 (compared to the GER for primary education of 108 percent). There is significant variation in students' access to education by gender, socioeconomic status, and location. Key factors driving these gaps include (i) cost—unofficial levies are charged by schools often to compensate for poorly targeted/delayed government subsidies, which worsens with progression to secondary school where provision is less well subsidized;<sup>7</sup> (ii) distance to schools resulting from the lack/variable distribution of secondary schools (mainly located in urban areas) is a major impediment to transition to secondary school, particularly for girls, which is further exacerbated by the lack of affordable and safe transport options (especially in rural areas); and (iii) gender-related issues including fear of gender-based violence (GBV) both on the

---

<sup>5</sup> In the Harmonized Test Scores, Sierra Leone scores 315 on a scale where 625 represents advanced attainment and 300 minimum attainment.

<sup>6</sup> Examination taken at the end of JSS. It determines whether a student will be permitted to continue on to senior secondary education.

<sup>7</sup> In 2011, the annual out-of-pocket expenditure per child for primary and secondary education was purchase price parity US\$98 and purchase price parity US\$375, respectively, which was higher than in countries such as Ghana, Niger, Uganda, and Cameroon in the same period. Though out-of-pocket expenditure per child for tertiary education were high in absolute terms (purchase price parity US\$765 in 2011), they were lower compared to other countries.





journey to and while in school and limited if any access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities, particularly for girls who have reached puberty.

- (b) **Gender issues.** While female enrollment has increased sharply, closing the gender gap at the primary and junior secondary levels, there are important gender disparities in terms of both access to schooling and retention and completion rates. For example, while the GER for SSS is 29 percent for boys in 2018, it is 25 percent for girls. An estimated 41 percent of disadvantaged girls<sup>8</sup> have never attended school, and for those who do, retention and completion rates are low—and decrease significantly across the education levels. Some of the specific reasons that girls drop out of school are related to teenage pregnancy (with 61.8 percent school dropouts due to early pregnancy), early forced marriages, and GBV and sexual harassment in schools.<sup>9</sup> The cost of schooling (which comprises both out-of-pocket and opportunity costs), distance to schools (low access to senior secondary school is partly driven by the limited number of schools), poor sanitation and menstrual hygiene management in schools, and lack of understanding of gender-related issues and less support to promote gender equality at the school and community levels also hinder girls' participation and retention in school.
- (c) **Pregnant girls' access to quality education.** Adolescent pregnancy and child marriage in Sierra Leone are among the highest globally (31 percent of women ages 20–24 years had given birth by the age of 18 while 3 percent before the age of 15). In Sierra Leone, pregnant girls were not allowed to attend school or sit for examinations while visibly pregnant, and these girls were supposed to attend community schools which are of poor quality generally. The legal basis of this position was challenged in the Economic Community of West African States' (ECOWAS) Court of Justice, which ruled in December 2019 that this was not sufficient and ordered the immediate overturn of the policy. In March 2020, the Government overturned the policy with immediate effect. The policy would be replaced by two new policies focusing on the radical inclusion and comprehensive safety of all children in the education system. The overturn of the policy will play a crucial role as early school closing due to COVID-19 pandemic is likely to affect teenage fertility.
- (d) **Inadequate support to children with disabilities.** Persons with disabilities are more likely to be excluded from education than those without disabilities. According to the 2019 ACS, nearly 48,000 students across the four levels of education are disabled (27.6 percent of children with disabilities have a learning disability, 19.4 percent have a visual disability, 17.2 percent have a physical disability, 17.8 percent have a speech disability, and 18.0 percent have a hearing disability)—representing 1.5 percent of total school enrollment. With approximately 15 percent of the country's population estimated to be disabled, the ASC finding points to the likelihood that a large number of children with disabilities do not attend school. Barriers to full inclusion of persons with disabilities include (i) inaccessible physical environments; (ii) the unavailability of assistive devices and technologies; (iii) non-adapted means of teaching and learning materials; (iv) a limited number of trained teachers who can teach properly children with disabilities; and

---

<sup>8</sup> Defined as the poorest quintile of rural students from households whose heads have no education.

<sup>9</sup> Though particularly the case at the senior secondary level, educational institutions generally have serious issues related to transactional sex, sexual harassment by teachers, and violent discipline. Adolescent girls are often victims of sexual harassment and are forced to exchange sex for basic necessities including education, grades, and transportation to school. A 2010 study found that 9 percent of girls surveyed had been coerced into sex in exchange for money or grades and the National Study on School-Related GBV in Sierra Leone in 2010 cited teachers as the main perpetrators of sexual harassment.



(v) discriminatory prejudice and stigma in society. Females who are disabled are doubly disadvantaged, due to the stigma associated with gender as well as disability. The few specialized schools in the country can handle only the mild to moderate forms of disabilities, especially physical impairment. Children with other forms of disabilities, particularly intellectual disabilities, severe mental health conditions, and sensory disabilities, are severely marginalized. For people with disabilities, a lack of access to education is not only about physical mobility and transport but also about suitable curricula, teachers who are trained to teach children with disabilities, and overcoming of widespread stigma and discrimination against people with disabilities.

- (e) **Quality of teaching.** In general, Sierra Leone's teacher workforce is ill trained, poorly remunerated, and receives little support by way of continuous professional development (CPD), and consequently, their morale is low. In 2018, around 61 percent of the estimated 80,126 teachers in primary and secondary education were not government approved and hence not paid with government funds—many obtain a precarious living as part-time 'volunteers' on minimal stipends. Monthly monitoring undertaken by the DFID-funded *Leh Wi Lan* Project revealed an average student-teacher contact time of only two hours per day. There is no national in-service teacher training program—training is ad hoc and is not informed by learning assessment outcomes nor does it respond to the needs identified by classroom teachers.<sup>10</sup>
- (f) **Inadequate teaching and learning environment.** The lack of qualified and motivated teachers is further exacerbated by poor infrastructure and absence of functioning WASH facilities. Currently, the Government does not have a school catchment area plan to guide expansion of the provision of education, nor a national school construction strategy, construction standards, or a quality assurance mechanism to assess and ensure the viability and safety of school infrastructure. Given the recent Ebola crisis, the absence of functioning WASH facilities is a major health concern and acts as a significant deterrent to adolescent girls' transition to JSS and SSS.
- (g) **Limited curriculum and insufficient TLMs.** Currently, there is no unit in the MBSSE in charge of curriculum. Students sitting for the WASSCE administered by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) use WAEC syllabi. At the primary and JSS levels, the accelerated curriculum developed as part of post-Ebola recovery is being used. This is deliberately compact and fast-paced to enable students to catch up from the lost year of schooling. Sierra Leone urgently needs a new primary and JSS curriculum with defined learning outcome benchmarks appropriate to the grade. According to the 2018 ASC, at the primary level, the student-textbook ratio is around 3:1 (and around 4:1 for science textbooks). This situation is expected to have improved over this year from the efforts of the World Bank-assisted Revitalizing Education Development in Sierra Leone (REDiSL) Project (P133070) at the primary level and at the secondary level through the DFID-funded *Leh Wi Lan* project, which has distributed 2.8 million student guides and 16,000 teacher lesson plans. Though progress has been made in providing these materials, two major questions/concerns remain: (i) how will the replenishment of book stocks be financed and managed? and (ii) how can the use of books by students and teachers be ensured? A recent impact evaluation (IE) of a textbook distribution program in Sierra Leone showed that students'

---

<sup>10</sup> Wright. 2018. *A Comprehensive Situation Analysis of Teachers and the Teaching Profession in Sierra Leone*. Freetown, Teaching Service Commission.



access to textbooks did not increase because a large majority of the books were stored rather than used.<sup>11</sup>

- (h) **Inadequate assessment system.** There is persistent concern about the integrity, robustness, and reliability of the national exams provided by WAEC. In 2018, the Sierra Leone Anti-Corruption Commission reported widespread examination malpractice. The large fluctuations in WAEC pass rates year on year (for instance, the pass rate was 19 percent in 2017 and 94 percent in 2018) suggest major technical weaknesses and/or manipulation of pass mark boundaries.
- (i) **Limitations in education system management and governance.** The 2017 Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD)<sup>12</sup> reported major weaknesses in governance including government effectiveness, regulatory quality, corruption, and rule of law. In the education system, the policy and regulatory environment is weak, the management of schools and teachers is inefficient, and there are major institutional and human capacity issues. While basic education has been declared a devolved subject under decentralization, those functions and budgets that have been devolved to Local Councils (LCs) and local agencies such as district education offices (DEOs) and district Teaching Service Commission (TSC) offices are not clear. This is further exacerbated by a dual system of local administration incorporating both the civil service and paramount chief system. Overall, the system's governance is characterized by a high level of politicization at all levels. For example, at the school level, it is not unusual for appointees to outnumber representatives elected by parents. School management is generally weak with governing bodies having limited understanding of financial entitlements and having received little or no training in school improvement planning, financial management (FM), revenue mobilization, and performance management.
- (j) **Limitations in teacher management, deployment, and policy development.** Sierra Leone established the TSC by an Act of Parliament in 2011. Officially, the TSC mandate covers teacher registration and licensing, teacher management and payroll, teacher performance and development, and teacher-employer relations. However, the TSC has only recently become operational and is struggling to assert its mandate in the face of major institutional and human capacity weaknesses. Improving teaching in Sierra Leone will require addressing four major challenges. First, due to a limited labor force planning process, currently the link between the need for teachers and teacher hiring is weak. This is particularly acute for secondary subject-specific teachers (mathematics, science, and English) where there are chronic shortages. Second, recent studies on the efficiency and effectiveness of teacher preservice suggest that preservice teacher training is poor and there is no statistically significant correlation between teacher qualifications and student learning outcomes. There is also little information on the speed or unit cost of teacher production and whether this meets the demand for teachers. Third, teacher deployment is inefficient—the allocation of teachers to schools is not commensurate with the needs of each school with rural areas being particularly disadvantaged. This misallocation has resulted in wide variations in the pupil-qualified teacher ratios (PQTRs) ranging from 30:1 in Western Area Urban to 84:1 in Pujehun. Finally, there is no standard supervision and quality assurance system for managing teachers, nor is there a defined career path to guide professional

<sup>11</sup> This finding was confirmed by school visits undertaken during the preparation of the proposed project.

<sup>12</sup> World Bank. 2017. *Sierra Leone - Systematic Country Diagnostic: Priorities for Sustainable Growth and Poverty Reduction*. Washington, DC: World Bank Group (Report Number 115408).



development. The system lacks sufficient staff, resources, and expertise to provide effective planning, supervision, and support.

- (k) **Low and inefficient public spending.** The Government has made a strong commitment to education, raising the education sector budget to 21 percent of the government budget (of this, approximately 80 percent is allocated to basic education). In 2016, public spending on education was US\$109 million or 12.5 percent of total government spending, which is lower than the regional average. In per-student terms, public spending in primary and secondary education in Sierra Leone is the lowest among countries with similar GDP per capita. Further, public spending is inefficient and is largely used to cover recurrent costs—three-quarters of which is spent on staff compensation. A DFID-funded analysis of the Government's FQSE plans shows a disconnect between planned expenditure and available resources. At a school level, this is evident in the distribution of capitation grants where resources are often not made available to meet obligations—forcing schools to charge fees, which in turn poses a significant financial burden, particularly on poor households. At a system level, there is a large backlog of schools pending approval and teachers not on payroll—which, depending on the Government's decision, will likely have important fiscal implications. There are also many inefficiencies related to insufficient financial control of the payroll, weak targeting and fragmentation of education subsidies, inadequate links between funding and performance, low budget execution, disbursement delays, limited capacities in planning and FM in educational institutions, over-centralization, and weak accountability in the use of resources.

### **Actions to Address Education Sector Challenges**

15. **The current Government has made its commitment to addressing the abovementioned challenges explicit through its adoption and implementation of its flagship FQSE Program.** Introduced in 2018, this program focuses on addressing the significant barrier that school fees pose to accessing school education in making it available to all. The key elements of the program for the 2019/2020 school year include: (a) reducing barriers to access to education (government payment for school, admission, and public examination fees); (b) providing essential elements for quality education provision (policies to motivate teachers, provision of textbooks in core subjects, TLMs, and pens and pencils); and (c) enhancing the role of parents in students' learning and the support of local education committees, DEOs, and the MBSSE in program delivery. During the school year, this policy is expected to reach all government and government-assisted schools in the country. The financing of the program comes primarily from the Government with a substantial increased investment of up to 21 percent of its national budget. The Government has communicated the key messages of the program and set up a hotline for inquiries, clarifications, and/or grievances.

16. **The Government's response to education sector challenges has been guided by the medium-term NDP 2019–2023, the Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2013–2017, and more recently the ESP 2018–2020.**<sup>13</sup> As discussed earlier, education is one of the national priorities as articulated in the NDP. The most recent ESP 2018–2020, which was endorsed by the local education group (LEG) in 2017, lays out the Government's strategy to achieve its overall goals of improving (a) education service delivery; (b) integrity in education; and (c) learning in formal and nonformal settings/education institutions. The plan focuses

---

<sup>13</sup> The Government is carrying out the education sector assessment which will inform the update of the ESP.



on a number of key areas including: (a) access, equity, and completion; (b) quality and relevance; (c) system strengthening; and (d) emergency preparedness and response.

17. **The Government was prompt in responding to mitigate the potential adverse impact of COVID-19 on education.** The Government, working with partners, has initiated several interventions. The School Safety Guidelines developed to mitigate the Ebola crisis were reactivated in early March 2020. Both MBSSE and MTHE prepared a COVID-19 response strategy to introduce measures in the short-run, such as school closing, awareness building, continuous distance learning through radio transmission, protocol for re-opening of schools, and long-term operations and planning. Also, an Education Emergency Taskforce (EET) has been established to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 on children and learning. The EET is expected to advise and support the Government's education activities during COVID-19, as well as during the post COVID-19 period.

18. **Various development partners (DPs) have been engaged in supporting the education sector in Sierra Leone.** For instance, the REDiSL Project, originally funded by a US\$23.2 million grant from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and DFID, received an additional financing (AF) from IDA for US\$10 million in 2017. The Government has also received financial or technical assistance (TA) from DPs including through the DFID-funded *Leh Wi Lan* program (£62.5 million, 2016–2021) focused on quality improvement in government and community secondary schools; a GPE grant of US\$17.2 million (2018–2022) focused on government preprimary and primary schools; and the European Commission (EC) grant of €30 million that supports capacity building of the TSC and school infrastructure interventions at the primary level. Irish Aid and other DPs are providing support to the sector, including in the areas of girls' education, GBV, teacher training, TLMs, infrastructure, inclusive education, and TA. The support from DPs has informed the proposed project's design—ensuring project-supported activities are well aligned with and complementary to the above interventions. For additional information on activities supported by DPs in the sector, see section II.F.

### C. Relevance to Higher Level Objectives

19. **The proposed Free Education Project is well aligned with the Government's and DPs' priorities and strategies,** focusing on addressing education sector challenges and transforming the education system over the long term. It is aligned with the main objectives and focus of the NDP 2019–2023, as well as the ESP 2018–2020. Specifically, the project was designed in close collaboration with the Government and DPs and to support the Government's FQSE Program—with an aim of ensuring that free quality education is provided to all children. The FQSE Program is expected to significantly increase (a) fiscal pressure, which will need to be addressed through systems reform that yields major efficiencies, and (b) pressure on existing facilities, including overcrowding in schools as has been seen in other countries that have introduced a policy to provide free education. The design of this project seeks to mitigate against these risks through a twin-track approach focused on longer-term macro-system reforms and school-level interventions focused on improving performance in the classroom.

20. **The project's focus corresponds to the emphasis of the World Bank Group's Country Partnership Framework (CPF)<sup>14</sup> for Republic of Sierra Leone, specifically with its emphasis on the importance of investing in human development.** It integrates key priorities from the CPF, particularly one of its two

<sup>14</sup> World Bank. 2020. *Sierra Leone: Sierra Leone: Country Partnership Framework for the Period FY21 - FY26*. Washington, DC: World Bank (Report No. 148025-SL).



pillars, which focuses on human development and specifically on investments to support decentralized delivery of social services, including primary education. Moreover, its focus on increasing equitable access to education is aligned with the World Bank's twin goals of reducing poverty and boosting shared prosperity. Finally, the project is based on sector research and analytical work, including the 2017 SCD.

21. **The project will be financed by an IDA grant of US\$50 million, and US\$15.97 million equivalent in grant funds from DFID, Irish Aid, and the EC through a World Bank-administered Sierra Leone education multi-donor trust fund (MDTF), which is in the process of being established and the funds are expected to become available upon the project's approval by the World Bank Board of Executive Directors.**

## II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### A. Project Development Objective

#### PDO Statement

22. The project development objectives (PDO) are to improve the management of the education system, teaching practices, and learning conditions.

#### PDO Level Indicators

23. The PDO-level indicators for the proposed project are as follows:

- School catchment area and rationalization plan in place and associated transparent criterion-based school approval and financing process implemented
- One national learning assessment (NLA) conducted and findings disseminated
- Percentage of teachers receiving project-supported training demonstrating improved teaching practices in the classroom<sup>15</sup>
- Share of performance-based financing (PBF) schools meeting 85 percent of student attendance rate
- Number of students benefiting from improved learning environment (including female)

### B. Project Components

**Component 1: Policy, Governance, Accountability, and System Administration (IDA: US\$4.65 million equivalent and MDTF: US\$1.50 million equivalent)**

24. **This component aims to strengthen the education system in areas of policy, governance, accountability, and administration.** It will support policy and implementation coherence across the education subsectors and promote strategic initiatives at the country level.

---

<sup>15</sup> Proportion of teachers who demonstrate improvement of classroom effective practices (the observable parameters have been proposed and will be articulated in the Project Implementation Manual). Assessments will be made pre and post training.





*Subcomponent 1.1: Evidence-based Education Planning and Rationalization (IDA: US\$2.08 million equivalent and MDTF: US\$0.67 million equivalent)*

25. **Annual and medium-term ESP development and budgeting.** The proposed project will support the MBSSE in preparing annual and medium-term ESPs and budgeting. The Government's FQSE Program was accompanied by a commitment from the Government to allocate 21 percent of its national budget to education. The FQSE commitment covers teacher remuneration, provision of TLMs, fee subsidies, and payment of examination fees for candidates in government and government-assisted schools. Based on the DFID-funded analysis of the financing gap for implementing the FQSE Program, there is an urgent need for fiscal realism and credible annual plans, which are resourced through the Medium-term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and guided by new information, evidence, policy needs, and priorities. This is important, as the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted the country's economy and public service delivery. The project will support (a) the Directorate of Planning and Policy to undertake necessary annual projections of inputs to inform the budgeting process, and (b) the MBSSE in collaboration with Ministry of Finance (MoF) to review and deliberate the budget proposal based on the government fiscal commitment, capacity, and the potential impacts of the proposed budget submission.

26. **School catchment area and rationalization plan and formula-based school funding.** A comprehensive school mapping exercise reveals significant gaps in geographical coverage. The project will provide technical advisory services for the development of education norms and standards including the distribution of school networks with special focus on maximum distance from home to school, maximum size of school/population, minimum package of facilities, minimum standards for a child-friendly school, minimum environmental safeguards, criterion and formula for determining the extent and nature of government financial assistance. The project will support combining existing school mapping and population density data<sup>16</sup> to generate a school catchment plan. This will constitute a geographically logical network of JSSs with their associated set of primary feeder schools and SSSs with associated cluster of junior secondary feeder schools. The plan will also provide guidance on the appropriate size of these schools given population density. This catchment area plan will then provide the evidence base for long-term planning and more immediately guide a range of interventions including civil works, teacher deployment, and organization of CPD. The school catchment area plan, which is expected to be completed in the first year of the project, will

- (a) Define school catchment areas;
- (b) Define acceptable radius between schools and school catchment areas based on manageable distance (walking, cycling, and provided transport as appropriate); and
- (c) Identify schools that require amalgamation based on existing physical barriers between schools and catchment areas (rivers, mountains, valleys, and so on).

27. The school catchment area plan will rely on continuous dialogue between the Government and communities on the transition from the current state of distribution of schools to rationalization and will be adopted by the Government.

---

<sup>16</sup> Additionally the project will use various data sets including geospatial survey data, road network, and poverty data.



28. **Reform of government school approval and financing criterion and process.** The rationalization of the school system will require construction/renovation/upgrading of schools in some areas and the amalgamation and closure of schools in others. A key element for effectively implementing this reform will be the fine-tuning of the Government's school approval process so that it is aligned with information from the school catchment area mapping. To then sustain the reformed system, clear education norms and standards will need to be established which all schools will be required to follow. The project will support the development of these norms and standards considering the distribution of school networks, which include the maximum distance from home to school, the maximum size of school/population, a minimum package of facilities, minimum standards for a child-friendly school, minimum environmental safeguards, unit area per student, architectural norms, and minimum technical norms. Existing standard models for school infrastructure will be reviewed and adjusted as needed to ensure they are cost-effective and sustainable models that the Government will be able to implement. In addition, the project will support the Government's provision of school subsidies. Transparent decision making driven by established criteria can be expected to ensure more predictable financing for schools—which will aid schools in planning.

29. **Education data and management system.** It is critical for the Government to have reliable and valid data that are comparable over time and geography. The MBSSE has made significant strides toward this with the implementation of the 2018 ASC, which was the first nationwide digital data collection undertaken (with tablets) in Sierra Leone. The ASC data set includes information on all preprimary, primary, junior, and senior secondary schools and has been extremely useful in guiding sector decision making and in designing and preparing the proposed project. The project will support the continued (digitized) implementation of the ASC to ensure that there are adequate data for education system planning and management. The MBSSE through the Education Management Information System (EMIS) Unit in the Planning Directorate will be responsible for the ASC and will use the data management processes. This subcomponent will support capacity building of the deputy directors, supervisors, and statistical clerks at the district level to use the ASC data. It is also expected that every year the MBSSE will produce a comprehensive report on the status of basic and senior secondary education in the country based on the ASC. Moreover, an easy-to-understand school profile card with information from the ASC will be provided to every school in the country at the beginning of the school year. This card will present the school's targets and performance on key education indicators during the previous year and a comparison of its performance to the average of the district in which the school is located—in an easy-to-read and easy-to-understand format (both online and offline).

30. A number of activities supported by the Government and DPs rely heavily on effective data collection, management, and analysis as well as their timely provision. The Government recognizes the importance of integration of systems under a unified EMIS. This needs to bring together a wide variety of data (for example, teacher qualifications, location and payroll, school location and infrastructure, student population data by geography, and student and teacher attendance). It also requires significant coordination of multiple government agencies and attention to the challenges of data integration across software platforms and synchronisation/coordination around data collection cycles. While work is ongoing on this (including development of a national strategy), it was recognized that this remains a major challenge. While the ASC provides an excellent annual snapshot of key indicators on the system, more regular data are needed to drive school- or district-based performance management (for example, weekly or daily teacher and student attendance). The Government needs to both (a) consolidate and rationalize existing data collection, and (b) agree on where the data are reported and who is responsible for acting





upon them. The project will support efforts led by the EMIS Unit in the Planning Directorate to develop a coherent, time-bound, and costed plan.<sup>17</sup>

31. **Schools Standards and Quality Assurance Framework.** The project will support the strengthening of existing school standards to ensure that key dimensions of inputs, practices, and outcomes are specified—including the definition of optimal class sizes and school sizes differentiated according to location and population density; the definition of the minimum infrastructure package in optimal schools; sanitation standards for males and females; and teacher supply standards (PQTR) in primary schools and pupil-subject-specified teacher ratio and teachers' workload in secondary schools). In terms of practices, the standards will focus on teaching practices, school management, community engagement practices, health promotion, gender, and inclusivity, among others. At the outcome level, standards in terms of learning and completion will be included. Further, this framework will also articulate different levels of school performance (on a scale) and lay out a clear pathway and criteria for schools to move from one level to the next. On the basis of the school standards, this subcomponent will support the development and implementation of an effective quality assurance system. The MBSSE is hiring additional school inspectors to strengthen monitoring and supervision of schools to ensure that school standards are achieved. The project will assist the development of the framework, guidelines, and procedures that comply with the best international practice in the external evaluation of schools. In addition, the project will help schools conduct internal evaluations. It is envisaged that these will be used by the school to develop the school improvement plans (SIPs). The project will cover costs associated with TA needed for these activities and training of school management committees (SMCs), inspectors, and other identified stakeholders engaged in quality assurance.

32. **Institutional and human capacity development.** Although core regulatory education functions in areas including education policies, standards, curriculum, and quality assurance are under the control of the MBSSE, some units in the MBSSE have been defunct or seriously understaffed—resulting in a lack of leadership and limited policy direction and progress in certain key areas (for example, gender, curriculum, and school supervision). Lack of personnel and resources hampers the effectiveness of education services. Moreover, under the devolution process initiated by the Government, some functions such as delivery of TLMs for basic education have been devolved to LCs and a growing share of the total education budget has been channeled directly to schools through LCs. There are also various committees at the local levels to monitor and support schools. Roles and responsibilities at the local level among various committees need to be clarified, and coordination needs to be strengthened. The MBSSE has carried out an organizational and management analysis to determine where in the educational system specific responsibilities and authority should be assigned and has initiated its institutional reform process. The project will support the MBSSE's reform process and capacity development of government officials at the central and local levels to ensure quality of education services.

*Subcomponent 1.2: Curriculum and Assessments (IDA: US\$0.91 million equivalent and MDTF: US\$0.29 million equivalent)*

33. **Curriculum reform.** This project will provide support to enable the MBSSE to transition from the current curriculum to a comprehensive national curriculum and to develop curriculum framework. The

---

<sup>17</sup> However, it was emphasized that the key deliverable under this component was for the annual production of the ASC and the funds allocated are calculated to be sufficient for conducting the school census over the five years. If funding is used to support the planning around a comprehensive integrated EMIS, this should not be undertaken to the detriment of conducting the ASC.



curriculum and teaching syllabi for key subjects will be validated by subject specialists and teachers. The curriculum materials will be reviewed to ensure that they are gender appropriate and gender sensitive and incorporate the five Cs—creativity, critical thinking, communications, collaboration, and citizenship. The expected learning outcomes outlined in the curriculum document will be used for regular classroom assessments as well as examinations. This subcomponent will cover the costs of international and local TA, training, workshops, and operating costs.

34. **Assessments of student learning outcomes.** The MBSSE has developed the NLA framework based on the experience accumulated from learning assessments conducted by various donor-funded projects (for example, the REDiSL Project and DFID's *Leh We Lan* project). The framework includes the objectives of the NLA and provides guidance on conducting low-stake sample learning assessments in key stages/grades and subjects to identify and explore in more detail the factors that affect student learning (that is, family, school, and policy factors) and devise strategies to improve learning outcomes. The project will support the MBSSE to operationalize the NLA framework and conduct one sample-based NLA of student learning outcomes during project implementation. The project will provide capacity building of staff to design, implement, and analyze the NLA and use the findings from the NLA for policy and program development. The NLA will be useful in curriculum development, preservice teacher education, CPD, and educational material development. The NLA will be designed to enable comparisons across districts and with other groups, thereby enabling education policy makers to identify areas and groups that are lagging behind in terms of achievement and to design strategies to address the special requirements of these areas and/or groups. This subcomponent will cover costs of international and local TA, training, workshops, data collection equipment, and operating costs.

35. This project will also support WAEC in conducting analyses of results on the National Primary School Examination (NPSE), the BECE, and the WASSCE (key subjects) to identify response patterns and detect underlying student strengths and weaknesses by district and ward. This will draw on the current analysis undertaken by the examiner annually—whereby a report is produced describing student performance in every subject and identifying possible learning gaps. Under the proposed project, WAEC will be supported to ensure that this analysis is further developed and more targeted—capable of providing specific feedback on learning gaps at the school level.

*Subcomponent 1.3: Gender Equality and Inclusive Education (IDA: US\$1.67 million equivalent and MDTF: US\$0.53 million equivalent)*

36. **Promoting gender equality.** A social assessment and a GBV assessment were carried out as part of project preparation. The project will finance both school- and system-level interventions to improve gender equality in education, as summarized in Table 1. Gender issues will be addressed through activities supported under each of the project's components, including gender in education (including GBV prevention and awareness) as part of SMC training under Subcomponent 3.1; promotion of a greater number of women entering and staying in the teaching profession under Subcomponent 2.1; inclusion of specific modules in teacher training focusing on gender-related issues (including prevention and reporting of GBV and sexual harassment, as well as sexual and reproductive health) under Subcomponent 2.2; school infrastructure construction and maintenance/renovation that is gender friendly with attention to girls' safety under Subcomponent 3.2; and promotion of the hiring and deployment of qualified female teachers as part of the TSC's efforts to promote equitable teacher deployment under Subcomponent 2.1.



37. Additionally, under this subcomponent, a few targeted activities will be supported to keep girls in school and enable pregnant girls and young mothers, who have dropped out of school, to return to school, by addressing some of the barriers that girls face in accessing a safe and quality education and completing schooling. First, the project will provide training to school administrative staff and staff at the district level on gender issues (including discrimination) as well as prevention of and response to GBV. Second, the project will strengthen existing school-based mechanisms for reporting violence, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and will work with communities to support more effective sensitization and SGBV prevention. All these activities were designed based on international evidence and experience in Sierra Leone. Joined up with the World Bank and other DP programming in the health and social sectors, the project will align its strategy with the planned National Action Plan on SGBV and could support the establishment of a strong referral mechanism for survivors.

38. The Government developed in 2018 the National Strategy for the Reduction of Adolescent Pregnancy and Child Marriage 2018–2022 as a multisectoral approach under five Ministries: the MBSSE; Ministry of Health and Sanitation; Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender, and Children’s Affairs; Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development; and Ministry of Youth Affairs. The strategy has been rolled out at both national and subnational levels. The project will support the Government to strengthen pathways for girls to reenter formal education after giving birth. Moreover, the MBSSE has recently established a sexual and reproductive health taskforce to address issues relating to gender in education and the involvement of women and girls in national development. The project will support the MBSSE and the taskforce to review the policy and implement actions and strategies to move this agenda forward. The project will also help the Government integrate sexual and reproductive health education (comprehensive sexual education) into school curricula and develop a framework for a mentoring program for both boys and girls. All these activities will be aligned with ongoing support from the Government as well as DPs.

**Table 1. Overview of the Project Interventions to Improve and Promote Gender Equality in Education**

Area	Key Issue	Input/Activity	Expected Output
School level	Lack of access to safe and quality education	Performance-based school grants to incentivize student retention (girls and boys)	Increased retention and reduction in dropout rates
	Lack of basic infrastructure	Infrastructure and renovation support to schools (safe, gender-friendly, and inclusive schools)	Adequate provision of safe and gender-friendly learning environment
	Lack of exposure to female teachers as role models	Campaign and support to promote greater uptake of females in teacher training colleges Support female trainee teachers	More women becoming teachers
	Lack of appropriate classroom management and teaching techniques	Provision of teacher training	Teachers apply gender-sensitive teaching techniques and approaches
	Lack of understanding of gender-related issues and less support to promote gender equality at the school and community levels	Provision of SMC/Board of Governor training on gender sensitization	Increased gender sensitization at the school and community levels



Area	Key Issue	Input/Activity	Expected Output
System level	Low access to safe and gender-sensitive secondary schools for girls	Infrastructure and renovation support to schools (safe, gender-friendly, and inclusive schools)	Increased access to education and reduced dropouts of girls
	Lack of appropriate support system at the local level on gender issues and prevention of and response to GBV	Training to school administrative staff at the district level on gender issues and prevention of and response to GBV	A mechanism for reporting GBV at the community level strengthened and a platform for effective response developed
	Lack of gender balance of male-female teachers	Support of implementation strategy for teacher deployment	Gender-balanced and equitable teacher deployment across schools
	Lack of systematic and regular information of student attendance and learning	Support of ACS and monitoring and feedback system	Regular monitoring system on student attendance and learning strengthened
	Lack of basic information and knowledge about sexual and reproductive health	Provision of sexual and reproductive health education	Students have accurate information and knowledge about sexual and reproductive health
	Lack of mentoring system on sexual and reproductive health at the school level	Support of the development of a framework for mentoring system	Mentoring program on sexual and reproductive health developed at the school level
	Lack of clear policy and government directive which can prevent unequal treatment of pregnant girls regarding access to education	Support a sexual and reproductive health taskforce to review policy and implement strategies	Clear policy directive provided on pregnant girls' education  Support system established to facilitate pregnant girls and young mothers to return to school
	Inadequate staff working on gender at both central and local levels	Carrying out an organizational and management analysis	Increased number of government officials working on gender

39. **Inclusive education.** Promoting inclusive education is an objective of the Government—highlighted in the NDP—with its activities to be guided by the Inclusive Education Policy developed with support from the REDiSL Project, currently pending Cabinet approval. The project will support the Government's commitment toward achieving a more inclusive approach to education, increasing access to education, and improving the learning environment for children with disabilities. As part of project preparation, a disability analysis was undertaken. On the basis of existing information on needs and informed by effective practices to date in Sierra Leone and beyond, the project will support the inclusion of children with disabilities through school- and system-level interventions (see Table 2). Activities will include supporting development and implementation of an inclusive education policy; supporting a regular monitoring system of student attendance and learning outcomes among children with disabilities; supporting an anti-stigma campaign, highlighting the capacities and rights of persons with disabilities; integrating information on how to promote an inclusive education environment (using video and information developed for the Sierra Leone context) in the training for teachers and school heads and



administrators;<sup>18</sup> designating an inclusion champion in each school receiving in-service teacher training (and performance-based school grants); and promoting universal design as part of the national school construction strategy. The MBSSE will work closely with Education for Children with Disabilities Network (ECDN), Sightsavers, and other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

**Table 2. Project Interventions to Promote Inclusive Education and Support Children with Special Needs**

Area	Key Issue	Input/Activity	Expected Output
School level	Lack of basic infrastructure for children with disabilities	Performance-based school grant to incentivize student retention (including children with disabilities) and infrastructure support to schools (universal accessible design)	Adequate provision of safe and inclusive learning environment
	Most of teachers, school heads, and administrators do not have appropriate knowledge and skills to teach children with different disabilities	Provision of training for teachers, school heads, and administrators in promoting an inclusive education environment	Teachers have increased knowledge on inclusive education and apply special teaching techniques and approaches for children with disabilities
	Less support to promote inclusive education at the school and community levels and stigma associated with being disabled	Provision of community awareness and anti-stigma campaign on the capacities and rights of persons with disabilities	Attitudes toward children with disabilities changed at the school and community levels
System level	Lack of inclusive education action plan to roll out inclusive education policy	Support of the development of inclusive education framework	Delivery mechanism of inclusive education developed
	Different types of learning difficulties are not captured in ACS	Support of ACS and monitoring and feedback system	Regular monitoring system on student attendance and learning strengthened
	Inadequate staff working on inclusive education at both central and local levels	Promoting collaboration with ECDNs and NGOs	Increased number of government officials working on inclusive education and collaboration with partners strengthened

**Component 2: Teacher Management and Professional Development (IDA: US\$13.6 million equivalent and MDTF: US\$4.4 million equivalent)**

40. **This component seeks to address the critical teacher quality and workforce management issues facing the country.** Both system- and school-level interventions will be supported through two subcomponents. These aim to strengthen the capacity of the TSC in managing workforce planning, to maximize the benefits of IT use at local levels for management and CPD, and to strengthen the teaching workforce competence and motivation through cluster-based CPD for primary and JSS teachers.

<sup>18</sup> Training and other activities listed here have been provided by both Sightsavers International and Handicap International through projects funded by the EC (to include pilots in targeted areas/schools in different areas of the country).



*Subcomponent 2.1: Teacher Workforce Planning and Teacher Management (IDA: US\$0.76 million equivalent and MDTF: US\$0.24 million equivalent)*

41. The TSC has developed a HR database and teacher monitoring system. This subcomponent will strengthen teacher workforce planning and implement teacher related policies. It will also assist the TSC in developing a comprehensive and integrated teacher management information system (TMIS). This system will need to be able to answer questions on the existing stock of teachers (including location, qualification level, subject specialism, and years of service /retirement date); the rate of teacher supply graduating from teacher training colleges (including their subject specialism); and the geographic deployment of teachers across the country. To provide a comprehensive TMIS will require strong coordination among multiple agencies, including the MTHE, teacher training institutions, MoF, accountant general's office (payroll), MBSSE, and so on. The desired outcome of this subcomponent is to ensure that there is an adequate supply of qualified teachers including by subject across Sierra Leone's schools. It will also enable monitoring and action to promote higher levels of female participation in the teacher workforce. The implementation of this subcomponent will be linked with Subcomponent 1.1.

*Subcomponent 2.2: Teacher Professional Development (IDA: US\$12.88 million equivalent and MDTF: US\$4.12 million equivalent)*

42. This subcomponent aims to improve the quality of classroom instruction across primary schools and JSSs. Activities will include providing a solar-powered tablet<sup>19</sup> or appropriate digital device to every primary and secondary head teacher and to TSC district offices (noting that many head teachers have already been provided tablets or will be provided with tablets in 2020 under various donor-funded projects). A second theme will be strengthening support to cluster- and school-based CPD by effective harnessing of information and communication technology. This will encompass a comprehensive feasibility study learning from innovations and what works from around the world (for example, phone sim card libraries and social media teacher support groups). This is important given the particular circumstances of Sierra Leone—Internet coverage, high data costs, and challenges around IT support and maintenance. A third element is to develop a CPD program for both primary<sup>20</sup> and JSS teachers. At least 22,000 teachers will benefit from the CPD program. The detailed content of this program will be developed according to a needs analysis informed by learning assessments, examinations, and teacher feedback. The implementation of this subcomponent will be linked and coordinated with other DP-funded initiatives to ensure alignment of activities and information, knowledge, and resource sharing where possible with a view to long-term affordability and sustainability. The TSC is developing a CPD framework that clearly describes the competencies expected for teachers and serves as guidelines for the activities of teacher training institutions. The project activities will be aligned with the CPD framework.

**Component 3: School Level Education Development (IDA: US\$27.49 million equivalent and MDTF: US\$8.80 million equivalent)**

43. **This component will focus on support to improve educational delivery among primary schools and JSSs.** Specifically, through Subcomponent 3.1, the proposed project will fund the provision of performance-based school grants to non-private primary schools (offering the full cycle) and will support

<sup>19</sup> To strengthen preservice training, all training materials will be shared with the teacher training colleges in the country so that they can incorporate these modules into the preservice teacher training, curriculum, and practice.

<sup>20</sup> The training will focus on teachers who are not covered by the UNICEF/GPE project.





efforts to strengthen the engagement and involvement of SMCs in school planning and performance. Through Subcomponent 3.2, the proposed project will aim to improve the teaching and learning environment—ensuring adequate infrastructure.

*Subcomponent 3.1: Performance-based School Financing (IDA: US\$14.89 million equivalent and MDTF:US\$4.76 million equivalent)*

44. This subcomponent will aim to encourage school-based planning for improved school performance by providing community-managed, performance-based grants to all primary schools<sup>21</sup> offering the full cycle of primary education (Grades 1–6).<sup>22</sup> Under the project, drawing upon lessons learned under the REDiSL Project,<sup>23</sup> targeted primary schools will receive PBF with the amount determined based on the number of students in the school and the school's performance on select indicators related to teacher and student attendance, teacher classroom practices, regular classroom assessment by teachers, classroom observation by school heads, and reading performance. The school grants will be transferred from the project's Designated Account (DA) to each school's bank account three times a year (at the end of the school term) over three years and will be managed by SMCs. SMCs will meet and discuss how to spend the grant to improve the quality of schooling (a number of items/activities are suggested—while there is also a negative list specifying spending that would be ineligible under the school grant). Decisions will be incorporated into the SIP and publicly disclosed at the school.

45. Monitoring of the school grants and assessment of performance will be undertaken by the Free Education Project Secretariat in collaboration with LCs and local education committees. These grants aim to supplement current fee subsidies provided by the Government<sup>24</sup>—with the longer-term objective of supporting the Government in establishing a sustainable results-based school grants system<sup>25</sup>. Detailed information on this activity including targeting criteria, performance indicators, and details related to the implementation and monitoring of this activity will be included in the PBF manual. A feedback form used under the REDiSL Project will be provided to schools receiving school grants. This form will contain information on their achievement on each of the indicators and will provide an explanation for the grant amount they received. Additionally, an evaluation will be carried out by a third party during the project implementation for validation of PBF.

46. The assistance from the project will include the revision of the PBF manual and the school-based management (SBM) manual and capacity building for SMCs, school heads, and local supervisors to undertake strategic planning and to manage school grants (some of the training will be applicable to community-empowered construction activities also supported under the proposed project; see Subcomponent 3.2).<sup>26</sup> The project will benefit from training materials used under the REDiSL Project with

---

<sup>21</sup> All primary schools, except for private schools.

<sup>22</sup> The choice of complete schools is motivated by the likelihood of complete schools to offer continuity in schooling compared to incomplete schools.

<sup>23</sup> The provision of performance-based school grants was introduced under the REDiSL Project and continues today with 1,850 schools in six of the country's most disadvantaged LCs receiving three rounds of grants per year.

<sup>24</sup> Currently, the Government provides capitation grants to schools in the following amounts (by level of education): SLL 30,000 for primary, SLL 150,000 for junior secondary, and SLL 180,000 for senior secondary.

<sup>25</sup> It is expected that the PBF will be aligned with policies developed under Component 1 (for example, school subsidy use policy).

<sup>26</sup> In those schools that have already benefited from school grants/training under the REDiSL Project, the training provided will be modified according to identified needs.



updates as needed, including a reader-friendly SBM manual. The SBM manual will be updated to clarify selection and responsibilities of SMCs and implementation of participatory decision making in school. Also, training will be provided to school heads and local supervisors in school improvement planning, supervision, monitoring and reporting, and transparency. This subcomponent will integrate the use of digital tools (mobile phones and tablets) as much as possible to facilitate data collection/monitoring related to performance-based school grants at the school and supervisory levels. This subcomponent will be implemented by the Directorate of Planning with support from the Free Education Project Secretariat.

*Subcomponent 3.2: Physical Improvements to the Learning Environment (IDA: US\$12.62 million equivalent and MDTF: US\$4.03 million equivalent)*

47. This subcomponent aims to support construction and maintenance/renovation of primary schools and JSSs identified using ASC data, school catchment area planning, and information collected through site visits. This subcomponent will assist in meeting some of the immediate critical infrastructure needs of targeted schools throughout the country that are classified as makeshift/unsafe or dilapidated and in disrepair. It will further support the Government's policy to eliminate the double-shift system<sup>27</sup> and provide free quality education to all children. Criteria for selection of schools and targeting framework used under this subcomponent are described in Annex 2.

48. **Construction.** The project will finance the construction of approximately 510 furnished classrooms<sup>28</sup> (190 classrooms for primary schools and 320 classrooms for JSSs) to meet the immediate infrastructure needs in primary schools and JSSs as identified by the school catchment area plan developed under Component 1. The project will also review the infrastructure needs of girls' boarding schools, home, and WASH facilities and will provide support to address the needs of such schools. The procurement process will be based on two modalities: (a) decentralized at the LC level for construction of new schools, and (b) community-empowered approach for the existing schools with SMCs. The MBSSE is developing a new set of drawings and unit costing that will determine the standards and the cost-effectiveness. Construction will conform to the norms and standards that will guide school catchment area planning in school networking, distance to schools, population, size of classrooms, minimum package of facilities, and quality standards. Guidelines will be formally established in the first year of the project with construction/renovation works to begin during the second year of the project and implemented using a phased approach. The construction will adhere to commonly agreed standards (for example, inclusive, safe, resilient, and climate smart design).

49. **School maintenance/renovation grants.** These grants will be provided to approximately 1,520 primary schools (680 large schools and 840 schools of moderate and small size) to support schools in conducting minor maintenance/renovation. An SMC in each target school will be required to develop a SIP on how to best utilize the funds from construction of latrine blocks to fixing/replacement of roof panels or floors. Large schools will receive US\$5,000 while smaller schools will receive US\$2,000 to undertake maintenance/renovation of infrastructure in their schools, with supervision costs being an additional amount. Based on the photos taken from schools during the 2018 ASC, the grant will support, for instance, replacement of roofs, repairing of classroom floors/wall, construction of facilities for children with

---

<sup>27</sup> This will follow a rigorous data-driven approach defined by a readiness index.

<sup>28</sup> Support could include staff room.





disabilities, and/or construction/repairing of sanitation facilities for girls. LCs will approve the SIP and provide engineering and safeguards technical support to SMCs.

50. The project will finance a feasibility study to explore the best community-empowered approach for additional classroom construction and school maintenance/renovation grants given to targeted schools. The SMCs will play a role in school management and maintenance. A training manual will be developed to support the implementation of the program. The SMC and elected community members for each school will participate in grassroots management training, FM/procurement (fiduciary) training, technical training, and environmental and social safeguards training. The respective LC will work closely with each SMC in sensitization of the local communities ensuring that safeguards issues are addressed during the school construction.

**Component 4: Project Management, Coordination, and Monitoring and Evaluation (IDA: US\$4.26 million equivalent and MDTF: US\$1.27 million equivalent)**

51. **This component covers the costs of managing the project as well as the specific activities for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and learning activities.** The Free Education Project Secretariat to be established latest six months after project effectiveness will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the project with support from the Directorate of Planning and for carrying out day-to-day management of the project, with the support of each of the three component leads. The Free Education Project Secretariat will also support the verification and evaluation of the performance-based school grants, school infrastructure development, and teachers' training. Moreover, the Free Education Project Secretariat will undertake coordination activities related to project implementation, ensuring alignment with DP activities and involvement of key stakeholders in the education sector as appropriate. The Project Fiduciary Management Unit (PFMU) of the MoF will be responsible for the project's fiduciary aspects (procurement, FM, disbursement, and audits). This component will cover the administrative costs associated with the Free Education Project Secretariat and the PFMU support to the proposed project and its overall coordination. Financing will also be provided for knowledge generation (including undertaking IEs of key project activities and policy research), sharing of this information and findings, and environmental and social risk management.

52. **Communications.** Information sharing and awareness raising will be important factors in the effective implementation of the project and in ensuring that the project achieves its PDO. The project will support the establishment of an online data/resource sharing platform. Efforts will be made through a well-thought-out communication strategy to ensure that communities are well informed of each of the project-supported activities to ensure a clear understanding of the project's objectives, their roles and responsibilities, and the alignment of the proposed project with the larger government program as well as to manage their expectations. This is particularly critical given the far reach of some of these activities and the use of both an SBM approach to school improvement planning and grant management and a community empowerment approach to school maintenance—each of which relies heavily on clear and continued communication. The Free Education Project Secretariat will work closely with the communications unit at the MBSSE.

**Component 5: Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC) (US\$0)**

53. **This component is included in accordance with World Bank Policy on Investment Policy Financing (IPF), paragraphs 12 and 13, for rapid response to an eligible crisis or emergency, as needed.**



It will allow the Government to request the World Bank for rapid reallocation of project funds to respond promptly and effectively to an eligible emergency or crisis that is a natural or artificial disaster or crisis that has caused or is likely to imminently cause a major adverse economic and/or social impact. If the World Bank agrees with the determination of the disaster and associated response needs, this component will draw resources from the categories financing Components 1, 2, 3, and 4 and/or allow the Government to request the World Bank to recategorize and reallocate financing from other project components to cover emergency response and recovery costs. This component could also be used to channel additional funds should they become available because of an emergency. Disbursements will be made against a positive list of critical goods or the procurement of works and consultant services required to support the immediate response and recovery needs.

### **Key Cross-cutting Design Aspects**

54. **COVID-19 response.** The MBSSE has established an Education Emergency Taskforce to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on children and learning. Some initial COVID-19 response activities can be supported through the proposed project, including provision of distance learning, communication campaigns about COVID-19 spread and prevention, gender-responsive actions, and support for resilience of the education system. It is expected that the GPE COVID-19 Accelerated Funding will mainly support the COVID-19 response activities in the education sector. The World Bank will ensure alignment with partners' activities and involvement of key stakeholders as appropriate to leverage resources.

55. **Equity considerations in project design.** The project is designed to address equity challenges in education. For instance, under Component 1, the project will support the evidence-based education sector planning and rationalization, which is expected to help the Government reduce gaps in access to education by location and improve efficiency in the education system. The project will also finance activities to promote gender equality and inclusive education. The NLA will enable policy makers to identify areas and groups that are lagging behind in terms of achievement and to design strategies to address the special requirements of these areas and/or groups. Component 2 will support the implementation of evidence-based equitable teacher deployment. Capacity-building support will be provided to key stakeholders, and special attention will be given to stakeholders in smaller, rural, and disadvantaged schools. Under Component 3, performance-based school grants will be provided to all complete primary schools (except for private schools) and infrastructure support will be given to increase access to education and improve learning conditions. Indicators in the project's Results Framework are disaggregated by gender, location, and type of school, where possible.

56. **Gender and disability inclusiveness.** As discussed earlier, the project will finance both school- and system-level interventions to improve gender equality in education. Gender issues will be addressed through activities supported under each of the project's components. Additionally, under Subcomponent 1.3, a few targeted activities will be supported to keep girls in school and facilitate pregnant girls' and young mothers' return to school, thereby addressing some of the barriers that girls face in accessing safe and quality education and completing schooling. The project will also support the Government's effort to encourage women to enter and stay in the teaching profession. Children with disabilities often have limited access to schooling and have lower completion and retention rates than children without disabilities. The project will respond to this issue through Subcomponent 1.3.

57. **Use of digital technology.** The project will use education technology to improve the efficiency of the system management and teaching and learning processes as follows:



- (a) **Systems.** The project will support the collection of quality and timely data at the school level using tablets through the ASC, data on PBF indicators every term, and classroom-level data (teacher attendance, teacher practices, participation on cluster meetings, use of lesson plans, and so on) monthly. It will also support the automatic generation of reports at the school, district, and national levels to guide decision making, including (i) easy-to-understand school profile cards using the ASC; (ii) PBF feedback forms for each school describing the school's performance on key indicators relative to other schools; (iii) national examinations to identify the main learning gaps of students at the national, district, and school levels and inform the development of targeted teacher training activities; and (iv) monthly data collected through teachers', principals', and supervisors' tablets to develop dashboards to guide management and pedagogical decisions.
- (b) **Teachers.** Digital content (daily lesson plans, short videos of other Sierra Leonean teachers exemplifying subject-specific strategies to explain difficult-to-understand topics and general pedagogical techniques, examples of rapid student assessment tools, and other useful resources<sup>29</sup>) will be developed to scale up continuous in-service teacher training in a standard and low-cost format.

58. **Community empowerment and citizens' engagement.** Citizens' engagement is fostered within several project activities, including consultations, collaboration, community-driven activities, and the establishment of grievance redress mechanisms (GRMs) that will be made available for all relevant project interventions. Project activities such as performance-based school grants, school infrastructure improvements for existing schools, and school maintenance/renovation grants will be managed by communities/schools using a community-empowered approach. SMCs and boards of governors will be responsible for facilitating dialogue among school stakeholders and decision making at the school level, making information publicly available, developing an implementation plan, and leading the implementation.

### C. Project Cost and Financing

59. **The project will be financed through an IDA US\$50 million grant and US\$15.97 million equivalent from DFID, Irish Aid, and the EC through a World Bank-administered Sierra Leone Education MDTF**, which is in the process of being established and the funds are expected to become available to the project upon the project's approval by the World Bank Board of Executive Directors. The project will be executed through the IPF instrument. This financing approach provides flexibility to build necessary human and institutional capacity and allows for close follow-up of and necessary adjustments to project activities and procedures by the Government and the World Bank. The implementation period for the project is five years with the Closing Date of September 30, 2025. The project cost by component is presented in Table 3.

---

<sup>29</sup> Additional materials include the summary of the national teacher guide/national curriculum framework and guidelines for basic education. To avoid overburdening teachers and to allow for adaptation and continuous improvement, materials will be loaded into the tablets each term. Loaded materials will be aligned to the lesson plans and the after-school sessions.



**Table 3. Project Cost by Component (US\$, millions)**

<b>Project Components</b>	<b>IDA Financing</b>	<b>MDTF</b>	<b>Total Project Cost</b>
<b>1. Policy, Governance, Accountability, and System Administration</b>	<b>4,650,000</b>	<b>1,500,000</b>	<b>6,150,000</b>
1.1 Evidence-based Education Planning and Rationalization	2,080,000	670,000	2,750,000
1.2 Curriculum and Assessments	909,000	291,000	1,200,000
1.3 Gender Equality and Inclusive Education	1,667,000	533,000	2,200,000
<b>2. Teacher Management and Professional Development</b>	<b>13,600,000</b>	<b>4,400,000</b>	<b>18,000,000</b>
2.1 Teacher Workforce Planning and Teacher Management	758,000	242,000	1,000,000
2.2 Teacher Professional Development	12,885,000	4,115,000	17,000,000
<b>3. School Level Education Development</b>	<b>27,490,000</b>	<b>8,801,000</b>	<b>36,291,000</b>
3.1 Performance-based School Financing	14,889,000	4,756,000	19,645,000
3.2 Physical Improvements to the Learning Environment	12,616,000	4,030,000	16,646,000
<b>4. Project Management, Coordination, and Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<b>4,260,000</b>	<b>1,269,000</b>	<b>5,529,000</b>
4.1 Project Management, Coordination, and Monitoring and Evaluation	4,260,000	1,269,000	5,529,000
<b>5. Contingent Emergency Response</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50,000,000</b>	<b>15,970,000</b>	<b>65,970,000</b>

60. **DPs.** DPs other than IDA are expected to provide US\$16 million equivalent for the project through an MDTF. As of June 2020, three DPs have committed financing to the project: £1.4 million from DFID, €3.5 million from Irish Aid, and €9.1 million from the EC. The World Bank will manage the MDTF and work closely with the DPs throughout project implementation. MDTF financing will be disbursed alongside IDA proceeds and will contribute to achieving the Government's larger strategic objectives in the sector.

61. **MDTF.** The MDTF will use a pooled funding mechanism and follow the World Bank's fiduciary, environmental, and social safeguards procedures. The pooled funding (a) is aligned with the Paris Declaration of Aid Effectiveness; (b) increases the coordination and harmonization of policy development and investment in the sector; (c) emphasizes the government leadership in strengthening country systems to deliver education services; and (d) builds partners' confidence in providing development financing through the government systems. The partnership principles of the pooled funds will be addressed through an MDTF Operations Manual<sup>30</sup> that reflects mutual commitment to the Government's objective of achieving enhanced coordination and harmonization. The manual will describe the mutual roles and responsibilities of signatory partners. Further reduction in the administrative burden of the Government will be achieved through streamlined modalities for monitoring and reporting on the project progress and results. The MDTF will not only contribute to the implementation of the ESP and the FQSE Program but also support analytical and advisory services associated with M&E, TA, and research and studies (for

<sup>30</sup> This has been developed in May 2020.



example, research to assess impacts of the FQSE Program, education public expenditure review, and impact evaluation of PBF through MDTF World Bank-executed funds<sup>31</sup>.

62. While the Government's budget allocation to the education sector is estimated at US\$675 million between 2019 and 2023, DFID's costing of the FQSE Program estimates that US\$3,620 million will be required to deliver the Government's FQSE Program during the same period. Support from the World Bank and participating DPs totaling US\$65.97 million will help ease the Government's fiscal constraints. The financing gap, however, is still very large—US\$2,869 million (see Table 4)—mainly due to a sizable infrastructure gap. The project aims to assist the Government in bringing about behavior and systemic change that ensures effective use of inputs and collaboration among key actors for improved service delivery.

**Table 4. Estimated Financing (2019–2023)**

Source	Amount (US\$, millions)	Share of Total (%)
FQSE Program financing requirement <sup>a</sup>	<b>3,620.0</b>	100.00
Government-projected resources	675.0	18.65
World Bank/IDA	50.0	1.38
DFID (through MDTF)	1.8	0.05
Irish Aid (through MDTF)	4.0	0.11
EC (through MDTF)	10.2	0.28
Financing gap	<b>2,879</b>	79.53

Note: a. This is based on the middle case scenario. See Annex 3 for details.

## D. Project Beneficiaries

63. The project is expected to significantly contribute to improving the performance of the education sector in Sierra Leone. The direct beneficiaries of the project include 1.7 million students, 49,000 teachers, and SMC members in 7,600 schools (both primary schools and JSSs). In addition, the project will benefit 179,000 students, 7,500 teachers, and stakeholders in 300 SSSs. Over the medium term, the project will support communities and local/school key stakeholders in building their capacity and promoting ownership and accountability.

## E. Results Chain

64. Figure 1 shows the Results Chain for the project and illustrates how the project's activities are designed to promote the achievement of the objectives/outcomes of the project and how the activities and results outputs are linked to the PDO.

## F. Rationale for Bank Involvement and Role of Partners

<sup>31</sup> MDTF World Bank-executed funds are US\$6 million equivalent which will finance MDTF management and administration, analytical and advisory services, and supervision and monitoring.

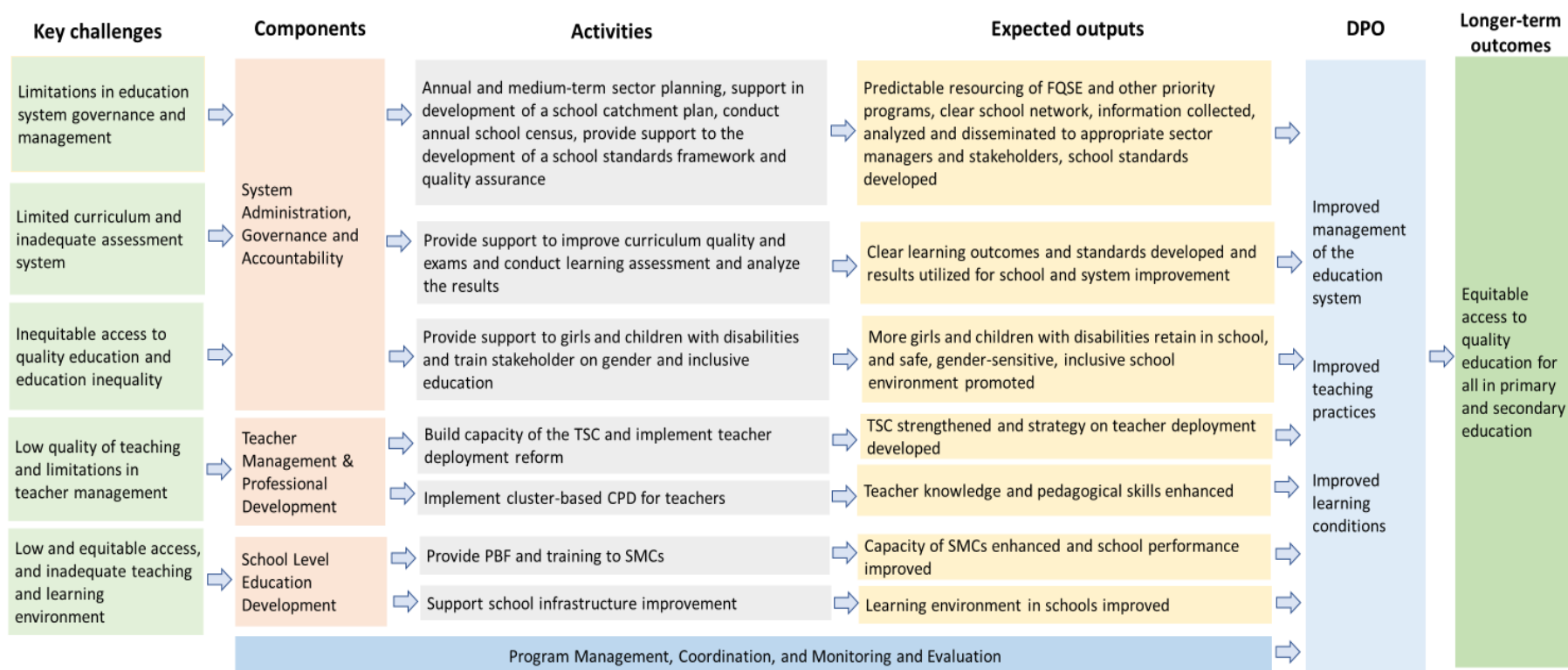


### **Rationale for Public Sector Provision and Financing**

65. **Public sector financing of education, which is an investment in human capital, is justified for several reasons.** First, education is one of the national priorities as articulated in the NDP. The Government launched the FQSE Program in 2018 to ensure all eligible children and youth have access to basic education. The project will assist the Government in implementing the FQSE Program, improving the overall management of the education system, and ultimately enhancing human capital development in the country. Second, the project will reach out to lagging groups to increase equitable access to education, particularly for disadvantaged children (for instance, girls and children from rural areas and with disabilities), and support improvements in the quality of education. Without public investment, Sierra Leonean children will likely have poor human capital and inferior labor market outcomes. The World Bank's experience in implementing education projects, both in Sierra Leone and internationally, will help improve the effectiveness and efficiency of limited public investment.



**Figure 1. Results Chain**







## Value Added of the World Bank's Support

66. **The World Bank's investment in the education sector has been significant in recent years, and the proposed project will contribute to shaping dialogue on key education policy areas—including school catchment area planning, teacher labor force planning, teacher professional development, and teacher deployment, among others.** The World Bank has been engaged in the education sector as a grant agent for the original GPE/MDTF-funded REDiSL Project and provided an AF to the REDiSL Project (US\$10 million) and is financing a Skills Development Project (US\$20 million, P163723). The Government's FQSE Program combined with the proposed project can facilitate the scale-up and increased reach of evidence-based and effective practices in increasing equitable access to quality education and building system capacity. This will, in turn, allow the project to play a catalytic role in strengthening the foundation for an effective education system that can support the provision of quality education to all children.

67. **Several aspects of the project will be important in driving systemic change in the education sector,** including (a) its alignment with the Government's expressed commitment to provide free quality education to all; (b) the investment provided, which will secure the far reach of activities throughout the country; (c) its grounding in significant analytical work and access to and reliance on data (a comprehensive database that includes geographic information system coordinates/physical mapping and key details of each school, allowing interventions to be well-targeted and closely monitored); and (d) the commitment of a number of DPs to supporting both the Government and the World Bank in these efforts—promoting alignment and harmonization of activities and approaches in the sector.

## Role of Partners

68. **Several DPs are very active in the education sector and are providing targeted support aligned with education sector priorities,** as follows:

- (a) **DFID.** Through its Sierra Leone Secondary Education Improvement Program<sup>32</sup> (£62 million), the DFID-funded *Leh Wi Lan* (Let Us Learn) program, covering all JSSs and SSSs in the country, has provided student handbooks to students and scripted lessons plans (following an accelerated curriculum) to teachers. Additionally, under the project, a CPD program for teachers was developed, in which school support officers follow scripted lesson plans in a minimum of two visits per month to schools. The proposed project draws upon this experience and seeks to provide lesson plans to teachers and coaches (similar to support teachers) as well as continuous visits to schools<sup>33</sup>.
- (b) **EC.** Under the 11th Education Development Fund<sup>34</sup> (€30 million), some of the areas that have been supported by the EC are head teacher leadership training, development of professional standards and career progression for teachers, and distance education. The proposed project would incorporate the materials and best practices of the head teacher leadership training, feeding the most important contents into the tablets given to head teachers so that they can use them while being pedagogical leaders of their

---

<sup>32</sup> Which started in June 2016 and has an expected closing date of March 2021.

<sup>33</sup> However, given the difficulty of expanding the model by hiring coaches/support officers with a similar profile and salary as supervisors (and then integrating that financial structure into the government payroll), the proposed intervention relies on less-qualified coaches supervised by existing government officials (TSC district officers and district supervisors) and uses tablets that contain relevant information allowing for closer monitoring and follow-up.

<sup>34</sup> Signed off in March 2017 for 36 months.





institutions. Further, the lead teachers (LTs) will be recruited taking into account the professional standards for teachers and will be rewarded as such with small grants given the extra time they have to dedicate to carry out weekly after-school sessions with cluster schools. Additionally, in the medium term, the training modules in the tablets should be used as micro courses that build into the in-service training requirements for teachers to progress in their careers as stipulated in the EC-supported teacher professional standards.

- (c) **UNICEF-managed GPE program.** Through a GPE-funded program (US\$17.2 million) for 2018–2020, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) is supporting early grade reading and math in Grades 1–3 (teacher development, TLMS, and EGRA/Early Grade Mathematics Assessment). For the latter, the UNICEF-managed GPE project plans to build on the progress made by the REDiSL Project<sup>35</sup> across all districts, training at least 11,000 teachers in Grades 1–3 during 2019–2020.<sup>36</sup> Currently, the UNICEF-funded Girls’ Access to Education and Services Project is aiming to teach young people important life skills and to empower them with information about sexual and reproductive health, including through the training of guidance counselors and their placement in 200 JSSs.
- (d) **Irish Aid** is supporting activities to ensure that poorer girls have access to and benefit from quality education, which is one of the four envisioned outcomes under the recently approved Mission Strategy for Ireland in Sierra Leone (2019–2023). This reflects Ireland’s increased emphasis on education for girls as reflected in Ireland’s new global policy for international development ‘A Better World’. Increased investment in education in Sierra Leone builds on the work that Ireland is currently undertaking in supporting disadvantaged children, particularly out-of-school adolescent girls, to access life skills and education. This includes the GATES program (2016–2019 through the United Nations Population Fund [UNFPA]) which assists the MBSSE-supported Community Learning Centers in delivering life skills training and linking adolescents to health and education services; the StRAP program (2018–19, UNFPA) which includes initial work on developing a comprehensive sexuality education curriculum for JSS level; and the FQSE Program which supported the rollout of Free Quality Education in Koinadugu district (2018–19, UNICEF).

69. **The project will seek to ensure alignment and complementarity to existing DPs and government interventions.** The project builds on the activities and achievements of the ongoing and previous World Bank supported projects, as well as projects supported by other DPs. DPs meet periodically under the MBSSE leadership to discuss important aspects of the education strategy and coordinate joint support to the strategy and activities. The World Bank and MDTF-participating DPs through the project will make every effort to promote harmonization among DPs and between the Government and DPs and demonstrate a shared commitment to supporting the Government in addressing education challenges and rolling out the FQSE Program.

## **G. Lessons Learned and Reflected in the Project Design**

---

<sup>35</sup> Under the REDiSL Project, (a) 4,000 teachers of Grades 1–4 and head teachers from 14 districts received a 10-day training on early grade reading instruction and (b) 2.2 million early grade readers and more than 41,000 teacher guides were distributed in all primary schools.

<sup>36</sup> As mentioned earlier, the project implemented by UNICEF and funded by the GPE creates CoP with support from coaches for Grades 1–3. Its execution ends in June 2021. At this time, this project will continue the provision of teacher training supporting the CoP approach with technology and embedding supervision within the government system. DFID has a similar intervention for the secondary level that relies on coaches and school-level interventions facilitated by tablets.



70. **A number of lessons learned, taken from the education sector in Sierra Leone and other contexts, informed project preparation and were incorporated into the project's design, as follows:**

- (a) **The need to support both school- and system-level interventions for sustainable impact.** The activities under the proposed project are well aligned with the Government's strategy and aim to support the Government in achieving its medium- and long-term objectives in the sector. In addition to providing targeted support to schools (through school grants and construction) and to teachers (through training), it also aims to strengthen the education system; strengthen its capacity to identify school needs, respond to those needs, and develop an effective education program; through the use of data, achieve community empowerment and strong M&E mechanisms; and strengthen accountability at all levels.
- (b) **The effectiveness and efficiency of community-empowered approaches.** International evidence shows the importance of community involvement in school activities, including decision making and implementation. The project recognizes this and enables the mobilization of ownership and the commitment of the community. Experience from the REDiSL Project shows that the provision of performance-based school grants managed by the local community (SMC) has been a well-received approach that has been associated with a number of positive education outcomes among beneficiary schools. The scale-up of this approach throughout the country builds on this understanding. Further, evidence from other settings (for example, Mauritania, Togo, and Sudan) has also highlighted a community-empowered approach to school infrastructure improvement, in which the community plays a lead role in implementation, monitoring, and supervision of civil works activity being both efficient and cost-effective.
- (c) **The effectiveness of PBF to enhance school performance.** The provision of performance-based school grants was introduced under the REDiSL Project and continues today with around 1,800 schools receiving performance-based school grants in six of the country's most disadvantaged LCs. Evidence shows that SMC participation in school activities has improved accountability for resources and results of school performance. Based on lessons learned under the REDiSL Project, all complete primary schools will receive PBF based on the achievement of performance indicators.
- (d) **The importance of including targeted infrastructure grants.** Under the REDiSL Project, a significant portion of school grant funding has been used to improve the physical aspects of school environment, rather than other important quality inputs associated with improved learning. To support schools in addressing their infrastructure needs, and to create space for schools and SMCs to use short-term performance-based grants to finance/purchase other quality measures and inputs, the proposed project will support one-time infrastructure and/or renovation grants to more than 1,520 schools.
- (e) **The effectiveness of a cluster-based CoP approach to teacher training.** Key elements of effective in-service teacher training programs—with their impact on teacher instruction and student learning—most often include face-to-face practical training, are subject specific, and are followed by regular mentoring and coaching that results in direct feedback. The proposed intervention therefore incorporates structured lesson plans in a coaching program that includes these highlighted characteristics.
- (f) **The importance of simple technology in carrying out a far-reaching activity that can target school-specific needs.** Experience to date has highlighted the impact of simple technology in achieving important sector outcomes. Technology and the geo-mapping of schools (and key details) have been a critical input in project preparation in terms of identifying needs and targeting. The use of simple technology to collect data and provide reports tailored to each school for both the performance-based school grants activity and the ASC will continue to be supported under this project. The provision of



simple digital tablets to head teachers and TSC district offices with content informed by learning gaps identified through various data analysis will facilitate the project's reach throughout the country while also ensuring school-specific support.

- (g) **The importance of capacity building of key stakeholders for project management and sustainability.** Inadequate staffing and capacity constraints, especially at the state and local levels, led to challenges in areas such as fiduciary management and adversely affected project implementation. Continued capacity building of officials and key stakeholders, especially at the school level, is essential.

### III. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

#### A. Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

71. **Project implementation.** The MBSSE will be responsible for the overall implementation, prompt and efficient coordination, oversight and monitoring of the project activities. Within the MBSSE structures, there are various directorates and units that will be responsible for several aspects of the implementation of the project. The project will strengthen the Government's institutions responsible for education: MBSSE, TSC, WAEC, and DEOs. The MBSSE will also work closely with LCs which have an implementation role in management of schools located within the geographical catchment of the LC and various local education committees to implement the project activities. Table 5 lists the agencies that will lead the implementation of the project components and subcomponents.

**Table 5. Project Components and Implementation Agencies of the Project**

Project Components and Subcomponents	Agencies with Implementation Responsibilities
<b>1. Policy, Governance, Accountability, and System Administration</b>	
1.1 Evidence-based Education Planning and Rationalization	Directorate of Planning, Directorate of Human Resources, Directorate of Inspectorate, and Assessment Unit of the MBSSE, MTHE, MoF, MoPED
1.2 Curriculum and Assessments	Directorate of Inspectorate, Assessment Unit of the MBSSE, WAEC
1.3 Gender Equality and Inclusive Education	Directorate of Education Program and Services of the MBSSE
<b>2. Teacher Management and Professional Development</b>	
2.1 Teacher Workforce Planning and Teacher Management	TSC, MBSSE, MTHE, MoF, and National Accountant Office
2.2 Teacher Professional Development	TSC, Directorate of Inspectorate, Directorate of Planning of the MBSSE
<b>3. School Level Education Development</b>	
3.1 Performance-based School Financing	Directorate of Planning of the MBSSE and Schools
3.2 Physical Improvements to the Learning Environment	MBSSE, LCs, SMCs, and schools
<b>4. Project Management, Coordination, and Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	
4.1 Project Management, Coordination, and Monitoring and Evaluation	MBSSE and PFMU

72. **Day-to-day project management and coordination.** The MBSSE will have a dedicated Free Education Project Secretariat that will be responsible for day-to-day project management and coordination, oversee project



activities, and be paid by the project. The Free Education Project Secretariat will provide reports of project progress and make this available to the minister and the World Bank. To function effectively, the Free Education Project Secretariat will have at least the following full-time personnel on hand: (a) head (coordinator), (b) Component 1 coordinator, (c) Component 2 coordinator, (d) Component 3 coordinator, (e) M&E specialist, (f) program specialist, (g) environmental specialist, (h) social development specialist, (i) civil engineer, and (j) additional administrative staff as needed. Other functions, including communications and human resources, will be carried out by the MBSSE with support and guidance from the Free Education Project Secretariat. Directors and heads of units of the MBSSE who are responsible for project activities will work as technical leads. The Project Implementation Manual, which has been developed, specifies the implementation arrangements and detailed information on project-supported activities.

73. **Project fiduciary management.** The PFMU of the MoF is responsible for the day-to-day FM and procurement functions of the project. Designated procurement specialist(s) and FM specialist(s) will be recruited to work for the project considering its complexity and size. The related operational costs of maintaining the PFMU during the life of the project, including computer hardware, stationery, mailing withdrawal applications, and printing project FM reports, will form part of the costs that the proposed project will cover.

74. **Policy direction and oversight.** Policy direction and oversight of the project will be carried out by an MDTF Free Education Project Steering Committee on a semi-annual basis. The committee will review the overall performance of the project and decide on important policy aspects to facilitate the achievement of outcomes and results. The committee will comprise heads of the MBSSE, TSC, MoF, World Bank, and MDTF-participating DPs. The committee will act as the steering body for the project and will be co-chaired by the Government (rotating chair between the MoF and MBSSE) and the World Bank.

## **B. Results Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements**

75. **The proposed project will have a strong focus on the M&E of results and outcomes.** The M&E activities will focus on inputs, processes, and outcomes. A detailed framework for M&E has been worked out. The project's Results Framework includes PDO-level and intermediate results indicators, baselines and target values, frequency, data source methodology, and responsibilities for data collection. Indicator definitions have been provided alongside the selected indicators to ensure clarity in the results to be monitored. Given the strong alignment between the proposed project's indicators and those to be used to monitor the implementation and measure the impact of the Government's program, monitoring of these indicators will be incorporated into the MBSSE EMIS and will be tracked as part of standard monitoring under the technical supervision and support of the Directorate of Planning. Though M&E capacity has been strengthened under recent initiatives, including the REDiSL Project, it is expected that an M&E specialist will be recruited to the Free Education Project Secretariat. This specialist will work closely with the MBSSE to ensure data collection, cleaning, analysis, and reporting are completed according to the project requirements.

76. **The MBSSE has significant data on all schools offering basic and senior secondary education, including geo-mapping of their precise location, and has processes in place to obtain data at the school level.** School performance and key education indicators will be tracked through the ASC and the monitoring of the performance-based school grants activity. These activities will be continued (with data collection now digitized) and capacity of MBSSE staff further strengthened through the analysis of the results, the provision of these results to communities (through the school profile card and PBF feedback form), and the use of these results in guiding

---



interventions at the school level and larger policy dialogue and decision making. School-specific analysis of WAEC data will also be undertaken to inform schools and teacher training content under Component 2. Available data on schools and teachers will also be used to inform teacher management and deployment decisions. Given the project's reliance on timely and reliable data for effective implementation, capacity building in the areas of data collection, analysis, reporting, and dissemination will be provided.

**77. M&E under the project will rely on each level of the education system—from the school level, to the local and central levels.** Each component lead will work closely with the M&E specialist within the Free Education Project Secretariat to ensure that effective monitoring processes are adopted and that information flow is smooth reaching the relevant actors on time. Steps will be taken to ensure that each feedback mechanism established under the project can provide timely data to the local-level actors (schools and SMCs), local education committee members, LCs, and districts. Additionally, the project will promote engagement of civil society and other government actors<sup>37</sup> in monitoring and oversight. The details on M&E processes and requirements will be included in the Project Implementation Manual. The project will maintain a strong GRM given the project's reliance on community inputs for effective implementation and achievement of project outcomes. Information on the GRM will be provided in the context of SMC and school-level training. The Free Education Project Secretariat will ensure timely response to any grievances received.

**78. The Free Education Project Secretariat, with support from the M&E specialist and component leads, will be responsible for tracking the implementation of all project activities and progress made on each of the project's PDO-level and intermediate results indicators as laid out in the project's Results Framework.** The following reports will be required throughout the project duration at established intervals: (a) annual work plan on project implementation by component and subcomponent, including detailed activities at the various levels (annually) and (b) progress reports detailing achievements under each activity, progress on each of the indicators in the Results Framework, and analysis of identified gaps and next steps (semi-annual). The performance of the project (for example, progress toward achievement of the PDO and components, overall implementation progress FM, project management, procurement, M&E, and safeguards) will be assessed regularly, including through semi-annual joint review missions<sup>38</sup> led jointly by the World Bank and MDTF-participating DPs.

**79. The World Bank, jointly with the MDTF-participating DPs, will provide implementation support and supervision, including fiduciary and safeguards oversight during project implementation.** At the technical level, the Free Education Project Secretariat and the MBSSE component team leads<sup>39</sup> will meet with the World Bank and MDTF-participating DPs once a month to review the project's implementation progress. The Free Education Project Secretariat will report to the wider DP/LEG meeting that the MBSSE chairs on the progress of the project to ensure coordination and synergy at the sector level. Every six months, an MDTF Free Education Project Steering Committee will review the project implementation and address policy issues emerging from the project implementation. Additionally, implementation support and supervision missions will be undertaken jointly by the World Bank and MDTF-participating DPs at least every six months to assess the project progress in achieving its development objectives. The project will cover a range of activities, including goods, consultant services, TA,

---

<sup>37</sup> For example, the public sector reform unit and parliament education committee.

<sup>38</sup> The objectives of the regular mission are the following: (a) assess the project's overall performance and implementation progress and score this against defined indicators; (b) assess and report the level of achievement of annual targets for indicators set in the Results Framework; (c) review reports and documents prepared by the government counterpart; (d) review implementation of FM responsibilities and procurement procedures, including disbursement rates and audit reports; (e) review social and environmental safeguards practices; (f) identify challenges and lessons learned and make recommendations for the project going forward; and (g) agree on the actions to be taken.

<sup>39</sup> They are Directors of the Directorate and heads of education units in the MBSSE who are in charge of the project-supported areas.



training, workshops, conferences, seminars, monitoring, evaluation, research, and studies. A midterm review (MTR) will be undertaken at the project implementation midpoint, by August 31, 2023 which will provide an opportunity to assess overall progress in project implementation, update the Results Framework as necessary, review allocation across components, reassess the risks, and propose corrective measures to ensure achievement of the PDO. Moreover, the World Bank will conduct third-party monitoring surveys (e.g., beneficiary feedback survey and activity verification survey) as needed using MDTF World Bank-executed funds.

## C. Sustainability

80. **The sustainability of project investments and activities guided project preparation and key elements of the project design.** First, the PDO and project-supported activities are consistent with national strategies—in terms of overall human development and education—specifically supporting the Government’s flagship FQSE Program which seeks to provide free education to all basic and senior secondary students in Sierra Leone. There is also strong alignment between the indicators to be used to assess progress under the proposed project and the indicators/outcomes defined for the Government’s FQSE Program. Second, project preparation began at around the same time as the Government’s decision to implement this flagship program which allowed the World Bank and government teams to work closely and collaboratively to ensure that the project design was aligned with the new program and adequately took into account areas of potential concern in its rollout—including efficiency in teacher deployment and rationalization and making improvements to the teaching and learning environment in schools while increasing access. Third, the technical design of the project is supported by international and national evidence of good practices. Lastly, a central focus of the project is strengthening the education system and capacity at all levels, including supporting the establishment of a countrywide results-driven school grants system and strengthening the community’s overall role in school management and planning, each of which is expected to be sustained in the long term. This would help the education sector to effectively respond to any future pandemics. All the elements discussed above support the sustainability of the project’s development objective.

## IV. PROJECT APPRAISAL SUMMARY

### A. Technical, Economic and Financial Analysis

#### Technical Analysis

81. **The technical design of the project is closely aligned with the Government’s FQSE Program and is guided by lessons learned from past projects in Sierra Leone and in the region as well as global knowledge and evidence highlighted in the World Development Report (WDR) 2018, *Realizing the Promise of Education for Development*, and the WDR 2019, *The Changing Nature of Work*.** Education is critical to building human capital and achieving higher economic productivity and growth. Learning happens when schools have (a) effective teaching; (b) adequate learning conditions; and (c) effective school management and community engagement. The technical analysis for the major activities to be supported under the proposed project is included below:

- **Performance-based school grants.** A large body of evidence—including information from this activity carried out under the REDiSL Project—points to the effectiveness of performance-based grants managed





by the community in improving education outcomes, including improved learning outcomes and overall school performance. Research has also shown that such approaches can be effective in reducing student and teacher absenteeism and teacher effectiveness. The design of this activity builds on the evidence of what has worked in other settings and, in particular, in Sierra Leone—findings gleaned from the IE undertaken in the context of the REDiSL Project, which highlighted, on average, better outcomes among schools receiving performance-based grants than those that did not receive performance-based school grants.<sup>40</sup> The school grants to be supported under the proposed project are built on the approach used under the REDiSL Project while including some modifications to further strengthen the school grant's impact on learning outcomes. The grants reward schools' performance in key areas, including teacher and student attendance, teacher classroom practices, regular classroom assessment by teachers, classroom observation by school heads, and reading performance. Further, the project's support to capacity building of SMCs in SBM can better ensure that the community is trained in key areas relevant to school improvement planning and grant execution, management, and monitoring. Further, communities will be provided with information which will ensure understanding of objectives of performance-based grants, processes, and procedures—as well as information on their own school's performance, relative to the entire district. Experience in other settings has shown that this information can provide an important incentive to communities toward achieving results.

- **Community-based school infrastructure improvement.** This approach has been used in a number of contexts in Africa, including in Togo, Ghana, and Sudan. One of the first countries to fully adopt this approach was Mauritania, which launched this model in 1989 and has successfully been implementing it over 25 years. A large body of research highlights this as a cost-effective and efficient approach to improving the quality of the teaching and learning environment in schools while also empowering communities to work closely with schools and to strengthen community cohesion.
- **Strengthening teacher management and deployment.** There is now strong evidence internationally that both teacher effort and skills can be raised, leading to improved learning outcomes. However, since teacher effort, ability, and skills are complementary in generating high-quality education, it is important to address issues at the level of the system to create a cadre of professional educators who provide high-quality education. Given how critical teacher quality and management issues are in Sierra Leone, the proposed project will provide support to the TSC to deliver on its mandate. The proposed project will assist the TSC in the implementation of critical reform related to teacher management and deployment.
- **CPD.** Evidence shows that effective in-service training programs tend to include initial face-to-face practical training,<sup>41</sup> are subject specific, are linked to professional incentives, and are followed by regular mentoring and coaching in teachers' classrooms, which results in direct feedback (Béteille and Evans

---

<sup>40</sup> Using ASC data, a simple comparison of PBF (those which received the performance-based school grant) and non-PBF schools (those that did not receive the performance-based school grant) between 2017 (post-PBF) and 2015/2016 (pre-PBF) shows higher enrollment growth and lower repetition rates in PBF schools (difference-in-difference [D-i-D] estimate of 6 percentage points and -2 percentage points, respectively), as well as a greater likelihood of having a functioning SMC and a school improvement plan in PBF schools (D-i-D estimates of 5 percentage points and 20 percentage points, respectively). There is also some indication of a modest increase in the share of female enrollment between 2016 and 2017 in JSSs receiving PBF (from 46.5 percent to 48.1 percent) versus non-PBF schools (from 49.7 percent to 50.5 percent). The census data also suggest that PBF schools coped with the increase in enrollment by hiring more teachers (D-i-D estimate: 4 percentage points), resulting in a negligible impact on PTRs in PBF schools (D-i-D estimate: 0.5 pupils per teacher). Interestingly, only those PBF schools that received supplemental grants to address issues of high overcrowding and poor infrastructure quality did better than non-PBF schools to mitigate issues of class size (D-i-D estimate: -3 pupils per class) and classrooms needing repair (D-i-D estimate: -6 percentage points).

<sup>41</sup> Involving practice with other teachers, role-plays, modeling practices, reflection, and feedback.



2019).<sup>42</sup> They also found that when teachers lack content knowledge and pedagogical skills, highly structured lesson plans have also been found to improve learning. Taking this into account, the proposed intervention incorporates structured lesson plans in a coaching program that includes the main characteristics of those programs that have been found effective.

- **Using technological innovations.** The project will explore the use of technological strategies to overcome the country's capacity and structural constraints. The use of mobile technology has demonstrated effectiveness in several activities and settings. In Sierra Leone, the digitization of the ASC and monitoring of schools receiving performance-based school grants has facilitated the flow of information from the school level to the local and central levels and has also allowed communities to receive information on their progress in a timely manner. In other settings, the utility of mobile devices to improve education interventions and outcomes has been demonstrated. In South Africa, a program was piloted which provided teacher and learner materials (big books, posters, flash cards, and writing frames) and had two treatments: (a) a standard intervention where teachers received paper-based lesson plans, visits from coaches in their classrooms every three weeks, an initial two-day training, one-day quarterly trainings, and needs-based training as required, and (b) an e-coaching intervention where teachers received tablets loaded with lesson plans, video clips, and other resources; accessed e-coaching through their cellphones and WhatsApp messenger through their tablets or phones; and had an initial three-day block training and quarterly one-day training. They found similar learning gains between the on-site coaching and the virtual one, although both were expensive (more than US\$40 per learner annual cost). In Brazil, low-cost Skype-based coaching was provided to pedagogical coordinators (so that they could support teachers more effectively). This resulted in modest improvements in student learning.

## **Economic and Financial Analysis**

82. **Economic analysis.** The World Bank's engagement in the education sector has been significant in recent years, and the new project will contribute to shaping policy dialogue on key education areas such as school catchment area planning, teacher labor force planning, deployment and development, and so on. The cost-benefit analysis shows a positive net present value (NPV) of US\$369 million and an internal rate of return (IRR) of 17.1 percent (see details in Annex 3). These results clearly suggest that the funds invested under the project will produce high economic benefits and the project's investment is largely justified. In fact, these are conservative lower-bound estimates, given that they do not account for potential nonmonetary benefits, including the social benefits of education and externalities.

83. **Financial analysis.** As discussed earlier, the financing gap is significant and fiscal sustainability will be a challenge. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic will also have a negative impact in terms of decline in government revenue. However, the project will help improve the teaching and learning environment by addressing school-level needs (school infrastructure and school grants to promote community-driven school improvement), and will have provisions for continued and systematic capacity development of the government staff and key stakeholder. The project will also help reorient the education financing from input-based to output-based by focusing on learning, and will support improvements in the quality and efficiency of education services, and bring about behavior and systemic change that ensures effective use of inputs and collaboration among key actors for improved service delivery. This approach will help ensure sustainability of the education services (see the detailed fiscal analysis in Annex 3).

---

<sup>42</sup> Béteille and Evans. 2019. "Successful Teachers, Successful Students: Recruiting and Supporting Society's Most Crucial Profession." Washington, DC: World Bank Group.





## **B. Fiduciary**

### **(i) Financial Management**

84. **The World Bank conducted an FM assessment to determine the adequacy of the FM arrangements of the PFMU of the MoF.** The objective of the FM assessment was to determine whether the PFMU has acceptable FM arrangements. The arrangements which were reviewed include the PFMU's system of planning and budgeting, accounting, internal controls (ICs), funds flow, financial reporting, and auditing. The entity's arrangements are acceptable if they are considered capable of recording correctly all budgets, transactions, and balances; supporting the preparation of regular and reliable financial statements; and safeguarding the entity's assets and are subject to auditing arrangements acceptable to the World Bank. The assessment was conducted in accordance with the World Bank's Financial Management Manual effective March 1, 2010, as last revised on February 10, 2017.

85. **The assessment concluded that the FM arrangements of the PFMU meet the World Bank's minimum requirements for the administration of project funds under the World Bank Policy and Procedure for IPF Projects.** The PFMU is headed by a unit manager who is responsible for ensuring the overall direction of work at the unit. Under the direction and supervision of the unit manager, the entire PFMU FM team that comprises the FM specialist (a qualified accountant), finance specialist, assistant finance specialist, a finance assistant, and two administrative finance assistants is responsible for all of the day-to-day FM functions of specified donor-funded projects.

86. **The PFMU has satisfactory planning and budgeting, accounting, IC, financial reporting, and external auditing processes in place that will support the effective and efficient use of resources for the proposed project.** The related operational costs of maintaining the staff during the life of the project, including computer hardware and stationery, submitting withdrawal applications electronically, and printing project FM reports will form part of the costs that the project shall bear as part of the project management costs.

87. **The PFMU will open a U.S. dollar-denominated Designated Account (DA) at a commercial bank approved by the World Bank for the IDA grant.** The project will use report-based disbursements through the submission of quarterly interim financial reports (IFRs) on the sources and uses of project funds. A forecast of the first six months' expenditures will form the basis for the initial withdrawal of funds from the Grant, and subsequent withdrawals will be based on the net cash requirements. Additionally, another segregated DA will be opened for MDTF pooled funds.

88. **The project will follow a cash basis of accounting and financial reporting and will submit, within 45 days of each Government fiscal quarter, IFRs of the project activities.** At a minimum, the content of the IFRs will be (a) a statement of sources and uses of funds for the reported quarter and cumulative period from project inception, reconciled to opening and closing bank balances; (b) a statement of uses of funds (expenditures) by project activity/component and by expenditure categories, comparing actual expenditures against budget, with explanations for significant variances for both the quarter and cumulative period; and (c) a DA reconciliation statement.

---



89. **The annual audited financial statements of the project shall be submitted to IDA within six months of the end of the Government's fiscal year** (that is, by June 30 each year). The external auditors will conduct the audits on the project financial statements following terms of reference (ToR) as agreed with the World Bank.

90. **The residual FM risk is rated Substantial, if the planned risk mitigation measures are properly implemented.** A detailed description of the FM assessment is included in annex 1.

## (ii) Procurement

91. Procurement under the proposed project will be carried out in accordance with the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers (Procurement Regulations) dated July 2016, revised in November 2017 and August 2018; the Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants, dated July 1, 2016; and other provisions stipulated in the Financing Agreement.

92. **Implementation arrangements.** Procurement under the project shall be carried out by the PFMU of the MoF at the central government level and the LCs in collaboration with DEOs and SMCs at a decentralized level under the supervision of the PFMU mainly on construction and maintenance/renovation of schools.

93. **Procurement planning.** A Procurement Plan detailing the activities to be carried out during the first 18 months reflecting the actual project implementation needs and the plan with Project Procurement Strategy for Development (PPSD) have been prepared by the Government and is acceptable to the World Bank. The Plan shall be uploaded into Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement (STEP) and approved before its implementation.

94. **Use of country systems.** For procurements approaching the national market and that are below the defined thresholds, national procurement systems may be used. An open competitive approach to the market will be the World Bank preferred approach as it provides all eligible bidders/proposers with timely and equal opportunity to provide the required goods or services.

## C. Legal Operational Policies

	Triggered?
Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	No
Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60	No

## D. Environmental and Social

The Environmental and Social risk is considered moderate for both environmental and social aspects. The environmental and social risks associated with the project are minimal, site specific, and can easily be managed with the required mitigation measure.



## **Environmental Safeguards**

95. **The project environmental risk has been assessed as Moderate based on the capacity of the Client and the World Bank Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs).** Specifically, Subcomponent 3.2 will finance the construction of new classroom blocks, boreholes, sanitary facilities, and maintenance/renovation works for a selected number of schools throughout the country. It is estimated that the project will support 2,000 schools. The nature of the anticipated civil works is not complex given that these will take place in existing school compounds, and it is not envisaged that any natural or sensitive habitats will be affected by the works. However, since the works will occur during school hours when lessons are taking place and young children are exposed to construction hazards, strict supervision and adherence to the Sierra Leone Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and World Bank ESSs, including the health and safety guidelines for construction, are required during the implementation of the project. Since the specific schools for investments have not yet been identified, an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) have been prepared by the Client in line with the requirement of the ESSs and disclosed on June 19, 2019. The ESMF will provide for the screening of selected schools during implementation using the checklist to be prepared and the development of associated Environmental Social and Health Impact Assessments and Environmental Social Management Plans (ESMPs) as may be required. Detailed analysis of the application of the World Bank standards of the project has been provided as part of the Environmental and Social Review Summary. The project will address the needed environmental and social measures through the implementation of an Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), which has been prepared by the Client, approved by the World Bank, and disclosed on June 3, 2019 on MBSSE's website.

96. **The task team conducted a more structured institutional capacity assessment to support the environmental and social capacity enhancement.** The assessment revealed that the MBSSE has no existing environmental and social management system and procedures in place. There is no role for safeguards specialists in the current structure of the MBSSE. The LCs have environmental and social specialists, but they have no experience implementing the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and are not mobile enough to effectively supervise/monitor projects on a regular basis. In addition, high staff turnover was reported among the LCs surveyed as part of the capacity assessment.

97. **The project will recruit environmental and social specialists to be based at the Free Education Project Secretariat and will be responsible for the project environmental and social safeguards implementation** and ensuring that all bidding documents are accompanied by the required Occupational Health and Safety guidelines and construction ESMP including requirement for GBV prevention as required. They will also be responsible for ensuring that the project complies with the requirements within the ESCP. The environmental and social specialists will also work closely with the LCs and the SMCs throughout the implementation of the project and provide guidance to the secretariat on the safeguards required for Sierra Leone EPA and World Bank standards. The environmental and social specialists will be supported by the LC staff, specifically the clerk of works, the environmental specialists, and the council engineers, in the day-to-day supervision of the civil works in the schools. The environmental and social specialists will put in place a standard environmental and social checklist for use by the environment and social specialists in the field for monitoring and supervision at the various project sites as well as conducting regular field monitoring visits as part of their oversight responsibility. The project will support the development of environmental and social management system for the MBSSE to comply with ESS 1 requirements. In addition, partners/NGOs may collaborate with the Government for the implementation of GBV mitigation measures. Training for the safeguards specialists on the new ESF is recommended and included in the

---



ESCP. The World Bank team will provide guidance and capacity building throughout the project, as per the requirements of the new World Bank ESSs.

### **Climate and Disaster Screening**

98. **Climate and disaster risk screening has been completed for the project.** The exposure rating is High, the impact rating is Moderate, and the outcome/service delivery rating is Low as the impacts can be mitigated by integrating appropriate risk reduction measures. Sierra Leone is vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. The most frequently reported natural hazards in the country are epidemic, flood, landslide, storm, and wildfire. Floods regularly affect Sierra Leone during the rainy season due to heavy precipitation and storm surges along the coast. The increasing occurrences of natural disasters have an adverse impact on growth, agricultural production, infrastructure, people's homes, public health, and biodiversity along the coast. The project has a national scope and is expected to finance classroom climate-smart construction and maintenance/renovation of school facilities. It is expected that potential environmental impacts from the proposed physical interventions will not pose major, irreversible environmental impacts given their nature and small or medium scale. The overall environmental footprints of the interventions are anticipated to be construction/maintenance related, comprising short-term localized impacts that can be easily managed. A comprehensive ESMF has been developed to ensure proposed due diligence to environmental and social aspects. The project will also support the development of low-carbon/climate-smart school infrastructure standards and guidelines. The construction will use climate-smart, safe, and resilient design. Buildings designs and construction approach adopted will be informed by a study undertaken as part of the project preparation grant. Where possible, construction will be managed, monitored, and maintained by the school community with the help of LCs. Capacity enhancement and awareness programs for school and community stakeholders will be provided to reduce the risk impact.

### **Climate Co-benefits**

99. **The project will promote a safe, sustainable, resilient, and climate-friendly learning environment.** The project will finance physical school infrastructure under Subcomponent 3.2. Schools in some areas may be vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change and disaster. The project will provide technical support to mainstream climate change adaptation and risk reduction into education infrastructure. First, the project will help the Government develop school infrastructure standards that are expected to be met by schools and guidelines on how to achieve the standards. Second, school infrastructure will be managed and maintained by schools with the help of LCs. Under Subcomponent 3.2, capacity enhancement and awareness programs will be provided to reduce the risk impact and to ensure a common understanding of acceptable levels of school infrastructure among stakeholders who are involved in the planning, monitoring, constructing, and maintenance of school infrastructure interventions. Moreover, the project will include a CERC as Component 5 that will allow the Government to efficiently respond to disasters or crises during the project period, and this will also contribute to climate co-benefits.

### **Social Safeguards**

100. **The project social risk is classified as Moderate.** The project's potential social impacts stem from the construction of school infrastructure, including the construction of new and maintenance/renovation of existing classrooms blocks, WASH facilities, and so on. These works are expected to take place within existing school compounds, and as such, land acquisition and restriction of use of land are expected to be limited to the immediate surroundings of the existing schools. While the project is expected to use school or government lands, in many cases, unused or underused state land is subject to occupation, sometimes by 'squatters'. The utilization

---



of state land may therefore have an impact on livelihoods that will need to be identified through due diligence and appropriate mitigation measures. Often government acquisition is not properly done or undocumented, which can result in disputes over ownership and boundary demarcation. At this stage of preparation, the specific schools where physical works will take place are yet to be identified, and as such, the likely nature and magnitude of involuntary resettlement impact is unknown until during implementation. The project has therefore prepared an RPF before appraisal to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to address any issues that might arise from potential land acquisition and/or economic displacement under the project. Once subprojects are defined, and necessary information becomes available, the project will prepare site-specific Resettlement Action Plans or Livelihood Restoration Plans proportionate to the potential physical or economic displacement risks. No physical and/or economic displacement will occur until plans required by ESS 5 have been finalized and approved by the World Bank.

101. **Labor risk.** The contracting structure of the project involves mainly the use of local labor residing within the communities, and it is expected that there would not be a need for the establishment of workers' camps and international migrants. The likely labor risk may include health and safety of workers during the construction and operational phases, general labor working conditions, community grievances over recruitment process and selection, and protection of female teachers, students and workers. The ESS 2 requires the MBSSE to promote sound worker management relationships and enhance the development benefits of the project by treating workers fairly and by providing safe and healthy working conditions. A Labor Management Procedure has been developed as part of the ESMF. Civil works contractors will be required to update and comply with these requirements during project implementation. The MBSSE will develop and implement a Health, Safety, and Environmental Plan in line with World Bank Group Environment, Health, and Safety Guidelines (for construction activities). The plan will include procedures on investigation and reporting of incidents and nonconformance, emergency preparedness and response procedures, and continuous training and awareness of workers.

102. **Community health and safety (ESS4).** Community health and safety concerns arise from activities during construction and afterward. As the planned constructions/renovations take place in existing school premises, the staff and students in school as well as the local population may be exposed to construction-phase risks such as traffic and road safety risks, diseases, and hazardous materials associated with project implementation. The safety and integrity of structures could pose risks in the post-construction phase.

103. Community health and safety risks are covered by the existing laws and regulations pertinent to the LCs, Ministry of Health, EPA, and traffic and vehicle management. The capacity assessment has identified some gaps related to operationalization of rules and regulations such as (a) absence of standard codes of construction; (b) gaps in following procedures for submission and approval of designs before construction; (c) gaps in ensuring safety and integrity of public structures through a certification process post construction; and (d) gaps in the assessment carried out by the health authorities in charge of approving the design of sanitary facilities regarding the engineering and technical specifications and aspects of sanitary engineering. The ESCP includes measures that address these gaps.

104. Close collaboration is required between the project, MBSSE, Ministry of Works and Public Assets, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, EPA, and LCs to ensure strict application of procedures for submission and approval of designs before construction and certification and verification of integrity of public structures. The ESMF and RPF prepared by the project will guide the identification and mitigation of community health and safety risks of construction activities. Capacity building for implementation and monitoring of ESS for environmental and social

---



officers and engineers of local councils, contractors, consultants, as well as the Free Education Project Secretariat and SMCs, is required.

## **Gender and GBV**

105. **The project has a strong gender results chain to identify, address, and monitor key gender issues in the education sector** including, though not limited to, low transition rates from the primary to secondary levels, dropout rates due to early marriage and pregnancy, a lack of female teachers/role models, lack of understanding of gender-related issues, less support to promote gender equality at the school and community levels, and unsafe school environments. The project undertook a gender analysis to inform the specific actions that should be undertaken within the scope of the project to close gender gaps and address gender-related issues. Sierra Leone has made significant progress when it comes to gender parity in school enrollment, particularly at the primary and junior secondary levels. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) at preschool level is in favor of girls at 1.1, while there is gender parity at the primary level and almost parity at the JSS level. At the SSS level, GPI is 0.9.<sup>43</sup> There are, however, general challenges regarding school retention, completion, and quality learning outcomes. The country's Medium-term NDP 2019–2023 has raised concern that 'too many girls are still not completing basic education, and many who complete do not move on to senior secondary school'. The leading causes for girls dropping out of school are related to late entry in schools, teenage pregnancy, early forced marriages, poor sanitation and menstrual hygiene management in schools, and school-related GBV.<sup>44</sup> Inadequate support systems at the local level on gender issues, GBV prevention, and response to GBV are also cited as a challenge.

106. A social assessment and international evidence have informed the design of Subcomponent 1.3 which will finance both school- and system-level interventions to promote gender equality and disability inclusion in the education sector. Additionally, gender issues will be extensively addressed through activities supported under each of the project's components. They are as follows:

- Including specific modules in teacher training focusing on gender-related issues (including prevention and reporting of GBV and sexual harassment)
- Including additional sanitary facilities with special attention to girls' safety in school infrastructure and renovation
- Encouraging the hiring of qualified female teachers as part of the TSC's efforts to promote equitable teacher hiring
- Establishing/strengthening a mechanism for reporting GBV at the community level and developing a platform for effective response, including financing to strengthen key support and health services and establishment of a strong referral mechanism, in collaboration with the relevant ministries, departments and agencies.
- Supporting the Government's ongoing efforts to promote radical inclusion in education, provide sexual and reproductive health education, and establish a mentoring program for both boys and girls
- Monitoring the number of SMC members and teachers trained in gender in education (gender sensitization, GBV prevention, and awareness)

---

<sup>43</sup> Sierra Leone ESP (2018–2020). <http://www.education.gov.sl/PDF/Slider/ESP-2018-2020-V6-ONLINE.pdf>.

<sup>44</sup> International Rescue Committee. 2016. "Change the Context Not the Girls: Improving Efforts to Reduce Teenage Pregnancy in Sierra Leone."





107. **The project aims to address the gender gap in human endowment as laid out in the World Bank's gender strategy.** The report "World Bank Group Gender Strategy (FY16-23): Gender Equality, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Growth" emphasizes the importance of gender equality in achieving the World Bank's twin goals of ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity and explicitly endorses interventions that can reduce the gender gap in key areas. The proposed project design includes targeted interventions to address the identified gender gap. By addressing some of the barriers that girls face in staying in and completing school, including lack of community and teacher knowledge/awareness of gender equality and GBV, the project is contributing to reducing the identified gender gap. An intermediate results indicator – the number of SMC and Board of Governor members and teachers trained in gender education (gender sensitization, GBV prevention and awareness) – has been included in the Results Framework to address lack of understanding of gender-related issues and inadequate support to promote gender equality at the school and community levels. Research on Burkina Faso, Ghana and Malawi shows that training of teachers and key school stakeholders on children's rights and responsibilities, gender sensitization, basic counselling and listening skills, awareness of GBV at school and teacher code of conduct has improved gender equality and led to reduced GBV at the school and community levels. An international survey by Education International found that teacher codes of conduct were present in 26 of 50 countries surveyed, and that over half of teachers believed the code of conduct had a significant impact in reducing misconduct<sup>45</sup>. The project will measure impact of training for SMC and Board of Governor members and teachers in gender in education by carrying out a pre- and post- survey.

108. **Attention will also be paid to GBV risk mitigation particularly when there will be infrastructure works within schools.** It is also expected that the search for jobs and procurement opportunities from the project could provide grounds for sexual harassment and exploitation of girls and women. The project has been filtered for GBV risks using the World Bank's corporate GBV Risks Assessment Tool. The assessment indicated a GBV risk score of 13.75, suggesting that the potential for project activities to create conditions for GBV is Moderate. Measures to minimize and respond to GBV risks and impact from the construction will be applied in accordance with the Good Practice Note on GBV risks related to civil works: (a) the Free Education Project Secretariat will have a social development specialist covering gender and developing a GBV Action Plan; (b) the project's Environmental and Social Impact Assessment will include an assessment of GBV risk and measures to address them included in the contractor ESMP and adequately costed, within three months after the project effectiveness; (c) all bidding documents for works and procurement contracts will include clear requirement to address GBV risk, including the requirement for a Code of Conduct that prohibits sexual harassment and exploitation throughout the contract's life; (d) GBV prevention and response actors will be mapped out and local service providers will be identified and partnered to assist in GBV response; and (e) a GBV-sensitive GRM will be established for confidential reporting. It is expected that the school infrastructure support will be implemented in conjunction with the clerk of works and LCs. The role of these entities will be extended to provide oversight on GBV engagement, capacity building, and monitoring under the project.

109. **Disability inclusion.** Persons with disabilities constitute one of the largest vulnerable groups at risk of exclusion in the education sector of Sierra Leone. Several factors impede their participation in school including inaccessible school infrastructure, lack of assistive devices, and inadequate teacher knowledge on handling different forms of disabilities in classrooms, stigma, and abuse. The World Bank has made 10 corporate commitments since July 2018 on disability inclusion and one among these commitments is to ensure that all World Bank-financed education programs and projects are disability inclusive by 2025. Promoting inclusive education is an objective of the Government. The project has considered specific interventions to promote inclusive education

---

<sup>45</sup> McKelvie-Sebileau, P. 2011. *Patterns of Development and Use of Codes of Conduct for Teachers in 24 Countries*. Paris, UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning.



detailed under Subcomponent 1.3. The project will support some ongoing government interventions including supporting anti-stigma campaign on the capacities and rights of persons with disabilities, integrating training for teachers and school heads and administrators in promoting an inclusive education environment through in-service training, and promoting universal design as part of the national school construction strategy.

### **Citizens' Engagement**

110. **Citizens' and stakeholders' engagement will form an integral part of the project implementation as it is fundamental to reinforcing the project's development results and sustainability.** The project integrates various citizen engagement mechanisms, including consultations, community-driven activities, participatory monitoring, and a project level grievance mechanism (GM) that will be deployed at various stages of the project cycle. Extensive consultations were conducted to seek feedback on the project design during the preparation process with various stakeholders (including disability organizations, organizations focused on women and girls, and stakeholder in rural areas). Stakeholders provided feedback on the selection and design of activities and the overall implementation of the proposed project interventions. A Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)<sup>46</sup> prepared during the project preparation will be used to ensure engagement is maintained and updated throughout project implementation. Project activities such as PBF, school infrastructure improvement for existing schools, and school maintenance/renovation grants will be managed by communities/schools using a participatory approach. The project will ensure that different voices are heard, including the most vulnerable and people with disabilities, gender, and low literacy. The project communication strategy will facilitate beneficiaries' access to information on project's interventions and the grievance mechanisms (GM) will address complaints from individuals or groups who feel that they are negatively affected by the project activities. SMCs and board of governors will be responsible for facilitating dialogue among school stakeholders and a participatory decision making process at the school level, making information publicly available, developing an implementation plan, and leading the activities implementation. Additionally, the project will support capacity building of communities/SMC members in key areas such as school grants management and gender and disability awareness raising. The project -level GRM will ensure accessible and transparent procedures for complaints uptake, resolution and feedback. The following three intermediate results indicators have been included in the Results Framework to monitor the implementation of citizen engagement activities.

- Number of schools developing school improvement plan and executing school activities based on the plan using a participatory approach
- Survey of SMCs organization and effectiveness
- Share of grievances addressed within a certain time period

## **V. GRIEVANCE REDRESS SERVICES**

111. Communities and individuals who believe that they are adversely affected by a World Bank (WB) supported project may submit complaints to existing project-level GMs or the WB's Grievance Redress Service (GRS). The project GM procedures will be accessible at no cost to complainants and will ensure a transparent and timely resolution. In order to address sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (SEA/SH)-related complaints safely and ethically, the project will incorporate SEA/SH-specific channels into the GM that

---

<sup>46</sup> A SEP was disclosed in country on June 3, 2019.





allow for the safe and confidential disclosure, documentation, response and management of SEA/SH grievances. The GRS ensures that complaints received are promptly reviewed in order to address project-related concerns. Project affected communities and individuals may submit their complaint to the WB's independent Inspection Panel which determines whether harm occurred, or could occur, as a result of WB non-compliance with its policies and procedures. Complaints may be submitted at any time after concerns have been brought directly to the World Bank's attention, and Bank Management has been given an opportunity to respond. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank's corporate Grievance Redress Service (GRS), please visit <http://www.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/products-and-services/grievance-redress-service>. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank Inspection Panel, please visit [www.inspectionpanel.org](http://www.inspectionpanel.org).

## VI. KEY RISKS

112. **The overall risk of the project is considered Substantial.** Key risks that could adversely affect the achievement of the PDO and the sustainability of results are as described in the following paragraphs (see Systematic Operations Risk-Rating Tool in Datasheet). There are uncertainties around school closure and the timeline for reopening related to the COVID-19 outbreak, the impact on numbers of out of school children and learning levels with widening inequity for marginalized groups, and contracting of Sierra Leone's economy, with subsequent constraints on the education sector budget, due to the global and local effects of the pandemic.

- **Political and Governance: Substantial.** The political risk is substantial in light of the country context and the current political situation. Providing equitable access to education to all children in Sierra Leone is a government priority—a critical component in improving the country's overall human development outcomes and in promoting economic growth in the medium to long term. The project will support the Government's commitment through the provision of resources and the implementation of sector reforms.
- **Macroeconomic: Substantial.** Following the Ebola crisis and the collapse in iron ore prices in 2016, Sierra Leone's economy has experienced growth. GDP growth was estimated to reach 5.4 percent in 2019—the highest level since 2016. However, this recovery in the economy is likely to be hijacked by the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted public service delivery and may lead to many children entering the labor market to support their families. The project will support the Government to provide fiscal resources to maintain essential service delivery.
- **Sector Strategies and Policies: Substantial.** Sierra Leone has increased its investment and focus on improving the quality of education services—and ensuring equitable access for all. In particular, the Government's support of the FQSE Program demonstrates its longer-term commitment to education for all. The Government will adopt and implement a number of reforms and new approaches related to community-empowered management, teacher deployment, and the solidification of a sustainable national school subsidies system, under the project, which are likely to make the project design complex. The World Bank will provide strong implementation and technical support during project implementation.
- **Institutional Capacity for Implementation and Sustainability: Substantial.** The proposed project will continue to build on the experience and capacity which has been acquired by the MBSSE and the TSC through the implementation of several education projects in country. The project funds will be



used strategically to support capacity building of the Government and achievement of the education sector strategies. TA and capacity building will be provided throughout the project, covering education aspects, M&E, implementation, FM, procurement, environmental and social safeguards, and GRM.

- **Fiduciary: Substantial.** The fiduciary risk is substantial given the limited institutional capacity as well as the reliance on local communities for the successful execution, implementation, and monitoring of the performance-based school grants. The PFMU has experience carrying out fiduciary tasks under other World Bank supported projects. The proposed project will strengthen the fiduciary capacity of the PFMU through the recruitment of designated FM and procurement specialists to support project implementation. In addition, the project will put in place mitigation measures that will include building the internal audit capacity in the PFMU.



## VII. RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND MONITORING

### Results Framework

COUNTRY: Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone Free Education Project

#### Project Development Objectives(s)

The project development objectives (PDO) are to improve the management of the education system, teaching practices, and learning conditions.

#### Project Development Objective Indicators

Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	Intermediate Targets				End Target
			1	2	3	4	
Improved Management of the Education System							
School catchment area and rationalization plan in place and associated transparent criterion-based school approval, and financing process implemented (Text)		No school catchment area plan in place	School catchment area plan produced and endorsed	Associated transparent school approval and financing criteria developed and endorsed	School catchment area plan used for school approval and financing process	Associated transparent criterion-based school approval and financing process linked to school mapping initiated	Associated transparent criterion-based school approval and financing process implemented
One national learning assessment (NLA) conducted and findings disseminated (Text)		No integrated national learning assessment (NLA) conducted	National assessment team set up	Staff trained, test items piloted and developed	One NLA conducted	Results of NLA analyzed and disseminated	Results of NLA disseminated and used for learning improvement
Improved Teaching Practices							
Percentage of teachers receiving project-supported training demonstrating		n.a.	5 percentage points increase annually	5 percentage points increase annually	5 percentage points increase annually	5 percentage points increase annually	5 percentage points increase annually



Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	Intermediate Targets				End Target
			1	2	3	4	
improved teaching practices in the classroom (Text)							
<b>Improved Learning Conditions</b>							
Share of PBF schools meeting 85% of student attendance rate (Percentage)		50.00	0.00	60.00	70.00	75.00	75.00
Number of students benefiting from improved learning environment (Number)		0.00	505,600.00	515,712.00	526,026.00	536,546.00	547,278.00
Number of female students (Number)		0.00	252,800.00	257,856.00	263,013.00	268,273.00	273,639.00

### Intermediate Results Indicators by Components

Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	Intermediate Targets				End Target
			1	2	3	4	
Component 1: Policy, Governance, Accountability, and System Administration							
Annual school census conducted and report produced (Yes/No)		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
School quality standards developed for primary and secondary schools (Text)		Child-friendly school standards in place.	Stakeholder consultations on the current school standards	Current school quality standards revised	New school quality standards piloted	New school quality standards finalized	New school quality standards rolled out
A system for examination analysis and feedback in place (Text)		Small scale examination analysis conducted	Formulation of implementation arrangement for analysis	NPSE, BECE and WASSCE examination analyzed at down to ward level by item	Pedagogical feedback developed for the item analysis down to ward level and provided to all	Pedagogical feedback developed for the analysis at down to school level and	Pedagogical feedback developed for the analysis at down to school level and provided to all



Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	Intermediate Targets				End Target
			1	2	3	4	
					approved schools	provided to all approved schools	approved schools
Number of SMC and Board of Governor members and teachers trained in gender in education (gender sensitization, GBV prevention and awareness) (Number)		0.00	0.00	12,000.00	22,000.00	28,000.00	32,000.00
Percentage of stakeholders receiving training demonstrating improved knowledge on gender (Text)		n.a.	5 percentage points increase annually	5 percentage points increase annually	5 percentage points increase annually	5 percentage points increase annually	5 percentage points increase annually
Inclusive education policy developed and in use (Text)		Inclusive education policy drafted	Inclusive education policy approved	Inclusive education policy reviewed by law office department	Teacher training program using inclusive education policy	Teacher training program using inclusive education policy	Teacher training program using inclusive education policy
Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning (CRI, Number)		0.00	100,188.00	300,564.00	500,940.00	751,410.00	1,001,880.00
Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning - Female (CRI, Number)		0.00	50,094.00	150,282.00	250,470.00	375,705.00	500,940.00
<b>Component 2: Teacher Management and Professional Development</b>							
Teacher management information system developed and in use (Text)		Teacher management information system not in place	Needs analysis conducted for teacher management information system	Detailed work plan for teacher management information system developed	Teacher management information system piloted	Teacher management information system applied nationally	Teacher management information system in use
Number of teachers in primary and JSSs participating in cluster-based CPD (Number)		0.00	0.00	10,000.00	16,000.00	22,000.00	22,000.00
Teachers recruited or trained		0.00	0.00	10,000.00	16,000.00	22,000.00	22,000.00



Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	Intermediate Targets				End Target
			1	2	3	4	
(CRI, Number)							
Teachers recruited or trained - Female (RMS requirement) (CRI, Number)		0.00	0.00	1,800.00	2,800.00	3,900.00	3,900.00
Number of teachers trained (CRI, Number)		0.00	0.00	10,000.00	16,000.00	22,000.00	22,000.00
<b>Component 3: School Level Education Development</b>							
Share of PBF schools meeting 85% of teacher attendance rate (Percentage)		44.00	0.00	55.00	60.00	75.00	75.00
Number of schools developing school improvement plan and executing school activities based on the plan using a participatory approach (Number)		500.00	600.00	700.00	1,200.00	1,600.00	2,000.00
Survey of SMCs organization and effectiveness (Text)		Information of SMCs operation available on REDiSL supported schools	Baseline study conducted and recommendation provided	SMC manuals issued	Case study conducted	Midterm evaluation conducted	SMC manual revised based on evaluation results
Number of classrooms constructed in compliance with standards in target schools (Number)		0.00	0.00	80.00	200.00	350.00	500.00
Share of grievances addressed within a certain time period (Percentage)		0.00	50.00	60.00	70.00	80.00	90.00



**Monitoring & Evaluation Plan: PDO Indicators**

Indicator Name	Definition/Description	Frequency	Datasource	Methodology for Data Collection	Responsibility for Data Collection
School catchment area and rationalization plan in place and associated transparent criterion-based school approval, and financing process implemented	A strategy for amalgamation of small and non-viable schools as well as establishment of schools where there is need. This will be developed and endorsed by the government. Associated transparent criterion-based school approval and financing process will be implemented.	Annual	Administrative reports	Reports	MBSSE
One national learning assessment (NLA) conducted and findings disseminated	National integrated learning assessment framework covering primary and JSS developed. A standardized learning assessment conducted. Findings disseminated and fed back into learning materials and teacher education practice.	Annual	Project Reports	Project Reports	MBSSE/EMIS
Percentage of teachers receiving project-supported training demonstrating improved teaching practices in the classroom	Proportion of teachers who demonstrate improvement of classroom effective practices (the observable	Annual	Teacher Assessment	Teacher Assessment	MBSSE and TSC



	parameters have been proposed and will have to be agreed upon). Baseline and endline to establish the improvement in learning over the project period.				
Share of PBF schools meeting 85% of student attendance rate	Proportion of schools receiving performance-based financing (PBF) where 85% or more of the learners enrolled are present in school during a random visit. Data will be collected every term and this indicator will take an average of the three visits.	Annual	Project operational data (PBF monitoring)	PBF monitoring	MBSSE/EMIS
Number of students benefiting from improved learning environment	Cumulative number of students enrolled in schools that receive infrastructure grants	Annual	Annual School Censuses	EMIS Reports	MBSSE/EMIS
Number of female students	Cumulative number of female students enrolled in schools that receive infrastructure grants	Annual	Annual Census	EMIS Reports	MBSSE/EMIS

#### Monitoring & Evaluation Plan: Intermediate Results Indicators

Indicator Name	Definition/Description	Frequency	Datasource	Methodology for Data Collection	Responsibility for Data Collection
Annual school census conducted and report produced	Digital data collection carried out every year and	Annual	Administrative Reports	EMIS Reports	MBSSE/EMIS





	report of the results prepared before the end of the school year				
School quality standards developed for primary and secondary schools	School quality standards will be developed, which will be used for school inspection and monitoring.	Annual	Project Reports	Project Reports	MBSSE/Directorate of Inspectorate
A system for examination analysis and feedback in place	A feedback mechanism to districts, wards and schools established to provide feedback on existing learning gaps based on WAEC examinations.	Annual	Project data	Reports	MBSSE
Number of SMC and Board of Governor members and teachers trained in gender in education (gender sensitization, GBV prevention and awareness)	This is gender-related indicator. Cumulative number of SMC and Board of Governor members and teachers trained in gender in education (gender sensitization, GBV prevention and awareness)	Annual	Administrative Reports	EMIS Reports	MBSSE/EMIS
Percentage of stakeholders receiving training demonstrating improved knowledge on gender	Percentage of stakeholders receiving training demonstrating improved knowledge on gender (gender sensitization, GBV prevention etc).	Annual	Project Reports	Project Reports	MBSSE
Inclusive education policy developed and in use	Inclusive education policy developed and in use.	Annual	Project Reports	Project Reports	MBSSE
Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning		Annual	Administrative Reports	Project Reports	MBSSE



Students benefiting from direct interventions to enhance learning - Female					
Teacher management information system developed and in use	TSC will develop a comprehensive and integrated teacher management information system (TMIS).	Annual	Project data	TSC Reports	TSC
Number of teachers in primary and JSSs participating in cluster-based CPD	Number of teachers in primary and JSSs who attend cluster-based CPD.	Annual	Project data	Project Reports	MBSSE and TSC
Teachers recruited or trained		Annual	TSC Reports	TSC Monitoring	TSC
Teachers recruited or trained - Female (RMS requirement)		Annual	TSC Reports	TSC Monitoring	TSC
Number of teachers trained		Annual	TSC Reports	TSC Monitoring	TSC
Share of PBF schools meeting 85% of teacher attendance rate	Proportion of schools receiving PBF where 85 percent or more of teachers are present in school during a random visit. Data will be collected every term and this indicator will take an average of the three visits.	Annual	Project Reports	EMIS Reports	MBSSE/EMIS
Number of schools developing school improvement plan and executing school activities based on the plan using a participatory approach	Cumulative number of schools developing school improvement plan and executing school activities based on the plan	Annual	Project Reports	EMIS Reports	MBSSE/EMIS



Survey of SMCs organization and effectiveness	This is citizen-engagement (CE) related indicator. Survey of SMCs organization and effectiveness will be carried out. In year 1, baseline study will be conducted. In year 2, SMC manual will be issued based on findings of the study. In year 3, case study will be carried out. In year 4, midterm evaluation will be conducted. In Year 5, SMC manual will be revised based on evaluation results.	Annual	Project Reports	Project Reports	MBSSE/EMIS
Number of classrooms constructed in compliance with standards in target schools	Cumulative number of classrooms constructed in compliance with standards in target schools	Annual	Project Reports	Project Reports	MBSSE/EMIS
Share of grievances addressed within a certain time period	Share of grievances addressed within two weeks. Steps are articulated in the stakeholder engagement plan as well as the project implementation manual.	Annual	Project Reports	Project Reports	MBSSE



**The World Bank**

Sierra Leone Free Education Project (P167897)

---

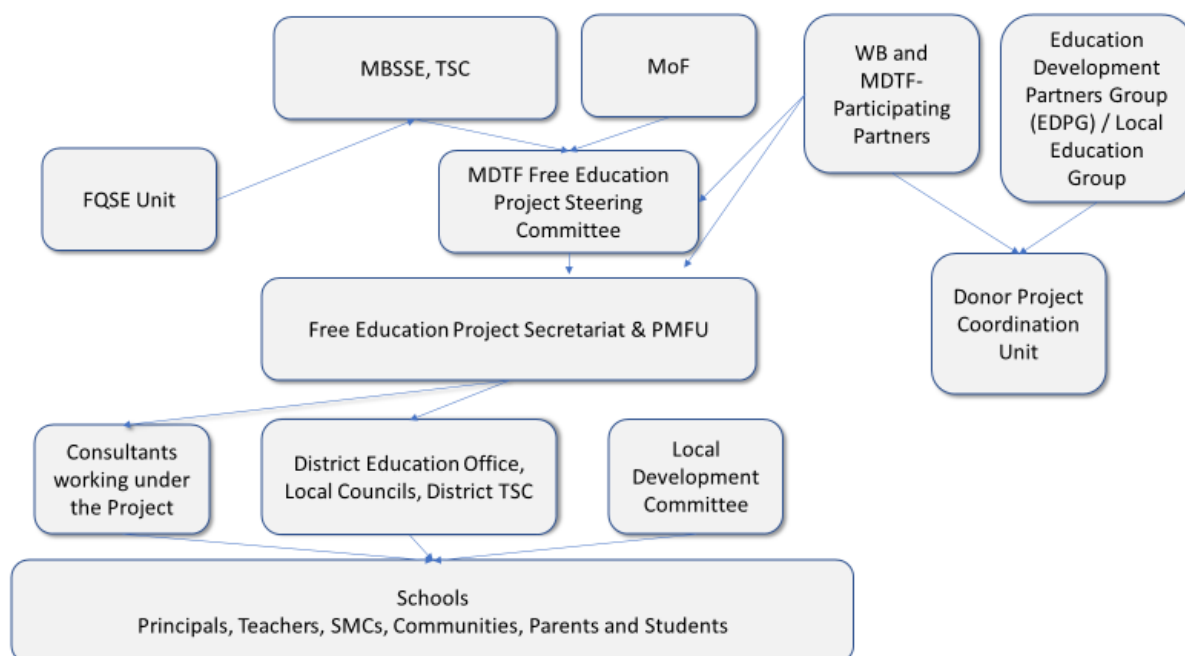
## ANNEX 1: IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS AND SUPPORT PLAN

COUNTRY: Sierra Leone  
Free Education Project

### Project Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

1. **The MBSSE, in coordination with the MoF, will be responsible for the overall implementation prompt and efficient coordination, oversight and monitoring of the project activities.** Within the MBSSE structures, there are various directorates and units that will be responsible for several aspects of the implementation of the project. The project will strengthen the Government's institutions responsible for education: MBSSE, TSC, WAEC, and DEOs. The MBSSE will also work closely with LCs which have an implementation role in management of schools located within the geographical catchment of the LC and various local education committees to implement the project activities. The Free Education Project Secretariat to be established under the project in the MBSSE will coordinate all project activities, report on progress, and provide technical advice to the MBSSE related to the World Bank procedures on a range of the project- related administrative issues. See Figure 1.1 and Table 1.1 for an overview of agencies with implementation responsibilities.

**Figure 1.1. Structure of Central- and Local-level Agencies**



### Implementation arrangements for Components

2. **Implementation arrangements for Component 1: Policy, Governance, Accountability, and System Administration.** Table 1.2 provides the key agencies leading the implementation of Component 1 activities. The



Directorate of Planning and Policy of the MBSSE will undertake necessary annual projections of inputs to inform the budgeting process and the MoF to review and deliberate the budget proposal based on the Government's fiscal commitment, capacity, and the potential impacts of the proposed budget submission. The Office of Chief Education Officer (CEO) and Directorate of Planning will take the lead in school catchment area planning and school approval process, working closely with the MoF. The MBSSE through the EMIS Unit in the Directorate of Planning will be responsible for the ASC and education data management. The Directorate of Inspectorate oversees quality assurance activities. Under Subcomponent 1.2, the Directorate of Inspectorate will be responsible for curriculum-supported activities. The MBSSE Assessment Unit will lead project activities related to the NLA and analysis of examinations. Implementation of Subcomponent 1.3 will be led by the MBSSE's Gender Unit and Inclusive Education Unit in the Directorate of Education Program and Services.

**Table 1.1. Component 1 Lead Implementing Agencies**

<b>Project Components and Subcomponents</b>	<b>Agencies with Implementation Responsibilities</b>
<b>Component 1: Policy, Governance, Accountability, and System Administration</b>	
1.1. Evidence-based Education Planning and Rationalization	
Annual and medium-term ESP development and budgeting	Directorate of Planning, MBSSE, MTHE, MoF, MoPED
School catchment area and rationalization plan	CEO, Directorate of Planning, MoF
Education data and management system	Directorate of Planning
School standards and quality assurance framework	Directorate of Inspectorate
Institutional and human capacity development	Directorate of Planning, Directorate of Human Resources
1.2. Curriculum and Assessments	
Curriculum reform	Directorate of Inspectorate
National learning assessment and analysis of examinations	Assessment Unit and WAEC
1.3. Gender Equality and Inclusive Education	
Gender equality	Directorate of Education Program and Services of MBSSE
Inclusive education	Directorate of Education Program and Services of MBSSE

### **3. Implementation arrangements for Component 2: Teacher Management and Professional Development.**

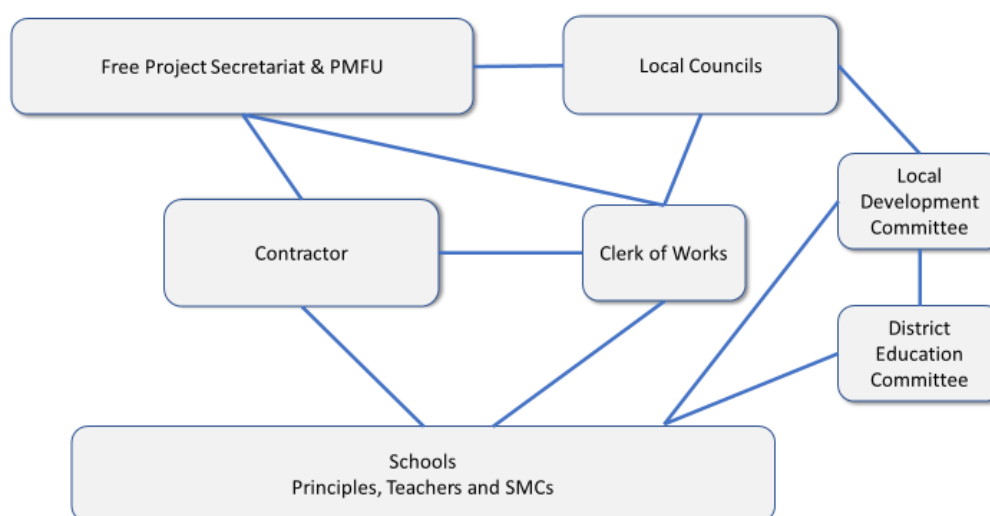
The TSC, which provides oversight of teacher-related activities, register, and license and sets professional standards for recruitment, deployment, transfer, promotion, and managing teacher-employer relationships, will be responsible for activities under this component. Teacher workforce planning will guide and facilitate the allocation of resources for deployment and recruitment (including replacement) of teachers throughout the system. The TSC will work closely with the MoF, MTHE, and MBSSE (Directorate of Planning and the Directorate of Inspectorate).

**4. Implementation arrangements for Component 3: School Level Education Development.** Accountability for the PBF activities will lie with schools and the Directorate of Planning of the MBSSE in collaboration with the Free Education Project Secretariat but will involve different agencies/stakeholders. The PBF funds will be directly disbursed by the Free Education Project Secretariat to the bank accounts of schools targeted to receive funding under this subcomponent. SMCs will lead the development of a SIP and implement the activities using PBF.



Monitoring of the PBF and assessment of performance will be undertaken by the Free Education Project Secretariat in collaboration with LCs and ward committees (education). Under Subcomponent 3.2, the project will support the construction of classrooms to meet the infrastructure needs of primary schools and JSSs as identified by the school catchment area exercise. To supervise civil works activities in the school, a clerk of works will be hired to follow the day-to-day activities on-site ensuring the quality of construction and adherence to specifications. The LC engineer will work closely with the clerk of works and be responsible for confirming completion and adequacy of construction and approving payment certificates to release the funds to the contractor(s). The payment will be paid directly by the PFMU to the respective contractor(s). LCs will also provide engineering and safeguards technical support to schools (see Figure 1.2). Schools (SMCs) will monitor school infrastructure improvement.

**Figure 1.2. Agencies/Actors Involved in Classroom Construction**



**5. Implementation arrangements for Component 4: Project Management, Coordination, and Monitoring and Evaluation.** The Free Education Project Secretariat will be responsible for overseeing project implementation of the project with support from various directors and heads of units, undertaking coordination activities related to project implementation, ensuring alignment with DP activities and involvement of key stakeholders as appropriate. The PFMU of the MoF will be responsible for the project's fiduciary aspects (procurement, FM, disbursement, and audits).

#### **Education Sector Governance and Coordination**

**6. The new education sector governance and coordination structure has been adopted by the MBSSE, MTHE along with key line ministries, DPs, and key stakeholders** (see Figure 1.3). Expected outcomes through enhanced sector-wide coordination are (a) increased efficiency of education sector resources (finance, people, knowledge) in support of prioritized Government's education sector plans and strategic priorities; (b) increased use of evidence to drive key education policies and monitor delivery; (c) greater focus on implementation, using joint results-based monitoring and enhanced performance management procedures; (d) improved public perceptions of government, especially on service quality and transparency, through the engagement of civil



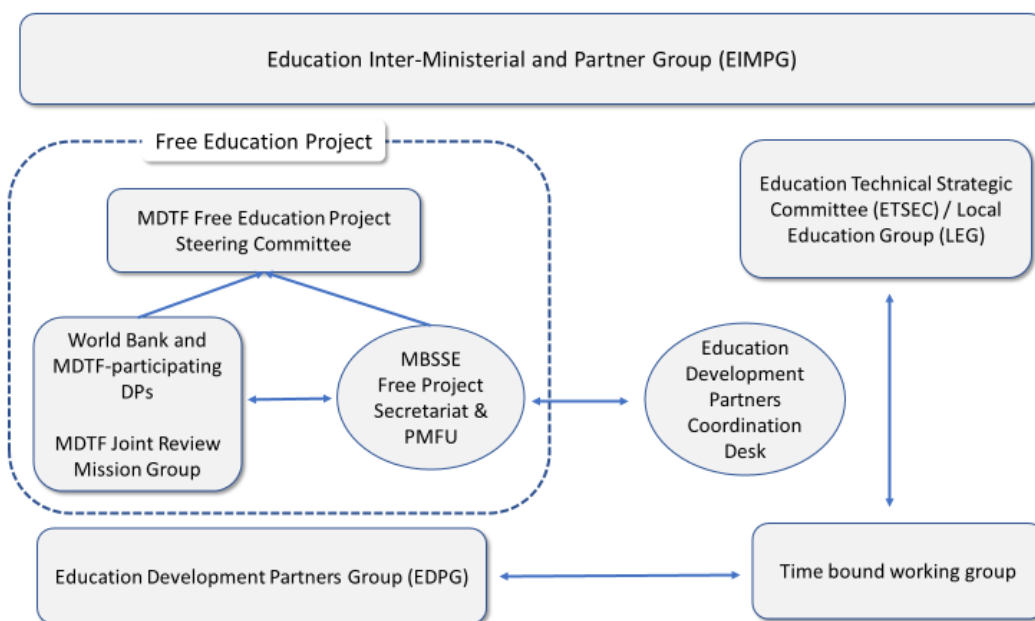
society and regional bodies in accountability mechanisms; and (e) reduced transaction costs for the MBSSE and education stakeholders from better coordination and meeting etiquettes.

- (a) **Education Inter-ministerial and Partners Group.** This group is the most senior authority within the education sector and will be responsible for performance monitoring and decision making for key education initiatives such as the FQSE, GPE, and ESP. Standing members include the Chief Minister, MBSSE Minister, MoF Minister, MTHE Minister, Chair of TSC, heads of agency, other ministries and agencies, as required.
- (b) **MDTF Free Education Project Steering Committee.** This group comprising heads of DPs and the MBSSE/MoF group will act as the steering body for the project, review the overall performance of the project, and decide on important policy aspects to facilitate the achievement of outcomes and results.
- (c) **Joint Review Mission (JRM) Group.** The World Bank, jointly with the MDTF-participating DPs, will provide implementation support and supervision, including fiduciary and safeguards oversight during the project implementation period. The JRM will be undertaken by the World Bank and MDTF-participating DPs in collaboration with the Government every six months to assess and score project progress against development objectives. Areas to be assessed include progress toward achievement of the PDO and project components, overall implementation progress, FM, project management, procurement, M&E, and safeguards.
- (d) **Free Education Project Secretariat.** The Secretariat will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the project with support from various directors and heads of unit, undertaking coordination activities related to project implementation, ensuring alignment with DP activities, and involving key stakeholders in the education sector as appropriate.
- (e) **Education Technical Strategic Committee (ETSEC)/LEG.** This group will engage in strategic dialogue related to the Government's priorities and policy area, facilitate decision making, and prompt issue resolution. This comprises the Minister, CEO or permanent secretary of the MBSSE and MTHE, MBSSE/MTHE/TSC directors, and representatives from DPs and civil society.
- (f) **Education Development Partners Coordination Desk.** This is a coordination desk located at the MBSSE and tasked with the major organization, administration, and effective running of the coordination structure.
- (g) **Time-bound Working Groups.** These consist of small groups of seven to eight individuals who are nominated technical experts and decision makers. They work on specific time-bound tasks, for example, a periodic joint expert review of the Education Sector Analysis and ESP.
- (h) **Education Development Partners Group.** This group will meet once or twice a year primarily for an information, accountability, and lesson sharing on education at large, including showcasing government and DP projects. Members include Ministers and MBSSE and MTHE staff, TSC, DPs, NGOs, and civil society organizations involved in education delivery.





Figure 1.3. Education Sector Governance and Coordination Structure



## Procurement

7. **Procurement management arrangements.** Procurement under this project shall be carried out by the PFMU of the MoF at the central government level and the LCs in collaboration with DEO and school management at a decentralized level under the supervision of the PFMU mainly on construction and maintenance/renovation of schools.

8. The procuring entity as well as bidders and service providers, that is, suppliers, contractors, and consultants, shall observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of contracts financed under the project in accordance with Section I and Section II of the Procurement Regulations.

9. **PPSD.** The Government has developed a PPSP which describes how procurement activities will support project operations for the achievement of PDOs and deliver value for money. The procurement strategy will be linked to the project implementation strategy ensuring proper sequencing of the activities. The PPSP considers institutional arrangements for procurement, roles and responsibilities, thresholds, procurement methods, prior review, and the requirements for carrying out procurement. It includes a detailed assessment and description of the PFMU's capacity for carrying out procurement and managing contract implementation, within an acceptable governance structure and accountability framework.

10. **Procurement planning.** The Government has prepared the Procurement Plan for the project that details the activities to be carried out during the first 18 months reflecting the actual project implementation needs, and it has been approved by the World Bank. The Procurement Plan will be uploaded in the online procurement management system—Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement (STEP)—and updated as required, to reflect the actual project implementation needs in agreement with the World Bank.



11. **Use of country systems.** For procurements approaching the national market and that are below the defined thresholds, national procurement systems may be used. An open competitive approach to the market will be the World Bank preferred approach as it provides all eligible bidders/proposers with timely and equal opportunity to provide the required goods or services.

12. **Procurement management risk assessment.** Given the country's post-conflict and weak governance context, the procurement management risk assessment found that even though the current staff in the PFMU are doing procurement in World Bank-funded projects,

- (a) The capacity of the existing pool of staff remains low despite several training and capacity-building workshops being conducted by the World Bank;
- (b) There are substantial delays in internal approvals on procurement decisions since the technical teams are in different project implementing ministries and agencies and the procurement team is in the PFMU;
- (c) There is limited knowledge on the World Bank's Procurement Regulations and limited familiarity with the use of the World Bank's STEP;
- (d) There is a need for establishment of the record keeping system;
- (e) There are inefficiencies and delays in the procurement processes;
- (f) There is insufficient competition in procurement; and
- (g) There is a weak complaint redress system.

13. Procurement at the decentralized level shall be done by LCs in collaboration with the DEO and the beneficiary schools' management. At LCs, the procurement system and processes are satisfactory and all tenders at the LC level will apply National Procurement Procedures. It is also proposed that the beneficiary SMCs will participate in the procurement and contract management process to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of implementation of project activities.

14. The procurement management risk for the project is rated High, which is expected to reduce to Substantial after mitigation. To address the risks and weaknesses identified, mitigation measures have been discussed and agreed with the Government, as shown in Table 1.3.

15. **Procurement post reviews (PPRs) and independent post reviews (IPRs) by the World Bank.** Based on the assessed agency implementation risk for procurement, which is High risk, the World Bank will carry out PPRs or IPRs for all contracts based on the approved Procurement Plan and not having been subject to prior review by the World Bank using a sample of 20 percent. Based on continuing assessment of risk and the success of risk mitigation measures implemented, the sample size will be reduced as risk mitigation measures are successfully implemented. Based on the risk rating, the sample sizes for the PPRs or IPRs are as follows: 5 percent for Low risk rating, 10 percent for Moderate risk rating, 15 percent for Substantial risk rating, and 20 percent for High risk rating.



**Table 1.2. Project Procurement Risk Factors and Mitigation Measures**

<b>Risk Factor</b>	<b>Mitigation Measure</b>
Capacity building of procurement staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend training in World Bank procurement procedures.</li> <li>• Conduct training on new World Bank procurement procedures.</li> <li>• Provide regular supervision, support, and monitoring.</li> </ul>
Substantial delays in internal approvals on procurement decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct regular meeting to identify delays and the causes and provide solutions.</li> <li>• Technical and procurement teams need to work together regardless of the structures and chain of command in different ministries and agencies.</li> </ul>
Limited knowledge in the World Bank's Procurement Regulations and use of STEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct regular procurement clinics.</li> <li>• Provide training to the team on use of STEP.</li> </ul>
Record keeping and documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The implementing agency will establish and maintain all procurement records duly cataloged and indexed that will facilitate easy access to information.</li> </ul>
Inefficiencies and delays in procurement process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct regular monitoring through the Procurement Plan and STEP.</li> </ul>
Insufficient competition in procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aggregate smaller contract packages wherever feasible.</li> <li>• Sensitize the private sector to bid for public tenders.</li> </ul>
Weak complaint redress system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop GRM system.</li> <li>• Provide semi-annual report of all complaints received and action taken.</li> </ul>
Fraud and corruption risks (including collusion and outside interference) in contracting process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disclose Procurement Plan.</li> <li>• Disclose contract awards.</li> <li>• Create awareness on effects of fraud and corruption.</li> <li>• Conduct regular reviews such as PPR, internal audit, external audit, and so on.</li> </ul>

## Financial Management

16. The overall FM risk for the project at preparation is assessed as High, but with the effective implementation of proposed risk mitigation measures, the residual FM risk is rated Substantial.

17. **Country issues.** According to the 2014 Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability which included an analysis of Sierra Leone's Public Financial Management (PFM) strengths and weaknesses, the Government has taken considerable actions to improve its PFM since 2010.

18. The adoption of a number of new laws has had a positive impact on the regulatory framework of PFM. The new PFM Law that has replaced the Government Budgeting and Accountability Act 2005 and the Public Debt Law passed in 2011 are two important legislations contributing to the enhanced legislative framework. The establishment of the Procurement Directorate and the Public Investment Planning Unit of the MoF and capacity increases and improvements in the number and quality of staff within the MoF, the Accountant-General's Department, and the Office of the Auditor General are positive developments in the PFM environment.

19. A weakening of budget credibility and predictability for both expenditures and revenues (underestimated), minor gains in comprehensiveness not affecting fiscal management challenges, weaknesses in expenditure control (including payroll), and low levels of transparency are weaknesses to be addressed as the Government considers



moving the system to a level that is capable of directing resources to priority areas and supporting high-quality expenditure outcomes.

20. PFM reform in Sierra Leone is directed at all the dimensions of the PFM system. The PFM Reforms Strategy 2014–2017 seeks to develop the basis for the Government to accelerate PFM reforms and establish an efficient, effective, and transparent PFM system that minimizes opportunities for corruption.

21. The strategy is being pursued under the following four themes:

- **Budget planning comprehensiveness and credibility.** Its primary aims are to establish a credible and stable budget process, particularly to establish a transformational and development fund and public investment program and link investment to recurrent operations and maintenance spending through the MTEF process.
- **Financial control and accountability, service delivery, and oversight.** The most critical objective is to complete the rollout of the integrated financial management information system (IFMIS) to major spending ministries, departments, and agencies and bring all central government public accounts—including sub-vented accounts and DP project accounts—on to IFMIS.
- **Revenue mobilization.** The two objectives will be to: (a) establish more effective tax and control regimes for extractive industries through the Extractive Industries Revenue Act and the Oil Exploration Act, and (b) improve the system for recording and reconciling payment and receipts.
- **Strengthening local governance FM through LCs for effective decentralization.** A critical objective shall be the consolidation of the implementation of the Petra Accounting Package in all LCs including the real-time processing of transactions by selected LCs.

22. If successfully implemented, the PFM Strategy will put in place appropriate structures and processes to promote transparency and accountability and mitigate the fiduciary risk of utilizing public funds both at the country and project levels as well as having a positive impact of aggregate fiscal discipline, the strategic allocation of resources, and the efficiency of public service delivery. The PFM reform is being supported through a donor-financed Public Financial Management Improvement and Consolidation Project (P133424) supported by DFID, African Development Bank, and IDA.

23. The bulk of external assistance in terms of programming has been channeled off-budget both in the sense that resource allocations are not reflected in the Government's budget documents and those funds are not disbursed through country Treasury systems. This lack of information and absence of effective instruments to guide the allocation of external financing seriously undermine the integrity and effectiveness of the budgetary system. There is insufficient transparency in public finances. The budget process is not yet transparent. The Public Financial Management Improvement and Consolidation Project (P133424) being currently implemented aims at addressing all the above-mentioned weaknesses by mobilizing funds from a number of donors to finance a comprehensive PFM overhaul of the respective integrated systems and ensure inclusion of donor-funded projects in the government chart of accounts and budgets so that eventually they are able to use existing country systems.

24. **Project risk assessment and mitigation.** Table 1.4 presents the results of the risk assessment and identifies the key FM risks and the related risk mitigating measures.



**Table 1.3. Risk-Rating Summary**

Risk		Risk Rating	Risk Mitigating Measures	Conditions of Negotiations, Board or Effectiveness (Yes or No)	Residual Risk Rating
<b>Inherent Risks</b>					
1	<b>Country Level</b> Weaknesses in legislative scrutiny, low human capacity, declining revenues, and energy challenges affecting timely and adequate intergovernmental fiscal transfers	H	Efforts are being made to help the Government substantially resolve and enhance revenue management framework in the medium term. The Public Financial Management Improvement and Consolidation Project seeks to address the human capacity issues including FM capacity and improve process aspects.	No	H
2	<b>Entity Level</b> The political arm of the entity and/or management may unduly interfere with, and/or override, project FM controls.	H	An independent PFMU with specialists paid by the project will manage the fiduciary aspects of the project to ensure independence. An independent external audit will be carried out annually under the project. The design of the project will include an enhanced accountability framework to ensure control of soft expenditures from possible abuse. Initially, regular FM reviews will be conducted by the World Bank team.	No	S
3	<b>Project Level</b> Weak FM capacity could result in slow execution of the project, and delayed reporting could affect progress.	H	The PFMU will have qualified personnel that will handle the day-to-day management of the project for the Government of Sierra Leone. The performance of the staff hired in the unit will be reviewed annually as a basis for renewal of their individual contracts.	No	S
<b>Control Risks</b>					
4	<b>Budgeting</b> Annual work plan and budget (AWPB) preparations may be delayed and may not be comprehensive. Risk of cost overruns and adverse variations in expenditure could arise due to potential slow implementation and padding of the related unit costs of goods and services entailed in the implementation.	M	The project budget has been finalized. The annual work plan will be submitted annually before implementation starts for review by the World Bank team which will ensure it is realistic and unit cost estimates are reasonable based on industry and global experiences gathered in some jurisdictions that have undertaken similar operations and also cross-check the same with the local market. In addition, budget execution reporting through quarterly IFRs will be routinely monitored by IDA with variations in unit costs tracked to ensure all deviations are followed up and investigated. The Budget Office will also monitor budgeted activities to ensure effective use of budgets.	No	L



	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Risk Rating</b>	<b>Risk Mitigating Measures</b>	<b>Conditions of Negotiations, Board or Effectiveness (Yes or No)</b>	<b>Residual Risk Rating</b>
5	<b>Accounting</b> Government Accounting System not yet installed at the unit. Use of a manual accounting system not generating reliable, accurate, and timely accounting information for appropriate decision making acceptable to the World Bank.	H	The PFMU will use a customized accounting system. The Financial Procedures Manual is being revised to consider the specific design of the project. The World Bank will provide support to relevant project staff at the PFMU.	No	S
6	<b>ICs</b> Project funds not being used for intended purposes because of inadequate IC by management and lack of control measures pertaining to soft expenditures and use of executive override. This may give rise to noncompliance with IC procedures.	S	Adequate IC over the disbursement and accountability of funds for eligible expenditures will be further strengthened by the adoption of an enhanced accountability framework for the project and internal audit oversight on the project at the PFMU will be instituted. The internal auditors will be required to generate periodic internal audit reports which should be shared with relevant stakeholders including the World Bank. The ICs will also be documented in the FM manual for the project. Internal and external auditors will be expected to clearly identify and report any cases of breach of IC procedures by the project management.	No	M
7	<b>Fund Flow</b> Possible delays in processing withdrawal applications leading to problems in honoring payments to third parties. Submission of withdrawal applications delayed.	S	The PFMU will be responsible for preparing and submitting withdrawal applications, and acceptable service standards for settlement of bills will be established.  IDA funds will be disbursed through the U.S. dollar-denominated DA to be opened by the PFMU. Simplified flow of funds arrangements will be included in the Project Implementation Manual.	No	M
8	<b>Financial Reporting</b> Delays in the preparation and submission of unaudited IFRs and/or unreliable IFRs submitted.	M	IFRs shall be submitted to the World Bank within 45 days after the end of each calendar quarter. The content of the IFR will include sources and uses of funds, uses of funds by category, bank accounts reconciliation, and a schedule of amounts drawn.	No	L



Risk		Risk Rating	Risk Mitigating Measures	Conditions of Negotiations, Board or Effectiveness (Yes or No)	Residual Risk Rating
9	<b>Auditing</b> Delays in the submission of audit reports and the timeliness of management follow-up on audit issues	S	The audit ToR will be agreed with the World Bank and a qualified and acceptable auditor appointed with relevant input of Audit Service Sierra Leone. Continuous satisfactory performance of auditors will be a basis for continuous engagement. The audit will be done in accordance with International Standards on Auditing and International Public Sector Accounting Standards. The audited financial statement is expected to be submitted to the World Bank not later than 6 months after the end of each fiscal year. The ToR for the external auditors has to be cleared by the World Bank. The World Bank will coordinate closely with implementing agencies to ensure that management takes corrective actions on identified weaknesses.	No	M
<b>Overall risk rating</b>		<b>H</b>			<b>S</b>

Note: H = High, S = Substantial, M = Moderate, and L = Low.

25. A summary of the key findings of the FM assessment, as well as the FM arrangements under the project is presented in the following paragraphs.

26. **Planning and budgeting.** The respective entities' AWPBs will be prepared and approved based on the policy guidelines and strategy planning as laid out in the Project Implementation Manual and consistent with the provisions of the Government Budgeting and Accountability Act 2005. This budget will be activity based and in line with the cost tables of the project. The AWPB is expected to be prepared in a participatory way and will be approved before each new financial year begins. The financial part will be monitored during project implementation using unaudited IFRs. The PFMU will ensure timely preparation, review, consolidation, and approval of the annual work program.

27. **Accounting policies, system, and procedures.** The PFMU will set up and maintain books of accounts specifically for this project. Books of accounts will include a main cash book and ledgers, fixed asset registers, and a contracts register. The PFMU will use a customized FM system (TOM2PRO) and will ensure that codes for the transactions are adequately reflected in its books.

28. The accounting system will (a) contain a chart of accounts and a coding system capable of capturing transactions classified by project components and IDA disbursement categories; (b) use the cash or modified cash method of accounting; (c) use a double entry accounting system; and (d) produce annual financial statements and quarterly unaudited IFRs in a format acceptable to IDA.

29. An accounting policies and procedures manual will be prepared to include the project financial transactions procedures at each of the implementing agencies. The manual will contain the necessary ICs including internal checks and segregation of duties.





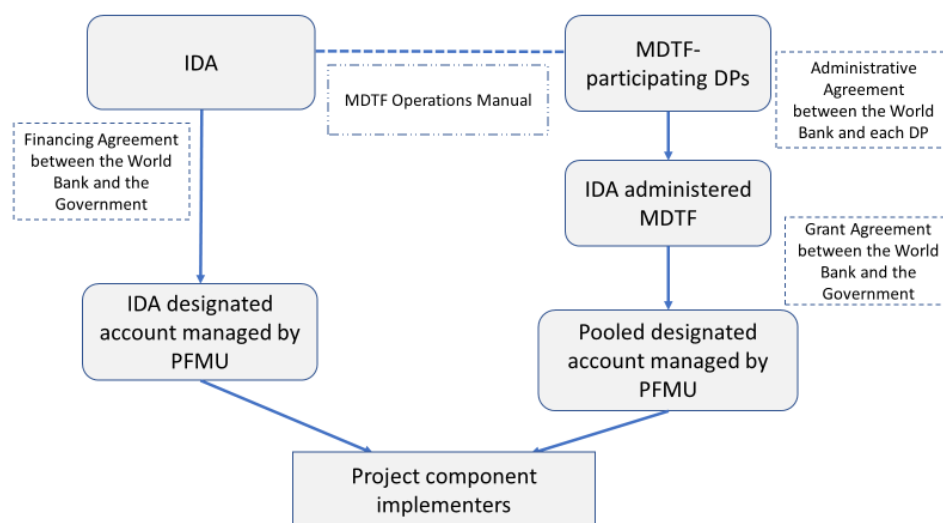
30. **Internal audit and control.** The Internal Audit Unit of the MoF will carry out periodic internal audit reviews of activities carried out during implementation of the project and share copies of their report with the World Bank.

31. Segregation of duties, and full compliance with the provisions of the Project Implementation Manual, especially as pertaining to IC aspects, will remain a key ingredient in the implementation of the expenditure processing activities at the PFMU and the executing agencies during the life of the project.

32. **Governance and anticorruption.** The World Bank's Anticorruption Guidelines (Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants, dated October 15, 2006 and revised in January 2011) apply to this operation. Sections of these guidelines, especially those relating to conflict of interest, procurement and contract administration monitoring procedures, procedures undertaken for replenishing the DA, and use of the project's assets, shall be provided as an annex to the project's Financial Procedures Manual. Additional mitigation measures will include advocating good governance, close monitoring, and spot checks by the internal audit units of the implementing entities, as well as enhanced social responsibility by the Government and implementing entities.

33. **Flow of funds and disbursement arrangements.** Figure 1.4 shows the flow of funds under the project.

Figure 1.4. Project Flow of Funds



34. **DAs.** To facilitate funds flow to the Government of Sierra Leone, a segregated DA for IDA will be opened in U.S. dollars at a commercial bank acceptable to the World Bank and managed by the PFMU. The DA will cater to the implementation requirements for all the components. Additionally, another segregated DA will be opened for MDTF pooled funds.

35. A Financing Agreement for the IDA grant will be signed between the Government and the World Bank. For the MDTF grant, Administration Agreements will be signed between the World Bank and -participating DPs to establish the MDTF. Thereafter, a Grant Agreement for the recipient-executed trust fund will be signed between





the Government and the World Bank (on behalf of the MDTF-participating DPs). The Grant Agreement will reflect a grant amount based on the actual contributions from DPs from time to time. The Grant Agreement, therefore, will be amended every time the World Bank receives additional funds from DPs to reflect replenishments to the grant to the Government.

36. **Disbursement arrangements.** The report-based disbursement method will be used as a basis for the withdrawal of grant proceeds. The project provides for the use of 'advances, reimbursements, direct payment, and special commitments' as applicable disbursement methods, and these will be specified in the Disbursement Letter. Table 1.5 shows disbursement category.

**Table 1.5 Disbursement Categories**

Category	Amount of the Grant Allocated (SDR)
(1) Goods, works, non-consulting services, and consulting services, Training and Operating Costs (excluding Categories (2), (3) and (4) of the Project) for the Project	16,611,000
(2) Performance-based School Grants	11,000,000
(3) School Maintenance/Renovation Grants	4,505,000
(4) Emergency Expenditures	0
(5) Refund of Preparation Advance	4,384,000
<b>TOTAL AMOUNT</b>	<b>36,500,000</b>

37. Supporting documentation will be retained by the implementing agencies for review by the IDA missions and external auditors.

38. **Financial reporting arrangements.** The PFMU will be responsible for the preparation and submission of quarterly IFRs for the project, to be submitted within 45 days after the end of the quarter to which they relate. It will also be responsible for the preparation of the annual financial statements for the fiscal period to which they relate and for having them audited. The information in these reports will be clearly linked with the chart of accounts for the project.

39. The following quarterly IFRs and annual financial report will be produced:

- (a) A statement of sources and uses of funds for the reported quarter and cumulative period from project inception, reconciled to opening and closing bank balances
- (b) A statement of uses of funds (expenditures) by project activity/component and expenditure category, comparing actual expenditures against budget, with explanations for significant variances for both the quarter and cumulative period

40. The Financing Agreement will require the submission of audited financial statements to the World Bank within six months after the end of each financial year. These financial statements will comprise:



- (a) A statement of sources and uses of funds/cash receipts and payments, which recognizes all cash receipts, cash payments, and cash balances controlled by the project entities and separately identifies payments by third parties on behalf of the project entities;
- (b) A statement of affairs/balance sheet as at the end of the financial year, showing all the assets and liabilities of the project;
- (c) The accounting policies adopted and explanatory notes. The explanatory notes should be presented in a systematic manner with items on the statement of cash receipts and payments being cross-referenced to any related information in the notes. Examples of this information include a summary of fixed assets by category of assets and a summary of withdrawal schedule, listing individual withdrawal applications; and
- (d) A management assertion that IDA funds have been expended in accordance with the intended purposes as specified in the relevant World Bank Financing Agreement.

41. Indicative formats of these statements will be developed in accordance with fiduciary requirements and agreed with the Country FM specialist.

42. **External audit.** The Audit Service Sierra Leone is by law responsible for the audit of all government finances and projects. However, in view of the prevailing capacity constraints, it is likely that the Audit Service Sierra Leone could outsource such service to a private firm of auditors with qualifications and experience acceptable to IDA.

43. The PFMU will be responsible for preparing the project financial statements on which the auditor will issue a single opinion covering project accounts, the use of statement of expenditures, and the management of DAs. In addition, a management letter outlining any IC weaknesses will also be issued by the external auditor together with the audit report.

44. The annual financial statements should be prepared in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (which among others include the application of the cash basis of recognition of transactions) and will be audited in accordance with International Standard on Auditing and submitted to the World Bank within six months after the end of each fiscal year.

45. The project financial statements will be audited annually in accordance with International Standard on Auditing by independent auditors acceptable to IDA based on ToRs acceptable to IDA as above annotated. The auditors should be appointed before the first audit period to allow the auditors to submit the audit report within the due date. The audited financial statements will be submitted to IDA within six months after the end of each fiscal year. The cost of the audit will be financed from the project proceeds.

46. **Fraud and corruption.** Inefficient service delivery due to poor governance practices and weak PFM environment is an inherent issue. The possibility of circumventing the IC system such as colluding practices, bribes, abuse of administrative positions, and misprocurement among other considerations are critical risks that may arise. Other IC incidences that may expose the project to fraud and corruption include but are not limited to (a) late submission of supporting documents; (b) poor filing and records; (c) lack of work plans and/or budget discipline; (d) unauthorized commitment to suppliers; and (e) bypassing budget and expenses vetting procedures. The project shall mitigate these potential fraud and corruption related risks through the following: (a) project monitoring will be strengthened; (b) specific aspects on corruption auditing will be included in the ToRs for the



external audit; (c) targeted FM procedures and IC mechanisms across the project activities shall be detailed in the Project Implementation Manual; (d) FM staffing arrangements will be strengthened; (e) periodic FM supervisions will be conducted, and (f) IFRs will be reviewed and monitored.

47. **Implementation Support Plan.** As the overall FM risk rating of the project is Substantial, implementation support for project FM will be performed at least twice a year. The implementation support for the project will closely monitor the FM aspects and will include, but not be limited to, operation of DAs, evaluation the quality of budgets, project financial monitoring and management reviews of financial reports, quality of IFRs, relevancy of the FM Manual, ICs, work and document flow and quality of financial records, and follow-up of audit and mission findings. The review will also conduct random reviews of the statements of expenditures and compliance with covenants. Based on implementation support results, the risk will be reassessed, and the frequency of supervision will be adjusted accordingly.

48. **Conclusion.** The conclusion of the assessment is that the FM systems of the PFMU meet the World Bank's minimum requirements for the administration of project funds under the World Bank Policy and Procedures for IPF. The overall FM residual risk of the project is Substantial.

### **Strategy and Approach for Implementation Support**

49. The implementation support plan of the project is consistent with the Government's national strategies and the FQSE Program. It also considers challenges in the education sector and risks identified in the Systematic Operations Risk-Rating Tool. It reflects the lessons learned from the past projects in Sierra Leone. The project implementation is the responsibility of the MBSSE with targeted and continuous implementation support and technical advice from the World Bank and DPs.

50. The implementation support strategy is based on several mechanisms that will enable enhanced implementation support to the Government, on-time and effective monitoring of the project, and guidance to implementing agencies on technical, fiduciary, environmental, and social aspects, as necessary. The implementation support thus comprises (a) joint review meetings and missions; (b) regular technical meetings and field visits; (c) progress report on the Results Framework; (d) M&E; and (e) harmonization among DPs and other stakeholders.

51. The World Bank's implementation support will broadly consist of the following:

- Capacity-building activities to strengthen the ability to implement the project, covering the technical, fiduciary, environmental, and social dimensions
- Provision of technical advice and implementation support geared to the attainment of the PDO and PDO-level and intermediate outcome results indicators
- Ongoing monitoring of implementation progress, including regularly reviewing key outcome and intermediate indicators, and identification of bottlenecks
- Monitoring risks and identification of corresponding mitigation measures
- Close coordination with other DPs to leverage resources, ensure coordination of efforts, and avoid duplication



52. **Role of the World Bank.** The World Bank's implementation support team will be composed of a task team leader (TTL) based in the country office (CO) and both headquarters-based and CO-based operations and specialist staff, who will be closely working with the client on a regular basis on implementation monitoring. Consultants will also be engaged for additional support in the key areas of reforms including governance, fiduciary, and safeguard management. The World Bank will manage the MDTF and work closely with the DPs throughout project implementation.

53. **Role of MDTF-participating DPs.** The role of DPs will be critical in the implementation of the project and continuous dialogue will be maintained with the education DPs. The dialogue will cover the overall strategic objectives of the education sector and the interventions under the project. Any major issues or challenges during the implementation period will be discussed and solutions will be identified collectively. Preparation of an AWPB will assist with the planning and reporting and increase the MBSSE's accountability toward its partners. The MDTF joint review mission will be carried out on a regular basis.

54. **Fiduciary arrangements.** FM and procurement arrangements will build on and use the capacity developed under the previous projects. The World Bank FM and procurement specialists are based in the World Bank's CO in Freetown and will support project implementation through regular reviews and on-time training and capacity building of the Client's staff. Formal supervision of fiduciary processes and procedures will be conducted semi-annual and implementation support will be provided as required by the World Bank.

55. **Social and environmental safeguards.** The World Bank environmental and social development specialists will provide regular implementation support to the Government in the implementation of the ESMF. The gender and disability inclusiveness specialists will also work closely with the MBSSE to promote gender and inclusive education benefits for the project. The World Bank team will provide guidance and capacity building throughout the project, as per the requirements.

56. **Analytical support.** The World Bank as well as MDTF-participating DPs will assist the Government by regularly undertaking research, pilots, and impact evaluations on themes and topics that are considered high priorities for future policy formulation and planning. These studies and evaluations will be undertaken collaboratively with the Government.

57. **Third-party monitoring.** The World Bank will contract an independent third-party monitoring agent, using MDTF World Bank-Executed funds to carry out monitoring activities (e.g., beneficiary feedback survey and activity verification).

### **Implementation Support Resource Requirements**

58. During the first two years, it is expected that stronger engagement will be required in terms of operational support as well as M&E. Special attention will be paid to the strategic development and monitoring activities of the MBSSE and the delivery of services at the local and school levels. The World Bank will ensure timely, efficient, and effective implementation support to the client. Tables 1.6 and 1.7 provide the implementation support plan and the skills mix required for the project.



**Table 1.6. Overview of Implementation Support Resource Requirements**

Time	Focus	Skills Needed	Resource Estimate (Staff Weeks)
First 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team leadership</li> <li>• Governance/public sector expertise</li> <li>• Institutional arrangements</li> <li>• Implementation support and supervision</li> <li>• Fiduciary support and management</li> <li>• Environmental and social safeguards monitoring and reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical expertise for education, teacher management, school-based management, civil works, governance, and accountability, and gender</li> <li>• Project supervision, monitoring, and reporting</li> <li>• Procurement training and supervision</li> <li>• Environment and social monitoring and reporting</li> <li>• Institutional capacity building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TTL: 30</li> <li>• Education/operations specialists: 20</li> <li>• Education data and M&amp;E: 7</li> <li>• Procurement: 7</li> <li>• FM: 7</li> <li>• Environmental: 5</li> <li>• Social: 5</li> <li>• Administrative support: 10</li> </ul>
Years 2–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team leadership</li> <li>• Technical review/support</li> <li>• Implementation support and supervision</li> <li>• Fiduciary support and management</li> <li>• Environmental and social safeguards monitoring and reporting</li> <li>• Monitoring and reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical support</li> <li>• Procurement management</li> <li>• FM and disbursement-related support</li> <li>• Monitoring and reporting</li> <li>• Environment and social monitoring and reporting</li> <li>• Institutional capacity building</li> <li>• Project supervision, monitoring, and reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TTLs: 90</li> <li>• Education/operations specialists: 80</li> <li>• Education data and M&amp;E: 30</li> <li>• Procurement: 40</li> <li>• FM: 30</li> <li>• Environmental: 30</li> <li>• Social: 30</li> <li>• Administrative support: 30</li> </ul>

**Table 1.7. Required Staff Skills Mix for the Task Team**

Skills Needed	Number of Staff Weeks Per Year	Number of Trips	Comments
TTL	30	Field trips as required	CO based
Education specialist	10	Field trips as required	HQ based or based in region
Education economist/data specialist	10	Field trips as required	HQ based or based in region
Operations officer	10	Field trips as required	HQ based
FM specialist	7	Field trips as required	CO based
Procurement specialist	6	Field trips as required	CO based
Social development specialist	4	Field trips as required	CO based
Environmental specialist	4	Field trips as required	HQ based
Gender/social development specialist	6	Field trips as required	HQ based
Administrative support	10	None	CO based

Note: CO = Country Office. HQ = Headquarters.



## ANNEX 2: PROJECT TARGETING FRAMEWORK

1. The project will support the combination of existing school mapping and population density data to generate a school catchment area plan. The school catchment area plan will provide the evidence base for long-term planning and, more immediately, guide a range of interventions including civil works, teacher deployment, and the CPD teacher program.
2. Under the proposed project, in line with current priorities and the funding envelope, there is some variation in targeting for each of the project activities. With regard to the school profile activity which is supported under Subcomponent 3.1 (PBF grants), all schools in the country will receive this PBF grant to include details of learning gaps to help schools improve. The infrastructure subcomponent will be managed in two parts: (a) makeshift/deprived schools will receive (depending on specific details) essential maintenance grants from the program's outset, and (b) new building construction will be informed by the school catchment area and rationalization plan to be completed in the first year. Subcomponent 2.2 (CPD training) will use the same targeting as that for Subcomponent 3.1 (PBF grants).
3. The targeting is based on the 2018 ASC which covered 11,000 primary and secondary schools, including community, government, mission, and private schools. The targeting has three beneficiary groups corresponding to the project components. The first intervention package (system-level support) will focus on feedback to all primary and secondary schools. A total of 9,114 schools will receive school profiles. About 1.9 million learners/students enrolled in these target schools will benefit from the effects of improved education dialog due to the school feedback mechanisms.
4. **Beneficiaries.** All schools (approximately 9,000), teachers, and students (1.9 million) in primary and secondary schools throughout the country are expected to benefit from the project.

**Table 2.1. Summary of Beneficiaries under Intervention Package 1 by District**

District	Schools	Boys	Girls	Total
Bo	835	90,774	95,037	185,811
Bombali	525	61,290	61,134	122,424
Bonthe	277	23,137	25,224	48,361
Falaba	230	16,283	14,516	30,799
Kailahun	463	49,343	50,690	100,033
Kambia	446	53,387	46,193	99,580
Karene	314	34,321	29,095	63,416
Kenema	826	85,939	94,888	180,827
Koinadugu	301	28,067	28,064	56,131
Kono	666	67,025	67,397	134,422
Moyamba	603	51,060	51,664	102,724
Port Loko	755	83,113	75,811	158,924
Pujehun	317	25,476	27,761	53,237
Tonkolili	665	70,606	67,754	138,360
Western Rural	714	65,278	67,723	133,001
Western Urban	1,177	135,730	147,994	283,724
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,114</b>	<b>940,829</b>	<b>950,945</b>	<b>1,891,774</b>



5. The second intervention package will target complete non-private primary schools. Complete schools offer the full cycle of primary education, that is, they have all grades from 1 to 6. Out of the 7,002 primary schools, there are 4,371 non-private complete primary schools covering a total of 200 chiefdoms. The schools will benefit from the PBF grants as well as the CPD for teachers.

**Table 2.2. Summary of Beneficiaries under Intervention Package 2 by District**

District	Schools	Boys	Girls	Total	Students with Disabilities
Bo	410	48,281	52,797	101,078	1,464
Bombali	238	29,426	31,246	60,672	1,277
Bonthe	132	12,618	14,568	27,186	359
Falaba	78	8,650	7,768	16,418	255
Kailahun	242	29,164	31,659	60,823	2,360
Kambia	295	37,039	32,920	69,959	910
Karene	189	23,459	20,817	44,276	1,163
Kenema	425	42,379	48,943	91,322	1,878
Koinadugu	138	14,758	15,022	29,780	613
Kono	349	39,601	39,762	79,363	2,109
Moyamba	342	33,707	34,803	68,510	1,772
Port Loko	441	52,779	49,071	101,850	2,215
Pujehun	180	16,476	18,778	35,254	534
Tonkolili	427	46,792	46,444	93,236	1,761
W.A. Rural	239	28,786	30,173	58,959	594
W.A. Urban	246	29,893	33,301	63,194	350
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,371</b>	<b>493,808</b>	<b>508,072</b>	<b>1,001,880</b>	<b>19,614</b>

6. The third and final intervention package will target schools with dire infrastructure needs. The targeting for infrastructure has been further categorized into four groups: (a) primary schools that have considerable enrollment but have only makeshift classrooms, (b) primary schools with big enrollment and high pupil-class ratio, (c) big primary schools that require maintenance, and (d) JSSs with acute infrastructure needs. The detailed selection of schools requiring new building will be driven by the findings of the school catchment area planning, which will identify both location and, according to population density and current capacity, the appropriate number of classrooms to be constructed. It is expected, however, that standardized building 'packages' will be developed in the first year (in conjunction with the school rationalization plan) to maximize efficiency and facilitate costing and procurement.



### ANNEX 3: ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

1. The economic argument for investing in the project is summarized in this annex, by highlighting (a) the rationale for public sector provision and financing; (b) the expected project development impact, including a cost-benefit and financial analysis; and (c) value added of the World Bank's support.

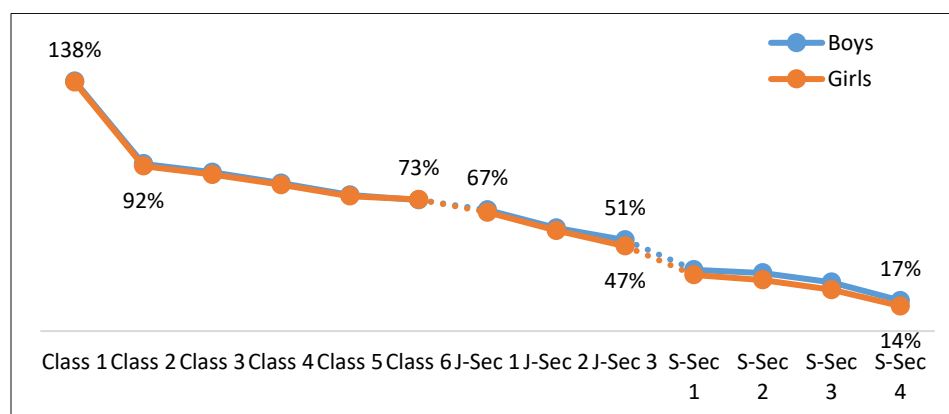
#### Rationale for Public Sector Provision and Financing

2. Public sector financing of education, which is an investment in human capital, is justified for several reasons. First, education is one of the national priorities as articulated in the NDP. The project will assist the Government in implementing the FQSE Program, improving the overall management of the education system. Second, the project will reach out to lagging groups to improve equitable access to education, particularly for disadvantaged children (for instance, girls and children from rural areas and with disabilities). Additionally, the project will help strengthen the education system and improve teaching and learning conditions to lay the foundation for quality of education. Without public investment in education, especially after Ebola and currently with the onset of COVID-19, such Sierra Leonean children will likely have poor human capital and inferior labor market outcomes. The World Bank's experience in implementing education projects, both in Sierra Leone and internationally, will help improve the effectiveness and efficiency of limited public investment.

#### Project Development Impact

3. The Government of Sierra Leone introduced the FQSE Program in September 2018, removing the barriers to accessing and retaining in basic and senior secondary education. The move was informed by the high internal inefficiencies—slightly more than half of the learners who begin Grade 1 make it to the end of primary and only 14 in 100 of those who begin Grade 1 are likely to complete secondary (see Figure 3.1). The FQSE is hinged on the international evidence that more schooling is associated with increased wages. With a per capita GDP of US\$486 in 2019, Sierra Leone has one of the poorest populations in the globe. Investing in education to increase the employability and the wages of this population is a moral path that the country's leadership has taken, and support to this cause is justified.

**Figure 3.1. Retention Profile**



Source: ACS.

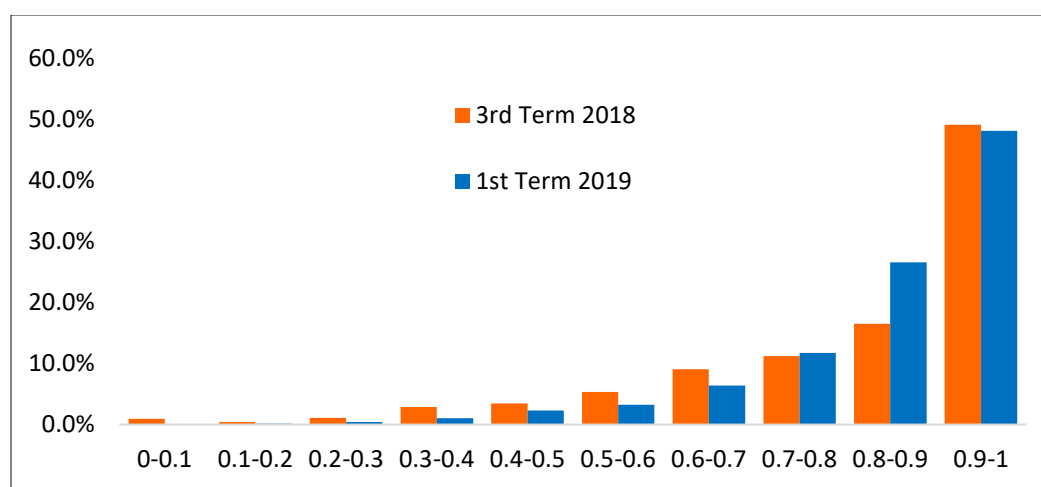




4. While the barriers to education have broadly been removed by the Government, there remain systemic weaknesses, including inadequate school inputs—while the Government has begun providing TLMs, the learning environment is still wanting. For instance, 14 percent of classrooms in primary schools are makeshift, toilets are overcrowded, and the distribution of junior and secondary schools is very sparse. These limitations converge to motivate inconsistent school attendance (Damon, Glewwe, Wisniewski, and Sun 2016)<sup>47</sup> with the potential of undermining learning. According to OECD (2016)<sup>48</sup> in its study of how teacher and student behavior affect learning, absenteeism from school was associated with lower scores in science.

5. One of the key development impacts of the project will include improved learning as a result of the interaction of increased participation in school and improved teacher practices. Results from the REDiSL Project show that there is a positive trajectory in school attendance—the average attendance grew by 3 percentage points from 82 percent in June to 85 percent in November 2018 and the share of schools that recorded more than an 80 percent attendance rate increased by 9 percentage points from 74.7 percent to 65.6 percent over the same period (see Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2. Distribution of School Attendance Rates



Source: REDiSL project report.

### Cost-Benefit Analysis

6. One of the key result areas for this project is sustaining student enrollment, increasing the completion of primary education and the transition to secondary education. The project targets the entire primary and secondary education. However, intensive activities will be limited to one million students who are currently enrolled in non-private primary schools. Accounting for the jamming caused by low development of preprimary whereby Grade 1 is overenrolled compared to Grade 2, the retention rate is projected to increase by three percentage points for every grade. With this assumption, together with the

<sup>47</sup> Damon, A., P. Glewwe, S. Wisniewski, and B. Sun. 2016. *Education in Developing Countries: What Policies and Programmes Affect Learning and Time in School?* Stockholm: Eba.

<sup>48</sup> OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). 2016. *PISA 2015 Results (Volume II): Policies and Practices for Successful Schools*. Paris: OECD Publishing.



assumption that without the project, the number of primary graduates will remain at the level of 2018/19, the net beneficiaries from the project will be 249,000 over a five-year period.

**Table 3.1. Current and Projected Enrollment in Supported Primary Schools**

Grade	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Primary 1	281,355	274,651	275,666	284,570	295,441	308,016
Primary 2	181,119	268,134	262,659	264,362	273,507	286,470
Primary 3	165,528	174,264	259,111	254,922	257,685	267,746
Primary 4	146,008	157,905	166,510	247,984	244,370	247,419
Primary 5	126,634	138,989	150,588	159,083	237,354	234,319
Primary 6	101,236	119,254	131,165	142,411	150,760	225,407
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,001,880</b>	<b>1,133,197</b>	<b>1,245,699</b>	<b>1,353,332</b>	<b>1,459,117</b>	<b>1,569,377</b>

Source: Author's estimation based on ASC, 2018.

7. **Net cost.** The project costs comprise the World Bank grant which includes project administrative costs and opportunity cost. The opportunity cost is based on the wages that would have been earned by students instead of being in school, based on the wages of persons with incomplete primary education. The costs are spread across the five years of the project as shown below. Analysis of data from the Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey 2018 shows that the average income for wage workers increases with increasing education attainment, with persons who complete primary education earning up to 30.7 percent more in monthly wages compared to persons with incomplete primary education.

8. These results are based on some critical assumptions, including

- (a) The project will benefit five cohorts of primary graduates and graduated every year;
- (b) The project will be implemented within five school years;
- (c) Direct investment by the World Bank will total US\$50 million;
- (d) The primary graduates will have a work life of 45 years for the internationally recognized age for entry into labor and exit at age 60;
- (e) During the period between completion of primary education (age 11) and entry to the labor market (age 15), graduates will attract benefits similar to family farm wages;
- (f) Wages for persons with incomplete primary education is US\$151 per month;
- (g) Wages for persons with complete primary education is US\$197 per month; and
- (h) All costs and benefits are discounted at 10 percent annual rate<sup>49</sup>.

9. Table 3.2 presents key results from modeling costs and benefits of the project based on the assumptions above. Discounting all the costs and benefits at 10 percent, the present value of future benefits, due to the 249,000 additional students who will benefit from the project interventions, will be approximately US\$716 million. These results assume that the primary graduates will join the labor market

<sup>49</sup> Discount rate of 10 percent is used to calculate NPV of project benefits, considering the size of the project, interest rates and estimates of the future cash flows.



at age 15 and work up until they turn 60—a cumulative work life of 45 years. This also implies that after graduation from primary education, learners will not join the labor market until they are 15. Accounting for the project cost—value of investment from the World Bank and the opportunity cost associated with the additional learners being in school—the total cost of the project is US\$347.5 million yielding an IRR of 17.14 percent. The NPV of the investment is estimated to be US\$369 million with a cost-benefit ratio of 2.1.

**Table 3.2. Cost-Benefit Analysis**

IRR	17.14%
Present value	
Present value of costs (US\$, millions)	347.5
Present value of future benefits (US\$, millions)	716.1
NPV (US\$, millions)	369

*Source:* Authors' computation based on the project investment and assumptions.

10. Existing evidence points to the immense benefits associated with education development, benefits ranging from private to social returns. At the private level, accumulated education leads to better earning as demonstrated in earlier sections. At the state level, increased employment implies increased collection of ordinary revenue, and with this comes better service delivery across government sectors—contingent upon prudent management of resources. In health, education has been observed to be an important vehicle for changing the attitudes of educated females for them to make better social choices. Increased focus on awareness of reproductive health in elementary and secondary schools is associated with increased mean age for the first pregnancy, lower birth rates and reduced population growth rates, and improved attitudes toward seeking health care by girls, all these forming important ingredients for sustainable development.

11. The need for additional resources to education has been demonstrated throughout the technical justification of each project intervention. Potential developmental impacts of the project have also been hypothesized in the analysis.

### **Value Added of the Bank's Support**

12. To date, the World Bank's investment in the education sector has been significant in recent years. The World Bank's presence in the sector on the ground and in the region allows for timely and enhanced support to the Government. The new project will contribute to shaping policy dialogue on key education areas such as school catchment area planning, teacher labor force planning, deployment and development, and so on. The Government's FQSE Program combined with the proposed project can facilitate the scale-up and far reach of evidence-based and effective practices—in turn, allowing the project to play a catalytic role both in (a) transforming education outcomes through investment in both increased access and improved quality, and (b) strengthening and building capacity of the existing education system at all levels.

13. Several aspects of the project will play a role in driving systemic change in the education sector, including (a) the Government's identification of education as a top national priority and an expressed commitment to provide free quality education for all throughout the country; (b) the large-scale



investment provided by this project, allowing it to reach schools and children throughout the country; (c) significant analytical work and the development of a comprehensive database that includes geographic information system coordinates/physical mapping of each school as well as key details on each (for example, number of students, teachers, and performance in a number of areas), allowing interventions to be well targeted and closely monitored; and (d) the commitment of a number of DPs to supporting both the Government and the World Bank in these efforts.

## **Financial Analysis**

14. **Cost analysis of the FQSE Program.** With the help of DFID, the Government has carried out the costing of the FQSE Program. A simulation model has been developed to cost all the elements of the program using three scenarios of high, medium, and low, which are determined by a set of indicators. Assumptions made in the costing model are as follows:

- The model is linear and assumes equal annual changes in key parameters over the plan period of 2019–2023.
- Real GDP growth will remain over 5 percent over the plan period.
- Overall population growth rate will remain below 2.5 percent over the plan period.
- Percentage allocation to education will remain at least 21 percent over the plan period.
- About 80 percent of this will be allocated to basic school and secondary school education.

15. The FQSE Program inputs aim to increase access, equity, and completion, improving quality, relevance, and integrity. The following items have been costed in the simulation model:

- Learner projections for all four education levels (preprimary, primary, JSS, and SSS) in all schools and approved government and government-assisted schools
- Subsidies to approved government and government-assisted schools
- Examination fees based on previous WAEC examination entries and enrollments in examination classes for each year and level
- TLMs for learners
- TLMs for class streams
- Resources for teachers
- School uniforms for all the levels of education
- School feeding to selected districts
- Salaries for teachers in approved government and government-assisted schools
- University tuition fees for children of teachers with over 10 years of teaching experience
- Textbooks in core subjects for the three levels
- Education infrastructure (new schools, new and rehabilitated classrooms, WASH facilities, and furniture)

16. The education inputs such as trained teachers, TLMs, textbooks, school feeding program, removal of double shift, and improved learning environment are also expected to increase the efficiency of the system, which would result in a reduction in the dropout rate, thereby increasing completion rates. They



are also expected to contribute to reducing repetition, thereby reducing overcrowding and reducing pressure on classroom space. As shown in Table 3.3, while the Government's budget allocation to the education sector is estimated at US\$675 million between 2019 and 2023, US\$3,620 million will be required to deliver the FQSE Program during the same period in the middle case scenario. The total deficit is US\$2,945 million mainly due to a sizable infrastructure gap.

**Table 3.3. Summary of Allocation and Cost Projections during the Plan Period, 2019–2013 (US\$, millions)**

<b>Expenditure Category</b>	<b>Total Government's Allocation</b>	<b>High Case Scenario</b>	<b>Middle Case Scenario</b>	<b>Low Case Scenario</b>
School subsidies	50.6	161.4	151.4	139.1
Examination fees	19.4	24.7	22.5	20.2
TLMs	7.3	40.5	40.5	34.6
School uniforms	—	238.6	223.3	204.1
Teacher salaries	522.8	538.7	442.1	387.0
Infrastructure	36.1	2,326.3	2,402.5	3,661.5
Grants in aid	12.7	71.5	58.0	50.6
Textbooks	17.5	201.8	188.2	167.6
School feeding	8.2	50.2	50.2	50.2
School furniture	—	42.8	41.1	37.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>674.7</b>	<b>3,696.5</b>	<b>3,619.9</b>	<b>4,752.2</b>
<b>Deficit</b>		<b>(3,021.8)</b>	<b>(2,945.1)</b>	<b>(4,077.5)</b>

Source: Cost analysis of FQSE Program.

17. **The World Bank and MDTF partners' support.** The project is expected to add US\$65.97 million over the project period. Support from the World Bank and participating DPs will help ease the Government's fiscal constraints. The financing gap, however, will remain significant—US\$2,879 million in the middle case scenario—and fiscal sustainability will be a challenge (see Table 3.4). The project will help (a) improve the teaching and learning environment by addressing school-level needs (school infrastructure and school grants to promote community-driven school improvement); (b) have provisions for continued and systematic capacity development of the government staff and key stakeholders; (c) help reorient education financing from being input based to output based by focusing on learning and supporting improvements in the quality and efficiency of education services; and (d) bring about behavior and systemic change that ensures effective use of inputs and collaboration among key actors for improved service delivery. This approach will assist the Government in ensuring sustainability of the education services.

**Table 3.4. Estimated Financing (2019–2023)**

Source	Amount (US\$, millions)	Share of Total (%)
FQSE Program financing requirement <sup>a</sup>	<b>3,620.0</b>	100.00
Government-projected resources	675.0	18.65
World Bank/IDA	50.0	1.38
DFID (through MDTF)	1.8	0.05
Irish Aid (through MDTF)	4.0	0.11
EC (through MDTF)	10.2	0.28
Financing gap	<b>2,879</b>	79.53

Note: a. This is based on the middle case scenario.