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Report No: PAD713

PROJECT APPRAISAL DOCUMENT

ON A

PROPOSED GRANT

IN THE AMOUNT OF US\$49.9 MILLION

TO THE

REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

FOR THE

IMPROVING PRE-PRIMARY AND GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION PROJECT

October 9, 2014

Education Global Practice  
Europe and Central Asia Region

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## CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(Exchange Rate Effective October 9, 2014)

Currency Unit = Uzbekistan Sum (UZS)  
2,371.47 Sum = US\$1  
US\$ 0.00042 = 1 Sum

## FISCAL YEAR

January 1 – December 31

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BEP	Basic Education Project
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CPS	Country Partnership Strategy
DPG	Development Partner Group
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GoU	Government of Uzbekistan
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ELDS	Early Learning and Development Standards
ESP	Education Sector Plan
FBM	Feedback Mechanism
FM	Financial Management
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
ICB	International Competitive Bidding
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IFR	Interim Financial Report
ILO	International Labour Organization
INSET	In-service Education and Training
IPF	Investment Project Financing
KG	Kindergarten
LEG	Local Education Group
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEFRIT	Ministry for Foreign Economic Relations, Investment and Trade of Uzbekistan
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoPE	Ministry of Public Education of Uzbekistan
NCB	National Competitive Bidding
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PDO	Project Development Objective
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PMT	Project Management Team
POM	Project Operations Manual

SOE	Statement of Expenditure
TA	Technical Assistance
TLM	Teaching and Learning Material
TPM	Third Party Monitoring
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WIS	Welfare Improvement Strategy

Regional Vice President:	Laura Tuck
Country Director:	Saroj Kumar Jha
Senior Global Practice Director:	Claudia Maria Costin
Practice Manager:	Mario Cristian Aedo Inostroza
Task Team Leader:	Janssen Teixeira

## UZBEKISTAN

### IMPROVING PRE-PRIMARY AND GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION PROJECT

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## PAD DATA SHEET

*Uzbekistan*

*Improving Pre-primary and General Secondary Education Project (P144856)*

### PROJECT APPRAISAL DOCUMENT

*EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA*

*ECCU8*

Report No.: PAD713

Basic Information			
Project ID	Lending Instrument	EA Category	Team Leader
P144856	Investment Project Financing	C - Not Required	Janssen Edelweiss Nunes Teixeira
Project Implementation Start Date		Project Implementation End Date	
01-Jan-2015		31-Jan-2018	
Expected Effectiveness Date		Expected Closing Date	
01-Dec-2014		31-Jan-2018	
Joint IFC			
No			
Practice Manager	Senior Global Practice Director	Country Director	Regional Vice President
Mario Cristian Aedo Inostroza	Claudia Maria Costin	Saroj Kumar Jha	Laura Tuck
Recipient: Ministry of Finance			
Responsible Agency: Ministry of Public Education			
Contact:	Ulug'bek I. Inoyatov	Title:	Minister of Public Education
Telephone	(998-71) 239-1310	Email:	info@uzedu.uz
No.:			
Approval Authority			
Approval Authority			
RVP Decision			
please explain: this Project was approved by the Board of the Global Partnership for Education (donor) on June 28, 2014.			

Project Financing Data(in USD Million)									
[ ] Loan		[ x ] Grant		[ ] Other					
[ ] Credit		[ ] Guarantee							
Total Project Cost:		54.11			Total Bank Financing:		0.00		
Total Cofinancing:		0.00			Financing Gap:		0.00		
Financing Source				Amount					
Recipient				4.21					
Global Partnership for Education				49.90					
Total				54.11					
Expected Disbursements (in USD Million, only for the GPE grant)									
Fiscal Year	2015	2016	2017	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
Annual	13.5	24.6	11.8	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cumulative	13.5	38.1	49.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Proposed Development Objective(s)									
The Project Development Objectives (PDO) are to increase access of children aged 3-6 to quality early childhood care and education in rural pre-primary institutions and to improve conditions for better learning outcomes of students of rural general educational secondary schools.									
Components									
Component Name						Cost (USD millions including counterparts funds)			
Component 1 - Improving Access to Quality Early Childhood Education Opportunities						22.50			
Component 2 - Improving Conditions for Better Learning Outcomes in General Educational Secondary Schools						25.31			
Component 3 - Strengthening the Capacity to Monitor the Education System						6.30			
Institutional Data									
Sector Board									
Education									
Sectors / Climate Change									
Sector (Maximum 5 and total % must equal 100)									
Major Sector			Sector		%	Adaptation Co-benefits %		Mitigation Co-benefits %	
Education			General education sector		59				
Education			Pre-primary education		41				

Total	100		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I certify that there is no Adaptation and Mitigation Climate Change Co-benefits information applicable to this project.			
<b>Themes</b>			
Theme (Maximum 5 and total % must equal 100)			
Major theme	Theme	%	
Human development	Education for all	100	
Total		100	
<b>Compliance</b>			
<b>Policy</b>			
Does the project depart from the CAS in content or in other significant respects?		Yes [ ]	No [ X ]
Does the project require any waivers of Bank policies?		Yes [ ]	No [ X ]
Have these been approved by Bank management?		Yes [ ]	No [ X ]
Is approval for any policy waiver sought from the Board?		Yes [ ]	No [ X ]
Does the project meet the Regional criteria for readiness for implementation?		Yes [ X ]	No [ ]
<b>Safeguard Policies Triggered by the Project</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01		X	
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04		X	
Forests OP/BP 4.36		X	
Pest Management OP 4.09		X	
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11		X	
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10		X	
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12		X	
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37		X	
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50		X	
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60		X	
<b>Legal Covenants</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Recurrent</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Institutional Arrangements	X		Yearly
<b>Description of Covenant</b>			
The Recipient shall carry out the Project in accordance with the Grant Agreement, appropriate social standards and practices and any applicable laws and regulations on child and forced labor.			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Recurrent</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Frequency</b>



Institutional Arrangements	X		Yearly
<b>Description of Covenant</b> At all times during project implementation, the Recipient, through the Ministry of Public Education, shall ensure that the Project Management Team is maintained with adequate funds, suitably qualified staff in sufficient numbers, facilities, services and other resources, including an adequate financial management system, all satisfactory to the World Bank.			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Recurrent</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Project Operation Manual	X		Yearly
<b>Description of Covenant</b> The Recipient shall carry out the Project in accordance with the provisions of the Project Operational Manual, which shall include, <i>inter alia</i> : (a) the project financial management, disbursement (including the flow of Grant funds) arrangements and procedures which shall be consistent with the additional instructions referred to in Section IV.A.1 of the Schedule 2 of the Grant Agreement; (b) the procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of the Project, including the project monitoring indicators; (c) the procedures for the procurement of goods, consultant's services and non-consulting services for the Project as set forth in the Procurement Plan; and (d) the criteria and procedures for the selection of the education institutions under the subcomponent 1.2 and general educational secondary schools under the subcomponent 2.2 of the Project. In the case of any conflict between the terms of the Project Operational Manual and those of the Grant Agreement, the terms of the Grant Agreement shall prevail.			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Recurrent</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Third Party Monitoring (TPM) and Feedback Mechanism (FBM) <sup>1</sup>	X		Yearly
<b>Description of Covenant</b> The Recipient, through the Ministry of Public Education, shall take all necessary actions, and ensure that necessary actions are taken, to enable the TPM Consultant to perform monitoring activities in accordance with the applicable terms of reference, including, but not limited to allowing and facilitating for the TPM Consultant to visit sites where the Project is being carried out, collect relevant data and communicate with Project stakeholder and participants.			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Recurrent</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Third Party Monitoring (TPM) and Feedback Mechanism (FBM)	X		Yearly
<b>Description of Covenant</b> The Recipient shall: (a) review and discuss with the Bank monitoring reports prepared by the TPM Consultant; and (b) promptly take any actions, as may be requested by the Bank upon its review of said reports, with respect to compliance with the undertakings relating to child and/or forced labor as set forth in this Agreement and the Project Operational Manual.			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Recurrent</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Third Party Monitoring (TPM) and Feedback Mechanism (FBM)	X		Yearly
The Recipient: (a) shall and shall cause respective local authorities to fully collaborate with the TPM Consultant in developing an effective grievance redress mechanism in connection with the Project activities, as set forth in the TPM Consultant's terms of reference; (b) shall review biannual reports of			

<sup>1</sup> The Third Part Monitoring and Feedback Mechanism in the context of the World Bank's portfolio in Uzbekistan are currently being discussed/finalized and therefore the relevant disclosure should not be considered as final.

the TPM Consultant on grievances received, redress mechanism and any feedback provided; and (c) shall promptly implement or cause relevant local authorities to implement the recommendations provided in said reports.

Name	Recurrent	Due Date	Frequency
Anti-Corruption	X		Yearly

**Description of Covenant**

The Recipient shall ensure that the Project is carried out in accordance with the provisions of the “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 (“Anti-Corruption Guidelines”).

Name	Recurrent	Due Date	Frequency
Donor Visibility and Visit	X		Yearly

**Description of Covenant**

The Recipient shall take or cause to be taken all such measures as the World Bank may reasonably request to identify publicly the Donor’s support for the Project.

Name	Recurrent	Due Date	Frequency
Donor Visibility and Visit	X		Yearly

**Description of Covenant**

For the purposes of Section 2.09 of the Standard Conditions for Grants Made by the World Bank Out of Various Funds, dated February 15, 2012, the Recipient shall, upon the World Bank’s request, enable the representatives of the Donor to visit any part of the Recipient’s territory for purposes related to the Project.

**Conditions**

Name	Type
Project Management Team	Effectiveness

**Description of Condition**

The Project Management Team has been established within the Ministry of Public Education and staffed with personnel in sufficient numbers and with experience and qualifications satisfactory to the World Bank.

Name	Type
Project Operations Manual	Effectiveness

**Description of Condition**

The Project Operational Manual has been adopted by the Recipient in form and substance satisfactory to the World Bank.

Name	Type
Legal Opinion	Effectiveness

**Description of Condition**

The execution and delivery of the Grant Agreement on behalf of the Recipient has been fully authorized or ratified by all necessary governmental and corporate action.

**Team Composition**

**Bank Staff**

Name	Title	Specialization	Unit
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Janssen Edelweiss N Teixeira	Senior Education Specialist	Task Team Leader	GEDDR		
Fasliddin Rakhimov	Procurement Specialist	Procurement Specialist	GGODR		
Sujani Eli	Program Assistant	Program Assistant	GEDDR		
Gabriel Francis	Program Assistant	Program Assistant	GHNDR		
Saodat Bazarova	Senior Operations Officer	Senior Operations Officer	GEDDR		
Naveed Hassan Naqvi	Program Leader	Lead Education Economist	ECCU8		
Sachiko Kataoka	Education Economist	Education Economist	GEDDR		
Jasna Mestnik	Finance Officer	Finance Officer	CTRLA		
Amanda Epstein Devercelli	Education Specialist	Early Childhood Specialist	GEDDR		
Antonio Cristian D'Amelj	Counsel	Counsel	LEGLE		
Mark Woodward	Lead Social Development Specialist	Social Development and Safeguards	GURDR		
Tatyana Shin	E T Consultant	E T Consultant	GHNDR		
Nasiba Usmanova	E T Temporary	E T Temporary	ECCUZ		
Non Bank Staff					
Name	Title	Office Phone	City		
Iqboljon Ahadjonov	Consultant		Tashkent		
Chelsea Coffin	Consultant		Washington		
Nodar Mosashvili	Financial Management Specialist		Tbilisi		
Aimonchock Tashieva	Consultant		Washington		
Locations					
Country	First Administrative Division	Location	Planned	Actual	Comments
Uzbekistan	Region	Rural areas in 14 regions countrywide	X		

## **I. STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

### **A. Country Context**

1. Uzbekistan is a lower middle income<sup>2</sup> country located in Central Asia with growth that has averaged 8 percent annually since the mid-2000s. Uzbekistan represents about a half of Central Asia's population, with 30.5 million inhabitants as of January 2014, and it is the third largest country by population and fifth largest by landmass in the former Soviet Union. Uzbekistan gained independence in 1991, and since that time, authorities have chosen a gradual path to reform, with an emphasis on national independence, centralized government control and self-sufficiency.

2. Despite high growth rates, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita was US\$1,878 in 2013<sup>3</sup>, one of the lowest in the Europe and Central Asia Region, and an estimated 15 percent of the population was unable to meet basic consumption needs in 2013<sup>4</sup>. According to the State Statistic Committee, 49 percent of the population lives in rural areas. The adoption of the government's new "Welfare Improvement Strategy" for 2013-2015 embraces all means-tested public social programs providing allowances and benefits to targeted groups of poor, vulnerable groups and to those lacking services through local neighborhood communities (mahallas). Every year, the Government of Uzbekistan (GoU) adopts additional social programs targeted to particular vulnerable groups in line with its thematic priorities, for example, "the Year of Harmony Generation" (2010), "the Year of the Small Business" (2011), "the Year of the Family" (2012), "the Year of Prosperity" (2013), and "the Year of the Healthy Child" (2014). Additional pro-poor actions are taken every year, such as additional increases in wages, pensions, and benefits, access to micro-lending, especially for women, the provision of housing for orphan children and of social assistance to single citizens in need, as well as job creation in public works, construction and services sectors, provision of cattle to the poor, and outsourcing of some apparel production from large enterprises to households in rural areas. The Government of Uzbekistan is also increasing the provision of health care and basic education in rural areas by introducing per capita financing in rural primary health care, schools, and vocational colleges. Investments in education are central to the Government of Uzbekistan's plans for economic and social development. Given the country's young population – 28.8 percent was under the age of 15 in 2012 – the Government of Uzbekistan is keen to improve access to basic public services, including education, while also improving quality and increasing equity. This is part of a strategy to promote a smooth and gradual transition to a market-oriented economy across the entire country.

### **B. Sectoral and Institutional Context**

3. Uzbekistan's economic strategy emphasizes the maintenance of basic public services, including heavy investments in education. The Law on Education N-464-I proclaims education as a priority of the state and guarantees equal rights to education for all. To achieve high levels of access, the GoU increased public expenditure on education from 5.6 percent of GDP in the mid-1990s to 10 percent of GDP in 2010, dedicating an estimated 35 percent of the total annual budget to education, in 2012. While this level of spending is considerably higher than the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) average, there are questions as to the efficiency and labor market relevance of the current education sector at all levels.

4. It is important to clarify that in Uzbekistan, the term "general secondary education" covers two cycles, which are commonly known as basic education, as follows: grades 1-4 for children aged 7 to 10, and grades 5-9 for students aged 11 to 15. After general secondary education, there are three years of secondary specialized

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<sup>2</sup> According to the World Bank Atlas method (based on the Gross National Income – GNI - per capita). Lower middle income countries as of July 1, 2013 have GNI per capita between US\$ 1,036 and US\$ 4,085.

<sup>3</sup> Data from World Bank EdStats database.

<sup>4</sup> Official data as cited in Welfare Improvement Strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2013-2015, Tashkent, February 2013, p.137. Poverty, or ability to meet basic consumption needs, is measured by a national food-based norm of 2,100 kilocalories per person per day.

professional education, for students aged 16 to 18, who can choose to attend either an academic lyceum or a vocational college. Both alternatives can lead students to higher education (Bachelor and Master degrees) and subsequent postgraduate courses and doctoral degrees.

5. Uzbekistan's education system comprises 15,774 educational institutions including 9,763 general educational secondary schools, with 4.5 million students and 410,614 teachers (for the entire system).<sup>5</sup> The student-teacher ratio is at 11:1. As of 2012, a total of 539,527 children aged 2 to 7 were enrolled in 4,962 Kindergartens (KGs) and Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) facilities<sup>6</sup>. These children are served by 51,662 pedagogical staff. General secondary education is free and mandatory. In contrast, pre-primary education is neither free nor mandatory and is characterized by low enrollment.

6. *General secondary* education - access to general secondary education is nearly universal. Learning outcomes and the quality of education, however, vary by region. Schools located in rural areas fare worse in most aspects, as compared to urban schools: the availability of teaching and learning materials, status of infrastructure and student outcomes all tend to be lower in more remote areas. Only 37 percent of remote rural schools have a sufficient number of teaching materials as compared with 64 percent in urban areas.

7. The following factors hinder learning improvement in general secondary education: insufficient and outdated equipment and learning resources; lack of teachers' professional competence to promote the active engagement of students in their own learning; lack of quality data for monitoring and evaluation; mobilization of sector employees (and, in the past, students) to pick cotton at the start of the academic year; and limited community and stakeholder participation to encourage accountability.

8. The Basic Education Project funded by the World Bank has financed activities to strengthen the students' assessment system of Uzbekistan. Two rounds of standardized students' assessments in Mathematics and native language for grade 4 were conducted. However, the results of these assessments have not been made available to the general public yet, which reflect the low level of accountability of the system. The Government of Uzbekistan does not participate in any international student assessment, but is considering this initiative. These weaknesses make planning and decision-making more difficult in Uzbekistan.

9. In 2012, Uzbekistan took a substantial step forward in the planning of its education sector, by preparing the Education Sector Plan (ESP) for 2013-2017. This exercise was part of the process of becoming a member of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). In January 2012, the GPE released its indicative allocations for Program Implementation Grants for the period of 2012-2014. On June 28, 2014, the Uzbekistan's application for a GPE Program Implementation Grant in the amount of US\$49.9 million was approved by the GPE Board of Directors. The World Bank has been appointed by the GoU and partners as Supervising Entity.

10. The ESP derives from the Welfare Improvement Strategy (WIS) of 2013-15, which is the GoU's second national poverty reduction strategy and is aimed at supporting sustainable growth, employment, health and education. The ESP identifies eight specific strategic areas, which have relevance for all subsectors of the education system. The outcome for preschool education is children's health and personalities developed in preparation for learning in school. For general secondary education, the ESP shows the outcome of learners' general knowledge, independent thinking and organizational skills developed in preparation for successful progression in the education system.

11. It is important to mention that the learning environment for children in general secondary education is improving, but it is still inadequate to increase their ability to think creatively and independently. The focus on

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<sup>5</sup> Data from the Ministry of Public Education (2012).

<sup>6</sup> In Uzbekistan, children aged 2 and 7 also participate in ECCE, but these ages represent a small share of enrollment (13 percent for age 2 and 8 percent for age 7). Children aged 3 to 6 are the targeted beneficiaries for the Project and the internationally recognized age range for ECCE activities.

improving independent thinking skills reflects the intention of the GoU to implement individual-centered approach in education.

12. While the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the education process has increased, there is scope for further expansion. The Center for Development of Multimedia Educational Programs (under the Ministry of Public Education - MoPE) has developed and introduced 119 e-materials, 40 virtual labs, 113 multimedia resources and 1,074 information and resource centers.

13. Concerning teachers training, as per existing regulation in Uzbekistan, every three years each teacher should take at least 144 hours of professional development course in a regional in-service education and training (INSET) institution. In addition, the INSET system offers short-term courses in different areas, depending on the schools' demand. The training courses are reported to take into account the results of the student learning monitoring conducted by MoPE on a regular basis, as well as the INSET training programs assessment conducted by the State Testing Center. The average annual capacity of all INSET institutions is to train around 110,000 educational workers, including 4,000 educational staff from pre-primary schools. Between the formal courses, in their schools, teachers should be supported by the heads of the methodological units and more experienced teachers (*ustozes*), which, in turn, are supported by rayon methodologists.

14. In the medium to long term, the GoU intends to revise its INSET system and programs to make it more flexible in meeting the training needs of the educational personnel, including teachers, methodologists and heads of the education institutions. Short-term planned activities to improve INSET include revision of the state requirements, upgrading the programs based on the increasing needs and modern international trends and best practices in the teaching area, improving planning of the courses and capacity building of the institutional staff.

15. *Pre-primary Education* - Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) are increasingly priority areas for the GoU. While Uzbekistan has nearly universal coverage of essential health and nutrition interventions for young children, the national enrollment rate in ECCE for children aged 3 to 6 is low by international standards, at 23.3 percent nationally in 2012<sup>7</sup>. If learning quality and outcomes are to be improved across the education system, access to high quality preprimary school will need to increase to ensure children arrive to general educational secondary schools ready to learn and succeed.

16. Of those who attend ECCE, the vast majority of children are enrolled in full-day KGs and childcare facilities. Traditionally, these facilities have provided services with more of an emphasis on childcare, than the promotion of child development and early learning opportunities. In recent years though, the GoU has embarked on several reforms within the pre-primary sub-sector, including a national program for pre-school education known as *Bolajon* (which means "the child"). Starting in 2011-2012, *Bolajon* is mandatory and must be used in all pre-school institutions as the curriculum to teach children and train teachers. In addition, Uzbekistan is one of 50 countries worldwide that has participated in Going Global – Early Learning & Development Standards (ELDS). ELDS provide a systematic and integrated approach to ECD and can be used as the basis for what children are taught (curriculum), how learning is planned and assessed (assessments), and how teachers are taught and deemed competent to teach young children (teacher training curricula and teacher certification standards).

17. Demand for available ECCE services is low in Uzbekistan. As of 2010, for every 100 pre-school seats available, just 78 children are enrolled, indicating that the current number of available seats in pre-schools exceeds enrollment levels by 22 percent – and the trend has been consistent for the last decade. This means that there are extra classrooms in many existing pre-primary schools, especially in rural areas. Although children from rich urban households in certain regions are more likely to access ECCE than those from rural ones in other regions, high levels of parental support for early learning (measured by parenting activities in the home) exist across these groups. This contrast indicates that low enrollment is not related to a lack of parental support for early learning but

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<sup>7</sup> Official data from the Ministry of Public Education cited in World Bank Report No. 71930-UZ, *Republic of Uzbekistan: Improving Early Childhood Care and Education*.

rather to the difficulties involved in accessing available ECCE options.

18. In 2006, according to Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) data, only 5 percent of children from the Uzbekistan's less advantaged families (lowest income quintile) were enrolled in pre-schools, compared to 46 percent of children from the country's wealthiest families (highest income quintile), indicating that greater efforts are needed to promote access for children from the lower income families. Many pre-schools are known to charge "fees" per child that are equal to 100 percent of the minimum wage<sup>8</sup>, which means that, for many poor families, fees are a major constraint preventing them from enrolling children in pre-school. Existing regulations permit to exempt from fees up to 15 percent of students enrolled in each pre-school, but given that 19.5 percent of the population was poor (unable to meet basic consumption needs in 2010), this limit is not adequate to ensure access for children from the poorest families. The existing mechanism to identify households in need (for the fee exemption) has not been as effective as it was in the past. ECCE enrollment could be expanded more equitably and have a greater impact if funds allocated to this initiative were distributed progressively, by targeting low-enrollment regions and low income households.

19. The GoU commits significant resources to children's early learning, but the current model for provision of pre-primary education may lead to reduced enrollments, due to high costs and limited flexibility in the type of ECCE available. In 2011, 10.2 percent of the recurrent education budget was dedicated to expenditure at the pre-primary level<sup>9</sup>. Uzbekistan spends, as a share of GDP, more than the OECD average and other comparator countries at similar levels of development, but has less than half the enrolment rates in ECCE<sup>10</sup>. Uzbekistan's current model of full-time ECCE delivery may be prohibitively expensive, making it difficult to expand and sustain. An expansion in coverage of ECCE will involve taking measures to reduce delivery costs by exploring alternative forms of service delivery. In 2012, children enrolled in partial-day or home or community-based centers accounted for just 3.1 percent of all KG enrolment, with half-day school readiness programs comprising 90 percent of enrollment in alternative forms of delivery in 2010<sup>11</sup>. The half-day programs are heavily concentrated in three regions, so Uzbekistan's experiences with half-day programs in these limited areas could inform the design of a similar program on a national scale.

20. Comprehensive mechanisms to promote the quality of ECCE in Uzbekistan exist, but these mechanisms are not adequate to ensure quality or convince parents of the benefits of enrolling their children in ECCE. The most highly qualified teachers are more likely to be employed in urban areas and specific regions. Despite clearly established infrastructure standards for ECCE facilities, just 34 percent of facilities nationwide are rated as "fully equipped" and 39 percent of facilities are in need of repair<sup>12</sup>. Both the physical status of facilities and teachers' qualifications can be visible signals of quality to parents, which can in turn affect perceptions of the quality of ECCE. High positive correlations exist between enrollment rates and well-maintained physical facilities and schools with more highly trained teachers.

21. The ESP is aligned with this context and with the proposed project activities in ECCE. The ESP calls for development of "children's health and personalities developed in preparation for learning in school" with priorities for the development and support of ECD services, expansion of the half-day model, and support to parents for early learning in the home.

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<sup>8</sup> Monthly fees and the minimum wage in 2010 were both reported to be UZS 62,920, according to official data cited in World Bank Report No. 71930-UZ, *Republic of Uzbekistan: Improving Early Childhood Care and Education*.

<sup>9</sup> Official data as cited in *Education Sector Plan for the Republic of Uzbekistan*.

<sup>10</sup> Average of all 18 countries with per capita income less than 10,000 USD, in 2006. Data on pre-primary enrollment rates for 3 to 6 years from United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Data on ECCE expenditure from Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

<sup>11</sup> Official MoPE data.

<sup>12</sup> Official data as cited in World Bank Report No. 71930-UZ, *Republic of Uzbekistan: Improving Early Childhood Care and Education*.

22. *Child and forced labor* - the World Bank recognizes the concern over the use of child and forced labor in cotton production and the impact this can have on the education sector. The GoU is a signatory of several International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions<sup>13</sup> related to child and forced labor, but the enforcement of these conventions, as well as of existing national laws reflecting international agreements, has continued to be a challenge, specifically during the cotton harvest. Forced child labor in cotton harvesting used to be widespread, but has declined in recent years. A joint ILO-GoU mission took place during the cotton harvesting season in September-October 2013 to monitor the use of forced child labor in cotton harvesting. The ILO's official public statement at the completion of their monitoring activities is as follows: "In general terms, the monitoring observed widespread awareness of national laws and instructions not to allow the use of children under 18 years of age in the cotton harvest. Moreover, it would appear from the monitoring that there was no systematic recourse to forced child labor." However, forced child labor has been reportedly substituted with forced adult labor organized by local authorities and mobilized from both public institutions, such as educational facilities from which teachers and other staff members have been recruited, and the private sector.

23. *Gender* - in Uzbekistan, gender differences in enrollment at all levels of the education system are small. Enrollments by gender are almost equal at the levels affected by the proposed project: 54 percent of pre-school children are female as of 2010, and 48 percent of all general educational secondary school students are female, according to official data from 2012. The gender parity index for enrolment rates (ratio of enrollment rate for females to enrollment rate for males) in ECCE was 100 percent, in 2011, and gender parity indexes for grades 1 to 4 and grades 5 to 9 are 97 percent and 98 percent, respectively, according to World Bank EdStats data. Graduation rates at the tertiary level are also similar for men and women, with a graduation rate of 10 percent for women and 13 percent for men, in 2011, according to World Bank EdStats data. Girls and boys have similar access to education at the pre-primary and general secondary education levels, but according to 2011 GIZ Labor Survey data, 26 percent of women are employed in Uzbekistan compared to an OECD average of 57 percent for women and an average of 67 percent for men in Uzbekistan. Women are under-represented in agriculture, construction, industry, and services.

24. ECCE activities have been shown to close gaps in achievement for disadvantaged groups, so over the long run, early learning opportunities provided to girls (as well as boys) may help them to get the right start they need to eventually pursue employment. In the short run, the implementation of flexible models and an expansion of ECCE are likely to boost women's employment as more female parents will have time to enter the labor force if they choose. In addition, older female siblings may have more time to devote to their education.

25. *Community of international development partners* - in Uzbekistan, ongoing education activities also receive some support from international development partners, including the World Bank, UNICEF, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Activities of partners, including the half-day pre-primary education model, improvements to the teacher training systems, and provision of ICT equipment, provide a foundation for the interventions in this Project (see table below).

**Figure 1 – Recent International Development Partners' Activities**

<b>Education subsectors</b>	<b>Development Partner</b>	<b>Activities</b>
Preschool education	UNICEF	Adoption of Early Learning Development Standards Course in Child Centred Teaching Methods in Pre-Service and In-Service Institutions Advocacy for alternative ECCE programs
General secondary	Asian Development	Rural basic education Education Sector Development Program to improve the

<sup>13</sup> Convention no. 138 on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, Convention no. 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labor, Convention no. 29 on Forced Labor, and Convention 105 on Abolition of Forced Labor. In addition, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), also subscribed by the government, prohibits forced labor (article 8).



education	Bank (ADB)	relevance and quality of education Textbook development program ICT in Basic Education Effective Management of Investments and Reforms in Basic Education
	European Commission (EC)	Inclusive Education initiative for Uzbekistan
	Government of People's Republic of China	Provision of ICT in Basic Education
	Korean Exim Bank	Provision of ICT to schools
	The World Bank	New teaching materials and resources for teaching Improvement of teacher training system Improvement of MoPE to efficiently allocate resources, monitor, and evaluate its programs
	UNICEF	Child friendly schools program Access to quality basic services for children and women Improving quality of education and learning achievements for children from pre-school up to grade 9
	UNESCO	EFA Coordination and Monitoring Inclusive Education ICT in education EMIS

### C. Higher Level Objectives to which the Project Contributes

26. The Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) for Uzbekistan for the period FY 2012-2015 and the proposed Project are aligned. The proposed project design supports two of the four key result areas identified in the CPS. These include:

- Enhancing the economy's competitiveness: investing in the human capital of Uzbekistan's workers is one of the most important ways in which the World Bank can help spur the country's economic competitiveness. By improving access to early quality pre-primary education and enhancing conditions for better learning outcomes in general educational secondary schools, the proposed Project aims to help Uzbek authorities put their country on a path to sustainable economic transition.
- Improving access to, and outcomes of social services: the proposed Project focuses on improving access to quality pre-primary education as well as on enhancing conditions for better learning outcomes in general secondary education. The Project would finance the development of more flexible forms of Early Childhood Care and Education service provision, ensuring that Child Friendly Schools are scaled up for young children, in line with the ESP. Additionally, it will complement the recently completed Second Basic Education Project, as well as analytical work in the early childhood and higher education sub-sectors, in developing a holistic approach to improving quality of education in Uzbekistan.

27. Additionally, the proposed Project is aligned with the World Bank's twin goals of ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity. Education is a fundamental building block of human capital, and secondary education in particular provides the higher level skills that are required for success in the labor market or in more advanced levels of education. A high quality education is linked with poverty reduction and productivity growth, both of which contribute to shared prosperity. In addition to this, by supporting interventions targeting rural pre-primary institutions and general educational secondary schools, the proposed Project would particularly benefit those students for whom socioeconomic disadvantages represent major constraints to attend schools.

## **II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE**

### **A. Project Development Objective**

28. The Project Development Objectives (PDO) are to increase access of children aged 3-6 to quality early childhood care and education in rural pre-primary institutions and to improve conditions for better learning outcomes of students of rural general educational secondary<sup>14</sup> schools.

### **B. Project Beneficiaries**

29. The project's direct beneficiaries would be 50,000 children aged 5 to 6 (25,000 girls and 25,000 boys) living in rural areas of Uzbekistan, who would gain access to quality early childhood education through enrollment in half-day pre-primary programs in 1,220 institutions. Additionally, 300,000 young children aged 3 to 6 (150,000 girls and 150,000 boys), who are not enrolled in formal ECCE and live in rural areas, would also directly benefit from early literacy promotion activities supported by the Project. Approximately 62,000 children (31,000 girls and 31,000 boys) enrolled in the full day program at ECCE centers where the half-day model is offered would benefit from better equipped pre-primary education institutions' outdoor facilities. Students of 1,220 rural general educational secondary schools would benefit from facilities that meet minimum school standards in terms of ICT equipment for computer labs and teaching and learning materials.

30. The group of direct beneficiaries of the proposed Project also includes 2,000 pre-primary teachers (1,910 female and 90 male), who would be trained in child-centered approaches and holistic early childhood development and would receive ongoing mentoring throughout the Project. Additionally, 200,000 teachers and school managers of pre-primary and general educational secondary schools in the country would benefit from professional development courses supported by the Project and conducted by the INSET institutions on a regular basis (around 100,000 trainees per year).

### **C. PDO Level Results Indicators**

31. The expected outcomes of the proposed Project are the following:
- Increased percentage of children aged 3-6 enrolled in ECCE in rural areas of Uzbekistan.
  - Increased percentage of rural general educational secondary schools that meet minimum school standards<sup>15</sup>.
  - Results of students' assessments in Mathematics and native language for grade 4 analyzed and publicly disseminated.
  - Results of students' assessments in Mathematics and native language for grade 9 analyzed and publicly disseminated.

## **III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **A. Project Components**

32. **The proposed Project would be aligned to the Education Sector Plan for the Republic of Uzbekistan 2013-2017.** The Project is to be implemented over a period of three years, between 2015 and 2018, and would be

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<sup>14</sup> In Uzbekistan, the term general education comprises the following two levels: primary grades 1 to 4 (for children aged 7 to 10) and secondary grades 5 to 9 (for children aged 11 to 15).

<sup>15</sup> The Project would finance the implementation of minimum standards for general educational secondary schools in terms of teaching and learning materials and ICT equipment.

financed by a GPE grant of USD 49.9 million plus USD 4.2 million from the Government of Uzbekistan, in the form of an investment financing. The GoU contribution would finance the distribution of goods (to be purchased using GPE grant funds) from Tashkent city to schools. The proposed Project is organized around three components, as described below, which relate to the following key dimensions of investments: access to quality early childhood education opportunities and learning conditions for students of general secondary education.

**Component 1 - Improving Access to Quality Early Childhood Education Opportunities (total estimated cost: US\$ 22.5 million, of which US\$ 20.7 is from the GPE grant).**

33. The objective of this component is to improve access to early learning opportunities and quality pre-primary education in rural areas of Uzbekistan, by supporting the development and implementation of more flexible and efficient models of service provision. By the end of the Project, it is expected that the ECCE enrollment rate of children aged 3 to 6 in rural areas would increase from 8.5 percent to 13.1 percent. The implementing unit of this component would be MoPE's Department of Pre-School Educational Institutions.

34. This component would finance *technical assistance to support the development of flexible forms of ECCE service provision*, which include a *half-day year-round school readiness program for children aged 5 to 6*, and *early literacy promotion activities targeting families with children aged 3 to 6*. The half-day ECCE program would allow the GoU to expand access to quality pre-primary education with a focus on promoting school readiness (not only childcare) for children aged 5 and 6. The proposed half-day approach requires fewer public resources per child than the standard full day program implemented by MoPE. The development of this program would build on current flexible models of child-centered ECCE, which have contributed to the enrollment of 15,624 children, as of 2010, concentrated in three regions, some of which have received partial funding support from the United Nation Children's Fund (UNICEF). The implementation of the half-day model would directly benefit 50,000 children aged 5 to 6 (25,000 girls and 25,000 boys), by the end of the Project.

35. The half-day model would be implemented in the neediest 1,220 pre-primary education institutions located in rural areas<sup>16</sup>, through the purchase and distribution of teaching and learning materials (TLM), furniture, and outdoor and indoor recreation equipment. Pre-primary teachers would also be trained to deliver the flexible model. Pre-primary education institutions would be selected to implement the half-day model based on objective criteria designed to target schools in underserved areas most in need of investment (see more information on the criteria in Annex 2). All pre-primary education institutions to benefit from the half-day model shall have their physical infrastructure repaired by the GoU using the State or local budget, prior to the distribution of any materials. The outdoor recreation equipment could also be used by children enrolled in full day programs at ECCE centers where the half-day model is offered. It is estimated that 62,000 children (31,000 girls and 31,000 boys) of selected centers would benefit from improved environments, in addition to the 50,000 children of the half-day model.

36. This component would also finance a nationwide distribution of storybooks to parents of young children (aged 3 to 6) not enrolled in formal ECCE and living in rural areas, to engage in early reading in the home. Project funds would finance the purchase of storybooks, as well as weekly story time hours. These storybooks would be produced in Uzbek, Russian and Karakalpak languages, which cover the mother tongue of 98% of all children enrolled in pre-primary education, in Uzbekistan. Pre-primary teachers would lead regular story time hours with children not enrolled in ECCE and their parents, at pre-primary centers participating in the half-day model. Each family would receive a set of storybooks (at least 3 books) per child. By the end of the Project, it is expected that 200,000 parents of young children (around 300,000 children aged 3-6, of which 150,000 girls) would receive the storybooks and would be engaged in the early reading initiative. Small lending libraries would also be established in each participating pre-primary education institution (1,220 small libraries, in total) with storybooks procured through project funds. This would contribute to the sustainability of the initiative beyond project implementation.

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<sup>16</sup> Data from MoPE show that there were 2,605 pre-primary centers located in rural areas, in 2010. The neediest 1,220 centers out of these 2,605 (approximately 47%) would benefit from the proposed Project.

37. To promote participation in the half-day model and early literacy activities, *this component would finance the development and implementation of communication campaigns*, which would focus on the critical role of parents, as children's first teachers, in providing stimulating early childhood environments and promoting learning in the home. The campaigns would raise awareness on engaging in responsive speech and activities with children from birth, reading to very young children in the home, participating in a half-day ECCE program that focuses on learning, and other relevant issues. These campaigns would also help ensure that project beneficiaries are fully aware of the legislation on child and forced labor in Uzbekistan and the associated feedback mechanism, which will be implemented to help address child and forced labor issues in connection with the project activities or within the project areas (see more information in Annexes 3 and 7).

38. The half-day model would require the knowledge of some different teaching methodologies, including child-centered approaches and holistic early childhood development. Teachers should be able to implement the adapted half-day *Bolajon* curriculum and engage parents in early reading activities. *This component would finance the training and ongoing mentoring of the half-day model teachers*, as well as *learning group exercises (learning circles)*. Existing 2,000 pre-primary teachers (it is estimated that 65% of project pre-primary education schools would choose to operate two shifts, one in the morning and one in the afternoon) would be trained through a cascade model and would receive on-going mentoring throughout the Project. Additionally, 100 existing methodologists would receive training on early childhood development and education and more child-centered teaching practices, and would become mentors to half-day model teachers. The mentors would provide feedback on classroom practices, during school visits financed by the Project. The mentors would also facilitate *periodic learning circles*, in geographic clusters, so that half-day model teachers can exchange best teaching practices, become aware of successful strategies to overcome challenges, and receive guidance from their mentors. The mentors would visit each teacher once per quarter and learning circles would be held once per quarter. A training module on the legislation on child and forced labor in Uzbekistan and the associated third party monitoring and feedback mechanism<sup>17</sup> will be developed, given the findings of the social analysis carried out for the proposed Project (see more information in Annexes 3 and 7).

39. This component would also finance *studies to assess the implementation and quality of flexible models supported by the Project*. These studies should draw conclusions to MoPE on the effectiveness of flexible ECCE provision, which is crucial for the purposes of sustainability of the Project. Key potential aspects of the flexible models to be analyzed in these studies include: (i) school readiness for children enrolled in the new half-day model; (ii) early reading activities in the home for children and families that participate in the storybook distribution; and (iii) classroom activities of teachers receiving training in the half-day model. The latter would allow observing pre-primary teacher practices in the classroom to assess the use of techniques learned in the training for the half-day model, such as use of the half-day *Bolajon* curriculum, time spent on learning activities, and use of child-centered techniques. In the case of school readiness for children enrolled in the new half-day model, one study would assess the degree of school readiness for groups of children including those who: have completed the half-day model, have completed the full day model, have participated in early reading activities in the home, and are not enrolled in formal ECCE activities and do not attend the story hours or receive storybooks.

**Component 2 - Improving Conditions for Better Learning Outcomes in General Educational Secondary Schools (total estimated cost: US\$ 25.31 million, of which US\$ 23.12 is from the GPE grant).**

40. The objective of this component is to improve conditions for better learning outcomes in rural general educational secondary schools, by *improving the training system for teachers and school managers and increasing the availability of adequate equipment and teaching and learning materials*. The implementing units of this component would be the Main Department for Organizing Activity of Educational Establishments and the Department for Organizing the Material Technical Support of Educational Institutions. By the end of the proposed Project, it is expected that the conditions of in-service teacher training institutions are improved.

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<sup>17</sup> The Third Part Monitoring and Feedback Mechanism in the context of the World Bank's portfolio in Uzbekistan are currently being discussed/finalized and therefore the relevant disclosure should not be considered as final.

41. *This component would support the professional development of education personnel* through improvements of training conditions at all 16 in-service training and retraining institutions (including the Republican Training and Methodology Center of Preschool Teacher Training and Retraining), upgrade of training modules, revision of the regulatory framework of the promotion mechanism, and development of information systems in support to the training system. These activities would benefit 192 master trainers and 200,000 teachers and school managers of pre-primary and general educational secondary schools, who would be trained in advanced areas of teaching and education management<sup>18</sup>. A training module on the legislation on child and forced labor in Uzbekistan and the associated third party monitoring and feedback mechanism will be developed, given the findings of the social analysis carried out for the proposed Project (see more information in Annexes 3 and 7).

42. Project funds would be used to better equip all 16 central and regional teacher training and retraining institutes, in order to improve existing training conditions for education personnel, which include teachers, methodologists, and principals of pre-primary and general educational secondary schools. Each institute would benefit from the establishment of a training resource center and would have current classrooms upgraded into multimedia lecture rooms. To address gaps in existing courses, training modules would be developed in several advanced areas of high demand, including education management, pedagogic techniques and methodological support, ICT, inclusive education, foreign language teaching, and distance learning. This component would also support the development and production of teaching materials for training institutes; these materials would be developed in Uzbek, Russian and Karakalpak languages. The new modules would be intergraded into the regular courses of the training institutions. This component would support classroom and training observations in two different stages of the implementation of project-financed training activities, for the purposes of the assessment of the quality of teaching.

43. The component would also finance technical assistance (TA) to support the revision of the regulatory framework of the in-service training system to achieve three major objectives: (i) align required intervals for training and attestation; (ii) allow education personnel more choice in training module subjects; and (iii) promote flexibility in the delivery of training to include seminars, workshops, and distance learning. Additionally, to enhance the operation of all 16 INSET institutions, this component would support the development and installation of the following information systems: (i) virtual library; (ii) teachers and principals training management system; and (iii) needs in training on inclusive education.

44. *This component will finance the implementation of minimum school standards* in rural general educational secondary schools. The concept of minimum school standards in Uzbekistan includes requirements for teaching and learning materials, ICT equipment, furniture, and school infrastructure. This component would support the implementation of minimum school standards in terms of ICT equipment for computer labs and teaching and learning materials, upon completion of any necessary improvements in schools' infrastructure at the expense of the State or local budget. The implementing unit of this activity would be the Department for Organizing the Material Technical Support of Educational Institutions. By the end of the Project, it is expected that 1,220 rural general educational secondary schools meet minimum school standards in terms of ICT equipment and teaching and learning materials.

45. This component would complement the GoU's and donor's efforts to provide general educational secondary schools with adequate teaching and learning resources, materials and aids. This is to be done in full alignment with the priorities of the ESP and in coordination with education projects or initiatives supported by other donors also focused on equipping schools with teaching and learning resource. General educational secondary schools would be selected to benefit from this component based on objective criteria designed to target schools in underserved areas most in need of investment (see more information on the criteria in Annex 2).

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<sup>18</sup> The average annual capacity of all in-service training institutes is to train around 110,000 educational workers, as per existing regulation.

**Component 3 – Strengthening the Capacity to Monitor the Education System (total estimated cost: US\$ 6.3 million, of which US\$ 6.08 is from the GPE grant).**

46. *This component would support the strengthening of the existing capacity to monitor the education system*, which is one of the major responsibilities of MoPE's Main Department of Development of the Training and Education Process in General Secondary Schools. Project funds would be used to build capacity on education quality monitoring as well as to improve existing management information systems. By the end of the Project, it is expected that the results of students' assessments in Mathematics and native language for grades 4 and 9 are analyzed and publicly disseminated.

47. *Standardized Assessment of 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Graders* – this component would finance another round (the third one) of standardized students' assessments in Mathematics and native language for grade 4. Students of grade 9 would also participate in the third round of the national standardized assessment. These assessments would enable decision-makers to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the education system, based on results of sample-based national standardized tests and build on BEP experiences. TA would be provided by the proposed Project to strengthen the existing capacity to develop and conduct these tests as well as to analyze and disseminate their results. Thus, the proposed Project would contribute to increase the level of accountability observed in the education system.

48. Additionally, this component would finance the purchase of ICT equipment for all 14 province education departments, 194 district education departments and MoPE. Project funds would finance the training of 832 users of existing or improved management information systems. These activities would be financed to support existing and new initiatives aimed at monitoring the education system and increasing its accountability.

49. *This component would support day-to-day project management and implementation activities*, such as: TA to strengthen MoPE's capacity to implement the proposed Project; project audits; and operational and staffing costs of the Project Management Team. As the implementation would rely primarily on the existing structure of MoPE and the proposed activities to be financed by the Project are part of the everyday work of its staff, a Project Management Team would be set up to support the day-to-day management of the Project (see more information in Annex 3).

## **B. Project Financing**

### **1. Lending Instrument**

50. The proposed Project would be financed through a Program Implementation Grant to be provided by the GPE, which was designed to support the implementation of some priority activities of Uzbekistan's ESP for 2013-2017. In June 2014, the GPE Board of Directors approved the application of Uzbekistan for a Program Implementation Grant in the amount of US\$ 49.9 million. The World Bank has been appointed by the GoU and partners as Supervising Entity. Through Program Implementation Grants, GPE supports countries as they work towards the Education for All goals as well as in consideration of the GPE's priorities and objectives outlined in the strategic plan. Considering that the proposed Project would have a focus on specific education investments, the instrument Investment Project Financing (IPF) would be used.

51. For MoPE, the main value added of the proposed Project lies in the ongoing supportive role that the Bank team brings through IPF implementation support and accompanying technical assistance. The Bank team will provide analytic and technical support to MoPE to implement more flexible and efficient forms of ECCE service provision, while at the same time helping general educational secondary schools to meet minimum school standards and strengthening the MoPE's students' assessment system.

### **2. Project Cost and Financing**

52. The Project would be financed by a GPE grant of USD 49.9 million plus USD 4.2 million from the Government of Uzbekistan. The GoU contribution would finance the distribution of goods (to be purchased using GPE grant funds) from Tashkent city to schools. The project costs are listed in the table below.

**Table 1 - Project Components and Costs**

<b>Project Cost by Component</b>	<b>Estimated Cost (US\$)</b>	<b>Counterpart Financing (US\$)</b>	<b>GPE Financing (US\$)</b>	<b>% of GPE Financing</b>
<b>1 - Improving Access to Quality Early Childhood Education Opportunities</b>	22,501,000	1,801,000	20,700,000	92.0
<b>2 - Improving Conditions for Better Learning Outcomes in General Educational Secondary Schools</b>	25,310,000	2,195,000	23,115,000	91.3
<b>3 - Strengthening the Capacity to Monitor the Education System</b>	6,307,000	222,000	6,085,000	96.5
<b>Total Baseline Costs</b>	54,118,000	4,218,000	49,900,000	92.2
<b>Contingencies</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Project Costs</b>	54,118,000	4,218,000	49,900,000	92.2
<b>Total Financing Required</b>	54,118,000	4,218,000	49,900,000	92.2

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

53. *Awareness of short time frames.* The previous pre-primary and basic education projects in Uzbekistan noted that implementation of education projects can require more time than anticipated due to the hierarchical and controlled environment and other issues. The evaluation of Basic Education Project's first phase (BEP I) advised that if long time frames are not an option, teams should make a strong effort to complete as much work as possible toward the beginning of the project to meet implementation readiness conditions. In addition, project teams should consider the extent and sequencing of reforms. The Project is closely aligned with reforms planned in the ESP for the ECD/Pre-school and General Secondary Education sub-sectors, which include the expansion of the half-day program and support to parents for activities in the home, at the ECCE level, and development of favorable conditions for children's training at school and improving the quality of teaching and learning. The Project's half-day model follows previous implementation of half-day programs (partially funded by UNICEF) in three regions of the country, and the revision of the national curriculum for ECCE to be more child-friendly. The provision of ICT equipment for general education secondary schools and the assessment of students in grades 4 and 9 build on successful activities of earlier education projects – BEP Phase I and II.

54. *Institutional assessment.* Both BEP I and BEP II mainstreamed implementation without a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) in order to encourage a transfer of knowledge about World Bank procedures and practices. For these projects, close coordination between consultants who supported project implementation and MoPE was especially important given differences between World Bank and Uzbekistan procedures. The proposed Project will follow in the footsteps of BEP II, when MoPE will have at least seven years' experience in implementing Bank projects without a PIU. In addition, a comprehensive understanding of the existing context of public administration, procurement, and financial management systems of Uzbekistan's centrally planned economy is critical to smooth project implementation. Although reforming these country systems is beyond the scope of the proposed Project, a thorough fiduciary assessment covering these systems and MoPE will be completed, with the intent of better addressing capacity gaps.

55. *Effectively inform beneficiaries of Project activities.* Another relevant lesson for the proposed Project is that investments targeting behavioral changes should be well planned in order to achieve success, since this kind of

change is usually gradual and difficult to accelerate. The Project Component 1 supports the development and implementation of two more flexible models of ECCE service provision, including a half-day program and strong engagement with parents to encourage learning in the home. To allow stakeholders to understand the value of proposed changes to the system, the proposed Project will carry out communication campaigns to inform parents of the benefits of early learning and to share information about the half-day program.

56. *Build on current child-friendly activities in Uzbekistan.* The evaluation of UNICEF's successful Child Friendly Schools (CFS) project has a few recommendations that are relevant for the Project Component 1, which would use a child-centered approach to design the half-day model's curriculum. These lessons include the importance of regular and sustainable salaries for teachers in the half-day model, which the GoU has committed to finance during the Project, and the importance of establishing clear fees for the half-day model, which are set at a level affordable for parents in rural areas. The Project would shift from school-based support to countrywide institutionalization of CFS concepts through training teachers in the half-day model. The proposed Project would also use a training of the trainers, or cascade approach for training teachers, as suggested by the CFS evaluation.

## **IV. IMPLEMENTATION**

### **A. Institutional and Implementation Arrangements**

57. The Ministry of Public Education would be the project implementing agency. Project implementation would rely primarily on the existing structure of MoPE, as the proposed activities to be financed by the Project are part of the everyday work of its staff. Thus, the proposed Project would not require the establishment of a parallel structure or a full scale Project Implementation Unit. Instead, a small team of local consultants (a Project Management Team - PMT) would be supported using project funds to assist MoPE with day-to-day project management, and make sure it is implemented in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Grant Agreement and the Project Operations Manual.

58. The PMT would *manage* the project activities *under strategic guidance of the Deputy Minister of Public Education and in line with the implementation lead given by the department heads*. A small team of five local consultants would be hired using project funds. The PMT would include a Project Coordinator, a Procurement Specialist, a Financial Management Specialist, a translator and a Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist. The Project Component 3 would finance the operational costs of the PMT and project audits.

59. Additionally, six local consultants would be hired to technically support the implementation of the proposed activities as follows: three for the Component 1 (attached to the Department of Pre-School Educational Institutions), two for the Component 2 (attached to the Main Department for Organizing Activity of Educational Establishments and the Department for Organizing the Material Technical Support of Educational Institutions) and one for the Component 3 (attached to the Main Department of Development of the Training and Education Process in General Secondary Schools).

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

60. The PDO level and intermediate results indicators, as well as the effectiveness of more flexible models of ECCE service provision and the quality of teaching would be monitored using the following sources and methodologies:

- regular data collection process;
- baseline and follow-up surveys (studies outlined in Component 1);
- classroom observations; and
- reports prepared by the PMT.

61. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Specialist of the PMT would be responsible for bringing together the reports and representatives of MoPE for monitoring of the PDO and results, and communicating with the World



Bank according to the frequency of reports described in Annex 1. M&E under the Project would be integrated into regular monitoring functions of MoPE. Project indicators have been selected on the basis of the data requirements already planned as part of regular data collection process of MoPE. The Project Results Framework includes indicators to measure the quality of teaching, given the investments planned for training activities of pre-primary and general secondary education teachers. Additionally, the Project Results Framework includes an indicator to measure children's school readiness.

62. A firm would be selected to assess the quality and implementation of flexible models supported by the proposed Project. These studies should draw conclusions to MoPE on the effectiveness of flexible ECCE provision, which is crucial for the purposes of sustainability of the Project. Key potential aspects of the flexible models to be analyzed in these studies include: (i) school readiness for children enrolled in the new half-day model; (ii) early reading activities in the home for children and families that participate in the storybook distribution; and (iii) classroom activities of teachers receiving training in the half-day model.

63. Concerning the quality of teaching, one of the proposed studies would allow to observe teacher practices in the classroom to assess the use of techniques learned in the training for the half-day model, such as use of the half-day *Bolajon* curriculum, time spent on learning activities, and use of child-centered techniques. In the case of school readiness for children enrolled in the new half-day model, one study would assess the degree of school readiness for groups of children including children who: have completed the half-day model, have completed the full day model, have participated in early reading activities in the home, and are not enrolled in formal ECCE activities and do not attend the story hours or receive storybooks. Lastly, to look at early reading in the home, another study would interview parents and children to learn about activities such as reading books, telling stories, singing songs, and playing. The baseline studies should be carried out at the start of the school year 2015/2016 (September 2015) and the follow up studies, at the end of school year 2015/2016 (May 2016).

## **C. Sustainability**

64. The sustainability of the Project is based on close alignment between the design, previous activities in the education sector, and the ESP, as well as the high cost effectiveness of the ECCE half-day model. In the ECCE activities, the flexible provision of ECCE is a very cost-effective way for the GoU to reach its enrollment goals. As stated in the ESP for 2013-2017, the GoU has set the goal of increasing ECCE enrollment rates from 23.3 percent to 32.2 percent, by 2017, with 41 percent of children enrolled in alternative models, including half-day programs, as promoted by the Project. The GoU would finance half-day teacher salaries during the Project life, which would allow GoU to reach up to twice as many children with the same expenditure on teacher salaries, as children are only in school for half of the day. The proposed Project would also create cost savings to parents, as fees would be lower for the half-day model. Salaries for half-day teachers are estimated to be 44 percent less than salaries for full day teachers<sup>19</sup>, and the use of shifts for the half-day model would allow for more efficient use of the ECCE facilities. In addition, the Project would deliver a half-day curriculum as well as teacher training modules that would allow for continued implementation of the half-day model. The storybook lending libraries that would be established in each of the 1,220 project pre-primary schools would also contribute to the sustainability of this initiative. The general secondary education activities of providing ICT equipment and TLM build on previous education projects in Uzbekistan, and the GoU has specific mechanisms in place, at the district level, to plan for on-going and annual repairs of computers and other ICT resources. The teacher training activities would also continue past the duration of the Project, as it would support the development of modules in new advanced training areas, while the GoU continues to fund the regular in-service training sessions that are required by law.

## **V. KEY RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

### **A. Risk Ratings Summary Table**

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<sup>19</sup> Estimates of salaries provided by MoPE.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Rating</b>
<b>Stakeholder Risk</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>Implementing Agency Risk</b>	
- Capacity	<b>Moderate</b>
- Governance	<b>Substantial</b>
- Fraud and Corruption	<b>Substantial</b>
<b>Project Risk</b>	
- Design	<b>Substantial</b>
- Social and Environmental	<b>Substantial</b>
- Program and Donor	<b>Low</b>
- Delivery Monitoring and Sustainability	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>Operating Environment Risks</b>	
- Country	<b>Substantial</b>
- Sector and Multi-Sector	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>Overall Implementation Risk</b>	<b>Substantial</b>

## **B. Overall Risk Rating Explanation**

65. The overall risk is substantial for both project preparation and implementation. The key risks are the following:

- Stakeholder risk: there is a risk that Government's engagement to the education sector reform agenda is not maintained for the remainder of the Project. Additionally, beneficiaries have limited voice in influencing education service provision. This may affect project preparation and implementation.
- Governance risk: this risk is substantial, given the lack of transparency and low level of accountability.
- Project risk: there is a risk of limited uptake regarding the proposed pre-primary interventions. Though it is expected that parents will be more interested in the half-day model, there is a risk that parents will not enroll their children. The Project would target rural areas, where the demand for childcare is lower, so the risk is that parents will not enroll their children due to lack of understanding of the benefits of ECCE.
- Social and environmental: there is a moderate risk that students as well as a substantial risk that teachers and school managers (all beneficiaries of the proposed Project) may be mobilized to pick cotton or provide financial resources to support the cotton harvest.

## **VI. APPRAISAL SUMMARY**

### **A. Economic and Financial Analysis**

66. Project activities in both areas ECCE and general secondary education represent worthwhile investments in Uzbekistan, in terms of the public rationale and economic and financial benefits. Additionally, the involvement of the World Bank will contribute to the implementation of new approaches in pre-primary education, as explained in the following paragraphs.

67. *Public rationale for ECCE activities.* The Project's ECCE interventions in rural areas would help to enhance equity in society, by compensating for early learning gaps due to family differences, as the poor are more likely to live in rural areas. In addition, these activities would generate externalities associated with ECCE, including increased female participation in the labor force and a healthier, more productive workforce. Lastly, given these benefits and others, privately provided ECCE is often too expensive for many families. In cases where the market does not provide a good with benefits to society at an affordable price, government support is necessary.

68. *Economic and financial benefits for ECCE activities.* The half-day model of ECCE is more cost-effective than the full day program. Cost savings from the half-day model include US\$3.6 million to the government and US\$10.4 million to parents, over three years. The Project would increase the national budget for ECCE by about

1.7 percent in each year, and would allow for an increase of at least 21 percent of spending on children in the half-day model. The investment would represent a significant increase to the amount allocated to non-wage current expenditure for TLM and other learning resources that is often squeezed out by teacher salaries and capital expenditure.

69. *World Bank's role in ECCE activities.* The World Bank's involvement would allow Uzbekistan to innovate on its current model for providing ECCE, by bringing guidance, support, and experience from successful similar activities in other countries. Expansion of ECCE through more flexible models is necessary to increase enrollment rates from the low rate of 23.3 percent nationally, in 2012.

70. *Public rationale for general secondary education activities.* Social returns to primary education in the region (general secondary education in Uzbekistan) are the highest of any level of education after pre-primary education, which means that education at the primary level will generate more benefits for society than investments in education at higher levels. In addition, the Project would seek to increase equity in learning conditions in Uzbekistan, by providing resources to schools in rural areas where the poor are more likely to live.

71. *Economic and financial benefits of general secondary education activities.* General secondary education will also provide high returns in terms of future wages. As Uzbekistan has nearly achieved universal enrollment and reached gender parity in education, improvements in the availability of learning resources, better trained teachers, and use of student assessments results to bring about quality improvements are the next step. The Project would contribute an additional 20 percent spent per student in selected schools.

72. *World Bank's role in general secondary education activities.* The World Bank's involvement would provide the necessary innovative guidance to reform the teacher training system and to shift from a system of examination to student assessments, particularly given its strong experience in supporting national standardized students' assessments in the ECA region.

## **B. Technical**

73. The technical design of the proposed Project is based on the ESP 2013-2017, which identifies eight specific strategic areas for all subsectors of the education system. The outcome for preschool education is children's health and personalities developed in preparation for learning in school. For general secondary education, the ESP shows the outcome of learner's general knowledge, independent thinking and organizational skills developed in preparation for successful progression in the education system.

74. The analytical underpinnings of the proposed Project are threefold. First, project design has benefited from numerous consultations with stakeholders and technical discussions with national, regional, and international experts. Next, the design draws heavily on international experience and sound practices in pre-primary and basic education reforms, particularly in the region, and is carefully contextualized for Uzbekistan. Finally, it builds upon the lessons learned from the implementation of similar World Bank-financed projects not only in the country, but also in other Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries and around the world, which has allowed project design to be developed in anticipation of known challenges and plan accordingly, to maximize potential for success.

75. Concerning the design of the ECCE component, international evidence suggests that children can benefit from high-quality modalities that operate for as little as 15 hours per week, yielding increases in school readiness at entry to primary school. The proposed half-day structure requires fewer public resources per child than the standard full day program implemented by MoPE. The cost savings would result from the following: (i) use of a shift model of two half-day sessions, thus reducing staff salary requirements; (ii) reduced infrastructure requirements as napping spaces are no longer necessary; and (iii) fewer meals during the school day.

76. In terms of early reading initiatives, international evidence suggests that when children have experience

with literacy in the home environment, they enter primary school with higher levels of school readiness. Reading in the home is limited in Uzbekistan: analysis of 2006 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) data shows that while 71 percent of parents engaged in some limited early learning activities in the home, only 43 percent of children aged 5 or less had access to children's books. To promote participation in the half-day model and early literacy activities, the proposed Project would finance the development and implementation of communication campaigns with focus on the critical role of parents, as children's first teachers.

77. Regarding the investments in general secondary education, the Project intends to improve learning conditions in rural schools over the short duration of its activities to lay the foundation for improving learning outcomes over the medium and long-term. The literature shows that better conditions in schools may contribute to increased learning outcomes (see details in Annex 2). A recent review found very promising results for the effect of school infrastructure and pedagogical materials, in particular textbooks and furniture, on student learning. Concerning the linkages between investments in ICT equipment and learning outcomes, findings show that ICT equipment can create learning gains when computer-assisted learning programs reinforce skills learned in the classroom, or when computer use is directly linked to pedagogy. Aside from immediate learning gains, ICT skills are increasingly important in the context of knowledge economy, and school may be the first place where students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds are exposed to computers (see details in Annex 2).

### **C. Financial Management**

78. The Ministry of Public Education would be responsible for implementation of the financial management (FM) function of the proposed Project including flow of funds, budgeting, accounting, reporting, and auditing. The MoPE will hire a well experienced FM Consultant who was responsible for FM and disbursement arrangements of the BEP.

79. Overall, the FM arrangements at MoPE, including systems of budgeting, accounting, financial reporting, auditing, and internal controls, are assessed to be moderately satisfactory to the Bank. The MoPE generally maintains proper FM requirements under the BEP II including regular and timely submission of quarterly reports as well as satisfactory project audits. The MoPE operates a computerized accounting system, based on the 1-C software that is used by many World Bank-funded projects in the country and is suitable for project accounting and reporting.

80. The FM system operated by MoPE is capable of recording all transactions and balances, and generates regular financial statements that are submitted to the World Bank regularly and on time. Internal control systems and procedures established by MoPE ensure the reliability of accounting records and safeguarding of project resources and assets.

81. The existing FM system is able to meet the World Bank's financial management requirements, including the capacity to generate Statement of Expenditures (SoEs), withdrawal applications, Interim Financial Reports (IFRs) and annual financial statements.

82. Disbursements from the Grant Account would follow the transaction-based method, i.e., traditional Bank procedures: including advances to the designated account, direct payments, special commitments and reimbursement (with full documentation and against SoEs). For payments above the minimum application size, as specified in the Disbursement Letter, the MoPE may submit withdrawal applications to the Bank for payments to suppliers and consultants directly from the Grant Account.

83. The adequacy of FM arrangements would be continuously monitored during project supervision and adjustments made when necessary to ensure fiduciary compliance. An action plan has been agreed upon with MoPE to ensure that adequate FM systems are in place before implementation begins. In addition, an FM Specialist would review the annual audit report and the quarterly IFRs, including a monthly reconciliation of accounts, and perform at least one complete supervision mission per nine-month period, which could be complemented by other

supervisions as necessary. More details on FM arrangements are provided in Annex 3.

#### **D. Procurement**

84. Procurement for the proposed Project would be carried out in accordance with the World Bank's "Guidelines: Procurement of Goods, Works and Non-Consulting Services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers" dated January 2011 (Procurement Guidelines); and "Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers" dated January 2011 (Consultant Guidelines) and the provisions stipulated in the Grant Agreement. If there is conflict between government decrees, rules and regulations and the Bank Procurement and Consultant Guidelines, then Bank Procurement and Consultant Guidelines shall prevail. In addition the Project would also follow 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.

85. As part of the project preparation, an assessment of the procurement capacity of MoPE was carried out, in July 2013. The country procurement assessment conducted in 2003 (by the Bank and ADB) identified the following weaknesses in the public procurement system in Uzbekistan: (a) absence of a unified legislative framework; (b) inefficient and non-transparent procurement practices; (c) absence of a single institution with oversight or regulatory authority on public procurement practices; (d) weak capacity to deal with bidders' complaints; (e) lack of independent scrutiny of contracts; (f) lack of comprehensive anti-corruption measures; and (g) low skills/capacity of the staff handling public procurement at every administrative level. Further recently, it was noted that (i) the government decrees and rules and regulations have internal conflict in major provisions such as price verification after contract is signed for contracts involving imports or foreign contractors which leads to considerable delays in project procurement and implementation; (ii) the difficulty in obtaining bank guarantee for bid security and performance security by the bidders and non-availability of alternative instruments for such purpose in the country banking system and (iii) considerable procurement delays in implementing the on-going project due to lack of procurement capacity. The recent Country Integrated Fiduciary Assessment revised the procurement environment to be considered a high risk and little change in public procurement environment was noticed during another just completed review.

86. The MoPE would have overall responsibility for procurement under the proposed Project. The MoPE has got a procurement consultant, experienced in procurement under Bank projects. The procurement risk will be minimized by following the Bank's Procurement and Consultant Guidelines, hiring a Procurement Specialist with international experience to oversee the procurement processes and ensure compliance, and by adopting appropriate threshold levels for prior review. To build procurement capacity, the Bank will encourage the local Procurement Specialist of the PMT to attend regional procurement training conducted by the Bank regionally and other in-country procurement training/workshops.

87. The proposed Project would procure furniture, equipment and teaching and learning materials for pre-primary education institutions, storybooks for parents of children aged 3 to 6, as well as ICT equipment and teaching and learning material for general educational secondary schools and teacher training institutes. Additionally, some consultancy assignments are planned under the proposed Project. The project team would support the advanced procurement activities under the Project earlier so the procurement starts soon after the Project becomes effective. More details on the procurement arrangements, risk mitigation measures and details of the Procurement Plan for the Project can be found in Annex 3.

#### **E. Social (including Safeguards)**

88. Given the scope of the proposed Project, there are several relevant stakeholders (MoPE, Central Institute for Teacher Training and Retraining named after A. Avloniy, Republican Training and Methodology Center for Preschool Teacher Training and Retraining, Women's Committee, Mahalla Foundation, higher education institutions, teachers, parents, and other institutions/social actors) that can be influential or have a stake in the

education sector. To properly address the needs and concerns that these stakeholders may have, MoPE will conduct stakeholder consultations during the implementation of the proposed Project. It's important to highlight that, through ongoing collaboration to execute BEP I and II, the World Bank has been collaborating with these institutions, since 2007. The Women's Committee and the Mahalla Foundation could be key partners to support the communication campaigns to encourage parents in early reading in the home.

89. The number of partners working in education is limited in Uzbekistan. UNICEF has been engaged in Early Childhood work in Uzbekistan for a number of years and coordinates the local working group on ECD that contributed to the ESP. Since 2010, UNICEF has been piloting flexible approaches to ECCE in six regions of the country, in partnership with the national and local Government, including MoPE, the Women's Committee and through the Mahalla Foundation. The proposed Project would build upon the existing work in this area.

90. While the use of child and forced labor, prohibited in Uzbekistan, continues in particular during cotton harvest, good progress on child labor has recently been made and during the 2013 harvest season, the ILO monitored the cotton harvest directly on the fields of Uzbekistan. The ILO report concluded that it would appear from the monitoring that there was no systematic recourse to forced child labor (see The ILO High Level Mission Report on the Monitoring of Child Labor, 2013). However, forced labor in cotton harvesting remains a concern. The proposed Project will mitigate the use of child and forced labor through participation in the Third Party Monitoring (TPM) and Feedback Mechanism (FBM), which will be funded through a separate trust fund, as well as training and awareness raising activities. A TPM Consultant will perform monitoring activities in accordance with the applicable terms of reference. Occurrence of child and/or forced labor in connection with the project activities, as reported by the TPM and/or FBM, might entitle the World Bank to take any appropriate measures in accordance with any applicable provisions of the Standard Conditions for Grants Made by the World Bank Out of Various Funds, dated February 15, 2012. More details on child and forced labor issues in Uzbekistan are presented in Annex 7.

91. The proposed Project is not associated with any social safeguard risk and no World Bank social safeguards are triggered.

**F. Environment (including Safeguards)**

92. The proposed Project is classified as a World Bank environmental Category C and is not expected to trigger environmental safeguards.

**G. Other Safeguards Policies Triggered (*if required*)**

93. No other safeguards policies are triggered.

**Annex 1: Results Framework and Monitoring**  
**Improving Pre-Primary and General Secondary Education Project**

<b>The Project Development Objectives are to increase access of children aged 3-6 to quality early childhood care and education in rural pre-primary institutions and to improve conditions for better learning outcomes of students of rural general educational secondary schools.</b>								
<b>PDO Level Results Indicators</b>	<b>Core</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Cumulative Target Values</b>			<b>Data Collection and Reporting</b>		
			<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Frequency and Reports</b>	<b>Data Collection Instruments</b>	<b>Responsibility for Data Collection</b>
Increased percentage of children aged 3-6 enrolled in ECCE in rural areas of Uzbekistan.		8.5 %	10.3 %	12.9 %	13.1 %	Semi-annual monitoring reports	MoPE's documents	Department of Pre-School Educational Institutions
Increased percentage of rural general educational secondary schools that meet minimum school standards		44.8 %	53.1 %	61.4 %	61.4 %	Semi-annual monitoring reports	MoPE's documents	Department for Organizing the Material Technical Support of Educational Institutions
Results of students' assessments in Mathematics and native language for grade 4 analyzed and publicly disseminated		Results available for the 2 <sup>nd</sup> round of assessment of 4 <sup>th</sup> graders	Results available for the 2 <sup>nd</sup> round of assessment of 4 <sup>th</sup> graders	3 <sup>rd</sup> round of assessment of 4 <sup>th</sup> graders	Results of students' assessments in Math and native language for grade 4 analyzed and publicly disseminated	Semi-annual monitoring reports	MoPE's documents	Main Department of Development of the Training and Education Process in General Secondary Schools
Results of students' assessments in Mathematics and native language for grade 9 analyzed and publicly disseminated		Preparation of assessment of 9 <sup>th</sup> graders	Preparation of assessment of 9 <sup>th</sup> graders	1 <sup>st</sup> round of assessment of 9 <sup>th</sup> graders	Results of students' assessments in Math and native language for grade 9 analyzed and publicly disseminated	Semi-annual monitoring reports	MoPE's documents	Main Department of Development of the Training and Education Process in General Secondary Schools

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<b>Intermediate Outcome Indicators</b>								
<b>Component 1 - Improving Access to Quality Early Childhood Education Opportunities</b>								
Number of children aged 3-6 benefitting from early reading activities in the home		0	150,000	300,000	300,000	Semi-annual monitoring reports	(i) evidences of distribution of storybooks; (ii) story hours' attendance lists	Department of Pre-School Educational Institutions
Number of small libraries established in project pre-primary education institutions		0	300	1,220	1,220	Semi-annual monitoring reports	MoPE's documents; evidences of distribution of storybooks	Department of Pre-School Educational Institutions
Establishment of a system to assess the school readiness of children aged 5-6 enrolled in the project half-day model		Half-day students' school readiness system not established	Preparation of 1 <sup>st</sup> assessment of half-day students' school readiness	1 <sup>st</sup> assessment of half-day students' readiness for school carried out at the start of the school year 2015/2016	2 <sup>nd</sup> assessment of half-day students' readiness for school carried out, results compared and analyzed	Semi-annual monitoring reports	Two measurements of school readiness assessments for children aged 5-6 enrolled in the project half-day model (two rounds of assessments carried at the start and end of the 2015/2016 school year)	Department of Pre-School Educational Institutions
Number of children aged 5-6 enrolled in the project half-day model		0	4,500	25,600	50,000 of which 25,000 are girls	Semi-annual monitoring reports	MoPE's documents	Department of Pre-School Educational Institutions
Number of children benefitting from better equipped pre-primary schools that implement the half-day model (aside from children enrolled in the project half-day model)		0	12,000	56,000	62,000 of which 31,000 are girls	Semi-annual monitoring reports	MoPE's documents	Department of Pre-School Educational Institutions
Number of pre-primary education teachers trained to deliver the project half-day model		0	500	2,000	2,000 of which 1,910 are female teachers	Semi-annual monitoring reports	Teachers Training Institutes' lists of presence	Department of Pre-School Educational Institutions
Increase in the share of project half-day model teachers demonstrating		0%	0%	0%	20%	Semi-annual monitoring reports	Classroom observations carried out twice over the implementation	Department of Pre-School Educational Institutions



mastery of key concepts of ECCE and child-centered teaching							period (sample based)	
<b>Component 2 - Improving Conditions for Better Learning Outcomes in General Educational Secondary Schools</b>								
Number of teachers and school managers trained in advanced areas of teaching and education management developed by the project		0	0	100,000	200,000	Semi-annual monitoring reports	Lists of teachers attending training activities supported by the Project in improved Training Institutes	Main Department for Organizing Activity of Educational Establishments
Number of newly developed training modules		0	6	6	6	Semi-annual monitoring reports	MoPE's documents	Main Department for Organizing Activity of Educational Establishments
Number of master trainers providing training in new areas of education management and teaching and learning		0	0	192	192	Semi-annual monitoring reports	MoPE's documents	Main Department for Organizing Activity of Educational Establishments
Increase in the share of trained general secondary education teachers using pedagogical practices developed/upgraded by the project in the classroom		0%	0%	0%	20%	Semi-annual monitoring reports	Classroom observations carried out twice over the implementation period (sample based exercises)	Department for Organizing the Material Technical Support of Educational Institutions
<b>Component 3 – Strengthening the Capacity to Monitor the Education System</b>								
System for learning assessment at the primary level	√	System to be revised	System under revision	System under revision	System in place	Semi-annual monitoring reports	MoPE's documents	Main Department of Development of the Education in General School
Number of representatives of MoPE and Province and District Education Departments trained in monitoring and evaluation activities supported by the project		0	100	400	832	Semi-annual monitoring reports	MoPE's documents; lists of training activities	Main Department of Development of the Education in General School

## Annex 2: Detailed Project Description

### Improving Pre-Primary and General Secondary Education Project

1. The proposed Project would be aligned to the Education Sector Plan for the Republic of Uzbekistan 2013-2017. The Project is to be implemented over a period of three years, between 2015 and 2018, and would be financed by a GPE grant of USD 49.9 million plus USD 4.2 million from the Government of Uzbekistan, in the form of an investment financing. The GoU contribution would finance the distribution of goods (to be purchased using GPE grant funds) from Tashkent city to schools.
2. The proposed Project is organized around three components, as described in the next paragraphs, which relate to the following key dimensions of investments: access to quality early childhood education opportunities and learning conditions for students of general secondary education.
3. **Component 1 - Improving Access to Quality Early Childhood Education Opportunities (total estimated cost: US\$ 22.5 million, of which US\$ 20.7 is from the GPE grant).** The objective of this component is to improve access to early learning opportunities and quality pre-primary education in rural areas of Uzbekistan. The implementing unit of this component would be MoPE's Department of Pre-School Educational Institutions. By the end of the Project, it is expected that the ECCE enrollment rate of children aged 3 to 6 in rural areas would increase from 8.5 percent to 13.1 percent.
4. **Subcomponent 1.1 – Developing More Flexible and Efficient ECCE Service Provision.** This subcomponent would finance the development of more flexible forms of ECCE service provision, which include a half-day school readiness program for children aged 5 to 6 and early literacy promotion activities targeting families with children aged 3 to 6. The implementation of the half-day model would be supported by the subcomponent 1.2 and would benefit 50,000 children aged 5 to 6 (of which 25,000 are girls), by the end of the Project. The implementation of the early literacy promotion activities would benefit 300,000 children (of which 150,000 are girls) over the duration of the Project.
5. *Designing a Half-day School Readiness Program* - this subcomponent would finance technical assistance (TA) to develop and implement a flexible model of a half-day year-round ECCE program, which would allow the GoU to expand access to quality pre-primary education with a focus on promoting school readiness (not only childcare) for children aged 5 and 6. This activity would directly support ESP Output “1.6 - Curriculum for pre-school education on the basis of *Bolajon* program further developed and implemented, together with related teaching and learning materials”. International evidence suggests that children can benefit from high-quality ECCE programs that operate for as little as 15 hours per week, yielding increases in school readiness at entry to primary school. The proposed half-day structure requires fewer public resources per child than the standard full day program implemented by MoPE. The cost savings would result from the following: (i) use of a shift model of two half-day sessions, thus reducing staff salary requirements; (ii) reduced infrastructure requirements as napping spaces are no longer necessary; and (iii) fewer meals during the school day.
6. The development of a half-day program would build on current flexible models of child-centered ECCE. In Uzbekistan, 15,624 children, concentrated in three regions, were enrolled in half-day ECCE programs in 2010, some of which have received partial funding support from UNICEF. Many of the schools offering the half-day model have based their approach on the national full-day *Bolajon* curriculum, which was designed to guide a child-centered pre-primary program. The proposed half-day model would use the *Bolajon* as well. However, this would require an adaptation of *Bolajon*, including a teacher-friendly summary of its key concepts, child-centered education approaches, as well as lesson plans and teaching strategies to support teachers in their daily work. The adaptation of *Bolajon* would also take into account the Grade 1 curriculum and the Early Learning Development Standards to ensure continuity of approaches and child experiences.
7. *Communication Campaigns* - to promote participation in the half-day model and early literacy activities as well as ECCE more generally, this subcomponent would finance the development and implementation of

communication campaigns. The communication campaigns would address ESP Output “1.5 - Awareness on early learning importance raised among parents, communities, and the general public”. Such campaigns would focus on the critical role of parents, as children’s first teachers, in providing stimulating early childhood environments and promoting learning in the home. International evidence suggests that when children have experience with literacy in the home environment, they enter primary school with higher levels of school readiness. Reading in the home is limited in Uzbekistan: analysis of 2006 MICS data shows that while 71 percent of parents engaged in some limited early learning activities in the home, only 43 percent of children aged 0 to 59 months had access to children’s books. In addition, many parents are not aware of the benefits to enrollment in high-quality ECCE and are unlikely to elect to enroll their children in center-based ECCE programming if their children do not need full-time daycare. Analysis of the 2006 MICS data showed that 42 percent of parents with children aged 3 to 6 reported “no reason to attend” as the reason why their children were not enrolled in ECCE, indicating that awareness of the benefits of ECCE is low and also that the current full day model does not meet their needs.

8. The campaigns would raise awareness on engaging in responsive speech and activities with children from birth, reading to very young children in the home, participating in a half-day ECCE program that focuses on learning, and other relevant issues. Options to reach parents with these messages include: national television (including the newly-established *Bolajon* channel), radio, printed magazines and pamphlets, and community events. Potential partners include the Makhalla Committees and the Women’s Committee at the local level, which are already trusted and efficient sources of information to reach parents.

9. The communication campaigns would also help ensure that project beneficiaries are fully aware of the legislation on child and forced labor in Uzbekistan and associated feedback mechanism, given the findings of the social analysis carried out for the proposed Project (see more information in Annexes 3 and 7). Vulnerable groups that may not be aware of the feedback mechanism should be informed of its availability and functions.

10. *Assessment of Flexible and Efficient ECCE Models* - this subcomponent would also finance studies to assess the implementation of flexible models supported by the Project. The assessment activities contribute to ESP Output “1.4 - Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy for educational processes at pre-school developed and integrated into general Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy”. These studies should draw conclusions to MoPE on the effectiveness of flexible ECCE provision, which is crucial for the purposes of sustainability of the Project. Key potential aspects of the flexible models to be analyzed in these studies include: (i) school readiness for children enrolled in the new half-day model; (ii) early reading activities in the home for children and families that participate in the storybook distribution; and (iii) classroom activities of teachers receiving training in the half-day model.

11. Concerning the quality of teaching, one of the proposed studies would allow to observe teacher practices in the classroom to assess the use of techniques learned in the training for the half-day model, such as use of the half-day *Bolajon* curriculum, time spent on learning activities, and use of child-centered techniques. In the case of school readiness for children enrolled in the new half-day model, one study would assess the degree of school readiness for groups of children including those who: have completed the half-day model, have completed the full day model, have participated in early reading activities in the home, and are not enrolled in formal ECCE activities and do not attend the story hours or receive storybooks. Lastly, to look at early reading in the home, another study would interview parents and children to learn about activities such as reading books, telling stories, singing songs, and playing. The baseline studies should be carried out at the start of the school year 2015/2016 (September 2015) and the follow up studies, at the end of school year 2015/2016 (May 2016).

12. **Subcomponent 1.2 – Implementing Quality Early Childhood Education Opportunities.** This subcomponent would support activities to improve the quality of pre-primary education, by providing teaching and learning materials (TLM), furniture and equipment to existing pre-primary education institutions where the half-day ECCE programs would be held as well as promoting early literacy activities. Additionally, this subcomponent would finance training activities for pre-school teachers and master trainers to deliver the half-day model. By the end of the project, it is expected the 50,000 children aged 5 to 6 (of which 25,000 are girls) would attend the half-day program, in 1,220 existing pre-primary centers located in rural areas of Uzbekistan.

13. *Early Reading Program* – a nationwide distribution of storybooks to parents of young children would be supported under the implementation of a targeted program to engage children aged 3 to 6, who are not enrolled in formal ECCE and live in rural areas, in early reading in the home. The early reading program is related to ESP Output “1.5 - Awareness of early learning importance raised among parents, communities, and the general public”. The parents and children to benefit from this program would be identified as part of the TA supported by the previous subcomponent. Mobilizing parents to participate in community and group activities has been shown to be a successful strategy to increase parental engagement in children’s early learning and to provide parents with the skills they need to support their children’s development.

14. Project funds would finance the distribution of storybooks to parents of young children and support weekly story time hours. Storybooks would be chosen for the targeted age group with ample illustrations, simple story lines, large print, appropriate amount of text and durable construction. The storybooks would be produced in Uzbek, Russian and Karakalpak languages. Both Russian and Karakalpak are officially designated as languages of ethnic minorities in Uzbekistan. According to the most recent data, by producing materials in Uzbek, Russian and Karakalpak, the Project would provide materials to 98% of all pre-primary students in their mother tongue (Tajik, Kazakh and several other languages of ethnic minorities account for the remaining 2% of children). Teachers would lead regular story time hours with children not enrolled in ECCE and their parents at pre-primary centers participating in the half-day model. Each family would receive a set of storybooks (at least 3 books per child). By the end of the Project, it is expected that 200,000 parents of young children (around 300,000 children aged 3-6, of which 150,000 are girls) would receive the storybooks and would be engaged in the early reading initiative.

15. Additionally, small ECCE lending libraries would be established in each participating pre-primary education institution (1,220 small libraries, in total), ensuring that children would have access to storybooks beyond the length of the Project. Children who do not receive storybooks during project implementation would also benefit from the Project, by visiting the lending libraries and borrowing some books, as the libraries will be open to all children in the respective communities.

16. *Implementing the Half-day School Readiness Program* - this subcomponent would finance the implementation of the half-day model in the neediest 1,220 existing pre-school education institutions located in rural areas<sup>20</sup>, through the purchase and distribution of TLM, furniture, outdoor and indoor recreation equipment; pre-primary teachers would also be trained to deliver the flexible model. This provision of TLM and equipment for the half-day model supports ESP Output “1.2 - Physical condition and availability of kindergartens improved, including their equipment”. The physical status of facilities provides visible signs of quality to parents, and enrollment rates are positively correlated with well-maintained facilities. In Uzbekistan, only 34 percent of ECCE facilities are rated as fully equipped, which may deter parents from enrolling their children. Pre-primary education institutions would be selected to implement the half-day model based on objective criteria designed to target schools in underserved areas most in need of investment (see table below). All pre-primary education institutions to benefit from the half-day model shall have their physical infrastructure repaired by the GoU using the State or local budget, prior to the distribution of any materials.

**Table 2 - Criteria to Select Pre-primary Education Institutions**

Dimensions	Categories	Points
1 - Need for improvement of preschool education quality by providing with multimedia systems, educational manuals and materials	Classified by MoPE as not fully equipped	4
	Classified by MoPE as fully equipped	0
2 - Classroom available for half-day	Classroom available	4

<sup>20</sup> Data from MoPE show that there were 2,605 pre-primary centers located in rural areas, in 2010. The neediest 1,220 centers out of these 2,605 (approximately 47%) would benefit from the proposed Project.

model	No classroom available	0
3 - Availability of qualified teachers	Less than 20 percent of teachers have a university degree	2
	More than 20 percent of teachers have a university degree	0
4 - Location of educational institutions in the countryside	Over 20 km from rayon center	2
	10 to 19 km from rayon center	1
	Less than 10 km from rayon center	0
5 - Rate of preschool aged children covered by the state pre-primary education institution in the province	Enrollment rates less than 20 percent	2
	Enrollment rates greater than 20 percent	0

**Total possible score**

**14**

17. In each pre-primary education institution, an existing classroom would be outfitted to provide the half-day model with TLM, equipment and furniture (1,220 classrooms, in total). In order to minimize the potential for parents with children enrolled in full day programs to question or resent the provision of new high-quality materials to half-day model students only, some additional TLM, equipment and furniture would be distributed to at least other 1,220 classrooms, in the same group of selected schools, aside from those where the half-day model would be implemented. The Project would produce TLM in at least three languages: Uzbek, Russian, and Karakalpak. Both Russian and Karakalpak are officially designated as languages of ethnic minorities in Uzbekistan. According to the most recent data, by producing TLM in Uzbek, Russian and Karakalpak, the Project would provide materials to 98% of all pre-primary students in their mother tongue (Tajik, Kazakh and several other languages of ethnic minorities account for the remaining 2% of children). In Uzbekistan, the language of instruction at pre-primary education schools is determined by parental consensus for each class. The Project would phase in the implementation of the half-day model, providing inputs to 300 schools in the first school year and the remaining 920 schools in the second school year.

18. This subcomponent would support the purchase and distribution of outdoor and recreation equipment that all children at the selected pre-primary centers can access. Children need safe places to play and promote the exploration of their world. The outdoor recreation equipment could also be used by children enrolled in the full day program at ECCE centers where the half-day model is offered. It is estimated that 62,000 children (of which 31,000 are girls) of selected centers would benefit from improved environments, in addition to the 50,000 children of the half-day model.

19. *Improving the Quality of Pre-Primary Teachers* – this subcomponent would finance the training and on-going mentoring of the half-day model teachers, as well as learning group exercises (learning circles). These activities directly support ESP Output “1.3 - Quality of pre-school personnel improved according to Resolution 25 Annex 1, §§ 8.1, 8.2, 8.3”. In Uzbekistan, all teachers are required to meet minimum qualifications of three years’ vocational training. In practice, 77 percent of pre-primary teachers have specialized vocational training and 22 percent had a university degree as qualifications to teach children in the full day program in 2010<sup>21</sup>. The half-day model would require the knowledge of some different teaching methodologies, including child-centered approaches and holistic early childhood development. Additionally, teachers should be able to implement the half-day *Bolajon* curriculum and engage parents in early reading activities. Similar innovative ECCE approaches in other settings have successfully provided teachers with the skills they need to teach a school readiness class with a limited amount of pre-service training and on-going in-service training and mentoring.

20. Existing pre-primary teachers would be trained through a cascade model and would receive on-going mentoring throughout the Project. First, 60 master teachers (cascade trainers) would receive two days of training at the Central Institute for Teacher Training and Retraining named after A. Avloniy, in: effective ways to deliver

<sup>21</sup> Official MoPE data.

training material; interactive activities to engage participants; and background on the half-day *Bolajon* curriculum. The master teacher trainers shall be selected from the group of lead teachers and others with experience as training facilitators. They would be responsible for training 2,000 teachers (it is estimated that 65% of the participating 1,220 pre-primary schools would operate two shifts a day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon) at the regional teacher training institutes for pre-primary education. The training of the half-day teachers would be ten days in duration, and would include child-centered pedagogy, the role of school readiness, methods for engaging parents in early learning, and effective methods for reading aloud. All training activities would be phased to accommodate implementation of the half-day model in 300 centers in the first implementation year, and 920 centers in the second project implementation year. As mentioned previously, the quality of pre-primary teachers training would be assessed through the studies to be financed by the subcomponent 1.1.

21. The training activities would incorporate a session on addressing and identifying the requirements of children with less serious special needs. In Uzbekistan, children with some special needs, including those who are blind, deaf, and have serious mental disabilities, attend separate pre-primary schools. Therefore, the Project would reach those children with other special needs that remain in pre-primary schools to be treated by speech therapists.

22. Additionally, 100 existing methodologists would become mentors to half-day model teachers and would also receive two days of training at the central level (at A. Avloniy) in child-centered pedagogy, classroom observation, and mentoring techniques. Highly effective methodologists would be selected to be mentors, and they would be responsible for providing continuous support to half-day teachers. Each mentor would support about 20 half-day pre-primary teachers through feedback on classroom practices provided during school visits financed by the Project. The mentors would also facilitate periodic learning circles, in geographic clusters, so that half-day model teachers can exchange best teaching practices, become aware of successful strategies to overcome challenges, and receive guidance from their mentors. Moreover, each methodologist<sup>22</sup> would receive a laptop to facilitate overall monitoring of ECCE, as well as feedback to half-day teachers (for those methodologists who are also mentors).

23. Project funds would finance a training module on (i) the legislation on child and forced labor in Uzbekistan, and (ii) aspects of the associated third party monitoring and feedback mechanism<sup>23</sup>, given the findings of the social analysis carried out for the proposed Project (see more information in Annexes 3 and 7). This training module would inform project beneficiaries about the initiatives on third party monitoring and feedback mechanism, explain their importance and strengthen beneficiaries' capacity to provide meaningful feedback.

24. Activities in Component 1 are closely aligned with the ESP in the sub-sector of ECD/Pre-school. The plan calls for development of "children's health and personalities developed in preparation for learning in school". There are priority programs of development and support of ECD services, expansion of the half-day model, and support to parents for early learning in the home.

25. **Component 2 - Improving Conditions for Better Learning Outcomes in General Educational Secondary Schools (total estimated cost: US\$ 25.31 million, of which US\$ 23.12 is from the GPE grant).** The objective of this component is to improve conditions for better learning outcomes in rural general educational secondary schools, by improving the training system for teachers and school managers and increasing the availability of adequate equipment and teaching and learning materials. By the end of the proposed Project, it is expected an improved in-service teacher training system.

26. **Subcomponent 2.1 – Supporting Training Programs for Teachers and School Managers.** This subcomponent would support the professional development of education personnel through improvements of training conditions at all 16 in-service training and retraining institutions, upgrade of training modules, revision of

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<sup>22</sup> At present, there are 222 pre-primary school education methodologists, in Uzbekistan.

<sup>23</sup> The Third Part Monitoring and Feedback Mechanism in the context of the World Bank's portfolio in Uzbekistan are currently being discussed/finalized and therefore the relevant disclosure should not be considered as final.

the regulatory framework of the promotion system, and development of information systems in support to the training system. The implementing unit of this subcomponent would be the Main Department for Organizing Activity of Educational Establishments. By the end of the Project, it is expected that 200,000 teachers and school managers of pre-primary and general educational secondary schools are trained in advanced areas of teaching and education management.

27. *Improving Conditions of Teacher Training and Retraining Institutes* - project funds would be used to better equip all 16 central and regional teacher training and retraining institutes, in order to improve existing training conditions for education personnel, which include teachers, methodologists, and principals of pre-primary and general educational secondary schools. These activities would be implemented aligned with the ESP, which includes requirements for strengthened in-service institutions (outputs 4.2 and 4.3). Each institute would benefit from the establishment of a training resource center and would have current classrooms upgraded into multimedia lecture rooms. The equipment provided by the proposed Project would allow for wider exposure to international resources in the education area, modern instruction and the trainees' learning achievements assessment, facilitate research by trainees and trainers, and orientation in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) equipment that is used at the school level. The equipment is also needed for operating the training management information systems to be developed under the Project.

28. *Technical Assistance to Upgrade Training Programs* - the content of in-service training programs would be improved under this subcomponent. The development of training modules and revision of the related regulations contribute to the ESP (outputs 4.2 and 4.4). To address gaps in existing courses, training modules would be developed in several advanced areas of high demand, including education management, pedagogic techniques and methodological support, ICT, inclusive education, foreign language teaching, and distance learning. In the process of upgrading training programs, the following elements supported by the BEP Phase II would be considered: results of the grade 4 student assessment (to be made public by the end of 2013), classrooms observations and educational staff training needs assessment. The reasons for selecting the mentioned areas include:

- the introduction of per capita financing in pre-primary and general educational secondary schools in 2010 accompanied has increased the responsibilities of school directors, who have more financial autonomy now. These additional responsibilities demand new knowledge and skills from the school directors;
- preliminary assessment of teachers' training needs under BEP II indicates great interest of teachers in strengthening their teaching techniques (general and subject related), as well as in more support from the methodologists and *ustozes* in the utilization of new knowledge and skills obtained during in-service training courses;
- the new regulation on foreign language teaching requires new training module in this area.

29. Project funds would finance a training module on (i) the legislation on child and forced labor in Uzbekistan, and (ii) aspects of the associated third party monitoring and feedback mechanism, given the findings of the social analysis carried out for the proposed Project (see more information in Annexes 3 and 7). This training module would inform project beneficiaries about the initiatives on third party monitoring and feedback mechanism, explain their importance and strengthen beneficiaries' capacity to provide meaningful feedback.

30. This subcomponent would also support the development and production of teaching materials for training institutes. These materials would be developed in Uzbek, Russian and Karakalpak languages. The new modules would be intergraded into the regular courses of the training institutions. The TA would support the training of 192 master trainers at the 16 in-service institutions, as the first stage of a cascade training approach. Then, these master trainers would train the teachers and school managers in their respective institutions. As part of the regular training and retraining program of MoPE, the in-service institutions train around 110,000 educational workers (including 4,000 educational staff) annually, in average. This regular training program is financed by the State budget. Although the proposed Project would not support pre-service teacher training activities, the staff of pre-service training institutions would be invited to attend the training initiatives financed by this subcomponent.

31. This subcomponent would support classroom and training observations in two different stages of the implementation of Project-financed training activities, for the purposes of the assessment of the quality of teaching. The training process (in the areas supported by the proposed Project) and the activities of teachers in their classrooms would be observed. The training participants' feedback on the new modules would be collected and analyzed.

32. The subcomponent would also finance TA to support the revision of the regulatory framework of the in-service training system to achieve three major objectives: (i) align required intervals for training and attestation; (ii) allow education personnel more choice in training module subjects; and (iii) promote flexibility in the delivery of training to include seminars, workshops, and distance learning. This TA should help to address issues of discrepancy between training and attestation cycles, which affect incentives for professional development and provide a base for further development of the module-based training and certification.

33. *Development of Training Management Information System* – to enhance the operation of all 16 INSET institutions, this subcomponent would also support the development and installation of the following information systems: (i) virtual library; (ii) teachers and principals training management system; and (iii) needs in training on inclusive education. The virtual library would provide access to international resources in the education area, and create a network so that digital materials can be shared between in-service and pre-service institutions and libraries. To better plan INSET courses and allocate adequate resources, the training institutions and respective education authorities need a system able to provide information on staff qualification, training history, training needs and attestation requirements. This information system would replace the current paper-based system with multiple records to create digital profiles. Lastly, the system on inclusive education would store data on special needs students to inform their teachers about their educational requirements.

34. **Subcomponent 2.2 - Supporting the Implementation of Minimum School Standards.** Funds of this subcomponent would be used to finance the implementation of minimum school standards in rural general educational secondary schools. The concept of minimum school standards in Uzbekistan includes requirements for teaching and learning materials, ICT equipment, furniture, and school infrastructure. This subcomponent would support the implementation of minimum school standards in terms of ICT equipment for computer labs and teaching and learning materials, upon completion of any necessary improvements in schools' infrastructure at the expense of the State or local budget.

35. This subcomponent would complement the GoU's and donor's efforts to provide general educational secondary schools with adequate teaching and learning resources, materials and aids. This is to be done in full alignment with the priorities of the ESP and in coordination with education projects or initiatives supported by other donors also focused on equipping schools with teaching and learning resources. The provision of the ICT equipment and teaching and learning materials is closely related to the ESP Output "2.2 – Schools Equipped with Modern Tools, Libraries, Laboratory Equipment and Computers, which Allow for Effective Utilization of Modern Teaching Technologies".

36. The Project intends to improve learning conditions in general educational secondary schools over the short duration of its activities to lay the foundation for improving learning outcomes over the medium and long-term. There is a rich debate in the literature about the linkages between educational inputs and learning outcomes, and the literature shows that better conditions in schools may contribute to increased learning outcomes. A recent review by Paul Glewwe et al. (2011) covered 79 studies, from 1990 to 2010, and found very promising results for the effect of school infrastructure and pedagogical materials, in particular textbooks and furniture<sup>24</sup>, on student learning. Previous reviews have found similar impacts, including Harbison and Hanushek (1992), Fuller (1994), and Eduardo Velez and co-authors (1993). Concerning the linkages between investments in ICT equipment and learning

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<sup>24</sup> See School Resources and Educational Outcomes in Developing Countries: A Review of the Literature from 1990 to 2010, Glewwe et al. (2011). For textbooks, 26 out of 60 estimates were significant and positive, and just 4 were significant and negative. For furniture, 8 out of 28 estimates were significant and positive, and no effects were negative.



outcomes, findings show that ICT equipment can create learning gains when computer-assisted learning programs reinforce skills learned in the classroom, or when computer use is directly linked to pedagogy<sup>25</sup>. Aside from immediate learning gains, ICT skills are increasingly important in the context of knowledge economy, and school may be the first place where students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds are exposed to computers<sup>26</sup>.

37. The implementing unit of this subcomponent would be the Department for Organizing the Material Technical Support of Educational Institutions. By the end of the Project, it is expected that 1,220 rural general educational secondary schools meet minimum school standards in terms of ICT equipment and teaching and learning materials. General educational secondary schools would be selected to benefit from this subcomponent based on objective criteria designed to target schools in underserved areas most in need of investment (see table below).

**Table 3 - Criteria to Select General Educational Secondary Schools**

Dimensions	Categories	Points
1 - Location in the countryside	30 km or more from rayon center	4
	20 to 29 km from rayon center	3
	10 to 19 km from rayon center	2
	Up to 10 km from rayon center	1
	Located in rayon center	0
2 – Number of students enrolled	More than 200 students are enrolled	2
	200 students or less are enrolled	0
3 - Computer lab equipment is outdated or lacking	Computer classroom does not exist	2
	Majority of equipment in computer classrooms was purchased five or more years ago	1
	Majority of equipment in computer classrooms was purchased within four years or less	0
4 – Percentage of students that meet state standards in grade 5 (average of shares in Maths and Language)	Percentage of students meeting state standards is lower than 66 percent	2
	Percentage of students meeting state standards is 66 percent or higher	0
5 – Percentage of students that meet state standards in grade 9 (average of shares in Maths and Language)	Percentage of students meeting state standards is lower than 85 percent	2
	Percentage of students meeting state standards is 85 percent or higher	0
<b>Total possible score</b>		<b>12</b>

38. The activities of the Component 2 are closely aligned with the ESP in the two relevant sub-sectors of general secondary education and teacher training and retraining<sup>27</sup> (see Figure 2 below). In the sub-sector of general secondary education, the strategy focuses on the development of favorable conditions for children's training at school, and improving the quality of teaching and learning with the goal to develop "learners' general knowledge, independent thinking skills, and organizational skills developed in preparation for the successful progression in the education system". The sub-sector of teacher training and retraining prioritizes the differentiation of in-service training based on professional challenges and educational needs of teachers with the overall outcome of "teachers

<sup>25</sup> See Banerjee et al. (2005); Barrow et al. (2008); and *infoDev's* Knowledge Map on the Impact of ICTs on Learning and Achievement.

<sup>26</sup> See OECD (2011), PISA 2009 Results: Students on Line: Digital Technologies and Performance (Volume VI).

<sup>27</sup> The ESP considers teacher training and retraining as one of the educational sub-sectors, given its relevance for the country's education system.

prepared for the transmission of knowledge, independent thinking and organizational skills to learners, and for the development of learners' personalities in preparation for their contribution to society”.

**Figure 2 – Linkages between the ESP and the Component 2**

ESP's outputs	Project activities
2.2 - Schools equipped with modern tools, libraries, laboratory equipment and computers, which allows for effective utilization of modern teaching technologies	Providing the Neediest General Educational Secondary Schools with ICT Equipment
	Providing the Neediest General Educational Secondary Schools with Teaching and Learning Materials
2.3 - Professionalism and capacity of teachers and educational managers strengthened for installing and evaluating knowledge, and for fostering independent thinking skills in learners	Technical Assistance on Preparing Training Programs and Delivering Training Activities in Several Areas of Education Management and Teaching and Learning
4.2 - Flexible in-service teacher training system in line with modern requirements, interests and needs of the individual teacher developed	Technical Assistance on Preparing the Legal Framework and Regulations for the Attestation of Teachers and School Managers Training
	Technical Assistance on Preparing Training Programs and Delivering Training Activities in Several Areas of Education Management and Teaching and Learning
4.3 - Material, technical and informational base of in-service institutions strengthened	Improving Conditions of Teachers Training and Retraining Institutions
	Providing Digital Materials for Training of Teachers and School Managers
4.5 - Mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of pre- and in-service training established	Supporting the Development and Installation of Information Systems for Training and Retraining Institutes (Training Management Information System, Inclusive Education Information System and Virtual Library Network)

39. **Component 3 – Strengthening the Capacity to Monitor the Education System (total estimated cost: US\$ 6.3 million, of which US\$ 6.08 is from the GPE grant).** This component would support activities aimed at strengthening the students' assessment system and supporting project day-to-day management. A lean Project Management Team would be established to support the existing structures for project implementation within MoPE. By the end of the Project, it is expected that the results of students' assessments in Mathematics and native language for grades 4 and 9 are analyzed and publicly disseminated.

40. **Subcomponent 3.1 – Strengthening the Education System Monitoring Capacity.** This subcomponent would support the strengthening of the existing capacity to monitor the education system, which is one of the major responsibilities of MoPE's Main Department of Development of the Training and Education Process in General Secondary Schools. Improving the monitoring capacity is aligned with ESP Output “2.4 - M&E strategy extended to include monitoring of QBE criteria in the general secondary education teaching process and learning environment”. Project funds would be used to build capacity on education quality monitoring as well as to improve existing management information systems. Additionally, this subcomponent would finance the purchase of ICT equipment for all 14 province education departments, 194 district education departments and MoPE. In addition, 832 users of these management information systems would be trained using project funds.

41. *Standardized Assessment of 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Graders* – this subcomponent would finance another round of standardized students' assessments in Mathematics and native language for Grade 4. Students of Grade 9 would also participate in the third round of the national standardized assessment. These assessments would enable decision-makers to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the education system, based on results of sample-based national standardized tests and build on BEP experiences. Technical assistance would be provided by the proposed Project to strengthen the existing capacity to develop and conduct these tests as well as to analyze and disseminate

their results.

**Subcomponent 3.2 – Project Management:** This subcomponent would finance the following activities: technical assistance to strengthen MoPE’s capacity to implement the proposed Project; project audits; and operational and staffing costs of the Project Management Team.

42. As the implementation would rely primarily on the existing structure of MoPE and the proposed activities to be financed by the Project are part of the everyday work of its staff, a Project Management Team would be set up to support the day-to-day management of the Project (see more information in Annex 3). A team of five local consultants would be hired using project funds for this purpose, including a Project Coordinator, a Procurement Specialist, a Financial Management Specialist, a Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, and a translator. Additionally, six local consultants would be hired to technically support the implementation of the proposed activities - three for the Component 1, two for the Component 2 and one for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Component. Lastly, given the concentration of several procurement activities to be prepared and launched in the first year of implementation, a Procurement Specialist with international experience will be hired using project funds to assist the Project Management Team under a time-based contract.

### Annex 3: Implementation Arrangements

#### Improving Pre-Primary and General Secondary Education Project

##### Project Institution and Implementation Arrangements

1. The Ministry of Public Education would be the project implementing agency. Project implementation would rely primarily on the existing structure of MoPE, as the proposed activities to be financed by the Project are part of the everyday work of its staff. Thus, the proposed Project would not require the establishment of a parallel structure or a full scale Project Implementation Unit. Instead, a small team of local consultants (a Project Management Team - PMT) would be supported using project funds to assist MoPE with day-to-day project management, and make sure it is implemented in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Legal Agreement, the Project Appraisal Document and the Project Operations Manual.

2. The Deputy Minister of Public Education, as Project Director, would be responsible for overall leadership and management of the proposed Project, as well as liaison with the World Bank, the Local Education Group (LEG) and Development Partner Group (DPG). The Heads of MoPE's Departments would be responsible for implementing specific subcomponents, as illustrated below.

**Figure 3 – Matrix of Responsibilities for the Implementation of Project Subcomponents**

Components	Subcomponents	Responsible Units
1 - Improving Access to Quality Early Childhood Education Opportunities	1.1 – Developing More Flexible and Efficient ECCE Service Provision	Department of Pre-School Educational Institutions
	1.2 – Implementing Quality Early Childhood Education Opportunities	Department of Pre-School Educational Institutions
2 - Improving Conditions for Better Learning Outcomes in General Educational Secondary Schools	2.1 – Supporting Training Programs for Teachers and School Managers	Main Department for Organizing Activity of Educational Establishments
	2.2 - Supporting the Implementation of Minimum School Standards	Department for Organizing the Material Technical Support of Educational Institutions
3 – Strengthening the Capacity to Monitor the Education System	3.1 – Strengthening the Education System Monitoring Capacity	Main Department of Development of the Training and Education Process in General Secondary Schools
	3.2 – Project Management	PMT

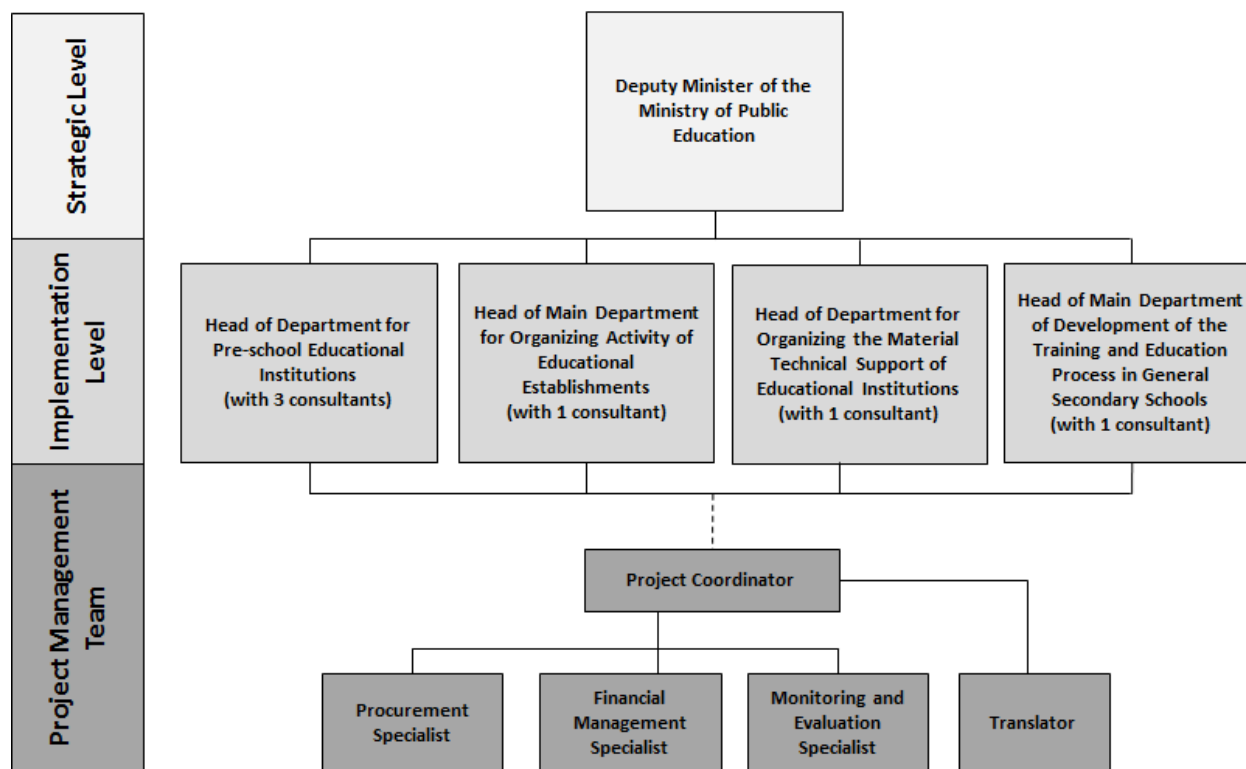
3. The PMT would *manage* the project activities *under strategic guidance of the Deputy Minister of Public Education and in line with the implementation lead given by the department heads*. A small team of five local consultants would be hired using project funds. The PMT would include a Project Coordinator, a Procurement Specialist, a Financial Management Specialist, a translator and a Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist. The Project Component 3 would finance the operational costs of the PMT and project audits.

4. Additionally, six local consultants would be hired to technically support the implementation of the proposed activities as follows: three for the Component 1 (attached to the Department of Pre-School Educational Institutions), two for the Component 2 (attached to the Main Department for Organizing Activity of Educational Establishments and the Department for Organizing the Material Technical Support of Educational Institutions) and one for the Component 3 (attached to the Main Department of Development of the Training and Education Process in General Secondary Schools). Given the concentration of several procurement activities to be prepared and launched before in the first year of implementation, a Procurement Specialist with international experience would

be hired using project funds to assist the Project Management Team under a time-based contract. These implementation arrangements are reflected in the illustration below.

**Figure 4**

### Implementation Arrangements



### Financial Management, Disbursements and Procurement

#### Country Issues

5. According to the findings of the Country Integrated Fiduciary Assessment (CIFA) report for Uzbekistan and UZ Accounting & Auditing ROSC report, the capacity in the accounting profession in the country is still low as there is no critical mass of professionally qualified accountants. Knowledge of internationally recognized accounting and auditing standards, such as IFRS, IPSAS, ISA, is limited, in both the public and private sectors. As such, MoPE does not have any accountants with internationally recognized accounting qualifications. However, the Chief Accountant is quite knowledgeable about National Accounting Standards that, in most cases, are based on international standards.

6. Most Bank-financed projects in the country are implemented through stand-alone project implementing agencies that install parallel accounting systems to those used in the respective line ministries. Audit of Bank-financed projects in the country has been performed by private sector firms that meet the Bank's eligibility criteria. Recently, the Bank conducted a review of local audit firms to determine their capacity to audit Bank-financed projects, and five firms were qualified for audit of project financial statements, such as would be required under the Project.

7. **Implementing Entity:** MoPE would be responsible for implementation of the financial management (FM) function of the proposed Project, including the flow of funds, budgeting, accounting, reporting, and auditing. The FM assessment was carried out to determine the FM implementation risk and found that the FM arrangements at MoPE, including accounting, reporting, planning, and budgeting, and staffing was considered to be moderately satisfactory to the Bank. Inherent risk of the Project is rated as substantial, while the control risk and the overall FM risk are both considered to be moderate.

8. **Strengths and Weaknesses:** the significant strengths that provide a basis for reliance on the project FM system include: (i) FM arrangements similar to BEP II, which was implemented successfully by a PIU within MoPE and found to be satisfactory; (ii) experienced FM staff (an existing contract should be renewed); (iii) proper internal controls and well operational accounting system in place.

9. The following capacity building action has been agreed to be implemented:

Action for capacity building	Responsible	Completion date
Update the Financial Management Chapter of the Project Operational Manual to reflect the project related internal control, budgeting, external auditing, financial reporting and accounting policies and procedures	MoPE	By effectiveness

10. **Budgeting and Planning:** the MoPE had, in general, acceptable budgeting and planning capacity under the recently closed BEP II Project. The annual budget of the Project will be based on the final procurement plan that is approved by the World Bank. All changes to the procurement plan will be reviewed by the Project Coordinator, approved by the Deputy Minister and then approved by the World Bank. The Project Coordinator, the Financial Management Specialist, and the Procurement Specialist will be involved in the preparation of the annual budget. These budgets will form the basis for allocating funds to project activities and requesting counterpart funds from the Government, where appropriate. The budgets will be prepared according to the Interim Financial Report (IFR) format (disbursement categories, components and activities, account codes, and broken down by quarter).

11. **Accounting and Maintaining of Accounting Records:** the MoPE has solid prior experience maintaining the independent accounting system. Project accounting is maintained based on the UZ National Accounting Standards. For reporting purposes, cash basis International Public Sector Accounting Standards and World Bank guidelines for Borrowers will be used under the Project. The FM Manual of the recently closed BEP II properly reflects accounting policies and procedures and will be used under the proposed Project. All supporting documents will be maintained in files for ready access by auditors and Bank staff. The Project's chart of accounts will track all transactions and report them according to source of financing project components, and type and category of expenditure. The accounting software 1-C has been adapted and used by the MoPE to meet the World Bank-financed project requirements, including the ability to generate IFRs, withdrawal applications, statement of expenditures, and annual financial statements. In addition, regular backups of the accounting data are done by the accounting staff. The MoPE will hire a well experienced financial management consultant to be responsible for overall FM arrangements of the proposed Project.

12. **Internal Controls:** the PIU's internal controls system was assessed in to be capable of providing timely information and reporting on the BEP II. The Financial Management Manual is well prepared and fully documents accounting and financial reporting policies and procedures. Under the BEP II, the PIU conducted monthly formal reconciliation of the World Bank disbursement data with project's accounting records via Client Connection. Formal reconciliation of the special and local accounts with the project records was done on a monthly basis. The PIU had adequate internal control procedures in place over operational expenses. The FM Manual for the proposed Project will be updated to reflect the specific activities of the project, like Audit TOR, frequency of submission, format of IFRs, and so forth.

13. **Financial Reporting:** MoPE prepared quarterly IFRs for the BEP II. Those IFRs for FY 2013 and first quarter for FY 2014 were usually received on-time and generally found to be acceptable. Project-management-oriented Interim Unaudited Financial Reports (IFRs) will be prepared under the proposed Project. The MoPE will produce a full set of IFRs every calendar quarter throughout the life of the project. The format of IFRs has been agreed during the assessment and includes (i) Project Sources and Uses of Funds, (ii) Uses of Funds by Project Activities, (iii) Designated Account Statements, (iv) Project Balance Sheet, and (v) a Statement of Expenditure Withdrawal Schedule. IFRs will be produced by the accounting software. These financial reports will be submitted to the Bank within 45 days of the end of each calendar quarter. The annual audited project's financial statements and audit report together with the management letter will be provided to the Bank within six months of the end of each fiscal year and also at the closing of the Project.

14. **External Audit:** the final audit report for BEP II and the accompanying project financial statements have been received on time. The auditor has issued unmodified (clean) opinion on the project's financial statements. BEP II annual and final audit reports and the accompanying project financial statements were usually found acceptable to the Bank. The proposed project audit would be conducted (i) by independent private auditors acceptable to the Bank, on terms of Reference acceptable to the Bank, and selected by MoPE; and (ii) according to the International Standards on Auditing (ISA) issued by the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC). The ToR will include (i) audits of financial statements, (ii) assessments of the accounting system, and (iii) a review of the internal control mechanisms. The following table identifies the required audit reports that will be submitted by MoPE together with the due date for submission.

Audit Report	Due date
The Project Financial Statements include Project Balance Sheet, Sources and Uses of Funds, Uses of Funds by project activities, Statement of Expenditures Withdrawal Schedule, Designated Account Statement, Notes to the financial statements, and Reconciliation Statement	Within 6 months of the end of each fiscal year and also at the closing of the Project

15. The audited financial statements will be disclosed to the public in a manner acceptable to the Bank. Following the Bank's formal receipt of these statements from the borrower, the Bank makes them available to the public in accordance with the World Bank Policy on Access to Information.

16. **Flow of Funds and Disbursement arrangements:** grant funds will flow to the Project via disbursements to one Designated Account (DA) maintained by the MoPE. The Project will follow transaction-based disbursement procedures (advances to the DA, reimbursements, direct payments, and special commitments). Withdrawals from the Grant Account will be requested according to requirements in the Disbursement Letter. The Ceiling of the Designated Account will be US\$ 1,500,000 and eligible expenditures paid from this Account would be reported to the Bank at least quarterly. Withdrawal applications will be signed by an authorized representative of the Recipient, from the Ministry of Finance or another designated official, such as the Project Coordinator, or other persons to whom these powers were delegated in writing by the Ministry of Finance.

17. Disbursements will be made on the basis of full documentation: (i) goods/services contracts for consulting firms over US\$ 100,000 each, and (ii) individual consultants' contracts over US\$ 50,000 each. Disbursements under these amounts, and training and operating costs, will be made according to certified Statements of Expenditure. Documents to support the Statements of Expenditure will be held by MoPE for at least one year after the Bank receives the audit report for the fiscal year in which the last withdrawal from the Grant Account was made. This information will be available for review during Bank staff supervision missions and for annual audits that assess the propriety of Statement of Expenditure disbursements and the quality of the records.

## Procurement

18. General: procurement for the proposed project will be carried out in accordance with the World Bank's "Guidelines: Procurement of Goods, Works and Non-Consulting Services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers" dated January 2011 and revised in July 2014 (Procurement Guidelines); and "Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers" dated January 2011 and revised in July 2014 (Consultant Guidelines) and the provisions stipulated in the Financing Agreement. If there is conflict between government decrees, rules and regulations and the Bank Procurement and Consultant Guidelines, then Bank Procurement and Consultant Guidelines shall prevail. In addition the project will also follow 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. For each contract to be financed by the Project, the different procurement methods or consultant selection methods, the need for prequalification, estimated costs, prior review requirements, and time frame are agreed between the Recipient and the Bank Team and stated in the Procurement Plan. The Procurement Plan will be updated at least annually or as required to reflect the actual project implementation needs and improvements in institutional capacity.

19. Procurement of goods: goods procured under the Project would include furniture, equipment and teaching and learning materials for pre-primary education institutions, storybooks for parents of children aged 3 to 6, as well as ICT equipment and teaching and learning material for general educational secondary schools and teacher training institutes. These goods will be procured following ICB procedures. Office furniture could be procured following NCB procedures. The Bank's latest Standard Bidding Documents (SBDs) will be used for procurement of goods following ICB procedure and SBD acceptable to the Bank will be used for procuring following NCB procedures.

20. Consulting services: the major consulting services would include: (i) technical assistance in the education area; (ii) assessment of the quality and implementation of flexible models; (iii) financial audit; and (iv) individual consultancy.

21. Operating costs: the operating costs would include expenditures related to communication and translation costs, bank charges, office supplies, advertisements, photocopying, mail and travel. They will be financed through the annual budget approved by the Bank and according to MoPE's administrative procedures. Operating costs will not include civil servants' salaries or any top ups.

22. Technical aspects: The MoPE will be responsible for developing the bidding documents and Terms of Reference (ToRs) and in consultation with the relevant departments of the Ministry (see implementation arrangements).

23. Domestic preference will apply to goods contracts, as appropriate.

24. Filing and record-keeping: the PMT will use current filing and record keeping systems established under the recently completed BEP II, including hard and/or electronic copies of procurement documents. The reporting format agreed upon would be included in the Project Operations Manual (POM).

25. Procurement Risk Assessment and Mitigation: as part of project preparation, an *Assessment of the Procurement Capacity of MoPE* was carried out, in July 2013. The country procurement assessment report (Report # 25653 UZ), conducted in 2003, by the Bank and ADB, identified the following weaknesses in the public procurement system in Uzbekistan: (a) absence of a unified legislative framework; (b) inefficient and non-transparent procurement practices; (c) absence of a single institution with oversight or regulatory authority on public procurement practices; (d) weak capacity to deal with bidders' complaints; (e) lack of independent scrutiny of contracts; (f) lack of comprehensive anti-corruption measures; and (g) low skills/capacity of the staff handling public procurement at every administrative level. Further recently, it was noted that (i) the government decrees and rules and regulations have internal conflict in major provisions such as price verification after contract signature for all import contracts and international contractors/consultants which leads to considerable delays in project



procurement and implementation; (ii) the difficulty in obtaining bank guarantee for bid security and performance security by the bidders and non-availability of alternative instruments for such purpose in the country banking system and (iii) considerable procurement delays in implementing the on-going project due to lack of procurement capacity. Private sector suppliers and contractors remain unsatisfied with the rules governing public procurement and have little confidence in the system's fairness. The recent Country Integrated Fiduciary Assessment (CIFA) revised the procurement environment to be considered a high risk and no major change in public procurement environment was noticed during the just completed PEFA review. The overall procurement assessed using PRAMS is high.

26. As per implementation arrangement for the Project, MoPE will be responsible for procurement under the Project with the assistance of the Project Management Team (PMT). Procurement arrangements for the Project are considered acceptable, since they are ring-fenced from public procurement, and use only Bank Procurement and Consultant Guidelines. The procurement capacity will be strengthened by providing training and technical assistance to the local procurement consultant of the PMT. He/she will be encouraged to attend regional procurement training conducted by the Bank within CA countries and other in-country procurement training/workshops. Staff involved in the proposed Project will continue to be trained in the overall procurement procedures to ensure up-to-date knowledge and capacity building. Additionally, given the concentration of several procurement activities to be prepared and launched in the first year of implementation, a Procurement Specialist with international experience will be hired using project funds to assist the PMT under a time-based contract.

27. Procurement arrangements: The project procurement will be carried out by the PMT, which would have one Procurement Specialist throughout project life. The local Procurement Specialist who is involved in the recently completed BEP II could be engaged. The MoPE with the support of the PMT will carry out procurement activities following Bank's Procurement and Consultant Guidelines. A Procurement Specialist with international experience will be hired (see information above).

28. Procurement Plan: the MoPE has developed the Procurement Plan covering procurement activities for the first 18 months of project implementation. This Plan will be continuously updated by MoPE and will be reviewed by the Bank accordingly. The Procurement Plan will be published on the MoPE's and Bank's external website, by the time of Project negotiations. The POM will elaborate on the appropriate mechanisms for procurement according Bank Guidelines. Advertisement of procurement opportunities will also be published on the MoPE website. The General Procurement Notice (GPN) and Specific Procurement Notices (SPN) shall be published in the UN development business, Bank's external website and in Uzbek media. The POM will include the complaint registration and handling mechanism so any complaint is treated fairly and openly. Any complaint concerning the procurement or other aspects of the Project implementation has to be registered and dealt within a time frame agreed in the POM. The procurement-related risks and respective mitigation measures are summarized in the table below:

<b>Description of risk</b>	<b>Rating of risk (*)</b>	<b>Mitigation measures</b>	<b>Residual risk</b>
Contract registration requirements are arduous and may seriously impact procurement and the implementation timeline	H	The team will monitor contract award notification and publication of contract award details as per Bank Procurement and Consultant Guidelines. The team will further monitor receipt of signed prior review contracts and take timely action to ensure Bank Guidelines are followed	S
Staff of implementing agency have limited experience with Bank procedures and new guidelines	H	The hiring of seasoned local Procurement Specialist by MoPE, who will attend Bank's regional procurement training, and international procurement consultant will mitigate this risk.	M
Government officials may intervene in the procurement decisions under the Project	S	The POM shall clearly define the responsibilities of the Project stockholders in the procurement process. The Bank's procurement procedures shall be followed strictly. Complaint handling system shall be defined in POM and will be in place	M
Lack of qualified suppliers for goods to be financed by the Project	S	The MoPE will conduct bidders workshop to attract more qualified bidders	M
<b>Average</b>	H		M

(\*) H: High; S: Substantial; M: Moderate; L: Low. Detailed risk mitigation measures are listed in the PRAMS

29. **Procurement Plan:** the Procurement Plan for the appraisal, with preliminary dates is given below.

<b>Item No</b>	<b>Component Reference as per PAD</b>	<b>Contract Ref No.</b>	<b>Contract Description</b>	<b>Procu. Method</b>	<b>Date of Bid Opening</b>
1.	Components 1,2,3	GPE/Grant/ICB1	Printing Materials: storybooks, set of sample pictures, set of posters, set of manuals and literature for pedagogical staff, printed and digital materials distributed to teachers and school managers, TLM training and retraining institutes. (1.2.1; 1.2.3; 2.1.5; 2.1.6; 2.2.2)	ICB	03/20/2015
2.	Components 1,2,3	GPE/Grant/ICB2	Procurement of outdoor equipment, recreational equipment and furniture: LOT 1-outdoor equipment; LOT 2-recreational equipment; LOT 3-Furniture; (1.2.2)	ICB	03/20/2015
3.	Components 1,2,3	GPE/Grant/ICB3	Procurement of learning multimedia means: compute class set; laptops; ICT equipment; ICT for monitoring. (2.2.1; 2.1.1; 1.2.4)	ICB	03/20/2015
4.	Components 1,2,3	GPE/Grant/ICB4	Procurement of learning multimedia means: LOT 1-compute class set. (2.2.1; 3.1.1)	ICB	03/20/2015
5.	Component 3		Office equipment and furniture for PMT (3.2.4)	SH	10/28/2014
6.	Component 3		Software for FM	SH	10/28/2014

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Component Reference as per PAD</b>	<b>Contract Description</b>	<b>Procurement Method</b>	<b>Date of Proposal Submission</b>	<b>WB Review (Prior/Post)</b>
1.	Component 1	1.1.3 Implementation of campaigns to encourage early reading in the home and to promote the Half-day model	QCBS	04/28/2015	Prior
2.	Component 1	1.1.4 Assessment of the implementation of flexible models of ECCE service provision	QCBS	04/28/2015	Prior
3.	Component 1	1.2.5 Strengthening the capacity of the Pre-primary education teachers to implement the Half-day model	QCBS	04/28/2015	Prior
4.	Component 2	2.1.3 Technical assistance on preparing training programs and delivering training activities in several areas of education management	QCBS	04/28/2015	Prior
5.	Component 2	2.1.4 Supporting the development and installation of information systems for training and retraining institutes (Teachers and Principals Training Management Information)	QCBS	04/28/2015	Prior
	Component 2	2.1.7 Assessing the quality of teaching in areas of education management and teaching and learning supported by the project	QCSB	04/28/2015	Prior
6.	Component 3	3.1.2 Developing and implementing management information systems to monitor the Education system	QCBS	04/28/2015	Prior
7.	Component 3	3.1.4 Assessing the learning outcomes of students of 4 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> grades in Uzbekistan language and math	QCBS	04/28/2015	Prior
8.	Component 3	Consultants' service (3.2.3 Project Financial Audits)	LCS	02/09/2015	Prior

### 30. Thresholds for Procurement Methods and Bank Prior Review

Methods of procurement: the following methods of procurement shall be used for procurement under the Project. It has been agreed that if a particular invitation for bid comprises of several packages, lots or slices, and invited in the same invitation for bid, then the aggregate value of the whole package determines the applicable threshold amount for procurement and also for the review by the Bank. The NCB conditions will be part of the Grant Agreement.

Expenditure Category	Contract Value Threshold (US\$)	Procurement Method	Contracts Subjects to Prior Review (US\$)
<b>Goods (including non-consulting services)</b>	≥1,000,000	ICB	All ICB contracts
	<1,000,000	NCB	First 2 contracts
	<100,000	Shopping	First 2 contracts
	NA	DC	All DC contracts
<b>Consultant Services (including training)</b>	Irrespective of Value	QCBS/QBS/LCS/FBS/C QS*	All contracts above US\$ 200,000 for firms; the 1-st CQS contract regardless of value; all contracts above US\$ 100,000 for individuals; and all SSS contracts
	NA	SSS	
	NA	IC	

Notes:

Shortlist may compose entirely of national consultants for assignments of less than US\$300,000 equivalent per contract.

c/ Legend:

ICB – International Competitive Bidding

NCB – National Competitive Bidding

DC – Direct Contracting

QCBS – Quality and Cost Based Selection

QBS – Quality Based Selection

LCS – Least Cost Selection

FBS – Fixed Budget Selection

\*CQS – Selection Based on Consultants’ Qualifications will be followed depending on type of assignments for estimated value less than \$200,000

SSS – Single Source Selection

IC – Individual Consultants

Procurement Supervision and Ex-post Review: Routine procurement reviews and supervision will be provided by the Procurement Specialist based in the region/country office. In addition, two supervision missions are expected to take place per year during which ex-post reviews will be conducted for the contracts that are not subject to Bank prior review on a sample basis (e.g., 20 percent in terms of number of contracts). One ex-post review report will be prepared per fiscal year, including findings of physical inspections for not less than 10 percent of the contracts awarded during the review period.

## Environmental and Social (including safeguards)

31. The GoU is a signatory of several ILO conventions<sup>28</sup> related to child and forced labor, but the enforcement of these conventions, as well as of existing national laws reflecting international agreements, has continued to be a challenge, specifically during the cotton harvest. Forced child labor in cotton harvesting used to be widespread, but has declined in recent years. A joint ILO-GoU mission took place during the cotton harvesting season in September-October 2013 to monitor the use of forced child labor in cotton harvesting. The ILO's official public statement at the completion of their monitoring activities is as follows: "In general terms, the monitoring observed widespread awareness of national laws and instructions not to allow the use of children under 18 years of age in the cotton harvest. Moreover, it would appear from the monitoring that there was no systematic recourse to forced child labor." However, forced child labor has been reportedly substituted with forced adult labor organized by local authorities and administrators of public institutions. To mitigate this risk, the proposed Project will participate in the third party monitoring and feedback mechanism currently being established to focus on issues of forced and child labor for selected projects of the World Bank portfolio in Uzbekistan. Furthermore, the training activities under Project Components 1 and 2 will include an awareness raising module on the Uzbekistan's legislation on child and forced labor. It is also expected that the Project's grant agreement will include appropriate covenants requiring that (i) the Project be carried out in accordance with applicable environment and social standards and practices and in compliance with applicable laws and regulations and international agreements on child and forced labor, and (ii) the TPM and FBM will be the agreed mechanisms to verify compliance with applicable laws and regulations on child and forced labor.

32. **Objective and Scope of the TPM and FBM<sup>29</sup>.** The TPM, which will be financed through a separate trust fund, will focus on child and forced labor issues in connection with the project activities and will be conducted during the cotton harvesting season. Feedback will be collected from both project beneficiaries and other credible stakeholders in connection with the project activities. Through the TPM, feedback will be monitored and collected on any issues related to the potential use of child and forced adult labor as defined by international conventions and national legislation. A fully independent FBM will be established, dedicated to receiving reports of alleged occurrences or evidences of child and/or forced labor that might be related to the proposed Project. Activities under the TPM and FBM include, *inter alia*: (i) capacity building and learning; (ii) periodic site visits; and (iii) periodic assessment of local context and conditions.

33. The FBM will be established under a separate trust fund, like the TPM. The FBM will be based on the following principles: (i) it will be independent from other feedback systems operated by the proposed Project; (ii) it will follow strict complaint resolution procedures; and (iii) the firm will employ a variety of awareness raising strategies to ensure that project beneficiaries are fully aware of the FBM's availability, familiar with its mode of operation, and know how to confidentially use it.

34. **Analysis and evaluation.** A detailed report will be prepared to present the findings of each TPM mission. Biannual reports will be prepared assessing the operation and effectiveness of the FBM system. All reports will be publicly disclosed after correction of any factual errors. Occurrence of child and/or forced labor in connection with the project activities, as reported by the TPM and/or FBM, might entitle the World Bank to take any appropriate measures in accordance with any applicable provisions of the Standard Conditions for Grants Made by the World Bank Out of Various Funds, dated February 15, 2012.

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<sup>28</sup> Convention no. 138 on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, Convention no. 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labor, Convention no. 29 on Forced Labor, and Convention 105 on Abolition of Forced Labor. In addition, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), also subscribed by the government, prohibits forced labor (article 8).

<sup>29</sup> The full Terms of Reference for the TPM and FBM can be found in the project file.

**Annex 4: Operational Risk Assessment Framework (ORAF)**  
**Uzbekistan: Improving Pre-Primary and General Secondary Education Project**

1. Project Stakeholder Risks							
1.1 Stakeholder Risk	Rating	Moderate					
Risk Description:  1. Government’s engagement to the education sector reform agenda is not maintained for the remainder of the Project.  2. Beneficiaries have limited voice in influencing education service provision.	Risk Management:  1. Continued advocacy by the World Bank for the reform agenda with intensive consultations with Government and donor’s community.						
	Resp: Bank	Status: In Progress	Stage: Both	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency	Yearly
	Risk Management:  2. Communication campaigns implemented to inform stakeholders on the reform agenda.						
	Resp: Client	Status: Not Yet Due	Stage: Implementation	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency	Yearly
2. Implementing Agency (IA) Risks (including Fiduciary Risks)							
2.1 Capacity	Rating	Moderate					
Risk Description:  1. There is a risk of insufficient coordination to implement project activities across different units within MoPE.  2. An impediment to project implementation is the government’s requirement for contracts registration and price verification by the MEFRIT and	Risk Management:  1. Extensive training and capacity building is part of the project design and implementation. Project operational procedures will be regularly updated to reflect lessons learnt during implementation. The Project Operations Manual will define processes and roles and responsibilities on technical and fiduciary areas.						
	Resp: Client	Status: Not Yet Due	Stage: Implementation	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency	Yearly
	Risk Management:						

MoPE. This requirement could cause delays for project implementation.	2. MoPE will monitor delays in contracts registration and initiate actions, as per Bank’s Procurement Guidelines.						
	Resp: Client	Status: Not Yet Due	Stage: Implementation	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency Yearly	
2.2 Governance	Rating	Substantial					
Risk Description:  1. Lack of transparency and accountability, as well as limited voice and participation of citizens.	Risk Management:  1. The Country Office has been working with the government to improve governance through ongoing dialogue. The improvement of existing management information system would help to support accountability initiatives in the education sector.						
	Resp: Client	Status: In Progress	Stage: Both	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency Yearly	
3. Project Risks							
3.1 Design	Rating	Substantial					
Risk Description:  1. There is the risk of limited uptake regarding the proposed pre-primary interventions. Though it is expected that parents will be more interested in the half-day model, there is a risk that parents will not enroll their children. The Project would target rural areas, where the demand for childcare is lower, so the risk is that parents will not enroll their children due to lack of understanding of the benefits of ECCE. In addition, some of the preschool facilities in rural areas are in need of repair. Poor quality facilities are another deterrent to enrollment.	Risk Management:  1. In order to mitigate the risk of low demand for ECCE services in rural areas, the Project includes advocacy activities to finance public awareness campaigns, aimed at parents, to explain the benefits of ECCE and to engage them in responsive speech and activities with their children from birth. The MoPE will partner with the national and local representatives of the Mahalla Foundation and the national and local representatives of the Women's Committee - these are both trusted sources of information and effective community mobilization partners. In order to mitigate the risk of poor quality preschool facilities serving as an enrollment deterrent, the MoPE has agreed to oversee the repair of facilities. The Project Operations Manual will clearly state that no materials will be disbursed to pre-school facilities until necessary facility repairs have been undertaken.						
	Resp: Client	Status: Not Yet Due	Stage: Implementation	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency Yearly	
	Risk Management:  2. The proposed Project would support activities to build capacity to use quality educational information produced by management information systems to be improved using project funds.						



2. There is the risk of low capacity to use educational information produced by management information systems, which includes students' assessment data.	Resp: Client	Status: Not Yet Due	Stage: Implementation	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency Yearly
3.2 Social and Environmental	Rating	Substantial				
Risk Description:  1. There is a moderate risk that student beneficiaries and a substantial risk that teacher and school manager beneficiaries may be mobilized to pick cotton or provide financial resources to support the cotton harvest.	Risk Management:  1. To mitigate this risk, the proposed Project will participate in the third party monitoring and feedback mechanism as currently being established to focus on issues of forced and child labor for selected projects of the World Bank portfolio in Uzbekistan. Furthermore, the training activities under Project Components 1 and 2 will include an awareness raising module on the Uzbekistan's legislation on child and forced labor. It is also expected that the Project's grant agreement will include appropriate covenants requiring that (i) the Project be carried out in accordance with applicable environment and social standards and practices and in compliance with applicable laws and regulations and international agreements on child and forced labor, and (ii) the TPM and FBM will be the agreed mechanisms to verify compliance with applicable laws and regulations on child and forced labor.					
	Resp: Bank and Client	Status: Not Yet Due	Stage: Both	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency Yearly
3.3 Program and Donor	Rating	Low				
Risk Description:  1. Lack of coordination with other donors, mainly the UNICEF.	Risk Management:  1. This risk is minimal because the proposed Project supports the ESP, which was prepared in close coordination with all Development Partners including UNICEF, UNESCO and ADB. Oversight will be in place during project implementation.					
	Resp: Client	Status: In Progress	Stage: Both	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency Yearly
3.4 Delivery Monitoring and Sustainability	Rating	Moderate				
Risk Description:  1. There is a risk of weak monitoring and evaluation due to low MoPE's capacity in	Risk Management:  1. The existing management information systems would be strengthened and M&E mechanisms would be developed with TA supported by the proposed Project. Additionally, some local consultants would					

this regard and the multitude of stakeholders and service providers involved.	assist MoPE departments to monitor project implementation.					
	Resp: Client	Status: Not Yet Due	Stage: Implementation	Recurrent: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due Date:	Frequency Yearly
<b>5. Overall Risk</b>						
<b>Overall Preparation Risk: Substantial</b>			<b>Overall Implementation Risk: Substantial</b>			
Risk Description:			Risk Description: a substantial risk rating was selected for implementation given the governance risks as well as the risk is that parents will not enroll their children due to lack of understanding of the benefits of ECCE.			
Nondisclosable Information for Management Attention (Optional)						
<b>Risk Description:</b>						

## Annex 5: Implementation Support Plan

### Improving Pre-Primary and General Secondary Education Project

1. The implementation support strategy for the proposed Project would include regular dialogue with the Government, joint review of the project implementation and regular exercise of fiduciary oversight throughout implementation.
  - (i) *Regular dialogue with the Government* would facilitate early identification of problems and obstacles, which could delay implementation and would enable timely provision of technical advice and support to remove such obstacles. This would help to identify issues as they emerge and address them by advice and support in a timely manner, without waiting for joint reviews.
  - (ii) *Joint reviews* would take place twice a year, aimed at reviewing the progress and achievement of agreed targets/results. The Bank Task Team would participate in such reviews with representatives of the GoU and relevant stakeholders. During each of the reviews, the type of implementation support that is needed would be identified, followed by joint decisions on specific necessary assistance.
  - (iii) *Fiduciary oversight* would enable the Bank to fulfill its fiduciary obligations and ensure compliance with the Bank's fiduciary standards through the ongoing supervision of the Project's financial management and procurement arrangements and results.
    - a) *Financial management supervision* will be performed in two ways: (i) review the Project's quarterly IFRs, as well as the annual audited financial statements and auditor's management letter, yearly; and (ii) perform on-site supervisions to review the Project's financial management and disbursement arrangements, including monitoring of agreed actions, issues identified by the auditors, review of randomly selected transactions and review of accounting, reporting, budgeting, internal controls and flow of funds.
    - b) *Oversight on procurement* will be provided through prior reviews in accordance with the procurement thresholds. Supervision will be carried out twice per year, through both desk and on-site reviews of procurement arrangements and results, including post review of contracts selected in a random manner. As needed, on the site training on procurement may be provided upon request to the PMT or MoPE staff.
2. Implementation Support Plan – the table below reflects the implementation support plan for the proposed Project.

Time	Focus	Skills Needed	Resource Estimate	Partner Role
First 12 months	Technical and operational support: (i) implementation of minimum school standards; (ii) students' assessment system; (iii) M&E; and (iv) overall implementation	Senior Education Specialist (TTL)	10 weeks	Participation in joint reviews
	Technical support: (i) design and implementation of flexible models of ECCE service provision; (ii) assessment of flexible ECCE models; and (iii) communication campaigns	Education Specialist / Education Economist	8 weeks	

	Technical support: training program for teachers and school managers	Senior Operations Officer	4 weeks	
	Technical and operational support	Education Specialist (Consultant)	8 weeks	
	Social Development support: analysis of the issues of forced and child labor	Senior Social Development Specialist	2 weeks	
	Financial management support	Financial Management Specialist	3 weeks	
	Procurement support	Procurement Specialist	4 weeks	
13 <sup>th</sup> – 36 <sup>th</sup> months	Technical and operational support: (i) implementation of minimum school standards; (ii) students' assessment system; (iii) M&E; and (iv) overall implementation	Senior Education Specialist (TTL)	20 weeks	Participation in joint reviews
	Technical support: (i) design and implementation of flexible models of ECCE service provision; (ii) assessment of flexible ECCE models; and (iii) communication campaigns.	Education Specialist / Education Economist	4 weeks	
	Technical support: training program for teachers and school managers	Senior Operations Officer	3 weeks	
	Technical and operational support	Education Specialist / Education Economist	4 weeks	
	Social Development support: analysis of the issues of forced and child labor	Senior Social Development Specialist	4 weeks	
	Financial management support	Financial Management Specialist	4 weeks	
	Procurement support	Procurement Specialist	4 weeks	

## **Annex 6: Economic and Financial Analysis**

### **Improving Pre-Primary and General Secondary Education Project**

1. The Project promotes investments in two key dimensions: access to quality pre-primary education and learning conditions for students of general secondary education. This analysis discusses the public rationales, economic and financial benefits, and justifications for World Bank involvement for the core activities in each dimension. The economic analysis uses the cost-effective approach, which compares Project outcomes to alternatives when possible.

#### **Increased access to quality ECCE**

2. The Project seeks to improve access to quality early childhood education through financing the development of more flexible forms of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) service provision, which include (i) a half-day school readiness program for children aged 5 to 6, and (ii) early reading activities targeting children aged 3 to 6. Both activities will target children in rural areas. The implementation of the half-day model would be supported by adapting the *Bolajon* pre-school curriculum, training teachers in school readiness teaching methods, and providing teaching and learning materials (TLM) and equipment to existing centers (pre-primary education institutions) where the half-day ECCE programs would be held. Early reading activities would include the purchase and distribution of storybooks to parents of young children and reading hours to encourage early reading in the home. Over the three years of the Project, 50,000 children aged 5 to 6 would attend the half-day school readiness program and 300,000 children would participate in early reading activities. In addition, as a spillover effect from half-day school readiness activities, 62,000 children in the full day program at selected pre-schools would benefit from equipment provided to schools where the half-day model is provided. It is expected that rural ECCE enrollment for children aged 3 to 6 would rise from 8.5 to 13.1 percent<sup>30</sup>.

3. The World Bank's involvement will be central to the successful implementation of the half-day model in Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan has an established system for providing early child-care to children. However, enrollment for children aged 3 to 6 is low compared to other countries with similar levels of GDP per capita, at just 23.3 percent nationally in 2012 and 8.5 percent in rural areas in 2010 according to MoPE data (see Figure 5). Annual costs to the government of approximately US\$500 per child and monthly costs to families of \$30<sup>31</sup> (equivalent to the minimum wage as of 2010) are part of the reason why enrollment is low in addition to distance from school and lack of conviction about the benefits of pre-primary education<sup>32</sup>. In order to expand coverage of ECCE, Uzbekistan will need to experiment with alternative program structures, including a half-day model that can provide children with developmental benefits, but at a lower cost. The World Bank will be able to provide guidance and support to implement this innovation, and it will also bring extensive experience from across countries in implementing half-day ECCE programs.

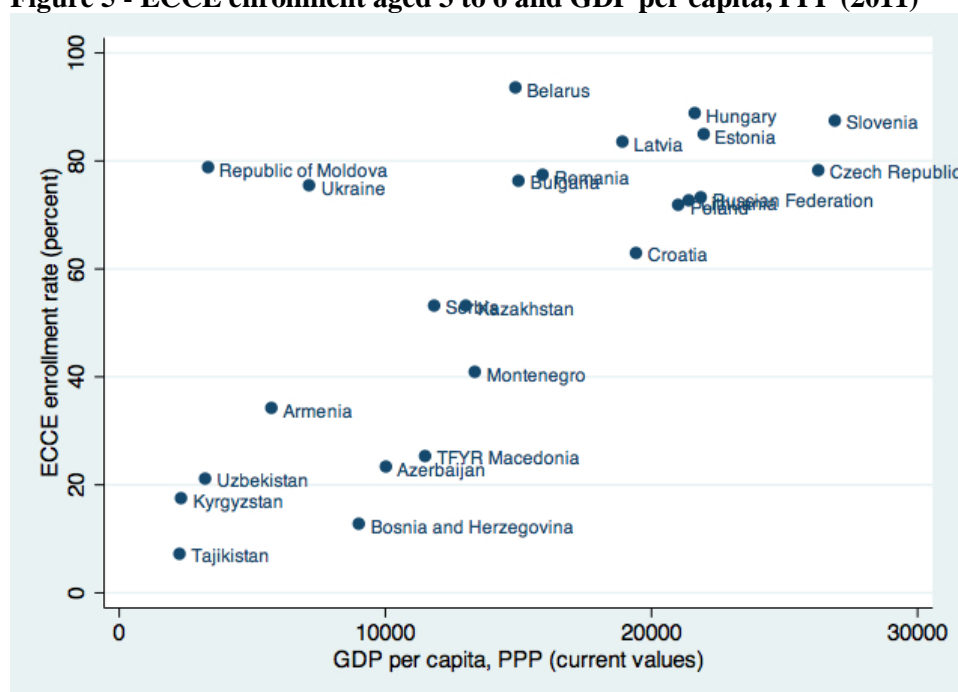
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<sup>30</sup> Here and throughout except when noted, the ECCE analysis takes advantages of official MoPE data for 2010, the most recent year for which an extensive dataset on ECCE in Uzbekistan is available.

<sup>31</sup> MoPE data.

<sup>32</sup> UNICEF sociological survey (2009).

**Figure 5 - ECCE enrollment aged 3 to 6 and GDP per capita, PPP (2011)**



Source: EdStats, MoPE, and TransMonEE.

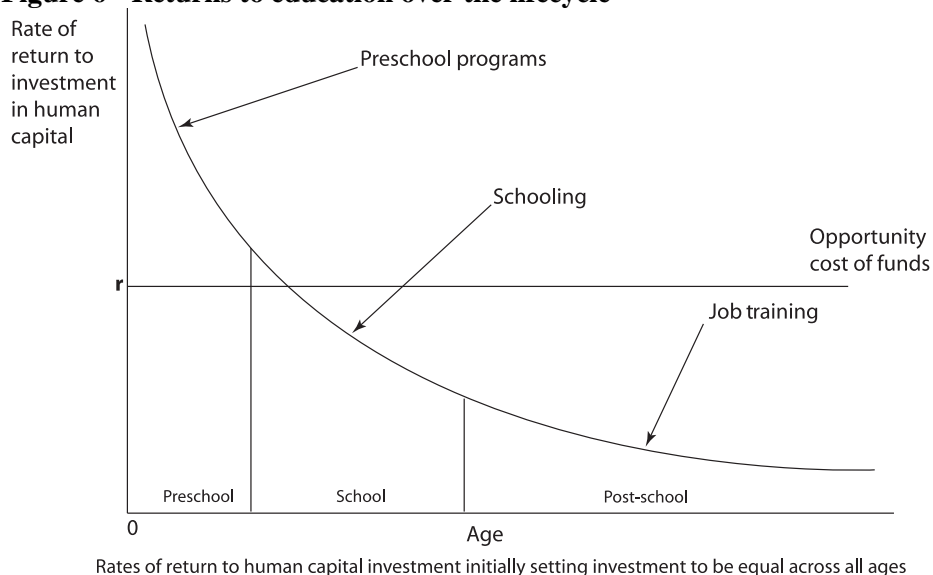
#### *Economic analysis and justification for public provision of ECCE activities in Uzbekistan*

4. **Investments in early childhood care and education have proven to be more cost-effective than investments made at later stages of the lifecycle.** Proper nutrition, cognitive stimulation, and nurturing care during children's early years have lasting positive consequences for their subsequent educational attainment, health, fertility, and earnings<sup>33</sup>. The return in terms of national productivity to a dollar of investment made while a person is young is estimated to be between US\$7 and US\$16, and higher than the rate of return to the same dollar invested at a later age<sup>34</sup>. These higher returns are partly due to the finding that IQ, which influences achievement levels over schooling, is more malleable at younger ages and that younger learners will use their skills over a longer period of time (see Figure 6).

<sup>33</sup> See Shonkoff and Phillips (2000), Cunha and Heckman (2007), Heckman (2006), Cunha et al (2005), and Carneiro and Heckman (2003).

<sup>34</sup> Lancet (2011), Strategies for reducing inequalities and improving developmental outcomes for young children in low-income and middle-income countries.

**Figure 6 - Returns to education over the lifecycle**



Source: Cunha et al. (2007).

5. **Investments in ECCE can also enhance equity in society.** The family environment is crucial to any child's development of skills and abilities, but poor children frequently do not have access to the resources enjoyed by their wealthier peers. This disparity leads to the early emergence of performance gaps between children from different socioeconomic backgrounds and the widening of these gaps as children grow older<sup>35</sup>. By using public resources to create a supportive environment for the most disadvantaged children, ECCE programs can make up for some early family differences. Research has shown that early childhood interventions can equalize opportunities for children and reduce the intergenerational transmission of poverty and inequality<sup>36</sup>. According to official data in Uzbekistan, poverty as measured by a national food-based norm of 2,100 kilocalories per person per day declined from 27.5 percent of the population in 2001 to 19.5 percent in 2010, although poverty decreased at a lower rate in rural areas<sup>37</sup>. With 48.8 percent of the population living in rural areas and a concentration of poverty in rural areas, it is especially important to increase rural ECCE enrollment rates from 8.5 percent (compared to 29.5 percent in urban areas as of 2010). By a focus on increasing access to ECCE in rural areas where 70.3 percent of the children who are out of school live, the Project will benefit 32.3 percent of rural children who are currently out of ECCE (see Table 4).

<sup>35</sup> See Paxson and Schady (2007).

<sup>36</sup> See Heckman (2006).

<sup>37</sup> World Bank (2011), Country Partnership Strategy for the Republic of Uzbekistan.

**Table 4 - Project beneficiaries in relation to children aged 3 to 6 out of ECCE in 2010**

	Enrollment rate	Estimated number of children out of ECCE	Estimated number of children out of ECCE as share of total out of ECCE	Half day beneficiaries (50,000 children) as a share of out of ECCE	Storybook beneficiaries (300,000 children) as a share of out of ECCE	Project beneficiaries as a share of out of ECCE
Urban	29.5%	437,364	28.4%	-	-	-
Rural	8.5%	1,082,533	70.3%	4.6%	27.7%	32.3%
National	21.0%	1,539,383	100.0%	3.2%	19.5%	22.7%

Source: MoPE.

6. **ECCE interventions that also provide childcare can free household members (especially female parents and older siblings) to participate in other productive activities such as education or employment.** Mothers and female siblings are often the family members responsible for the care of young children. However, if affordable ECCE is available, families may choose to have their children participate in ECCE programs. Mothers who have more time while their children are in ECCE may choose to seek employment and sisters who have more time due to younger siblings in ECCE may be able to devote more time to their schoolwork. As an example, the expansion of Argentina's pre-school programs increased maternal employment by about 7 to 14 percent<sup>38</sup>. In Uzbekistan, women's employment rates are quite low, at 26 percent compared to an OECD average of 57 percent and men's employment rates of 67 percent<sup>39</sup>. The Project will provide mothers and older sisters in 50,000 families with children that participate in the half-day model more choice in how they spend their time. Expanding ECCE in Uzbekistan is also likely to employ more women by nature of the pre-primary workforce, as 99 percent of pre-primary teachers are female in the country<sup>40</sup>. Through implementation of the half-day model, up to 2,000 half-day teachers (very likely to be women and existing underemployed teachers) will increase their teaching hours and earnings by approximately US\$2.0 million per year (half-day teacher salaries are estimated to be approximately US\$83 a month, and teachers will be paid for a maximum of 12 months a year). The opportunity cost to these teachers will be quite low due to low employment rates for women in Uzbekistan mentioned above.

7. **ECCE interventions can create benefits to society in terms of a healthier, more educated, and more productive workforce in the long run, which gives many governments reason to subsidize its provision.** Given external benefits, society's demand for ECCE is generally higher than the private demand for ECCE, which means that ECCE is often underprovided by private providers or services are offered at a price point that is too high for families to afford. In fact, private fees for ECCE can be over ten times as expensive as public fees for ECCE in Uzbekistan. The Government provides 99 percent of ECCE services<sup>41</sup>, but even these services are too expensive for many families, as parents in Uzbekistan cite prohibitively high costs as a main reason why they do not enroll their children in ECCE<sup>42</sup>. However, the public subsidy to ECCE estimated to represent only 70 percent of the total cost is not sufficient, as families cover the remaining amount through fees<sup>43</sup>. Partly as a result of fees as high as 100 percent of minimum wage, compared to the rest of the ECA region, ECCE enrollment rates are very low in Uzbekistan, as mentioned earlier. In addition, in 2006, only 5 percent of children from the lowest income quintile were enrolled compared to 46 percent of children from the highest income quintile (see Figure 7). Poverty is concentrated in rural areas, with a poverty rate of 30.0 percent in rural areas compared to a poverty rate of 18.3

<sup>38</sup> See Berlinski and Galiani (2007).

<sup>39</sup> World Bank analysis of GIZ 2011 Labor Survey.

<sup>40</sup> MoPE data (2010).

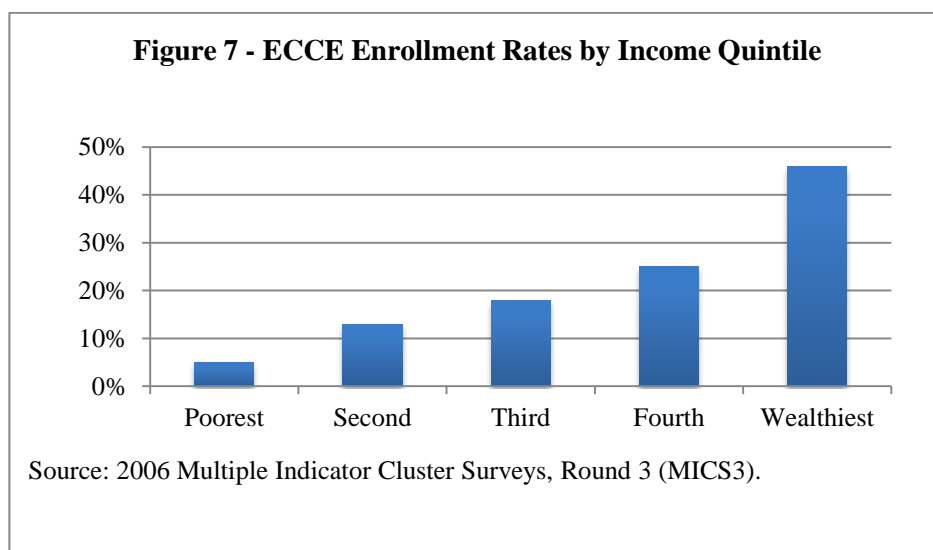
<sup>41</sup> Naqvi (2013).

<sup>42</sup> Along with children (up to 2 years old) that were too small, these two reasons were among the top three mentioned by parents for not enrolling their children in ECCE, according to a 2009 UNICEF survey.

<sup>43</sup> See World Bank (2013).



percent in urban areas in 2005 (the most recent year with available data)<sup>44</sup>. Therefore, by targeting rural areas, the project is more likely to reach the poorest children.



#### *Financial analysis of ECCE activities in Uzbekistan*

8. **Providing ECCE for the half of the day is more cost-effective for the Government than the full day program that is currently delivered in Uzbekistan.** Fifteen hours is the minimum number of hours per week provided by pre-schools around the world<sup>45</sup>. In addition, international evidence suggests that children can experience cognitive gains from center-based ECCE services for 15 to 30 hours a week<sup>46</sup>, which is well below Uzbekistan's standard requirements of 40 to 60 hours a week<sup>47</sup>. Therefore, a half-day model will allow GoU to expand access to quality ECCE that focuses on school readiness (not only childcare) using fewer resources than required by the full day program. The government will finance teacher salaries to provide additional teaching hours for the 2,000 teachers at a cost of approximately US\$2.0 million per year (half-day teacher salaries are estimated to be approximately US\$83 a month, and teachers will be paid for a maximum of 12 months a year). However, if the government were to expand coverage with the current full-day model, the salary cost would be almost double, approximately US\$3.6 million per year. Compared to the full day model, the half-day model will represent a cost savings to the government of US\$1.6 million in one year and US\$3.6 million over three years (considering the number of schools in each year) while expanding access to the same number of children (see Table 5).

**Table 5 - Cost savings from teacher salaries**

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Number of children beneficiaries	4,500	21,100	24,400	50,000
Number of teachers needed per year	500	2,000	2,000	4,500
Project scenario: Half-day teacher salaries	\$597,353	\$2,429,235	\$2,429,235	\$5,455,822
Counterfactual scenario: Full day teacher salaries	\$896,028	\$3,584,112	\$3,584,112	\$8,064,252
<i>Cost savings from half-day salaries</i>	<i>\$298,675</i>	<i>\$1,154,877</i>	<i>\$1,154,877</i>	<i>\$2,608,430</i>

Source: calculations based on MoPE data.

<sup>44</sup> Welfare Improvement Strategy of Uzbekistan (2007).

<sup>45</sup> Naudeau et al. (2011).

<sup>46</sup> For example, Loeb et al. (2007).

<sup>47</sup> In Uzbekistan, ECCE facilities are minimally required to provide services for 8 to 10 hours a day and 5 to 6 days a week.

Note: The cost savings calculation assumes equal student-teacher ratios in the full and half-day programs for simplicity.

9. **In addition, a half-day model provides quality ECCE at a lower cost to parents, as school meals are often the only type of fees that parents pay.** Fees for the full day program are US\$30 (62,920 UZS) per child per month, with a discounted fee of US\$23 per child (47,700 UZS) for parents with two children enrolled. Demand is also low, with 24 unoccupied places in ECCE centers per 100 available places, which indicates that a lower price point may increase enrollment<sup>48</sup>. A half-day model addresses these concerns through a strong emphasis on learning and substantially lower costs. The government is still finalizing the fee structure for the half-day model, but current fees for the half-day model are about US\$13 per month. If parents pay the same half-day fees required currently, this would represent a cost savings of at least US\$17 per month and US\$208 per year to parents. With 50,000 children attending the half-day model over 3 years, in total, this would be a cost savings of US\$10.4 million.

10. **The Project would represent a significant boost to the existing pre-primary budget, especially in the amount allocated to non-wage current expenditure for TLM and other learning resources that is often squeezed out by teacher salaries and capital expenditure.** An estimated US\$13.7 million of Project funding will be spent on equipment, furniture and TLM, of which at least US\$5.3 million represents expenditure on the inputs to outfit the half-day classrooms. With 50,000 half-day beneficiaries, the Project will invest at least US\$107 directly per child beneficiary in the half-day model, which is about 21 percent of the amount that is spent per child nationally (1.057 million UZS or US\$511)<sup>49</sup>. Project funding for equipment and TLM represents 1.7 percent of the national budget in one year.

11. **Lastly, the Project is more cost-effective than comparable alternatives.** If the GoU does not intervene in ECCE, the number of children enrolled is likely to decline slightly, as total enrollments declined by 4.8 percent annually over the period of 2007 to 2010. If GoU wishes to increase ECCE enrollments in rural areas by 50,000 children as the Project intends, it can expand in three ways: (i) continue the full day program; (ii) raise the student-teacher ratio with the full day program; and (iii) use the half-day model in additional ECCE centers (see Table 6). Under the full day program, 5,376 additional teachers would be necessary at an estimated cost of US\$9.4 million over three years (given the student-teacher ratio of 9.3 in rural areas as of 2010). By comparison, increasing the student-teacher ratio by two-thirds to 15 students as mentioned by the 2013 *Republic of Uzbekistan: Improving Early Childhood Care and Education* report would require an additional 3,333 teachers to reach 50,000 children at a cost of US\$6.0 million over three years. Costs for the half-day model would be US\$5.5 million with 5,556 teachers needed (with a student-teacher ratio of 9, as the model assumes slightly lower demand for the half-day model at the beginning of the Project). Although costs for increasing enrollment through the half-day model and a higher student-teacher ratio are similar, in the long run, the half-day model will be more cost-effective because it will not require additional construction over time. As of 2010, there was approximately one empty classroom in each rural ECCE center, and this lack of available classroom space will not allow for expansion of the full day program to as many children as the half-day model would, even with a higher student-teacher ratio, after the Project cycle.

**Table 6 - Comparison of Project intervention with alternative approaches**

	Change in number of children enrolled	Change in number of teachers	Teacher salaries over three years (US\$)
No intervention	-8,860	-953	US\$ -1,707,270
Option 1: Full day program	50,000	5,376	US\$ 9,634,710
Option 2: Higher student-teacher ratio	50,000	3,333	US\$ 5,973,520

<sup>48</sup> Naqvi (2013).

<sup>49</sup> Government of Uzbekistan (2013).

Option 3: Half-day model	50,000	5,556	US\$ 5,531,044
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Note: calculations assuming US\$1,792 as a full day teacher's salary and US\$996 as a half-day teacher's salary.

### Improved learning conditions for general secondary schools

12. The project seeks to improve learning conditions in general secondary schools through (i) financing training programs for teachers and school managers; (ii) implementing minimum school standards; and (iii) strengthening the education system's monitoring capacity. Improvements to training programs include higher quality training modules and better training facilities. The implementation of minimum school standards would provide Information Communication Technology (ICT) equipment and TLM to 1,220 general secondary education schools in rural areas. Finally, another round of student assessments would provide information on learning outcomes in 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades, in Math and native language.

13. Building on experience with the previous education projects in Uzbekistan, the World Bank will provide the necessary innovative guidance to reform the teacher training system and to shift from a system of examination to student assessments. The teacher training system will become more responsive to teacher needs and provide modern lessons. In addition, the move to student assessments will align Uzbekistan's measurement of learning outcomes with other countries. The World Bank will be able to build on its long history of providing support to the ECA region to develop national assessments: from 1998 to 2009, 81 percent of education projects in the region received support for assessments<sup>50</sup>.

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14. **Aside from pre-primary education, social and private returns to education are highest at the primary levels in Asia and around the world, which makes primary education a sound government investment** (see Table 7). In Uzbekistan, general secondary education include grades 1 to 9, and enrollment was at 91.5 percent<sup>51</sup> with a gender parity index of 97 percent for grades 1 to 4 and 98 percent for grades 5 to 9 in 2012 according to World Bank EdStats data. Quality primary education is essential to establish a foundation for future learning, as skills and content learned in lower grades would enable learning in higher grades. As Uzbekistan has nearly achieved universal enrollment, quality improvements are the crucial and logical next step.

**Table 7 - Returns to investment in education by level, latest year, regional averages (percentage)**

Region	Social			Private		
	Primary	Secondary	Higher	Primary	Secondary	Higher
Asia*	16.2	11.1	11.0	20.0	15.8	18.2
Europe/Middle East/North Africa*	15.6	9.7	9.9	13.8	13.6	18.8
Latin America/Caribbean	17.4	12.9	12.3	26.6	17.0	19.5
OECD	8.5	9.4	8.5	13.4	11.3	11.6
Sub-Saharan Africa	25.4	18.4	11.3	37.6	24.6	27.8
World	18.9	13.1	10.8	26.6	17.0	19.0

Source: Patrinos and Psacharopoulos (2002).

\*Non-OECD

15. **Learning outcomes are influenced by many factors at the student and school level, including availability of adequate resources.** The relationship between learning outcomes and related factors can be examined on a comparable basis across countries using Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2009 data. PISA tests 15 year olds in mathematics, reading, and science. Although Uzbekistan did not participate in PISA

<sup>50</sup> Liberman and Clarke (2012).

<sup>51</sup> Government of Uzbekistan (2013).

2009, other countries in the region were included in the study, such as Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, and the Russian Federation. Results showed that GDP per capita only explained 6 percent of the scores, which means that the remaining 94 percent could potentially be affected by policy. The PISA results demonstrate a weak link between the level of educational inputs at a school and learning outcomes, but that it is crucial for schools to have a minimum level of resources in order to achieve results. Beyond that threshold, additional resources may no longer affect test scores. A study of student outcomes and instructional spending levels in the US state of Alabama supports the idea of a minimum set of adequate set of resources. Ferguson and Ladd (1996) found that resources matter for districts that spend below the average, with significant effects on learning outcomes not only for particular inputs (teacher test scores, teacher education, and class size) but also for instructional spending levels more generally. In Uzbekistan, a lack of resources may hinder student achievement in some cases, as 21 percent of schools do not meet state standards for equipment. In addition, 19 percent of schools are missing science labs and 27 percent of schools are missing computer labs, with variation by region (see Table 8).

**Table 8 - Schools that were equipped with learning labs from 2005 to 2012**

Regions	Total	Physics, Chemistry, and Biology class		Computer lab	
		Equipped	Share equipped	Equipped	Share equipped
<i>National</i>	9765	7925	81.2%	7171	73.4%
Karakalpakistan	739	610	82.5%	561	75.9%
Andijan	742	618	83.3%	543	73.2%
Bukhara	534	445	83.3%	358	67.0%
Djizzak	545	456	83.7%	416	76.3%
Kashkadarya	1118	868	77.6%	818	73.2%
Navoi	359	284	79.1%	245	68.2%
Namangan	688	575	83.6%	534	77.6%
Samarqand	1232	901	73.1%	840	68.2%
Surkhandarya	858	705	82.2%	620	72.3%
Syrdarya	301	261	86.7%	224	74.4%
Tashkent	883	711	80.5%	708	80.2%
Ferghana	918	787	85.7%	676	73.6%
Khorezm	531	423	79.7%	385	72.5%
Tashkent city	317	281	88.6%	243	76.7%

Source: MoPE.

16. **Specific to the Project's activities, evidence on the link between student achievement and ICT is mixed, but shows possible positive impact under the right circumstances.** For example, findings show that ICT equipment can create learning gains when computer-assisted learning programs reinforce skills learned in the classroom or when computer use is directly linked to pedagogy<sup>52</sup>. In Uzbekistan, the provision of ICT equipment for computer labs and digital TLM will be complemented by a new training module in ICT to ensure effective use by teachers and eventually students. Aside from immediate learning gains, ICT skills are increasingly important in today's economy, and school may be the first place where students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds or low-income countries are exposed to computers<sup>53</sup>.

17. **Importantly, most of the relationship between school resources and school performance is related to students' socio-economic status according to PISA results.** This means that educational resources are often inequitably distributed according to schools' socio-economic and demographic profiles. In Uzbekistan, 21 percent of schools in rural areas are underequipped, and as mentioned earlier, poverty rates are higher in rural areas, making educational opportunities especially important. As Uzbekistan has already almost achieved universal enrollment in grades 1 to 9 of general secondary school, promotion of equity is the rationale for using public resources to fund

<sup>52</sup> See Banerjee et al. (2005); Barrow et al. (2008); and *infoDev's* Knowledge Map on the Impact of ICTs on Learning and Achievement.

<sup>53</sup> See OECD (2011), PISA 2009 Results: Students on Line: Digital Technologies and Performance (Volume VI).

basic education. The project will provide 1,220 schools located in rural areas with a computer lab and TLM. Selection criteria including location in the countryside and availability of ICT equipment (or computer lab) will ensure that only schools in need will receive new inputs, and Government funds will be used to improve school infrastructure before the distribution of such inputs. In this way, the Project will provide an estimated 260,000 grade 5 to 9 students in rural areas with the crucial minimum inputs students need to succeed (assuming 215 grade 5 to 9 students per rural secondary school and 1,220 beneficiary schools).

**18. Teachers have been shown to be the greatest determinant of learning outcomes at the school level, more so than inputs.** There are many observable factors that influence teacher quality, including experience, qualifications, and professional development. Evidence on the effectiveness of in-service teacher training models is mixed, but it is clear that the nature of training matters. For example, in-service professional development programs are more effective if they focus on changing pedagogy and not merely providing additional materials for teachers<sup>54</sup> as well as exposing teachers to best practices in instruction and showing them how to implement these practices<sup>55</sup>. Teacher training is usually provided by the state to ensure that all public school teachers are able to upgrade their skills periodically. In Uzbekistan, all teachers and school managers are required to attend 144 hours of training every three years, but the conditions of the training need upgrading and the teaching methods and topics could be better aligned with current issues in education. The Project will upgrade teacher training modules make them more modern and responsive to teachers' needs, and a total of 200,000 teachers and school managers will be trained over the duration of the activities.

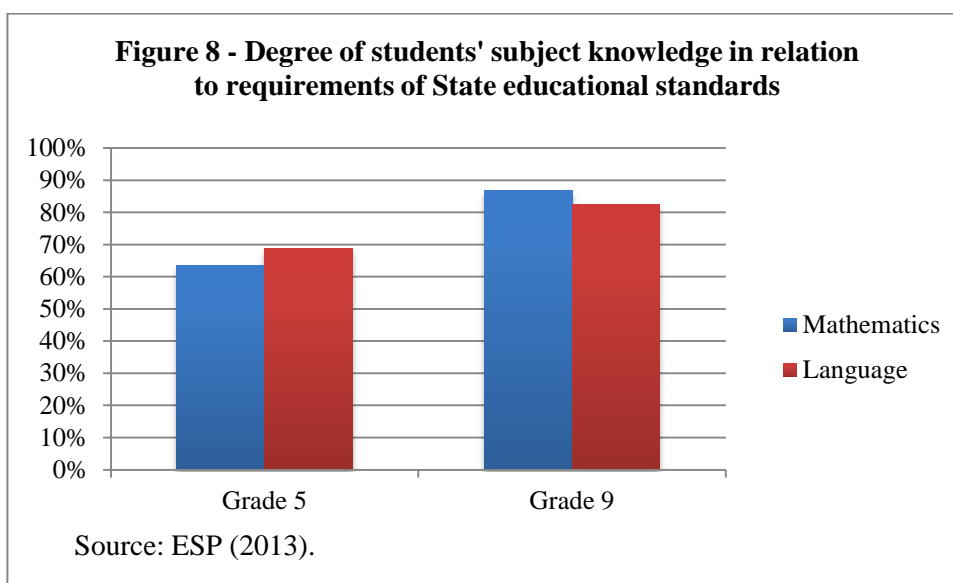
**19. Student assessments also have the potential to improve learning outcomes through providing information that can be used by policymakers, teachers, or parents to make decisions about allocation of resources, classroom activities, and school choice.** National assessments of student learning can show how well students are acquiring knowledge, essential for today's economy, and how this outcome changes over time with respect to policy changes<sup>56</sup>. Available data on student learning outcomes in Uzbekistan are scarce, but results from examination of student knowledge according to state standards show that high shares of students have not mastered the required material in math and language (see Figure 8). Examinations can show whether a particular student has mastered the required concepts, but regular student assessments that are comparable across time and regions would allow for the more systematic tracking of learning outcomes. Uzbekistan is one of the last remaining countries in the ECA region without a functioning national student assessment system, making this intervention particularly necessary.

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<sup>54</sup> Angrist and Lavy (2001) and Abeberese, Kumler & Linden (2011) as cited in World Bank (2013b).

<sup>55</sup> Angrist & Lavy (2001); Borko (2004); Brown, Smith & Stein (1995); Cohen & Hill (1997); Wenglinsky (2000); Wiley & Yoon (1995) as cited in World Bank (2013b).

<sup>56</sup> Greaney and Kellaghan (2008).



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20. **The Project will provide substantial benefits to Uzbekistan's education budget for general secondary schools, especially for students in rural locations.** In 2011, Uzbekistan spent US\$2.7 billion (5,582.9 billion UZS) on education, which represents 35 percent of the total state budget<sup>57</sup>. A considerable amount of expenditure goes to general secondary education, whose budget share was 56.1 percent of the total in 2011 (see Table 9). However, often little is spent on learning resources such as digital TLM and computer labs, as salaries and capital investments usually consume the majority of education budgets in most countries. A relevant budget breakdown is not available for Uzbekistan, but in the ECA region for 26 countries with available data, an average of 80 percent of education spending on primary, secondary, and vocational and technical education on salaries and capital expenditure, leaving just 20 percent for other current expenditure. The Project will add US\$17.6 million, to the non-wage and non-construction expenditure over 3 years. In addition, the Project will contribute US\$5.1 million to teacher training institutes and US\$1.7 million to training half-day teachers, or 6.7 percent to the training budget each year over 3 years (the budget is an estimated US\$8.7 million or 18 billion UZS for 2012/13). The Project will also significantly support students in rural areas, as US\$67 will be directly invested per grade 5 to 9 student in the selected rural schools, which is approximately 20 percent of per student spending in 2012 (assuming 215 grade 5 to 9 students per school and 1,220 beneficiary schools). The Project funding of digital TLM and computer labs complements planned GoU spending on ICT in education complements the GoU goal of 100 percent of schools with computers by the year 2016/17.

**Table 9 - Distribution of 2011 budget by level of education, excluding central investments and off-budget spending on education**

	Soms (billions)	Share of education budget
Pre-school education	569.7	10.2%
General secondary education	3,129.4	56.1%
Education at academic lyceums	104.6	1.9%
Education at vocational education colleges	1,087.4	19.5%
Higher education	302.4	5.4%
Other	389.4	6.9%
<i>Total</i>	<i>5,582.9</i>	<i>100%</i>

<sup>57</sup> GoU's ESP (2013).

## Summary

21. To summarize, Project activities in ECCE and general secondary education represent worthwhile investments in Uzbekistan in terms of the public rationale, economic and financial benefits, and role of the World Bank.

### Summary of ECCE analysis

22. *Public rationale.* The Project's ECCE interventions in rural areas will help to enhance equity in society by compensating for early learning gaps due to family differences, as the poor are more likely to live in rural areas. In addition, activities will generate externalities associated with ECCE, including increased female participation in the labor force and a healthier, more productive workforce. Lastly, given these benefits and others, privately provided ECCE is often too expensive for many families. In cases where the market does not provide a good with benefits to society at an affordable price, government support is necessary.

23. *Economic and financial benefits.* The half-day model of ECCE is more cost-effective than the full day program. Cost savings from the half-day model include US\$3.6 million to the government and US\$10.4 million to parents over 3 years. The Project will increase the national budget for ECCE by about 1.7 percent in each year, and will allow for an increase of at least 21 percent of spending on children in the half-day model. The investment would represent a significant increase to the amount allocated to non-wage current expenditure for TLM and other learning resources that is often squeezed out by teacher salaries and capital expenditure.

24. *World Bank's role.* The World Bank's involvement will allow Uzbekistan to innovate on its current model for providing ECCE by bringing guidance, support, and experience from successful similar activities in other countries. Expansion of ECCE through more flexible models is necessary to increase enrollment rates from the low rate of 23.3 percent nationally in 2012.

### Summary of general secondary analysis

25. *Public rationale.* Social returns to primary education in the region (general secondary education in Uzbekistan) are the highest of any level of education after pre-primary education, which means that education at the primary level will generate more benefits for society than investments in education at higher levels. In addition, the Project will seek to increase equity in learning conditions in Uzbekistan by providing resources to schools in rural areas where the poor are more likely to live.

26. *Economic and financial benefits.* General secondary education will also provide high returns in terms of future wages. As Uzbekistan has nearly achieved universal enrollment and reached gender parity in education, improvements in the availability of learning resources, highly trained teachers, and use of student assessments results to bring about quality improvements are the next step. The Project will contribute an additional 20 percent spent per student in selected schools.

27. *World Bank's role.* The World Bank's involvement will provide the necessary innovative guidance to reform the teacher training system and to shift from a system of examination to student assessments, particularly given its strong experience in developing national assessments in the ECA region.

## **Annex 7: Mobilization of Labor for Cotton Production**

### **Improving Pre-Primary and General Secondary Education Project**

1. **The GoU has signed and ratified several ILO conventions related to child and forced labor, and promulgated similar provisions in its national legislation.** These conventions include Convention No. 138 on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, Convention No. 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labor, Convention No. 29 on Forced Labor, and Convention No. 105 on Abolition of Forced Labor. In addition, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), also subscribed to by the Government, prohibits forced labor (Article 8). Said legislation essentially prohibits any form of child<sup>58</sup> and forced labor,<sup>59</sup> ensures fair employment conditions and aims at creating adequate working environments. The GoU's domestic legislation includes a number of provisions prohibiting forced and child labor. In particular, the Constitution, the Labor Code, the Criminal Code and some other local laws and decrees contribute to laying out a legal framework in such areas. However, forced child labor has been reportedly substituted with forced adult labor organized by local authorities and administrators of public institutions.
2. **Forced child labor in cotton harvesting used to be widespread, but has mostly disappeared in recent years.** A joint ILO-GoU mission took place during the cotton harvesting season in September-October 2013 to monitor the use of forced child labor in cotton harvesting. The ILO's official public statement at the completion of their monitoring activities is as follows: "In general terms, the monitoring observed widespread awareness of national laws and instructions not to allow the use of children under 18 years of age in the cotton harvest. Moreover, it would appear from the monitoring that there was no systematic recourse to forced child labor. While the law and practice are increasingly being applied, gaps remain in practice and child labor still has taken place during the cotton harvest to a limited extent." The ILO's full report was released in February 2014. Reports by international NGOs largely support this conclusion and indicate that fewer children from primary and junior secondary school (grade nine and below) have been observed in the fields since 2012. However, some NGOs raise concerns that while children below the age of 15 are not employed in the fields, children aged 15-17 are still mobilized to pick cotton.
3. **Forced child labor has been reportedly substituted with forced adult labor.** In order to comply with the cotton quotas, the burden of cotton harvesting has apparently shifted from children to adults. According to available information, the Hokimiyats currently work with the administrators of different governmental organizations (primarily schools, universities, hospitals, etc.) to compile a list of employees who would be mobilized during the cotton harvesting season (these lists consist of "brigades" of around 150-200 people each). Administrators then require their employees to join cotton harvesting and Hokimiyats provide transportation means. University students may also be required by the university authorities to work in the fields during the cotton harvesting season. Cotton harvesters are required by their administrators to sign statements of consent prior to taking part in cotton harvesting.
4. **The level of coercion to take part in cotton harvesting seems to vary from one locality and organization to another.** In some localities and organizations cotton harvesting needs may be less considerable, and it may be fairly easy to refuse or to excuse oneself from taking part. In other places, a refusal can reportedly

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<sup>58</sup> For the purposes of Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor, the term 'child' "shall apply to all persons under the age of 18" (Article 2). Article 3 provides that: "...the term 'the worst forms of child labor' comprises: (a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labor, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances; (c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties; (d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children."

<sup>59</sup> For the purposes of Convention No. 29 on Forced Labor, the term forced or compulsory labor refers to "all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily" (Article 2).



lead to serious complications in the work place (e.g., dismissal, rejection of promotion, denial of benefits, etc.). However, one can allegedly pay a "fine" in order to avoid cotton harvesting or pay someone else to go on his or her behalf. Reportedly, the performance of governmental employees in cotton fields affects their job evaluations and their prospects for promotion (those who pick more cotton are more likely to get promoted).

5. **The mass mobilization of government employees reduces access to public services, including health care, education, and social services.** Governmental employees are typically mobilized to pick cotton in shifts. In schools, while some teachers are sent to the fields, those who remain in schools teach additional classes, bring together children from several classes, or simply cancel classes. In hospitals, only emergency services may be offered due to the absence of large numbers of workers. Reportedly, payments of pensions and other social benefits are considerably delayed as governmental employees are at the cotton field and absent from their regular work places.

6. The start of the school year in Uzbekistan in early September roughly coincides with the start of the cotton harvest, which typically lasts for some six to eight weeks. When students or school staff are mobilized to pick cotton, this has the effect of significantly shortening the school year, thereby contributing to hindering the effectiveness and quality of education. Even when schools are not directly affected, when other community service providers, e.g., health care workers, or parents are mobilized, this can also have an indirect impact on students.

# Map

